



THE WAR IN UKRAINE

A lesson in global geopolitics



The war in Ukraine

Towards a **stalemate**?



President Zelensky addressed
French parliament

Compared the city of **Mariupol** to
Verdun

Excellent communication skills



The Pentagon

Russian army may have lost
up to 8% of its manpower

Lack of supplies (food & fuel)

Successful Ukrainian **counter
attacks**: Russian army unable
to encircle Kiev



Putin has **not achieved aims** in
Ukraine

Refused to rule out the use of
nuclear weapons if Russia faced with
“existential threat”

Nuclear blackmailing





What are Vladimir
Putin's **war aims**?

No one really knows (no even himself?)

His objectives may have changed as swift
military victory is eluding him

What objectives?

Securing the access to the Black Sea

Linking the self-proclaimed eastern pro-Russian republics to Crimea



What objectives?

Kiev: a political objective





How far is Vladimir
Putin's **willing to go?**

Increased violence (use of chemical or
nuclear weapons) – **Vertical strategy?**

OR

Negotiations?



How long can Ukraine
hold?

Several months?
Urban guerilla

Russian army: stalemate or
operational pause?

A lesson of geopolitics



A photograph of Nicolas Maduro, President of Venezuela, speaking at a podium. He is wearing a dark suit, a white shirt, and a striped tie. He has a mustache and is gesturing with his right hand. The background features the Venezuelan flag and a blue screen with a grid pattern.

8 March 2022

The global impact of the war in Ukraine

Venezuela released two jailed U.S. citizens:
an apparent goodwill gesture toward the
Biden administration

The visit of a high-level U.S. delegation the
week before

Nicolas Maduro referred to the talks as
“respectful, cordial and very diplomatic”



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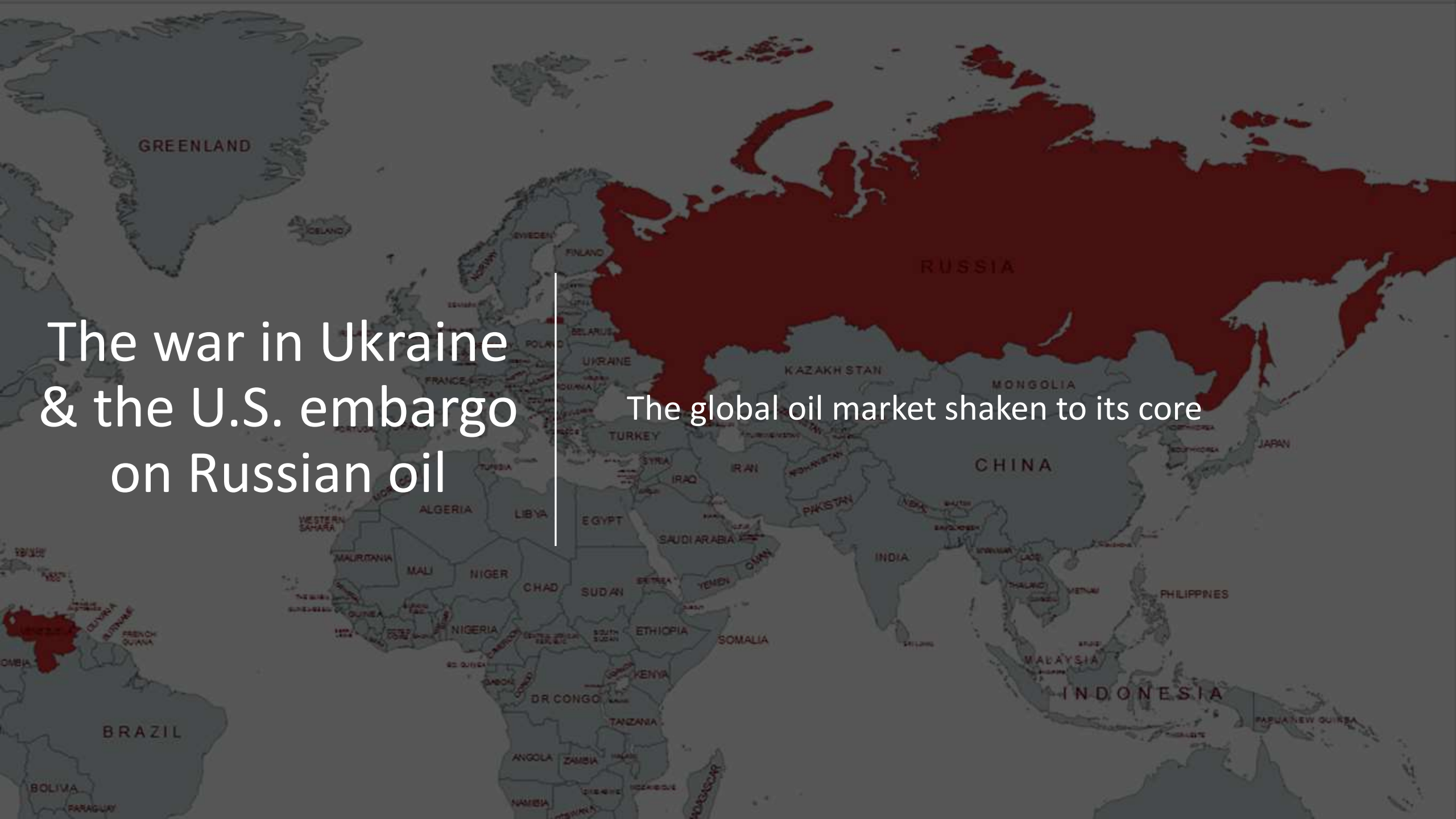
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Why Venezuela?

Moscow's key ally in Latin America

A key oil producer



The war in Ukraine & the U.S. embargo on Russian oil

The global oil market shaken to its core



The war in Ukraine

Uncertain outcome: the Russian *Blitzkrieg* has turned into a war of attrition

Its **far-reaching global consequences** comparable to the 9-11 terrorist attacks and the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989)



A “new era” for Europe

The end of the **post-Cold War era** which began with the collapse of the Soviet Union (1991)

“Russia’s invasion, regardless of its outcome, portends a new era of immense hostility with Moscow”

(Mary Elise Sarotte, a professor of historical studies at Johns Hopkins University)



The conflicts of the 20th
century after 1945

The two great “*superpowers*”: avoiding
a direct Western-Soviet confrontation
“proxy wars in other countries”

Rules and communication channels
*“Putin’s brazenness calls this practice
into question”*



The use of **new weapons**

The absence of regulations

Negotiations with Moscow to avoid a
new arms race now **impossible**



Vladimir Putin's **recklessness**

The impacts of harsh Western economic
sanctions

Putin's misreading of Ukraine

The errors of his invasion plan

The Western reactions underestimated

The image of a **shrewd tactician** seriously
eroded



Russia under Putin:
an **autocracy**

Russia's **Security Council** meetings (21-24
February): a spectacle





Russia under Putin:
an **autocracy**

The return of the old **Soviet methods of governance** without its mechanisms (the destitution of the leader)

Putin could stay in power until... 2036!



Russia's economic growth
compromised

Invasion of Ukraine: a heavy
financial burden



The “*Oblast*” of Kaliningrad

Russian strategic semi-enclave on the Baltic Sea

October 2016: the deployment of tactical missiles **Iskander** (nuclear capacity)

Baltic states’ concern
Growing tensions Russia-EU since annexation of Crimea

A response to NATO (deployment of troops – 4 000 men) in Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia

Any favorable outcome for Putin?

