

A Military Lesson Plan to Justify the Special Military Operation in Ukraine

Aleksandr Perendzhiev

Translated and Foreword by Ray Finch

24 February 2023 will mark the grim, one-year anniversary of the Kremlin's decision to invade Ukraine. There are many reasons why the Kremlin has failed thus far to achieve its ill-defined objectives of "demilitarizing and de-Nazifying Ukraine," but one of the more mundane revolves around poor military morale. Not real strong to begin with, the fighting spirit of Russian military personnel was further damaged by faulty planning assumptions (e.g., Russians would be treated as "liberators"), inadequate training, poor logistics, and weak leadership.

To improve morale, over the course of the past year, the Kremlin has modified its reasons for invading. Anticipating a quick fight, where the "Nazi" leadership in Kyiv quickly capitulated, Russian soldiers initially believed that the Ukrainian people would either support their intervention or at least remain neutral. As resistance mounted, Russian soldiers had difficulty reconciling the Kremlin's stated objectives with the assertion that "Ukrainians and Russians are one people." Kremlin propaganda soon defined the enemy as any Ukrainian who resisted or protested the Russian military presence.

To transform the Ukrainian people into an enemy, the Kremlin asserted that NATO and the United States had infected them with a quasi-Nazi, anti-Russian ideology. Russian soldiers were now fighting Ukrainian proxies of the evil West. In the Kremlin's narrative, the West has installed a fascist government in Kyiv, hoping to gain a staging area in Ukraine from which it can better weaken Russia. With a clever sleight of hand, the Kremlin tapped into those deep anti-Western sentiments it had nurtured over the past few decades (or centuries). Russian soldiers aren't killing their Ukrainian brothers, but rather defending the motherland against the predations of the United States and NATO.



Aleksandr Perendzhiev (Photo courtesy of Sputnik News)

The accompanying article, "Russia in the Modern World" was published in the November 2022 issue of Armeiyskiy Sbornik (Army Collection). Armeiyskiy Sbornik is somewhat like the U.S. Army's Military Review, and each issue has a section devoted to officer and enlisted professional development. This particular lesson plan was designed to be taught to Russian officers, laying out the chief contours of the Kremlin's narrative and justification as to why Russians are fighting in Ukraine.

As there is often a wide gap between what the Defense Ministry (MoD) purports to teach and the actual time spent reviewing the material, it is difficult to ascertain the effectiveness of this instruction plan. The primary purpose might be to demonstrate to the political leadership that the MoD fully supports the Kremlin's propaganda. Nevertheless, this article encapsulates the Kremlin's chief propaganda points as to why Russian soldiers are fighting in Ukraine. I've included personal footnotes to elaborate and clarify some of the more egregious propaganda.

Russia in the Modern World. Main Directions; Socio-Economic, Political and Military-Technical Development of the Country

Aleksandr Perendzhiev

Officer Tasks for the 2023 Academic Year

The development of the Russian Federation in the modern world is taking place against the background of well-known challenges as well as new threats to its national security, which are primarily associated with the geopolitical position of Russia and its role in world politics. Russia's independent foreign and domestic policies cause opposition from the United States and its allies, who seek to maintain dominance in the world. Their containment strategy of the Russian Federation provides pressure on the country's political, economic, military, and information systems.¹

Recent international conflicts demonstrate that the role of force has not only not decreased but has been constantly increasing. The defining factor of this trend is the Russian Federation's unwillingness to accept NATO plans to move military infrastructure to its borders and NATO attempts to give this military alliance global functions that go against the rules of international law.²

Today Western countries have unleashed a hybrid war against Russia, and the special military operation in Ukraine began as a pretext for a broad anti-Russian campaign.³ Instead of looking for mutually acceptable ways to dialogue, attempts are being made to isolate our country in the international arena, as well as imposing economic sanctions against Russia. The collective West is "teetering on the edge" between hybrid actions and open armed conflict with Russia.

At the same time, processes are taking place in the world replacing the obsolete global economic model led by the United States to a new global economic model, where the leading position can be occupied by the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa). Unrestrained sanctions pressure on our country by the United States, the European Union, and other Western countries led to economic retaliatory measures not only from Russia, but also from other non-Western countries. Introduction of settlements in national currencies between Russia and friendly countries is reducing the influence of the dollar and the euro on the world economy, giving a new impetus to the process of disintegration of the old global economic model and its replacement with a new model.⁴

The Special Military Operation on the Territory of Ukraine as a Result of Unresolved Contradictions in the Military-Political Sphere between Russia and the West: Its Causes, Goals, and Objectives

On 24 February 2022, the President of Russia—Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Vladimir Putin, announced the start of a special military operation in Ukraine. Very serious reasons contributed to the adoption of this decision, which have been accumulating since the beginning of the USSR's collapse.

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“Before the start of the military special operation, the Russian leadership was particularly concerned and anxious about those fundamental threats which from year to year, step by step, rudely and unceremoniously were created by Western politicians in relation to our country.”

by Western politicians in relation to our country—the expansion of the NATO bloc to the east, bringing its military infrastructure closer to the Russian borders.⁷

We present in historical order and in tabular form the main reasons and arguments justifying the decision to conduct the military special operation in Ukraine, which were

announced in the televised speech by the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, on 24 February 2022.⁸

Table 1 **Reasons, Arguments for Substantiating the Decision to Conduct a Military Special Operation in Ukraine**

Reasons and arguments; description of the reasons and arguments as factors in substantiating and making the decision to conduct a special operation in Ukraine.

