



Europe (CFE), Ukraine is fielding more tanks and armoured combat vehicles (ACV) than Russia (in its European territory). Any transfer of additional tanks or ACVs by Russia into the CFE region would be a treaty violation. In short, Ukraine is well placed to deter or withstand a conventional attack from Russia. Any Russian threat or use of force against Ukraine would have dire consequences for Russia. Thus, it is in Russia's self-interest to resolve disputes with Ukraine through peaceful means. Nuclear weapons, in any case, would be useless in countering Russian political or economic pressure. A nuclear-armed Ukraine, paradoxically, would be viewed as a threat by its Central European neighbours.

While, in theory, Ukraine appears to be in a situation to become the world's third largest nuclear weapon state, in practice this is a hollow option. Physical possession of weapons does not translate into operational control. Ukraine lacks all of the critical capabilities in this regard. The cruise missiles had their guidance packages removed to Russia in late 1991, and the ballistic missiles apparently have been electronically disabled from Moscow. Kyiv does not possess other critical systems, such as: command and control, effective early warning, geodetic data from satellites for targeting, and maintenance and testing. Further, Ukraine risks a pre-emptive Russian attack on the nuclear weapons on its territory, if it appears that Kyiv gains launch control.

Thus, for all practical purposes, Ukraine does not and cannot have an effective nuclear deterrent. As Professor Bill Kincade of the American University in Washington, DC, has pointed out: "by almost any logic, the choices faced by Kyiv in developing an employment doctrine for primitive nuclear forces are starkly limited to self-deterrence and self-destruction."

Ukraine's independence was welcomed in the West, and it has attracted a lot of goodwill. However, by continuing prevarication over fulfilling arms control obligations Ukraine risks being tagged as a "pariah" and an "unreliable" state in the international community. Astute Ukrainians recognize that as their

economy nears collapse, desperately needed aid and investment will not be forthcoming unless Ukraine progresses down the road to nuclear disarmament. And in the absence of disarmament, Ukraine will be economically deprived and politically isolated -- in sum, have less security.

Canadians of Ukrainian heritage, therefore, would recognize their moral duty to support President Kravchuk, Foreign Minister Zlenko, and their allies, in their effort to convince the Rada and public opinion that the best option for Ukraine is to renounce nuclear-weapon status. By demonstrating its goodwill in complying with its legally binding international obligations, Kyiv stands to gain more in Western support -- both politically and financially -- than in holding hostage the strategic arms control process.

It is in the interest of all Canadians, not just Ukrainian-Canadians, that Ukraine prospers as an independent state, occupies its rightful place in the community of law-abiding nations, and contributes to global security by destroying its Soviet nuclear weapons legacy. A nuclear weapon-free Ukraine would attract greater Western support, indeed Western governments should publicly commit themselves to this course of action as an incentive to Ukraine to demonstrate its credentials as a responsible, sovereign member of the international community. ■

## UKRAINE, RUSSIA and NUCLEAR ARMS

by  
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Once again the question is being raised in the Western media as to why Ukraine is becoming increasingly reluctant to give up the strategic nuclear weapons which remain on its territory. Although nuclear weapons are indeed morally reprehensible, there may be some justification for this

position because of the rising tensions in the region.

When it declared independence in August 1991, Ukraine's government stated that its intention was to make Ukraine a nuclear-free state. This was in the days of euphoria, when the disintegration of the USSR was accompanied by much idealistic rhetoric from the leadership of every Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) country. This included terms like "economic cooperation, non-aggression, and territorial integrity". These intentions simply have not stood the test of post-Soviet reality, especially between Ukraine and Russia.

The economic relationship between the two countries can best be described as adversarial. Russia has been pressuring Ukraine to enter into an unacceptable economic union and is using all means at its disposal. For example, Ukraine has very little of its own oil and natural gas remaining, and it depends largely on foreign sources to supply its industrial and agricultural needs. Russia has unilaterally reduced fuel supplies to Ukraine by 30% in order to obtain concessions from the Ukrainian government. As can be expected, this has caused major hardships in the Ukrainian economy. What oil Russia does sell to Ukraine is at near world prices, and must be paid for in hard currency. At the same time Russia demands below market prices for Ukrainian wheat, food and electrical energy. As a means of causing unrest among Ukrainian miners, Russia has also drastically reduced shipments of Siberian timber to the Donetsk region. This timber is needed to support Ukraine's vital coal mining industry. Compounding Ukraine's economic woes is the fact that Russia is stalling on payments for purchases of Ukrainian manufactured goods and food.

Ukraine has made no territorial claims whatsoever on any of its neighbours. In contrast Russia has openly declared its aspirations regarding Crimea, which was given to Ukraine by Khrushchev in 1954. At various times the Russian