

SYNERGING



ENERGIES

BLACK SEA SECURITY

ANALYTICAL MAGAZINE No. 1 (33) 2019



FOCUS ON:

CRIMEA.
FIVE YEARS OF OCCUPATION

MARITIME POLICY
OF UKRAINE

IDEL-URAL. POLYETHNIC
VOLCANO OF RUSSIA

IT IS 2 MINUTES
TO MIDNIGHT

BERDYANSK

small armored artillery boat



ROMAN MOKRIAK
(1986, Kyrovograd region)



ANDRII ARTEMENKO
(1994, Kyrovograd region)



BOHDAN GOLOVASH
(1996, Poltava region)



YURII BEZIAZYCHNYI
(1990, Odesa region)



ANDRII EIDER
(1999, Odesa region)



DENYS HRYTSENKO
(1984, Mykolaiv city)

AUXILIARY CREW MEMBERS



ANDRII SHEVCHENKO



SERHII CHULYBA
(1992, Kherson region)



VOLODYMYR VARYMEZ
(1992, Odesa region)



YURII BUDZYLO
(1972, Odesa city)

NIKOPOL

small armored artillery boat



BOHDAN NEBYLITSA
(1994, Sumy region)



VIACHESLAV ZINCHENKO
(1998, Kyshyniv city)



SERHII CHYBIZOV
(1997, Khmelnytskyi region)



SERHII POPOV
(1991, Donetsk region)



VLADYSLAV KOSTISHYN
(1994, Cherkasy region)



ANDRII OPRYSKO
(1971, Lviv region)

SBU OFFICERS



ANDRII DRACH



VASYL SOROKA
(Odesa region)

YANI KAPU

tagboat



OLEH MELNYCHUK
(1995, Cherkasy region)



MYKHAILO VLASIUK
(1984, Kyiv city)



VOLODYMYR TERESHCHENKO
(1994, Dnipro city)



VICTOR BEZPALCHENKO
(1987, Kherson region)



YEVHENII SEMYDOTSKYI
(1998, Luhansk region)



VOLODYMYR LISOVYI
(Sevastopol city)

UKRAINIAN SAILORS DETAINED BY RUSSIA

 hromadske



UKRAINIAN HOSTAGES OF THE KREMLIN  **70 ARE STILL IMPRISONED**  **10 ALREADY RELEASED**
AS OF JANUARY 31, 2019

LET MY PEOPLE GO!

POST-TRUTH WORLD MEGACORRUPTION IN TIME OF PUTIN'S HYBRID WARS:

Gas flows to Europe in exchange for a blind eye on the Kremlin's repressions against the Ukrainians



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they have been kept in prison by the FSB
on the fabricated charges.

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

Dear readers,

2019 has arrived. Now the world is one year closer to a new global conflict. That is, if revanchism, hegemonism and militarism of today's Russia are not thwarted. Putin's wars did not begin today, but the new Crimean war unleashed by Russia in the 21st century brought Europe to the brink of Apocalypse. In 2019, the hands of Doomsday Clock, which marks time left till global catastrophe since 1945, show two minutes to midnight. Similar situation took place only at the dawn of the Cold War era in 1953, when the nuclear fusion bomb was invented and when the Korean War was still going on. An article published in the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, who adjust the hands on the clock each year, specifically pointed out that there is a growing concern about a possibility of Russia initiating hybrid conflicts, similar to occupation of Crimea and support given to secessionists in the east of Ukraine, spearheaded against the new NATO member countries. My guess is that in August 2019, when the remaining 6-month period of validity of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty torpedoed by Russia is over, the clock's hands will be another 30 seconds closer to Apocalypse.

5 years ago, when Putin's "little green men" invaded Crimea, at first people did not realize that they were the harbingers of Apocalypse. Unfortunately, even today a lot of people in Europe do not understand that Pandora's Box has been opened back then. This issue of the journal is mostly dedicated to the 5th anniversary of occupation of Crimea and Sevastopol. It is important to not forget what happened in Crimea then and duly assess the events that happened at that time. In the time of "post-truth politics" the false interpretations of the events of February-March 2014 are far from being in short supply. In addition to claims that "Crimea belonged to Russia from the time immemorial" circulated by Russian propaganda, there appear western versions which speak about "disputed territory".

