

# Prophetic RAND Corp. Report: “Destabilize and Undermine” Russia. Recommended “Provocative Actions”

By [Nauman Sadiq](#)

Global Research, March 29, 2022

Region: [Europe](#), [Russia and FSU](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [UKRAINE REPORT](#)

All Global Research articles can be read in 51 languages by activating the “Translate Website” drop down menu on the top banner of our home page (Desktop version).

To receive Global Research’s Daily Newsletter (selected articles), [click here](#).

Visit and follow us on Instagram at [@globalresearch\\_crg](#) and Twitter at [@crglobalization](#). Feel free to repost and share widely Global Research articles.

\*\*\*

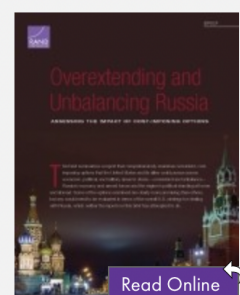
*Reputed foreign policy think tanks, lavishly funded by security establishments and the military-industrial complex, are the real terrorist organizations that have a long and checkered history of cheerleading Western nations into pursuing militarist and belligerent state policies, clandestinely orchestrating proxy wars, publicly pleading for imposing no-fly zones and mounting purported “humanitarian interventions,” oftentimes on the ostensible pretext of so-called “responsibility to protect” and upholding capitalist and neocolonial exploitation in the garb of promoting bourgeois democracy in the developing world.*

A “prophetic” RAND Corporation report titled “[Overextending and Unbalancing Russia](#)” published in 2019 declares the stated goal of American policymakers is “to undermine Russia just as the US subversively destabilized the former Soviet Union during the Cold War,” and predicts to the letter the crisis unfolding in Ukraine. RAND Corporation is a quasi-US governmental think tank that receives three-quarters of its funding from the US military.

## Overextending and Unbalancing Russia Assessing the Impact of Cost-Imposing Options

by [James Dobbins](#), [Raphael S. Cohen](#), [Nathan Chandler](#), [Bryan Frederick](#), [Edward Geist](#), [Paul DeLuca](#), [Forrest E. Morgan](#), [Howard J. Shatz](#), [Brent Williams](#)

Related Topics: [Geopolitical Strategic Competition](#), [Military Command and Control](#), [North Atlantic Treaty Organization](#), [Nuclear Deterrence](#), [Peacekeeping and Stability Operations](#), [Russia](#), [U.S.-European Relations](#)



While designating Russia as an “intractable adversary,” the report notes that “Russia has deep seated anxieties” about Western interference and potential military attack. These

anxieties are deemed to be “a vulnerability to exploit.”

The RAND report lists several “provocative measures” to insidiously “destabilize and undermine” Russia. Some of the steps include: repositioning bombers within easy striking range of key Russian strategic targets; deploying additional tactical nuclear weapons to locations in Europe and Asia; increasing US and allied naval force posture and presence in Russia’s operating areas (Black Sea); holding NATO war exercises on Russia’s borders; and withdrawing from the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.

Almost all the provocative actions recommended in the RAND report have practically been implemented by the successive Obama, Trump and Biden administrations since the 2014 Maidan coup, toppling Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych and consequent annexation of the Crimean Peninsula by Russia.

The US Air Force has flown [B-52 strategic bombers](#) and RC-135 reconnaissance planes over eastern Ukraine in months before the invasion, as part of its effort to deter Russia. To stiffen Ukraine’s ability to resist, the United States and NATO dispatched teams of military advisers in months before the invasion to survey air defenses, logistics, communications and other essentials.

Besides deploying 15,000 additional troops in Eastern Europe last month, total number of US troops in Europe is now expected to reach 100,000. “We have 130 jets at high alert. Over 200 ships from the high north to the Mediterranean, and thousands of additional troops in the region,” NATO Secretary General Jens [Stoltenberg told CNN](#) on March 9.

Ahead of the NATO summit attended by President Biden Thursday, March 24, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg announced the transatlantic military alliance would double the number of battlegroups it had deployed in Eastern Europe.

“The first step is the deployment of four new NATO battlegroups in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia, along with our existing forces in the Baltic countries and Poland,” Stoltenberg said. “This means that we will have eight multinational NATO battlegroups all along the eastern flank, from the Baltic to the Black Sea.”

NATO [issued a statement](#) after Thursday’s emergency summit attended by Joe Biden and European leaders:

“In response to Russia’s actions, we have activated NATO’s defense plans, deployed elements of the NATO Response Force, and placed 40,000 troops on our eastern flank, along with significant air and naval assets, under direct NATO command supported by Allies’ national deployments. We are also establishing four additional multinational battlegroups in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia.”

