

INTERNATIONAL WEEKLY

№09 15.05.2024-31.05.2024

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- *THEME ANALYSIS: Security agreements with EU countries: is the European community ready to take on defence responsibilities for Ukraine instead of NATO?*



Photo: Reuters

At the end of May, the European Commission concluded that Ukraine and Moldova had fulfilled all the necessary conditions to start negotiations on EU accession. This was announced by European Commission spokesperson Ana Pisonero at a briefing in Brussels.¹ She noted that the European Commission had informed the Committee of Permanent Representatives of the EU at the level of ambassadors (Coreper) of the progress made by Ukraine and Moldova in fulfilling the requirements for the start of intergovernmental negotiations on EU accession.

"On the part of the European Commission, we have provided updated information on this matter. We believe that both countries have taken all the necessary steps... Now the decision is in the hands of the member states, which have to adopt the framework conditions for the negotiations. Once this decision is made, the EU Council Presidency will convene an intergovernmental conference to officially launch the negotiations," - said the EC spokesperson.

According to her, Ukraine has adopted legislation to increase funding for the National Anti-Corruption Bureau, removed provisions from the legislation on corruption prevention that restricted the NACB's powers to verify assets under investigation, and reduced the NACB's powers to verify property disclosed in the income declarations of candidates for public office. In addition, the Ukrainian side has stepped up its lobbying legislation, bringing it in line with European standards as part of an action plan to limit the influence of oligarchs.

In addition, the EU is ready to continue supporting Ukraine financially. Thus, the European

¹ Україна виконала всі умови для початку переговорів про вступ до ЄС – Єврокомісія.07.06.2024.
<https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-politics/3872448-ukraina-vikonala-vsi-umovi-dla-pocatku-peregovoriv-pro-vstup-do-es-evrokomisia.html>

Commission is considering using future interest from frozen Russian assets in Europe to provide Ukraine with a multibillion-dollar loan. The seven-year EU budget of €1.2 trillion will guarantee these funds. According to Ukrinform, citing Politico, this idea will be discussed by EU finance ministers in the near future. It is noted that the implementation of this proposal will be a significant step forward compared to the recently agreed EU plan, according to which most of the profits from frozen Russian assets in Europe, approximately €3 billion a year, are to be used to purchase weapons for Ukraine. The implementation of this idea requires the unanimous consent of all EU governments to change the bloc's seven-year budget, as well as the approval of the European Parliament, the newspaper notes.

There is an opinion in EU political circles that this proposal may be acceptable to Washington. Sources say that the US administration is seeking to shift the risks of this loan to Ukraine to the EU countries. President Joe Biden does not want to involve Congress in the ratification of a potential future loan agreement, as he fears that opposition from Republican lawmakers could delay the process after the November presidential election.

Indeed, we can now see **Europe taking on the role of Ukraine's main ally**. After all, the United States, being in the election race, has pushed the Ukrainian issue to the back burner. At the same time, the expected July NATO summit in Washington will not bring Kyiv the desired results.

This is also felt at the level of the population. Thus, about 60 per cent of Europeans support the purchase and supply of military equipment from the EU to Ukraine. According to a Eurobarometer poll published on 23 May, six out of ten EU citizens support military assistance to Ukraine. The same number of respondents also approve of granting Ukraine the status of an EU candidate. However, this support is down slightly from the 5 May poll, when 67 per cent of EU citizens supported military assistance to Ukraine.

The number of those who approve of providing humanitarian aid to Ukraine has dropped from 93 to 87 per cent, while the number of those who support accepting Ukrainians fleeing the war has decreased from 88 to 83 per cent. At the same time, seven out of ten Europeans support financial assistance to Ukraine and economic sanctions against Russia for the war. In the previous poll, the number was eight out of ten. More than three quarters of Europeans (77 per cent) support a common defence and security policy between EU countries, and more than 71 per cent of EU citizens agree that the EU should increase the production of military equipment.

