

# TEN RECOMMENDATIONS

## HOW TO COUNTER AGGRESSION WITH LIMITED RESOURCES

Based on our report “Security in Transition. How to Counter Aggression with Limited Resources”, the Institute of World Policy has prepared 10 recommendations that will improve Ukraine’s security if carried out. All 10 are based on a medium-term timeframe of 3-5 years. The Institute remains confident that Euro-Atlantic integration is the only direction for Ukraine to develop.

Nevertheless, without decisive reforms in every area, not the least in defense, this ambition will remain as one-sided as it currently is. Ukraine’s partnership with NATO should not be based on the cry “Membership or Bust!” that simply reflects Ukraine’s inability to take advantages of the available opportunities. Ukraine should consider, instead, moving to the “deeper, not wider” phase and intensify its cooperation in already established areas, rather than wasting resources in search of new instruments.

- 1. Asymmetrical security.** In a situation where traditional models are not working for Ukraine or are unable to provide the necessary level of security, it makes sense to devise some contemporary adapted models that will be able to respond to the most important security challenges. Such models need to be outside of outdated canons and their main criteria must be viability and effectiveness. Given the real state of affairs internally and externally in Ukraine, the asymmetrical security model is capable, both short- and medium-term, of providing the necessary response to most security challenges facing the country. One of its key features should be the capacity to respond effectively to a stronger adversary, despite limited resources, and to break the opponent’s will to engage in aggression.
- 2. Smart defense and diplomacy.** In shoring up conventional military capacities, the accent should be on developing a “smart defense” system and the appropriate new generation army, taking elements from the examples of the armies of Switzerland, Israel and Sweden. Particular attention should be paid to work with the civilian population, so that it sees a direct link between itself and its army and security system. For any security model to be successful, smart, pro-active diplomacy will play a critical role for Ukraine. This should be done by working with national elites and business in key countries, engaging in systematic efforts with all key partners, establishing the necessary networks and coalitions, and direct actions, thereby fostering the transformation of Ukraine into an important continental hub that will prove too costly to attack. This means that supporting smart reforms of Ukraine’s diplomacy and allocating the necessary resources, no matter how difficult it might be, must be one of the handful of top priorities for the state in the medium term.

- 3. Results-based Euro-Atlantic integration.** The coordination of reform of Euro-Atlantic integration must be strengthened with both human and financial resources. One thing that is needed is a document regulating reforms that will bring Ukraine closer to NATO standards, containing clear objectives and benchmarks, and focusing on results-based management. NATO specialists should be involved in drafting a National Annual Plan with clear objectives, benchmarks and timeframes, in addition to a clear plan for monitoring and evaluating the execution of the NAP. The non-government sector should have opportunities to influence both the content of this document and its evaluation.
- 4. Countering corruption as a cornerstone of security.** In its efforts to combat corruption in the defense sector, Ukraine must demonstrate serious results in the shortest time possible. Countering corruption would be the first, most obvious, and most basic sign that Ukraine is determined to change: at the least, this does not require outside funding but, on the contrary, will save public funds. Punishments for those engaged in corrupt activities should be more severe in the defense sector than in the civilian sector. The law must provide for very serious consequences against companies that have presented corrupt proposals to entities in the defense and national security sectors.
- 5. Deeper, not wider.** Ukraine cannot afford to have the attitude, “Membership or Bust!” in working with NATO but should, instead, take maximum advantage of all the available opportunities for partnership with the Alliance. There are no fundamentally new formats for cooperating with NATO that Ukraine has not made use of so far. However, Ukraine is not currently taking full advantage of those mechanisms on offer. Ukraine’s partnership with NATO is unique and the level of support it has garnered from partner countries is unprecedented. This does not mean that the scale of assistance cannot be increased, but the Alliance has made one thing quite clear: Kyiv must first demonstrate the capacity to absorb existing levels of assistance effectively. Right now, Ukraine’s absorption capacity is simply not there. Critically, Kyiv must not dither in making those decisions that don’t require much time but have a major impact on the country’s reputation, such as appointing the Ukrainian head of mission to NATO.
- 6. Establishing a new narrative among partners.** The Government of Ukraine should actively cooperate with the non-government sector, both in Ukraine and in NATO member countries, to formulate a new, positive image of Ukraine as both a country that contributes to the security of the entire Euro-Atlantic region, and as a state that has unique experience in resisting and combating hybrid warfare. Ukraine must establish effective lines of communication, not just with the Alliance itself but, first and foremost, with its member countries, and to invest not only in communication at the intergovernmental and interparliamentary levels, known as Track 1 diplomacy, but also in Track 2 diplomacy between Government and civil society, and Track III diplomacy within civil society itself. Notably, Ukraine’s non-government sector is far more progressive in engaging in these various tracks of diplomacy.