1. Transforming Ukraine into a satellite state

Guerilla warfare (Remember the Soviet
invasion of Afghanistan?)

Western sanctions: Russian economy
asphyxiated



**Any favorable outcome
for Putin?**

2. The Russian army forced to retreat

Putin's defeat

Russia no longer able to maintain its grip
over its *"near abroad"*





Russia and its “*near abroad*”

RUSSIA

Former Soviet Republics:
Russia’s **sphere of influence**

ESTONIA

LATVIA

LITHUANIA

BELARUS

UKRAINE

MOLDOVA

GEORGIA

ARMENIA

AZERBAIJAN

KAZAKHSTAN

UZBEKISTAN

TURKMENISTAN

KYRGYZSTAN

TAJIKISTAN



An invasion of Ukraine to
prevent the former Soviet
republic from joining NATO and
the EU

A “red line” for Putin
*“Any NATO movement to the east is
inacceptable”*

The opposite effect



The EU: the awakening

A military intervention at its doorstep
launched by a nuclear power
(permanent member of the UN
Security Council): a transformed EU

A brutal awakening (the repeated U.S.
warnings ignored)

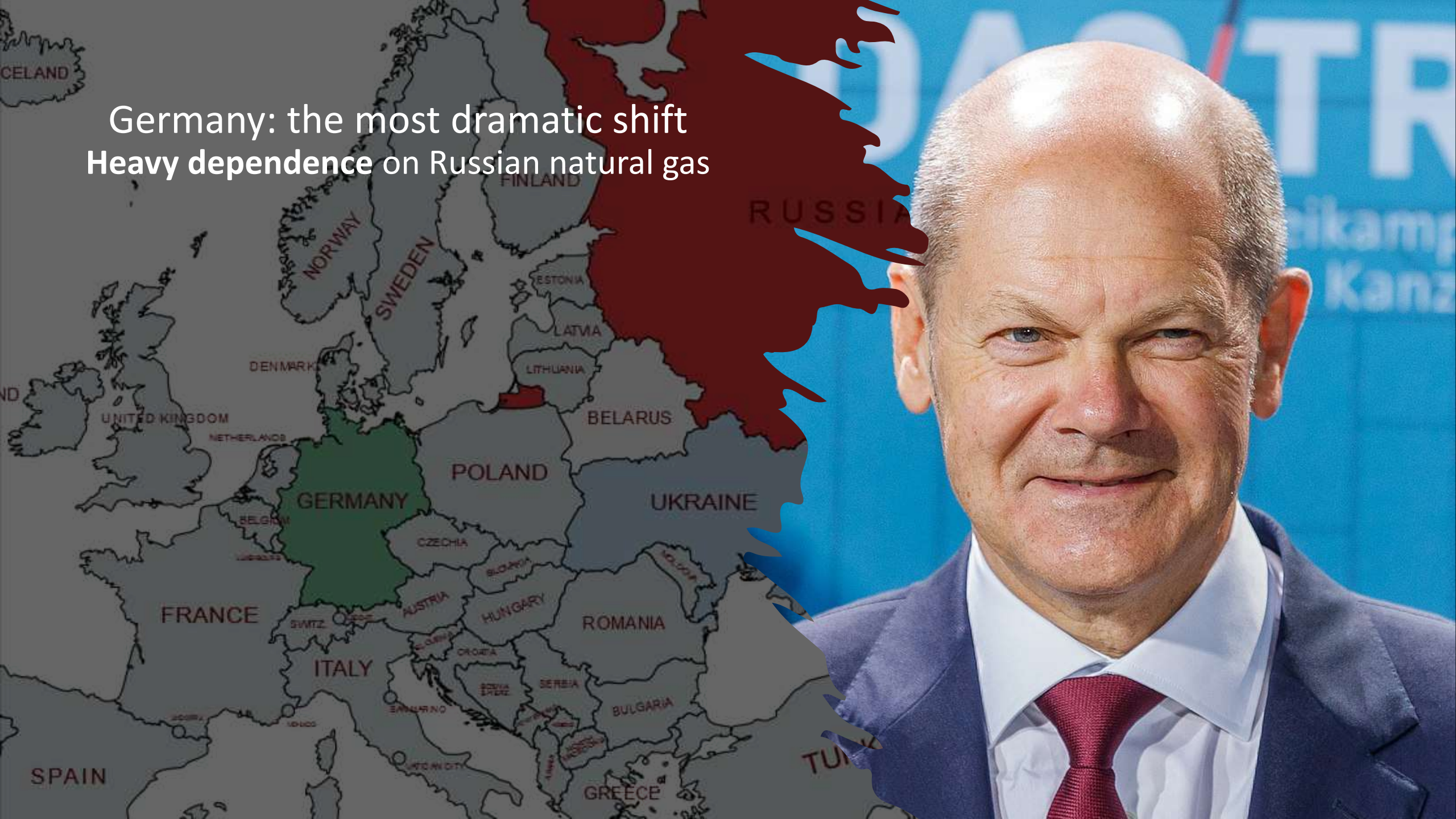
Massive sanctions against Russia +
military aid to Ukraine



Germany: the most dramatic shift
Military weakness

27 February: military budget to
be increased significantly

Germany: the most dramatic shift
Heavy dependence on Russian natural gas





Nord Stream 2 halted

Natural gas pipeline from
Russia to Germany running
through the Baltic Sea



Nord Stream 2

**GERMANY HALTS
NORD STREAM 2
PIPELINE
CERTIFICATION**

ed, Reliable, Safe

The image shows a grand, historic hall with a high, vaulted ceiling adorned with numerous large, ornate chandeliers. A long, curved conference table is set up in the center of the room, with many people, presumably EU leaders, seated around it. The room features high arched windows and classical architectural details. The atmosphere is formal and significant.

