

The armed conflict in Ukraine as a potential precursor to a global military confrontation – a comparative perspective in the context of the world's largest wars

Original article

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Abstract

Objectives: The purpose of this article is to analyze the war in Ukraine in the context of historical armed conflicts and assess the potential risk of escalation of this conflict to World War III. The paper aims to identify the characteristics of the modern Russian-Ukrainian conflict and compare them with selected international conflicts to determine the scale and global consequences of the current war.

Results: The analysis showed that the Russian-Ukrainian conflict stands out from other conflicts both because of the scale of involvement of world powers and the unprecedented geopolitical, economic and social consequences, which are felt not only at the regional level, but also at the global level and in the economic context. Unlike previous wars, the war in Ukraine triggered widespread political and social mobilization.

Conclusions: The results of the study indicate that the war in Ukraine, although it has not yet formally evolved into a global conflict, has characteristics that could be the seeds of a larger escalation. The complexity of the conflict, the involvement of key international actors and its implications for European and global security pose a real risk of this war turning into a wider conflict.

1. Introduction

War and related activities constitute one of the most tragic pages in human history. The terms “war” and “armed conflict” are often used interchangeably, however, it is important to distinguish them precisely. War is defined as the rupture of peaceful relations, including diplomatic relations, between two or more states and the unequivocal transition to relations of war. In most cases, war begins as a result of a formal declaration of war by one of the states, where the key premise is an aggressive attack by one state on the other, which becomes its victim. Armed conflict, on the other hand, encompasses all military actions, including those not preceded by a formal declaration of war, as is the case with the Russian-Ukrainian war, among others (Collier, Hoeffler, 2007).

Analysis of the concept of war requires consideration of its multidimensional nature. From a sociological perspective, the subject is sometimes marginalized, which is partly due to the conditions associated with political correctness in various national contexts. In the simplest terms, war is the opposite of a state of peace, however, such a schematic statement does not convey the complexity of the phenomenon or provoke meaningful reflection. In the tradition of moral philosophy, Cicero argued that war can be morally justified as long as certain conditions are met. Francis Suarez argued that war should be waged with a clear goal of restoring peace, while negotiating peace and avoiding actions that could take the form of unlawful aggression. In the classical theory of war, Carl von Clausewitz defined it as the continuation of policy by violent means, aimed at forcing the opponent to achieve political goals (Suarez, 2006). The ultimate goal of the aggressor is to completely overpower the opponent and to force the demilitarization of the attacked state. The classic definition of war was formulated by American political scientist Philip Quincy Wright, who considered war to be a legal state of affairs that allows disputes between states to be settled by armed force. On the other hand, the ancient Chinese thinker Sun Zi (544-496 BC), in his fundamental treatise *The Art of War*, emphasized that the highest achievement in the art of war is victory over the opponent without having to fight. This interpretation does not refer only to peace negotiations, but primarily to strategically smashing the enemy from within. An effective tactic is to skillfully create tensions and divisions among the invader's allies, thereby tipping the balance of victory to one's side (Combs, 2000).

Technological advances have significantly influenced the modernization of traditional weapons, such as the World War II-era Thompson submachine gun, and have also contributed to the development of modern weapons systems, such as laser weapons. Technological innovations introduced during armed conflicts have significant implications not only in military terms, but also in economic, social and cultural terms. The advantage on the battlefield is gained by the entity that makes more efficient use of available resources and possesses advanced technology. Technology plays a key role in any war, regardless of the era or theater of operations. The first armored vehicle is considered to be the British Mark I tank, used during World War I, although the first concepts of war machines date back to Leonardo da Vinci's designs. In 1911, Australian engineer Lancelot De Mole developed a design for an armored tracked vehicle, but it was rejected by the military of the time. It can be noted that major armed

conflicts force the parties to engage all available resources and technologies in order to gain an advantage and end the war successfully (Sun, 2019).

The purpose of this article is to provide an in-depth analysis of the war in Ukraine in the context of historical armed conflicts of the 20th and 21st centuries and to assess the potential risk of its escalation to a global conflict, potentially leading to World War III. The article aims to identify similarities and differences in the course, scope, and consequences of these conflicts from a political, military, and social perspective. Another important aspect of the research is to assess the impact of the war in Ukraine on the contemporary international order and global security. The analysis aimed to determine the extent to which this conflict could constitute a critical juncture for further destabilization of the international system. A key element of the work was to identify political and diplomatic mechanisms that could contribute to reducing the risk of war escalation. The article emphasizes that the war in Ukraine is not only a regional armed conflict but also a phenomenon with far-reaching geopolitical implications. The ultimate goal was to draw attention to the need to develop lasting instruments of international peace and security that will prevent a repetition of the experiences of past global conflicts.

