

SYNERGING



ENERGIES

BLACK SEA SECURITY

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**IN FOCUS:
OCCUPIED CRIMEA**

**IN FOCUS:
POLISH VISION OF TRIMARIUM**

**IN FOCUS:
SOUTH CAUCASUS**

Essay of the Book

"Wars-XXI: Russia's PolyHybression"

*Re-thinking conceptual approaches
Human Security vs. National Security*

*Retrospective of the "Black Sea Security":
Dmytro Shtyblikov. 2008*



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H A P P Y B I R T H D A Y !



D. SHTYBLYKOV

**CREATORS OF THE BLACK SEA SECURITY
HAVE BEEN KEPT IN PRISON FOR MORE THAN A YEAR
BY THE KREMLIN**



O. BESSARABOV

Founder - the Center for assistance to the geopolitical problems and Euro-Atlantic cooperation of the Black sea region studies NOMOS (Sevastopol)

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FOREWORD

Dear readers,

You hold the anniversary thirtieth issue of the Black Sea Security magazine. The second issue, which we've released without our Sevastopol colleagues Dmytro Shtyblykov and Oleksii Besarabov. As can be seen from the cover, Crimea - the Ukrainian peninsula in the Black Sea occupied by Russia, is in the focus of attention. The editorial board of the magazine not accidentally decided to dedicate this number to Crimea. It is there, in the occupied territory, Russia continues to prepare for a new throw of polyhybression — multi-frontal aggression of a hybrid type against the West. The peninsula has already become the bridgehead for Russian interventions in the Middle East. About militarization of Crimea, its scale and consequences read in the work of our partners from The Maidan of Foreign Affairs Fund specially for the Black Sea Security.

The Crimean human rights group outlined another important aspect of the peninsula under occupation - the militarization of the social life in Crimea. In this issue, we pay particular attention to the Kremlin's repressive policies towards dissidents, Crimean Tatars, and the brutal neglect of human rights by Russia.

The UN report, the key fragments of which we present in this issue, eloquently confirms the anti-human nature of the Putin regime. For us, this is an obvious thing, since two members of the editorial board of the Black Sea Security were imprisoned by the occupants on their native Crimean land from November 9, 2016.

At the occasion, we wish to send a message of birthday greetings to Dmytro Shtyblykov and Oleksii Besarabov. On November 8, Dmytro has met his 47th and on December 5 Oleksii has met his 41st anniversary. In this issue, our retrospective view is presented by Shtyblykov's article, published in 2008 on the pages of our magazine under the eloquent and prophetic titled "Russian-Georgian conflict. Is Ukraine the Next?". Clearly there is truth in the saying that a prophet is not without honor save in his own country... We hope that by the joint efforts with the assistance of the international community our colleagues will meet

their next birthdays on the land of Freedom, in Ukraine.

In this issue, we put materials devoted to protecting Kremlin's political prisoners who are deprived of their liberty in the occupied territory and in the materialized Mordor of the modern world – in Russia. The problem of human security in the coordinate system "Human Security vs. National Security" is also analyzed. In Ukraine, the doctrine of the totalitarian Soviet heritage, "the security of the state - above all," still dominates the notion of human security, which is an obstacle to the development of a coherent system of protection aimed at both individuals and society. Natalya Belitser from the Pylyp Orlik Institute for Democracy reveals an actual topic.

Of course, we could not ignore the Trimarium Initiative a new Polish-Croatian version of the long-standing idea of Intermarium, presented in September at the "Central European Davos" - the International Economic Forum in Krynica. We publish with courtesy of the author, a well-known Polish expert, advisor to Polish Foreign Ministry, Przemysław Żurawski vel Grajewski his program article „Trimarium: A View from the North.” In addition, another ambitious project, which deal with the Black Sea region, namely the Chinese "Belt and Road Initiative" is analyzed through the Ukrainian-Serbian expert view. A rather unexpected view, because there is little in common with Ukrainian and Serbian approaches to key international issues. However, we managed to do this.

We also have not neglected the analysis of the Turkish policy in the Black Sea region. Famous Armenian experts David Shahnazaryan and Ruben Megrabyan presented the view on the actual problems of the South Caucasus in the context of Russian expansionism. Certainly, in the magazine there is a traditional review of foreign sources on the actual issues of the Black Sea security.

Finally, we offer short fragments of two important works: the essay of the book «Ukraine - Russia: War in terms of coexistence» by a well-known Ukrainian expert, captain I rank Hryhoriy Perepelytsia and an excerpt from a new book by

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the Center of Global Studies “Wars-XXI: Russia’s PolyHybression.» Also, we announce the book «Russia between fascism and disintegration» by the famous Russian researcher Yuri Fedorov, who received a refuge in the Czech Republic.

The first article of the magazine is devoted to the state of affairs with the Ukrainian prisoners of the Kremlin in Crimea and Russia. We cannot ignore this topic, not only from purely Ukrainian motives - in the region of the Wider Black Sea, dangerous tendencies become more and more visible. In Russia, Turkey, and Azerbaijan, authoritarian regimes, which neglected freedom of speech and human rights, are intensified.

Russia, as in the time of the USSR, tries to be ahead of the whole planet, and especially in the persecution of Ukrainian citizens. Freedom of the Ukrainians, who repeatedly destroyed the

totalitarian Russian empires, gives rise to the fear of the Kremlin. The latter strengthens repressions against Ukrainian citizens, not realizing that this only brings about the collapse of the ruling kleptocracy. Our mission is to bring the day when the Russian Mordor disappears from the world map.

Mykhailo Gonchar

Acting Editor-in-chief of the Black Sea Security magazine,

President of the Centre for Global Studies Strategy XXI,

Director on Energy Programs of the NOMOS Centre (2006-2014)

Review of the Situation with Political Prisoners of the Kremlin

According to human rights organizations of Ukraine, as of the middle of October 2017, on the territory of the occupied Crimea and in Russia, there have been imprisoned at least 61 citizens of Ukraine on political grounds. There are people of different nations, confessions, jobs and political opinions. Among them are journalists, experts, activists, farmers, miners, stage directors, teachers and students. Crimean Tatars amount 34 of them. 23 from 61 persons have already received court decisions in occupational Crimean courts or in Russian courts with confinement periods from 1.5 up to 22.5 years. Since the early 2017, there were at least 18 new detentions, which have from the point of view of the human rights community signs of politically motivated prosecution. Detentions occurred mostly in the occupied Crimea.

Shortly before the July's EU-Ukraine Summit, relatives of political prisoners of the Kremlin, colleagues, experts, civil activists, journalists and human rights lawyers went with an open letter to the leaders of the EU and NATO. In particular, the letter said: *"This year marks the anniversary of the Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy, adopted by the European Council on 28 June 2016. In its strategic paper, the EU recorded non-recognition of Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and promoted "human rights through dialogue and support, including in the most difficult cases". Among such cases are human rights violations in the Ukrainian territories occupied by Russia, unlawful arrests, detention and tortures of the Ukrainian citizens who opposed Russian occupation.*

The NATO Warsaw Summit Communiqué, issued on 8-9 July 2016, states that "Russia bears full responsibility for the serious deterioration of the human rights situation on the Crimean Peninsula." The European Parliament in its resolution of 16 March 2017 mentioned the responsibility of the occupational authorities for the political persecutions, unlawful arrests, tortures of Crimean

Tatars and Ukrainian activists, violation of the right to freedom of expression and press in Crimea.

While appreciating these approaches of the EU and NATO, we encourage you not only to continue the policy of sanctions against Russia for its actions in the occupied territories of Ukraine, and particularly in Crimea, but also strengthen the sanctions regime, the possibility of what has been stated in the G7 Communiqué on the results of the May 2017 G7 summit in Taormina. In our view, it is necessary to transform correct words from the EU and NATO papers into concrete actions. As the past years showed, just words are inefficient for the Kremlin. Being convinced that any action by the West would be confined to verbal rhetoric, it continues to intensify repressions and ignores demands of international organizations. Unfortunately, numerous statements of Western politicians about solving all the problems only through dialogue with Russia and expediency to review / mitigate / cancel the sanctions are a wrong message to the Kremlin because it is perceived solely as a sign of weakness of the EU and NATO.

We, the relatives, colleagues, human rights defenders of the Kremlin's political prisoners repressed by the Russian regime, urge you to "mainstream human rights", as stated in the EU Global Strategy. Therefore, further imposition of personal restrictive measures against the leadership of Russia responsible for egregious human rights violations as well as sectoral sanctions, are necessary.

The EU has a strong non-military force that it has not involved yet. We encourage you to use its soft power to force the aggressor to peace and to release of political prisoners in the occupied territories of Ukraine. In our view, sanctions should include:

- freezing of personal assets of the Kremlin kleptocracy, including Putin's family members and his "circle of friends", in the Western financial institutions;

- *gradual replacement of Russian crude oil, petroleum products, gas and coal imports into the EU by those from the non-Russian sources;*
- *declining Russian projects of non-transit gas transportation systems, like the Nord Stream 2, project by the EU and its member states.*

The President of the European Union Donald Tusk during the EU-Ukraine Summit in Kyiv on July 13, 2017 said: ***“I call for the immediate release of all illegally detained in Russia and on the Crimean Peninsula Ukrainians.”*** Later we also received the letter with answer on behalf of the President of the European Council Donald Tusk, President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker and the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini, where in particular, is said: *«The EU has developed a comprehensive package of restrictive measures in response to the illegal annexation of the Crimean Peninsula and actions, destabilizing the situation in Eastern Ukraine...»*

The EU continues to follow very closely the human rights situation in the illegally annexed Crimea and in Sevastopol, as well as the areas of Donetsk and Lugansk oblasts, not under the effective control of the Government of Ukraine...

The EU continuously underlines that all international human rights observers should be granted full, free and unhindered access to these territories. The EU continues to call for the immediate release of all the illegally detained Ukrainians in Russia and on the Crimean Peninsula.”

On October 5, 2017, the European Parliament has passed the new Resolution No.2017/2869(RSP) - *«European Parliament resolution on the cases of Crimean Tatar leaders Akhtem Chygoz, Ilmi Umerov and the journalist Mykola Semena»*. This resolution contains for the first time the list of Ukraine's citizens, which are detained in trial centres on the territory of the occupied Crimea and in Russia or already have received confinement periods and are in jails: **Uzair Abdullaev, Teymur Abdullaev, Zevri Abseutov, Rustem Abiltarov, Muslim Aliyev, Refat Alimov, Ali Asanov, Volodymyr Balukh, Enver Bekirov, Oleksii**

Bessarabov, Hlib Shablii, Oleksii Chirniy, Mustafa Degermenji, Emil Dzhemadenov, Arsen Dzheparov, Volodymyr Dudka, Pavlo Gryb, Rustem Ismailov, Mykola Karpyuk, Stanislav Klykh, Andriy Kolomiyets, Oleksandr Kolchenko, Oleksandr Kostenko, Emir-Usein Kuku, Sergey Litvinov, Enver Mamutov, Remzi Memethov, Yevhen Panov, Yuri Primov, Volodymyr Prisich, Ferat Sayfullayev, Eider Saledinov, Oleg Sentsov, Vadym Siruk, Oleksii Stogniy, Redvan Suleymanov, Roman Sushchenko, Mykola Shiptur, Dmytro Shtybylykov, Viktor Shchur, Rustem Vaitov, Valentyn Vygovsky, Andriy Zakhately and Ruslan Zeytullaev.

However, after this Resolution, the mentioned list has to be updated with new names. Association of relatives of the Kremlin prisoners, human rights and civil organizations went in September with an open letter to the UNO Secretary General Antonio Guterres, saying that: *“The activists are detained under the false pretext of “organizing mass disorders”, “organizing and preparing sabotage”, “spyware”, “extremism”, “terrorism”, “illegal possession of weapons”, etc. Kidnappings, enforced disappearances, tortures for obtaining false confession, as well as cruel and humiliating treatment of people have become a common and widely used practice in the Russia-occupied Crimea. So-called Crimean “courts”, fully controlled by the occupation authorities, have been served as a tool for repressions against those, who oppose the temporary occupation and attempted annexation of the Crimean Peninsula by Russia. The repressions and arbitrary application of the legislation on extremism, terrorism, and separatism have led to a serious deterioration of the situation with human rights in Crimea, unprecedented restrictions on freedom of expression. The observance of fundamental freedoms, human rights, human security, and the norms of international humanitarian law cannot be guaranteed on the Russia-occupied Crimean Peninsula...*

A new tendency appeared – Russia started to kidnap citizens of Ukraine both from the territory of the country (two officials of the State Border

Guard Service of Ukraine) and from the territory of third countries. Provocative case with nineteen-year old guy Pavlo Gryb, which was kidnapped by the Russian FSB during a special operation on the territory of the Republic of Belarus and against his willingness brought to Russia is a clear confirmation of new, very dangerous tendencies in the Russian authorities' policy – kidnapping of people.

3.5 years of illegal occupation of Crimea have proved that words, which have not been underpinned by deeds, could only stimulate and encourage the aggressor to new violations and crimes. Until adequate international response including enforcement measures is ensured, the repressions and other violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the Russia-occupied Crimea will continue unabated...

We believe that in the context of the United Nations reform, it is a high time for the UN to revise the practice of using the veto by permanent members of the Security Council. Today, 114 out of 193 UN member states support the initiative to limit the use of the veto power. Having occupied a part of the Ukrainian territory and brutally violating human rights, Russia continues to abuse the veto power in order to avoid responsibility, bans international organizations and human rights defenders from access to the temporarily occupied territories. This situation, dangerous for maintaining the international peace and security, should be put to an end.

In this appeal concerning the issue of large-scale repressions and political persecutions by the Russian Federation in the occupied territory of Ukraine, we consider the following measures should be a part of international response:

- 1. To hold international hearings in the UN framework on systemic and large-scale violations of human rights in the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine - the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, as well as in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine.*
- 2. To demand from the Russian Federation to stop political persecutions and to*

immediately release Ukrainian citizens, illegally imprisoned in Russia and temporarily occupied Crimea for political reasons, to demand respect for their rights and freedoms, in particular freedom from torture, the right to protection, the right to a fair trial, etc.

- 3. To demand from the Russian Federation access of the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (UN HRMMU) and other international human rights mechanisms to the territory of the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea.*
- 4. To demand from the Russian Federation to stop the practice of using anti-terrorist and anti-extremist legislation against dissent voices.*
- 5. To demand just and fair investigations of gross human rights violations, crimes against humanity and war crimes, as well as further prosecution of perpetrators of crimes committed by Russian occupation authorities in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea.*
- 6. To recommend that governments take restrictive measures (including the freezing of financial assets and the ban on international travel) concerning Russian officials and representatives of Russian occupation authorities in the temporary occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol responsible for gross violations of human rights, unlawful and politically motivated persecutions of Ukrainian citizens (falsification of cases, criminal prosecution, torture, illegal sentences, etc.)*
- 7. To encourage governments to review the procurement policy of energy and other resources from the country (Russia), whose actions led to violations of international human rights law, international humanitarian law and wide repressions and persecutions against dissentients."*

Relatives of the Ukrainian prisoners of the Kremlin with the support of the Head of the Committee of

Ukraine on foreign affairs of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Hanna Hopko went to the opposite part of the Atlantic Ocean – to the foreign minister of Canada Chrystia Freeland: *“Relatives of prisoners – mothers, wives, sisters, daughters – kindly ask you to become their voice with regard to worldwide top-politicians. Many politicians in Europe have already forgotten about human rights and take care only about business-as-usual restoration with the country, which brutally violates international law, human rights, launches repressions against dissidents on occupied by Russia territories.*

Crimes of Kremlin’s regime against citizens of Ukraine on the occupied territory of Crimea should already be sentenced with more than one “Magnitsky Act”. The Kremlin feels itself unfettered, since it only periodically hears rare voices of members of parliaments and governments of individual countries and sees occasional short media publications. No one of the world’s leading politicians speaks of sanctions against Russia for brutal human rights violations. Instead,

many politicians are going to the FIFA World Cup in Moscow in 2018. Therefore, the Kremlin continues its practice of repression in the occupied territories in order to keep the population in the occupied Crimea and in the territory of Russia in an atmosphere of fear and obedience”.

Now civil activists prepare new appeals and new actions, including on international level with a very simple goal – Putin and his accomplices should face in all democratic countries the question about political prisoners of the Kremlin. Life and freedom are the most valuable issues. Russia should bear responsibility for violating them. We expect that human rights and freedoms are still important values for Western politicians and stay above “business-as-usual” approach. “The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.” —Edmund Burke.

**Editorial Board
of the “Black Sea Security” magazine**

SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine)

Situation of Human Rights in the Temporarily Occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol

Fragments of the Thematic Report,
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

I. Executive Summary

1. On 14 March 2014, following a request of the Government of Ukraine addressed to the United Nations Secretary-General to establish a human rights mission in Ukraine, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) deployed a Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU). Since then, HRMMU has been collecting and analyzing information on the human rights situation throughout Ukraine, including in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol on the basis of the United Nations General Assembly resolutions 68/262, reaffirming the territorial integrity of Ukraine and 71/205 referring to the Crimean peninsula as Ukrainian territory temporarily occupied by the Russian Federation. According to the Constitution of Ukraine, Crimea and the city of Sevastopol are separate administrative units of the Crimean peninsula having their own governing institutions.

2. The present report was developed based on the mandate of OHCHR and HRMMU, but also following a request by General Assembly resolution 71/205 on the “Situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine)” for a dedicated thematic report of OHCHR on the “situation of human rights in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol”. The report covers the period from 22 February 2014 to 12 September 2017. HRMMU has not been provided access to Crimea by Russian Federation authorities since its former Head of Mission accompanied the former Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Ivan Šimonović, on 21-22 March 2014. As a result, it has been monitoring human rights developments in Crimea from mainland Ukraine.

3. Pro-Russian groups in Crimea rejected the

ousting by Parliament of former President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich on 22 February 2014, criticizing it as an unconstitutional change of power. One of these groups was the ‘people’s militia’, a local paramilitary formation created on 23 February 2014, and commonly referred to as the ‘Crimean self-defence’. With the support of Russian Federation troops, the Crimean self-defence blocked key infrastructure, airports and military installations and took control of strategic facilities. It has been accused of committing numerous human rights abuses with impunity since the end of February 2014.

4. The President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin stated that in a meeting with heads of security agencies during the night of 22 and 23 February 2014 he took the decision to “start working on the return of Crimea to the Russian Federation”.

5. On 27 February 2014, uniformed men without insignia took control of the Parliament of Crimea. On the same day, the Parliament of Crimea dismissed the Government of Crimea. On 11 March 2014, the Parliaments of Crimea and Sevastopol adopted a joint Declaration of Independence stating that Crimea and Sevastopol will unite to form an independent state - the “Republic of Crimea” - and seek integration into the Russian Federation if Crimean residents choose to join the Russian Federation at a referendum scheduled for 16 March. According to the pro-Russian authorities in Crimea, a large majority of voters backed Crimea’s “incorporation” into the Russian Federation. The referendum was declared invalid by the Government of Ukraine and the United Nations General Assembly. The United Nations Secretary-General Ban-Ki Moon expressed “deep concern and disappointment”, adding that the referendum would only exacerbate an “already complex and tense situation.” Subsequently, the

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Russian Federation and the “Republic of Crimea” signed on 18 March 2014 a “treaty of accession” effectively annexing the peninsula into the Russian Federation.

6. One consequence of this development was the imposition of the Russian Federation’s citizenship on residents of Crimea. This has resulted in regressive effects on the enjoyment of human rights, particularly for those who refused to automatically adopt citizenship of the Russian Federation, were ineligible to obtain it, or were required to forfeit their Ukrainian citizenship in order to remain employed.

7. Since the beginning of occupation, Ukrainian laws were substituted by the Russian Federation laws, in violation of the obligation under international humanitarian law to respect the existing law of the occupied territory. Among other implications, this led to the arbitrary implementation of the Russian Federation criminal law provisions designed to fight terrorism, extremism and separatism, which have restricted the right to liberty and security of the person and the space for the enjoyment of fundamental freedoms.

8. Laws and judicial decisions deriving from the implementation of the legal framework of the Russian Federation in Crimea have further undermined the exercise of fundamental freedoms. Mandatory re-registration requirements were imposed on NGOs, media outlets and religious communities in Crimea. Russian Federation authorities have denied a number of them the right to re-register, generally on procedural grounds, raising concerns about the use of legal norms and procedures to silence dissent or criticism.

9. Most affected by these restrictions were individuals opposed to the March 2014 referendum or criticizing the Russian Federation control of Crimea, such as journalists, bloggers, supporters of the Mejlis, pro-Ukrainian and Maidan activists, as well as persons with no declared political affiliation but advocating strict compliance with the tenets of Islam, who are often accused of belonging to extremist groups banned in the Russian Federation, such as Hizb ut-Tahrir. The rights of these people to freedom of opinion and expression, association, peaceful assembly,

movement, thought, conscience and religion, were obstructed through acts of intimidation, pressure, physical attacks, warnings as well as harassment through judicial measures, including prohibitions, house searches, detentions and sanctions.

10. Russian Federation justice system applied in Crimea often failed to uphold fair trial rights and due process guarantees. Court decisions have confirmed actions, decisions and requests of investigating or prosecuting bodies, seemingly without proper judicial oversight. Courts frequently ignored credible claims of human rights violations occurring in detention. Judges have applied Russian Federation criminal law provisions to a wide variety of peaceful assemblies, speech and activities, and in some cases retroactively to events that preceded the temporary occupation of Crimea or occurred outside of the peninsula in mainland Ukraine.

11. Grave human rights violations, such as arbitrary arrests and detentions, enforced disappearances, ill-treatment and torture, and at least one extra-judicial execution were documented. For a three-week period following the overthrow of Ukrainian authorities in Crimea, human rights abuses occurring on the peninsula were attributed to members of the Crimean self-defence and various Cossack groups. Following Crimea’s temporary occupation, on 18 March 2014, representatives of the Crimean Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation (the FSB) and police were more frequently mentioned as perpetrators.

12. While those human rights violations and abuses have affected Crimean residents of diverse ethnic backgrounds, Crimean Tatars were particularly targeted especially those with links to the Mejlis, which boycotted the March 2014 referendum and initiated public protests in favour of Crimea remaining a part of Ukraine. Intrusive law enforcement raids of private properties have also disproportionately affected Crimean Tatars and interfered with their right to privacy under the justification of fighting extremism. Furthermore, the ban of the Mejlis, imposed in April 2016 by the Supreme Court of Crimea, has infringed on the civil, political and cultural rights of Crimean Tatars.

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in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine)

13. The Russian Federation authorities in Crimea have failed to effectively investigate most allegations of human rights violations committed by the security forces or armed groups acting under the direction or control of the State. Failure to prosecute these acts and ensure accountability has denied victims proper remedy and strengthened impunity, potentially encouraging the continued perpetration of human rights violations.

14. Since the beginning of the temporary occupation, all penitentiary institutions in Crimea have been integrated into the penitentiary system of the Russian Federation, leading to numerous transfers of detainees from Crimea to penal colonies in the Russian Federation, contrary to provisions of international humanitarian law.

15. Restrictions affecting freedom of movement to and from Crimea have been imposed by the Russian Federation and Ukraine on the grounds of security or pursuant to immigration rules. They include five-year exiles, deportations, prohibitions on entry of individuals and public transportation, non-recognition of documents, and restrictive regulations applicable to travel of children and transportation of personal belongings.

16. Large scale expropriation of public and private property has been conducted without compensation or regard for international humanitarian law provisions protecting property from seizures or destruction. Crimean Tatars who returned from deportation in the 1990s and built their houses on land plots without obtaining construction permits remain at risk of seeing their security of tenure contested and being forcibly evicted.

17. The space for public manifestation of Ukrainian culture and identity has shrunk significantly. Groups manifesting their attachment to national symbols, dates or historic figures have been issued warnings or sanctioned by courts for violating public order or conducting unauthorized rallies. Education in the Ukrainian language has almost disappeared from Crimea, jeopardizing one of the pillars of an individual's identity and cultural affiliation.

18. The availability of health services in free-of-charge State medical institutions has been

impaired since March 2014 due to the numerous departures of doctors and other medical staff to more lucrative private sector institutions in Crimea. This has resulted in delayed treatment of the most economically disadvantaged, jeopardizing their right to life and health. Retrogressive measures stemming from the implementation of Russian legislation have affected people suffering from drug dependence.

19. The right of the Crimean population to an adequate standard of living has been affected by measures taken by Ukrainian authorities or implemented on mainland Ukraine, including the interruption of water and energy supplies to the peninsula. Under international humanitarian law, the Russian Federation as the occupying power is obliged to ensure to the fullest extent of the means available to it sufficient hygiene and public health standards, as well as the provision of food and medical care to the population. At the same time, this does not exonerate Ukraine from its obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights not to interfere with the enjoyment of the rights it enshrines, and from respecting the requirement under international humanitarian law to ensure that the basic needs of the population continue to be met under conditions of occupation.

VIII. Conclusions and Recommendations

220. The human rights situation in Crimea has significantly deteriorated since the beginning of its occupation by the Russian Federation. The imposition of a new citizenship and legal framework and the resulting administration of justice have significantly limited the enjoyment of human rights for the residents of Crimea. The Russian Federation has extended its laws to Crimea in violation of international humanitarian law. In many cases, they have been applied arbitrarily.

221. Russian Federation authorities in Crimea have supported groups and individuals loyal to the Russian Federation, including among national and religious minorities, while preventing any criticism or dissent and outlawing organized opposition, such as the Mejlis. The space for civil society to operate, criticize or advocate has considerably shrunk. Media outlets have been shut down,

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disproportionately affecting the Crimean Tatar and Ukrainian communities, their right to information and to maintain their culture and identity.

222. Grave human rights violations affecting the right to life, liberty and security have not been effectively investigated. The judiciary has failed to uphold the rule of law and exercise proper administration of justice. There is an urgent need for accountability for human rights violations and abuses and providing the victims with redress.

223. Moreover, the freedom of movement between mainland Ukraine and Crimea has been restricted and the ABL has acquired many attributes of a State border.

224. Since the attempted alteration of the status of Crimea by the Russian Federation, a development which was denounced by General Assembly resolution 68/262 and later qualified as occupation in General Assembly resolution 71/205, the forcible integration of the peninsula into the political, legal, socio-economic, educational, informational, cultural and security spheres of the Russian Federation has been actively pursued, deepening the divide between this territory of Ukraine and the rest of the country.

225. In July 2016, Crimea was administratively attached to the Southern Federal District of the Russian Federation, further strengthening implementation of policies from the central level and coordination with neighboring regions of the Russian Federation. The peninsula has been integrated into the energy grid of the Russian Federation, which is also building a rail-and-road bridge through the Kerch strait, creating a land corridor to Crimea. This intensified integration is further compounded by population movements - from the Russian Federation to Crimea and from Crimea to mainland Ukraine - which tend to favour and strengthen pro-Russia sentiments on the peninsula.

226. In order to improve the human rights situation in Crimea, OHCHR recommends:

To the Government of the Russian Federation:

a) Uphold human rights in Crimea for all and respect obligations that apply to an occupying

power pursuant to international humanitarian law provisions;

b) Ensure proper and unimpeded access of international human rights monitoring missions and human rights non-governmental organizations to Crimea, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 71/205;

c) Apply Ukrainian laws in Crimea, pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 68/262 and 71/205;

d) Ensure accountability for human rights violations and abuses through effective investigations of allegations of ill-treatment, torture, abductions, disappearances and killings involving members of the security forces and the Crimean self-defence; bring perpetrators to justice and provide redress for victims;

e) Comply with the international humanitarian law prohibition to compel residents of the occupied territory of Crimea to serve in the armed forces of the Russian Federation and to deport or transfer parts of the civilian population of the Russian Federation into Crimea; return to Crimea all protected persons transferred to the territory of the Russian Federation;

f) Ensure independent and impartial administration of justice, including due process and fair trial rights, and that persons deprived of liberty benefit from all legal guarantees, including equal treatment before the law, the right not to be arbitrarily detained, the presumption of innocence and the prohibition from self-incrimination;

g) End the practice of retroactive application of penal laws to acts committed before the occupation of Crimea, and refrain from using law enforcement bodies and the justice system to pressure and intimidate opponents;

h) Uphold the right of defence counsel to perform their professional functions without intimidation, harassment or improper interference;

i) End the practice of extracting confessions of guilt from persons in detention through threats, torture, or ill-treatment, and refrain from practices such as forcible psychiatric hospitalization, which may amount to ill-treatment;

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in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine)

- j) Ensure adequate medical assistance to all individuals detained in penitentiary institutions irrespective of their citizenship or any other grounds;
- k) Enable unimpeded freedom of movement to and from Crimea, and end deportations of Crimean residents pursuant to Russian Federation immigration rules;
- l) Ensure that the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, association, thought, conscience and religion can be exercised by any individual and group in Crimea, without discrimination on any grounds, including race, nationality, political views or ethnicity;
- m) Stop applying legislation on extremism, terrorism and separatism to criminalize free expression and peaceful conduct, and release all persons arrested and charged for expressing dissenting views, including regarding the status of Crimea;
- n) Allow the development of independent and pluralistic media outlets, including those representing minority communities, and refrain from placing legal and administrative obstacles on their registration or operation;
- o) Put an end to police actions, including house searches, summons, detentions, taking of DNA samples, targeting disproportionately members of the Crimean Tatar community;
- p) Lift any limitations on the ability of the Crimean Tatar community to conserve its representative institutions, including the Mejlis;
- q) Ensure the availability of education in the Ukrainian language, and enable all ethnic communities in Crimea, including Crimean Tatars and Ukrainians, to maintain and develop their culture, traditions and identity, and to commemorate important events;
- r) Ensure access of all Crimean residents, including those without Russian passports, to employment, health treatment, property and public services, without discrimination;
- s) End the ban on the use of Substitution Maintenance Therapy (SMT) for patients suffering from drug dependence;
- t) Respect the right to property and the prohibition to confiscate private property; ensure security of tenure for Crimean Tatars by putting in place a mechanism facilitating recognition of their property rights.

To the Government of Ukraine:

- a) Use all legal and diplomatic means available to promote and guarantee the enjoyment of the human rights of residents of Crimea;
- b) Investigate, within practical limits, human rights violations and abuses committed in Crimea as well as those perpetrated in mainland Ukraine in relation to the 'civil blockade' of Crimea;
- c) Remove all non-necessary restrictions to freedom of movement to and from Crimea, and ensure that the perimeter of the mined area near the Kalanchak and Chaplynka crossing points in the Kherson region is visible and well protected;
- d) Simplify access to civil documents, education and other public services to residents of Crimea and IDPs;
- e) Support dialogue between the Ombudspersons of Ukraine and the Russian Federation to facilitate the voluntary transfer of Ukrainian prisoners held in Crimea to penitentiary institutions in mainland Ukraine;
- f) Refrain from actions that would raise obstacles to the enjoyment by residents of Crimea of their human rights.

To the international community:

- a) Insist on full cooperation of the Russian Federation with international and regional monitoring mechanisms, including by granting unrestricted access to their representatives to Crimea;
- b) Remind the Russian Federation and Ukraine to strictly abide by international human rights law and international humanitarian law in ensuring the protection of the population of Crimea;
- c) Raise cases of human rights violations and abuses in discussions with the Russian Federation authorities at bilateral and multilateral forums.

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Military Build-up of Crimea

This article represents a chapter from the report titled “Occupied Crimea under Sanctions and Blockade in 2014-2016,” which was prepared by Maidan of Foreign Affairs Fund and presented at the end of May 2017. In fact, the report covers a three-year period of the Crimean occupation - from February 20, 2014 to April 2017.

The human mind, especially the mass consciousness, has a peculiarity to give an assessment of events and processes that have already become fixed in public opinion in a few years, from the standpoint of “whoever does not know this.” If you ask today the inhabitants of Ukraine, which is Russia’s main objective in the occupied Crimea, most people will confidently answer: “Putin creates a large military base there to control the Black Sea region.” And they will be right. But in reality, everything is more complicated.

What the authors called a “military build-up” is not only the expansion of the military base itself, that is the development of places of permanent dislocation, or the concentration of the newest weaponry on the Crimean Peninsula. This is a structural reorganization of the whole economy of Crimea and Sevastopol under the task of providing a new main, militaristic, destination of all components of the life on the occupied territory.

To the components of “military build-up” the authors include the situation with human rights in general and repressions against the part of the population that did not accept the occupation and annexation: Crimean Tatar people as an organized community and political Ukrainians of another

ethnic origin. The replacement of population of the peninsula and mass-wave “brainwashing” of the Crimeans in the militaristic spirit starts with kindergarten. The reason is clear: there can be no civil society, freedom of expression and assembly, no protests, alternative points of view and other “democratic tools” on the military base.

Another factor is very important. In fact, the occupant country during the first year and a half after the Crimean occupation had hopes and took appropriate steps for the investment to the peninsula, including the tourism sector. This was done in order to reduce the burden on the budget of the Russian Federation in terms of financing the social sphere in Crimea, i.e health care, education, pensions, financing municipal needs, etc.

But, already in mid-2015, the Russian leadership began to realize the impossibility of initial ambitious plans for the economic development of the occupied Crimea, and in this regard concentrated - not betraying the rhetoric of economic development - only on its “military build-up”. This is a direct consequence of the economic blockade of Crimea from the mainland of Ukraine and international sanctions.

This was marked by the fact that the Ministry of Crimean affairs of the Russian Federation, created two weeks after the illegal annexation on March 31, 2014, was abolished as early as on July 15, 2015.

“The dreams of creating a “new Russia” in Crimea, with the Silicon Valley, the gambling zone and the flagship free economic zone, seemed to lose to another concept of development – “The Island of Crimea” with citadels, generals and armies. The economic and political achievements

in comparison with the deployment of 96 military alliances, military units and organizations are becoming more and more pathetic.” [1]

The results of 2014-2016 have shown that Russia in its current state can not overcome the impact of blockade and sanctions on the Crimean economy. During 2016, Russia's refusal to create a “new shopwindow in Russia” in Crimea became final. On July 28, 2016, the status of the occupied Crimea and Sevastopol as a part of Russia was lowered, as Putin's decree eliminated the Crimean Federal District, which was created immediately after the annexation – on March 21, 2014. The so-called “subjects of federation” - the Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol - are now included in the Southern Federal District with a center in Rostov-on-Don.

By this act, among other things, political and administrative management was unified with the military, since all parts of the Russian armed forces in Crimea were from the outset included in the Southern Military District with the headquarters in Rostov-on-Don.

In general, for three years of the Russian occupation, interest to Crimea, with the exception of the military-strategic significance of the peninsula, has clearly fallen.

A demonstration of the “change of course” was the repeated holding in the height of the summer resort season of 2016 large-scale military exercises with fighting and bombing on the Kerch Peninsula, in the immediate vicinity of the single highway from the Kerch ferry service, which provides tourist flows and supplies to Crimea.

In population of Russia, an understanding is strengthened that the effects of the annexation of the Crimea have significantly accelerated the deterioration of the socio-economic situation, and the decline in consumption of the population of the RF for 2015-2016 is estimated at 10-15%. Against this backdrop, the “big requests” of the Crimean residents, who were dissatisfied with the failure to fulfill the gigantic promises of the initial period of occupation, were annoyed. As a result, three years after the annexation, 84% of Russian citizens believe that the financing of Crimea and

Sevastopol from the federal budget should be the same as other subjects of the RF with similar conditions [2].

In 2016, the militarization of Crimea became not only the core idea of the Crimean policy of Russia, but also the main driver of the economy in the occupied peninsula. As a result, during the three years of occupation, the only «success story» of the Russian Federation in Crimea was the «military build-up» of its territory.

The “Reversal” Restructuring of the Crimean Economy

The “military build-up of the territory” includes, first of all, the establishment and build-up of a giant military base that equals or exceeds the largest US military bases around the world. Reliable transport, energy and water infrastructure for military purposes and dual use is being created.

The economies of Crimea and Sevastopol now undergo a “reverse” restructuring aimed at the priority restoration of the military-industrial enterprises and objects preserved from the USSR time.

It is worth to mention that in contrast to the existing historical stereotypes, the Crimean Peninsula in the Soviet era has never been from an economic point of view “the all-Union health resort”. The real nature of economic processes in Crimea in the Soviet era was different. In the time of the USSR in terms of employment, use of territory, state investments, output volumes, Crimea was:

- first and foremost, a large military and naval, aviation and military space base that provided the dominance of the USSR in the Black Sea region and its influence in the Mediterranean and the Middle East;
- secondly, the industrial and scientific center of the all-union significance in military instrument-making and shipbuilding;
- thirdly, one of the centers of the food industry of the USSR with specialization in the processing of fish, vegetables, fruits and grapes.

The basis of the Crimean industry was the enterprises of military instrument-making in

Sevastopol, Yevpatoria, Simferopol, Feodosiya, and military shipbuilding and ship repairing - in Sevastopol, Feodosia and Kerch.

□ Dozens of large naval ships were built at the shipyards of Crimea. At the instrument-making factories controlled torpedoes, armament control systems, radio equipment, complex parachuting systems, including spacecraft and landing of tanks, etc. were produced and tested. At the same time indicators related to the defense ministry and the military-industrial complex – A speedy build-up of the largest in Europe combined-arms grouping (RF) is underway

- Since the first days of occupation, Crimea has been receiving only the newest and cutting-edge arms and military equipment in the priority order
- All Soviet infrastructure in Crimea, such as numerous military airfields, rocket launch pads, air defence facilities, radar systems and nuclear weapons storage facilities, is currently being restored
- A new fortified area in the north of Crimea has been created and is being developed
- Construction of new and reconstruction of old military bases, as well as of housing for military personnel is under way
- The number of military servicemen, as well as of various special services, grows
- Due to the military orders, the work of the military-industrial enterprises — military instrument-making, shipbuilding and ship repair — has been restored in priority order. These enterprises are now included in the structure of the relevant state concerns of the Russian Federation
- All other areas of life in Crimea — economy, social sphere, human rights, information space and national politics — are now subject to the ideology of a military springboard.

The Chronicle of the Crimean Occupation

The “military build-up” of Crimea began in the first days of the occupation. The special operation of the Russian Federation on the seizure of Crimea started three days before the end of the Winter Olympics in Sochi that lasted from the 7th to the 23rd of February 2014.

On February 20, 2014, a column of the armored vehicles left the base of the 810th marine brigade of the Russian Black Sea Fleet (BSF) in the Cossack Bay of Sevastopol, heading out of the city. The official explanation was that the BSF in Crimea put its regiments on a heightened alert in view of the difficult political situation in Ukraine, meaning that the marines would enhance security of the BSF units throughout the peninsula — in addition to Sevastopol, it had a naval aviation airfield in the village of Gvardeiskoye near Simferopol and a base in Feodosia.

On February 20-23, 2014, a Special Forces brigade of the Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation (GRU) — was sent from Tolyatti, Russia, to Crimea to “protect a strategic object.”

On February 23, 2014, Sevastopol has de-facto got under Russian control — the city congress elected a “people’s mayor” and created the “self-defense units.” The “self-defense” was aided by the Russian soldiers who wore a uniform without insignia, promptly nicknamed “the little green men”.

On February 23, 2014, the Winter Olympics in Sochi ended and Russian BSF ships that ensured the safety of the games, headed straight from the sea to Novorossiysk.

On February 24, 2014, Russian armored personnel carriers (BTR) completely blocked the entrance to Sevastopol. The city became the starting point for the occupation of Crimea, because in accordance with the Ukrainian-Russian treaty, it was here that Russia’s BSF headquarters, its main shipbuilding warehouse and naval infantry were based.

On that very day, in Novorossiysk, the “Olympic” fleet of the BSF took on board the units of the airborne special forces and marines with military equipment for the occupation of Crimea and took course on Sevastopol.

Below is the list of vessels stationed in the Sochi-Novorossiysk region of the Black Sea during the Winter Olympics:

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1. Rocket cruiser *Moscow* — left Sevastopol on February 3, 2014.
2. Russian guided missile destroyer *Smetlivy* — left Sevastopol on February 3, 2014.
3. Large ASW Corvette *Alexandrovets* — left Sevastopol on February 4, 2014.
4. Large ASW Corvette *Muromets* — left Sevastopol on February 4, 2014.
5. Marine minesweeper *Kovrovets* — left Sevastopol on February 4, 2014.
6. Marine minesweeper *Turbinist* — left Sevastopol on February 4, 2014.
7. Reconnaissance ship *Priazovye* — left Sevastopol on February 4, 2014.

In addition, the Russian Navy fleet in the Black Sea included large landing ships (LST) of the Black Sea, Northern and Baltic fleets that regularly provided for the military contingent of the Russian Naval Base in Tartous, Syria, and delivered military equipment to the Syrian Assad regime from the Russian BSF naval base in Novorossiysk.

During the special operation of the Crimea occupation — from February 20 to March 25, 2014 — there were 9 large landing ships in the Black Sea:

- 5 large landing ships of the Black Sea Fleet: *Saratov* (#150), *Nikolai Filchenkov* (#152), *Novocherkassk* (#142), *Yamal* (#156) and *Azov* (#151)
- 2 large landing ships of the Baltic Fleet of the Russian Federation: *Kaliningrad* (#102) and *Minsk* (#127)
- 2 large landing ships of the Northern Fleet of the Russian Federation: *Olenegorskyi Gornyak* (#112) and *Georgy Pobedonosets* (#016).

Also, at least nine other ships of the Black Sea Fleet that were based at the Novorossiysk naval base and eight ships of the Coast Guard of the FSB Border Guard were present in the Black Sea at the time of the annexation.

On February 25, 2014, after the Olympics, the squadron of the Russian Black Sea Fleet returned to the already seized Sevastopol delivering

several thousand paratroopers and weapons from Novorossiysk.

Incidentally, the seriousness of the situation could be evidenced by the fact that in those days, in Sevastopol, the BSF compiled the lists of the servicemen family members for the event of evacuation, while marine units were put on heightened alert.

On February 25, 2014, a Special Forces unit of the GRU of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Russia arrived from Ulyanovsk to Crimea.

On February 27, 2014, the reconnaissance and sabotage group of the Airborne Special Forces of the Russian Federation that arrived from Sevastopol in uniforms without insignia, seized the Verkhovna Rada and the Council of Ministers of Crimea in Simferopol.

On February 28, 2014 the exit from the Balaklava Bay (Sevastopol) where Ukraine's Coast Guard ships were stationed, was blocked by the BSF missile boat *Ivanovets* (#954), while the base of the military maritime border of Ukraine in Balaklava was surrounded by the special forces of the Russian Federation.