At the same time, at the political level, EU ambassadors agreed on the text of a bilateral security agreement between Ukraine and the European Union, which continues the G7 declaration on security guarantees. The agreement is scheduled to be finalised by the end of June, Welt reports. The eleven-page document, which was approved by ambassadors of 27 EU countries under the "confidential" label, states that the **European Union and its member states will play a key role in Ukraine's long-term security and resilience through military, humanitarian, financial, trade and economic support, as well as through refugee accommodation, support for reforms and sanctions, and reconstruction.**

The EU commits to hold immediate consultations within 24 hours in the event of new attacks, although this excludes the participation of European troops in hostilities against Russia. Brussels will continue to train the Ukrainian military and provide defence assistance. According to Welt, the Ukraine Support Fund will have a budget of €5 billion in 2024. By 2027, the budget may increase depending on the needs of the Ukrainian army and additional bilateral contributions from EU countries. The EU is also committed to providing Ukraine with large-scale reconstruction support, estimated at billions of euros. In February 2023, the World Bank estimated the cost of rebuilding Ukraine at \$411 billion.

In late June 2023, EU countries agreed to provide Ukraine with security guarantees. However, the three neutral states insisted that the bloc should not give guarantees separately, but only make security commitments. **Seven EU countries, including Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Ireland, Austria, and Malta, refuse to sign bilateral agreements**

with Ukraine. Switzerland and Turkey, which are not members of the EU, also do not want to negotiate a security agreement with Ukraine.

At the same time, Kyiv is waiting for the start of EU accession talks in June. European Commissioner for Budgetary Affairs Johannes Hahn said that Ukraine's accession to the EU would not pose significant financial difficulties for the union. At the same time, the **EU itself faces challenges in building its own security**. However, the European Union should not have to choose between supporting Ukraine and ensuring its own security - both of these tasks should be addressed simultaneously. This was stated by Ursula von der Leyen during the Eurovision Debate 2024 debate among candidates for the post of the future head of the European Commission, which was held with the participation of representatives of leading European parties, an Ukrinform correspondent reports.

"First of all, we must stand by Ukraine. Ukraine is fighting in this war for freedom, against oppression, a war of democracy against autocracy. Ukraine is fighting for our values and for all free countries. Therefore, we must first of all support Ukraine and, of course, at the same time increase our defence," von der Leyen said. ² **Europe, according to the EPP candidate, should continue to develop its own defence industry, stop the fragmentation of the European defence sector and focus on joint European projects.**

"For example, one of these projects could be the creation of an air shield for the whole of Europe, proposed by Mitsotakis (Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Prime Minister of Greece) and Tusk (Donald Tusk, Prime Minister of Poland). These are the projects where all Europeans can say yes, we are taking this money and investing it for the whole of Europe. But first and foremost, we have to help Ukraine," said von der Leyen, who is running for the post of President of the European Commission in the new composition of this key European institution after the European Parliament elections.

² С має одночасно вирішувати питання підтримки України та власної безпеки - фон дер Ляєн. 23.05.2024. <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-politics/3867128-es-mae-odnocasno-virisuvati-pitanna-pidtrimki-ukraini-ta-vlasnoi-bezpeki-fon-der-laen.html>

Foreign and Defense Policy of Ukraine

- **THEME ANALYSIS:** V. Zelensky unites Europe on the basis of a common threat from Russia



Source: Reuters

*Joe Biden's delay in authorising the use of Western weapons against targets in Russia has allowed Kremlin forces to laugh at Ukraine and "hunt" its people, Volodymyr Zelensky told The Guardian.*³

In a wide-ranging interview in Kyiv, the Ukrainian president said that the White House's ambiguity has cost lives and called on the US president to overcome his long-standing fears of a possible nuclear "escalation" with Moscow.

On Thursday evening, it was reported that after months of lobbying, the US took a small but symbolic step - and for the first time will allow the Kyiv military to use US-made weapons to fire into Russian territory in defence of the city of Kharkiv. But in an interview with the Guardian, Zelensky made it clear that he wants the ability to use "powerful" long-range weapons that can hit targets deep inside Russian territory - a red line that the White House refuses to remove. He said the *US should "have more faith in us"*. Without this green light, Zelensky said, other allies, such as the United Kingdom, may also not allow Ukraine to use its long-range weapons. "Believe us, we have to respond. They understand nothing but force. We are not the first and not the last target," he said of Russia.

Volodymyr Zelensky also said:

- New American weapons have not yet arrived in sufficient quantities to equip additional Ukrainian brigades in the northeast, where Russia is advancing.

- Vladimir Putin was similar to Adolf Hitler, saying: "Putin is not crazy. He is dangerous, and that is much more frightening."

