The Ukraine-NATO Partnership: Challenges and Opportunities in Light of the Ongoing Russia-Ukraine War

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Abstract

Article 51 of the UN charter affirms that it is the natural and fundamental right of all nations to select and put in place their security measures, and to be able to freely choose or modify their security arrangements, such as alliances and treaties. After Ukraine regained its independence in 1991, formal relations between Ukraine and NATO were established in 1992 with Ukraine's membership in the North Atlantic Cooperation Council, which was later, renamed the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. Through qualitative analysis this research paper examines the Ukraine-NATO Partnership in the context of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, seeking to understand the challenges and opportunities it presents. Two hypotheses are put forth: first, that the partnership has evolved and strengthened, reflecting NATO's commitment to deterring Russian aggression and promoting regional stability; and second, that internal divisions within NATO member states continue to hinder the partnership's full potential. .It delves into the challenges and opportunities that arise from this partnership, considering the geopolitical implications and security concerns for both parties. This study further examines the implications of classical realism for current regional stability and security challenges in international relations. Overall it suggests that partnerships are still essential to maintaining regional stability and security.

Keywords   Russia-Ukraine, NATO, Challenges, Opportunities, Classical Realism

Introduction

According to Article 51 of the UN Charter, all states have the "inherent right to choose and to implement freely their own security arrangements and to be free to choose or change their security arrangements, including treaties of alliance, as they evolve." This is echoed in the NATO-Ukraine Charter on a Distinctive Partnership. Both NATO and Ukraine must decide whether joining is in their respective interests. In 1991, when Ukraine joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC, later renamed the Euro Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC)), relations between Ukraine and NATO were formally established. Ukraine became a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in 1994 and joined the Partnership for Peace (PfP) program. In November 2002, the NATO-Ukraine Action Plan was adopted in Prague after President Leonid Kuchma expressed Ukraine's intention to join NATO in May 2002. The Intensified Dialogue (on Membership of Ukraine) began in April 2005 and was a clear indication of NATO Allies' support for Ukraine's integration aspirations (Kriendler, 2007).

The main nation where this influence needed to be re-established was Ukraine. Russian elites on the left, right, and even the center gave priority to control over Ukraine because of its unique significance in Russian history and advantageous location in relation to Europe. Immediately after Ukraine proclaimed its independence in August 1991, Pavel Voshchanov, Yeltsin's press secretary at

the time, asserted territorial claims against it. Alexander Rutskoi, Yeltsin's vice president from 1991 to 1993, frequently broached the subject of regaining Russian control over the whole Crimea as well as the Black Sea fleet stationed out of Sevastopol. More progressive politicians also proposed similar ideas. Thus, in 1992, Vladimir Lukin, a prominent member of the Yabloko Party and a former Russian ambassador to the United States, started the first votes in the Russian parliament that supported utilizing the Black Sea Fleet to put pressure on Ukraine over Crimea. The Russian Supreme Soviet issued two resolutions in 1992 and 1993 asserting that Sevastopol was a part of the Russian Federation and that the 1954 transfer of the Crimea to Ukraine was unconstitutional. Yeltsin personally first rejected agreeing to a fundamental contract with Ukraine that would permanently surrender all territorial claims. Between 1992 and 1993, Russian officials hinted that Western nations didn't need to modernize their facilities in Kiev because the days of Ukrainian independence were numbered. Russian elites believed that Ukraine joining NATO would be a calamity of epochal proportions and a serious threat to Russian interests across a number of fronts, notably their overseeing of the Black Sea Fleet base at Sevastopol (Snegovaya, 2022).

In September 2014, the NATO-Ukraine Commission announced that all 28 allies were working together to improve Ukraine's security. Several allies were giving extra back to Ukraine on a two-sided source including military-technical assistance. NATO recognized five defence competence building reliance resources to help out Ukraine get better its protection. In December 2014, Jens Stoltenberg, Secretary General of NATO, confirmed the trust funds and added that some allies were providing practical support and equipment. Although NATO intensified their collaboration with Ukraine, they resolved in April 2014 to suspend all sensible resident and military teamwork with Russia. The reasons for NATO and EU governments' hesitation to provide Ukraine with deadly military hardware are many, including the fright of combat with a nuclear-armed Russia. Other factors include the perception that Russia is more invested in Ukraine's future status than NATO and EU governments and that they will do whatever it takes to secure their position (Yost, 2015).

