



# JACQUES BAUD: "THE GOAL IS NOT TO HELP UKRAINE, BUT TO FIGHT PUTIN"

*Posted on June 1, 2022 by Jacques Baud*



*This interview comes to us through the kind courtesy of the Swiss journal, [Zeitgeschehen im Fokus](#). In it, Jacques Baud brings us up-to-date on the Ukraine situation, while providing us with great insights, in his usual, inimitable way. He is in conversation with Thomas Kaiser. [Note: This English translation of the original German interview has been exclusively updated by Jacques Baud. Translated from the German by N. Dass.]*

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**Thomas Kaiser-Zeitgeschehen im Fokus (TK):** You cannot recognize Switzerland in a certain sense. Everything that was of importance to the state is being thrown away, almost hand-over-fist. What's your view?

**Jacques Baud (JB):** We are indeed in a state of hysteria; and it is unbelievable how people forget the fundamental principles of the rule of law. This is a fundamental problem—you forget your own foundations, your own identity. Regardless of who is fighting each other, it is not our fight, and it is an advantage not to be involved in the fight, because that creates the opportunity to develop better solutions and help defuse the problem.

**TK:** A neutral state could make a positive contribution here?

**JB:** Yes, but that is exactly what Switzerland is not doing. It behaves as if it were a party in this conflict. This prevents Switzerland from finding a balanced, objective and impartial solution. This is a key point, *nota bene* for the international community as a whole, not only for Switzerland. The difference is only that Switzerland should be neutral.

**TK:** How is that relevant?

**JB:** This neutrality could be exploited, not to take sides, but to help solve the problem, regardless of who is guilty or innocent. These are different things. It's like an arbitrator. He is not supposed to be a party. We have forgotten that. It doesn't matter what the referee thinks about a participant, whether he finds him sympathetic or not, he must keep the same distance from both participants. Switzerland should be in this situation, but it does take advantage of it. I don't mean financially, of course, but

intellectually, legally and morally. The problem is that Switzerland forgets that it is not a warring party in this conflict.

**TK:** If you listen to the Swiss government or even to the narrative of some lawmakers, this neutral stance is completely blurred, even if they claim the opposite is repeatedly..

**JB:** It is also interesting that if one takes some distance to assess the conflict and does not immediately side with Ukraine, one is declared a " Putin-[Empathizer](#)." This is unbelievable. What I think about Putin has nothing to do with the assessment of the situation. That is the business of the Ukrainians. I have said this several times: if I were Ukrainian, I probably would have taken up arms. But that is not the point. I, as Swiss, will not give up my Swissness. In order to help Ukraine, I don't have to become a Ukrainian; but I have to look at the big picture I have as Swiss to bring a less passionate but more constructive point of view. The journalists who criticize me are more Russia-haters than Ukraine-lovers.

**TK:** Where, then, might Switzerland's role in this conflict lie?

**JB:** When an onlooker sees an old lady being attacked by a thug on the street, he does not encourage her to fight back, but tries to separate the two. We are in the situation of this onlooker; but our response is to give weapons so that Ukraine fights. For a Ukrainian it is legitimate to want to fight. But for a Swiss or another European, our role is to try to limit the damage. But no one is even attempting to do that in the West. When Zelensky was looking for a mediator, he turned to Turkey, China, and Israel. He did not choose a European Union country or even Switzerland. He understood that Switzerland is no longer an independent partner.

**TK:** Isn't that the result of current Swiss foreign policy?

**JB:** Yes, it shows the nature of the problem. We have to make a difference between what we think about Putin and what we want to achieve politically. These are two different things. In addition, I always ask myself if are we so keen to blame the aggressor. Why didn't we blame and sanction the U.S., the UK or France when they attacked Middle Eastern or African countries?

**TK:** Yes, this question really does arise.

**JB:** Paradoxically, everything we give to Ukraine today only highlights the help and compassion we have not given to those who have been unjustly attacked by the West in the Middle East and elsewhere. This will have consequences in the future. Many have noticed this with the refugees. The "blond, blue-eyed" refugees are gladly helped; the others are not. Maybe we can understand this, even if we cannot approve of it. But what is incomprehensible, remains the fact that we keep silent about one attacker, while another is punished with more than 6 000 sanctions.

