

## US and related powers in cooperation against Russian aggression

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### Abstract

The article examines the multidimensional cooperation between the United States, NATO and key Asia-Pacific countries in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. It highlights the evolving role of non-European NATO partners - Japan, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand - in supporting Ukraine through military aid, economic sanctions against Russia, cyber defense collaboration, and humanitarian assistance. The analysis underscores the strategic motivations behind U.S. engagement with Ukraine, rooted in the promotion of democratic values, containment of Russian aggression, and the preservation of global stability. Additionally, the historical development of U.S.-Ukraine relations, including disarmament agreements and evolving defense cooperation, is discussed to contextualize current policies. The article also reflects America's broader geopolitical goals and the global ramifications of the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

**Keywords:** Ukraine War, U.S. role, International Security, Russian Aggression

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## Introduction

In the Ukrainian war, US is cooperating with European countries from various platforms, not only with European states against Russia. One of the most important roles is played by NATO, as a military alliance that unites 28 European countries, America, and Canada, and also cooperates with Asia-Pacific countries such as South Korea, Japan, New Zealand, and Australia. (Lynch, 2022). The participation of these Asia-Pacific countries in the NATO ministerial began in the 90s, but the degree of involvement has been increasing and since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, their role in cooperation with NATO has increased even more (Lynch, 2022). In 2022, the representatives of the above-mentioned four countries joined the meetings to discuss the issue of Ukraine, and to discuss the joint forces to deal with the reality caused by the war, which creates serious threats on a global scale.

## Cooperation of NATO and the Countries of the Asia Pacific

The cycle of meetings led to the decision that NATO and the countries of the Asia Pacific (South Korea, Japan, New Zealand, Australia) strengthen cooperation in cyber security, adoption development/use of new technologies, combating disinformation, strengthening maritime security, climate change, and sustainability (Lynch, 2022). After this decision, America held a working meeting in Germany, where the main issue was Ukraine's defense issues and inevitable needs. As for the specific actions of the above-mentioned countries of the Asia-Pacific Ocean, in addition to cooperation with NATO, they have developed separate response mechanisms due to the war against Russia in Ukraine. Japan very quickly, along with the US, announced the imposition of sanctions, which included restrictions on export controls on the supply and export of technology to Russia. South Korea and Australia have implemented similar policies. After all, Japan has provided significant

aid to war-torn Ukraine by donating bulletproof vests under circumstances where the transfer of defense equipment to a state at war is restricted and prohibited under the Japanese constitution. To physically deliver bulletproof vests allocated by Japan to Ukraine, America engaged military aircraft to drop the equipment into Ukraine. This fact shows that the US-Japan partnership and this partnership is useful for operational action. The representatives of the United States of America, Japan, and the European Union from the beginning held constant meetings to help Ukraine and respond to its needs. These meetings had a significant meaning and essence, specifically at one such meeting, Japan decided to provide assistance to Ukraine and increase the amount of the loan from 100 to 300 million dollars, provide more equipment and techniques for defense, like masks, specific clothing, surveillance drones and so on, overall, all the details and help is a step forward for Ukraine. As for South Korea, they also contributed no less to the aid of Kyiv, more specifically, they provided \$10 million in humanitarian aid to the population of Ukraine, which also included bulletproof helmets, tents, blankets, medical supplies, and so on (Lynch, 2022). As mentioned, South Korea also imposed sanctions on Russia, to which America reacted. The representative of the United States of America said that America and Korea will respond to Russia's aggression in Ukraine with joint forces through deep cooperation.

South Korea has provided additional assistance to Ukraine by providing a \$30 million aid package, including defibrillators, general-purpose ventilators, first aid supplies, and so on (Lynch, 2022). Subsequently, the representatives of the Ministry of Defense of South Korea held a meeting with the members of the NATO Military Committee to plan how to act in the given situation. It is also worth noting that South Korea, as a result of setting up its policies and strategies, is currently the number first country in Asia that has joined the NATO cyber defense group.

