

Paris war summit prepares for direct deployment of NATO troops to Ukraine

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European Union (EU) heads of state gathered in Paris Monday for a summit on the NATO war with Russia in Ukraine. Facing the imminent collapse of NATO's Ukrainian proxy forces amid massive losses, the summit was called to lay the groundwork for the introduction of troops from NATO and EU member countries to fight Russia in Ukraine.

Before the summit, Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico warned, "NATO and EU member states are considering that they will send their troops to Ukraine on a bilateral basis." He added, "I cannot say for what purpose."

These warnings were confirmed by French President Emmanuel Macron, who declared last night that "everything is possible" to prevent a Russian victory in Ukraine, and that individual European countries sending troops to Ukraine is "not excluded."

He pledged to give Ukraine "medium- and long-range missiles and bombs" for use against Russia. That is, Macron, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and other top EU officials agreed to the framework for a full-scale EU-NATO war against Russia.

The statements of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, who spoke to the Paris conference via video link, epitomize the official lying aiming to obscure the catastrophic implications of this EU-NATO escalation. "31,000 Ukrainian soldiers have died in this war," Zelensky claimed. "Not 300,000 or 150,000, or whatever Putin and his lying circle are saying. But each of these losses is a great loss for us."

Zelensky's statement exposes his contempt for the Ukrainian people, who know he is lying. If the NATO powers are now advocating sending their own troops to the battlefield, it is because so many Ukrainian soldiers have been killed that the Ukrainian army has run out of manpower.

In November 2022, US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Mark Milley said 100,000 Ukrainian troops had been killed or wounded, though the *New York Times* wrote that "officials said privately the numbers were closer to 120,000." Last August, the *Times* cited US officials claiming Ukraine had lost 70,000 killed and 120,000 wounded.

US officials critical of the Ukraine war and with access to classified intelligence reports said these August 2023 figures in fact understated Ukrainian losses, so as to limit opposition to the war.

US Colonel Douglas Macgregor said, "The Ukrainians now, we think, have lost 400,000 men killed in battle. We were talking about 300,000-350,000 a few months ago. Within the last month of this supposed counteroffensive which was to sweep the battlefield, they lost at least 40,000 killed."

Ukrainian casualties today are far higher than they were last August. Indeed, Ukraine's failed "counteroffensive"—which involved throwing troops against well-prepared Russian fortifications backed by mines, heavy artillery and drones—was not called off until November. Ukrainian forces have since suffered catastrophic defeats all along the front line, most recently abandoning Avdeevka amid reports they were suffering 1,500 casualties per day.

A recent *Washington Post* report on the Ukrainian front found several infantry battalions with only 40 of 200 men left. One battalion commander warned the *Post* that "the front will collapse somewhere."

Ukraine's catastrophic casualties are a warning: Other European countries will also take horrific losses if they wage war on Russia. It is worth recalling the September 2023 study in the *US Army War College Quarterly*, which called on the United States to reinstate the draft so as to be able to absorb the losses it

would suffer in a war with Russia. It projected that the US Army would take 3,600 casualties per day, or 1.3 million per year, in this looming war.

Moreover, the deaths and casualties will not be confined to the battlefield. The direct introduction of NATO forces into the war against Russia would almost certainly escalate into a nuclear conflict, with deaths and casualties running into the tens and hundreds of millions.

If Zelensky lies so brazenly about the number of war dead, what else are he and his NATO allies lying about? The answer is: Everything.

The entire narrative the NATO powers have concocted around the Ukraine war, to justify plans for military escalation worked out behind the backs of the population, is a tissue of lies that must be rejected. Workers and youth must instead be politically mobilized to stop the war.

US and European ruling circles lie relentlessly about the origins of the Ukraine war, claiming it is a case of unprovoked Russian aggression. But this weekend, the *New York Times*, to justify its call for the US Congress to pass legislation providing \$60 billion in additional military aid to Ukraine, published an article detailing how Ukraine serves as a valuable asset for CIA spying and assassination programs against Russia. “The details of this intelligence partnership, many of which are being disclosed by the *New York Times* for the first time, have been a closely guarded secret for a decade,” it wrote.

Thus, the “closely guarded secret” of complicit US and European media is that NATO provoked the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine. Since the 2014 US-backed coup in Kiev that installed Ukraine’s current regime, the NATO powers have spent tens and hundreds of billions of dollars to build up Ukraine as a military base. The bankrupt post-Soviet capitalist regime in Russia invaded Ukraine as an essentially defensive maneuver, trying to pressure what it calls its “Western partners,” that is, the NATO imperialist powers, to drop their most aggressive policies against Russia.

Since the Stalinist bureaucracy dissolved the Soviet Union in 1991, the NATO powers have waged wars across the Middle East, Eastern Europe and Africa, killing millions. This bloody rampage enabled the NATO powers to plunder the world, while imposing

social austerity and strengthening the military-police state against the workers at home.

The disintegration of the Ukrainian front comes under conditions where the lies used to justify these wars are deeply discredited. The Iraqi “weapons of mass destruction” Washington invoked as a pretext to invade oil-rich Iraq in 2003 did not exist. The NATO wars launched in Libya and Syria in 2011, supposedly to defend democracy against authoritarian regimes tied to Russia, have been followed by the NATO powers’ backing for Israel’s genocide against Gaza. Amid growing social anger and strikes against inflation and austerity, mass protests against the Gaza genocide are unfolding in America, Europe and internationally.

The European ruling class is reacting to this crisis by shifting far to the right. Fearing that a Ukrainian defeat would blow apart the entire edifice of lies used to justify its imperialist wars abroad and class war at home, it has opened a path for World War III to explode across Europe and the world.

The way forward for the working class, as the ruling class turns to global war, is a turn to an international, revolutionary perspective. The urgent task, amid growing strikes against inflation and austerity and mass international opposition to the Gaza genocide, is to build an international anti-war movement based in the working class and fighting for socialism.



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