

Ilya Timtchenko:

... Ilya Timtchenko and I'm a Master's in Public Policy candidate here at the Harvard Kennedy School, the Belfer Young Leader Student Fellow and Chair of the Ukraine Caucus here at HKS. I'd like to welcome both our in-person and virtual guests. For those of you in Zoom room, feel free to type your questions in the Q&A box. Also, be aware that this session is being recorded, that your image may appear in the recording, that we may post this video to the Belfer Center's website. While this event is on the record, the event organizers prohibit any attendees, including journalists, from audio/visual recording or distributing parts or all the event program without prior written authorization.

Once again, welcome to such an important event at the Kennedy School. Today we have the unique opportunity to hear from a voice that has long been suppressed, a voice that has been popular until a year ago. We'll be hearing a message from Ukraine. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, since the historical Western academia tended to in some ways neglect the Eastern European region, foreign policy priorities shifted elsewhere, and as the Kremlin was seen as sort of defeated, this had considerable damage on misunderstanding the region. Those academic programs on Eastern Europe that remained tended to give into a Russia-centric perspective as Russia was still seen as a hegemony that extended sphere of influence. This made it tempting for Russia to extend its narrative of influence with top global schools becoming prime attractive hubs for Russia to try to extend that influence. Titles of school programs can be exemplary of the Russian centralism and academia. Just look at names of Eastern European programs and many Ivy League schools, which dominate with the word, Russia.

But one year ago, Ukraine proved to many Western [inaudible 00:01:55] that their understanding of the region was flawed. Ukraine started to align the narrative with truth and destroyed the Kremlin's narrative based on lies. Thanks to the unbreakable determination of Ukrainians, I'm able to present you today's guests.

It's my pleasure to welcome the Foreign Minister of Ukraine, Dmytro Kuleba to the Harvard Kennedy School. Dmytro Kuleba was born in 1981 in Sumy, a city located in northeastern Ukraine. In 2003, Dmytro Kuleba graduated with honor from the Institute of International Relations, Taras Shevchenko University, where he studied international law. In 2006, Mr. Kuleba obtained a Ph.D. in law. His experience in diplomacy dates back to 2003 as he started his career at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Since then, he has held multiple diplomacy positions, including being the Ambassador-at-Large, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the Council of Europe and Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Ukraine. Mr. Kuleba has been Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine since March 2020, is also the author of a book called *The War of Reality, The War for Reality. How to Win in the World of Fakes, Truths and Communities*. With that said, please welcome Ukraine's Foreign Minister, Dmytro Kuleba.

Dmytro Kuleba:

Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, I'm grateful for the invitation. It's really an honor to address you today. I wish I could be present in-person as I sincerely wanted to personally experience the greatness of your university and directly pass on to you the thoughts and feelings of the great people of Ukraine, but the UN is to blame for my online appearance. Apparently, it's always easy to blame international institutions. That's the rule in diplomacy, and I'm using it. But jokes aside, yes, I had to stay in New York to address the UNGA and hold additional bilaterals to persuade some members, member states, especially from the global south, to support the upcoming UN General Assembly resolution on Ukraine.

Now, let me begin by taking you back straight in 1991. August 1st, 1991, President of the United States George W. Bush visits Kiev and delivers the famous Chicken Kiev speech in the Ukrainian Parliament. He had just met Gorbachev in Moscow. Now he's in Kiev, cautioning against what he called, I quote, "suicidal nationalism". He told tens of millions of Ukrainians who wanted their own country to give up their dreams and stay with Moscow. In just three weeks, tanks will enter central Moscow. The Soviet Union starts to collapse, leading to Ukraine proclaiming independence.

Fast-forward four months, December 1991, the USSR legally ceases to exist. Russian leader Boris Yeltsin sends a letter to the UN Secretary General. He's claiming Russia's right to the Soviet seat on the UN Security Council. Not a single legal procedure defined by the UN charter is upheld. A simple letter, legally null and void becomes the reason for the UN Secretariat to change nameplates at the tables. This is how big world politics is done, and Russia usurps the seat with the silent consent of other members.

Now, fast-forward three years, Budapest, December 1994. Russia and the United States joined forces to denuclearize Ukraine. In exchange for abandoning its numerous nukes, Ukraine receives security assurances, the most significant of which is the commitment to convene UN Security Council consultations in case of the threat of nuclear attack. Russia, the U.S. and the U.K. also pledged to ensure there will be no use of force or threat of use of force against Ukraine, nukes in return for consultations and promises. That's what it was.