On that same day, a column of armored vehicles, including armored Tigers and other weapons previously not in service of the RF military units in Crimea headed from Sevastopol and the Gvardeiskoye BSF airfield near Simferopol towards the Crimean capital, while the Special Forces of the Russian Federation seized airports Simferopol and Belbek (Sevastopol).

On March 1, 2014, the Russian President asked the Federation Council to authorize the use of Russian troops in Ukraine “until the socio-political situation stabilizes” and the request was granted. On the same day, two large landing ships of the Baltic Fleet of the Russian Federation *Kaliningrad* (#102) and *Minsk* (#127) with paratroopers and technicians from Novorossiysk entered Sevastopol.

Also, on March 1, 2014, both Feodosia Bay and Port were blocked by one of the two missile hovercrafts of the BSF — *Bora* and *Samum*.

On March 2, 2014 two large landing ships *Olenegorsky Gornyak* (#112) and *Georgy*

Pobedonosets (#016) of the Russian Northern Fleet arrived to Sevastopol carrying on board paratroopers and equipment from Novorossiysk. On the same day, the marine battalions of the Ukrainian Navy in Feodosia and Kerch and the coastal defense brigade in Perevalnoye village were blocked. The office of the President of Ukraine in Crimea, as well as the headquarters of the Azov-Black Sea regional management and the Simferopol border unit of the Border Service of Ukraine, were seized.

On March 3, 2014, the ships and auxiliary vessels of the BSF blocked the exit from the Sevastopol Bay to prevent the possible exit of the Ukrainian Navy ships or the entrance of the Ukrainian Navy flagship frigate *Hetman Sahaidachny* (U130). That day marked the start of the RF military blockade of all Ukrainian military units in Crimea that lasted until March 25, 2014.

The commander of the Black Sea Fleet of the RF Admiral Alexander Vitko declared an ultimatum to the Ukrainian serviceman: if they do not surrender by 5 a.m. on March 4, 2014, Russian troops will begin the assault of all units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine throughout Crimea. The ultimatum to the Ukrainian military units was delivered by the Russian servicemen.

On the same day, the Russian Special Forces captured the border crossing point at the Kerch Ferry Terminal and the Kerch Sea Border Guard.

On March 5, 2014 five large landing ships of the Russian Navy — the Baltic Fleet landing ships *Minsk* (#127) and *Kaliningrad* (#102), the Northern Fleet ships *Olenegorsky Gornyyak* (#112) and *George Pobedonosets* (#016) and the Black Sea Fleet ship *Azov* (#151) — arrived to Sevastopol with troops and equipment from yet another trip to Novorossiysk. At least 300 people and 20 vehicles were unloaded from each ship. Seven BTR-80s and a number of the anti-tank missile systems Shturm were unloaded from the landing ship *Azov*.

In the meantime, on the west coast of the Crimean Peninsula, at the entrance to Lake Donuzlav where the Ukrainian Navy base was located, Russian BSF flagship missile cruiser *Moskva*, the physical fields control vessel *CFP-183*, a small rocket ship (corvette) *Shtil* and a *Molniya*-type rocket boat

controlled the exit from the lake in the Black Sea.

On March 6, 2014, at the entrance to the Donuzlav lake near Yevpatoria where the Ukrainian Navy ships were based, the Russian Black Sea Fleet blew up and sunk its own old discharged cruiser *Ochakov* and a rescue tug *Shakhtar* to block the fairway in order to prevent the Ukrainian ships from leaving for Odessa.

As of March 7, 2014, Russian troops in Crimea had taken all the administrative buildings, blocked all the access ways to the peninsula and surrounded all the bases and military units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Russian warships had delivered to the peninsula about 10 thousand soldiers and ammunition, including mobile anti-ship coastal defense systems.

During the day there was very active relocation of the Russian troops via the seized Kerch ferry crossing. 18 trucks with Russian soldiers arrived in the Gulf of Feodosia coast by Cape Chauda and set camp on the territory of the Ukrainian military range for receiving man force and ammo from the incoming landing ship.

On March 14, 2014, a train with 14 S-300 PMU anti-aircraft missile systems travelled via the Kerch ferry crossing to the Crimean interior.

Crimean Rocket Potential Build-Up

In March-April of 2014, the *Bastion* coastal defence missile systems capable of shooting down not just ships, but also land targets, were already stationed on the Crimean coast. Each Bastion with Onyx cruise missiles can provide coastal protection of more than 600 km in length. It is planned that by 2020, the first stationary anti-ship missile base station “Bastion-C” with up to 36 Onyx 3M55E missiles will be deployed in the occupied Crimea.

In addition, in March-April 2014, Russia transferred to Crimea *Bal* coastal defence missile systems (BRK), formerly stationed in the Caspian Sea. The squadron of these coastal defence missile systems was relocated to Sevastopol and included into the 15th newly formed separate coastal missile brigade. The BRK Bal is intended for control of territorial waters and is a mobile system that carries two types of anti-ship missiles (PKR)

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in launch vehicles (TPK). The Kh-35E missile range is 120 km, while the Kh-35B missile — 260 km. The BRK Bal and Bastion-P are deployed in the Reservne village area between Sevastopol and Balaklava. The Bastion-P (K300P), a mobile variant of the MZKT-7930 complex on chassis, can be equipped with nuclear warhead missiles. On May 9, 2014, the BRK Bal and Bastion-P took part in the Victory Day military parade in Sevastopol.

In May-June 2014, according to the sources of our monitoring group, an echeloned air defense system that included the mobile systems of the airborne and anti-missile defense systems S-400 (long-range) and Panzir-C1 (short-range), was deployed near Feodosia. The information was also confirmed by the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine (NSDCU).

In November 2014, according to our sources, the first operational-tactical missile complexes (OTRK) Iskander-M appeared in the occupied Crimea.

On May 20, 2015, the secretary of the NSDCU Oleksandr Turchynov stated that “10 Iskander-M have been delivered to the occupied peninsula,” that they were located in the vicinity of Shcholkine (the Cape Kazantip, Kerch Peninsula) and Krasnoperekopsk and that Russia was also preparing to place similar complexes in the Dzhankoy and Chornomorske village areas (the Cape Tarkhankut, the Western coast of the Crimean Peninsula).

In addition, according to the secretary of the NSDCU, the grouping will have three OTRK Iskander-K squadrons, including those equipped with the nuclear warhead missiles.

The secretary of the National Security and Defense Council also said that the Russian Federation was planning to deploy in Crimea a regiment of the Tu-22M3 bombers equipped with the new modification of the controlled aerial bombs and the Kh-15 (in the future — Kh-102) air-ground hypersonic missiles.

As for the infrastructural support of the nuclear forces, the Russian command pays special attention to the runway repair and modernization at the airbases Gvardeiskoye (Simferopol), Belbek

(Sevastopol) and Dzhankoy for receiving and deploying the Tu-22MZ bombers.

In order to test the new models of aviation weapons, including the air-ground missiles Kh-15 and Kh-102-based, the Russian military has already restored the airfield in the village of Kirovske (near Feodosia).

At the end of 2015 and in 2016 there was a significant increase in the number of the Russian BSF ships and their combat power capacity.

In 2015, the Black Sea Fleet got two new 06363 missile submarines and two new 21631 small rocket ships (corvettes). All four new combat ships are equipped with the C-1 cruise missiles with a range of up to 2,500 km capable of carrying a nuclear warhead.

On September 28, 2015, the first of the six new 06363 submarines — submarine B-261 *Novorossiysk* with the Caliber cruise missiles arrived to Sevastopol.

On November 18, 2015, two new missile ships equipped with the Caliber cruise missiles — small missile boats (corvettes) *Zelyonyi Dol* and *Serpukhov* — followed.

On December 25, 2015, the second of the six new 06363 submarines — submarine B-237 *Rostov-on-Don* with the Caliber cruise missiles arrived to Sevastopol. On November 17, 2015, en route from the Baltic to the Black Sea, it fired cruise missiles from the eastern Mediterranean at the targets in Syria.

In 2016, two more missile ships — a frigate and a submarine — were added to the RF Black Sea Fleet.

On June 9, 2016, Admiral Grigorovich, the main frigate in a series of six new 11356 ships, equipped with the Caliber cruise missiles, entered Sevastopol.

On June 29, 2016, the third of the six new rocket submarines, *Stary Oskol*, entered the Black Sea.

All in all, as of January 1, 2017, the Russian Black Sea Fleet had 7 warships (including 3 submarines) equipped with cruise missiles capable of carrying nuclear weapons. Before the occupation of Crimea,

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only one ship — the Soviet era flagship of the Russian Black Sea Fleet, missile cruiser Moskva — had such capability.

1. *Moskva* missile cruiser, the flagship of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation, since 1983

2. *Novorossiysk* rocket submarine, since September 21, 2015

3. *Zelyonyi Dol* small missile boat, since November 18, 2015

4. *Serpukhov* small missile boat, since November 18, 2015

5. *Rostov-on-Don* missile submarine, since December 25, 2015

6. *Admiral Grigorovich* missile frigate, since June 9, 2016.

7. *Stary Oskol* missile submarine, since June 29, 2016.

In 2017, the Russian Black Sea Fleet will get two more missile frigates and three submarines armed with the *Caliber* cruise missiles.

In November 2016, the Soviet-time anti-ship missile coastal division *Utes* was restored and reactivated. The object is located in the Balaklava district of Sevastopol, in the Cape Aya area. At the end of 2016, it test-fired the 1982 anti-ship Progress missiles, an upgraded version of the Soviet P-35 anti-ship missile with the range of shooting of up to 460 km. The missile is equipped with a 560-kilogram explosive warhead or a nuclear warhead of up to 20 kilotons.

On April 25, 2017 the BRK *Utes* fired a cruise missile at a maritime target. The P-35 missile successfully hit the sea shield that drifted in the sea at a distance of about 170 km.

By 2020, the *Utes* complex will be replaced with the first stationary silo-based coastal missile complex *Bastion-C* with up to 36 Onyx missiles.

Restoration of the Crimea's Nuclear Potential

The monitoring group believes there is a high probability that there are already nuclear warheads for marine and coastal missile systems in Crimea.

In March-April 2014, in the early days of the Crimean occupation, Russian troops took control of the nuclear weapons storage and service bases on the territory of the Crimean Peninsula left there from the Soviet times.

In May 2014, the Russian command inspected the Feodosia-13 facility, the main nuclear weapons storage and service base.

On January 26, 2015, Russian media reported that as part of the Russian military grouping in Crimea deployment and build-up, the 12th General Directorate of the General Staff of the Ministry of Defense of the RF got a new body whose mission would be the provision of storage, transportation and disposal of nuclear blocs for tactical and ballistic missiles.

On April 25, 2015, the Information and Analytical Center of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine (IAC NSDCU) announced that on April 23, 2015, the Consulate General of Ukraine in Rostov-on-Don had received a notification that, several railroad cars with the “Nuclear danger” sign on board travelled via the Rostov railway station presumably towards the Crimean Peninsula. According to the peninsula residents, however, such cargo was seen on the territory of the occupied autonomous republic on numerous occasions.

Currently, two basic nuclear weapon maintenance facilities are being restored:

- one of the central USSR nuclear weapons storage bases — the military unit # 62047, also known as Feodosia-13 in Kiziltash (Krasnokamenka), in the mountain tract between Sudak and Koktebel and
- missile and technical base (RTB) # 820 of the Soviet Black Sea Fleet, military unit #90989 in Balaklava (Sevastopol).

Note: The Feodosia-13 facility became operational in 1955 and was used to store nuclear munitions for aviation, artillery and missiles, including for the warships of the Soviet Black Sea Fleet. The atomic bombs used in the September 1956 tests at the Semipalatinsk range had been assembled at that site. In 1959, the first nuclear warheads to the GDR (Furstenberg) were sent from Kiziltash. In September 1962, during the Caribbean crisis,

six aircraft bombs assembled in Kiziltash were sent to Cuba as part of the Operation Anadyr. Prior to the occupation of the Crimea in 2014, the complex of buildings and structures was used as a permanent deployment base of the 47th special purpose regiment “Tiger” of the internal troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine that consisted of two special-purpose battalions. Stationed there were also the military commandant’s office of the guard of the 51st joint AFU warehouse and a patrol battalion.

The RTB #820 of the Black Sea Fleet in Balaklava started operation in 1959 in the Balaklava Bay rocks. The site contained nuclear warheads of six types for missiles, torpedoes and missiles/torpedoes of submarines, surface ships and coastal missile regiments of the USSR Black Sea Fleet. In 1961, a military detachment #20553 was created there. It was a mobile repair and technical automobile base (PRTBA) for the dispersion of nuclear munitions over the territory of Crimea in the event of a threat or war. Prior to the occupation of Crimea, the silos of the facilities were used as the Balaklava naval museum complex also known as the “Cold War Museum.”

The Occupied Crimea in the Syrian War

Since late 2015, along with Novorossiysk, the occupied Crimea has become one of Russia’s major launch pads in the Syrian war. The Russian troops grouping in Crimea, specifically, surface ships, submarines, and marines, take an active part in the RF military actions in Syria.

In 2015-2016 the following ships of the RF BSF carried out Caliber cruise missile attacks on ground targets in Syria from the eastern Mediterranean:

- On December 8, 2015, *Rostov-on-Don* submarine fired four missiles from underwater.
- On August 19, 2016, *Zelenyi Dol* small missile boat struck land targets near Aleppo.
- On August 19, 2016, *Serpukhov* small missile boat rocket fired missiles at ground targets near Aleppo.

- On November 15, 2016, *Admiral Grigorovich* frigate launched three cruise missiles.

In addition to carrying out the cruise missile strikes, Russia supplies the Assad regime with equipment and ammunition carried from Sevastopol and Novorossiysk by the large landing ships of the Black Sea Fleet and other Russian fleets, as well as by the BSF auxiliary vessels based in the occupied Sevastopol – the so-called “Syrian Express.”

In 2016, the large landing ships of the RF BSF conducted 67 return trips from Sevastopol and Novorossiysk to the naval base of the Russian Federation in Tartus, Syria. The ships carry missile launchers, armored vehicles, military vehicles, etc.

Of the 67 trips, half (34) were made by the large landing ships of the RF Black Sea Fleet, 17 – by the Baltic Fleet and 16 – by the Northern Fleet. It should be noted that in 2015, the large landing ships the Russian Navy completed 69 such trips with the same distribution ratio between the fleets, while in 2014 and 2013 — 46 and 30 trips, respectively. Thus, after the occupation of Crimea, the number of the Russian Black Sea Fleet trips to Syria has doubled.

In October 2016, RF BSF ships delivered a squadron of the Bastion coastal missile complexes from Crimea to Syria. In November 2016, its replacement arrived to Crimea. Over 2016, auxiliary vessels — dry cargo ships under the naval flag of the Russian Federation – of the 205th unit of the BSF provision completed at least 17 round trips between Sevastopol and the Syrian port of Tartus.

The Sevastopol-based 810th Brigade of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation provides on-board security of the Russian naval vessels carrying cargo to Syria and also guards the naval base of the Russian Federation in Tartus.

The Occupied Crimea and Change of the Region’s Military Balance

The combat missile and delivery potential concentrated in the territory of the occupied Crimea in 2014-2016 has led to a major change in the military-strategic balance in the Black Sea

region, as well as in the situation in the Black Sea-Mediterranean and Black Sea-Caspian regions, in favour of the Russian Federation.

Prior to the first military use of the sea cruise missiles Caliber on October 7, 2015, their range was believed to be around 300 km. But in the first combat operation in Syria the missiles struck targets at distances of over 1500 km. Some data suggests, however, that the true range of these missiles can be up to 2600 km.

On October 22, 2016, the head of the combat training department of the Russian Navy's Main Staff, Rear Admiral V. Kochemazov, said that the sea-based cruise missiles Caliber had a shooting range of up to 2 thousand kilometers. *"Depending on the targets — whether they are ground or sea ones — and on the route, taking into account the need to bypass obstacles on the ground, the total shooting range of these missiles is up to 2 thousand kilometers"*, - said Kochemazov. The specialized sites already state the range of these missiles as 2600 km.

Thus, at the very minimum, if fired from the Sevastopol area, the Caliber missiles of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation are capable of easily reaching the Baltic States, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria, Romania, Bulgaria, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Greece, including the island of Crete, all the Balkan states, Turkey, Cyprus, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Iran, Iraq, the coast of Egypt and southern Italy.

However, if the launch vessel is positioned in the southwestern part of the Black Sea, i.e., near the entrance to the Bosphorus, the Caliber missiles can reach almost the entire territory of Italy, including the island of Sicily.

At the same time, the mobile coastal missile complex Bastion with an Onyx cruise missile, same as Caliber, is capable of shooting not only ships, but also small land targets within a likely range of 600 kilometers.

When fired from the Sevastopol area, Bastion can also strike land targets in the coastal areas of all Black Sea countries. It can also be used with a nuclear warhead.

Officially, the mobile short-range ballistic missile system Iskander has approximately the same range of 500 kilometers and can carry a nuclear warhead up to 50 kilotons. However, many experts believe that the declared number is purposely underestimated to conceal the violation of the INF Treaty and that the real range of this cruise missile is 2000-2600 km.

The February 14, 2017 issue of the New York Times published an article by Michael R. Gordon «Russia Deploys Missile, Violating Treaty and Challenging Trump» that reported that in breach of the 1987 INF Treaty, Russia had begun mass production and deployment of the 9M729 long-range missile (US designation SSC-X-8) as part of the 9K720 missile complex Iskander-M.

In various US sources, the maximum range of the 9M729 cruise missile is estimated between 2000 and 5500 km. Until now, the missile complex Iskander-M used cruise missile 9M728 (US designation SSC-7) with the declared maximum range of less than 500 km, which met the INF Treaty terms.

Tu-22 M3 missile bomber regiment scheduled for deployment in Crimea includes 16 aircrafts each able to carry 10 Kh-101 (H-102) cruise missiles with a range of about 5 000 km, including a nuclear warhead of 250 kilotons.

The Kh-101 – or Kh-102 with a nuclear warhead — is a strategic air-to-surface cruise missile with the radar-evading stealth features. The test results have demonstrated a circular error probable (CEP) of 5 m at a range of 5500 km. It is capable of destroying mobile targets with up to 10 meters accuracy.

Overall, coupled with the plans to deploy the Tu-22M3 missile bombers, the coastal land missile systems Iskander and Bastion and the Black Sea Fleet sea missiles Caliber stationed in the occupied Crimean Peninsula, threaten now not only the entire Black Sea coast, as previously believed, but also, all of Europe, especially from its southern flank.

The Size and Composition of the Military Grouping in Crimea

In the Soviet era, about 140 thousand military personnel were stationed on the Crimean Peninsula. Before the occupation of Crimea, under the agreement with Ukraine, there were 12.5 thousand servicemen of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation with an authorized number of up to 25 thousand people.

By the beginning of 2017, the monitoring group estimates the size of the Russian armed forces grouping in the occupied Crimea at close to 60 thousand people with the prospect of building it up to 100 thousand people. By comparison, according to the US Department of Defense, all American bases in Japan have a total of about 50 thousand servicemen stationed there.

On March 6, 2015, at the Atlantic Council and Freedom House in Washington, D.C., the Maidan of Foreign Affairs presented a report «Human Rights Abuses in Russian-Occupied Crimea». In particular, the report said: “Putin creates an enormous military base on the entire territory of Crimea with incredible pace. Its number, according to our estimates will reach 100 000 people.”

The forecast was based on the official press release of the Southern Military District of the RF Ministry of Defense from September 17, 2014 entitled “The Newly Formed Army Detachments of the SMD in Crimea Will Receive New Combat Banners [3].”

The report said: “By the end of this year, more than 40 units and military detachments of the Southern Military District (SMD) will be granted the new design military banners. Most of the military units of the SMD where the solemn rituals of the combat banner award will take place, are the recently formed in Crimea aviation, anti-aircraft missile, engineering, artillery and RCBP regiments, separate brigades of coastal troops, material and technical support, and so on.”

In the armed forces of the RF, combat banners are awarded to regiments and separate battalions, as well as brigades, divisions and armies. The staffing of the regiment is between 2000 and 3000

servicemen — soldiers, sergeants, ensigns and officers — and civilians, while of brigades — up to 3000-4000 personnel.

On June 8, 2015, during a speech at the meeting of the Ukraine-NATO Interparliamentary Council in Kyiv, the Ukraine Defense Minister Stepan Poltorak said: “*The Russian Federation increases the size of the military grouping in Crimea. Now it numbers about 24 thousand servicemen ... There is a high probability of the deployment of the strategic nuclear weapons carriers in the peninsula. In fact, Russia forms a powerful group in Crimea for guaranteeing its grip on the occupied territory and defending its interests against Ukraine and other states.*” According to him, if such build-up of force continues, it is possible that by 2017, Russia can double the number of its troops and create a powerful contingent of 43 thousand troops.

On June 30, 2016, while on a visit to Bulgaria, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko said in an interview to Bulgarian television: “*More than 60,000 Russian military personnel are located on the Crimean Peninsula and there is a great threat of the deployment of nuclear weapons there [4].*”

It should be added that by now, the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation also includes “military trophies,” i.e., the Ukrainian Navy ships seized during the annexation that will be stuffed with the Russian crews, specifically:

1. *Konstantin Olshansky* large landing ship (98 people crew)
2. *Prydniprovia* missile boat (corvette) (44 people crew)
3. *Lutsk* small anti-submarine ship (corvette) (90 people crew)
4. *Ternopil* small anti-submarine ship (corvette) (90 people crew)
5. *Khmelnysky* small anti-submarine ship (corvette) (36 people crew)
6. *Chernigov* trawler (68 people crew)
7. *Cherkasy* trawler (68 people crew)
8. *Slavutich* control ship (129 people crew).

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The number of these crews and coastal personnel will add yet thousand people more to the number of the RF Black Sea Fleet personnel in the occupied Crimea.

Russian troops in Crimea include surface and submarine forces of the Black Sea Fleet. The surface forces include assault warships, large and small landing ships and coastal defense ships -- anti-submarine and minesweepers.

The basis of the Russian Navy troops in Crimea is comprised of:

- 30th surface ship division
- 197th landing ship brigade
- 41st missile boat brigade
- 68th coastal defense ship brigade
- 4th submarine brigades.

The current structure of the Russian Black Sea Fleet allows it to accomplish both its near seas operation area objectives, such as control of the sea waters adjacent to Crimea, as well as conducting naval landing operations against Ukraine, and the far seas operation area ones, such as maintaining permanent naval presence of Russia in the Mediterranean Sea and provision of Russian troops in Syria. The basis of the Russian land troops in Crimea is comprised of:

- 810th separate Marine Corps brigade (Sevastopol),
- 126th separate coastal defense brigade of (Perevalne, Simferopol area)
- 15th separate coastal missile brigade (Sevastopol);
- 127th separate intelligence brigade (Simferopol);
- 1096th anti-aircraft missile regiment (Sevastopol);
- 8th artillery regiment (Simferopol);
- 68th separate marine engineering regiment (Yevpatoria),
- 4th radiation, chemical and bacteriological protection regiment (Sevastopol)
- Airborne assault brigade of the Airborne Forces

(Dzhankoy). [In the analysis on composition of the Russian military group in Crimea, information from the Center for Army, Conversion and Disarmament Studies (CACDS) was used]

The units' munitions are continuously upgraded. For example, in the spring of 2016, the 810th separate marine brigade of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation received 40 new amphibious armored personnel carriers BTR-82A. That model has a combat module with a coaxial machine gun and dual-feed automatic cannon, a more powerful engine, reinforced protection against improvised explosive devices and mine blasts, the fifth-generation communications and a topographic orientation system, as well as an air-conditioning system.

At the end of 2016, in order to manage the coastal units, a special 22nd Army Corps of the Black Sea Fleet in Crimea was formed. Major General AV Kolotovkin, who previously served as commander of the 58th Army in the North Caucasus, was appointed the Corps Commander. The 22nd Army Corps now includes the Black Sea Fleet's Coastal Troops that previously reported to the BSF Deputy Commander for Coastal Troops.

Note: An Army Corps is a ground force composite unit of the Russian Army formed for solving specific operational-tactical tasks that may include two, four or more divisions. Since a division has upward of seven thousand servicemen, an army corps can have tens of thousands of troops.

The air defense of the occupied Crimea is provided by the 31st Air Defense Division of the 4th Air and Air Defense Forces Army, whose units are stationed in Sevastopol (the 12th Artillery Regiment), Feodosia (the 18th Artillery Regiment) and Yalta (an artillery regiment).

One of the objectives of the Crimean land units of the Russian Army grouping in Crimea is covering the Crimean isthmus, as well as maintaining readiness for the possible invasion of mainland Ukraine from Crimea, including amphibious landing on the Ukrainian coast of the Black and Azov Seas.

The Air Force component of the Crimean Russian Military Force includes the units of the bomber, fighter and defense aviation that comprise the 4th Air and Air Defense Forces Army and the BSF Naval Aviation.

In addition to the latter consisting of the 43rd separate naval assault regiment (Saki) and the 318th separate mixed regiment (Kacha), a new aviation grouping — the 27th Mixed Aviation Division — composed of three different types of regiments — the 37th mixed air regiment (Gvardeiskoye), the 38th fighter jet regiment (Belbek) and the 39th helicopter regiment (Dzhankoy) has been formed. The aviation grouping is capable of performing combat missions throughout the entire depth of the Black Sea region.

In January 2015, it received new Su-30CM destroyers, modernized Su-27CMs and Su-24M attack aircrafts and Su-25CM. In addition, the 39th helicopter regiment is equipped with the type Ka-52, Mi-28N and Mi-8 AMTSh helicopters.

In 2016, the build-up of the already-largest Southern Military District of Russia in the regions of Russia bordering Ukraine continued. At the end of 2016, the 150th Motorized Infantry Division in the Rostov Region, the 42nd Motorized Infantry Division in Chechnya, the squadron of the Ka-52 shock helicopters in the Krasnodar Territory and several others were formed and started combat training.

On July 1, 2016, Colonel General Alexander Dvornikov who earlier was in charge of the Russian army grouping in Syria and was awarded the title of Hero of the Russian Federation was appointed the commander of the Southern Military District that included the occupied Crimea.

The New Cold War on the Crimean Coast

The occupation of Crimea and the aggression of the Russian Federation in the East of Ukraine have shown that in the XXI century it is too early to write off to the historical archives **the military strategy and tactics of the past XX century**. For example, the threat of Russian Navy's landing on the Odessa region coast with access to Transnistria so far, can

only be counterposed by the coastal defense, Air Force and Air Defense Forces of Ukraine, or the naval presence of NATO ships in these areas.

Meanwhile, along with the process of radical build-up of anti-ship missile systems and air defense equipment in the occupied Crimea, in 2014-2016 Russia's Armed Forces began to apply psychological pressure and demonstration of force in regard to the naval forces of the non-Black Sea NATO upon their entrance in the Black Sea.

The first incident reminiscent of the Cold War that received a considerable resonance in the world press, occurred in April 2014, during the entrance in the Black Sea of the US Navy missile destroyer.

On April 12, 2014, the Russian bomber Su-24 flying without external weapons at low altitude, for at least 12 times over 1.5 hrs simulated an attack on US missile destroyer USS Donald Cook (DDG-75). That imitation of an air attack on a US Navy ship in the Black Sea was the first one since the end of the Cold War.

In addition, in April 2014, Russian mass media conducted a wide informational special operation, reporting in hundreds of media outlets the false information that the Su-24 had used the Khibiny Electronic Countermeasures System (ECM) that suppressed the US ship's Aegis Armament Management System. The story went on to say that after such buzzing, the American destroyer had quickly left the Black Sea and that subsequently, dozens of American sailors wrote requests for discharge.

Shortly, the Russian manufacturer of the Khibiny ECM officially announced – however, only in the English version of the website — that the news had been a hoax since the ECM was not installed on Su-24:

“By the way, nowadays Khibiny is being installed on Su-30, Su-34 and Su-35, so the famous April attack in the Black Sea on the USS Donald Cook by the Su-24 bomber jet allegedly using the Khibiny complex is nothing but a newspaper hoax. The destroyer's buzzing did take place. This EW system can completely neutralize the enemy's radar, but Khibiny are not installed on Su-24.”

Later the practice became regular and continues to date.

On September 7, 2014, in the northwestern part of the Black Sea, two Russian Su-24 bombers and an An-26 military transport aircraft buzzed the Canadian frigate HMCS Toronto (F333) that was heading for the Sea Breeze-2014 international exercises. One of the SU-24s came within 300 meters above the frigate.

On June 8, 2016, Russian military aviation carried out a military demonstration was carried out in the central part of the Black Sea by the Russian Navy's naval missile ship at the Romanian port of Constanta, headed by USS Porter (DDG-78) missile destroyer.

Four Tu-22M3 bombers, four Su-27 fighters and an A-50U airborne early warning and control (AEW) aircraft from three Russian airfields — in Saratov, Rostov-on-Don and Ivanovo, respectively, took part in the operation.

The Effect of Sanctions on the Black Sea Fleet

At the same time, it was that very year that the Ukrainian and international **sanctions against the Russian military-industrial complex** hit the Russian Federation especially hard when it came to the BSF modernization.

In fact, the program of the new surface ships construction for the Black Sea Fleet has been thwarted. The main reason was the sanction-related ban on supplying Ukrainian and German engines for three new project 11356 missile frigates of the *Admiral Grigorovich* type and three new project 21631 missile corvettes similar to the operating corvettes *Serpukhov* and *Zelenyi Dol*, respectively.

The Government of the Russian Federation ordered the Russian enterprises to replace the Ukrainian engines, but the attempt was unsuccessful.

As a result, in October 2016, it was decided that the bodies of the 4th and 5th frigate of the six frigate series previously assigned to the BSF — *Admiral Butakov* and *Admiral Istomin* — would be completed at the Kaliningrad Yantar Plant and sold to India without the engines. Meanwhile,

India intends to purchase the engines directly from Ukraine.

The construction of the 6th frigate in the series — *Admiral Kornilov* — has been cancelled. Most likely, that means the end of the project 11356 frigate production. Thus, instead of six, Russia's BSF will include only three frigates of that type.

A similar fate was faced by the 21631 series of small missile boats (corvettes) equipped with engines by the German MTU Friedrichshafen GmbH, a Rolls-Royce Holdings group. The series was supposed to consist of 12 ships: three for the Caspian Flotilla (all built), six for the Black Sea Fleet (2 built and 1 launched on water without engine), three for the Baltic Fleet (construction not started).

Due to the German manufacturer's refusal to continue supplying engines for the series, the task of the import substitution was entrusted to the Kolomensky plant and Zirka plant in St. Petersburg. After that attempt had failed, the naval command of the Russian Federation decided to fit the boats with the Chinese engines, specifically, the 1980-design Henan's diesel engines licensed by the German Deutz-MWM that had left the high-speed marine diesel engines market. Most likely, further construction of the 21631 series corvettes project Russia will be also cancelled.

The international sanctions have seriously strained yet another Russian Navy ship construction project unrelated to the Black Sea — the 20385-series corvette. The construction of the series flagman ship *Gremyaschiy* started in the St. Petersburg Norther Shipyard on February 1, 2012 and the second one — *Provorniy* — on July 25, 2013.

However, given that the 20385 series corvettes were also supposed to be fitted with the MTU Friedrichshafen diesel engines that due to the international sanctions are now out of Russia's reach, the construction of both ships has been suspended.

Currently, the command of the Russian Navy of the Russian Federation anticipates the German MTU diesel engines to be replaced with the ones manufactured by Russia's Kolomensky Plant.

Militarization as an Industrial Growth Factor

In 2016 the **militarization** of Crimea finally became not only the main content of Russia's Crimean policy, but also the main driver of the occupied peninsula's economy.

Naturally, the formation of a powerful military base in Crimea now determines the priority directions of the area's economic development, which is the revival of the military industry and everything related to the military infrastructure. In April 2016, the then Russian President's envoy in the so-called "Crimean Federal District," Oleg Belaventsev, said that the military-industrial complex (MIC) that included about 30 companies was a strategic direction for Crimea's industrial policy.

He noted that the development of the defense industry in Crimea is caused *"by the need to strengthen national security in the face of rising external threats and sanctions; presence on the peninsula intensified group of troops and forces of the Defense Ministry of the RF; special geographical and geopolitical location of the southern outpost of Russia, as well as historical priority, which significantly influences the growth of the economy of the federal district."*

The revival of the military industry in Crimea is accompanied by its technological and legal integration into the military-industrial complex of the Russian Federation. According to the 2015 annual summary, Crimea was declared "the leader in the growth rate of industrial production" within Russia with a growth rate at 12.4%. According to official numbers, in the first half of 2016, the industrial production index in the Crimea exceeded 120% (i.e., a 20% increase compared to the corresponding period in 2015). That growth was mainly due to the provision of Crimean enterprises with military orders.

In April 2016, the head of the "Ministry of Industrial Policy" of the "Republic of Crimea" reported that the Crimean defense enterprises had state contracts totaling tens of billions of rubles until 2020.

In 2016, of the eight regions of the Southern Federal District (SFD), the highest growth rate of

the industrial production was shown by Sevastopol. Over the course of the year, the city's output of industrial production increased by 21.8%.

According to Rosstat, the index of industrial production in the Southern Federal District in 2016 amounted to 106.4% compared to the previous year. That is above the all-Russian index of 101.1%.

In the SFD, the highest level of industrial production growth was demonstrated by Sevastopol - 121.8%. As a reminder, in 2014 industrial production in Sevastopol grew by 372.9%.

The Rostov region is in the 2nd place with 112.6%, followed by the Republic of Kalmykia with 112.2%, the Republic of Adygea with 111.7%, the Astrakhan Oblast with 109.8% and the "Republic of Crimea" with 104.6%. The lowest growth rate of 104.1% was recorded in the Krasnodar region.

However, since the Crimean defense industry loses competition to the defense enterprises of the Russian mainland, the Crimean "authorities" are fighting for increasing the volume of military orders at the peninsula's enterprises.

As a result of the occupation, among the "war trophies," the aggressor acquired 13 Ukrainian defense enterprises that had been part of the Ukrainian state concern "Ukroboronprom," namely:

- The Sevastopol Aviation Enterprise;
- The Yevpatoriya Aviation Repair Plant;
- The Feodosia Shipyard;
- The *Chernomorets* Central Design Bureau (Sevastopol)
- The Design Bureau of Radio Communication (Sevastopol)
- The Sudokompozit Design and Technology Bureau (Feodosia)
- The Feodosia Optical Plant;
- The *Polumjya* Special Industrial and Technical Park (Sevastopol)
- The Aerospace Systems Research Institute (Feodosia)

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- The Helicopter Research Center (Feodosia)
- The Skloplastic Plant (Feodosia)
- The *Morye* Feodosia shipbuilding company
- The Fiolent Plant (Simferopol).

In addition, the following enterprises have switched to the defense manufacturing:

- The Zaliv Shipbuilding Yard (Kerch)
- The Sevastopol Marine Plant
- The Uranys-Radiosystemy Company (Sevastopol)
- The SELMA Electrowelding Equipment Plant (Simferopol)
- The Koral CDB (Sevastopol) and others.

Also, since 2015, a plant in Ordzhonikidze, near Feodosia, that specializes in torpedoes and offshore based missiles is now being actively restored into a naval nuclear weapons servicing facility. The perimeter of this object is being reinforced with the latest state-of-the-art security systems.

Note: During the Soviet era, the village of Ordzhonikidze was the site of two secret enterprises – the Hydropribor and the Hydroapparat factories — engaged in the manufacturing and testing of various torpedoes and rocket torpedoes, as well as the unique equipment for controlling the state of the torpedo and missile weapons.

At the same time, the Crimean occupation administration publicly admits that “the enterprises are forced to cope with the consequences of the EU and US sanctions, such as the problems of logistics, limited external markets, decreased volume of the export-import operations and increased transportation costs.”

According to representatives of the Crimean “government”, the Crimean enterprises get sufficient volumes of state orders mainly due to the personal attention of President Putin and the “top-level decisions to place a large number of orders at the Crimean shipyards.”

In September 2016, we learned that the Russian United Shipbuilding Corporation (USC) was creating a shipbuilding cluster in Crimea that would include the Sevastopol branch of the Zvyozdochka Shipbuilding Center – a new name of the “nationalized” Sevmorzavod, two design bureaus – Coral and Sudokompozit – and the Sevastopol National Technical University.

The USC Vice President Dmitry Kolodyazhnyi announced that Feodosia’s design bureau Sudokompozit — that until 2014, as part of the Ukroboronprom concern, participated in construction of the landing ships on the Zubr air cushion and was later “nationalized” by the RF – would become a branch of the St. Petersburg Central Nevsky Shipbuilding Yard.

Sevastopol’s Central Design Bureau Coral that specializes in designing of floating cranes and rigs will now also fulfill military orders. Meanwhile, it is planned that Crimean shipbuilding plants will perform dock repairs and servicing of the new frigates and submarines of the Russian BSF, which has already started.

It is symptomatic that in September 2016, Igor Ponomarev, Vice-President of the United Shipbuilding Corporation, stated that “it is premature to talk about the mass-construction of vessels at the Crimean shipyards, but the OSK is working hard on providing Crimean shipyards with current dock repairs and maintenance of the Black Sea Fleet ships, including new submarines and patrol vessels.”

In late spring 2016, Sevastopol’s Sevmorzavod received the first Russian shipbuilding order — to build a pontoon complex for the Kerch Strait bridge construction. The Coral CDB became the project designer.

Earlier in 2015, the plant repaired and painted the body of new *Novorossiysk* submarine after its transition to the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation from St. Petersburg.

The *Morye* shipyard in Feodosia in 2016, after “transferring” into the federal ownership of Russia, began to build the first of three new small rocket ships of the Karakurt-class (Project 22800). Construction of emergency rescue and

hydrographic vessels for the Black Sea Fleet of Russia was started at the Zaliv Shipbuilding Yard (Kerch), and an active search for larger orders is underway (at this plant one of the largest shipbuilding docks in Europe is located — 364 meters in length and 60 wide — which do not have analogues in the territory of the Russian Federation). Negotiations are under way on the transfer of orders to this plant for the construction of five small rocket ships of the Karakurt-class.

Thus, due to sanctions, Russia reconsidered its initial plans for loading shipyards in Crimea and Sevastopol; it abandoned plans for large civilian ships production, as nobody else in the world recognizes provenance certificate with the mark “Crimea. Russia”. Therefore, Russian experts do not foresee another alternative but the military orders both for the *Gulf* plant and for the other shipbuilding enterprises of Crimea.

Crimean “Trophy” Economy

It is the logic of the occupied territory, captured as a “trophy” for the use of the military base, since the first months of the annexation of Crimea conditioned the attitude towards property rights in the occupied peninsula. The authors of this article called this concept a **“trophy economy”**.

It is characterized not only by mass violations of the legal norms adopted in the civilized world, but their complete neglect. Mass expropriation of all state property of Ukraine on the territory of Crimea, which is cynically called “nationalization”, took place.

The list of expropriated Ukrainian property objects includes: about 200 sanatoriums, all ports, airports, water supply and energy objects, railways, wineries, elevators, agrarian enterprises. Such famous objects as the Nikitsky Botanical Garden, the famous children’s center *Artek*, Chornomornaftogaz, the Morye shipyard could be exemplified.

Expropriation is not limited to objects of state ownership of Ukraine. In the list of “nationalized” — objects that belong to trade unions, other public organizations, higher educational institutions, the Academy of Sciences, etc.

Formally, there is no direct expropriation in relation to private enterprises, but the mechanism of forcible takeover and changes in their management using the same “Crimean self-defense forces” is used. Officials, for example, may dissolve false information, as if the company has become bankrupt, or is guilty of something, before it is “nationalized”.

Thus, on August 24, 2014 “self-defense forces” allegedly at the request of the workers did not let the management of the Zaliv shipyard in Kerch. The plant belongs to Ukrainian businessman K. Zhevago. On July 30, 2014, a decision was made that lease agreements on property owned by Crimea, concluded before the Republic of Crimea became a part of the Russian Federation, may be canceled prematurely unilaterally.

Objects belonging to Ukraine initially “were taken into account” as the property of the Republic of Crimea. In addition, Russia’s largest state monopolies did not directly control the expropriated enterprises of Ukraine in Crimea, fearing international sanctions. They implement this indirectly through enterprises specially created by the occupation authorities of the Republic of Crimea (state corporations).

Concentration of a large number of enterprises in the hands of the “Crimean authorities” has created a serious managerial problem. The Crimean autonomy has never managed so many enterprises. Crimea does not have its own cadres of state top managers. This is compounded by the inability to attract private foreign investment to the occupied Crimea.

In 2014, the Crimean occupation authorities decided to “nationalize” at least 400 entities of state property of Ukraine in Crimea. The exact state statistics of Ukraine on this issue have not been published yet, since during the occupation of Crimea documents of the State Property Fund of Ukraine in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea were lost.

But in the end of 2014, “respect for the decency” was rejected. The direct transfer of the property stolen in Ukraine to Russian departments began, for example, to the Office of the President of the Russian Federation. In addition, the Government

of the Russian Federation, the FSB, the Ministry of Defense, the Joint Shipbuilding Corporation, etc. can already be added to this list. Parks, wineries and vineyards, state residences, sanatoriums located on the Southern coast of Crimea were “transferred” to the Office of the President of the Russian Federation.

For example, the Crimean Natural Reserve, the Swans Island Reserve, the historic palaces of the princes Yusupov and Golitsyn, four state residences. The largest Massandra winery concern and its eight branches with wineries and vineyards; unique state sanatoriums: Alushta, Gurzufsky, Dawn of Ukraine, Lower Oreanda, Southern; sanatoriums of trade unions: Kurpaty, Miskhor and Ai-Petri; private sanatorium and the unique botanical garden Ayvazovsky (the property of the Ukrainian businessman S. Taruta), Rainbow and Russia state boarding houses in Bakhchisarai and Evpatoria. All of the above objects are located in unique locations, with an area of many tens, hundreds and thousands of hectares, and their market value in normal conditions is hundreds of millions of dollars.

In 2015, the “nationalization” of Ukrainian business property began. According to the experts of Maidan of Foreign Affairs, the closest to reality are the aggregate figures of nationalized state and private enterprises, given by Ukrainian lawyer Georgy Logvinsky - about 4 thousand Ukrainian enterprises [5].

According to the laws of the Russian Federation, nationalization with compensation should be provided. In 2014, in the occupied Crimea the pretexts were used as “strategic importance of the enterprise” or “the enterprise does not conduct production activity”.

In 2015, as an excuse for “nationalization”, the term of re-registration of enterprises was set up after the annexation was enacted by March 1, 2015. As expected, the next stage of “exploration of Crimea” by the occupants was the sale of part of the expropriated property of Ukraine in Crimea, unless certainly there was a rich buyer or investor on this stolen property.

