

Poland's promise to Ukraine

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President of the Republic of Poland, President of Ukraine, and President of Lithuania

Carilyn Pointer - Poland has promised to deliver four [Soviet-designed](#) MIG fighters to Ukraine. These will be the first warplanes sent by a NATO country since Russia's invasion over a year ago. Originally, Poland promised such fighters months ago, but until now hasn't fulfilled that promise. Understanding the concept of power explains the significance of this aid, and its possible implications on the war.

[Material power](#) looks at things to define power. This power can be defined as national industrial strength, educational level, or military strength. In the context of the Russian-Ukraine war, the warplanes, financial assistance, and other weapons offered in support of Ukraine are examples of material power. While material power can certainly help win battles, it is the relational dynamic between the participating countries that shapes the final outcomes of war. Otherwise known as [relational power](#). Relational power focuses less on the amount of material things, and instead how material power is used as countries interact. Essentially, it teaches us that physical expressions of power are only important when relationships are formed between those trying to gain power. This explains why the military aid being sent is so crucial to Ukraine, because the aid represents relational strength and allies. By showing they are continually gaining support from other powerful countries and coalitions, Ukraine reinstates its power in the fight against Russia. The willingness of the international community to support Ukraine in response to the invasion will ultimately be the deciding factor in who wins this war. That is because this

war is as much about the power relationships going on between the countries as it is the missiles exchanged.

Part of Poland's hesitation in gifting the warplanes, was that they wanted to do it as a part of a coordinated response with other countries. The coordination did not become a reality, so Poland decided to independently send the planes in hope it would convince other countries to follow suit. To some extent this has worked. After months of hesitation, Germany has sent advanced battle tanks to Ukraine. However, some countries such as the U.S. still hesitate to send F-16s, though the reasoning has not been fully disclosed.