



To the President of the House of Representatives of the States General
PO Box 20018
2500 EA The Hague

Re:

The war in Ukraine: a geopolitical 'time shock'

Date:

18 October 2022

Dear Madam President,

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The war in Ukraine has struck at the very heart of Europe. The Russian invasion is having a devastating effect on the people of Ukraine, resulting in countless deaths, refugees, ravaged cities and shattered infrastructure, and for the first time in many years, there is talk of a nuclear threat. The war is undermining the sense of security throughout Europe and has led many European countries to radically rethink their foreign policy. The conflict is also having an impact in the Netherlands: arms supplies to Ukraine, the financial-economic sanctions against Russia, the huge number of Ukrainian refugees, soaring energy prices and rising inflation all contribute to this. Our values, our interests and the international legal order are at stake.

On 7 July 2022, the House of Representatives requested the Advisory Council on International Affairs (AIV) to produce an urgent advisory letter concerning the impact of this war on foreign policy for the Netherlands and the EU.¹ Now that the war has been ongoing for more than six months, with no immediate end in sight, the Netherlands would be well advised to think about a future strategy. How can the Netherlands protect its socioeconomic and security interests against the backdrop of war and in the face of changing geopolitical relationships?

This advisory letter consists of two parts. The first examines the new international security situation, the nature of the conflict and the impact of the war on Ukraine, the Netherlands, the EU and at a global level. In the second part, the AIV makes a number of urgent and specific recommendations.

I. A new international security situation

The Russian invasion of Ukraine, which began on 24 February 2022, marks a turning point in history, with far-reaching repercussions for the security situation in Europe and for the international legal order. It was for good reason that, immediately after the invasion, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz spoke of a '*Zeitenwende*' (turning point in history), and French President Emmanuel Macron later alluded to the end of abundance, the end of being free from worry, the end of an era in which certain things could be taken for granted (*'fin de l'abondance, de l'insouciance et de l'évidence'*).²



1.1 Nature and urgency of the conflict

The war between Russia and Ukraine is an international armed conflict between two nations. The Russian president, Vladimir Putin, was free to choose whether or not to use force and he deliberately opted for a military invasion. As with the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the recent annexation of regions in eastern Ukraine, this represents a grave violation of international law. Ukraine, on the other hand, is being forced to defend itself against a foreign aggressor. Ukraine's military action is a legitimate exercise of the country's sovereign right of self-defence, as set out in Article 51 of the UN Charter.

From a legal perspective, the Netherlands is not a party to the conflict. The Netherlands is consequently not bound by international law to support Ukraine; Ukraine is not a member of NATO or the EU. However, while the Netherlands is not *obliged* to support Ukraine, it is absolutely *entitled* to do so, in the context of collective self-defence, as also stipulated in Article 51 of the UN Charter. Furthermore, helping to repel the Russian aggression is an active step in upholding the international legal order, which also protects Europe. The AIV finds that the West is in direct conflict with Russia as a consequence of the latter's numerous and significant non-military attacks in the cyber and energy domains, designed to disrupt Western societies.

The need to protect Europe from Russia is nothing new. The invasion of Ukraine represented an escalation of many years of mounting tensions between Russia on one side and Ukraine and the West on the other. These tensions date back to the early years of the Russian Federation and conflicts that first emerged at that time. The invasion is part of a pattern characterised by growing internal repression in Russia, Moscow's support for autocratic regimes, hybrid attacks against the West, and the threatening or waging of war against neighbouring countries. Over the past 20 years, the Kremlin has adopted an imperialistic mindset, as a result of which Russia's foreign policy has been increasingly based on militarism and the expansion of territorial power, in combination with sociocultural conservatism.

President Putin's speech at the Munich Security Conference in 2007 was one of the first clear signals of an overtly confrontational policy towards the West. Against the backdrop of NATO's eastward expansion and the lack of a stable security order in Europe, the Russian president accused the Americans of pursuing a unipolar (Western) world order, of undermining the international legal order and Russian territorial integrity, and of adopting an aggressive stance towards Russia.³ At the time this growing assertiveness was not taken seriously enough.