Versailles summit

10-11 March 2022

Meeting of EU heads of states or government

Topics discussed: *“European sovereignty”* & *“strategic autonomy”*

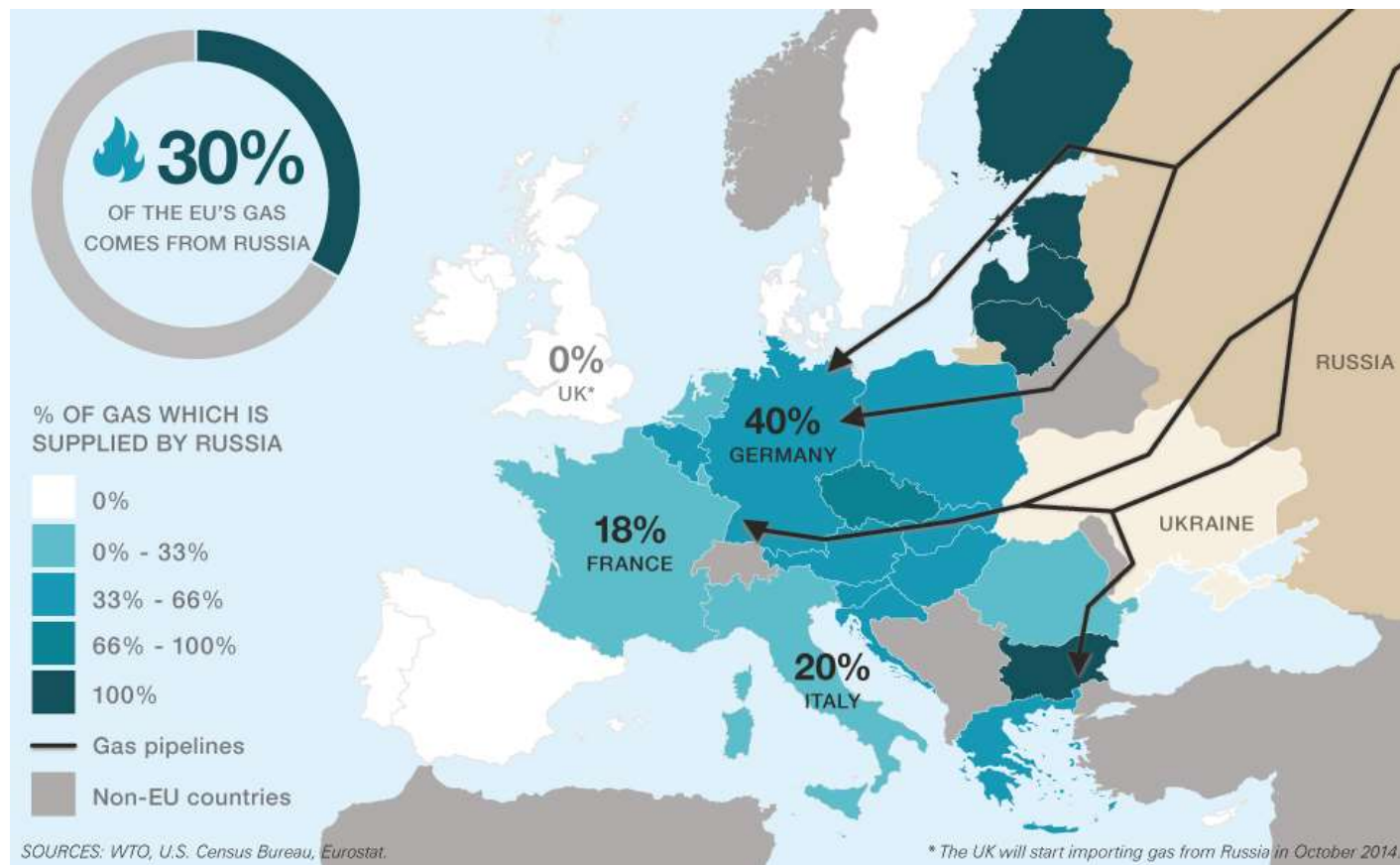


Versailles summit

10-11 March 2022

Cold War: economic systems
disconnected

Europe's significant economic
dependency towards Russia (supplies
of natural gas): a paradox



Harsh economic
sanctions

BUT

Europeans still pay
Russia US\$ **700 million**
per day for their
supplies of oil and gas



Versailles summit

10-11 March 2022

Decision to end dependency towards
Russia by 2027

Major consequences for European
economies

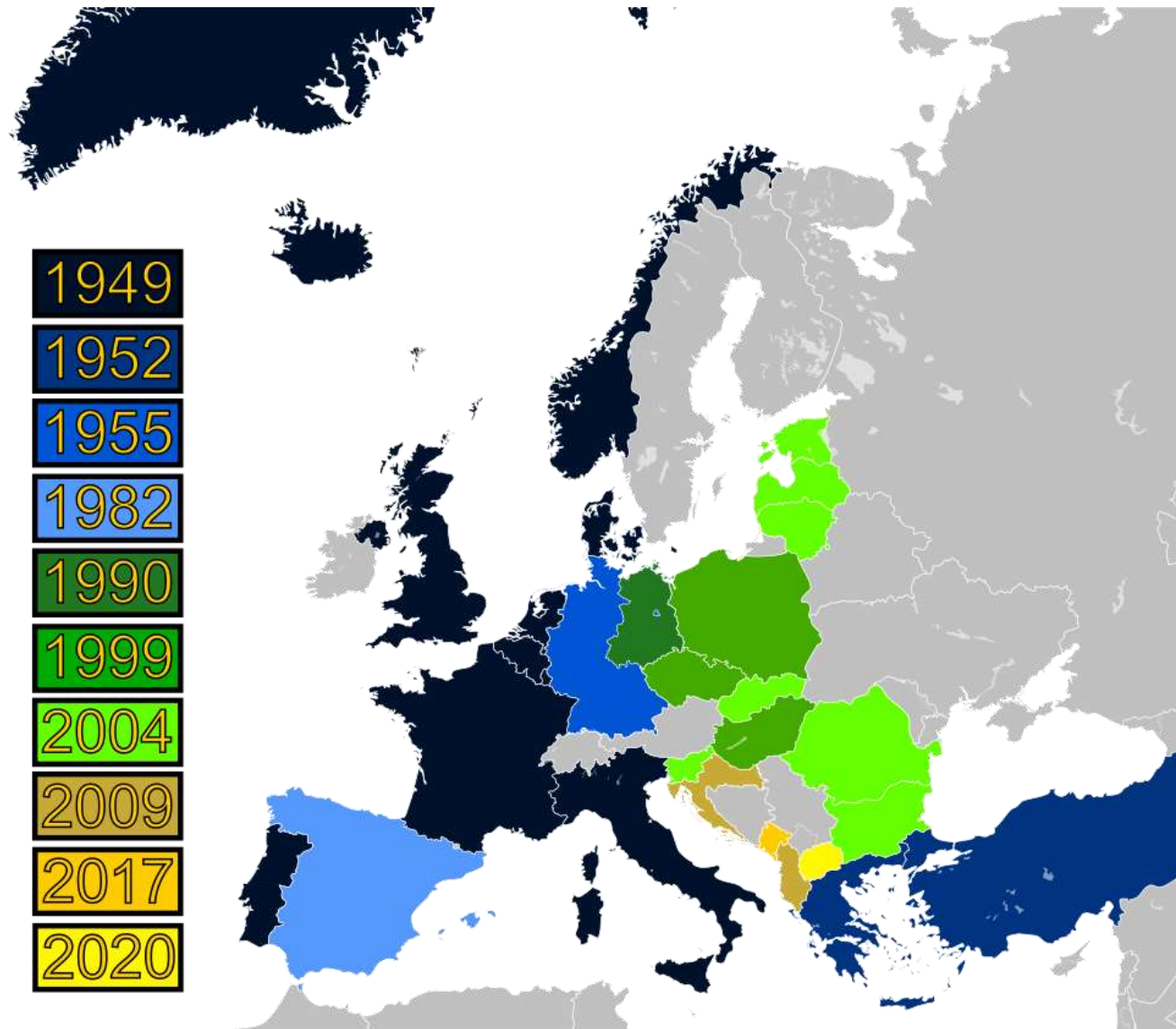


NATO resuscitated

Another one of Putin's "exploits"

