

How to End the Ukraine-Russia War?

By [Konrad Rekas](#)

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Unfortunately, we can presume that no one knows the answer to the title question, and what is worse, some people do not even want to.

As we are already aware, in the very first weeks of this conflict there have been some ideas about how to get it to an end, shared in Moscow and in some circles in Kiev as well. Nevertheless this hope was quickly extinguished by **Boris Johnson** and direct pressure from the UK and the USA, not only uninterested in peace, but clearly determined to continuing the war for any (Ukrainian) cost, so the Kiev government has been ultimately forced to follow.

Who Does Not Want the Peace?

As a result, more and more Western observers are pondering over the apparent paradox of Western involvement in Ukraine, pointing out that it is definitely insufficient for Kiev to take the strategic initiative, let alone achieve a victorious breakthrough, but it fits perfectly into the scenario of maintaining a long drawn conflict, like the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s, which was covered on television news somewhere between local tractors exhibition, sports and weather forecast. These analysts, unable to understand Western strategy, repeat an error that perhaps similarly looped systemic historians would recognise. **The double assumption that the West expects a Ukrainian victory and that it wants peace is a mistake.** If the US and UK really wanted peace, then:

- a) would not lead to war,
- b) would allow for a Ukrainian-Russian ceasefire as early as Spring/Summer 2022.

When nothing like this happened, the goals must be different. This assumption makes much

more sense than insisting that everyone in Western capitals has suddenly lost touch with reality.

Historians should associate that with the outbreak of the Great War. To this day, multitudes of researchers cannot understand how it is possible that such experienced diplomacy as the English one did not save the peace, even though it could have done it with one telegram to Berlin (which was requested by the French, by the way). However, the Foreign Office did no such thing and the scholars still try to understand the reasons of such a *mistake*, instead of accepting the obvious explanation that it was not a mistake, but a deliberate action aimed at escalating and spreading the European and then global conflict.

What End of the War?

No, more than two years after the outbreak, we are no closer to peace, because this is not the goal of this war assumed by its perpetrators, i.e. the United States, the UK and NATO. But does the other belligerent, i.e. Russia, have a vision of ending the conflict?

We can omit Ukraine in these considerations because, contrary to appearances, it is not an entity, but only a place of conflict, without any decision-making power.

The assumption that the Ukrainians have such power, or at least can regain it, was the Russian primary mistake in planning the original war goals, based on the belief that if Kiev is given a good shake, the ravenous oligarchs will leave it on their own, and neutralisation and denazification will be recognised by the Ukrainians themselves as meeting their vital interests. From today's perspective, such a plan seems embarrassingly naive, but everything indicates that this is exactly what the original Russian idea for a quick war without extraordinary military consequences looked like.

This plan fizzled out with Russian tank engines failing to capture Kiev when they had such an opportunity and was finally thrown off the table with the failure of the Istanbul Russian-Ukrainian talks. However, there remains the question of what is next, to which no one can give a sensible answer.

This is somewhat reminiscent of the situation with the COVID-19, when the only sensible question was never asked: what state would be considered the final end, how many 'infected' people should be there, then what percentage of the population should be vaccinated, in short, what must happen to stop tormenting people and destroying economy? We have not known that for two years and we never found out in the end, because **Putin** shot COVID-19 from a tank, which was probably not planned in advance when the pandemic circus began and would last for two years.

Similarly, we do know nothing today: what should be Kiev's victory? All we know is that there is no burning of Moscow, no capture of Donbas, no takeover of Crimea, so what: patching up the front, not so much broken by the Russians, but abandoned by deserting Ukrainian troops? Besides, the Russians probably don't know how and where it will end either: on the full line of the Dnieper? On the Dnieper line but with Odessa? On the upheaval in Kiev, on the way to the Zbruch River (before 1939 border between USSR and Poland), or maybe to the Bug River (present Ukrainian-Polish border)? And what is next, where does the idea come from that there is peace somewhere across the next river, as after all this time there is no other Reich Chancellery to raise a banner on saying '*Well, we've done what we needed to do, it's time to go home!*'?

Dancing on the Volcano

Unless both sides (once again, i.e. the West and Russia) have worked through the well-known strategy of the tickle game, turning it into an option of who gets tired sooner and has greater potential, i.e. into a scenario closest to the one known from the Western Front of the Great War. Then the subsequent villages in Ukraine that the Russians enter after the Ukrainian desertion do not matter much, because there are almost as many villages in Ukraine, Poland and Romania as there are conscripts in Russia, so all this may take a very long time.

This war will last or it will smoothly turn into another one. The current crisis may be deeper and longer than the previous one. And we are still dancing on the volcano, deceived by the appearance of a small quasi-stabilisation.

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