Recently, Putin delivered another speech, this time more hostile and more threatening than the one he gave 15 years ago. On 30 September 2022, the day of Russia's illegal annexation of the four Ukrainian regions of Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia, the Russian president spoke of the West – and NATO – as the great enemy of the Russian people. He declared that all means were legitimate to keep Russia free of Western influences and dominance. He would not hesitate to use military force to defend Russia, including nuclear weapons if necessary.

The current war is part of a large-scale, long-standing hybrid conflict; a strategy in which Russia deliberately engages in confrontation with the West on many fronts. The downing of flight MH17 over Ukraine in 2014, which killed 298 people, brought the conflict in Ukraine into many Dutch living rooms for the first time. And this is by no means the Netherlands' only connection to the conflict: it is embroiled in an ongoing hybrid battle with Russia. Hybrid warfare involves

the integrated deployment of diplomatic, information, economic, financial, intelligence and law enforcement means.⁴



The Dutch government is rightly committed both politically and morally to Ukraine's struggle against Russia. The government would be well advised to communicate this country's involvement more effectively and more widely – with emphasis and authority – so that the public is aware of exactly what is at stake. This is all the more important now that the war is highly likely to continue for some time yet and its effects will be felt for many years to come.

1.2 Escalation and anticipation

Russia's annexation of regions in eastern Ukraine at the end of September 2022 constituted a further escalation of the conflict. Thus, any Ukrainian counteroffensive would – in the eyes of President Putin – take place on Russian territory; and this prompted him to threaten to deploy weapons of mass destruction as a last line of defence, in accordance with Russian military doctrine. At the same time, Russian forces have been weakened by a combination of poor organisation, low morale and logistical problems.

The effects of the various dimensions of Russia's hybrid war and of the sanctions against Russia will continue to be felt in the Netherlands (and the rest of Europe) for a long time to come, in terms of the economy, energy, migration and purchasing power. The Dutch government needs to identify these effects and boost society's resilience. The need for heightened anticipation capabilities is considerable. Over the next few years, great demands will be made on the resilience of the Dutch people, as well as that of citizens of other European countries. The effects of the war can be felt in everyday life, and people's sense of security is coming under growing pressure, particularly in the light of President Putin's ever more frequent threats to deploy nuclear weapons. The Dutch government should be guided by the principle that cohesion and solidarity within and between countries offers the best guarantee of protection for the Netherlands and Europe against Russia.

When it comes to confronting Russia's nuclear threat and withstanding any conventional attack, the Netherlands is covered by NATO's security guarantee. The concepts of deterrence and resilience are essential elements of NATO's military doctrine, enabling NATO to protect Alliance territory against external aggressors. The US plays a key role here: President Joe Biden has warned explicitly on more than one occasion that any Russian attack on a NATO member would trigger Article 5 of the NATO treaty.⁵ Agreements made within NATO, for example at the recent Madrid summit, determine how Allies (including the Netherlands) shape their military engagement and support in the defence of NATO territory.

1.3 Military assistance for Ukraine

The effects of the war have been disastrous for Ukraine. Cities, towns and villages have been devastated, infrastructure destroyed, port facilities bombed, nuclear power plants damaged and food supplies disrupted. More than 7.6 million Ukrainians have fled the country, while around 7 million have been internally displaced. Supplies of products to the global market have been delayed, and there is a shortage of raw materials.⁶ The Netherlands is currently supporting Ukraine bilaterally in the form of around EUR 60 million in humanitarian assistance and EUR 65 million in economic support.⁷ In October 2022, the government pledged a further donation of EUR 70 million to help Ukraine through the winter months.⁸



The World Bank has estimated that the cost of recovery and reconstruction in Ukraine, as it stands now, will amount to more than USD 349 billion.⁹



Meanwhile, the war continues to rage. Russia's actions are extraordinarily violent and it is deliberately shelling civilian targets, while Ukraine has now managed to liberate occupied areas in the east. The success of Ukraine's resistance can largely be attributed to the political strength and social resilience of Ukrainian politicians, military and civilians, helped in particular by the large-scale military assistance from the US (USD 17.5 billion), the UK (GBP 2.5 billion) and the EU (EUR 2.5 billion, plus billions in bilateral assistance from EU member states).¹⁰ These sums are expected to increase over the next few months.