2. Korean War “The Forgotten War”

The conflict between North Korea and South Korea had been going on for a long time, but in Poland in the 1950s, access to information about the two countries was severely limited. Nonetheless, North Korea gained sudden attention in the Polish public space, especially during meetings of the Polish Committee of Defenders of Peace, where it was often a topic of discussion. Marches and demonstrations were organized in the country to express solidarity and support for the Korean people. Portraits of dictator Kim Ir Sen were commonly displayed in many Korean households and workplaces, reflecting his cult status in society (Choi, 2017). The Korean War is often seen as a mask for a deeper, ideological clash between the superpowers - the United States and the Soviet Union - while the Koreans themselves became secondary participants in the conflict. The real goal was to confront these two global powers in a limited but strategically significant proxy war. The formal dividing line of the Korean Peninsula was drawn along the 38th parallel, resulting in the creation of two separate states in 1948, while generating significant social problems for the region's inhabitants. Taking advantage of Japan's weakening after the atomic bombings carried out by the US, the Japanese attempted to increase their influence in the region, further complicating an already tense geopolitical situation (Jurek, 2023).

The origins of the Korean War raise numerous questions and controversies, especially in the context of North Korea's adoption of the model of Soviet communism. The region's society was characterized by extreme poverty - an estimated 88% of the population was illiterate living in rural areas. Infant mortality rates were alarmingly high, with only 20% of children living to the age of one. The diet of most of the population was based on limited resources such as field crops and tree bark, reflecting the harsh living conditions that forced the population to take unreasonable measures even in the realm of basic nutrition. Access to medical care was virtually absent, and life expectancy rarely exceeded 42 years. The North Korean authorities remained heavily dependent on the Soviet Union, receiving support

from the People's Republic of China, while the southern part of the peninsula was under the control of the United States. The political and social differences between the two parts of Korea were clear - the north was dominated by a communist regime inspired by the Soviet model, while the south had a constitutional republic whose elections were overseen by United Nations envoys, which confirmed their legitimacy and led to the establishment of the Republic of Korea (Ryan, 2018).

In the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Kim Ir Sen consistently consolidated his authority through the systematic creation of a cult of the individual. He exercised power in an autocratic manner, often compared to Joseph Stalin, whose political methods were a model for him. His image was glorified in art and propaganda - praise songs and numerous portraits were created, furthering his quest for absolute control. One of Kim's main goals was to unify the entire Korean peninsula under a single communist political system. To this end, he sought the support of the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China for a military attack on South Korea, which eventually led to the outbreak of the Korean War (Steinberg, 2019). From a sociological perspective, the conflict contributed to profound changes in the southern part of the peninsula, where the activity of resistance movements increased significantly, putting pressure on the North Korean leadership. At the very least, Kim Ir Sen's ambitions had a regional dimension, and his expansionist policies enabled an intensive build-up of military capabilities, which created the conditions for the implementation of further aggressive actions against its southern neighbor (Konon, 2022). However, the termination of the conflict was not the result of political calculations alone - military considerations also played an important role. Both sides, North Korea and South Korea, came to the realization that continued hostilities would not result in a strategic victory, and that further bloodshed would not serve the interests of either side.

One of the immediate consequences of the Korean War was the return of North Korean youth residing in Poland between 1951 and 1959. As a result of the hostilities, a significant number of orphans - children who had lost their parents to the fighting - were evacuated to Eastern Bloc countries, mainly Poland, Czechoslovakia, the USSR and Romania. More than 1,200 children and young people were sent to Poland, and their stay was fully financed by the state. The health of those who arrived differed significantly from the medical standards in Poland at the time - reports indicated, among other things, the presence of unknown parasites among many of the children. After Wladyslaw Gomulka took power and during the political thaw, it was decided to repatriate the young Koreans. The official reason was the improvement of the internal situation in North Korea. However, according to the interpretation of some researchers, the decision was also based on the North Korean authorities' belief that the children's eight-year stay abroad posed a threat to the ideological unity of the state. One of the lasting effects of the war was the intensive militarization of North Korea, implemented at the expense of an almost complete redistribution of budgetary resources for the military. Such policies led to years of social impoverishment and civilizational regression. In the post-war years, the bodies of people who died of starvation were a common sight, as a result of the brutal principle: "he who does not work, does not eat." The state had no resources for social welfare, and even today public executions are permitted, especially in cases of suspected espionage. The situation was exacerbated by systematic violations

of human rights (Peters, 2018). Restrictions on civil liberties were (and remain) pervasive - affecting freedom of expression, political activity, and economic conditions.