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- 7. Maximum integration into EU and NATO security structures.** To strengthen Ukraine's positions in the post-soviet region and diminish Russia's influence there, Kyiv needs to actively develop bilateral and multilateral security, defense and sector cooperation with EU and NATO countries in the many available formats: the Three Seas Initiative, NORDEFECO, EU battlegroups, LITPOLUKRBRIG, peacekeeping operations, and so on. Together with the Defense Ministry, Ukraine's Foreign Ministry should set up a working group to analyze formats for tighter military cooperation with various configurations of NATO and EU countries. Among others, Ukraine should consider participating in a number of projects: in NORDEFECO, moving from observer status and participation in exercises and training to cooperation in the Military Industrial Complex; in the Bucharest Nine, cooperating with members of NATO's eastern flank; and in military cooperation with the Visegrad group, such as further participation in V4 EU BG, joint exercises and the development of operational plans. The purpose of this kind of cooperation would be to maximally integrate into the military and security spaces of the EU and NATO without waiting for membership in NATO in the short and medium terms.
- 8. New knowledge.** Instituting NATO standards and reorienting towards the European security region means immediate changes in approaches to the teaching curricula of Ukraine's military academies and to military training in general. Military training, exercises and a modern military education are a mandatory component for establishing regional cooperation in existing and ongoing defense projects. This means that Ukraine must not only study European practice but also put effort into establishing a common educational environment for Ukrainian and European service personnel. Among others, Kyiv can submit a proposal to establish a NATO training center in Ukraine that would, in the immediate term, begin as simulation training centers. Or a proposal to set up a regional military academy along the lines of the Estonian one in Tartu. Negotiations on this kind of project can even be raised within the Visegrad group, which anticipated setting up a similar post-secondary institution as part of its own defense cooperation plans.
- 9. Making use of opportunities at the OSCE and UN.** To strengthen Ukraine's regional security, another major component would be to actively make use of opportunities offered by the OSCE and UN. Supporting the reform of the UN Security Council and pushing for updated OSCE arms control agreements are at least two existing initiatives in which Kyiv's voice should be stronger. The goal of Ukraine's own diplomats should be to get information to the world community about Russia's destructive role in regulating conflicts and to continue to expose its aggression against Ukraine and other countries in the region.
- 10. Deeper partnership with the US.** Kyiv needs to work towards maintaining and increasing cooperation with Washington. Ukraine should promote the idea of increasing the US and NATO presence in the Balkans and in the Black Sea basin. One argument in favor of this is that, right now, RF groupings in occupied Crimea show, both qualitatively

and quantitatively, far more new weaponry than what the Kremlin has placed in the Kaliningrad enclave. Ukraine should also steadily expand cooperation with the US by looking for additional common interests in the military arena. In the medium term, developing relations step-by-step and enshrining them in agreements should go hand-in-hand with upgrading Ukraine's military capacity. The new agreement should, in legal terms, be higher than the current Charter, and eventually lead to either a Strategic Framework Agreement or a Defense Cooperation Agreement. The priority areas for such an agreement should include:

- holding joint exercises;
- cooperating in developing weaponry;
- getting consultative and material assistance in reforming the defense sector;
- collaborating in cyber security as an important link in cooperation with the US, given that Russia's hacker attacks have been used against the US as well as against critical infrastructure in Ukraine;
- joining forces to support international peace and security, which would strengthen Ukraine's role as a strategic country for the US. This kind of cooperation needs to have substance and avoid being declarative;
- joint research and analysis of the ways and means of hybrid warfare.
- cooperating in the intelligence sphere.



*A full publication is available on the IWP web-page: <http://iwp.org.ua/eng/>*

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