However, detractors claim that treating NATO and its capacity for expansion as the cornerstone of US engagement in Europe is problematic because it not only encourages allies to take advantage of US security generosity on the cheap, but it also might encourage risky allied behaviours that could trap the USA in a wider range of security issues than it would otherwise face. In other words, NATO expansion can benefit the new members while not necessarily improving US security (Goldgeier, 2020).

Zelensky's approach has been to try and involve the Western countries in the crisis. When it comes to direct action, Biden has been less vocal, and France and Germany have been even less vocal. Zelensky and others have so far been unsuccessful in getting the government to impose a "no fly zone" over the nation. Such a move would be disastrous and would certainly lead to a military confrontation between NATO and Russia. An arrangement by Poland to install MiG-29 warrior jets to the US, and soon to Ukraine, was redundant by the US. A Pentagon official expressed solemn apprehension for the full NATO grouping regarding the possibility of fighter jets, which are available to the US government, flying into the airspace in excess of Ukraine that is contested with Russia. The planes are expected to fly from a US base located in Germany. However, the US Congress approved a package of $3.5 billion in military equipment in March, along with an additional $3 billion for the deployment of US forces in European allies and for intelligence support. Portable drones that explode when they make contact with their object, Stinger anti-aircraft missiles, Javelin anti-tank weaponry, and the Patriot air defense missile system are examples of military assistance. Germany has abandoned its long-standing practice of refraining from supplying armaments to conflict areas (Choorana, 2022).

Three nearly similarly written declarations, including ones for Belarus and Kazakhstan, were released in December 1994, along with the Budapest Memorandum regarding Ukraine. Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States met in the margins of the Budapest summit of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and offered security guarantees to Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine in switch for their amalgamation the NPT as non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS) and handing over all nuclear warheads finished by the Soviet Union that were present on their soil to Russia. Regarding their security guarantees in this regard, China and France released separate and independent declarations (Yost, 2015).

Skokov's 1993 adoption of Russia's first official foreign policy manifesto, the Foreign Policy Concept, made it abundantly obvious that "the near abroad" was of great interest to Russia and that the post-Soviet space required close observation. In November 1993, the Military Doctrine was approved, which called for an expanded Russian presence in the region. By late 1993, a new and more assertive strategy was adopted to defend Russia's "special role" in the nearby regions. This marked the territorial orientation of post-Cold War Russia, which is evident from the special attention given to the nearby regions in almost every Russian foreign and security policy paper. With time, more strident policies followed this more confrontational rhetoric. The Kremlin may have prioritized opposing Western "encroachment" over all other goals in order to re-establish great power status rather than forging beneficial relationships with the former republics (Snegovaya, 2022).

Moscow's annexation of Crimea in March 2014 demonstrated its disregard for Ukraine's "territorial integrity or political independence," as well as its "independence and sovereignty" within its current borders. It was impossible to argue that Russia was acting "in self-defence" because Ukraine did not pose a threat to Moscow. The UN Security Council also did not give Russia permission to intervene in Ukraine, much less seize a portion of the nation. Russia's failure to uphold its obligations under the Budapest Memorandum fits into a larger pattern of Russian contempt for international agreements. On the other hand, Russia has refuted accusations that it broke the Budapest Memorandum, citing the transformation of the Ukrainian administration. Russia has emphasized that the Ukrainian government in place since President Viktor Yanukovich fled Kiev in February 2014 is different from the one with which the Budapest Memorandum was signed in 1994. President Putin claimed that Yanukovich was ousted in a "revolution" or "anti-constitutional coup" in March 2014. In case of a revolution, Putin stated that "a new state... would emerge in this territory, with which we have signed no binding agreements" (Yost, 2015).

