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## UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF NUCLEAR ESCALATION IN UKRAINE

Much has been written about the possibility for the current crisis in Ukraine to escalate into nuclear conflict. As Russian forces lose ground ahead of the winter, speculation has increased that Putin may up the ante by switching to tactical or battlefield nuclear weapons. In [How not to estimate the likelihood of nuclear war](#), a long-form article from the Brookings Institute, the authors comprehensively debate the probability of nuclear use, and outline flaws in the current estimates of Russian usage. This is a wide-ranging discussion that critically assesses all current positions on nuclear conflict in Ukraine and is extremely useful for those trying to think more deeply about nuclear weapons, their utility, and the probability of their use.

## LESSONS LEARNED FROM SIX MONTHS OF WAR

Planned as a blitzkrieg, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has now passed the six-month mark. The team at the Atlantic Council has pulled together [23 lessons](#) from what has happened to date. They range from conclusions that should inform Western diplomacy going forward, including with regard to how to deal with Putin and Russia, to lessons for military operations, for example with regard to the notion that the war appears to have once again highlighted the importance of people – and their commitment to fight – over the availability of equipment.

## AS RUSSIA RETREATS, UKRAINE PICKS UP MILITARY GEAR

As Ukrainian soldiers regain ground in Ukraine, they are capturing military vehicles and weapons abandoned by fleeing Russians, turning some against the invading army. Russia and its neighbour mostly use similar Soviet-era equipment, so Ukrainians often do not need major training to use any left behind. In this [article](#) Michael Kofman analyses the military and strategic impact for Ukraine, as it bolsters its inventory with large amounts of artillery, armoured vehicles and tanks.

## TOWARDS AN EU-UKRAINE SECURITY COMPACT

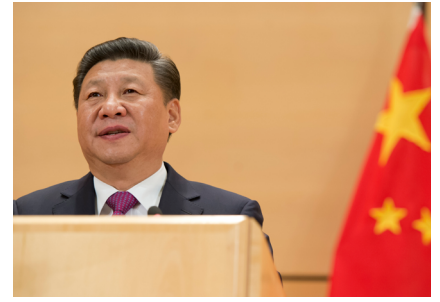
A [policy brief](#) by Gustav Gressel, published by the European Council on Foreign Relations, makes the case for an EU-Ukraine security compact even though Ukraine's accession to the Union is still likely to take many years. Gressel argues that a more formalised security agreement – even if it is just meant to bridge the time until Ukraine can join the EU – would make it easier for Europe to support Ukraine, both in the immediate future and in the coming years. He also notes that the war is helping the EU better understand Russian military strategy. Finally, the paper also suggests that the EU should pro-actively explore security compacts with other non-NATO/EU states such as Moldova and Georgia.

## WIDER READING

As the world struggles with soaring inflation, many have questioned the importance of interest rates as a source of domestic financial stability. Across the world people are increasingly unable to afford mortgages, pay back loans, and meet their debt obligations. But what is interest? Where did it come from, and why is it important? As people across the globe try to grapple with this essential tool of finance they would do well to read [The Price of Time: The Real Story of Interest](#) by Edward Chancellor, which sets out why interest exists, explores the history of the phenomenon, and importantly assesses how to measure a nation's power from observing interest rates closely. This is a timely work and easily accessible for those trying to understand the pressures of everyday life around them, and trying to connect real world policy to this otherwise ethereal financial concept.

## GETTING INTO THE HEAD OF THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL MAN

Xi Jinping is effectively President for life. At the 20th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, the man who came to power in 2012 has been granted a third term, with many observers now expecting that he will rule until he decides to step down or passes away. The occasion has prompted several attempts to better understand Xi. Amongst the most noteworthy are [this article](#) by Kevin Rudd, former Prime Minister of Australia, in *Foreign Affairs*, and the podcast series [The Prince](#) published by *The Economist*. Both paint the picture of an unlikely rise to power, and a man who truly believes that his ideas and thoughts should guide China on its path to becoming a/the dominant global power.



