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EUROPEAN SECURITY AND FINLAND'S POLICY DURING THE RUSSIAN AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to analyze the influence of Finland on regional policy of NATO and the Russo-Ukrainian war. The article explores political, economic and military aspects of Finland and Ukraine in the light of the Russian aggression while considering their relationships and foreign policy goals on a regional level. The author draws attention to various aspects of Helsinki domestic and foreign policy that is directed to set a balance in the region and, at the same time, to support Kyiv militarily and economically in confrontation with Moscow.

Finland's active policy of promoting stability can be described as a two-track policy, whereby EU membership and intensified military cooperation with Western partners provide a basis for the maintenance and development of relations with Russia. The author focused on energy resources and its importance for Finland that has a long history of energy trade with Russia. The trade is practically one-directional, as Finland lacks domestic fossil fuel reserves in comparison with its substantial demand for energy, whereas Russia has significant export volumes.

Along with the above-mentioned issues, the author is observing aggressive Russian military activities in the Baltic Sea region. Despite peaceful relationships with Finland, Moscow does not mind to remind neighboring countries who calls the tune in the region. Pursuing this purpose, Russia increases military activity in the Baltic Sea region with relatively frequent airspace and territorial water violations. As a result, there is a risk that collisions or provocations might lead to a rapid and uncontrolled escalation. So, Finland finds its important to keep open channels for political dialogue and to seek ways to re-activate existing confidence-building measures.

Finland-NATO relationships are taken into consideration as well. The author described the process of Finland's accession to the alliance. After almost 30 years of close partnership with NATO, Finland joined the Alliance on April 4, 2023. Its partnership with NATO was historically based on its policy of military non-alignment, which changed following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Following Russia's aggression, Ukraine has requested materiel assistance from the EU and NATO member countries. To date, Finland has donated 23 defence materiel packages to Ukraine. The combined value of all defence materiel packages submitted so far is now over EUR 2 billion.

Keywords: Finland, Russo-Ukrainian war, NATO, European security, regional policy

ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКА БЕЗПЕКА І ПОЛІТИКА ФІНЛЯНДІЇ УПРОДОВЖ РОСІЙСЬКОЇ АГРЕСІЇ ПРОТИ УКРАЇНИ

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Анотація

Метою статті є аналіз впливу Фінляндії на регіональну політику НАТО та російсько-українську війну. У статті досліджуються політичні, економічні та військові аспекти Фінляндії та України у світлі російської агресії. Розглянуто їхні взаємовідносини та зовнішньополітичні цілі на регіональному рівні. Автор звертає увагу на різні аспекти внутрішньої та зовнішньої політики Гельсінкі, яка спрямована на встановлення балансу в регіоні та водночас на військову й економічну підтримку Києва у протистоянні з Москвою.

Активну політику Фінляндії, спрямовану на дотримання стабільності, можна охарактеризувати як двосторонню політику, згідно з якою членство в ЄС та активізація військового співробітництва із західними партнерами є основою для підтримки та розвитку відносин з Росією. Автор звертає увагу на енергетичні ресурси та їхню важливість для Фінляндії, яка має довгу історію торгівлі енергоносіями з Росією. Торгівля є практично односпрямованою, оскільки Фінляндії не вистачає внутрішніх запасів викопного палива порівняно зі значним попитом на енергію, тоді як Росія має значні обсяги експорту.

Поряд із вищезазначеними питаннями, автор частково розглянув агресивну російську військову діяльність у регіоні Балтійського моря. Попри мирні відносини з Фінляндією, Москва не проти нагадати сусіднім країнам, хто диктує політику у регіоні. З цією метою Росія посилює військову активність у регіоні Балтійського моря з відносно частими порушеннями повітряного простору та територіальних вод. У результаті є ризик того, що зіткнення чи провокації можуть призвести до швидкої та неконтрольованої ескалації. Отже, Фінляндія вважає важливим зберегти відкриті канали для політичного діалогу та шукати способи відновлення існуючих заходів зміцнення довіри.

Також розглянуто відносини Фінляндії та НАТО. Автор описав процес приєднання Фінляндії до альянсу. Після майже 30 років тісного партнерства з НАТО 4 квітня 2023 р. Фінляндія стала членом Альянсу. Її партнерство з НАТО історично базувалося на політиці військової позаблоковості, яка змінилася після повномасштабного вторгнення Росії в Україну у лютому 2022 року. Після агресії Росії Україна звернулася за військовою допомогою до країн ЄС і НАТО. На сьогодні Фінляндія передала Україні 23 пакети військової допомоги. Загальна вартість усіх надісланих пакетів оборонних матеріалів наразі перевищує 2 мільярди євро.

