UDC 94:323(520)
DOI: https://doi.org/10.31652/2411-2143-2026-55-206-218

The position of the People's Republic of China on the russian-ukrainian war: foreign policy concepts and strategic interests

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Abstract.

The purpose of the article *is to conduct a thorough analysis of China's foreign policy in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war in order to form a clear understanding of Beijing's motives regarding its position in relation to Russian aggression against Ukraine, to consider China's main foreign policy concepts and priorities, to clarify China's relations with Western countries and to develop recommendations for Ukraine in order to incline Beijing to a more pro-Ukrainian position.* ***The research methodology*** *is based on a combination of general scientific (analysis, synthesis, generalization) and specifically historical (historical-genetic, historical-typological, historical-systemic) methods with the principles of historicism, systematicity, scientificity and verification.* ***The scientific novelty*** *of the study lies in the analysis and systematization of China's main foreign policy concepts, on the basis of which a generalized conclusion is made about the country's strategic foreign policy course and its position regarding the Russian-Ukrainian war.* ***Conclusions.*** *It is clarified that China is persistently implementing global initiatives, positioning itself as a responsible player on the world stage. In relation to the United States, Chinese leaders pursue a "big country" policy and try to talk with Washington on an equal footing. In relation to the Russian-Ukrainian war, Beijing takes a restrained position, avoiding criticism of the Russian Federation and demonstrating its commitment to international law. It is proven that China's relations with the Russian Federation are strategic in nature, therefore Beijing is not interested in isolating moscow and imposing sanctions against it. It is found that China and Ukraine have strategic partnership relations and close trade relations. It is emphasized that relations between the two countries are important. In this context, a number of recommendations have been developed for the formation of a more pro-Ukrainian position of China.*

Keywords*: cooperation, security, global initiatives, russian aggression, strategic dialogue.*

Позиція Китайської Народної Республіки щодо російсько-української війни: зовнішньополітичні концепти та стратегічні інтереси

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Анотація.

Метою статті *є проведення грунтовного аналізу зовнішньої політики Китаю в контексті російсько-української війни задля формування чіткого розуміння мотивів Пекіну щодо його позиції по відношенню до російської агресії проти України, встановлення основних зовнішньополітичних концептів Китаю і пріоритетів, з'ясування відносин Піднебесної із західними країнами та розробки рекомендацій для України задля схилення Пекіну до більш проукраїнської позиції.* ***Методологія дослідження*** *ґрунтується на поєднанні загальнонаукових (аналізу, синтезу, узагальнення) та спеціально історичних (історико-генетичного, історико-типологічного, історико-системного) методів з принципами історизму, системності, науковості та верифікації.* ***Наукова новизна*** *дослідження полягає в проведенні аналізу та систематизації основних зовнішньополітичних концептів Китаю, на основі яких зроблено узагальнений висновок про стратегічний зовнішньополітичний курс країни та її позицію щодо російсько-української війни.* ***Висновки.*** *Встановлено, що Китай наполегливо впроваджує глобальні ініціативи, позиціонуючи себе як відповідального гравця на світовій арені. По відношенню до США китайські лідери проводять політику «великої країни» і намагаються розмовляти з Вашингтоном на рівних. По відношенню до російсько-української війни Пекін займає стриману позицію, уникаючи критики РФ та демонструючи відданість міжнародному праву. Доведено, що відносини Китаю з РФ носять стратегічний характер, тому Пекін не зацікавлений в ізоляції Москви та запровадженні санкцій проти неї. З'ясовано, що Китай та Україна мають відносини стратегічного партнерства та тісні торгові взаємини. Зроблено акцент, що відносини між двома країнами є важливими. У цьому контексті розроблено низку рекомендацій для формування більш проукраїнської позиції Китаю.*

Ключові слова*: безпека, глобальні ініціативи, російська агресія, співробітництво, стратегічний діалог.*

The Problem Statement. In the context of the protracted Russian-Ukrainian war, an important factor in Ukraine's victory is the foreign policy factor. Ukraine needs political, economic, and military support from the international community, since it is extremely difficult to defeat the Russian aggressor on its own. It is worth noting that after the Russian occupiers invaded the territory of Ukraine, most Western countries showed support for the country by providing large-scale assistance – economic, financial, humanitarian, and military. Thousands of Ukrainian citizens have found refuge in European countries. At the initiative of former US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin, the Ramstein Contact Group on Defense of Ukraine was convened on April 22, 2022 – a coalition of approximately 50 countries from around the world that decided to help Ukraine fight Putin's aggression. Since the establishment of the Contact Group, diplomatic meetings of defense ministers from several dozen countries around the world have been held regularly, at which the issues of synchronizing and accelerating the provision of military weapons to Ukraine to counter a full-scale Russian invasion and discussing issues of supporting Ukraine after the end of the war are discussed. Within the framework of the Contact Group, Ukraine received significant amounts of military weapons, equipment and ammunition, in particular: Patriot, SAMP-T and IRIS-T air defense systems, HIMARS, Leopard tanks, F-16 and Mirage aircraft, etc. In total, the participants of the Contact Group announced security assistance to Ukraine worth almost $170 billion. (МОУ, 2025).