In this issue we present analysis of the events that preceded the invasion, their development, and also what could have been done, what has not been done and what can be expected. This time our editorial board chose to involve well-known experts from both our country and from abroad

– Mykhailo Samus from Ukraine, Stephen Blank from the USA and Paweł Kost from Poland – in analyzing the Crimean episode of Putin's wars. Crimea's economy has been reviewed by Eugenia Goryunova from V.I Vernadsky Tavrida National University which has found refuge in Kyiv after occupation of the peninsula.

Among other things, 2018 will be remembered as the year that saw the appearance of two new strategic documents – the Maritime Doctrine of Ukraine until 2015 and the Strategy of the Naval Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine until 2035. The documents stirred up a heated debate among experts. Sergii Shumskyi, member of the Ukrainian Navy Veterans Association has done an in-depth analysis of both documents which we included in this issue. Complete text of the analysis, together with thoughts of Vice-Admiral Sergii Hayduk, who was the Ukrainian Navy Commander in 2014-2016, will be available on the website of the Centre for Global Studies Strategy XXI.

To be able to conquer the enemy, you need to thoroughly study him, to identify his weaknesses. Being a polyethnic, multiconfessional and geographically de-concentrated country, under Putin's regime, Russia, despite the fact that its official name includes the word "federation", has become over-centralized. Exercising a hard-handed rule, the Kremlin tries to maintain the order, established by its kleptocracy. But this hard-handedness makes the regime weaker, more vulnerable. Now not only the periphery of Russia, but also its traditional core demonstrates activity that was non-existent since 1990s. In this issue we publish an article by Pavlo Podobied, political analyst, concerning Idel-Ural – this terra incognita of the Urals-Volga region seized by the Tsardom of Muscovy.

Oksana Ishchuk reviews foreign media materials dedicated to the Black Sea Region issues. Besides, we published the text of an important document – Resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe No 2259 (2019) "The escalation of tensions around the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait and threats to European security". Infographics provided by the Crimean Human Rights Group sums up the crimes of the occupation regime in regard to violation of human rights on the Peninsula of Bondage in 2018.

EDITOR'S PREFACE

We are in the year 2019, and that means that we are one year closer to de-occupation of Crimea and Sevastopol. It brings us closer to liberation of our editorial board members – Oleksii Bessarabov and Dmytro Shtyblykov, as well as Volodymyr Dudka - from detention in Russian jails. Dmytro Shtyblykov is once again sent by prisoner transport from Crimea to Siberia, where he has to contribute serving his 5-year-sentence in maximum security labour camp. Notwithstanding the fact that the case of “infiltrators” is falling apart even in the Crimean “court” fully controlled by the occupants and that Oleksii Bessarabov and Volodymyr Dudka deny any charges, they are kept in the detention centre for almost three years now. But the days of the regime of Bondage are numbered!

#FreeShtyblykov #FreeBessarabov #FreeDudka
#Free70Kremlin'sPrisoners

And finally, our greetings to the new generation of Sevastopol people – Vasylo and Marichka – who came into this world in Kyiv to the Mayorov family – Alina and Maksym, just before Christmas. This event has a symbolic significance! New lives for new times – after de-occupation of Crimea and Sevastopol. We all are going to return to Sevastopol Bay!

#FreeCrimea #FreeSevastopol

*Editorial Board
of the Black Sea Security Magazine*



Photos: Oleksii Bessarabov, Dmytro Shtyblykov, Volodymyr Dudka

Mykhailo GONCHAR,

President of the Centre for Global Studies Strategy XXI,

Editor-in-chief of the Black Sea Security Magazine,

Director on energy programs of the NOMOS Centre (Sevastopol) in 2006-2014

Crimean Blitzkrieg of Russian Hybression*

Russia: A Path to New Crimean War

Putin's Russia carried out a thorough analysis of its actions against Ukraine both in the Yeltsin period, when the young Ukrainian state neutralized the Moscow-inspired attempt to separate Sevastopol and Crimea from Ukraine in the 90's, as well as an invasion in Georgia in August 2008, separation of the Tskhinvali District and the creation of a puppet "Republic of South Ossetia." One of the most important aspects of the revision was the approach to formation of the «fifth column» in those countries, which became the targets for the Russian aggression, as well as propaganda support and legal justification of the invasion. This was especially noticeable in Crimea starting from the 2000s, when Russia flourished with the rapidly growing oil export revenues.

