

The Debatable Efficiency of the Faits Accomplis

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Abstract

Territories change hands with wars or faits accomplis (land grabs). A fait accompli does not directly aim at war; instead, it is mainly used to exert pressure against the adversary and demand compensation. However, a fait accompli can lead to open warfare. Other faits accomplis bring permanent changes, and others temporary ones. Regarding the efficiency of faits accomplis, we examine two seemingly different cases, the case of Varosha, a town in Cyprus, and the case of the region of Crimea in Ukraine. Nevertheless, in both cases, the faits accomplis are linked to long-term broader conflicts. A detailed presentation of these cases allows a conclusion about the substance and efficiency of this strategy.

Keywords

Fait Accompli, Cyprus, Varosha, Crimea, Ukraine

1. The Strategy of Fait Accompli

In international relations, fait accompli is a dangerous maneuver of crisis management tactics involving the illegal occupation of a third-country territory and can lead to war. According to Van Evera (1998: p. 10), a fait accompli is halfway stepping into war. The provocative and usually unforeseen action at the adversary's expense tests the adversary's endurance and creates dilemmas for the way of handling. Retaliation by military means or recourse to diplomacy? In principle, creating a fait accompli is to win more without risking war. However, since the violation of the red lines of the adversary is an immediate challenge and increases the risk of using violence, attempts to create a fait accompli usually occur in areas with contested sovereignty and in the regions that have been grayed out before.

However, the response to a fait accompli depends on several factors. An important factor is the claimed area's strategic position and geopolitical interest.

Especially if the region is of interest to the big international players, in this case, a lot is at stake, especially global peace and security.

2. Varosha, the Fenced-Off Town on the Island of Cyprus

Outside the walls of Famagusta, in the area Gardens of Famagusta, which was destroyed in 1570 by the Venetians because of the Ottoman occupation, a new town began to be built after 1571. The Greek Cypriots inhabited this new town since only Turks lived inside the walls of Famagusta. The city got the name Varosha from the Turkish word *varos*, meaning suburb.

As is often the case, the “city of the unwanted” has grown beyond all expectations. During the 70s, Varosha showed rapid commercial and industrial development while it was a top tourist destination and the most prominent tourist resort in Cyprus. However, the enormous expansion of Varosha and its cosmopolitan air stopped abruptly in the summer of 1974 when the Turkish army invaded the Island. Before the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, the city of Varosha had a population of 39,000. On August 14, Turkey launched the second operation on the Island, the so-called “Attila II,” during which they advanced to Famagusta and other areas. As a result, thousands of residents left their homes for fear of massacre. Most of them left without taking anything with them, believing they would return home as soon as the situation calmed down. However, when the Turkish army took control of the area during the invasion, it fenced off and barred anyone except the Turkish Army and United Nations personnel.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 550 of 1984 entrusted the administration of Varosha to the United Nations, intending to resettle only the expelled inhabitants of Varosha. However, resolution 550 clearly states that it “considers attempts to settle any part of Varosha by people other than its inhabitants as inadmissible and calls for the transfer of that area to the administration of the United Nations” (UNCR 550/84, point 5, p. 13).

Varosha has been abandoned to decay all these years. As a result, Varosha is called a “ghost town.” The tall buildings and hotels are collapsing, everything has rusted, and the plants have penetrated abandoned houses and sidewalks. Even sea turtles are nesting on deserted beaches.

In the years that followed, until recently, Varosha was indeed the main negotiating paper¹ (Migdaloviz, 2007, p.CRS-5) in the hands of Turkey. By promising to return Varosha to its inhabitants and asking for compensation, the Republic of Cyprus has repeatedly granted rights to the occupying forces, hoping that these promises would come true. One such settlement plan was the Annan Plan. The Annan Plan promised the return of Varosha to the original inhabitants. However, most Greek Cypriots rejected the Annan Plan, considering it unjust.

Today, Turkey refrains from talks and negotiations on the Cyprus issue and illegally opens the Varosha coastal front. In October 2020, in defiance of United

¹Migdalovitz, C. 2007. Report for Congress. *Cyprus: Status of UN Negotiations and Related Issues*. Updated July 2007, *Congressional Research Center*. In fact, in successive rounds of negotiations, the opening of Varosha was directly linked to ensuring equal rights for the Turkish Cypriots.