To date, the Netherlands has pledged military assistance worth more than EUR 220 million, supplying light equipment, such as helmets, ammunition and guns, and heavy materiel, such as armoured vehicles, self-propelled howitzers, antitank weapons and air defence missiles.¹¹ The Netherlands is also helping to provide training for the Ukrainian army in the United Kingdom and Germany. In addition, staff from the Netherlands Forensic Institute will be present in Ukraine to assist in the investigation of war crimes.

As part of the defence of NATO territory, the Netherlands is providing logistical assistance for the transportation eastwards of combat assets and is helping to strengthen the eastern flank of the Alliance, with, for example, a Patriot air defence system in Slovakia, F-35s in Bulgaria and by participating in a battlegroup in Romania. Many of these activities are part of NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence and Enhanced Vigilance Activities.

1.4 Effects of the war on the Netherlands and Europe

Russia's hybrid attacks are putting the resilience of the Netherlands and the EU under strain. They are part of a deliberate strategy by Russia to generate discord in and between European countries. Countless activities in relation to energy, refugees, diplomacy, disinformation and the digital domain are currently taking place, designed to play EU member states off against each other and undermine their societies.

The problems relating to rising food and energy prices, reception of refugees, soaring inflation and disruption to trade – all of which are intrinsically connected with each other and are often cross-border issues – are elements of the hybrid conflict. Critical infrastructure (including digital networks) is under constant pressure. Sustained cyberattacks and physical sabotage, such as the recent incident concerning Nord Stream pipelines in the Baltic Sea, show that civil and commercial matters such as transport, communications and the energy supply are inadequately protected.

The economic sanctions against Russia are also driving up the price of energy and food in the Netherlands. Although the government's announced partial price cap, together with compensation, will ease the financial burden on households and small and medium-sized enterprises, bills will remain very high for many Dutch people. This could in time lead to increased tensions and diminished public support for sanctions against Russia or support for Ukraine, as well as declining interest in the war ('war fatigue').¹² The AIV warns of the risk that the Dutch public will regard the conflict less and less as 'our war too'. This makes it all the more important for the Dutch government and the governments of Europe to anticipate and identify social repercussions in a timely manner and invest in socioeconomic security and solidarity within and between nations.



The same applies to public support for the reception of refugees. The humanitarian consequences of this war are catastrophic; many European countries have taken in large numbers of Ukrainian refugees. According to the UNHCR, some 4.3 million Ukrainian refugees are now living in Europe.¹³ The Netherlands is host to around 79,000 Ukrainians. Other countries, such as Poland, the Czech Republic and Germany are hosting many more refugees, while much onward migration is taking place from Romania and Hungary.¹⁴ The willingness of European countries to accommodate large numbers of refugees appears to be diminishing, so a common policy among European countries to provide shelter for large numbers of refugees, also with a view to onward migration, remains vital.

1.5 The European order: EU, EPC and G7

The collective response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine reflects a deepening of European cooperation, for example in terms of energy supply and pricing, the preservation of our standard of living, purchasing power, sustainability, migration and food supplies. A more intense synergy between the EU institutions is emerging in these areas, with EU heads of government setting out broad lines within the European Council, the European Commission presenting far-reaching measures and member states fleshing out and implementing these measures. No EU sanctions are imposed without decisions by the Council of the European Union.

European security and defence cooperation, as enshrined in the Treaty on European Union, is being developed step by step.¹⁵ EU countries have joined forces to provide Ukraine with the necessary military assistance in the short term. In doing so, the EU is using existing defence cooperation instruments, such as the European Peace Facility and the European Defence Industry Reinforcement through common Procurement Act (EDIRPA). In addition, the EU recently decided to set up the EU Military Assistance Mission (EUMAM) to provide training for 15,000 members of the Ukrainian armed forces.¹⁶ The EU is also cooperating within the Ukraine Defense Contact Group, in which the defence ministers of 19 countries meet at Ramstein Air Base in Germany, at the invitation of the US, to agree on arms supplies.

When it comes to EU enlargement, the decision by the June 2022 European Council meeting to grant Ukraine – and Moldova – EU candidate status is an important one. This sends an important message that Ukraine is a permanent part of the European family. The country stands on this side of a new, hard geostrategic fault line with Russia.

