

The Russian-Ukrainian War as a War of Transitional period. New patterns of the war.

The experience of our struggle will be useful to everyone looking for a path to peace. And the path to peace can also be through war.

«**Si vis pacem, para bellum**» – words attributed to the ancient Roman historian Cornelius Nepos, unfortunately, are ideally suited to a democratic society even today, in the 21st century. If you want peace, prepare for war. Yes, this is absolutely true. This is confirmed by me, who had to be in the role of Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, and the entire Ukrainian people, who really learned it well and painfully.

When I was born, twenty-eight years had passed since the end of one of the most brutal and bloodiest wars in the history of mankind. When I was born, already no bombs were falling on cities and villages, and tanks were not crushing the soil and everything on it. There were no piercing sounds of air raid sirens, no automatic bursts.

But today I pray myself and ask all of you to pray and ask God that our grandchildren never see what our grandfathers saw, what we saw and, unfortunately, our children. For this sake, one can not stop fighting for the right to live, even for a minute. Evil is nearby and it has come to kill.

Despite the fact that the most valuable wealth of mankind on the planet Earth is the ability to live, almost all of its history is associated with wars. Or rather, with the killing of people. These wars, or rather murders, over time, in terms of the scale of events and the number of victims, became unprecedented and acquired the status of world wars. Only in the last century, there were two such conflicts – the First and Second World Wars, which in time separated a little more than twenty years, and which claimed the lives of about 60 million people. Is humanity ready to calmly accept the next war in terms of suffering – the Third World War? To some extent, it depends on us, the professional

military, who know almost everything about the war. After all, it is the professional military who wage wars and know their true price. The price of defeats and victories.

Turning to the events of 2022-2024 of the decade-long war between Ukraine and Russia, we must honestly tell humanity what is happening and what the humanity should be prepared for. Free and democratic nations and their governments need to wake up and think about how to protect their citizens and their countries.

We are ready to share all our knowledge, experience and thoughts with those who have not left Ukraine in difficult times and who seek peace and tranquility for their peoples.

So, what did this war teach us, Ukrainians, and especially its full-scale component, which vortex burst into our lives on February 24, 2022?

First of all, wars must be avoided! But if it does come, you need to be prepared for it. It is the readiness for war that should be considered as a huge set of measures that covers not only purely military aspects, but also all spheres of state activity.

Perhaps the most difficult and important component is the readiness of society, based on honest and transparent communication between the government and the people. Society must agree to temporarily give up a range of freedoms for the sake of survival. Modern wars, unfortunately, are total. They require the efforts not only of the army, but also of society as a whole. Politicians can and should mobilize society. For this purpose, the military and other state resources are comprehensively involved. Among such resources are the economics, finance, population and allies. Such actions, of course, will affect the political processes in the state.

Thus, the readiness for war will be determined not only by the readiness of the army to repel aggression, but also by the readiness of society to confront the enemy.

Second, war can in no way be seen as part of the domestic political process. War is the maximum concentration of forces for survival. And only for this!

«War is merely the continuation of policy by other means,» said Prussian General Karl von Clausewitz. Therefore, it seems strange when, on a global scale, the war in Ukraine, on the contrary, shapes domestic politics in other countries, which, in the end, is used by enemies for their own purposes. I am convinced that the war for freedom in one country should become the policy of survival of democracy in other free countries.

War is a science. Science with its own laws and rules that need to be known and studied. Using the war for their own purposes or trying to influence its course for their own interests is a crime that results in huge casualties.

It is always difficult for a democratic army, an army of a free society, to fight with the army of a feudal lord. The enemy considers democracy to be our greatest weakness and tries hard to use it. Fakes, lies, devaluation of national interests, disbelief in the leadership – this is an incomplete list of tools that Russians have been using for more than ten years, and democratic societies have not yet found methods to counter.

As early as the 5th century BC, the well-known Chinese thinker Sun Tzu outlined the basic principles of war, which remain topical today, and will be relevant as long as people rule the war. However, these are just basic principles that need to be filled with weapons, forms and methods of their use, armies with their structures. It is in this sequence that the war changes.

Carefully analyzing our experience, supported by figures and facts, I understand that we are on the threshold of not only enormous work, but also the most important thing, facing a difficult choice. For us, Ukrainians, this is not only an investigation of the law of «challenge-and-response» of the British historian Arnold Joseph Toynbee. Not only the very existence of Russia is already a threat. Today we already have a full-scale and bloody war, which has led us to a new challenge - physical survival.