Denmark announced a significant increase of its military budget

Finland & Sweden considering joining NATO

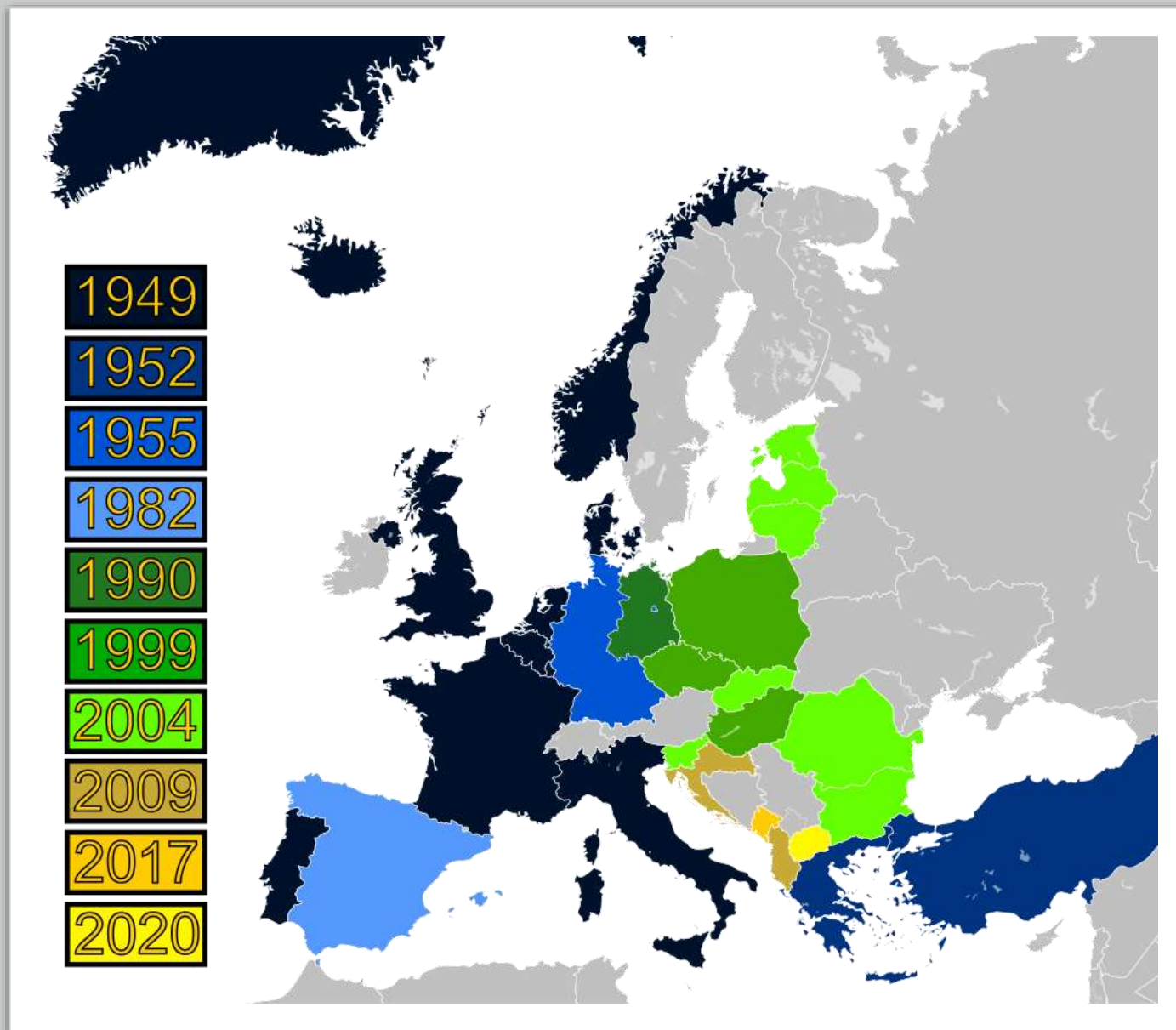


“More NATO”

Debates over the future of the alliance no longer necessary

Its mission: the **collective defense** of Europe (at the heart of founding treaty)

“Reassuring” Eastern European countries (Baltic states, Poland, Romania...)



Article 5

*"Parties agree that an armed **attack against one or more** of them in Europe or North America shall be considered **an attack against them all**"*

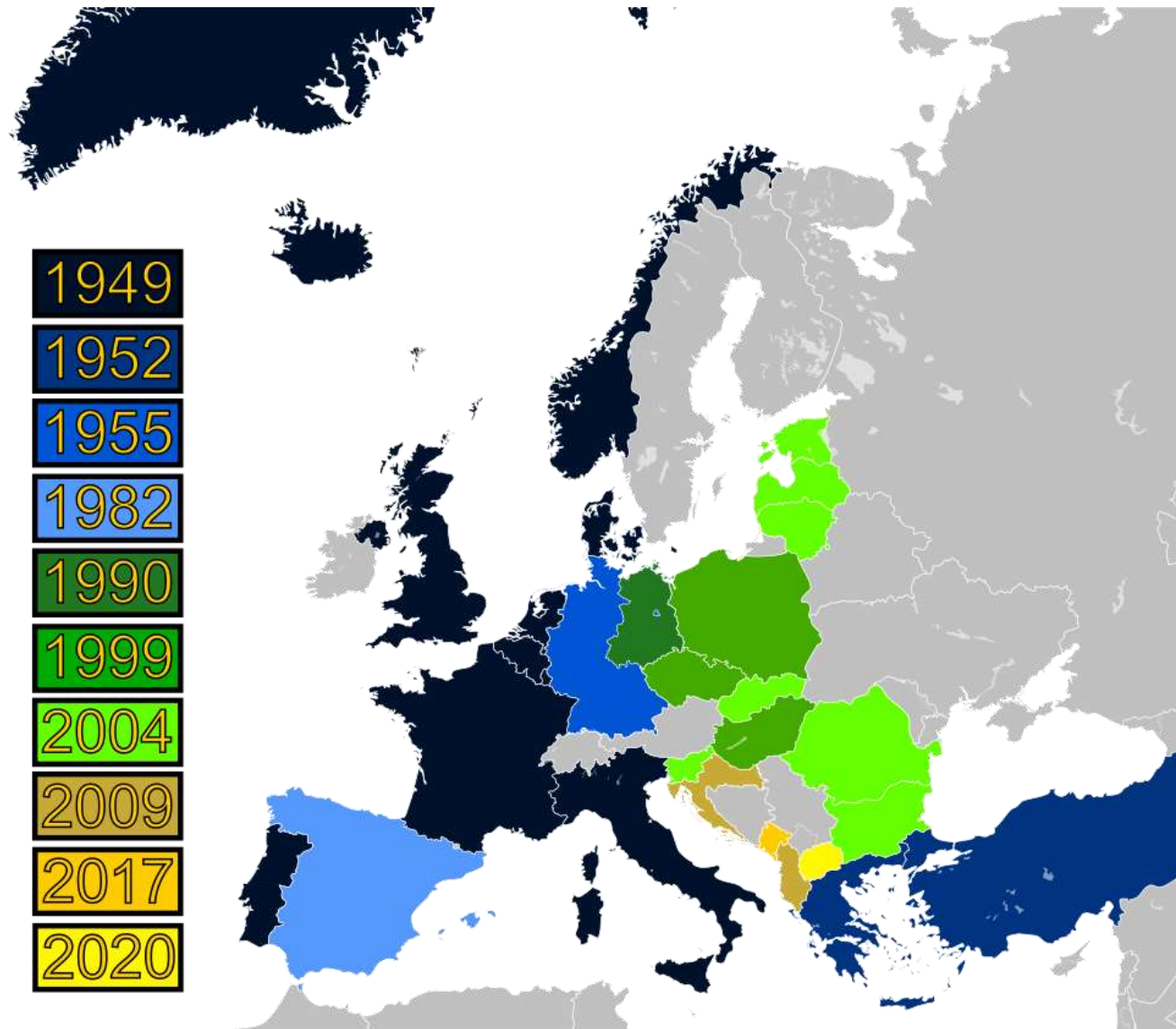


The EU's "*Strategic Compass*"

To establish a common view on EU security and defense

To be adopted by all 27 EU members at the end of March 2022

A "**turning point** for the European Union as a security provider and an important step for the **European security and defense policy**"



NATO's “*Strategic Concept*”

To be adopted at the **Madrid Summit** in June 2022

To outline the alliance’s purpose and its fundamental **security tasks** and **identifying challenges** and opportunities it faces in the light of the war in Ukraine



The end of the **NATO-Russia partnership for peace** established in 1994

The alliance agreed in principle not to station permanent troops in former Soviet satellites



Turkey

An increasingly **uncomfortable**
balancing act

A NATO member

Maintaining its economic ties with
Russia while selling weapons (drones)
to Ukraine



The **American global leadership** in question

Close cooperation between the U.S. and its allies

A dramatic improvement from the Trump years

BUT...



