

US-led NATO is military, nuclear fist of expansionist strategy

Editor's Note:

April 4, 2024, marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of NATO. As a product of the Cold War, NATO should have been disbanded, but over the years, it has served as a war machine and facilitated US hegemony. The Global Times talked to a number of experts and scholars to reveal how the US exploits NATO to serve its geopolitical purposes and how NATO destabilizes the world, exacerbates nuclear threats and brings confrontation to Asia.

GT: How does the NATO bombing in 1999 still affect people in Serbia today?

Jovanovic: Serbia mourned and paid respect to around 2,000 civilians killed by NATO 25 years ago. We also remembered that NATO bombed the Chinese embassy in Belgrade killing three Chinese journalists. We recall that NATO used missiles with depleted uranium, cluster bombs and other forbidden means and methods. This resulted in maligned diseases and deaths of people even today, and material damage amounting to over \$100 billion.

The objective of the US-led NATO was to take the Province of Kosovo and Metohija from Serbia, transform it into the Balkans carrier of US troupes for expansion to the East, topple the government of former president Slobodan Milosevic, and make a precedent for future military interventions violating the UN Charter and the supremacy of the UN Security Council and International Law, in general. The aim was also to firmly discipline European allies behind the concept of unipolar world order, supporting US geostrategic interests. In 1999, NATO went beyond its founding treaty, abandoning its defensive and adopting an offensive, aggressive character.

The US-led NATO pursues these interests today. Military aggression has been replaced by other means. Right now, they use pressure, including blackmailing Serbia to recognize the secession of its autonomous province of Kosovo and Metohija and accept its membership in the international organizations. Serbia, of course, will not submit. Economically, Serbia has not as yet fully recovered. Ruins from the aggression could be seen even in the heart of Belgrade, but Serbia's GDP nevertheless maintains a constant rise, even above the European average. Unfortunately, the Balkans are far from stable. It is divided, dependent and militarized.

GT: You attended an international conference in Belgrade a few days ago that marked the anniversary. The theme of the conference was "From the Aggression to a New Just Order." What are the

In the first interview of the series, Global Times (GT) reporter Wang Wenwen talked to Zivadin Jovanovic



(Jovanovic), president of the Belgrade Forum for a World of Equals who served as the minister of foreign affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia between 1998 and 2000. Serbia recently marked the 25th anniversary of the NATO bombing of what was then Yugoslavia. He recalled this brutal operation of NATO and how the US and NATO obstruct a just world order.

obstacles to a new just world order?

Jovanovic: The main obstacle to the new world order based on the principle of sovereign equality and non-interference in internal affairs is the policy of expansion and global domination of the minority of Western countries led by the US. It seems that they do not understand the global changes and trends of multipolarization and tend to believe that they can stop those historic trends, even reverse them, by force, including nuclear. These doctrines represent the main source of serious threats to global peace and development. This is a threat to humanity.

GT: Taking into consideration NATO actions from NATO bombing Yugoslavia 25 years ago to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, what role does NATO play in facilitating US hegemony?

Jovanovic: The NATO aggression on Yugoslavia in 1999 was the beginning of the globalization of military interventionism of the US-led NATO. Afterward, we saw many interventions and aggressions based on the 1999 NATO precedent on Yugoslavia. German politician Willy Wimmer said in 2022 that the first bombs fell on Ukraine in 1999.

The US-led NATO, in my opinion, is the military, nuclear fist of expansionist strategy, of global domination within unipolarity.

GT: The US has leveraged NATO to sustain dominance over Europe. Do you think Europe has the will and ability to reflect on its position? Is Europe feeling more secure or less secure?

Jovanovic: European autonomy at present is at its lowest point since World War II, this includes its dignity, identity and morality. It is not because of the people, European nations or cultural heritage. It is, first of all, because of the quality of the present political elite which has lost its sense of traditional civilization values, which seems

to have abandoned morality, solidarity, justice and legality and which has practically reduced everything and everybody to the profit by all means. I don't know, really, what term would best express such characteristics, but perhaps, it is not far from – corruption, one way or the other. Global changes could hardly leave Europe untouched. Some changes toward autonomy, dignity and sovereignty are taking place, particularly in some European countries, like Hungary, Slovakia and others. We shall see what the elections for the European Parliament in June will show. I hope it will be the beginning of changes, changes for the better. One election may not be sufficient, but the trends matter.



Zivadin Jovanovic
Photo: Courtesy of Jovanovic

GT: China was also a victim of the NATO bombing 25 years ago. In the past two years, NATO has declared China a security challenge. The NATO chief also linked what's happening in Ukraine to the Taiwan question. What do you think of the NATO moves against China?

Jovanovic: It is true. China was not only the victim, but also the target of NATO military aggression in 1999. Just

minutes later, I was at the scene seeing public services rescuing survivors from the debris. Bombs were still hitting a nearby hotel and the surrounding park, when then-Chinese ambassador Pan Zhanlin was freed out of the ruins. I expressed my condolences and assured him of my government's solidarity and support.

Should anybody wonder why Serbia and China are "iron friends" and comprehensive strategic partners ever since?

Who, what and why represents the challenge depends on who is assessing it and from positions of which values. Learning from recent history, I suppose, countries demanding equal security and sovereignty over natural resources, such as oil and gas reserves, uranium and other strategic minerals deposits, huge markets, and geostrategic connectivity lines have always been a challenge for NATO and Western power centers.

What we have been witnessing over the past decades is that the US and NATO have for years now been expanding and reinforcing their presence through their branches in the Far East and Indo-Pacific like Quad and some newly born alliances. Seen from Europe, the US-NATO expansionist

strategy is directed to the East, to Russia, the Caspian Sea and the Middle East. Asia and Siberia seem to be real objectives, from both geographic positions. US-NATO exploits similar, or the same means and methods: spreading fear, insecurity and disorientation, demonstrating power through a series of massive "defenders" exercises, offering protection of scarred ones, use of separatism, terrorism and human

rights. We know from their rhetoric that China represents a "systemic" challenge and Russia a "malign influence." This only means that they have no solutions for their own problems nor do they have the courage to face today's reality. So far, they opt to continue living in the past, instead of accepting a new reality called equality and living in togetherness.



A view of NATO's new headquarters in Brussels, Belgium.
Photo: AFP