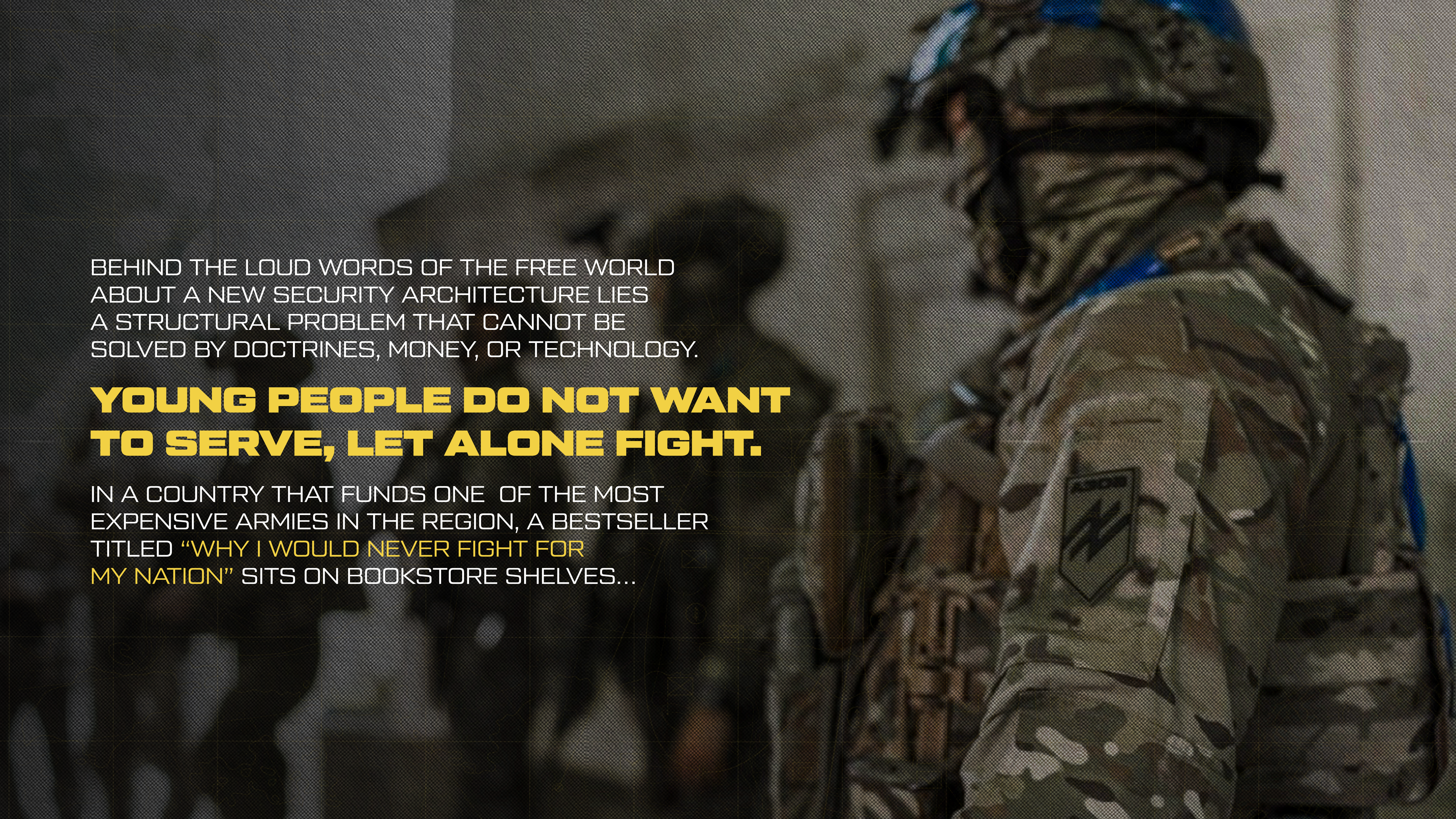




COMPREHENSIVE DEFENCE AS A SET OF INDIVIDUAL DEFENCES: A REVOLUTIONARY EDUCATION REFORM

PHD, MAJ. IHOR YAKUBOVSKYI
FIRST CORPS AZOV OF THE NATIONAL GUARD OF UKRAINE

A soldier in camouflage gear and a helmet is looking down at a young child. The soldier's uniform has a patch on the sleeve. The child is looking up at the soldier. The background is dark and out of focus.