- He asked former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson to lobby Donald Trump ahead of the US Congress' vote in April to give Ukraine \$61 billion in aid, which was opposed by far-right Republicans.

³ Volodymyr Zelenskiy: Russian troops are laughing at and 'hunting' Ukrainians. 31.05.2024. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/article/2024/may/31/volodymyr-zelenskiy-russian-troops-have-been-laughing-at-and-hunting-ukrainians>

In a speech at his presidential headquarters, Zelenskyy made clear that he wants to use long-range weapons such as the British-made Storm Shadow missiles. He said that, despite reports to the contrary, the UK had not given "100% permission" to do so. In fact, Downing Street is waiting for the Americans, Zelensky suggested. "We have raised this issue twice. We have not received confirmation from him [David Cameron, Foreign Secretary]," he said. The final decision of the UK and other partners depends on "**consensus**" and Washington's position is crucial, he suggested. "You know how it works," he said.

Biden has long been concerned about the risks of a direct nuclear conflict with Moscow. The US president is likely to skip next month's peace summit in Switzerland, which Zelensky has organised. Asked if he felt the US and its leadership had let him down, he replied: "I think they should believe in what is happening: "I think they should believe in us more."

Ten countries have expressed support for the cancellation of the ban's "red lines". For example, French President Emmanuel Macron expressed his support on Wednesday, saying that Ukraine could use France's long-range Scalp missiles against hostile Russian military targets. "No one is blaming anyone," he said. "We are where we are. We are at war, and we are at war, not at the beginning of it. Therefore, we need to look for a way out of this situation every day."

And it can be seen that **Volodymyr Zelensky is looking for a way out in building a new European anti-Russian coalition within the framework of the Peace Summit.** Thus, he made an unexpected European tour, visiting Italy, the Vatican, Germany, France, and the United Kingdom in three days. This visit is directly related to the counter-offensive of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Zelensky had a similar tour in early February, when he visited London, Paris and Brussels in three days. At that time, the Ukrainian delegation received promises of new arms supplies from Western partners. Soon after, the formation of a "tank coalition" was announced, signalling a breakthrough in the issue of providing Kyiv with heavy armour, which had previously been considered a "red line" for Western capitals.

During his last visit, Zelensky expressed hope for the creation of a ***"fighter jet coalition"***. This issue is extremely important for Ukraine, but has not previously found adequate support from Western partners. The visit was aimed at strengthening the support of Western allies and securing new arms supplies necessary for a successful counter-offensive by the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

Thus, ***Volodymyr Zelensky's trip to European capitals was aimed at obtaining concrete results in terms of military support for Ukraine in preparation for important military operations.***

In addition to arms agreements, during his European tour, Volodymyr Zelensky managed to sign public declarations with France, Germany and Italy confirming support for Ukraine's movement towards NATO and the EU. It is worth noting that the wording in these documents leaves room for different interpretations. In particular, the declarations state that France, Germany and Italy "fully support" the NATO-Ukraine Commission as a "platform for further strengthening and expanding current cooperation". The main goal is to "help Ukraine to make its way to the Euro-Atlantic family in accordance with the Bucharest Declaration". As a reminder, at the NATO summit in Bucharest in 2008, Ukraine did not receive an action plan for membership in the Alliance, but was assured that it would "definitely be there".

The NATO summit in Vilnius is scheduled for July. President Zelensky is ready to attend, but expressed hope: ***"Neither the majority of Ukrainians, nor the majority of Europeans, nor the majority of people across NATO will understand the leaders of the Alliance if this summit in Vilnius does not include a well-deserved political invitation for Ukraine to join the Alliance."*** The new declarations with the leaders of Germany, France and Italy do not include a direct offer of membership to Ukraine at the next NATO summit. They only say that all these issues are "eagerly awaited in Vilnius".

Volodymyr Zelensky undertook his European tour not only to obtain new commitments of military aid, but also to manage Western leaders' expectations of a future Ukrainian counter-

offensive. The President of Ukraine visited Italy, the Vatican, Germany, France and the United Kingdom, where he discussed the realistic situation on the battlefield, the resources needed and the potential outcomes.

During this tour, Zelensky also secured the signing of public declarations with France, Germany and Italy reaffirming support for Ukraine's movement towards NATO and the EU. These declarations contain language that leaves a lot of room for interpretation, but confirm the intention to support Ukraine on its path to Euro-Atlantic integration.