Nations Security Council resolutions, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Turkish Cypriot leader Ersin Tatar announced the opening of the coastal front in Varosha. Specifically, on October 8, points were opened from the Turkish and Turkish Cypriot Army Officers' Club to the Golden Sands Hotel. In November 2020, Erdogan and the Turkish ambassador to the occupied territories visited Varosha. In addition, the main Kennedy Avenue was renamed Semih Sanjár, the Chief of General Staff of Turkey from 1973 to 1978, a period including the Turkish invasion.²

On November 26, 2020, the European Parliament called on Turkey to reverse its decision and resume negotiations to resolve the Cyprus issue based on a bi-communal, bi-zonal federation and called on the European Council to impose sanctions on Turkey if things do not work out. However, Turkey and the pseudo-state rejected the resolution, adding that Turkey would continue to protect its and Turkish Cypriots' rights.

On July 20, 2021, on the 47th anniversary of the Turkish invasion³, the Turkish Cypriot leader Ersin Tatar and the President of Turkey, Tayyip Erdogan, announced the lifting of the military regime in Varosha and the pilot opening of 3.5% of the enclosed area. He even called on the Greek Cypriot legal residents and owners to appeal to the Real Estate Committee of the pseudo-state. The immediate reaction of the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Nikos Anastasiadis, was that the discussion to open Varosha "alters or is an attempt to alter the status quo of Famagusta, as defined by resolutions 550 and 789, and the reactions will be similar"⁴. Three days later, as President of the U.N. Security Council at the time, France issued a presidential statement condemning Turkey's announcements on the further reopening of Varosha. The President's statement called for "the immediate reversal of that course of action and for the reversal of all steps taken on Varosha since October 2020" (*U.N.S.C. Resolutions 550 and 789 on the Varosha regime*)⁵.

On October 10, 2021, the U.N. Security Council called on Turkey to reverse its decision, while the President reaffirmed the Security Council's commitment to Resolutions 550 and 789. In addition, he called on the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, and the guaranteeing powers started a dialogue.

However, once again, the response from Turkey was negative, criticizing the decision of the Security Council and stating that the international community should take into account the events on the Island and not the propaganda of the

²Erdogan says Cyprus to stay divided, visits ghost town in Turkish held north.

<https://www.euractiv.com/section/global-europe/news/Erdoğan-says-Cyprus-to-stay-divided-visits-ghost-town-in-Turkish-held-north/>

³Erdogan, Tatar announce controversial plan to further reopen Cypriot Ghost town (20/07/2021). <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2021/07/erdogan-tatar-announce-controversial-plan-further-reopen-cypriot-ghost-town>

⁴Anastasiadis on Erdoğan-Tatar statements: It is an attempt to alter the status quo of Famagusta.... <https://www.worldstockmarket.net/anastasiadis-on-Erdoğan-tatar-statements-it-is-an-attempt-to-alter-the-status-quo-of-famagusta/>

⁵United Nations Security Council Resolution 789 of 1992, Statement by the President of the Security Council, S/PRST/2021/13, 23 July 2021.

Greek Cypriots.

According to what has been discussed recently in the E.U. Council of Foreign Ministers on December 14, 2021, in Brussels, the issue of illegal Turkish actions in the fenced-off city of Varosha is of concern to the Union; however, there was no political will for hard decisions. The German bloc in the E.U. continued to provide time credit to Turkey and downplayed the importance of a third country's actions to a member state's detriment. Specifically, Germany, Finland, Sweden, Holland, Estonia, Spain, and Italy disagreed on imposing sanctions on Turkey for what happened in Varosha. France, Belgium, Luxembourg, and Austria expressed the opposite view, citing the need to show solidarity with Cyprus and stressing that it would be a bad precedent to lead tolerance towards Turkey when it ignores U.N. decisions and violates international law. Notwithstanding the E.U. High Representative's efforts for a balanced approach, invoking solidarity with Cyprus remained a vague promise. Following this, the Council of the European Union concluded, confirming the E.U. timidity and the lack of determination of decision-making concerning Turkey. In particular, while resolutely imposing sanctions on Ukraine, Russia, or Belarus, it is hesitant to protect E.U. member states (Cyprus, Greece) systematically affected by Turkey's actions.