BEHIND THE LOUD WORDS OF THE FREE WORLD
ABOUT A NEW SECURITY ARCHITECTURE LIES
A STRUCTURAL PROBLEM THAT CANNOT BE
SOLVED BY DOCTRINES, MONEY, OR TECHNOLOGY.

**YOUNG PEOPLE DO NOT WANT
TO SERVE, LET ALONE FIGHT.**

IN A COUNTRY THAT FUNDS ONE OF THE MOST
EXPENSIVE ARMIES IN THE REGION, A BESTSELLER
TITLED “WHY I WOULD NEVER FIGHT FOR
MY NATION” SITS ON BOOKSTORE SHELVES...



HOW RUSSIA TURNS THE ETHICS OF AN OPEN SOCIETY AGAINST IT

Over recent decades, the Kremlin has methodically cultivated within European societies a peculiar brand of "pacifism" – not as an ethical choice, but as a weapon turned against those societies themselves.

The strategic objective: that at the critical moment, democracies would find themselves internally fractured, with their citizens' willingness to defend national sovereignty reduced to a minimum.

NARRATIVE

TARGET AUDIENCE

GOAL

**"THIS ISN'T
YOUR WAR"**

POLITICALLY
DISENGAGED YOUTH

FOSTER INDIFFERENCE
TOWARD NATIONAL
DEFENCE

**"THE ARMY
IS A PRISON"**

INDIVIDUALISTS

CULTIVATE AVERSION
TO DISCIPLINE

**"RESISTANCE
IS FUTILE"**

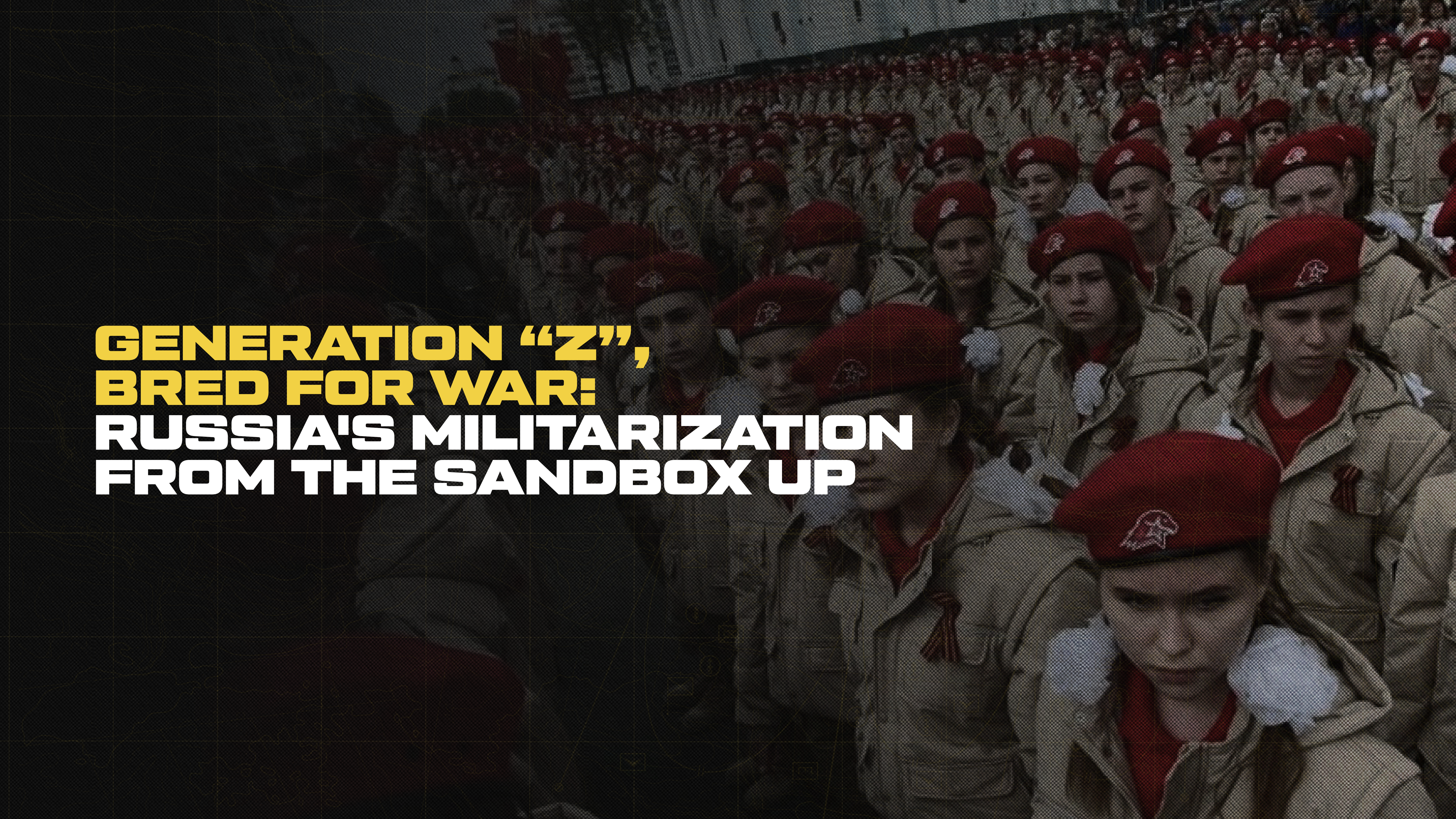
FEARFUL OR
ANXIOUS YOUTH

PARALYZE THE WILL TO
RESIST BY INSTILLING
FEAR OF RUSSIA

**"THE STATE WILL
BETRAY YOU"**

