



RUSSIA & UKRAINE

The crisis and its far-reaching impacts on the
Indo-Pacific region



January 2022

U.S.-NATO-Russia meetings at
Russia's request

Russia not empty handed:
agreements already prepared

Article 6

All member States of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization commit themselves **to refrain from any further enlargement of NATO, including the accession of Ukraine as well as other States.**

Article 7

The Parties that are member States of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization **shall not conduct any military activity on the territory of Ukraine as well as other States in the Eastern Europe, in the South Caucasus and in Central Asia.**



Vladimir Putin

An immediate answer

Over 100 000 Russian soldiers
positioned initially at the border
with Ukraine



Ukraine

Population: 44 million

A former Soviet Republic
Independent since August 1991

Putin: Ukraine and Russia are the
same



The cradle of **Kievan Rus'**
(9th-13th centuries)

Loose federation of East Slavic,
Baltic and Finnish peoples

Russia and Ukraine's cultural
ancestors

Russia & Ukraine within the **same
political entity** (1796-1991)

July 2021

**“On the Historical Unity of Russians
and Ukrainians”**

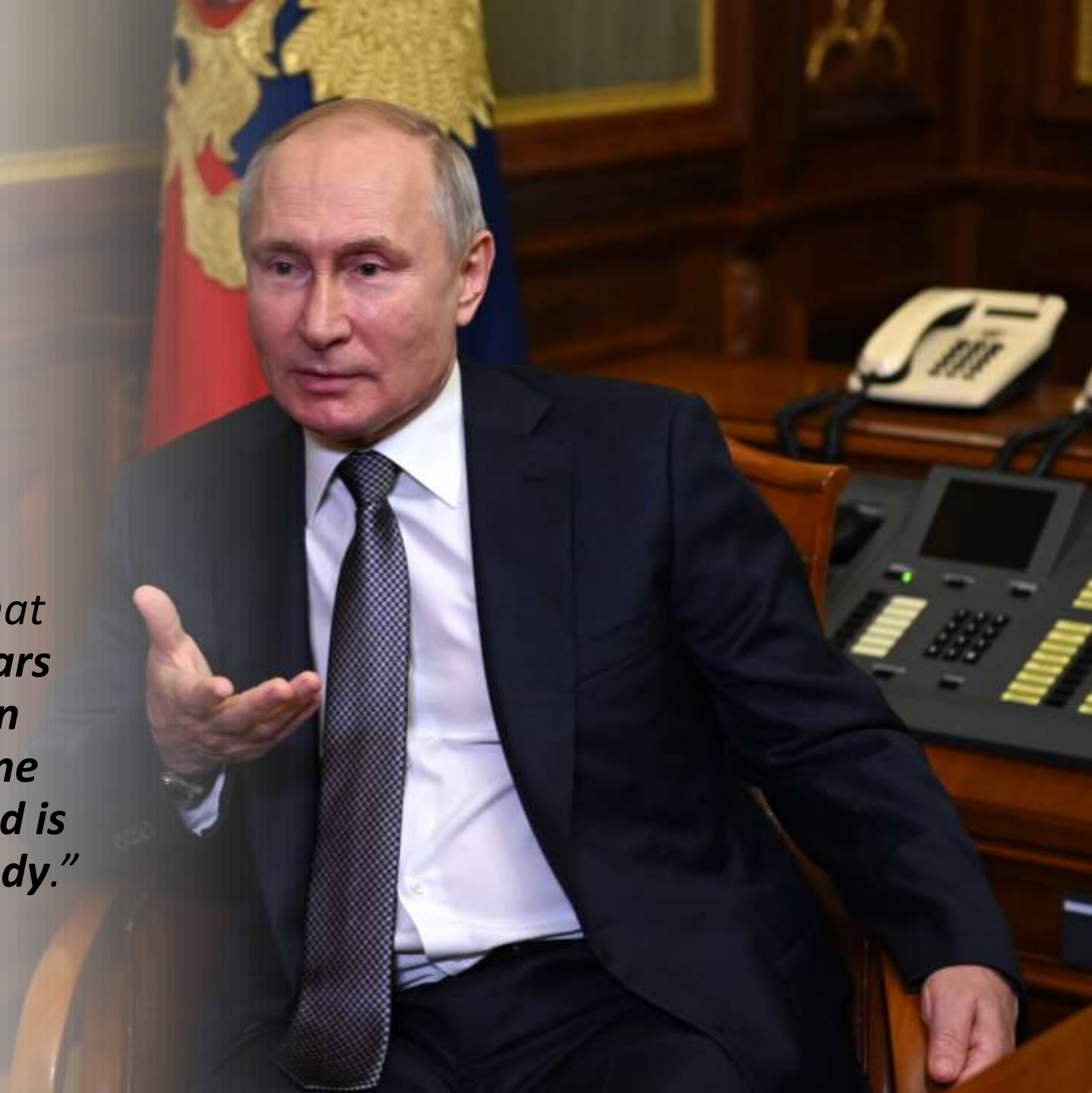
***“During the recent Direct Line, when I was
asked about Russian-Ukrainian relations,
I said that Russians and Ukrainians were
one people – a single whole.”***



July 2021

**“On the Historical Unity of Russians
and Ukrainians”**

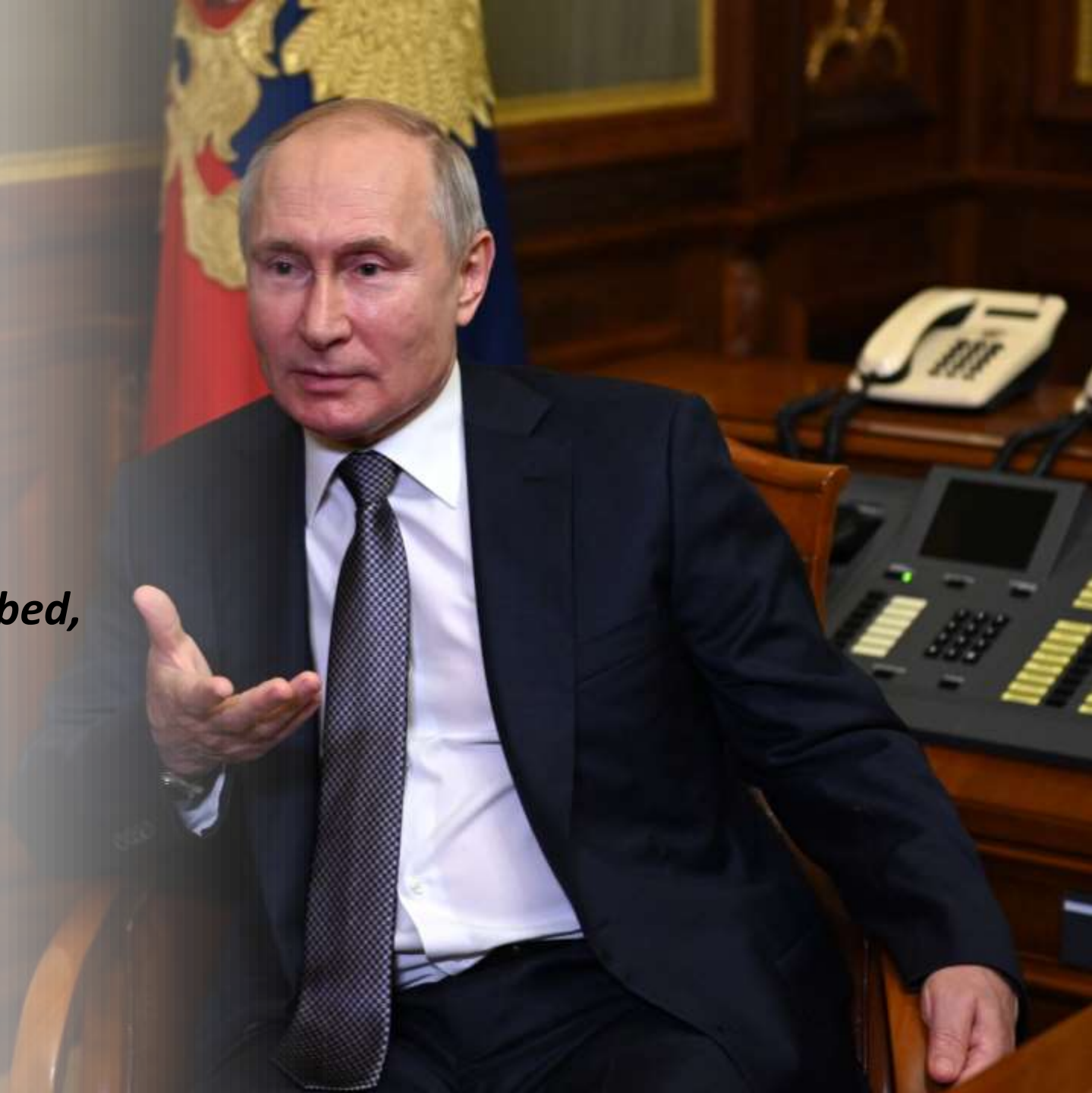
“First of all, I would like to emphasize that the wall that has emerged in recent years between Russia and Ukraine, between the parts of what is essentially the same historical and spiritual space, to my mind is our great common misfortune and tragedy.”



July 2021

**“On the Historical Unity of Russians
and Ukrainians”**

***“One fact is crystal clear: Russia was robbed,
indeed”***



What do the Ukrainians
think?

*“Yes, we have a lot in
common, but we are
certainly not a single nation”*





The Orange Revolution

(November 2004-January 2005)

Anti-corruption non-violent protests

Putin: an attempt by the West to destabilize Russia

Rapprochement Ukraine-European Union initiated



2013: EU-Ukraine Association Agreement

To facilitate economic & political cooperation between the EU & Ukraine

Under **Russian pressure**, Ukrainian president changed his mind days before the signing of the agreement

Ukrainian Revolution of 2014

Pro-Russian president forcefully removed from office

Putin denounces a "*fascist coup*" (March 2014)

"Russia reserves the right to use every available options, including military force"
(Putin)







Pro-Russian Separatists
supported by Russia

The self-declared **Donetsk** and
Luhansk People's Republics

2014 annexation of Crimea





1954: Crimea transferred to Ukraine

1996: Ukrainian constitution recognizes the **autonomous republic of Crimea**

Agreement with Moscow (Black Sea fleet and military bases)



The “*restoration of Russian unity*”
(March 2014)

“*We have not annexed Crimea, we
have offered its population the
possibility of expressing itself*”

Minsk Protocol (September 2014)