Concluding, although the international community has taken a stand against the division of the Island and is in favor of creating a communal and bi-zonal federation, Turkey prefers to insist on its original pursuit, the division. With a series of *faits accomplis*, Turkey has been claiming the division of Cyprus for the last fifty years.

Often, creating a *fait accompli* that causes upset but is not a direct challenge that justifies war involvement is the best way to implement a long-term strategic plan. The *salami* tactics for tackling a long-standing problem create a climate of doubt and gradually strengthen the aggressor's narrative. Turkey seems to have invested in the "salamization" of the Cyprus problem and is waiting for the conditions to mature. Time is primarily in favor of the one who does the *fait accompli*. If there is no immediate reaction, the affected party is usually driven to compromise and accept the change made unilaterally over time.

Moreover, when the generation that lived through the events will no more be in life, the memories will fade. The next generations either no longer have the same emotional attachment to the lost homeland or have created better conditions in the new settlements. However, does oblivion always facilitate compromising?

3. The Annexation of Crimea to Russia

Ukraine is the second-largest country in Europe after Russia.⁶ From the 19th century onwards, the Russian Empire, incorporated most of Ukraine, with the rest falling under Austro-Hungarian control. After a period of uninterrupted war and several attempts at independence (1917-1921), on December 30, 1922,

⁶Russia-Ukraine war in maps and charts: Live Tracker.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/2/28/russia-ukraine-crisis-in-maps-and-charts-live-news-interactive>

Ukraine emerged as one of the founding democracies of the Soviet Union. However, during the German occupation (1941-1944), the German leadership placed Ukraine directly under the German administration (Eastern Sector). Finally, in 1944, Ukraine was liberated by Soviet armed forces.

To the West, the Ukrainian territory of the Soviet Socialist Republic expanded shortly before and after World War II, with the annexation of Polish provinces occupied by the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact in 1939, and to the south in 1954 with the transfer of Crimea to the territory of Ukraine. One of the most severe nuclear accidents at the Chernobyl station happened in Ukraine on April 26, 1986. With this precedent and since Ukraine was a country with many nuclear weapons (the third biggest arsenal in the world) there was sincere concern about Ukraine's future after the collapse of the U.S.S.R. collapsed. After becoming independent again in 1991, Ukraine was invited to sign the Lisbon Protocol (May, 23, 1992), which required Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakstan to return their nuclear weapons and adhere to START and N.P.T.⁷ To encourage Ukraine to cooperate, in May 1993, the United States said that if Ukraine were to ratify START, Washington would provide more financial assistance.

However in 1993 the Russian Federation raised an issue concerning the status of Sevastopol⁸, after the submission of a complaint by the Minister of Affairs of Ukraine, at the 3256th meeting of the U.N.S.C. on July 20, 1993, the Great Powers pledged to preserve Ukraine's territorial integrity and guarantee its sovereignty.

Notwithstanding its neutrality declaration, Ukraine established a partnership with NATO (Partnership for Peace) in 1994 while maintaining a military alliance with Russia and other C.I.S. countries. Moreover, Ukraine, Russia, Britain, and the United States signed in Budapest a memorandum on December 5, 1994⁹, to guarantee Ukraine's accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (N.P.T.) as a non-nuclear weapon state. The memorandum welcomed the accession of Ukraine to the N.P.T. as a non-nuclear-weapon State, as well as Ukraine's commitment to eliminate all nuclear weapons from its territory within a specified period.

Overcoming domestic objections to the conditions and trade-offs for surrendering its nuclear weapons, and after intense diplomatic activity, by 1996, Ukraine handed over all its nuclear warheads to Russia in exchange for economic aid and security assurances¹⁰.

Based on the principles of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe¹¹, the four signatory parties reaffirmed their commitment to Ukraine to respect its independence, sovereignty, and the existing borders of Ukraine. They also reiterated their commitment to abstain from any

⁷Daryl Kimball on Russia Nuclear Capability. Arms Control Association Executive Director. *C-SPAN Washington Journal*, 2/26/2022.

⁸The Russian Federation sought the annexation of Sevastopol because it wanted to maintain the existing base for the fleet of the Russian Federation (Zaborsky, 1995).