Unlike Western countries, Asian countries, including China, have a more restrained stance on Russian aggression against Ukraine. In the issue of the Russian-Ukrainian war, Chinese leaders are primarily guided by their own interests. China and the Russian Federation have a long-standing

historical relationship, which is also associated with joint military actions against both internal and external enemies of communist China, in particular the Japanese interventionists, and the Chaikanshi regime. It is worth noting, however, that during that period, aid came from the USSR, not directly from the Russian Federation. Over the years of large-scale reforms, China has become a powerful player on the world political map. The Chinese leadership is proposing new ideas for the future world order, backing them with economic power and financial resources. Therefore, Beijing's influence on world processes is growing. Although China has not recognized the Russian Federation as an aggressor, the country's leadership has developed proposals for resolving the Ukrainian crisis (this is how Beijing defines the Russian-Ukrainian war).

Ukraine and China have established a strategic partnership, which involves active interaction across a wide range of relations, including security. China's position on the Russian-Ukrainian war is important, therefore there is a need to build a format for relations between Ukraine and China that would encourage the Chinese leadership to take a more pro-Ukrainian position. In this context, there is a need to study the foreign policy of China at the current stage, determine its features and take them into account in the foreign policy of Ukraine.

Analysis of Sources and Recent Research. The topic of studying China's foreign policy is quite popular given that China's role in world processes is growing; the country's global initiatives are gaining greater international support, primarily from the countries of the Global South, which link their future with China. Western countries are also closely monitoring Beijing's "behavior" on the world stage, while demonstrating a more restrained attitude towards its global initiatives.

In the context of the research topic, it is worth familiarizing yourself with a number of studies presented by foreign and domestic experts on China's foreign policy.

A thorough analysis of China's foreign policy under the rule of the country's leader Xi Jinping was presented by Zekeriyya Akdağ from Sakarya University (Turkey) in his article "China's Assertive Foreign Policy and Global Vision under Xi Jinping." The author argues that with Xi Jinping's accession to the presidency, China has begun to demonstrate a more assertive stance or behavior on many issues. Xi Jinping has replaced the country's traditional "low-profile" foreign policy with a more assertive and confident one based on the motto "pursuing success." Although Xi's foreign policy approach has at times seemed more assertive, it is not belligerent, the author believes. The Xi administration, like previous administrations, has pursued a strategy of avoiding conflict while trying to protect China's interests on the international stage. The Xi Jinping administration has begun to emphasize new strategies such as "China's rejuvenation," the "Chinese dream," and the "shared future of mankind." By prioritizing foreign policy, Beijing confirms that China practices “great-power diplomacy” and advocates for a “new type of major-power relations” that aims to shape an international environment that directly affects China’s core interests and status goals (Zekeriyya, 2024).

Beijing's position on the Russian-Ukrainian war was examined by Mohammed Saeida from Al-Istiqlal University (Palestine) in the article "China's Foreign Policy towards the Russian-Ukrainian Crisis". In his research, the author concluded that China’s voting pattern for resolutions condemning Russia’s behavior at the United Nations was characterized by a cautious and restrained approach. This approach demonstrates China’s desire to maintain friendly relations with both Russia and Ukraine, while recognizing the complexity of the issue (Saaida, 2023).

In a joint article by Alden, A., Zolkina, M., & Fiala, L., “ China Factor’ in the Russia-Ukraine War,” the researchers draw attention to the fact that since 2022, China has been pursuing a two-pronged policy – maintaining close ties with Moscow while seeking to maintain relations with Europe, which is leading to growing skepticism in Kyiv. Traditionally focused on trade, agriculture, and strategic industries, China’s engagement with Ukraine is part of a broader effort to reshape the international order and expand Beijing’s global influence. Understanding the “China factor” is essential for shaping a stable and balanced security environment in Ukraine and Europe (Alden, A., Zolkina, M., & Fiala, L., 2025).

Researchers Alicja Bachulska and Ivana Karásková from the European Council on Foreign Relations note in the article “Great changes unseen: The China-Russia nexus and European security” that China is cautiously avoiding overt intervention in Russia’s war against Ukraine. The contrast between its diplomatic rhetoric and actual behavior over the past three and a half years suggests that Beijing is acutely aware of the reputational and material risks associated with being seen as complicit in the invasion of Ukraine. Aligning with Russia as an openly hostile or revisionist actor would threaten China’s global positioning, risking secondary sanctions and alienating key economic partners, especially in Europe. As a result, China has adopted a position of calibrated support: reinforcing Russian narratives about the causes of the war and NATO’s role in the conflict, maintaining high levels of trade and diplomatic engagement with Russia, but refraining from supplying lethal weapons or directly supporting Russian policies (Bachulska, Karásková, 2025).

The article's authors "No Limits? The China-Russia Relationship and U.S. Foreign Policy" Robert D. Blackwill and Richard Fontaine from the Council on Foreign Relations (USA) in the article examined the interaction between Beijing and Moscow in the context of Russian aggression. They believe that the growing quasi-alliance between China and Russia poses the greatest threat to vital US national interests in the last sixty years. In their view, the concerted effort to undermine U.S. policy and the international order has made significant progress over the past decade and will continue for the foreseeable future. While the United States and its partners have yet to mount an adequate response to this historic challenge, there is reason for optimism about the West's ability to cope with the strengthening Sino-Russian alliance (Blackwill, Fontaine, 2024).