These were three strategic mistakes. From 1991 to 1994, this chain of mistakes set the stage for the war I just came from. Instead of cementing Ukraine's place in the West, our state was disarmed and abandoned in the gray zone to see what would come out of it. The Cold War was over, but Ukraine was left outside in the cold. We were not left alone, though. Ukraine was held at a distance of a firm, friendly handshake, but always at a distance. The strategic failure to start Ukraine's succession to NATO at the 2008 Bucharest Summit has become just the first level of this house built upon all previous mistakes.

While the West exercised short-sighted cautiousness, Russia was growingly persistent and self-assured. Unlike the West, it always had a Ukraine strategy. Think of this, there hasn't been a decade in which Russia hasn't threatened Ukraine's territorial integrity, attempts to seize Crimea in 1993, the Tuzla crisis... Tuzla is a small, tiny island between Crimea and the Russian territory in the Sea of Azov... it was in 2003, the occupation of Crimea in 2014, the war in the east of Ukraine in 2014, and the full scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. There has not been a single decade when Russia would not betray willingness of its Western partners to be friends with it and pardon it for its sin.

For years Europe had been confident enough to say it could sort things out without America, but this war has proven the opposite, whether you like it or not, but the United States continue to bear responsibility for maintaining European peace since 1945. Speaking in Brussels recently, President Zelenskyy said, "We are defending not only your values, but your interests." These words are no less significant than the ones he said about ammunition and the ride. They explain why Ukraine should be supported.

But what about Ukraine? I have to be frank. We have made our mistakes, too, like you did. We bred a class of oligarchs in the early '90s. We did not pay enough of attention to our army. Our foreign policy strategies exact from time to time. We engaged Russia in our domestic politics from time to time, and we allowed some corruption schemes to blossom. But whatever flaws we had, one thing has always made us fundamentally different from Russia. The core of the Ukrainian project has always been freedom, whereas the core of the Russian project has always been obedience, obedience of Russian nationals towards SAR and the imposed obedience of neighbors towards Russia. Here is the key. Freedom is what makes Ukraine part of the West.

But there is also something else that has always united us. I would call it a lack of self-confidence towards Russia. For decades, neither you nor us, we have had confidence that we can prevail over Russia and discipline it. That is why the conclusion has always been that we need to make concessions. Russian imperialism has been overlooked for decades and has been tolerated for decades, but look at Moldova in 1992, look at Chechnya, look at Georgia, look at Ukraine. Russia was continuously invited to the table, pleased, appeased and pardoned. Its imperial influence has spread easily through academia, media, culture, politics, sports and business in the West. This is how we got to the Bucharest 2008 mistake when Ukraine was not given the membership action plan to become a member of NATO. All of this took us to the attempted illegal annexation of Crimea, the interference in the 2016 U.S. elections and other troubles and tragedies.

I remember clearly the moment when I began to believe in Ukraine without a second thought, and I have to confess, it was only in early hours of February 25th, 2022. This was the day when I left this lack of self-confidence behind and began to believe that we can prevail and we will. On that night, I was driving from Poland into my dark and war-ravaged homeland. My car was the only one driving in with hundreds of cars driving out. That was the moment when I personally abandoned fear. Yes, I was afraid of many things at that moment, but I overcame my fear and I told myself, "We are going to win. Otherwise, it doesn't make sense to be sitting in a car and driving in and not out of Ukraine." I also know when we abandoned fear as a nation, when we restored our self-confidence. It happened after one week of resistance, because this was the maximum which even our closest friends gave us.

As foreign minister, I always fight for a change of perspective, and abandoning fear is part of that concept. I keep saying, "Stop looking at Ukraine through the prism of Russia." I keep saying, "Do not assume that peace is only achievable through Ukraine's concessions. Don't say that Russia shouldn't win. Set a positive goal instead. Ukraine must win. Don't be afraid to arm Ukraine with whatever weapons it requires. At the end of the day, don't be scared of Russia's collapse or the future without this Russia, Russia as we know it now." It takes this slight shift of perspective to start making correct policy decisions. In my 10 years' tenure as foreign minister, I have realized that it's not about asking someone to take certain decisions, but rather asking to change the perspective so that certain decisions become possible.

Now, what will the Ukrainian victory look like? It's Ukraine restoring territorial integrity within internationally recognized borders. Why are those who advocate for the cessation of weapon deliveries to Ukraine hypocrites? Because what they really want is not peace, but Russian victory and the genocide of Ukrainians. What is the answer to the question, how long will this war last? The right answer is, don't ask how long this war will last. Ask what you can do to bring Ukraine's victory closer. Why does it make no sense to fear escalation? Because the West has experience of managing Russia. It's not the most successful one on a number of accounts, but here is one thing. Look at the last speech by President Putin. There were so many fears and expectations associated with it, but in the end we all saw that his corridor for escalation is getting narrower. There is no space for Russia.