An incident with the blockade of Sea Breeze-2008 international exercises, which as usual took place annually in Crimea, by the local diverse pro-Russian forces, was indicative. One can state that this was the first large-scale "training" for political parties of the left and pro-Russian local NGOs to "repel NATO's aggression." The secret coordination was carried out by the headquarters of the Black Sea Fleet of Russia, working out the coherence of actions of all the actors for the future. All this was used in 2014 against parts and units of the armed forces of Ukraine.

In 2010s, first of all, the activity of the Russian Institute for Strategic Studies (RISS), which for 2008 was the main «analytical body» of the Foreign Intelligence Service (FIS) of the Russian Federation, was increased significantly in the Crimean direction. In the spring of 2009, the Institute was resubordinated to the Presidential Executive Office of Russia. The nature of RISS activities was also changed with its resubordination: ideological-propaganda support was added to information-analytical support of the work of state structures

of Russia. Leonid Reshetnikov, retired Lieutenant-General of the FIS, an overt Ukrainophobic person and an «Orthodox Communist», who previously headed the information-analytical department of the FIS, was appointed to the post of Director of the Institute». Tamara Guzenkova, Director of the Center for Baltic and CIS Countries, became the leading specialist in Russian-Ukrainian relations. This tandem, with the support of dependent and subordinated to them scholars and experts, promoted the theses like «There is no any Ukraine, there is only Little Russia (Malorossiya)», «Ukrainian statehood is a bluff», «Ukraine is a failed state», formed the concept of consolidation of the post-Soviet space «on the basis of territorial and spiritual renaissance». The authorship of the idea of «New NewRussia (NovoRossia)» belongs to these two «Orthodox emissaries».

In 2010, the Black Sea-Caspian Regional Information and Analytical Center of the RISS in Rostov-on-Don, Russia, which is considered to be the leading expert center in the South for studying relevant social, political and economic processes in the Black Sea-Caspian region, including issues of Russian-Ukrainian relations, prepared a large generalized report on the situation in Ukraine and Crimea. According to the report, the Ukrainian people have been invariably inclined to Russia since the days of the Pereiaslav Council; «insignificant Western trends» are marginal in nature, are provoked by a bunch of pro-fascist residents of Western Ukraine; the vast majority of Ukrainians retain the memory of a common history and dream of a revival of the common state existence of the Russian Empire / the Soviet Union; the Crimean population is in favor of joining the Russian Federation, and in the event of resistance by the organizations of Crimean Tatars and Ukrainian security forces, they can be easily blocked by forces of the Black Sea Fleet units deployed in Sevastopol, primarily by units of the Marine Corps.

* Based on the Project «Wars XXI: Polyhybression of Russia»

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It is clear that the RISS is not the main source of information for the Kremlin, but only one among many. But an incredible mixture of monarchism, stalinism, Orthodoxy, xenophobia, hatred to the West and Ukraine became the main ideological leitmotif of the RISS. Since the late 2000s, thousands of people have been working on this new ideology, especially in the media, in the Foreign Ministry, in the controlled by the Kremlin «public sector».