The Military Base and the Displacements of the Population of Peninsula

It is in the context of “military build-up” of the occupied Crimea that it will be lawful and logical to consider **demographic processes and the human rights situation** on the peninsula. For the military base, the population of Crimea in the amount of 2.4 million people is economically excessive. In addition, the occupiers certainly take into account that this population was almost a quarter century in the conditions of Ukrainian democracy and freedom of expression. The “aggravating circumstance” for occupants in this sense is the presence on the peninsula of Crimean Tatar people in all its multifaceted aspects of its history, problems and promising national goals and objectives.

Therefore, the demographic situation in Crimea is considered only in the context of the military build-up in the region with the loyal population, an optimal cost of its maintenance and impossibility of civil protests and any other uncontrolled forms of political activity.

Over the past three years of occupation, the hypothesis that the Russian Federation has taken a course to squeeze out of the Crimean “extra” population and its partial displacement at the expense of controlled migration flows from the regions of the Russian Federation has repeatedly been confirmed.

This policy began immediately in the spring of 2014. Later, the light was shed on the matter with the help of statistical data. According to the latest pre-war data of Ukrainian statistics, on January 1, 2014 — that is two months before occupation — the population of Crimea (without Sevastopol) was 1,967,200 people. A census was one of the first events in the RF after the occupation. According to the Crimean census conducted on October 14, 2014, the population of Crimea was 1,889,400.

Such a decrease in the population of the occupied Crimea during 9 months of 2014 — by 77,800 people — provides an understanding of the scale of departure of the population from the Crimea. According to the authors of the article, 80-90% of this indicator was the departure of the population

to the mainland of Ukraine as a result of fears related to repressions.

Throughout the occupation period, “superfluous” population was displaced through demonstrative repressions. In 2016, they touched not only the Crimean Tatar people, but were distributed to “Ukrainian terrorists and saboteurs”. In addition, repressions against journalists continued.

At the same time, the invading state during 2014-2017 have been stimulated actively the movement of large numbers of people from Crimea to various regions of the Russian Federation, for example, under the program “Far Eastern Hectare” – a free acquisition of a land plot for housing construction, business or farming on territories of subjects of the Russian Federation, which are part of the Far Eastern Federal District. In addition, young people are encouraged to leave Crimea through privileges for studying in universities of regions of the Russian Federation.

At the same time, the population of Crimea is supported by residents of different regions of the Russian Federation. Firstly, in this process, the actual militarization of Crimea is used - that is, an increase on the territory of the peninsula not only of the servicemen, who belong predominantly to a contract personnel, not conscripts, but also members of their families. For this purpose, the “military mortgage” program has been extended to the occupied Crimea.

Secondly, the replacement of personnel is actively used: the Crimean state and municipal officials, despite the fact that they demonstrated loyalty to the annexation, are systematically and massively replaced by officials from different regions of the Russian Federation, mainly from depressed regions of the European part of Russia, including the northern ones, and also from distant cities of Siberia.

From the first days and during all three years of occupation, Russia, through the directing of personnel from Moscow and other regions, continues to form systematically its repressive and managerial apparatus in Crimea and Sevastopol: power structures, controlling bodies, “overseers” in the organs of the republican and municipal

authorities, the occupied territory.

It is estimated that based on the analysis of both public and insider information, the proportion of officials sent from the Russian Federation in subdivisions of federal agencies of the Russian Federation in Crimea, which are subordinated directly to Moscow, reaches 70%, and in local departments subordinated to Simferopol - 50%.

One of the trends that emerged in 2016 is that the replacement of local staff with foreigners began to emerge in areas such as education and health.

This is due to dismissal of the Crimean specialists caused by the lower salary levels and increased bureaucratic requirements for paper-based reporting.

Thirdly, during all three years of occupation, a process of resettlement to the Crimea with the purchase of housing for pensioners from the remote northern regions of Russia — Siberia and the Far East — continues.

Fourth, it is possible to predict that a significant number of Russian workers involved in the construction of the Kerch Bridge and other large infrastructure facilities may remain in Crimea for permanent residence.

According to official data of the statistical bodies of the Russian Federation, on October 1, 2016 the absolute population growth in Crimea due to migration from the regions of the Russian Federation in 2014-2016 amounted to 151 651 people, including the “Republic of Crimea” - 96,226 people, Sevastopol - 55,425 people.

The rate of population growth in Sevastopol due to migration from the regions of the Russian Federation in the period of occupation was an unprecedented 14, 36% in comparison with a pre-occupation period as of January 1, 2014 (amounted to 385 900 people). Excluding Sevastopol, the rate of growth of the population of Crimea due to migration from the regions of the Russian Federation for the period of occupation compared to January 1, 2014 is 4.9%.

However, the estimates given by the inhabitants of the occupied Crimea regarding the migration situation are fundamentally different even from

the above very high official statistics. Residents of Sevastopol, including deputies of city councils and employees of health and medical insurance, note that in their opinion the population of Sevastopol increased by 2-2.5 times. Residents of Simferopol believe that the real population of the Crimean capital is now about 600 thousand people against 380 thousand in 2014. Also, there is a very large increase in the number of children, that caused a sharp shortage of places in schools and especially in kindergartens.

After the population's replacement in Crimea to a level of satisfactory loyalty, the Kremlin authorities could, in their opinion, get an opportunity to enter the international negotiation process on the Crimean fate on a "democratic" basis. Thus, in 2016 a significant number of "throws" into the information space was noted through the well-known "liberal" activists from the Russian Federation and some Western countries about the idea of holding a "second referendum" on the status of Crimea.

* * *

According to authors, understanding of the domestic nature of the processes taking place in the occupied Crimea, often hidden by the media, is very important both for Ukraine and for the world community. It is on its basis, that new real steps can be taken in the direction of the de-occupation of the Crimea.

Within 3.5 years of occupation of the Crimean Peninsula, the attitude towards the problem of occupation of Crimea in the external world is changing. On the one hand, the official discourse of the United Nations, NATO, the OSCE, the EU, the European Parliament, the Council of Europe, the International Criminal Court includes basic definitions that are adequate to the situation in Crimea not only in the context of human rights violations, as in previous years, but such definitions as "occupation," "annexation," "international military conflict."

Since occupation and illegal annexation of Crimea, the understanding of its global importance gradually develops in the world. "The world after Crimea" has become different. And these changes

are growing rapidly.

In the world, the number of countries is increasing, for which it becomes increasingly apparent that the aggression of the Russian Federation against Georgia, the actual annexation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, the creation of the Russian-controlled enclave in Transnistria, the occupation and annexation of Crimea, an attempt to withdraw the southern and the eastern regions (the Novorossia project) from Ukraine by the Crimean scenario, the Russian intervention in the Syrian conflict, as well as the democratic mechanisms of the developed countries — all these are interconnected components of the dangerous process of implementing the new global policy by the Putin regime.

On the other hand, another group of countries and/or influential political forces in them has been identified. In these countries there is an inertia of a successful European development in the years after the collapse of the USSR, which will exist for some time. It manifests itself in the mood of "pacification of the aggressor," similar to the years before the Second World War. At the same time, in the statements of a number of politicians, not only "appeasement" is seen, but also a tendency to sacrifice values and principles for electoral or economic conditions.

In these states, in spite of the decisions of international organizations, with the aim of lifting economic sanctions to Russia, a course has been formed on the "normalization" of relations with Russia, including by recognizing the annexation of Crimea de facto and even de jure. As a result of active Russian politics and domestic political processes in such countries, including those that are members of the EU and NATO, they tend to "normalize" relations with the Russian Federation and lift sanctions.

At the end of 2016, against the background of the absence of a state strategy for the de-occupation of Crimea in Ukraine, the plans to resolve the "Ukrainian-Russian crisis" appeared and gained a widespread interest. These plans were proposed by Western politicians G. Kissinger and T. Graham and supported by some Ukrainian oligarchic circles. To a certain degree, all of them are based

on the actual recognition of the annexation of Crimea. In such a situation, it becomes clear that real solutions to the problem of occupation and annexation of Crimea can be found only in a wider international context.

According to the authors, Ukrainian civil society, the politicians, the experts, Ukraine, as a state that directly opposed to the aggression of the Russian Federation, must reasonably explain to the civilized world its dramatic experience, including the example of occupation and annexation of Crimea. They also must explain that the Putin regime aims at a global revenge for the historical defeat of the Soviet empire, that he builds his anti-Western world with other basic values. In this capacity, modern Russia along with formations like ISIL, has become a new global threat in the 21st century.

After annexation of Crimea, Russia intervened in the Syrian war and united two regional “arcs of conflicts” — the Mediterranean and the Black Sea — into one “front line” from Tunis to Donbass.

Russia has created the largest military group in the Southern Military District. This group fought with Georgia, then at military bases in unrecognized Abkhazia and South Ossetia, prepared in the North Caucasus the militants who occupied Crimea and fought in the East of Ukraine. Now it uses these territories to participate in the Syrian war.

Putin’s Russia has become a global leader in the scientific development and practical application of the principles of a modern hybrid or diffused war and put even NATO in a deadlock in the sense of an adequate response to this challenge.

In this context, the risk of Russia’s activation of the conflicts in the South Caucasus (Georgia, Nagorno-Karabakh) increased, blocking new energy transit

projects to Europe from the Caspian Sea and Turkmenistan through the territory of Turkey. The Moldovan direction looks like a risky one. This is due to Russia’s control over Transnistria and the fact that pro-Russian forces play an important role in Moldova’s domestic policy.

Based on this:

It is impossible to allow a split of international sanctions against the RF, adopted by the civilized world, into “sanctions for the annexation of Crimea” and sanctions “for aggression in the east of Ukraine.” Without the successful annexation of Crimea, there would be no attempt to dismember Ukraine, which was suspended in Donbas and other eastern and southern regions of Ukraine by the Ukrainian people.

Sanctions against Russia, related directly to Crimea, need to be expanded, made even more targeted, sectoral and specified, relating, inter alia, to military and infrastructure projects in the territory of the occupied Crimea.

It is necessary to impose sanctions on those Russian structures that are now the official managers of “military trophies” - that is, to impose sanctions on enterprises and organizations of the RF that have taken in their “ownership” the Ukrainian enterprises captured in Crimea, including the Presidential Affairs Department and the Russian Government, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the FSB, the Ministry of Defense, the Central Bank, other ministries and state corporations of the Russian Federation.

And, finally, the main thing is that the Crimean de-occupation strategy in the updated sense should be part of the not-yet-established strategy of curbing Russian expansion in the world.

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Militarization of Social Life in Crimea

Militarization of social life in Crimea is one of the key directions of the Russian state policy on the peninsular that composes of different spheres. The most dangerous are those forms of militarization, which are aimed at children.

Militarization of the public life of Crimea is one of major aspects of the RF governmental policy in Crimea and covers many areas of public life. The militarization forms focused on children are of major threat, therefore a particular attention is paid to militarization issues of education, sports, and culture. The system for educating the children developed by the RF in Crimea is dominated by principles and approaches that contradict the major values of human rights. For instance, most educational establishments in Crimea try to develop a positive attitude of children not only to the army and the war, but also to the paramilitary units.

A complex of comprehensive actions aimed at militarizing the conscience of children and young people in Crimea is called ‘military patriotic education’. During such actions the children and young people are taught to use weapons and wear military uniform. The children learn various types of arms, are trained in man-to-man fighting, and study fundamentals of the military science. One of major ‘values’ to be enrooted in the children’s conscience is to justify aggression and military conflicts for interests of Russia. With such education, occupation of Crimea and actions of paramilitary units are legitimized in their conscience. Apart from this, the residents of the occupied peninsula are taught, since childhood,

to identify themselves only citizens of Russia and are prepared to defend the interests of occupying state, including service in its armed forces, law enforcement bodies or participation in the Russian paramilitary units.

Militarization of Educational System in Crimea

The propaganda of the military service and the general militarization of the children’s conscience are carried by the RF education system functioning de facto in Crimea. Since March 2014 the RF strategy on educating children has been implemented in Crimea[1]. The strategy cornerstone is that ‘one of the objectives for children’s education up to 2025 shall form patriotism, pride for the Motherland, readiness to defend the Fatherland’s interests, responsibility for the future of Russia in children through development of programs for patriotic education of children, including the military patriotic education.’

Target state programs ‘On patriotic education of RF citizens’ are developed in the RF, with implementation in Crimea started since April 2014. At the moment the State Program ‘On patriotic education of the citizens of the Russian Federation for 2016 — 2020’ is being implemented in Crimea. The state program points out that one of its objectives is a military patriotic education of RF citizens and formation of positive motivation in the young people to the military service[2]. A list of 15 organizations included into the Federal Register of the youth and children’s non-governmental organizations supported by state is published at the Federal Youth Agency website[3]. One of them is ‘Association of Knights’ NGO. The charter of organization states that one of its tasks is to ‘propagandize service to the Fatherland’. It acts

also in Crimea, and at its website the organization reports on holding actions to learn man-to-man fighting techniques, weapons firing, and war history for the children in Crimea.

The local authorities are active in implementing the education militarization policy. For instance, the 'Ministry of Education of Crimea' publishes the information on the military patriotic education activities and their budget expenses on its official website. So, according to the order of the 'Ministry of Education' of Crimea, RUR 27,460 thousands were allocated in 2016 for organizing and holding civil patriotic and military patriotic events. [4]

The Federal Security Agency of RF (FSB) establishes military patriotic clubs in Crimea where children learn about the FSB activities, that promotes the service in this agency. For instance, the project on establishing military patriotic children's clubs 'Young Friend of Border Guard' has been implemented by the FSB Border Guard Department in Crimea, 'Union of Paratroopers of Crimea' NGO, SIVASH military patriotic center.

The RF budget organizations take also an active part in actions on militarizing education on the peninsula. For instance, the RUSSIAN CENTER FOR CIVIC AND PATRIOTIC EDUCATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (RosPatriotCentr) Federal State Budget Establishment is subordinate to the Federal Agency for Youth. The RosPatriotCentr projects are aimed at approving an opinion on 'legitimacy' of Crimea occupation in the Crimean society. [5]

Grants are received also by the writers publishing books about the war. For instance, RUR 3.0 mln of state support have been allocated for the propaganda of fiction in Crimea, with particular project focus on the creative works of the war veteran writers. The money for this project was received by 'Fiction Propaganda Bureau of Writers' Union of Russia' non-commercial partnership[6]. The NOCHNYE VOLKI (Night Wolves) inter-regional public biker organization received a state grant of RUB12.0mln for the project: 'PATRIOT All-Russian Patriotic Youth Center in Sevastopol City'[7]. The NOCHNYE VOLKI organization has held regularly mass military and Anti-Ukrainian

events for the children and young people on the place of the supposed PATRIOT Park.

A global public movement that militarizes the conscience of children on the peninsula is 'YUNARMIA' of Crimea. The Crimean YUNARMIA was founded as branch of the YUNARMIA All-Russian Children and Youth Military Patriotic Public movement in June 2016[8]. There are also public organizations in Crimea that though acted on the peninsula prior to occupation, have not re-registered according to the RF laws. Such movements, for instance, include 'Union of Monarchists of Russia'. [9]

Some political parties of the RF participate in the propaganda of war and militarization. For instance, the website of Crimean Branch of RF Communist Party (CPRF) publishes calls and slogans propagandizing the Russian army. Among them: 'Best Weapons and State-of-Art Equipment For Army and Navy', 'People and Army Undefeatable!', 'Yes to Russian Army and Navy', 'Defend Army — Preserve Russia'[10]. Representatives of the YEDINAYA ROSSIA (United Russia) Party take part in various events in Crimea dedicated to glorifying the Russian army[11]. However, activities of the Russian political parties in educational establishments are forbidden by Law of Russia 'On education'. Pursuant to Article 27.12 of Law, 'political parties, religious organizations (associations) shall not be established and shall not act in the state and municipal educational establishments'. RF Law 'On political parties' forbids interference of political parties into the academic process of educational establishments'. The participation of political parties in Russia in militarizing the conscience of children is also inconsistent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child that declares that the child shall be fully prepared for independent life in the society and educated in the spirit of principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity'.

Priests of the Russian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate (MP ROC) do their best to create a positive attitude of the Crimean children

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and young people to the RF army. For this purpose the representatives of clergy participate together with the military men and paramilitary unit members in various events, ceremonies and events where children and young people are involved. The clergy representatives hold paramilitary Orthodox camps on the territory of peninsula. For instance, in August 2016 a summer camp of Orthodox Scout Brotherhood at Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral was organized in Crimea. The Crimea (MP) Eparchy website reports that according to the camp program the children were taught to survive in the forest, to transmit signals for helicopters, and move soundlessly (basic principles) [12]. Similar camps with the Crimean children participation are organized also on the RF territory. The Krasnodar Regional Branch of ORTHODOX SCOUT BROTHERHOOD Inter-regional Children Personality Developing Public Organization elaborated the project: 'Youth of Kuban and Crimea, Let's Build Common Future!' that was supported by the Russian Orthodox Church grant. [13]

A particular place in the educational militarization system is played by cadet colleges and classes supported by the military men, law enforcement agencies, paramilitary units. They are created in the functioning educational establishments or become independent educational establishments included into the general education system of Crimea. Some of them are funded from the budget, though there are private schools, too. The purpose of such establishments is propaganda of military service and preparation of children for the service in the RF army. Such actions on the occupied territory are forbidden by Article 51 of Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949, 'Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War'. One of the leading establishments of such kind in Crimea is the SEVASTOPOL PRESIDENT CADET COLLEGE Federal State Budget Funded Comprehensive Education Establishment created by Decree of President of RF no 74-rp of 20 March 2014. Similar actions are also taken by the paramilitary units. For instance, CRIMEAN KAZAK CADET CORPS (school) private educational establishment was licensed by the RF for educational services in November 2015. The establishment website says that 'the corps was

re-registered according to the Russian laws on 29 January 2015'. [14]

With the help of various mass and regular events, the exclusively 'Russian' identity and tolerance to war and violence are developed in the children who are also motivated to serve in the RF Armed Forces. In order to attract such children into the armed forces of occupying state they are convinced that one of top moral and ethical values for the Crimea residents is to defend the Russian Federation from enemies. At numerous events organized by the military and paramilitary units the children are trained to fire, and to assemble fire arms, are offered competitions based on physical force use, and are taught the ABC of reconnaissance and military science. Such actions are held in various forms: games, contests, military subject competitions [15], paramilitary children camps, cultural and entertainment events [16], lectures, conferences, theatrical shows, establishment of special paramilitary educational establishments and classes, lessons and meetings for military patriotic [17], spiritual patriotic and patriotic education. [18]



Women with strollers and children in military uniform at holiday parade on May 9, 2015, Simferopol.

<http://hochukrohu.ru>

Actions on militarization and war propaganda are actively carried out among the adult civilian population of Crimea. In late 2014 a number of documents was adopted in Crimea that regulated the behavior of the Crimean residents in case of war actions. On November 17 Mr S. Aksenov signed Edict 'On creating the Evacuation Commission of the Republic of Crimea' that stipulated preparatory

actions to evacuate the population, materials and cultural values to the safe districts. On November 21, Mr S.Aksenov adopted Decree 'On managing education of the Republic of Crimea citizens on the elementary defense knowledge and their training on the military service elements in 2015' [19]. Such documents promoted creation of atmosphere of fear and inevitable military conflict with Ukraine that presented the RF Armed Forces as the only savior from external threat. [20]

Festival events on the military and war subjects take place in Crimea at least once a month. During the particular festivals glorifying the paramilitary units ceremonies of awarding the 'volunteer corps' members and the Kazaks, including for the participation in the Crimea occupation, are held. For instance, on February 23 2015 ceremonial events dedicated to the first anniversary of the 'People's Volunteer Corps of Crimea' establishment were held in Simferopol. During the event the 'volunteer corps' members were decorated with special medals 'For Return of Crimea'. After the occupation of Crimea the Russian authorities have been celebrating 'Reunion with Russia' Holliday when the residents together with the army and the paramilitary units 'celebrate' the anniversary of occupation. The ceremonial events dedicated to this were held in the Crimean cities and towns on March 16, 17 and 18. A specific component in the paramilitary festival system is represented by events dedicated to the integrity of Crimea and Russia. They are aimed at legitimizing the Crimea occupation in the society, glorifying the Russian military men and paramilitary units as well as the banditti participating in the military conflict in the East of Ukraine.

Many mass cultural events are also focused on militarization. For instance, in August 2016 within the KOVCHEG SPASENIA (Arc of Salvage) event the audience watched a performance that involved the military equipment, and people in military uniform. Moreover, flags of unlawfully created DPR and LPR appeared at the stage.

The Russian Orthodox Church plays an active part in militarizing the population. In the course of religious ceremonies this church members accept a positive image of the occupying country and

paramilitary unit members. Representatives of the Kazaks and 'People's Volunteer Corps', the military men participate regularly in such ceremonies. For instance, in January 2017 the VICTORIUS Icon dedicated to the Crimea Occupation was painted in Crimea as gift for RF President Vladimir Putin. Before sending to Moscow the icon escorted by the Kazaks was stately showed to the faithful in the churches and in the military units in different parts of the peninsula [21]. The priests bless the heavy weapons brought to Crimea, fixing the idea of a necessary militarization of Crimea in the conscience of the faithful.

After the occupation a number of new monuments and memorial plates dedicated to various wars and military men, were unveiled. For instance, on June 11 2016 a monument to 'polite men' looking as RF military man was stately opened in Simferopol. The Russian propaganda builds up a positive perception of occupation in the Crimeans, calling the RF Main Intelligence Office special task force and 'Crimean Self-Defense' fighters who seized Crimea, 'polite men'.

Murals presenting President of RF with appeal 'Crimea Is Ours' and describing positively the occupying country military men are created on the walls of houses in Crimea. For these purposes the dedicated NETWORK project has been created in the RF which is funded from the RF budget via the system of grants and non-commercial organizations. [22]

Conclusions

The occupation of part of Ukrainian territory — the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol City — and further actions of the Russian Federation in Crimea constitute a gross violation of the international law standards, are not consistent with the UN objectives, and defy the fundamental principle of the UN member states: a commitment to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations. The RF aggression against Ukraine has resulted into global violations of the fundamental human rights, military crimes and crimes against humanity in Crimea.

The documented facts show that restricting rights and freedoms in Crimea has become one of the major consequences of the public life militarization on the peninsula. One of the most severe threats is militarization of education in Crimea, that has finally resulted into educating the children in the spirit of cult of war and tolerance to violence, aggressive attitude to the states and peoples that do not support the 'Russian World' ideas. Moreover, the children are enforced only the 'Russian identity', breaking their ties with the country of birth and citizenship — Ukraine. The Russian authorities carry on the military propaganda among the under-age residents of Crimea, preparing them to the service in the RF army that constitutes a

gross violation of the international humanitarian law standards.

Anti-Ukrainian propaganda and propaganda of war and hatred at the state level have logically developed into manifestations of Crimea militarization that caused repeated violation of freedom of expression, freedom of speech and freedom of mass media. In attempt to control the Crimea information space in order to implement such large-scale propaganda, the Russian Federation has almost destroyed independent mass media and pluralism, having restricted substantially the access of Crimea residents to the alternative information sources.

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Trimarium: A View from the North

The Three Seas Initiative is a project aimed at promoting and developing economic cooperation among the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. This paper is to present a – not *the* – Polish view on the Polish-Croatian Trimarium Initiative (TI) launched by the presidents of the two countries (Andrzej Duda and Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović) in 2015. The paper is divided into two main parts: the first is devoted to a description of the TI as it is understood today, while the second considers possible potential extension of cooperation within TI both in a geographical sense and as far as the specific areas of cooperation (political, military etc.) are concerned.

Introductory remarks

This paper is to present a – not *the* – Polish view on the Polish-Croatian Trimarium Initiative (TI) launched by the presidents of the two countries (Andrzej Duda and Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović) in 2015.¹ Formalized at the first TI summit in Dubrovnik (August 25-26) [1], the initiative gained new momentum at its second summit in Warsaw on July 6-7 of this year [2], especially given that it was combined with and supported by the visit of US President Donald Trump to the Polish capital [3]. The paper is divided into two main parts: the first is devoted to a description of the TI as it is understood today – i.e., primarily in terms of infrastructure – while the second considers possible potential extension of cooperation within TI both in a geographical sense and as far as the specific areas of cooperation (political, military etc.) are concerned.

Geographically Trimarium is a space covering the basins of three seas: the Adriatic, the Baltic and

the Black. Politically, however, it is defined more narrowly—at least for the time being. It has its earliest conceptual origins in the Polish interwar idea of Intermarium (the political and military cooperation of the Central and Eastern European states that were threatened by German and Soviet imperialism) [4]. Today the international milieu is substantially different, of course, given the American military presence on the ground, the existence of NATO and the EU, and the fact that Germany is now an allied democracy. However, the Russian challenge remains a factor in the region.

Trimarium is geographically wider than was Intermarium, since – at least potentially – it is open not only to the countries situated between the three seas, but also those located around the Baltic Sea, such as the Scandinavian states that are not yet participants but that are perceived as desirable and attractive potential partners in Poland and in the Baltic states. Unlike Intermarium, which was above all intended as an answer to the military threat to the region and whose original backbone was the Polish-Ukrainian and Polish-Romanian anti-Soviet alliances of 1920 and 1921, today's Trimarium is not primarily about security but about infrastructure. (Moreover, while Ukraine is not yet a core country of Trimarium cooperation, though it remains a potentially an important partner for the group; for its part, Romania remains one of the leading powers in the construction of the modern initiative.)

Formally Trimarium is a cooperation project of 12 European Union member states: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia. Currently, the project's dimensions

are primarily infrastructural and economic. The key to Trimarium cooperation is the participants' shared membership in the EU; its political goal is to deepen sectoral cooperation and strengthen cohesion among the states of the Eastern flank of the EU. Ultimately, the initiative is intended to strengthen the traditional links among Central and Eastern European states and to include them into the process of the European integration as active creators, not merely passive consumers of ideas and projects conceived in the "core" EU countries. Trimarium therefore is not an alternative to the EU, but a complement to it.

The very idea of the TI is still *in statu nascendi* (under construction). Its final shape remains to be determined, though the dynamic nature of politics allows us to predict confidently that this process will never – and should never – be completed. In order to function, develop, and thrive, Trimarium will have to evolve and be modified repeatedly in order to adjust to the new challenges that will emerge in the future. Fukuyama was wrong – there is no such a thing as the end of history – so Trimarium will continue to evolve until the end of its political lifespan.

Given that the Initiative is still under construction today, this allows us however to identify the two main factors behind its birth: the European and the American. The first is obvious, since its very construction is an attempt to organize the central-eastern part of Europe in an integrated political group. The second, however, has been added to Trimarium by the visit of President Donald Trump. The political support of the world superpower for this local initiative has given it new momentum while making it harder for its opponents to portray it as unserious or based on unrealistic wishful thinking.

The infrastructure dimension of Trimarium – that is, within the group of 12 states – is today the basic political task for the initiative. Nevertheless, the potential for wider cooperation – both geographically and thematically – is considerable. There is obvious room for cooperation within NATO and the EU and to some extent with other partner countries (Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia) in infrastructure (transport and communication as

well as energy and energy raw materials transfer), security (including military industry and technology), and political cooperation (eastern NATO flank strengthening, immigration policy, structural funds, equal standards for all in the EU, one speed Europe instead of two speed one, opposition to German-Russian infrastructural projects like Nord Stream 2 etc.). Each particular topic added to Trimarium will result in variable geometry, since one can hardly expect all the countries of the region to be equally interested in deep cooperation in each of the fields mentioned above. However, work on each issue does not take place in complete isolation, as the success or failure of the group in one field will have an impact on its activity in other fields as well. Let us turn now to examine the three main dimensions of Trimarium cooperation as they are seen from Poland.

I. The Trimarium Initiative Today: Infrastructure Cooperation as a Core Project

There are two main areas of cooperation in the infrastructure dimension of Trimarium: transportation (rail lines and highways) and energy (LNG and oil terminals, gas and oil pipelines, gas storage facilities electricity connections, etc.) The Visegrád Group (V4; that is, – Czechia, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia) plus Croatia constitutes the core countries in this field of cooperation. According to the declaration signed at the Dubrovnik summit in 2016, Trimarium aims to contribute to the construction of the Single European Market in the region by strengthening sectoral cooperation in the fields pointed out above. A longer-term but obviously necessary priority is the development of East-West transport infrastructure, which must be coupled with enhanced North-South connections. Central and Eastern European cohesion is crucial for Poland, a country situated at the crossroads of two macro-regions: the Baltic and Danube. The infrastructure links between them, neglected in previous centuries by the empires that ruled the region, should be strengthened to benefit the free nations of today.

The Visegrád Group and the formats associated to it, such as V4+ (i.e., the four countries plus

one external partner – usually Croatia, Romania, Slovenia, or Ukraine, with the last being the principal non-EU partner) or V4+NB8 (adding the five Nordic and three Baltic states) have great potential for cooperation on bilateral and regional infrastructure projects both in transport and communication. The leading area for this kind of activity are north-south rail lines and highways to connect the countries of the region and to spark further development in their economies. The most famous example is the Via Carpatia – the highway planned to begin in the Greek city of Thessaloniki and end either in the Lithuanian port of Klaipėda or to extend even further to the Estonian capital of Tallinn, with onward ferry connections to Helsinki. On the southern end, this highway will have branches across Bulgaria to Istanbul and to the Romanian Black Sea port of Constanța. Another potential area for this kind of cooperation are the Sudeten Mountains, where there is room for potential bilateral Polish-Czech projects to construct road and rail links.

The Polish section of Via Carpatia (570 km) runs along the S19 road and is planned to be completed by 2023. The estimated cost of the section, in which the investor is GDDKiA, is 30 billion złoty (€7 billion). The S19 road runs from Barwinek on the Slovak border to Budzisko on the Lithuanian frontier, connecting cities such as Rzeszów and Lublin, among others. The route offers some promising additional connections to Ukraine (Rzeszów-Przemyśl-Lviv, Zamość-Volodymyr Volynskyi-Lutsk and Lublin-Chełm-Kovel). Moreover, it is not only the Polish section of Via Carpatia that can be extended to Ukraine; connections are possible to the Slovak (via the Mukachevo-Uzhhorod-Košice) and Hungarian (Mukachevo-Debrecen) segments as well.

Via Baltica is another project of the same nature as Via Carpatia. It is a part of Branch B of Pan-European Tran91-km Polish section, planned for completion in 2018-2021, is estimated to cost 3.5 billion złoty (€820 million), with GDDKiA again serving as the investor. The highway project will begin with a Berlin- Warsaw connection and then turn north along the existing S8 and S61 roads through Ostrów Mazowiecka, Łomża, Elk and Suwałki before reaching the Lithuanian border at

Budzisko; it will then, as described earlier, continue onward to Kaunas, Riga, Tallinn and Helsinki.

Currently under construction and scheduled for completion by 2022, the A1 route— known as the Amber Highway in Poland and running from Gorzyczki at the Czech border to Gdańsk via Katowice, Częstochowa, Łódź, and Toruń—is another example of improvements to the road transport network². It will form part of the European transport corridor E75 that runs from Vardø in far northern Norway through Finland, onward via the Helsinki-Gdynia ferry connection to, Poland, before proceeding through Czechia, Slovakia, Hungary, Serbia, and Macedonia to Greece. It intersects the E30 (Cork, Ireland to Omsk, Russia) and E40 (Calais, France to Ridder, Kazakhstan), making it an important element of European transport infrastructure.

The S3 expressway (from Świnoujście to Lubawka on the Czech border) is to be completed by 2018 and supplemented with an onward connection to Czechia by 2023. It constitutes a part of the European transport corridor E65 as well as Central European Transport Corridor (CETC) Route 65, and runs from Sweden (via the Malmö-Świnoujście ferry connection) o Poland, Czechia, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Kosovo, Serbia, Macedonia, and Greece, with a ferry connection to Crete.

Last but not least of the infrastructure projects worth mentioning in this context is the so-called Go Highway Odesa-Gdańsk, which is aimed at connecting Ukraine and Poland but which can also constitute a part of the Chinese Belt and Road initiative.

It is not just road but also rail infrastructure that will be developed in the Trimarium. The priority project is Rail Baltica (Warsaw-Tallinn), which is expected to be completed by 2025 with an undersea tunnel to Helsinki by the mid-2030s. [5]

The success of the Kyiv-Lviv-Przemyśl rail connection opened by Ukrzaliznytsia (Ukrainian Railways) in December 2016 shows us another potential for cooperation in the region. That example is worth being followed—and even replicated elsewhere. Dedicated new rail service along the routes Wrocław-Kraków-Przemyśl-Lviv-Ternopil-Khmelnytskyi-Vinnytsia-Kyiv and

Warsaw-Lublin-Chełm-Kovel-Korosten-Kyiv would reduce traffic at the overloaded Polish-Ukrainian road border crossings—a matter that has become more urgent since visa-free travel for Ukrainians to the EU began in June 2017. Local trains on the routes Lublin-Chełm-Kovel-Rivne-Zhytomyr and Przemyśl-Lviv-Ivano-Frankivsk-Chernivtsi would also help reduce border congestion.

The transport system in the Trimarium region also comprises three water routes to be built: the E30 – from Świnoujście on the Baltic Sea along the Oder, the Elbe and the Danube rivers to the Black Sea; the E40, also connecting the Baltic and Black seas from Gdańsk to Odesa; and the E70 connecting the Oder and Vistula rivers (as part of a route ultimately linking Klaipėda and Rotterdam). [6]

The energy dimension of TI cooperation was born as a tool to meet the Russian challenge clearly demonstrated to the region by the so-called Russian-Ukrainian “gas wars.” [7] The Trimarium answer to that challenge is embodied in the North-South Corridor project - the planned connection between the already existing LNG terminal in Świnoujście on the Baltic coast, not far from the Polish-German border, and the planned facility on the Croatian island of Krk on the Adriatic. The Corridor actually began with the Polish-Danish-Norwegian Northern Gateway project, consisting of a Baltic pipeline to bring gas from Norwegian fields to Poland. The planned investors are: Gaz-System (Poland), Gassco (Norway), and Energinet (Denmark). The Polish main gas distributor PGNiG is also engaged in the project, as its subsidiary PGNiG Upstream Norway holds shares in 20 Norwegian gas fields in the North Sea. The project, which has an estimated cost of between €1.6-2.2 billion and a planned capacity of 10 billion cubic meters (bcm) per year, is scheduled to be completed between 2017-2022, and will be able to operate in reverse mode as well [8]. For these investments to be effective, however, they must be coupled with the construction of interconnectors between the V4 countries and their Trimarium neighbors as well as Ukraine. In particular, the creation of the North-South gas transit corridor demands the construction of three further interconnectors: Polish-Ukrainian

and Polish-Slovak – both already planned to be completed by 2020—and Polish-Czech, for which a deadline has yet to be established.

The Polish-Slovak interconnector is planned to be built between Strachocin and Veľké Kapušany. Its annual capacity will be 4.7 bcm (Poland to Slovakia) and 5.7 bcm (Slovakia to Poland). The main investors are Gaz-System (Poland) and Eustream (Slovakia) and the estimated cost is 356 million złoty (€83 million). The project has been supported with €108mln in EU funding provided within the framework of the Connecting Europe Facility instrument.

The Polish-Czech interconnector will stretch from Libhošť (Czechia) to Hať (Polish-Czech border) and on to Kędzierzyn Koźle (Poland). Its capacity is planned to be 5 bcm (Poland to Czechia) and 2.5bcm in the reverse direction; costs have not yet been estimated, though the main investors will be Gaz-System (Poland) and Netgas (Czechia).

As for the Polish-Ukrainian interconnector, its route is planned to stretch from Hermanowice (Poland) – Bilche Volytsia (Ukraine) with a compressor station in Strachocin (Poland). With a planned capacity between 5 to 8 bcm per year, the interconnector's main investors are Gaz-System and Ukrtransgaz.

For Poland and Ukraine the project is rooted in energy security concerns; the Russo-Ukrainian war in particular has forced Ukraine to seek gas suppliers besides Russia's Gazprom. For Czechia and Slovakia, the respective interconnectors have a much more economic dimension; nonetheless, the Russian-German pipeline Nord Stream 2 represents a fundamental threat to the Slovak position as the main transit country for Russian gas, thereby forcing Bratislava to search for alternatives.

The North-South corridor, as mentioned above, is to be combined with LNG terminals at both ends, Świnoujście and Krk respectively. In Poland, the project is treated as a kind of reinsurance to guarantee security of supply to the region in the event that Russia causes any interruptions of LNG shipments to Świnoujście via the Baltic Sea. [9]

Apart from the North-South corridor, the Gas Interconnector Poland-Lithuania (GIPL) is

planned to connect Poland to its northeastern neighbor, linking Hołowczyce (Poland) and Jauniūnai (Lithuania) by 2021. The investors are Gaz-System, Amber Grid (Lithuania), and the Innovation Network Executive Agency – INEA (EU). With an estimated cost of €558 m, GIPL is intended to connect the Baltic states' gas grid with that of the rest of the European Union; however, it will likely be complicated with the competitive nature of the LNG terminals – the existing facilities in Polish Świnoujście and the floating storage regasification unit (FSRU) in Klaipėda, as well as the additional FSRUs planned for planned to be built in Skulte (Latvia), Tallinn and Paldiski (Estonia) [10] and Constanța (Romania). [11]

The common struggle against the German-Russian [12] Nord Stream 2 project engages the interests of Poland and Slovakia [13] within the TI as well as Ukraine and Belarus outside of it. All of these states are currently the main transit countries for Russian gas and oil exports to the EU [14]. It is highly probable that these states will cooperate with the Scandinavian and the Baltic countries on this issue, since all of them fear Russian domination in the region and perceive Russian gas exports as an instrument of the Kremlin's foreign policy; for these reasons, they protested against Nord Stream 1 as well. [15]

The energy infrastructure of TI may be completed as well by the two electricity interconnections, one the LitPol Link between Ełk in Poland and Alytus in Lithuania, thereby connecting Poland and the Baltic states, as well as another link between Poland and Ukraine currently only in the planning phase. [16]

The first experimental American gas shipment to Świnoujście LNG terminal on June 8 [17], together with President Trump's announcement in Warsaw in July [18] that the US will supply Central Europe with American LNG, has lent considerable political momentum to Trimarium cooperation in the energy dimension, making its success very likely.

In its present configuration of 12 countries, Trimarium is home to 105 million people and has a combined GDP of \$3.3 trillion (€2.8 trillion) [19]. The economic potential of the region within

the EU is thus certainly not negligible. From a German perspective the Polish market alone is more than twice as large as that of Russia, while the combined V4 market is greater than that of France [20]. For years, Czechia was the second largest market for Poland, after Germany (in 2015 – €11.9 billion, or 8.4% of exports, compared with €5.1b or 2.9% of exports to Russia); only in 2015 did Czechia fall to third place after the UK (€12.1b, 8.5%). In 2015, Polish exports to Hungary (€4.8b, 2.7%) were only slightly smaller than those to Russia [21]. The TI countries offer each other stable trade conditions, low political risk, personal and legal security to entrepreneurs and their employees, geographical proximity (thereby lowering transportation costs), and consumers with relatively large – and growing – purchasing power who are moreover not dispersed over a large territory unlike Russia; similarly, compared to Russia the level of corruption is relatively low and dropping further. When factoring in the impact on regional development of the TI initiative's infrastructure projects, the region may become a powerful and attractive market for the entire EU.

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see next page

II. Potential of the future cooperation in the Trimarium region

a) Trimarium and the security dimension

Trimarium Initiative is not about security, many of its countries still share the same position on the military dimension of international relations in the region and – especially after 2014 – have the same or similar perception of the Russian threat. Regional integration in the security field began at a November 2015 summit of NATO's eastern flank, convened at the initiative of Poland and Romania. At this summit, the “Bucharest 9” (Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia) officially came into being. Given the context of Russian aggression in Ukraine, the 9 appealed

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to NATO for the reinforcement of the Alliance's eastern flank. Of these countries, those that share a common land or maritime border with Russia (the Baltic states, Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria) formally requested the presence of Allied troops on their soil, while those lucky enough not to have such a neighbor (Czechia, Hungary, and Slovakia) offered the others their political solidarity and support [22]. These requests—except for that Bulgaria, given its further southern location) were accepted at the Warsaw NATO summit in July 2016²⁴ and are now being implemented. [23]

The core countries for security cooperation in the Trimarium geographical space are Poland, Romania, and the Baltic states. However, the Nordic countries¹ (both those that are NATO member states – Denmark and Norway—as well as neutral or nonaligned Finland and Sweden) represent an important security factor in the region and remain attractive cooperation partners for all of Central and Eastern Europe.

The Scandinavian perception of the Russian threat is the similar to that of Poland or the Baltic states;² moreover, given that the Nordic states belong to “old Europe,” their voices are often more powerful than those of the “new” members of NATO and the EU; accordingly, the Nordic countries are often listened to more carefully and treated more seriously. That fact has a political value for Poland, the Baltic states, and Romania that is difficult to overestimate. Scandinavian opinions on the security situation in our part of Europe resonate and harmonize with our own opinions, making them more credible and powerful. This helps to reduce

1 Iceland is a Nordic country too and a NATO member, though it does not have a military of its own and its geographical distant situation from the Baltic region makes it hardly a potential member of TI and this is why it is not considered here.

2 Of course there are some differences even among the Nordic states, caused primarily by geographical factors. Finland is a direct neighbor of Russia, as the two share a common land border, Sweden is more maritime oriented and still focused on the Baltic Sea, Norway focuses on North Atlantic and Arctic, while Denmark—relatively less threatened—also focuses on the Arctic. On the history and perspectives of the Nordic military cooperation see: T. Dąbrowski, M. Gniazdowski, J. Gotkowska, J. Groszkowski, A. Sadecki, A. Wilk, J. Hyndle-Hussein, *W regionie siły? Stan i perspektywy współpracy wojskowej wybranych państw obszaru od Morza Bałtyckiego do Morza Czarnego*, ed. by J. Gotkowska, O. Osica, Center for Eastern Studies, Warsaw 2012, p.22-27. See as well: J. Gotkowska, P. Szymański, *Between co-operation and membership. Sweden and Finland's relations with NATO*, “OSW Studies”, no 62, February 2017, pp.31 and J. Gotkowska P. Szymański, *Gotland and Åland on the Baltic chessboard – Swedish and Finnish concerns*, “Analyses” OSW, 26.10.2016, <https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/analyses/2016-10-26/gotland-and-aland-baltic-chessboard-swedish-and-finnish-concerns>.

the impact of the Russian propaganda narrative about the “hysterical, historically-motivated Russophobia” of Warsaw, Vilnius, or Tallinn. Moreover, the high quality of state administration in the Nordic countries would be an important resource for Trimarium if the former were to join it. This kind of “network assets” (well-trained, high quality civil servants loyal to their mother countries while employed in prominent positions in EU and NATO structures) would be difficult to overestimate as a means of promoting the shared Scandinavian-Baltic-Polish-Romanian point of view on the nature of Russian policies and politics.