PROTEST-
ORIENTED YOUTH

ERODE TRUST
BETWEEN CITIZENS
AND INSTITUTIONS

A large group of young Russian soldiers in uniform and red berets marching in formation. The soldiers are wearing tan jackets and red berets with a white star emblem. They are marching in a dense, organized line, filling the frame from the foreground to the background. The background shows a large crowd of people, possibly spectators or other military personnel, under a bright sky.

**GENERATION "Z",
BRED FOR WAR:
RUSSIA'S MILITARIZATION
FROM THE SANDBOX UP**



THE SCALE OF INVESTMENT IN THIS STRATEGY IS INDUSTRIAL

In 2025 alone, Russia spent over \$2 billion on propaganda content and programs targeting children and young people. Direct spending on information warfare against Ukraine reached **\$1.4 billion** last year. This is not "fake news" – this is operations in the cognitive domain, aimed at dismantling societal will.





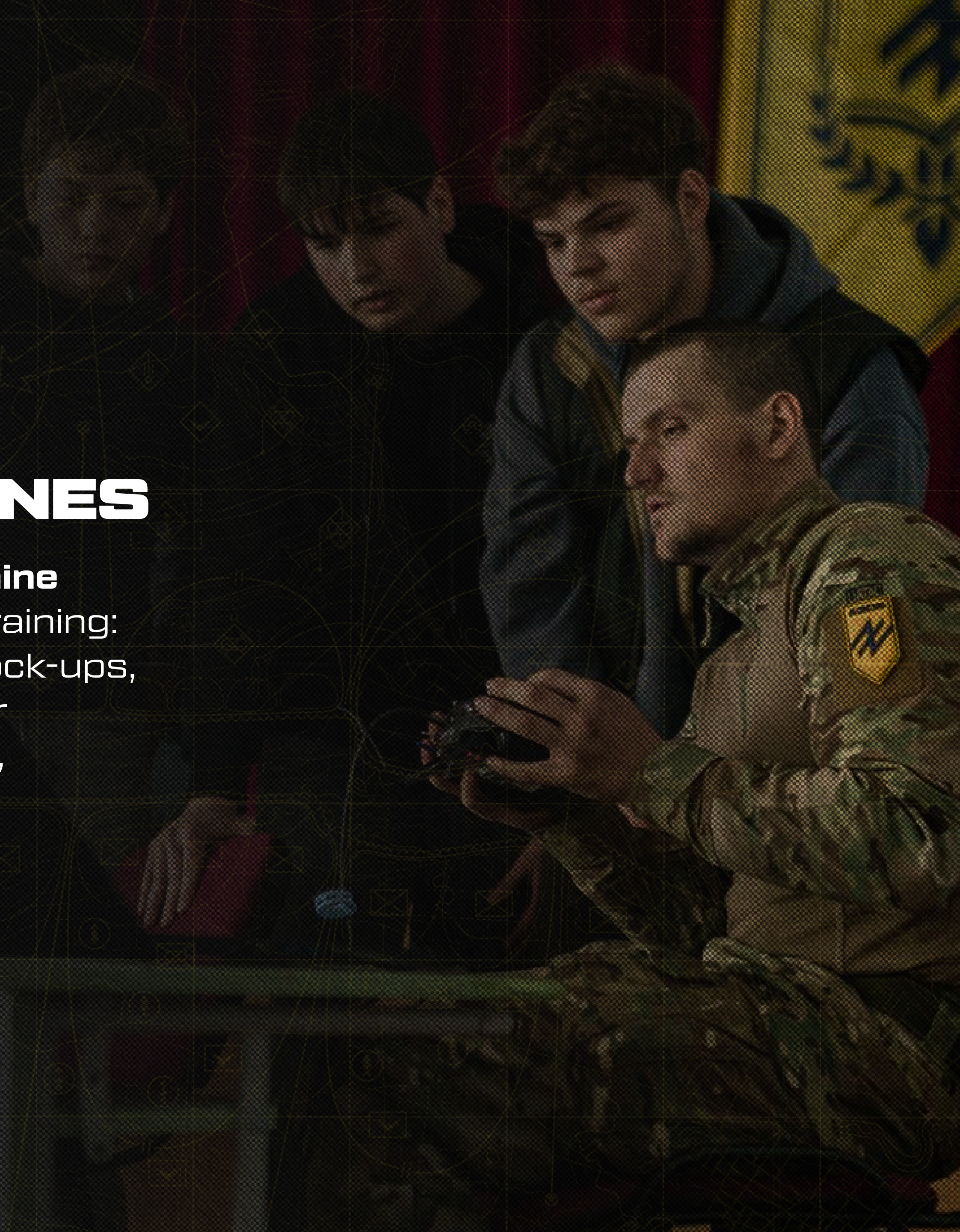
In Mariupol, we saw how Russian propaganda was poisoning the minds of young people step by step, and we understood: **if we let them capture a teenager's mind today, tomorrow that teenager will choose flight or surrender over resistance to the invader.**