President Putin, however, said that Russia had numerous justifications for its conduct with regard to Crimea in March 2014: that Soviet authorities had committed a "outrageous historical injustice" by handing over control of Crimea and other historically Russian territory to Ukraine; Sevastopol and Crimea are "dear to our hearts, symbolizing Russian wartime glory and remarkable valour," they say; that attempts "to deprive" Russian speakers and population in Ukraine "of their past remembrance, as well as their language in order to subject them to forcible assimilation" were made against them; that 'nationalists, neo-Nazis, Russophobes, and anti-Semites' staged a 'revolution' in Kiev under the control of 'foreign backers' in the West; the people of Crimea and Sevastopol had begged Moscow for assistance in follow resolve on the foundation of the Kosovo precedent; that this "overthrow" intended that there was "no lawful supervisory power in Ukraine now"; in particular, "with NATO's spreading out to the East, as well as the establishment of military equipment at our borders," that "western co-workers, direct by the United States," had "lied to us a lot of times, made choices behind our backs, put us previous to an skilful fact."; Additionally, the NATO fleet would be stationed in the city of Russia's military magnificence as a result of Ukraine joining NATO, posing a genuine threat to all of southern Russia. (Yost, 2015)

A drive was made to extend both the EU and NATO near Russia's borders during a period of abruptly declining Russian power (figure 3). In order to push for both EU and NATO membership, Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia (later Czechia and Slovakia) established the Visegrád group in 1991. The US government of Bill Clinton, however, was when development really picked up speed. At the 1999 NATO summit in Washington, "Membership Action Plans"—a newly established process for prospective members—were announced for Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, North Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia. These plans formalized NATO's expansion into Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic. Since the Baltic States joined NATO in 2004, Russia considers neighbouring former Soviet states as unfriendly. Numerous Russians view NATO as a relic of the Cold War that is fundamentally hostile to their nation, as stated by Strobe Talbott, Clinton's deputy secretary of state. They argue that the Warsaw Pact, their military partnership, has been abolished and question why the West should not follow suit (Choorana, 2022).

According to some commentators, the Kremlin intentionally stirs up hostility with Russia's neighbours to sketch concentration away from domestic trouble. The 2008 Russian invasion of Georgia, according to Lilia Shevtsova, "described the return of the classic strategy of uniting people around an identifiable foreign enemy, thereby diverting from their true concerns." According to McFaul and others, Putin was concerned about colour revolutions and the size of the political

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opposition after he was elected president once more in 2012. As a result, Putin "recast the United States as an enemy" and viewed developments in Ukraine throughout late 2013 and early 2014 through the prism of this framework in an effort to organize his electoral base and discredit the opposition. These justifications appear reasonable. Opinion polls revealed that support for Putin was waning before the choices to attack Ukraine in 2014 and 2022. After making those decisions, Putin's popularity skyrocketed (Snegovaya, 2022).

The Ukrainian administration has articulated attention in substitute the Budapest Memorandum with a more potent ambassadorial agreement. In June 2014, newly elected President Petro Poroshenko declared in his inaugural speech that he would use his diplomatic expertise to ensure that an international agreement is signed to replace the Budapest Memorandum. Such an accord is obliged to offer straight and reliable guarantees of peace and safekeeping by donation armed assistance in the event of a risk to defensive reliability. In August 2014, Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk announced that his administration would seek legislation from parliament to allow Ukraine to apply for NATO membership. Ukraine's Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk questioned what the Russian Federation's ongoing military attacks on Ukrainian territory designate. It implies that a nation that deliberately gave up its nuclear armoury refused nuclear position, and received guarantees from the most powerful nations in the world is left helpless and isolated in the face of a nuclear state that is well-armed. To our Western allies, I say: "Explain how you will convince Iran or North Korea to give up their status as nuclear states if you do not provide the guarantees that were agreed to in the Budapest Memorandum." The former foreign minister of Ukraine from 2007 to 2009, Vladimir Ogryzko, has stated that Ukraine should leave the NPT and develop nuclear weapons if Western nations do not take concrete steps to secure its security. 'If you have nuclear weapons, nations don't attack you,' according to Pavlo Rizanenko, a Ukrainian lawmaker (Yost, 2015).

