



By: *The Editorial Board*

One Thousand



The first of the past thousand days was full of expectations from Russia and its leader that everything would last only a few days, after which the concept of the so-called historical or natural Russia, which goes far beyond its internationally recognised borders, would triumph.

On the other hand, the expectations of the Ukrainians were to persevere and prevent the occupation and fragmentation of the country on each of these days, no matter how long it took.

A thousand terrible days in Ukraine changed the world. Whether by accident or not, around the thousandth day, the outcome that will determine what the coming years in Europe and Eurasia will look like begins to emerge.

Only after the election defeat of his candidate, US Vice President Kamala Harris, did US President Joe Biden finally **authorise** Kyiv to deploy long-range missiles against targets in Russia, demonstrating that his lengthy hesitation was simply a pre-election calculation.

Allowing Ukraine to use Western long-range weapons to attack military targets deep in Russian territory was too risky for Biden for months, as it would cost his camp votes from those who do not want an escalation with Russia or do not welcome American interference in the war.

American hesitation and delay

Hesitation and delay in fulfilling the demands of Kyiv and the vast majority of European partners constituted half of Biden's term. Despite the fact that the US is by far Ukraine's largest donor in its fight against Russian aggression, Biden's reluctance to fulfil Kyiv's crucial military demands could prove a decisive handicap for Ukraine in terms of the outcome of the crisis.

From Barack Obama's refusal to supply Ukraine with Javelin anti-tank missiles to Biden's reluctance to send Ukraine the most

advanced tanks and HIMARS artillery systems, then F-16 aircraft, to today's green light for long-range missiles, the White House has been lagging behind the timing that could have drastically shortened the current thousand days.

If Kyiv changes the situation on the front in its favour in the next two months before Trump's arrival in the White House, the agenda of some future peace talks would look different from what it is today

In addition to their desire to maintain their reputation at the end of their term, Biden and his staff are setting up obstacles for Donald Trump to execute his "peace in 24 hours" plan, a move that aligns with the Kremlin's intentions.

If Kyiv changes the situation on the front in its favour by deploying American, British, and French long-range missiles in the next two months before Trump's arrival in the White House, the agenda of some future peace talks would look different from what it is today.

Putin in a bind

The Ukrainian strikes deep within Russian territory will share the same strategic objective as the invasion by the Ukrainian army and the occupation of a portion of the Kursk region. The goal is to transfer the war to Russia's territory and confront its population, acknowledging that a full-blown war, not a mere "special operation," began a thousand days ago.

Putin does not want this development because he understands that not only will his propaganda narrative lose credibility, but also that his material resources and potential to lead an invasion will disappear much faster than before.

Therefore, Biden's approval of Ukraine's

deployment of long-range missiles puts Putin under even greater pressure to scale back his imperial ambitions in Russia.

Olaf Scholz's phone call on Friday gave Putin an unexpected way out of his predicament

However, outgoing German Chancellor Olaf Scholz's phone call on Friday gave Putin an unexpected way out of his predicament. Following Biden's tightening, this was another potentially ground-breaking move inspired by pre-election calculations.

By breaking the two-year silence in the West's communication with the Kremlin, Scholz wanted to start the election campaign as a key peacemaker, a leader with the power to end the biggest European conflict since World War II.

Putin, however, saw this move very differently. He perceived it as a vulnerability and a break in the seemingly unwavering Western support for Ukraine. And not by anyone. Germany is Kyiv's second-largest financial and arms donor, holding a crucial vote in the Western alliances.

“No-one will stop Putin with phone calls. Telephone diplomacy cannot replace real support from the whole West for Ukraine. The next weeks will be decisive, not only for the war itself, but also for our future,” said Polish PM Donald Tusk, expressing no small resignation about Scholz's conversation with Putin.

A window for a peaceful solution

Around the 1000th day, Ukrainian leader Volodymyr Zelensky has once again directed his position towards peace, negotiations, and ways to secure continued Western support.

“It is certain that the war will end sooner with the policies of the team that will now lead the

White House. This is their approach, their promise to their citizens,” Zelensky told Ukrainian media.



It is certain that the war will end sooner with the policies of the team that will now lead the White House - Volodymyr Zelensky

He thus finds in the circumstances of the "thousandth day" a space that indicates that it is possible to end the war under conditions that will not be devastating for Ukraine.

Zelensky and his compatriots are facing the third and harshest winter since the start of the war. They are facing it with almost 80% of their energy facilities destroyed and, more recently, with a sharp increase in Russian missile attacks on civilian targets in major cities.

The fatigue of the past thousand days is becoming increasingly unbearable for the Ukrainians. Even for their friends in the West, who have provided them with support thus far. The transfer of power in Washington will drain the energy of this support in the upcoming months, much like the election campaign in Germany.

Based on the authorisation to deploy long-range missiles against Russia and the presence of its army in the Russian border region of Kursk, as well as the paralysing effects of Russia's economic isolation, Kyiv is approaching the negotiations knowing full well that it will have to make concessions.

The other side of the conflict will also have to accept conditions such that it will no longer be a security threat to Ukraine or anyone else in

the European neighbourhood.