The economic potential and high technological level of the Nordic countries – especially their military industry – are a further reason why the Trimarium Initiative should be extended to the North. Currently, the broader region threatened by Russia is engaged in an intensive program of rearmament. For Poles, Balts, and Romanians, the Nordic armament industry production as well as military know-how is considerably attractive. Since 2001- 2002, Polish-Finnish military industry cooperation has been a reality, as best symbolized by the Polish Army wheeled armored personnel carrier Rosomak – which is based on the construction of the modified Finnish Patria Armored Modular Vehicle (AMV) [24]. Finland is also a leading regional producer of ballistic protection systems (companies such as: Ballistic Protection Burgmann, Verseidag Ballistic Protection, Exote Armour, FY-Composites, and Temet) as well as of electronic military systems (Control Express Finland, Electro-Hill, Elektrobitt, and Elesco) [25]. Finnish³ and Estonian expertise and know-how on territorial defense [26] and the Estonian experience in cyber warfare are other issues that merit being studied by the other countries in the region and therefore represent a promising additional area for cooperation. [27]

Polish-Norwegian military industry cooperation was inaugurated on May 24th 2016 during the

3 For more details see: *Facts about National Defence. The Finnish Defence Forces 90 years*, Public Information Division of Defence Command Finland, Helsinki 2008, p. 46–50. Consult as well: H. Herranen, *Professional and Efficient in Action but Conscript Oriented: The Finnish Defence Forces*, [in:] K. Spohr Readman (ed.), *Building Sustainable and Effective Military Capabilities. A Systemic Comparison of Professional and Conscript Forces*, IOS Press, NATO Science Series, seria 5: Science and Technology Policy, vol. 45, Amsterdam 2004, p. 97–108 and Rajavartiolaitos. The Finnish Border Guard, http://www.raja.fi/rvl/home.nsf/pages/index_eng.

visit of Polish President Andrzej Duda to Oslo. At that time, the Polish Armament Group and the Norwegian firm Kongsberg Defence & Aerospace AS signed a letter of intent on cooperation, as Poland wants to purchase elements of the Norwegian NASAMS air defense system. [28]

Sweden's military industry is one of the strongest in the region and has enjoyed great prestige in Poland since the interwar period (Bofors anti-aircraft canons fighting Luftwaffe in 1939 are an icon of Polish popular memory). The Hungarian and Czech air forces have been using Swedish-made Saab JAS 39 Gripen fighter jets since 2001 and 2005 respectively. For the last few years, Poland has been considering replacing its old Soviet-made MiG 29 and Su-22 jets by 2021, with the Gripen as one of the options under review. [29]

The Swedish military industry also produces armored vehicles, artillery and guided missiles (BAE Hagglunds, BAE Bofors), aircraft (Saab), ships (Kockums), munitions (Åkers Krutbruk, BAE Hagglunds, Nammo Sweden, Norma), ballistic protection systems (Åkers Krutbruk, Bofors, CSM Materialteknik, Saab Barracuda), radio and other communications-related electronics (Ericsson, Saab), optoelectronics (Aimpoint, Flir), and simulators and training items (NSC, Saab). Sweden is also a leading producer of stealth technology.

Nordic participation in the political dimension of extended Trimarium security cooperation into the area of security is equally attractive. Just like their Central European counterparts, Nordic countries rely on American military protection and support and therefore belong to the core of the pro-American camp in Europe along with the Baltic states, Poland, and Romania.

Military cooperation in the Trimarium region, however fragmented, is already a reality. The Nordic states actively cooperate among themselves, as do the Baltic states. Moreover, Nordic-Baltic cooperation on security and defense issues dates to the beginning of the 1990s [30]. Poland and Lithuania had a common peacekeeping battalion between 1999- 2008, as did Poland and Ukraine from 1995-2010; a common brigade among the three countries became operational in 2017. A Polish-German-Danish *Multinational Corps*

North East (MC NE) has existed since 1998, while a Visegrád European Union Battle Group open to cooperation with Ukraine was created in 2011. [31]

The above-described potential for Trimarium cooperation in security and defence thus encompasses the northern and eastern flanks of NATO and the EU. Its backbone is constituted of the Nordic and Baltic states, Poland, and Romania that can count on some kind of cooperation and solidarity from the other V4 countries as well as the Western Balkan NATO member states. Some potential for cooperation of this group with Ukraine exists as well. Combined, all those countries combined may form a group to playing the role of an American military and political anchor in Europe. The core countries for such a construction are: Poland, as the keystone state and as the country that has the largest demographic and military potential in the region; Romania, the second largest country in the group, with second (after Poland) largest military potential on NATO eastern flank, a very realistic (i.e. free form illusions) approach to Russia and a very pro-American and pro-Polish orientation of both the elites and the public opinion, Scandinavia with its military industry & technology, political prestige, and power combined with its geostrategic position (along the maritime routes that connect the North Atlantic and northwestern Baltic Sea)—the most probable area of Russian action aimed at testing the credibility and unity of NATO.

b) Trimarium and the EU – “No to a Multi-Speed Europe!”

Although TI is not formally intended to coordinate regional cooperation within the EU, such cooperation still exists in some areas and has the potential to be extended to others—perhaps with the addition of new partners as well. This is primarily about the immigration crisis and the threat of marginalization of the countries of the Trimarium region resulting from the idea of a “multispeed” or “double- speed” Europe”.

Today the V4 has a common position on the immigration crisis in the EU. Poland and Slovakia

(which are situated outside the main immigration routes from the south) as well as Czechia (which does not border any country outside the Schengen zone at all) are not “frontline countries” that are forced to meet the challenge directly. However, the crisis powerfully hit Hungary, Croatia, Slovenia, and Bulgaria while also threatening Romania. The V4 countries have shown mutual solidarity to each other in collectively rejecting the compulsory quota system of immigrant redistribution that the European Commission has tried to impose on them.

The second problem – the marginalization of the Trimarium states within the EU – is much more serious and has more destructive political potential. This potential marginalization already has a long history. In 2012, while the Fiscal Pact was being negotiated, French diplomatic pressure deprived Poland and the other non-EMU (Monetary and Economic Union) EU states (in the broader region, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Hungary, Romania and Sweden) permanent observer status at Eurozone summits. It is in the interests of the European Union as a whole to overcome discriminatory practices that result in the strengthening of dividing lines within the EU. Poland wants to end the practice of withdrawing Trimarium countries from European decision-making structures, and it counts on the cooperation of other countries in a similar position. Any transfer of decision-making power from treaty-based EU institutions to informal or narrower bodies and formats (the “first-tier EU”) is perceived by our countries as a step towards the disintegration of the European Union by dividing its member states into a “directorate” group of leading powers – the decision makers – and a group of subordinate states expected “not to miss the opportunity to keep silent,” in the infamous words of former French president Jacques Chirac, and to accept the domination of the “leaders” or face being declared “bad Europeans.” Certainly, Poland will not accept any such status for the TI countries. Poland wants a powerful and united European Union that enjoys the support of its citizens, not one where its administrative structures suffer from a deficit of democracy.

Conclusions

The Trimarium Initiative is not intended to replace the EU or NATO, and has not been created “against” something or somebody, but to promote regional cooperation. Even with its present focus on infrastructure, it may also strengthen transatlantic relations by attracting US engagement via LNG supplies to the region.

Moreover, the Trimarium Initiative may also evolve to encompass security and political dimensions; indeed, some specific groups of states within the Trimarium area (V4, V4+, V4+NB8, the “Bucharest 9”) have already undertaken such cooperation. There is a great potential to include the Nordic countries in all possible dimensions of the initiative as well.

Poland is still the largest country of Trimarium by population; together with the Czechs and Hungarians, it shares a specific dual experience of dominating and of being dominated; having such a historical memory the Poles are eager to expand this initiative based on mutual respect and equality among the partners. The success of the initiative depends on the genuine support of the smaller states and this may be won only by real— not merely rhetorical— respect for their dignity and interests. The role of Croatia as a co-initiator of the project therefore cannot be overestimated.

Even though it was created by EU member states, Trimarium does not mean that we are turning our backs on our non-EU neighbors Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, or those in the Balkans. In fact, the reality is just the opposite. TI is also a tool for intensifying cooperation with these neighbors, making it more substantial and concrete than mere pleasant-sounding declarations of friendship. Although the Trimarium of today is not the same as Intermarium of the 1920s and 1930s, the spirit of the latter – a desire to guarantee the independence and sovereignty of Central and Eastern Europe – remains alive and inspiring for Poland.

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Black Sea Region in China's 'Belt & Road' Initiative

China's 'Belt & Road' Initiative previews different transport ways from China to Europe. One of them is through the wider Black Sea region, but this one faces challenges and difficulties, including conflict zones. Nevertheless, there is a great potential for the 'Asian dragon' and its partners in the wider Black Sea region to have many benefits in terms of further implementation of the Initiative, which is not cancelled but rather postponed.

Introduction

The Black Sea area is an important transcontinental crossroad. It means 'the land and seascape from the Balkans to the Caucasus and from the Ukrainian and Russian steppe to Anatolia' [1]. In effect, the Black Sea region includes the Black Sea and countries, which have coasts there. At the same time, just before establishing of the Organization the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) in 1992 in international political and academic communication, the term of the wider Black Sea region appeared, and in addition to the above-mentioned countries it included the certain Balkan and Caucasus countries, which did not have the Black Sea coasts but became the BSEC members. [2]

Some of the most influential global actors in the region are the European Union (EU), the United States (USA), Russia and Turkey, and the People's Republic of China (China) has joined them more

recently. In fact, China's initial interest to the region dated back to the Cold War era, when, on the basis of the communist ideology, this Asian force built a strategic partnership with Albania, first of all, to reorient itself later on closer cooperation with the SFR Yugoslavia and Romania. Their cooperation lasted till the end of the Cold War or more precisely to the dramatic political changes in the region, which began with the change of the Ceausescu regime in Romania and reached culmination in the violent breakdown of the SFR Yugoslavia. After that, China's ties with the region almost completely disappeared. In other words, for some period of time the official Beijing remained practically without a coherent plan that would produce visible results in the area. Besides the principle support to Slobodan Milosevic's regime at various international forums during the 1990s, there were no other indications of some articulated China's strategy in the region (or at least it was not visible in a recognizable form). [3]

However, the group of authors led by Cosmin Ioniță points out that, after the end of turbulent events caused by the collapse of communism and the bipolar world order, "China was quick to accept the new reality, to shed ideological considerations and to assume the role of a benign economic player and even handed partner in the region. Its new approach was to promote mutually beneficial investment and trade with no political strings attached. As China's economic-financial clout and geographical outreach grew spectacularly during the past three decades, it discovered the

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importance of the Western Balkan-Black Sea area and Central Europe as a vital segment for its future-oriented strategic design: a modern version of the ancient Silk Road" [4]. That strategic vision was concretized at the end of 2013, when the president of the most populous country in the world called on Eurasia and other countries to join the Chinese Belt & Road Initiative (BRI) — the mega-lamination plan for a stronger link between Europe and Asia through revitalization and construction of land and maritime infrastructure with the aim to increase and intensify East-West trade exchange and thereby accelerate economic growth of involved actors.

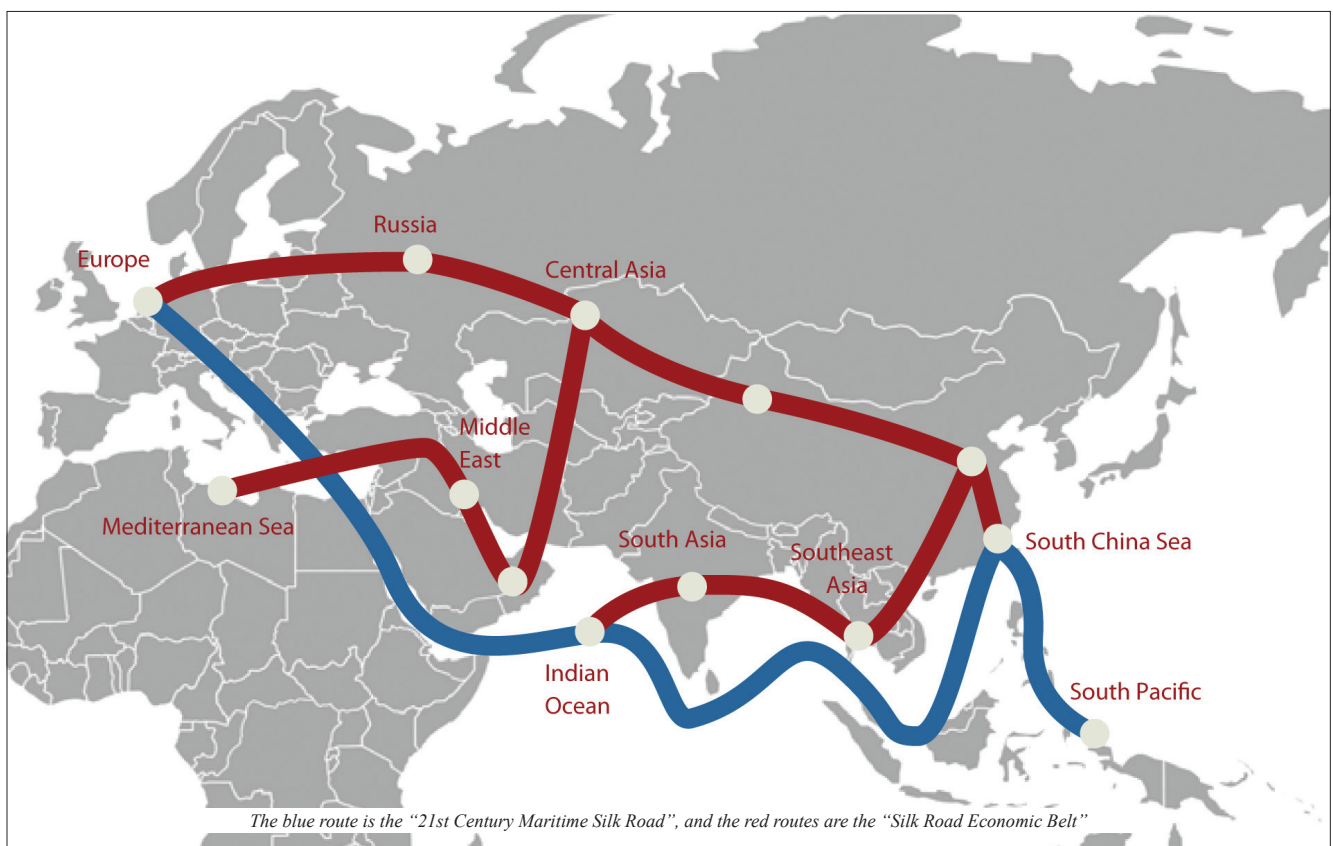
As the call for cooperation provoked mixed reactions (some countries expressed optimism and a desire to join the Chinese project, and some expressed concern about the growing impact of the 'Colossus from the East'), several issues arose. How does China plan to engage in a complex Black Sea geopolitical puzzle and battle for the possibility of realizing its strategic ideas? What challenges does it face there? What activities in

the region are currently being implemented? What does its political establishment expect? What does the international academic and political community think about it?

In order to provide answers to these questions, it is necessary to briefly explain what exactly BRI means, as long as it comes to its realization, and what are the reactions of some actors on the Eurasian geopolitical scene with regard to the beginning of operationalization of the Chinese mega-plan.

'Belt & Road' Initiative: Economic or (Geo) Political Project?

According to the concept of the BRI creators, this mega-project basically links Asia and Europe, China and the EU, by land and sea, through the revitalization and construction of multiple infrastructures. As Liu Zuokui, Senior Research Fellow of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, CASS, and the Director of the Department of Central and Eastern European Studies, Institute



Source: Ingrid Ge, Andrew Christie and Jeff Astle, *One Belt One Road - A role for UK companies in developing China's new initiative: New opportunities in China and beyond*, China-Britain Business Council, p. 6.

of European Studies, CASS, states, the concept includes two simultaneous plans: development of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st-Century Maritime Silk Road [5]. The first one implies improvement and development of land connections, in other words - construction of the so-called Eurasian land bridge – logistics chain from China's east coast to Rotterdam in Western Europe, as well as developing a number of economic corridors connecting China with Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Russia, Central Asia and South-East Asia. The second one includes development of the maritime route, which goes from China's east coast to Europe through the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean. The aim of the maritime route is to build efficient transport routes between major ports in various countries, including the development of an economic corridor through the Indian Ocean, better connecting China with South Asia, the Middle East, Africa and the Mediterranean. [6]

In a wider sense, Tian Jinchun, the director of the Western Development Department of China's National Development and Reform Commission, explains: "It aims to create the world's largest platform for economic cooperation, including policy coordination, trade and financing collaboration, and social and cultural cooperation" [7]. According to views of some experts, "the plan has the potential to massively overshadow the US' post-war Marshall reconstruction plan, involving about 65% of the world's population, one-third of its GDP and helping to move about a quarter of all its goods and services" [8]. In this regard, it is important to emphasize that some concrete projects are already in progress.

However, although the Chinese plan in principle aims to encourage total economic growth, intensify trade and promote economic co-operation between the countries involved and international organizations, it should be noted that not all actors (invited to participate) are equally optimistic. For example, while countries like Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan with great enthusiasm support the

'Asian dragon' in its endeavors, believing that this will bring economic prosperity, some others, like India, accuse the official Beijing in «tending to make others (other states) its economic vassals» and «undermine their sovereignty», and that «the whole project is just the smoke curtain that China uses to establish control over the Indian Ocean». [9]

Still, according to the statements of Chinese officials, especially those that were announced at the last BRI summit, it seems that Beijing will not give up its ideas lightly. On that occasion, the President of the world's most populous country pledged to «pump up» another \$125 billion in the Silk Road Foundation, emphasizing that "China harbours no intention to control or threaten any other nation", describing the summit as a chance "not to assert a new hegemony, but an opportunity to bring an old one to an end". [10]

However, bearing in mind that the BRI encompasses a vast geographical area, as well as the fact that the political top in China already faces numerous challenges in the realization of its ideas, in its immediate surroundings, it is logical to assume that the official Beijing with similar reactions (accusations of undermining sovereignty of other states and expressed doubts as to the economic justifiability of certain projects) is likely to be encountered in any part of Eurasia in which it began to implement its plans [11]. It can reasonably be expected that such a practice will be particularly prominent in those regions where there is strong geopolitical dynamism and where there are many open issues. As the area around the Black Sea is one of such regions, the challenge to decision-makers in China is more complex, because there is a strong foothold of some of the most powerful global and regional actors who have generally conflicting interests.

China and the wider Black Sea region: Recent Activities and Key Challenges

In order to adequately understand China's strategic approach to the wider Black Sea region

and anticipate the key challenges it faces there, it is necessary to draw attention to several important facts. Namely, although the countries of the Region are under the umbrella of the BSEC, the Chinese government has not so far shown its interest in using this platform for multilateral BRI discussions [12]. Instead, it declined to prioritize bilateral cooperation and, in 2012, established a multilateral platform for cooperation with 16 Central and Eastern European countries, called CEE 16 + 1.

When it comes to bilateral cooperation between China and the region, the first significant investments were in the Balkans, when the world financial crisis was experiencing its peak. In November 2008, Chinese President Hu Jintao sent a \$3.4bn to the state-owned China Ocean Shipping Company (COSCO) to modernize and put into operation a part of the Greek state port in Piraeus [13]. Since 2009, COSCO has invested heavily to modernize and complete the two piers under its management, which led to a rapid increase in the turnover of containers. In 2016, as part of its privatization programme, the Greek government sold 51 per cent of its shares in PPA to COSCO in return for €280.5 million. Franz-Paul van der Putten explains: "The Chinese company thereby became the owner and operator not only of all three piers of the container terminal, but also of the ferry port, cruise-ship port, car terminal, ship-repair facilities and the real estate that is adjacent to the harbour. Under the condition that it makes some €300 million worth of additional investments in the port, COSCO is entitled to purchase another 16 per cent of the shares in PPA (for €88 million) by 2021. COSCO has stated that it wants to increase the port's container turnover to 5 million TEU by 2018, which could turn Piraeus into Europe's fifth-largest port". [14]

Of course, Greece was not the only country in the Balkans, in which China demonstrated its interests. After purchasing a port in Piraeus, China focused on Serbia, especially its transportation and energy sector. Dragan Pavlicevic points out: "A Sino-Serbian Friendship Bridge, later renamed for the Serbian scientist Mihajlo Pupin, was agreed upon in 2010. Worth \$260 million, the bridge was

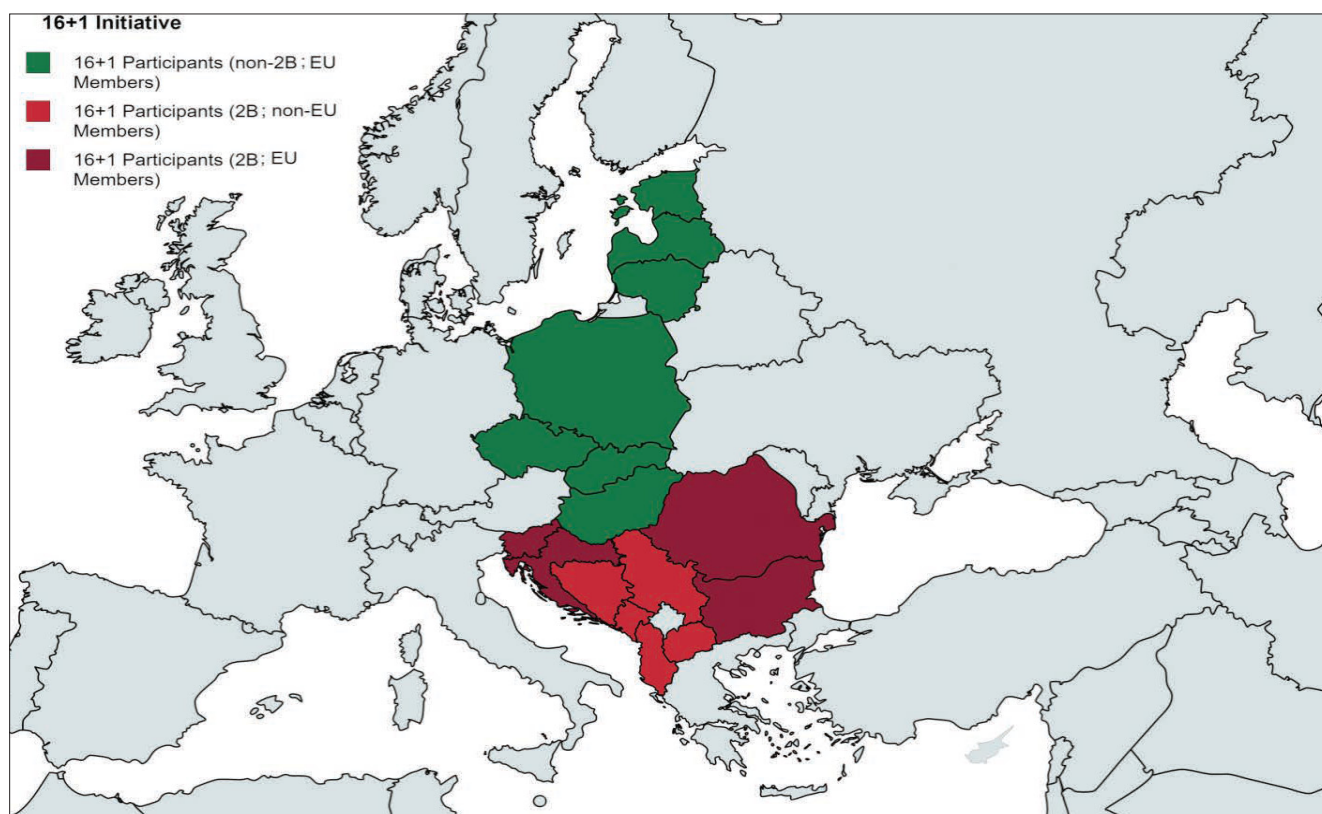
built by China's state-owned enterprise, China Road and Bridge Corporation (CRBC), on the back of a soft loan from the Export-Import Bank of China" [15]. The bridge was constructed from 2011 to 2014 and open in December 2014 [16]. Dragan Pavlicevic explains: "This project was soon followed by the first phase of the revitalization of the thermal power plant Kostolac, which included the renovation of an existing power station, construction of desulphurization systems, and an upgrade of accompanying transport infrastructure. This first joint infrastructure project in the energy sector was facilitated with a \$293 million state-to-state loan on preferential terms". That project was completed in 2014 as well, and the Chinese Prime-Minister declared new infrastructure projects. [17]

Although the primary attention of Chinese to Serbia among the Balkans states, it did not neglect almost any of the neighboring countries. The economic power of the 'Asian dragon' has managed to open doors across the region, targeting, first and foremost, the energy sector (especially in the green energy area), the auto industry, the metal sector, and the development of significant trade and military relations. [18]

This was especially evident after 2012 and creation of the platform for cooperation between China and countries of Central and Eastern Europe, known as the CEE 16 + 1.

After that, the number of projects in the Balkans has increased significantly, and investments from China began to flow into Central and Eastern Europe. According to Małgorzata Jakimów: "Indeed, Chinese state-owned enterprises' investments in European nuclear energy, construction and railway infrastructure have grown rapidly since 2012. In countries such as the Czech Republic, Romania and Hungary, Chinese money has flowed into key energy, telecommunications and real estate sectors" [19]. After Serbia became a strategic partner of China in 2009, Poland gained the same status in 2011 and the Czech Republic - in March 2016. Moreover, Iulia Monica Oehler-Şincal explains that "the strategic partnerships with Serbia and Poland were upgraded to the *comprehensive* level in June 2016" [20]. It is logical „as of 2015, the number of completed, ongoing and proposed

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Source: Cosmin Ioniță, Sergiu Celac, Horia Ciurtin, Sandro Knezović, Miruna Troncotă, *Strategic challenges in South East Europe and the Black Sea area – Policy paper*, New Strategy Center – IRMO, February 2017, p. 14.

joint infrastructure projects between China and Serbia is nearing double digits” [21]. One of them is reconstruction the railway Belgrade-Budapest, which is a joint project of China, Serbia and Hungary and a very significant segment of BRI. Pavličević says: “Among the over one dozen agreements signed at the time, construction of the Belgrade-Budapest High-Speed Railway (HSR) has attracted the most attention, both domestically and internationally. The project is conceived as the first section of a future high-speed rail connection stretching from the Greek port of Piraeus, an entry point to Europe for a large number of made-in-China products, to Central Europe”. [22]

At the same time, BRI faces several challenges in the Western Balkan-Black Sea area. Van der Putten notices: “Progress is slow: the privatization of the port of Piraeus met with substantial delays until COSCO was able to acquire a majority share in the port in 2016. Currently the construction of a new railway track between Belgrade and Budapest is also being delayed as a result of concerns from the European Commission as to whether the

agreement between Hungary and China follows EU government procurement rules” [23]. Besides, Jakub Jakóbowski adds: “The process of creating multilateral institutions to offer substantive and financial support to Chinese companies was beset with difficulties. These included the lack of willingness on the part of CEE partners to carry out coordination tasks, the inexperience of Chinese companies in pursuing this model of cooperation, as well as failure to adjust the instruments created under this cooperation initiative (16+1 - Authors) to the region’s economic reality. The credit line worth US\$ 10 billion offered by China has been used only in infrastructural projects carried out in non-EU member states in the Western Balkans. A specialized investment fund known as China CEE Investment Co-operation Fund turned out to be more successful. However, investments carried out under this Fund in Poland, Hungary and Bulgaria are worth a mere US\$ 0.5 billion” [24]. But the primary obstacle, as Małgorzata Jakimów estimates, “the EU still sees China as a threat”, because economic benefits of the

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Chinese engagement in the region are higher than expected. Małgorzata Jakimów is sure that, besides economic goals, China is reaching political goals by BRI: "After Lithuania and Estonia welcomed the Dalai Lama in 2011, China offered its Baltic investment to a more 'politically correct' Latvia. Likewise, when Poland hesitated to accept Chinese investments due to security concerns the same opportunities were snapped up by its neighbours" [25]. In addition, "some analysts, for instance, have shown how Chinese enterprises' economic power translates into political influence at the highest levels of the Czech government. Hungary's vocal support for recognition of China as a market economy stands at odds with the EU common trade policy, and its president's praise for the liberal China model goes against core European values". [26]

Ukraine is also very interested in tracing the Silk Road through the Ukrainian territory involving its ports and railways into this project. In 2016, Ukrainian Minister of Infrastructure Volodymyr Omelian declared political decision of the Ukrainian government to become a part of the Chinese initiative and readiness of China to invest in infrastructure projects in Ukraine [27]. However, although Ukraine tested the land-sea-land railway route in January 2016, the Silk Road seems to be a remote perspective, because this route crosses regions with numerous conflicts (Nagorno-Karabakh, South Ossetia, Abkhazia, Crimea,

Donbas and Transnistria), in which Russia has its own particular interests.

According to van der Putten: "At the end of 2013, Russian media and experts were highly negative about Chinese plans for turning Crimea into a major hub for the new Silk Road initiative. While the subsequent annexation of Crimea was primarily related to Russian antagonism towards the West, this also disrupted a major port construction project on the peninsula that was to be financed by a Chinese company" [28]. He also stressed: "With regard to the Black Sea region, the involvement of the Chinese government in BRI projects is more limited than in the Balkans region. China seems to be cautious not to antagonize Russia and to be taking into account Russian geopolitical sensitivities in the Black Sea region. Given their location, both Georgia and Ukraine could potentially be close diplomatic partners and hosts to major China-funded infrastructure projects. However, they are also former Soviet republics that have strained relations with Russia. Judging from maps with projected railway links that circulate in China, the Chinese government seems to favour a transport corridor to Southeast Europe from China via Iran and Turkey rather than via Georgia or Ukraine. This suggests that China's approach cannot be understood exclusively on the basis of economic factors: geopolitical considerations should also be taken into account". [29]



Source: China - Eastern Europe route. <http://glavcom.ua/publications/330543-obijti-rosiju-desjatoju-dorogoju-jak-ukrajina-buduje-svij-%C2%ABshovkovij-shljah%C2%BB.html>

In addition to Russia and China, the United States also see the wider Black Sea region as their sphere of influence and are ready to defend their interests. The evidence is a competition between Chinese and American companies around the tender on construction of a port in the Georgian town of Anaklia. Namely, although the Chinese-Georgian consortium (the Power China with the Georgian partners) was almost a sure winner of the announced tender, the decision was that the project would be given to the US-Georgian consortium Anaklia Development Consortium (ADC) that became a surprise for many in China and Georgia. [30]

Everything indicates that China will not have an easy access to the region. Taking this into account, the question is how the 'Asian dragon' can respond to these challenges.

Further Development of Chinese Wider Black Sea Region Strategy: Is There a Possibility for More Significant Engagement?

Realization of the Chinese idea of linking Europe and Asia faces many obstacles. However, taking into account readiness of Beijing to pursue its own idea, despite the fact that it faces problems, it suggests that the "Colossus from the East" will not easily give up its own plans [31]. In addition, the Chinese engagement in the region, in the context of the BRI, may even have positive effects and reduce the existing tensions.

For example, with regard to relations between China and Russia, van der Putten estimates that „because of Russia's strained relationship with the West it seeks friendly relations with China in order to avoid becoming isolated. This makes it easier for China to expand its economic influence in Russia's neighborhood, including the Black Sea region", but he advises that "China needs to proceed with caution" [32]. This approach is confirmed by the fact that China Harbor Engineering Company (CHEC) signed a deal with the Ukrainian government in May 2017 to upgrade the Black Sea port of Yuzhny in Ukraine's southern Odessa region that has had no objections from the Russian side. The same in Georgia, as Joseph Larsen says,

in 2014, China accounted for \$217.94 million in foreign direct investment into the Caucasus country. Among non-EU member countries, only Azerbaijan provided a higher volume. A number of Chinese companies now have major operations in Georgia, including the Hualing Group, Georgia's single largest foreign investor. [33]

Concerning China's relations to the EU, Małgorzata Jakimów suggests that „for its part, China has done much to calm the EU's anxieties about its motives, insisting that it would prefer Europe strong and united and contributing to various European projects rather than competing with them" [34]. Van der Putten agrees with this suggestion: "If BRI can contribute to the economic development of the Balkans and Black Sea region then the EU should take an active approach that seeks to maximize this contribution within its strategic interests". [35]

Opinions on China's relations with the US are divided. While some consider that the political leadership in Washington would break the Chinese agenda down by using rivalry between China and India [36], others welcome the fact that the US President Donald Trump sent a delegation to the summit dedicated to BRI and offered assistance to China in realization of its ideas [37]. Who is right remains an open question, but it is evident that the new Silk Road will increase China's influence in the region. This would provide regional stability in the Black Sea region as China is careful to avoid geopolitical competition, which would destabilize the region.

Local authorities, regional organizations and a private sector should be more actively involved into implementation of the Chinese idea. Van der Putten considers: "The new silk road is being shaped not only by China but also by non-Chinese actors. By investing in infrastructure and facilitating east-west (across the Black Sea) and north-south (across the Balkans) corridors, regional actors can enhance their role in BRI and stimulate engagement by China". [38]

There are several signals that the Chinese idea on the Silk Road goes in the right direction. First, at the last forum dedicated to BRI in May 2017 in Beijing, some leaders of the Black Sea states

(including Turkey and Russia) were present. Second, this (2017) year the Balkans and Black Sea Cooperation Forum was organized for the first time with the aim to “strengthen cooperation throughout this region in various regards, including in terms of transport and infrastructure”, taking

into account contribution of the BRI for countries participating in the forum [39]. If such activities continue, there is a great potential for the ‘Asian dragon’ and its partners, located in the wider Black Sea region, to have many benefits in terms of further BRI implementation.

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Security Policy of Turkey and Its Impact on the Black Sea Region

The article deals with Turkish security policy in the context of its implementation in the Black Sea region. The main approaches of Ankara within the framework of the regional strategy are analyzed. Positive and negative factors influencing the potential of turning Turkey into a real strategic partner of Ukraine are described.

The Turkish Republic is a very important actor of international relations system. The suitable geographic location, historical legacy and cultural traditions define the multi-vector nature of its foreign interests towards different regions. One of such regions is the Black Sea area functioning naturally as a northern border of the Turkish state. The fact that Ukraine also belongs to the said region that has become the stage of opposition to the Russian aggressive imperialistic policy, makes it important for our state to learn the Turkish view to the region.

Within the framework of implementing the Black Sea vector of foreign policy, the Turkish Republic's priority directions are the development of relations with the European Union; maintenance of cooperation with the Russian Federation, and the protection of Turkish interests in the South Caucasus. Ankara is carrying out its policy based on the principles of Euro-Atlantic solidarity, with respect to its NATO membership. However, it should be pointed out that the Turkish view to the regional situation does not often coincide with that of Brussels. Yes, the Turkish Republic put a veto on spreading the operation "Active Endeavor" in the Black Sea by the Alliance. During the Russian-Georgian conflict in 2008, its position remained ambiguous [1]. It did not react to the Romanian initiative as regards the formation of NATO's

squadron in the Black Sea that was proposed in 2016. On the other hand, the Turkish part expressed their concern as for insufficient presence of NATO in the Black Sea. Because of Brussels' lack of attention to the problems of region, the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan stated that it might turn into the "Russian lake" [2]. Such controversial position completely coincides with the disorientation of Turkish foreign policy in recent years when the radical changes in foreign policy course and rhetoric have become Ankara's landmark.

In different historical periods, Turkey differently defined their national security challenges existing in the Black Sea area. After eliminating the global Soviet threat, they may be classified under the various directions such as the spread of separatist movements and radical Islam; international terrorism; the threat of maritime security (providing the appropriate functioning of transport flow of goods and passengers; fighting the illegal trade, etc); regional conflict solution. [3, p. 878]

The important tendency in regional foreign policy of Turkey during the second half of 2000's is striving for both normalizing the relations and stabilizing the situation in the Black Sea area. This is the context in which the initiatives for reconciling in the Caucasus (so-called "football diplomacy" in relations with Armenia, and the project of creating the Caucasus platform for stability and cooperation) should be considered. However, the Arabian spring's events which agitated the Middle East have diverted Ankara's attention from the northern borders in favor of southern ones. Today, the Black Sea area remains important but minor element of the Turkish Republic's regional policy. It is in the shadow of Middle-East problems and conflicts such as the civil war in Syria, and the rise

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of Kurdish national movement, which endanger the national security and, for this reason, become much more important. In the region, Turkey borders other geopolitical regions such as the Balkans in the West, and the Caucasus in the East. It lessens the importance of the Black Sea area's problems more and more.

The Turkish approach towards the Black Sea area is based on striving for its stabilization, avoidance of threats and confrontation on its territory which could divert Ankara from other foreign policy directions. Turkey is interested in the stability of its neighbours and in keeping status quo more than democratic process. Because of this, the significant political turbulences around events in Ukraine are taken carefully by the Turkish authorities. [4, p. 7]

The Ankara's stance as regards "closing" the Black Sea area for the foreign actors remains principled. The resistance of Turkey is caused by meddling in their internal affairs by the third countries. The Turkish government stated repeatedly on its negative stance towards their participation in solution of regional issues, especially in the form of direct presence of the foreign fleet in the Black Sea for it may result in the breach of strategic balance in this important region. It is facilitated by reference to the old Ottoman tradition to consider this water body a "Turkish lake". The stance of Ankara remains unchangeable even if such an "external actor" is represented by the long-term strategic ally such as the USA or NATO partner states [3, p. 880]. Turkey also stands for limiting approach as regards the solution of naval security issues in the region. Agreeing with the necessity to attract the representatives of the Baltic and Caucasus spaces for solving the problems of political and humanitarian nature, Ankara considers that the particular Black Sea area issues should remain the exclusive competence of limited circle of riparian countries. In this context, the Turkish stance comes into conflict with the vision of the regional security system (which is very popular today in Ukraine) in the format of Intermarium concept since it significantly limits the possibility of attracting the countries of Central and Eastern Europe for the solution of regional security.

The relations with the countries of the region are

strictly submitted to the classification of the Black Sea states into three groups. Bulgaria and Romania are NATO partners of Turkey. Based on this, their cooperation is developing in the sphere of security. Georgia and Ukraine are the countries of post-Soviet space which declare about their commitment to the European values; however, they haven't realized their integration potential (not least because of aggressive policy by the Russian Federation). The relations with them, first of all, are developing in the format of economic cooperation (the prospects of concluding the free-trade zone agreement with Ukraine; the role of Georgia as a transit location of Turkish-Azerbaijan transport and infrastructure partnership). Finally, the Russian Federation is the regional leader which has reinforced its stance in the Black Sea area in recent years. The energy and, in a lesser degree, economic dependence on Moscow requires carefulness from Ankara while building relations with the Russian Federation.

The Turkish Republic participates in activating the regional integration projects, regarding them as the steps for regional leadership. This is Istanbul where the headquarters of the Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation are located. There is nothing strange in it since this structure was regarded by Ankara as such which would help achieve geopolitical ambitions of Turkey by turning into the center of gravity and definite alternative to joining the European Union. At a lower level of practical cooperation in 2001 Turkey took the initiative in establishing Black Sea Naval Cooperation Task Group (BLACKSEAFOR). It has become a mechanism of naval cooperation of Black Sea countries. The agreement on participation in this program was signed by Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Georgia, and Russia. The range of tasks to be performed by this group are as follows: search and rescue operations, mine counter measures, environmental protection, humanitarian assistance, goodwill visits, and other tasks agreed by the parties [5]. After events that occurred on 11 September 2001, fighting the terrorism, organized crime, and proliferation of mass destruction weapons was added to the said task range. However, the ideas of regional cooperation initiated by Ankara didn't get the appropriate support. To a certain degree, it happened because

of ignoring the political issues of regional security under modern conditions of confrontation. Taking into account the conflictogenity of the region, the actions by the Russian Federation in relation to its neighbours nullify all the efforts made by the actors of international relations as regards regional consolidation [6]. Under the conditions of conflict intensification and implementation of sanctions by the EU against the Russian Federation, the Kremlin is moving towards isolation. It is an inaccessible development vector to such a powerful player, without which neither integration project in the Black Sea area will have any sense. The Russian aggression against Georgia in 2008, and Ukraine in 2014 made it impossible for the navies of the Black Sea countries to cooperate in practice.

The most important factor that determines the significant role of Turkey in the Black Sea area is the control over the Bosphorus and Dardanelles. They are a connecting link between the Black Sea and the World Ocean. In this context, Ankara is recently trying to enhance its role as a regional player. The Turkish government has decided to fully control the maritime trade of the Black Sea countries with the world countries. The then prime-minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan declared on building up the shipping channel between the Black and Marmara seas till 2023, and to redirect the goods flow there from the Bosphorus. Apart from the strait regulated by the international agreements, this way will be controlled by Turkey that will independently specify the tariffs and terms for passing it by foreign ships [7]. Despite significant costs (over 10 billion US dollars) required for building up the channel called "Istanbul", the project implementation is advancing (at the stage of theoretical agreement of details).

From the point of view of military component, as regards the Black Sea area, the Turkish navy plays the most significant role. The Northern navy zones, one of two territorial commands whose headquarters are located in Istanbul are responsible for the Black Sea. The geographical location of Turkey simplifies the maneuvers of its main navy forces based in the strait areas both in the south and north. It allows increasing the groupings rapidly in any direction without permanent military presence

in this or other region. The impact of external, non-regional players is neutralized by controlling the straits by Turkey and their status diplomatically regulated. It provides Ankara with military advantage over any participant of the Black Sea environment except for the Russian Federation. Before the events occurred in 2014, the Russian navy had been weaker than the Turkish one. But the increase in its power after annexing Crimea has changed the situation; the experts highlight that the Turkish armed forces cannot challenge the Russian ones without hope for external support [8, p. 13].