The Korean War also contributed to a deep social polarization between the two parts of the peninsula. This differentiation is evident in both lifestyles and the prevailing legal order. The conflict has also resulted in huge human losses, with North Korea losing more than 500,000 soldiers and another 500-600,000 wounded. The number of civilian casualties exceeded 2 million. In South Korea, by contrast, some 415,000 soldiers were killed and 429,000 wounded. Civilian losses are estimated at 600,000 to as many as 1 million people.

3. Vietnam War - Second Indochina War

The military actions in Vietnam, which took place between 1957 and 1975, are, in terms of war doctrine, an example of a conflict of a special nature. They were not limited to a clash between two Vietnamese states - the Republic of Vietnam (South) and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North) - but had a much broader, geopolitical dimension. For the first time in history, the DRC employed guerrilla warfare on such a scale, fitting into the paradigm of asymmetric conflict, in which the weaker side uses irregular tactics against an opponent with military superiority. For the United States, the Vietnam War was groundbreaking and dramatic. More than 58,000 American soldiers died in it, and the number of casualties on the Vietnamese side is counted in the millions. In the domestic context, the conflict left a much stronger mark on US society than the Civil War or World War II. It was not only a military shock, but above all a political and social upheaval. It led to a deep crisis of citizen confidence in the ruling elite, polarizing American society - into supporters of the war effort, including veterans and their families, and opponents of the war, who often avoided compulsory military service (Herzog, 2017). From an international perspective, Vietnam itself, despite its massive war damage, has gained importance as an important economic hotspot, a source of natural resources used by developing countries and global industrial powers.

Despite deteriorating political and military conditions in the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam), President John F. Kennedy continued the strategic foreign policy line initiated by his predecessor. His actions responded to the ideological challenge posed by Nikita Khrushchev, who supported the concept of “liberation wars” in Asia as a tool for the expansion of communism (Freedman, 2000). Seeking to maintain his influence in the region and with the prospect of re-election in mind, Kennedy decided to significantly increase the number of U.S. military advisors stationed in South Vietnam. In addition, the presidential administration authorized the participation of specialized special forces units in combat operations. An important aspect of this military escalation was also the authorization of the use of extremely controversial means - including chemical weapons such as napalm and defoliants, the use of which had disastrous consequences for both the environment and the civilian population.

After the tragic death of John F. Kennedy, the office of President of the United States was assumed by Lyndon B. Johnson, who was faced with key decisions regarding further U.S. involvement in the Vietnam conflict. Johnson recognized the potential risks in terms of both internal destabilization and the international political consequences that would result

from the collapse of the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam). For this reason, until the 1964 presidential election, he decided to exercise restraint on intensifying military action.

In the meantime, however, Communist forces from the North were steadily gaining strength, while American involvement in the region remained limited. The breakthrough came in February 1965, when President Johnson decided to begin regular bombing of strategic targets in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam) (Floride, Paine, 2021). These actions were intended to weaken the enemy's military potential while boosting the morale of the Saigon government and its military base.

President Lyndon B. Johnson consistently pursued a strategy based on the assumption that victory in the Vietnam conflict could be achieved through decisive military action. Accordingly, he increased the scope of support for the Republic of Vietnam, recognized by the US as a country fighting for freedom and democracy. However, US-led military operations were limited by design - the president consciously avoided escalating the conflict to a level that could provoke intervention by the People's Republic of China or the Soviet Union. Accordingly, he prohibited ground troops from crossing the border and conducting offensives into the territory of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (Baird, 2018). Instead, the United States focused on intensifying air strikes against strategic targets in North Vietnam. It was hoped that the scale of losses and military pressure would prompt the authorities in Hanoi to engage in peace talks. Fearing a reaction from the USSR and China, Johnson avoided openly asking Congress for further funding to continue the war effort, reflecting a cautious policy of balancing confrontation with diplomacy. As the conflict prolonged and losses mounted, public opinion in the United States began to increasingly demand the withdrawal of troops from Indochina. Veterans returning from the front, often wounded or psychologically maimed, were a visible symbol of the costs of war, reinforcing anti-war demands. Against the background of the Cold War experience and the growing arms race, pacifist movements began to emerge and strengthen.