Three interconnected elements will determine if Ukraine will apply to join NATO in the future. The expected transformation of NATO into a new pan-European security framework comes first. Second, the accomplishments of Ukraine's four-divided alteration progression include state, nation building, marketization, and democratization. Finally, whether Ukraine decides to renounce its non-bloc rank and impartiality in favour of applying for full NATO membership will be heavily influenced by developments in Russia (Kuzio 1998).

The conflict between Russia and Ukraine has been a topic of much discussion. Similarly, the partnership between Ukraine and NATO has been a point of interest for many. However, there is a lack of comprehensive research that explores the relationship between Ukraine and NATO, as well as their interactions in the context of the ongoing conflict. To address this gap, a thorough analysis is being conducted to examine the potential and difficulties of the Ukraine-NATO alliance. This analysis will take into account both security concerns and regional stability, with the aim of offering a comprehensive understanding of the situation. The study will examine the current status of the partnership, the challenges that exist, and the prospects for the future. The analysis will consider the political, economic, and social factors that have contributed to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, as well as the impact of these factors on the Ukraine-NATO partnership.

The goal of this study is to examine the potential and problems posed by the alliance between Ukraine and NATO in the context of the ongoing Russia-Ukraine War. It looks into the possible impacts on regional security and stability as well as the significance of stepping up cooperation between NATO and Ukraine to address shared security concerns. The theory of classical realism is applied to accomplish this. What major obstacles must the Ukraine-NATO alliance overcome in light of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine? How does the current conflict influence regional security and stability, and how much of a part does the Ukraine-NATO alliance play in resolving these issues? This study will provide answers to these questions within the unique context of Ukraine and NATO during the Russia-Ukraine War, as well as insights into the continuing importance of partnerships in sustaining security and peace in the region.

Hypothetical Speaking:
Ukraine desires NATO membership for security and protection from Russia. By seeking NATO membership, Ukraine aims to create a more stable and secure environment. NATO plays a pivotal role in facilitating cooperation, strengthening security alliances, and expanding its reach to deter Russian aggression. Ukraine recognizes the challenge of facing a nuclear-armed superpower like Russia and believes that NATO membership is the most effective way to ensure its safety. Becoming a NATO

member would grant Ukraine access to collective security, comprehensive support, and assistance from all NATO member nations. This hypothesis posits that NATO's strategic engagement with Ukraine has intensified, leading to an increase in financial and military support, joint exercises, and a deepening of political cooperation.

Despite NATO's efforts to bolster the Ukraine-NATO Partnership, internal divisions among NATO member states regarding the appropriate level of support for Ukraine persist, thereby limiting the partnership's full potential. Ukraine's aspiration to join NATO has given rise to a spectrum of viewpoints within both Ukrainian society and among NATO member states. These varying opinions have led to controversies within NATO member states, primarily driven by concerns over potential Russian reactions. The issue of Ukraine's accession has occasionally strained alliance relationships, as some member states exercise caution in dealing with Russia. This hypothesis suggests that varying national interests, risk perceptions, and diplomatic considerations within NATO member states continue to influence their commitment to Ukraine's security. The research will delve into these internal dynamics to understand their impact on the partnership and assess whether NATO's qualitative approach to collective security is fully realized in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war.

NATO-Ukraine Partnership: Enhancing Opportunities for Ukraine

The evolution of Ukraine's democracy is inextricably linked to its ties to Europe and potential future membership in the European Union. Approximately 75% of the votes in the May 25, 2014, presidential elections went to candidates that clearly supported the European Union and the West; as a result, Ukraine is more pro-EU than the majority of other EU nations.2014 (Granholm).

The difficult task for Ukraine is to decide whether or not joining NATO is in its best interests. If so, it must then develop the necessary internal political consensus, effectively market itself to NATO allies, and forge the necessary ties with Russia. Prior to a few years ago, what appeared to be within everyone's reach today paints a considerably more challenging picture (Kriendler, 2007).