However, it does not lessen the role of the Turkish navy in the region. It still remains a powerful force. Its future is connected with a range of projects whose implementation is directed to increase its combat potential. First of all, it means the updating of navy's ship composition. In this connection, a range of projects is being implemented today. Among them, the most successful one is the implementation of MILGEM project. According to it, Turkey has developed the perspective project of a guard ship, on the basis of which 8 corvettes of Ada type and 4 frigates of Istanbul type are planned to be added to the navy composition. Two corvettes are introduced into operation, and two more ones are in progress. Also, in 2017, the first of frigates was laid down. The further future of Turkish navy is connected with frigates of TF-2000 type. But this project is still drafted. The "underwater" navy component is planned to update within the frame of partnership with Germany; Turkey concluded the contract with HDW Company for building six Type 214 submarines to replace the obsolete submarines of Atilay type. At the same time, the project of building a new assault ship TCG Anadolu to be used as a light air carrier is in progress.

The geopolitical positioning and regional impact of the Turkish Republic make it objectively an important partner for Ukraine. At that, it should be taken into account that the Turkish vision of the Russian-and-Ukrainian conflict has a double nature. Turkey repeatedly expressed its respect for the state sovereignty and territorial integrity of our country. It sent their representatives to the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine. On

the whole, it is considered that its reaction to the events occurred in 2014 was much quicker than that to the Russian intrusion to Georgia in 2008. At the same time, Ankara's position as regards the direct accusation of the aggressor remains rather moderate. The Republic did not solidarise with Ukraine and the West regarding sanctions against the Russian Federation. The Turkish politicians have repeatedly stated that it is impossible to use the Crimean problem by the foreign forces for the purpose of worsening relations between Turkey and Russia. The country is trying to profitably use the situation. Its position has become a suitable example for the Russian propaganda to demonstrate the lack of consent among NATO member states [4, p. 8].

The role of Turkey in the Black Sea area is defined by the range of specific factors that should be taken into account by Kyiv while developing bilateral relations with Ankara. On the whole, they may be divided into two groups – positive and negative to Ukraine.

The positive factors defining Turkey as an important strategic partner of Ukraine are as follows:

1. Turkey is one of the most significant players under its military potential. In the Black Sea area only Turkey may challenge the Russian hegemony. In practice, before the process of modernizing the Black Sea navy of the Russian Federation, the Turkish navy had dominated in this area (due to controlling the straits and possibility of rapid maneuvering of the Mediterranean navy). Today the situation has changed; anyway, Turkey remains a powerful player, without whose support it is impossible to implement the regional security policy successfully.
2. Turkey is the south-eastern flank of NATO. Under the conditions, when Euro-Atlantic course is officially recognized as the priority of the Ukrainian foreign policy, it brings bilateral relations with Ankara at a new level. The latter is not only very important regional player but a representative of collective security system whose membership our country is seeking. Moreover, the Euro-Atlantic community itself is the only competitor who can resist

the aggressive Russian policy in the modern world. As a result of activating the cooperation with Turkey, the area of security becomes the direction for realizing the Euro-Atlantic goals of Kyiv.

3. Turkish and Tatar peoples are ethnically close to each other. Under the conditions of popularity of pan-Turkism ideology and of recognizing the decisive role of Turkey as a donor for helping the Turkic ethnic groups, the repeated statements by the Turkish government on necessity to protect the rights of Tatar people in Crimea and their readiness to solve this issue, highlights the direct involvement of Ankara in the Crimean issue. Despite the real actions in this area haven't been initiated, and the Turkish stance remains at the level of declarations, anyway, it brings Turkey to the conflict and actualize this issue for the Turkish community. At the same time, the violation of Tatars' rights in Crimea by the Russian occupation authorities is forming the negative image of the Russian Federation which is undermined by the barbarian methods applied by the aerospace forces in Syria.

The negative factors which decrease the strategic value of Turkey as the Ukrainian ally are as follows:

1. The crisis in relations between Turkey and Europe. Despite the pro-European course declared, the Turkish authorities are recently taking actions that compromise themselves in the eyes of European politicians. The range of problem issues includes the accusation of antidemocratic processes in the country (pressure and repressions against opposition; initiative to turn Turkey into the president republic what may threaten Atatürk's legacy); support of Islamic movements; manipulating the issue of migration crisis in pursuit of their own interests. The relations of Ankara with leading European actors such as Germany, the Netherlands, and Austria are taking shape of aggressive diplomatic conflict which may cause the global consequences (for example, we remember the statement made by S. Kurz, former foreign minister of Austria, as regards unreadiness of Turkey to become EU member

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state, and in response, the latter blocked the cooperation of Vienna with NATO; forced withdrawal of German anti-terrorist units from Turkish air force base of Incirlik). At the same time, the popular neo-Ottoman conceptions in Turkey, along with the increase in influence of religious factor on the community, gradually alienate the country from the values of the Western world, commitment to which has been declared by Ukraine.

2. The high level of Turkish dependency on the Russian Federation. Despite a lot of significant contradictions as for Karabakh, Syrian, and Kurdish issues, including the crisis in relations caused by shooting down Russian Su-24, in terms of long-term perspective, it's very difficult for Turkey to hope for fast development without appropriate Moscow's support. Especially, this dependency is traced in power sector, i.e. significant volume of power resources consumed by Turkey is supplied by the Russians. At the same time, the Russian Federation is engaged in building up the nuclear power station in the territory of Turkey. The other important industries requiring relations at an appropriate level are tourism (the Russian tourists are very good financial source for the Turkish Republic) and defense industry (within the frame of agreement for purchase of Russian anti-aircraft complexes C-400). Under the conditions of tense relations with Europe, the Russian vector becomes both an actual alternative in some areas, and propaganda element of Turkish policy pressure on the European partners.
3. The role of Turkey in recognizing the status of the Northern Cyprus. The stance of Ankara as regards the Ukrainian-and-Russian conflict and its potential as a partner of Ukraine is restricted by the fact that the Turkish Republic itself is engaged in military aggression against its neighbor. The occupation of the northern part of Cyprus in 1974, within the frame of protection of the island's Turkish population,

looks similar to the actions taken by Russia towards Ukraine. Declaring the Turkish Republic of the Northern Cyprus in the occupied territory, whose legitimacy is not recognized by the world community, makes the Turkish stance in the Cyprus issue much closer to the Russian strategy in Donbas and Crimea. Under these conditions, it is impossible to expect the accusation of current Russian policy in the post-Soviet space by Ankara (it concerns not only Ukraine but the support of Prydnestrovje by Moscow, and Russian-and-Georgian conflict) what may endanger the consistency of the Turkish strategy and the state interests in Cyprus.

On the whole, it should be pointed out that the security stability in the Black Sea area meets the interests of Turkey. The Russian aggressive policy does not endanger Ankara directly; therefore, the latter may satisfy some particular needs of Russia for the account of other regional actors. Turkey does not suffer from democratic messiahship, and so it does not find it necessary to share pro-Western goals of the states representing post-Soviet space for ideological reasons only. The geographical location at the juncture of continents makes the Eurasian vector and relations with the Russian Federation a very important element of international positioning of the Turkish state, from which it is impossible to refuse only for the reason of Euro-Atlantic solidarity. The high interest in the southern - Middle-Eastern - direction diverts attention and resources of the Turkish Republic from activities in the Black Sea area, which could loosen the balance of forces existing *de facto* after occupation and annexation of Crimea. It does not coincide with the interests of Ukraine that has become the main victim of such situation. Anyway, implementing the security policy by our state requires a special attention to the relations with Ankara which remains the powerful regional actor under any circumstances.

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From Brezhnev to Putin: Genesis of the Eurasian Empire's Doctrine

Russia's policy towards the post-Soviet republics collectively fits into a single logic, which contains nothing innovative. "Putin Doctrine", like "Brezhnev Doctrine", comprises several crucial public speeches of Vladimir Putin from early 2000s, adopted conceptions and doctrines from different spheres, significant commentaries and speeches of a number of Russian politicians in conjunction with practical policy of the Russian Federation of the post-Soviet period. That Doctrine was also named "doctrine of limited sovereignty" of the countries of the so-called Soviet "camp".

Introduction

Russia's policy towards the post-Soviet republics fits into a single logic no matter at which degree it's systematically formulated by those making that policy. Logic, algorithms of that policy have developed yet not today and principally don't contain anything innovative, however, innovations of revolutionary nature have been introduced into its tools and method of realization, conditioned by information revolution worldwide, and in the use of its achievements to advance in its tasks Russia and its authorities have taken leading positions, and in certain components they can be called as pioneers.

We won't find "Putin Doctrine" as such formulated in Russia's fundamental foreign policy documents. Like "Brezhnev Doctrine" from the Soviet period [1], its components comprise several crucial public speeches of Vladimir Putin from early 2000s, adopted conceptions and doctrines by different spheres [2], significant commentaries and speeches of a number of Russian politicians in conjunction

with practical policy of the Russian Federation of the post-Soviet period. "Brezhnev Doctrine" as such was formulated by western politicians and political analysts after his speech at the Congress of the Polish United Worker's Party in 1968 and observing political-ideological grounding and justification to the then pursued policy of interference into the affairs of the countries in the socialist "camp" in it, essence of which was: ensuring of stability of the political course of those subjects directed to close cooperation with the USSR, recognition of its predominance in that "camp", consolidated by communist ideology. That Doctrine was also named "doctrine of limited sovereignty" of the countries that make up the Soviet "camp".

On the Essence of "Putin Doctrine"

"Putin Doctrine", going back to Brezhnev's ideology, compared to his "forerunner" is deprived of any ideology and naturally is realized in quite different internal and external conditions. To "Eurasianism" and "Russian world" the ideology is applicable with prefix "pseudo" as it equally rejects liberal values and is aimed at systemic weakening of the West. However, by virtue of fundamental change in correlation of powers and resources, if the doctrine of limited sovereignty under Brezhnev was realized worldwide, then under Putin — only in the post-Soviet space, where, according to the "Concept of foreign policy of the Russian Federation" from February 2, 2013, "Russia considers the issue of formation of Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) a priority, meant not only to maximally set in motion mutually beneficial economic ties in the territory of CIS, but to become a model of unification, determining the

future of Commonwealth countries, open for other republics.” [3]

With Putin’s assumption of the office of the President of the Russian Federation, definition “Putinism” [4] was introduced into the political life of media outlets, which unites characteristic features of his management, and the term “Putin Doctrine” [5] appeared already in March 2013. Particularly, in his article with that title Len Aron, American expert on Russian affairs and former USSR, states that in Russian political elite one of the crucial composites of foreign policy consensus is regional hegemony: “To reach that goal Moscow strives to new political, economic, military and cultural integration of former Soviet bloc countries under Russia’s governance”[6], adding that an attempt of “Finlandisation” of post-Soviet republics is meant, reminding Soviet times, when “In the period of the Cold War Moscow was controlling Finland’s foreign policy.” Within such a scheme Moscow allows its neighbors to choose independently their domestic policies and economic systems, reserving the last word in issues related to their external orientation.

Organizations established by Russia’s initiative, both the CSTO (the Collective Security Treaty Organization) and EAEU (the Eurasian Economic Union), play a role of instruments for realization of the “Putin Doctrine” [7] and the issue of membership of separate republics of the post-Soviet space became a reason for crisis or dramatic developments, like September 3, 2013 in Armenia, when the president of Armenia in Moscow announced withdrawal from the Association Agreement (AA) with the EU and his intention to involve in the Eurasian Union, or refusal of Viktor Yanukovich, president of Ukraine, to sign the already initialed AA with the EU, which led to mass protests in Maidan in Kiev, the breakdown of his power, followed by annexation of Crimea and occupation of a part of Donetsk and Lugansk regions of Ukraine by Russia, as well as formation of another “frozen conflict”.

For Russia’s policy, involvement of the post-Soviet countries into its union now, first and foremost to the EAEU, becomes principally important, and Moscow widely uses leverages of “frozen

conflicts” to achieve its domestic policy goals, linking their possible resolution with membership to the EAEU. “If we want peace in the Caucasus, the entire Caucasus should be integrated into EAEU,” Sergey Glazyev, advisor to the president of Russian Federation, said in Yerevan [8]. But this is only the regional reflection of that global vision of the world order voiced by Moscow’s military-political leadership.

Political approaches that influenced “Putin Doctrine” were formed yet in the period of B. Yeltsin and were voiced on the highest level. Report by Andrey Gromyko [9], the son of the well-known head of the USSR Foreign Minister in the period of 1957-85, at the meeting of State Duma Committee of the Russian Federation on geopolitics on December 19, 1996 devoted to the 90-th anniversary of Brezhnev Doctrine, is worth attention. Touching upon “Brezhnev Doctrine” he confessed that formally it didn’t exist, but in essence—yes. He called on to restore those approaches in the formation of the foreign policy of post-Soviet Russia, “...now everyone sees that a real struggle in terms of ousting Russia from the geopolitical area of former Soviet Union. In this struggle a lot depends on how sober Russian leadership will assess the ongoing situation. If it casts away such misunderstandings that world politics is a salon of courtesy exchange, that Russia recorded victory by the end of the cold war, i.e. placid pink moods, that our country will suffer a new cataclysm—Russia is falling to pieces, Siberia will withdraw, and the state of Moskovia will remain” [10]. “That state was lost under Gorbachev. Lost without a trace! It mixes up with geopolitical realities of the current leadership. As a result, we have what we have. Russia doesn’t possess Crimea, even Sevastopol! Ukraine slowly drifts towards the West. Channels, Black and Mediterranean Sea are controlled by Turkey. Control over the Caspian and its immense oil reserves is claimed by anyone, who feels like it. Kaliningrad region appeared to be cut off from the entire territory of the state. The most important strategic beachhead—the Baltic states, where neither naval base wasn’t formulated by Russia as a property nor a rent was taken!”, A. Gromyko stressed.

In his conceptual article “Value of science is in prevision” Valeriy Gerasimov, Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation [11], yet in February 2013 stressed, that “the role of non-military means in reaching political and strategic goals has increased, which in several cases has considerably surpassed the power of the weapon by its effectiveness,” adding that, “remote contactless action on the adversary is becoming the main means to reach purposes of the war and operation.” Actually, the conception formulated by Colonel Gerasimov fits into the postulate of Sun Tzu “best of the best is conquering another’s army, without a battle,” and fully and systematically reflects the new methodology and planning of advance of Russian policy in a period of 15 years mentioned by S. Karaganov under the conditions when the world is plunged into “the first world hybrid warfare” [12, 13]. “Thanks to the Internet and social media, the kinds of operations the Soviet psy ops teams once could only fantasize about — upending the domestic affairs of the states with information alone — are now plausible. The information space opens wide asymmetrical possibilities for reducing the fighting potential of the enemy,” stresses Molly K. McKew, expert on information warfare. [14]

Armenian “Front” in “Putin Doctrine”: Moscow’s Undeclared War Against Armenia

After the terror act at the Armenian parliament on October 27, 1999 a wide spectrum opened before Russia for possession of economic, military and political assets / leverages in Armenia, allowing it to have a fatal impact on Armenian policy in future.

Yet in the period of Karabakh war in 1991-1994, in the conflict zone Russia took steps towards extension of its influence in the region. Summer attack of Azerbaijani army in 1992 in the south of Nagorno Karabakh, as a result of which 58% of the territory of former Nagorno Karabakh Autonomous Republic appeared under Baku’s control, was recorded under the decisive role [15] of the Russian the 104th Guards Airborne Division under the command of Vladimir Shamanov, future commander of the Airborne Forces of the RF (VDV). [16]

After the signing of the agreement on establishment of ceasefire regime, Russia shifted to non-military methods of influence, in which information component started to play a leading role more and more.

Since 2010 Moscow had launched large-scale supply of armaments to Azerbaijan, including offensive weapons, and the military-political situation in Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone, based on relative balance of powers, appeared under threat, which became the most serious external challenge for Armenia in the period of its independence. It can be assumed, that from that moment Moscow created a new instrument of blackmailing Armenia—a factor of threatening resumption of a large-scale war against Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh). This factor became the most ponderable in exerting Armenia in making decision on withdrawal to sign the Association Agreement (AA) with the EU on September 3, 2013, as well as opened a new scope and became a comfortable background for informative manipulations.

It should be stressed that by ratification [17] of the agreement [18] on joint troops with Russia and the agreement on involvement of the republic to the Russian-Belarusian Intergovernmental Financial and Industrial Group (IFPG) “Defense Systems”, Russians not only obtain wide opportunities for reconnaissance and control, but also strengthen these opportunities legally.

New Armenia-EU Agreement: New Opportunities of Diversifying Foreign Policy and New Challenges

Armenia has the possibility to diversify its policies and in this respect already initialed and ready for signing the Agreement (CEPA) [19] with the European Union considerably widens these opportunities.

This will allow Armenia to cover strategic imperfections, given the fact that in Russian unions (CSTO and EAEU) Armenia doesn’t have partners, and membership in these unions is just a component of bilateral relations with Russia, but not with other member states, with which Armenia has no borders, no adequate volume and level of

relations, no shared interests and issues significant for Armenia. [20]

Despite Armenia's sudden withdrawal on September 3, 2013 from the Association Agreement with the EU and its rather negative political implication [21], Yerevan and Brussels didn't leave attempts to set a new ground to Armenia-EU relations, and Yerevan initiated CEPA. It should be noted that concerning Nagorno Karabakh [22] there is following formulation that it recognizes "the importance of the commitment of the Republic of Armenia to the peaceful and lasting settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and the need to achieve that settlement as early as possible, in the framework of the negotiations led by the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs; also recognizing the need to achieve that settlement on the basis of the purposes and principles enshrined in the UN Charter and the OSCE Helsinki Final Act, in particular those related to refraining from the threat or use of force, the territorial integrity of States, and the equal rights and self-determination of peoples and reflected in all declarations issued within the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairmanship since the 16th OSCE Ministerial Council of 2008; also noting the stated commitment of the European Union to support this settlement process;" - this is a **ponderable factor of security for Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh** (excreted by the author).

Grounding for such a statement is the fact that at present consensus on conflicts in the post-Soviet area has been formed: conflicts in the territories of Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine should be resolved exclusively based on the principle of territorial integrity of the mentioned states, whereas three principles of Helsinki Final Act are brought on Nagorno-Karabakh conflict—territorial integrity, refraining from the threat or use of force, self-determination of peoples. Also, the definition "people of Nagorno Karabakh" was used not once in U.S Department of State's domestic policy statements and documents. Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is the only one in the post-Soviet area, where due to the OSCE Minsk Group, in which Russia is only a co-chair, failed to realize [23] its intentions and deploy its peacekeepers, and the

OSCE MG is a weighty restricting factor in this regard, by which is grounded counteraction and discontent to the work of this format by Moscow, Baku and Ankara.

Several European countries under Azerbaijani influence strive to change the formulations on Nagorno-Karabakh conflict of Riga Summit (May 21-22, 2015), which again states "on its full support of mediation efforts of the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group on Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, including on the level of presidents and their statements starting from 2009." An additional factor to the asset of supporters to change the formulations is Catalonia's issue, in respect of which the EU has developed a consensus in favor of Spain's unity. However, it should be taken into account that the Catalanian issue can't be put on the same level with that of Nagorno Karabakh, as legal frameworks with Catalonia enter into a direct contradiction with the Constitution of Spain and only 43% took part in the referendum. Whereas Nagorno Karabakh organized referendum in full compliance with the laws in force at that moment and by appearance of the Republic of Azerbaijan wasn't under its control, furthermore, it's impossible not to take into consideration the wars with Azerbaijan and the threat to security of the people of Nagorno Karabakh. It should be stressed that Azerbaijan's efforts on disruption of Armenia-EU Agreement also fully fits into the course of Russian strategy, as their success will soften the game in the region by the Russian rules.

Consequently, it seems that signing of Armenia-EU Agreement is of regional importance as well as can become a new factor of regional stability. [24]

Conclusions: Regional Dimension

For the time being, the world suffers the third crisis of liberal democracy, one of manifestations of which is definite dysfunctionality of the US domestic policy, and lack of strategy in relations of Russia and post-Soviet member states within the EaP, lack of regional strategy in the South Caucasus. Therefore, there is degradation of the situation, inadequate reaction to the crisis, which is reflected in the following:

- The trend of developing affairs with Russia is still significant in Europe that actually is a legitimization of Putin's policy. Although it should also be noted that the position [25] of the European Commission on the Nord Stream 2 is able to blow up efforts of Gazprom and Russia on further corrupting of Europe's political elite.

- Institutional weakening of the West as a system of the European and global security continues, and to that end S. Karaganov's [26] confession on the fact that "Indeed, Russia consciously disrupts that order by its own hands," appearance of the first aggressor in Europe after Hitler, who annexes part of its neighboring state, makes from other neighbors "a zone of privileged interests". All this as presented remains without due attention and adequate assessment against the background of, first and foremost, moral crisis. And the statement of the Kremlin-associated figure is acknowledgement and verification of the fact that Russia is the main instigator of "the first world hybrid warfare", which due to its blurring and prevalence of non-military forms of its conduct remains unconscious. Although in the U.S political elite, interference of Russia to elections in the USA is already assessed as military operations. [27]

- Against the background of aggravating deep crisis of liberal democracy little attention is attached to another important component of hybrid warfare - international corruption comparable to the international terrorism by the level of threat. Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act [28] adopted by U.S Congress may become a key factor in neutralization of international corruption, however, the bipartisan group of Congressmen raised an issue that the White House doesn't act in compliance with the Act and postpones strengthening of pressure on Russia. [29]

- In the unfolded information war with Russia, as a crucial element of hybrid warfare, the infrastructure of counteraction remains extremely weak and inadequate to the threat dimensions. The point is that there is no institute able to effectively fight with information sabotages, fakes and processes, sources of their generation, which, as already proved, systemically and effectively work under

the umbrella of Russian government, serving its interests.

- Worsening of USA-Iran relations, threat of termination of the agreement on nuclear program with Tehran, continuous contradictions in American institutes on that issue can cement a Moscow-Tehran-Ankara triangle. And at the stage of formulation the attitude towards the South Caucasus region as "something between" in this triangle purely from the view of "real politicians" in certain political circles in the West, can generate further degradation of the situation in the region and pose a threat of existential nature in view of its being fragmented and abundant of various conflicts. Besides, this undermines efforts in formation of the basis of indivisible Black Sea security, where the role of the North Caucasus and Ukraine is just dominant.

- Against the background of the lack of US strategy in the settlement of the crisis in Ukraine's East, involvement of the European mediators only, sharply increases the opportunity of conflict conservation in Donbass. In the case of the degradation of situation in Donbas, Russia will fully free its hands in the South Caucasus. The tendency of withdrawal from democratic norms noticed in Georgia, intensification of Russian influence, "borderization", i.e. periodic movement of the front line to Georgia's north, which is creeping intervention and occupation, as well as skepticism in the political class and the society regarding the Euro-Atlantic integration of the country—all these are key factors depriving official Yerevan of an alternative, and Armenia — of opportunities to counteract to the realization of "Putin Doctrine" applied towards our country.

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Hybrid War: Georgian State Lessons for Ukrainian State⁴

Georgia has a tragic and multifaceted experience in countering various forms of Russian aggression. In the early 1990s, different separatist movements started their activities on the territory of the country and received immediate assistance from Russia after Georgia's independence declaring. It was Russia that intervened in the confrontation between the first President Zviad Gamsakhurdia and Eduard Shevardnadze. At the height of the confrontation and with assistance from Russia, separatists from South Ossetia and Abkhazia succeeded in their activities. Focus of Georgia on integration into NATO and EU was one of the reasons for further inflammation of inter-ethnic conflicts and later on the war provoked by Russia in 2008. Since then, nearly a decade the confrontation does not cease requiring significant efforts from Georgia to resist multi-factor threats of political, economic, financial and security nature. In addition, the above events are interpreted as elements of Georgia struggle for its independence, and the concept of hybrid war started to be applied by Georgia only after Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

After-war lessons of Georgia

The Russo-Georgian War 2008 contributed to the national security system development. The National Security Council of Georgia intensified its activities in identifying and overcoming gaps,

in particular, preconditions for implementation of the following processes were established:

- Institutionalization of the government approach to the national security planning as an integrated process;
- Interdepartmental cooperation deepening within the process of the national security policy planning (political level – Interdepartmental Commission at the level of the Deputy Ministers of the NSC, managerial level - Interdepartmental Working Groups at the level of Departments, operational level – provision of communication, support and supervision over the daily activities by the National Security Council of Georgia);
- Development of the state authorities' capabilities involved in cooperation with the National Security Council of Georgia through the relevant trainings;
- Transparency, openness and inclusiveness of the process of the national security policy planning through cooperation with the Parliament, NGOs, partner countries and academic circles.

Constitutional changes and change of the ruling coalition in 2012 have made some adjustments to the process of the national security development in Georgia. The vertical system of subordination under the auspices of the National Security Council was changed, and the process of legislative reformatting for the parliamentary republic was initiated. The time of fundamental political changes is often a period when the progress dynamics in the national security system development is lost in the course of struggle. Georgia was not an exception, but to

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look at the experience gained during the previous period is important.

Features of threats to the national security of Georgia and methods of their neutralization

Georgia still believes that possible Russian offensive targeted at the occupation of the whole territory of the country and establishment of the pro-Russian government are the key threats to its national security. The only format to counteract such threats, as defined in the Strategic Defense Review, is Georgia's accession to the NATO, but it is not clarified by the Alliance at this historic stage. [1]

Georgia is constantly facing the "creeping" Russian occupation, when signs of separation are moved during the arbitrary actions in the areas along the lines of collision by the armed groups of self-proclaimed republics and Russian military forces inside the Georgian territory. Georgia cannot currently offer an effective mechanism to counteract such actions since it avoids military confrontation to such provocations aimed at preventing another large-scale armed conflict, and nothing is benefited from official statements and complaints at the international level as they are neglected by Russia.

Only in 2017, Georgia officially recognized Russian propaganda and "soft power" as threats and initiated relevant countermeasures. Today, Georgia is actively studying Ukrainian, Baltic and EU experience in counteractions to these threats.

Georgia has only recently set up the hybrid war as a separate type of threat to the national security requiring development and introduction of mechanisms to identify and analyse them as well as prevention and counteraction measures. Such types of threat include disguised use of armed forces by aggressor country on the territory of Georgia, sabotage operations, cyber-attacks, information war and support of forces, oppositional to the current authorities, including armed groups.

In particular, Georgia did not include the issues on counteractions to terrorism as a threat to the national security in its Strategic Defense Review reducing in this way the issue of Georgian citizens' participation in IDIL and Al-Nusra, proximity to

traditional routes of radical forces through the Caucasus and threats to the citizens radicalization. At the same time, Georgia is an active participant in the international activities targeted at combating terrorism and faced the manifestations of the relevant activities of Chechens, Abkhazians and Ossetians supported by Russia.

National Security Policy has been developed and relevant bodies and legal framework for their functioning have been created to counteract threats.

National Security Bodies

The key national authorities guaranteeing national security of Georgia are *the National Security Council of Georgia, the Ministry of Defense of Georgia, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia and the Ministry of Finance of Georgia*. Each of these state authorities has its legally defined scope of competencies and relevant structural divisions to analyse, take, implement, control and review their decisions.

The national security system has been developed with the relevant vertical affiliation for many years during the Presidential Republic functioning in Georgia. The situation has changed when Georgia was transformed into a parliamentary republic and power transfer from the President to the Government took place. This process is going on quite difficult, as it requires working on many laws and amendments to the practice of the national security bodies functioning.

When the Constitution was adopted in 1995, *the National Security Council of Georgia* started to play a leading role in the national security. As a consultative body of the President of Georgia, it performed coordination and supervision functions in the national security system and was responsible for the armed forces formation and development. This situation continued even after the constitutional changes in 2004 and until 2012, when the country moved to the parliamentary system of government. Since 2012, the National Security Council of Georgia has lost some of its powers resulted from the powers redistribution from the President in favour of the Government.

According to the Atlantic Council of Georgia [2], the national security was negatively affected since the National Security Council of Georgia had lost its functions to build an integral system of the national security by limiting its powers to advisory functions and depriving its right to create or convene Interdepartmental Commissions for working on and coordinating the state security policy. [3]

The gap in responsibility for internal and external threats assessment and relevant measures planning and coordination to prevent and neutralize the threats identified has appeared. The Georgian National Security Council also lost its functions of crisis management at the highest political level.

In 2013 the Government of Georgia established the Council for State Security and Crisis Management to ensure activities in the national security formation [4]. The Ministers of Internal Affairs, Defence, Foreign Affairs and Finance of Georgia were included in this Council, which in general is similar to the structure of the National Security Council of Georgia [5]. Both state institutions' functioning looks like a duplication and does not contribute to the national security effective coordination and development. Since 2013, the relevant Ministries have coordinated their activities mainly with the Government Council for State Security and Crisis Management.

Legislative changes

The Concept of the National Security of Georgia is a fundamental document on which the state policy for responding to identified threats, risks and challenges is based [6]. The first official version was published in 2005, in 2011 the document was reviewed and updated, and in January 2012 a new version of the Concept was published.

According to the British analytical agency Chatham House [7], the updated document has a number of strengths and weaknesses, which are generally dictated by the dynamics in the political life of Georgia causing a significant subjectivity in assessments and preventing unbiased strategic analysis.

A key advantage of the Concept updated was

awareness of the multifaceted nature of the state security system, which should include, in addition to military and diplomatic events, systematic activities for economic development, overcoming one-sided dependence and creating balanced trade and economic relationship, reliability and stability in energy supply, increase in citizens' confidence to the national authorities, and balance between the local self-government and central institutions.

Significant drawbacks:

- No comprehensive state policy for sustainable economic growth based on the national economy and geographical location advantages;
- No realistic program to overcome economic poverty and unemployment, ensure prerequisites for individual and family welfare improvement through the fair distribution of domestic GDP according to the proportional contribution from each employee;
- Disregard for political education of the citizens and their removal from political processes in the country and political persecution of the opponents;
- Weak assessment of Georgian economy dependence on the global economic processes, predicting of the evolution of this situation and plans for responding to possible challenges and risks development;
- Insufficient level of attention to the situation in the Caucasus as a whole as a geopolitical region;
- No scenarios for possible development of relations with Russia;
- Unreasonable expectations from the EU and NATO in the context of their contribution to security and development of Georgia;
- Weakness of the institutional foundations for democratic ruling in Georgia;
- Consequences of internal migration processes of the population, in particular,

internally displaced people, for the economic development of the state.

The National Threat Assessment Document is a conceptual document, which includes a retrospective analysis of the previous years with appropriate scenario predicting future development and describing threats to the national security, degree of their possible occurrence and outcomes. The document is updated annually and till 2012 it was within the competence of the National Security Council of Georgia. After constitutional changes, this document falls within the competence of the Government of Georgia.

In 2009, the *National Security Review* preparation was launched, which intended to implement three logical and interrelated stages: firstly, the Concept of the National Security and National Threats Assessment adaptation, secondly, coordination in the strategic documents development and, thirdly, the National Security Strategy development. Interdepartmental cooperation and institutionalization of the approach to the national security policy of Georgia preparation and implementation was based on this document. After constitutional changes, above process was suspended until changes and amendments made to the laws of Georgia in terms of the powers transfer between the branches of the Government.

The National Security Strategy by its nature would be a strategic document, which should clearly indicate any shortcomings of the security system of Georgia and offer effective and achievable ways for their elimination. It has been planned to approve above document by the end of 2012, but due to constitutional changes this process was postponed until the period of legislative changes finalization. [8]

Due to changes and amendments to the Defense Planning Act, responsibility for the preparation of the National Military Strategy and Threat Assessment Document was transferred from the President to the Parliament. In this context, Threat Assessment Document shall be submitted for approval by the Government to the President, while the National Military Strategy shall be approved only at the level of the Government.

Due to changes and amendments to the Law on Military Duty and Military Service and the Law on Military Reserve in Georgia, the system of recruitment and military service coordination that had been within the competence of the President was violated in Georgia. The President being formally the Commander in Chief has lost its powers to influence the processes.

Changes to the state of emergency proclamation and martial law limited the powers of the President and currently the corresponding presidential decrees require government approval to entry into force. The latter calls into question validity of its functions in case of the martial law proclamation.

Since 1995, Georgia has implemented its crisis management system in case of large-scale external or internal crisis situations. For a long time, the National Security Council of Georgia was a key coordinating body ensuring interdepartmental cooperation in the crisis management system. Only in 2010, a separate system for interdepartmental cooperation in crisis was introduced, however, the strategic concept of crisis management and documents planning for the relevant activities were not adopted. Since 2009, Georgia started cooperation with Great Britain to strengthen its own capacity for crisis management. After 2012, cooperation is developing mainly with the Government of Georgia, in particular, in 2016 the National Situation Room was jointly opened. [9]

Conclusions for Ukraine

A summary of Georgian experience in the national capacities building to counteract hybrid threats shows a lot of common features and, accordingly, makes it possible to identify achievements and gaps to prevent their repeated occurrence.

The main conclusion is recognition of *a single state body* with an independent status and broad powers for the internal and external risks and threats analysis, national security policy development and implementation, and all state authority activities coordination and control.

This body should be as far remote as possible from any political parties, have a mandate protected by the laws to form and implement national security

system, guaranteed budget and the right to cooperate with all potentially useful institutions within the security issues, the veto right to legislative and regulatory acts of Parliament, Government and President provided that reasonable security warnings are available.

The state should provide *legal framework for the national security system functioning*, regardless of political changes at the parliamentary or governmental levels.

Effective countermeasures to the hybrid threats are possible *only with the integrated and systematic analysis* of external and internal environment by

independent and professional body without any political or economic influence by any parties concerned.

It is important to take into account not only the influence of foreign policy, military and macroeconomic factors when forming the national security system, but also any technological progress, labor, migration and cultural relations, objective analysis of the state capabilities, political field, electoral preferences and sentiments.

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Human Security vs National Security

“...Human focuses on the safety of individuals and communities. At minimum, human security refers to safety from direct threats of violence. A comprehensive approach to human security includes three components: freedom from fear, freedom from want, and freedom to live in dignity”.
[1]

This definition is provided by the extended research conducted within the framework of the international collaborative project involving nearly 100 organisations around the world and facilitated by a consortium consisting of: the Alliance for Peacebuilding, the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict and the University of Notre Dame’s Kroc Institute for International Peace. Such an approach to the very notion of “security” is rather new and yet poorly comprehensible for both governments and populations of the post-Soviet states including Ukraine. The main reason for such state of affairs is because people living for too long time in isolation behind the iron wall have been brainwashed by the overwhelming and insistent propaganda on a “sieged fortress” encircled by vicious capitalist enemies, wishing to destroy their own country of “true socialism” and their allies. As a result, indoctrination by the idea of national (actually, state) security to be above all had become so widespread that the whole apparatus of law enforcement bodies being focused on performing exactly this function was perceived as something quite normal. Inevitably, the issue of the respect to and safeguarding human security, including personal security and observance of human rights, was pushed far away from any priority.

After having received such kind of heritage, to change the overall situation in favor of human dimension of security turned out a challenge and extremely difficult task that requires not

only radical reformation of the police, army, intelligence services etc. but the system of values and to some extent, the whole social mentality. To achieve this goal in times of the acute crisis lasting for over three years – actually, in times of the undeclared officially “hybrid war” with the Russian Federation, named instead “Anti-Terror Operation” (ATO), makes the task even more complicated.

State security under threat

Indeed, from the very beginning of the dramatic events of 2014 – the occupation immediately followed by the Russian annexation of Crimea, the survival of Ukraine as an independent sovereign state was put under question. Caught fully unprepared for such kind of aggression, with practically non-existing army and security bodies, disordered and dysfunctional governmental institutions and parliament, Ukraine struggled for its very existence, and under such circumstances, state security at that time seemed indeed above all.

Apart from many other aspects, general frustration was caused by the failure of international community to react properly to the unprecedented case in the post-WWII Europe – direct annexation of a part of the neighbouring state’s territory. Especially shocking this act of aggression looks in light of the Budapest Memorandum signed on December 5, 1994, by Ukraine, also the US, UK and Russia as the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty (NPT) depositary states as a condition of Ukraine’s joining the NPT as a nuclear weapons free state. This decision entailed relinquishing its nuclear arsenal – the world’s third largest to Russia. By this document the signatory states declared commitments to Ukraine’s security through the Memorandum on Security Assurances, providing pledges to Ukraine in the case of the use of force against its territorial integrity—precisely

the kind of situation that occurred in Crimea in 2014.

Of course, the Budapest Memorandum is a diplomatic, political document and not a legally binding treaty; nor does the memorandum foresee any punitive provisions in case of its breach. However, it does link the fulfilment of these security commitments to Ukraine's nuclear renunciation, and brutal violation of them by one of the signatory states may have deteriorating consequences not only for Ukraine but also for the very future of the NPT – the treaty aimed to curb the spread of weapons of mass destruction around the world – by obviously discouraging other states from joining it and thus undermining the regime of nonproliferation [2]. Concerning Ukraine, it could – and should – look for some other potential means of re-considering the Budapest Memorandum in order to incline the US and the UK to use stronger leverage in response to Russia's aggression and in such a way, strengthen its state security that is still under threat.

Human security and human rights on the occupied territories

Current situation in the occupied Crimea and in the east of Ukraine, although differing in the nature of threats, presents gravest danger not only for those taking part directly in military actions, but for the civilians, too. The Donbas war has already taken nearly 10.000 of human lives; number of hostages and “disappearances” also amounts to thousands. Situation with human rights observance on the occupied territories is horrible and constantly deteriorating. Ukrainian, including Crimean, HR groups try hard to monitor brutal violations, collecting and documenting confirmed cases of summary executions, ‘disappearances’ (abductions), arbitrary detentions, numerous searches etc. It turned out that one of the major threats to many of detainees is a widespread practice of tortures by ‘investigators’ aiming to force the victims to ‘recognize’ the crimes committed.

In the report “Surviving Hell” [3], human rights activists spoke with those who had been held captive by militants. They found that over 87% of Ukrainian soldiers and 50% of civilians taken prisoner by the militants in Donbas had been

subjected to torture, inhuman or degrading ill-treatment. In over 40% of the cases, key roles had been played by Russian Federation mercenaries, FSB or people who identified themselves as Russian military personnel.

Recently, adviser to the Security Service of Ukraine (the SBU) chief Yuriy Tandit claims that 3,136 Ukrainian prisoners of war and civilian hostages have been released or tracked since Russia has unleashed aggression in Donbas [4]. Numerous war crimes and crimes against humanity are recorded on the occupied territory. [5]

Such tragic examples as continuous shelling of the village Avdiivka by the militants led and fully supported by Russian troops and the so-called “volunteers” remind to some extent the Syrian Aleppo: it repeatedly caused not only collapse of any kind of vital infrastructure responsible for electricity and water supplies, ruined buildings and other damages, but resulted in a number of local residents wounded or dead. On the occupied territories, all human rights and freedoms are brutally violated, raising a question of what can be done by Ukraine and international community to stop this lawlessness and prevent further crimes. In contrast to lawlessness on the occupied territories of Donbas where lootings, beatings and other crimes are realities of everyday life, one can expect that in the annexed Crimea, at least legislation of the RF could have been observed. But this is not the case. Human rights situation in Crimea is worse than in other regions of Russia, and abundant violation of both international and domestic legal norms and standards has its own specificity. There are systematic attempts to suppress the voices and/or activities of any person or group manifesting – or just being suspected of – disagreement with the fact of occupation, but first and foremost – of the indigenous Crimean Tatar people. Systemic discrimination, persecutions and repressions targeting Crimean Tatars aim at their intimidation and forcing them to leave the peninsula which is their only homeland.

As a result of occupation and according to the most cautious estimations, there are at least 24 political prisoners, 16 ‘disappeared’ and 10 persons killed. Among them, number of Crimean Tatars is: 18 out

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of 24, 10 out of 16, and 7 out of 10. (Proportion of Crimean Tatars within the whole population of Crimea is about 14 – 15%). The banning, in the fall of 2016, of the Mejlis - the main representative organ of the Crimean Tatar indigenous people – as an ‘extremist organization’ is an unprecedented case of banning not just an ‘organisation’ or ‘association’ but the body elected by the whole indigenous people.

Especially endangered are Crimean Muslims, subjected permanently to numerous searches, detainments and arrests under charges of belonging to Hizb ut-Tahrir (from 2003 claimed by the RF legislation to be an ‘extremist organization’). But in general, ‘groups of risk’ the members of which are under continuous threat and whose rights, freedoms and security are brutally violated, include all people with pro-Ukrainian stance, not accepting the Russian occupation and being punished for the slightest expression of their ‘dissent’ – like manifestations of Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar flags, national symbols and communicating in mother tongue. [6]

Up to date, all efforts to ensure unimpeded access to the occupied territory of Crimea and Donbas of national and international monitoring missions remain fruitless. Claims and calls for this articulated by the most influential international bodies such as the UNO, OSCE, Council of Europe, European Parliament etc. did not bring any positive results, in particular, due to the veto right imposed by the RF that is simultaneously an aggressor state and a permanent member of the UN Security Council. Activities of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) are restricted by counter-actions of the armed occupants preventing them from proper functioning, denying access to storages of heavy weapons, shooting down their drones, and threatening the lives of the OSCE personnel. Proposals to substitute the SMM by international police mission or UN peacekeepers so far failed; in 2016, the information that all leaders of the ‘Normandy four’ countries agreed for the deployment of the OSCE police mission armed with personal weapons was renounced by the Russian side. As the Kremlin’s press service said, “the Russian Federation supports the activities of

the OSCE monitoring mission in Donbas, not the police mission”. [7]

Facing such a deadlock and helplessness to restore the post-WWII world order, Ukraine might try to strengthen human security regime on the occupied territories – relying, first and foremost, on the internationally recognised fact of the occupation of the Crimean peninsula – by using more effectively the existing instruments of international humanitarian law. In this respect, let us recall certain provisions of the 4th Geneva Convention of 1949 – the treaty ratified by both Ukraine and Russia. [8]

According to this convention, the provisions of Part II cover the whole of the populations of the countries in conflict, without any adverse distinction based, in particular, on race, nationality, religion or political opinion, and are intended to alleviate the sufferings caused by war (Art. 13). In the context of the application of further particular articles, special attention should be paid to the institution of the so-called ‘Protecting Powers’. As is stipulated by Art.9, “The present Convention shall be applied with the cooperation and under the scrutiny of the Protecting Powers whose duty it is to safeguard the interests of the Parties to the conflict. For this purpose, the Protecting Powers may appoint, apart from their diplomatic or consular staff, delegates from amongst their own nationals or the nationals of other neutral Powers. The said delegates shall be subject to the approval of the Power with which they are to carry out their duties”.