Ключові слова: Фінляндія, російсько-українська війна, НАТО, європейська безпека, регіональна політика

Introduction. The unprovoked aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine in 2022 caused a number of changes in the policy of European countries, especially those bordering Russia. And one of them is Finland, policy of which is not much analyzed though its foreign policy especially after the beginning of the full-fledged war initiated by Russia against Ukraine. The Republic of Finland has had formal relations with NATO since 1994, when it joined the Partnership for Peace program. The country

maintains positive relations with the organization, and the possibility of its membership has been a topic of debate in the country since the end of the Cold War. It became NATO's newest member on April 4, 2023, after submitting application of accession to the North Atlantic Treaty at NATO headquarters in Brussels. NATO Allies signed Finland's Accession Protocol on July 5, 2022, after which all 30 national parliaments voted to ratify the country's membership (Finland joins NATO as 31st Ally, 2023).

Topicality of the research. Scholars recognize fundamental changes in the world politics, both at the global and the regional levels especially after the beginning of the Russian aggression against Ukraine in 2022. And the changes concerned not only big international actors, but also smaller states such as Finland, Sweden and so on. The topic of the research is relevant due to the impact of Finland in the regional politics and aid provided by this country to Ukraine in fighting against Russia. Topicality of the topic is determined by lack of academic researches concerning Finland and its role and stance regarding Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The article explores political, economic and military aspects of Finland and Ukraine in the light of the Russian aggression while considering their relationships and foreign policy goals on a regional level.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the influence of Finland on regional policy of NATO and the Russo-Ukrainian war. The purpose presupposes the following objectives:

1. Follow the relationships between Finland and the Russian Federation over the last few years;
2. Trace the development of two-sided relationships between Finland and NATO;
3. Identify Finland's influence on the Russo-Ukrainian war.

Methodology. Among methods used in the research we find useful the following ones: a case study of Ukraine; event analysis; use of secondary data; comparative analysis; content analysis.

The case method provides an in-depth understanding and analysis of the warfare waged by the Russian Federation against Ukraine. Event analysis as a qualitative research technique that is used to describe and explain events related to the topic of the research. Secondary data analysis (official statistics) provided us with data regarding economic and military aid provided by Finland in order to help Ukraine. Comparative analysis, used in the study, furthered our understanding of the Russian Federation aggressive policy against Ukraine. Content analysis was applied to speeches delivered by Finland and Ukrainian politicians and obtained from media sources.

Literature review. The issue of regional policy has been frequently raised by scholars, but Finland and its impact in Ukraine's resistance and fighting back to Russia was not in the focus of researches. There are some publications dedicated to Finland and its regional policy and cooperation with NATO, but they are predominantly mass media news. From our point of view Finland's role in helping Ukraine since the start of the full-fledged war is underestimated. We identified several groups of researches who focused on various aspects of Finland's policy ranging from the development of relationships with Moscow to NATO cooperation.

The first group includes scholars who studied Finland-Russia relationships before the full-fledged war of Russia against Ukraine. C. Duxbury and J. Rossi (2015) described how Helsinki nurtured trading ties with Moscow in 2015, four years later, after the occupation of the Crimea and the eastern regions of Ukraine by Moscow. Despite aggressive actions of Moscow against Ukraine, Helsinki developed economic relationships with its neighbor. What is more, at that time Finland turned out to be a leader of economic relationships with Russia (Duxbury & Rossi, 2015).

K. Pynnöniemi and S. Sinikukka (2017) identified and described set of threats posed by Russia and directed against Finland. The scholars conclude that Russia is using both carrots and sticks, often unofficially and indirectly, to exert influence and to signal the potential for more negative policies in the region. The above-mentioned Finnish experts, in

the article, share some of the lessons Finland has learned in recent years. Among them: influence on politics and public opinion, strategic use of energy resources and increased military activity in the Baltic Sea region (Pynnöniemi & Sinikukka, 2017). J. Suchoples (Suchoples, 2022) traced historic events of bilateral relations with the focus on Finland in the Security Policy of Russia and the Soviet Union from Peter the Great to Contemporary Times. His observations explain to some extent the stance of neutrality of Finland that is in the shadow of the aggressive neighbor.