Involvement in the Partnership for Peace program can bring several benefits to Ukraine. For example, joint activities in peacekeeping (since Ukraine opposes participation in CIS peacekeeping) can lead to an increase in the quite a lot of skilled units accessible for the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) or UN peacekeeping duties. Additionally, it can enhance the effectiveness of NACC, conducts cooperative exploration and scholastic studies, and raise Ukrainian military standards to those of NATO. As a result, Ukraine can participate in PFP on equal terms with Russia and aid in the democratization of the army (Kuzio, 1998).

One of Ukraine's richest oligarchs, Petro Poroshenko, has now been elected president, elevating his supporters to positions of authority. Following the signing of the EU association agreement, the country's constitution was changed to obligate it to join both the EU and NATO. Over the following six years, the US would provide the nation with military assistance worth almost $1.8 billion. The government agreed to hike gas prices for consumers and implement deficit reduction process in return for a $3.9 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund (Choorana, 2022).

According to Marten, the downturn in relations between the West and Russia was over predicted, and the expansion of NATO was not a major contributing element. Instead, enlargement highlighted Russia's diminishing standing rather than the fact that NATO threatened Russia, to the degree that it contributed to the present tensions. According to the Russian view, the USA operated as if Western interests may have a minimal impact on Russian interests. Each side still had conflicting ideas on the non-Baltic states of the former Soviet Union, however. Russia considered these nations to be part of its exclusive sphere of influence, in contrast to the United States and its allies who thought they were free to determine their own destiny. Thus, NATO expansion may have strengthened Russian opposition to Western policy, but it was only one of several factors in the rekindling of hostility (Goldgeier, 2020).

Another significant issue is capital flight and investors moving their money elsewhere. The greatest risk, though, is to Russia's credibility as a trading partner and, more especially, as a source of energy for Europe, in the long run. If Europe starts importing more energy from other places, Russian economic growth would further slowdown. The revenue from energy exports still makes up a significant portion of the Russian national budget. It will be challenging to keep commitments like raising pensions and benefits and improving healthcare and education due to decreased energy incomes. For a sizable portion of Putin's supporters, these issues are crucial (Granholm, 2014).

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What should the left do in light of all this? In nations like Britain, the entire standard supporting organization has hooped together not presently to condemn Russia but also to quash any disapproval of the part that NATO and the EU played in fomenting violence in Ukraine. Sharp criticism of groups like the Stop the War Coalition (STWC), which was originated in 2001 to go up against the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as the Russian raid of Ukraine and the NATO expansion that came before it, has resulted from this (Choorana, 2022).

Ukraine does not maintain its neutrality or non-bloc status out of a desire to "Finlandize" itself. President Kuchma has after all stated that "Ukraine's environmental location oppose our doctrine." By no means are we Switzerland or any other such nation. 107 on several occasions, President Kuchma added, "Ukraine will not be capable to stay external the coalition. However, Kuchma remarked during a visit to Riga. That Ukraine's non-alignment today is absurd. In Ukraine, the self-declared neutrality it established in the July 1990 Declaration of Sovereignty is becoming increasingly irrelevant, which is likely to be reflected in the country's position if previously neutral Austria joins NATO (Kuzio, 1998).

Challenges and Consequences for Both Parties

On September 14, 2006, Prime Minister Yanukovych addressed the North Atlantic Council. "There is no substitute currently for the approach that Ukrainian has selected in its relationship to NATO," said then-prime minister Yanukovych. But with regard to the Membership Action Plan, The present state of affairs in Ukraine indicates that "we are going to be forced to take a break, but the moment is coming where a decision will be taken". Furthermore, their viewpoints have not changed in any way. Yanukovych stated, "Ukraine is not prepared to join NATO at this time," in late March 2007, in response to a U.S. Congress resolution supporting Ukrainian participation in NATO.2007 (Kriendler).

