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Hard truths: Presidential elections are scheduled to take place next March, but war makes them uncertain.

Is Putin winning? It has been more than two years since fighting began in Ukraine. Some say that Ukraine is still no closer to winning.

What's happening?

Hundreds of thousands dead. Millions forced to leave their homes. But after nearly two years of war, **Ukraine** is running out of options.

Yet Ukraine's leader Volodymyr Zelensky remains clear: he will not give up. Ukraine will fight to the bitter end to take back its land after **Russia** invaded in February 2022.

Find out more

This week's *TIME* magazine cover story on Zelensky confirms what critics of the war have said for a long time — it is unwinnable for Ukraine.

In fact, many even say that Zelensky is wrong for refusing to think about holding peace talks with Russia. Some of the people saying this are Zelensky's closest advisors.

There was hope of a breakthrough against Russia. But now one Ukrainian military official says this is unlikely.

"We're out of options," says one of Zelensky's closest helpers. "We're not winning. But try telling him that." Added to this are the horrifying number of soldiers who have been killed or injured.

To many in the West, this may be surprising. Western media reports tell of the Russian army's troubles. How could it be that Russia is actually winning?

Many historians of war are much less surprised. Wars are often won by sticking it out despite the massive loss of life. And with a population of 143 million, Russia can do this for far longer than Ukraine.

Yes! Ukraine has not been able to force Russian soldiers out of their country. The West will one day stop sending help. And Russia has many more people — it can fight for longer than Ukraine in the end.

Is Putin winning?

Some say

Others think

No! Russia thought it could win this war easily. It failed. The country has lost a huge number of soldiers too and its people will get angrier.

Some people say

“Older men declare war. But it is the youth that must fight and die.”

Herbert Hoover (1874 – 1964), 31st president of the United States

Empty heading

What do you think?

Six steps to discovery

1. Connect

How do you feel about this story? - What do you know about the war in Ukraine? How does it make you feel?

2. Wonder

What questions do you have? - For example: Why did the war start?

3. Investigate

What are the facts? - Pick out one thing we know for certain and one thing we cannot say for sure from this story.

4. Construct

What is your point of view? - You are a new advisor to the Ukrainian president. What advice would you give him?

5. Express

What do others believe? - Split into small groups. Discuss the question: “Is peace possible?”

6. Reflect

What might happen next? - Write a letter to world leaders, giving them some advice on what to do next to stop fighting in Ukraine.

Glossary

Ukraine - A country in Eastern Europe. It was invaded by Russia in February 2022.

Russia - The largest country in the world by area. It has a population of 144 million people.