Agreement to end the fighting in the
Donbass region

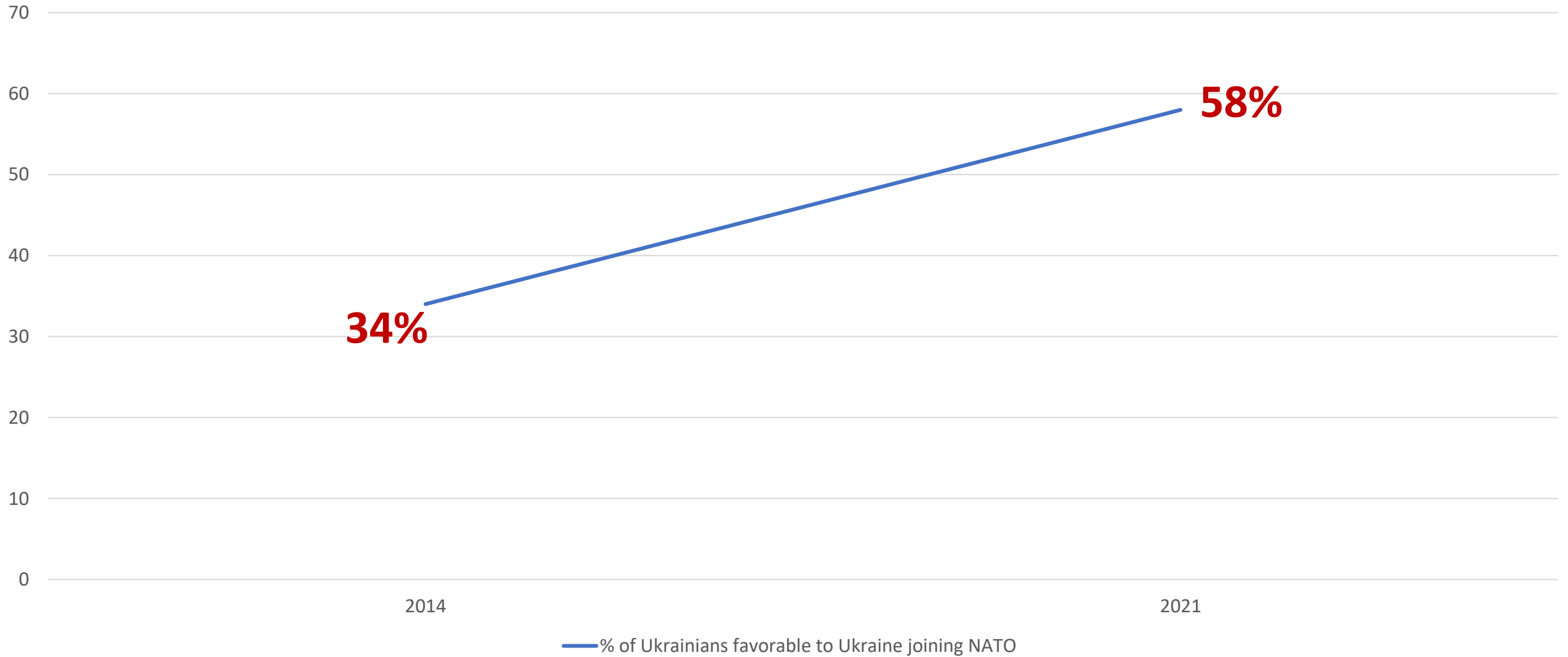


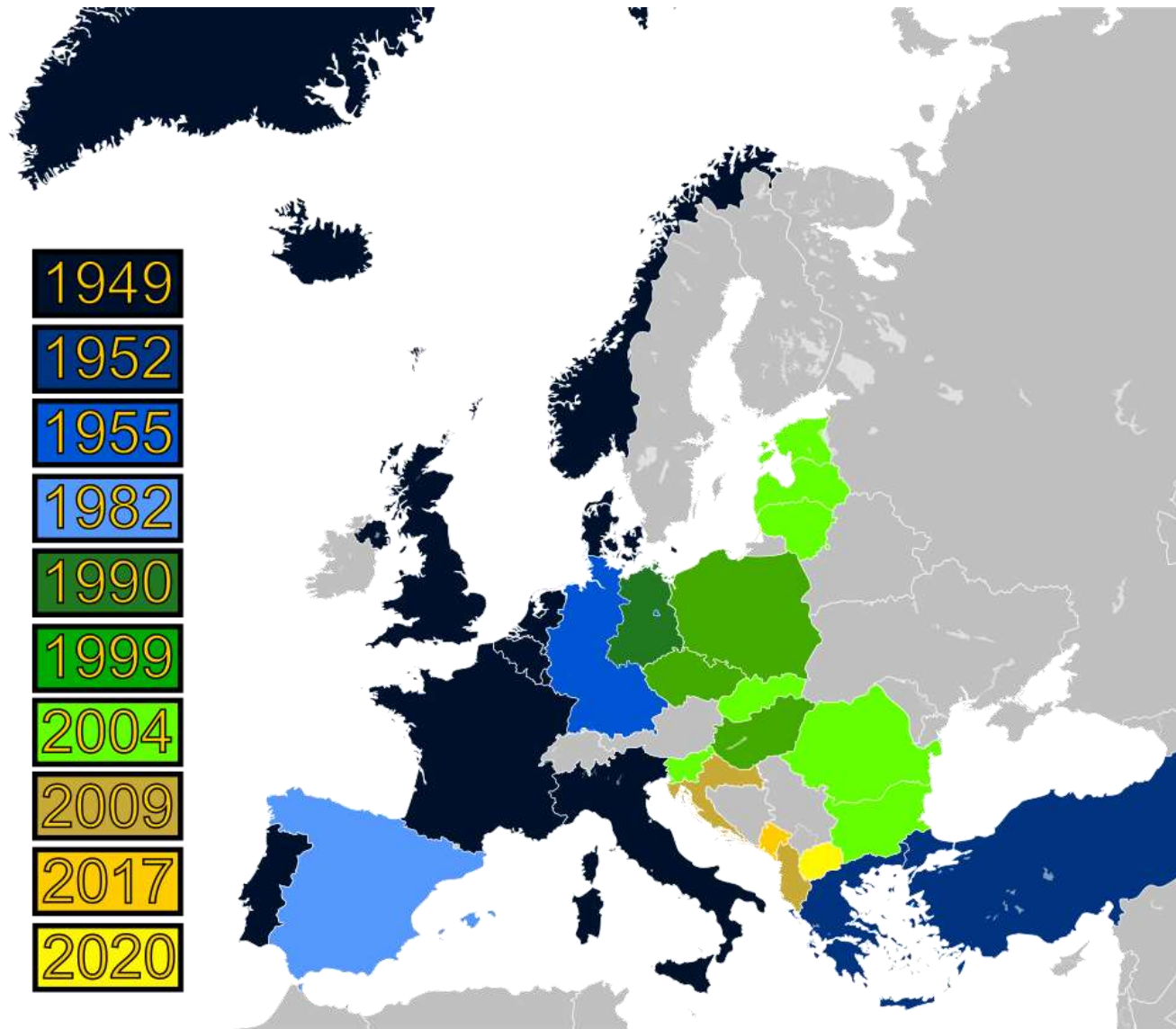


The emergence of a true
Ukrainian national sentiment

The opposite of what Putin initially
wanted

% of Ukrainians favorable to Ukraine joining NATO

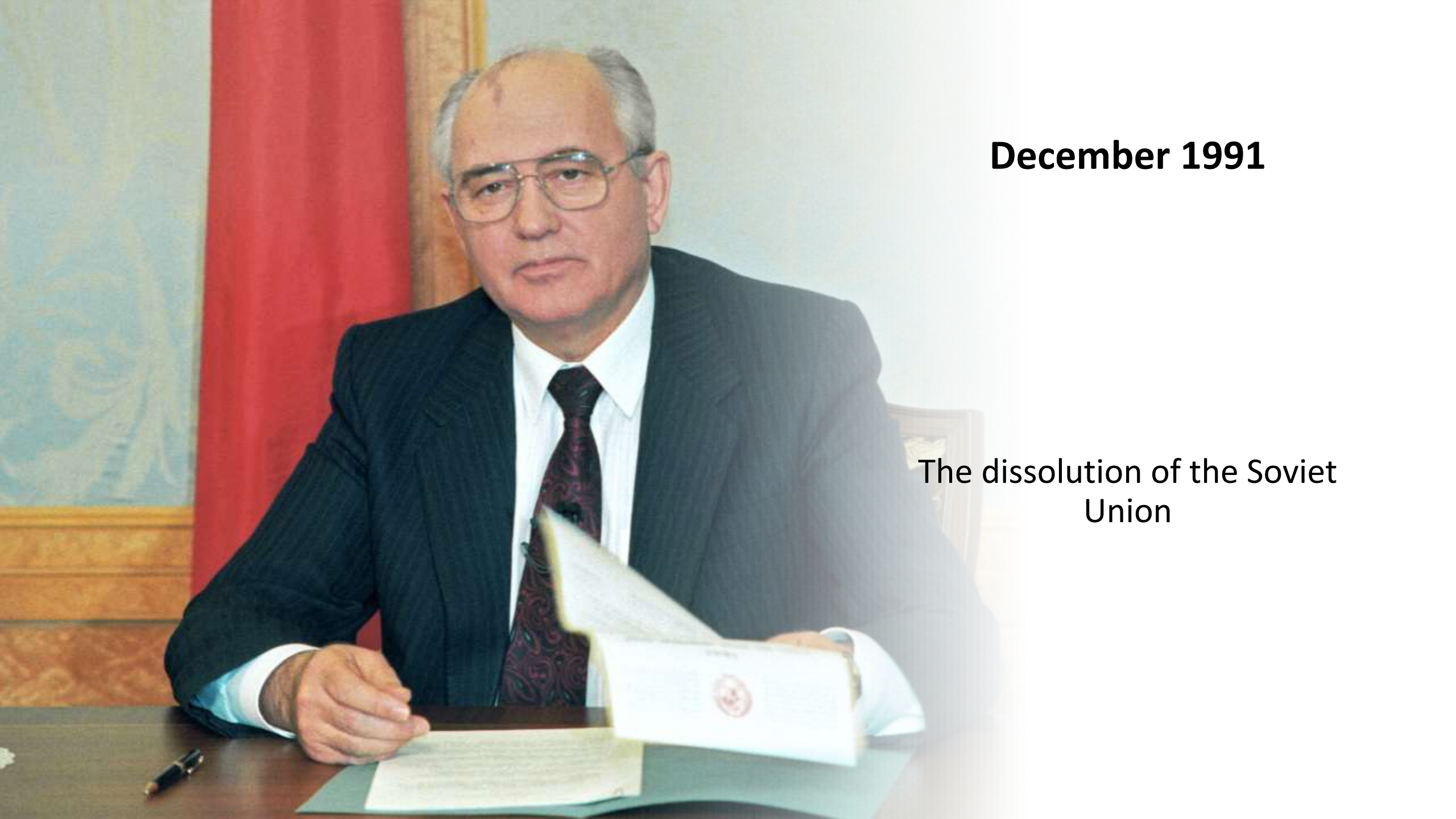




NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization)

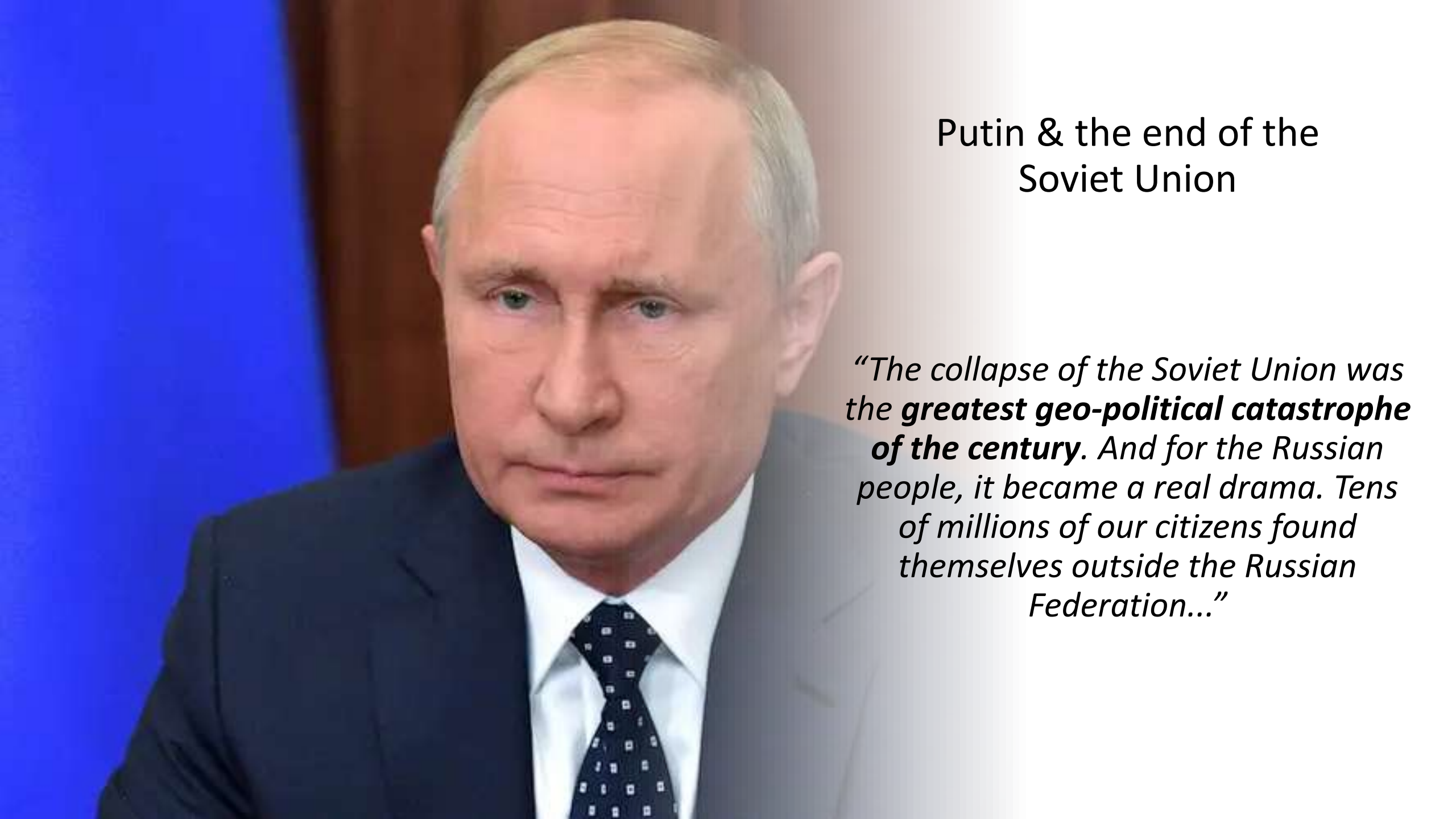
Military alliance created in 1949
by the U.S., Canada & Western
European countries to face the
Soviet Union