U.S. chaotic withdrawal from
Afghanistan
(Summer 2021)

The ***AUKUS*** Security Pact

A **trilateral security pact**
(Australia, the UK and the U.S.)

Australia to acquire nuclear-
powered submarines

Diplomatic spat with France (the
cancellation of a French-
Australian submarine deal)



The **American global leadership** in question

Uncertainty over U.S.
commitment to defend Europe

Razor-thin Democratic majority
in U.S. Congress

Midterm elections in November
2022



U.S.'s main focus: its **growing rivalry with China**

Misread Putin's intentions since 2008

Minimized the 2014 annexation of Crimea

Joe Biden, VP between 2009 & 2017

The U.S. must manage **two adversaries** in two different zones



A photograph of Vladimir Putin, the President of Russia, seated at a desk. He is wearing a dark suit, a white shirt, and a dark red tie. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a serious expression. In front of him is a microphone and some papers. The background features the Russian flag (white, blue, and red horizontal stripes) and a gold-colored decorative element on the left.

Putin's strategy of **escalation management**

A key concept in managing
deterrence

The West (NATO) laid out its limits
("red lines") from the start: no
military intervention in Ukraine

Putin and nuclear weapons as an
option



Cold War

Nuclear weapons not to be
used (deterrence)

27 February: referendum day in Belarus

A map of Europe with several countries highlighted to show the conflict's location. Russia is colored red, and Ukraine is colored orange. Other countries like Germany, France, Italy, Spain, and the UK are in grey. A small box with the word 'Russia' is placed over the Russian territory in the east of Europe.



A photograph of Vladimir Putin, the President of Russia, seated at a podium. He is wearing a dark suit, a white shirt, and a dark red tie. He is looking slightly to his right with a serious expression. A microphone is in front of him, and his hands are resting on papers on the podium. The background features the Russian flag (white, blue, and red horizontal stripes) and a gold-colored decorative element on the left. The right side of the image has a white gradient overlay where the text is placed.

Putin's repeated nuclear
threats

Any country interfering in the
invasion of Ukraine threatened with
*"consequences greater than any you
have faced in history"*

Nuclear "deterrence" forces put on
alert



**U.N. General Assembly
resolution** demanding an end to
Russian invasion
(2 March)

141 states voted for the resolution

5 against

35 abstained (including China and
India)



India's abstention

Russia: India's primary weapon supplier

India **concerned** the U.S. might not be a reliable partner to contain China's assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific



China's balancing act

China unlikely to side by the West or
blame Russia for the war in Ukraine

The U.S. and NATO accused of taking side
(supplying weapons and information to
Ukraine)

China-Russia "limitless" friendship

The background of the slide features the national flags of Russia and China. The Russian flag, with its horizontal stripes of white, blue, and red, is on the left. The Chinese flag, with its red field and five yellow stars, is on the right. Both flags are waving against a blue sky with scattered white clouds. A thin white vertical line is positioned between the two flags.

Russia and China

An **unbalanced** marriage of convenience
Win-win situation for China and its quest for
global power

Russia-China **partnership**: can it resist the
far-reaching impacts of the war in Ukraine?



Anti-American stance

The consequences of the Russian
invasion of Ukraine

Western sanctions threaten
China's economic objectives

A long history of rivalry and
mistrust

1953: the death of Stalin

February 1956: Khrushchev denounced the **crimes of Stalin** & the **cult of personality** – **Peaceful coexistence** with the West

Mao accused Khrushchev of **revisionism**:
"The Soviet Union may attack Stalin, but we will not"



1962: China accused the Soviet Union of treason for agreeing to withdraw its missiles from Cuba

Phoenix Weather
THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC
Today's Chuckle
THE STATE'S GREATEST NEWSPAPER
Third Year, No. 57, 40 Pages
Phoenix, Arizona, Tuesday, October 23, 1962
TELEPHONE 270000 100 8 Ten Cents

U.S. BLOCKADES CUBA, TELLS RUSS 'LAY OFF'

Will Sink Ships That Won't Halt
The United States is ready to sink any Soviet ship that does not halt its voyage to Cuba, the State Department said today. The move is part of a new U.S. policy to block all Soviet ships from bringing supplies to Cuba, the State Department said.

President's Cuba Stand Far-Reaching
By MICHAEL PERMAN
Special to the Republic

Southeast Gears To War Pace
MIAMI, Fla. (UPI)—Military forces in the Southeast are being alerted to warlike activity that might develop.

President Acts
Island's A-Missile Build-Up Cited
WASHINGTON (AP)—President Kennedy ordered a U.S. "quarantine" blockade of Cuba today, saying the Soviet Union was sending Soviet missiles to Cuba. The blockade is intended to prevent the Soviet Union from sending more missiles to Cuba.

U.S. Acts To Block Speech
WASHINGTON (AP)—President Kennedy today ordered a U.S. "quarantine" blockade of Cuba today, saying the Soviet Union was sending Soviet missiles to Cuba. The blockade is intended to prevent the Soviet Union from sending more missiles to Cuba.

1964: further tensions following the successful explosion of the first Chinese atomic bomb



1969: Sino-Soviet undeclared border war

Multiple clashes

Fear of a nuclear war




Rapprochement with the U.S.



Soviet Union as a common
enemy


February 1972: Nixon's visit
to China

A black and white photograph showing two men from the chest up. The man on the left is wearing a dark, high-collared jacket and has his right arm raised in a wave. The man on the right is wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and dark tie, and is smiling. A third person's head is partially visible between them. The background is light and out of focus.

1979: the establishment of
diplomatic relations with
the U.S.

*“The Soviet Union has
demonstrated by her actions that
she is ready to invade and occupy
any countries she wants to invade
and occupy”*

(Deng Xiaoping)

An aerial photograph of Tiananmen Square in Beijing, China, showing several Chinese Type 69 tanks. The tanks are positioned in a line across the wide, paved square. In the lower-left foreground, a lone individual stands near one of the tanks, providing a sense of scale. The image is overlaid with white text. A decorative lamp post with multiple white globe lights is visible in the bottom center foreground.

1989: Tiananmen Square
A **tipping point** in the China-Russia
relationship

An essential partnership against the
West (the U.S.)