A turning point in the course of the Vietnam War occurred in February 1968, when communist forces launched a wide-ranging offensive known as the Tết offensive. The attacks carried out on South Vietnam at the time were massive and covered almost all major cities and strategic military bases. Although U.S. forces and the South Vietnamese army managed to repel the assault, inflicting significant losses on both Viet Cong and North Vietnamese regular troops, the offensive had significant political and social consequences. Despite the military victory, the events of 1968 had a significant impact on the deterioration of sentiment in American society, undermining confidence in the government's narrative of imminent victory. The final withdrawal of U.S. troops from Indochina did not occur until 1975, after the formal end of hostilities. As a result, the Vietnam War began to be viewed in the collective consciousness not only as a military and strategic defeat, but also as a deeply traumatic national experience. Vietnam itself became a symbol in Western culture of the senseless suffering, moral dilemmas of asymmetric warfare and social division that the US military intervention had caused.

4. Gulf War - Operation Desert Storm

The Gulf War is regarded as an example of an industrial conflict in which modern military technology played a dominant role. The United States had advanced weaponry unavailable to most countries, which translated into its significant military advantage. The foundation of this advantage was the investment in the development of defense technologies that began as early as the 1970s, aimed at modernizing the army and implementing a new doctrine for conducting military operations (Mawson, Croft, 2019). In August 1990, U.S. President George H.W. Bush recognized Saudi Arabia as a strategically important country for American interests and appealed to Iraq to respect its sovereignty. The White House's strategy was unclear at first, but eventually the United States decided to send troops to Iraq. The decision was met with resistance from the public, which was concerned about potential casualties among US troops. During one speech, Bush compared Saddam Hussein to Adolf Hitler, stressing the futility of negotiations and concessions, which led to the breakdown of further talks. In November 1990, the president reiterated Hussein's brutality, comparing it to Nazi crimes. In the United States, campaigns were launched to increase support for military intervention against Iraq. The experience of the Vietnam War prompted the administration to improve cooperation with the media, while introducing strict regulations on coverage of the Gulf conflict (Dickey, Madhu, Shetty, 2021).

For the British, the benchmarks in the Gulf conflict were, as for the Americans, the Vietnam War and the Falklands War. They paid particular attention to technological innovations in the military field, which made it possible to conduct combat operations without direct involvement of ground forces. Media coverage in Britain was moderate, and the full picture of the problem and the victims of the conflict was not presented to the public until February 1991, with the release of photographs showing Iraqi casualties and defenseless civilians. This method of communication contributed to as much as 90% public support for participation in the military operation. The media effectively fulfilled its role, as in the US, by mobilizing public support for the government's actions. The consequences of the Gulf War should be analyzed multifacetedly, going beyond the military sphere. While the goal was to restore stability in the region, Iraq's pursuit of weapons of mass destruction could not be unequivocally confirmed. In addition, the destruction of oil wells led to the contamination of the environment with toxic substances, which had negative ecological consequences (Panel, Petri, 2022).

5. Woja in Chechnya

Chechnya is located in the southwestern part of the Russian Federation, close to the Greater Caucasus. Chechens are the main ethnic group, while Ingush and Russians are minorities. Since the days of the Soviet Union, Chechens have been seen as an unpredictable and aggressive community, an enemy of Russia. Between 1830 and 1850, Muslim leader Shamil resisted the Russians, taking advantage of the natural barrier of the Terek River, but was defeated in 1859, and Russia captured strategic territory. Chechnya is partly mountainous and has a temperate climate. After the collapse of the USSR, nationalist sentiment among Chechens intensified, leading to the collapse of the Russian-dependent economy. Leader Dzhokhar Dudayev, who enjoyed a large following, pursued an independence policy and sought

international recognition for the republic. Russia took military action against him and assassinations failed (Lazarev, 2019).

From a geopolitical perspective, Chechnya is of key strategic importance to the Russian Federation. An important oil pipeline leading to Tuapse in Krasnodar Krai passes through its territory, as well as major transportation routes connecting Russia to the Caspian Sea and Azerbaijan. Despite possessing resources from post-Soviet arms depots and substantial funds from oil sales, the Chechens have not given up their independence aspirations.