1. Weakening and further collapse of the USSR

After the weakening and collapse of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s, the balance of power in the world was upset. Many previous treaties and agreements have ceased to be followed.⁹

2. Repartition of the world and revision of the existing system of international law

First, the United States and other NATO countries, without any sanction from the UN Security Council, carried out a bloody military operation against Belgrade, using aircraft and missiles right in the very center of Europe. Several weeks of continuous bombing of peaceful cities, of life-supporting infrastructure. Then came the turn of Iraq, Libya, Syria. The illegitimate use of military force against Libya, the perversion of all decisions of the UN Security Council on the Libyan issue, led to the complete destruction of the state, to the emergence of a huge hotbed of international terrorism, to the fact that the country plunged into a civil war and humanitarian catastrophe that has continued for many years. A similar fate was prepared for Syria. The fighting of the Western coalition on the territory of this country without the consent of the Syrian government and the sanction of the UN Security Council is nothing but an aggressive intervention.¹⁰

First, over the past thirty years, Russia has persistently and patiently tried to reach an agreement with the leading NATO countries on the principles of equal and indivisible security in Europe.⁵ In response to the proposals of official Moscow, Russia constantly faced either cynical deceit or attempts at pressure and blackmail. And the North Atlantic Alliance, meanwhile, despite all the protests and concern from the Russian Federation, steadily expanded and continues to expand. The Western war machine has closely approached the borders of our country.

Thus, at the beginning of 2022, the Russian proposals contained in the draft treaty between the Russian Federation and the United States of America on security guarantees in the Draft Agreement on Security Measures for the Russian Federation and the Member States North Atlantic Treaty Organization were rejected.⁶ This draft dealt, in particular, with the rejection of further NATO expansion, including the accession of Ukraine, as well as any NATO bases located in those other states that were previously part of the USSR, which were not members of the Alliance, including the use of their infrastructure for conducting any military activity as well as the return of military capabilities, including offensive capabilities, and infrastructure of NATO to the state of 1997, when the Founding Act was signed between Russia and NATO. These provisions are of fundamental importance for the Russian Federation.

Second, unacceptable threats to the Russian security were created by the active development of NATO countries in Ukraine. Thus, before the start of the military special operation, the Russian leadership was particularly concerned and anxious about those fundamental threats which from year to year, step by step, rudely and unceremoniously were created

3. Invasion of Iraq

The invasion of Iraq (2003), which also took place without any legal grounds, occupies a special place in this series of U.S. acts of aggression. The pretext for the invasion was supposedly reliable U.S. information about the presence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Subsequently, it turned out that all this was a hoax, a bluff: there were no chemical weapons in Iraq. In this situation, deception took place at the highest state level and from the rostrum of the UN. Its result was huge casualties, destruction, and an incredible surge of terrorism.¹¹

4. Deception by the United States and the entire West about preventing NATO expansion to the East

American politicians, political scientists, and journalists themselves write and talk about the fact that a real “empire of lies” has been created inside the United States in recent years. And the United States infects other countries with this deception. All her satellites not only resignedly and dutifully agree, sing along with her for any reason, but also copy her behavior, and enthusiastically accept the rules she proposes. Such behavior contradicts not only the principles of international relations, but above all, the universally recognized norms of morality and ethics.¹²

5. The West’s attempt to finally destroy Russia in the 90s and early 2000s

After the collapse of the USSR, with all the unprecedented openness of the new modern Russia, the readiness to work honestly with the United States and other Western partners, and in the conditions of virtually unilateral disarmament, the West immediately tried to put the squeeze on us, finish off and destroy us completely. This is exactly what happened in the 90s, in the early 2000s, when the collective West most actively supported separatism and mercenary gangs in the South of Russia (Caucasus). What sacrifices, what losses did all this cost us then, what trials did we have to go through before we finally broke the back of international terrorism in the Caucasus. We remember this and will never forget.¹³

6. Western attempts to destroy traditional Russian values

Attempts to destroy our traditional values and impose on us their pseudovalues that would corrode us, our people from the inside; those attitudes that they are already aggressively planting and spreading in countries, and which directly lead to degradation and degeneration, because they contradict the very nature of man.¹⁴

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7. The unwillingness of the United States and its allies to negotiate with Russia in December 2021

Russia once again made an attempt to agree with the United States and its allies on the principles of ensuring security in Europe and on the nonexpansion of NATO. Unfortunately, the position of official Washington has not changed. The United States has again demonstrated its unwillingness to negotiate with Russia on this key issue for official Moscow, pursuing its own goals, completely ignoring the interests of the Russian Federation.¹⁵

8. Taking into account the bitter experience of the beginning of the Great Patriotic War in June 1941

We know well from history how in 1940 and early 1941 the Soviet Union tried in every possible way to prevent or at least delay the outbreak of war. For this, among other things, it tried literally to the last not to provoke a potential aggressor, did not carry out or postponed the most necessary, obvious actions to prepare for repelling an inevitable attack. And those steps that were nevertheless taken in the end were catastrophically overdue.