More than a decade ago, we began the fight for the consciousness of our fellow civilians – above all, the youth – through summer camps, military training, and the work of the Khorunzha Service.

The direct result of this work became evident in 2022: dozens of those raised through the Mariupol programs took up arms in defence of their city and country without hesitation. **Some of them today are commanders at various levels – the backbone of the unit.** This is the outcome of systematic work that began eight years before the full-scale invasion.

REFORMING "DEFENSE OF UKRAINE": FROM ALUMINUM GRENADES TO TACTICAL DRONES

Until 2024, the mandatory school subject **Defense of Ukraine** remained a Soviet relic. It was outdated pre-conscription training: the cult of the "Great Patriotic War", aluminum grenade mock-ups, and dull, irrelevant theory delivered by a PE or shop teacher who often didn't understand the material himself. At worst, it was taught by a Soviet army veteran who took pleasure in watching children march and memorize regulations.



**AT THE REQUEST OF UKRAINE'S
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE,
AZOV JOINED THE REFORM OF THE
"DEFENSE OF UKRAINE" SUBJECT
A YEAR AGO – AND THE RESULTS
SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES.**

963

dedicated hubs for the Defense of Ukraine subject established across the country – spaces within schools equipped with all the functional zones needed for the course.

70%

of classes are practical – tactics, UAVs, communications, tactical medicine, counter-PSYOP, civil protection, and civic education. Instead of memorizing regulations – life-saving skills.

15%

of all subject teachers nationwide already retrained by Azov instructors.

400,000+

high-school students mastering real skills in modern facilities – 65% of the total.