Moreover, look back and let's recognize that Russia never needed anyone else's decision or move to escalate in response. Russia was always escalating itself and then was accusing others of provoking it. That's the classic tactics. There was not a single instance when fears of escalation materialized. I remember how we were fighting for unlocking new options, new weapons options, and every time when we asked for artillery, the response was, "If we give your artillery, Russia will-"

PART 1 OF 4 ENDS [00:16:04]

Dmytro Kuleba:

The response was, if we give you artillery, Russia will escalate. You gave us artillery, Russia did not escalate. Ever since, be it HIMARS, being long range missiles, be it air defense or tanks, it all started with, "No, we are not going to do it because Russia will escalate." But Russia had always escalated before you made a decision to provide us with any weapons.

The most interesting question is what to do with Russia? In my view, the answer is change it so that it no longer poses a threat to anyone. I know it may sound too provocative, but we have to understand, as long as Russia remains as it is, it will remain a source of threat. We can win the war. We can expel Russia from our territory, and we will do so. But if Russia remains as it is, it will continue to be a source of threat.

One more point. This is not a war for compromise. This is a war for Ukraine's victory. I'm saying it as a diplomat, because Ukraine's victory is in everyone's interest. We cannot allow Russia to get away with what it has done and get even more emboldened. This will also embolden the world's other evil forces. It

is far less expensive to support Ukraine now and allow us to defeat this evil than to face it later. Only on the battlefield can a just and lasting peace be achieved in this war. In such a case, the goal of our wartime diplomacy is to help achieve this result with supplies of weapons, new sanctions, financial support, and of course, building strong coalitions. Things are different today. We are almost done breaking the cycle and making sure that the Russian imperial project will fail. Ukrainian victory, as I already said, is essential to this end.

As history teaches us, Ukrainian independence and Russian imperialism are irreconcilable, just as freedom and obedience are irreconcilable. We are far better off today than we were during all previous attempts to break free and bring down the empire. Nowadays, we are winning in an information war, unlike in '20 and '14. We have one of the strongest armies in Europe with zero support. This is different from the beginning of the 20th century when we failed to defend our independence against Russia. We have President Zelenskyy, an inspirational wartime leader who has become the hero of our time and galvanized global attention. Today, our core idea of freedom is universally shared, unlike in the 17th and early 20th centuries when we had fought against Russia fighting for our independence.

Most importantly, we now have the first generation of Ukrainians in their thirties who have not lived in the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, I do not belong to it, I'm much older. But they are already part of the resistance on many levels, holding important posts and leading small unions on the frontline. For them, Ukraine has never gained independence, like for me. It has always been independent. For them, the world without independent Ukraine doesn't exist.

Modern Ukraine is not only a state, it's a project in the making and I think this is what makes us very similar to the United States. The Ukraine we want to be is always ahead of us. We are essentially a collaboration of people of all ages, all walks of life, all ethnic backgrounds and all faith united in our determination to make Ukraine a success and put an end to Russia's imperial frenzy. We as a generation are determined to prove that this time, we will not only struggle but actually win.

Last year, a few weeks before the full-scale invasion began, the secretaries of state, an exemplary diplomat, and my friend, and I'm proud to be his friend, Anthony Blinken, visited Kiev. I invited him to my office. We sat down for a talk, just two of us. I told him, "Tony, I know we may face some dreadful challenges soon, but one thing I am confident about is that I will not be writing my memoirs in exile as many Ukrainian politicians of the past did. I will be writing my memoirs in Kiev as a representative of the generation that won the most important war in the most important war of their lifetime."

I don't know whether he had full confidence in what I was saying, but he has been always there to support us and to help me since then, and one year later, I'm talking with you representing the country that is alive and kicking against all odds.

And so be it. Thank you for your attention and I really appreciate this opportunity to speak to you and if my assistant scrolls down the text in front of me, I may share with you main takeaways of my lecture.

Great. Let me recap five takeaways. First, forces of history need to be followed, not opposed. Second, shortsighted cautiousness yields opposite results. Third, evil must be defeated, not pardoned or appeased. Fourth, it takes a change of perspective to change policy, and this is really the most important rule for me, my personal biggest takeaway in my career. And fifth, to win, we have to abandon fear and believe in our joint cause. And now, here comes my final thank you.

Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

[inaudible 00:22:55].

Dmytro Kuleba:

That's it in case [inaudible 00:23:06]

Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

Oh, okay. Eric.