Steady improvement of the
relationship since



Renewed friendship: the work of Xi Jinping

Russia: Xi Jinping's **first foreign trip** (one week following his election – 2013)

Teaming up with Russia diplomatically to contain the influence of the U.S. and its NATO allies

A “*strategic partnership*” between Russia and China



Renewed friendship: the
work of Xi Jinping

Deterioration of relations
between Russia and the West

Growing U.S.-China rivalry

=

China-Russia's partnership

2014: China did not recognize Russia's
annexation of Crimea but did not
condemn

2014 annexation of Crimea





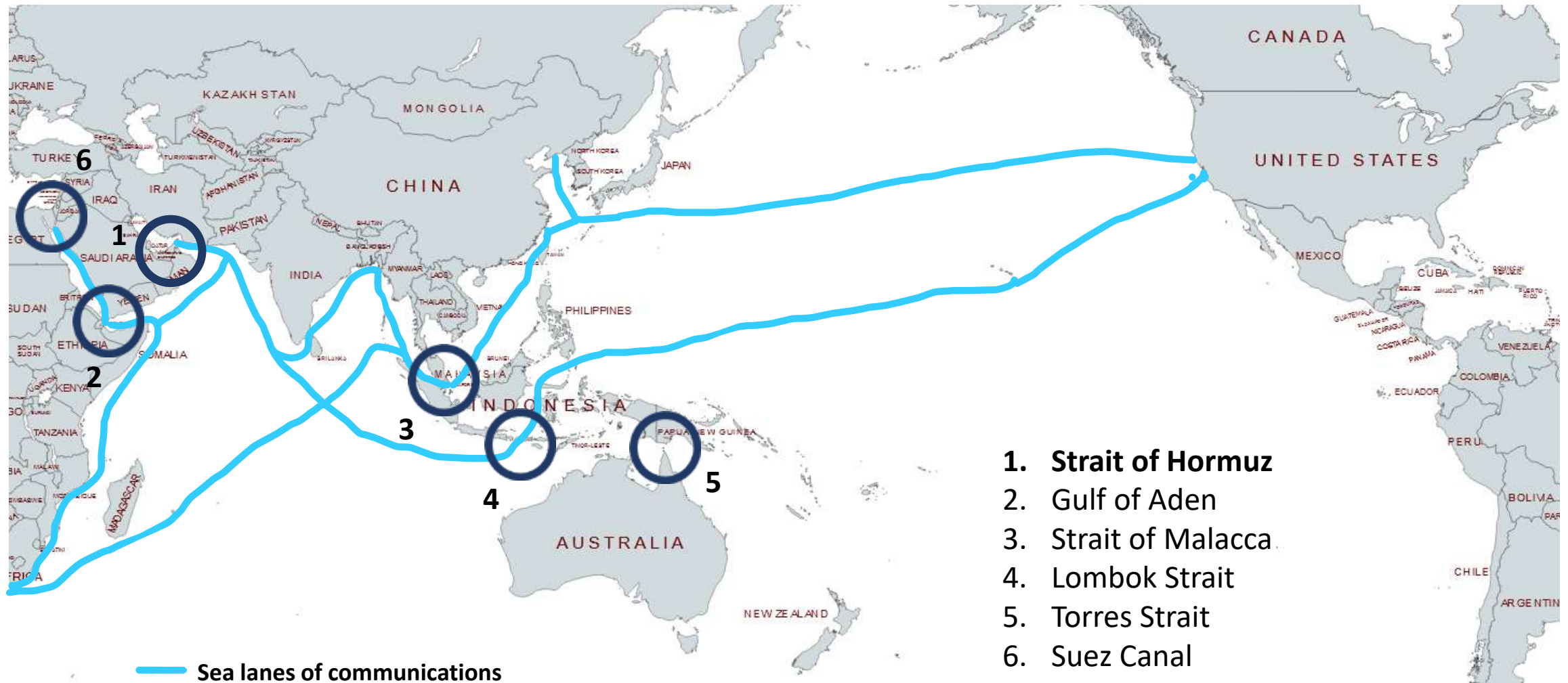
China-Russia cooperation

Enhanced relationship to benefit China

Russia's level of isolation on the global stage to be determined by China & other Asian emerging economies (India)

To help Russia maintain its exports
(natural resources)

Geo-strategic stakes in the Indo-Pacific today...



The Strait of Ormuz

Key to global trade

Connecting the Persian Gulf to
the Indian Ocean

A “door” to the Indo-Pacific



The Indo-Pacific

70% of global maritime
traffic



The Strait of Hormuz

A highly strategic strait (natural resources)

An entry point to the Persian Gulf



The Persian Gulf

Oil and gas rich region

Half of global known reserves

A third of the world's oil production

24% of global oil exports transit through Strait of Hormuz



The Strait of Hormuz

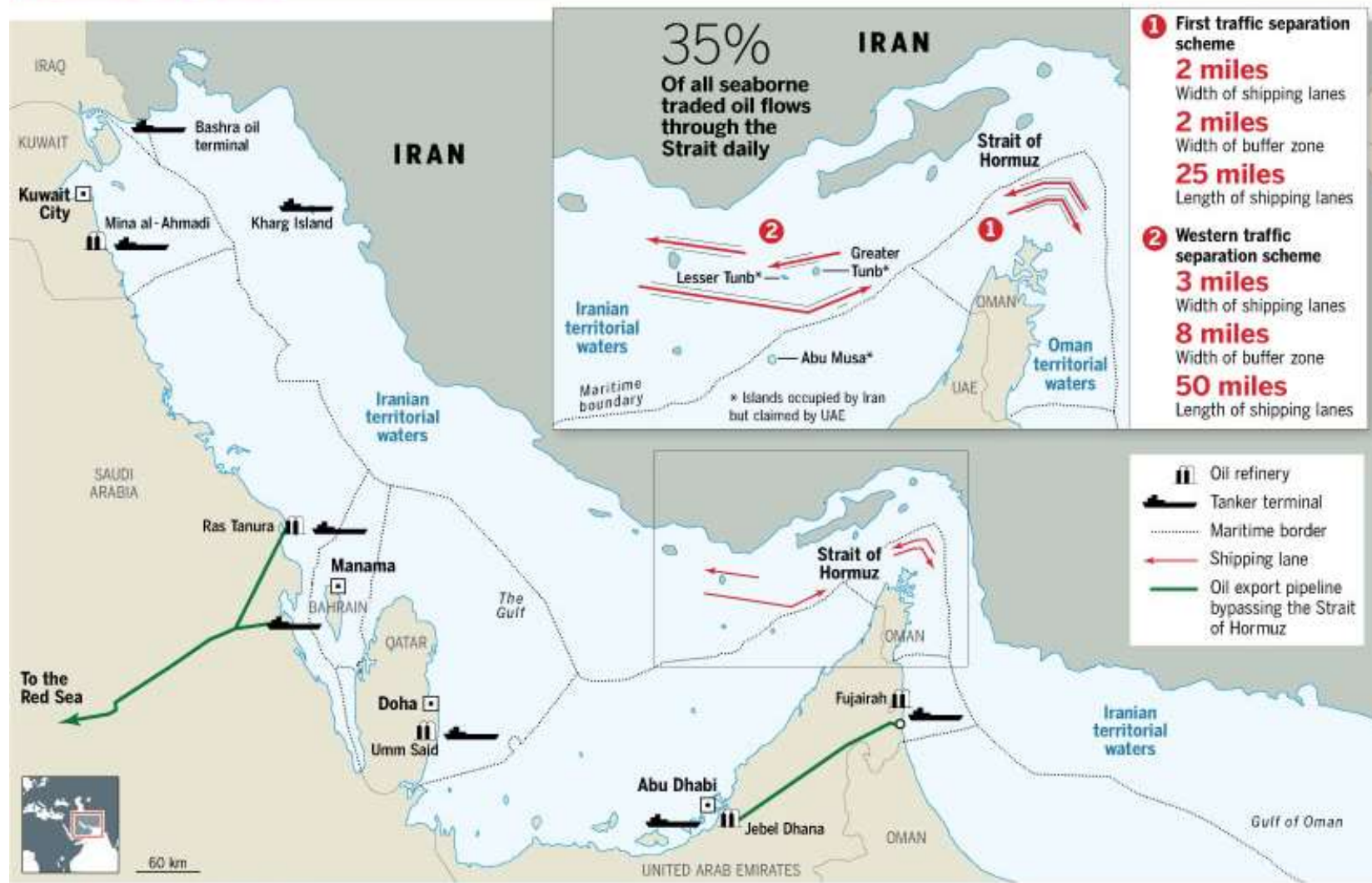
A very narrow passage (180 km)