9. Failure to take measures to prevent direct aggression against our country can lead to grave consequences

This is what historical experience teaches us. As a result of not taking the necessary measures

to prevent aggression, our country was not ready to fully meet the invasion of Nazi Germany, which attacked our Motherland on 22 June 1941 without declaring war. The enemy was stopped and then crushed, but at a colossal cost. An attempt to appease the aggressor on the eve of the Great Patriotic War turned out to be a mistake that cost our people dearly. In the very first months of hostilities, we lost huge, strategically important territories and millions of people. The second time we will not allow such a mistake, we have no right.¹⁶

10. NATO expansion to the east

Bringing NATO's military infrastructure close to Russia's borders. As NATO expands to the east, the situation for Russia becomes worse and more dangerous every year. Moreover, in recent days, the leadership of NATO has been directly talking about the need to accelerate, speed up the advancement of the Alliance's infrastructure to the borders of the Russian Federation. NATO is toughening its position toward Russia. Official Moscow can no longer simply watch what is happening. This would be absolutely irresponsible on the part of the Russian military-political leadership.

11. Creation of a hostile political project "anti-Russia" on the historical lands of Russia

Military development of the territory of Ukraine by NATO. In the territories adjacent to Russia, an "anti-Russia" hostile to our state is being created, which is placed under full external control, is intensively settled by the armed forces of NATO countries, and is pumped up with the most modern weapons. The military development of the territories adjacent to the borders of Russia, if allowed to be completed by the United States and NATO, will remain for decades to come, and perhaps forever. And it will create a constantly growing, absolutely unacceptable threat for Russia.¹⁷

12. The transition of the United States and NATO of the red line in relation to Russia

For the United States and its allies, this is the so-called policy of containment of Russia, with obvious geopolitical dividends. And for our country, it is ultimately a matter of life and death, a matter of our historical future as a people. This is a real threat not just to our interests, but to the very existence of our state, its sovereignty. This is the very red line that has

been talked about many times. They have passed this red line.

13. The complete refusal of modern power structures in Kyiv to peacefully resolve the conflict with Donbass

Those forces that carried out a coup in Ukraine in 2014 seized power and are holding it with the help of, in fact, decorative electoral procedures, have finally abandoned the peaceful settlement of the conflict. For eight years, endlessly long eight years, Russia has been doing everything possible to resolve the situation by peaceful, political means. However, the authorities in Kyiv have demonstrated their complete unwillingness to establish peace in the Donbass.¹⁸

14. The need to prevent genocide against the inhabitants of Donbass

For us, the citizens of Russia, it was impossible to look at the killing of civilians in the Donbass and the destruction of its social infrastructure without compassion. It was necessary to immediately stop this nightmare—the genocide against the millions of people living there, who rely only on Russia, hope only on Russian citizens. It was these aspirations, feelings, and the pain of people that were the main motives for Moscow to decide on the official recognition of the people's republics of Donbass.¹⁹

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15. **Ukrainian Nazis and nationalists seek revenge on the Crimeans and Sevastopol residents for their choice toward Russia**

The leading NATO countries, in order to achieve their own goals, support extreme nationalists and

“Circumstances require decisive and immediate action from Russia and its Armed Forces.”

neo-Nazis in everything in Ukraine. They, in turn, will never forgive the Crimeans and Sevastopol residents for their free choice—reunification with Russia.

16. **The desire of Ukrainian nationalists and neo-Nazis to seize Crimea and other Russian territories**

Ukrainian nationalists and neo-Nazis, of course, will launch military aggression against Crimea. And the same as against the Donbass. They openly declare that they lay claim to a number of other Russian territories.²⁰

17. **The desire of the Ukrainian side to possess nuclear weapons**

On 19 February 2022, at the Munich Conference, President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky announced his intention to initiate a summit of the countries participating in the Budapest Memorandum, which provided for Ukraine to renounce nuclear weapons. For reference: The Budapest Memorandum is an interstate document on security guarantees in connection with Ukraine’s accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.²¹

18. **The inevitability of a clash between Russia and armed formations of Ukrainian neo-Nazis**

The entire course of events and analysis of incoming information shows that Russia’s clash with Ukrainian neo-Nazi armed formations was inevitable. It was only a matter of time: they were preparing and waiting for a convenient hour. Russia could not feel safe, develop, exist with this constant threat emanating from the territory of modern Ukraine.

19. **Russia was left with no other choice but to defend itself and the people’s republics of Donbass by military means**

In 2000–2005, the Russian Armed Forces gave a military rebuff to terrorists in the Caucasus, defended

the integrity of our state, and preserved Russia. In 2014, Russia supported the Crimeans and Sevastopol residents. In 2015, the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation put up a reliable barrier to the penetration of terrorists from Syria into Russia. There was no other

way to protect our country. The same thing is happening now. Russia was simply not left with any other opportunity to protect itself, our people in the Donbass, except for the one that we will be forced to

use today. Circumstances require decisive and immediate action from Russia and its Armed Forces.

20. **Evaluation of enemy forces opposing Russia**

Those who claim to world domination, indeed, have great financial, scientific, technological, and military capabilities today. The leadership of Russia is aware of this and objectively assesses the threats that are constantly being addressed to it in the economic sphere, as well as their ability to resist this impudent and permanent blackmail. The military-political leadership of Russia evaluates them without illusions, extremely realistically.²²

21. **Assessment of one’s own strengths and capabilities**

Modern Russia, even after the collapse of the USSR and the loss of a significant part of its potential, is one of the most powerful nuclear powers in the world. Moreover, it has certain advantages in a number of the latest types of weapons. The decision of the military-political leadership of Russia to conduct a special military operation in Ukraine has a reasoned legal and targeted character, the essence of which is also reflected in a tabular form.

Table 2 **Legal Basis, Goals, and Objectives of the Military Special Operation of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation in Ukraine and Donbass**

Parameters of conducting a military special operation in Ukraine; description of the parameter for conducting a military special operation.