Progressive enlargement



December 1991

The dissolution of the Soviet
Union

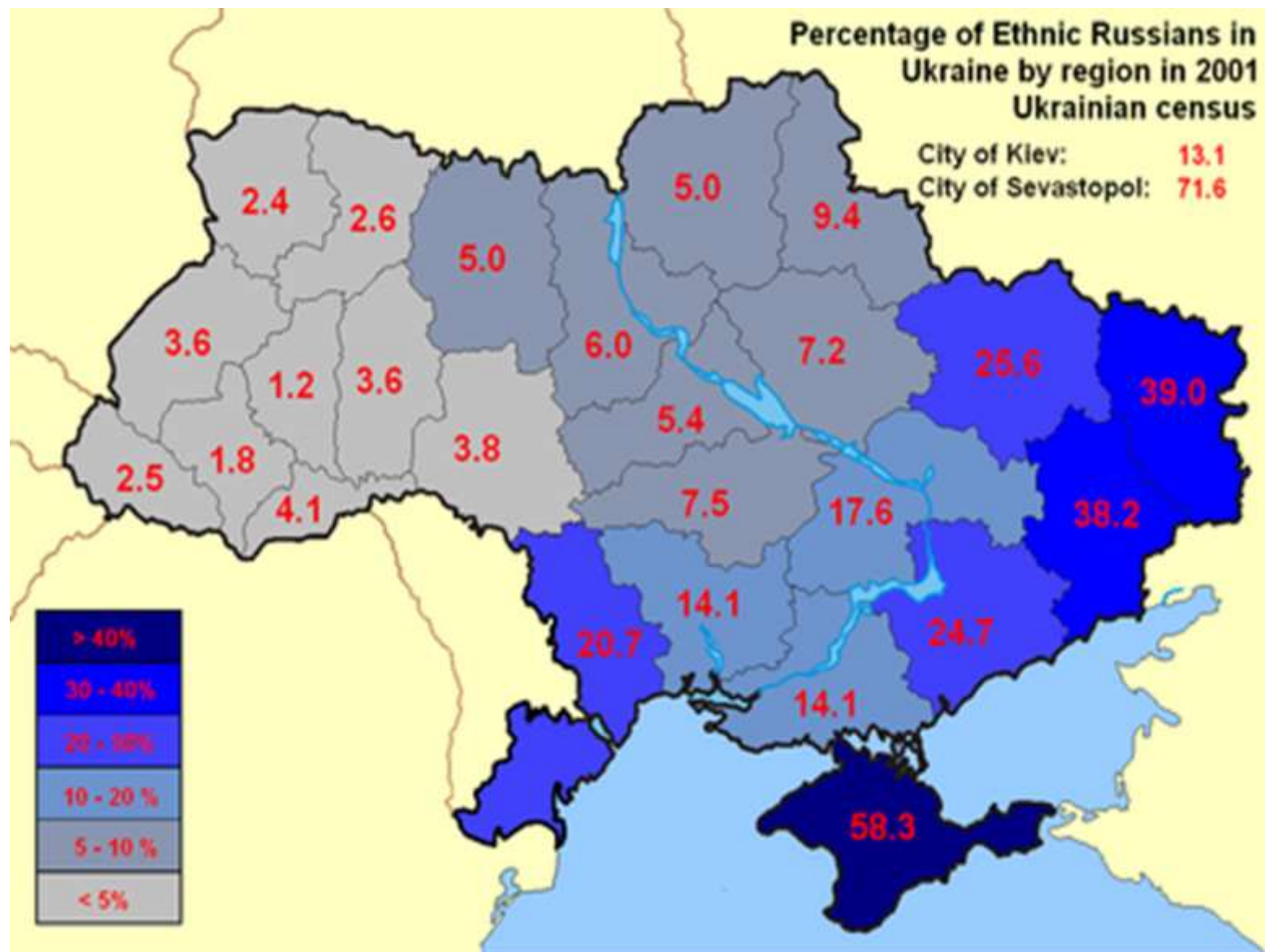
A portrait of Vladimir Putin, the President of Russia, looking slightly to the left. He is wearing a dark blue suit, a white shirt, and a dark tie with a small white pattern. The background is a blurred mix of blue and brown.

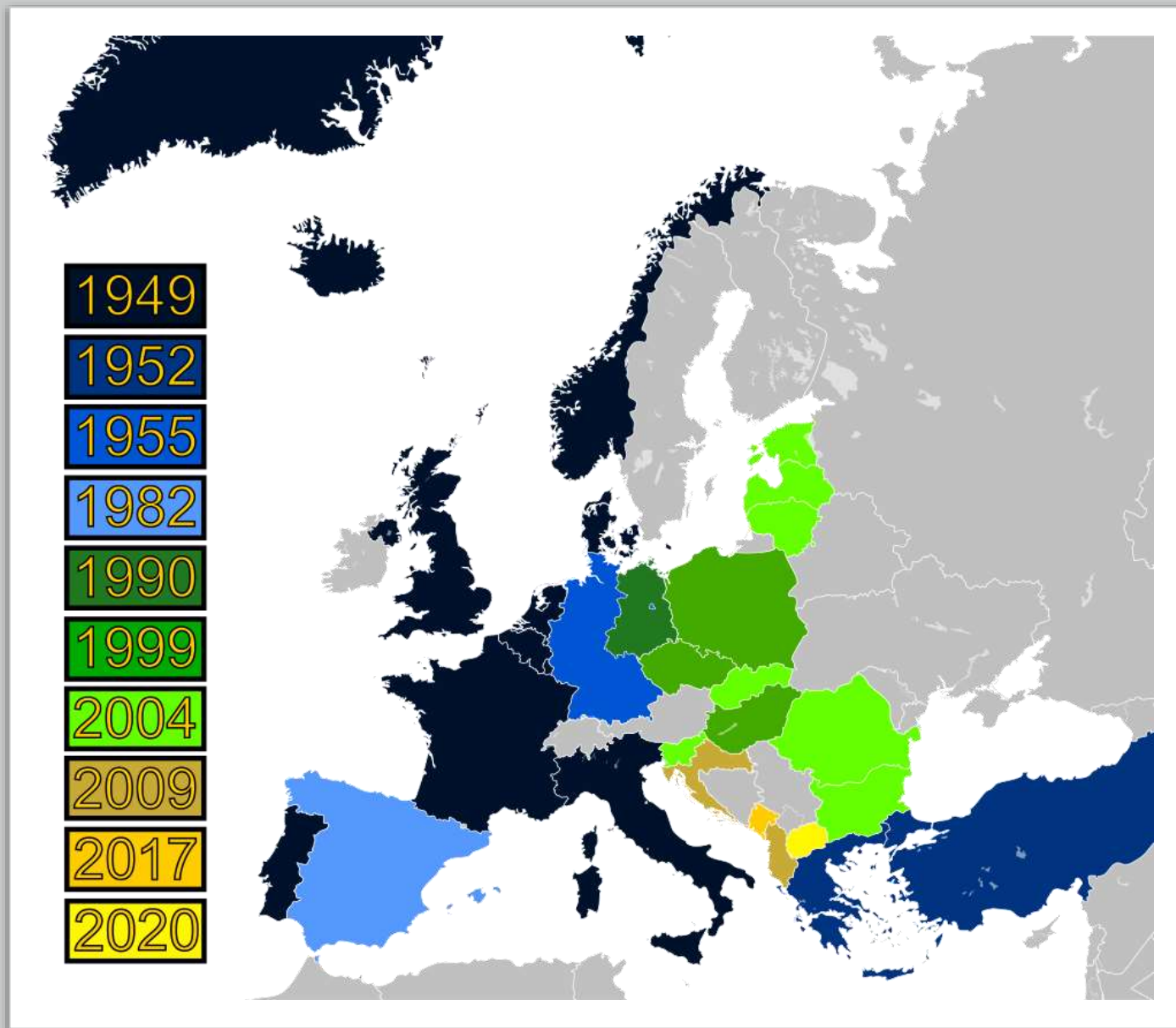
Putin & the end of the Soviet Union

*“The collapse of the Soviet Union was the **greatest geo-political catastrophe of the century**. And for the Russian people, it became a real drama. Tens of millions of our citizens found themselves outside the Russian Federation...”*

Ethnic Russian populations







NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization)

Enlargement to the east (former Soviet satellites – Baltic republics)



A NATO-Russia partnership for peace: creating trust between NATO and Russia

NATO's expansion to the east: a **source of early tensions**



Russia and its “*near abroad*”

RUSSIA

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

Problem: Baltic states,
Ukraine and Georgia wanted
closer relations with the
West

Foreign policy: Russia as
a “*besieged fortress*”

Russia as the equal of the
U.S.

No foreign meddling
(internal affairs and Russia’s
near abroad)





Ukraine to join NATO?

A “red line” for Putin

“Any NATO movement to the east is unacceptable”

Putin’s ambition: Russia’s grip over its sphere of influence must be acknowledged

A photograph of the NATO Headquarters in Brussels, a large modern glass building. In the foreground, numerous flagpoles are arranged in rows, flying the national flags of NATO member states. The flags are set against a cloudy sky. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Statement by the North Atlantic Council on the situation in and around Ukraine

*“We support the right of all countries to decide their own future and foreign policy free from outside interference. **NATO’s relationship with Ukraine is a matter only for Ukraine and the 30 NATO Allies**”*

The **sovereign right** of a nation to join alliances of its choosing



SPERRT
DEN MÖRDERN
DIE KONTEN





A possible membership
to the EU?

Putin's authoritarian regime
threatened



24 February 2022

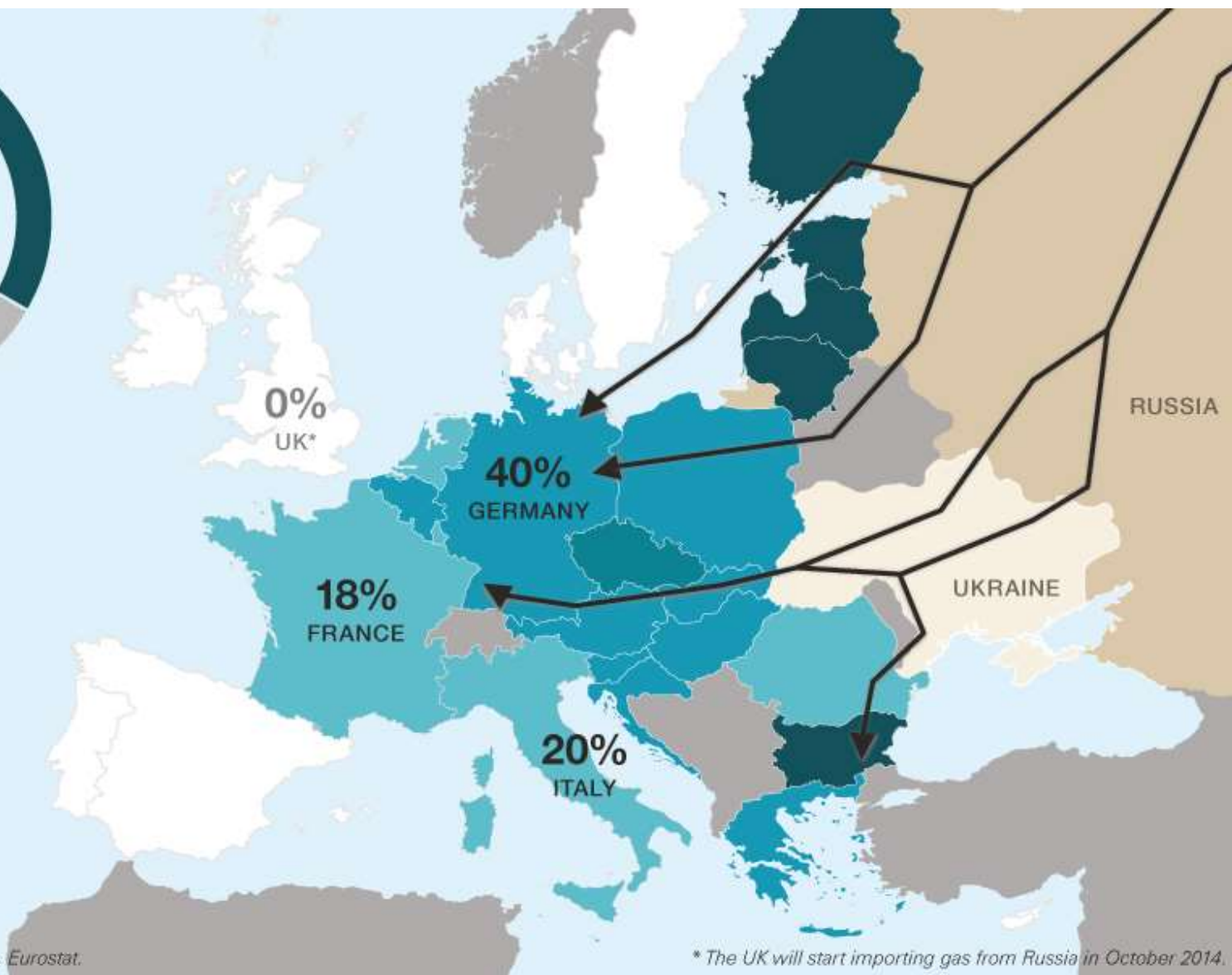
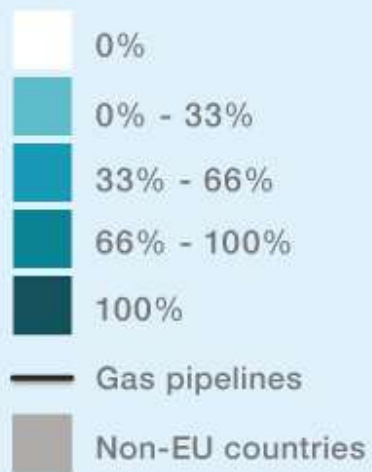
Why an all-out war against
Ukraine now?