This is reflected in President Macron's initiative for a European Political Community (EPC). The goals of the EPC are to promote political dialogue and strengthen security and stability in Europe. Besides the national leaders of the 27 EU member states, leaders of 17 European states outside the Union took part in the first meeting in Prague on 6 October 2022, including those of Ukraine, the United Kingdom, Turkey, Norway, Switzerland, Azerbaijan, Armenia and the Balkan states.

Besides the EU, the G7 is proving to play a role in coordinating close cooperation in this war. In terms of both Western sanctions and arms supplies, it is the leaders of the seven leading industrial powers – the US, Germany, France, Italy, the UK, Canada and Japan – and the presidents of both the European Commission and the European Council who are informally coordinating the decision-making among themselves, in some cases with the involvement of other leaders (such as the prime minister of Poland). This is strengthening the cooperation between European countries and their Western partners.

1.6 The global response

A recent vote at the UN General Assembly showed unequivocally that the global response to Russia's annexation attempts was one of strong condemnation. Of the 183 countries present, 143 voted in favour of the resolution denouncing the Russian annexation, five countries (including Russia, Belarus and Syria) voted against it and 35 countries (including China and India) abstained.¹⁷ Nevertheless, global players China and India had previously made it clear – at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation meeting in mid-2022 – that they subscribed to the principle of territorial integrity and did not therefore support the Russian annexation. Globally, countries value the principle of territorial integrity and condemn any violation.

However, this by no means translates into widespread support for the West's sanctions policy – on the contrary. The financial and economic sanctions packages, as drafted by Western and European countries, were rejected by major global powers China and India, but also by countries in South America, Africa and the Middle East, countries that represent most of the world's population. Their rejection stems partly from the fact that they oppose sanctions as a matter of principle, and partly because sanctions have far-reaching consequences for countries a long way from the conflict or for less developed countries. These countries are opposed to a one-sided interpretation of this conflict and point to what they see as double standards in Western attitudes towards other conflicts.

Yet countries such as China and India seem reluctant to risk their trade relations with the EU. While these countries are currently still experiencing a short-term benefit in the form of cheap energy from Russia, they are also feeling the economic effects of Western sanctions, compounded by the geo-economic impact of OPEC's recent price increases. War is bad for economies, including those of China and India. With its illegal annexation of the regions of Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia, Russia would appear to be slowly losing credit with those countries. That would be even more the case if Putin were to follow through on his threat to deploy nuclear weapons.

It is not only China and India that ventured cautious criticism – in veiled terms – of Russia's annexation of Ukraine's eastern flank. Kazakhstan and Serbia, usually staunch supporters of Putin's policies, also reject Russia's claims, thus appearing to undermine Russia's regional dominance. Meanwhile, hostilities have reignited once again between Armenia and Azerbaijan and between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. In the arc around much of Europe, instability is increasing, with tensions in the Western Balkans, worrying developments in the Sahel (where Russia is expanding its geopolitical power), and new outbreaks of violence in Afghanistan, Libya and Syria (where Russia has recently carried out new airstrikes).

Too little attention is being paid in the Netherlands to the destabilising consequences of the war beyond its own borders. Political and social debates in The Hague are mainly limited to the short term and focus on rapidly rising energy prices and growing inflation in the Netherlands. When it comes to new energy contracts, there is a pragmatic tendency to gravitate towards countries such as Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman. But whereas rising energy prices are stoking inflation in Europe, in Africa, for example, they are directly contributing to widespread famine, the failure of essential services and increased migration.

II. Recommendations



The Netherlands is committed to supporting Ukraine in this war, and it also finds itself embroiled in a hybrid conflict with Russia. The war is causing problems for Dutch society and European societies on many fronts, and the fragile security situation is forcing parliament and the government to think about a strategy for the future. How much room for manoeuvre does the Netherlands have in terms of administrative and policy matters regarding the effects of the war in Ukraine? The AIV makes the following urgent recommendations.

