

# NATO Summit Drives World Closer to World War

by Carl Osgood

July 15—The July 11-12 NATO summit in Vilnius, Lithuania, concluded with the promise of unconstrained military and financial support for the Kiev regime in Ukraine, in what is in reality a NATO proxy war aimed at the “strategic defeat” of Russia. Anything less, including a peace settlement negotiated from any standpoint other than the capitulation of Russia, was rejected out of hand. NATO’s leaders also promised eventual membership for Ukraine in the alliance, once certain “conditions” are met. What those conditions are remains unclear, though it seems likely that they include the military defeat of Russia, a prospect that looks increasingly unlikely at this point.

The risk of pushing every red line regarding NATO expansion laid down by Russia, a nuclear armed power, should be obvious. Apparently, it is not clear to the Biden Administration.

Warnings of those risks have been sounded for three decades, and from at least one current member of President Joe Biden’s own administration, CIA director William Burns, whose career in the State Department included a tour as U.S. Ambassador to Moscow from May 2005 to November 2008. In a February 2008 email to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, declassified and published for his 2019 memoir, *The Back Channel: A Memoir of American Diplomacy and the Case for Its Renewal*, Burns warned that Ukrainian membership in NATO was “the brightest of all redlines,” not just for Russian President Vladimir Putin but for all the Russian elites. Burns wrote:

In my more than two-and-a-half years of conversations with key Russian players, from knuckle-



NATO

*The NATO Heads of State Summit promised unconstrained military and financial support for the Kiev regime in Ukraine, but didn't open the door to Ukraine's membership in NATO. Left to right: Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (Türkiye), Volodymyr Zelensky (Ukraine), Rishi Sunak (UK), Joe Biden (U.S.). Vilnius, Latvia, July 12, 2023.*

draggers in the dark recesses of the Kremlin to Putin’s sharpest liberal critics, I have yet to find anyone who views Ukraine in NATO as anything other than a direct challenge to Russian interests. At this stage, a MAP offer [NATO leaders in 2008 were contemplating offering both Ukraine and Georgia Membership Action Plans, a path towards membership in the alliance, at the then-upcoming NATO summit in Bucharest—ed.] would not be seen as a technical step along a long road toward membership, but as throwing down the strategic gauntlet. Today’s Russia will respond.



C-SPAN

*CIA Director William Burns.*

Burns then listed numerous measures that he expected Russia

to take.

The Bucharest summit did not offer Ukraine and Georgia membership action plans, limiting itself to promising eventual membership to both countries.

Otherwise, Burns' warning, like so many before and since from both sides of the NATO/Russia divide, was ignored.

NATO's just concluded summit in Vilnius, with further promises of guaranteed support for the Kiev regime, has brought the world yet another step closer to a thermonuclear world war, one from which the world is unlikely to recover.

### Ukraine Was Not Going To Be Made a Member

Helga Zepp-LaRouche, founder of the Schiller Institute, argued in her weekly live-streamed dialogue on Youtube July 12 that it was clear from the outset that Ukraine was not going to be offered full membership in NATO, nor even a time line for it. "But it was very clear that there was a decision, long before, that the MO would be to basically arm Ukraine to the hilt with long-range weapons." She cited President Emmanuel Macron's announcement that France would send 50 long range SCALP missiles to Ukraine and Germany's simultaneous announcement of €700 million in military support, including tanks and other armored vehicles.

There is a tremendous military buildup of Ukraine and an agreement to streamline the military exercises and training, and everything with NATO standard. So if you really look at the substance of it, it seems to me that it's everything but a formal NATO membership; integration, intelligence, help with cyberattacks if they come. So in a certain sense, it looked like a lot of theater to me. President Zelensky made a bit of a show, saying he was so disappointed that there was no timetable. But then, as the summit proceeded, he was very satisfied with the result.