In recent years, several monographs by foreign authors devoted to the history of China and the modern policy of the Chinese leadership have been translated into Ukrainian and published in Ukraine. In particular, in 2024, a Ukrainian translation of the monograph by the Australian-American Linda Jaivin, "The Shortest History of China," was published, in which the author reports that for millennia, China has influenced world trade, military strategy, aesthetics, and philosophy. The author of the book turns several thousand years of history into a short, readable story: from philosophical origins to the political system of China, from the COVID-19 pandemic to the hypothetical hegemony of the PRC in the future. She concludes that modern China is perceived in different ways: as an economic power, a symbol of urbanization, a propagandist and aggressive superpower striving for world domination (Jaivin, 2024).

In 2025, a Ukrainian translation of the book by British author Michael Sheridan, "The Red Emperor. Xi Jinping and His New China" (Sheridan, 2025), was published, in which the author talks about China and its current leader. The author presents a portrait of Xi Jinping as the "new emperor," a man who rules over 1.4 billion people and has the second largest economy in the world. According to the author, Xi is the absolute ruler of China, his word is law in everything, from war and peace to the ruthless campaign against Covid-19. He seeks to maintain the dominant position of the Chinese Communist Party, make China the supreme power in the East, and achieve global leadership.

In 2018, a collective monograph "Ukraine – China – 25 years of cooperation: results of cooperation and prospects. "One Belt, One Road" edited by O. Oliynyk was published, which analyzed the results and prospects of Ukrainian-Chinese cooperation over the 25 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations, which were transformed into strategic partnership relations (Oliynyk, 2018). In the article by S. Radziyevska "China's Role in Global Governance", which was included in this monograph, the author presented four possible options for strengthening China's role in global governance. In the author's opinion, the most likely option for China will remain the option of building up "military muscles", increasing activity in the BRICS and SCO organizations, and increasing its participation in the development of integration processes, which may lead to the formation of its own bloc of subordinate allies (Radziyevska, 2018).

With the beginning of Russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine, O. Oliynyk prepared a number of informational and analytical materials, including: "China's Position on Russian Military Aggression against Ukraine" (Oliynyk, 2023a), "Relations between the PRC and the EU in the Conditions of the Russian-Ukrainian War" (Oliynyk, 2023b, pp. 186–191), "The Rise of Xi Jinping's Status in China's Leadership and Its Influence on the Implementation of Beijing's Foreign Policy" (Oliynyk, 2023c, pp. 16–31), "Prospects for Cooperation between Ukraine and China in the Conditions of Intensification of Bilateral Relations" (Oliynyk, 2023d, pp. 184–189), "China's Foreign Policy Strategy in the Modern Era" (Oliynyk, 2024, pp. 871–883), "Internal and External Factors in the Formation of China's Foreign Policy in the First Quarter of the 21st Century" (Oliynyk, 2025, pp. 53–79) and others. In his articles, the author says that Xi Jinping is trying to behave on the world stage as a world-class leader, who talks on an equal footing with the first persons of the world's leading countries, pursues a persistent foreign policy of a large country, and also demonstrates determination in defending the country's national interests. The researcher also thinks that on the issue of the Russian-Ukrainian war, China behaves with restraint, declaring its commitment to the principles of international law and the UN Charter. According to the author, Beijing is not interested in Moscow's victory, just as it is not interested in its defeat. The weakened and isolated from the outside world, the Russian Federation is a beneficial object of influence from China and its vassal in promoting foreign policy concepts.

Of interest to the scientific and general community is the Ukrainian translation of the collection of speeches by President Xi Jinping of the People's Republic of China "On Public Administration in China. Volume 1", which was published in Ukraine in 2021. The book is dedicated to the activities of the leader of the People's Republic of China Xi Jinping as an ideologist of the idea of socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era as a guiding ideology that the Communist Party of China will adhere to over the long term. The publication also contains a large number of speeches by the leader of the People's Republic of China on public administration issues, new ideas, views, considerations, answers to important theoretical and practical questions related to the development of the party and

the state in new historical conditions, which reveal the political course pursued by the Xi Jinping's new leadership of the CPC Central Committee (Xi Jinping, 2021).

In an article by Konstantin Voitovsky, the chief consultant of the Strategic Planning Department of the Center for Security Studies of the National Institute of Security Studies, "Ten Ways the War in Ukraine Will Change the World: A Review of EIU Research," the author notes that, cut off from the international political, economic, and financial system, Russia will turn east to strengthen its alliance with China. What began as a "marriage of convenience" has grown into a strategic partnership over the past decade. For China, the alliance with Russia provides security for its northern border, natural resources, and a shared authoritarian approach and attitude toward the West (Voitovsky, 2022).

The foreign policy of the Chinese leadership is also presented in a series of collections of official speeches by President Xi Jinping entitled "On Public Administration". The collection, which was developed in 2014, published the report of the Chinese leader "To Create a Bridge of Friendship and Cooperation in Eurasia", which he made on April 1, 2014 during a visit to the College of Europe in Bruges (Belgium). In his speech, the President of the People's Republic of China expressed the hope that China, together with its European friends, will create a bridge of friendship and cooperation in Eurasia. To do this, joint efforts must be made to create four bridges – peace, growth, reform and civilizational progress – in order to create a strategic partnership between China and Europe that is even more significant and influential (Xi Jinping, 2014, pp. 382–384).