The leaders of the UK, Germany, France and Italy publicly declare their readiness to support Ukraine "for as long as it takes", which underscores their long-term commitment to helping Ukraine in its struggle for freedom and territorial integrity.

But the tour did not stop there, and Zelensky also travelled to Spain, Belgium and Portugal. Three new security agreements were signed then. On 27 May, Ukraine and Spain signed an agreement that provides Ukraine with €1 billion in military aid this year and €5 billion over the next three years. This demonstrates Spain's strong support for Ukraine's efforts to defend its territorial integrity and sovereignty.

On 28 May, Ukraine signed a bilateral security cooperation agreement with Belgium. According to the agreement, Belgium will provide Ukraine with at least €977 million in military aid and 30 F-16 fighter jets by 2028. This agreement will significantly strengthen Ukraine's military capabilities, particularly in the field of aviation. On the same day, Ukraine signed a bilateral security agreement with Portugal, which provides for at least EUR 126 million in military support in 2024. The agreement confirms Portugal's participation in the F-16 Coalition, the International Maritime Security Coalition, and the large-calibre ammunition procurement programme.

Thus, the Ukrainian President has become a catalyst for a new unity in Europe, which brings major geopolitical and security changes for the political architecture of the world and the entire world.



Source: Army FM

■ Changes at the front

Trend: *Ukrainian defence forces stopped the Russian offensive in the Kharkiv sector, forcing them to regroup.*

The Defence Forces of Ukraine take all necessary measures to deter the enemy's offensive, deplete its combat potential and stabilise the situation. The Air Force and the missile and artillery forces of the Ukrainian Defence Forces are striking at the concentrations of enemy personnel and equipment.

The enemy did not conduct any active offensive actions in the Chernihiv and Sumy directions. The situation is under control of the Defence Forces.

In the Kharkiv direction, the enemy is regrouping troops.

The situation in the Kupyansk sector is tense. Fighting is taking place in the areas of Stepova Novoselivka, Pishchane and Berestove.

In the Liman direction, Ukrainian defenders are successfully repelling attacks near Druzhelyubivka, Nevske, Terny, Torske and Hryhorivka.

In the Siverskyi sector, the Russian aggressor's attempts to approach our positions in the areas of Spirne, Ivan-Daryivka and Verkhnekamianske were repelled. No losses of positions were incurred.

In the Kramatorsk direction, Ukrainian troops repelled two occupants' attacks in the vicinity of Klishchiyivka and Andriivka.

In the Pokrovsk direction, heavy fighting continues in the areas of Yevhenivka and Novopokrovske. The situation is under control of the Ukrainian Defence Forces.

The situation ***in the Kurakhove direction*** is somewhat tense. Russian troops are constantly trying to break through the Ukrainian defences near Nevelske, Krasnohorivka, Heorhiivka,

Paraskoviivka and Kostiantynivka.

In the Orikhivsk direction, the Russian aggressor is launching unsuccessful attacks near the village of Kopani. Ukrainian positions were not lost.

In the Prydniprovskiy sector, Ukrainian defence forces repelled one attack after another of the Russian invaders north of Krynky.

In other areas, the situation has not changed significantly. In the last week of May, the aggressor country's troops carried out 21,000 shelling and 431 air strikes on Ukrainian territory.

■ *Military assistance*

France has provided Ukraine with new batches of weapons, ammunition, VAB armoured personnel carriers, vehicles and boats.

The Netherlands has joined the initiative of Denmark and Sweden to purchase CV90 infantry fighting vehicles for Ukraine, with the government allocating about €400 million for the project.

USA. The US Department of Defence has revealed the contents of a new \$225 million military aid package for Ukraine.

What does the bill on assistance to Ukraine, passed by the US House of Representatives, provide for and how does it differ from the White House's request of 22 April 2024?

According to the new \$225 million package, Ukraine will receive missiles for HAWK air defence systems, missiles for Stinger systems, ammunition for HIMARS, as well as 155-mm howitzers and a batch of 155-mm and 105-mm artillery shells.