There's a set of articles connected with the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian war and the Finland's policy of aid for Ukraine. For instance, P. Ngendakumana (2024) has made observation of the current situation when Finland's officials made a statement that Ukraine is free to bomb Russia with their weapons (provided by Finland) (Ngendakumana, 2024). A. Gordon (Gordon, 2023) draws a parallel between the past and current Finland. The scholar analyzed the Finnish effect of the war in Ukraine. L. Cook and M. Lee (Cook & Lee, 2023) grounded the reasons why Finland joined NATO in major blow to Russia over Ukraine war. The reasons are quite clear and are explained by aggressive foreign policy course of the Russian Federation. G. Sauvage (Sauvage, 2022) illustrated why Helsinki changed its status and made decision to join NATO. The researcher proved the idea that the war in Ukraine tests Finland's stance on Russia (Sauvage, 2022). B. Reynolds (Reynolds, 2023) reviews Finland's long road West.

A recent review of the literature on this topic (Hivert, 2023) found that migration process in Finland, at the country's eastern border, were initiated by Russia in retaliation for its NATO membership. More recent evidence (Vanhanen, 2023) shows the change of Finland's policy course under the influence of a revanchist Putin. The scholar reveals how Finland has made a shift away from a decades-long policy of military nonalignment to the member of NATO. H. Pillai (Pillai, 2022) drew a distinction between the previous and the current policy course of Finland. The researcher maintains the idea that a new era of Finnish foreign policy begins. K. Pohjanpalo, N. Rolander and L. Laikola (Pohjanpalo, Rolander & Laikola, 2024) provide several reasons how Russia pushed Finland and Sweden to join NATO. They singled out benefits for NATO, Russia's response to the steps made by Sweden and Finland and what war required to join NATO.

The main body of the paper is divided into four sections: first, relationships with Moscow; second, aggressive Russian military activities in the Baltic Sea region; third, Finland's way to NATO; fourth, Finland-Ukraine relationships in the light of Russian aggression.

The results and discussions. Relationships with Moscow. Relationships with Moscow has never been easy for the Republic of Finland. Living next door to Russia pushed Helsinki to find a position of balancing between the West and NATO on the one hand, and Moscow and its imperial intentions, on the other. So, relations with Russia, for decades, were based on the ability of Helsinki to maintain reciprocal trust, with an emphasis on Moscow's faith that Finland was not plotting against Russia. Finland makes regular attempts to maneuvers in its foreign and security policy. It is Helsinki political and military dilemma, because neighboring Russia leaves almost no room for maneuvering and requires constant management and corrections. Finland's active policy of promoting stability can be described as a two-track policy, whereby EU membership and intensified military cooperation with Western partners provide a basis for the maintenance and development of relations with Russia (Pynnöniemi & Sinikukka, 2017).

Economically, their relationships were developing and both states got benefits from trading. Finnish exports to Russia amounted to \$6.5 billion in 2013. The Russian market accounts for 9.5% of what Finland sells abroad. By comparison, 2.2% of Finnish exports go to neighboring Sweden, and Finnish companies sell 6.9% of their goods in the EU. In addition, Russian tourists spent \$1.5 billion in Finland in 2013. To encourage Russians to spend more, the government has allocated 37 million Euros to modernize checkpoints on the eastern border (Duxbury & Rossi, 2015).

Despite economic ties, Moscow could not get rid of its corrupt approaches of spoiling relationships through provocations and violent acts. Russian provocations were connected with border migration tensions. In the winter of 2015-2016, Russia suddenly began to let third country citizens access the Russian-Finnish border to seek asylum in Finland. This breached a decades-old common border practice, without actually breaking any official agreements. A total of 1,713 asylum seekers arrived in Finland from Russia during the winter months (Pynnöniemi et al., 2017). Russia's purpose was not to destabilise Finland, but to test the reaction and operational readiness of the Finnish authorities. It was also a signal that good working relations between neighboring countries could not be taken for granted and that the consequences of losing Russia's trust could be significant for Finland.