Picture: UN Photo / Jean-Marc Ferré

## GROWING CONCERNS ABOUT STABILITY IN BOSNIA

Russia's war in Ukraine has policymakers across Europe and the West worried about the stability of Bosnia and Herzegovina. For decades, Russia appears to have worked to keep Bosnia divided and dysfunctional, essentially preventing the multi-ethnic state from developing a united foreign policy and potentially moving towards NATO membership. This [policy brief](#) by the European Council on Foreign Relations discusses how Russia has sought to wield its influence, even as its economic presence in Bosnia is limited. Author Majda Ruge ultimately argues that the most immediate threats to Bosnia's stability remain home-grown and regional, including from forces inside the country and the agendas of neighbouring states.

## OPEC CUTS BRING THE US AND SAUDI TO BLOWS

The recent OPEC+ decision to decrease the volume of oil production over the next quarter has led to a sharp increase in tensions between the United States and one of its most important allies in the Middle East, Saudi Arabia. In this [Special Briefing](#) from the Middle East Institute, key thinkers address the strategic implications of OPEC+ cuts from the view of the United States, Saudi Arabia, and the wider region, as well as global oil markets. In a comprehensive analysis, the scholars agree the move signals a Saudi move toward greater independence from the US, but also raises the possibility for US rivals in the region, and – further away in Moscow – the opportunity to take advantage of the situation to undermine US regional strategic aims.

## RUSSIAN MISSILES AND CONCERNS OVER THE FUTURE OF ARMS CONTROL

Even as its campaign in Ukraine is in crisis, Russia continues to modernise its strategic nuclear forces, including by developing nuclear-capable ballistic missiles. This [detailed blog](#) by Timothy Wright at the International Institute of Strategic Studies provides an analysis of what appear to be recent developments in the Russia Burevestnik nuclear-powered and nuclear-armed cruise missile programme. Towards the end of the piece, Wright addresses the question of arms control, noting that the strategic stability dialogue, usually the forum in which new arms control arrangements between Russia and the US have been explored, has been suspended. The New START treaty is set to expire in 2026; at the moment an extension seems highly uncertain.





## NEWS STORIES TO WATCH OUT FOR

As the war in Ukraine and its multi-dimensional repercussions continue to dominate headlines, here are some other topics to keep an eye on:

After a close result in the first round of the Brazilian presidential elections on 2 October, incumbent Jair Bolsonaro and former President Lula da Silva are set for a [head-to-head runoff](#) on 30 October.

The crucial [midterm elections in the USA](#) are rapidly approaching; the economy seems to favour Republicans, but Democrats have made up some ground recently.

The government of Haiti has [called for military assistance](#) to deal with heavily armed gangs that are threatening the country's stability.

[Eritrea is mobilising thousands of reservists](#) in a move likely signalling an escalation of its intervention in Ethiopia's Tigray region.

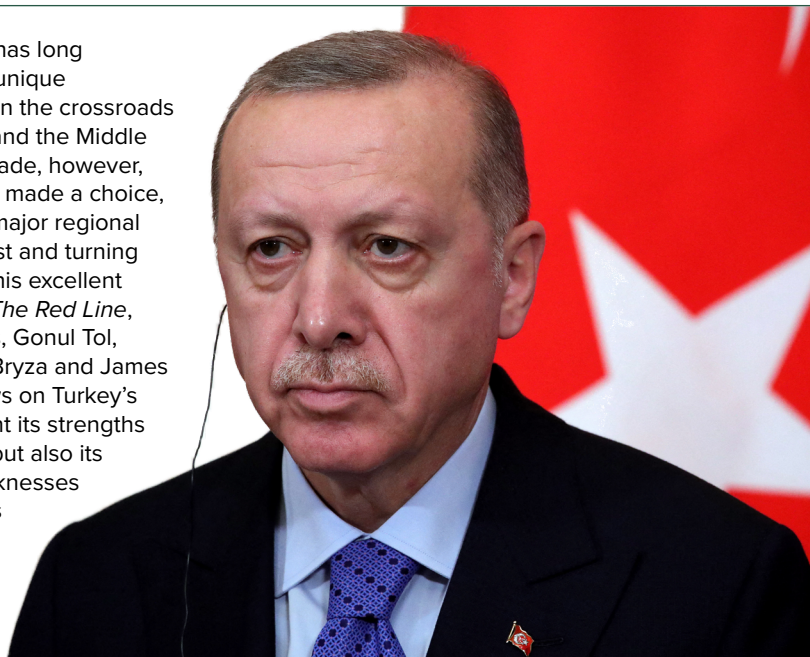
Weeks after Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid expressed his openness to a Palestinian State in an address to the UN, he is facing a tough [election battle](#) that could well bring back former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