No ongoing negotiations for Ukraine to join NATO
France & Germany lukewarm at the prospect (to avoid tensions with Russia)





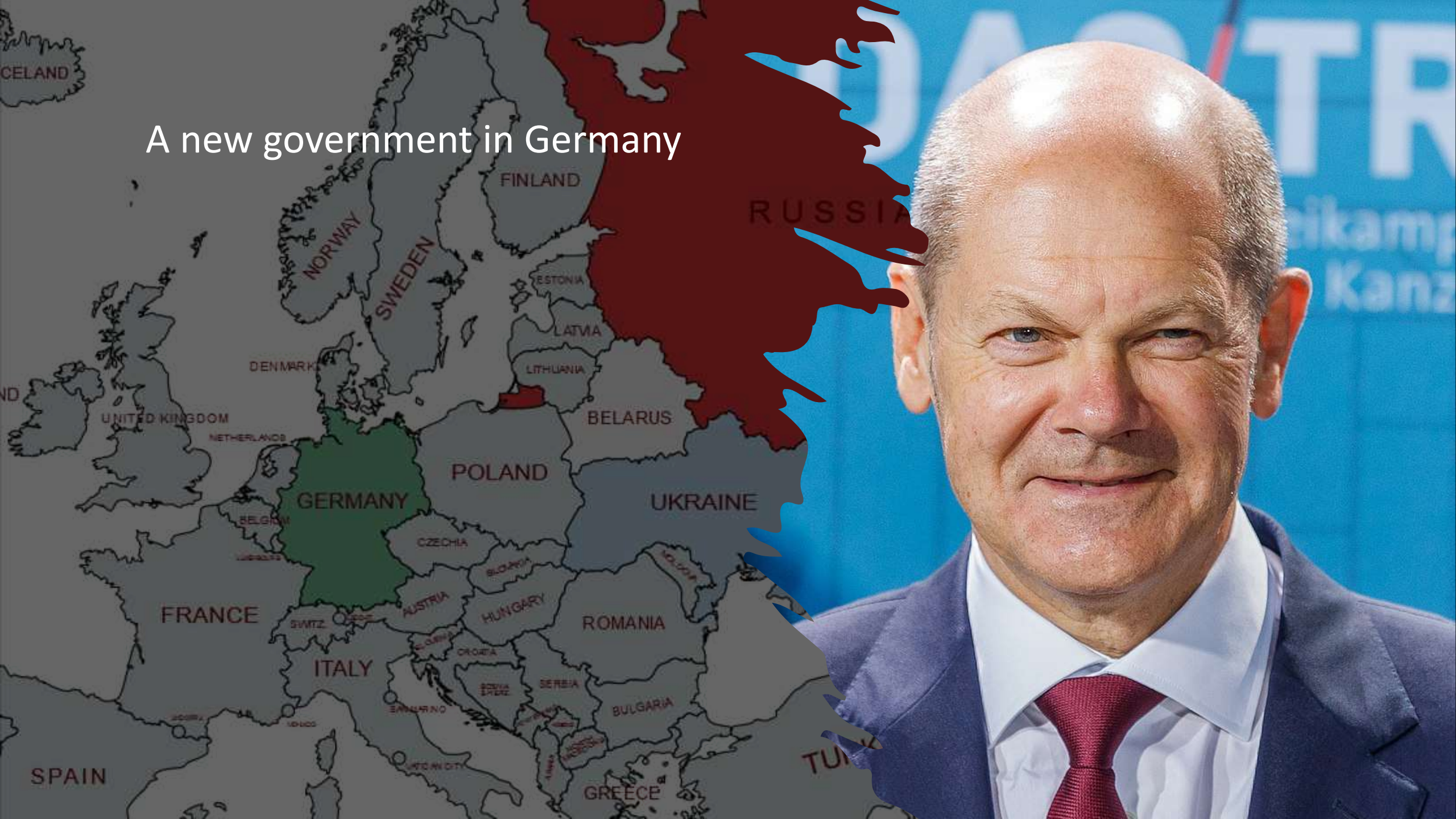
% OF GAS WHICH IS
SUPPLIED BY RUSSIA



SOURCES: WTO, U.S. Census Bureau, Eurostat.

* The UK will start importing gas from Russia in October 2014.

A new government in Germany



Presidential election in France







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

U.S. perceived as weak by
Putin

U.S. more preoccupied by its
growing rivalry with China

Russia less a priority




RUSSIA & UKRAINE

The crisis and its far-reaching impacts on the
Indo-Pacific region



A major test to an emerging **Moscow-Beijing** axis



Commemoration of
Nixon's visit to China
(1972)

Putin's recognition of the self-
proclaimed republics of Luhansk &
Donetsk

The entry of Russian troops in the
Donbass

Beijing embarrassed





China's reactions

Surprise

Treading a **cautious line** to a conflict
Chinese foreign affairs experts did not
believe would happen

The sacrosanct principles of
“sovereignty” & “territorial integrity”

Chinese Foreign Affairs
Minister **Wang Li**

Tensions in Xinjiang province

China's repression of Uighurs

The threat: **separatism**



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

2014 annexation of Crimea




A close-up portrait of Chinese Foreign Affairs Minister Wang Li. He is an older man with grey hair, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and a blue patterned tie. He has a serious expression and is looking slightly to the right of the camera. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

China's reactions

*“China once again calls on all parties to **exercise restraint**, recognize the importance of implementing the indivisible security principle, ease the situation and resolve differences through **dialogue and negotiation**”*

Chinese Foreign Affairs
Minister **Wang Li**



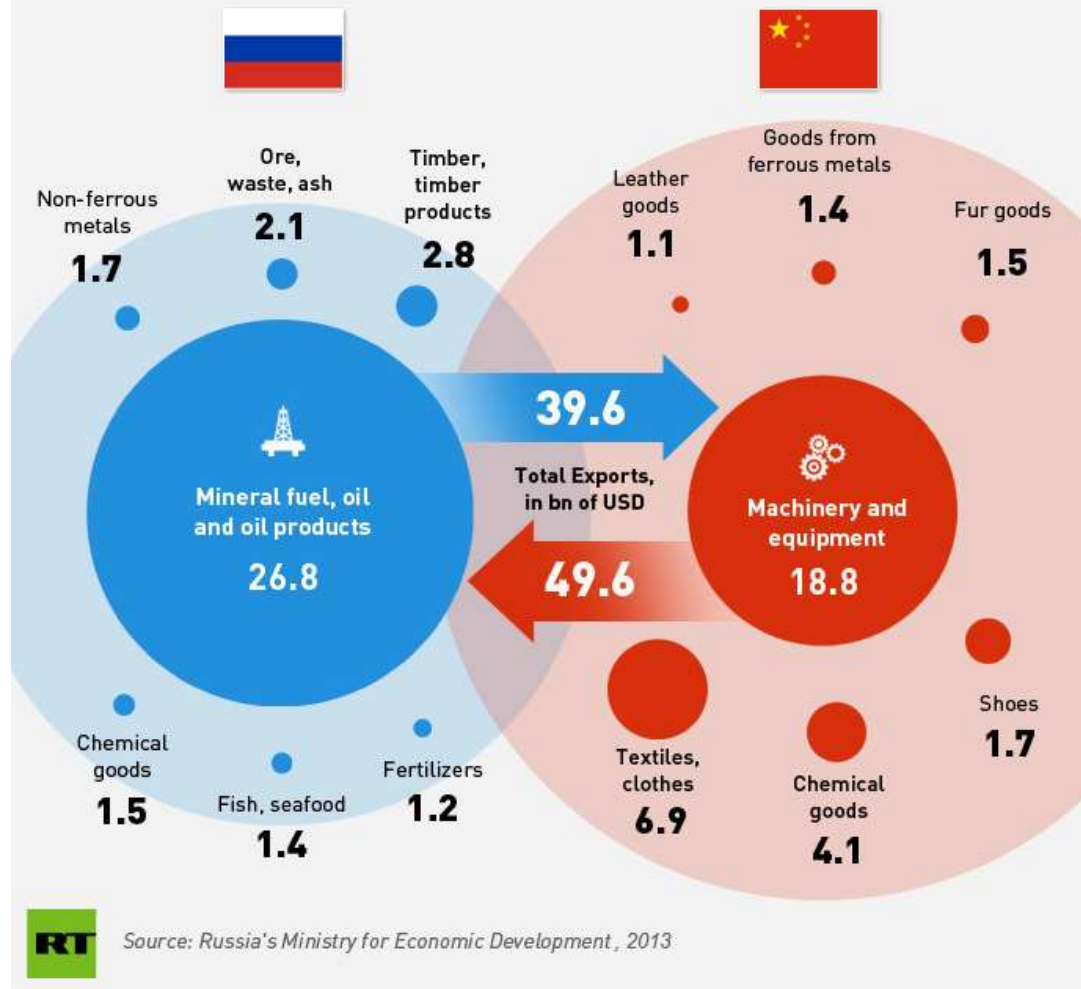
“At the same time, we also see the Ukraine problem has a complex and particular historical state of affairs and we understand Russia's reasonable concern on security issues”

No “invasion”, but an “special military operation”

China ready to support Russia against Western sanctions
BUT
Russia is seen as a partner, not an ally



Russia-China trade



Economic balance of power favors China

2018: 76.19% of Russian exports to China = oil & natural gas

Manufactured good: 5%

China's exports to Russia: machinery & equipment

Conflict in Ukraine + Western sanctions:
enhanced economic ties between Russia & China



Russia: a junior partner

The image shows the Russian and Chinese national flags flying side-by-side on tall poles against a blue sky with scattered white clouds. The Russian flag, with its white, blue, and red horizontal stripes, is on the left. The Chinese flag, with its red field and five yellow stars, is on the right. A thin white vertical line separates the two flags.

