



Between Now and NATO:

**A Security Strategy
for Ukraine**

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Cover photo: Portrait of Ukrainian female soldier holding a national flag.
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Executive Summary

- Europe's security hinges on Ukraine's stability. **NATO membership for Ukraine is the only long-term security guarantee** and should be the ultimate goal. However, Ukraine cannot wait for NATO; this report provides a comprehensive road map with concrete recommendations for what Ukraine's allies and partners must do in the interim to secure Ukraine, between now and NATO membership.
- The study **identifies specific tools and authorities** that have proven effective in previous security assistance arrangements, which the US Congress and administration can deploy now for Ukraine. These include: the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative, Presidential Drawdown Authority, foreign military sales, foreign military financing, mutual intelligence sharing, joint research and development, memoranda of understanding, reform of International Traffic in Arms Regulations requirements, and professional development programs.
- The study also identifies the existing and potential gaps in current security agreements, including the 28 signed bilateral security agreements (BSAs) and the Ukraine Defense Contact Group (UDCG), also known as the Ramstein Format. These gaps include inconsistent leadership, the informality of structures, and challenges in long-term planning.
- Case studies of Afghanistan, Colombia, Israel, Lebanon, and Taiwan demonstrate that security assistance and cooperation are **"one size fits one"** endeavors. Measures are most impactful when tailored to the specific international and domestic pressures necessitating them.
- Lessons from these case studies emphasize the importance of **clear objectives, partner buy-in and ownership, accountability mechanisms, and prioritizing civilian oversight**. Successful cases overwhelmingly benefited from mutual understanding, strong relationship-building among all parties, consensus on objectives and methods of achieving those objectives, and the recipient partner of assistance having ownership of its future. Failures stemmed from poor communication, weak relationship-building, and mismatched objectives.
- BSAs between Ukraine and its partners will not yield long-term stability and security without dedicated resources, buy-in from partner governments, and consistent management of goals and objectives.
- **A consistent branding and messaging** campaign by Ukraine and its partners is vital to communicate the global significance of ongoing support and the ultimate goals.

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- US support to Ukraine must include targeted funding and clear partnership objectives. Regular cooperation authorizations, appropriations mechanisms, and a **multiyear memorandum of understanding** will provide steady and predictable resources to structure the partnership in the long term.
- The appointment of an empowered **US special envoy or special representative** for Ukraine's security and defense, with buy-in, individual resource control, and a known and well-respected voice, would ensure consistent and necessary leadership.
- **NATO and European Union (EU) support and assistance will remain critical** for Ukraine's long-term security. All available tools must be utilized, including increased assistance, heightened punitive measures against Russia, and clear pathways to NATO and EU membership for Ukraine.
- The current **UDCG, Security Assistance Group-Ukraine, and International Donor Coordination Center constructs may not be sustainable over time** due to donor fatigue, leadership changes, and shifting priorities. The framework for identifying and executing Ukraine's security needs must incorporate additional tools and processes for long-term planning, balancing rapid response with sustainability while avoiding excessive bureaucracy.
- Russia seeks to wear down Ukraine and its partners through military escalation, requiring layers of resilience. **Ukraine's counterefforts fall into two categories: quantifiable needs** (e.g., military equipment, training, financing, and logistics) and **non-quantifiable needs** (e.g., political will, leadership, ideological victories, democratic values, and anti-corruption efforts).
- Despite continuous Russian attacks on its infrastructure, **Ukraine's defense industrial base is growing**. As the Ukrainian Armed Forces' needs evolve, strong partnerships with the Western industrial base will be essential. This includes investments to expand Ukraine's own industrial capacity, ensuring the Western defense industrial base can meet increasing demand, and addressing bureaucratic hurdles such as approvals, licensing, technology sharing, and opportunities for co-development and production.

Introduction

Europe's security hinges on Ukraine's stability. Without a secure Ukraine, Russia's pattern of illegal aggression will continue, putting the United States and its European allies and partners at continued risk. Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Ukrainian and partnered policymakers have prioritized immediate military aid and urgent weapons packages for the battlefield. The focus for Ukraine and its partners has expanded to include the development of bilateral security agreements (BSAs), capability coalitions, and larger NATO and European Union (EU) missions aimed at establishing a long-term security framework for Ukraine.

While the path to Ukraine's NATO membership is still unclear, membership is the only security guarantee that can ensure a safe and sustainable future. Ukraine's partners cannot wait for the current conflict to end to work toward membership. Therefore, the United States, along with its allies and partners, must provide Ukraine with what it needs in the short, medium, and long term.

While that process unfolds, this study offers a comprehensive road map for the US, Ukraine, allies, and partners, with concrete steps to ensure Ukraine's security and full integration into Western structures. It presents a strategy grounded in the analysis of existing mechanisms, lessons from case studies of security partnerships, and current proposals addressing the period leading up to NATO membership.¹ The tenets of a road map are rooted in past and present security assistance and cooperation partnerships. These models provide valuable insights into the holistic development, implementation, and execution of comprehensive support, offering critical lessons to avoid pitfalls, prevent failures, and achieve success. The study examines security assistance and cooperation models from Ukraine (2014–2022), Afghanistan, Colombia, Israel, Lebanon, and Taiwan — each offering insights into the successes and failures of long-term cooperation. These specific case studies were selected for analysis based on several key metrics, including the fact that each represented a long-term security partnership with sustained resources. Several of the countries studied faced existential threats to their sovereignty; some, including Israel and Taiwan, are referenced as potential models for Ukraine. Additionally, some are regarded as successes, while others are considered failures. The study also explores historical and emerging security frameworks for Ukraine, including NATO and EU roles, the Ukraine Compact, bilateral agreements, and the Ukraine Defense Contact Group (UDCG). The key challenge for the US and its allies and partners is to provide support in the short, medium, and long term that will be politically and fiscally sustainable, while also complementing Ukraine's path to NATO membership.



Photo: Admiral Rob Bauer, Chair of the NATO Military Committee and Ukrainian Cadets. Credit: NATO Flickr

Findings from the study highlight that successful security partnerships employ a range of tools, including committed budget appropriations, tailored train-and-equip authorities, robust and comprehensive foreign military sales (FMS), foreign military financing (FMF), mutual intelligence sharing, joint research and development (R&D), and professional development programs. These tools and resources are successfully implemented by allies, partners, and international organizations, including NATO and the EU.

Current security assistance for Ukraine employs a mix of strategies, such as the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative (USAI), a US-specific train and equip authority, Presidential Drawdown Authority (PDA), FMS, and FMF. Ukraine is also finalizing 32 bilateral security agreements (BSAs) to guide long-term cooperation, alongside ongoing support from the UDCG (also known as the Ramstein Format) and expanded NATO and EU missions.

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To meet Ukraine's immediate and long-term security needs, consistent funding and strategic planning are essential. Increased ground presence from partners remains underutilized, and clear, long-term political leadership is needed from the US, allies, and partners. Additional measures could include formalized commitments through memoranda of understanding (MoUs) from the US, NATO, and the EU, as well as industrial base reform frameworks to support current and future conflicts. Reducing bureaucratic hurdles, such as licensing and International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) restrictions, could further enhance production and international cooperation.

The Transatlantic Defense and Security (TDS) program at the Center for European Policy Analysis (CEPA) has completed a yearlong study aimed at crafting a sustainable, long-term strategy for security cooperation and assistance to Ukraine. This strategy is designed to bridge the critical phases from Russia's invasion to Ukraine's recovery, reconstruction, and eventual NATO and EU membership.²

The study was led by Catherine Sendak, the director of CEPA's TDS program, whose extensive experience includes over 15 years of government service, notably as principal deputy for Russia, Ukraine, and Eurasia at the US Department of Defense and as a professional staff member on the House Armed Services Committee, covering Europe and security assistance among other issues. The team included Ilya Timtchenko, a former fellow at Harvard University's Belfer Center for Science and International Studies and former Ukraine-based editor and journalist. Most recently, Timtchenko worked as a program manager and research associate at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

The research team undertook an in-depth analysis through interviews, working groups, and case studies of long-term security cooperation, assistance, and assurances to extract lessons from their successes and failures. This study offers actionable recommendations for policymakers in Washington, DC; Europe; and Kyiv, building upon CEPA's previous report which underscored Ukraine's essential role within the transatlantic community and its importance in preserving the rules-based order.³ It also builds upon another recent CEPA publication which focuses on reconstruction efforts.⁴

The team conducted a comprehensive literature review and engaged with a broad spectrum of experts, including current and former government officials, defense industry representatives, and academics. Their research included virtual and in-person consultations in Washington, DC, as well as field visits to Warsaw, Poland; Wiesbaden, Germany; and Odesa, Ukraine, where they met with key stakeholders, including the US Army Europe, the US Security Assistance Group – Ukraine, the International Donor Coordination Centre, and national security professionals from Ukraine and partner nations.

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CEPA convened three sessions of its Ukraine Security Working Group, featuring experts from the US, Europe, and partners and allies, including current and former government officials and defense industry representatives. Leveraging insights from these sessions, the TDS team developed a strategic framework, which was tested in a strategic scenario exercise designed and facilitated by a professional wargamer. Feedback from this exercise was integrated into the final framework outlined in this report, which provides detailed recommendations on sustaining long-term security cooperation and assistance, as well as critical reforms needed to modernize the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

This report distinguishes between the following key terms:

Security assistance – military-to-military and military-to-civilian technical and financial commitments to a partnering country which are ultimately determined by the donor country in terms of scale and type of assistance. The assistance can be provided by loan, cash sales, lease, credit, or a grant.

Security cooperation – military-to-military technical and financial cooperation between partnering countries with the aim of building structural changes, relationships, and commitments. The cooperation is ultimately determined by all parties involved.

Short term – up to two years

Medium term – two to five years

Long term – over five years

The study is predicated on two key assumptions: 1) no matter the outcome of Russia's invasion, Ukraine will need to provide for its own defense in the long term, and 2) Ukraine will ultimately become a member of NATO.⁵

While this report lays out a comprehensive framework for long-term security assistance and cooperation, it would be incomplete without a thorough understanding of the historical security relationship between the US and Ukraine. Chapter 1 provides that overview and identifies the gaps in preserving Ukraine's security.

A Snapshot of Ukrainian Security

Ukraine’s resilience, fueled by its people’s unwavering thirst for independence and democratic values, has been a formidable bulwark against Russia’s relentless aggression. This resilience is vital not only for Ukraine’s security and defense but also for shaping the future of Europe, the post-Soviet space, and the broader democratic world. To sustain and strengthen this resilience — the capacity to “resist, respond, and to quickly recover from shocks and disruptions”⁶ — future security agreements must be anchored in clear commitments and unwavering support from partners. Establishing a robust and enduring security framework will define peace and stability for Ukraine and beyond.

Ukraine’s path to sovereignty and security has been marked by significant treaties and agreements (see box for details), beginning with the 1990 Declaration of Sovereignty, which pledged the country not to acquire nuclear weapons. After the Soviet Union’s collapse, Ukraine transferred its nuclear arsenal to Russia under agreements like the 1991 Minsk Agreement and the 1992 Lisbon Protocol. The 1994 Budapest Memorandum saw Ukraine give up its nuclear weapons in exchange for security assurances, though this agreement is widely seen as inadequate, especially after Russia’s later aggression. Additionally, Ukraine’s strategic assets, such as the Black Sea Fleet, were significantly diminished in agreements favoring Russia. Efforts to align with Western institutions often clashed with Russian attempts to keep Ukraine within its sphere of influence, culminating in Ukraine’s eventual severance of ties with organizations like the Commonwealth of Independent States and Black Sea Naval Force (BLACKSEAFOR or Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Group). These events underscore Ukraine’s complex struggle for independence, security, and alignment with Western standards amidst persistent Russian pressure.

Following Russia’s 2014 invasion, the Trilateral Contact Group — comprising Ukraine, Russia, and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe — signed the Minsk Protocol (Minsk I) on September 5, 2014, aiming to end the conflict in eastern Ukraine. Mediated by France and Germany under the Normandy Format, Minsk I was a 12-point ceasefire agreement that included prisoner exchanges, humanitarian aid, and heavy weapons withdrawal. However, Minsk I collapsed, leading to Minsk II in February 2015, which sought to reinforce the ceasefire but ultimately failed as Russia denied being a direct party to the conflict.