Like Japan and South Korea, Australia also imposed the same type of sanctions on Russia. The

only difference was that compared to Japan and South Korea, Australia provided Ukraine with military technical equipment and first-aid items more promptly and quickly. By April 2022, Australia had already given \$141.9 million in military aid to Ukraine, and a separate \$48.3 million in humanitarian aid (Lynch, 2022). Additionally, Australia provided 70,000 tons of coal to Ukraine for a specific purpose, for example, to help women, children, and the elderly, and their food, shelter, and emergency medical needs. Along with all this, Australia has granted around 6,000 humanitarian visa permits for Ukrainian refugees to enter the country (Lynch, 2022). The three countries united within the framework of AUKUS, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, have repeatedly confirmed their absolute support and assistance to Ukraine. Therefore, the degree of involvement of the Asia-Pacific countries cooperating with America in the Ukrainian war against Russia is very interesting because it plays a big role in the distribution and balancing of forces.

AUKUS is a very real, reliable, and powerful platform to pool the military capabilities of the three countries to maintain peace, stability, and security globally and regionally (Lynch, 2022). Of the Asia Pacific countries partnering with the United States and NATO, New Zealand was the latest to respond to the Ukraine war with sanctions against Russia (Lynch, 2022). But its involvement and functionality have a big role in all of this. In March 2022, New Zealand also joined the package of sanctions against Russia. Also, this was followed by the allocation of military, technical, and medical items for Ukraine within the limits of 11 million US dollars (Lynch, 2022). After all this, the representation of New Zealand provided Ukraine with 13 million dollars (Lynch, 2022).

In these waves of aid, it became clear that the strategy of America and its partner Asian states is not only financial and military support, as they extracted from their oil reserves and supplied it to Ukraine, which meant that they, as members of the International Energy Agency, respond to the challenges of energy

security disruptions caused by war. According to separately available data, Australia supplied Ukraine with 3,300,000 barrels of oil from its reserves, South Korea with 11,650,000 barrels, and Japan with 22,500,000 barrels (Lynch, 2022). New Zealand has highlighted the critical importance of the United States of America and NATO's Asia-Pacific countries in meeting global security challenges.

Accordingly, in addition to the United States of America and European states, it is extremely necessary to involve Asia-Pacific and other Indo-Pacific countries and recognize their role in the Ukrainian war processes. For example, Singapore also imposed sanctions on Russia in response to its invasion of Ukraine, and Singapore provided serious humanitarian aid to Ukraine by donating 2.6 million US dollars through its Red Cross (Lynch, 2022). These states, as global actors, can do a lot to help America by getting involved in various crises and so on.

## **Historical Background of the US-Ukraine Relations**

Relations between the US and Ukraine have their own history and stages of development in the political and economic direction. According to official documents, diplomatic relations between these two states were established after Ukraine began to function independently in the international arena, around 1991. For America, Ukraine is a state of strategic importance and the object of America's democratic goals. America has been well aware for years that it is important for Ukraine to join the European Union and NATO alliance, first of all, for the well-being of Ukraine and global geopolitical security (U.S. Embassy in Ukraine, 2025).

The existing cooperation between America and Ukraine is strengthened by the Charter of Strategic Partnership. This document mentions the current need and necessity for an enhanced partnership between Ukraine and America on various issues such as defense, security, economy, trade, energy topics, security, democracy and cultural challenges (U.S.

Embassy in Ukraine, 2025). The charter also emphasizes that the United States has a responsibility to Ukraine to continue joint and supportive activities between NATO and Ukraine. A special commission has been institutionally created to monitor the implementation of the provisions contained in this strategic partnership act signed between America and Ukraine.

The background of all these relations between the two countries is the fact that America's goal from the very beginning is to have a positive influence on Ukraine, to help strengthen democratic processes and to promote the revival of the country. America helps Ukraine to defend itself from Russia at all difficult stages in history. The United States of America condemns Russia's occupation of Crimea and does not recognize it as separate from Ukraine. One of the important steps in the relations between Ukraine and the United States of America was the granting by the United States of America of the status of a country with a market economy to Ukraine, which was accompanied by the cancellation of the Jackson-Vanik amendment on Ukraine (U.S. Embassy in Ukraine, 2025). This cancellation means that Ukraine, as a normally developed country, has been given the authority to establish trade relations and carry out relevant operations under a permanent regime. They also have investment agreements. America exports specific products to Ukraine, such as coal, machinery/machinery, vehicles, agricultural products, fish/seafood, aircraft, and so on. As for the imports that America carries out from Ukraine, it concerns the following products: iron, steel, inorganic chemicals, petroleum, iron and steel products, aircraft, and agricultural products. Within the framework of all this, there is a US-Ukraine Trade and Investment Council to effectively influence the results of cooperation in this regard, to identify problems, if any, and to solve these problems. Ukraine and the United States of America share common interests and many points of intersection, they are members of the same international organizations, for example, the United