Eric Rosenbach:

Okay. Minister Kuleba, my name is Eric Rosenbach. I'm the co-director of the Belfer Center here. Used to have positions in the Pentagon, assistant secretary of defense and chief of staff at the Pentagon, as well used to meet with senior Ukrainian officials on a regular basis.

Thank you so much for making time to meet with us. It's a little sad that you couldn't be here in person. You seem like you'd fit right in on the Harvard faculty. We need to get you in the classroom here sometime soon. Thank you also for everything that you're doing. Pretty amazing run that you've had just this week being in Kyiv, in Warsaw, I think, in Brussels, in New York, all around the world. You probably only slept about two or three hours a day and you're fighting a war. Thank you for everything you do. It's inspirational.

We're going to ask a couple questions first, myself and my colleague who I'll introduce, and then we'll go to the students who I'm sure will have the best questions. But I'd like to introduce Ambassador Paula Dobriansky. She is also like you, a PhD from Harvard University. She served in some of the most senior positions in the government, including as the undersecretary of state for political affairs, which essentially is the number three position in the Department of State. She has been around, seen a lot, and most importantly, she's Ukrainian, so we're very happy about that as well. Paula, thank you so much. She's also a senior fellow at the Belfer Center, and I'm going to turn it over to you for the first question. Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

Right. Well, thank you so much Eric, and welcome to you, Minister Kuleba. Very good to see you. We would've loved to see you here in person, but it's good to see you in any event. Let me also just congratulate you on the very powerful opening statement that you made. Not only did you make a very clear, concise, poignant, and compelling statement, but you also answered, I'm going to say almost 95% of the questions that are always addressed and it was good to hear your responses.

As Eric indicated, you've been hitting the ground and particularly the past week, you've had a lot of meetings and I believe that when you were, I believe in Munich, that you met with NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, and also the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell. This was the first high-level Ukraine, EU, NATO talks. Can you share with us your perspective of what took place as a result of those talks given Ukraine's own strong desire to be part of the EU?

Dmytro Kuleba:

Thank you, Paula. It's good seeing you again. Yeah, the meeting that we had, it may sound weird, but it was the first time that all three of us, Ukraine, NATO and EU got together at senior level to actually coordinate and ensure that there will be no duplication of efforts and slowdowns in resolving numerous issues in particular related to the production, procurement of weapons and ammunition for Ukraine and most importantly, deliveries.

You have to keep one thing in mind. What Ukraine and its partners are doing now in terms of security assistance deliveries to Ukraine represents the largest logistical operation since World War II. It's easy when we read history books and a respected scholar writes that this was the biggest something. But it's much more difficult to recognize this biggest something when you are in the middle of it and you are living through it. This is exactly what's happening. The meeting went extremely well and I even began to regret that when Ukraine becomes member of the EU and NATO, we won't be able to sit down in the same format anymore. This format will cease to exist.

But basically, yes, the war is awful. War is hell. War is terrible. But while it does bring deaths and slows down many important vital processes in politics, in life, it also galvanizes and speeds up many things. This [inaudible 00:28:01] between Ukraine and NATO and EU, it should have happened years ago, but there was always a lack of political will, mostly on the side of both alliances or institutions to make it happen. Now, it is there more visible and recognized at the level of the European Union as we were

granted the candidate status finally. Less visible in NATO because while we enjoy enormous support of allies themselves, NATO as an alliance is not eloquent on the even estimated timeline of Ukraine succession. But it's going to happen. I must tell you that I do not think that integration into EU and NATO remain the biggest problems of Ukrainian foreign policy because this is going to happen. There is no way back. Wheels of history are turning. It's just a matter of time. And the sooner it happens, the better it will be for all of us.

Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

Thank you, Minister Kuleba. Eric.

Eric Rosenbach:

Minister Kuleba, thank you again for making time for us. As you mentioned, war is hell, and right now on the eastern front of Ukraine, there are thousands of people dying every day, both soldiers, civilians on both sides, Russians and lots of Ukrainians, which is a terrible thing.

If we look at the one-year anniversary, it's really inspiring how well everything has gone for Ukraine. It's inspiring that President Biden was there to visit. When you think about the future and the timeline of it, it starts to have an impact on your strategy for war. My question is, over the next few months, is there anything that the United States could provide to Ukraine from a capabilities perspective that could bring Russia to the negotiations table? In particular, if you looked at MiG-29s or long-range missile systems like ATACMSs, maybe additional air defense, could that actually save lives on the eastern front and bring the Russians to the negotiating table? Is that something that you asked President Biden for when he was there in Kyiv?

Dmytro Kuleba:

A short answer to your question and all the sub-questions is yes.

Eric Rosenbach:

Okay. Can I ask you a follow-up question?