Although Kiev has occasionally expressed interest in joining NATO over the years, it is still unlikely that Ukraine will join the organization, in part because numerous NATO partners are reluctant to move in a way that could be interpreted as hostile to Russia in a insightful area. Putin's performance during this disaster has further distanced Ukraine from joining NATO, despite the fact that Russian behaviour has undoubtedly raised interest in that membership. Although the NATO partners are willing to offer a number of forms of assist to Ukraine, they are not willing to take on the risk of armed warfare with Russia in order to protect Ukraine. Inviting Ukraine to join their collective defense organization would imply taking that risk. In the near term, there isn't the probability of agreement to provide Ukraine with a Member Action Plan or an alternative path to membership. Consensus among the current partners is an crucial prerequisite of an summons to a nation to become part of the coalition (Yost, 2015).

The leader of the nations holds drastically different opinions within the Cabinet about the question of whether it would make a good idea for the country to become a member of NATO. These differences, across many other reasons, have put the prospect of Ukraine joining NATO on hold. Other reasons involve the following: a lack of support from the public in Ukraine; the requirement for important further change; as well as the current complexity, along with ambiguity of the Ukrainian political procedure. The inclusion of Ukraine in NATO is a significant issue. It concerns the issue of how far NATO would expand into the former Soviet area as well as the security measures that Russia will put in place to ensure its own security. The problem also plays a deciding role in ties between NATO and Russia (Kriendler, 2007).

By this point, the alliance's expansionary policies were already highly polarized. At the April 2008 summit, France and Germany had previously opposed granting Ukraine and Georgia quick membership action plans; now they would persist in doing so, obstructing any further advancement. The gas supplies from Russia, which has the greatest reserves in the world, were extremely important to the powers of continental Europe. In fact, the German government had invited Russia to construct Nord Stream 2 despite opposition from the US, Britain, Poland, and the Ukraine. The tactics were merely abandoned in 2022 because to the raid of Ukraine. This would have operated in equivalent to the already-existing Nord Stream 1, which transports gas straight from Russia to Germany (Choorana, 2007).

Alliance unity and risk-sharing are two fundamental tenets around which NATO is built. Collective defense obligations, as mentioned above, as well as the need that allies participate actively in non-Article 5 NATO-led operations, where allies often bear the cost of troop deployment, participation, and support, are examples of burdens. Financial expenses are incorporated in the

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contribution of tasks. This encompass a section of the roughly $2 billion annual NATO Security Investment Program (NSIP), as well as the coalition united inhabitant and military budgets. Russia would view Ukrainian membership in NATO as a serious aggravation, which is likely to cause kindred with Russia to further deteriorate. In many respects, being an ally is taxing. Participating fully in the intricate and rapidly changing decision-making process within NATO requires high strain on state institutions. Valuable inter-agency communication, cooperation, and interaction with parliament are of utmost importance, especially when parliamentary approval is required intended for choice such as the use of state military for NATO operations. As the alliance makes nearly all decisions by agreement, it is essential for allies to be willing to compromise to enable NATO to make timely decisions for collective action. This often involves changing one's opinion on controversial matters, where strong opinions may exist. However, in the interest of alliance cohesion, partners must bear the burden of condemnation of NATO for its whole policies or any act that proves incorrect, such as civilian deaths or injuries caused by a NATO or NATO-led operation. Even while Ukraine may not have had a direct role in the operation or the specific incident, many would still hold it somewhat responsible as an ally (Kriendler, 2007).

Ukraine may resemble Turkey more and more as it waits in line to join the EU for 40 years as a nation that serves as a "bridge" between two civilisations but is never truly regarded as being "European." However, due to the Cold Wars and its aftermath's recognition of Turkey's strategic importance, joining NATO has not been blocked. Therefore, Ukraine might experience the same financial and psychological issues that keep Turkey from entering the EU/WEU yet let it join NATO (Kuzio, 1998).

The difficulties facing Ukraine are immeasurably greater: to retain the country's unity, independence, and democracy against intense Russian pressure while pursuing its aspirations to join the European Union. Ukraine cannot handle this duty by itself. For a very long time to come, it will require support from Western nations politically and financially. There is a probability that Ukraine will have a genuine reformist government given the gravity of the situation and the outcome of the pre-term presidential elections (Granholm, 2014).