**TK:** Is this not the well-known double standard?

**JB:** Yes, it is. It also doesn't mean that you have to be in favor of Russia; that has nothing to do with it. If you look at Justitia, she is blind and holds a scale in her hand. That is exactly what is missing today. Western countries are partial and biased. The same applies to the European Union. A modern state should not be guided by passion, but by reason. These principles were established by Montesquieu, Voltaire and Rousseau in the 18th century. Our "woke" culture has forgotten them. We let our feelings guide us and we follow them. That is the problem.

**TK:** Does that mean that the principles of the rule of law have disappeared?

**JB:** The rule of law means that decisions are not based on feelings or intuitions, but on the basis of facts. That is why modern states have intelligence services. This is about supporting decision-making based on facts and not on the basis of divine inspiration. This is a fundamental difference between enlightened governance and despotic obscurantism. Fighting a dictatorship does not entitle us to forget the principles of the rule of law. Since the Balkan War, the West seems to believe that the end justifies the means. It is irrelevant what individual ministers think as persons, they are allowed to hate Putin, that is their right as citizens —but not as ministers. Feelings cannot be the basis of their policy. Here I would like to refer to Henry Kissinger. He said in 2014, "Demonizing Vladimir Putin is not politics; it is an alibi for not having politics." That's what [Henry Kissinger said](#); not Putin or Lukashenko. It behaves like a monarch, like Louis XIV who was guided by a divine inspiration.

**"It is not about solving the problem of 'war,' but about eliminating the problem of 'Putin.'"**

**TK:** So, the Swiss government's decision-making is more based on emotions than on reason?

**JB:** It is not the only one, unfortunately. This "management by Twitter" that has the upper hand in the entire Western world at the moment is absolutely inappropriate. It leads to this situation where you react before you know exactly what has happened.

Obviously, things don't get better as a result. We close the doors. We do not communicate anymore. Diplomacy has stalled. In reality, it is not about solving the problem of "war," but about eliminating the problem of "Putin."

**TK:** Reacting before you know the details is common practice?

**JB:** Yes, after the missile attack on civilians at the Kramatorsk train station on April 8, the Swiss minister of Foreign Affairs summoned the Russian ambassador. At that time, however, only few details of the attack were known. Nevertheless, the Russians were accused. Today, factual evidence, such as the serial number of the missile, the direction of the launch, the type of missile and the strategy tend to indicate a Ukrainian responsibility. But without an impartial international investigation, a direct accusation of Russia means an endorsement of a possible war crime by Ukraine. That is not the way to run states. The fact that the political leadership is unable to take distance to the events is extremely disturbing.

**TK:** Without distance, it is probably extremely difficult to judge a situation adequately?

**JB:** In most cases, we are not able to distinguish between a war crime and "collateral damage." In large part, this is because the media dictate an answer to us. What was provocation, what was reaction, what is propaganda? We don't know. Despite everything, we accuse and sanction Russia. But if you want to condemn something, first you need an international and impartial commission of inquiry to find out what happened. What we are doing tends to exclude any possibility of dialogue, and that prevents the formulation of a crisis management strategy.

**TK:** So, the citizen and the state cannot have the same approach?

**JB:** The citizen can believe what he wants. What the ordinary citizen thinks is completely up to him. He can mean what he wants about Putin, about Russia. He can hate people if he wants to. But a state and state media cannot afford that.

**TK:** Why not?

**JB:** The role of a state is not to express the emotions of its people, but to represent their interests. Ukraine's interest is to protect its citizens from an aggression. Switzerland's interest should not be to support a war, but to support achieving a peaceful solution. Switzerland's role should not be to blame or condemn. Today, Switzerland decided the second largest number of sanctions against Russia, but it didn't apply any sanction against the US, the UK or Israel. In other words, we accept crimes when they are committed by some, but not when they are committed by others.

