

War and defence

Those who think about the war in Ukraine see four possible outcomes. The most likely is the current brutal war marches on with little change of territory, with Western cash and weapons supplied sufficiently to sustain brave Ukrainian resistance. In the last week the West has produced another \$50 bn loan. The USA has signed a 10 year defence partnership and has relaxed its rules on use of Western weapons.

Some think both sides will be brought to see the need to compromise. If neither side can deliver a knock out blow it is possible they could agree a new border for Ukraine. To date Ukraine has been firmly against this. There is the option of NATO offering membership to the new Ukraine to emerge from such an Agreement, along with full security guarantees. One of Ukraine's reasons for not wanting such a peace would be the threat that Russia could come back strengthened to try another invasion. Many Ukrainians and allies do not like the idea of ceding land to Russia as reward for an invasion.

Some think NATO should intensify its financial and military aid to increase the chances of a Ukrainian victory. Given the Russian war time economy and willingness to accept large losses of troops this would come at a price but offers the best deterrence against future Russian aggression.

The fourth outcome is Russia taking more territory and forcing an even more favourable peace for itself.

Some military experts think going all out for victory by Ukraine would be best. It would avoid the costs of early future conflict and reduces the security need. The more that is ceded to Ukraine the more aggressive Russia might become.

The Ukraine war has made clear the inadequacy of NATO weapon stocks and the need for much more western weapons and ammunition manufacture. When will this be put in?

The West is considering using Russian money held in Western banks to help Ukraine. This poses legal issues which still have not been resolved.

What should NATO do now about Ukraine? Which outcome do you expect?