

Finlandization

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In news— In order to end the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine, France's President is said to have suggested Finlandization as "one of the models on the table"(he denied it later).

What is Finlandization?

- **Finlandization refers to the policy of strict neutrality between Moscow and the West** that Finland followed during the decades of the Cold War.
- **The principle of neutrality was rooted in the Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance (or YYA Treaty, from the Finnish "Ystävyys-, yhteistyö- ja avunantosopimus") that Finland signed with the USSR in April 1948.**
- Article 1 of the treaty (translated) reads: *"In the eventuality of Finland, or the Soviet Union through Finnish territory, becoming the object of an armed attack by Germany or any state allied with the latter (meaning, essentially, the United States), Finland will, true to its obligations as an independent state, fight to repel the attack"*(if necessary, with the assistance of or jointly with, the Soviet Union).
- In (these) cases, the Soviet Union will give Finland the help that it requires, subject to mutual agreement between the contracting parties.
- The 1948 treaty formed the basis of Helsinki-Moscow relations until 1992, when Finland signed a new agreement with post-Soviet Russia.
- It lay at the heart of Finland's foreign policy doctrine especially when Juho Kusti Paasikivi (1946-56) and Urho Kekkonen (1956-82) were President, and is known in international relations studies as the "Paasikivi-Kekkonen line".
- From the perspective of Finland – whose capital Helsinki

is situated just across the Gulf of Finland from St Petersburg (Leningrad) – the treaty protected it from being attacked or incorporated into the USSR like the Baltic and eastern European states.

- It allowed the country to pursue the path of democracy and capitalism while staying out of the conflict between the great powers.
- Finland did not participate in the Marshall Plan, the post-War European recovery programme named after President Harry S Truman's Secretary of State George C Marshall, which promoted the idea of shared interests and cooperation between the US and Europe. It took neutral positions on matters on which the Soviet Union and the West disagreed.
- It stayed aloof from NATO and European military powers, and used this positioning to ward off pressure from Moscow to become part of the Soviet bloc or the Warsaw Pact.