Dmytro Kuleba:

Sure.

Eric Rosenbach:

Why didn't President Biden say yes to those capabilities if we know it's going to save lives, it'll bring the Russians to the table, why doesn't President Biden in the United States just say yes to the capabilities that would bring a war to the close, or at least to the appease conference?

Dmytro Kuleba:

I think the United States and President Biden himself, they have done enormously a lot. On all of these positions that you mentioned, the only unlocked option is the only outstanding unlocked option. No, sorry. The only outstanding locked option is the planes. On everything else, the United States are there one way or another. When I have time and when time passes so no one gets offended, of course, I will write full story about how decisions on weapons had been taken. But it's not easy. It's not easy to make decisions on some of the most sophisticated weapons. Trust has to be built and the moment trust between Ukrainian army and-

PART 2 OF 4 ENDS [00:32:04]

Dmytro Kuleba:

At the moment trust between Ukrainian army and politicians on the one side and American army and politicians on the other side was built. The sophisticated arms were deployed to Ukraine. And every type of weapon that you gave us, in many cases together with partners, but you were always leading the effort, they were game-changers.

In the beginning of the war, I remember it very vividly, we thought that to win the war... We didn't expect it would last so long to be honest. But we understood that to win the war, we need seven types of new weapons. And this is the big seven I call it. And in 12 months, we got six out of seven, with only planes remaining. Yes, we can discuss about quantities, about pace of deliveries, but planes is the only outstanding option. And I understand western politicians. For them, it's not only the U.S., for them, planes is virtually the last card to use, the last argument. But I have no doubts that this option will be also unlocked. Again, it's not because I have a crystal ball that tells me the truth, but because I understand the dynamics of the war and the dynamics of the decision-making.

And let me get back to my introductory remarks. I spoke about this perspective. Here is another lesson that I learned throughout my career. Sometimes when you talk with someone who can be helpful, it makes sense not to ask for anything in the conversation itself, but to hold conversation in a manner when that someone will himself make a decision. And I think this is the top art of diplomacy, to get something that you need without asking for it. And I have reasons to believe that it will be the case.

There is one more thing that I want to say on this. Of course, as I said, it's easy to read about historic events in history books. It's much more difficult to be part of historic events and to live through them and to assess the situation in a perspective, and to bear responsibility for decisions you are making. And it's not easy neither for us nor for your administration. But there are two key elements, two key driving forces. It's the people of Ukraine in Ukraine and the people of America in America. As long as both sides, both peoples will remain committed to the ideals they stand for, politicians will be making decisions.

Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

Minister, if I may, I have another question and so does Eric. And we're going to also ask, there are quite a few students, others who are gathered here to have them line up a bit over here because we're going to have you come up to the mic but you have to be on that side. Let me go to diplomacy. Last weekend, the U.S. Secretary of State, Tony Blinken, your counterpart, he said that the Biden administration has very real concerns that China is contemplating providing material support to Russia's war effort in Ukraine. During the Munich Security Conference, I believe that you met with Wang Yi. Do you share the same perspective on the U.S. concern?

Dmytro Kuleba:

I heard what Secretary was saying, and of course, we're alarmed with this perspective. We haven't seen specific facts at this point. I had a meeting with... But we live in a world where nothing can be excluded. And again, when the future of your country is at stake, you become extremely cautious. When I met with Councilor Wang Yi, we had a long conversation mainly about, he shared with me key elements of this peace proposal that China is going to put forward within days I think. But we also spoke about the principle of territorial integrity. And this is the cornerstone of both foreign policy of China and Ukraine and many other countries of the world, of course.

I think that if China, and I say if, because I don't have facts in my hands. But if China decides to support Russia militarily, it will be a major blow against its own policy. Against its own cornerstone principle, principle of territorial integrity. Because assisting Russia in violating territorial integrity of Ukraine, it doesn't require any additional explanations. China is a big and important player. We have to be careful, but we made our choice. We will fight until we prevail, whatever happens and whoever tries to support Russia in this struggle. So let's see how it evolves. But we'll remain in close contact with both Chinese and Chinese colleagues and American friends.

Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

Thank you for that. And by the way, if I may just restate again, the reason why you have to come up to the podium is because the camera's there and you'll be facing him at the back of the room. So please for those who'd like to ask questions to come around to the side. Eric, back to you.

Eric Rosenbach:

Thank you Minister. When you do win, which I hope is very soon, and you want to write that book, make sure you call us at the Belfer Center first. It's a nice place to write the book and I'd be happy to learn more about that too.

