

Three Recent Surveys Re-emphasize the Need for Negotiations to End the Ukraine War

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Two recent surveys have re-emphasized the need for ending the Ukraine war as early as possible.

According to the results of a survey by Harris Poll and the Quincy Institute in the USA in February 2024, 70 per cent of the people in the USA want their government to push Ukraine towards a negotiated settlement with Russia as soon as possible.

When people polled were told that this is likely to involve compromises on both sides, still nearly two-thirds or 66 per cent supported the push towards early peace. In late 2022 when a similar question was asked, the people supporting the drive for peace constituted 57% of those polled. Hence there is a 9 per cent increase in such support for a negotiated settlement that involves compromises[1].

The second survey was conducted by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology.

This revealed that 72 per cent of Ukrainians believe that talks with Russia ought to get underway. The proportion of Ukrainians who believe that Ukraine can win 'only militarily' is only 23 per cent, although one year back it was 35 per cent, registering a drop of 12 per cent.[2]

A European Union poll conducted in 12 countries in January 2024 revealed that only 10 per cent of Europeans believe that Ukraine can defeat Russia. The poll also found that now most people in Europe support 'compromise solutions', unlike about a year back when there was much more emphasis on the Ukraine reclaiming all its territories.[3]

While these three surveys show that there is a clear preference in the USA as well as in Ukraine for finding a way out of the Ukraine war towards peace, this does not appear to be backed by the most powerful persons in the ruling establishments of these two countries.

In fact leaders at the top in the USA have continued to say that they are willing to support the Ukraine war effort against Russia for as long as it takes despite the terrible human costs of the war which have only continued to increase in recent times.

In a shocking display of lack of ethics a number of political leaders in the USA have been openly saying that the costs to the USA are very little as it is the Ukrainians who are doing the fighting for weakening their old adversary Russia. They also say that the supply of arms to Ukraine leads to jobs and business gains in the USA. What is completely forgotten by them is the immense human costs to the people of Ukraine in terms of the millions injured, displaced and killed. The lack of ethics shown in such statements by prominent leaders has shocked many people some of whom express disbelief that such statements have actually been made by leaders in responsible positions.[4]

Russian sources have told Reuters that Russia sent a peace offer to the USA in December 2023 and January 2024 which was rejected by the USA. However the USA has denied that such an offer was made.[1]

President Zelensky of Ukraine has also continued to make statements that are likely to result in the war continuing for an indefinitely long time, as he insists on Russia vacating all territories it has gained including Crimea before peace can be negotiated.

A much more viable solution with much higher chances of bringing ceasefire and peace would be to have ceasefire on the basis of existing lines of control and then to resolve all disagreements on the basis of peace negotiations which can be prolonged but should not be allowed to break down. This will result in conditions in which the overdue, really big rehabilitation effort in Ukraine can start. Peace and community -based rehabilitation on a large and adequate scale—these are the two most immediate and important needs of the people of Ukraine which must be met as soon as possible.

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Notes

1. New poll—nearly 70% of Americans want talks to end war in Ukraine. Article in ‘Responsible Statecraft’ by Connor Echols, February 16, 2024.
2. Zelensky must listen, Ukrainians want peace—article by Aydin Sezer, The Times of India, February 24, 2024.
3. Only 10% of Europeans believe Ukraine can defeat Russia—Report in Euronews by Joshua Askew.
4. Ukraine’s tragedies—A good deal for some war supporters, article in Responsible Statecraft

by Branko Marcetik.

Featured image: Graffiti "Stop War" on Russia's war in Ukraine in the Mauerpark in Berlin, Germany. Image taken on March 11, 2022. Source: Wikimedia Commons.

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