Shadow waters

2 shipping lanes (3.2 km wide)
separated by a buffer zone



Treacherous waters



Sources: Petroleum Economist; CSIS; VLIZ; NGA; EIA

Oil production and exports

Barrels per day (m)



The Persian Gulf

Saudi Arabia's options to export its oil (without transiting through the Strait of Hormuz) are extremely limited



INDIAN OCEAN PORT DEVELOPMENT



■ PORT AUTHORITIES ASSISTED BY CHINA

■ PORT AUTHORITIES ASSISTED BY INDIA

■ U.S. NAVAL FACILITIES

COUNCIL on
FOREIGN



2018: three-quarters of oil exports that transited through the Strait of Hormuz ended up in India, China, Japan, South Korea and Singapore

The Strait of Hormuz: an oil hub towards the Indo-Pacific

The Indo-Pacific region is about to become the most important importer of oil from the Persian Gulf

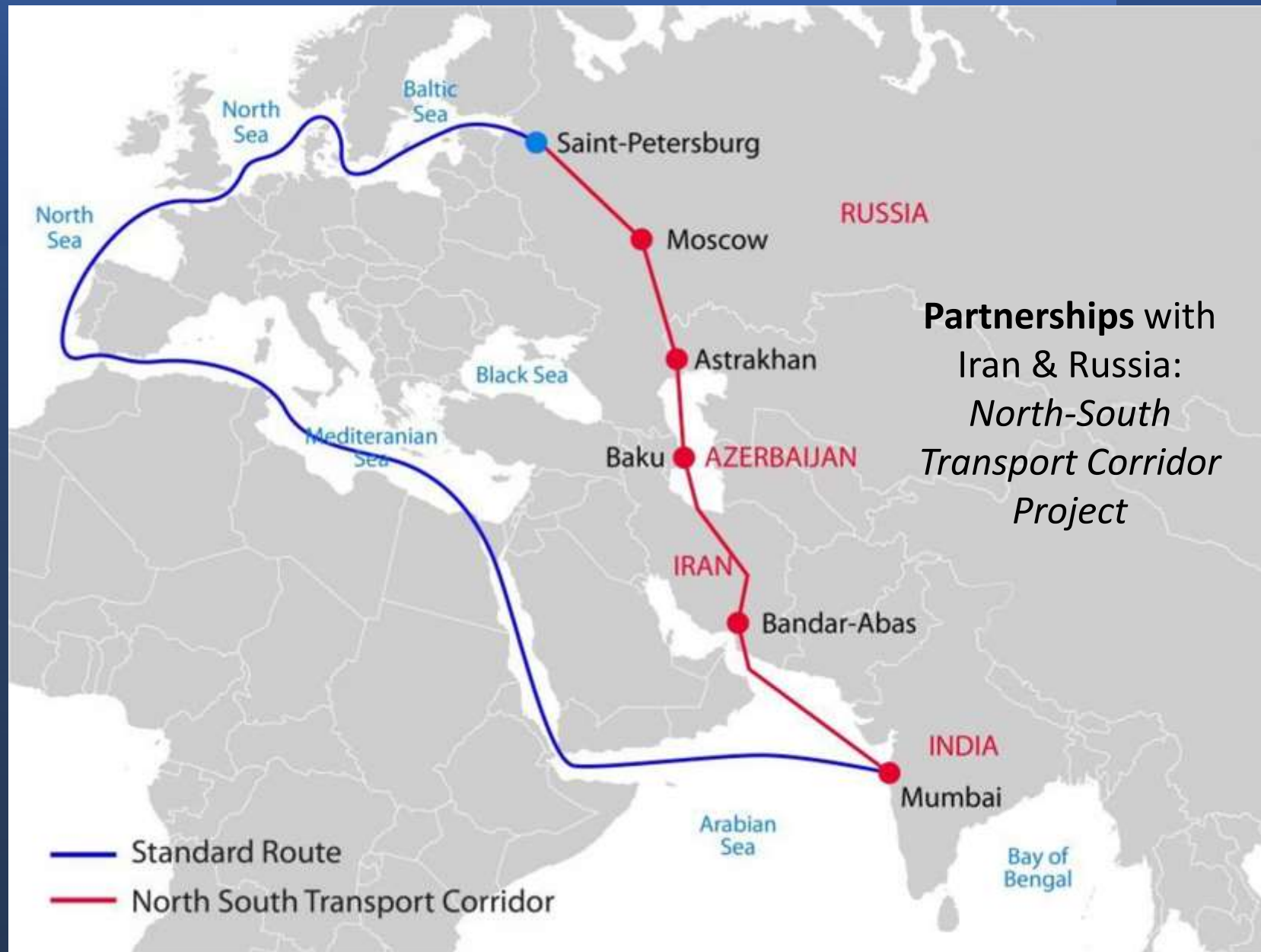
Persian Gulf countries: the importance of the Indo-Pacific for their exports integrated in their **foreign policies**