«Non-state analytical centers» were not too far behind the RISS. It should be noted the special role of the Institute of the CIS countries (Institute of Diaspora and Integration) of the State Duma deputy Konstantin Zatulin. Being a formally autonomous non-profit organization, the Institute of the CIS countries (ICISC) competed with the RISS, especially in 2009-2013, both in terms of providing top state RF leaders with filtered information, and in forming a network of influential agents and «useful idiots» in Ukraine. And if in Kyiv the representative office of the Institute of the CIS countries was headed by the apologist of Donetsk-Kryviy Rig Republic Vladimir Kornilov, then the head of the representative office in Sevastopol was former chief of intelligence of the Black Sea Fleet Rear Admiral (Ret.) Vladimir Solovyov – an experienced intelligence officer and apparatchik. «Zatulin's staffers» not only carried out the collection of intelligence information about the socio-political situation in Ukraine and the ARC, of materials that characterized the leaders of public opinion, but also actively promoted in the minds of the inhabitants of the peninsula the thesis of Ukraine as a failing state, of the illegality of being Crimea and Sevastopol a part of Ukraine. In 2009, the ICISC's report «Transfer of Crimea to Ukraine was illegal and unfair» caused significant public reaction; this report became later the basis of the Russian ideologeme, which was to justify the seizure of Crimea by Russia in 2014. In the same year, according to Zatulin's affirmation, they submitted to the RF Presidential Executive Office an information paper on the need for creation in the east and south of Ukraine (future «New Russia» (Novorossia)) the separatist «People's Front of the South and East of Ukraine» composed of pro-Russian movements and the anti-Ukrainian part of the Party of the Regions electorate. On the sidelines of one of the round tables, the head of the Sevastopol branch of the Institute, Admiral V. Solovyov, was genuinely surprised and impressed

with the question of whether the Black Sea Fleet of Russia would be withdrawn from Crimea after termination in 2017 of the agreement on its temporary stay in Ukraine. «Sooner Ukraine will leave Sevastopol than the Russian Black Sea Fleet will», was his reaction.

Since 2010, intelligence units of the Foreign Intelligence Service and the Main Intelligence Agency of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces, as well as the FSS counter-intelligence unit operating in Sevastopol, received an order to collect information that would characterize and compromise the heads of executive bodies in Crimea, deputies of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC, local authorities, security officials, influential businessmen, scientists, journalists, and other leaders of public opinion in order to use them in the interests of Russia.

It should be noted that the servicemen of the armed forces and security forces of Ukraine were under the close scrutiny of the Russian special services. Data collection on servicemen of the Naval Forces, units of Land and Air Forces of Armed Forces of Ukraine stationed in Crimea, has practically begun since 1992. In the «Appeal of Derzhavnist' parliamentary group to the members of parliament in connection with the consideration by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of draft laws relating to the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, the defense and security of Ukraine" in 1996, it was noted: *“The main method of human intelligence of the GRU and the FSB was infiltration of its agents to the community of officers who returned to Ukraine after the collapse of the Soviet Army, as well as recruitment of servicemen who remained to serve on the Ukrainian territory <...> The most favorable conditions for the human intelligence of the Russian special services were formed on the territory of the Crimean peninsula. This region was the only place outside of Russia, where the GRU was able to work openly on a legal basis, referring to the intelligence structures of the Black Sea Fleet, which was allegedly in the joint Russian-Ukrainian subordination <...> In general, the work of the Russian special services in Crimea was greatly facilitated by the presence of the agents of the central apparatus of the KGB, who, due to a specific region (the presence of a large number of party and state dachas, sanatoriums, rest homes, etc.), were not subordinated and were not known to local security authorities under the jurisdiction of Ukraine”.* [2]

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Consequently, many years of systematic work of Russian intelligence services and its local agents were effectively used by Russia in 2014, when “D-day” came. Vice Admiral Serhii Haiduk, Commander of the Naval Forces in 2014-2016 argues: “... there were many examples when the commanders of the units, for example, a Commander of the Feodosian Marine Corps Battalion, were said openly: you live at such an address, your wife is at home, the child goes to such a school, so are you not afraid for your family? Please take a proper decision! » [3]. “A proper decision” meant to take the Russian side. This gave to aggressor the desired effect. Taking into account the territorial principle of staffing of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, only 3 991 servicemen from 13 468 personnel in Crimea remained faithful to the oath and did not step on the side of the enemy [4].

Later, after occupation, information collected since the 1990s, worked for the a campaign to detect «spies, terrorists and saboteurs» among the objectors to the Russian occupation of Crimea. The list of targeted victims was actually formed during the prewar period. Crimean Tatar activists, as well as regional journalists and experts, turned out in the list. For example, there were experts from the Center of Assistance to the Geopolitical Problems and Euro-Atlantic Cooperation of the Black Sea Region Studies «NOMOS» (Sevastopol), which issued the quarterly «Black Sea Security» and monitored the activity of the Russian Black Sea Fleet not only in Ukraine, but also in the Black and Mediterranean Seas.