Energy resources are important for Finland that has a long history of energy trade with Russia. The trade is practically one-directional, as Finland lacks domestic fossil fuel reserves in comparison with its substantial demand for energy, whereas Russia has significant export volumes. Finland imported 64% of its primary energy in 2016 and 63% of this amount originated in Russia, i.e., 40.4% of the total primary energy in 2016 was of Russian origin (Jääskeläinen, Höysniemi, Syri & Tynkkynen, 2018). The most notable energy sources from Russia are oil, uranium, coal and natural gas, respectively. Natural gas is the most sensitive in terms of security of supply, as practically all the natural gas consumed in Finland still comes through a single pipe from Russia. Moreover, unlike other imported fuels, there are practically no natural gas storages in Finland. Considering its dependence on Russia supply, Finland is eager to halve its oil imports and phase out coal in normal energy use by 2030. Moreover, the global markets for crude oil and coal are liquid. At the same time, Finland is much less significant a purchaser of energy from Russia than what Russia is to Finland as a supplier. Of all Russian hydrocarbon exports in 2016, 1.4% of oil (Neste's refinery actions excluded), 1% of natural gas and 1.7% of coal were exported to Finland (Statistics Finland, 2017).

On the one hand, Helsinki is dependent on its neighbor, because Finland does import all of its natural gas and significant shares of its oil, coal, uranium and electricity from Russia. Of these, disturbances in the supply of natural gas and electricity are the most tangible, as they are connected to the existing pipelines and transmission lines, respectively. However, consumption of natural gas in Finland and Russian electricity imports have decreased significantly during the 2010s (Jääskeläinen et al., 2018). For coal, oil and uranium, there is a variety of suppliers globally. So, there are options and if things get worse, it is possible to find substitute sources. On the other hand, there are no natural gas storages in Finland, but the critical demand for natural gas can be substituted with oil. Therefore, disturbances in the fuel supply would not cause an immediate energy crisis.

Regarding perspectives, Finnish energy imports from Russia will decrease slightly by 2040. Finland abandons its ban on coal for security of supply reasons, but the use of coal decreases as some of the power plants reach the end of their technical lifetime.

Aggressive Russian military activities in the Baltic Sea region. Despite peaceful relationships with Finland, Moscow does not mind to remind neighboring countries who calls the tune in the region. Pursuing this purpose, Russia increases military activity in the Baltic Sea region with relatively frequent airspace and territorial water violations. Russian military aircraft often fly "dark" between St. Petersburg and the Kaliningrad region, namely without transponders or a flight plan. As a result, there is a risk that collisions or provocations might lead to a rapid and uncontrolled escalation. So, Finland finds it important to keep open channels for political dialogue and to seek ways to re-activate existing confidence-building measures (Pynnöniemi et al., 2017).

Peaceful coexistence at the time of challenges. Russia as a dangerous neighbour has made Finns constantly strengthen their defence capabilities. As a result, Finland has one of the strongest armed forces in Europe. The country has a system of obligatory universal conscription. Finns can mobilise up to 280,000 soldiers. The Finnish army's artillery units are among the largest in Europe. Since the middle of the 20th century, Finnish military engineers have become first class experts in equipping

fortifications, obstacles, traps and mines. The Finnish military possesses 200 German Leopard Tanks, as well as various missile weapons. These include the Israeli JASSM air-to-ground guided cruise missile, and the Gabriel V extremely low-altitude anti-ship missile. The Finnish military's use of the GMLRS guided multiple launch rocket system is also better adapted to the peculiarities of the Finnish landscape than the wheeled HIMARS system (Gordon, 2023).

Finland-NATO relationships. After almost 30 years of close partnership with NATO, Finland joined the Alliance on 4 April 2023. Its partnership with NATO was historically based on its policy of military non-alignment, which changed following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 (Relations with Finland, 2024).

The initial stage of connections dates back to 1994 when Finland joined the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (a multilateral forum for dialogue that brings together all Allies and partner countries in the Euro-Atlantic area) in 1997. For quite a long time period, prior to its accession, Finland had been one of NATO's most active partners and a valued contributor to NATO-led operations and missions in the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq. As an 'Enhanced Opportunity Partner'¹ (a partner country that makes particularly significant contributions to NATO operations and other Alliance objectives), Finland experienced enhanced opportunities for dialogue and cooperation with the Allies (Relations with Finland, 2024).

In 2017, Finland implemented an initiative and created the Helsinki European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats. The center is open to participating states and supported by NATO and the EU.