In response to Russia’s annexation of Crimea and invasion of Donetsk and Luhansk in 2014, the US and its partners increased security assistance to Ukraine, spending approximately \$3 billion from 2014 to 2022 to bolster Ukraine’s defenses and align it with Western standards.⁷

Past Promises

Ukraine Security Agreements 1990-2004

1990

- Declaration of Sovereignty: Ukraine pledged “not to accept, produce, or acquire nuclear weapons.”²⁵⁰

1991

- **Commonwealth of Independent States:** Established in 1991 for regional cooperation following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Ukraine was a founding member but withdrew in 2018 following Russia’s invasion in 2014.²⁵¹
- **Minsk Agreement on Strategic Forces:** CIS members agreed that Russia would control all nuclear weapons, with the weapons in Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus set for dismantlement by 1994.²⁵²

1992

- **Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation:** Founded in 1992 by Ukraine and 10 other countries to foster regional stability and prosperity. The charter entered into force in 1999.²⁵³
- **Lisbon Protocol:** Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan agreed to transfer nuclear weapons to Russia.²⁵⁴

1993

- **Massandra Accords, September 1993:** Ukraine and Russia involved in discussions on security assurances and foreign aid for dismantlement of nuclear weapons, but no final agreement was reached.²⁵⁵
- **Black Sea Fleet Division:** Ukraine and Russia agreed in 1993 to divide the Soviet Black Sea Fleet, with Russia receiving the majority. Ukraine lost most of its fleet after Russia illegally annexed Crimea in 2014.²⁵⁶

1994

- **Trilateral Statement, January 1994:** The Trilateral Statement committed Ukraine to disarmament in exchange for economic support and security assurances from the US and Russia.²⁵⁷
- **Budapest Memorandum:** Signed in December 1994, the US, the UK, and Russia pledged security assurances to Ukraine in exchange for its nuclear disarmament. It was criticized for its lack of enforceable guarantees.²⁵⁸

1998

- **Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation:** Signed in 1998 between Ukraine and Russia; canceled by Ukraine in 2018.²⁵⁹

2001

- **Black Sea Naval Force:** Initiated in 2001 for regional naval cooperation; Ukraine and other members withdrew over time due to conflicts and disagreements.²⁶⁰

2003

- **Agreement on a Common Economic Space:** Signed in 2003 with Kazakhstan, Belarus, and Russia as an alternative to the EU trade framework. It was short-lived, with subsequent Russian attempts to integrate Ukraine into its economic sphere failing.²⁶¹



Photo: Supreme Allied Commander Europe Gen. Christopher Cavoli, Commander Security Assistance Group - Ukraine, Lt. Gen. Curtis Buzzard and NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte. Credit: NATO Flickr

From 2014 to 2022, the US employed a comprehensive, whole-of-government approach to support Ukraine, encompassing humanitarian, judicial, economic, and security sector assistance. For security and defense, the US leveraged a diverse array of tools, including the European Deterrence Initiative (formerly the European Reassurance Initiative), USAI, the Global Security Contingency Fund, FMS, FMF, and International Military Education and Training (IMET) programs.⁸ These training, equipping, and assistance authorities and funding tools provided multifaceted opportunities to address Ukraine’s military gaps and deficiencies, drive critical reforms, and institutionalize and standardize best practices across all levels of government.⁹

From 2014 to 2017, the Obama administration provided nonlethal support to the Ukrainian military, focusing on military training and equipping, including a US military presence at the Joint Multinational Training Group-Ukraine (JMTG-U) in Yavoriv and special operations trainers.¹⁰ Beginning in 2017, the Trump administration — and later the Biden administration — approved the provision of defensive lethal assistance, marking a pivotal change in US-Ukraine security cooperation.¹¹

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The US Secretary of Defense also appointed senior defense and industrial base advisers and a Defense Reform Advisory Board with key partners, including the US, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Lithuania, to guide defense reforms, industrial base challenges, and solutions to reinvigorate a longstanding and dysfunctional defense sector.¹² At the working level, the US and its partners provided advisers embedded in various ministries to offer advice and guidance as Ukraine sought to undertake reforms and address corruption.¹³

From the onset of the conflict in 2014, key partners and allies — including the UK, Poland, Canada, and the Baltic states — played vital roles in spearheading security assistance and cooperation with Ukraine. In addition to the US training mission, these partners led significant efforts in training, educating, and equipping the Ukrainian Armed Forces (UAF). The UK and Canada led extensive training missions, with the UK also focusing on bolstering Ukraine’s naval capabilities.¹⁴ Additionally, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania conducted training missions and provided education opportunities for the UAF.¹⁵ Poland formed a multinational brigade with Lithuania and Ukraine to train the UAF and focused on supporting the Ukrainian defense industry.¹⁶ Notably, Lithuania was the only country to provide lethal assistance to Ukraine prior to the US policy shift in 2017.¹⁷

Since Ukraine’s independence, its engagement with NATO has evolved significantly, especially after Russia’s illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014, which intensified support for Ukraine. The establishment of the NATO-Ukraine Commission in 1997 provided a crucial platform for Ukraine to deepen its relationship with NATO post-2014. NATO expanded its presence and cooperation with Ukraine, integrating the country into alliance exercises, training programs, and setting up the NATO Representation to Ukraine (NRU) for on-the-ground support and guidance.

NATO’s cooperation emphasized aligning Ukraine with NATO standards, countering hybrid warfare, and enhancing resilience. In June 2020, Ukraine was designated a NATO Enhanced Opportunity Partner, further embedding it within NATO structures.¹⁸ Concurrently, the EU concentrated on political reforms and economic growth, supporting Ukraine’s civilian security sector through the EU Advisory Mission in Ukraine. In December 2021, the EU amplified its support by expanding the European Peace Facility to finance military assistance, underscoring its commitment to Ukraine’s security and stability.¹⁹

These efforts yielded varying degrees of success. In the wake of Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, many observers point to the “Westernization” of the UAF — such as the development of a robust noncommissioned officer (NCO) corps, the enhancement of special operations forces, and critical institutional reforms including civilian oversight — as a key factor in the UAF’s resilience and counteroffensive against the Russian advance.²⁰

However, other reform initiatives aimed at institutionalizing budgeting, acquisition, and procurement practices, combating corruption, and building strategic planning and capacity yielded mixed results.²¹ Persistent challenges, including cultural and institutional resistance, hampered progress. Coordination among Ukraine's partners was inconsistent, leading to fragmented efforts and goals.²²

The provision of US defensive lethal assistance, which began in 2017, was often incremental and fell short of addressing the urgent needs faced in February 2022. Insights from case studies, including those of Ukraine before 2022, offer valuable lessons on ensuring long-term success in international partnerships.

Current security cooperation, assistance, and assurances

Modern Ukraine's security policy has featured the following declarations, agreements, and partnerships:

Bilateral security agreements

Ukraine has pursued BSAs designed to enhance security, stability, and alignment with NATO standards. However, the effectiveness of these agreements and their integration into the broader network of multinational security frameworks remains to be seen.

So far, 32 countries are pursuing long-term BSAs with Ukraine. All of the agreements have the following in common: the partner agrees to provide: 1) consultations within 24 hours in case of a Russian attack, 2) security assistance, 3) economic assistance, 4) military capacity building, and 5) a 10-year commitment.²³

The BSAs will only be as effective as the political support within each country that signs them. Without robust political support, these agreements will lack the necessary resources to provide support, ensure security assurances, and grow the partnership with Ukraine. The level of commitment from NATO and EU members to Ukraine's security will largely depend on whether the allies and members see the conflict as a regional skirmish or an existential threat.²⁴

The success of these BSAs will also depend on how well Ukraine implements reforms, especially within its defense and intelligence bodies, to strengthen trust with partners.

Regional security agreements that, while not directly targeting NATO membership, still involve NATO members could further enhance BSAs. For example, the Visegrad Group — comprising the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia — provides an enhanced cooperation framework within Central Europe.²⁵ The Baltic states have also enhanced military cooperation among themselves and have forged separate

defense cooperation agreements with the US, Denmark, and Sweden.²⁶ The Ukraine-Nordic Summit, which includes Sweden, Denmark, and Norway, is another avenue for developing regional defense and security relations.²⁷ These security agreements not only reassure nations of resource support beyond EU and NATO frameworks but also consolidate efforts and foster a competitive environment where countries can learn from one another.²⁸

At the July 2024 NATO Summit in Washington, DC, Ukraine and 23 BSA partners, in addition to the EU, signed the Ukraine Compact, underscoring their unified support and assistance over the long term.²⁹

Long-term considerations and the nuances of bilateral partnerships

There are three underlying aspects of BSAs: 1) their responsive nature, 2) their role as temporary defense solutions until Ukraine secures NATO membership, and 3) their aim to create frameworks that make the UAF self-sufficient within the next five to 10 years. Additionally, BSAs enhance cooperation in logistics, sensitive technology, and intelligence exchange among countries and can secure ongoing military assistance annually, including ammunition, maintenance and replacement systems, and air defense.³⁰

BSAs serve as a bridge to NATO but are not a substitute for full membership. They play a vital role in sustaining the UAF's capabilities during the war. As Ukraine's ultimate goal is NATO membership, it is essential to consider the alliance's role in coordinating BSAs, leveraging its extensive resources, capacity, and institutional knowledge.³¹

Joint declaration of support for Ukraine

On July 12, 2023, during the NATO Summit in Vilnius, G-7 leaders, along with the presidents of the European Council and the European Commission, issued a Joint Declaration of Support for Ukraine. This declaration, endorsed by 25 additional countries, affirmed the Russian aggression against Ukraine as a direct threat to international peace and security, and pledged sustained support for Ukraine.³² The statement established a foundation for BSAs and outlined a collaborative framework for each signatory to commit to specific, long-term security obligations and agreements.

The signatories of the initiative came in five waves. The first wave was the initiative's founders — Germany, France, Canada, Italy, the UK, the US, and Japan. The second wave consisted of Scandinavian countries — Finland, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. The third wave consisted of the Baltics — Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia. The fourth wave included Greece, North Macedonia, Bulgaria, Kosovo, and Montenegro.

In the fifth wave, Belgium, Czechia, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Cyprus, and Slovenia supported the declaration, and Ukraine's partners are continuing to finalize agreements.

Black Sea

Black Sea Grain Initiative and its alternative

In July 2022, Ukraine, Turkey, the United Nations, and Russia agreed on the Black Sea Grain Initiative to provide limited safety for grain exports via Black Sea ports.³³ The Kremlin withdrew from the initiative in July 2023 and suspended the deal.³⁴

Ukraine launched an alternative Black Sea corridor in August 2023 that did not depend on Russia's participation. Instead, it has the military backing of and coordination with Western partners, allowing the country to export grain and other goods at levels closer to the pre-February 2022 period.³⁵ However, there are still risks of Russian attacks.³⁶

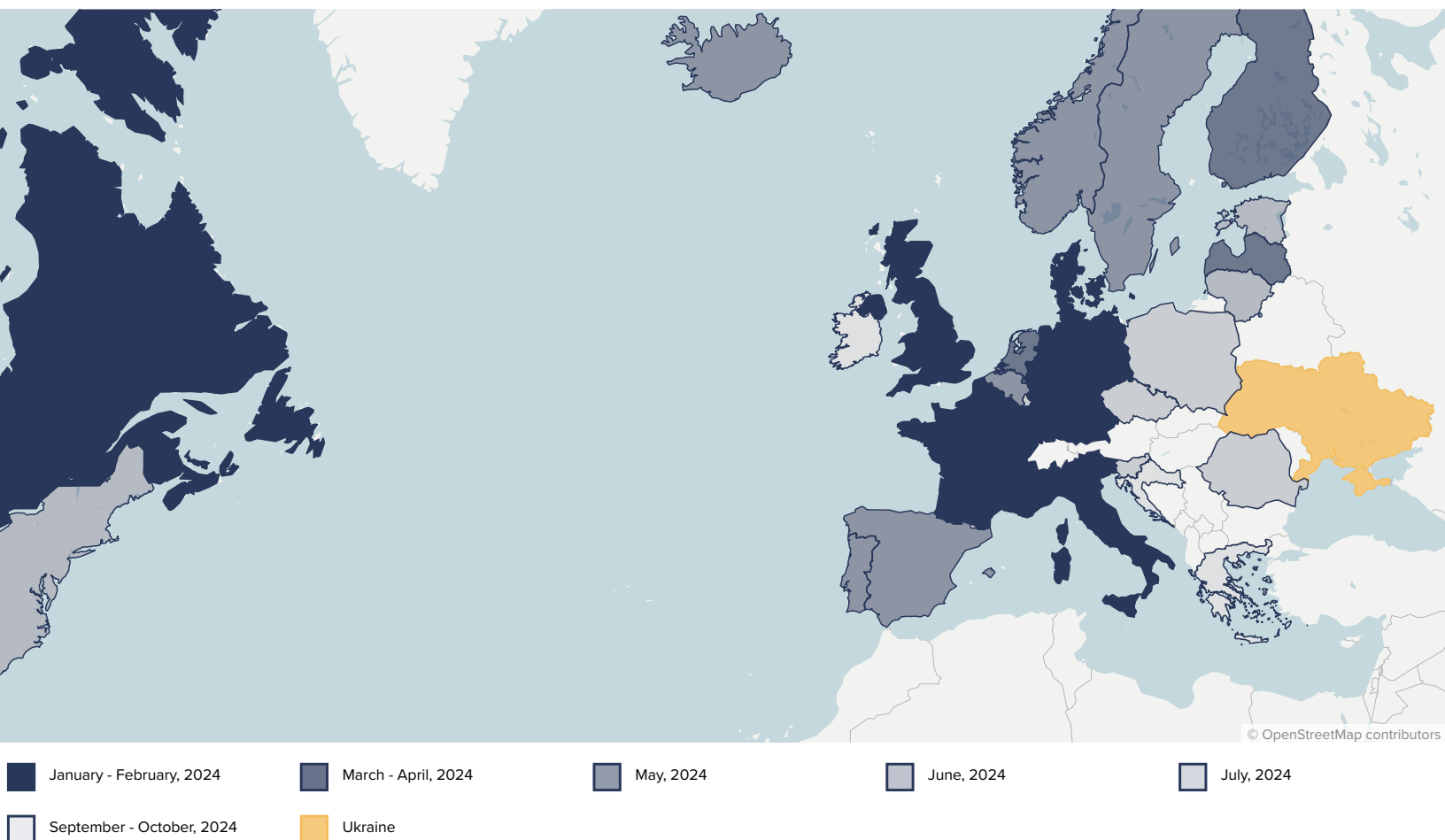
GUAM (GUUAM)