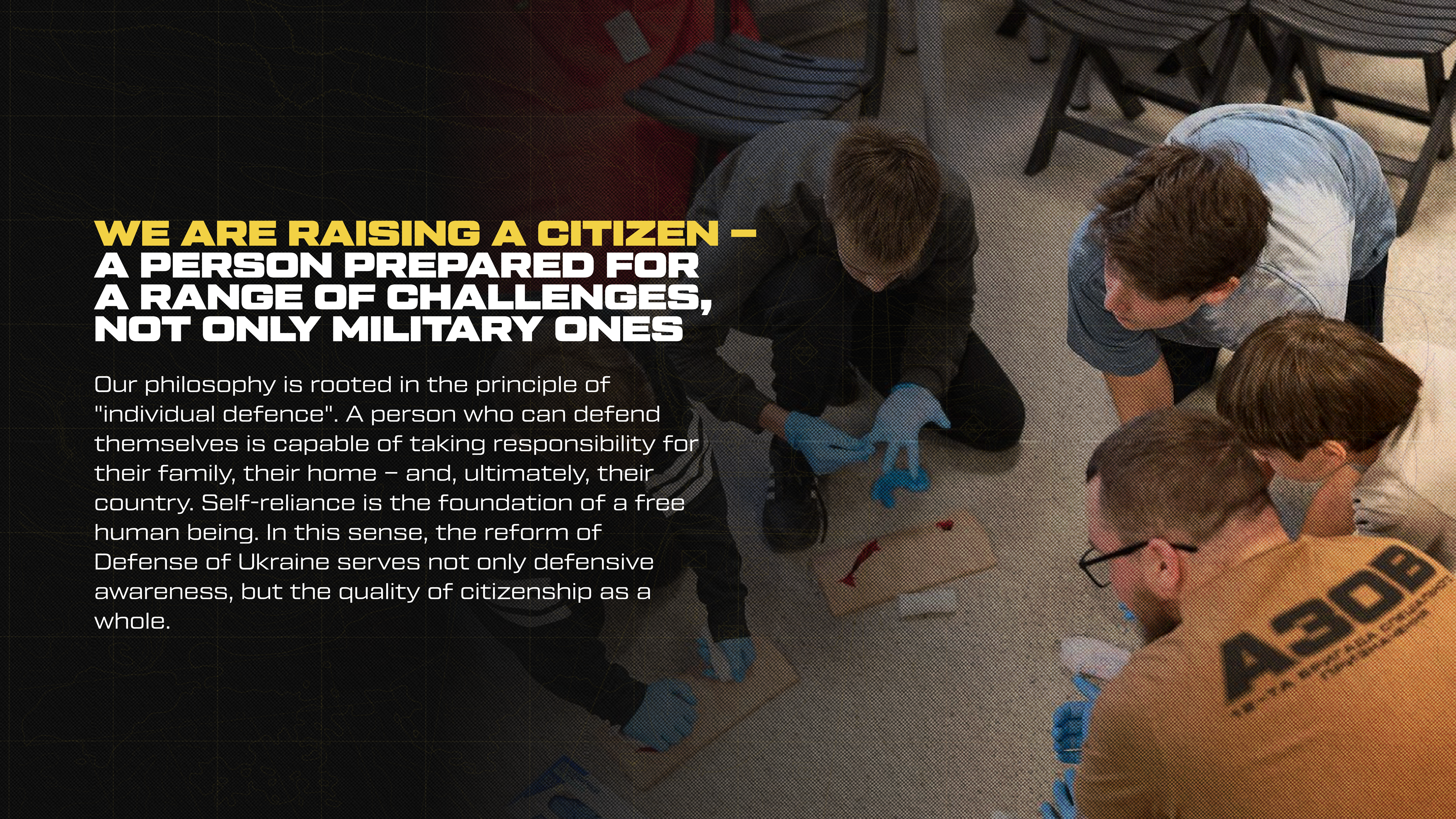
UAH 2B+

state investment in equipment as of 2026.

UAH 100M

invested in upskilling teachers across all program modules.

**NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR,
COVERAGE WILL RISE TO 80%,
AND FROM 2027 – 100% OF
ALL HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENTS
WILL BE REACHED**



**WE ARE RAISING A CITIZEN –
A PERSON PREPARED FOR
A RANGE OF CHALLENGES,
NOT ONLY MILITARY ONES**

Our philosophy is rooted in the principle of "individual defence". A person who can defend themselves is capable of taking responsibility for their family, their home – and, ultimately, their country. Self-reliance is the foundation of a free human being. In this sense, the reform of Defense of Ukraine serves not only defensive awareness, but the quality of citizenship as a whole.