War in Ukraine as an accelerator of changes. Since the initial stages of Russian aggression against Georgia and later against Ukraine, in contrast to the Baltic states, Finland was sticking to its usual non-aligned policy and did not want to join NATO. At the same time, Helsinki was preparing for a possible war. While Western countries have been cutting their military budgets, Finland has continued to increase spending on the army. In particular, the country strengthened its arsenal by purchasing cruise missiles from the United States.

The President of the Republic of Finland Sauli Niinistö, making a report in the Parliament, stated: "Russia's cruel invasion of Ukraine in the early years of this decade dramatically changed the security situation in the whole of Europe. Finland responded by joining NATO and continued by negotiating the DCA agreement with the United States" (Speech by President of the Republic of Finland Sauli Niinistö in Parliament on 1 March 2024). In the light of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, which began in February 2022, Finland (together with Sweden) submitted its official letter of application to become a NATO Ally on 18 May. On 4 July 2022, following the Madrid Summit of NATO Leaders, Finland and Sweden completed accession talks at NATO Headquarters in Brussels. The then 30 Allies signed the Accession Protocols for Finland and Sweden the following day. The Accession Protocol for Finland was subsequently ratified by each of the Allies according to national procedures (Relations with Finland, 2024). On 4 April 2023, Finland became a full member of NATO.

NATO Allies signed Finland's Accession Protocol on 5 July 2022, after which all 30 national parliaments voted to ratify the country's membership. "We welcome Finland to the Alliance!," said NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, as Finnish Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto deposited Finland's instrument of accession with the government of the United States, represented by Secretary of State Antony Blinken. Speaking ahead of the ceremony, the Secretary General thanked President Niinistö for his outstanding leadership and for leading Finland into the most successful Alliance in history: "I am deeply proud to welcome Finland as a full-fledged member of our Alliance and I look forward to also welcoming Sweden as soon as possible," he said. "Joining NATO is good for Finland, it is good for Nordic security and it is good for NATO as a whole," he added. The Secretary General also noted that Finland's accession shows the world that President Putin failed to

“slam NATO’s door shut.” “Instead of less NATO, he has achieved the opposite; more NATO and our door remains firmly open,” he said (Finland joins NATO as 31st Ally, 2023).

Finland was not alone in its efforts to join NATO. Thereafter, Sweden joined the Alliance on 7 March 2024, after Sweden’s Accession Protocol was ratified by all NATO member countries. So, two Nordic countries strengthened the alliance in tandem. Finland has close ties with other Nordic countries and participates in Nordic Defence Cooperation (NORDEFCO), a regional defence initiative that promotes collaboration between Nordic armed forces. Two Nordic countries, have joined NATO, and strengthened the Nordic borders of the Alliance with Russia approaching Moscow so closely.

Finland’s NATO membership was a major blow to Russian President Vladimir Putin with a historic realignment of Europe’s post-Cold War security landscape triggered by Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine. Finland had adopted neutrality after its defeat by the Soviets in World War II, but its leaders signaled they wanted to join NATO after Moscow’s invasion of Ukraine sent a shiver of fear through its neighbors. “The era of nonalignment in our history has come to an end – a new era begins,” President Sauli Niinistö said before his country’s blue-and-white flag was raised outside NATO headquarters. A short distance away, outside the security fence, a few dozen people wrapped in flags of their own chanted, ‘Ukraine needs NATO’ (Cook & Lee, 2023).

In praising Finland’s membership, U.S. President Joe Biden noted: “When Putin launched his brutal war of aggression against the people of Ukraine, he thought he could divide Europe and NATO. He was wrong,” Biden said in a statement. “Today, we are more united than ever. And together – strengthened by our newest ally, Finland – we will continue to preserve transatlantic security, defend every inch of NATO territory, and meet any and all challenges we face” (Cook et al., 2023).

Finland’s accession to full NATO membership is a significant step for strengthening European security and fit is clear not only for Ukraine and European partners, but also for Russia and its proponents. Considering the implications of Finland’s accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) for Ukraine is also important. NATO has welcomed Finland as its thirty-first member, fundamentally transforming the security situation in Northern Europe and the Baltic Sea region. This move has sparked higher aspirations among those in Ukraine who favor European-Atlantic integration, with Ukraine eventually becoming a NATO member state (Finland’s support to Ukraine: facts and numbers, 2024).