The Organization for Democracy and Economic Development is an economic, political, and security regional organization of four member states — Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova (GUAM). The forum was briefly GUUAM (1999–2001) when Uzbekistan entered and then left the group.³⁷ The organization founded its advisory forum in October 1997 during the Second Council of Europe Summit in Strasbourg, and its charter was signed during the GUAM Kyiv Summit in May 2006 and ratified in June 2008. GUAM's objectives are to strengthen:³⁸

- European integration
- Democratic values, rule of law, human rights, and sustainable development
- Economic and humanitarian cooperation
- International and regional security and stability

GUAM has been largely inactive since 2008 due to inconsistent foreign policy strategies among its members.³⁹ However, the forum never officially dissolved and, at times, acted as a useful platform among the four countries to counter the Kremlin's influence. GUAM might see a revival, as the foreign ministers of the four states met on the sidelines of the 2022 United Nations General Assembly to discuss how to strengthen GUAM's security dimension.⁴⁰ Turkey has also demonstrated an interest in joining GUAM.⁴¹

Map of Bilateral Security Agreements with Ukraine



Not pictured: Japan, June 2024. Map: Center for European Policy Analysis

NATO

At its 2024 summit in Washington, DC, NATO agreed to establish the NATO Security Assistance and Training for Ukraine (NSATU) initiative to coordinate military equipment and training provisions and appointed a senior representative to lead the NRU in Kyiv.⁴² Members also agreed to the NATO Industrial Capacity Expansion Pledge to strengthen the defense industry across the alliance. In addition to the NSATU, the alliance formalized the NATO-Ukraine Joint Analysis, Training, and Education Centre (JATEC).⁴³ The NSATU will coordinate the military assistance the alliance and its partners donate to Ukraine.⁴⁴ Based in Poland, the JATEC will serve as an analysis hub for lessons learned from the war, focusing on Russian tactics, techniques, and procedures,⁴⁵ and enhancing the UAF's interoperability with the alliance.⁴⁶

Ukraine applied for NATO membership in September 2022, but the alliance has not yet initiated an invitation.⁴⁷ During its 2023 Vilnius Summit, the alliance agreed to a three-element package to expedite Ukraine's membership.⁴⁸ The package entails assistance that will catalyze Ukraine's transition from a Soviet-inherited structure to

one that fully meets NATO standards and enables Ukraine to meet its operational needs. In addition, NATO and Ukraine established the NATO-Ukraine Council (NUC) — a forum for crisis consultations and decision-making where all members meet as equals. The alliance also agreed to remove the requirement for a Membership Action Plan and to issue an invitation to join the alliance “when allies agree, and conditions are met.”⁴⁹

In June 2023, the European Parliament called on NATO allies to “honor their commitment to Ukraine and pave the way for Kyiv to be invited to join the defense alliance.”⁵⁰ The resolution had a firm 425 votes in favor.

Chronology: Cooperation with NATO (1991–2021)

- 1991:
 - Ukraine and the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) enter into discussions.⁵¹
 - Ukraine engages NATO’s Science for Peace and Security Programme.⁵²
- 1992: Ukraine becomes a member of NACC.
- 1994: Ukraine and the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program initiate dialogue.⁵³
- 1995: NATO and Ukraine start cooperation in Balkan operations in the framework of the Implementation Force (IFOR). Ukraine’s 240th peacekeeping battalion, UKRBAT, supported IFOR.⁵⁴
- 1996: UKRBAT continues participating in the Stabilization Force, the successor to IFOR.⁵⁵
- 1997:
 - Ukraine and NATO sign the 1997 Charter on a Distinctive Partnership, which established the NATO-Ukraine Commission, the main body responsible for Ukraine-NATO relations (replaced by the NATO-Ukraine Council in 2023).⁵⁶
 - Ukraine is one of the founding members of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, which replaces the NACC.⁵⁷
- 1998: The NATO-Ukraine Commission establishes the NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group on Defense Reform (JWGDR).⁵⁸
- 1999:
 - UKRBAT withdraws from Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Ukraine begins participating in Kosovo Force.
 - NATO’s Liaison Office is established in Kyiv and plays a key role in facilitating NATO-Ukraine cooperation.

- 2000: The PfP Status of Forces Agreement enters into force as part of the NATO-Ukraine legal framework for operational cooperation.⁵⁹
- 2003–2014: Ukraine supports⁶⁰ the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan.⁶¹
- 2004: NATO and Ukraine ratify the Host Nation Support agreement and launch the NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group on Defence Technical Cooperation.
- 2005: JWGDR launches a Professional Development Program for civilians working within the defense and security sector.⁶²
- 2005–2011: Ukraine contributes officers to the NATO Training Mission in Iraq.⁶³
- 2006: NATO and Ukraine ratify the strategic airlift agreement.
- 2007–2010: Ukraine deploys ships in support of Operation Active Endeavour.⁶⁴
- 2008: NATO announces at the Bucharest Summit that Ukraine will become a NATO member and that Ukraine’s next step is a Membership Action Plan.
- 2009: Ukraine and NATO sign the Declaration to Complement the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership.⁶⁵ NATO introduces the Annual National Program as Ukraine’s main instrument to advance its Euro-Atlantic integration and related reforms.⁶⁶
- 2013: Ukraine contributes to the NATO counter-piracy operation Ocean Shield.⁶⁷
- 2010–2014: Ukraine pursues a nonalignment policy, which eventually is terminated due to Russia’s 2014 invasion.
- 2015: Ukraine hosts a NATO-Ukraine civil emergency joint exercise, “Ukraine 2015,” in Yavoriv. NATO’s Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre and the State Emergency Service of Ukraine organized and ran the exercise.⁶⁸
- 2018: Ukraine hosts the Clear Sky aviation exercise with the US Air Force.⁶⁹
- 2019: The US and Ukraine co-host the 19th iteration of NATO’s Sea Breeze exercise.⁷⁰
- 2021: Ukraine hosts Rapid Trident 21, the last one to be held in Ukraine before the exercises move to Moldova.⁷¹

The Ukraine Defense Contact Group/capability coalitions

Formed in 2022, the US-led UDCG comprises 50-plus countries and the EU, coordinating military equipment deliveries. As of September 2024, there have at least 24 meetings.⁷²

Pros:

- Plays a strong symbolic role in showing international unity
- Acts as a springboard for ideas and a catalyst for military support
- Provides accountability, coordination, and continuity

Cons:

- Long-term sustainability is at risk⁷³
- Adds another layer of bureaucracy
- Outsized role of US leadership is vulnerable to partisan domestic politics⁷⁴

Regional commitments within the UDCG

The UDCG is divided into subgroups called “capability coalitions” that specialize in particular military dimensions:⁷⁵

- Air Force capability coalition co-led by the US, Denmark, and the Netherlands
- Armor (Poland and Italy)
- Artillery (US and France)
- Demining (Iceland and Lithuania)
- Information technology (Estonia and Luxembourg)
- Integrated air and missile defense (France and Germany)
- Maritime security (UK and Norway)
- Drone (UK and Latvia)

Capability coalitions show promise, as they assign specific responsibilities to individual countries while emphasizing collective duties — an approach Russia lacks. However, these coalitions do not address all needs, such as sustainment and maintenance, logistics, and the physical and mental health of soldiers and veterans.

Additionally, platforms such as UDCG encourage coordinated and unified efforts. For example, under the leadership of French President Emmanuel Macron, NATO members are weighing efforts to send military instructors to Ukraine.⁷⁶ However, as late as May 2024, the study discovered that NATO did not assign a representative to the US Security Assistance Group – Ukraine (SAG-U) or the International Donor Coordination Centre (IDCC) in Wiesbaden and that NATO representation at the UDCG and capability coalition convenings was “spotty.”⁷⁷ Further integration of all efforts is needed.



Photo: The Lithuanian Army has been training members of the Ukrainian Armed Forces in the fundamentals of squad leadership. Credit: NATO Flickr.

Gaps, shortfalls, and opportunities

Dynamics — what Ukraine has learned and gained in capabilities between 2014 and 2022

From 2014 to 2022, the Ukrainian military undertook significant reforms, including creating an NCO corps, enhanced civilian oversight, and revamped command structures, aligned with NATO standards. These reforms introduced innovative NATO approaches while navigating the constraints of a Soviet legacy. Ukraine also confronted its challenges head-on, recognizing gaps in capacity building, military equipment modernization, self-sustainable production, and tackling pervasive corruption.

Military and security sector modernization needs for Ukraine

Ukraine, a heavily industrialized nation with a Soviet-era arms production legacy, has continued to produce and export arms since gaining independence, though with a history of opacity and corruption. With its highly educated workforce, the country is well-positioned to revitalize its defense industrial base (DIB).⁷⁸ Despite ongoing Russian attacks on Ukraine's infrastructure, its DIB is expanding. According to Ukrainian Defense Minister Rustem Umerov, Ukraine has developed a strategy for domestic defense production to offset military equipment shortages. However, robust partnerships with allies will be crucial to meeting demand as the needs of the UAF grow.

The strong and expanding partnership between German arms manufacturer Rheinmetall and the Ukrainian Defense Industry (UDI) (formerly Ukroboronprom; UOP) proves that such effective collaborations are possible, even on Ukrainian territory. Turkish drone-maker Baykar is also building manufacturing plants in Ukraine.⁷⁹ The Ukrainian government planned to fund \$1.3 billion in military R&D in 2024.⁸⁰ The government also planned to spend around \$6 billion on domestically produced weapons in 2024. It spent an estimated \$10 billion on procurement in 2023.⁸¹

As allies modernize their armed forces, they will have to cooperate with the UAF to maintain interoperability and operational effectiveness.

Ukraine has inherited a challenging security framework that has often put it at a disadvantage, particularly as the country urgently seeks to scale its military modernization.⁸² Against this backdrop, the next chapter delves into security assistance and cooperation case studies, extracting key lessons to inform long-term partnerships with concrete, actionable commitments.

Learning from the Past to Secure the Future

Case study methodology

The most relevant examples of security assistance and cooperation for this study are Afghanistan, Colombia, Israel, Lebanon, and Taiwan.

- Each, **in its success or failure**, provides lessons for US and Ukrainian policymakers to inform a robust long-term security assistance and cooperation framework with Ukraine.
- These case studies lasted for **decades, with sustained investments and resources**, and varied political leadership on all sides supporting implementation.
- Several of our case studies — Colombia, Israel, and Taiwan — face(d) **existential threats to their sovereignty**, much like Ukraine.
- Many of these case studies, especially Afghanistan, Israel, and Taiwan, are frequently compared to Ukraine. Analysts and experts often consider Taiwan and Israel to be **potential “models”** for a long-term security arrangement, making their comparison apt for analysis.

The research team analyzed other countries, including Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the Republic of Korea. However, it omitted these examples from the final study, primarily due to several factors, including a large ongoing US troop presence, fluid partner political dynamics, and regional perspectives not conducive to applicability to the Ukraine partnership.⁸³ **The most critical takeaway is that “one size fits one.”**⁸⁴ Security assistance, cooperation, and assurance measures achieve their greatest impact when partners tailor them to address the specific international and domestic pressures that drive their need.

Afghanistan

The US- and NATO-led capacity-building mission conducted in Afghanistan was among the largest ever undertaken. Since the US withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021, Ukraine has become the largest recipient of US security assistance and cooperation.

Attempts to build and institutionalize the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces (ANDSF) were characterized by an effort to have the ANDSF adhere to “Western” standards and practices, not considering the willingness and buy-in from the partner nation.

During the later stages of the partnership, the US and its allies found it increasingly difficult to connect Afghanistan's security with the security of their populations, resulting in the mission becoming a lower priority for US political leadership.

Section I - Background

In response to the September 11, 2001, attacks by al-Qaeda, the US led a coalition to launch Operation Enduring Freedom on October 7, 2001 — an invasion of Afghanistan designed to oust the Taliban, eliminate the al-Qaeda threat, and embark on a sweeping state-building mission.⁸⁵ In December 2001, United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1386 established the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to secure Kabul. By August 2003, UNSC Resolution 1510 transferred command of ISAF to NATO, broadening its mandate to cover all of Afghanistan. ISAF collaborated with the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan on a security sector reform program, aiming to integrate decentralized tribal militias (loyal to their commanders) into a unified Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police under Hamid Karzai's interim administration.⁸⁶ Despite these efforts, the resurgence of the Taliban and ongoing coalition tensions continued to challenge the support and assistance missions.

The Obama administration released an Afghanistan strategy in 2009 embracing a counterinsurgency approach on three timelines: first, a troop surge through 2011 (which peaked at 100,000 US troops), then a scale-down and focus on training to transfer security responsibility by 2014, and finally a smaller US footprint (no bigger than 5,000) for normalized security cooperation by 2016. This strategy had mixed results. By June 2013, the US and NATO transferred security responsibilities to the ANDSF. In December 2014, ISAF was replaced by the NATO Resolute Support Mission to facilitate training and equipping the ANDSF; the US also signed a formal BSA with the Afghan government, further establishing security cooperation and assistance. However, by 2017, the war was at a stalemate; 9,000 US troops (and as many contractors) remained in Afghanistan.⁸⁷ The Taliban and Afghanistan's National Unity Government signed a loose peace agreement in February 2020, but negotiations on a ceasefire and political reorganization were unfinished.⁸⁸ US forces, nonetheless, scaled back to 2,500 troops in mid-January 2021. Approximately a month before the planned full withdrawal of US troops, the Taliban suddenly overran Kabul in August 2021. The ANDSF collapsed, and the Taliban captured up to an estimated \$7.12 billion in US-transferred equipment.