In response, Russia launched a military operation on December 11, 1994, directing its forces from Dagestan and Stavropol Krai toward Grozny, the symbolic capital of Chechnya. Forty thousand troops from the North Caucasus Military District were directed to the site, and the contingent was successively reinforced with special units from other regions, Interior Ministry formations and militia units. Some 200 tanks and field artillery were also committed to the operation (the exact number was not disclosed). Chechen forces initially numbered about 3,000 regular army troops, and by 1995 had grown to about 15,000. In addition, the Chechens had about 200 combat vehicles and more than 200 aircraft (De Jong, van der Kam, Ford, Hargreaves, van Oosten, Cunningham, Boots, 2004).

The massive offensive by Russian Federation forces against Grozny began on December 31, 1994 and lasted until February 13, 1995, when the fighting for the Chechen capital came to an end and military operations were transferred to provincial areas. The most intense resistance by Chechen forces was recorded in the cities of Gudermes, Shali and Argun. In April 1995, Russian operations focused on neutralizing strategic resistance points associated with Dzhokhar Dudayev's forces, especially in the Bomut and Samoshek areas (Panico, 2018). Chechen troops, well versed in local geography, conducted effective irregular operations, infiltrating into the rear of Russian forces and forcing them to fight in the difficult mountainous terrain of the Caucasus. Despite numerous analyses, exact loss figures remain inconclusive. According to estimates, Russian forces suffered losses of 2,000 to 3,500 soldiers, while 7,000 to 8,000 fighters were killed on the Chechen side. However, the losses among the civilian population were particularly tragic, with the death toll estimated at around 50,000.

6. Russian-Ukrainian war

The armed invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, which began on February 24, 2022, not only came as a shock to Ukrainian citizens, but also took the international community by surprise. Despite intense and massive attacks by the aggressor, Ukraine's Armed Forces have shown extremely strong resistance, conducting defensive operations with great determination (Jurek, 2022). The conflict, stemming from President Vladimir Putin's imperial ambitions to revitalize the influence of the former Russian empire, has quickly taken on the character of brutal warfare, which is considered by many observers to be the greatest military atrocity in Europe since World War II - a conflict that claimed the lives of some 60 million people, representing 3% of the world's population at the time. Although a significant number of Ukrainian citizens have been forced to flee their homes in fear for their own lives and those of their loved ones, the war has continuously resulted in massive human losses. In response to Russian aggression, many countries have expressed solidarity with Ukraine, offering military, political and humanitarian support.

As Ukraine does not have the status of a member of either the United Nations or the European Union, the scope of interventions by these institutions remains limited in operational terms. Nevertheless, many European countries are actively supporting Ukraine with high-tech military aid (Stankiewicz, 2013). This assistance includes, among other things, missile defense systems and modern armored vehicles, including tanks. Of particular importance in this context is the contribution of Poland, which has provided Ukraine with more than 200 second-generation T-72 tanks, a significant boost to its defense capabilities (Håkansson, 2024).

In his reflections, Anatol Lieven, a British journalist and political analyst, identifies one of the main reasons for the Russian aggression against Ukraine as an unresolved issue concerning Russia's status in the structure of the European geopolitical order. The Russian Federation, citing not only its geographic location, but also its historical and political heritage, claims the right to actively co-determine the shape of Europe (Council, 2024). In the Russian perception, Moscow's influence on European affairs is marginalized, which generates a sense of frustration and revisionist aspirations (Yaroshevich, Yakniūnaitė, Adey, 2025). According to Lieven, it can be surmised that if Russia were fully located in Asia and did not have a partial European identity, the decision on armed aggression against Ukraine could have been made much earlier. Vladimir Putin, a former KGB agent, exercises authoritarian rule, and his policies are based on the idea of restoring Russia's imperial unity with Ukraine. In the eyes of many Russians, Ukraine is seen as an integral part of their statehood, and its separation from Russia is considered an act of artificial division of the historical community (Islam, Ferdusi, Aurpa, 2025). In a similar vein, Ukrainian expert Volodymyr Vasilenko, who in his work *The Cause, Nature and Purpose of Russia's Armed Aggression against Ukraine*, points out the key elements of Russian expansionist ideology. He stresses that in Russian discourse, Ukraine appears as an integral part of the “Russkiy mir,” and its independence is seen as a strategic threat to Russia's integrity and identity. Vasilenko notes that Russians attribute responsibility for the collapse of the Soviet Union to Ukraine, and the reunification of the two peoples within a single sovereign state would, according to this logic, represent the final stage in the construction of a so-called “super-nation”.