The position of the Chinese leadership on the current global governance system is presented in Xi Jinping's report "Enhancing Our Country's Ability to Participate in Global Governance," which he delivered at the 35th Seminar of the Politburo of the 180th CPC Central Committee, and which was published in 2017 in the collection of official speeches of President Xi Jinping entitled "On State Governance." In this report, the Chinese leader stated that promoting the transformation of the global governance system is a common cause of the international community, and in this matter, it is necessary to firmly adhere to the principles of joint discussion, joint construction and joint use of the fruits, so that the requirement for the transformation of this system is embodied in the common opinion of all parties and flows into joint actions (Xi Jinping, 2017).

This book also presents the report of the leader of the PRC, "Jointly Creating a World Community with a Shared Future," in which he advocates the idea of multipolarity and multilateralism as a way to safeguard peace and sustainable development. In this context, Xi Jinping emphasizes the important role of the UN and other international organizations (Xi Jinping, 2017, pp. 768–785).

A number of publications devoted to China's position on the Russian-Ukrainian war were prepared by authors of Ukrainian non-governmental analytical centers. Thus, Yuriy Poyta from the Center for International Security in his article "China's Formal Neutrality on the Russian-Ukrainian War: Conclusions for Ukraine" notes that after the start of the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war in 2022, China, in general, continued to adhere to its formally neutral position, but Beijing significantly strengthened the Russian vector of its foreign policy, in particular: China significantly deepened economic ties and increased energy purchases in Russia (which provides significant economic support for the Russian political regime); began work on the construction of new gas pipelines from the Russian Federation to the PRC; strengthened political and military cooperation, diplomatic coordination with Russia; opposed the exclusion of Russia from the G20 and voted against the exclusion of Russia from the UN Human Rights Council. The author believes that it is most likely that China will generally continue its so-called "pro-Russian neutrality", which is due to the importance for the PRC to maintain relations with both the West and Russia. In his opinion, China will most likely not provide Russia with military-technical support and will be cautious about providing assistance in circumventing sanctions, but will assist Russia informationally, diplomatically, economically and partly technologically. Given the above, the researcher emphasizes, Ukraine's relations with China should be adjusted taking into account China's global goals of achieving world leadership and attempts to undermine the West's positions, which pose long-term challenges for Ukraine (Pota, 2023).

In the article of the researcher of the Program of Russian and Belarusian Studies Anton Oksentiuk "Military interaction between the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China and its impact on the course of the Russian-Ukrainian war", it is noted that the People's Republic of China has not yet begun open and large-scale supplies of military equipment to the Russian Federation. Although Beijing avoids direct military support for Moscow in the war against Ukraine, it provides indirect assistance – by supplying critically important goods, equipment and components. In the conclusion to the cited article, the author notes that this format of interaction allows the Russian Federation to maintain the ability to produce modern weapons systems even under severe international pressure. As a result, the military-technical partnership with China is becoming not only important, but also crucial for the implementation of Moscow's modern military strategy (Oksentiuk, 2025).

Summing up the analysis of recent studies and publications, both international and Ukrainian, it can be stated that the research community is closely monitoring Beijing's foreign policy course and its

attitude to the Russian-Ukrainian war. The analysis of the above publications gives grounds to assert that China upholds the principles of multipolarity and multilateralism, will seek to strengthen its influence in the world, and will demonstrate "formal neutrality" towards the Russian-Ukrainian war, which will require Ukraine to adjust its foreign policy course taking into account the challenges that will arise as a result of such foreign policy behavior of China.

This article is a continuation of this direction of scientific research, which allows for a deeper understanding of China's foreign policy at the current stage and its position on the Russian-Ukrainian war.

The Purpose of the Article. The authors of the article set out to conduct a thorough analysis of China's foreign policy at the current stage, establish China's main foreign policy concepts, strategic interests and priorities, clarify China's relations with Western countries, form a clear understanding of Beijing's motives regarding its position regarding Russian aggression against Ukraine, and develop recommendations for Ukraine to sway Beijing towards a more pro-Ukrainian position.

The Results of the Research. An analysis of China's foreign policy actions regarding the Russian-Ukrainian war shows that Beijing did not support the Kremlin's invasion of the territory of Ukraine. At the same time, China abstained from recognizing the Russian Federation as an aggressor during the UN vote. The UN General Assembly Resolution ES-11/1 of 02.03.2022 condemned the Russian Federation's announcement on February 24, 2022 of a "special military operation" in Ukraine and demanded that the Russian Federation immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all its armed forces from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. This UN resolution was supported by 141 states. At the same time, China categorically opposes the use of nuclear weapons during the Russian-Ukrainian war. Chinese leaders note that it is necessary to jointly oppose the threat of nuclear weapons and nuclear blackmail, which may be a point of contact with Western countries in their intentions to stop Russian aggression against Ukraine. (United Nations, 2022).

The explanation for this position of the PRC regarding the Russian war against Ukraine lies in the presence of a number of factors that need to be taken into account in order to better understand the motives of the Chinese leadership regarding Russian aggression.

In this context, it is worth noting the economic and security components of China's motivation for the war in Ukraine.

