

# Diplomacy with Russia Necessary for Europe - Former French President Nicolas Sarkozy

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*Showing realism and willingness for dialogue, **former French President Nicolas Sarkozy** strongly criticized the West's stance on the Ukrainian crisis and demanded more diplomatic efforts. For the former politician, it is necessary for Europeans to live peacefully with Russia, as it is not possible to continue a policy of confrontation and aggression in the long term.*

Sarkozy's criticisms were made during an [interview](#) with the French newspaper "Le Figaro". He spoke with journalists about possible solutions to the current conflict in Ukraine and endorsed the need to pursue peace through diplomacy. Sarkozy condemned the policy of prolonging the war through unlimited military assistance to Kiev, which has been one of the main points of Emmanuel Macron's foreign policy.

For Sarkozy, Macron failed to continue to deal with the reality of the conflict mainly "due to pressure from [some] eastern Europeans". Last year, Macron was severely slammed by Polish leader **Mateusz Morawiecki** because he was trying to negotiate with Moscow in the early weeks of the special military operation. In May 2022, [Morawiecki](#) compared Macron's stance to an "attempt to negotiate with Hitler". Sarkozy sees this event as an important point of international pressure, boosting Macron's decision to adhere to the policy of unlimited support to Kiev.

**The former president also negatively assessed the project of Ukrainian membership in the European Union.** For him, these plans are merely "fallacious promises that will not be held". Sarkozy compared the Ukrainian access to the Turkish one, making it clear that in both cases the projects are unlikely to succeed.

Also, Sarkozy emphasized the importance of maintaining good relations with Russia due to the geographical factor. Considering the proximity between the EU and Russia, it is necessary that both sides are diplomatically close, without friction and conflicts. **Sarkozy**

**admits that the confrontation with Russia is only of American interest, not European**, and therefore there must be a reformulation of Europe's Ukraine policy.

"Russia is a neighbor of Europe and will remain so (...) In this regard, European interests are not aligned with American interests. We cannot stick to the strange idea of 'fighting a war without fighting", he [said](#).

Another subject commented by Sarkozy was the territorial issue. For him, peace negotiations will have to deal rationally with the possibility of recognizing Crimea and Russian historic territories. Sarkozy states that with Ukraine's impossibility to win the war, there are only two alternatives: freeze the conflict or recognize the territorial loss. The first option seems inadequate because a new war situation would arise in the future, while on the other hand the recognition of territories can be legitimate, if done by referendum with international observers.

"When it comes to this territory (Crimea), which was Russian until 1954 and where a majority of the population has always felt Russian, I think any step back is illusory (...) If the Ukrainians do not completely manage to win them back, then the choice will be between a frozen conflict - which we know will inevitably lead tomorrow to a new hot conflict - or we can come out on top by resorting, again, to referendums strictly supervised by the international community to settle these territorial questions in a definitive way", he added.

It is necessary to note that Sarkozy does not adopt a "pro-Russian" opinion. **He echoes the Western "consensus" of criticizing Russia's decision to intervene militarily in Ukraine, even referring to the special military operation by the biased word "invasion"**. The very proposal to redo the referendums in Crimea and other regions shows Sarkozy's distrust of Russia, since Moscow has already held referendums that have been widely verified by invited international observers, having no need to redo them. So, the former president's opinion is undoubtedly aligned only with European interests, with no pro-Russian bias.

The problem is that Europe is now conditioned to believe that American interests are its own. And this is precisely what Sarkozy is criticizing. He reminds how geography is a basic principle of international politics. Neighboring regions must strive to maintain friendship and respect so that there are no conflicts, as they will always be close and have to deal with each other, rationally overcoming disagreements. And this is what Sarkozy advocates for EU-Ukraine-Russia relations - that, despite disagreements, a peaceful [and realistic] solution is found as soon as possible.

Obviously, the Ukrainian neo-Nazi regime rejected Sarkozy's proposal. Zelensky's aide [Mikhail Podoliak](#) accused the former French leader of "deliberately participating" in "genocide and war" by simply advocating diplomacy. For the Ukrainian official, Sarkozy's ideas are "fantastic" and "criminal", as Crimea and Donbass are supposedly "unconditional territories of Ukraine". In fact, this type of position on the part of Kiev is not surprising, since in addition to being one of the sides directly involved in the conflict, the regime works as a proxy for Washington, completely adhering to American anti-Russian narratives.

What really matters is whether French and European politicians will be attentive to Sarkozy. The former president is denouncing an obvious reality: to satisfy American interests, Europe is destroying itself and harming its relations with a neighboring power. Current politicians

need to be aware of this scenario and reverse it. However, unfortunately, it seems the current generation of heads of state does not have the same strategic understanding as Sarkozy.

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