Due to the number of defense exports Ukraine makes to the Russian Federation and the dependence of the Ukrainian defence sector on Russian component imports, Russia's military-technical cooperation must terminate. According to data from the Ukrainian Ministry of Industrial Policy in 2004, over half (51.9%) of the exports from the country's military-industrial complex went to Russia. Approximately eighty percent of the supplies needed by the Ukrainian military were anticipated to be supplied by Moscow in late the year 2005, concerning the weaponry components that Kiev purchases from Russia. Another estimate, apparently from a Russian source, suggests that Ukraine sold $680 million worth of defense equipment in 2005, out of which approximately $200 million came from collaboration with Russia. The inference is that the suspension of security assistance would directly affect defense exports worth close to $200 million. It's also important to note that the majority of the Ukrainian defense sector is located in eastern Ukraine, which is the region that opposes NATO membership the most (Kriendler, 2007).

Following the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, the Yushchenko-Tymoshenko government was tasked with implementing sweeping reforms and bringing about significant change. However, their efforts fell short of the expectations of the Ukrainian people, ultimately leading to the victory of Yanukovych in the presidential election. Yanukovych's rise to power was a result of the disillusionment with the previous administration and its inability to deliver on its promises. After winning the 2010 election, Yanukovych announced a "balanced policy" that involved maintaining his commitment to cooperation with the European Union while abandoning his desire to join NATO. This shift in policy was an attempt to balance Ukraine's dealings with the East and the West and avoid antagonizing Russia, which had long been a major economic and political partner of Ukraine (Choorana, 2022).

It would seem reasonable to assume that American leaders would comprehend Russia's worries about Ukraine joining a hostile coalition. After all, the Monroe Doctrine, which cautions foreign superpowers to avoid the Western Hemisphere, is something that the United States takes very seriously. However, very few American policymakers have the ability to put themselves in Mr. Putin's position. They were thus taken aback when he sent more troops into the Crimea, threatened to invade

eastern Ukraine, and stated Moscow would use its tremendous economic clout to topple any government in Kiev that was opposed to it (Mearshiemer, 2014).

In a statement to the State Duma in 2005, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov remarked, "We have said repeatedly that every country has the right to determine who will be its collaborator in the global arena in a sovereign manner. In addition, the admission of Ukraine and Georgia to NATO will result in a significant geopolitical change, which we evaluate from the standpoint of our interests. The State Duma then passed a resolution reproving Ukraine's aspirations to link NATO and noting that this would "direct to extremely pessimistic consequences for relationships between our fraternal peoples" by a vote of 435 to 0 with one abstention. President Putin made it quite plain in a speech he gave on February 10 at the Munich defence consultation that Russia was unhappy with the NATO expansion. He declared that "NATO extension is a grave issue which subordinate the level of shared trust" and further argued, "We have the obligation to inquire upon whom this is aimed?" (Kriendler, 2007).

Asymmetry in stakes is an issue for NATO, in addition to a lack of resources to protect small, defenceless states close to Russia. Simply put, the security of the Baltic States, Georgia, and Ukraine is more important than that of the USA. Moscow has a strong incentive to act against these nations since the United States will locate it complicated to do so without committing unnecessary risks (Menon, 2020).

The unfavourable public perception of NATO in Ukraine is a major linked issue. A huge majority of the people opposes joining NATO due to not have of interest, deficiency of knowledge, the endurance of Cold War stereotypes, critical criticism of NATO and of alliance with NATO, among other factors. Press reports state that only 16% of the people favoured NATO membership as of the end of 2005. More recently, a study conducted in mid-July 2007 by the Yaremenko Ukrainian foundation for societal Studies and the Social Monitoring Center revealed that only 19.9% of respondents favoured Ukraine's inclusion in NATO, while 57% opposed it. The survey also revealed that 43.4% of Ukrainians support a union with Russia and Belarus, whereas 24.7% of respondents said Ukraine should join the EU (Kriendler, 2014).