In addition, the United States will provide

- M113 armoured personnel carriers;
- trailers for transporting heavy equipment;
- coastal and river patrol boats;
- guided missiles (TOW);
- Javelin and AT-4 anti-tank systems;
- ammunition for small arms;
- night vision devices;
- spare parts, maintenance and other support equipment.

At the end of May, the Biden administration allowed Ukraine to use US weapons to strike at Russian territory, but only in the region bordering Kharkiv. At the same time, Biden noted that American weapons should not be used by Ukraine to strike 320 kilometres deep into Russia, at Moscow or the Kremlin.

■ *Russia: External and internal challenges*

Trend: Russia has enlisted Beijing's support in forming a global anti-Western diplomatic front

Since the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, **China has increased its supply of precision machine tools to Russia for the Russian military industry tenfold**, according to the British newspaper Financial Times.⁴ It is therefore not surprising that Chinese manufacturers now dominate the trade in critical elements for Moscow's military industry. The sharp increase in the supply of modern machines capable of performing extremely precise metal milling is a cause for justifiable concern among Ukraine's allies. For example, according to Russian customs data, in February 2024, Chinese manufacturers

⁴ Китай у 10 разів збільшив поставки Росії високоточних верстатів для військової промисловості - FT 03.01.2024. <https://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/articles/ce5jnn40ypko>

supplied equipment worth \$68 million, while in February 2022, this figure was \$6.5 million. The share of Chinese computer numerical control (CNC) machines in Russian imports increased from 12% to 57%. In addition, Moscow imports significant volumes of CNC tools made in Taiwan and South Korea.

Michael Raska, associate professor at the Singapore School of International Studies, notes that China and Russia have common political interests in confronting the United States. According to him, Russia is forced to rely on China, as it is cut off from European technology. Trade between China and Russia, including oil, equipment, consumer goods and cars, supports the Russian economy, which has suffered from sanctions. Chinese leader Xi Jinping, in particular, said in October 2023 that annual trade between the two countries had reached a "historic high" of almost \$200 billion. At the same time, Beijing claims that it does not supply Russia with lethal weapons and does not support its military aggression against Ukraine.

However, the FT's analysis of export documents shows that some major Chinese manufacturers have close ties to the People's Liberation Army (PLA). For example, Wuhan Huazhong Numerical Control, which has increased its exports to Russia, was the main contractor in a project to replace foreign CNC systems with domestic ones in China's defence industry and worked with Chinese jet fighter manufacturer Shenyang Aircraft Corporation. HuazhongCNC was under US sanctions from 2008 to 2010 for violating the law banning the transfer of military technology or equipment to Syria, Iran and North Korea. Now, all Chinese companies that continue to trade with Russian importers risk facing US restrictions that could jeopardise their ability to trade in other markets.

As the authors of the article point out, the US has already imposed sanctions on a number of large companies that supply CNC machines to Russia. At the same time, former Deputy Assistant U.S. Trade Representative Emily Kilcrease told the FT that Washington was reluctant to impose financial sanctions on Chinese companies that help Russia because of fears that this would reduce the effectiveness of such measures in the event of a direct crisis in relations with Beijing. At the same time, China gives Russia a great advantage. For example, an analysis by the Bank of Finland's Institute for Developing Countries shows that the average price of a basket of Chinese goods for Russia that can support its military operations increased by 78% from 2021 to 2023. At the same time, the price of Chinese exports of the same goods to other countries increased by only 12%. According to Alexander Gabuev, director of the Carnegie Russia and Eurasia Centre in Berlin, current US sanctions and export controls against Beijing's military contractors on other issues have led many Chinese companies to ignore potential US sanctions risks.

It is not yet clear how Russia uses Chinese CNC devices. But the Beijing-Moscow friendship does not end with the economic dimension. In May, Putin arrived in China for a two-day visit. This was his second visit to Beijing in less than a year and his first trip abroad after being "re-elected" as president of the Russian Federation. In 2023, Xi Jinping also made his first trip abroad to Russia after being re-elected as China's leader. In total, this is the 43rd meeting between the two leaders, which is a record number of contacts for a Chinese leader with any other head of state. For comparison, Xi has met with US presidents 18 times and Indian prime ministers 19 times.

Finance was an important topic of the talks for Russia. In recent months, Chinese banks have begun to refuse to service transactions related to Russia for fear of secondary sanctions from the US and EU. According to the Russian Central Bank, exporters are unable to return tens of billions of dollars to Russia due to payment problems, and a significant portion of these funds are stuck in Chinese banks. In a statement following the first talks, the parties announced that Russia and China had agreed to strengthen cooperation in the banking sector.