It is the survival of a nation that is determined by its choice. How to respond to this challenge? How to survive in the conditions of ambiguity and contradiction of the surrounding world? Now, we must realize that it depends on us Ukrainians whether we will live and whether our children have a future.

Without a doubt, history today once again gives the Ukrainian people a chance. On a cold night on February 24, 2022, when the whole world was enjoying a peaceful life and basking in warm beds, Ukrainians reminded themselves whose blood flows in their veins and entered into a fierce battle with the eternal enemy. Through the lives of ordinary Ukrainians, we have won a chance for ourselves. A chance not just to continue the primordial struggle, but a chance to win. It cost us dearly – many lives of the best sons and daughters. It was only the starting point.

Very soon we realized that to withstand a blow, to give a worthy rebuff to the enemy – this is only the beginning of a more difficult stage of confrontation, which is to find your own special way of victory. It was the search for this special path that led us to an understanding of the already comprehensible contours of revolutionary changes, primarily in the military. Oddly enough, but quite logically, it is likely that these changes, which were invented on the battlefields of the Russian-Ukrainian war, will determine the outlines of wars and the art of war in the 21st century. And most importantly, they will become the

foundation of the entire global security system of the future. Until recently, one could confidently say that unmanned systems are the main reason for changes in strategies, forms, and methods of application. But even today, it is probably necessary to introduce a broader concept – technology – into the concept of a new strategy for waging war.

The war that came to us in 2014 is completely different from the one that broke into our lives on February 24, 2022. Although it was based on the concepts of 2014, it was already different and quickly exhausted our forces in May 2022. It was the intensity of hostilities that forced us to restore the level of the beginning of 2022, and the need to survive on the battlefield led us to another war, which we faced in the summer of 2023. The belligerents stopped for some time in search of new weapons, and it would be appropriate to search for new forms of application of the latest technologies. It is the invention of new methods of use that would logically lead to changes in the structure of units, detachments and the Armed Forces as a whole.

It is this motion that is scientific and reasonable. The development of technologies affects the forms of their application, and only new forms of application affect the structure of fighting armies. This trend is inevitable and will continue.

Technologies – as a set of not only innovative solutions, but also a set of measures for the development, scientific support, training, development of doctrines that will change the situation on the battlefield in the conditions of the enemy's existing advantages in military potential and resources. Simply put, today we have already invented a way to fight and win against stronger armies in the 21st century. Obviously, it is the technology that should ensure the sustainability of the Ukrainian nation.

At the same time, I absolutely agree that the Russian-Ukrainian war is not yet a war of the future. It is only a war of transitional period. But it is our war that forms new rules. We, Ukrainians, with our blood

and thirst for victory, are forming new patterns of a new war. A war that will be the war of the future.

We must admit that the thirst to survive on the battlefield is almost the main reason for finding ways to improve weapons. The combination of such factors as limited resources, lack of proper support, inability to focus on the production of traditional means of struggle has led to significant changes on the battlefield of the Russian-Ukrainian war. In fact, a new stage in the forms and methods of military operations has begun. We see how scientific and technological progress has set in motion the wheel of history and brought to the battlefield the technologies that are likely to be decisive in this war and, most importantly, will become the basis of global security of the future. Who will quickly master these technologies – the democratic world or the world of tyranny – will depend on us.

War is about resources and time. If we consider technologies as resources, then as of today, due to various reasons, neither Ukraine nor Russia will be able to master them on their own in the near future. This means that the only way out may be to increase the number of human resources involved in hostilities. At the same time, technologies will wait for the brave and able to master them. Whoever masters them will solve the issues of global security.

It is difficult to say how the situation will develop in the future. Only one thing is certain – tyrants will need war constantly for internal use as a tool for retaining power. The rest should build reliable protection against them.

Today, more than ever, it is in Ukraine that they find ways to survive and create technologies. But for obvious reasons, they cannot scale up. On the other hand, our partners have resources, but there is no applied and practical field to test them. Only together we will be able to effectively use the resource, because time no longer works for us.

«Following yesterday's rules of war will not lead to today's (or tomorrow's) successes. It is the realization of this that can save many lives. We must begin to grapple with the consequences of the new rules of war.» I took this quote from retired American General Stanley McChrystal. And then he had these words: «if not, we will all be left behind».

But I would say more categorically: otherwise we will all die.