Theoretical Framework

Classical realism and structural realism both agree that states are the main determinants of the international system, which is anarchic. They also share the view that power politics plays a significant role in domestic and international politics. However, classical realism differs from structural realism in that it sees the international system as one of many causes, defined by anarchy and contingency, rather than predictable patterns. Thus, when analysing foreign policy, other elements, like as the "lust for power" and related psychological and emotional urges, are taken into account by classical realists. Unlike structural realists who primarily focus on the third-image studies, classical realists give greater significance to first-image (the individual) and second-image (the state) evaluations. While classical realism acknowledges that Russia and the United States are working to promote their idealised views of social reality and a strong feeling of social identity, structural realism is frequently linked to the inherent dread of states. For classical realists, the struggle for life is not as important as the political struggle over wills, meanings, and the satisfying of basic psychological and emotional drives. The theoretical perspective of classical realism in offensive realism likewise contests the claim that the state is rational (Smith & Dawson, 2022).

The need for power is the foundation of classical realism's approach to global politics and foreign policy. It has both survival and assertion aspects. According to offensive realism, a state's primary goal is survival, but the assertion component can reveal more about the nature of power politics. Morgenthau believes that the desire for power is related to an individual's position among their peers once their survival is secured, rather than their ability to survive. Russia and the US, who are forcing their ideas of social order on Ukraine, hold this same opinion. According to President Joseph Biden, "Russia's choice of war" poses "a clear threat to the rule-based global system created since the end of the Second World War Two" in March 2022. Prez. Vladimir Putin declared in June that "nothing lasts permanently" and that "they tend to have faith that the supremacy of the West in international affairs and financial markets is an unaltered, everlasting value." Ontological security for Russia is predicated on the notion that it will win in Ukraine. The goal of the US is to prove that Western norms and values are holding steady. This dispute ultimately escalated into a military battle as a result of its increasing fierceness (Smith and Dawson, 2022).

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Results and Findings

After conducting a thorough analysis of the variable at hand, with a primary focus on the relationship between NATO and Ukraine and challenges and opportunities that arise from this partnership, the present study concludes that it has become apparent that reinforcing NATO's cooperation with Ukraine is an imperative and strategic priority, given the constantly evolving and intricate geopolitical landscape worldwide. This study aims to shed light on the complex web of connections that exist between these two entities and the significant influence their partnership has on ensuring Ukraine's security and stability, thus contributing to wider regional and global stability.

The current research shows that the NATO-Ukraine alliance presents a complex mix of opportunities and challenges. To be in compliance with NATO standards, Ukraine must experience internal political and security changes. This procedure may be difficult and costly, but it also gives Ukraine the chance to update and improve its defense capabilities, promoting greater stability and resilience. Effectively assisting Ukraine's reform efforts presents a challenge for NATO, potentially requiring a strain on resources and focus. However, this alliance gives NATO the chance to broaden its influence and influence in Eastern Europe, promoting regional stability and displaying the alliance's dedication to international security.

The present found that there is a clear divergence in public opinion among numerous NATO members, which has a direct impact on how much help is given to Ukraine. Divergent opinions on the geopolitical consequences and alliance commitments of aiding Ukraine are reflected in this division. Given the possible risks and expenses involved with interfering in Ukraine's internal affairs, some citizens and authorities in these member nations could be cautious. On the other hand, there are supporters who underline the value of unity within the alliance and the strategic significance of supporting Ukraine in the context of regional stability and global security.

The present study found that major increase in financial and military support, an expansion of joint exercises, and a material development of political collaboration have all been signs of a notable escalation in NATO's strategic relationship with Ukraine. The determination to strengthen Ukraine's security and adaptability to regional challenges is reflected in this strengthened collaboration. NATO is strengthening Ukraine's security through increased financial and military support as well as joint exercises to raise integration and readiness. The alliance's dedication to maintaining regional stability and security is further cemented by the deepened political collaboration reflecting a shared understanding of the significance of bringing Ukraine's democratic and institutional reforms into line with Western standards.

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