The economic component is that Russia is a significant market for Chinese goods. It is also profitable for China to buy Russian energy resources at prices significantly lower than market prices, which to some extent compensates for China's losses from Western sanctions that were imposed by Western countries against Beijing in connection with its continued cooperation with Moscow, after most countries in the world condemned the actions of the Russian invaders.

The security component is that in the event of a military conflict between China and the United States, most likely over the Taiwan issue, Russia will remain the only partner capable of providing military support to Beijing. In addition, the parties are linked by a number of regional associations, in particular, the SCO, BRICS, CSTO etc. After successfully reclaiming Hong Kong and Macau, China has been trying to regain control of Taiwan. In 1954, the United States passed the Taiwan Relations Act, which aims to maintain peace, security, and stability in the Western Pacific and advance United States foreign policy through continued commercial, cultural, and other relations between the United States and Taiwan. The law establishes the US obligation to provide defense assets and services, including in the event of external threats to Taiwan's security, the nature and scope of which are determined by the US President and Congress. Under this law, the US supplies Taiwan with the most advanced types of military equipment and technology. In September 2024, US President Joe Biden approved $567 million in defense assistance to Taiwan, nearly double the $345 million in defense support for Taiwan approved by the Biden administration in July 2023. The military aid package includes funding for military training, procurement of supplies, anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons, and comprehensive outreach (Reuters, 2024).

Beijing views such active assistance to Taiwan from the US as Washington's intentions to oppose China's policy of "peaceful reunification" of Taiwan with mainland China.

It is worth noting that with the appearance of Xi Jinping on the political arena, there has been a significant shift in Beijing's foreign policy behavior. China's foreign policy has become more global in nature. Xi Jinping openly declares that China is a major country on the political map of the world and should play a more active role in world processes. He backs up his claims about China's greatness with global initiatives and projects aimed at creating new international alliances, trade and transport routes. The Chinese leader began his political activity in world politics with the global project "One Belt, One Road" (OBOR), announced in 2013 during a visit to Kazakhstan. The project aims to connect the major economies of Eurasia through infrastructure, trade and investment. It is a global project focused on connecting transport routes and communication networks of different continents, including Asia, Africa, America and Europe. As of January 2023, 151 countries have been registered

as participants in the project. At the initiative of the leader of the Celestial Empire, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank was established, with 105 countries as members. The authorized capital of the bank is $100 billion. With the assistance of the Chinese leader, the Silk Road Fund was established with a share capital of $40 billion (CRS, 2023).

In 2021, during the general debate at the 76th session of the UN General Assembly, Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed the Global Development Initiative (GDI), which aims to guide global development to a new stage of balanced, coordinated, and inclusive growth. On January 20, 2022, the Permanent Representative of the PRC to the UN, Ambassador Zhang Jun, held the kick-off meeting of the Group of Friends of the Global Development Initiative (GDI), which marked the official establishment of the Group of Friends, in which more than 20 heads of UN agencies participated and delivered speeches. The document's developers hope to strengthen communication and cooperation in priority areas of the global development goals to provide fresh political momentum to global efforts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, recover from the pandemic, and implement the Sustainable Development Goals. In April 2022, at the annual conference of the Asian Forum in Boao, China, Xi Jinping presented a concept paper called China's Global Security Initiative (GSI), which indicates China's intention to play a much greater role in international politics. Also in March 2023, the Chinese leader announced another initiative called Global Civilization Initiative (GCI). As defined by Xi Jinping, this initiative aims to respect the diversity of civilizations, the common values of humanity, the importance of the inheritance and innovation of civilizations, and strong international exchanges and cooperation between people. He emphasizes that, in contrast to the West's claims of "the superiority of certain civilizations and the clash of civilizations," China calls for upholding the principles of equality, mutual learning, dialogue, and inclusiveness among civilizations. He emphasizes the importance of cultural exchanges that go beyond alienation, mutual learning, beyond clashes and coexistence, beyond feelings of superiority.

In his speech at the 25th meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which took place on September 1, 2025 at the Meijiang International Convention and Exhibition Center in the Chinese city of Tianjin Xi Jinping reaffirmed his commitment to the idea of globalization and to demonstrating China as a global player and world leader ready to lead world development. In addition to previously announced initiatives, the Chinese leader announced the Global Governance Initiative (GGI). He explained the need for such an initiative by saying that the Cold War mentality, hegemonism, and protectionism continue to haunt the world. New threats and challenges are only intensifying. The world has entered a new period of turbulence and transformation. Global governance has reached a new crossroads. He identified the following as the main pillars of the new initiative: upholding sovereign equality, ensuring the international rule of law, practicing multilateralism, advocating a people-centered approach, and focusing on real action (Cheung, 2025).

Thus, through global initiatives, Beijing is trying to prove that modern China is a great country that is concerned with the problems of world security, global development, and the protection of the interests of all nations, regardless of their level of development and role in world processes. Through these initiatives, the Chinese authorities are trying to fill the fundamental principles of peaceful coexistence of nations with real meaning, when each nation has equal rights in the system of international relations. At the same time, they are ready to take responsibility for the implementation of their initiatives and are determined to support the countries of the Global South in protecting their rights and interests.