Russia and China

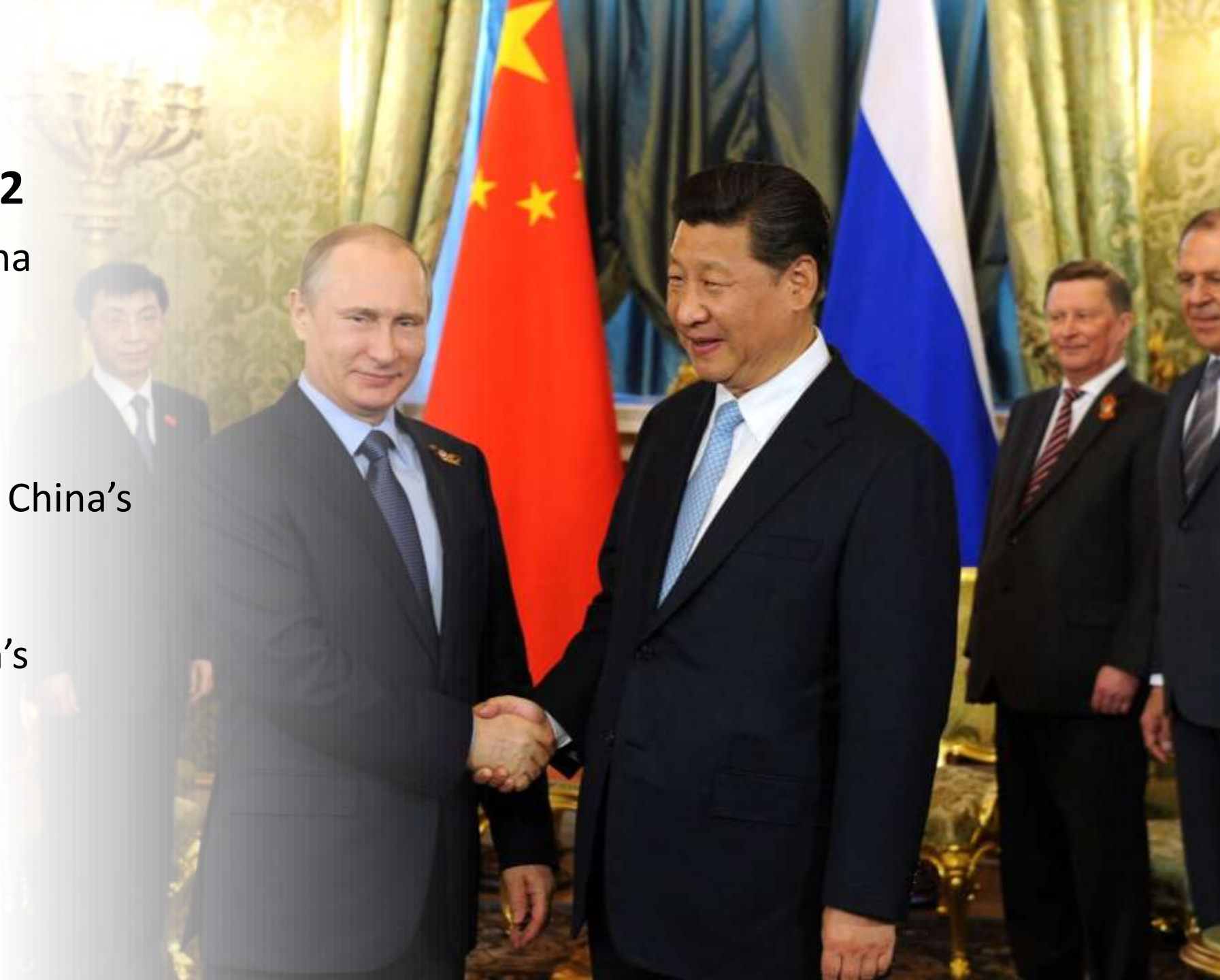
An **unbalanced** marriage of convenience
Win-win situation for China and its quest for
global power

4 February 2022

Putin's visit to China

Moscow's full support to China's
stance on Taiwan

Opposed to Taiwan's
independence





The Ukrainian crisis:
geopolitical benefits for China

The U.S. forced to focus on the
Ukrainian crisis

China: greater margin of action
(South China Sea: **Taiwan**)

Taiwan

The People's Republic of
China's main **territorial**
claim

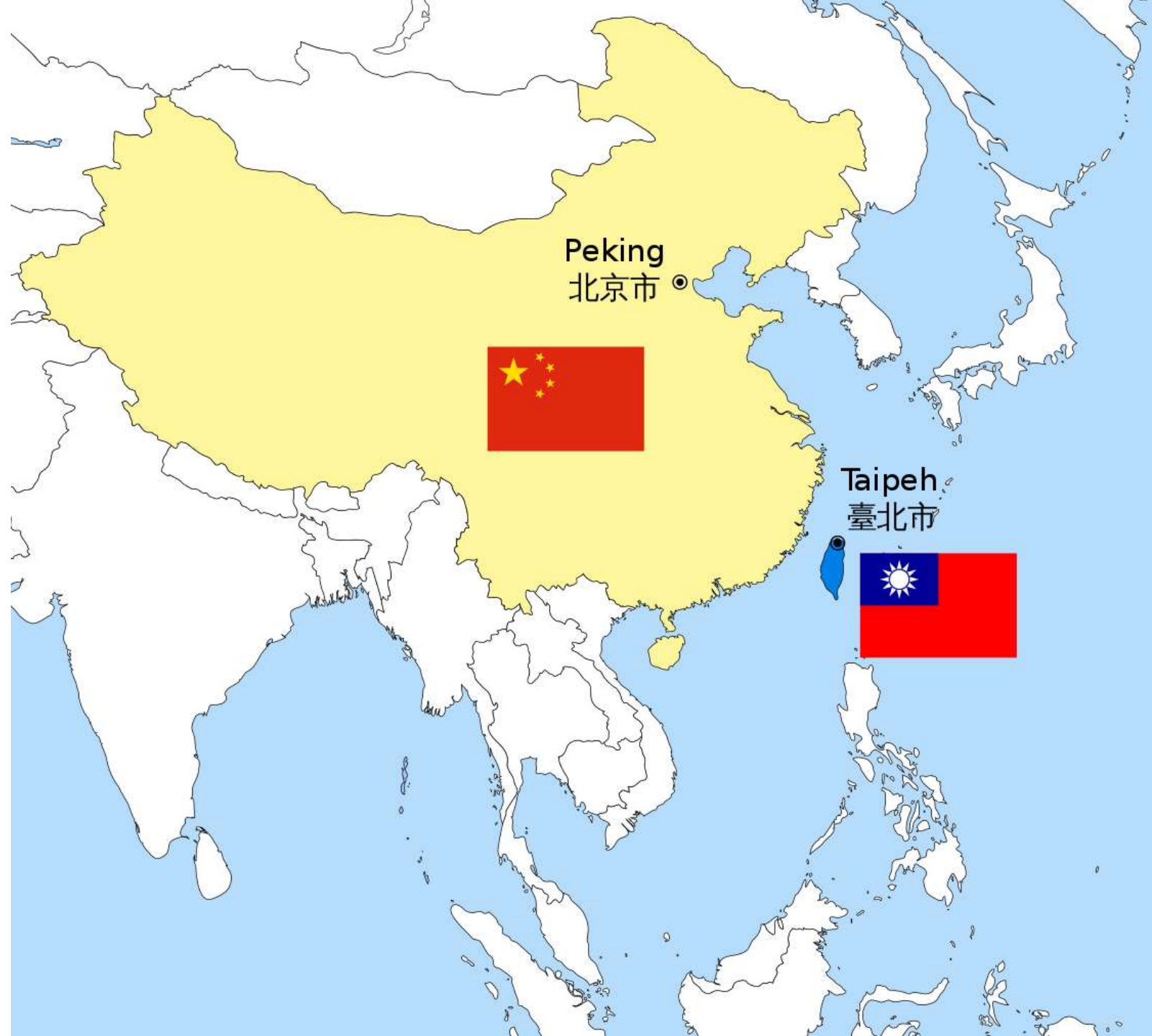
A major **point of tensions** in
the Indo-Pacific region