2.1 Emphasise the urgency of this war, invest in public support.

- ▶ **Narrative:** Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has inflamed the geopolitical security situation. The Dutch government is rightly committed to this conflict, both politically and morally, and it is providing Ukraine wherever possible with military, economic and humanitarian assistance. The war in Ukraine affects the Netherlands too. Our values, our interests and the international legal order are in jeopardy. This national commitment should be communicated confidently – with urgency and conviction – so that the public know what is at stake.
- ▶ **Public support:** In all probability, this war will last a long time and its effects will be felt in the Netherlands for many years to come. It is vital that the Dutch government anticipates and identifies the international social consequences early on and invests in socioeconomic security and solidarity within and between nations. Because of the rising costs for the Dutch people, it is important to seek public support for the military, economic and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine. The future is uncertain and unpredictable and will place heavy demands on public trust. A clear explanation of the background to the war in Ukraine, the West's position, the hybrid threats emanating from Russia, possible scenarios for ending the war, and how the Netherlands should deal with Ukraine and Russia in the future can all help to bolster public support for political choices.

2.2 Be prepared for escalation and create scenarios for de-escalation

- ▶ **Escalation:** The AIV considers it advisable for the Netherlands to prepare within the EU and NATO for scenarios of possible escalation. This includes new arms supplies, clear communication to Russia regarding deterrence and updating procedures for triggering Article 5 of the NATO treaty and Article 42 (7) of the Treaty on European Union. The Netherlands could enhance its anticipation capability by responding earlier to EU decision-making in close coordination with the US..
- ▶ **De-escalation:** The AIV stresses that the Netherlands should at the same time work within the EU and NATO to develop de-escalation scenarios. These could relate to negotiations regarding the recovery of Ukraine's territorial integrity, security guarantees – in line with the proposals by the Working Group on Security Guarantees for Ukraine,¹⁸ for example – and nuclear and conventional arms control in Europe. The use of snapback sanctions – sanctions that can be reimposed – could also be considered. Thought should also be given to the preparation of future negotiations between Ukraine and Russia, at an opportune moment. In this context, various scenarios should be developed on the future relationship with Russia. Care should be taken to avoid demonising the Russian people and to highlight the importance – and protection – of human rights defenders.



2.3 Maintain military and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine and develop plans for reconstruction.



- ▶ **Military assistance:** Weapons could be supplied to Ukraine to greater effect in a European coalition, specifically in collaboration with the US. This would require a long-term strategy. To avoid a situation in which military assistance to Ukraine is provided at the expense of our own armed forces, it would be advisable to increase the involvement of the defence industry in this effort. Here, direct funding of investments and joint procurement of equipment is important; this could be achieved in part through the European Defence Fund, provided it is increased in time.
- ▶ **Reconstruction:** A large-scale programme needs to be set up in collaboration with the Ukrainian people, initially for the coming winter months, but also for the period after that. This also requires a reconstruction strategy, a 'build back better' plan for Ukraine, supported by national and local government. Besides rebuilding cities, infrastructure and port facilities, there should also be a strong focus on strengthening governance and the justice system (the rule of law) and on fighting corruption. Furthermore, investments are needed to support the local business sector and SMEs. These plans need to be properly coordinated in terms of bilateral and multilateral initiatives and will require cooperation with the private sector.
- ▶ **Financial basis:** With regard to the financial basis for the reconstruction of Ukraine, the AIV sees possibilities in a partnership of the EU, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Investment Bank, the World Bank and the US. In the short term, the Netherlands and the EU should ensure direct transactions and payment of budgetary support, given the sizeable and urgent shortfalls in Ukraine's budget.
- ▶ **Defence Act:** The AIV emphasises the importance of national and international decision-making in respect of the provision of military assistance to Ukraine. At the same time, however, the AIV warns against the erosion of the Dutch defence organisation. The Dutch armed forces will not be able to sustain the current aid commitment for very long. The Netherlands will therefore have to accelerate the transition to a permanent and structural investment of at least 2% of gross domestic product (GDP) in defence, as called for by NATO. In the advisory letter 'Choices for the Armed Forces' (March 2022), the AIV called for a more binding defence planning process with a duration of 10 years, thus spanning the terms of multiple governments, and urged that this planning process be laid down in a Defence Act. This plea has been made all the more urgent by current developments.¹⁹

2.4 Reinforce the political, economic and social resilience of the Netherlands and the EU.

- ▶ **Interdependence:** The war in Ukraine has revealed a correlation between security problems and problems relating to food and energy supplies, climate change, migration policy, economics and trade. The government needs to establish a clearer link between national crises, which requires a cross-domain, interministerial and comprehensive approach. To this end it is necessary to flesh out the National Security Strategy and form a National Security Council, as proposed by the government in the coalition agreement;²⁰ the government should develop this proposal, using concrete language, as soon as possible.