I have a question about what you're working on today and of course, it's me, so it's a follow-up question. Today, like you mentioned you're at the UN General Assembly and you're pushing hard at the UN there to protest the violations of Russian war crimes, I think is the way I would say it. This ties to my last question in that you've said publicly before that no peace process could start until there's a tribunal on Russian war crimes that is initiated, was the first precondition. The second is that it should be the UN and the UN Secretary General that oversaw a peace process.

My question is this, when, I'll be optimistic, we get to the point that you have achieved strategic advantage on the battlefield and it's time for a peace process, would you really hold up a peace process on a UN war crimes tribunal for Russia and the Secretary General doing it? Or would you soften your stand to let the tribunal come later and have someone like Erdogan, for example, run the peace process?  
Dmytro Kuleba:

Did I say that about the tribunal and the Secretary General?

Eric Rosenbach:

You did, yeah. It's right here in an AP article from December.

Dmytro Kuleba:

Oh, I have to double-check that.

Eric Rosenbach:

I'm in front of my students. I have to practice what I preach in case I get asked a question by the foreign minister.

Dmytro Kuleba:

Okay. Whatever this AP report says, our position is the following. The establishment of the tribunal is not a prerequisite for the beginning of any diplomatic effort. In fact, I see victory or the end of this war in two phases. The first one is what I call a short victory. This requires one thing, Russia's withdrawal from the territory of Ukraine, which is restoring Ukraine's territorial integrity within its international recognized borders as of 1991. This will be the day when I take out a bottle of champagne, uncork it and finish it. This will be the victory day for me.

But then will be the long victory process. And I remember one of the U.S. lawyers called everything that happened between the 8th of May, 1945 and the day when Nuremberg Tribunal delivered its last judgment, he called it the second phase of the war. And for me, I call it the long-term peace. So after we win and liberate our territory, there will be issues about Russia's paying compensations, Russian officials being brought to trial for the crime of aggression. Russian soldiers and officers brought to trial for war crimes, crimes against humanity and other atrocities committed. And many, many other things will follow until the final kind of, we will turn the last page of this conflict.

But no, I don't think that having the tribunal is a prerequisite for the settlement. It will take years because it's international justice and it has to be conducted in accordance with the rule of law. Tribunal is not an easy thing to achieve for a number of reasons, but I get... How to put it in a diplomatic way? I get upset when I hear that to set up a tribunal to try Russian leadership for the crime of aggression, we have to follow existing precedents. And since UN Security Council won't be able to establish this tribunal, therefore it will be difficult to achieve that goal.

Guys, we are literally living in the middle of history in the making. And if our predecessors were making bold decisions because they wanted to pursue justice and these decisions were unprecedented for their time, now is the perfect time to make new unprecedented decisions, if our goal is peace and justice.

Peace cannot be achieved in full within existing structures and procedures, this is the thing. It will require time, but we will get there.

And you mentioned facilitators, mediators, many tried in the last 12 months. Very, very few achieved. Last September I was in New York and one foreign minister approached me and said, "We have a peace plan. We will announce it within a couple of days. We want to take the lead." And I told him, "Sit down." We had a conversation for 15 minutes. He stood up, shook my hand and he said, "Okay, probably it's not the best time to put forward a peace plan." So we welcome all peace initiatives, but in most of the cases it's just a smoke screen for domestic policy purposes and an excuse not to do something to support Ukraine. Because you come up with a peace plan and you say, "Ukraine, I cannot do anything for you because I have a peace plan." And that's how it was in the last 12 months.

Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

Minister, I know we're getting close to the time when we have to end our session. We have a number of students and I'm going to try to get them in, all of them. There're just four standing up. But I was going to take two. Could the two of you please come up to the podium? We're going to take both of your questions and then we'll take the other two. So if you'll come up please, and introduce yourself and ask your question. And then she'll introduce herself. The young lady has on her t-shirt, Slava Ukraini, by the way, but all right.

Dmytro Kuleba:

[inaudible 00:45:28] Slava.

Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

Please.

Speaker 2:

Hello Mr. Minister Kuleba.

Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

Look at the camera there.

Speaker 2:

Thank you for being here with us today. My name is Johan Hasanov, I'm from Azerbaijan. And as someone who recently experienced horror, I understand your feeling and I wish all the best for the Ukrainian nation. So my question is, you mentioned the strategic mistakes that happened during the time span between '91 and '93. So I wanted to know your perspective, what else had been done wrong that made Russia think that they can get away with it easily? And what do you think can be done in the future to prevent this kind of things happening with other nations and other countries? Thank you.

Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

Minister, if you took that on board, may I ask the other young lady to come up, introduce herself to ask her question? So as I said, we can get the students in, please.