Section II – Successes and Failures

Security assistance, cooperation, and authorities

In 2005, the US Congress authorized the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund (ASFF) to support the ANDSF. ASFF funding was delivered to the Combined Security Transition Command–Afghanistan — the US component of the multinational NATO Training Mission–Afghanistan — to train, equip, and deliver supplies, and pay the salaries of the ANA and ANP. Overall, Congress obligated a total of \$88.8 billion under the ASFF over FY 2002–FY 2021.⁸⁹ ASFF enabled a rapid and tailored expansion of the ANDSF that would not have been possible with other tools.⁹⁰ ASFF was a unique authority allowing the Department of Defense (DoD) to flexibly reprogram funds to assist and directly equip Afghanistan.⁹¹ With fewer oversight requirements for the benefit of rapid expansion of platforms than the standard FMS process, the authority provided equipment ranging from armored vehicles to helicopters to unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and munitions.⁹²

There are numerous lessons for Ukraine and its partners from the 20+ years of security assistance and cooperation work in Afghanistan.⁹³ Lessons learned include:

- *Relationship building.* Turnover rates for international coalition partners were high, resulting in a lack of consistent contact and relationship building with Afghan partners.⁹⁴
- *Patchwork of authorities and resources.* In addition to ASFF, the mission was executed with a patchwork of legislative authorities, resources, and overseers, leading to inconsistent results and cases of waste, fraud, and abuse.⁹⁵
- *Partner commitment.* The Afghan government contributed a small percentage of total security expenditure (approximately 4.2% of its total military costs over 20 years).⁹⁶
- *Time investment.* The US and its partners failed to appreciate the generational transformation required to make institutional changes at every level of governance, security, and stability.⁹⁷
- *Ripple effects.* Perhaps an unanticipated but nonetheless critical issue was the anxiety within Pakistan that coalition efforts would move Kabul closer to India and disrupt a regional balance of power. As such, Pakistan hosted the Taliban and actively frustrated US and NATO efforts.⁹⁸



Photo: Ukrainian troops train in Poland to master Allied Leopard 2 tanks. Credit: NATO Flickr

Section III - Applications for Ukraine

Afghanistan stands as NATO's most ambitious mission outside its traditional area of operations and marks the only instance in the alliance's history where Article 5 — the collective defense clause — was invoked, supporting US efforts to prevent further terrorist attacks. By 2011, 40,000 of 130,000 troops in country were non-US NATO allies and partners.⁹⁹ Some have criticized allied involvement in nation building, arguing that “mission creep” from a counterterrorism mission to holding Afghan territory was beyond NATO's strategic interest.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, creating the ANDSF in the style of a Western military, departing from Afghanistan's decentralized military tradition, may have undermined ANA's capacity to succeed.¹⁰¹ **Building an army with zero likeness to Afghan society was a strategic error** that likely contributed to its collapse.¹⁰²

As the war continued, with varying levels of success and support, the interest of the American people began to wane, leading to **ebbs of presidential leadership and will**, and the messaging from either US or Afghan leadership on the importance of the mission ceased to be effective. Like in Afghanistan, US security assistance and

cooperation in Ukraine is failing to strike a domestic political chord.¹⁰³ With a lack of domestic support, future administrations may find it challenging to provide the support necessary for Ukraine, leaving the job to Congress. However, “you can try to run policy out of Congress, but it will fail without presidential leadership.”¹⁰⁴

In addition, security assistance and cooperation **highlighted the need for an individual set of authorities and resources** to address individual security needs and dynamics. Institutionalized support, resources, strategy, and an individual legislative authority for Ukraine are critical.

Colombia

- Colombia, like Ukraine, led the transformation of its own security contributing 90% of funding to fight its own fight, and taking full advantage of an advanced partnership with the US to secure and stabilize territory and make institutional changes to its governance.
- Bogotá maintains a consistent and effective messaging campaign, clearly communicating the importance of the security of Colombia to the US, thereby maintaining political will and resources.

Section I – Background

The Colombian conflict, rooted in a complex interplay of political, social, and economic factors, provided the backdrop for US involvement. Beginning in 1999, Plan Colombia aimed to address not only drug trafficking but also the underlying issues fueling the conflict, including poverty, inequality, and weak state institutions. This support helped stabilize the power of the central government and significantly improved security and military forces. Over 25 years, Plan Colombia focused on supporting Bogotá against insurgent groups such as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, commonly known by its Spanish acronym FARC, while Peace Colombia focused on post-conflict resolution and “winning the peace.”¹⁰⁵ From 1999 to 2016, the US trained approximately 97,000 Colombian soldiers, the third highest among countries receiving US security assistance and cooperation in that period.¹⁰⁶ In addition, Bogotá was the third-highest recipient of US military aid during the same period, only behind US missions in Iraq and Afghanistan.¹⁰⁷ US funding was, on average, \$540 million per year between 2000 and 2008.¹⁰⁸

Plan Colombia was rooted in developing and strengthening institutional transformation and defense management, including capability-based force planning, budget planning, and human resource management. The core of the approach consisted of advising, training, educating, and improving technology. Mission focus areas were clearly defined at inception, focusing on intelligence and aviation capabilities, addressing key Colombian military needs, and transforming their approach to the conflict. Multiple US departments, including the DoD and the

State Department, heavily contributed to equipping the military and police, including but not limited to air assets, patrol boats, and intelligence equipment.¹⁰⁹

The US-Colombia partnership continues working on post-conflict issues, including addressing increased drug production and peace plan implementation. This includes training, exercising, advising, reforms, and rule of law with an FY 2024 budget request for \$444 million in assistance.¹¹⁰

Section II – Successes and Failures

Successes in the US-Colombia partnership include improvements in security forces, stabilization of the central government, and, for a time, a reduction in coca cultivation. Fostering an inclusive governance framework was essential for many of Plan Colombia's successes, including civilian oversight, strategic planning and budgeting, and transparency. However, challenges persist, such as allegations of human rights violations and limited impact on counternarcotics objectives, exemplified by recent increases in coca production.

The US tailored a multiagency, holistic approach to Bogotá's needs.¹¹¹ This tailored approach, atypical for other US security assistance cooperation studies, sought to tackle not only security challenges, but investment in diplomatic, economic, and humanitarian priorities. For example, in parallel to the goal of professionalizing the military, overseen by the DoD, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) invested in developing alternative crops in the country. Two significant lessons learned include:

- *Colombia as an exporter of security* - Bogotá has evolved into a security exporter, leveraging its experience to contribute to stability beyond its borders, including in its Central American neighbors and as a part of the NATO Global Partner program. Its transformation into an exporter of security was both a way to connect with other countries, giving them expertise regarding counternarcotics, and a way of maintaining military readiness and capabilities.¹¹² There is a shared vision that Ukraine will similarly transition into a security exporter, being the most battle-ready and with one of the largest standing militaries in Europe.
- *Strategic patience, trust building, and long-term presence* - Plan Colombia is widely considered an effective and successful example of security assistance and cooperation, with a consistent strategy, funding, and committed US leadership and will.¹¹³ The strategy developed between the US and Colombia included robust institutional capacity building (ICB), emphasizing institutional norms, budgeting practices, and robust human resources. In addition, Bogotá owned this strategy, contributing the majority of the finances. The US funded only 10% of military expenditure.¹¹⁴ In addition, maintaining a clear and consistent narrative tied directly to US security played a vital



Photo: SNMG2 and SNMCMG2 sailing in the Black Sea as part of NATO routine presence. Credit: NATO photo by GBRN LPhoto Paul Hall.

role in preserving US interest and leadership. The partnership continues with tackling increased coca production, implementing the peace plan, and addressing cartel and paramilitary threats.

Section III - Applications for Ukraine

Colombia offers valuable insights for Ukraine. Like Colombia, Ukraine faces an existential threat, necessitating international support. Plan Colombia and now Peace Colombia's successes revolved around its **holistic approach**, as the US crafted a strategy that included military, law enforcement, justice, and economic and social development.¹¹⁵

Lessons highlight the importance of **clear objectives, partner buy-in and ownership of outcomes, accountability mechanisms, and the prioritization of civilian oversight**. Investments in sustained training, institution building, and capacity development are essential for sustainable security solutions. The US must ensure that the transformations and reforms implemented in Ukraine are consistent and cohesive to ensure institutionalization and sustainability.¹¹⁶

Colombia also highlights the need for **comprehensive messaging and branding of the partnership**, as it consistently connects the challenges with US drug consumption with its sources. In addition, effective messaging on reforms and anti-corruption measures is an important element for US public and congressional support. The Ukrainian government can apply this lesson to its fight against corruption to garner bipartisan support.¹¹⁷ Effective branding of the importance of Ukraine's success against Russia, as well as guarantees that Ukraine will use US resources with integrity, underscore the country's commitment to transparency and accountability, enhancing credibility.

Israel

- Israel's decades-long partnership with the US makes it the largest cumulative recipient of US foreign aid (approximately \$310 billion).¹¹⁸
- Ukraine and Israel are both confronting existential threats, though Ukraine is in an active conflict with an adversary, and the focus in Israel is on deterrence and preparation for conflict.
- The US-Israel partnership is anchored in the principles of maintaining Israel's qualitative military edge (QME) and a series of 10-year MoUs designed to enhance Israel's technological superiority in ways that align with its unique strengths and needs. Elements of this model can address Ukraine's long-term security needs, providing a strategic blueprint beyond the immediate demands of the current conflict.

Section I – Background

Supporting Israel has been a cornerstone of US foreign policy since 1948.¹¹⁹ Initially, the US focused its support on diplomatically fostering regional stability, but this changed in 1968 amidst escalating Cold War tensions with the Soviet Union and the aftermath of the Six-Day War, prompting the Johnson administration to supply F-4 Phantoms to counter Soviet support of Egypt, Syria, and Jordan.¹²⁰ The 2008 Naval Vessel Transfer Act, also known as the "QME Law," amended the 1968 Arms Export Control Act and formally established US-Israeli QME, which codified the longstanding policy of leveraging Israel's security to counterbalance US competitors in the Middle East.¹²¹ This policy provides Israel with access to advanced defense technologies and restricts the supply of similar capabilities to other Middle Eastern states, preserving Israel's military advantage by enabling access to superior equipment and training.¹²² The cornerstone of the US-Israel security assistance and cooperation framework is the bilateral MoU, renewed every decade since 1999. The latest MoU, signed in 2016, pledges \$38 billion in assistance¹²³ and emphasizes critical areas such as intelligence sharing,¹²⁴ platform development, capability co-creation, and aligned security objectives.¹²⁵ In addition to the MoU, the Joint Declaration on the US-Israel Strategic Partnership reaffirms shared values and mutual interests.¹²⁶

Section II – Successes and Failures

Israel is the leading global recipient of US security assistance under the FMF program.¹²⁷ Since 1948, the US has provided \$310 billion in bilateral assistance, including intelligence sharing, co-development, and missile defense funding to address complex security threats, bridge Israel’s capability gaps, advance interoperability through joint exercises, and help maintain QME.¹²⁸ Israel also participates in FMS, most notably used for the recent acquisition of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter aircraft, as a “strategic cooperation participant.”¹²⁹

The US provides Israel with a range of advanced equipment, including aircraft and munitions, as well as routine training and exercises.¹³⁰ Through US support and the advanced Israeli R&D sector, Israel successfully realized initiatives such as the Iron Dome, David’s Sling missile defense systems, and anti-tunneling devices and increased both Israeli and US capabilities.¹³¹

Overall, the objectives of enhancing US national security and developing Israel’s robust military architecture through QME and MoUs have been successful. With unwavering support, Israel has a significant materiel advantage, enabling it to effectively counter adversaries in the region. While QME has successfully bolstered Israel’s defenses, some scholars caution that it may have unintended consequences.¹³² The partnership has complicated US relationships throughout the Middle East. Sales of equipment to other regional partners — for example, to the United Arab Emirates — have been scrutinized by Congress for potentially upsetting Israel’s QME in the region¹³³ and have irritated partners, exacerbating tensions in the region. The partnership, aimed at enhancing Israel’s security and providing stability, has ripple effects on much of the region’s security and political dynamics.

Section III – Applications for Ukraine

Ukraine and Israel both confront existential threats.¹³⁴ While Ukraine is engaged in an active conflict against a conventional adversary, US security assistance and cooperation with Israel focus heavily on deterrence and strategic preparedness. This foundational approach underscores the importance of proactive measures in safeguarding national security amidst persistent threats.