After joining NATO by Finland and Sweden, the entire Nordic region has become a part of NATO. Europe has become a more powerful defense partner for the United States and Canada. NATO’s expansion will enhance the continent’s capability to safeguard security in this pivotal region. Together, Sweden and Finland bolster the defense of the Arctic, where Norway and Iceland previously faced the extensive Russian border alone. A united European presence in NATO also sends a clear signal to Russia that its ambitions to weaken the alliance have failed. This solidarity strengthens NATO’s ability in Europe to confront the Kremlin and tackle continent-wide challenges such as terrorism, cyber threats, corruption and other destabilizing elements. Sweden and Finland possess capabilities other NATO Baltic Sea nations do not: fast-moving combat boats, hovercraft and coastal hunters that are trained to defend against enemy naval infantry, but are also able to attack. Beyond the Baltic region, only the U.S. and the UK among NATO members maintain strong amphibious forces (Bjorling, 2024).

Finland defence materiel assistance to Ukraine. Following Russia’s aggression, Ukraine has requested materiel assistance from the EU and NATO member countries. To date, Finland has donated 23 defence materiel packages to Ukraine. The combined value of all defence materiel packages submitted so far is now over EUR 2 billion (Russian attack on Ukraine and Finland’s support to Ukraine, N.d.). Finland is part of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group, which consists of over 50 countries and which, led by the United States, coordinates the delivery of armed assistance to Ukraine.

As the President of the Republic of Finland Sauli Niinistö at Max Jakobson Memorial Lecture on 28 September 2023 said: “But more is at stake in Ukraine than

European security alone. The negative side effects of Russia's actions are being felt across the globe. The core principles of international security and law are being tested. If Russia is allowed to succeed in Ukraine, it will set a dangerous precedent for others to potentially follow. It is the task of the whole international community to ensure that this foundation remains strong even after the war" (Speech by President of the Republic of Finland Sauli Niinistö at Max Jakobson Memorial Lecture on 28 September 2023).

The Kiel Institute for the World Economy estimated that in 2022 Finland committed, in general, over 0.899 billion Euros to help Ukraine combat Russian aggression. This commitment accounts for 0.360 percent of Finland's GDP, putting it among the top 11 nations in terms of its response. Regarding humanitarian aid, Finland donated 0.051 billion Euros to Ukraine, the equivalent of 0.020 percent of Finland's GDP. This places Finland in the top 14 countries in terms of their humanitarian response to the situation (Finland's support to Ukraine: facts and numbers, 2024).

According to The Kyiv Independent, as of May 25, 2023, Finland provided the 16th package of military aid, thus increasing the sum of the type of assistance to 1.1 billion euros. This package comprises, among other elements, anti-aircraft systems, and associated munitions. Moreover, on April 21, Ukraine received a shipment of defense training equipment from Helsinki in accordance with the European Union Military Assistance Mission in Support of Ukraine (EUMAM). This shipment was part of an effort to equip the 30,000 Ukrainian troops participating in EUMAM, providing them with the necessary resources to complete their mission (Finland's support to Ukraine: facts and numbers, 2024).

On 3 April 2024, Ukraine and Finland signed an agreement for security cooperation and long-term support. As reported by the press service of the Ukrainian President, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, the Ukrainian president, and Finnish President Alexander Stubb have signed the agreement in Kyiv. There are 89 clauses in the document. The published text foresees that Finland commits to providing long-term support to Ukraine's needs, particularly in the areas of security and defence, as well as to strengthening Ukraine's stability (Ukraine signs security agreement with Finland, 2024).

"Finland's security commitments to Ukraine seek to complement contributions from the participants of the G7 Declaration, including the EU and the Nordic countries. These security commitments to Ukraine are coordinated with allies and partners," the document states. Finland will continue its support for Ukraine during the ten-year term of this agreement and provide Ukraine with comprehensive support for as long as necessary. Ukraine, for its part, is determined to implement public administration reforms, including transparency, accountability and anti-corruption reforms. Finland's military support will remain substantial and will contain defensive assets based on Ukraine's urgent and critical needs, such as ammunition (Ukraine signs security agreement with Finland, 2024). Both countries reaffirm their commitment to working constructively for Ukraine's gradual integration into the EU with the goal of its future EU membership.