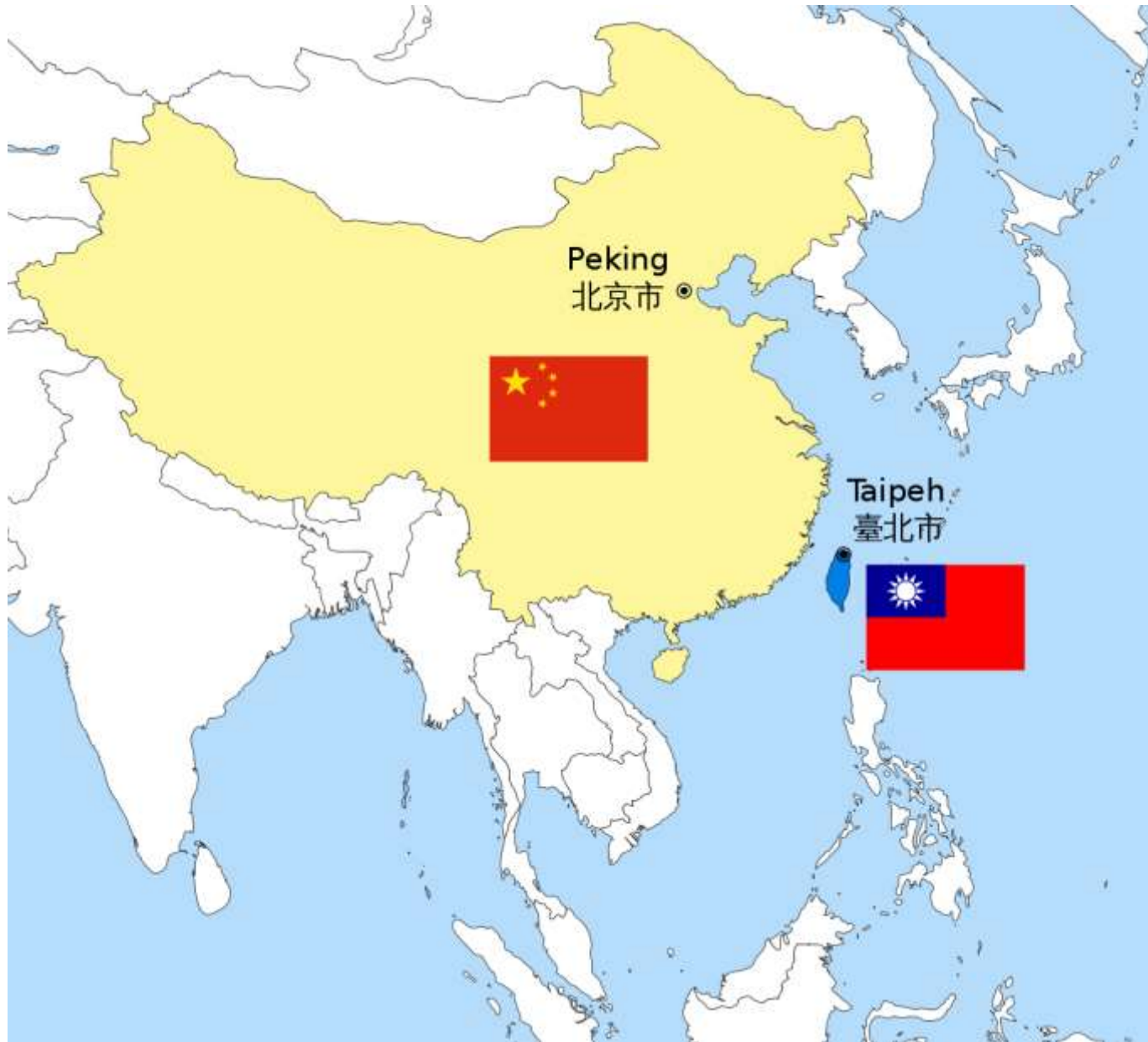


What Taiwan means for China

a high **geo-strategic** value

A “door” to the Pacific
Ocean

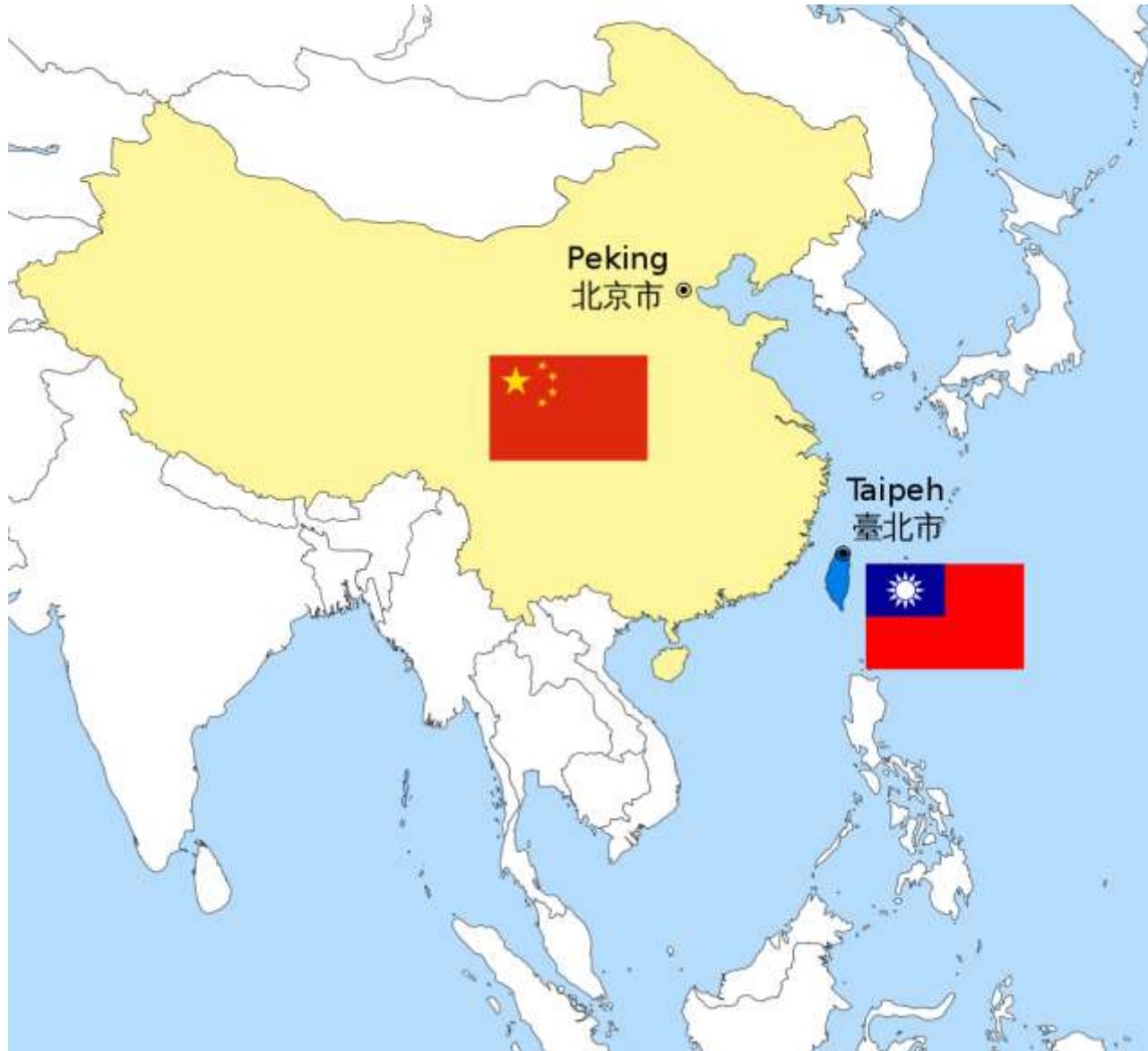




Vulnerability & Opportunity

Taiwan: both an **obstacle** to China's ambitions & a **peril** to its security
Perceived maritime **encirclement**
(*vulnerability*)

Taiwan would grant
tremendous **leverage** to China
against the U.S. and Japan
Enhance its **maritime
influence**
(*opportunity*)



Vulnerability
Taiwan: strategic
vulnerability for China

1. & Chinets Quartier.
2. & Gerecht.
3. De Dyker ofte markt.
4. & Equipage ende Smits Huys.
5. & Fort Zeelandia.
6. & Gouverneurs Huys.

TAIOAN.

7. & Heerenwink.
8. Redige werck.
9. De Rader Stal.

10. & Hooge Landt Altes Fort.
11. De Sandt Altes Fort.
12. De Chingfah Altes Fort.



The island baptized *Ilha Formosa* ("the beautiful island") by the Portuguese



1604: the Dutch seized the
Pescadores islands

Dutch raids along the Chinese coast

The Ming dynasty demanded the
Dutch withdraw to Taiwan



FORMOSA ISLAND
AND THE PESCADORES
CHINA

Compiled by Gen. G. M. W. Le Gendre, U.S. Consul, Amoy & Formosa

1876

According to the above description, given to the authorities, that
the Dutch had been expelled from the Pescadores, the Dutch had been
expelled from the Pescadores, the Dutch had been expelled from the
Pescadores, the Dutch had been expelled from the Pescadores.

FORMOSA ISLAND

The Ming dynasty replaced by the **Qing dynasty** (1644)

Resistance to the change of
dynasty



Zheng Chenggong

Powerful warlord and his clan settled in
Formosa

Formosa transformed into a base
against the new Qing dynasty

Historical parallel with post **1949**
situation: Taiwan occupied by a regime
claiming to represent the legitimate
power in China



The Qing's reaction

Admiral **Shi Lang**'s fleet destroyed the power of Zheng Chenggong





What to do with Taiwan?

"Taiwan is located beyond the ocean. It has nothing to do with us. We only invaded it because of uncivilized peoples who kept harassing the Chinese coast"

Kangxi Emperor





Shi Lang's arguments

Occupation of Taiwan to prevent attacks against Chinese coast and defend China's maritime interests

Taiwan to remain under Chinese rule

Kangxi Emperor

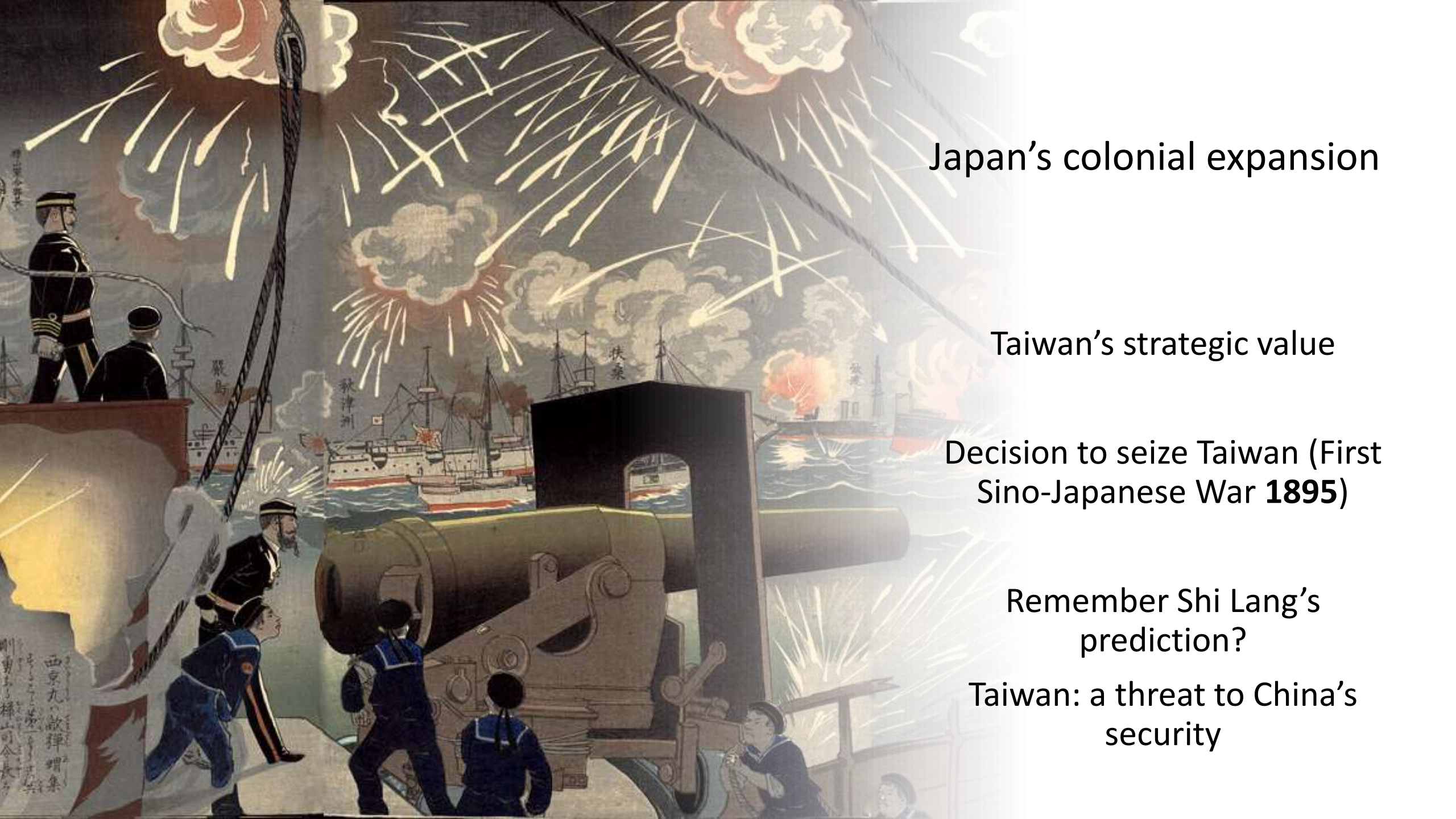




By PHGCOM - self-made. Map background: Topographic90deg N0E90.png, CC BY-SA 4.0

Sino-French War

Taiwan: leverage against China (cutting off rice supplies)



Japan's colonial expansion

Taiwan's strategic value

Decision to seize Taiwan (First Sino-Japanese War **1895**)

Remember Shi Lang's prediction?

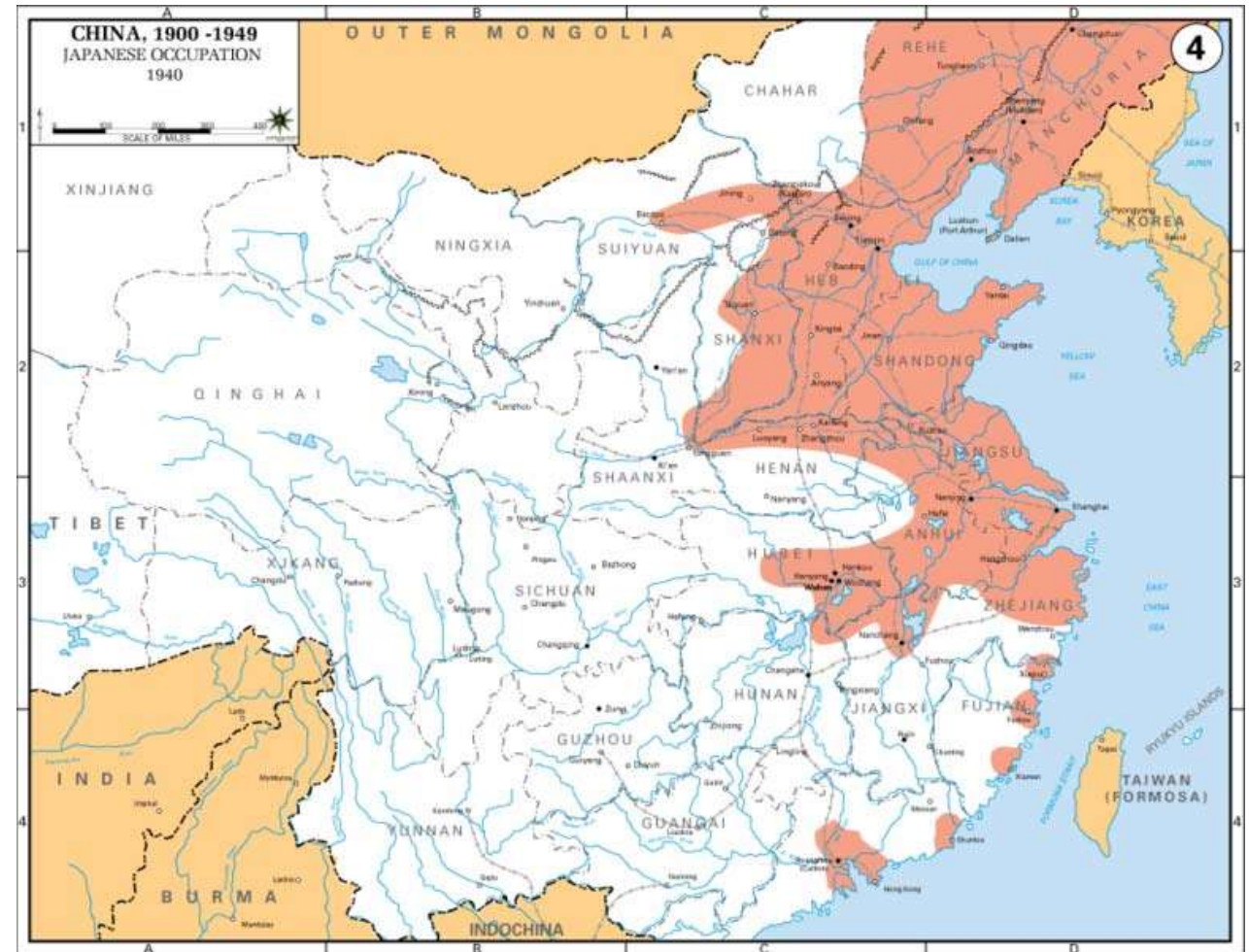
Taiwan: a threat to China's security

Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945)