Considerable burden in preparation of the hybrid war fell on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and led by it the Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States Affairs, Compatriots Living Abroad, and International Humanitarian Cooperation, more commonly known as «Rossotrudichestvo». The mechanism of the «Russian world» started its work as the conglomerate of marginal pro-Russian organizations, movements, parties and blocs, under the organizational surveillance of diplomats from the Russian embassy in Ukraine and the Russian Consulate General in Simferopol, despite the problematic relations in the pro-Russian political environment in Crimea.

At the same time, the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces was working out options for mili-

tary seizure of Crimea. Under various motives and legends, the peninsula was filled with representatives of Russian intelligence agencies, who carried out reconnaissance trips, reconnaissance of the area, were engaged in covert intelligence work. Intelligence units of the Russian Black Sea Fleet, deployed in Crimea and Sevastopol, were involved in some special operations against Ukraine. The worked out plans were polished during military trainings of Coast Guard units of the fleet under the guise of planning the conducting of the military operations «in the course of resolving internal conflicts» and «counteracting the actions of illegal military formations».

According to experts, the Russian Federation was preparing to occupy the Crimean Peninsula in 2015. The reason was to be the «threat of coming to power in Ukraine of the Nazi president» as a result of the next presidential election. In the Kremlin, it was understood that any president of Ukraine, who will replace Yanukovich, will in the first place denounce 2010 Kharkiv gasfleet agreements between Yanukovich and Medvedev, which continued the term of the Russian Black Sea Fleet deployment in Sevastopol and Crimea until 2042. Denunciation of these agreements was unacceptable for the Russian Federation. However, the unpredicted scenario (EuroMaidan, Revolution of Dignity, escape of V. Yanukovich from Ukraine) forced the military-political leadership of Russia to implement their hidden plan ahead of schedule, in fact a year earlier – in 2014. Its successful implementation during a short period from February 20 to March 18 indicates that not only a scenario of operation has already been prepared in advance, but also the necessary complexes of early preparations for “D-day” have been completed. According to military experts, the actions of paramilitary forces - the Crimean “self-defense”, fighting clubs, security firms, veterans' organizations, Cossack groups - were not spontaneous, but well-coordinated. “Not suddenly the self-defense squadrons appeared in 2014, the servicemen of which were dressed in camouflage, had weapons, had some coordinated systematic prompt actions, communication tools - the same does not happen in nature» [5] - states Vice-Admiral S. Haiduk. It should also be noted the work of Russian special services with members of the regional departments of the Security Service of Ukraine, whose activities were not just paralyzed, but carried out during the invasion, in fact in favor of the aggressor. This is confirmed

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by the highest percentage of traitors among the SBU servicemen in Crimea - 86.4% compared to other security structures [6].

Technology for creation of Crimean chaos

In his 2013 work, "Hard Diplomacy and Soft Coercion: Russia's Influence Abroad", James Sherr, Fellow of the British Royal Institute for Foreign Affairs, Chatham House, put together means and practices traditionally used by Czarist and Soviet Russia and still used by the modern Russian Federation in its relations with neighbors near and distant. According to him, these are:

- the policy of division and influence;
- the use of moral, financial, and political vulnerability;
- infiltration (to opponents and allies);
- involvement (temporary and conditional alliances);
- creating fictitious companies, "shadow" structures, using proxies;
- using covert operations and agents of influence;
- language manipulations;
- the use methods of propaganda and means of information-and-psychological warfare.

Russia has been using the entire range of methods and tactics mentioned above, not only during the hybrid war against Ukraine but during the entire period of the existence of the independent Ukrainian state. This is why the theory of spontaneity of Putin's actions against Ukraine, spread from time to time by Russian politicians beyond Russian borders, is either spin-doctoring or lack of deep retrospective analysis of Russia's policy in relation to Ukraine. The assessment by the then US President B. Obama was a rebroadcast of this theory. Mr. Obama said that Putin had not had a prepared strategy towards Ukraine, while the annexation of Crimea was the Kremlin's "improvisation" in response to protests in Maidan, unexpected for Moscow.

