

Ukraine War: a Peace Proposal

It is time for the Great Powers -- the United States, the European Union, Britain, and China -- to approach Russia and Ukraine with a peace proposal to put an end to the mutual carnage and massive destruction of the cities and infrastructure of Ukraine. The current struggle has become a war of attrition that on one side is destroying a generation of Ukrainian men, displacing millions of Ukrainians from their country, and turning eastern Ukraine into a wasteland. On the other side, it is draining the manpower of the Russian military, crippling the Russian economy, and causing severe economic hardships for the Russian people. It is in the interests of both the Ukrainian and the Russian peoples that this war be ended through an intervention by the Great Powers.

What is needed is a peace proposal from the Great Powers that calls for an immediate ceasefire and for Russia and Ukraine to agree to a peace treaty on the following terms:

- 1) that Ukraine agrees to cede to Russia the mostly Russian-speaking eastern provinces of Luhansk and Donetsk within their antebellum borders, and the major part of the provinces of Zaporizhia and Kherson east of the Dnieper River, and agrees to recognize Russian suzerainty over Crimea;
- 2) that Russia agrees to recognize Ukraine, within its new borders, as an independent non-aligned country;
- 3) that the Great Powers guarantee the independence of Ukraine within its new borders as delineated in the peace treaty;
- 4) that the European Union signatory agrees to accept Ukraine as an associated member of the European Union;
- 5) that the Ukraine will not be allowed to join NATO and is banned from having NATO forces and nuclear weapons stationed on its soil;
- 6) that the United States, Britain, and the European Union agree to provide financial aid for rebuilding Ukraine, for transforming Odesa into a major port facility for the export of Ukrainian grain and oil, and agree to facilitate the return and resettlement of the displaced Ukrainian population; and
- 7) that China agrees to provide financial aid for the re-building of the eastern provinces ceded to Russia, in consultation with Russia.

Without such a peace treaty adhered to by the Great Powers, and signed by Russia and Ukraine, the war of attrition will continue unabated, perhaps for years to come. The cities and infrastructure of eastern Ukraine will be reduced to rubble, and multi-millions more Ukrainians will be forced to flee their country with no prospect of ever returning to a country with a destroyed economy. Ultimately, Ukraine does not have the manpower to continue to fight an endless war of attrition, and Russia, under Putin, will never agree to end the war without some significant gains to save face. In refusing to cede 'an inch of territory', the Ukrainian government is risking the loss of everything. Ultimately, the Ukrainian army will be destroyed through manpower losses, and Russian troops will overrun the entire Ukraine, will strip its resources, and will annex the entire country to Russia. Such a scenario is readily foreseeable if the war is not ended through an intervention by the Great Powers. The ultimate defeat of Ukraine in a long war of attrition, will render the heroic resistance of the Ukrainian army and the suffering of the Ukrainian people of no account, other than as a source of pride in the memory of the Ukrainian diaspora.

Far better for the Great Powers to act to bring an end to the carnage, and for the Ukrainian government to accept the loss of the four Russian-speaking eastern provinces which it has little prospect of re-taking from the entrenched Russian forces. The proposed peace treaty will secure the future for an independent non-aligned Ukrainian nation in which Ukrainians can enjoy peace, prosperity, and a free national life under the protection of the Great Power signatories. In such a situation, Ukrainians can be proud that they secured their independence in fighting fiercely to prevent the Russian behemoth from overrunning their entire country and annexing it to Russia.

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