Regarding RAND’s recommendation of “augmenting naval force posture in the Black Sea,” it’s worth recalling that before the Biden-Putin summit at Geneva last June, the British Royal Navy Defender [breached Russia’s territorial waters](#) in the Black Sea and as many as 20 Russian aircraft conducted “unsafe maneuvers” merely 500 feet above the warship and Britain also lamented shots were fired in the path of the ship.

“British Prime Minister Boris Johnson would not say whether he had personally approved the Defender’s voyage but suggested the Royal Navy was making a point by taking that route,” a [Politico report](#) alleged in June. A [Telegraph report noted](#) that former Foreign Secretary

Dominic Raab had raised concerns about the mission, proposed by defense chiefs, and that Boris Johnson was ultimately called in to settle the dispute.

Among the 50-page Ministry of Defense documents [discovered at a bus stop](#) in Kent and passed to BBC were papers showing that ministers knew that sending a Royal Navy warship close to Crimea last June would provoke Russia, and did it anyway, sparking an international incident.

Similarly, signed by President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1987, [the United States withdrew](#) from the Cold War-era agreement, the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty in August 2019. Intermediate range missiles are considered particularly destabilizing because the missiles can reach their targets within ten minutes, giving little warning and time for decision-making and, consequently, raising the specter of miscalculation.

The full RAND report says:

“While NATO’s requirement for unanimity makes it unlikely that Ukraine could gain membership in the foreseeable future, Washington’s pushing this possibility could boost Ukrainian resolve while leading Russia to redouble its efforts to forestall such a development.” (emphasis added)

In November 2021, the US and Ukraine signed a [Charter on Strategic Partnership](#). The agreement confirmed “Ukraine’s aspirations for joining NATO” and “rejected the Crimean decision to re-unify with Russia” following the 2014 Maidan coup.

In December 2021, Russia [proposed a peace treaty](#) with the US and NATO. The central Russian proposal was a written agreement assuring that Ukraine would not join the NATO military alliance. When the proposed treaty was contemptuously rebuffed by Washington, it appeared the die was cast.

[The Intercept reported](#) on March 11 that despite staging a massive military buildup along Russia’s border with Ukraine for nearly a year, “Russian President Vladimir Putin did not make a final decision to invade until just before he launched the attack on February 24,” senior current and former US intelligence officials told the Intercept. “It wasn’t until February that the agency and the rest of the US intelligence community became convinced that Putin would invade,” the senior official added.

Last April, US intelligence first detected that “the Russian military was beginning to move large numbers of troops and equipment to the Ukrainian border.” Most of the Russian soldiers deployed to the border at that time were later “moved back to their bases,” but US intelligence determined that “some of the troops and materiel remained near the border.”

In June 2021, against the backdrop of rising tensions over Ukraine, Biden and Putin met at a summit in Geneva. The summer troop withdrawal brought a brief period of calm, but “the crisis began to build again in October and November,” when US intelligence watched as Russia once again “moved large numbers of troops back to its border with Ukraine.”

Extending the hand of friendship, Russia significantly drawdown its forces along the western border before the summit last June. Instead of returning the favor, however, the conceited leadership of supposedly world’s sole surviving super power turned down the hand of friendship and haughtily refused to concede reasonable security guarantees demanded by

Russia at the summit that would certainly have averted the likelihood of the war.

Current Under Secretary for Political Affairs Victoria Nuland said that over 20 years [the US invested \\$5 billion](#) in the project to destabilize Ukraine and provoke Russia. The culmination was a violent coup in February 2014. Since 2015, the US has been training ultra-nationalist and [Neo-Nazi militias](#).

Prior to 2018, the US only provided “defensive military assistance” to Ukraine. The RAND report assesses that providing lethal (offensive) military aid to Ukraine will have “a high risk but advantages will far outweigh the cost.”

Accordingly, US lethal weaponry to Ukraine skyrocketed from merely a trickle to [\\$250 million](#) in 2019, [\\$303 million](#) in 2020 and [\\$650 million](#) in 2021. Total military aid is much higher. A few weeks ago, [the Hill reported](#), “The US has contributed more than \$1 billion to help Ukraine’s military over the past year.”

On March 16, President Biden announced an unprecedented package of \$800 million in military assistance to Ukraine, which included 800 Stinger anti-aircraft systems, 2,000 anti-armor Javelins, 1,000 light anti-armor weapons, 6,000 AT-4 anti-armor systems and 100 Switchblade kamikaze drones.