But it is safe to assume that the military issue was not left out of the talks: during the war, it was China that supported the Russian defence industry by providing it with raw materials, electronics and components. Xi Jinping and other Chinese officials claim that

China is not a party to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, but in fact, Beijing's assistance allows Russia to continue its aggressive actions.⁵

Following the first day of talks, **Xi and Putin announced their intention to strengthen defence cooperation and declared common positions on the "Ukrainian issue"**. The issue was discussed in Beijing in the context of Xi and Putin's favourite topic - the fight against US dominance and the formation of a multipolar world, the architects of which Beijing and Moscow dream of becoming. If we look at this in more detail, in the statement following the talks, the leaders of China and Russia

- 15 times mentioned the United States and its negative role in the modern world. In particular, in the following characteristic wording: "the parties reaffirm their serious concern over the US attempts to secure a decisive military advantage in violation of the strategic balance."

- opposed "interference in the sovereign affairs of states through the use of multilateral or national justice" and against the violation of "national immunities" (which is especially important for Putin, who is being sought by the International Criminal Court)

- condemned Western initiatives to freeze and seize national assets (extremely relevant for Russia and important for China because of possible aggression against Taiwan)

- condemned the West's sanctions policy;

- emphasised that it is unacceptable to use nuclear weapons (this point was apparently initiated by Beijing, which does not like Moscow's regular attempts at nuclear blackmail);

- condemned the expansion of NATO and the "creation of military footholds near the borders of other nuclear states".

China and Russia also agreed to increase the number and scale of joint military exercises and strengthen cooperation between the defence ministries. And once again, **they opposed Western assistance to Ukraine** ("the need to stop any steps that prolong the fighting and further escalate the conflict"). **Moscow separately supported Beijing's "peace plan", which proposes to freeze the war and torpedoed the peace formula promoted by Ukraine.** The joint strategy of China and Russia in this context is obvious: *to demonstrate to the rest of the world, especially to the countries of the Global South, that it is Ukraine and its partners in the West that are to blame for the ongoing war.*

Unfortunately, the joint efforts of China and Russia in this direction are yielding results: the presidents of two important states of the Global South - Brazil and South Africa - have already refused to participate in the peace summit in Switzerland. In general, we can say that Moscow is pursuing an active policy to dissuade states from participating in the summit. After all, it is now a direct threat to it. If more than 100 countries take part in the summit with a joint declaration, it could be considered the **creation of a global anti-Russian coalition.**

On the second day of his visit, Putin arrived in Harbin, a city founded by Russian subjects in the late nineteenth century. Together with Chinese Vice-President Han Zheng, he visited the Harbin Institute of Technology, a leading centre for research and development of weapons, including missile technology. "The fact that this visit was so openly made is symbolic of Beijing's willingness to provide direct military use technology to support Russia's war against Ukraine," said Markus Garlauskas, a security expert at the Atlantic Council, in a commentary for The New York Times.

The visit is a clear response to the US and EU calls for no military aid to Russia. **Beijing is clearly raising the stakes,** demonstrating its determination to escalate its confrontation with the West. While this does not mean that we will see Chinese weapons in Russian hands tomorrow, Washington and European capitals should look for more effective tools to influence China than just words.

Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin share a vision of a "multipolar" world order in which

⁵ Putin hails Russia's ties with China as 'stabilizing' force in the world.16.05.2024.
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2024/05/15/russia-vladimir-putin-china-xi-meeting/>

countries led by China and Russia can operate under different rules than those set by the United States and other liberal democracies. Maya Nouwens, senior fellow for Chinese security and defence policy at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, notes that Russia and China are focusing on the failures of the West and the United States, even if they are not directly named.

Putin's visit to China after Xi's European visit shows that Beijing has not changed its attitude to bilateral relations with Russia, despite calls from European leaders to end Chinese support for Russia's military economy and defence industry. **Putin and Xi share a common goal of reshaping global power and ending US dominance in world affairs.**

Thus, a new open diplomatic confrontation between the United States and China for world domination is being formed, and the outcome of the Ukrainian-Russian war will play a decisive role in it.