

International Briefs

UK's Liz Truss Proclaims 'The Return of Geopolitics'

In an April 27 [speech](#) to the Lord Mayor's 2022 Easter Banquet brazenly titled "The Return of Geopolitics," UK Foreign Secretary Liz Truss laid out the British intention to use their war in Ukraine—which it intends to ramp up—"to reboot, recast and remodel" the current international security and economic architecture along the lines of the British Empire. This is to be imposed through generalized sanctions and war, enforced by a global military and economic NATO, and associated ad hoc [alliances](#), dubbed the "Network of Liberty." She cited AUKUS (Australia, UK, and the U.S.), the QUAD (U.S., Japan, Australia, India) and the G7, which "should act as an economic NATO."

She asserted, "The war in Ukraine is our war," and called for ramping up weapons to Ukraine. However, Global NATO's role goes way beyond that. Don't fall for a "false choice between Euro-Atlantic security and Indo-Pacific security," she said, getting to her target of China. "We need to pre-empt threats in the Indo-Pacific, working with our allies like Japan and Australia to ensure the Pacific is protected. And we must ensure that democracies like Taiwan are able to defend themselves."

She singled out China for threat. "By talking about the rise of China as inevitable, we are doing China's work for it. In fact, their rise isn't inevitable. They will not continue to rise if they don't play by the rules...."

Global NATO Met at U.S. Ramstein Air Base, Germany

On April 26 at the U.S. Ramstein

Air Base in Germany, U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin hosted the so-called Ukraine Defense Consultative Group, with over 40 nations attending, to discuss ramping up weapons deliveries to Ukraine, and ongoing collaboration. Meetings of the grouping are now to take place monthly.

At the outset, organizers emphasized that this was not a "NATO ministerial," and the non-NATO roster included Pacific partners South Korea, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand, as well as nations from Africa and Asia. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg attended, along with Ukrainian Defense Minister Oleksii Reznikov, U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Mark Milley, and U.S. European Command head Gen. Tod Wolters, who spoke about Ukraine's military requirements.

In the countdown to the Ramstein meeting, Pentagon Press Secretary John Kirby said uneasily at an April 22 briefing:

"As you know, NATO as an alliance is not providing security assistance to Ukraine, so this is not being done under the NATO umbrella at all. Now, some of the nations ... are, in fact, NATO allies, but they're doing this in a—a sovereign unilateral way, not as a part of the alliance."

A directorate for the new configuration was already set up in March at U.S. Army facilities in Stuttgart, called the European Control Center Ukraine (ECCU), which has staff sourced from 14 nations.

India's Jaishankar Denounces West's Impact in Afghanistan

"In terms of Afghanistan, please show me which part of the rules-based

order justified what the world did there," demanded India's Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, speaking at the Raisina Dialogue, the prominent annual conference, which he co-hosted April 25-27 this year. He spoke out in reaction to criticism of India's refusal to back Ukraine against Russia, which was raised by diplomats from Norway and Luxembourg. Jaishankar urged them to reflect on what happened in Afghanistan, "when an entire civil society was thrown under the bus by the world."

On the Ukraine conflict itself, "There will be no winners out of this conflict," he assessed. And he reminded his European colleagues to take notice, that "there is also a world out there. I'm very glad you're sitting here in India. And I would remind you that there are equally pressing issues in other parts of the world. I mentioned Afghanistan. I mentioned the challenges we are facing in Asia."

The Raisina Dialogue in 2016 included an address on the Belt and Road Initiative by Helga Zepp-LaRouche, founder of the Schiller Institute. It is co-hosted annually by the Observer Research Foundation and India's External Affairs Ministry. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi opened this year's event.

U.S. Preparing Regime Change in the Solomon Islands

The U.S. delegation to the Solomon Islands led by National Security Council Indo-Pacific Coordinator Kurt Campbell issued threats against Solomon Islands Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare, in a 90-minute meeting April 22, in an obvious effort to get

him to break the security agreement he had just signed with China. The White House readout reported that,

“Solomon Islands representatives indicated that the agreement had solely domestic applications, but the U.S. delegation noted there are potential regional security implications of the accord, including for the United States and its allies and partners. The U.S. delegation outlined clear areas of concern with respect to the purpose, scope, and transparency of the agreement.

