

# Situation for Kiev Is “Very, Very Difficult”. US Joint Chiefs of Staff, Mark Milley

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*While Western journalists insist that Ukraine is “winning” the conflict, experienced military and analysts continue to point to the evident fact that Russia cannot be defeated so easily. In a recent interview, a top US general commented that the situation is very complicated for the Ukrainians, who will have many difficulties to fulfill their promise to “expel” Russian forces from territories already reintegrated into Moscow’s sovereign space.*

According to the chairman of the **US Joint Chiefs of Staff, Mark Milley**, Ukraine will face many problems in order to achieve its military objectives in the current conflict against Russia. He points out that most Western leaders, and even the Ukrainian **President Volodymyr Zelensky**, despite the bellicose speech, believe that the resolution of the conflict will be done through diplomatic negotiations instead of by force. Milley seems skeptical of any possibility of Ukrainian success through the military dispute.

Milley also commented on the time it would take to end hostilities. Although some Ukrainian and Western politicians claim that they plan to expel the Russians as soon as possible, he does not believe in the possibility of this process being completed by 2023. The solid positions maintained by the Russian forces in the regions newly integrated into the Federation make it difficult to believe in the possibility of a rapid military reversal strong enough to guarantee Kiev the control of these territories.

“President Biden, President Zelensky, and most of the leaders of Europe have said this war is likely to end in a negotiation (...) From a military standpoint, this is a very, very difficult fight (...) I still maintain that for this year, it would be very, very difficult to militarily eject the Russian forces from every inch of Russian-occupied Ukraine (...) That doesn’t mean it can’t happen, doesn’t mean it won’t happen. But it’d be very, very difficult”, he said during the interview.

Milley’s views sound realistic. **He makes it clear that Ukraine’s weaknesses will not**

**be overcome** so easily, despite Western help. The US alone has already sent over 110 billion dollars in military aid to Kiev, providing packages that include heavy weapons, combat vehicles, anti-aircraft systems and over a million artillery shells. Europe and NATO allied nations are also providing everything they can to the Ukrainian neo-Nazi regime. However, Russian military superiority sounds evident, as Moscow celebrates more and more important victories, such as the recent seizures of Soledar and Klescheevka.

There are many factors that explain Russia's success despite Western aid to Ukraine. Moscow's focus is on avoiding a war of attrition that needlessly kills Russian soldiers and civilians. For this, there is a strategic direction of the fighting forces to key regions, where the military victory makes viable the cutting of the supply lines of the Ukrainian forces. Also, Russian artillery focuses on big military zones and infrastructure facilities, while parallel troops, such as the private military company "Wagner Group" play the role of infantry force, mainly in urban areas.

On the other hand, Kiev seems to have difficulties in strategically managing the conflict. Despite NATO's support, the Ukrainian forces, as already reported by several on the ground informants, are marked by disorganization and corruption. Most Western weapons are absolutely new to the Ukrainian soldiers, who do not know how to operate them correctly, often causing damages against their own side.

Furthermore, Ukrainians seem to prioritize territory over human lives, unlike Russians. While Moscow constantly promotes strategic retreats to save lives, Kiev keeps troops in the trenches even when the battles are virtually lost. The result is the death of thousands of soldiers in unnecessary combat. These soldiers are replaced by new fighters, with not enough training and no military experience, resulting in strategic errors and more deaths.

In addition, it is important to mention that since 2014 Kiev deliberately attacks civilians and this has been getting worse as heavy weapons from the West arrive in the country. Much of the equipment imported by Ukraine has been used in demilitarized areas in Donbass for the sole purpose of murdering ethnic Russian civilians, without any military gain, which makes it even more complicated for this Western aid to have any real impact in the conflict.

In fact, **Milley's words just confirm what has already become a constant conclusion among military experts: Kiev is not able to defeat Russia** - both because Moscow is militarily stronger and because of the lack of organizational and administrative capacity on the part of the Ukrainians. The possibility of a real military reversal would only happen in a scenario of more direct NATO's intervention, but in this case the war would certainly escalate to the nuclear level and end without winners.

On the near horizon, only the Russian victory looks like a real scenario. The best to do is to resume the talks, with Kiev fully accepting Russian ceasefire terms. As Milley suggested, Western politicians themselves believe this, but they prefer to continue funding the conflict just to try to destabilize Russia's strategic environment as much as possible, even if it costs the lives of Ukrainian citizens.

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