The **fundamental basis of QME is not comparable to the situation in Ukraine.** Among the differences, the US is not selling or providing capabilities or platforms to Russia or Russia’s partners. While Ukraine has a skilled professional workforce, it suffers from severe challenges such as critical infrastructure loss and population decline, distinguishing it from Israel.¹³⁵ Though the current conflict in Israel demands urgent assistance, the focus of the partnership for the past five decades has been on long-term capability development. Meanwhile, **meeting the current needs for**

active combat differs from building long-term military capacity in accordance with NATO standards.¹³⁶ For example, partners could help meet immediate air defense needs, similar to the US, French, and British assistance to Israel that foiled a barrage of 300 drones and missiles fired by Iran earlier in 2024.¹³⁷ The provision of **immediate security assistance and cooperation working in parallel with a comprehensive, long-term MoU template** with sustained authorities and annual appropriations meets the needs of today and tomorrow.¹³⁸

As both nations maintain a battle-ready culture, Ukraine, like Israel, will need to remain in a constant state of readiness for conflict, driven by ongoing threats and the necessity for resolute decision-making, strong democratic practices, and institutional capacity.¹³⁹

Lebanon

- US security assistance and cooperation efforts in Lebanon are characterized by training, equipping, and advising the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF), providing crucial capabilities and organizational reform. These efforts aim to separate the LAF from the country's political forces and transform it into a capable fighting force with long-term planning abilities.
- Similar to Ukraine, US leadership views Beirut as a crucial actor in maintaining regional stability.
- The partnership's success turned a relatively weak force into a well-organized and structured institution meeting NATO standards and capable of joint operations.

Section I - Background

The US-Lebanon bilateral security partnership emerged in 2005 with the end of Syria's 30-year occupation and the beginning of Lebanon's transition to a democracy. Initially, assistance and cooperation focused on providing basic necessities to prevent a degrading humanitarian situation after the civil war.¹⁴⁰ That support soon encompassed security. The US viewed a stable and peaceful Lebanon as an important element of a comprehensive peace infrastructure in the Middle East and an effective tool in addressing the threat posed by terrorist organizations and Hezbollah's increasing influence.

The US significantly invested in improving Lebanon's security infrastructure, logistics, capability planning, and integration. The ICB Initiative aimed to enhance integration and operational proficiency with the capabilities donated by the US.¹⁴¹ Strong end-use monitoring served as a verification and effective oversight mechanism, reducing the risks of unauthorized use of equipment and technology.¹⁴²

From 2006 to 2022, the US allocated over \$5.5 billion in assistance to Beirut, of which \$3 billion went toward economic development and strengthening security forces, including funds allocated for countering Hezbollah's propaganda in the country.¹⁴³ In FY 2023, the US disbursed approximately \$157 million to Beirut for livelihood, professional military education (PME), and military financing.¹⁴⁴

Section II – Successes and Failures

The partnership with the US transformed the LAF from a weak military institution into a relatively effective organization with sufficient long-term planning capabilities.¹⁴⁵ The isolation of the military from the political sphere is a complex and dynamic phenomenon that, in Lebanon, has both slowed down the achievement of success and benefited the LAF.¹⁴⁶ While its isolation has prevented the LAF's politicization, the LAF lacks strategic guidance from the political leadership.¹⁴⁷ Additionally, the successful development and maintenance of the LAF's capabilities are due to long-term bilateral work on institutional components, including robust human capital development and human resource management, readiness, logistics, and strategic planning.

Internal structures have undergone significant cultural transformations through interaction with US personnel.¹⁴⁸ Team building and information-sharing practices are noticeably improved, leading to shifts in habits and attitudes over time. Joint operations, particularly in the fight against the Islamic State group, have further contributed to the LAF's institutional capabilities and showcased results in its operational effectiveness.¹⁴⁹

Through the provision of essential resources such as aircraft, munitions, vehicles, and comprehensive training, the LAF has emerged as a reliable partner in countering extremist threats. Furthermore, the enhancement of fires coordination, intelligence gathering, and logistical support has strengthened operational effectiveness.¹⁵⁰ In addition, the LAF retains autonomy in determining the use of provided capabilities, consequently assuming responsibility for any mistakes or misjudgments.¹⁵¹ The dividends of this cooperation extend beyond Lebanon, with successful operations against groups including the Islamic State and al-Qaeda. Despite this, there continue to be areas for improvement. Notably, the LAF relies on the US for much of the sustainability of its platforms, as it lacks leverage within the government. This dynamic hampers the development of capabilities within Lebanon, continuing to make the LAF reliant on the US for sustainability.¹⁵²



Photo: Ukrainian recruits wrap a simulated casualty in a heat blanket during training provided by Operation Interflex. Credit: NATO Flickr

Section III - Applications for Ukraine

Lebanon and Ukraine face unique challenges, including differing types of security threats, capabilities, and cooperation needs for each partner. However, the US, Ukraine, and their allies can apply lessons learned from assistance to Lebanon to a Ukraine security assistance framework. Security assistance and cooperation with Ukraine **should engage in all functions of a military force — organize, train, equip, sustain, deploy, and employ** — while considering the sustainability aspects of cooperation.¹⁵³

The LAF incorporated NATO standards during joint operations against the Islamic State group, greatly improving its capabilities. It could provide a model for integrating NATO standards into the UAF.¹⁵⁴ Furthermore, **the US can learn from the interpersonal relationships** developed over a 10-year period, including embedded US personnel in the Lebanese Ministry of Defence.¹⁵⁵ The trust between embedded personnel and partner states made it easier to absorb and execute standards, adapting the work for long-term sustainability and effectiveness.¹⁵⁶

Taiwan

- The US and Taiwan founded their partnership on *strategic ambiguity* — a policy that allows for robust security assistance and cooperation while instilling a deterrent of unknown decision-making for China — and it is considered relatively successful over the course of the policy.
- Similar to the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) vis-à-vis the Taiwanese military, the Russian military overshadows Ukraine’s military regarding equipment and manpower. Therefore, US military support is essential to effectively counterbalance the threat posed by Russia.
- A clear commitment to Ukraine’s victory is vital to avoid sending the wrong message to other partners, including Taipei. A Russian defeat is a defeat for China.

Section I - Background

The US-Taiwan partnership began in 1979 with the passage of the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), abrogating the previous US-ROC Mutual Defense Treaty due to US recognition of the People’s Republic of China. The TRA maintains a policy of “strategic ambiguity” for the US toward Taiwan; in the event of a Chinese attack against Taiwan, the US is not legally obligated to intervene militarily but maintains an intentionally vague policy of support to Taipei, thus impacting Chinese decision-making calculus.¹⁵⁷

Despite cutting official diplomatic relations, unofficial security cooperation — including arms transfers, training, information sharing, and routine bilateral defense dialogues and planning between the US and Taiwan — has continued since 1980.¹⁵⁸ As the US National Defense Strategy defines China as a “pacing threat,” US engagement and support to Taiwan increases.

From 1950 to 2022, Taipei purchased approximately \$50 billion in FMS, making it the fourth-largest buyer during that period.¹⁵⁹ FMS purchases cover various platforms, including anti-naval equipment focused on a potential amphibious invasion.¹⁶⁰ Since 2021, the US has gradually increased the number of troops deployed to Taiwan. From approximately 25 in 2021 to approximately 30 in 2022, the Pentagon deployed 200 troops to Taiwan in 2023, mostly consisting of army instructors.¹⁶¹ The FY 2023 National Defense Authorization Act gave the president the authority to draw down equipment stockpiles worth up to \$1 billion annually to Taipei.¹⁶² Totaling \$1.9 billion, the 2024 National Security Supplemental dedicated funding to replace equipment given to Taiwan, increased FMF for Taiwan, and increased the funding for PDA for Taiwan.¹⁶³

Section II – Successes and Failures

Taiwan based its military strategy on two fundamental facts. First, Beijing has not ruled out an invasion to reunify mainland China with Taiwan. Second, the PLA maintains a qualitative and quantitative advantage over Taiwan's military, dwarfing the island in quantities of equipment and manpower. As such, US security assistance and cooperation is vital for enhancing Taiwan's defense capabilities and developing its capacity for asymmetric warfare (or porcupine strategy).¹⁶⁴ US military sales of capabilities are aimed at targeting and deterring an attempted Chinese naval invasion across the Taiwan Strait.

Critics argue that the policy of *strategic ambiguity* is a double-edged sword that comes from a time when the US vastly outmatched China in terms of military power.¹⁶⁵ The lack of a firm security guarantee inherently leaves room for doubt about willingness to intervene on behalf of Taipei in the event of a conflict, arguably emboldening China to act upon its expansionist agenda.

Additionally, current security assistance and cooperation programs have largely neglected enhancing civil resiliency. Vital water, transportation, electricity, and other critical infrastructure remain vulnerable to sabotage, constituting a major weakness.¹⁶⁶ Moreover, concerns about the size, training, and resolve of Taiwan's armed forces raise questions about their capacity to withstand an invasion attempt by China.¹⁶⁷

The shortcomings of the US-Taiwan partnership are a result of a lack of understanding of the partner, institutional reforms, and buy-in from the partner nation. First, the current relationship largely views Taiwan's issues through the prism of a "cookie-cutter approach" without identifying and acting upon the unique regional and global context.¹⁶⁸ Second, Taipei's institutional challenges and lack of social trust do not help solve the immediate and long-term cooperation issues. Lastly, Taipei buys or receives weapons ill-suited for its needs, uses outdated warfighting concepts, and suffers logistical challenges.¹⁶⁹

Section III - Applications for Ukraine

There are comparative differences that separate Ukraine and Taiwan. First, and most importantly, Taipei is not mired in a direct conflict, and some experts question the risk of a potential invasion.¹⁷⁰ This inherently poses a different sense of urgency and assessment of the scope and scale of cooperation. Moreover, Taiwan is separated from China by a body of water, which makes a potential amphibious operation one of the most complicated undertakings in military history.¹⁷¹ Additionally, there is a question of how willing the Taiwanese are to fight compared to the Ukrainians.¹⁷² However, the Taiwanese are learning lessons from the ongoing conflict in Ukraine,¹⁷³ such as developing more asymmetric capabilities and emphasizing a whole-of-society approach to Taiwan's defense.¹⁷⁴

Second, regarding **relationship building and partner buy-in**, the US-Taiwanese partnership exhibits the pitfalls of a weaker feedback loop between partners when adjusting to the needs of both.¹⁷⁵ Communication between partners and between populations has suffered setbacks. For example, a recent poll found that 31% of Taiwanese respondents thought the US was a trustworthy ally, an 11-point drop since 2021, likely owing to the US' lackluster support of Ukraine.¹⁷⁶ However, the same poll also found that 65% supported US arms sales to Taipei.

Finally, **strategic communication** is vital. The lessons Taiwan is taking from the conflict in Ukraine are not positive. These lessons, including a lack of partner resolve to achieve victory, send the message that the US is looking to bleed “Russia white on the cheap.”¹⁷⁷ While strategic ambiguity has thus far effectively deterred an invasion of Taiwan by China, the same cannot be said for Russia — “strategic ambiguity has not been helpful for Ukraine because Russia invaded anyway.”¹⁷⁸ Taipei is watching closely how, when, where, and why the US and partners support a partner, with the perspective: “[I]f the United States does not support Ukraine or if Ukraine loses, what does that say about Taiwan? If Russia wins, then China will be emboldened.”¹⁷⁹

Applying Lessons Learned to the Partnership with Ukraine

Synthesizing the case studies above, the following lessons stand out:

- Need for a long-term strategy
 - Short-term priorities, including munitions supplies, must not overshadow strategic priorities, such as long-term security objectives and metrics, military modernization priorities, and institutional reforms. A long-term strategy must include ends, ways, and means with clearly identified interim and final goals agreed upon by all partners.
- Long-term cooperation regime
 - The strategy is implemented through long-term security assistance and cooperation investments with clear objectives and sustained resources by the US, Ukraine, allies, and partners.
- Alignment between the US and partners
 - Duplication of effort among partners is a big trap and can be avoided by clear leadership and delineation of responsibilities. While there may be trade-offs that eliminate the rush to support, the long-term gains pay off.
- Providing agency to the host country
 - Understand and work with the cultural and social aspects of a partner to enable the host country's own authority, leadership, and buy-in.

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- Political leadership and presence
 - Without US leadership, there is “no Ukraine ... but Ukrainians need to be in the driver’s seat. The US can be the engine, and the Ukrainians can be the driver.”¹⁸⁰
 - US and partner presence on the ground should be locally based, long-term, and properly overseen “to do the work and understand the system and engage with the system rather than a few points of entrance.”¹⁸¹
- Reforms
 - Continue Ukraine’s NATO standardization and interoperability to strengthen capacity and resilience, while building trust and interchangeability with the alliance.
 - Foundational reforms at every level of government ensure long-term institutional sustainability by addressing human resources, logistics, maintenance, training, and oversight.
- Prolonged and sustainable funding
 - Successful partnership execution requires access to a predictable, sustainable, and flexible flow of funds from the US, Ukraine, allies, and partners to Ukraine.
- Oversight and accountability
 - Create a system of checks and balances for all partners to build accountability and address corruption.
- Long-term marketing/branding campaign
 - All members of the partnership should work to develop and maintain a consistent message explaining the importance of support for Ukraine and its connection to global threats.

Building on these security assistance and cooperation case studies, the next chapter delves into Ukraine’s specific needs and priorities for effectively defending its territory and securing long-term stability.