1. **On the basis of what legal acts is the special operation carried out (legal support)?**

(1) In accordance with Article 51 of Part VII of the UN Charter,

- (2) with the sanction of the Federation Council of the Russian Federation,
- (3) in pursuance of the treaties of friendship and mutual assistance ratified by the Federal Assembly on 22 February 2022 with the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic

2. What does Article 51 of Part VII of the UN Charter say?

This Charter shall in no way affect the inalienable right of individual or collective self-defense should an armed attack occur against a Member of the Organization until such time as the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. Measures taken by Members in the exercise of this right of self-defense shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and shall in no way affect the powers and responsibilities of the Security Council under this Charter to take at any time such action as it deems necessary to maintaining or restoring international peace and security.

3. Special operation mission

Protection of people who have been subjected to bullying and genocide by the Kyiv regime for eight years.

4. Goals of the special operation to complete the mission

Strive for the demilitarization and denazification of Ukraine, as well as for bringing to justice those who committed numerous bloody crimes against civilians, including citizens of the Russian Federation.

5. What is not included in the plans for the special operation?

The plans for the special operation do not include the occupation of Ukrainian territories. Russia is not going to impose anything on anyone by force.²³

6. The main task is to give the right to citizens living in Ukraine to make a choice regarding the ownership of their territory.

During the creation of the USSR, and after the Second World War, no one ever asked people who lived in certain territories that are part of modern Ukraine how they themselves want to arrange their lives. At the heart of Russian politics is freedom, the freedom

of choice for everyone to independently determine their own future and the future of their children. The military-political leadership of Russia considers it important that this right—the right to choose—could be used by all the peoples living on the territory of today's Ukraine, by everyone who wants it.²⁴

“The military-political leadership of Russia has no doubt that the soldiers and officers of the Russian Armed Forces, devoted to their country, will professionally and courageously fulfill their duty.”

7. What are the goals and objectives of the special operation?

Today's events are not connected with the desire to infringe on the interests of Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. They are connected with the protection of Russia itself from those who have taken Ukraine hostage and are trying to use it against Russia and its people. The actions of the military-political leadership and the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation are self-defense against the threats created to our country, from an even greater disaster than the one that is happening today.

8. On whom and what does the military-political leadership of Russia rely on inside the country when conducting a special operation?

- (1) Coordinated and effective actions of all levels of government (federal, regional, and municipal);
- (2) specialists responsible for the stability of the Russian economy, financial system, social sphere;
- (3) on the heads of Russian companies and all Russian businesses; and
- (4) on the consolidated, patriotic position of all parliamentary parties and social forces.

9. The leadership of Russia is confident in the professionalism and courage of Russian soldiers

The military-political leadership of Russia has no doubt that the soldiers and officers of the Russian Armed Forces, devoted to their country, will professionally and courageously fulfill their duty.²⁵

10. The mission and goals of the special operation will be achieved, the tasks will be completed

Ultimately, as it has always been in history, the fate of Russia is in the reliable hands of our multi-national people. And this means that the decisions

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made will be implemented, the goals set will be achieved, the security of our Motherland will be reliably guaranteed.

About Biological (Bacteriological) Laboratories in Ukraine

The correctness and importance of conducting a military special operation was confirmed by information about the presence of American biological (bacteriological) laboratories on the territory of Ukraine. So, on 27 May 2022, the head of the Radiation, Chemical and Biological Protection Troops (RCBZ) of the RF Armed Forces, Lieutenant General Igor Kirillov, announced that Russia has data on ten military biological projects of the Pentagon in Ukraine, which included work with pathogens of especially dangerous and economically significant infections.²⁶

The head of the RCBZ troops presented to the media official documents confirming the organization of work by the Pentagon, represented by the U.S. Department of Defense Threat Reduction Administration (DTRA), with a clear military-biological focus. He drew attention to the memorandum prepared by the office of the head of the Pentagon regarding the UP-2 project for mapping especially dangerous pathogens (a type of microorganism that causes diseases in humans, animals, and plants) on the

territory of Ukraine. “The document notes that the main task of this project is to collect information on the molecular composition of pathogens characteristic of Ukraine and transfer samples of strains,” said the head of the RCBZ troops. He added that within the framework of the Joint Threat Reduction Program, foreign experts were implementing the UP-4 project in Ukraine. In particular, virologists have explored the possibility of spreading especially dangerous infections through migratory birds.

“The documents received indicate that just for the period from November 2019 to January 2020, 991 biological samples were collected,”

the lieutenant general said. In total, the Russian side has information about the implementation of ten such projects (including UP-3, UP-6, UP-8, UP-10), which included work with pathogens of especially dangerous and economically significant infections: Crimean Congo fever, leptospirosis, tick-borne encephalitis, African swine fever.

In addition, American instructors trained biolaboratory personnel in Ukraine in emergency response to smallpox outbreaks, this fact was established during a military special operation, the head of the RHZB troops said. In reports on their biological research compiled for the UN, the United States and Ukraine did not mention joint work in this area.

The Terrorist Nature of the War against Russia and the Republics of Donbass, as well as against the Liberated Ukrainian Territories, by the Armed Forces of Ukraine (APU)

On the part of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, with strong logistical, advisory, intelligence, and other support from a number of NATO member states, the Ukrainian side has been waging a hybrid terrorist war against the republics of Donbass (starting from 2008), and this year against Russia and the liberated Ukrainian territories. Let's present its main forms and manifestations in tabular form.