“If steps are taken to establish a de facto permanent military presence, power-projection capabilities, or a military installation, the delegation noted that the United States would then have significant concerns and respond accordingly.”

Glazyev: China-Russia as the Nucleus of a New Economic Order

Sergey Glazyev, Russia’s Minister for Integration and Macroeconomics of the Eurasian Economic Commission of the EAEU (Eurasian Economic Union), and a renowned economist, reiterated his views on prospects for a new world economic system in an April 14 [interview](#) with journalist Pepe Escobar, published in *The Cradle*. He noted that it is the sanctions and other financial warfare being conducted by the U.S., EU, and the UK themselves, that have “sharply accelerated the ongoing dismantling of the dollar-based economic world order.”

Glazyev stressed that a new global currency and financial system must be centered on development rather than speculation. Among its features is the critical role of the China-Russia collaboration:

“Sovereign interests of Russia and China logically led to their growing strategic partnership and cooperation, in order to address common threats emanating from Washington.... I hope that

the strategic partnership of Russia and the P.R.C., which is enhanced by the coupling of the One Belt One Road with the Eurasian Economic Union, will become the foundation of President Vladimir Putin’s project of the Greater Eurasian Partnership and the nucleus of the new world economic order.”

European Industry, To Remain Operating, Wants Russian Fuel

Roughly 38% of Europe’s gas and 28% of its oil has come from Russia in recent years, and a cutoff of those supplies, as proposed by some in the current EU discussions for a sixth round of sanctions against Russia, threatens mass shutdown of European industry. Many are speaking out on this danger. For example, the trade union representing workers at the southwest German works of IG Metall, warns that companies face stopping production, without Russian gas deliveries.

Stefan Hartung, the head of the Bosch technology group from Stuttgart, warned in an April 8 [interview](#) with the business daily *Handelsblatt*, that Germany should not stop purchasing gas supplies from Russia prematurely.

“Bosch itself covers 20% of its energy needs with gas. So, we don’t need very large quantities, but some of our suppliers do.... If Germany unilaterally abandons Russian gas supplies, highly relevant elements of the supply chain will break down, and not just at Bosch.... In the event of a gas supply freeze, we expect a swift halt to all industrial production ... the effect would go far beyond the disruption caused by the coronavirus.”

As of the end of April, contingency arrangements are in effect for some 14 major European purchasers of Russian gas to continue gas flows, after Moscow requested payment in rubles, following the U.S. seizure of holdings of Russian

assets. Four European purchasers are paying Gazprom in rubles and 10 others have set up a two-account arrangement for payments and currency conversion. Financial media report that Italy’s ENI is among them.

On April 26, Gazprom announced cutting gas supplies to Poland and Bulgaria, which have remained belligerent, and refused to make ruble-compliant payment arrangements. Since then, Poland sharply upped its “reverse” gas orders from Germany. As reported by GASCADE, the German operator of the gas transmission network, the Russian gas is sent westward to Germany, then back-sent eastward to Poland, adding to cost all the way.

Brazil: WTO Must OK Russian Fertilizer Exports

On April 22, during a visit to Brazil, the WTO’s Director General, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, asked Brazil to increase its exports of food, particularly corn, soy, and rice. According to Brazil’s *Diario de Pernambuco*, President Jair Bolsonaro replied that Brazil doesn’t have the ability to do that without fertilizers, and requested that the WTO Director use her influence to ensure there is no cutoff in the flow of Russian fertilizers to Brazil. “We can’t survive without fertilizer,” he said. According to shipping media, Bolsonaro told the WTO that as of mid-April, 27 Russian ships were at sea, or loading up, with fertilizer shipments for Brazil.

Brazil imports 85% of its fertilizer, in recent years, 30% from Russia, and 28% from Belarus. Potash is vital. Brazil imports at least 12 million tons per year, mainly from Russia and Belarus, and it is required for the fall 2022 planting of soybean crops. Farm media report that Ibero-America and India are the first of the world’s major crop-growing regions to be hit, if they don’t have adequate fertilizer.