It has been known for a long time that Ukrainian militias commit war crimes and crimes against humanity. Switzerland has not condemned them. Currently, many Ukrainian war crimes are beginning to be denounced by [Western witnesses and humanitarian workers](#). Their revelations are censored, like the revelation of [Natalia Usmanova](#), censored by Reuters and Der Spiegel, which tells that it was Ukrainian militias and not Russians who prevented civilians from escaping through humanitarian corridors. By turning a blind eye to them, Switzerland is supporting practices that are prohibited under the Geneva Conventions, of which it is the depositary state.

**"Kiev and the West are waging a media war against Russia and the Donbas republics."**

**TK:** This means that the West is promoting crises?

**JB:** Yes. In 2014, a similar mechanism was observed. Western "experts" and media downplayed the Ukrainians' resistance to regime change. It had to be shown that the Maidan revolution was democratic. So, they built the myth of a Ukrainian army that was victorious against the rebels. After the defeat of the government in Donetsk, the excuse of a Russian intervention had to be invented to justify Western propaganda. This is how the first Minsk agreements came about (September 2014). Immediately after, Kiev broke the signed agreement to launch the Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO). This led to a second defeat at Debaltsevo and the second Minsk agreement (February 2015). Once again, the Ukrainian defeat was attributed to Russian intervention. Therefore, Western "experts" continue to claim that these agreements were signed between Ukraine and Russia, which is not true. The Minsk Agreement was signed between Kiev and representatives of the self-proclaimed republics of Lugansk and Donetsk.

**TK:** What is the current assessment of the war situation?

**JB:** Today we can see that Kiev and the West are waging a media war against Russia and the Donbas republics. Russia, on the other hand, is waging a war on the battlefield. As a result, Ukrainians and the West are stronger in the information war, but Russia and its allies are stronger on the battlefield. Who will win? We don't know. But what has been observed in Mariupol and the Donbas since mid-April tends to suggest that Ukrainian troops have been "abandoned" by their leadership. This observation is also made by Western volunteers who have left the battlefield due to the shortcomings of the Ukrainian command and are reporting this in the media.

**TK:** What does this mean specifically regarding Russian war objectives?

**JB:** Russia started with a limited objective. After that, the decision was made to go further. It wanted to demilitarize the threat over Donbas. Based on the first success, it wanted to start negotiations on the neutrality of Ukraine. This was a new objective, which was defined later. Putin saw a chance to achieve his goal through negotiations. If Ukraine did not accept it, he would adjust the objective accordingly. The Ukrainians don't want negotiations; so Russia is proceeding incrementally until Ukraine agrees to a negotiated settlement.

**"The Russians understand war from a Clausewitzian perspective: war is the continuation of politics by other means."**

**TK:** What were the original war aims?

**JB:** On February 24, Putin clearly stated the two war aims: "demilitarization" and "denazification," to end the threat against the Russian-speaking population in the Donbas. Moreover, Putin stated that he did not seek to take over all of Ukraine. This is exactly what has been observed.

Russians understand war from a Clausewitzian perspective: war is the continuation of politics by other means. Therefore, they move fluidly from one to the other. The idea is to get the Ukrainian side to enter into a negotiation process.

**TK:** Has Ukraine seriously engaged in a negotiated settlement?

**JB:** On February 25th, Zelensky hinted that he was ready to negotiate with Russia. The European Union then showed up on February 27th with a 450-million Euro arms package to spur Ukraine to fight. On March 7th, with the goal of "demilitarization" and "denazification" nearly achieved and Ukraine having made no progress in negotiations, Russia added that Kiev must recognize the return of Crimea to Russia and the independence of the two Donbas republics. It made clear that its position could change if Ukraine did not want to negotiate.

**TK:** Has Ukraine responded to this?

**JB:** After the capture of Mariupol, the situation in Ukraine weakened, and on March 21st, Zelensky made an offer that was accommodating to Russia. But as in February, the EU came back two days later with a second package of 500-million Euros for weapons. The UK and the US subsequently put pressure on Zelensky to withdraw his offer. Negotiations in Istanbul subsequently stalled. This was a clear indication that the West didn't want a negotiated solution.