## INDIA LAUNCHES NEW AIRCRAFT CARRIER

On 2 September, India launched its first domestically built aircraft carrier, the *INS Vikrant*. Compared to other countries' carriers, the *Vikrant* is medium-sized, with space for around 30 fixed-wing aircraft. It is the second carrier in India's rapidly expanding fleet, joining the Soviet-built *INS Vikramaditya*. In [this article](#) for the International Institute of Strategic Studies, Nick Childs and Douglas Barrie discuss the strength and weaknesses of the *Vikrant*, as well as the implications of its launch for India's maritime posture.

## TURKEY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Turkey's foreign policy has long reflected the country's unique geographical position on the crossroads between Europe, Asia and the Middle East. Over the past decade, however, Turkey appears to have made a choice, establishing itself as a major regional power in the Middle East and turning its back on Europe. In this excellent [podcast episode](#) from *The Red Line*, four outstanding guests, Gonul Tol, Rich Outzen, Matthew Bryza and James Jeffrey, share their views on Turkey's trajectory. They highlight its strengths and strategic pursuits, but also its vulnerabilities and weaknesses as the country prepares to enter a momentous year in which President Erdogan faces the toughest re-election battle of his career.



Picture: kremlin.ru, CC BY 4.0

## A DECADE OF INSTABILITY IN THE SAHEL

The future of Europe's engagement with the Sahel region is highly uncertain after France has declared its military withdrawal from the country. At the same time, instability, manifesting itself in the proliferation of extremist groups, irregular migration, the influx of mercenaries, and military coups (such as that in Burkina Faso in early October) remain as rife as ever. [This report](#) published by the Italian Institute for International Political Studies takes stock of ten years of instability, highlighting local, regional and international dynamics.

# OUT NOW & UP NEXT..

● "The only viable short-term solution [to growing instability in the Balkans] would be a robust NATO force on the ground to keep the peace." – **Dr Harun Karčić appraises the possibilities of further unrest in the Balkans in our latest In-Depth Briefing. Read CHACR's library of commentaries and articles at [chacr.org.uk](#)**

● Dates for the diary... **November 3:** Climate Change & In(Security) Project virtual conference; **December 9:** The CHACR Conference: Making sense of a confusing world (see [website](#) for details).

**IN-DEPTH BRIEFING // #39 // OCTOBER 22**

**LINGERING INSTABILITY IN THE BALKANS**

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The latest In-Depth Briefing from CHACR, October 22, 2022, is a 10-page report on the ongoing instability in the Balkans. It examines the complex interplay of factors contributing to the region's volatility, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the aftermath of the 2014 elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the resurgence of nationalist rhetoric. The report also discusses the role of external actors and the potential for further escalation.

**1 // IN-DEPTH BRIEFING - CHACR**

**CHACR**

**THE CHACR CONFERENCE:**  
**Making sense of a confusing world**

0900-1230 / December 9 2022 / Churchill Hall, RMAS  
0830-0900: Arrivals

0900-1230: Keynote address by Dr Robert Johnson (Director of the Secretary of State for Defence's Office of Net Assessment and Challenge) followed by panel discussions on **Geopolitical developments and Global security challenges**

Open to all British and Allied Defence personnel

Climate Change & (In)Security Project  
2022 Annual Conference

Please Register [Here](#)  
For a Joining Link

**Responding to Climate (In)Security:  
The Role of Defence**

**Keynote Speakers**

**James Clare**  
Director, Climate Change & Sustainability Directorate, Ministry of Defence

**Blair Brimmell**  
Interim Director, Climate Change and Security Centre of Excellence, NATO

**Thursday 3 November**  
10 AM - 5 PM  
Waiting room open from 9.45 AM

Full List of Speakers:  
[www.ccproject.uk](#)

Ministry of Defence