- ▶ **Critical infrastructure:** To counter hybrid threats, the AIV points to the need for enhanced economic, political and social resilience – at national and European level. Critical infrastructure – including data communications, transport and energy supplies – must be better protected. Although national governments are responsible as far as their own territory is concerned, a European and global approach is necessary, especially in relation to cyberthreats. The AIV proposes that the Netherlands submit a priority plan on this issue as soon as possible to the EU.
- ▶ **Energy:** The AIV urges the Netherlands to commit to accelerating the energy transition and to intensifying a diversification strategy, so that markets (such as gas, electricity, oil) are no longer dependent on a few countries and what are often state-owned enterprises. The AIV sees a coordinating role for the European Commission in this regard. Part of this effort also involves mitigating disproportionate risks for countries, such as Italy, that are heavily dependent on Russian gas. As a key European player in the energy market, the Netherlands should show solidarity with regard to energy needs within the EU.
- ▶ **Migration:** EU countries must take in Ukrainian refugees. This process needs to be better coordinated than is currently the case, at national, bilateral and EU level and in the UN. Host countries must be mindful of the possibility that the millions of displaced persons will stay for a long time. It would, therefore, be advisable to design a twin-track policy, taking into account that (1) some of the displaced will want or need to stay and (2) some will want to return as soon as possible. Special attention is required with regard to Russian deserters. Under current migration legislation, these refugees are free to apply for asylum in the Netherlands and the AIV warns that they should be subject to stringent security screening.

2.5 Participate in the strategic reordering of the European continent.

- ▶ **Accession:** The EU's decision to grant Ukraine – and Moldova – candidate status raises questions about future enlargement policy, with the sequence of accession being particularly sensitive. Similar status has already been granted to Turkey and four Balkan countries (Albania, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia). The AIV would draw the government's attention to the dilemma that that will create: on the one hand, there is an approach that prioritises countries as they meet the accession criteria; on the other, there is a political approach that would prioritise Ukraine as a sign of solidarity and out of strategic interest. As far as support for EU candidate countries is concerned, this should be part of a sort of 'partnership for enlargement', in order to respond institutionally and in terms of governance to their efforts to move closer to the EU. Within this framework, the AIV proposes the appointment of a Special EU Envoy for Ukraine, who will also deal with reconstruction.
- ▶ **Prospects for the Balkans:** The AIV notes the need for a decision from the EU regarding the position of the Western Balkan countries, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina. These are countries where clarity can promote stability and democratic reform. This includes further development of the membership prospects and endorsement of key military missions, such as EUFOR Operation Althea. The Netherlands could take the initiative to involve both Ukraine and the Balkan countries in the energy union and the integration of energy networks in Europe as soon as possible.

- ▶ **Internal cohesion:** The question arises as to how an enlarged European Union – potentially up to 36 members – can maintain internal cohesion. On the subject of the future EU’s working methods, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz made a number of concrete proposals during a recent speech in Prague, including amendment of the unanimity rule in decision-making.²¹ The AIV urges the government to develop these ideas further. A major challenge here is credible adherence to the principles of the rule of law.

- ▶ **European Political Community:** Besides the possibilities for countries’ association with and accession to the EU, the new European Political Community (EPC) presents another opportunity to express the political unity of all states on the European continent, those in the EU as well as non-EU countries, including the UK. This raises the question of how the Netherlands wishes to shape its future participation in the EPC and what specific types of partnership could be strengthened as a result. The EU-EPC relationship will also need further clarification.

- ▶ **European defence policy:** The AIV notes the importance of a common European defence policy centred on greater financial power, the possibility of increasing joint procurement of materiel and the expansion of defence industry capacity. Cooperation will need to be transparent and democratically monitorable. In supporting Ukraine, the European Defence Agency (EDA) could be given a greater role, as could the European Peace Facility (EPF) for military operations and assistance. The latter should be given greater financial power with immediate effect. Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) could also play a role. To streamline cooperation, the AIV advocates the reinforcement of the European Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), the formation of a separate Council of Defence Ministers and the appointment of a European Commissioner for Security.