Defining the Status and Treatment of Protected Persons (Part III, Section I. Provisions common to the territories of the parties to the conflict and to occupied territories), convention states that “Protected persons are entitled, in all circumstances, to respect for their persons, their honour, their family rights, their religious convictions and practices, and their manners and customs. They shall at all times be humanely treated and shall be protected especially against all acts of violence or threats thereof and against insults and public curiosity” (Art. 27.). Moreover, Protected Persons shall have every facility for making application to the Protecting Powers, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the National Red

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Cross (Red Crescent, Red Lion and Sun) Society of the country where they may be, as well as to any organization that might assist these several organizations shall be granted all facilities for that purpose by the authorities, within the bounds set by military or security considerations them (Art. 30.). Apart from the visits of the delegates of the Protecting Powers and of the International Committee of the Red Cross, provided for by Article 143, the Detaining or Occupying Powers shall facilitate, as much as possible, visits to protected persons by the representatives of other organizations whose object is to give spiritual aid or material relief to such persons. No physical or moral coercion shall be exercised against protected persons, in particular to obtain information from them or from third parties (Art. 31).

Taking into account this year conscription campaign, for the young Crimean residents especially relevant is Art. 51 clearly stressing that the Occupying Power may not compel protected persons to serve in its armed or auxiliary forces. No pressure or propaganda which aims at securing voluntary enlistment is permitted.

In view of the repeatedly surfaced insinuations that Ukraine is responsible for violating human rights in Crimea by introducing restrictions on trade, water and electricity supplies, Article 55 must be kept in mind and used as a strong argument: “To the fullest extent of the means available to it, the Occupying Power **has the duty** of ensuring the food and medical supplies of the population; it should, in particular, bring in the necessary foodstuffs, medical stores and other articles if the resources of the occupied territory are inadequate”.

Concerning the notorious “Case of 26 February” accusing Crimean Tatar leaders and activists in what happened during the mass protest action in Simferopol when Crimea was still formally under jurisdiction of Ukraine, Art. 70 should be applied, because “Protected persons shall not be arrested, prosecuted or convicted by the Occupying Power **for acts committed or for opinions expressed before the occupation**, or during a temporary interruption thereof, with the exception of breaches of the laws and customs of war”. Very important is also Art. 74, according to which “Representatives

of the Protecting Power shall have the right to attend the trial of any protected person, unless the hearing has, as an exceptional measure, to be held in camera in the interests of the security of the Occupying Power, which shall then notify the Protecting Power. A notification in respect of the date and place of trial shall be sent to the Protecting Power”. Not less significant is provision of Art. 76 that “Protected persons accused of offences shall **be detained in the occupied country**, and if convicted they shall serve their sentences therein...” (Whereas, for example, those arrested for a criminal offence on suspicions of belonging to or supporting the activities of Hizb ut-Tahrir were tried and sentenced to from five to seven years of imprisonment in the Rostov city on the territory of the RF).

So, potential opportunities of strengthening human security and human rights regime in the occupied Crimea by application of the 4th Geneva Convention and its Additional Protocol look rather appealing; nevertheless, and despite references to this legally binding instrument of international law in the recent PACE resolution, it is not yet used in full measure. The main obstacle to this is, first of all, the implied Russia’s objection to observe its obligations as those of the Occupying Power. Indeed, by the end of 2015, the RF already refused to present yearly reports on the fulfilment of such obligations under the pretext that “such reports might become too heavily politicised”. Blocking of this proposal occurred at a sitting of the International Red Cross Committee in Geneva and was supported by several other countries; as President of the ICRC responded with regret, in such a way, “the states missed the opportunity to help to protect millions of people”. [9]

At the same time, as is known, Geneva Conventions created the main basis of the international humanitarian law and as such, in contrast to other treaties, could not be revised according to the established procedure [10]. Therefore, to find legitimate ways of repudiation these particular instruments would be much more difficult than, for instance, refusing to abide the decisions of the International Criminal Court or the European Court on Human Rights. Therefore, Ukraine must do its

best to promote observance of those obligations, in particular, by initiating the formation of the system of Protecting Powers foreseen by the 4th Geneva Convention.

This particular opportunity should not be unheeded in view of the unfulfilled pledges of the states – signatories of the Budapest Memorandum. Feeling at least moral and political responsibility with regard to Russia's military aggression against Ukraine, both the US and the UK might perceive favourably such a request. The two other countries – namely, France and China, members of the NPT as the states possessing nuclear arsenals, supported (orally) the Assurances although did not put their signatures. These states could also be invited to join a club; the RF, on its side, should be proposed to nominate its own candidates for the role of the Protecting Powers.

It should be noted that the idea of attracting Protecting Powers in order to alleviate human rights and human security situation on the occupied territories is already dealt with by a number of Ukrainian CSOs, in particular, human rights and expert communities. Regrettably, their addresses and proposals along this line to governmental officials – including those from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – until now met a deaf ear. Also, while the case of Crimea as an occupied territory has been officially recognised not only by Ukraine but, in 2016, by a number of international resolutions, the situation with the uncontrolled parts of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts is much more complicated. Despite the fact that those regions have already been recognised as occupied by the Decree of the Verkhovna Rada [11], opposition to defining them as such in national legislation by a special bill is rather strong, coming, in particular, from the 'profile' Ministry on Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons [12]. This creates additional difficulties in imposing responsibility on the RF in terms of human rights observance and satisfying the population of the uncontrolled 'Separate Regions of the DLO' need in food, goods, electricity et al. – the 'hot' issue especially after introducing by the government of the 'blockade' of uncontrolled territories.

In terms of human security, the most acute problem

is that of running there the local elections before all troops and ammunitions would be withdrawn and Ukraine regaining its control over the Ukrainian-Russian border. Unfortunately, not only Russia but some Western partners of Ukraine, interpreting certain (rather confusing) points of the 'Minsk agreements' and the order of their fulfilment, often insist on this particular point to be realised without strong guarantees of the proper and effective security for all actors and stakeholders to be involved in the electoral process. [13]

We believe that the whole matter of human security on the occupied territories is worth of broader discussion at national and international levels with the engagement of all interested parties.

Human security in the 'Mainland' Ukraine

First steps

After initial shock of 2014, Ukraine rather quickly restored its state apparatus, military forces, law enforcement and security agencies, and became able to start taking the first necessary steps on the path of safeguarding human security. The first visible signs of departing from the habitual functions of law enforcement bodies are related to the appearance of the 'new police' beginning from the reformed patrol police.

Briefly, the whole story has begun on July 2, 2015, when Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) of Ukraine adopted innovative law 'On National Police' [14]. Civil society actors – mostly, human rights activists – participated in developing the draft and some of their proposals were accepted by lawmakers. Two days later, 2000 new policemen started patrolling the streets of capital city Kyiv. Those young men and women (21-35 years old) have been intensely trained for three months; training courses pursued not only improving professional capacities but also introducing ethical norms and principles inherent in civilised democratic world. In those courses – in particular, concerning human rights and non-discrimination – trainers and independent experts from CSOs were actively engaged. Such kind of training was by itself 'experimental', because never before such a 'multistakeholder' approach had been used.

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Reaction of the society was quite remarkable. It should be recalled that before ‘Revolution of Dignity’ (2013 – 2014) people’s mistrust in post-soviet ‘militiamen’ was almost absolute. In critical situations, any help from them was not expected; public opinion polls showed the level of support by only 2% of citizens, whereas 66% were for a total reformation of the whole law-enforcement system. Brutal attitude of militia special units (in particular, notorious ‘Berkut’) responsible for beatings, killings and tortures of protesters added to the existing tensions. Therefore, much societal hopes and expectations have been invested in the creation of a modern, Western-type police. Despite rather severe rules and procedures for the selection of candidates, a number of applicants were very high: from 5 to 30 candidates (in different cities) for one vacancy. It is interesting to note that about two thirds of the applicants have higher education, and that between 20% and 40% of them were females. Former militiamen amounted to only 10% of the applicants.

The new police performance was met by quite positive attitude of the population, but at the same time, subjected to the insistent and assertive observation and constant monitoring – both formal and informal. Each move and/or incident with the involvement of policemen has been vividly discussed by Internet users and covered by numerous bloggers. In particular, people positively react to the objective actions of the new patrolling police targeting those violators belonging to ‘VIPs’ who used to be ‘above the law’.

Transparency of the recruiting ‘new people for the new police’ and further proceedings have been found ‘unprecedented’ because of establishing numerous channels of communication [15]. Hotline was actively propagated asking, inter alia, to report on any violations perpetrated by the patrolling police. Also, sharply increased number of calls on ‘102’ emergency number may reflect the increased population trust.

It is important to note that the proclaimed ideology of these police forces is quite different from the former one. Basic concepts are formulated as: **‘collaboration, communication, and providing**

services’. The main goals are designated as **‘to serve and protect’** (**“We are not to punish, we are to ensure your security”**). Indeed, there are many positive responses describing such cases. As a result, after one month of police operations, the level of confidence in them raised significantly: according to the sociological poll by ‘RATING’ agency, 82% of the residents of Kyiv endorsed appearance of the new police, and 69% of the respondents expect improvement of criminal situation in the city and of their own security; approximately half of them hope also for the successful contribution to counteract corruption. Vision of their activities as a ‘first step for better future’ was widely shared by police personnel themselves and society at large.

Of course, this ‘honeymoon’ between ordinary people and new police did not last long; quite a few new servicemen turned unable to meet high expectations and were fired or abandoned the service on their own will. Nevertheless, nowadays the approval rate is slightly above 50% that is still in sharp contrast to previous overwhelming mistrust.

In view of the intense (and not slackening) attention to the activities of the new police, it is surprising that not less important element of ensuring human security – operations of the Ukrainian **CIMIC** (civil-military cooperation) Group – practically escaped wide public discussion and media coverage. This special unit, established by the General staff yet in 2014 according to NATO standards, accomplishes a lot of important functions, in particular, at the territories of Eastern Ukraine liberated from local separatists and supporting Russian militaries, and coming under the jurisdiction of central authorities. Traditional CIMIC mission usually consists in developing cooperation with local bodies and administrations, regional and international NGOs and other CSOs and population in general, in particular, providing humanitarian aid, participating in the exchange of prisoners of war and those who perished.

In addition to these conventional tasks, officers

of the Ukrainian CIMIC group are also actively engaged in less widespread activities – like repair of the destroyed objects of infrastructure vital for restoring life-support system. The need for this was conditioned by the practically non-functioning bodies of local administrations and self-government in some of the towns and settlements located in the zone of ATO (Anti-Terror Operation). These activities, especially in Donetsk oblast, promoted remarkably improved relations between Ukrainian militaries and local population: according to Colonel Nozdrachev, the Head of the CIMIC Group, support increased from 20 -30% a year ago to 80 – 85% in summer 2015 [16]. Scarce knowledge about and low level of interest to the CIMIC Group-Ukraine can be explained, perhaps, by the lack of publicity and PR-actions, also by rather rare interviews and other events attracting media.

It could also be added that although human rights and human security are usually regarded as linked inseparably, in the situation of crisis they sometimes come to clashes. For example, since officially war in Ukraine is not recognised (it's still named not a 'war' but 'ATO'), and state of emergency not declared, some human rights activists fight any restrictions relating, in particular, to public events, including rallies and other public gatherings, imposed sometimes by state officials under circumstances of increased danger of provocations and/or terrorist acts threatening human lives. Therefore, although the first steps towards building trustworthy and comprehensive system of modern military and police forces, aimed at not only national but also human security, can be regarded as a moderate success, much more work in this direction is needed. Ever increasing activity of civil society and its rising role in reformation of security sector might be a cornerstone of further achievements.

'Mainland Ukraine': groups of risk

Situation in Ukraine controlled by legitimate central, regional and local authorities, poses quite different concerns relating to human rights and human security. Several "risk groups" could be identified as being in especially vulnerable position.

Apart from traditionally vulnerable members of Roma ethnic minority who often suffer from discrimination and sometimes acts of violence perpetrated by local gangs and ordinary residents, new challenges have appeared relating to the increased number of refugees, asylum seekers, but also public figures becoming the targets of assassinations and/or terrorist acts.

The fate of asylum seekers from Russia and other authoritarian post-Soviet states is difficult and often dramatic; to get a special status of 'a person in need of a special protection' [17] means coming through exhausting procedure of fighting with the Migration Service habitually denying their claims, and then trying to overcome the negative decisions through court appellations. Since the overwhelming majority of refugees and asylum seekers from the RF and some Central Asia countries are opponents of the existing there regimes persecuted for their political and public activities, their extradition would mean a serious threat to their freedom and even life. [18]

Under Ukrainian law, judges cannot force migration authorities to deliver asylum or other appropriate status, only to reconsider applications; therefore, the 'happy end' in Ukraine for political refugees seems possible only after attracting serious attention of the HR community and media covering their cases. "It is unacceptable to not provide asylum for people facing persecution for peaceful opposition activities in their own country," asserted the Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group (KHRPG) – one of the most efficient NGOs applying great efforts to help the potential victims [19]. In this respect, quite remarkable is a story of three young persons from Krasnodar who were detained for 15 days in summer of 2014, placed on a terrorist watch list and charged with extremism after the attempt to organise a rally demanding broader autonomy for the southern Russia's region Kuban [20]. (Actually, their slogans on the 'federalisation' were mocking the Russia's claim to 'federalise' Ukraine).

One of them, Vyacheslav Martynov, fled immediately to Kharkiv where received a strong support from the KHRPG and active members of the former Kharkiv 'EuroMaidan' (in which

he participated in 2013 – 2014), and after several court sittings, did obtain the desirable status in early November 2015. The second one, Pyotr Lubchenkov, also having escaped to Ukraine in 2014, remained under the threat of being sent back to Russia until the beginning of 2017, when the eventual decision of rejecting Russia's claim for his extradition was adopted by the General Prosecutor Office of Ukraine. Their colleague Daria Polyudova, who chose to stay in Russia, was sentenced to two years in prison in December 2015 on charges of 'calling for Russia's territorial integrity infringement' -- a sentence that sparked an outcry from rights groups around the world. This story clearly indicates the necessity to reform the Migration Service of Ukraine keeping the former attitude towards the political refugees and demonstrates that concerted efforts and assertiveness of civil society actors are often able to conquer the old bureaucratic machine traditionally neglecting both human rights and human security.

Another category of persons experiencing enhanced risks to their security and very life, concerns some VIPs or well-known public figures becoming the targets of assassins and subjected to man-hunting, abduction or meeting death as a result of terrorist acts.

A few cases of protecting them successfully are known to wide public. One of them is the story of Ilia Bogdanov – former FSB officer who arrived in Ukraine coming from Russia in summer of 2014 and joined as a volunteer fighter first the 'Donbas' battalion, then the DUK 'Pravyi Sector'. Afterwards, he received Ukrainian citizenship, lived in Kyiv and disappeared on 12 November 2016. As it turned out, Bogdanov was kidnapped by a group of people and kept in isolation for further transfer to Russia. In a course of special operation worked out by the SBU, the criminals were detained at the Ukrainian-Russian border, and Bogdanov was liberated, as informed at a common briefing by General Prosecutor of Ukraine and Head of the Security Service of Ukraine. [21]

Unfortunately, not all assassinations eventuated in such a happy end. Resonance murder of the prominent journalist Pavel Sheremet on 20 July

2016 resulted from the explosion of his car, and that crime remains yet unsolved despite all the endeavours of the Ukrainian investigators and engagement of the experts from the FBI and Europol. [22]

The most recent murder in the centre of Kyiv of Denis Voronenkov, former Russian State Duma deputy who in October 2016 left Russia and moved to Ukraine together with his wife – famous singer Maria Maksakova – was even more shocking. Very soon after arrival in Ukraine (on 6 December 2016) he was granted Ukrainian citizenship and was considered a witness of the extreme value for the prosecution and preparation of criminal case against the former president of Ukraine Victor Yanukovych and, assumedly, for sharing information about the possible links between Ukrainian 'Berkut' and Russian special services during the Maidan events. On February 14, Russian FSB put him on a Federal 'Wanted' list; on March 23, he was killed by the assassin.

This tragedy has revealed, among many other repercussions, serious gaps and drawbacks in the system of ensuring the safety of key persons possessing information invaluable for state affairs. A number of questions arise, in particular, how was he found by his killers, and how was his safety secured. As prominent Ukrainian journalist and blogger Yuri Butusov wrote, "...after public announcements made by prosecutor's office officials, they should have offered security of a totally new level, with involvement of the SBU or Interior Ministry, who are obliged by the law to ensure safety to persons involved in a criminal investigation". Instead, Voronenkov at the moment of his killing was accompanied by only one officer of the Defence Ministry's Main Intelligence Department who certainly was not well trained – if at all – as a professional bodyguard. Butusov reached conclusion that "Vorononkov's assassination is the first blatant terrorist attack in Kyiv obviously orchestrated by the Russian secret services. We may see more attacks soon. It is necessary to investigate and draw conclusions out of it in order to prevent new casualties in this secret war. ... If we're interested in having more

high-ranking witnesses and sources in Russia, we must secure these people from future terrorist attacks”. [23]

Human security and social networks

New risk groups spread predominantly among teenagers appeared, rather unexpectedly, among active participants of popular Internet social networks, in particular, Facebook. First and foremost, this threat relates to the so-called ‘suicide groups’ whose users, following a set of commands and instructions from their administrators, are led gradually to suicidal acts often eventuated by fatal casualties [24]. In Ukraine, over the last few months the cyber-police unit has blocked more than 500 ‘groups of death’ in Internet, and arrested over 200 accounts of their organisers and ‘curators’. As was stated during the briefing, this unit receives daily approximately 70 applications about children disappeared, and there are firm evidence that 15-20% of the latter participated in the Internet ‘traps’ [25]. As has been emphasised, effective counteraction to this danger implies close collaboration of parents, teachers, and psychologists with law enforcement bodies.

In addition, some professional psychologists warn about dangers linked to the people’s need in security

and sympathy, and sometimes detrimental effects caused by the involvement in the FB discussions often full of ‘hate speech’. Certain advices and recommendations are provided how to resist such negative influences. [26]

Conclusions

In Ukraine, an old-fashioned doctrine of ‘state security above all’ still has an upper hand over the rather new (especially for the ‘post-Soviet space’) notion of human security and the necessity to develop a whole system of protection aimed at both individuals and vulnerable groups.

Current situation – in particular, annexation of the Crimean peninsula by the RF and continued war waged against local militants and Russian troops in Eastern Ukraine – presents new challenges complicating realisation of the ambitious plans in this direction. Nevertheless, the first steps are already being taken, whereas further success depends, *inter alia*, upon the active engagement of CSOs, and their regular collaboration with state bodies. International experience in counteracting terrorism and ensuring human security is also of great importance. In general, in all areas dealing with human security, tremendous consolidated work is still ahead.

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RE-THINKING CONCEPTUAL APPROACHES

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The Russo-Georgian Conflict. Is Ukraine the Next? Is the Ossetian Scenario Possible in Crimea?

(Posted in the Black Sea Security magazine No. 10, 2008)

The author offers the deep analysis of Russo-Georgian relations, the reasons of these two countries counter-action and their conflict consequences for Ukraine. The Russian mass-media provocative materials, concerning the annexation of the Crimea by Russia - in the nearest future, virtual combat actions between Russia and interconfessional relations between the peoples of the Crimea are also examined in the article. The main reason of instable situation in Crimea is the desire of Russia to prevent Ukraine from joining NATO.

On August 8, when the invasion of the regular Russian army units into the sovereign territory of Georgia through the Roki tunnel began, the South Ossetian conflict became a prologue to a new geopolitical confrontation — between Russia and the rest of the world — which purpose was to overthrow the existing world order and Russia's historical revenge for “humiliation” of 1991-2004 years. That is why the August events in Georgia for many people in the world have become a turning point in assessing the modern world order, especially in its post-Soviet space. Georgia was the first stage, but at the same time it was the “test bullet”.

The war between Russia and Georgia has caused fear in the neighboring states (especially from the former USSR). The fear was caused by memories of the times of Soviet imperialism. The threat of the invasion of “peacekeeping tank columns” hovered over the former brotherly republics, at

least over those with a high share of the so-called “Russian-speaking” population. The question entirely reasonably arises: “Will Moscow soon repeat the “successful” Georgian precedent in any other place to “protect” the Russians living there?”

Yet on August 13, 2008, the article “The active phase of the Russo-Georgian conflict is completed, next is the war with Ukraine” appeared on the site FORUM.Msk. According to the author, “this kind of perception of events in Georgia and prospects of Ukraine has become the dominant one in Ukrainian society today.”[1] The same article states that “Communist Leonid Grach was one of the first who declared (*with joy and pleasure, author's note*) that the South Ossetian scenario may be repeated in Ukraine in Crimea”.

President of Ukraine Viktor Yushchenko in the article “Georgia and the stakes for Ukraine”, published on August 26 at The Washington Post, wrote as follows: “Ukraine has become a hostage in the war waged by Russia. This has prompted Ukrainian authorities and all of our country's people, including those living in the Crimea, to ponder the dangers emanating from the fact that the Russian Black Sea fleet is based on our territory”.[2]

The concerns expressed become clear if you listen to the rhetoric of Russian politicians and review the materials of the Russian media.

In April 2008, at the NATO Summit in Bucharest, Vladimir Putin, being still the president of the Russian Federation, said at the closed door that “Ukraine is not a state! What is Ukraine? One part

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of its territory is Eastern Europe, and the other one - and a very big one - is presented by us!” Putin made it clear that if Ukraine is admitted to NATO, the process of “return” of its eastern regions and Crimea may be initiated.[3]

On September 1, on the website of the “Nezavisimaya Gazeta” (Independent Newspaper), an article by Volodymyr Solovyov, deputy editor-in-chief of the NG, editor-in-chief of the “NVO” (Independent Military Review), “Ahead is a Fight for Crimea” was published. In the article, the author expresses the following opinion: “I do not want to think about that, but should it so happen, then it will be difficult to avoid a new “five-day war”. Moreover, there are strong beliefs among the Russian military (and not only among them) that the Black Sea Fleet will never leave Sevastopol. And for that, all measures are appropriate, including the historical return of Crimea to Russia”.[4]

In an interview with the UNIAN agency, Alexander Khramchikhin, the head of the analytical department of the Institute for Political and Military Analysis (RF), said that he did not exclude that the August events in Caucasus could be repeated in Crimea”. Unfortunately, it can’t be totally excluded. The pretext may be the same as in South Ossetia: the protection of the rights of own citizens, which received previously Russian passports”, - Khramchikhin said. In his opinion, escalation may occur in a few years. “On the one hand, it is logical that this may occur closer to 2017, and on the other hand, it is rather foolish to predict for such a long term. The situation is changing fast”, - the expert said.[5]

Even the opposition to the Kremlin in the person of Valeriya Novodvorska in September stated that “The next meal in the menu after Transnistria had to become Crimea”. “I know that in many military offices there are maps with a green line, according to which Crimea, Eastern Ukraine, North-East Kazakhstan, and Transnistria go to Russia”. [6] To tell the truth, Valeriya Novodvorska does not believe in the success of this enterprise, but now it’s not about it ...

In addition to Russian and Ukrainian politicians and experts, opinions were also announced in European countries that the next object of Russian

aggression would be Ukraine, and it was said of at least the annexation of Crimea.

“The Poles have become firmly established in the opinion that Russia will not abandon its aggressive position,” political scientist Pavlo Sveboda said in a conversation with the correspondent of the publication “Podrobnosti” (Details) - Russia has not really transformed either politically or economically. And it is not ready to condemn its past. Instead, it continues to be wholly devoted to its own history. Russians - this is a very proud nation, which in the 90-ies felt itself outfooted. Therefore, one can assume that Georgia is not the last chapter of a new Russian geopolitics, Ukraine may appear next in the line”.[7]

On August 24, The Sunday Times published the article “Ukraine fears being next on Russia’s hit list”. [8] The tone of the publications of British observers - “We warned you!” American newspapers complain more about the government - the time of flirtation with Putin has ended. All of them agree on one thing: the next goal of Russia will be Ukraine.[9]

Headlines of several other newspapers: Frankfurter Rundschau, Germany - “It will not end with Georgia”. Tygodnik powszechny, Poland - “What prevents Russia from absorbing other parts of the former USSR?” The Independent warns: The Crimean Peninsula may become the new South Ossetia.

Polish President Lech Kaczynski, in an interview with the Polish channel TVP, commented on the situation as follows: “Today - Georgia, tomorrow - Ukraine. The face of the Russian Empire appears every time more and more, and every time it’s more dangerous. The sooner we realize this, the better”.

French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner states that he does not exclude repetition of the Georgian scenario in Crimea.[10]

According to former Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke, “the goal of Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin is to overthrow the Saakashvili government. And then Ukraine may appear under the political sight of the Kremlin”. [11]

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The Czech government does not exclude that Crimea may become the next target of Russia's great-power policy, as it's said on Deutsche Welle. Tomas Poyar, the Deputy Foreign Minister of the Czech Republic, said in view of the invasion of Russian troops on the territory of Georgia that it would not be surprised if in the future such events would take place, for example, in Crimea: “The situation there is not very stable, and it is not difficult to provoke instability in this region at all”. [12]

The tone of the above statements is quite alarming. How to treat them? Maybe it's paranoid, maybe just a hysterical or unreasonable panic mood? Here is an opinion on this topic from the experts of the Ukrainian Center for Army, Conversion and Disarmament Studies (CACDS):

“It can be argued that after the Russo-Georgian conflict, the military-political situation in the post-Soviet space, from 2008 onwards, in the medium term, will be characterized by instability, unpredictability and a certain possibility for unleashing hostilities not only in the Transcaucasian region.

The possibility of use of force by the Russian side, which was directly demonstrated in the Russo-Georgian conflict, should be timely taken into account in the approaches of the Ukrainian political and military leadership.

The armed Russo-Georgian conflict recorded an actual end of the impact of international agreements. About Ukraine, the guarantees, given to it after nuclear disarmament, do not work”. [13]

Ukrainian-Russian relations have recently become threatening. Unfortunately, the cruel word “war” is heard more and more often on both sides - veiled or openly. The theme of the “war with Ukraine” has long become popular in the Russian mass media. The impression is that Russians are purposefully preparing for a war with Ukraine. On the Internet, a lot of scenarios of “return” of Ukraine to the “fraternal family” appeared. Some of them do not exclude even the possibility of nuclear weapon use: **“A demonstrative nuclear air strike in the stratosphere in the southern part of the Pripyat wetlands, carried out at**

night, would be extremely helpful in this case.

It would not cause significant damage, if you do not take into account the disablement of power lines and electrical appliances within a radius of 100 km. But it would be seen in Lviv, which hates the “Muscovites”, and even in Poland. It would immediately cool hot heads, clearly demonstrating Kremlin's extraordinary decisiveness”. [14]

But we will not seriously discuss the “fruits of the inflamed imaginations”. And we will not consider the possibility of a large-scale war between Russia and Ukraine. The most popular scenarios for today are the “return” (capture, annexation) of Crimea to Russia according to South Ossetia or Kosovo scenario.

To begin, let's get acquainted with some of the most discussed virtual versions (or plans) of the “capture” of Crimea.

The first version.

“Russia annexes Sevastopol and occupy the island of Tuzla, thus ensuring control over the Kerch Strait, through which Russian troops from the Kuban will invade to the territory of Ukraine. Landing troops will be moved from Novorossiysk to the Crimea; their landing on the shore is supported by the fleet, based in Sevastopol. It will not be difficult to occupy the city, because pro-Russian sentiments prevail there.

The coast in the places of the attack of the Russian landing troops is blocked by Ukrainian troops - the Kerch Mechanized Brigade and the Simferopol Artillery Brigade. Airborne assault brigades are flown to the Crimea from Dnipropetrovsk and Mykolaiv, sea and land special forces are moved from Kirovograd and Ochakiv. Resistance units are formed out of Crimean Tatars on the peninsula.

The result of the conflict: Ukraine is defeated and asks the West for help. “Scenarists” stop on this point. But we will add: in the west and east of Ukraine, volunteer units are formed which support the opposing warring parties and Ukraine is on the verge of a civil war”. [15]

The second version.

On April 21, the ‘masterpiece’ of Igor Jadan named “The ‘Mechanical orange’ operation”

was published in the online edition of “Russian Magazine”, which is associated with the name of the famous pro-Kremlin political scientist, Gleb Pavlovsky. An excerpt from this article about the possibility of using a nuclear strike on Ukraine was given above. In turn, it was written the following about the attack on the Crimea:

“In the most limited version, the Russian Armed Forces can occupy only the Crimean Peninsula. Such a scenario is likely if the Ukrainian leadership continues to violate the articles of the Grand Treaty concerning deployment of the Black Sea Fleet. In this case, having declared the need to strengthen protection of objects, Russia conducts a forcible entry operation by the Marine Corps to seize key elements of the Crimea’s infrastructure: airdromes, ports, and road junctions. Ukrainian military units in the Crimea are not subject to a direct attack, unless they resist. Due to hesitation of the Kyiv leadership, serious resistance in this scenario is excluded. The only land force, the resistance of which is expected, is the elite Ukrainian separate battalion of the Marine Corps of Coastal Defense Forces of Ukraine, deployed in Feodosia. These are, however, the only forces of the Marine Corps of this state. Some shootings are also possible at sea as well as rare shootings on Russian military aircraft.

Kyiv will also not move troops for “liberation” of the peninsula, denuding other fronts. After all, in the Crimea, the Kyivan authorities have never enjoyed even the slightest support and were always held by the only administrative force. The Crimea for Ukraine is rather a “headache” from which the “Oranges” would hurry to get rid of if only they could do it without losing their faces and simultaneously consolidating their control over the rest of Ukraine. In this case, the conflict from a power stage will quickly move to a stage of political struggle in international institutions.

In the future, it will be absolutely predictable positive reaction of the Russian majority of the Crimean autonomy, as well as the rapid reorientation of local elites, to which the “orange” power of Kyiv will not be able to counteract. If Russia does not withdraw its troops for any political reasons, the

referendum on the independence of the Crimean republic, and further, probably several years later, the formation of a union of Crimea with Russia or even the entry into Russia, is quite possible, if at that time, Moscow will decide such step justified from the point of view of political logic”[16].

First of all, we should note that both scenarios predict not a full-scale war, but a quick local blitzkrieg (as in Georgia). Let’s try to figure out the likelihood of these scenarios.

- **“Annexation of Sevastopol”**. As it is known, annexation (Latin annexio, from annexus - attached) - is forcible inclusion (seizure) of all or part of the territory of another state or nation. [17] The authors of this scenario have forgotten that today Sevastopol is the base of two Fleets - the Navy of Ukraine and the Black Sea Fleet of Russia. Therefore, the forced joining (seizure) of Sevastopol with the same speed as the Island of Tuzla (with one frontier post) is impossible in principle. It is impossible due to the large area of the territory - 1079 km², due to the presence of forces and units of the Navy and Armed Forces of Ukraine in the city. In other words, we can assume that the operation for Sevastopol seizure can indeed be planned in the RF General Staff and implemented, but this operation will not be as fast as the “authors” of the scenarios plan, and, most importantly, the hostilities in the city will lead to numerous casualties among the civilians due to its high density (*the city occupies the second place in Ukraine in density of population - 441.4 people per square km - and in share of the urban population - 94.2% - in the total population, yielding in these indicators to Kyiv* [18]) and integrated military infrastructure into city infrastructure of Sevastopol (*military facilities of fleets are close to living buildings and civilian objects*).

“It will not be difficult to occupy the city, because pro-Russian sentiments prevail there. “Proceeding from the above, one has to doubt the pro-Russian sentiments of people, whose hometown will be destroyed by the force of Russian weapons. In general, the “pro-something” sentiments are changed greatly in the sounds of bursting shells and whistling bullets. And in Sevastopol not

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pro-Russian, but pro-Soviet, sentiments prevail. But this is not the same, and this aspect will be discussed a bit later.

“The capture of the island of Tuzla to control the Kerch Strait, “through which Russian troops will invade from the Kuban into the territory of Ukraine”. The width of the Kerch Strait - from 4.5 to 15 km. The target range of shooting of 122 mm howitzers D-30 is 15400 m (we recall that the Coast Guard troops of the Armed Forces of Ukraine have also more long-range systems). So, the capture of the island will not give control over the Strait. It is possible to control the Strait by capturing Kerch. In general, the “occupation” of the island of Tuzla is a gamble from the military point of view, if not to say - stupidity. With a width of up to 500 m and a length of about 6 km, the island is separated by a strait with a depth of 1.3 meters, and the distance to both banks of the Kerch Strait is approximately 4 kilometers. The capturing this bridgehead will not bring any strategic and tactical benefits. And the troops, which occupy it, will be practically under the direct fire of coastal artillery.

“Landing troops are moved from Novorossiysk to Crimea; their landing on the shore is supported by the fleet, based in Sevastopol”... “Russia conducts a landing operation by the Marines to capture key elements of the Crimea’s infrastructure: airdromes, ports, road junctions”. Marine Corps units of the Black Sea Fleet are stationed in Sevastopol. Another battalion of the Marine Corps is based in Temryuk (Krasnodar Territory, Russia), whose landing in Crimea will not fundamentally affect the situation.

Today, the Black Sea Fleet has 7 large landing ships (VDKs), one of which is on conservation. These are three VDKs of 1171 project (“Saratov” - № 150, “Orsk” - №148, “Nikolay Filchenkov” - №152) with each landing capacity up to 20 medium tanks or reinforced company (up to 400 marines), and four VDKs of 775 project (“Caesar Kunikov” - №158, “Azov” - №151, “Yamal” - №156, “Novocherkassk” - №142 (on conservation)) with each landing capacity up to 150 marines and 10 tanks, [19] or speaking in another language, the total maximum landing capacity of the Black Sea Fleet’s VDK is 2,100 marines. We should recall

that the total number of Russian Marines in the Black Sea is 2900. [20] In addition, the 7th Guards Airborne Assault (Mountain) Division is deployed in Novorossiysk, whose personnel has experience of loading and unloading on landing ships (*on December 5, 2008, a tactical-special training session was conducted with the personnel of the division on the load on “Azov” VDK - after the march, the load of 20 combat vehicles* [21]) and the 10th brigade of special forces (Molkino, near Krasnodar) was executed. The division has about 5,000 people [22], and the special forces brigade - 3.5 thousand [23]. It turns out that the sea transport can redeploy no more than 2000 paratroopers of the Division with combat vehicles. In the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, there are not so many air transport planes, to take only one Division into the air, even without heavy vehicles and reinforcing weapons [24]. If part of the Division with combat equipment is moved by the sea, then the remaining personnel, with weapon and armament, can be moved using air transport. We can even assume the use of helicopters of the 487th separate helicopter regiment (SHR) and 55th SHR from the North Caucasian Military District for landing airborne troops in the area of Feodosia (*the Mi-8 helicopter with paratroopers will not fly for a longer distance - the radius of flight is 240 km*). But there are only 11 helicopters of 487th SHR and 15 helicopters of 55th SHR, that is, 520 paratroopers. Together, the total number of Russian group, which, according to scenarios, can be thrown into Crimea to capture it, may include 2,900 marines, 5,500-6,000 paratroopers with equipment. In total, about 8,500 people and 508 armored combat vehicles (ACV), 91 artillery systems of caliber 100 millimeters and above (*132 ACVs and 24 artillery systems from Marine Corps of the Black Sea Fleet, and 376 ACVs and 67 artillery systems from the 7th Guards Airborne Assault (Mountain) Division*). It should be recalled that in the Russian-Georgian conflict, according to official figures, about 15 thousand Russian militaries were involved [25]. Given the fact that South Ossetia had its own armed formations, the total number of the military group was as follows: 25-30 thousand militaries, 150-200 tanks, 650-700 ACVs, 250-300 artillery systems [26]. The above figures clearly show that Russia has not enough

forces to create a numerical and fire superiority for the blitzkrieg in Crimea.

But we have forgotten about Ukrainian Armed Forces' resistance. No matter what poor the modern Ukrainian AF would be, it can carry out mine planting on landing-dangerous areas of the coast, counteraction with the fire of coastal artillery and with the fire of air defense. Even if the losses from this fire and mines are not fatal (which is not a fact), then the inevitable losses of ships and aircraft will not allow the rapid expansion of the group of Russian troops in Crimea. Here's an opinion on this issue of the Russian side: "Georgia had no effective air defense system. It was a military screwup of Georgia, which, in fact, secured our victory in this war"[27]. For particular doubters, we will remind that the military-political leadership of Ukraine speaks of relocation, first of all, of air defense units to the Crimea [28]. "The Marine Corps will be increased by one and a half thousand people, and we preliminary consider the Kamshova Bay, the village of Kacha and Balaklava for deployment of three air defense units. This will allow to control the entire airspace to Simferopol and repel the sea landing operation", - told a representative of the headquarters of the Ukrainian Navy to RIA Novosti. [29]

In any case, during such a large-scale landing operation, Russian troops will need to destroy air defense and artillery with rocket-bomb and artillery (ship) strikes, which is no longer a quick victorious "peacekeeping operation", but a full-scale military conflict with huge losses for the parties and among the civilian population.

"Serious resistance in this scenario is excluded. The only land force, the resistance of which is expected, is the elite Ukrainian separate battalion of the Marine Corps of Coastal Defense Forces of Ukraine, deployed in Feodosia"... "Some shootings are also possible at sea as well as rare shootings on Russian military aircraft". On what grounds did the authors draw conclusions about the reluctance of the Ukrainian militaries to defend their Motherland - it is completely unclear. Most likely, this is a propaganda for raising the fighting spirit of the Russian militaries. It strongly

resembles another imperial slogan: "We will fight with little blood, a powerful blow, in a foreign territory!" We all remember what these slogans resulted in...

"Kyiv will not move troops for "liberation" of the peninsula, denuding other fronts". It is unclear based on what documents or statements of the military-political leadership of Ukraine such a conclusion was made. Just in this scenario, it will be possible to easily move units from the western and south-western directions to strengthen the grouping in Crimea. Moreover, "if you look closely, it turns out that the main forces of the Ukrainian Armed Forces are deployed in the central and western parts of the country. Only a quarter of their total number is deployed in the East and South. Consequently, the areas of operational deployment of Ukrainian troops are also arranged accordingly. And it's not worth to think that such deployment is accidental. Such stationing allows to meet possible aggression from the East with minimal losses, to carry out the force projection of the Armed Forces in more or less favorable conditions and to meet the enemy at quite favorable frontiers (just look at Dnipro river strategic position)".[30]

Thus, the South Ossetian scenario of a "five-day peacekeeping operation" in Crimea (especially, described above scenarios) is unlikely.

In addition to purely military issues, inter-ethnic issues are discussed in the scenarios of the "return" of Crimea to Russia, the theme of the "pro-Russian fifth column" is also discussed. According to the authors, these factors will not be decisive for the complete and unconditional "annexation" of Crimea by Russia.

A few words about pro-Russian sentiments in Crimea.

According to the results of 2001 All-Ukrainian Population Census, 2 024 000 people live in the Crimea, including: 1,180,400 Russians (58,5%), 492,200 Ukrainians (24,4%), and 243,400 Crimean Tatars (12,1%) [31]. According to the Crimean sociologist Mykola Kuzmin, each year the population is reduced by 30 thousand people. Mainly because of the excess of deaths over births.

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Now, there are 1 million Russians, 600 thousand Ukrainians, and about 300 thousand Crimean Tatars in Crimea. [32]

It would seem, at first glance, the statements about the pro-Russian peninsula are absolutely correct. However, Russian in nationality and pro-Russian are not the same thing.

To begin with, you need to understand whom Russian experts consider to be the Russian, the ethnic Russian and the Russian citizens. Owners of passports of the former USSR? Anyone who considers himself a Russian? In today's Russian Federation, no state documents have been adopted yet on the issue of who should be considered the Russian.

Today, the national affiliation of Russians and Ukrainians in Crimea is largely determined not by ethnicity but by self-identification as a citizen of Ukraine. The real difference between Russians and Ukrainians on the peninsula is very relative. Those who considered themselves Russians, but not Soviet (except for the Black Sea Fleet staff and members of their families), have long moved to Russia. As an example, the results of the survey of Sevastopol residents conducted in October 2007 by the Youth Political Movement “We”: 80% of respondents have negative attitude to the current status of Sevastopol as part of Ukraine, but only 16% agree to get rid of Ukrainian citizenship in the event of obtaining Russian citizenship. [33]

In addition, there is a problem that Nikolai Kuzmin describes as follows: “Crimean society is a conglomerate of discriminated people. Crimean Tatars feel themselves like that. For the pro-Russian Russians, the presence of Crimea in Ukraine looks unfair. Ukrainians? They are practically not visible. But if a Ukrainian decides to give the child to the Ukrainian school, then he will have to go to the other end of the city. Russians in turn say that there are no Russian schools in Crimea, because the existing ones do not work according to the programs of the Russian Federation. Many do not want to deal with Ukrainian language at all. At the same time, in the mental type of the Crimean, regardless of ethnicity, two incompatible arrangements are coexisting: we are the best and

we are insulted. It turns out that the three largest ethnic groups have a complex of inferiority. They have no positive identity program”. [34]

Indeed, the Russians live with a psychological trauma from the loss of “great homeland”, which is reinforced by a constant artificial simulation to protect own culture, language, and simply by discomfort from the idea that you are a minority representative in Ukraine.

Ukrainians in the Crimea also feel themselves a minority. This is also facilitated by the real monopoly of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC) of Moscow Patriarchate on the peninsula, in comparison with the UOC of the Kyiv Patriarchate. This is accompanied by moral responsibility for everything that Kyiv does or does not do in Crimea.

In addition to the two above-mentioned “discriminated” nations, Crimean Tatars live in Crimea. This nation, for half a century, has experienced the tragedy of deportation and difficulties of return; having returned to its homeland, the nation has to prove that it has the right to teach children in their native language, to pray in mosques, to receive land, to build houses. The Greeks, Germans, Bulgarians, Armenians, who also went through deportation, have the same moral injuries and social discomfort, as well as the newly-formed insult - the state sees and hears only Crimean Tatars... [35]

We can talk about Crimea as about a fragment of the Soviet society. But pro-Soviet nostalgic sentiments are not pro-Russian ones at all. It is worth to look closely at demonstrations and rallies of pro-Russian organizations in Crimea. The main participants are retirees, dressed in Soviet military uniform, and old people. It is possible to play at pro-Soviet sentiments during elections, but it's at least not serious to rely on their active armed support during a conflict, as it is depicted in the scenarios of the seizure of Crimea.

Speaking about the pro-Russian sentiments on the peninsula, it's necessary to mention the problem of dual citizenship and Russian “passportization”.

Moreover, the officially voiced reason for Russia's invasion of Georgia was alleged violation of the

rights of Russian citizens living there, that is, Abkhazians and Ossetians, many of whom had been given Russian passports before.

The issuance of Russian passports to Ossetians began yet in 2002, after the adoption in the Russian Federation of the new law on citizenship. It provided for the right to the former citizens of the USSR, who remained stateless, to exchange a Soviet passport for a Russian one. The desire to help residents of South Ossetia to obtain education and work in Russia was called then as the main reason for the mass distribution of passports. But, officials from the very beginning acknowledged that passportization would help, if anything, to prevent Georgia from imposing its orders in South Ossetia.