Speaker 1:

My name is Svetlana. I'm a second-year student at Harvard Business School from Ukraine. And I cannot help but thank Minister Kuleba for everything he does. The first time I was in the U.S. in 2015, Petro Oleksiyovych was still the president and the only feeling I had toward public leadership of my country was shame and frustration. Right now I feel extremely proud of you being here, talking to Harvard and this feeling is priceless.

And since it's my last question for the session, I want to make it not political. Minister Kuleba, you joke that you are old. I actually want to say that it's not true. You're the youngest Minister, Foreign Affairs in Ukraine's history. And in one of your interviews you mentioned that the phrase that was following you all your career was, "He's great, but he's too young for the job." Here at Harvard we do not have a shortage

of young and ambitious people. So what would be your advice to these people to get that job sooner than later? Thank you.

Eric Rosenbach:

That's great.

Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

Minister.

Dmytro Kuleba:

My assistant just showed me that we have time, so if on your side it was not a diplomatic way of saying you want to wrap up, we can take the other questions.

Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

Okay. All right.

Eric Rosenbach:

Trust me, there's nothing urgent at Harvard.

Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

Well, thank you. But if you want to take these two questions and then as I said, we have two more in the queue. But please, what was your, on the tips for students who want to advance at a younger age?

Dmytro Kuleba:

Listen.

#### PART 3 OF 4 ENDS [00:48:04]

Dmytro Kuleba:

You know all these ratings like the best... What we [inaudible 00:48:15].

Speaker 5:

[inaudible 00:48:16].

Dmytro Kuleba:

Huh?

Speaker 5:

[inaudible 00:48:17].

Dmytro Kuleba:

Yeah, 30 under 30, or 10 under 35. Did you notice that all of these ratings never go beyond 40? I never made it to any top listings before I turned 14. That's why I'm saying I'm not young anymore. There is no list that I can apply for to be on top on the list, top in something. I'm old. I'm not 30, I am not 35. That is gone. No top list ratings for me. The rest is a decline.

Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

And the other question- oh, sorry.

Dmytro Kuleba:

My advice to everyone, just love what you're doing. You have to be in love with your job, with your occupation, with your daily routine. And my second advice would be always have second profession so that you do not become a slave of your first profession. I always knew that I will be, that I have other skills which will help me to make money for living. And it allows you to say no in the critical situations because you are not enslaved by the system. You are a free person who has a right to choose. And when I was a young diplomat, very young diplomat, a very, very wise man once told me that if I want to become a boss one day, I have to learn how to say no to people. And it proved to be one of the most

helpful advisors I ever got. In the critical situations you need to have stamina to say no. But you also have to know how to say yes. That answers your question of course, right?

Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

Yes, I think that. And on the first question.

Dmytro Kuleba:

Yes, on the first question, the easiest thing of course is to blame everyone for making mistakes. And it sells on social media and sometimes even during lectures at Harvard. But life of course is more complicated. And these mistakes were not made because countries or officials or people were necessarily intending to make these mistakes. They were just misreading reality, misreading what history was telling them. And this is why I started my introduction, my remarks with the Chicken Kiev speech.

The whole system, and Paula, you must remember these times, the whole system of the United States did not read how the situation would evolve. You know that while George Bush was in Kiev, he even declined the plea to meet with Ukrainian politicians striving for independence because he didn't want to upset his friend, Mikhail Gorbachev, or the Gorby. I don't think George Bush was looking for an opportunity to make a mistake. Sometimes we just misread reality, and how to read reality is one of the most important skills.

The same goes for the second case that I brought up, Russia's appearance at the UN Security Council. I argue, and both the law and the lawyers on my side, that Russia's presence on the United Nations Security Council is illegitimate. Russia has no right to be there. But everyone turned a blind eye on that in 1991 because it was unimaginable to imagine UN Security Council without Russia. And Soviet Union and Russia were equalized while it was not the case. Ukraine was a founding member of the United Nations together with the Soviet Union so formally we could have claimed deceit in the UN Security Council and the Vitaright. And I assure you, the world would have been different if it was us and not the Russian there.

I think the biggest mistake, and going back to Azerbaijan and the Caucuses in general, I think the biggest mistake that the West made towards towards Russia, and also we did the same mistake, we could never imagine life without them one way or another. And this is why Russia was allowed to dominate in Caucuses. And you know the rest of the story.

Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

Minister, may I ask you, we have two more students, is it feasible to take the two other questions together?

Dmytro Kuleba:

Yes. And then I go, yeah.

Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

Perfect. Please come up, gentlemen. Let's take each of you. Please introduce yourself.

Speaker 3:

Thank you very much.

Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

The camera's there.