**TK:** To what extent has Russia changed its goals?

**JB:** At the end of March, the goal of "denazification" was achieved with the capture of Mariupol and removed it from Russia's objectives as part of negotiations.

On April 22nd, the Russians adjusted their goal. The Ministry of Defense announced that the new goal was to take control of the southern part of Ukraine up to Transnistria, where the Russian-speaking never felt being well treated.

As can be seen, the Russian strategy adjusts the goals depending on the military situation. What the Russians are actually doing is to turn their operational successes into a strategic success.

**TK:** Does this mean that the Russian targets reported by the media never existed?

**JB:** That's right. Vladimir Putin never said he wanted to take Kiev. He never said he was going to take the city in two days. He never said he wanted to overthrow President Zelensky. He never said he wanted to take over all of Ukraine. He never said he was aiming for a victory on May 9th. He never said



he wanted to declare that victory at the May 9th parade. He never said that he wanted to "declare war" on May 9th, in order to trigger a general mobilization.

So, by setting the objectives, the West can now claim Putin did not achieve them. The narrative that Russia is losing the war against Ukraine is based on these claims.

**TK:** What should come out of the military action at the end?

**JB:** Of course, we do not know what is going on in Vladimir Putin's mind. But obviously there is a logic. The West is not making it easier for the Ukrainians, and the Russians are moving ahead. In the near future, we'll see the Russian coalition "liberating" more territories. Some provinces have already decided to introduce the ruble as currency. So, things are slowly moving towards the "recreation" of some kind of Novorossiia.

**TK:** What do you mean by "Novorossiia," and how should it look territorially?

**JB:** After the abolition of the official language law in 2014, not only the Lugansk and Donetsk oblasts rose up, but the entire Russian-speaking south of Ukraine. As a result, in October 2014, the Unified Forces of Novorossiia were formed, with units from the self-proclaimed Republics of Odessa, Kharkov, Dnepropetrovsk, and, of course, Lugansk and Donetsk. Only Lugansk and Donetsk survived. The other "republics" have been brutally suppressed by the Kiev's paramilitary forces. Today, the Russians are using the revival of the Novorossiia as an incentive for the Ukrainians to go to the negotiation table. If they don't want, Russia will increase the pressure.



**TK:** Does Russia have a chance of success in this way?

**JB:** Nothing is certain. What can be said, however, is that the popular resistance to Russia in the territories it occupies is much weaker than Western experts estimated. Moreover, it is clear that the Ukrainian conduct of operations has not been effective. It seems that the Ukrainian military has lost confidence in its authorities, as it did in 2014.

**TK:** How do we know this?

**JB:** The [testimonies of Western volunteer fighters](#) who have returned from Ukraine confirm that the Ukrainian leadership is weak. It seems that the Ukrainian leadership itself is a victim of its own propaganda, which overestimates the performance of Ukrainian Forces. One gets the feeling that the political leadership is more satisfied with the messages conveyed by the West than with the actual results on the battlefield. Of course, the Western media uses the civilian and military casualty figures

given by Ukraine to claim Ukraine's victory and Russian upcoming defeat.

**TK:** What conclusions can we draw from this whole situation?

**JB:** Western activities will only prolong this war, while leaving no room for negotiations. This is exactly what the EU and Switzerland are doing. They are more part of the problem than of the solution.

**TK:** German Chancellor Scholz has said very clearly, "Russia must not win the war." With that, the war will continue?

**JB:** That is childish. The operational situation shows that Ukraine is in a very difficult situation. I do not know whether Russia will "win" or "lose" this war. But I do know that Ukraine is no longer in a position to win militarily. On the political level, the situation may be different. This is debatable, and the future will tell. From a Western perspective, it is certainly a political defeat for Russia. However, for the rest of the world, this may not be the case. In fact, the new Eurasian bloc that will emerge from this conflict will be a significantly stronger contender for the West. We are used to see the fate of the world revolving around the West. But Asia will probably be the next "center of the world." By isolating Russia politically from the West, you push it into the Asian bloc. In the long run, this could give Russia an advantage over Europe and the United States.