Zepp-LaRouche went on to point out that the problem with the summit was its Global NATO agenda:



Alexis Rannou

*Schiller Institute founder Helga Zepp-LaRouche: "NATO brought the world closer to thermonuclear world war."*

They had one whole session for the guests, which was the Pacific four countries—I think it was, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and South Korea. And a lot of discussion was about China in this context, that the problems of the Euro-Atlantic are the problems of the Indo-Pacific and vice versa. So, if you leave aside all the confetti and discussion, it is the agenda of Global NATO; it is the agenda of treating not only Russia but also China, increasingly, as an adversary.

And there was absolutely no possibility of ending the war, of having some kind of a negotiated peace: So, in a certain sense, it is, unfortunately, exactly what was expected. In that sense, I don't see an inflection point there.

### The Fault Lines Appear

It would be a mistake, however, to conclude that there is complete unity behind NATO's proxy war against Russia, particularly with respect to Ukraine's relationship to the alliance. While Poland and the Baltic states have been pushing hard for Ukraine to be made a member, America and Germany were pushing back. White House National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan had already made clear, during a White House press briefing on July 7, that Ukraine would not be getting an invitation to join NATO. The summit, Sullivan said,

will be an important moment on that pathway towards membership because the United States, our NATO Allies, and Ukraine will have the opportunity to discuss the reforms that are still necessary for NATO to—for Ukraine to come up to NATO standards. So this will, in fact, be a milestone; but Ukraine still has further steps it needs



White House/Adam Schultz

*U.S. President Joe Biden*

to take before membership in NATO.

Biden himself reinforced this point in an interview with CNN's Fareed Zakaria, broadcast in full on July 9. He said that "Russia's war" in Ukraine needs to end before the alliance can consider adding Kiev to its ranks. Biden said that while Ukraine's membership was premature, America and its allies in NATO would continue to provide President Volodymyr Zelensky and his forces security and weaponry to try to end the war with Russia. Biden said:

I don't think there is unanimity in NATO about whether or not to bring Ukraine into the NATO family now, at this moment, in the middle of a war. For example, if you did that, then, you know.... We're at war with Russia, if that were the case.

For Zelensky, Biden's promise of security and weaponry was not enough. Like a petulant child, he threatened to not even come to the summit if an invitation to join the alliance were not going to be handed him upon arrival in Vilnius.

Ukraine's Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic integration Olga Stefanishina said, in an interview with Ukraine's *Evropeiskaya Pravda* media outlet (reported by TASS July 9), that Zelensky's visit to the summit would depend on its final documents:

No final decision has been made as of yet. We don't fully understand the format of all meetings in Vilnius; neither do we fully understand the decision that would be physically laid on the table. The work on final documents continues. No decisions have been made so far.

When Zelensky showed up on the summit's first day to find that indeed, Ukraine would not get an invitation, nor a time line for eventual membership, he threw a fit on Twitter:



NATO

*No talk of ending the war, or of seeking a negotiated peace. President Joe Biden, President Volodymyr Zelensky, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, NATO Deputy Secretary General Mircea Geoană. NATO Summit, Vilnius, Latvia, July 12, 2023.*

It's unprecedented and absurd when [a] time frame is not set, neither for the invitation nor for Ukraine's membership—while at the same time, vague wording about "conditions" is added even for inviting Ukraine.

UK Defense Secretary Ben Wallace was not pleased by Zelensky's outburst. "Sometimes you are asking countries to give up their own stocks [of weapons],"

he told reporters. "Sometimes you have to persuade lawmakers on the [Capitol] Hill in America." According to the *Guardian*, Wallace revealed at the briefing that he had travelled to Ukraine last year to be presented with a shopping list of weapons. "You know, we're not Amazon," he said. "I told them that last year, when I drove 11 hours to be given a list."

Wallace added that Zelensky was speaking to his own public and that, despite his complaint,

the final summit deal was a good one for Ukraine. The acceptance that "Ukraine belongs at NATO," he said, amounted to an effective invitation for membership.