Speaker 3:

Thank you very much, Minister. Please allow me to... Wearing a mask because I'm a soar throat. I'm sorry. My name is Ken Janeer, from Japan. I'm a Japanese diplomat studying in Harvard Kennedy School, and I really want to ask you your candid and frank opinion about recent Japanese diplomatic posture against Ukraine. I know that Japan is the only G7 country where neither a prime minister or president nor a foreign minister visited Ukraine. Under such kind of circumstance, Japan have to hold the G7

meeting in this coming May, so what you ask? What do you want Japan to do for Ukraine? Or what do you hope for Japan to support Ukraine right now?

Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

Very clear. And please, if you'll come and introduce yourself.

Eric Rosenbach:

[foreign language 00:54:58]. It's really good to have you here today. It's a pleasure to see you, even if virtually. At the beginning of... Oh, actually I probably should introduce myself first. My name is [inaudible 00:55:08]. I'm an MPP one student here at the Harvard Kennedy School.

Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

Master's Public Policy [inaudible 00:55:13].

Eric Rosenbach:

Yeah, which is Masters of Public Policy. And my question for you is this. At the beginning of the call, you mentioned the challenge of having to still, even after one year of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, having to still convince countries to believe in the Ukrainian cause, specifically within the Global South. How do you think Ukraine can best rally support in the Global South for the Ukrainian cause?

Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

Two very good, very clear questions, and precise. Minister.

Dmytro Kuleba:

Well, don't expect a candid answer from a foreign minister about the position of a country that is presiding in the G7 while his country is at work and requires G7 support. I have excellent relations with my Japanese colleague. It is regrettable that the prime minister of Japan has not visited Ukraine yet. But we are working on that visit, and we see that Japanese colleagues are serious about making it happen. I think Japan's latest announcement of the support they have secured in their budget for Ukraine is very important. And I don't think that, I'm not concerned that the support that Japan is offering to Ukraine will slow down. As G7 presidency, they will continue to do their utmost to help Ukraine with what we need. I regret though that your constitution does not allow transfer of weapons. Japan has a lot of stuff that we need, and if your constitution allowed it, we would have gotten some necessary stuff.

On the second question, Global South is... Let me put it this way. Global South requires a serious and... [foreign language 00:57:42]? Cold headed. And cold headed analysis. First, there is no such thing as a unified position of the Global South. If you remember the Cold War days, there was the movement of non-alignment. Yes, they had unified position. Global South is not unified. Look back at the resolution passed in October 19, in October, last October, which secured 143 votes. Many Global South countries voted for in favor. Positions of countries of the Global South are nuanced, and every country deserves a special, special attention.

Second, positions of the Global South countries are shifting. They are dynamic. Very few countries are rock solid in their positions. They're dynamic and we are working with them. And third, I think that Ukraine, the Russian aggression against Ukraine brought Global South back in the big game of world diplomacy. Because before that, Global South was mostly about providing assistance and fighting for resources. But now look, everyone is fighting for the sympathy of countries belonging to Global South. Visits, talks, persuasion, everything is thrown into the battle.

We should neither overestimate nor underestimate the importance of the countries of the Global South in this struggle. The coalitions have been formed and they will remain as they are, more or less, until one of the sides, and it will be Ukraine, begins to prevail on the battlefield. The more successful we will be on the battlefield, the more certain countries will be drifting in the right direction. It's easy. Like in life, diplomacy is the same. People like to be on the winning side. They love siding with the winner. And many countries of the global side are still waiting to see who will be prevailing to take a more open stance.

Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

Minister Kuleba, we come at the end of our session. And let me just say your time that you have taken with every question and really being very clear about Ukraine's position, we're just very gratified to have you here virtually. And the fact that you took your time today to do this in the midst of what's taking place at the United Nations, we're most appreciative. Know, Eric, myself and all those, not only here in the room, but that are also online, just again, are very grateful for your presence. And let me just close by saying again, Slava Ukraini to you.

Dmytro Kuleba:

[inaudible 01:01:03]. Dear Eric, dear Paula, dear students, I really appreciate this opportunity. You cannot imagine how much I wanted to come to see you in person, and just to change the environment and to be in the university world instead of the walls of the offices at the United Nations where I spend most of my time. But I'm sure the day will come, and I will make it if you decide to invite me again. And I will be looking forward to seeing you in Ukraine too. Thank you very much. Stay safe.

Speaker 4:

Thank you, Ms. Minister. You're always welcome. You let us know and we'll make it happen.

Dmytro Kuleba:

Thank you. Bye bye.

Amb. Paula Dobriansky:

Thank you again. Thank you.

PART 4 OF 4 ENDS [01:01:47]