Table 3

The Main Forms of Conducting and Manifestation of a Terrorist War by the Armed Forces of Ukraine in Relation to Russia, LPR, and DPR

Forms of conducting a terrorist war by the Armed Forces of Ukraine; what is the form?²⁷

1. Shelling of civilians

Launching rocket, mortar, and artillery strikes on peaceful neighborhoods, streets, and squares where there are no military facilities and where there are no military units. At the same time, it is known about the facts of the use of prohibited types of weapons by the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

2. Destruction of social infrastructure

Launching rocket, mortar, and artillery strikes, as well as strikes using unmanned aerial vehicles on hospitals, schools, kindergartens, energy sector facilities, housing, and communal infrastructure, etc.

3. Placement near residential buildings and social infrastructure facilities of heavy weapons and military equipment

The location of firing positions in the immediate vicinity of residential buildings, hospitals, maternity hospitals, kindergartens, clinics, and other social facilities.

4. The use of civilians as a “human shield” in the conduct of hostilities in urban areas

There is information that units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine are covered by civilians when performing combat missions.

5. Use of methods of nuclear terrorism and military-political blackmail

The shelling of nuclear power plants (Zaporozhye nuclear power plant).

6. Attempted murder and murder of employees of military-civilian administrations, well-known Russian journalists, political scientists, etc.

For example, on 20 August 2022, the daughter of the famous Russian philosopher Alexander Dugin, Daria Dugina, a well-known political scientist and public figure, was killed. Earlier, the Russian special services announced the arrest of a terrorist group that planned,

on the instructions of curators from Ukraine, the murder of prominent Russian journalists. On 6 September 2022 unknown people blew up the car of the commandant of the city of Berdyansk.

7. Planning for terrorist attacks and sabotage on the territory of the liberated regions of Ukraine, Donbass, and Russia

For example, on 29 July 2022, people were detained who, on the instructions of the Right Sector (banned in Russia), were planning to carry out a terrorist attack

“Launching rocket, mortar, and artillery strikes on peaceful neighborhoods, streets, and squares where there are no military facilities and where there are no military units.”

in Lipetsk. On 16 August 2022 in the military warehouse in the Crimea, near the village of Dzhankoy, the Ukrainian side carried out a sabotage in which a number of civilian objects were damaged.

The Main Measures Taken to Neutralize the Consequences of Economic Sanctions against Russia

Despite the conduct of a military special operation in Ukraine as well as unprecedented sanctions pressure on our country, all state and municipal authorities in Russia are taking measures for the socioeconomic development of the country.²⁸ It should be noted that the domestic authorities quite effectively repelled the first sanctions attacks, preventing the stability of the national currency from significantly weakening and preventing a shortage of goods. For example, the Government of the Russian Federation adopted the following antis sanction measures in the field of socioeconomic development:

- Implementation of special programs of concessional lending in various areas of economic activity (lending to small and medium-sized businesses, in the field of housing mortgages, etc.) has begun.
- Administrative costs have been reduced and new convenient services have been created for citizens and businesses.

- A decision was made to merge from January 2023 into one structure two state extra-budgetary funds.
- A Pension and Social Insurance Fund will help simplify payments to people, they will be appointed on the principles of the social treasury proactively,

“The package of state support measures under the sanctions affected the tourism, construction, forestry, and a number of other industries; within the framework of the program for the development of domestic microelectronics until 2025 ...”

that is, automatically, or on a single application.

- A unified basis for calculating insurance premiums to state off-budget funds and their unified tariff has been determined. This will increase the maximum amount of payments for insurance in case of temporary disability and in connection with maternity, will allow businesses to reduce administrative costs.
- The Russian government approved a bill aimed at reducing the administrative burden on businesses.

Amendments to the Code of Administrative Offenses soften the responsibility of businesses for failure to comply with a number of requirements. For example, for a misdemeanor first identified during an inspection, they will not be fined, but will issue an appropriate warning. The package of state support measures under the sanctions affected the tourism, construction, forestry, and a number of other industries; within the framework of the program for the development of domestic microelectronics until 2025, the state will finance the microelectronic industry in the amount of 170 billion rubles.

The state is providing additional support to air transport, which has been seriously affected by external restrictions. Unfriendly countries have banned Russian airlines from flying on many international routes. To stabilize the situation in the industry, a financial mechanism was previously adopted to stimulate passenger flights on domestic routes. Now a similar measure has been introduced for freight carriers. In addition, this year the Government of Russia allocated almost 3 billion rubles for partial compensation of their expenses.

This decision will help to reorient the existing fleet of cargo aircraft for transportation in the interests of Russian customers. Now the Russian economy is being rebuilt, many enterprises have already adapted to the new conditions—they are changing suppliers, transforming the supply chains of components, entering other markets. The Government of the Russian Federation assists them in this, reducing the administrative and tax burden. Let us also pay attention to global changes in the world economy and international economic policy. So, for example, Argentina, Iran, Turkey,

Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Algeria expressed their desire to become members of the BRICS.

Thus, it is obvious that a number of states that are not included in the concept of the collective West are looking for new ways of development that will ensure their progress and independence. There is an increased interest in new forms of international cooperation covering different continents of the globe. The uniqueness of the possible expansion of the BRICS membership lies in the fact that the founding countries of the organization and those who may join them in the near future will create the basis of an alternative system that challenges the Western-dominated model of the world economy that has been formed in recent decades. The structural development of an intercontinental organization creates the basis for the formation of a global financial and economic system independent of the U.S. and the EU.