According to a number of experts, a similar situation is formed in Crimea. There are many people with two passports here, as well as Russian officers who retired here, but did not return to their homeland, and stayed here with the Russian passport and anti-Ukrainian sentiments.

The ex-chief of Ukrainian Navy, Vice-Admiral Volodymyr Bezkorovayny, says about this: “The Russian-speaking population of Crimea is gradually becoming citizens of Russia. Proceeding from this, one can draw a parallel between South Ossetia, Abkhazia and Crimea. Over the past 5-6 years, officers and midshipmen of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation, who retired from military service, stay in Ukraine. They have passports of citizens of Ukraine, and at the same time they are citizens of Russia. About 2,000 officers and midshipmen receive Ukrainian pensions in Sevastopol. This is just what we can control”.[36]

Former minister for foreign affairs of Ukraine Volodymyr Ohryzko in an interview with the German newspaper “Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung” confirmed that Russia issues Russian passports to Ukrainian citizens in Crimea. According to him, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine did not receive an answer on the request to the Russian side to report the number of passports issued.[37]

On the other hand, according to official figures, 23 thousand of Crimeans participated in the last elections in Russia. Today, there are 29 thousand people at the consular register at the Consulate General of Russia in Simferopol [38]. According to unofficial data, there are about 60 thousand people in Crimea who have both Russian and Ukrainian passports [39]. Given that the personnel of the Black Sea Fleet is 11.5 thousand servicemen [40], plus members of their families, it turns out that there are no more than 40 thousand Russian citizens in Crimea. If we take into account that the average age of these citizens is a pension one, then there is no need to talk about serious support for capturing cities and providing support to “peacekeeping troops”.

The next factor, which, according to experts, will significantly affect the “return” of Crimea to Russia, is pro-Russian organizations that are active politically.

Russia’s recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia would have been impossible without establishing by the authorities of both unrecognized republics long and lasting relations with Moscow. The pro-Russian course of Tskhinvali and Sukhumi was not denied by any political force. Moreover, in both republics, there were stable vertical systems of governance, which de facto were long integrated into the all-Russian vertical. A striking example of these integration relations: in the magazine “Vlast” of August 25, 2008, information is provided with reference to an unnamed Minister of North Ossetia that the budget of North Ossetia annually receives 2.5 billion rubles from the Russian federal treasury for “international activity”, which were immediately transferred to the Government of South Ossetia. At the same time, no transparent reporting on spending of these funds was presented. This information was confirmed by former South Ossetian Prime Minister Oleg Teziev. Thus, it is safe to say that the political elites of the two unrecognized Caucasian republics have long been united in their pro-Russian aspirations.

In turn, the Crimean pro-Russian forces cannot dream of such unity. With all the diversity of pro-Russian politicians in Crimea, there is nobody

among them who Moscow could bet on - the pretenders for the role of the Crimean Kokoity⁵ are too busy with an internal struggle. They are also called “professional Russians,” for example, Oleg Rodovilov, a deputy of the Verkhovna Rada (Supreme Council) of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea who fights for the rights of Russian schools, or the head of the Russian community of Sevastopol, Raisa Telyatnikova, who advocates for the return of the city of “Russian glory” to administrative subordination of historical homeland. Even the head of the Crimean Russian community Sergey Tsekov, who holds the post of the first vice-speaker of the Crimean Verkhovna Rada, stated the following: “In Crimea, there are no serious pro-Russian organizations except Russian community. Many call themselves pro-Russians, but most of them have no any material base, no bank accounts, no regional offices. We have all this, and more than 15 thousand members[41]”.

However, it could hardly be considered a significant achievement the figure of 15 thousand supporters. Especially, if you take into account that the Russians are about 60% of more than two million people of the peninsula. Therefore, leaders of pro-Russian organizations usually prefer to focus not on the number of comrades, but on the quality of their work. For example, “Russian Front of Sergei Shuvaynikov”, according to Shuvaynikov, has only about 5 thousand members throughout Crimea, which does not interfere with his active political activity.

Real activity is shown only by the Cossacks, they have today over 50 various organizations. Now the number of Cossacks in Crimea, according to the Cossacks’ own information, is about 5 thousand people. However, there is also no unity in the Cossack environment (as, indeed, in the Cossack communities in Russia). To put it mildly, they do not want to work collectively and cannot work. Therefore, five thousand Cossacks - this is not an integrated paramilitary organization under a single command, but several often hostile to each other formations, sometimes criminal ones.

The beginning of the conflict in Ossetia and Abkhazia was largely determined by the willingness of local residents of these entities to fight against the Georgians. Are Crimeans ready to take arms in order to defend their pro-Russian views? The answer is negative looking at the examples above.

The next factor, called by experts, is escalation of ethnic conflicts on the territory of the peninsula.

In the opinion of the “Vlast” magazine, it was hatred that was the most reliable guarantee that Abkhazia and South Ossetia would never rejoin the country they have considered an aggressor for decades.

In Crimea, there was no bloodshed, and if anyone feels hatred, these are Crimean Tatars deported from the peninsula in 1944 on Stalin’s order. And Crimean Tatars are considered to be the potential provocative of Crimean separatism.

Against the background of constant scandals among the leaders of pro-Russian organizations, Crimean Tatars, which make up about 10-12% of the Crimean population, show an amazing unanimity. Back in 1991, at the Kurultai of Crimean Tatar people, they created their own parliament, the Mejlis, which was elected by the majority system. 33 members of Mejlis called their primary tasks the elimination of the consequences of the genocide of Crimean Tatars committed by Stalin, restoration of the national and political rights of Crimean Tatar people, including the right to practice Islam.

The Crimean Tatar Mejlis has no close relations with pro-Russian organizations, and Crimean Tatars have a cautious attitude towards Russia itself. Although the first deputy head of the Mejlis, Refat Chubarov, the second most influential man among Crimean Tatars, says that his people least of all would like quarrels between Moscow and Kyiv: “We are so small that any conflict will strike first of all on us. When Russia makes some moves that increase fear, such as the war in the Caucasus, we are alarmed. We have very bad relations with the Russian community. They say that Stalin did the right thing to deport the Tatars from here, because otherwise, they say, there would be a massacre in

⁵ Translator’s note: Eduard Kokoity is the former President of South Ossetia in 2001 – 2011

the Crimea between the Tatars and the Russians. It is impossible to imagine that Crimean Tatars will once ask Russia for patronage”.[42]

Undoubtedly, the root of the problems of Crimean Tatar people and accordingly the solution of the issue lies first of all in the socio-economic, but not in the ethno-political sphere. That is why Crimean Tatars in Crimea are more interested in economic issues. In recent years, they massively gather only on May 18 - at mourning rallies devoted to deportation.

Unfortunately, we can talk about targeted anti-Tatar and Islamophobic information campaigns. Russian-language Crimean publications publish in large numbers materials that can be called not just incorrect or defamatory, but also as those that directly provoke interethnic hostility.

But the problems of Crimea are formed not only there. When you go to the southern coast of Crimea, you see that the whole coast is already built up. An essential part in these buildings is Russian one. In addition to strategic, Russia has economic interests on the peninsula. Most of the tourist attractions belong to Russian investors, which gives one more, purely commercial, motive for “annexation”. In addition, it seems that the hysteria about the “Tatar” self-grabbing in Crimea is blown up by the same side. For example, according to the republican prosecutor’s office data, published in the newspaper “Voice of Crimea”, dated November 16, 2007, there are totally five thousand cases of illegal use of land in Crimea, of which only about five hundred are “Tatar” self-capture.

Is it possible to imagine Crimea a potential hot spot or a rebellious Ukrainian province? In times of real disorder on the peninsula, 270 thousand deportees returned. And what? Were there massive clashes? No! Except for a few private incidents. So, does this mean propensity towards conflict or, conversely, tolerance? [43] In the winter of 2008, one year after the events in Ai-Petri during the first session of the fifth Kurultai (higher representative

body) of Crimean Tatar people, the proposal for “mobilization” was not supported by a majority of delegates. Kurultai confirmed the allegiance to the principle of a non-violent struggle for own rights - a fundamental principle for Crimean Tatar national movement since the Soviet era [44]. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that the Crimean community is quite viable and far from conflicting. It will not be broken by interethnic contradictions.

In conclusion, as an opinion on the possible variants of the “annexation” of Crimea, one should point out the opinion of the CACDS: “Although forced scenarios are unlikely, as there are many other ways of influencing Ukraine, they are not completely excluded. The purpose of such actions is to disbalance the Ukrainian state power, to maintain control over the base of the Black Sea Fleet of Russia in Sevastopol and after 2017, to substantiate the territorial claims to Ukraine and to prevent its accession to NATO in the face of general instability.

To achieve these goals, Russia does not need a large military conflict with Ukraine, but it is enough to destabilize the situation in the only Crimean region. This requires only “targeted” operations, prepared and carried out by the forces of special services of the Russian Federation and separate units of the Black Sea Fleet - with the maximum use of the already formed in Crimea potential of the pro-Russian sentiments of a number of civic organizations and part of the local population.

At the first stage, we can talk about actions aimed at escalation relations between the Black Sea Fleet troops and representatives of Ukrainian authorities on the ground. In this case, the pretext for the primary conflict can serve, for example, a provocatively planned attack on the troops of the Black Sea Fleet. As a result, allegedly pro-Russian population is rising in defense of Russian militaries, collisions with law-enforcement agencies of Ukraine arise”.[45]

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Review of Foreign Sources on the Black Sea Region

“How Russian Rule Has Changed Crimea”

By Ilan Berman, Foreign Affairs, July 13, 2017

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/eastern-europe-caucasus/2017-07-13/how-russian-rule-has-changed-crimea>

Since Russia annexed Crimea in March 2014, the Ukrainian peninsula has become something akin to a “black box,” with little verifiable data on conditions available to counterbalance the official Russian narrative that all is well in the Kremlin’s newest territorial holding. Now, however, a new study has provided perhaps the most detailed look to date on the true state of political and economic play on the peninsula. Published by the Ukrainian Institute for the Future, a new but well-connected think tank based in Kiev, the report—entitled “Crimea: Three Years of Occupation”—draws on data from local sources and the analysis of seasoned specialists to paint a damning picture of the human and economic costs of Russian rule, and to make a compelling case that the Kremlin’s Crimean project is a threat to Crimeans themselves, as well as to everyone else.

Russia’s control of Crimea, the report notes, represents a massive social engineering initiative. Under Moscow’s administration, Crimea has seen the imposition of a raft of draconian new laws governing everything from military conscription to alcohol consumption, a surge in human rights abuses, and the “systemic persecution” of the region’s indigenous Crimean Tatar population (whose governing body, the Mejlis, has been formally banned as a “terrorist organization.”) The goal of this effort is twofold: to subjugate the region’s native population and to tether it more closely to Moscow.

The results are striking. To date, some 10 percent of Crimea’s total population (over two million in 2014) has fled. These people have been replaced through an influx of Russians—mostly civil servants, military personnel, or retirees—who

have been given significant economic perks by the Russian government for resettling there. And this population shift is still a work in progress. As the study notes, Russia’s official plans for the area envisions an increase in the Crimean population by another one million Russians in the next five years.

Economic conditions on the peninsula, meanwhile, have deteriorated markedly under Russian rule. Agriculture, once the mainstay of the local economy, has collapsed, with production of staples such as rice, soy, and corn now “almost fully destroyed,” and a surge in the once largely self-sufficient region’s need to import commodities like milk, meat, and eggs. (In just one example, Crimean meat production fell by an estimated 84 percent over the course of 2016.) The region’s banking sector, meanwhile, has cratered, ravaged by Western sanctions and an exodus of Ukrainian financial institutions that has led to an increasingly cash-intensive economy. Crimea’s annexation in 2014 was followed by an infusion of Kremlin funding intended to bring conditions in the territory (such as infrastructure and pensions) up to par with those of Russia’s other regions. According to Ukraine’s Razumkov Centre, Russia now foots the bill for approximately three-quarters of Crimea’s budgetary expenditures—accounting for a whopping \$1.4 billion in 2016. (By contrast, the Kremlin has progressively tightened its fiscal belt in relation to Russia’s other federal subjects—resulting in increasingly dire economic conditions in those places.) All this has come at a high cost; Moscow has been forced to cancel a string of high-profile projects in other regions in order to pay for its Crimean adventure. None of this appears to have prompted Russian officials to rethink their policies, however.

For the Kremlin, control of Crimea is also a distinctly military project. The Crimean city of Sevastopol has long served as the home port for Russia’s Black Sea Fleet (via a long-term

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lease from the Ukrainian government), and the region is vital to Russia's ability to project naval might. Moscow's annexation of the territory has been followed by a major, systematic expansion of Russia's military presence there—and, by extension, in the Black Sea region.

Since the annexation, Russia has reinforced its existing fleet of ships in the Black Sea with the deployment of at least six new vessels, as well as new land-based missile battalions. At the same time, it has doubled the number of naval personnel it has stationed in Sevastopol (from 12,500 in 2014 to over 25,000 today). In other words, **“the annexation of Crimea allowed [Russian President Vladimir] Putin not only to ‘save’ its Black Sea Navy, but to transform it into a threat... for the whole region.”**

Russia has attempted to portray its annexation of the peninsula in historic terms, as a reclamation of lost lands and a culmination of its destiny. The data, however, suggest that Crimea has become a tremendous economic millstone for the Kremlin—one that the Russia, still languishing under the weight of multilateral sanctions and low world oil prices, can ill afford.

For the former Soviet republics, meanwhile, Crimea's situation should serve as a cautionary tale. The Russian government has consistently pushed an expansionist narrative throughout the territory of the former Soviet Union, seeking to entice ethnic “compatriots” (a term it uses very loosely) in countries such as Kazakhstan and Moldova to rejoin the Russian Federation. **Crimea shows what it looks like to be part of the new Russia—and provides yet another reminder of why, having fought so hard to gain their independence from Moscow a quarter century ago, those nations should want nothing of the sort.**

* * *

“How Trump Can Get Putin's Attention”

By Stephen Blank, Atlantic Council, August 29, 2017

<http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/how-trump-can-get-putin-s-attention>

Two days after Russia told US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson it was willing to talk about Ukraine, **Moscow unilaterally and illegally closed the Kerch Strait**, ostensibly for technical reasons. So much for a willingness to talk. **Russia is not only threatening Ukraine again, it also is displaying contempt for President Donald Trump personally. Moscow's targeting of Ukraine and its economy are obvious. The Kerch Strait connects the Black Sea to the Sea of Azov. Its closure cuts off the two strategically important Ukrainian port cities of Mariupol and Berdiansk, along the northern shore of the Azov Sea, which are major export centers to the West for Ukrainian steel, from the Black Sea. Moscow is signaling that it can strike at Ukraine's society, politics, and economy whenever it likes.**

Closing the strait is also a strike at Washington; if Moscow wanted to talk seriously about Ukraine with Trump, this action would not have occurred. Prime Minister Dmitri Medvedev's recent comment that Trump cuts a humiliatingly weak figure at home shows Moscow's utter contempt for Trump, Tillerson, and the administration in general. However, if Moscow thinks it can act with impunity against Kyiv and/or Washington, it is profoundly deluded. The enormous costs of the sanctions that have been imposed since 2014 already show the steady impoverishment of Russia and have forced noticeable cutbacks even in defense spending as well as vital domestic investments. Putin may pretend that he can carry on as before, but his aggression has brought about a situation where he can only threaten Ukraine by such indirect means as these kinds of closures, economic warfare, cyber-strikes, and terrorism.

Although Russia has augmented its military capabilities around Ukraine and is attempting to do even more, it probably has reached the economic and strategic limits of its capabilities to invade Ukraine. While the Russian army totals about 350,000 men, only about one third are available for combat operations. Military escalation is becoming progressively more difficult to carry out. If Russia openly invaded Ukraine, it would arouse Europe, strengthen its cohesion by an order of magnitude,

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could even lead to NATO support for transferring defensive weapons to Ukraine and a larger and faster defense buildup. Therefore, it has to resort to such displays of rhetorical and simulated acts of bravado to sustain the untenable illusion of great power equality with the United States.

Trump should understand what Putin is up to. The psychological warfare of showing bravado and contempt is one that Trump employs, but it is not one he or we should tolerate. Indeed, whatever else we have done, the West is successfully imposing major costs upon Russia through the newest round of sanctions plus the extension of older ones. The limits to Russia's capacity for military escalation are becoming clearer. **The situation calls for continuing and extending those costs, while leaving the door open for serious negotiation when Moscow is truly ready.**

In practice this means that Washington should send US Navy warships into the Sea of Azov through the Kerch Strait to demonstrate our commitment to Ukraine's sovereignty and integrity and the freedom of navigation on the seas, which has been a cornerstone of US foreign policy since 1789. (This is similar to what the United States is doing in the South China Sea.) And NATO should do the same thing. Another way to impose costs on Russia is to give Ukraine the defensive weapons it needs and has requested to fight aggression. Not only is this in keeping with US policy since 1947, it also shows Putin and his cronies that he cannot redraw borders or disrespect the United States without paying the price. By doing so, we take a leaf out of Moscow's and Beijing's old strategy of simultaneously talking and fighting. **Failure to respond to these deliberate provocations only invites more aggression. Indeed, it is the failure to send Ukraine the help it needs that encourages unceasing Russian acts of aggression. The more this war comes home to Putin, the sooner it will become more difficult for him to sustain. And that, after all, has been the US objective from the start.**

"A Stone's Throw away from Disaster: Review of the Nuclear Crises Since 1945"

Bruno Tertrais, Foundation for Strategic Studies (Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique), France, June 13, 2017

<https://www.frstrategie.org/web/documents/publications/recherches-et-documents/2017/201704.pdf>

[...] Ukrainian crisis

During the Ukrainian crisis, Russia sent several nuclear messages to the world. First, Moscow sent a signal to the international community that Crimea became exclusively Russian territory after the annexation, and hence nuclear weapons could be moved here, as in any other region of the Russian Federation. In addition, Crimea is perceived as a sphere of critical interests of Russia. A year after the Crimean operation, Putin said that, if necessary, he was ready to raise nuclear forces in a state of combat readiness: *"We were ready to do this [...] Historically, this territory is ours. Here, Russians live and they were in danger ... "* Moscow implicitly hinted Washington that any attempt to repel Crimea by force would be perceived as an attack on Russia's territory *"and will be repulsed, including by the use of the nuclear forces. In this scenario, the United States must understand that their own territory is in jeopardy. "*

To intimidate, Russia's forces and means of the nuclear weapons delivery passed several times along the border to the EU in the air and sea, besides the TU-22 bombers were deployed temporarily on the territory of Crimea, and Iskander missile complexes in Kaliningrad.

In the event of an aggravation of the crisis, the circumstances that could provoke Russia to use nuclear weapons remain uncertain.

"Russia's Design in The Black Sea: Extending the Buffer Zone"

Bouris Toucas, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), June 28, 2017

<https://www.csis.org/analysis/russias-design-black-sea-extending-buffer-zone>

Reunite, Control, or Disperse

Russia's current military doctrine (2014) and national security strategy (2015) reflect the Kremlin's overarching obsession with fragmentation and subversion, especially in the Black Sea and Caucasus regions. Moscow shares

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the West's assessment that unresolved regional conflicts, ethnic tensions, or violence from extremist groups create a risk of destabilization. However, Russia perceives its own actions as defensive and mirrors Western accusations by claiming foreign military buildup and intelligence services in its near abroad seek to destroy its unity and territorial integrity. No clear distinction is drawn by either document between Russia's internal and external borders. On the contrary, neighbor countries allegedly serve as an entry point to shape Russia's information space and its internal sphere, undermining its national interests. In this perspective, radical political change at Russia's outskirts must be thwarted at any cost and could possibly lead to conflict.

The perceived need to recreate a buffer zone at Russia's borders against the West has pervaded Russia's leadership since the early 1990s. It started with the trauma of the fragmentation of the Soviet Union, the voluntary demise of which Vladimir Putin later called "the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century." At the turn of the 2000s, Russia, fearing unrest in the North Caucasus (Chechnya and later Dagestan, Ingushetia, or Kabardino-Balkaria) could lead to attempts at secession in its inner abroad, responded heavily handedly. Interestingly, it was in Chechnya, where the threat had been most salient, that Moscow gave the most leeway to local leaders—offering all-but-complete autonomy in exchange for unfailing support to the central government. In the meantime, in the Black Sea region, Russia's policy to preserve its *cordon sanitaire* reached well beyond its inner borders to include most of its neighbors. Moscow was too weak to coerce former vassal entities in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. It therefore struggled to preserve influence through diplomatic pressure, covert economic dominance, and regional integration instead.

Western buildup around the Black Sea region progressively challenged the notion that Russia could maintain regional dominance through nonmilitary means. As the European Union and NATO filled the post-Soviet power vacuum, Russia soon became aware that it was unable to stop the alliance's expansion eastward to Bulgaria

and Romania. It also failed to deter NATO from pledging eventual membership to Georgia and Ukraine at the Bucharest summit (2008), while establishing closer partnerships with Azerbaijan, Armenia (2005), and Moldova (2006). Having stretched eastwards and driven by bureaucratic dynamics, the European Union in 2009 proposed its Eastern Partnership to all countries around the Black Sea, a move that accelerated the decay of Russia's post-Soviet economic sphere of influence. In the early 2010s, as Russia was already increasing pressure on its near abroad, it sought again to revive its projects of regional integration and launched a competing economic platform, the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), but garnered limited success in the region—only Armenia joined, with reservations.

After the "colored revolutions" in Georgia (2003) and Ukraine (2004), Russia's focus increasingly switched to hard power to preserve its sphere of influence. Only Armenia, due to its specific situation, was allowed to cultivate ties with outside powers while maintaining excellent relations with Moscow—it still belongs to the Russia-led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). But in general, Moscow made clear to states in the region that political independence was not really an option. From a geopolitical perspective, Russia's move aimed at restoring the strategic depth it felt it had lost in Europe after the Cold War and avoiding what it considered to be hostile military forces at its borders—even if it implied encroaching over its neighbors' territory. Then, following economic recovery, Russia undertook with the annexation of Crimea to maintain access to a key strategic area, perceived as critical to restoring its global reach. Putin's repeated allusions to potential use of nuclear weapons in the broader context of the crisis in Ukraine was a message to the United States that Ukraine belongs to Russia's buffer zone and that Crimea potentially pertained to Russia's "vital interests."

Escalating Fractured Identities into Conflict

Russia understands too well that the Black Sea countries' unique mosaic of cultures is their potential weak spot. Tensions often predated Russia's current behavior, as remnants of the

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Soviet-era territorial division game. The Soviet Union drew its republics' borders to ensure that they had significant minority populations. It resorted to border changes and forced displacement of many of the Caucasus and Black Sea peoples, leaving gaping ethnic and territorial wounds. At the end of the Cold War, these wounds bled again and remain wide open. Russia found itself with about 25 million citizens living abroad that it would later use as an anchor point. Armenia and Azerbaijan became engulfed in a conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, which, almost three decades later, is not even frozen, as the 2016 Four Days War recalled. Georgia emerged in 1991 as a poorly centralized state, already shattered by a civil war in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Ukraine inherited deep social and economic fractures and a loose national identity, while Crimea never left the shadow of Russia's armed forces.

The exploitation of nationality issues is at the core of Russia's current efforts to legitimize the establishment of its buffer zone in the Black Sea region. In Georgia, then in Ukraine, the Kremlin claimed against all evidence that ethnic Russians or local minorities were faced with a "risk of genocide." Cross-border cultural links served as a pretext for more sovereignty infringement. In 2008, Russia recognized the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, wrested from Georgia after the 1992 civil war. In early 2017, South Ossetia was renamed Alania and its security forces merged with Russia's, a possible prelude to "reunification" with Northern Ossetia-Alania under the Russian flag. Russian passports have been distributed to residents of Ossetia, Abkhazia, and Crimea. In February 2017, President Putin issued an executive order recognizing identification documents issued in Eastern Ukraine. By contrast, the rights of local Tatars as a minority were mostly ignored after the 2014 annexation of Crimea, because they were critical of Russia's political design. In April 2016, their mejlis (local parliament) was eventually outlawed on accusation of sowing dissent among the population.

The Black Sea countries also served as a blueprint for the so-called Gerasimov doctrine. Before and after the 2008 conflict with Georgia,

Moscow actively tried to undermine the Georgian population's morale and escalate tensions in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, while jamming Georgia's network to prevent organized response. In Crimea, the Kremlin took control of the communication networks and used sponsored entities to escalate low-level cultural and political divergences into a nonexistent armed conflict, a scenario designed to justify ex-post Russia's intervention against "neo-Nazis and anti-Semites." Further steps led to quick absorption—covert military buildup under a false flag rebellion, a sponsored referendum, and recognition of independence by the Kremlin. Obfuscation tactics complicated international response until Putin eventually announced the fait accompli on April 17, 2014. During the conflict in Donbass, Russia resorted to integrated information warfare techniques even more massively—alteration of communication networks, disinformation, and promotion of anxiety.

Indeed, by seizing Crimea, Russia proved an existential threat to Ukraine and the adversary against which national identity could be consolidated. Finally, because Russia itself comprises as many as 185 ethnic groups, it should consider the risk that its actions in foreign breakaway territories could incentivize local separatists in Northern Caucasus or elsewhere more than anticipated.

A Possible Path Toward Stabilization

Washington and the Europeans should establish a shared vision of the future of the Black Sea region with clear, if more limited, objectives to support their partners. For those that aren't already in, there is no prospect of integration into either the European Union or NATO in the short run. NATO has realized that enlargement in the Baltic region came at a strategic and military price—it was more than just a bureaucratic deal. The U.S. president was reluctant to commit to Article 5 during the May 2017 Leaders' Meeting, and the recent U.S. strikes in Syria, which occurred in a very different context, should not be overinterpreted as a demonstration of U.S. willingness to protect third parties against a Russian intervention.

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That Black Sea countries will continue to rely primarily on themselves to thwart Russia's design. It does not mean they will be abandoned. Yet as recalled in the NATO treaty's Article 3, each member state's responsibility for individual defense is at the core of collective defense. Both individual NATO and non-NATO Black Sea countries' militaries should become efficient enough to deter or defeat a destabilization attempt on their own, buying time and political leeway for their partners to react. Within NATO, Romania's efforts to modernize its forces, as well as the alliance's limited reinforcement measures in the Black Sea will certainly complicate Russia's military calculus. Georgia is modernizing its security apparatus, while reasserting its defensive posture with a defense budget above 2 percent of gross domestic product. These steps are non-escalatory, but they would prevent Russia from an easy seizure of territory.

Black Sea countries will be even less subject to foreign pressure if long-lasting ethnic and political tensions are addressed. Renewed political investment toward resolving regional conflicts, especially in Nagorno-Karabakh, would help remove hurdles to regional integration and could be a credibility test for the EU doctrine of "strategic autonomy." The Black Sea region could be a bridge between Europe, the Caspian Sea, Central Asia, and beyond. Its cultural diversity could be turned into an asset to which Russian-speaking minorities could contribute if convinced by the narrative proposed by the country they live in. Finally, cultivating economic and diplomatic ties with third parties could help the Black Sea countries balance Russia's overwhelming presence in the region and complicate any destabilization attempts.

"The Growing Threat to Ukraine of Naval Mines in the Black Sea"

Ihor Kabanenko, Admiral of the Navy of Ukraine (ret.), former First Deputy Chief of General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Deputy Minister of Defence of Ukraine, The Jamestown Foundation, August 3, 2017

<https://jamestown.org/program/the-growing-threat-to-ukraine-of-naval-mines-in-the-black-sea/>

The northwestern sector of the Black Sea is economically important: its waters are crisscrossed by dense maritime shipping lanes, and it features several important Black Sea ports—Odesa (Ukraine), Constanza (Romania), Varna and Burgas (Bulgaria)—as well as the mouths of key water arteries (the Danube, Dnieper, Dniester and the Southern Bug) and several relatively large bays. At the same time, this maritime area is relatively shallow, with a depth of less than 100 meters from the Crimean Cape of Tarkhankut to the mouth of the Danube River and only a few dozen meters for a 30-kilometer stretch along the Romanian and Bulgarian coasts. This section of the Black Sea is also frequently beset by foggy weather. Together, such conditions make this area particularly favorable for stealthy mine laying operations. Hence, naval mines were widely used in the northwestern part of the Black Sea in war time to blockade ports (naval bases) as well as to threaten coastal maritime communications. Unexploded WWI and WWII-era naval mines still lay at the bottom of the Black Sea to this day, threatening local shipping.

The Russian Black Sea Fleet has accumulated considerable experience in mine warfare in the region. This fleet has traditionally been the Navy's leader when it comes to its ability to lay multiple large minefields. Russia increased the production of naval mines after illegally annexing Crimea. And recently, it has improved and upgraded its scientific-industrial facilities for naval mine modernization/construction. Naval mines, weapons characterized by great destructive power and cost-effectiveness, are particularly difficult to detect and neutralize. As such, they have a powerful psychological effect. Minefields to blockade particular sea areas, naval bases or ports can be installed densely or separately. Even a single naval mine could be used in order to pose a threat to freedom of navigation in an area where merchant shipping is particularly heavy. The operational size of the northwestern part of the Black Sea is such that were a mine to suddenly explode beneath the hull of one or two

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commercial vessels, this would likely entirely hinder further maritime navigation in the area until adequate counter-measures could be taken—negatively affecting the economies of the regional littoral states.

The Crimean annexation underscored that the element of surprise, stealthiness and disguise are key elements of Russia’s so-called “New Type of Warfare.” Therefore, it would not be outside the realm of possibility for Russia to carry out concealed offensive mine activities in the northwestern part of the Black Sea. At the same time, the probability of more intensive and more overt mine warfare in the Black Sea also cannot be excluded. Taking this regional mine threat into consideration, relevant naval capabilities for systematic and “on-call” MCM operations in the Black Sea are needed by the littoral states. These threats are common to the Black Sea members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as well as Ukraine. Thus, it would make sense to create an international naval group for MCM operations in the northwestern Black Sea, for example. For now, however, local MCM forces and capabilities are quite limited. In this situation, the rotational presence in the Black Sea by the Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Group 2 (SNMCMG2), amplified by Bulgarian, Romanian, Turkish and Ukrainian assets, could be one possible solution. SNMCMG2 activities in the Black Sea would be exclusively defensive in nature, aimed at ensuring freedom of navigation and positively influencing the security of merchant shipping in the Eastern Mediterranean. Regional maritime security would only benefit from such regularized operations.

“Strategic Overview of the Russian Maritime Threat to Ukraine: Mariupol and Odesa at Stake”

Ihor Kabanenko, Admiral of the Navy of Ukraine (ret.), former First Deputy Chief of General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Deputy Minister of Defence of Ukraine, The Jamestown Foundation, July 13, 2017

<https://jamestown.org/program/strategic-overview-russian-maritime-threat-ukraine-mariupol-odesa-stake/>

The illegal Russian annexation of Crimea opened the door to the implementation of the Kremlin’s aggressive ambitions directed in the southwesterly direction. The Russian Black Sea Fleet’s (RBSF) offensive capabilities have doubled since 2014. This fleet has been replenished by the introduction of new Krivak V-class frigates and improved Kilo-class submarines. In the coming years, Russia plans to increase the number of these platforms and acquire new Buyan-M-class corvettes as well. New Bastion and Bal mobile coastal missile complexes have been deployed in Crimea. These sea-born and coastal-based systems are equipped with Kalibr-NK cruise missiles as well as Yakhont and Onyx anti-ship missiles. Moreover, the Russian land military component in Crimea has been increased substantially. Russian marine infantry, air defense, air strike, electronic warfare (EW) and early-warning capabilities in Crimea have also been strengthened significantly. The RBSF maintains all its amphibious forces at combat readiness levels. As such, last spring’s Russian offensive airborne-amphibious exercises near Theodosia, Crimea (see EDM, April 12), require special attention.

It should be noted that Crimea’s economy critically depends on mainland Ukraine and on the Dnipro River’s waters for irrigation and domestic use as well as for the peninsula’s electricity and natural gas supply. After Crimea’s annexation, Russia also seized the Ukrainian continental shelf gas fields Odeske and Holitsynske. It is currently exploiting the assets of the Crimean oil and gas company Chornomornaftogaz and has begun the illegal extraction of Ukrainian natural gas. Since then, Moscow has also begun laying gas pipelines from Russia to Crimea via the Kerch Strait and has launched the first stage of its so-called “Energy Bridge” to connect Crimea’s electricity grid with Russia’s. In addition, 15 expensive mobile gas-turbine electricity stations were installed. Despite these efforts, problems with water, gas and electricity still exist. Hence, the threat remains high that Russia may try to create a “land corridor

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to Crimea” via southeastern Ukrainian territory. A strategically located city that still stands in the way is Mariupol (Mariupil)—a Ukrainian metallurgical industrial center on the Azov coast. Importantly, Mariupol is a key point between the Ukrainian-Russian border and the Dnipro River, which feeds into the Northern Crimean Water Channel. And the city is located just in 200 kilometers from the Zaporizhia Nuclear Power Plant, which had supplied Crimea with electricity until 2014. Russia’s 8th Guards Army was deployed near the Ukrainian border, not far from Mariupol. The 8th Guards Army has not only a combat component but also logistics support units and military hospitals. All the while, the Moscow-backed forces of the “Donetsk People’s Republic” (DPR) are seeking Russian boats to strengthen the DPR’s “Azov Flotilla”.

Near the occupied Odeske and Holitsynske fields, located within Ukraine’s exclusive maritime economic zone, Russia has created a mobile anti-access, area denial (A2/AD) bubble. RBSF combat ships and other assets operate there around the clock. The 41st Missile Boat Brigade (12 missile corvettes with 68 cruise and anti-ship missiles on board) was subordinated to the so-called Crimean Naval Base, located in Donuzlav (northern part of Crimea, 35 km north of Yevpatoria), enabling the RBSF’s naval strike capabilities against gas fields in the northwestern Black Sea. Considering the missile ranges on Russian corvettes, the Donuzlav base could threaten Ukraine’s most important industrial-agricultural ports including Odesa, Yuzhnyi, Chernomorske, Mykolaiv and Kherson.

Ukraine’s strategically important port cities of Mariupol and Odesa are located at developed rail, maritime and river junctions. But both are vulnerable to threats from the sea. In 2014, the Ukrainian Naval Forces (UNF) lost 70 percent of their assets in Crimea. Only two Giurza-class small armored artillery boats were built in the last three years, but their combat capabilities, operational area and speed are limited. The blue-water frigate Hetman Sahaydachniy—the UNF’s flagship—has been in service for 25 years and needs complex repairs and modernization. Other naval assets are too old and weak: the 37-year-old Matka-class

missile boat lacks missiles; the Polnocny-C-class landing ship and non-operational Grisha-class corvette are more than 40 years old; several Soviet-era small boats have low speed/range and weak weaponry. The UNF has no naval platforms on the Sea of Azov.

On February 20, 2013, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said, “*The Black Sea Fleet is protecting Russia’s interests in the southwestern direction, where most essential threats to our national interests are concentrated.*” He called the Mediterranean an important area for Russia’s national interests as well. Later, in May 2017, Shoigu called Ukraine a “strategically important [region] for Russia”. Ukraine’s maritime sovereignty has been repeatedly violated as a result of these “important interests.” In this unsecure situation, Ukraine urgently needs to improve its naval capabilities—including developing an asymmetric response, building small but fast and capable naval platforms, amphibious forces or mine-countermeasures capabilities.

“Lessons from Crimea: The Way Forward for NATO”

Kirk Wolff, Center for International Maritime Security, July 25, 2017

<http://cimsec.org/lessons-crimea-way-forward-nato/33173>

There is no sugarcoating: Russia’s continued aggression in Eastern Europe is not only reckless and a violation of international norms, but is illegal. In the invasion of Georgia and the annexation of Crimea, Russia showed complete disregard for the sovereignty of its neighbors and violated multiple treaties to which Russia is a party, including the 1994 Budapest Memorandum. Under the Budapest Memorandum, Russia agreed to never use force against or in any way threaten the territorial integrity of Ukraine [1]. It is clear Russia is no longer following international laws, even those it helped establish. Vladimir Putin’s desire to reclaim the perceived glory of the Soviet Union has manifested itself in illegal invasions of weaker neighbors. These actions have been met with responses from much of Europe and the United

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States that were, at best, toothless. The Russian Federation's aspiration to expand its borders and sphere of influence into former Soviet states and satellites poses a great threat to the stability of Europe and has already caused instability and military buildup in Eastern Europe. Putin has never hidden his desire to restore the USSR, the dissolution of which he referred to as "the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th Century [2]."

NATO and Russian Pressures

Consequently, the international system is now witnessing the single most important moment in NATO's history since the collective response to the 9/11 attacks. It is clear that continued sanctions in the vein of visa bans and asset freezes are no longer adequate responses to Putin's actions. In order to stave off further illegal expansion by an emboldened Russia, NATO must swiftly expand to include Finland and Sweden. Deciding not to expand NATO to include these Nordic States would represent a complete failure to learn the lessons of the last decade, which occurred as a result of the rejection of Ukraine and Georgia's attempts to join NATO. This proposed 7th expansion of NATO included Montenegro, which has recently earned acceptance from Alliance member states [3]. There is no better way to contain Russia than through expanding the alliance, the most effective collective defense organization in history and the historical counterbalance to Russo-Soviet expansionism.

Prior to and throughout the invasions of Georgia (2008) and Ukraine (2014), Russia telegraphed its intention to regain its former status as a great power. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Russian military fell from around 5 million troops to roughly 1 million in 1994 [4], and the capacity of those 1 million troops to exert Russian influence was questionable. Since that time, Russia's military strength has experienced a revitalization, bringing the current number to over 3 million troops [5]. The Russian military budget has increased by a factor of 5 since 1994, with a 91 percent boost in spending from 2006 to 2016 [6]. This boost in military spending and size transformed the Russian Armed Forces from a fledgling that could only muster around 60,000

troops to put down a Chechen rebellion in 1994 [7] to its current status as a resurgent world superpower that successfully used covert military forces to annex an entire region of its sovereign neighbor Ukraine in 2014. Through his reforms following the 2008 invasion of Georgia, Vladimir Putin has orchestrated a spectacular comeback for Russia in a region where the nation lost almost all of its influence a quarter century ago.

The question of why Georgia and Ukraine were targeted specifically is answered by the failure of NATO to offer either nation a Membership Action Plan following the April 2008 Bucharest Summit despite the pursuit of admission to the Alliance by both states [8]. It is likely that Putin was greatly relieved by this shortsighted decision by NATO, as his plans for Russian expansion were no longer threatened by NATO's collective defense pledge. It only took four months for Russia to invade the former NATO-hopeful Georgia, in what is referred to as the first European war of the 21st Century [9]. There is a reason the invocation of NATO's collective defense measure, otherwise known as Article 5, has only occurred once in history, and that it was prompted by the actions of rogue non-state actors on 9/11. The full backing of NATO's member states maintains peace at a level unseen in history by guaranteeing a costly counterattack to actions like the invasions of Georgia and Ukraine. It is critical for NATO to learn from the mistakes of the Bucharest Summit and prevent further destabilization of Europe by accepting both Finland and Sweden into the Alliance posthaste.

The Grand Strategy of Russian Resurgence

The United States and NATO have been operating without a grand strategy since the fall of the Soviet Union, and consequently, Russia has implemented its own grand strategy that takes advantage of this stunning lack of action by the West. Russia is clearly, though not officially, following the grand strategy laid out in the Foundations of Geopolitics by Alexandre Dugin. The book has had a considerable impact on Russian foreign policy and was adopted as an official textbook at the Russian equivalent of the U.S. Naval War College, where senior officers and government officials receive graduate degrees related to policy [10]. Major points of the work

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include (among other goals) separating England from Europe, dismantling Georgia, and annexing Crimea [11], all of which have been at least partially accomplished through Russian pressure, overt or otherwise. Not only have the arguments laid out in Dugin's work been mirrored by Russian policy, but Dugin has even been made a major foreign policy advisor to the Putin regime [12] and enjoys considerable influence and contact with the parliament and military [13]. One major goal listed in the plan that has yet to be accomplished is the annexation of Finland. This, along with continued aggressive actions against Finland, shows that there is an imminent threat to Finland from Russia. If Finland fails to act quickly to join NATO, it is likely to be next in line for Russian expansion, in partial fulfillment of Dugin's grand strategy for resurgent Russia.

In both Finland and Sweden, support for accession to NATO has been growing due to the aftermath of the annexation of Crimea. Russia has significantly ramped up operations and drills in the vicinity of Finland to such a degree that both Finland and Sweden are actively seeking new defensive agreements with western nations including the U.K. and U.S [14]. Multiple Russian jets have violated Finnish airspace, further showing Russia's disregard for the sovereignty of any of its neighbors [15]. Additionally, Russia has been working to increase Finland's dependency in order to further pull it into Russia's economic and political sphere of influence. One such attempt involves energy, where Russia is attempting to undermine the Finnish energy sector and even create an artificial energy crisis which would drive Finland to rely heavily on Russian government and energy firms [16]. Like Georgia and Ukraine, Finland was once part of Russia, and such historical ties were used as justification for both of Putin's illegal invasions [17], [18]. In fact, the Winter War of 1939 was started by Russia in an attempt to reabsorb Finland; it resulted in Russian territorial gains from Eastern Finland [19]. Based on the recent Russian actions in Georgia and Ukraine, it is not outside of the realm of possibility for Russia to make another attempt to regain Finland. Sweden has felt the increased pressure from Russia as well, as evidenced by the extreme step the Civil Contingency Agency

of Sweden took in December 2016 of telling towns to reinstate Cold War era counter-invasion measures, including bunker systems and military drills [20]. All of this represents a return to the great power conflict of the Cold War. Additionally, this demonstrates the clear and present threat to both Finland and Sweden from Russia that NATO would best solve.

The Current State of Partnership

Convincing the people of Finland of the necessity of NATO membership appears to be reliant on Sweden agreeing to join simultaneously. Support for a military alliance with Sweden is high, with 54 percent of Finns supporting such an alliance in 2014 while only 36 percent oppose [21], so the people of Finland could be persuaded to support NATO if their friend Sweden agrees to join as well. That same year, Gallup found that 53 percent of Finnish citizens would support joining NATO if the government of Finland recommended the move [22]. Since Finland already recognizes the importance of a military alliance with Sweden, it clearly can be convinced of the necessity of NATO as well. In Sweden, support of NATO membership has been on the rise. For instance, in 2015 the Centre Right Party joined two other major Swedish political parties to support NATO membership after having previously opposed the measure [23], which further indicates the political tides of the nation are turning in support of NATO. Not only is the move towards membership a necessity for these two nations, but it is also entirely within the realm of possibility in the near future.