Taiwan: a **strategic advantage** for
the Japanese

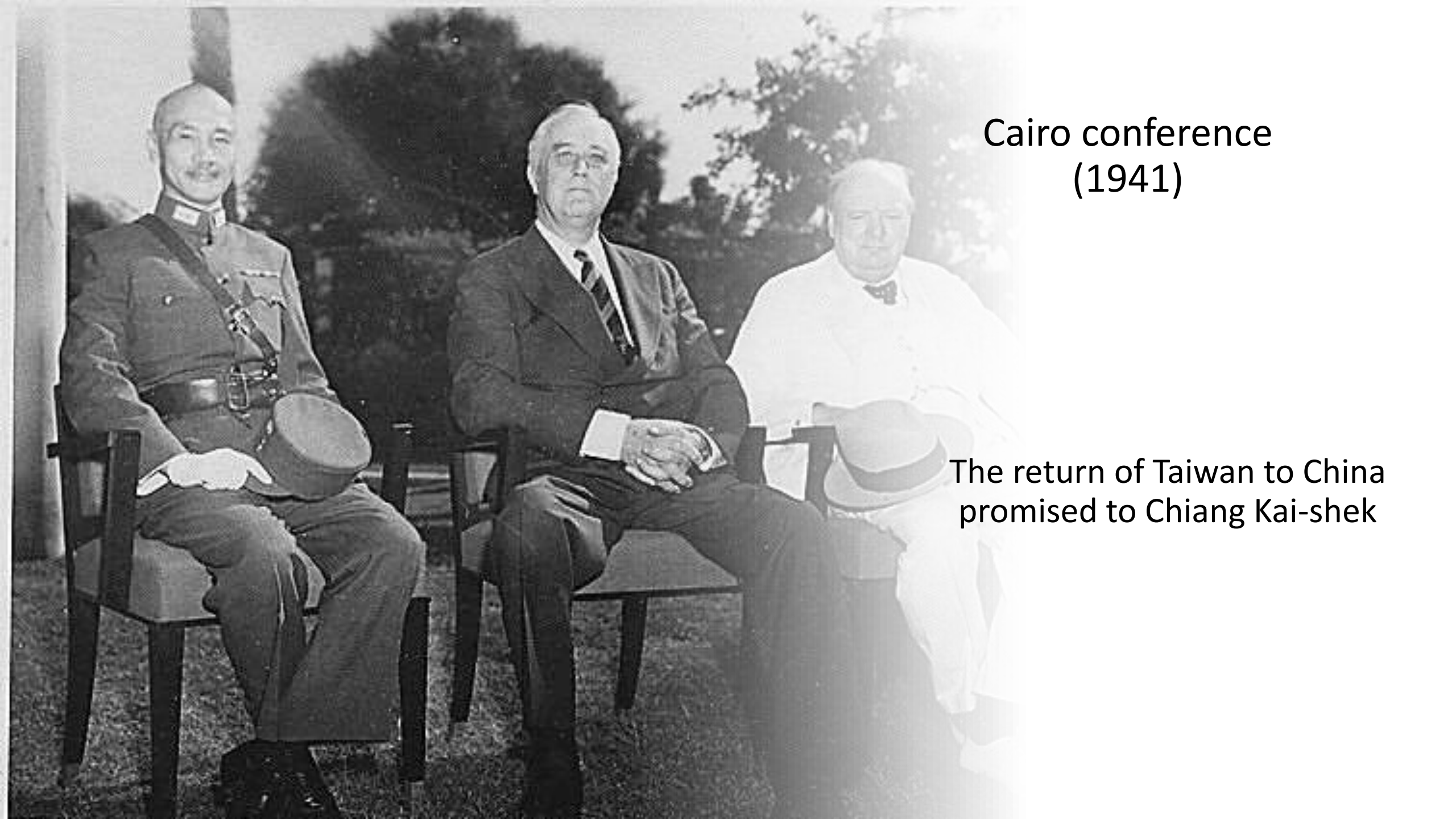
Maritime blockade

The invasion of Southeast China &
Southeast Asia facilitated



Japanese Empire 1942



A black and white photograph of three men seated outdoors. On the left is Chiang Kai-shek in a military uniform with a peaked cap. In the center is Franklin D. Roosevelt in a dark suit and tie. On the right is Winston Churchill in a light-colored suit and bow tie, holding a hat. They are seated in wooden chairs on a lawn with trees in the background.

Cairo conference (1941)

The return of Taiwan to China
promised to Chiang Kai-shek



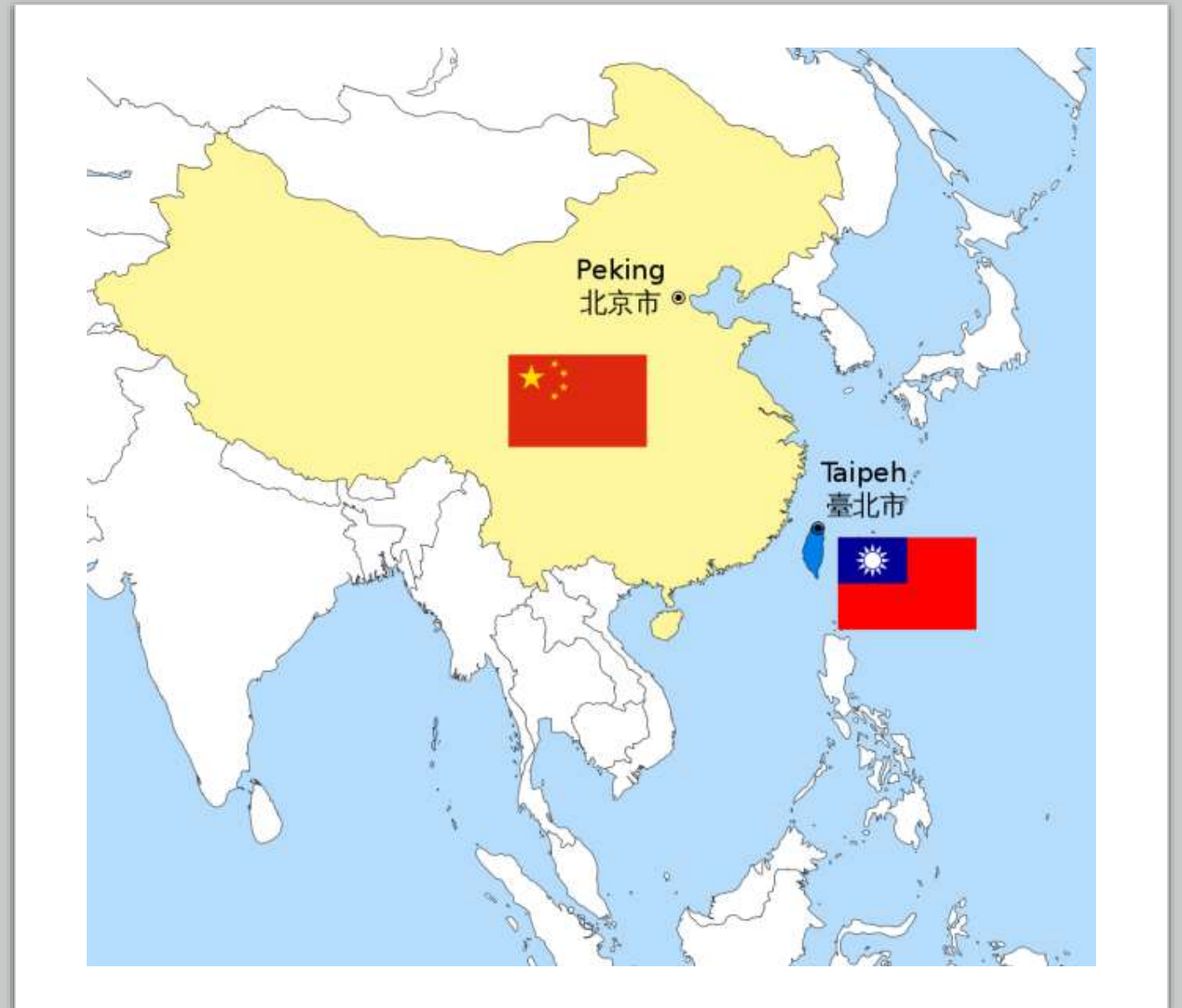
1 October 1949: the triumph of the Communists

Chiang Kai-shek and over 1.5 million of continental Chinese sought refuge on the island of Taiwan

*“If Taiwan is not liberated
and the Kuomintang’s naval
& air bases are not
destroyed, Shanghai and the
costal areas will remain
under threat”*

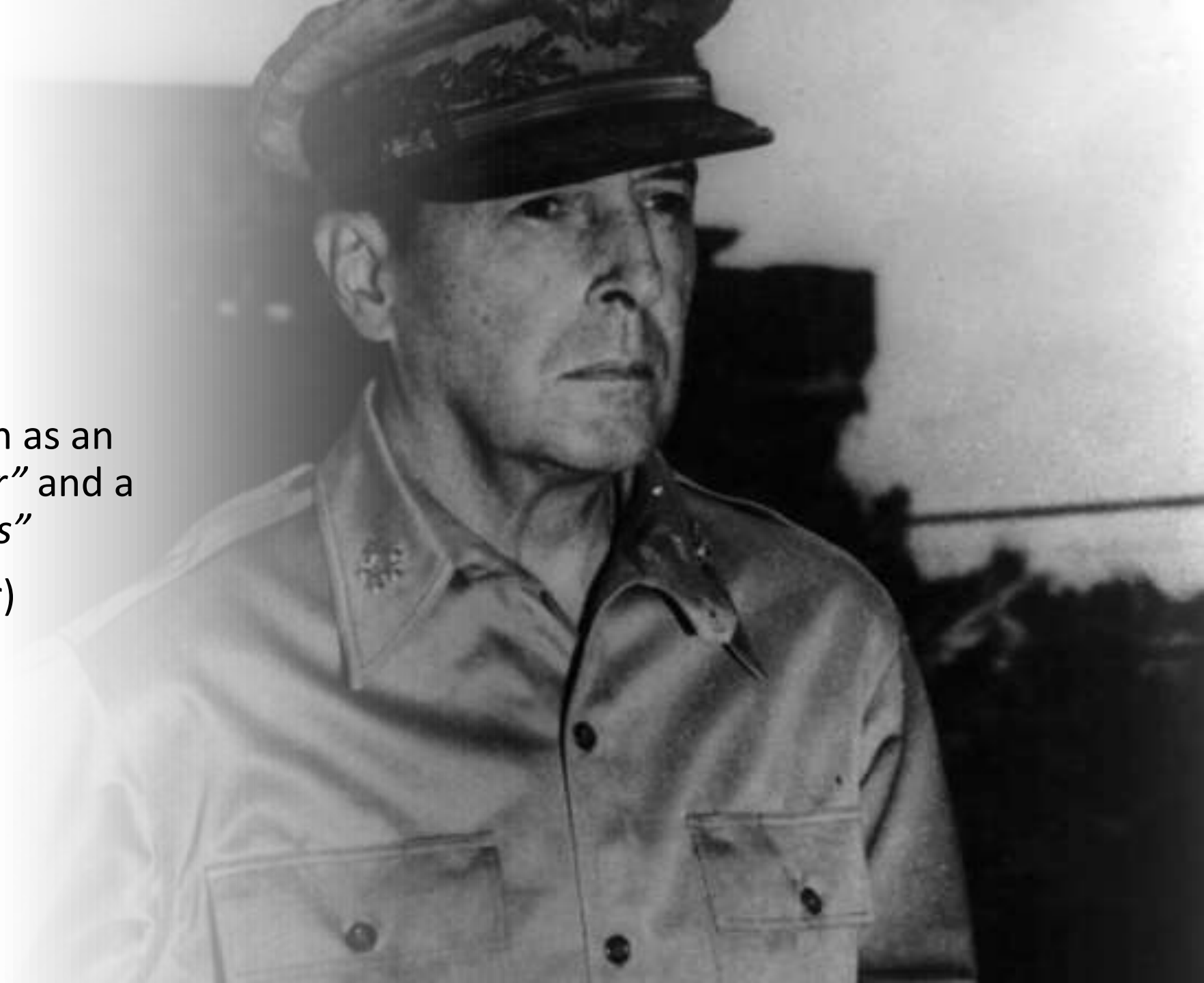


The strait of Taiwan would not have been enough to protect the island from a Chinese invasion had it not been for the **Cold War**



29 May 1950

The importance of Taiwan as an
“unsinkable aircraft carrier” and a
“base for submarines”
(General Macarthur)



The Korean War

The 7th U.S. Fleet to “*neutralize*”
the strait of Taiwan

Since 1950, China has accused
the U.S. of using Taiwan as
leverage





Deng Xiaoping's **ambition** (1980s): to put China on a path towards **development**

Confirming the end of China's diplomatic isolation (initiated in 1971)