It is no coincidence that on 7 September 2022, at the Eastern Economic Forum, Russian President Vladimir Putin stated that in recent years the role of the states of the Asia-Pacific region has grown. Exactly they became “new centers of economic and technological growth.” According to the president, Russia will always pursue an independent policy and Russia appreciates partners who conduct such same politics.

Thus, despite the highly sophisticated actions of powerful unfriendly states to causing as much damage as possible to the Russian Federations in all spheres of public life, including its role in world politics, the unbearable desire to defeat Russia in Ukraine, our country fends off sanctions attacks, maintains economic

stability, and confidently is moving toward achieving the goals of the special operation.

According to the president, this will all lead to the strengthening of Russia's sovereignty. It is understood that in the course of this struggle, the Armed Russian forces, with a high level of professionalism, will courageously fulfill all the tasks set before them, ensuring national and even international security.

The Main Tasks Facing the Armed Forces Russian Forces. The Tasks of the Officers for 2023 Academic Year

An analysis of the current military-political situation in the world shows that the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation are still faced with the task of containing military-political threats to national and international security, infringements on the economic and political interests of Russia and its closest allies.²⁹ In this regard, the priority areas for the development of the Armed Forces are:

- the formation of political and legal consciousness among the personnel, high moral and volitional qualities, immunity to ideological and cultural values alien to our society;
- awareness of the urgent need to strengthen the protection of the traditional values of Russian society, the importance of its spiritual unity in the difficult conditions of global instability, as well as the attempts of the West to impose alien, and in fact, destructive anti-values for our society;
- improving the quality of troop training while maintaining a high intensity of combat training, improving the algorithm for the work of commanders and tactical level staffs in directing combat training, improving work methods for organizing combat operations and command and control of troops (forces) using modern automated control systems and means of communication in various exercises;
- development of officers' skills and abilities in assessing and forecasting the development of the military-political situation at the global and regional

levels, as well as the state of interstate relations in the military-political sphere using modern technical means and information technologies;

- the formation of the officers' skills and abilities to expose false ("fake") information from the Western and Ukrainian media;
- maintenance of the nuclear deterrence potential at a sufficient level; maintenance of the Armed Forces in a given degree of readiness for combat use;
- studying the experience of combating neo-Nazism and terrorism in Ukraine, as well as the experience of combating terrorism in Syria, and readiness to apply it in practice;
- training military personnel to perform antiterrorist tasks with command and staff training;
- mastering the skills of maintenance, operation, and skillful use of new weapons and military equipment in any conditions by personnel;
- the development of new military equipment and combat means entering the arsenal of the Russian army, as well as the ability to destroy Western-made weapons in the course of hostilities; and

"It is understood that in the course of this struggle, the Armed Russian forces, with a high level of professionalism, will courageously fulfill all the tasks set before them, ensuring national and even international security."

- the formation of skills and abilities to counter the fascist (neo-Nazi) and other extremist ideology.
- The last two points deserve special attention, as they have gained particular relevance in 2022. "Russian weapons during the SMO in Ukraine confirmed their best qualities," said General of the Army Sergei Shoigu in a speech at the X Moscow Conference on International Security. The experience gained by the Russian army during the special operation in Ukraine is actively used to increase its effectiveness. As for the formation of skills to counter hostile ideology, the Minister of Defense of the Russian Federation at the First International Anti-Fascist Congress, which took place on the sidelines of the Army-2022 forum, announced that official Kyiv openly

declared itself the heir and continuer of the bloody Ukrainian nationalists.

The Verkhovna Rada proclaimed militants of the Ukrainian Nationalist Organization (OUN) (recognized as extremist in Russia) and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) as fighters for national independence. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukraine was encouraged to promote legislation

“The Russian Ministry of Defense is carrying out multifaceted work to combat the falsification of historical facts.”

banning the Russian language, Russian media, Russian culture, everything related to our country.

The Russian Ministry of Defense is carrying out multifaceted work to combat the falsification of historical facts. “We pay great attention to the military-patriotic education of young people. We strive to instill in the younger generation respect for the history of our native country, its multinational culture and traditions,

we strengthen the unity of the army and the people,” said the Minister of Defense.

The head of the military department also noted that this year a selection of declassified documents from the archives of the Ministry of Defense on the topics “Crimes of Ukrainian nationalists,” “Liberation of Mariupol,” “Battle for the Dnieper” was made public. In addition, Sergei Shoigu said that attempts to rehabilitate and spread Nazism, glorify Nazi criminals and their accomplices are illegitimate and immoral in nature. They are blasphemous in relation to the memory of those who freed the world from this obvious and legally established evil. Therefore,

the fight against any manifestation of Nazism must be uncompromising and comprehensive.

Methodological Recommendations

In the introductory part of the lesson, when substantiating the relevance of the topic, the leader of the lesson should use examples to show the most significant changes in the geo-economic and geo-economic situation in

AU Films Presents



AUP's Near Peer film series continues with a timely discussion of Russia and its military. Subject-matter experts discuss Russian history, current affairs, and military doctrine. Putin's declarations, advances in military technology, and Russia's remembrance of the Great Patriotic War are also addressed. *Near Peer: Russia* is the second film in a four-part series exploring America's global competitors. To view this documentary online, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iOikmi1uyFs&t=2179s>.

the world that occurred as a result of Russia's actions both in the international arena as a whole and during the military special operation in Ukraine.