Throughout the morning of the second day there was an intense effort to get Zelensky under control, according to numerous media accounts. Bloomberg reported that diplomats on both sides were framing Zelensky's outburst the previous day as a familiar maneuver designed to raise the stakes in a negotiation—a



Credit 10 Downing St./Simon Dawson

*Ben Wallace, UK Secretary of State for Defence.*

move that has paid off in the past, but this time did not.

### **NATO Substitutes Its ‘G7’ Hat**

By midday July 12, Zelensky’s tone was said to have shifted. “We understand some are afraid to talk about our membership in NATO now because they are afraid of the global war,” he told reporters. Ukraine accepts that it can only join “when it will be safe on our land,” he added. Then he said he wanted to include “words of gratitude” for the steps taken by allies, peppering his comments with that word—“gratitude.”

During a joint appearance with Biden, a reporter asked Zelensky how soon after the war would he like to see Ukraine in NATO. An irritated Biden jumped in and snapped, “An hour and 20 minutes. You guys ask really insightful questions.”

With NATO’s image of unity saved, the G7 leaders, all of whom were present at the summit, issued a “Joint Declaration of Support for Ukraine,” which promises the G7 countries’ “unwavering commitment to the strategic objective of a free, independent, democratic, and sovereign Ukraine, within its internationally recognized borders, capable of defending itself and deterring future aggression.”

The declaration commits the G7, and anyone else foolhardy enough to sign on, to working with the Kiev regime “on specific, bilateral, long-term security commitments.”

The first objective is “Ensuring a sustainable force capable of defending Ukraine now and deterring Russian aggression in the future” through unending military and security assistance; the second, “Strengthening Ukraine’s economic stability and resilience, including through reconstruction and recovery efforts, to create the conditions conducive to promoting Ukraine’s economic prosperity, including its energy security;” and the third, “Providing technical and financial support for Ukraine’s immediate needs stemming from Russia’s, war as well as to enable Ukraine to continue implementing the effective reform agenda that will support the good governance necessary to advance towards its Euro-Atlantic aspirations.”

Both the joint declaration and the 90-paragraph NATO communique issued the day before are based on the same set of lies, that Russia is solely responsible for all the evils in the world; and the cartoonish idea that it’s a titanic battle between “autocracies and democracies.” The communique demands that Russia, first off, and secondarily China and North Korea, surrender to the “rules based international order,” but offers no con-

cessions on the part of NATO that could be interpreted as attempts to ease tensions.

### **Putin Responds**

If NATO’s leaders thought that Moscow would be cowed by their promises to Kiev, they were wrong. Russian President Vladimir Putin reiterated July 13 that Ukrainian membership in NATO is a threat to Russia. In an interview with journalist Pavel Zarubin on the “Moscow. Kremlin. Putin.” program, Putin said:

As for Ukraine’s NATO membership, we have repeatedly said that this creates threats to Russia’s security. And, in fact, one of the reasons for the special military operation is the threat of Ukraine joining NATO. I am sure that it will not increase Ukraine’s security but on the whole, it will make the world more vulnerable, creating additional tensions on the international stage.

Speaking about arms deliveries to Kiev, Putin noted that Russia sees how much hope was pinned on the delivery of long-range missiles. “Yes, they do cause damage, but nothing critical happens in the combat zone with the use of these missiles,” he said.

Putin stressed that Ukraine does have the right to arrange its own security, but not at the expense of its neighbors:

Every country has a right to ensure its security and, of course, it has a right to choose the way to achieve that goal that it considers the best. [But] the work to achieve security for one country shouldn’t create threats for another country. Therefore, we proceed from the understanding that this principle, which has been repeatedly proclaimed in various international documents, will be taken into account. Ukraine, of course, has a right to ensure its security.

Putin pointed out that the draft agreement between Moscow and Kiev, which was put together in Istanbul in March and April of 2022, stipulated detailed guarantees of Ukraine’s security:

The draft agreement between Russia and Ukraine, which was prepared in Istanbul and was subsequently tossed into the trash bin by the Ukrainian regime, set out in great detail the issues of ensuring Ukraine’s security.