Plotting the Path Ahead

The case studies in the previous chapter highlight overarching principles:

- Ukraine and its partners must work to ensure victory on Ukraine’s terms, buying time against Russia’s next attack.
- The US must provide more guarantees and less assurances to lock in long-term ally commitments¹⁸² via a coalition co-led by Ukraine¹⁸³ and NATO.¹⁸⁴
- The US and Ukraine need to create a security framework consisting of agreements that are Russia-proof.
- Ukraine and its partners will need to boost Ukraine’s defense and security capacity building and interoperability with NATO by reforming and modernizing the Ukrainian DIB, i.e., “make Ukraine NATO ready.”

This chapter focuses on what the lessons learned mean for Ukraine in practice, including needs, challenges, and opportunities. Chapter 4 will frame what Ukraine and its partners must do.

Defining long-term needs for Ukraine

Russia will continue to bet on exhausting Ukraine and its partners and will ramp up its own military efforts. Within this context, Ukraine’s needs can be defined as quantifiable (tangible) and nonquantifiable (non-tangible). Both are essential to sustain resilience.¹⁸⁵

The quantifiable needs include military equipment, military training and education, financing, economic output, logistics, and aid. The nonquantifiable needs include political will and leadership, victory on the informational/ideological front, democratic values, and anti-corruption efforts.

The bedrock of all these is winning on the ideological front — convincing partners that the war is much “bigger” than a regional conflict and that the conflict endangers the international order. Therefore, allies and partners must prioritize informational warfare success and overtly call out the imperial nature of Russia’s regional efforts.¹⁸⁶ Victory in the information space is essential not only among Ukraine’s allies and partners but also in outreach efforts to the Global South.¹⁸⁷ This will continue to be a challenge as “[Ukrainian President Volodymyr] Zelensky will struggle to keep the man of the year title” because of trust issues, and the US is dealing with domestic “squabbles.”¹⁸⁸ A key component of the Kremlin’s strategy is exploiting perceived Western partners’ “fight with one another ... anything that delegitimizes democracy, anything that spreads conspiracy theories, anything that makes us weaker, they support.”¹⁸⁹

The Kremlin relies on its partners — including Iran, North Korea, and China — for needed military support. Additionally, its security relationships in Africa make it possible to funnel new funds to the war effort.¹⁹⁰ Ukraine and its allies must use all available tools to constrain Russia's access to external military resources to win in quantifiable and nonquantifiable spaces.

Defining strategy and objectives for security cooperation/assistance/assurances

The West will have to sustain a clear and declaratory policy for Ukraine. Below are overarching security strategy objectives parallel to work toward NATO membership:

- Navigating an equivalent of a “coalition of the willing,” such as the UDCG and accompanying capability coalitions, which can act as guarantors for peace.¹⁹¹ “Ukraine needs a coalition to succeed — there is no way for Ukraine to match what’s required for equipment.”¹⁹²
- Focusing on logistics¹⁹³ and procurement alignment, speed, and interoperability.
- Winning the political messaging of urgency and importance of Ukraine.¹⁹⁴
- Identifying organizational, operational, and equipment gaps focusing on self-sustainability and military equipment co-production with partners at scale.¹⁹⁵
- Ensuring accountability and oversight and the success of these efforts.

Defining military modernization needs and priorities

“[The Ukrainians] are learning fast from the reality of war. We’re still focusing on the equipment we needed 10 years ago.”¹⁹⁶

NATO-Ukraine interoperability and interchangeability are the guiding stars for comprehensive modernization. The UAF's modernization needs are substantial because a) Ukraine is a large country with a large military, b) its leaders neglected the military from 1991 to 2014, c) the military inherited an outdated Soviet approach, and d) it faces an extensive Russian threat. Prioritizing modernization is key to enabling the UAF to successfully deter and defend against threats in the long run. If Ukraine can combine a motivated force with a fully modernized one, it will be possible to perform modern maneuver warfare and do considerable damage. Organizing, training, equipping, deploying, and sustaining the UAF is vital, but many weaknesses still exist.

As Ukraine transitions to a modernized army at scale, it cannot lose focus on the basic and necessary military building blocks such as human resources, force planning, and logistics. In addition, Ukraine will need to consolidate and integrate its equipment and rationalize its force — deciding what to keep and what to discard — before it proceeds with modernization.¹⁹⁷ While this study will not recommend removing specific equipment, the UAF will have to move away from both Soviet-inherited equipment and mentality swiftly and comprehensively.

A brief history of Ukraine's defense industry: Road toward decline

Ukraine played a critical role in the success of the Soviet army during World War II and inherited a wide-ranging defense industrial base (DIB) infrastructure after the collapse of the Soviet Union. In addition to inheriting the third-largest nuclear arsenal in the world, it was home to the production of about one-third of the Soviet Union's defense industry capacities, including around 750 factories and 140 affiliated research and technical institutions.¹⁹⁸

However, since Perestroika, the DIB declined as Ukraine neglected the military due to corruption, economics, and Russian interference. Since independence in 1991, Ukrainian defense enterprises did not receive significant orders from their own government.¹⁹⁹

Ukrainian Defense Industry (UDI), Ukraine's modern-day, state-owned military industrial conglomerate, was formed under the presidency of Russian ally Viktor Yanukovich in 2010 as Ukroboronprom (UOP). After Russia's first invasion of Ukraine in 2014, UOP employed around 120,000 Ukrainians,²⁰⁰ but over half of the more than 130 defense enterprises were de facto out of operation due to mismanagement, and much of the equipment required Russian components.²⁰¹ Despite opacity and corruption pervasive in the Ukrainian DIB culture, it was still able to export \$1.3 billion in arms annually, primarily to African and Asian markets, which made Ukraine the world's eighth-largest arms exporter from 2009 to 2013.²⁰² The first significant wave of systemic reforms of UOP took place in 2019, focusing on a relaunch of management, changes in procurement standards, and financial audits.²⁰³ However, in the years that followed, the DIB's progress slowed. It remains a hierarchical system and continues to struggle with challenges related to context, culture, and capacity.

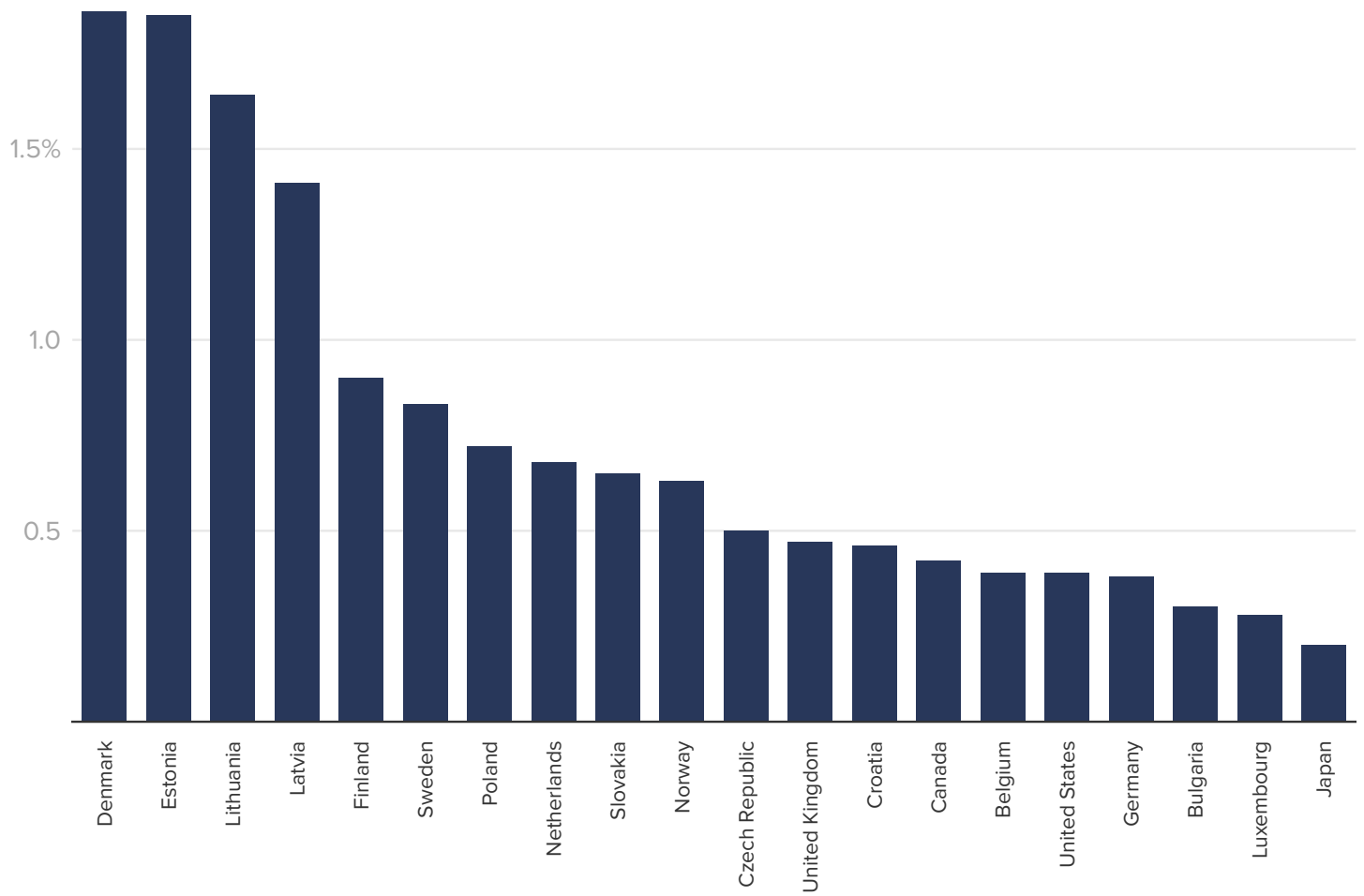
In March 2023, Ukraine's government initiated the transformation of UOP into the joint stock company UDI with the state as the sole shareholder.²⁰⁴ The structural change envisages major reforms, including trimming many unnecessary enterprises.²⁰⁵ Whether the government will follow through on all the stated reforms remains to be seen.

Overarching challenges and opportunities

Workforce

A dwindling workforce, especially for heavy industries, is an increasing challenge as the war drags on. While the Ukrainian government is working with the private sector to adjust legislation and exempt certain personnel from military conscription, the process has been rocky and will require ongoing adjustment. Companies interested in producing in Ukraine will need to see follow-through with reforms, adoption of Western standards in training personnel, and the capacity to deliver and train at scale according to EU and NATO standards.²⁰⁶ Scalable education collaborations, such as STEM programs, will be important for the success of Ukraine's workforce.²⁰⁷

Top 20 Allied Supporters of Ukraine (% of GDP)



Note: Allocations Jan. 24, 2022 to Aug. 31, 2024

Chart: Center for European Policy Analysis. Source: Kiel Institute for the World Economy

Production and procurement capabilities

The current ratio of ammunition production is not in Ukraine's favor, negatively impacting battlefield results. Russia, employing old-school Soviet tactics, has been betting on poor quality but massive quantity. On the other hand, domestic ammunition production and partner ammunition deliveries are failing to meet Ukraine's needs. Due to bureaucratic red tape, processes in Ukraine and its partners are slow, and there is "no top cover to ensure success, and no scale."²⁰⁸

Delivery speed

Since Ukraine is not self-sustainable in military production, it heavily relies on military equipment support from its Western allies. Production and equipment delivery speeds are unjustifiably slow in some cases, as partners are still applying acquisition and delivery approaches designed for peacetime.

Indigenous production

Drones, which have limited capital investment requirements, require intelligent production design — which is being handled domestically in Ukraine. Beyond drones, there is potential to produce a full range of military equipment, such as artillery, tanks, and infantry fighting vehicles, reducing the time needed to deliver vehicles to the battlefield. “[I]t is better not to drag tanks 2,000 miles through NATO territory.”²⁰⁹ If vulnerabilities, including corruption and potential Russian attacks, are mitigated, domestic co-production can also create jobs, boost economic output, and, importantly, increase collaboration with NATO.²¹⁰

Decreasing Russian capabilities

One effective way to strengthen capabilities is to limit the options and maneuverability of adversaries (Russia, Iran, North Korea, Belarus, and China). Equipping Ukraine with the ability to strike warehouses of enemy drones, missiles, and planes reduces the need for additional air defense ammunition. Additionally, controlling the international components market decreases enemy capabilities. For instance, drones and ballistic missiles rely on globally sourced components. Controlling critical components (e.g., chips) reduces the ability of Russia to meet its own demand.

On the other hand, the West can undermine its efforts by continuing or resuming business with Moscow. For example, lifting sanctions on Nord Stream 2 in 2021 signaled to Russia that “business as usual can come back.”²¹¹

Military funding

For the UAF to modernize, it requires ample investments from partners in long-term procurement.²¹²

Traditional equipment

Though critical, drones are not a substitute or a silver bullet for all of Ukraine’s military needs, which include artillery, air defense systems, counter-battery fire capabilities, anti-tank guided missiles, mines, and ammunition.

Reforms

Kyiv has made significant strides in addressing institutional corruption, particularly over the past decade. While it has established institutional practices and legal frameworks to tackle these challenges, further work is needed to build trust with its people and partners. The toolkit for Ukraine and its partners to address corruption includes NATO and EU integration requirements, institutional and legal reforms, transparency measures, and the creation of stable markets for investment and co-production.