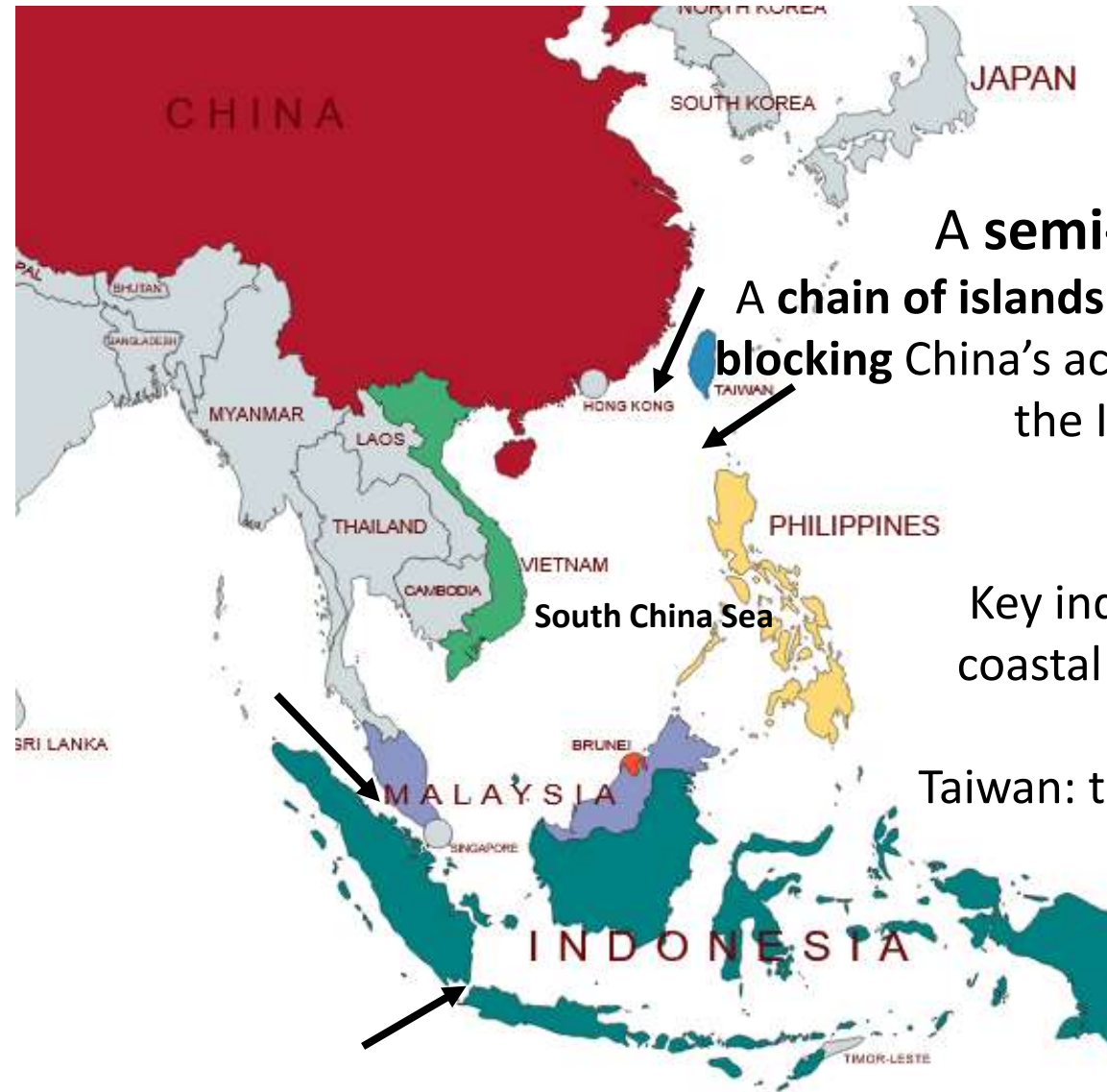
China **to regain** its rightful place on the global stage

Far-reaching **economic reforms** aimed at transforming China into an industrial powerhouse

Heavy reliance on energy (oil) to keep fueling China's economic growth

China's economic development & prosperity





A semi-enclosed sea

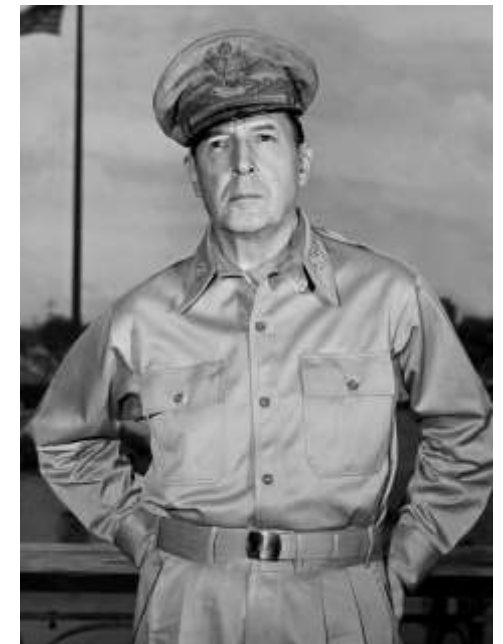
A chain of islands (from Japan to Indonesia)
blocking China's access to the Pacific Ocean & the Indian Ocean

Key industries and populated coastal centres as easy targets

Taiwan: the **most critical segment**



"From this chain of islands, we can dominate each Asian port from Vladivostok to Singapore and prevent any hostile movement in the Pacific"





A map of East Asia and the surrounding Pacific Ocean. China is highlighted in yellow and labeled 'CHINE' with its flag. The United States flag is shown in the upper right. A network of blue stars, representing U.S. military bases, is distributed across the region: Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, and Australia. A yellow starburst is located near Japan. A white ship icon is in the upper right. The text 'U.S. strategy of encirclement' is overlaid on the map.

U.S. strategy of encirclement

A network of military bases
Strategic alliances (Japan,
South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand,
The Philippines, Australia...)

U.S. bases perceived as many
fortresses (to maintain China
under a “**blockade**”)



Beijing

CHINA

East
China
Sea

JAPAN

Hanoi

Paracel
Islands

VIETNAM

Spratly
Islands

South
China

Taiwan at the **junction** of
the South China Sea & the
East China Sea

The **Strait of Taiwan**: a key
shipping lane

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



A large Chinese naval ship, possibly a missile cruiser, is shown sailing on the ocean. The ship has a complex superstructure with multiple radar masts and missile launchers. It is moving towards the viewer, leaving a white wake in the blue water. In the background, other naval vessels are visible, including a smaller ship to the left and another larger ship further back. The sky is clear and blue.

China's response

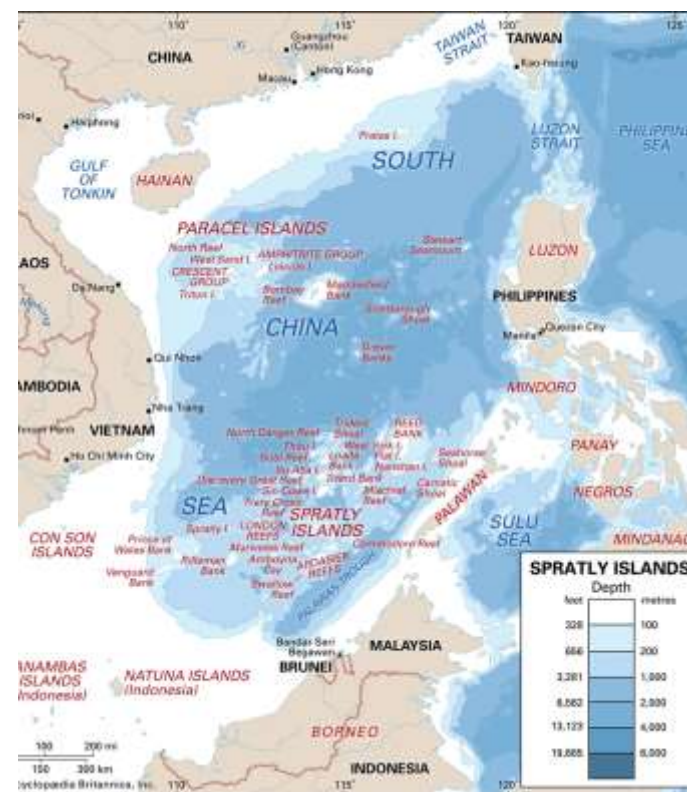
The modernization of its navy
(The world second largest navy)

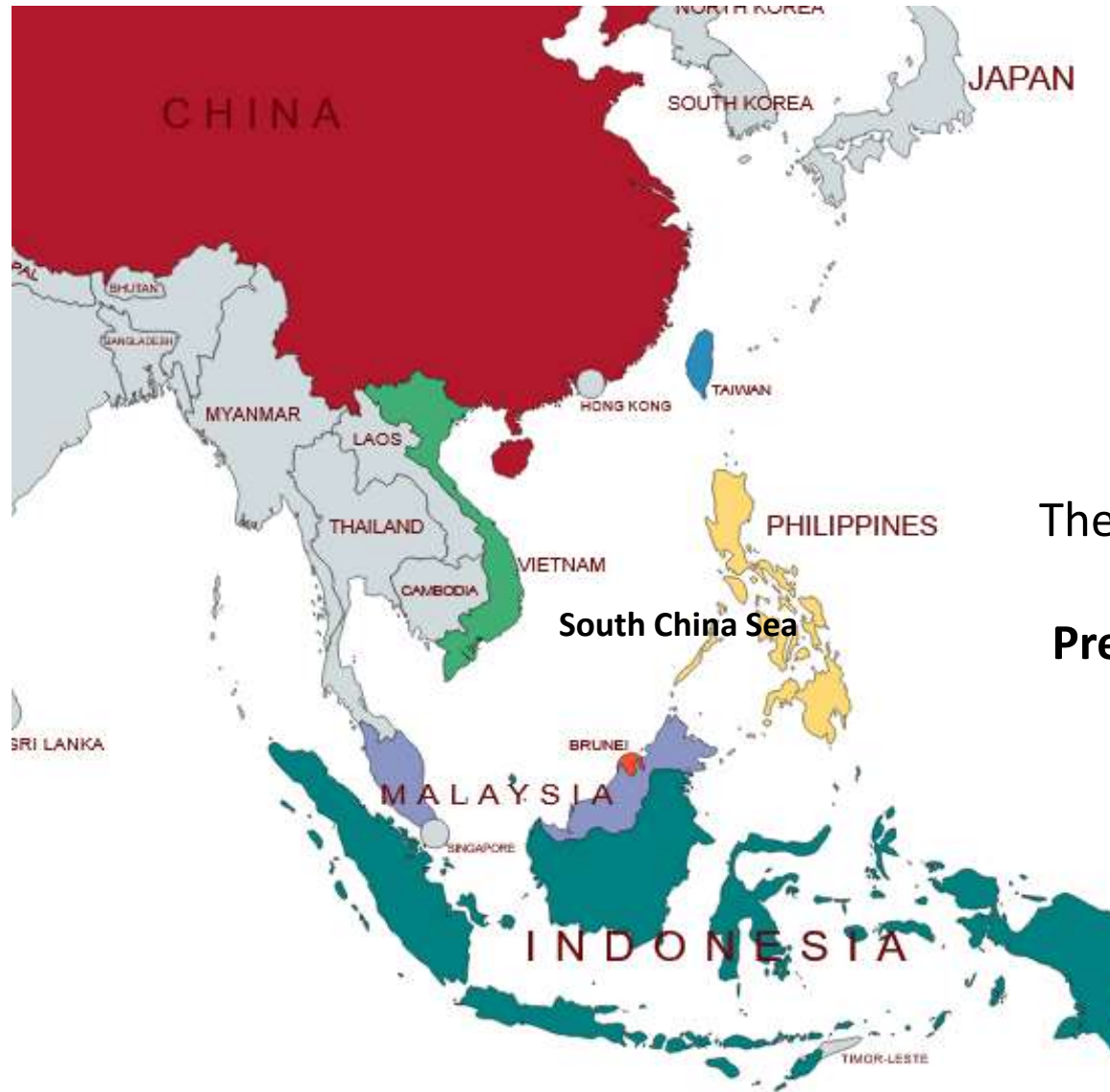
Controlling the **South China Sea**
(Taiwan): projecting naval power to
the Pacific Ocean & the **Indian**
Ocean



How to safely reach the Pacific & the Indian Oceans (fleet & nuclear submarines?)

South of South China Sea: shallow waters





To seize control over Taiwan: a
historical turning point
From *vulnerability* to ***opportunity***

The first step towards constitution of a **buffer zone**
Weakening the U.S. security perimeter
Preventing the U.S. Navy from entering the South
China Sea
Leverage against the U.S. and Japan

The background of the slide features two flags flying against a blue sky with scattered white clouds. On the left is the Russian flag, with its characteristic horizontal stripes of white, blue, and red. On the right is the Chinese flag, red with five golden stars. The flags are positioned behind a semi-transparent dark blue overlay that contains the text.

The Ukrainian crisis

To be watched very closely by China

What Western response?

How far will the West be willing to go to defend Ukraine's territorial integrity and political independence?