- ▶ **A European Security Council:** The EU and NATO have been coordinating their efforts closely throughout this security crisis. It is vitally important that this joint effort be maintained over the longer term, in both financial and material terms. A new body such as a European Security Council could bolster this cooperation. Should such a council be established, the Netherlands would be able to exert influence at an early stage. In this context, the AIV recalls the recommendations in its advisory report ‘European security: time for new steps’ (June 2020). At the time, the AIV called for an informal consultative body made up a few key players that could act as a political playmaker .

2.6 Shape global coalitions, formulate a financial plan for reconstruction and address war crimes.

- ▶ **New global partnerships:** The AIV believes that the EU should take stronger diplomatic initiatives in respect of African countries in response to the war’s economic repercussions, rising food prices and growing inflation. The Western narrative has lost its influence; there is a need to build equal partnerships, as previously advised by the AIV.²² Given the current economic situation, additional official development assistance (ODA) is required; this is aid delivered to developing countries. China, India and Turkey now seem to be taking on a vital global role in economic terms, in terms of global security and in light of their relationship with Russia. The EU should launch a diplomatic initiative directed at countries such as China and India in respect

of the impact of the war on energy and developing countries. It should also actively explore how to promote de-escalation (including with regard to the nuclear issue) and – if possible – how to work towards a future peace initiative.



- ▶ **Financial plan:** The UN, the World Bank, the IMF and the regional development banks need to work together to provide support to the countries hardest hit by the war. Post-war recovery can only be financed through long-term macroeconomic budgetary support and graduated reconstruction assistance, in addition to existing ODA support. As chair of the World Bank constituency of which Ukraine is also a member, the Netherlands could play a significant role in formulating plans for global initiatives regarding Ukraine's reconstruction, and could present them to the World Bank. Promoting the principles of good governance and local ownership as well as strengthening public-private partnerships is also vital to this end.
- ▶ **War crimes:** The Netherlands could play a driving role in investigating and prosecuting war crimes, by facilitating international legal investigations through the International Criminal Court and other organisations.

In conclusion

Because of the great unpredictability of the war, the aforementioned recommendations should be considered in the context of current developments. The AIV would like to stress that further elaboration and exploration of these recommendations will require further research.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Bert Koenders
Chair of the Advisory Council on International Affairs

This advisory letter was prepared by AIV members Prof. Bert Koenders, Lt Gen (ret.) Jan Broeks, Prof. Luuk van Middelaar, Henne Schuwer, committee members Linda Broekhuizen (Development Cooperation), Lo Casteleijn (Peace and Security), Prof. Beatrice de Graaf (Peace and Security), Dr Joris Larik (European Integration), Marieke Schouten (Development Cooperation) and Dr Hans van der Jagt (Council Adviser), assisted by Tessa Postmus (trainee).

Endnotes



- ¹ Request for advice regarding the impact of the Russia's war of aggression, House of Representatives of the States General, 8 July 2022.
<https://www.adviesraadinternationalevraagstukken.nl/adviestrajecten/documenten/adviesaanvragen/2022/07/7/adviesaanvraag-gevolgen-oekraïne-oorlog-voor-nederland>
- ² Speech by Germany's Chancellor Olaf Scholz in the German parliament, 27 February 2022
<http://www.bundesregierung.de/resource/blob/992814/2131062/78d39dda6647d7f835bbe76713d30c31/bundeskanzler-olaf-scholz-reden-zur-zeitenwende-download-bpa-data.pdf?download=1>
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<https://atlantico.fr/article/decryptage/maintenant-c-est-la-fin-de-l-abondance-de-l-inegalite-et-de-l-evidence-benoit-rayski>
And Dinah Cohen, 'Avant la rentrée du gouvernement, Emmanuel Macron évoque la "fin de l'abondance, de l'insouciance et de l'évidence"', Le Figaro, 22 August 2022.
- ³ Speech by Russia's President Vladimir Putin at the 43rd Munich Security Conference, 10 February 2007. <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/copy/24034>
- ⁴ DIMEFIL is a commonly used acronym in international academic and policy circles.
- ⁵ Speech by US President Joe Biden, Royal Castle, Warsaw, 26 March 2022.
<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2022/03/26/remarks-by-president-biden-on-the-united-efforts-of-the-free-world-to-support-the-people-of-ukraine/>
- ⁶ UNHCR data, 14 October 2022: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>
- ⁷ Letter to parliament (in Dutch) on the state of assistance, recovery and rebuilding efforts in Ukraine, Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, 27 September 2022.
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- ⁸ Letter to parliament on financial support for Ukraine, Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, 12 October 2022.
- ⁹ 'Ukraine Recovery and Reconstruction Needs Estimated \$349 Billion', World Bank, 30 September 2022. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2022/09/09/ukraine-recovery-and-reconstruction-needs-estimated-349-billion>
- ¹⁰ Statista data, 17 October 2022. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1303432/total-bilateral-aid-to-ukraine/> Cf. 'Military Assistance to Ukraine since the Russian invasion', Research Briefing, UK House of Common, 7 October 2022. <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9477/CBP-9477.pdf>