⁹Budapest Memorandum on Security in Assurances.

¹⁰Kimball, D. 2022. Russia Nuclear Capability. Arms Control Association Executive Director. *C-SPAN Washington Journal*, 2/26/2022.

¹¹Helsinki Final Act (August, 1, 1975).

economic coercion that might benefit themselves at the expense of circumventing the sovereign rights of Ukraine. Moreover, in exchange for assurances, Ukraine agreed on total nuclear disarmament, giving up the third-largest nuclear weapons stockpile in the world. Moreover, during his presidency, Leonid Kuchma supported Ukraine's European course and stated that his country wanted to sign an association agreement and join the E.U. by 2011.

Russia, although it participated in the proceedings, did not stop having visions for Ukraine, seeking to influence in many ways the political life of the country.

When the pro-Russian Viktor Yanukovich was declared the winner in the 2004 presidential elections, there was a strong reaction from the opposition representative Viktor Yushchenko. As a result, the dispute was referred to the Supreme Court. As expected, the Supreme Court ruled that the presidential election's outcome was primarily manipulated.

Moreover, Yushchenko's sudden illness nearly cost him his life was attributed to poisoning by T.C.C.D. Dioxin and raised suspicions of Russian involvement. The events triggered the outbreak of the Orange Revolution. The Orange Revolution brought Viktor Yushchenko and Yuliya Tymoshenko to power and sent pro-Russian Viktor Yanukovich into opposition. While an invisible war was waged with great intensity to secure the presidential elections in Ukraine, a considerable effort was orchestrated to discredit Victor Yushchenko and Julia Tymoshenko with Russia's help. In this context, sophisticated means were used to apply psychological pressure and guidance to the voters.

While political instability prevailed with alterations in Yanukovich and Tymoshenko's power, disputes with Russia resulted in the cessation of all gas supplies from Russia to Ukraine in 2006 and again in 2009. This blockade had an economic impact on Ukraine and on countries that received gas through Ukraine. However, in 2010 the situation seemed to normalize with Viktor Yanukovich's re-election as President by a large majority (48% of votes).

In November 2013, President Yanukovich decided to suspend the E.U.-Ukraine Association Agreement preparations, sparking strong Kyiv protests focused on Independence Square (Maidan). The protesters asked for the President and his government's resignation, accusing them of serving Russia's plans and demanding the Treaty with the European Union. After January 16, 2014, the events turned violent with the passing of laws against rallies by the then government. Anti-government protesters stormed government buildings in Kyiv. Ninety-eight people were killed and thousands injured during the riots on February 18 - 20, 2014. Hundreds of protesters were arrested by the Police and stormed a rally in riot gear. On February 20, 2014, after the end of a short truce, bloody incidents and a war with weapons broke out in Kyiv, the fight against the people. Crowds gathered in Independence (Maidan) Square when armed Police clashed with protesters and searched the area for casualties and escalating tensions. Supporters of the far-right "Right Sector" were among the most militant protesters, resorting to verbal and physical violence and blackmailing government officials into resigning. On February 21, 2014, with the intervention of the

E.U., the Foreign Ministers of Poland, Germany, and England agreed with Yanukovich on a four-point transitional agreement.

Russia maintained a cautious stance, while Putin appeared to have “emptied” Yanukovich. There were also typical statements by Russia’s Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, which had two readings. Specifically, without directly attributing responsibilities and removing the person charged for tension (Yanukovich). After the Winter Olympic Games (23/2/2014), which Putin attended uninterruptedly, Russia took action, surprising the other big players.

On March 1, Russian President Vladimir Putin received the Russian parliament’s approval to send Russian troops to Ukraine, specifically to the Crimean Peninsula. In the following days, Russian troops took control of most of Crimea, and the transitional Kyiv government declared a general mobilization, describing Russia’s actions as a declaration of war. Crimea’s local parliament called a referendum on March 16, 2014, on the region’s autonomy or Union with Russia. Even though the United Nations considered the referendum illegal, Crimean residents participated “en masse” and voted 97% in favor of the annexation to Russia. Based on the ballot results, Crimea was re-established with celebrations in Russia on 20/3/2014.