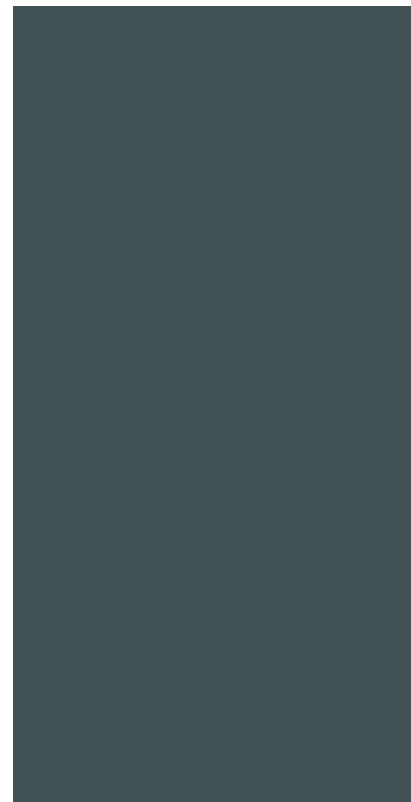
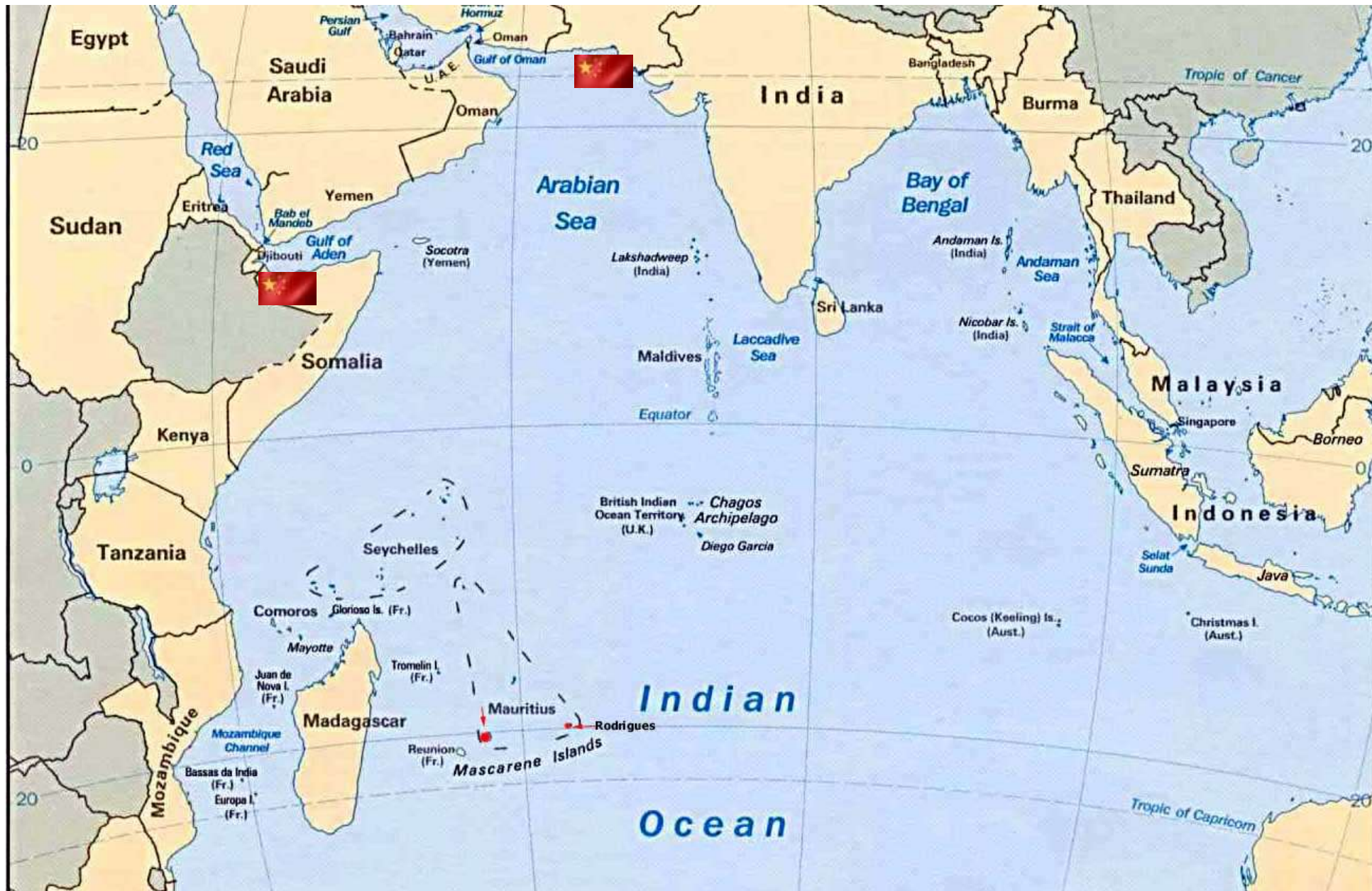




Iran-India: a strong trade relation since the 1990s

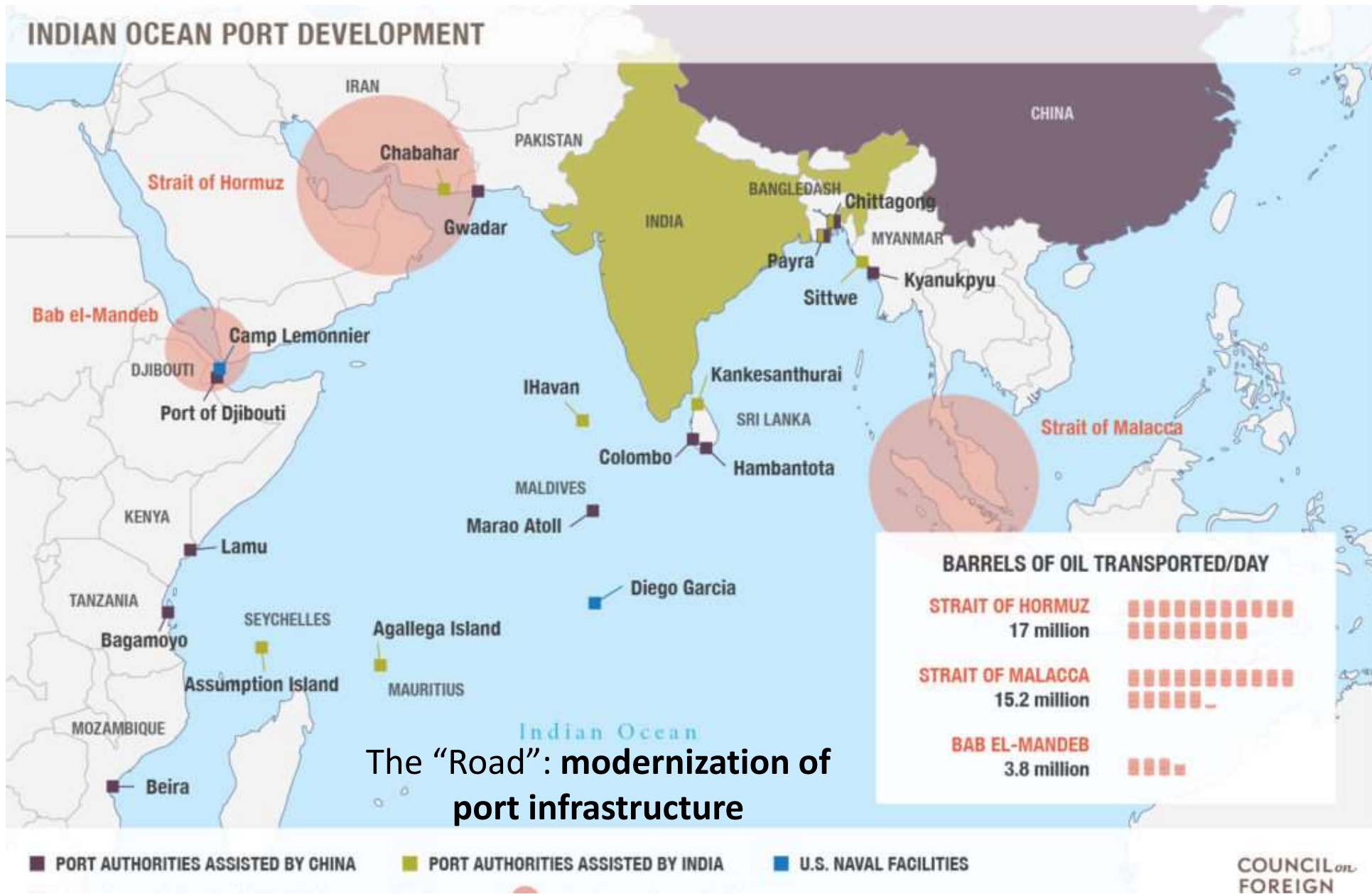
India financed the port of **Chabahar**







Port of **Gwadar** – 43 year lease
A military facility?



China's growing presence in Indian Ocean perceived as a **threat** by the U.S., Japan, India & Australia

The "Road": modernization of port infrastructure



Scott Morrison

Australia

“The Indo-Pacific is where we live”

*“It is the region that will continue
to shape our prosperity, security
and destiny”*

(Australian PM, June 2019)



A small population (25 million) but a huge territorial footprint

Responsibility for some of the world's largest maritime zones

Australia's interests can only be protected and advanced with the help of a more powerful friend

“Fear of abandonment”