By the 30th of May, Finland along with ten other European partners declared that Kyiv has the right to hit territory of Russia in order protect itself. The Finland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs says that they did not set any restrictions on the weapons supplied to the Ukrainian army. "Russia is waging an illegal war of aggression in Ukraine, and Ukraine has the right to self-defense according to Article 51 of the UN Charter. This also includes attacks on military targets on the attacker's territory, which are necessary for self-defense," said the head of the ministry, Elina Valtonen (Zhernovska, 2024).

In order to achieve objectives, Ukraine and Finland will hold an annual high-level dialogue on strategic security and defence policy. "In the event of a future Russian armed attack against Ukraine, at the request of either Participant, the Participants will consult within 24 hours, bilaterally or via other channels they both deem suitable, in order to determine appropriate next steps," the agreement says (Ukraine signs security agreement with Finland, 2024). Finland has taken pro-Ukrainian position, so Helsinki also urged Germany to "seriously consider" sending long-range Taurus cruise missiles to help Kyiv

(Ngendakumana, 2024). Ukraine can use weapons provided by Finland to hit targets on Russian soil, senior officials in Helsinki said. Finland's Defense Minister Antti Häkkinen said his country has not set any restrictions on what Ukraine can do with the weapons it provides and added that blocks have been imposed mainly by countries which have provided Ukraine with long-range weapons systems.

"If necessary, Ukraine should also strike military targets on the Russian side. It is a completely legitimate defensive battle that Ukraine is waging. The U.N. Charter allows military targets to be attacked across land borders," said Jukka Kopra, chair of the Finnish parliamentary defense committee. That's a stark difference from other Western countries including Germany, where Chancellor Olaf Scholz is reluctant to send long-range Taurus cruise missiles to Ukraine, fearing the weapons will be used to strike targets deep inside Russia and draw Germany directly into war with Russian leader Vladimir Putin. "I encourage Germany to seriously consider it. The German government does know that they would be of great importance," said Häkkinen.

Ukraine can use Finnish-provided weapons to strike Russian territory, Finnish Defense Minister Antti Hakkanen told the Finnish Broadcasting Company on February 29, 2024. "Finland has not imposed restrictions on its military aid to Ukraine", Hakkanen added. "Ukraine should also strike military targets on the Russian side, if necessary. Otherwise, these military objects will strike on the Ukrainian side. This is an absolutely legal defensive struggle, which Ukraine is waging. The UN Charter allows attacking military targets across land borders," Jukka Kopra, a member of Finland's parliament, said (Hodunova, 2024).

At the same time, Finland approved its 22nd defense aid package to Ukraine worth around 190 million Euros (\$205 million) in February of 2024. As with its previous aid packages, Helsinki did not disclose what it had included in the packages or when it was delivered due to security reasons. Hakkanen said restrictions have primarily been set by countries that have supplied Ukraine with long-range weapons systems (Hodunova, 2024).

In 2024 Finland will provide Ukraine with the 23rd military aid package. Its cost will be 188 million Euros, according to Finnish President Alexander Stubb. He says the Finnish government approved the 23rd aid package for Ukraine last week. It is worth 188 million Euros. It is mostly military aid. It includes air defense systems and large-caliber artillery ammunition, among other things. Stubb adds that Finland has so far provided 2 billion Euros in military aid and another 700 thousand Euros in humanitarian aid. He adds that Finnish support will continue. This 23rd package is what helps to meet the needs (Oleniak, 2024).

The newly elected President of Finland Alexander Stubb officially declared that support of Ukraine will not stop: "In the short term, we must continue to give Ukraine financial and military support. In the medium term, we must help Ukraine to achieve a just peace. In the long term, we must make sure that Ukraine becomes a fully-fledged member of both the EU and NATO" (Speech by President of the Republic of Finland Alexander Stubb at the Parliament of Estonia, the Riigikogu, on 27 May 2024).

Conclusions. Putin had hoped to occupy Ukraine in order to keep NATO away from Russia's borders, but he has achieved the opposite result. Finland's accession has doubled the length of NATO's borders with Russia. With Sweden's admission to NATO the security paradigm will shift in the European and Scandinavian security framework. This is the direct result of Putin's calamitous misjudgments. Despite peaceful relationships with Russia, Finland supports Ukraine providing military aid. Overall, Finland has shown an outstanding commitment to Ukraine during this trying time, with its response extending far beyond merely rhetorical symbols of solidarity. Finland's considerable contributions of humanitarian and financial aid and its significant military assistance demonstrate its strong commitment to standing together with Ukraine during the war since the beginning of the full-fledged warfare.

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