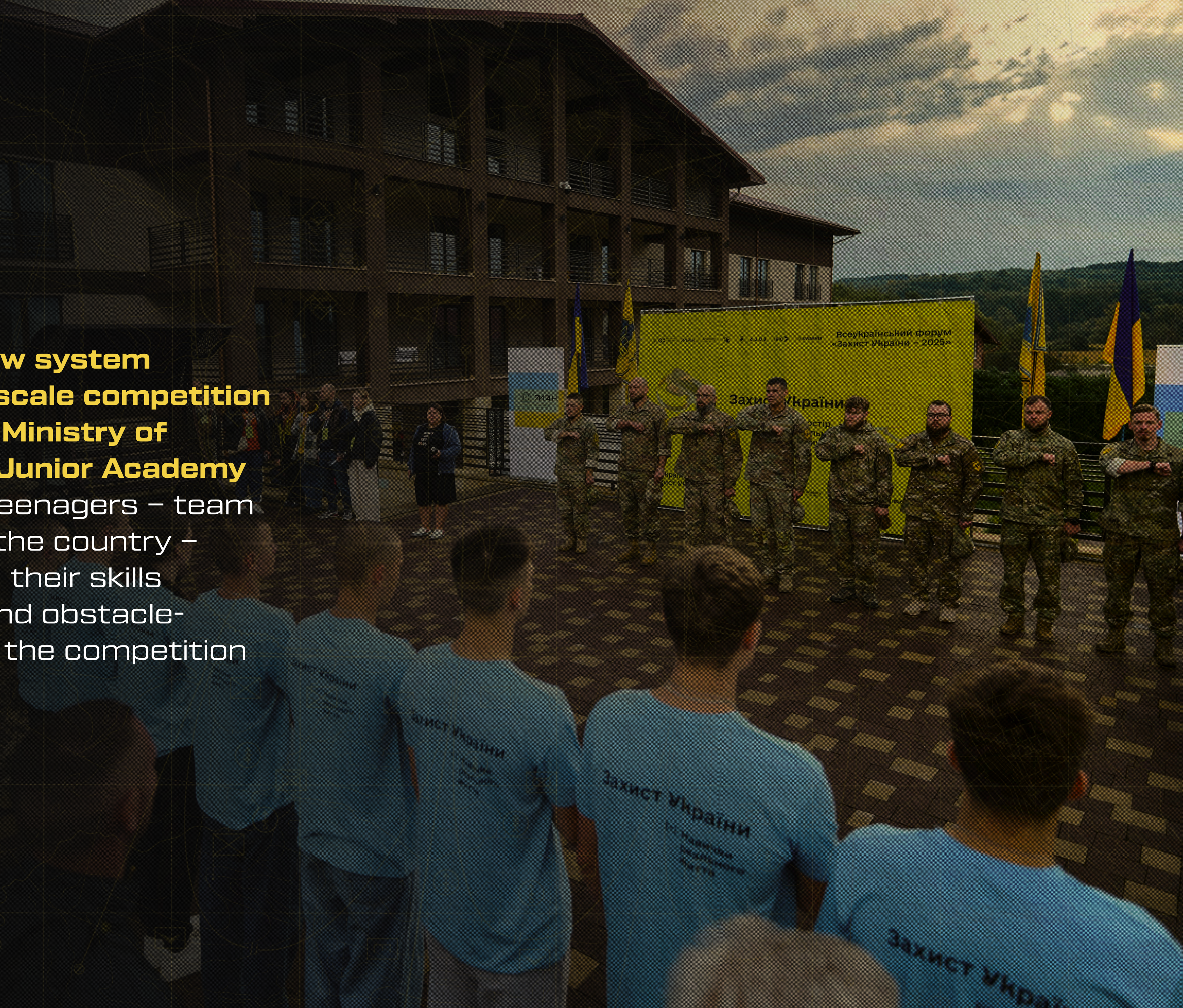


Захист України

To make sure the reform works in practice and not just on paper, Azov, together with representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science, conducts regular monitoring visits across the regions. Over the past year, we have covered 17 oblasts and more than 100 Defense of Ukraine hubs.



The strongest proof that the new system is working came with the large-scale competition we organized together with the Ministry of Education and Science and the Junior Academy of Sciences in 2025. Over 150 teenagers – team members from every corner of the country – spent three days demonstrating their skills in marksmanship, UAV piloting, and obstacle-course navigation. From now on, the competition will become an annual event.





THE NEXT FRONTIER: UNIVERSITIES AND NATIONAL RESISTANCE

The continuation of the school reform is a new university-level discipline: Foundations of National Resistance. A school graduate who has completed the updated Defense of Ukraine course must receive the next level of knowledge and skills in higher education.

The strategic conclusion is simple: as long as Russia exists in its current form, every coming generation of Ukrainians must be ready to fight back. Systematic work with young people is a foundational element of the national defense architecture – on par with air defence, missile programs, and the defence-industrial complex.



TOTAL DEFENCE IS THE SUM OF CITIZENS' "INDIVIDUAL DEFENCES"

The process of raising a citizen ready to defend takes time – far longer than the development cycle of a new type of UAV – yet this capability can be lost in an instant.

In early 2022, the whole world heard and was inspired by the words "Be brave like Ukraine." With full conviction, we can say that bravery is not enough.

**BE READY
LIKE UKRAINE**