**TK:** You said that Ukraine cannot win the war. Is that because it is too weak militarily?

**JB:** There is almost no Ukrainian military left, so to speak. Most of the Ukrainian army is encircled in the Donbas and is being incrementally neutralized by the Russian coalition. The Ukrainian government just started moving territorial units from the west of the country to the Donbas. This has increased tensions, especially in the areas of the Hungarian and Romanian minorities, whose people do not appear keen to fight against the Russians. We see demonstrations of mothers and wives in the west of the country and in Kiev.

**TK:** Obviously, Western countries behave as if they do not want peace. No one urges caution. Before anything is known for sure, conclusions are drawn, condemnations are made, weapons are supplied. The war is kept alive. What do you think of the announced increase in arms deliveries?

**JB:** Regarding weapons, there are several things to consider. First, feeding a war and thus keeping it alive is not the job of the international community. By international community, I mean primarily organizations like the UN or the EU. Whether a country pursues this policy like the U.S. or Poland, that is their decision. But the purpose of an international organization is not to support international conflicts.

**"Weapons disappear before they reach the front lines."**

**JB:** Second, it is not known where the delivered weapons actually go. Even U.S. intelligence agencies admit they don't know. However, it is clear that all these weapons disappear before they arrive at the front. There are reports of a rise in crime in Kiev. In fact, Western countries are fueling what the Global Organized Crime Index calls "one of the largest arms trade markets in Europe."

**TK:** So, what do the weapons bring to Ukraine?

**JB:** That's the third aspect to look at. The weapons don't help anything. The arms deliveries are based on the myth that Ukraine will win the war and Russia will lose. This idea is the result of the fact that the West has determined the objective of the Russians. Zelensky is demanding additional weapons because the Ukrainian army has already lost hundreds of battle tanks and artillery pieces. The few dozen supplied by the West will not change the situation. As in 2014, the main problem of the Ukrainian armed forces is not the determination of the soldiers, but the incompetence of the staff.

**TK:** How can Ukraine finance these weapons, or will the supplier states bear the cost out of solidarity?

**JB:** The weapons are provided to Ukraine on the basis of the "Lend-Lease" Law. This is a form of "leasing" that was introduced at the beginning of World War II to supply weapons to United Kingdom and the USSR. In other words, Ukraine will have to pay back for the weapons it receives. Just to give an idea, Great Britain and Russia ended the payment of their World War II debts to the USA in the year—2006!

Moreover, Ukraine is accumulating huge debts to international financial institutions (such as the IMF and the World Bank). The paradox is that, because of Western rhetoric about a country that is doing well and on the verge of defeating Russia, these institutions are reluctant to cancel its debt.

**TK:** So, the weapons supplied and the volunteer foreign fighters have no impact on the course of the war?

**JB:** They have only limited impact. Remember that, in Afghanistan the Taliban were able to prevail against the Western forces even though they were much more powerful. The Afghans had almost no heavy weapons, at most small arms. Neither the number of weapons nor their quality is decisive for victory. The biggest weakness of the Ukrainian armed forces is leadership.

**TK:** Why is that?

**JB:** The Ukrainian military leadership is bad because it is not able to integrate all parameters needed for planning and conducting battles. It makes the same mistakes as NATO forces in Afghanistan. This is not surprising, since the latter train the former. Besides, you have to master these weapons to get the most out of them tactically. They were developed for professional soldiers trained for months, not for casual soldiers trained in two weeks. That is completely unrealistic.

**"The weapons that are being supplied to Ukraine have no military effect."**

**TK:** Do I understand you correctly—the efficiency of these delivered weapons is very low and leads to more destruction in Ukraine?

