

The West Severely Miscalculated the Geopolitical Ramifications of the War in Ukraine

The EU, and not Russia, has weakened since the start of the special military operation

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Although many remember February 24 as the first anniversary of the war in Ukraine, Russia's special military operation is actually the next phase of a wider conflict that began in 2014. This is a key point often overlooked because the narrative built in the West is that Russia's intervention was an unprovoked invasion with the sole purpose of territorial expansionism. The international community, which the West incorrectly refers to itself as, has rejected this narrative. To the disappointment of Western leaders, most of the world has instead deepened their ties with Russia.

However, even this narrative has been exposed in the West as a fallacy. It is recalled that former German **Chancellor Angela Merkel** admitted in December 2022 that "the 2014 Minsk agreement was an attempt to give time to Ukraine."

"It also used this time to become stronger as can be seen today. The Ukraine of 2014-2015 is not the modern Ukraine," she said, adding that "it was clear to everyone" that the conflict had been put on hold, "yet this was what gave Ukraine invaluable time."

Merkel's statement confirmed that the Minsk Accords, a series of agreements which sought to end the Donbass war, was only intended to give the Ukrainian state more time to militarily strengthen. It also proves that the Western party of the Minsk Accords never intended to use this mechanism to find peace and address the concerns of local residents.

Therefore, the Russian intervention was not necessarily a surprise, and perhaps the West were even expecting it when remembering that the US were issuing warnings only weeks before the special military operation began.

However, what was an absolute surprise for the West was the geopolitical and economic ramifications – all to the detriment of the West and to the advancement of Moscow.

It cannot be denied that sanctions had an impact on the Russian economy, but the European Union has demonstrated that it is nothing more than a political dwarf that has no autonomy from Washington. Sanctions have a limited effect on Russia given that it is a completely self-sustainable country, unlike Syria and Iran (which are also heavily sanctioned but without the capacity for self-sustainability).

Rather, the sanctions have actually accelerated the de-Dollarisation of the global economy and deepened the economic crisis in Europe.

There was evidently naivety in the West as there was a false belief that Russia would capitulate to sanctions pressure. Instead, Europe is experiencing an economic crisis that has crushed the Middle Class through a cost-of-living crisis. Meanwhile, Russia has greater prospects for recovery compared to Germany and the UK.

According to a January forecast by the International Monetary Fund, Russia's economy will grow faster than Germany's while Britain's will contract. This is a far cry from the eminent collapse of the Russian economy that was predicted when hundreds of international companies, such as McDonald's and Boeing, withdrew from Russia and Russians were blocked from using Western financial institutions.

It is recalled that in March 2022, US **Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen** boasted that “the Russian economy will be devastated.” Eleven months after Yellen's statement, the IMF predicts that the Russian economy will start growing again in 2023, expanding by 0.3% and then 2.1% in 2024. Although 0.3% growth is paltry, it is still surprisingly higher than Germany's 0.1%, a phenomenal situation considering that it is Berlin imposing the sanctions, not Russia on Germany.

The UK is in an even worse situation. Its economy is expected to contract by 0.6%.

India and China are helping Russia alleviate the stress of decoupling from Western financial institutions and trade exchanges. Many experts believe that the 21st century is the “Asian Century” and expect the world's major financial centres to shift from the West to the East. In this light, Russia's exclusion from the West has left it with no choice but to strongly project to the East, something that India, China and other countries have enthusiastically taken advantage of.

The 20th century was dominated by the bipolar system and a short-lived unipolar system. Although the 21st century is multipolar in nature, the overwhelmingly dominant economic and military powers are expected to be the US and China, with a host of other Great Powers, such as Russia and India, fully capable of defending their own interests.

What the West does not realise is that in such a global system, it is Russia that hugely influences whether the US or China will triumph. Russia has effectively been given no choice but to pivot towards China. Future generations in the West will learn that this was a strategic blunder – and all for the illiberal sake of defending a neo-Nazi regime in Kiev.

Therefore, the war in Ukraine was expected to be another advancement of liberalism and Western internationalism. However, what has transpired instead is the weakening of Western hegemony. The US expected most countries to fall in line and impose sanctions

against Russia, however, this did not trend in Asia, the Islamic World, Africa, or Latin America.

Although the West is persistently and arrogantly defending the Kiev regime against the reality that Russia will triumph in the war, it continues to ruin its own reputation in the eyes of the actual international community by lambasting countries, such as India, for not following their orders. This will have long-term negative ramification for the West as its influence is weakening and mistrust is deepening.

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