The \$800 million will mean more than \$2 billion in the US military assistance has gone to Ukraine since Biden entered office in Jan. 2021, as the Biden administration had previously pledged \$200 million days before announcing the \$800 million package, \$350 million were disbursed immediately following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24, and the administration [provided \\$650 million](#) in military assistance to Ukraine during Biden’s first year in office.

Speaking to reporters in Brussels ahead of the European Union foreign ministers meeting last week, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said the EU would provide [\\$1.1 billion in arms](#) to Ukraine. The United States and its allies have [reportedly infused](#) over \$3 billion in military assistance to Ukraine since the 2014 Maidan coup.

Recently, the [Congress announced](#) \$1.5 trillion package for funding the federal government through September, boosting national defense coffers to \$782 billion, about a 6 percent increase. On top of the hefty budget increase, the package is set to deliver \$13.6 billion in emergency funding to help Ukraine, nearly twice the assistance package initially proposed, including \$3 billion for US forces and \$3.5 billion for military equipment to Ukraine, plus more than \$4 billion for US humanitarian efforts.

Nonetheless, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine last month was only a logical culmination of a long-simmering, eight-year war of attrition initiated by NATO powers against Russia in Ukraine’s eastern Donbas region after the 2014 Maidan coup.

In an [explosive scoop](#), Zach Dorfman reported for the Yahoo News on March 16:

“As part of the Ukraine-based training program, CIA paramilitaries taught their Ukrainian counterparts sniper techniques; how to operate U.S.-supplied Javelin anti-tank missiles and other equipment; how to evade digital tracking the Russians used to pinpoint the location of Ukrainian troops, which had left them vulnerable to attacks by artillery; how to use covert communications tools; and how to remain undetected in the war zone while also drawing out Russian and insurgent forces from their positions,

among other skills, according to former officials.

“When CIA paramilitaries first traveled to eastern Ukraine in the aftermath of Russia’s initial 2014 incursion, their brief was twofold. First, they were ordered to determine how the agency could best help train Ukrainian special operations personnel fight the Russian military forces, and their separatist allies, waging a grinding war against Ukrainian troops in the Donbas region. But the second part of the mission was to test the mettle of the Ukrainians themselves, according to former officials.”

Besides the CIA’s clandestine program for training Ukraine’s largely conscript military and allied neo-Nazi militias in eastern Ukraine and the US Special Forces program for training Ukraine’s security forces at Yavoriv Combat Training Center in the western part of the country bordering Poland that was [hit by a barrage](#) of 30 cruise missiles killing at least 35 militants on March 13, Dorfman claims in a separate [January report](#) that the CIA also ran a covert program for training Ukraine’s special forces at an undisclosed facility in the southern United States.

“The CIA is overseeing a secret intensive training program in the U.S. for elite Ukrainian special operations forces and other intelligence personnel, according to five former intelligence and national security officials familiar with the initiative. The program, which started in 2015, is based at an undisclosed facility in the Southern U.S., according to some of those officials.

“While the covert program, run by paramilitaries working for the CIA’s Ground Branch — now officially known as Ground Department — was established by the Obama administration after Russia’s invasion and annexation of Crimea in 2014, and expanded under the Trump administration, the Biden administration has further augmented it.”

By 2015, as part of this expanded anti-Russia effort, CIA Ground Branch paramilitaries also “started traveling to the front in eastern Ukraine” to advise and assist Ukraine’s security forces and allied neo-Nazi militias there. The multiweek, US-based CIA program included “training in firearms, camouflage techniques, land navigation, tactics like cover and move, intelligence and other areas.”

One person familiar with the program put it more bluntly. “The United States is training an insurgency,” said a former CIA official, adding that the program has taught the Ukrainians how “to kill Russians.” Going back decades, the CIA had provided limited training to Ukrainian intelligence units to try and shore up a US-allied Kyiv and undermine Russian influence, but cooperation ramped up after the Crimea annexation, a former CIA executive told Dorfman.

\*

Note to readers: Please click the share buttons above or below. Follow us on Instagram, @globalresearch\_crg and Twitter at @crglobalization. Feel free to repost and share widely Global Research articles.

*Nauman Sadiq is an Islamabad-based geopolitical and national security analyst focused on geo-strategic affairs and hybrid warfare in the Af-Pak and Middle East regions. His domains of expertise include neocolonialism, military-industrial complex and petro-imperialism. He is a regular contributor of diligently researched investigative reports to Global Research.*

[\*\*Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page\*\*](#)

[\*\*Become a Member of Global Research\*\*](#)

Articles by: [Nauman Sadiq](#)

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)

[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)