With the occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Russia used a 4-stroke algorithm, which is typical for hybrid war technology. It looks as follows:

1. **making dependent** of the highest state leadership of Ukraine on the Russian Federa-

tion through the formula of "strategic partnership" under the cover of which the program of crypto destruction of the state is implemented (maximizing of the financial, cultural and informational presence of Russia on the peninsula under cover of assistance to compatriots, increasing of private investment in Crimea, supporting of local pro-Russian forces issuing Russian passports to the Crimean people)

2. **transformation** of certainties and states (autonomy of the peninsula as part of Ukraine) into a cluster of uncertainties, chaotization of of cause-and-effect chains (there is no Russian intervention in Crimea, but there is chaos and a coup d'état in Kyiv, "people of Crimea" do not accept Maidan, Ukraine falls apart, Crimea wants to be with Russia)

3. **chaos management** to disorganization and blocking the activity of the central government through quick decisions, initiative actions (placement of "green men", "self-defense forces", "Cossack formations" along the peninsula) and preventive measures against other operators (blocking of military units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine on the peninsula and state institutions, disinformation of the world community about the events in Crimea and Ukraine).

4. **putting chaos to order, re-engineering of space**, gaining new reality through synergy. (Initiating of referendum on self-determination of Crimea, annexation of peninsula).

Let us consider how worked the 4-stroke algorithm of Putin's hybression on the example of Russia's Crimean blitzkrieg. Crimea's status as an autonomy within Ukraine is swiftly eroded by forces of "local self-defense" which emerged "impromptu" and, with support of "polite people" took key positions on the peninsula and seized administrative buildings. All this happened to the accompaniment of a propaganda campaign about a "Nazi" threat to Crimea and its people as a result of the "coup" in Kyiv, the seizure of power by the "junta" which had deposed the lawfully elected President and sent detachments of "The Right Sector" to the peninsula. A temporary uncertain status is created when formally the governance of Crimea is still effected from Kyiv but in reality the center can no longer fulfill the governance function because

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of the obstructionist position of local authorities, backed by “self-defense”, various “Cossacks”, and “polite people” of unknown origin. A room for opportunities emerges, and several transfer options: Crimea as another formally independent state but in fact a Russian satellite; Crimea as a Russian-Ukrainian condominium with Russia’s dominant role; Crimea within Russia.

However, the uncertainty is clear in one thing: for Russia, Crimea is no longer part of Ukraine. Military-and-political management of the uncertainty in the peninsula after its occupation by “little green men” through the mechanism of a questionable referendum is targeting only one of the possible options: Crimea within Russia. Through the referendum, Russia gains the synergy effect, expands its territory by occupying Crimea, and begins re-engineering of the post-Soviet space with the ambition to the geopolitical space of Europe after Yalta-1945. The history of the world after WWII began in Crimea. After 70 years, it receives an opportunity to restart in Crimea again. And again, it will restart on conditions of the lord of Crimea, i.e. the Kremlin, and specifically Vladimir Putin. According to the Kremlin’s logic, the history made a turn: the Russian status and order have returned to Crimea.

The authorship of technology of hybression (hybrid aggression) may be assigned to Vladislav Surkov. The former member of the State Duma of the RF and political exile, Ilya Ponomaryov, who knows well the Kremlin, characterized Surkov’s role in a way that agrees with the one given above: “He is the most talented technologist. He’s got the reputation of an artist... And you need a masterful player for Ukraine. His role in the annexation of Crimea is the key role. Russian Ministry of Defense and the Main Intelligence Directorate were executives, while Surkov was an architect” [7].

As the chief technologist, Surkov takes direct part in and controls the technological process of hybression where it happens, in Ukraine. Starting from the summer of 2013 and until the end of the winter of 2014, six of his trips to Ukraine became known (those which made it to the public space) [8]:

1. mid-August 2013: Surkov in Kyiv, **13-14 August he was in Crimea** (the proxy phase of the hybrid war starts: Ukraine’s export is blocked);
2. 20-21 January 2014: Surkov in Kyiv, in Viktor Yanukovych’s Administration, at the height of

preparation for the introduction of the state of emergency;

3. 31 January-1 February: Surkov in Kyiv, with his aides (Rappoport, Chesnakov, Pavlov);
4. 11-12 February: Surkov and Rappoport **in Donetsk and Crimea**;
5. 14-15 February: Surkov in Kyiv again;
6. 20-21 February: Surkov and an FSB General Sergiy Beseda in Kyiv, together with a group of law enforcers (launch of the military component of the hybression – diffused invasion of Crimea).