However, it cannot be ruled out that through global initiatives, Beijing is trying to “create a circle of friends,” that is, to enlist the support of other countries in its confrontation with the United States, first and foremost. In this matter, China has already achieved some success. In particular, in March 2023, the Chinese leader brokered an agreement between long-time antagonists Iran and Saudi Arabia to restore diplomatic relations. According to researchers at the Atlantic Council, this was a turning point that could potentially change the Middle East and the role of the United States in this vital region (Atlantic Council, 2023).

China's position is different from that of the United States on the resolution of the Russian-Ukrainian crisis, both in its principles and practical actions, making this area a new arena of competition between the two states.

According to analysts at the European Union Institute for Security Studies, China is likely to try to use the Global Security Initiative to prove that it is acting for peace, including in Ukraine (mentioned once in the concept), linking it to the recently published 12-point document – "The Position of the PRC on the Political Settlement of the Crisis in Ukraine" (Ekman, 2023).

It is worth noting that after the introduction of sanctions by Western countries against the PRC due to its position on the Russian-Ukrainian war, Beijing did not remain isolated from the outside world. The leadership of the Celestial Empire confidently implements its global projects and achieves new achievements in the international arena.

The successes of Chinese diplomacy have inspired Beijing to engage in more active foreign policy activities, primarily in the countries of the Global South, which include developing countries, in particular the countries of Southeast Asia, Central Asia, Latin America, and Africa, which have The China-Africa Cooperation Summit was held in Beijing from September 4 to 6, 2024. According to experts, the role of the private sector and people-to-people exchanges have become an increasingly important part of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) over the past 24 years since its establishment, injecting new impetus into China-Africa relations. During the FCAC Summit, China pledged to provide African countries with 50 billion U.S. dollars in financial support over the next three years and will continue to build industrial parks and assist in the industrialization of Africa for the sustainable development of the African continent (Mboya, 2024).

While the US openly pursues a policy of containment of China and has declared it its main competitor, the European Union is demonstrating a more moderate position and is trying to find a compromise option for cooperation with China, since open confrontation will have serious economic consequences for the EU itself. The main principles and directions of cooperation between the parties are enshrined in the EU-China Cooperation Strategy, which was adopted in 2020. The strategy states that the EU and China, as important players in a multipolar world, share responsibility for promoting peace, prosperity and sustainable development for the benefit of all. They agree to continue to strengthen and develop their strategic partnership for the benefit of both sides, based on the principles of equality, respect and trust (EEAS, 2020).

It is worth noting that European and Chinese leaders jointly declared the need to respect the state sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine immediately after the Russian aggression against Ukraine. At the initiative of the EU, an EU-China summit was held on April 1, 2022, the most important goal of which was a dialogue with Beijing regarding the Russian Federation's war against Ukraine. During the summit, European Council President Charles Michel called on China to help end the war in Ukraine. For her part, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen stressed that "the continuation of the war and the disruption it creates in the global economy are in no one's interests, and certainly not China's." She emphasized that “equidistance is not enough. Active work to achieve peace is important. And every actor must play their role” (European Council, 2022). Following the summit, the Chinese Foreign Ministry published a press release presenting Beijing’s position on Russia’s war against Ukraine. In the statement, the Chinese side emphasized that “China deeply regrets that the situation in Ukraine has reached the state it is in now. China’s position on the Ukrainian issue is that China always stands on the side of peace and draws its conclusions independently, taking into account the specifics of each issue.” (Paiders, 2022).

It is worth noting that Beijing did not recognize Russia as an aggressor during the UN vote, but China is complying with the requirements of international sanctions imposed by Western countries against Russia. In particular, two of China’s largest state-owned banks, the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China and the Bank of China, have stopped financing purchases of Russian goods due to financial sanctions from countries such as the United States. These banks have also stopped issuing dollar-denominated letters of credit to Russian companies. The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has suspended and is reviewing all activities related to Russia and Belarus. According to the Financial Times, Chinese mobile phone manufacturers Huawei, Xiaomi and Oppo have reduced mobile phone shipments to Russia by more than 50 percent due to the risk of secondary sanctions on China. China has also refused to supply Russian airlines with aircraft spare parts. According to Reuters, British oil company INOPEC has suspended talks on a potential investment of $500 million in a joint venture with Russian petrochemical holding Sibur – the East Siberian Petrochemical Plant. Chinese petrochemical company Sinopec has also stopped cooperation with Russian gas producer Novatek on joint gas projects. According to Reuters, representatives of the Chinese Foreign Ministry have instructed representatives of Sinopec, as well as China National Petroleum Corporation and China National Offshore Corporation to review their business ties and investment plans with Russian partners (Reuters, 2022).

China and Ukraine have established strategic partnership relations, which were formalized during the visit of the President of the People's Republic of China to Ukraine in June 2011, during which the Joint Declaration on the Establishment and Development of Strategic Partnership Relations between Ukraine and the People's Republic of China was signed. In December 2013, during the state visit to the People's Republic of China of the President of Ukraine, the Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation between Ukraine and the People's Republic of China, the Joint Declaration of Ukraine and the People's Republic of China on Further Deepening Strategic Partnership Relations, and the Program for the Development of Strategic Partnership Relations between Ukraine and the People's Republic of China for 2014–2018 were signed (MFA of Ukraine, 2022).

After the start of Russian aggression against Ukraine, the parties have maintained a dialogue at the level of heads of state and foreign policy departments.