When presenting the material on the first educational issue, it is necessary to clearly, using weighty arguments, show the necessity and importance of conducting a military special operation in Ukraine. Separately, we should dwell on examples that reveal the hostile nature of the actions of the United States, NATO and the Kyiv authorities, which threaten the national security of Russia and undermine the foundations of international security.

When studying the second question, one should voice the tasks set by the Minister of Defense for the

new academic year, linking them both with the tasks solved by a specific military team in which the lesson takes place, and in general with the tasks of the type or type of troops to which the student present at the lecture audience.

In addition to the text of the educational material itself, when studying the topic, it is desirable to use other thematic information resources. For example, these can be sections of the official website of the Ministry of Defense dedicated to the conduct of a military special operation, speeches by the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, reports by official representatives of the military department on important military-political issues. ■

Translator's Notes

1. The persistent Western threat of aggression against Russia remains the focal point of the Kremlin's ideology. This "enemy at the gate" assertion trumps any concern over democracy, human rights, or the fight against corruption. From the Kremlin's perspective, the U.S./NATO is the eternal hungry wolf, hoping to gain a staging ground in Ukraine to better attack Russia. The Kremlin does not believe in any sort of Ukrainian identity or agency or that the Ukrainian people should have a say in how their country is run. The Kremlin attributes all this talk of Ukrainian sovereignty and democracy to the schemes of Washington.

2. Again, the Kremlin maintains the NATO is merely a front organization for American imperialism. It firmly believes that NATO enlargement was *not* predicated upon the will of the people living in these countries, but rather on U.S. manipulation and pressure.

3. Over the past year, as it became clear that the Kremlin would not enjoy any rapid success in Ukraine, a strange alchemy has occurred in their propaganda whereby the West (U.S. and NATO) are chiefly responsible for starting the conflict in Ukraine. Today, Russian soldiers (and the Russian people) are taught that they are fighting against U.S. and NATO in Ukraine, and that the West started this war.

4. The Kremlin attributes much of American superpower status to the U.S. dollar's role as the global reserve currency and has been at the forefront of trying to reduce the influence of the dollar. For additional background, see Ray Finch, "The Kremlin's Economic Checkmate Maneuver," *Problems of Post-Communism* 62, no. 3 (2015), <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10758216.2015.1022392>.

5. Another gross distortion. Even during the 1990s, under Yeltsin's Kremlin leadership, Russia continued to claim an interest over former Warsaw Pact and USSR member states. To reiterate, new NATO members themselves lobbied to join, primarily over concerns of a revisionist Russia.

6. Most Western analysts rightly posit that the December 2021 draft proposal put forward by the Kremlin to supposedly reduce tensions surrounding Ukraine was an unrealistic canard. To meet Kremlin demands, Western and NATO leaders would have had to agree to return to the 1997 status quo (e.g., remove troops and equipment from any territory which joined the alliance after 1997: Poland, Baltics, etc.); agree that there would be no

further expansion; and confer first with Russia before conducting any exercise in this region. From all the evidence, by the time the Kremlin put forward this proposal, it was clear that the Kremlin had already decided to invade Ukraine. They developed this impracticable proposal knowing full well the West would reject it. For a Western perspective, see Andrew Roth, "Russia Issues List of Demands It Says Must be Met to Lower Tensions in Europe," *The Guardian* (website), 17 December 2021, accessed 27 January 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/dec/17/russia-issues-list-demands-tensions-europe-ukraine-nato>. For a Russian perspective on this proposal, see Fyodor Lukyanov, "One Year Ago, Russia Gave the West a Last Chance to Prevent a Full-Blown Conflict—What Went Wrong?," RT (pro-Kremlin site), 18 December 2022, accessed 27 January 2023, <https://www.rt.com/russia/568451-fyodor-lukyanov-one-year-ago/>.

7. Note how the author parrots the phrasing of Putin: "fundamental threats which from year to year, step by step, rudely and unceremoniously were created by Western politicians in relation to our country." As in Soviet times, it has now become *de rigueur* to quote the Kremlin leader.

8. Again, emblematic of the Soviet period, where military journals went out of their way to demonstrate loyalty to the leadership.

9. The revanchist thinking starts at the top. Recall Putin's claim that the "collapse of the USSR was the greatest geo-political tragedy of the twentieth century."

10. While this one-sided history lesson may have nothing to do with invading Ukraine, the Kremlin leader has suggested that Russia needed to act before the US/NATO attained a staging area in Ukraine.

11. In the Kremlin thinking, just as the U.S. could ignore the pleas of other countries in choosing to invade Iraq, then as a "sovereign" nation, so can Russia—even if it results in a strategic blunder.

12. The current Kremlin leadership firmly believes that the U.S. is the Western "puppet-master," who uses deception, bribes, and coercion to maintain NATO primacy.

13. This paragraph is an excellent example of Russian paranoia about Western policies and actions in the 1990s. As someone who worked in Russia in the 1990s, I have firsthand experience in

both Western public and private initiatives to help Russia make a transition to a market democracy after the collapse of the USSR. However, since Putin came to office in 1999, this history of U.S./Western goodwill toward Russia has been rewritten, to where many Russians now believe that the U.S./West was responsible not only for the country's near political and economic collapse, but also for abetting the conflicts in and around Chechnya (1994–96 and 1999–2005). While delivering Western aid was not without its problems, there were genuine efforts to foster a new economy and political pluralism, while helping the neediest. For additional details on alleged Western involvement in Chechnya, see "Claim (in 2004, 2015 and 2017): The U.S. Government Supported Chechen Separatism," *Russia Matters*, accessed 27 January 2023, <https://www.russiamatters.org/node/20317>.

