
SESSION 4 Geopolitical Outlook (Part 2) – Russia

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The session focused on analysing the geopolitical landscape in light of the Russia-Ukraine conflict and its broader implications for the transatlantic partnership between Europe and the United States. Specifically:

- Finland's increasing military preparedness and fortification of its border with Russia due to potential hybrid threats.
- Scenarios for Russia's future, including further repression, Stalinism, or collapse.
- A sobering ground perspective detailing Ukraine's dire humanitarian crisis, devastated infrastructure, and military/economic struggles. Doubt about negotiating with Putin and suggested Ukraine's survival may require the breakup of Russia into its constituent republics, as happened with the Soviet Union.
- How Russia has become more authoritarian domestically and aggressive internationally, reflecting underlying weaknesses and decline. However, Russia still poses challenges to Western democratic values, security, and the rules-based international order.
- The importance of planning and financing Ukraine's post-war reconstruction, which will require major private investment backed by public guarantees.

Key policies mentioned included sanctions enforcement, military aid to Ukraine, US financial assistance packages, post-war reconstruction planning, and increasing Finland's military preparedness vis-a-vis Russia.

The panellists agreed on the necessity of transatlantic resolve while grappling with uncertainties

around Russia's trajectory, meeting Ukraine's needs, and mustering sufficient, sustained assistance from the US and European partners.