War’s path puts Zelensky in a bind

Russian advances, stalled U.S. aid leave Ukraine with few good options

**By Isabella Kirschkevich**

KIEV — As Russia steps up attacks and guns again advance on the battlefield in Ukraine, more than two years into its bloody invasion, there is no end in sight. And President Volodymyr Zelensky, who has long pushed for a negotiated solution, finds himself in a bind.

U.S. aid, crucial for Ukraine’s war effort, has stagnated, leaving Washington divided on how best to view the conflict. Meanwhile, the battlefield of the Kremlin’s war is growing ever broader, with Russian advances, that halted in mid-February, recently resuming.

Ukraine now occupies about 20 percent of the territory it had in 2014, the result of gains in the east and south that Russia has recognized as sovereign states. In the east, where Russia-backed separatists hold sway, the Ukrainian army has been driven back to the line of contact.

In the south, Russia has seized the entire Crimean peninsula and parts of the eastern regions of Donetsk and Luhansk.

The war has also spilled over into the Black Sea, where Russia has seized the Crimean port city of Sevastopol and established a naval base.

Ukraine has lost major cities in the east and south, including Mariupol and Berdyansk, and saw its forces driven to the line of contact.

The Ukrainian army has been forced to retreat from its positions in the east and south, leaving behind a patchwork of limited control over parts of the territory it once held.

Zelensky has said Ukraine will not accept any peace settlement that would re-divide the country, but的话语 has not been enough to convince the international community to offer more support.

The United States, which has been a key ally of Ukraine, has said it will continue to provide military and humanitarian aid, but has not yet committed to sending any more troops.

In Europe, the European Union has also been divided on how to respond to the crisis, with some countries calling for increased sanctions against Russia and others urging restraint.

The war has had a profound impact on Ukraine and its citizens, with more than half of the population displaced and millions of people living in conditions of poverty and insecurity.

The situation is complicated by the presence of Russia-backed separatists in parts of the country, who have been waging a low-intensity conflict since 2014.

Nonetheless, Zelensky has said Ukraine will not accept any peace settlement that would re-divide the country, and has called for a negotiated solution to end the war.

But the road to peace remains long and fraught with challenges, with both sides dug in and unwilling to make concessions.

The war has also had a significant impact on the global economy, with oil prices rising and supply chains disrupted.

But the biggest challenge facing humanity today is the ongoing war in Ukraine, which has already claimed thousands of lives and displaced millions of people.

The world is facing a critical moment in history, and the outcome of the war will determine the course of global affairs for years to come.

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