**JB:** The weapons being delivered, some of which are obsolete, will not affect significantly Russian operations or give an edge to the Ukrainian forces. They will only attract Russian fire to certain areas. For example, Slovakia has supplied Ukraine with the S-300 air defense system, which, as far as I know, has been moved to the vicinity of Nikolaev. Within a very short time it was destroyed by the Russians. The Russians know very well where this equipment is, and where the weapons depots are. In Zaporizhzhia were stored brand new weapons from the West. The Russians destroyed the depot with a missile, with pinpoint accuracy. The weapons delivered to Ukraine have no military impact on the course of the war.

A few howitzers are ineffective because the Russians can destroy them very fast. The Ukrainians, of course, have to get these systems to the front as quickly as possible. They have to do that by rail. The Ukrainians have electric railroads in the western part of the country. The Russians destroyed most of

the electric substations of the network and the main railroads. Today, no electric locomotives are running on the network anymore. As a result, they have to bring weapons, such as tanks, to the "frontline" by road, one by one, using transporters. The problem is that these destructions affect not only military logistics, but also the economic life of the country.

**TK:** How did Russia react to these arms deliveries?

**JB:** It should be noted that before the Western arms deliveries, the Russians did not attack the railroad network. If the goal is to totally destroy Ukraine, then you have to do exactly what the West is doing now. If that is what we want. Whether it is what the West wants or not, I don't know. But if this is the goal, this is the way to go.

Also, it is said that Russia currently has the largest inventory of Javelin missiles in the world. I don't know if that is true, but it suggests that a large part of the weapons supplied by the West are not getting to Ukrainian fighters.

**TK:** The Gepard tank that the Germans want to supply has been decommissioned in the Bundeswehr. There is also no more ammunition for it in the Bundeswehr stocks. Isn't that a point you mentioned earlier?

**JB:** The Gepard is an anti-aircraft tank based on the chassis of the Leopard 1 main battle tank. It is a vehicle whose development goes back to the 1970s. It is a good weapon system, but it is no longer suited to modern threats. A weapon system also means logistics, maintenance and special training for the crews and mechanics. Furthermore, to be effective, such a system must be integrated into a command-and-control system. However, all of this cannot be accomplished in a matter of weeks. Basically, these weapon systems only draw Russian fire.

**"A British volunteer fighter who returned from Ukraine speaks of the fighters sent to the front as 'cannon fodder.'"**

**TK:** Do Western countries have any hope that all this will help accomplish something?

**JB:** One thing is for sure—it doesn't do anything. The British made a study of the weapons they had supplied to the Ukrainians. The results are extremely weak, and disappointing. They realized their weapons systems are too complicated, and the Ukrainian soldiers cannot operate them because they are not sufficiently trained. As for volunteer fighters, the picture is also disappointing. A British volunteer fighter who returned from Ukraine [speaks of "cannon fodder,"](#) of the fighters sent to the front. The British themselves realized that it was a waste of life and resources. That is why Boris Johnson started [back-pedaling](#), after urging young people to fight in Ukraine. So, everything that is being done only serves to continue the war, without bringing a solution, or decisively winning over Russia. It only leads to the destruction of Ukrainian infrastructure.

**TK:** So, it is not a matter of helping the Ukrainian army?

**JB:** In theory, yes. In practice, no. Ukraine already has enormous logistical problems with its troops in the Donbas. It can hardly supply them with weapons and ammunition. And now they are creating a new problem with weapons that cannot be repaired. The mechanics are not trained to do this, nor are the crews trained to operate the equipment. Moreover, in the systems supplied by the West, the instructions and user manuals are in German, English or French, but not in Ukrainian. This sounds so trivial, but it is a problem.

That is why I say Germany also wants to stoke the crisis. This is the attitude of German politicians like Scholz, Baerbock, etc. They want to fight Putin "to the last Ukrainian." That makes no sense.

**TK:** But if it is so obvious, why is the West going this way?

**JB:** I maintain that the West is using Ukraine against Russia. The goal is not to help Ukraine, but to fight Putin. In the English-language media, [many analysts confirm](#) that the West is [waging a war against Russia](#) through Ukraine. This is called a "proxy war." This is the point. We are not helping Ukraine. Everything else is a lie. If I were Ukrainian, I would condemn Putin as much as Ursula von der Leyen or even Ignazio Cassis. Because instead of playing a mediating role, these politicians are satisfying their own [ambitions by fueling the war in an unhealthy way](#).