Both Finland and Sweden have been longtime members of the Partnership for Peace (PfP) [24], a NATO program which aims to build stronger relationships with non-Alliance members [25]. Participation in the PfP is often seen as a pathway to membership since so many current NATO members were originally part of the PfP. This is crucial, because under Article 10 of the treaty all members must be unanimously confirmed; the fact that Finland and Sweden are already contributing to the collective defense of NATO shows that they would be valuable assets to the Alliance. Both Finland and Sweden sent troops to support NATO actions in Afghanistan, and Sweden was

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part of NATO's 2011 mission in Libya [26]. Due to their willingness to participate in operations, Finland and Sweden are clearly military assets to NATO, thus clearing the collective defense hurdle of NATO.

Despite this, neither nation could take on Russia alone. Swedish military experts found that if attacked by Russia, the nation could only hold out for one week [27], further highlighting the need for NATO to step in and prevent another Crimean crisis. Opponents of NATO enlargement may argue that Sweden and Finland fail to meet the requisite military spending requirement of the Alliance, which is 2 percent of GDP. This is irrelevant for two reasons. First, it is far more important to keep Russia in check and have nations remain in America/NATO's sphere of influence than to worry about the arbitrary 2 percent requirement. Demanding Sweden and Finland to increase their spending before joining will not create any measurable increase in NATO's military effectiveness, as the U.S. spends around \$650 billion dollars on defense [28]. The next closest Alliance member spends a mere 60 billion dollars [29]. It could be reasonable to require that both nations set a goal of reaching the 2 percent threshold within a decade, but the situation in Europe is too precarious to hesitate on such a minor issue. The true goal of NATO is maintaining the post-Soviet world order through the maintenance of the current spheres of influence.

The second reason the 2 percent requirement is irrelevant is the fact that only 5 of the 28 members currently meet the requirement. Based on publicly available military budget information, of the 28 NATO members, Finland outspends 14 before even joining and Sweden outspends Finland as well. Allowing Russia to continue to destabilize all of Europe because Finland and Sweden fail

to meet a standard that over 80 percent of current NATO members also fail to meet is shortsighted.

Conclusion

For Finland, Russia's western neighbor, the stakes are quite high. Putin has made multiple threatening statements in opposition to NATO enlarging to include Finland. These statements should be disregarded, as an identical scenario played out almost a decade ago in Georgia and recently in Ukraine. As mentioned earlier, Putin publicly opposed Georgia and Ukraine joining NATO, and shortly after NATO decided not to include the two nations, both were invaded by Russia's military. The only way to secure the stability of Northern Europe is through the accession of Finland and Sweden into NATO, since this provides the closest thing to a guarantee against Russian intrusion, as admitted by Russia's foreign minister Sergei Lavrov who said in 2016 that Russia "*will never attack a member state of NATO* [30]."

There is a choice for NATO currently: either allow Russia to expand its sphere of influence even beyond the bounds of the former USSR into the Nordic States, or learn from the examples of Georgia and Ukraine by blocking expansionism through a 7th enlargement of the Alliance. We are clearly in a new era of great power conflict, and for their own safety Sweden and Finland must join their Nordic neighbors under the collective defense shield of NATO. NATO must recognize the dawn of this new era and learn the lessons of Crimea. The move to add Finland and Sweden to NATO is not only plausible, but entirely necessary to safeguard the stability and peace that Europe has enjoyed since the fall of the USSR.

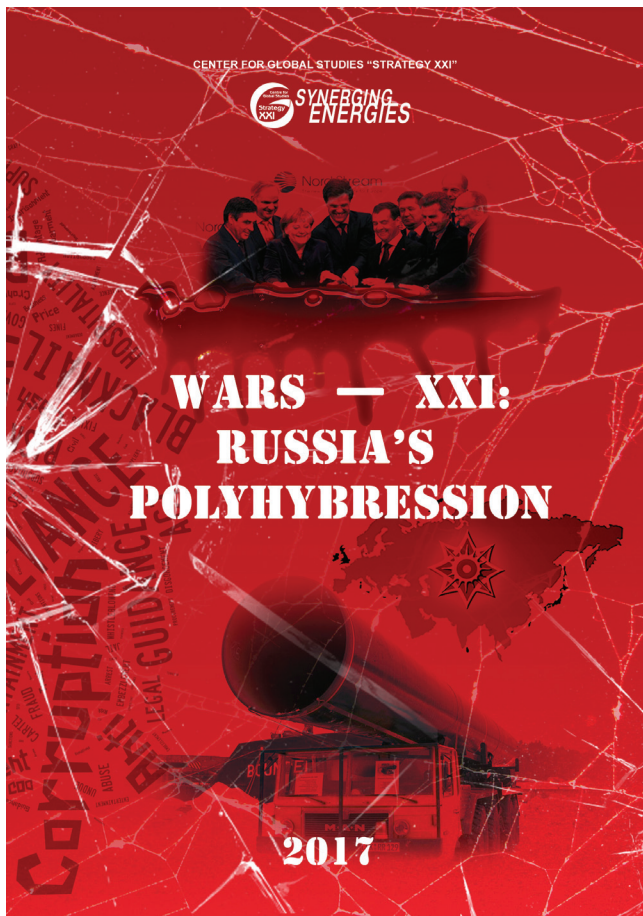
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Wars-XXI: Russia's PolyHybression



The book “Wars-XXI: Russia's PolyHybression”, edited by M. Gonchar, is prepared by the Centre for Global Studies Strategy XXI for publishing. A definition “polyhybression” means a “multi-faceted aggression of hybrid type.” It is exactly what the Kremlin regime conducts in regards of Ukraine, Europe and the West. This book is about the energy-centered approach to perception of hybrid war phenomenon, the functioning of the Russian four-cycle “chaos generator”, false-target programming and the contours of external control, the main ideologists, designers and technologists of hybression of Russian model, about how the “Crimean blitzkrieg” was effectuated, what did not work in the “Novorossiia project”, etc. The works on the publication have been conducted in the framework of “Antares project” for the last two years under support of the International Renaissance Foundation. In these pages, we present the separate book excerpts, devoted to the Russian vision of the world order and our thoughts on the topic of “how to stop Russia's polyhybression?”

Russian vision of the future

A retrospective analysis of the records of pro-Kremlin analysts leads to the conclusion that one of Russia's main goals is the destruction of the system of transatlantic partnership and solidarity, as well as repositioning of Europe towards Eurasia with a view to create the so-called Common Space Security and Trade from Lisbon to Vladivostok and from St. Petersburg to Colombo.

To predict the further actions of Putin's Russia, it is necessary to understand the Russian coordinate system for the strategic decisions. “Russia is a self-sufficient country”, – an ambiguous statement by V. Putin from his Valdai speech 2014. “Russia is much stronger, and the West is much weaker than many can think. ... Our country is finding its place in the world. Compare the Soviet armed forces, lumbering and expensive, with the nimble military of modern Russia,” – the assessment of one of the leading Russian political analysts S. Karaganov, who is one of the founders of the modern Putin policy.

In an interview with Der Spiegel 2.5 years after the beginning of the Russian hybression, S. Karaganov frankly stated: “...we are seeking for great power status. Unfortunately, we cannot abandon it: this status has become a part of our genome over the past 300 years. We want to become the center of great Eurasia, a zone of peace and cooperation. This Eurasia will include the European subcontinent as well [1].” This is not just the opinion of one of the political analysts of the Kremlin pool. A similar idea can be found in the theses of the task force of the influential Council on Foreign and Defense Policy “Strategy for Russia. Russian foreign policy: the end of 2010s – beginning of 2020s”, which were released in May 2016: “Russian foreign policy, as well as the society, is in the process of self-discovery. It returns to a new level of the traditional values, principles of its foreign policy, and policy in general. The main idea of these goals is to ensure absolute sovereignty and security. **In the last 300 years, as a result of Petrine and Catherine's reforms and due to the history of victories of the 18th and 19th centuries, one more value was added – the great power status ... The ideal foreign policy and economic position of Russia in the future is to be a big,**

economically developing, Atlantic-Pacific state that plays a central role in the Great Eurasian community, in the economic, logistical, military and political integration of Asia and Europe, and acts as a guarantor of international peace, exporter of military and political stability for Eurasia... **According to the economic and mental set, Russia should be not the eastern periphery of Europe, but the northern part of the vast Eurasia [2].**”

The preparation of the ruling elite of Russia for a possible conflict with the West has intensified since 2013. An unspoken decision about the readiness for this confrontation was made within the frame of informal consultative process of the Politburo 2.0 members [3] – a group of V. Putin confidants among the Kremlin’s powerbrokers, members of his administration and oligarchs. The grounds for such decision were their own predictions of another world crisis, which will have not only an economic, but a complex character and will be followed by military and political conflicts.

“The analysis of the long cycles of economic and political dynamics shows that the most probable period for the major regional military conflicts with the participation of the United States and its satellites against Russia is 2015-2018” [4] – says S. Glazyev, one of the founders of the Putin policy. Within the framework of the above-mentioned approaches, Russia is the target of the West aggression. It’s not Russia but the West that carries out expansion and aggression. Russia just defends itself. Accordingly, “in case of intellectual, economic and military mobilization, Russia has a chance to win the conflict of 2015-2018, as the United States and its satellites won’t be ready for overt aggression” [5]. According to the Kremlin’s logic, attack is the best form of defense. According to the logic of S. Glazyev, the USA want to replace Russian gas with their own by supplying it to Europe, and to grab the traditional market of nuclear fuel from Russia by enforcing the diversification of the suppliers upon the EU. Russia considers the competition, which is the basis of a market economy, as a mode of war led by the West against it. Therefore, Russia will act in a preventive and aggressive manner.

The energy resources matter shouldn’t be underestimated in the frames of Russian policy.

The shale gas revolution in the US, which Russia ignored, considering it a temporary phenomenon and a “gas bubble” that would surely burst, led to the fact that the US not only became gas-sufficient, but subsequently turned into the gas exporter. Thus, the USA became a competitor to Russia. That wasn’t foreseen by any of the scenarios in Moscow. Gazprom scenarios, on the other hand, predicted that the United States would become an importer of the Russian gas. In the mid-2000s, following the trend of oil and gas prices increase, Gazprom had the outlook for 2015 of 54 billion cubic meters of Russian LNG export to the US.

The situation, when the predictions didn’t just fail but turned out to be based on a completely erroneous model and realities, became critical, in the Kremlin’s view. Instead of “making the US gas-dependent on the Kremlin, like Europe was”, Russian strategists had to explore ways to eliminate a threat while the competitor was not just a country with rich gas deposits, but the most powerful state in the world. Unlike Turkmenian gas, which has been excluded from Europe, and Iranian gas, which is successfully blocked by Russia in Armenia and Syria, the blocking actions against the US gas are not possible. In this regard, the Russian Federation is considering options to combat the American gas expansion by trying to impose its alternatives on Europe, in particular, the Nord Stream-2 pipeline, and to limit the non-Russian gas supply options for the EU. Thus, the polyhybression becomes necessary: subversive acts of the Russian Federation in those regions from which gas can flow to Europe and those that play an important transit role for promising gas flows. Russia will be able to act preventively.

The analysis of the Russian experts’ records in recent years shows that, unlike the period before the Second World War, when the USSR was preparing to respond to German attack (we use the officially accepted view of the Russian Federation upon the events), now Russia is ready to act preventively. It is worth remembering Putin’s words “be the first who attacks”, as discussed above, or the statement of his foreign policy adviser S. Karaganov: “Russia

will never again fight on its own territory ...” [6]. Moreover, it has already started doing so. It uses the territory of Ukraine for the war with the West, which, according to the Kremlin, is running the proxy invasion into the “historically Russian land”, using the “Nazi junta in Kiev” as an aggressor.

As already mentioned, the beginning of the hybrid war is invisible. It becomes apparent after the activation of the military component in an explicit or implicit form. All this shows that the Kremlin is ready for a new, larger wave of geopolitical expansion, based on the strength of Russia (including the armed forces) and the weakness of the West. Actually, such pilot expansion began in August 2008 with 5-day war against Georgia. In 2014, it continued. Russia was determined to have a unique window of opportunity while the US president is B. Obama and Washington is overloaded with the problems of Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria. One of the Russian think-tanks specializing in the US and Canada made a closed assessment for the Kremlin as far back as 2013. **In essence, the United States is at its weakest foreign policy since the presidency of B. Obama. There are some chances that the next US president will be at Ronald Reagan’s level and will make the country again a global player. Drawing on the concerns experienced by the United States and Europe, NATO will be an ineffective instrument of the West. Therefore, Russia has a unique chance to take advantage of the weakness of the US, EU and NATO.** The assessment regarding the presidency of Obama proved to be true, but the “new Reagan” expectations’ did not materialize. However, the election of unpredictable D. Trump as a president opens even a wider window of opportunity for the Russian Federation due to the high probability of the internal American chaos. Although, the unpredictability of the 45th US president may lead at the same time to the increased risks for Russia. But if you remember Surkov’s expression “don’t be afraid of mistakes”, then the disappointment in Trump will obviously lead only to a certain correction of Russian tactics, but not a strategy to neutralize the US as a world power center.

The demonstrative disregard of the Western

sanctions, counter-sanctions, and the denial of the armed incursion into Ukraine followed by the demonstration of nuclear power is a proof that Russia won’t stop. Moreover, the reactive and insufficient actions of the West against Russia during its continuing hybression against Ukraine, as well as the expected fatigue due to the sanctions against the Russian Federation, were predicted by the Kremlin. A reasonable description of the Western approach to the Ukrainian issue made by a German expert Andreas Umland is successfully used by Russia: “... *the pacifist politicians want to establish good relations with Russia, even at the cost of Ukrainian sovereignty, the integrity of Moldova or Georgia. This is a trend. It is represented by a slogan: peace is above all and we need to do everything for peacekeeping*”. The expert estimates that such approach “*is shared by a large part of the German population, which is not very interested in the fate of Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia, Syria, but wants to avoid any conflicts*” [7]. And this is perfect for the Kremlin.

On the necessity of energy and financial measures of “coercion of the Kremlin to peace

“Ukraine’s compromise-seeking policy towards the Russian Federation is seen by Moscow as a sign of weakness and lack of confidence and only encourages its demands. The experience shows that each Ukraine’s concession to the Russian Federation becomes a starting point for the further pressure aiming to obtain more concessions which finally extremely limits the room for Ukraine’s political maneuver. Besides the ideas of revenge, the image of an enemy embodied in the Ukrainian people and a provocative idea that “the khokhols will not start a war” are introduced more and more intensely into the mass consciousness of the Russian people. It is necessary and reasonable to implement a more rigorous approach – a containment policy towards the Russian Federation which is to be implemented not only within the bilateral relations but also in the international context,” - this is a fragment of the policy brief drawn up for the Council of the National Security and Defense of Ukraine 20 years ago. [8]. The events that took place over the 20-year period and the current state of affairs demonstrate the relevancy of this

conclusion – as to the necessity of the rigorous containment policy towards Russia. If we replace the words “Ukraine” and “the Ukrainians” by “the European Union” and “the Europeans”, this will reflect the current approach of Russia to the EU.

It is evident that Russia focuses on the problems caused by the Middle East and Eastern Europe for the EU. Migration crisis, terrorist attacks in the EU countries speed up further collapse of the common EU space starting from the Schengen area and leading to a domino effect. Russia’s use of crypto-war methods will contribute to these processes splitting the EU from the inside through bilateral relations. The EU’s inability to act proactively has already caused a multiple crisis scenario which could be too much for the EU to tackle. Due to the involvement of the USA in domestic problems, Russia gets an additional chance for expansion in all directions; however, it may fail to withstand the overload and may suffer from negative consequences even in 2017-2018. Russia have been preparing and continues to prepare for a confrontation with the West, which is, in fact, “headless” and incapable of an effective policy of deterring and incapacitating the offenders of the international law. This is apparent both in Syrian and Ukrainian matters. The Syrian front is a logical extension of the “cold” European front of Moscow, where the information warfare prevails, as well as of the “hot” Ukrainian front. All this fits the multi-crisis scenario for the EU and hybrid war technologies, which don’t have a military component at an early stage.

The failure of the United States, Britain and France to comply with the Budapest Memorandum regarding Ukraine’s security guarantees, Germany’s active blocking of the defensive weapons supply to Ukraine, the hesitancy of NATO to provide Ukraine and Georgia with a security umbrella, silent watching of the Syrian tragedy, the EU’s indifference towards the events in Moldova, flirting with the Kremlin regime lead not only to the world’s disillusion with the Western alliances and leading countries, but also to the disgust, contempt and disregard of the current Western politicians. This, on the contrary, stimulates Russia for further actions – a “victory

over the West”. Russia’s multi-frontal war against the West will not bring victory to it, just as the energy resources of Russia haven’t made this country rich and prosperous. But Russia will forge ahead with its objective of the global geopolitical revenge until it is stopped in Ukraine, Syria and within the EU or until the international community creates the scenario of “crises multiplicity” for Russia through non-military means.

The last three years have shown that the West is unable to take preventive actions to deter Russia. The policy of the West is still reactive. Moreover, the Kremlin is receiving more and more signals about the possibility of lifting sanctions, if Russia changes its behavior, about the lack of alternative to dialogue, the need for cooperation, etc. This is another strategic blunder of the West. Moscow perceives such approaches as a lack of determination and indirect confirmation of the appropriateness of the chosen strategy and tactics.

It appears that asymmetric actions lacks of the military component at this stage are appropriate, necessary and possible for the West. So there is no need to enter into war with Russia in the future, Russia’s hybression against Ukraine shall be identified as aggression according to the UN definition of 1974 and stricter relevant measures shall be implemented against Russian state actors and political leaders abroad:

- to freeze the construction projects for new power units of the Russian NPPs in the EU countries;
- to abandon the Russian projects of non-transit gas transmission systems (Nord Stream-2, II line of the Turkish Stream in the EU)
- to substitute the import of Russian oil, oil products, gas and coal into the EU by non-Russian;
- to disconnect the Russian banks from the international interbank system of communications and payments SWIFT (as it was done with Iranian banks in 2012);
- sending all payments from Western companies for Russian energy resources to a specially created account in one of the international banks that the Russian Federation will be able to use only upon return to the status quo in the implementation of

the 1975 Helsinki Final Act and the Paris Charter 1990;

- the freeze the personal assets of the Kremlin pro-governmental oligarchy, including family members and the “circle of friends” of V. Putin in the West.

The last two positions are important. Real personal sanctions against the ruling elite of the Russian Federation and, above all, against V. Putin, rather than just against Russian officials, could be an effective mechanism for restraining the Kremlin’s expansionism. The asset of the Russian president obtained through highly questionable means is his “Achilles’ heel”. This suggestion is based on the estimates of one of the former largest Western investors in the Russian economy Bill Browder: “I believe that it (Putin’s net worth) amounts to \$ 200 billion”. According to him, the Russian president is “the richest person in the world or one of the richest people in the world, with the net worth of hundreds of billions of dollars stolen in Russia.” [9]

The personal sanctions and a shift of European companies to the system of the “deferred payments” for Russian energy resources with the creation of a special account for receiving funds without the right to transfer them to Russia until the withdrawal of Russian troops from the occupied territories (ORDO and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea in Ukraine, Transnistria in Moldova, Abkhazia and the Tskhinvali region in Georgia) is a lesser evil than the military response which the West may have to resort to in the event of further Russian expansion in Europe. Rather than stop its activity, Russia makes it even more and more provocative.

At the same time, the EU should strengthen its energy sustainability by supplying LNG and oil from the US and Canada. In the conditions of Russia’s polyhybression against Europe, the EU shall break the critical dependence on the Russian Federation. If Ukraine has managed to reduce the import of Russian gas to zero in three years, then Europe can minimize the import of Russian energy resources using the new hydrocarbon potential of North America.

These positions are extremely important for the effective deterrent to aggression. In mid-September 2014, the former Minister of Economic Development Alexei Ulyukaev noted that he did not believe that Russia would be excluded from the SWIFT. “I would say, this is a true act of war”, – the minister said. At the same time, the Russian minister noted that Russia should be prepared for the scenarios of a low probability [10]. Also, Moscow does not believe that the EU will limit the import of hydrocarbons from Russia, since they are excluded from the sanctions regime due to the efforts of the former European Commissioner G. Ettinger.

Thus, the West shall focus its efforts on the sensitive areas for Russia, rather than on those that make it feel discomfort, but not only fail to stop its aggression, but rather stimulate it. The fact that Iran was exempt from the sanctions regime, the surplus production capacity of Saudi Arabia gives Europe a favorable opportunity to replace the Russian oil supplies, to a great extent.

There are other mechanisms of coercion, which have no less restraining effect and fit the formula of Russia’s hybrid response by non-state actors. If we use the energocentric approach to the hybrid technologies of warfare as the basis, then the main risks for the aggressor are its internal risks and internal conflict potential. This all will be transformed into the threats of its self-destruction when the same cracking technologies that Russia uses when acting abroad are used by the external actors. Russia is neither monoethnic nor monoconfessional country. It has a dense network of infrastructure, and a large territory, which is difficult to keep under effective control. Therefore, the use of hybrid technologies of warfare as a double-edged sword can also hit Russia. “Russkiy Mir” created the mix of energomilitarism and hybression, which can destroy it both from the inside and outside using the same technologies. Moreover, the chief technologist of the hybrid war *a la russe* may be the undertaker of the general customer.

NEW PUBLICATIONS ON RUSSIA AND HYBRID WAR

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“Ukraine – Russia: War in terms of coexistence”



Essay of the book

Foreign Policy Research Institute represents to readers a new edition about the modern Russian-Ukrainian war – the book of **prof. Grigoriy Perepelytsia** ‘*Ukraine – Russia: War in terms of coexistence*’.

Few believed that in the XXI century, a period of stability in Europe and 25 years of independent Ukrainian state existence, Russia dares to start an insidious military aggression against Ukraine. Such a treacherous attack of ‘the big brother’ has induced many in Ukraine and abroad to rethinking of our ‘fraternal’ relations with Russia. This desire of rethinking has motivated the author to clarify the nature of these relationships and to investigate the roots and driving forces that transformed Russian-

Ukrainian relations into the conflict and its highest form manifestation – the war.

In general, Russian-Ukrainian relationships constitute rather complicated conglomerate of interrelations, conflicts and trends, making difficult to describe them relying just on one methodological approach. This creates a risk of one-sided covering of this complex of bilateral relations. Besides, Ukrainian-Russian relations do not fit the format of bilateral relations, as they are considered within the context of interaction approach. Their depth and significance are so great that they often become the subject of multilateral relations and are able to influence some regional systems of international relationships.

Obviously, this historical significance already contains not only the motivation for unity, but also carries a huge conflict potential. The objects or spheres which have a vital public or material importance are usually the subject of conflicts at the same time. Therefore, a comprehensive analysis of Ukrainian-Russian relations cannot be complete and self-sufficient without clarification of these conflictogenic issues.

The other issue that is brought up by the author of this book is what dominates in these relationships – harmony or conflict? Without clarifying of this issue politics cannot be build and further prospects of relations are not to be determined. The study has found out that the conflict of Russian-Ukrainian relations lies in the very nature of Russian national interest, which is based on the strong spiritual basis of imperial consciousness of Russian society. There is a powerful request for such aggressive policy in Russian society. Imperial consciousness of these society, in its turn, is a source of conflictogenity in both domestic and foreign policies, since such a request cannot be accepted by other subjects of international relations.

Such an imperial policy can, of course, provide hegemony, but can not ensure prosperity for the Russian people. Obviously, development of any empire consists of three phases: expansion - hegemony - decline. Change of these phases is due to the constant change in the balance and imbalance of forces in the regional and global systems of international relations. In its history, as

an imperial power, Russia is coming into the third cycle of reiteration of these phases. The completion of the first cycle led to the partial collapse of the Russian empire at the beginning of the 20th century as a result of the change in the balance of powers as a result of the World War I. Its second reconstitution began with the new expansion of Bolshevik Russia on the territory of Ukraine, the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Baltic that ended with the formation of the Soviet Union. As a result of the World War II, a new change of the balance of powers in the global system of international relations took place, thanks to which the Soviet Union reached hegemony over more than a half the world, taking over the place of a superpower in the world hierarchy of international relations. The end of the Cold War marked a new change in the balance of powers, which led to a decline, and further the collapse of the USSR.

In the so-called post-bipolar period, a new imbalance of powers emerged in favor of the West, and not of Russia. It was that imbalance, which led to the loss of the superpower status by Russia and its slipping into the middle position in the hierarchy of international relations. Obviously, such a status could not satisfy the imperial interests of Russia, which remained permanent in all periods of its existence, regardless possibilities of their realization. Meanwhile, in addition to the imperial ambitions in that historical period, one of the attributes of the superpower - nuclear weapons, remained in Russia. It did give Russia a hope to revise the balance of powers established after the Cold War, or, on the contrary, an imbalance from the Russian point of view, and to regain the lost status of a world power.

Thus, the third cycle of the reconstitution of the Russian state as an empire began with the arrival of Putin in power in 2000, and he began reconstruction of the imperial model of Russia by a new expansion into the post-Soviet space, as well as into the surrounding international environment, using available at that time economic, political, energy, financial and cultural-informational means. The purpose of that expansion was to achieve complete hegemony in the post-Soviet space, spreading the full power of the Russian state on it, and then to establish Russian hegemony

throughout the Eurasian continent. According to the plans of the Kremlin, this would allow to get rid of the “geopolitical catastrophe of Russia”, which arose as a result of the collapse of the USSR, and subsequently take again its place in the world hierarchy of international relations. But the main obstacle to this goal turned out Ukraine, an independent and sovereign state. Elimination of that obstacle by waging economic, cultural, as well as energy, economic and information wars proved to be insufficient. The last resort, which Russia is trying to achieve its goal in solving this geopolitical problem with Ukraine, has become a military aggression. The analysis of the situation, which arose as a result of Russian military aggression against Ukraine in this new third cycle of the Russian Empire’s reconstitution in the XXI century, leads to the conclusion that the West makes a fatal mistake in relations with Russia.

Instead of disarming Ukraine, the West would have to achieve complete nuclear disarmament of Russia, rather than trying to democratize its political regime.

Thus, the general methodological review of the nature of Russian national interest enables us to turn to the main and more important issues: how is national interest interpreted and implemented in relations with Ukraine and what place does it take in the structure of this interest? The answers to these questions allow us to resolve the basic dilemma of Ukrainian-Russian relations: war or peaceful coexistence of Ukraine and Russia as independent states. If the classic of American geopolitics Nicholas Spykman says that a conflict in the international environment is more typical than cooperation, then Ukrainians face a question of how to survive in the war with Russia and to preserve its state sovereignty? If the answer is coexistence – then under what conditions is it possible and how long and stable can it be? History of Ukrainian-Russian relations proves that coexistence of two independent states is possible, but only during a relatively short historical period, in the periods of Russian weakness and, accordingly, establishment of a new balance of power in the international arena at this background, which actually fixed that power imbalances that emerged between Russia and the West in favor of the last one.

The nature of the Ukrainian-Russian relations is conditioned, first of all, by the antagonism of the national interests of Ukraine and Russia. The book reveals what exactly this antagonism means. If the interests between the Ukrainian and Russian sides as subjects of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict are antagonistic, then a third question arises - what needs form such interests of the sides in the process of bilateral Ukrainian-Russian interaction. Needs, in turn, are formed by the environment, in which the subjects of the conflict exist and develop in the process of their relationship. This, in turn, raises the need for a retrospective analysis of emergence of the relations between Ukraine and Russia and evolution of their historical development.

In general, this analysis shows that antagonism in relations between Ukraine and Russia arises from the very beginning of emergence and incipience of the Ukrainian-Russian relations and has existed for over 600 years. The main subject of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, which concerns the antagonistic contradictions between the two sides of the relationship, is *the issue of identity*. This can lead to the conclusion that **the Russian-Ukrainian conflict is a collision of opposite identities**. Moreover, according to the dialectical theory, this means that there are alternative identities in the relations, which, at the same time, assume the existence of each other as a part of the bilateral relations (object) and constitute the essence of these relationships only in the unity. These identities can exist only in unity, because their collision or struggle is impossible without this unity.

The struggle for these identities is the essence of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict as the ultimate state of Ukrainian-Russian relations. Each of the identities is formed in the process of mutual struggle. Therefore, in principle, this substance of identity as a whole represents the unity of opposites: *identities and differences*. Thus, in its deep essence, **the Russian-Ukrainian conflict represents a clash of the Russian and Ukrainian identities, which are in unity and interdependence, but remain in the eternal struggle. This state determines simultaneously their coexistence and war - a war in the conditions of coexistence.**

Coexistence in this sense is a necessary condition for their struggle.

The subject of antagonism in this conflict of identities is “a land” as a living space that is interpreted as “Russian land”, “a state” as a space of power and its “international status” as a geopolitical space; “society” as “the Russian people”, which has its cultural-historical space, which is interpreted as “the Russian world” or “the Slavic world”. These subjects of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict are of fundamental interests to both Russians and Ukrainians, as they are simultaneously the subject of identifying their territory as a living space, a nation, statehood and place in the international environment. So, this conflict of identities is systemic, antagonistic, since it represents a clash of interests or claims to the same object or space.

The struggle for these spaces or the place in it makes the Russo-Ukrainian conflict extremely urgent and long-lasting, in which the interests of one of the sides are realized due to impossibility of the interests of the other side. In this situation, identification of one side with respect to the subject of the conflict denies the identity of the other side on the same subject. On the basis of this, it is possible to distinguish four circles of antagonisms: a small circle (central) – antagonism around the living space (“land”); a middle circle – antagonism around the power (“statehood”); a big circle – antagonism of national identities (“nation, people”); a mega-circle – antagonism around the place in the system of international relations (subject, status). All four circles of antagonisms are woven into one node and constantly foster each other in the process of the conflict development.

The retrospective analysis, presented in this book, shows that the war between Russia and Ukraine usually ended with defeats of the last one when it relied solely on external factors. Analysis of the combination of external and internal factors gave the author a possibility to outline the prediction of the Russian-Ukrainian war and its consequences for both states and peoples. The book concludes that the further course of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict will be determined by two decisive trends: **firstly**, *Russia will continue to pursue*

*strategies of controlled chaos and controlled escalation, but switch to more moderate scenarios of their implementation; **secondly**, erosion of the oligarchic-kleptocratic regime and weakening of Ukraine as a whole will take place.* Thus, the most likely scenario of the Russian-Ukrainian war for the short-term and medium-term prospects will be ***the scenario of “escalation of hostilities at a low level of intensity” with the possible seizure of new territories of Ukraine by Russian troops*** in order to force Ukraine to make changes to the Constitution of Ukraine, “integration of the autonomous “DPR/LPR” into Ukraine, elections of pro-Russian deputies on their territory, further attempts of federalization of Ukraine, formation of autonomous “Odesa and Kharkiv republics” through referendums, protection of all Russian-cultural citizens of Ukraine and, ultimately, reunification of Russia and Ukraine (subjects of South-Eastern Ukraine).” It is obvious that the scenario of Ukraine’s absorption in the way of “a widespread war” will be placed to the background, as it provides significant risks to Vladimir Putin, since this does not give a guaranteed result.

As for the Ukrainian side, in the case of absence of strategic thinking the post-Maidan government has no strategy of its behaviour in the Russian-Ukrainian war. The problem is that the kleptocratic elite is incapable for national interests thinking and, thus, formulating and solving of strategic tasks. Predominance of business interests and a desire to strengthen personal power deprive and exclude the possibility of development and implementation of plans for the war with the aggressor by the country’s leadership. So, in the short and medium terms, the Ukrainian authorities will try to follow ***a scenario of “no war and no peace”***, which, in the case of a significant escalation of hostilities, will move to ***a scenario of “losses of individual territories.”***

The year of 2018 will be the key to changes in scenarios of the Russian-Ukrainian war. The prerequisites for such changes will be: deepening of the economic crisis in Russia, which will take place during the new presidential campaign of V.Putin in Russia; a culmination of the Western sanctions against Russia, even if they are abolished

in 2017; presidential election campaign in Ukraine, change of European elites through presidential and parliamentary elections in the EU countries and other events. Therefore, the prediction for greater depth in the long-term perspective is impossible without taking into account more influential external factors that determine the relationship between the West and Russia.

In the short-term and mid-term perspectives up to 2018-2020, the tendency for further weakening of the West and Ukraine and strengthening of Russia will be preserved. After all, Russia has managed to withstand the negative consequences of falling world oil prices and the introduction of Western sanctions, reducing investments and labour resources. In 2016, the Russian economy began to emerge from the recession. Slowly, by 0,3%, GDP started growing, inflation slowed down, growth of real incomes of the population and companies was restored, and the rate of the Russian ruble stabilized.

Russia’s hybrid war against the West has also brought considerable success. The US has largely become more dependent on Russia in resolving international security problems, rather the opposite. The problem of Iran’s nuclear program, the war in Syria, the fight against IDIL are obvious confirmations to this. Europe became more tangible after imposing its sanctions on Russia, rather the opposite. Obviously, Europe will eventually abandon such sanctions and encourage Russia to return to economic cooperation. Largely due to Russian propaganda, Russia has considerably stepped up anti-Western forces in Europe, which has deprived the US, NATO and the EU of political, economic and military strategic advantages in the post-Soviet space.

By using its hybrid war, Russia has considerably deepened the crisis in the EU and the growth of disintegration tendencies inside the community. Stimulation of Syrian refugees to go to Europe, anti-American and euro-sceptic attitudes among the EU members can be considered as real non-military victories of Russia over the West. Russia managed to block the ratification of the Association Agreement between the EU and Ukraine through the Dutch referendum and force NATO to abandon

its expansion to the East. To a large extent, the West will increasingly return to its relations with Russia on the basis of the “business is business” principle, forgetting about its civilization values and the inviolability of international law.

NATO was not able to react adequately and promptly to the Russian military threat. NATO allowed its military to fall into decline, but it transformed from the defensive alliance into a political and security organization. Instead of moving to a strategy of regional deterrence of Russia, the Alliance is trying to draw it in a strategic partnership that shows psychological unwillingness of the Alliance to confront Russia and, especially, a war with it. Russia considers this as a psychological surrender of the Alliance, which further heightens its aggressive intentions.

In the medium-term perspective, Russia will increase its military presence along the NATO borders and commit constant military provocations. The anti-NATO hysteria within the country and discredit of NATO among the European populations will grow. By creating a hobgoblin of the main threat from NATO, Russia's leadership will convince its citizens in necessity to increase military spending, abandon economic modernization and reduce social spendings to address this threat. At the same time, in the European countries, such militaristic propaganda will contribute to strengthening fears of a possible war between Russia and NATO, which will lead to a loss of solidarity in the organization's actions to provide collective defense. By such actions Russia will push the West to agree on establishment of a new order based on power, especially on the balance of power on the eastern borders of NATO has already shifted to Russia.

Coming from such a balance of forces in the medium-term perspective after the increase escalation of any military-political crisis, including a full-fledged war, becomes possible. In the case of aggravation of the crisis, this scenario seems quite probable in the medium-term perspective. In such a situation, the territory of Ukraine, as already noted, may become a theatre of a large-scale war. In the long-term perspective, judging the tendency that occurred at the end of the first decade and in

the beginning of the second decade of the XXI century, there will be both Russia's degradation and subsequent disintegration of the West that will weaken the external influence of the two key players.

In the third decade, the wave of the economic crisis in Russia will come because of the negative impact of economic sanctions, large investment projects will be closed, the state budget deficit will increase, the stabilization fund will exhaust, the investments in the export-oriented sectors of the economy will be substantially reduced or stopped. Gradual reduction of the working population and a decline in labor productivity will take place. As a result, carrying out ambitious military programs will be extremely difficult that will again lead to a decrease in the military capabilities of the armed forces and military power of Russia.

Therefore, by destroying the world order or at least its European part, Russia may not have enough forces and resources to rebuild it on its own terms and vision. And then Russia will sink in this international chaos, which will necessarily sweep its own territory. Ukraine will have to survive on its own in conditions of this international chaos, while fighting simultaneously with internal challenges of the agonizing oligarchic-kleptocratic regime and external challenges of the Russian-Ukrainian war, the most likely results and the course of which will be *scenarios of “neither peace nor a war” and “Somali” scenario* in depending on the ability of both parties to continue this war.

Strengthening of Ukraine is possible at the period of 2020-2025, when the agony of the oligarchic-kleptocratic regime will take place and be replaced by a new generation of Ukrainian national elite that will be able to carry out effective reforms in the country, *a scenario of “a total war”* on restoration of territorial integrity and state sovereignty of Ukraine in the occupied territories will become possible.

If this does not happen and the oligarchic-kleptocratic system in the country will be strengthened, impoverishment of the people and radicalization of social sentiment and degradation of the spiritual foundations of the Ukrainian nation will intensify. This will lead to a possibility that at

the next presidential election, pro-Russian forces may again come to power in the aftermath of the war. In such a situation, an inevitable result of the Russian-Ukrainian war will be *a scenario of “satellites”*, which ultimately leads to negative or fatal consequences similar to that Ukraine has already experienced in its history more than once. To avoid this scenario, Ukrainians need to get rid of one significant flaw.

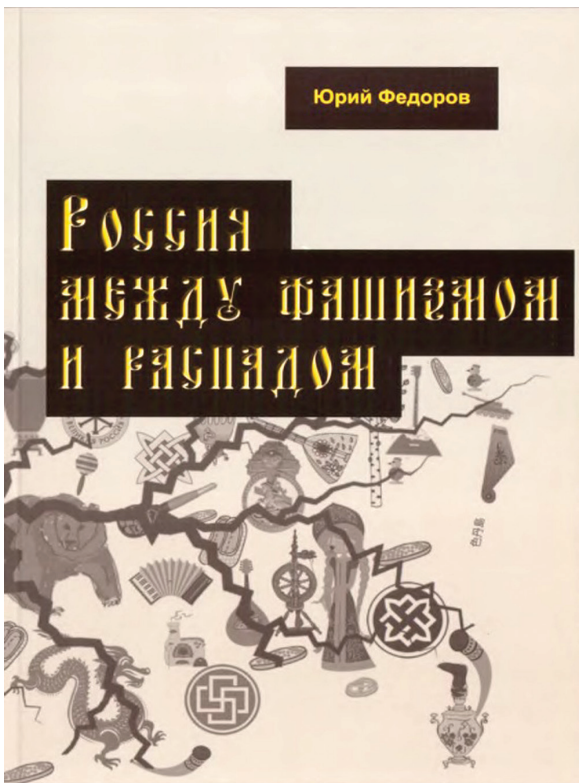
The problem lies in the fact that Ukrainians do not feel the danger of coexistence with Russia, living together with an insidious and perfect neighbor that can not accept their otherness and the right to have their own home, their land and their freedom. The threat of the future of Ukraine lies not in the quantity and power of the Russian armies, but in the absence of a filling of danger that is permanently coming from Russia and which the Russian state is trying to implement at the first appropriate opportunity. The nature of this congenital disadvantage lies in the perception of Russia by the ruling elite and a part of the Ukrainian society as their second homeland, and Russians as a fraternal people. The image of an “elder brother”, which for centuries was used and planted

in the consciousness of Ukrainians, does not allow them to really realize the mortal threat that comes from such “brotherhood”. Due to this myth about “brotherhood” Ukrainians cannot perceive Russia as “enemy”, and the Russian people as an invader. This innate blindness of Ukrainians explains why Russia’s insidious policy in relations to Ukraine is much more successful than an open war on the battlefield. So, it’s time to take a look as it is summarized in the book.

Thus, by its content the book reveals the preconditions and evolution of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict, the strategic goals and interests of Ukraine and Russia in the war, the peculiarities of the hybrid war of Russia, the strategy and tactics of the parties in the war and its international consequences. We hope that readers will find answers to such fateful questions in this book.

If the book is interesting for you, everyone can order it in the Foreign Policy Research Institute by writing to the e-mail: institute-fpri@ukr.net, or calling to: 0(68) 0176014; 0(97)4872000.

Russia Between Fascism and Disintegration



Essay of the Book

The Center for Army, Conversion and Disarmament Studies (CACDS) provides readers with a new publication on the perspectives of Russia – a book by **Yu. Fedorov** “**Russia Between Fascism and Disintegration**”.

The crisis of Putin’s regime becomes irreversible. The ruling clique is unable to offer even a marginally sensible model for overcoming Russia’s economic degradation. Russia remains dependent on fossil fuel exports, and widely-publicized import substitution is limited to clumsy protectionist measures which may be in line with the interests of several state corporations and some Russian businesses (largely agricultural ones), but at the same time offer Russian companies no incentives to modernize production or improve product quality. In science and technology, Russia is falling further behind China and the West. Despite its feverish efforts, the Kremlin cannot find a way out of the trap it has driven itself into by invading Ukraine and getting entangled in a “war against everybody” in Syria.

However, it appears unlikely that Putin’s Russia would transform into a relatively “normal”

state, one that is less dangerous to its neighbors and on the way to gradual integration into the global democratic community; or that it would abandon attempts to infringe on the sovereignty of neighboring states. Putin’s foreign policies are met with popular support in Russia, and any attempt to revise them will be met with strong resistance from the circles that constitute the “muscle” and ideological support of the current ruling clique. These circles have far reaching roots throughout Russian society. Political scientists and the media usually refer to them as “the security chiefs,” even though the heads of the so-called “power ministries” only account for some of them, perhaps not even a majority. These include the top brass and the officer corps of the armed forces and security services as well as most of the figures involved in the military-industrial complex; the clergy of the Russian Orthodox Church; some members of the bureaucratic machine, as well as financial and industrial groups interested in preserving and strengthening the existing economic and political course; political and academic circles, as well as members of the media involved in substantiating and promoting Russia’s strong anti-Western and neo-Imperial strategy. Many prominent members of these groups would suffer heavy personal losses if Russia’s existing course was to be abandoned.

These circles share the authoritarian tendencies that are widespread throughout Russian mass consciousness, ideas about the necessity of a “strong ruling hand,” and anti-Western, neo-Imperial, great-power chauvinist sentiments. They are typically xenophobic, invested in the so-called “traditional Russian spiritual values” and a distinct Russian identity; they believe that the interests of the state (of the bureaucratic machine) are superior to those of the individual, and share a disregard towards civil and political rights. The influence of these groups will certainly proliferate the systemic crisis, and as a result, the two most likely prospective scenarios will be either the establishment of a fascist regime, or the growing separatist tendencies ultimately resulting in the breakdown of Russia as a state.

Old order has gone -
New order will come



Will look like



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