What Ukraine offers

Ukraine's experience defending against Russia is invaluable for NATO, given that Russia is the alliance's largest immediate threat. Ukraine's experience on the battlefield is advancing quickly; the military of 2022 was not the same as it was in 2014 and will continue to evolve. Additionally, the Ukrainian Armed Forces (UAF) could utilize "many different platforms, and that experience is invaluable."²¹³ This experience and expertise not only assist NATO in confronting the Russian threat but also provide opportunities to address current and future threats from other adversaries.

Ukraine's military constantly tests and pushes equipment and capabilities. For example, Ukrainians employ Patriot systems differently than originally intended²¹⁴ and use cutting-edge approaches in the Black Sea with maritime drones. In other cases, Ukraine's use and production of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) has been unprecedented, earning Ukraine the reputation of the future "beating heart of UAV production."²¹⁵

Ukraine's industrial base and accompanying workforce broaden the West's reach and expertise, while securing defense industrial base partnerships within the alliance's orbit eliminates potential NATO competition. Partnership and eventual membership in the alliance will decrease the availability of expertise and resources for autocratic regimes competing in this space. For example, the brain drain of Ukrainian engineers and IT specialists to China has been a concern, with the latter also looking to purchase Ukraine's defense sector companies, such as Motor Sich.²¹⁶ Solidifying the industrial base economy for national defense will alleviate those vulnerabilities.

The European Union (EU) and NATO's work with Ukraine highlights stockpile challenges, production timelines, logistics, and acquisition and procurement. While Kyiv continues to align with EU and NATO military production standards, it is teaching the West valuable lessons about standardization and interoperability for future conflicts, including the infamous example of mismatched 155 mm shells and lack of interchangeability among platforms.²¹⁷

Ukraine is already playing a vital part as a security enabler in the region, and it is in the alliance's interest to secure a formal cooperation partnership. Ukraine has the second-largest military in Europe, which is battle-tested and innovative, proving its readiness and agility to respond to needs and evolve on the battlefield. It has the capacity to become a major security exporter — both of intelligence and military services and of arms production. Streamlining NATO-Ukraine standards will be in the interest of the alliance.

Recommendations

The following framework for long-term security assistance and cooperation builds on the foundation laid by the BSAs. These agreements aim to formalize coordination, collaboration, security objectives, and assurances with individual partners, complementing the efforts of the UDCG and reinforcing Ukraine's simultaneous pursuit of NATO membership. The framework outlines key priorities and milestones for success, including the sequencing of cooperation, institutionalizing political will and leadership, ensuring predictable and effective resourcing, and harnessing the full potential of society and industry.

Recommendations for Ukraine

Taking into consideration the abovementioned challenges and needs, Ukraine will need to do the following:

Military modernization

- **Secure maintenance and ammunition:** Before advancing modernization efforts, the UAF must first ensure robust maintenance, repair of spare parts, and ammunition capabilities through partnerships with international companies and in-house production.²¹⁸
- **Integration of capabilities:** Since Russia's full-scale invasion on February 24, 2022, Ukraine has received upwards of 500 individual systems in security assistance.²¹⁹ Both Ukraine and its partners acknowledge that a comprehensive capabilities integration plan is urgently needed.²²⁰

Recommendations:

- Ukraine, in conjunction with its partners and NATO, should utilize the **UDCG capability coalitions and/or the NUC in the short to medium term to form a specialized "tiger team"** to develop a strategic plan for capability integration, including decisions on retention, disposal, and further investment.
- **Establish clear mobilization rules and procedures** with integrated systems based on skill sets supported by advanced training doctrines.

Institutional reforms

- **Priority of reforms:** Institutional reforms remain a critical priority for the UAF. Achieving an effective "tooth-to-tail" ratio is essential for long-term security strategy and battlefield effectiveness.²²¹
- **Addressing needs systematically:** There is a lack of structured discussion regarding military needs and lessons on the battlefield, leading, in some cases, to a non-systematic approach to addressing those needs.

- **Sustainable institutionalization:** Processes require comprehensive planning, metrics, and oversight.

Recommendations:

- Collaborate with international partners to **implement comprehensive reforms in production and procurement**. This requires top-to-bottom changes in logistics, acquisition, procurement, sustainment, and equipment maintenance.
- **Remove licensing barriers to enhance production without compromising accountability and transparency**. Partners can achieve this by both modernizing the licensure procedure and increasing the number of personnel involved.

Security agreements

- **Importance of BSAs:** Well executed and resourced BSAs will be crucial during the pre-NATO period.

Recommendations:

- **Execute BSAs to their fullest potential**, including the allocation of budgeted resources throughout the duration of the agreement and, where feasible, formalizing commitments through legal status in partner governments.
- As an extension of BSA implementation, the US, Ukraine, allies, and partners should **establish an official body to coordinate and sustain long-term security efforts**, complementing Ukraine's initiatives.
- BSAs should also **support the advancement of Ukraine's DIB** through joint production, co-production, and R&D for technological advancements. Stable and long-term contracts with industry will demonstrate the seriousness of bilateral partnerships.

Capabilities prioritization

Air defense

- **Comprehensive approach:** Ukraine must protect its population, critical infrastructure, and service members from threats through an integrated "system of systems" approach from air and ground defenses.²²²
- **Immediate needs:** In the short term, the Ukrainian military requires surface-to-air, surface-to-surface, air-to-air, air-to-ground, and electronic warfare capabilities. Ukraine must couple these capabilities with the capacity to continue and expand strikes within Russian territory.
- **Long-term vision:** While Ukraine will likely develop its own equivalent of Israel's Iron Dome with Western support in the long run, it urgently needs aviation capabilities to secure Ukrainian airspace and its partners need to bridge the gap by providing air defense systems in the short to medium term.²²³

Recommendation:

- **International partners should deploy and supply robust, integrated air defense support** until Ukraine can independently produce and sustain its own equipment.

Artillery

- **Local munitions production:** The ability to produce munitions locally is crucial for Ukraine's medium and long-term security. While industry partners like Rheinmetall, BAE, Northrop Grumman, and Sellier & Bellot are investing in local production, neither Ukraine nor its allies can currently supply enough munitions to meet battlefield demands.²²⁴
- **Current efforts and challenges:** As Ukraine increases local production capacity, partners are also scaling up their munitions production. This includes the EU's initiative and a Czech-led effort to procure and deliver ammunition, though these efforts are progressing slower than necessary.²²⁵

Recommendations:

- **Increase Ukrainian and partner artillery production and delivery** focusing on long-range fires, both tube and rocket artillery, and the necessary ammunition, including barrels and spare parts.
- Rapidly **accelerate the production and deployment of artillery and long-range missile platforms**, such as ATACMS and HIMARS, to close the critical supply-demand gap.

Maritime

- **Missed opportunities in the Black Sea:** In 2014, Ukraine and its partners failed to address long-term security challenges and stability in the Black Sea. Since then, Russia has severely restricted freedom of navigation, conducted extensive mining operations, limited trade and commerce, and attempted to block the transit of critical grain and agricultural products. While Ukraine and its allies have successfully pushed back the Russian fleet and reestablished commercial transit, significant security challenges persist.

Recommendations:

- Continue Ukraine's focus on capabilities beyond a traditional navy to maintain and build on its successes in the Black Sea in the short to medium term. This includes **deploying surveillance towers, coastal defense missiles, long-range surveillance drones, and reconnaissance aircraft.**²²⁶
- Ukraine and its Black Sea partners — including NATO members Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey, and non-NATO member Georgia — must **take the lead in enhancing regional stability.**

- In parallel, international partners, including the US, NATO, and the EU, should collaborate with Black Sea nations to **develop and implement comprehensive Black Sea strategies focused on ends, ways, and means, clearly identifying agreed-upon goals and objectives**. These strategies should address domain awareness, intelligence sharing, demining, and the development of asymmetric capabilities, among other key areas.

Unmanned and counter-unmanned systems

- **Impact of unmanned systems:** Unmanned systems, both in the air and at sea, have significantly shaped military operations. Millions of aerial drones, primarily commercial in origin, have been deployed and lost by both sides, carrying out a wide range of missions. Unmanned surface vessels (USVs) have played a crucial role, contributing to the destruction of a third of Russia's Black Sea Fleet.
- **Ukraine's drone investment:** Ukraine continues to invest heavily in drone production and deployment, establishing the world's first dedicated drone branch within its armed forces. This investment yields results: small drones have effectively compensated for artillery munition shortages, while larger, long-range drones have successfully struck targets deep within Russian territory.
- **Future of unmanned systems:** Unmanned systems, including USVs, will remain a cornerstone of Kyiv's defense strategy, operational planning, and capabilities. Ukraine's approach will emphasize agility in updating technology, structures, processes, human resources, and doctrine to stay ahead.

Recommendations:

- The newly established **drone service branch should integrate representatives from all military services** and be empowered to focus on cross-domain operations.

Ukraine must **optimize drone manufacturing and distribution** to reduce fragmentation and duplication, harness grassroots innovation, and meet the high demand. Implementing robust intellectual property (IP) measures and oversight will be critical in enhancing collaboration with the private sector for testing and large-scale production.

Ukraine and partner defense industrial base

- **Industry shift:** Transitioning from the “just-in-time” model, refined over two decades of counterinsurgency conflict, back to a “just-in-case” approach is essential for strategic growth and future planning.
- **Incentives for coproduction:** Much of the Western DIB lacks sufficient incentives to coproduce with Ukraine. Effective partnerships must identify and implement the right procedures to change this, whether locally or abroad.

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- **Challenges in Ukraine's DIB:** A portion of Ukraine's DIB remains a hierarchical system, struggling to overcome challenges related to context, culture, and capacity, including issues of corruption and transparency.
- **Opportunities in Ukraine's DIB:** Half of Ukraine's DIB is privately held and, in many cases, the private sector's work on capabilities and platforms — including drones, electronic warfare, and armored vehicles — is successfully meeting the needs and requirements of the Ukrainian military.
- **Workforce evaluation:** After years of conflict, Ukraine's workforce requires thorough evaluation to identify and address any existing gaps.
- **Expedited production:** Both the Western and Ukrainian DIB sectors must accelerate the production of platforms and equipment through parallel and joint efforts.

Recommendations:

- Several Western companies have committed to coproducing munitions and providing sustainment and maintenance within Ukraine. This collaboration will enable Ukraine to maintain and produce key battlefield equipment and munitions. **The private sector should continue exploring opportunities for long-term investment and partnership, benefiting Ukraine's self-sufficiency and the business case for sustained investment and partnership.**²²⁷
- Reforming Ukraine's DIB and state defense enterprises presents both challenges and opportunities. Joint ventures can be viable with the right mix of political leadership and risk mitigation for Western industrial partners. **These joint ventures will require technology, equipment, IP, and financial support from the Ukrainian government, with potential production sites in neighboring NATO countries.** For high-tech innovations, partnerships with EU countries to produce on EU territory could safeguard IP rights.²²⁸
- As coproduction and joint ventures progress, and as the West provides security assistance, **it must continually assess export control requirements.** Persistent delays and restrictions in critical technology transfers, particularly those related to the US's ITAR, must be addressed, including increasing the ability for Ukraine to produce systems, such as ground-based air defense systems, in country with the proper licensing.²²⁹ All partners should work to resolve these issues efficiently, moving away from the current ad hoc approach.
- **The NUC should conduct a comprehensive assessment of its current workforce and expertise to accurately evaluate and analyze the capacity of Ukraine's industrial base.**
- Ukraine should **develop an institutionalized framework for managing emerging and evolving technologies**, including the establishment of a single interministerial and intergovernmental body, to ensure that Ukraine harmonizes R&D efforts without stifling grassroots innovation.

Transatlantic Defense Companies in Ukraine

Operator	Country of Origin	Capabilites Produced / Purpose
Rheinmetall	Germany	Artillery Ammunition; Infantry Fighting Vehicles
Northrup Gruman	US	Artillery Ammunition; Tank Ammunition; Medium Caliber Ammunition
BAE	UK	Artillery Maintenance and Repair
KNDS	France and Germany	Artillery Ammunition; Equipment Maintenance
Baykar	Turkey	Combat Drones
Amentum Services	US	Armored Combat Vehicles; Air Defense Equipment
Frankenburg Technologies	Estonia	Anti-Drone Missile Systems
AeroVironment	US	Loitering Munitions
Quantum Systems	Germany	Drones

Table: Center for European Policy Analysis

- **Western leadership could financially incentivize the private sector to partner with Ukraine’s DIB to scale up production.** For instance, NATO partners could consider “doubling the funded amount” to encourage greater collaboration and investment.²³⁰
- Ukraine has achieved significant progress, and the above recommendations provide a road map for further advancement. Ukraine can decisively break free from the Kremlin’s grip and emerge as a pivotal security partner by accelerating modernization and bolstering its industrial base. With these foundations in place, we now move to the next section, which explores the international framework, and the crucial steps Ukraine’s partners need to take.

Recommendations for Ukraine’s Partners

Taking into consideration Ukraine’s past failures and successes, and examining lessons learned from previous and current case studies, the study recommends the following for allies and partners:

International cooperation

The future

Challenges with current agreements: Unfortunately, many 10-year BSAs lack legal backing without the approval of individual legislative and oversight bodies, and most do not have dedicated, assigned resources. Additionally, managing and coordinating over 30 agreements may prove unsustainable for Ukraine and its partners.²³¹

Sustainability concerns with the UDCG: The UDCG is currently operating in a reactive mode, akin to “living paycheck to paycheck,” with Ukraine “living from

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Ramstein to Ramstein.” This is not a viable long-term strategy.²³² Under its current construct, the UDCG may struggle to sustain itself over time due to competing leadership priorities, the diverse needs and interests of its many participants, evolving relationship dynamics, and shifting priorities.