Nations, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, International Monetary Fund, World Bank and World Trade Organization (U.S. Embassy in Ukraine, 2025). At the same time, Ukraine is an observer of the Organization of American States and carries out relevant activities within the framework of observation. While Russia attacked Ukraine in 2022, President Biden sent his representative and embassy delegation to Kyiv with a corresponding message, confirming and expressing his support and solidarity (U.S. Embassy in Ukraine, 2025).

America constantly provides assistance to Ukraine with its biggest challenges, which are related to the security risks of the country and the danger of Russia. Along with all this, Ukraine's ambitions and prospects to have nuclear weapons have always been a challenge between America and Ukraine since the past. However, a number of negotiations were subsequently held, Ukraine repeatedly provided great assistance to NATO with its forces, and the cooperative relations between NATO and Ukraine, especially in terms of security, developed accordingly. The nuclear disarmament of Ukraine and the agreement reached in 1995, specifically the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), laid the foundation and made it very easy for Ukraine to get closer to America and Europe through various platforms, despite the fact that in all these processes there were serious risks of straining the relationship between America and Ukraine (Garnett, 1996). The Lisbon Protocol was also the previous stage of this agreement between America, Ukraine and Russia. America and the West have great influence and need to establish stability in Central and Eastern European countries. In this story, Ukraine is not a simple state, it has a great influence on the entire region, therefore, solving the issue of Ukraine and moving Russia-Ukraine relations to a normalized phase is a necessary geopolitical circumstance (Garnett, 1996).

Ukraine and America have many years of military and security relations, which can be divided

into several stages. According to the development of events, it starts from the 90s, including the period of the annexation of Crimea, until 2014, then until 2022, and from 2022 until today, this cooperation between them continues. During this time, America helped Ukraine a lot with finances and military equipment, and if it wasn't for this help, it would be very difficult for Ukraine to repel Russia's aggressive attacks. After the latest developments, that is, after the start of the war in Ukraine in 2022, America, together with Europe, plays an important role in strengthening Ukraine.

Ukraine is one of the rare cases that actually gave up nuclear weapons and capabilities, the United States of America fought hard to denuclearize Ukraine, thereby eliminating many risks, and the Budapest Agreement is also important in this regard (Strazdas, 2024). But on the other hand, in the relations between America and Ukraine, this issue of nuclear weapons was the main interest of America in its relations with Ukraine. During these periods, Russia and America were closer than America and Ukraine, and America was accountable to Russia. After that, in 1994, Ukraine became a member country of one of NATO's

Partnership for Peace (PfP) projects, which was aimed at ensuring transparency (Strazdas, 2024). After that, an important turning point occurred after the 2001 terrorist attack, when America's number one priority became the mobilization of all European forces to help Iraq and Afghanistan. Here, in favor of America, Russia allowed it to use the nearby territories of Russia for the transfer of military equipment or for other purposes. In fact, here America made a choice that this help from Russia was more important than the declaration of support for Ukraine, since Ukraine had no significant influence in these events. A small change took place on the basis of the revolution in Ukraine in 2004, when it seemed that Ukraine drew America's attention, but America did not have any significant influence in these processes, which would have changed the situation essentially. After that, a significant stage came again this time in 2008, when it was announced at the NATO summit that Ukraine

would become a member of NATO (Strazdas, 2024). Later, Obama conducted the processes in his own way, he wanted to renew the relations with Russia, he did not get the result he wanted, and then he focused on Ukraine. While in the beginning he had a policy that he would not refuse to help Ukraine, but he did not promise that he would do it now at a specific moment (Strazdas, 2024).