14. As in other corrupt, autocratic countries, the Kremlin leadership claims to be a defender of "traditional values," especially on gender matters. The assertion that "the Creator made his creatures either male or female, and that's it," has been blessed by prominent clerics in the Russian Orthodox Church. The Kremlin has used this traditional banner to gain international adherents. For detailed background, see E. A. Stepanova, "Everything Good against Everything Bad: Traditional Values in the Search for New Russian National Idea," *Z Religion Ges Polit* (2022), <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41682-022-00123-2>.

15. See note 6.

16. The Soviet victory in World War II is the absolute prism through which the Kremlin (and many Russians) view the world. Just as some in the USSR mistakenly believed that Nazi Germany would not attack in June 1941, so in February 2022, the Kremlin has put forth the canard that it had to initiate the Special Military Operation against Ukraine to prevent NATO/U.S. from attacking Russia.

17. This paragraph features more variations on the anti-US/NATO theme. Many Russian military pundits firmly believe that there is a direct correlation between an article's length, its repetition, and its effectiveness, especially if they quote the words of Kremlin leader verbatim. This echo-technique not only demonstrates the author's complete loyalty, but also serves to drive the point home.

18. The Ukrainians would rightly point out that it takes two powers negotiating in good faith to peacefully resolve a conflict. Leaders in Kyiv would remind this author that neither after March 2014 (when bogus Russian referendums were held in the separatist regions of eastern Ukraine), nor after the Minsk agreements in 2014–15, the Kremlin was never willing to relinquish political/military control over the areas it held in the Donbass.

19. The Ukrainian government has committed no acts of "genocide" against the inhabitants of Donbass. The UN and local human rights groups have calculated that approximately 3,500 civilians were killed between March 2014 and February 2022 in Eastern Ukraine. These casualties were caused by both sides in the conflict. For a brief synopsis, see Kathrin Wesolowski, "Fact Check: Russia Falsely Blames Ukraine for Starting War," *Deutsche Welle*, 4 March 2022, accessed 27 January 2023, <https://www.dw.com/en/fact-check-russia-falsely-blames-ukraine-for-starting-war/a-60999948>.

20. Here's the Kremlin formula: illegally annex regions of Ukraine (Crimea, Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, and Zaporozhye), then complain when "Ukrainian-Nazis" use force to regain control of these territories. For the record, only a handful of minor countries (not even Belarus) have recognized Russia's claim to Crimea. Only North Korea has supported the Kremlin's claim that the Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, and Zaporozhye regions belong to Russia.

21. This paragraph relies heavily on Russian propaganda themes. Ukraine signed the Budapest Memorandum in 1994 with the firm understanding that by giving up its nukes, its territorial integrity would be guaranteed by the other signees (one of which was Russia). Putin likely would have never tried to annex Crimea (2014) or invaded Ukraine (2022) if Kyiv still possessed nuclear weapons.

22. There was speculation among some Russian pundits that the sloppy U.S./NATO withdrawal from Afghanistan helped to convince the Kremlin leadership that US/NATO were weak, disorganized, and demoralized, and would not be able to defend Ukraine.

23. Another good example of the massive cognitive dissonance that has infected many within the Russian information space over the past twenty years. Even after the "legal" annexation of Crimea (2014), Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, and Zaporozhye regions (2022), and the widespread destruction throughout all of Ukraine, a wide swath of the Russian population—to include those in uniform—continue to maintain that "Russia is not going to impose anything on anyone by force."

24. Granted, the history of Ukraine is both complex and contested—somewhat dependent on where one stands. Putin has posited that Lenin allowed a certain Ukrainian identity after the 1917 Revolution to enlist this region to the Bolshevik cause. Similarly, transferring control of Crimea to the administrative control of the Ukrainian SSR in 1954 was done more out of a symbolic and/or political rationale. According to his historical analysis, President Putin believes that Russia and Ukraine share much common history and are essentially "one people." For an in-depth understanding of Putin's historical perspective, see V. V. Putin, "On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians," Yeltsin Library, August 2021, <https://www.prlib.ru/en/article-vladimir-putin-historical-unity-russians-and-ukrainians>.

25. This may prove to be the Achilles' heel of the Kremlin's plan. Increasingly, Russian soldiers fighting in Ukraine have proven unwilling to sacrifice their lives for a corrupt political system.

26. Over the past several years, pro-Kremlin media has transformed the fallacious assertion that the U.S. was developing bioweapons within Ukraine to target Russians into established fact. It remains one of the more popular Kremlin justifications for initiating the Special Military Operation.

27. All the measures and actions listed in this section have been taken by the Russian Federation government and its forces. As such, it may be an attempt to justify Russian actions by claiming the Ukrainians do exactly the same thing.

28. Not sure exactly why the author included this section. It may suggest that the economic strains stemming from Western sanctions are beginning to be felt at the local level, and the author felt compelled to assure his audience that the Kremlin leadership had the economic situation well in hand.

29. Note how many of the tasks revolve around morale and indoctrination. The Kremlin wants to ensure that its uniformed personnel fully adhere to their anti-Western narrative. To guarantee that this message is effectively spread throughout the ranks, the MoD reinstated the position of political commissars. For background, see Ray Finch, "Ensuring the Political Loyalty of the Russian Soldier," *Military Review* 100, no. 4 (July-August 2020), accessed 27 January 2023, <https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Journals/Military-Review/English-Edition-Archives/July-August-2020/Finch-Russian-Political-Loyalty/>.