Sanctions imposed on the Russian Federation by the international community following the invasion of Ukraine have triggered a serious economic crisis, which many experts describe as potentially the most serious crisis of the 21st century. Contrary to appearances, its scale is not limited to the cancellation of Russian coal or gas imports. The destruction of Ukraine's agricultural sector, which was a pillar of the country's GDP, is also having a significant impact on the global situation. The destruction of crops and agricultural infrastructure has contributed to a sharp increase in food prices around the world (Huynh, Hoang, Ongena, 2025). An additional threat from the armed conflict is potential disasters in the nuclear power sector. There are four active nuclear power plants on the territory of Ukraine, the possible damage or destruction of which could lead to an environmental catastrophe of trans-regional scope. Such a scenario carries serious consequences not only for immediate neighbors, including Poland, but also for the ecological security of the entire continent.

7. Conclusions

The war in Ukraine, analyzed in the context of the major armed conflicts of the 20th and 21st centuries, represents not only a dramatic episode in modern European history, but also a potential flashpoint of global significance. Its scale, brutality and impact on the balance of international power raise questions about the future of global security. Like the wars in Korea, Vietnam or the conflicts in the Persian Gulf and Chechnya, Russia's aggression against Ukraine is a consequence of superpower rivalries, geopolitical ambitions and deep-seated disputes over national identity and boundaries of influence. Unlike previous wars, however, this conflict is taking place in a world that is much more globalized, dependent on economic and energy cooperation, and at the same time more susceptible to destabilization by hybrid actions and disinformation. The threat of escalation to a global level - whether through a direct clash between NATO and Russia or through food and energy crises - is real and worrisome.

The outbreak of war in Ukraine in February 2022 marked a turning point in Polish energy policy, forcing an immediate reassessment of existing strategic assumptions. Russia's aggression led to a deep energy crisis in Europe, and Poland was one of the first European Union countries to decide to completely eliminate its dependence on Russian energy sources. In April 2022, gas imports from Russia were suspended, accelerating the launch of strategic infrastructure projects such as the Baltic Pipe, enabling gas imports from Norway, and the expansion of the LNG terminal in Świnoujście. At the same time, interconnections with neighboring countries, particularly Lithuania (GIPL) and Slovakia, became increasingly important, increasing the flexibility of the Polish energy system. Poland also began diversifying its oil and coal supplies, focusing on alternative sources, including Norway, Saudi Arabia, the United States, and Australia. At the same time, activities related to the development of nuclear energy, as part of the Polish Nuclear Power Program, and investments in renewable energy sources such as wind energy and photovoltaics, were intensified (Zajac, Balina, Kowalski, 2023).

In this sense, the war in Ukraine may not only be a symbol of the end of the existing international order, but also a warning - the seed of a conflict that, in the absence of a firm response and diplomatic solutions, could escalate into World War III (Jurek, 2023). The history of the twentieth century shows that local conflicts have, over time, been able to drag in the entire world. Therefore, today, more than ever, it is necessary to learn from the past - before repeating its most tragic chapter. With a view to ending the armed conflict in Ukraine, it is crucial to prepare the country for the peace process through multifaceted political, military, and social measures. First, it is necessary to establish a lasting truce based on international verification mechanisms and the presence of neutral observers, which will allow for the gradual building of trust between the parties. Secondly, it is necessary to develop credible security guarantees that could be provided by the international community in the form of multilateral treaties or bilateral agreements, replacing or supplementing existing defense instruments. Furthermore, an indispensable element of the peace process is the gradual demilitarization of conflict areas and the implementation of programs for the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of combatants, which helps to reduce the risk of renewed violence.

At the same time, legal and institutional mechanisms should be developed concerning the future status of disputed territories and the provision of transitional justice, including the prosecution of war crimes and the protection of the rights of victims of conflict. These measures—carried out simultaneously in the areas of security, politics, and law—create a coherent foundation for lasting peace, enabling the state not only to end hostilities, but also to rebuild social trust and reintegrate state structures in war-affected areas.

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