In February 2023, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Dmytro Kuleba met with the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China Wang Yi during the Munich Security Conference and had a telephone conversation with the member of the State Council of the PRC, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the PRC Qin Gang. Wang Yi once again stated that the war in Ukraine must be immediately ended through negotiations with the aggressor. He also added that China is preparing a peace initiative for Russia and Ukraine. The Head of the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry stressed that no compromises on the territorial integrity of Ukraine or any other country in the world are possible. He also stated that Ukraine wants China to play its role in deterring Russia (MFA of China, 2023).

On April 26, 2023, a telephone conversation took place between the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky and the President of the People's Republic of China Xi Jinping. During the conversation, the leaders of the countries discussed ways to strengthen the Ukrainian-Chinese partnership. They exchanged views on "China's peace plan and the Ukrainian "peace formula". According to the message of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, there are "certain moments, points of intersection" in the proposals of the parties. Thus, the positions of Ukraine and China coincided on the non-use of nuclear weapons and their non-proliferation. For his part, the Chinese leader reported that Beijing agreed that nuclear facilities should not be taken hostage. The President of Ukraine emphasized that before the full-scale phase of Russia's war against our state, China occupied an important place among Ukraine's trading partners. V. Zelensky expressed hope that this conversation will give a powerful impetus to the return, preservation and development of this dynamic at all levels (Mazurenko, 2023).

On February 24, 2023, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China published a document – "China's Position on the Political Settlement of the Ukrainian Crisis" (Plan), which reflects the position of the Chinese authorities on the end of the Russian invasion of Ukraine (Bortnik R., Krasovskaya O., 2023). The document's achievement is that in the first paragraph of the Plan, the Chinese side declares respect for the sovereignty of all countries, the need to effectively support the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all countries, as well as to encourage the equal and uniform application of international law, and double standards should be rejected. The weak part of the Plan is the eleventh paragraph, which declares the termination of unilateral sanctions. This is evidence that Beijing opposes the sanctions imposed by Western countries against Moscow. This wording indicates that China is not interested in the defeat of the Russian Federation.

In order to implement the agreements reached during the telephone conversation of the heads of state on May 16-17, 2023, the Special Representative of the Government of the PRC for Eurasian Affairs Li Hui visited Ukraine. During the meeting of the Special Representative of the Government of the PRC with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine D. Kuleba, the parties discussed current issues of interaction between Ukraine and China both at the bilateral level and within the framework of international organizations, as well as ways to stop Russian aggression. D. Kuleba informed Li Hui about the principles of restoring a sustainable and just peace based on respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. He emphasized that Ukraine does not accept any proposals that would entail the loss of its territories or freezing the conflict. The Minister noted the importance of China's participation in the implementation of the Peace Formula of the President of Ukraine, the Black Sea Grain Initiative, ensuring nuclear safety and other important international efforts. The parties separately discussed the long-term prospects for the development of bilateral relations between Ukraine and China and agreed to increase dialogue on key issues of the bilateral and international agenda (Kizilov, 2023).

On February 17, 2024, on the sidelines of the 60th anniversary Munich Security Conference, another meeting between the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine D. Kuleba and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi took place. The participants of the meeting discussed bilateral relations, trade, and the need to restore a just and lasting peace in Ukraine, and also agreed to maintain Ukrainian-Chinese contacts at all levels and continue our dialogue (Interfax, 2024).

In February 2024, China's Special Representative Li Hui visited Brussels, where he met with the heads of the European External Action Service (EEAS). According to the EEAS, the parties discussed Russia's illegal aggressive war against Ukraine and ways to promote a just and sustainable peace. During the meeting, European diplomats informed the Chinese Special Representative that Russia's war is a real threat to the security of the European Union, and therefore China's position on the war inevitably affects their bilateral relations. They added that the EU remains committed to supporting Ukraine in everything that is "necessary for victory." It was also emphasized during the meeting that the EU expects China, as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, to play a constructive role and use every opportunity to protect and promote the UN Charter and international law in order to ensure that the Russian Federation withdraws its troops from Ukraine beyond its internationally recognized borders (Espreso, 2024).

After visiting Brussels, Li Hui arrived in Ukraine on March 7, 2024 as part of shuttle diplomacy. During the meeting with Ukrainian government officials, the Chinese diplomat was briefed on the situation on the battlefield, the functioning of the "grain corridor", the return of prisoners of war, and the protection of the rights of civilian hostages. For his part, the Chinese special representative once again stated that China advocates an end to hostilities and a political solution to the Ukrainian crisis (Chiu, 2024).

China's position on the Russian-Ukrainian war was announced by Chinese President Xi Jinping during his visits to France, Serbia and Hungary in May 2024. During the talks in France, the leaders of the two countries exchanged views on international and regional issues of mutual interest, discussing, in particular, Russia's war against Ukraine. French President Emmanuel Macron tried to convince the Chinese leader of the reality of the threat posed by Russia to both France's national security and Europe in general, calling on China to limit exports of dual-use products to the Russian Federation. In turn, Xi Jinping stated that China did not initiate the "Ukrainian crisis" and is not a party or participant in it. In his opinion, China plays a constructive role in seeking a peaceful resolution of the "crisis". The Chinese President also stressed that his state is ready to work with France to find a reasonable way out of the "crisis" (Tishchenko, 2024).