Russia’s entire operation in Crimea was swift, confident, and, most likely, in executing a pre-existing plan. Russian forces waged a bloody war against Ukrainian forces in eastern Ukraine’s Donbas region for more than five years. The conflict claimed more than 13,000 lives, led nearly two million people to flee their homes, and caused extensive property damage. France and Germany worked together to mediate peace but failed to enact a lasting ceasefire, let alone a political settlement.

Moscow’s primary goal in Ukraine was to bring the former Soviet democracy back on track. In February 2014, European protesters overthrew Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich, who had enjoyed the Kremlin’s support. Russian special forces responded by occupying the Ukrainian Peninsula of Crimea. The regional authorities held a hasty and illegal referendum to join Russia, and in March 2014, Russia officially annexed Crimea, a move that most people condemned. The reunification of Crimea in 2014 with Russia (to which it belonged until 1954) is something that, for Ukraine and a significant part of the International Community, is considered an illegal occupation. Nonetheless, the referendum’s result legitimized the annexation for the Russian side. A side effect of the annexation of Crimea is that the Azov Sea has become one of the world’s hottest zones.

Since 2014, after the annexation of Crimea to Russia, both sides of the Kerch Strait have belonged to Russia. Despite the agreement signed in 2003 by Vladimir Putin with Leonid Kutsma to regulate the Azov Sea regime, Russia gained complete control of the straits and the Azov Sea. This agreement of 2003 stipulated that the two countries share Azov and jointly exploit the passage from the Black Sea to the Sea of Azov.¹² Besides, it specified that there should be a prior

¹²What makes the Black Sea so strategically important? Defense News.

<https://www.defensenews.com/naval/2022/02/25/what-makes-the-black-sea-so-strategically-important/>

notification from the other country whenever there are warships. In the case of Crimea, Russia not only applied all the standard instruments (military deployment, passportization, and responsibility to protect)¹³ to control an area but also made decisive steps to legitimize its actions. First, it held a referendum to confirm that the people were in favor and swiftly advanced the annexation of Crimea into Russia.

The U.S. responded by imposing economic sanctions on Russia. The E.U. has also imposed economic sanctions against Russia in specific financial areas and linked sanctions to the Minsk agreements¹⁴ full implementation. As a result, economic sanctions have been extended to July 31, 2020. Economic sanctions apply to a) restricting the access of some Russian banks and companies to the E.U.'s primary and secondary capital markets, b) banning arms exports and imports, c) banning the export of dual-use goods, and d) giving Russia access to certain sensitive technologies and services used for oil research and production. Russia reacted by imposing sanctions against several countries, including a total ban on food imports from the E.U., United States, Norway, Canada & Australia. The sanctions against Russia are still in effect, and it seems that they will be lifted if only Moscow fulfills the Minsk II agreements.

The sanctions caused significant economic damage to some E.U. countries Greece included and Russia. At the same time, Putin accused the United States of conspiring with Saudi Arabia to reduce oil prices. Due to the sanctions, Russia's economic losses amounted to some 0.5% - 1.5% of the G.D.P. growth and, in a way, prevented the continuation of Russian military activities in Ukraine. Following the signature of the Minsk 2 Agreement¹⁵, although Putin agreed to ease tensions and despite Russia's difficult economic situation, he hastened funding for the construction in 25 months of the enormous double bridge (road, rail) that connects the Kerch Strait access to the Azov Sea. Thus, Russia created a *fait accompli* to continue to control Crimea and the entire Caucasus region.

To counter such challenges, foreign policy officials usually resort to the imposition of sanctions. It is simpler to impose sanctions than to do nothing. However, in reality, the sanctions are not as efficient as expected. Great powers such as China and Russia bypass the sanctions easily. In particular, China and Russia found alternative trading partners. Moreover, China retaliated against the U.S. by lowering tariffs on the European Countries, and Russia counter-sanctioned European food imports to retaliate against European exporters and stimulate domestic production (Drezner, 2021: p. 149).¹⁶

Possibly taking advantage of the momentum from the changes in the U.S and

¹³Souleimanov et al., 2018. Unrecognized states as a means of coercive diplomacy? Assessing the role of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Russia's foreign policy in the South Caucasus. Routledge.

¹⁴The Minsk Agreements deal with the cessation of the conflict and the restoration of peace in Ukraine.