The most turning point in the reset of US Ukraine relations was 2014, Russia's attack on Ukraine and annexation of Crimea. Here, the West, America and Europe saw the events in a different way and saw the need to go against Russia (Strazdas, 2024).

In 2016, the United States developed a package, the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative (USAI), to gradually provide assistance to Ukraine, but behind this there is the fact that the United States was interested in what response Russia would give at this time and refrained from aggressive actions in order not to irritate Russia (Strazdas, 2024). Since the 2020s, America has already started strengthening Ukraine's field of vision, increasing funding, and so on. In general, the achievement that is revealed in the relationship between America and Ukraine in the period before the war of 2022 is that the nuclear neutralization of Ukraine took place, and America provides serious assistance to Ukraine's military architecture and defense direction in the fight against Russia (Strazdas, 2024). In the initial stages of Ukraine's difficulties, it was also noted that they did not want to change military rules, techniques, etc., they used a system similar to the Soviet Union, and processes beyond the war with Russia could not develop in Ukraine. Changes and development are necessary prerequisites for joining NATO, Ukraine has largely overcome these difficulties in the modern period and there is a united desire for development.

## **Analysis of American Motives for Ukraine Support**

One of the main interests of the United States of America is the existence of democratic values, a strong legal system, and a sufficiently developed defense in Ukraine, which is the simple reason that Ukraine has the necessary leverage and power against Russia. Because the results of the interaction between Russia and Ukraine will affect the rest of the world. For America, it is crucial to maintain stability on a global scale. Why the presence of a European democratic and developed Ukraine suits America can be seen in the following issues, first of all, the fact that Russia's aggression towards Ukraine means confronting the West simply through Ukraine. The second factor is that how the war in Ukraine ends will have a serious impact on the new world order and the distribution of power. Finally, America as a global actor and hegemon, taking into account its functions and goals, has a responsibility to help the Ukrainian state.

Moscow's victory in Ukraine represents a huge risk for the entire West, America, Europe, and the rest of the world. Moscow gradually stirs and rudely interferes in the issues of Ukrainian statehood, especially if Ukraine gets closer to the West. Russia interferes not only in the internal processes of Ukraine, but also in the internal processes of America and Europe, for example, information is spread about Russia's attempt to indirectly influence the presidential processes in America in 2016 (Åslund, Haring, Taylor, & Herbst, 2021). Moscow has various mechanisms of influence on the outside world, which are manifested in cyber-attacks, propaganda, disinformation, and information warfare. Over the years, Moscow has manipulated its sources and resources in trade, energy, and even uses the Russian Orthodox Church as a lever to further its imperialist intentions. It is a fact that the Russian Federation does not respect

international rules and the sovereignty of states and violates international law. After the annexation of Donbas, there were many attempts for diplomatic negotiations with Russia, for example, the Minsk agreements, the establishment of the Normandy Format, which united Ukraine, Russia, Germany, and France and the Trilateral Contact Group, with the participation of the OSCE chair, Ukraine, and Russia (Åslund, Haring, Taylor, & Herbst, 2021). However, all this did not prevent Russia from asserting that it did not do anything, especially military operations in Donbas, and that what happened was simply the result of a clash between Russia and Ukrainians. It is a fact that the attempts of these negotiations did not make Russia change its mind about the attack on Ukraine in 2022.

## **Conclusion**

The ongoing war in Ukraine has catalyzed a significant expansion of international support mechanisms, particularly involving the United States and its strategic partners in the Asia-Pacific region. The coordinated actions - from sanctions and humanitarian relief to defense and cyber cooperation - demonstrate a shared commitment to upholding international law and resisting authoritarian aggression. The historical trajectory of U.S.-Ukraine relations reveals consistent American interest in promoting Ukraine's sovereignty, democratic development, and alignment with the West. The active involvement of countries like Japan, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand marks a shift toward more globally distributed security cooperation beyond traditional NATO boundaries. Ultimately, the collective response to the Ukraine crisis serves not only to protect Ukrainian statehood but also to safeguard broader principles of global order and deterrence.

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