- 11 Letter to parliament (in Dutch) on Dutch contributions in response to the war in Ukraine, Minister of Defence and Minister of Foreign Affairs, 19 August 2022. <https://open.overheid.nl/repository/ronl-ca87f11dfe8155e722f4da03af5f7d8bf81f9c7f/1/pdf/kamerbrief-nederlandse-bijdragen-naar-aanleiding-van-de-oorlog-in-oekraïne.pdf>
- 12 'Hoge energieprijzen leiden tot toenemende sociale onrust in Duitsland – precies zoals Poetin het bedoeld heeft' [High energy prices lead to increasing social unrest in Germany – exactly as Putin intended,] *de Volkskrant*, 11 October 2022. Public support in Germany would thus appear to be waning; for comparison, see earlier opinion poll (in German): *Politbarometer* 'Ukraine unterstützen trotz hoher Gaspreise' [Support for Ukraine despite high gas prices], 15 July 2022. <https://www.zdf.de/nachrichten/politik/220715-politbarometer-ukraine-energiekosten-100.html> Public support in the Netherlands also seems to be declining; see (in Dutch): IPSOS Opinion Poll 'Stikstofcrisis - Oorlog Oekraïne - Inflatie' [Nitrogen crisis – War in Ukraine – Inflation], 6 July 2022: <https://www.ipsos.com/nl-nl/ipsos-peiling-stikstofcrisis-oorlog-oekraïne-inflatie>
- 13 UNHCR data, 14 October 2022: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine>
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 See also the Strategic Compass, the collective response to hybrid campaigns and the sharp increase in European defence budgets. For this cooperation, in 2018 the EU designed an Implementation Plan on Security and Defence within the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). See 'EU cooperation on security and defence', Council of the European Union. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/defence-security/>
- 16 'Ukraine: EU sets up a military assistance mission to further support the Ukrainian armed forces', Council of the European Union, 17 October 2022. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/nl/press/press-releases/2022/10/17/ukraine-eu-sets-up-a-military-assistance-mission-to-further-support-the-ukrainian-armed-forces/>
- 17 United Nations voting results: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/10/1129492>
- 18 Anders Fogh Rasmussen and Andriy Yermak, 'The Kyiv Security Compact. International Security Guarantees for Ukraine. Recommendations', 13 September 2022. https://rasmussenglobal.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/UKR-security-220913-ENG_version.pdf
- 19 The AIV's earlier appeal has now resulted in a private member's bill for a Defence Act introduced by the Calvinist Party (SGP), the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) and the Christian Democratic Alliance (CDA). See <https://www.internetconsultatie.nl/defensiewet/b1>
- 20 Coalition agreement 'Looking out for each other, looking ahead to the future', The Hague, 15 December 2021. <https://www.kabinetsformatie2021.nl/documenten/publicaties/2021/12/15/coalitieakkoord-omzien-naar-elkaar-vooruitkijken-naar-de-toekomst>
- 21 Speech by German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, 28 August 2022, Charles University, Prague. <https://www.bundesregierung.de/breg-de/impressum/scholz-speech-prague-charles-university-2125336>
- 22 Cf. AIV advisory letter no. 36: 'Urgentie van een nieuwe Nederlandse Afrikastrategie' ['Urgency of a new Dutch Africa strategy'] (July 2022).