During a Security Council meeting at UN Headquarters in New York on May 29, 2024, China's Permanent Representative to the UN Fu Kun stated that China's position on the Ukrainian issue is consistent and clear, and that it is in the best interests of all parties to seek a political settlement through an early cessation of hostilities. He believes that the continued flow of weapons and ammunition to the battlefield will only complicate the crisis and deepen the brutality, danger and unpredictability that war brings. This will lead to more innocent casualties, diminishing the hope for a peaceful end to the hostilities, as well as having a further negative impact on regional peace and stability (CGTN, 2024).

On June 4–6, 2024, the First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine A. Sybiga visited China to hold another round of Ukrainian-Chinese political consultations. During the meeting, the parties discussed current issues on the bilateral agenda, outlined joint steps to intensify contacts at the highest and highest levels, strengthen the positive dynamics of trade and economic cooperation, as well as further interaction within the framework of international organizations. The interlocutors emphasized the importance of adhering to the principles of the UN Charter and international law. As noted by the parties, mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity is the foundation on which the bilateral relations between Ukraine and China are based. The Ukrainian side once again called on the Chinese partners to make a practical contribution to achieving a just and lasting peace in Ukraine (Bandouil, 2024).

On July 24, 2024, in the Chinese city of Guangzhou, the next meeting of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine D. Kuleba with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi took place. The heads of the foreign ministries of the two countries discussed the issue of stopping Russian aggression against Ukraine and the possible role of China in achieving a just peace. D. Kuleba informed his Chinese counterpart about the results of the Peace Summit in Switzerland and explained the logic of further steps in implementing the Ukrainian Peace Formula. He confirmed Ukraine's readiness for negotiations with Russia, but only on condition of a good-faith approach from the Russian side. The Head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine emphasized that a just peace in Ukraine meets the strategic interests of the PRC, and the role of China as a global force for peace is important (LB.ua, 2024).

Conclusions. An analysis of China's foreign policy regarding Russian aggression against Ukraine in the context of Sino-Ukrainian relations allows us to draw certain conclusions:

- China's announcement of global initiatives – "One Belt, One Road", the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, the Global Governance Initiative, the Global Civilization Initiative – confirmed the shift in Beijing's foreign policy towards strengthening its aspirations for global influence and its application for active participation in international processes;
- Global Initiatives are key features of Chinese foreign and security policy. They are aimed at rejecting the world primacy of one single country (according to official Chinese documents), and are tools that will help China achieve global superiority. In fact, they are China's answer to the future of the world order. Through these initiatives, Beijing seeks to create a favorable external environment that will support China's sovereignty, security and development interests;
- Taiwan has become a stumbling block in geopolitical interests between the US and China. Today, the situation looks like neither side is ready to give up its own interests on this issue. As a result, an "arms race" continues in the Pacific region;
- Beijing pursues a pragmatic policy towards Moscow. China's interaction with Russia allows it to obtain cheap energy resources and count on support in the event of a military confrontation with the West;

- China is not interested in continuing military aggression against Ukraine and advocates a cessation of hostilities and negotiations with the aggressor to find a political solution. China categorically opposes the use of any weapons of mass destruction.

The results of the study provide grounds for developing a number of recommendations for the Ukrainian side, which include a set of measures aimed at activating the mutually beneficial strategic partnership between Ukraine and China, in particular the following:

- strengthen interaction with Beijing, intensify strategic dialogue and the activities of the Commission on Cooperation between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of the People's Republic of China in order to strengthen China's constructive role in ending the Russian-Ukrainian war and establishing peace in Ukraine, as well as developing large-scale cooperation, in particular in the economic, cultural, scientific, educational and military spheres;
- together with the Chinese side, develop a new Program for the Development of Strategic Partnership Relations between Ukraine and the PRC, since the previous program, designed for 2014–2018, has lost its validity;
- to analyze the implementation of the Action Plan on cooperation and accelerating the implementation of common intentions in the trade and economic, investment spheres, infrastructure and energy sectors, agricultural, industrial and humanitarian spheres, etc., which was signed on December 23, 2020 by Vice Prime Minister O. Stefanishyn and Vice Premier of the State Council of the PRC Liu He during the Fourth Meeting of the Commission on Cooperation between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of the People's Republic of China; based on the results of the analysis, to develop new projects for the successful implementation of the Action Plan and participation in the global initiative "One Belt, One Road";
- regularly hold political consultations at the level of deputy foreign ministers of the two countries on current issues of bilateral relations and, primarily, on joint actions aimed at ending the war in Ukraine and achieving a just peace based on international law;
- as Ukraine is a candidate for accession to the European Union, Ukraine's relations with China should take into account the EU's policy towards this country, which, against the backdrop of global conflicts such as the war in Ukraine, involves a complex, dual approach: being a partner (on climate, trade), a competitor (economic justice, technology) and a systemic rival (human rights, security), with a key focus on "de-risking" supply chains (especially critical technologies/raw materials) to increase resilience, promote the EU's autonomy, protect its interests through stronger trade instruments, while maintaining dialogue to manage tensions, all while countering Russian influence and its support from China.

Funding. The authors did not receive any financial assistance for the research and publication of this article.

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Надійшла до редакції / Received: 05.12.2025 Схвалено до друку / Accepted: 09.02.2026