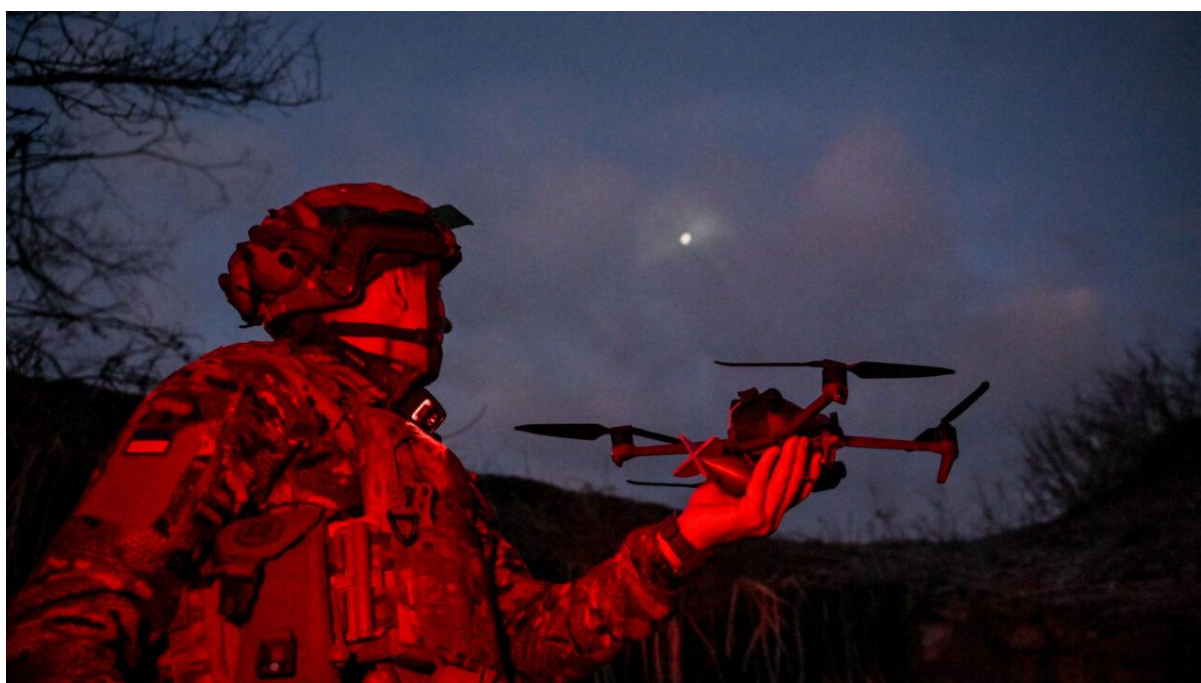




From Security Recipient to Security Provider: Ukraine's Strategic Evolution and Its Implications for the Southern Cone



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I. Executive Summary

A briefing held by Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Southern Cone representatives revealed a shift that extends well beyond the conflict with Russia.

While the war remains the central axis of Ukrainian foreign policy, the message conveyed by officials was considerably broader. Ukraine is beginning to redefine its place in the international system, not solely as a recipient of military assistance, but as a provider of security and related capabilities to third states. This transformation is visible across multiple

domains, including technological innovation, industrial cooperation, drone warfare, digital transformation, border security, institutional resilience, and even Antarctic cooperation.

II. Introduction

Since February 2022, much of the international debate on Ukraine has revolved around a single question: how can Ukraine be supported against aggression?

The briefing made clear, however, that Kyiv is no longer posing only that question. Ukraine's own position now poses a different one to its partners: what can Ukraine offer the world? The shift may appear subtle, but it represents a conceptual transformation of considerable significance. During the war's early years, Ukraine was perceived primarily as a recipient of financial, military, and humanitarian assistance.

Today it has become a provider of security and capabilities, positioning itself as a country able to transfer operational experience, technological innovation, institutional knowledge, and strategic capabilities developed under some of the most demanding conditions imaginable.

III. From Consumer to Security Provider

The briefing's central strategic message was precisely this shift in identity.

Officials insisted that Ukraine should no longer be understood solely as a country that receives international support. After more than four years of war, the country has developed knowledge and capabilities that virtually no other state in the world possesses. From Kyiv's perspective, these capabilities could be relevant to other states. They include:

1. drone warfare;
2. defense against hybrid threats;
3. digital transformation;
4. institutional resilience;
5. border security;
6. defense innovation.

This narrative aligns with a discussion that is beginning to take hold in Europe.

The *Munich Security Conference* itself has recently described Ukraine as a **security provider** [1], rather than merely a consumer of military assistance. Receiving assistance generates dependency. Transferring capabilities generates strategic relevance. Ukraine is moving toward the latter model.

IV. Drones Are Not the Product. The System Is the Product

One of the most striking aspects of the briefing was the way Ukraine presented its drone warfare experience. At no point was the message about simply selling technology. Quite the opposite: officials insisted that no country gains genuine military capability merely by acquiring drones.

What actually generates strategic advantage is an ecosystem built from radars, communications, command-and-control systems, operational doctrine, training, technological integration, and accumulated combat experience. Ukraine's strategy is not to sell drones, it is to transfer an entire operational architecture.

V. Beyond the War: Antarctica as a Foreign Policy Instrument

One of the least expected topics raised during the briefing was Antarctic cooperation, which at first glance might appear to be a purely scientific matter. Official documentation recently published by Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, however, shows that it forms part of the country's foreign policy. In 2026, Ukraine approved the **Strategy for Ensuring National Interests and the Development of Ukraine's Activities in Antarctica, the Arctic, and the World Ocean (2026–2035)** [2].

Antarctic presence is no longer understood solely as scientific research.

It is instead being redefined as a foreign policy instrument, a component of national security, a tool for international projection, and an element that strengthens Ukraine's geopolitical position.

Seen from this angle, the reference to Antarctica in a briefing aimed at the Southern Cone takes on an entirely different meaning. Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile are among the principal logistical gateways to the Antarctic continent. Cooperation with the Southern Cone could therefore prove key to Ukraine's foreign policy

VI. Latin America Is No Longer Only a Diplomatic Space

Officials highlighted the opening of new embassies, the region's expanding diplomatic footprint, and growing Latin American support in United Nations General Assembly resolutions.

All of this reflects a more active foreign policy in the region. The agenda presented during the briefing included technology, digital transformation, border security, innovation, scientific cooperation, and defense capabilities.

Ukraine is no longer seeking political backing alone. It is seeking to build long-term strategic relationships.

VII. Conclusion

Beyond the war itself, Ukraine finds itself amid a paradigm shift. For years, the dominant question was how to help Ukraine. That question still stands, but a growing number of actors are beginning to see Ukraine as a genuine provider of security and expertise. As a result, a different question is now emerging: what can Ukraine contribute to international security, innovation, and resilience?

The answer to that question will not shape Ukraine's future alone, it will also help define the security architecture, technological cooperation, and strategic alliances that emerge once the war ends

Bibliographical Notes

[1] *Münchener Sicherheitskonferenz richtet Event-Hub „Allies in Ankara“ am Rande des NATO-Gipfels 2026 aus.*

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[2] *Ukraine Approves Strategy for Activities in Antarctica, the Arctic, and the World Ocean for 2026–2035.* Embassy of Ukraine in Australia.

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