¹⁵Certain political wordings of the agreement Minsk II clearly favored Russia, especially, the provisions on special status in certain areas of Donbas (Dunkan, 2020).

¹⁶Drezner, D., 2021. The United States of Sanctions. The Use and Abuse of Economic Coercion. *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.100, N°5, pp. 142-154.

German administrations, on February 24, 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine, seeking to repeat what it had done in Crimea through an ultimate blitz war. However, the fight continues today despite the initial predictions of an easy victory. The ferocious resistance of the Ukrainians and the full support of the West have put Russia and Europe to a severe test.

This war is significantly different from what has happened before in similar cases. First, the West has not been at least overtly involved militarily but has supported Ukraine with massive amounts and war supplies. In parallel, the E.U imposed escalating sanctions^{17,18} on Russia. Second, there was a universal recognition from the West that Zelenskyi is fighting to protect Ukraine's territorial integrity and independence. Third, it is worth mentioning that, after ten months of the brutal war, Zelenskyi continues to inspire the people of Ukraine to fight "for altars and hearths." Fourth, the war in Ukraine became a confrontation between Democracy and Autocracy. Fifth, on the pretext that Zelenskyi's government was a Nazi government, Russia initially opted for a war to overthrow Zelenskyi's government and bring the whole country under its control. However, when this prospect appeared not feasible, Russia resorted to the well-known strategy of annexing specific areas (Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson regions)¹⁹. Sixth, Putin cannot accept leaving the battlefield without gains. If he can't achieve the initial plan, he can settle for a minor conquest, hoping to return to better times (salami tactics)^{20,21} Seventh, it is the first time since the 1962 invasion that Russia has threatened to use nuclear weapons.

Finally, this proxy war has already created the most severe energy crisis that Europe has experienced. No one can predict how this war will end and its consequences. However, we are heading into an era of enormous upheaval and change in the world arena. It is visible that revisionist forces claim changes in the status quo and contemporary arrangements for their benefit. In order to justify their actions and ensure a semblance of legitimacy, they construct scenarios

¹⁷European Council, Council of the European Union. EU restrictive measures against Russia over Ukraine (since 2014). On 6th October 2022 the EU adopted its latest package (8th) against Russia over the illegal annexation of Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson regions.

¹⁸European Council, Council of the European Union. Timeline-EU restrictive measures against Russia over Ukraine.

According to the above-mentioned timeline of discussions on the imposition of restrictive measures against Russia over Ukraine, from 3 March 2014 until 6 October 2022 the EU Council discussed this issue 95 times and decided on the imposition of new sanctions or extending their application. The restrictive measures concerned bans of all kinds and over time they covered all kinds of economic or commercial activity, of the state or of specific persons.

After the invasion of Russia in Ukraine, the restrictive measures have been tightened to the highest degree and it is typical that in the space of eight months, 8 packages of measures have been adopted and implemented. The sanctions have put both sides in a difficult position.

¹⁹The instrumentalization of Abkhazia and South Ossetia as a means to put pressure on Georgia's Government (Souleimanov et al., 2018: p. 2).

²⁰Altman, D. 2015. The Fait Accompli in Interstate Crises: Land Grabs from 1918 to 2007 (p. 17).

²¹Russia favors the emergence of de facto states such as Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Nagorno Karabakh, and Transnistria to maintain its influence over its neighborhood (Heritage Foundation 2016 cited in Souleimanov et al., 2018: p. 6) and limit the integration by Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan Azerbaijan and Moldavia (Yemelieianova, 2015, Deyermiond 2016, Souleimanov et al., 2018: p. 6).

about hypothetical enemies who threaten them and claim that there is a *juste cause* for their intervention to settle things.

4. Conclusion

Creating a *fait accompli* that causes upset but is not a direct challenge that justifies war involvement is the best way to implement a long-term strategic plan. The *salami* tactics for tackling a long-standing problem create a climate of doubt and gradually strengthen the adversary's narrative. To justify their actions and ensure a semblance of legitimacy, the adversaries construct scenarios about hypothetical enemies who threaten them and claim that there is a *juste cause* for their intervention to settle things. However, a *fait accompli* is a severe provocation and an open invitation to war. At any rate, the response to a *fait accompli* is necessary to stop the provocations, reverse the effects, and discourage the repetition of *fait accompli*.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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