**TK:** Guterres has let it be known that the war would stop, if Russia would stop the war.

**JB:** A war always has two parties, and in our case there are even three. We have Russia, Ukraine, and the so-called international community, that is, the Western world. It is clear that if the war is to be ended, it needs both parties, not just one. To this end, negotiations are underway in Turkey, but they are not really moving forward. Why has Ukraine withdrawn its own proposals? So, it is clear, the solution is not only on the Russian side.

**TK:** One has the impression that history is repeating itself.

**JB:** Yes, today we are in a similar situation as in 2014. The West does not want to talk to Putin because he is a dictator, and the West urges Zelensky not to make any concessions. Dialogue is therefore impossible. The problem is that Russia achieves operational success and increases its gains when there are no negotiations. The West hides behind the illusion of a Ukrainian victory. But the likelihood of it occurring is diminishing as time goes on, even though on a strategic and media level Russia appears to have lost.

**TK:** What should Ukraine have done?

**JB:** One only has to read the Minsk agreements to understand that their implementation essentially depends on constitutional reforms in Ukraine. These reforms, however, require dialogue with the autonomists. Kiev, however, has never taken these steps, and the West has never tried to get the Ukrainian authorities to do so.

What happened since 2014, happened because of Ukraine's behavior. These agreements are not implemented, and the situation got worse and worse. That led to today's situation; and this is a result of the previous history; the things that went on before.

**TK:** France and Germany were the guarantors of the Minsk agreements. What have they done to ensure that these agreements are implemented?

**JB:** The failure of the Western states is blatant. Ukrainians themselves have invented a new word. It is called "Macronize." It means "doing everything to look worried, showing that to everyone, but doing nothing." This sums up Western behavior.



No, the Western states have not taken up their responsibility in any way. Russia has now reacted to an armed conflict that has been going on since 2014 and started with the abolition of the official language law in February 2014. European states did nothing to bring peace. That is why Putin does not want to talk about war, because the war started in 2014. With the Minsk agreements, a solution was found. That is the situation. Guterres is a politician—and the problem is, we don't have any space in the UN or in our country for politicians to express a balanced opinion. This is exactly as when George W. Bush said, "Whoever is not with us is against us." We are exactly in that situation today—and there is no space in between at all; there is only good or evil.

**TK:** Are these developments intentional?

**JB:** The whole conflict is the result of a scenario carefully worked out by the West. Its basic components were laid out in 2019 in two papers published by the RAND Corporation, the Pentagon think tank, entitled, *Overextending and Unbalancing Russia* and *Extending Russia*. These describe the sequence of events that led to the Russian offensive in February 2022. In addition to that, promises were made to Ukraine that it would become a member of NATO if it instigated a war that led to Russia's defeat, as Oleksiy Arestovych [explained in an interview](#) with a Ukrainian television station in March 2019. In fact, Ukrainians were lied to, as Zelensky noted on CNN on March 21, 2022.

As a matter of fact, the Russians knew for a long time that this confrontation would occur. That is why they prepared for it militarily and economically. This explains why they are withstanding the sanctions and pressure better than expected. This is also the reason why the West is using its imagination to elaborate new sanctions or new methods to impose them, such as abandoning the principle of unanimity in the EU. We have entered a phase of "cockfighting" between the West and Russia. As a result, the problem is that international institutions are no longer fulfilling their role as arbiters, but have become parties to the conflict.

**TK:** But then the EU won the Nobel Peace Prize a few years ago. Where is the commitment to peace?

**JB:** Obama got it, too. And Obama was the American president who kept his country at war from the first day of his mandate to the last. He started three wars, and the number of air strikes increased tenfold compared to his predecessor. I don't think anybody takes the Nobel Prize seriously anymore at this point. It is purely political.

**TK:** Mr. Baud, thank you for talking to us.

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