Recommendation:

- Although the SAG-U and the IDCC are robust implementation arms for security cooperation, their current workload limits future planning to only about two months.²³³ **The international donor community, Ukraine, and industry should establish a task force** led by the SAG-U and IDCC teams to develop a road map for future needs, starting with 6-, 12-, and 24-month requirements.

European Union

- **The EU’s role and leadership:** Over the past two and a half years, the EU and its member states have delivered over \$50 billion in assistance, spearheaded sanctions policies and energy security efforts, and achieved several groundbreaking milestones, including providing lethal aid and training to Ukraine.²³⁴ This bold leadership must persist and become more audacious.²³⁵
- **Ongoing challenges:** Despite internal divisions, particularly with Hungary, the EU’s efforts continue. For instance, the European Political Community, established in 2022 to address European security challenges, is gaining increasing importance.
- **Funding concerns:** The absence of federal funding within the EU means that EU members support Ukraine from their national budgets, testing the EU’s ability to operate cohesively.

Recommendations:

- In addition to the proposed authorizations and appropriations, including a US-Ukraine MoU for security assistance and cooperation, the EU should **consider a multiyear, resource-committed MoU at approximately \$40 billion per year.**
- While some sanctions have been impactful, many current sanctions on Russia have been more symbolic. The EU should **intensify efforts to impose and explore new sanctions regimes against Russia and its allies.**
- The EU should continue and **expand its efforts to swiftly and sustainably transition Europe away from relying on Russian energy sources.**

NATO

- **NATO’s critical role:** NATO is essential for Ukraine’s success, yet political discord and disunity could severely limit the alliance’s effectiveness and engagement.
- **Current NATO involvement:** Until the summer of 2024, NATO has played a secondary role in providing assistance, relying on tools such as the

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Comprehensive Assistance Package for nonlethal support and the NUC to explore and deliberate additional support avenues.

- **Recent developments:** As of May 2024, the study revealed a lack of NATO representation at key forums, such as the SAG-U/IDCC in Wiesbaden, and an inconsistent NATO presence at UDCG meetings and capability coalition convenings.²³⁶ However, following the 2024 NATO Summit in Washington, DC, the alliance has committed to a more significant role in training, advising, and equipping Ukraine, a responsibility it is well-positioned to undertake.
- **Future role of NATO:** If the UDCG format proves unsustainable in the long term, NATO's involvement will need to be scaled up.

Recommendations:

- NATO should endorse former Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg's proposal for **a dedicated resource pool of \$40 billion per year over multiple years**. This funding should be exclusively allocated for long-term assistance, demonstrating a substantial commitment to the partnership with Ukraine and encompassing both nonlethal and lethal support.
- NATO and Ukraine should **establish a clear timeline with milestones** for Ukraine's membership aspirations.
- **Learning the lessons** from Russia's full-scale invasion and adapting to the evolving nature of warfare is critical for Ukraine and its partners. The increasing role of NATO in support and assistance to Ukraine enables the ability to formally structure a feedback loop of relevant lessons in training, doctrine, and battlefield evolution. As part of the NUC, NATO and Ukraine should formalize a lessons-learned team that regularly reports to allies and partners on key takeaways and recommendations for doctrine and operational concept development.
- Any political disagreements or attempts to dilute NATO's mission for the partnership must be addressed and resolved promptly. **Maintaining NATO's credibility is paramount.**

US efforts

- **US role and leadership:** The US will remain the critical leader and partner in NATO, driving a long-term vision for security assistance, cooperation, and assurances.
- **Collaborative vision:** The US, allies, partners, and Ukraine must break the cycle of waiting for others to define a long-term vision for Ukrainian security and stability. Strategic objectives should be collaborative, integrating the needs, goals, and commitments from all parties with clear ends, ways, and means to achieve agreed-upon objectives.
- **Institutionalizing the partnership:** While the USAI and other annual security assistance mechanisms like DoD security cooperation authorities and the

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PDA address immediate needs, the US should explore ways to further solidify and institutionalize the US-Ukraine security partnership.

Recommendations:

- Congressional **reauthorization and extension of the USAI** train-and-equip authority for a five-year period (Fiscal Years 2026–2031) are crucial for consistent authority and planning. Annual reauthorization creates inefficiencies and unnecessary delays.
- Congress should **increase the appropriation for USAI to cover two years** rather than one and fund timely support at \$40 billion per year. This extended funding timeline will support more effective planning and requirement identification within a broader capability development framework.
- With extended authorities and appropriations to meet short- and medium-term needs, the US and Ukraine should **negotiate a five-year MoU to outline and formalize the priorities and objectives of their long-term security partnership**. Modeled after the longstanding US-Israel MoU, this agreement would complement the existing BSA and enhance the long-term security assistance and cooperation framework. Key elements should include:
 1. Planning timelines, including capability targets
 2. Committed yearly resourcing over five years from both sides
 3. Messaging campaign
 4. International partnership opportunities
 5. Template for other cooperation and assistance
 6. Structured oversight mechanisms

Leadership

“US leading effort is key. Is US leadership still capable and do they need to lead? Answer is yes to both.”²³⁷

Recommendations:

- The US administration should **nominate a presidential special envoy (Senate-confirmed) or a presidential special representative (presidentially appointed) for Ukraine’s defense and security**.²³⁸ This individual would lead US engagement and leadership efforts, wield delegated budget authority, provide top-level political support, and serve as a prominent voice in the security and diplomatic community.
- The US administration, in collaboration with allies, partners, and Ukraine, must articulate **a clear vision for Ukrainian success and stability**. Simultaneously, the US must develop a comprehensive policy on Russia to guide a unified and effective approach.

US special representative for Ukraine: Following the NATO Summit in Washington, DC, in July 2024, the alliance established a senior representative position in Kyiv to oversee allied assistance and support. This development underscores the importance of appointing a US special envoy or special representative for Ukraine, which would complement the newly created senior representative role.²³⁹ While the US ambassador to Ukraine plays a crucial role in executing US policy, a special envoy or special representative would serve as a dedicated advocate for defense and security, liaising with the US, NATO, partners, and Ukraine.

While the study's research for this recommendation yielded mixed views from experts on the utility of such a position in the larger US bureaucracy, a special envoy or special representative could act as a friction breaker rather than an additional layer of bureaucracy.²⁴⁰ The benefits of this appointment, including enhanced unity of command, outweigh the potential drawbacks.

Pros

- Clear advocate and voice for mission
- Friction breaker within bureaucracy
- Expedited decision-making opportunities

Cons

- Potential added bureaucratic layers of decision-making
- Internal tensions over authority and resources

Messaging/branding

- **Principles of effective branding:** Sustainable and impactful branding requires a strategic **reframing of the rationale** behind supporting Ukraine, highlighting its critical importance to the West's own national security by linking it to the broader geopolitical dynamics involving Russia and China. This includes **realigning resources, tools, and objectives** to bolster Ukraine's success, including necessary authorities and appropriations. Additionally, there should be **a renewed focus on enhancing domestic capabilities** through increased investment in technology, innovation, and a robust DIB.

Recommendation:

- In collaboration with Ukraine, allies, and partners, the US should launch and maintain a **comprehensive branding campaign** that underscores the imperative for sustained security assistance and cooperation.²⁴¹

Oversight/assessment and monitoring/anti-corruption (Ukraine and partners)

- **Addressing corruption and oversight:** Partners, particularly the US, must intensify efforts to tackle underlying corruption by establishing clear standards for metrics and practices. Currently, US oversight mechanisms are fragmented and inefficient. With three inspectors general (DoD, Department of State, and USAID), 10 government agencies managing funds for Ukraine, 40 studies on assistance oversight, and 20 agencies overseeing Ukraine assistance,²⁴² the result is an overwhelming volume of data that is often fragmented and unclear.²⁴³ Effective assessment, monitoring, and evaluation are crucial, but the existing framework is unsustainable, and “full accountability is impossible.”²⁴⁴

Recommendations:

- Simplify US oversight structures by integrating lessons learned from over two years of Ukraine assistance into a **single interagency oversight body**. This entity should provide **periodic updates (quarterly or biannually)** and include publicly available documentation, reporting, and briefings to Congress.
- Implement uniform anti-corruption standards within the US government to eliminate duplication and opacity. The DoD and the Department of State should **develop a universal template for anti-corruption milestones**, which currently does not exist. This template should cover oversight and transparency processes, bidding and budgeting practices, and auditing, among other critical areas.²⁴⁵

Presence

- **Local US presence and engagement:** Maintaining a robust US presence on the ground is vital for success. Soft-power policies, such as education and training exchanges, along with consistent advisory roles, are essential for building relationships across all levels of military cooperation. These initiatives foster cultural shifts within partner militaries and drive long-term changes by integrating US and Western practices and leadership. Conversely, hard-power policies provide security assurances, real-time advice, and crucial on-the-ground insights.²⁴⁶

Recommendations:

- When feasible, **deploy US troops in a train-and-advise capacity with the goal of establishing a robust in-country presence.** This mission could include:
 1. **Special operations:** Providing leadership guidance and strategic insights²⁴⁷
 2. **Conventional training:** Reinstating the JMTG-U in Yavoriv
 3. **Hybrid approach:** Combining both special operations and conventional training elements²⁴⁸

Coordinating additional military presence efforts by partners is encouraged and should be integrated with the NATO mission as soon as possible.

- **Expand professional education and training by increasing Ukrainian military participation in PME and IMET programs.** These programs, which include leadership courses, training certifications, and exchanges, are cost-effective ways to build trust, foster relationships, and support foundational reforms.²⁴⁹
- **Reinstate, with a clear mandate, an ICB Ministry of Defense adviser and other ministry advisers,** including those for the Ministry of Strategic Industries and the Ministry of Digital Information.

Conclusion

Ukraine's situation is critical for NATO's future. The framework recommendations in this study represent the most ambitious shift in support since 2022, demanding renewed and sustainable political will from a nation worn down by casualties, hardship, and relentless stress, as well as from NATO members and partners who may be distracted by domestic and global challenges. Meanwhile, Russia will persist in spreading misinformation and disinformation to sow division on the issue of Ukraine, aiming to stoke "Ukraine fatigue" among key stakeholders. However, neither Ukraine nor the international community can afford delays or inaction — the stakes are simply too high.

This framework takes a holistic approach, addressing the actions needed across the population, government, and industry to secure assistance and cooperation for long-term success. While some framework elements may be straightforward to implement, many will require uncomfortable political and economic sacrifices. Delaying action increases the risk not only of Ukraine losing the conflict but also of NATO members and partners being directly impacted by the war, giving Russia one of its most prized assets — time. Russia is banking on an exhausted Ukraine and a complacent West to achieve its next anti-Western objective. This scenario could become a reality if the US, NATO, and their partners fail to fully recognize the gravity of the threat. Victory for Ukraine is within reach, but it demands decisive and immediate action to prevent further depletion of resources, resilience, and momentum.

Glossary

ANA – Afghan National Army

ANDSF – Afghan National Defence and Security Forces

ASFF – Afghanistan Security Forces Fund

ATACMS – Army Tactical Missile System

BLACKSEAFOR – Black Sea Naval Force

BSA - bilateral security agreement

CEPA – Center for European Policy Analysis

DIB – defense industrial base

DoD – Department of Defense

EU – European Union

FARC – Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia

FMF – foreign military financing

FMS – foreign military sales

GUAM – Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova

GUUAM – Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, and Moldova

HIMARS – High Mobility Artillery Rocket System

ICB – institutional capacity building

IDCC – International Donor Coordination Centre

IFOR – Implementation Force

IMET – International Military Education and Training

IP – intellectual property

ISAF – International Security Assistance Force

ITAR – International Traffic in Arms Regulations

JATEC – NATO-Ukraine Joint Analysis, Training, and Education Centre

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JMTG-U – Joint Multinational Training Group-Ukraine

JWGDR – NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group on Defense Reform

LAF – Lebanese Armed Forces

MoU – memorandum of understanding

NACC – North Atlantic Cooperation Council

NCO – noncommissioned officer

NRU – NATO Representation to Ukraine

NSATU – NATO Security Assistance and Training for Ukraine

NUC – NATO-Ukraine Council

PDA – Presidential Drawdown Authority

PfP – Partnership for Peace

PLA – People’s Liberation Army

PME – professional military education

QME – qualitative military edge

R&D – research and development

SAG-U – US Security Assistance Group-Ukraine

TDS – Transatlantic Defense and Security

TRA – Taiwan Relations Act

UAF – Ukrainian Armed Forces

UAV – unmanned aerial vehicle

UDCG – Ukraine Defense Contact Group (also known as the Ramstein Format)

UDI – Ukrainian Defense Industry, previously UOP

UNSC – United Nations Security Council

USAI – Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative

USAID – United States Agency for International Development

USV – unmanned surface vessel

Endnotes

- 1 One such example is the Kyiv Security Compact, which was proposed by former NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen and Head of the Presidential Office Andriy Yermak. Announced in September 2022, the KSC seeks to enable the defense and sovereignty of Ukraine backed by agreements with international partners. Although a proposed framework, some recommendations are being implemented, in particular, Ukraine and its allies have signed 25 bilateral security agreements.
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