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[www.afgazad.com](http://www.afgazad.com)

[afgazad@gmail.com](mailto:afgazad@gmail.com)

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Jorge Elbaum

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## ***Ukraine: disguised defeat***

Moscow's war of attrition may have no expiration date. But its outcome is attached to the configuration of a new Multilateral Global Order that will have the BRICS and the global South as central protagonists. There are very few political actors who remain oblivious to this reality. Javier Milei is one of them.



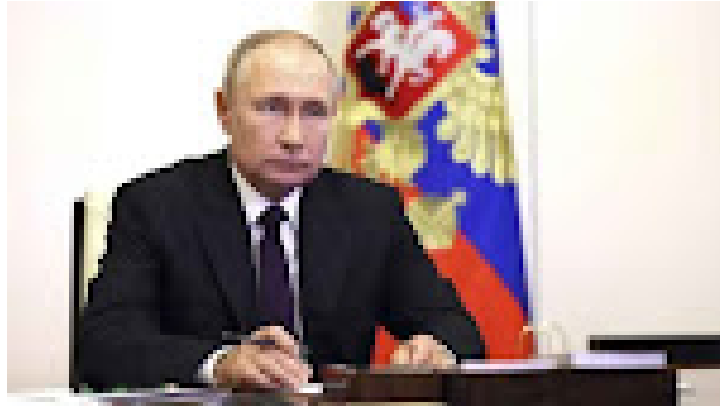
Next February will mark two years since the start of the Russian Federation's Special Operation in Ukraine. From that date to the present, Moscow controls a fifth of its neighbor's territory and has annexed the Donbas region in the framework of a referendum promoted by Russian-speakers who had been killed by the bombings of the Ukrainians. From the so-called Euromaidan of 2014 until the beginning of 2022, around fifteen thousand eastern Ukrainians lost their lives at the hands of Ukrainian troops who refused to accept the autonomy agreed in the Minsk agreements of 2014 and 2015.



#### Euromaidan. Chronology of two years of crisis

Since the start of Moscow's 2022 offensive, the Kremlin has controlled a thousand-kilometer front line, which has remained almost unchanged. The last major battle within that front line took place in Bakhmut and ended with its conquest by Russian troops in May 2023. In this same year that is ending, NATO forces had planned a counteroffensive that ended up failing, generating a deep and growing demoralization within the Ukrainian citizenry. According to analyst Marina Miron, a member of the Department of Defence Studies at King's College London, these strategic coordinates were implemented before Ukrainian forces were militarily prepared. Miron's conclusion is that such a projection "turned out to be a failure."

In addition to the strictly military component, Vladimir Putin and his General Staff have adopted a model of war of attrition, whose tactical objectives – in addition to war pressure – are the deterioration of Kiev's energy infrastructure and export capacity. Kiev's tenuous scenario is complemented by the gradual reduction of financial contributions from the West, the resumption of the military conflagration between Israel and Palestine in Gaza – which splits the possible contributions of the G7 between Ukraine and Israel – and the progressive difficulty of recruiting soldiers for the battlefield.



Russian President Vladimir Putin during a video conference from Moscow EUROPA PRESS

Ukraine has been suffering from a deep demographic bleeding for a decade. In 2014 it had 45 million people and it is estimated that today there are no more than 30 million. The majority of the population that has emigrated are women, because since 2022 men between the ages of 17 and 60 have been prohibited from leaving the country. However, the more affluent male population manages to avoid military service by paying sums ranging from 5000 to 20,000 euros. Those responsible for regional recruitment have been removed from office on the grounds that repeated corruption schemes aimed at both avoiding joining the armed forces and obtaining safe-conduct to leave the country have been revealed.



The Ukrainian population knows for a fact that it is not possible to win a war against the world's leading nuclear power. On the Telegram platform, there are information groups in which Ukrainian families participate – some with more than 100,000 members – where the

route of recruitment patrols is warned in real time. The level of demoralization and acceptance of defeat is inversely proportional to the silence decided by the media promoters of the NATO mainstream. Last week, Kiev announced that the army requested the mobilization of 500,000 additional conscripts and that to fulfill this task, citizens will be asked to present themselves at Ukrainian consulates scattered around the world. Defense Minister Rustem Umerov has reported that they will send the summons: "We want justice for everyone because it concerns our own country."



[Ukrainian Defense Minister Rustem Umerov proposes conscripting Ukrainians living abroad](#)

At the start of the war, the G7 and NATO assumed that trade and financial sanctions against Moscow would weaken its economy and undermine the Kremlin's political legitimacy. Ukrainian commanders have warned that the coming winter will be much more complicated than the previous one and warn that they will not be able to guarantee electricity and heating for a large part of the inhabitants. Kiev's complex military situation is deepening with the reduction of financial contributions from its partners.



Hungarian Prime [Minister Viktor Orbán](#) has warned that he will not go along with the [€50 billion aid proposed by the European Commission, chaired by Ursula von der Leyen](#), and US Republicans in both chambers have blocked new contributions. For his part, the European representative for Foreign Policy, Josep Borrell, warned last Wednesday about the certain possibility that Moscow will conclude the military campaign with an indisputable military triumph: ["if Russian President Vladimir Putin wins the war in Ukraine, it will represent great damage to the European project"](#).

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Ukraine uneasiness.

*Jorge Elbaum for La Pluma*

*Edited by [Maria Piedad Ossaba](#)*

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