Summarizing the internal Russian assessments of the operation “on the return of Crimea”, it should be noted that the expert consensus exists on the fact that Moscow succeeded to disorient Kyiv and the West before holding referendum on March 16, 2014 as there was an uncertainty about the level of Russian involvement in the Crimean events and its further intentions. This made it difficult both for Ukraine and its western partners to develop a timely and effective joint response to these actions. Through the prism of these estimates, the current US president Donald Trump was right when he pointed out the shed misconceptions, or rather inactivity of his predecessor, Barack Obama: «Obama to blame for Crimea. He lost Crimea...» [9].

It should be noted that abovementioned the 4-stroke algorithm worked for the Azov direction. Now the first stroke is being implemented. Under the cover of the 2003 Azov Agreement (Agreement between the Russian Federation and the Ukraine on cooperation in the use of the sea of Azov and the strait of Kerch of December 24, 2003), and under the pretext of protecting the Kerch Bridge from sabotage, the naval activity of Ukraine was complicated and limited, which causes economic damage to the Ukrainian Azov region, first of all to the ports of Mariupol and Berdyansk.

In the future, according to the plan, this should cause the effect of the discontent over Kyiv in the society, social protests, the emergence of “local public activists” who will call for “understanding with Russia”, “dialogue with the Donetsk People’s Republic”, the use of parliamentary elections and, subsequently, elections to local self-government bodies to make proxies passing to the Verkhovna Rada, the seizure of local control by “active citi-

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zens" (with the support of organized crime that might be controlled by the Russian agents), which will formulate and raise the question of the autonomy of Azov region under the guise of further decentralization, lending a friendly hand to Azov by Russian regions (Rostov region, Krasnodar region), as well as from Crimea and so-called "Donetsk People's Republic". All this in aggregate should lead to disorganization of the management of the region from Kyiv, its reorientation to Russia on the principles of "pragmatism." The algorithm crashed on November 25, 2018, when Russia resorted to aggressive actions against the naval group of the Ukrainian Navy in the Black Sea near the Kerch Strait. At the same time, such actions of Russia demonstrated that by trying to prevent the strengthening of Ukraine's military capabilities on Azov Russia prepared a hybrid scenario, including a military component, for the Ukrainian Azov region, as had occurred in Crimea.

Specifics of the Crimean stage of hybression.

The operation of the RF Armed Forces on the occupation of the Crimean peninsula is a camouflaged heavy-handed part of the RF hybrid aggression against Ukraine. In accordance with the above mentioned stages, it was a previously planned stage of engagement of the military component of the hybrid war in the event if after the intensive proxy phase, which lasted from August 14, 2013 until February 20, 2014, it would not be possible to reach the strategic goal - to conquer Ukraine completely, having curbed the Maidan.

The operation was started on February 20, 2014, when President Viktor Yanukovich was still in Kyiv and was negotiating with the opposition with the participation of international mediators - foreign ministers from Poland, Germany and France, as well as a special envoy of the president of the Russian Federation. Meanwhile, "empty" landing ships of the Black Sea Fleet with "green men" on boards were entering the Sevastopol bay, using the right of entering without a customs inspection, provided to the ships and vessels of the Black Sea Fleet of Russia in accordance with the Russian-Ukrainian agreements of 1997; military cargo aircraft were landing at the Kacha airfield with special force unit "Vypel" on boards. The occupation of Crimea began from Sevastopol. This was done quite simply, given the legal presence of the personnel and hardware of the Black Sea Fleet of Russia.

The chronology of the launch of the military component of hybrid aggression is important for understanding how Russia misinformed the international community, which tactics and strategy were used and where and when the Ukrainian side had opportunities to stop Russian aggressive actions.

- On February 20, the aide to the president of the Russian Federation, Vladislav Surkov, arrived in Kyiv. In Crimea, information came out that the group of armored personnel carriers had departed from the deployment site of the 810th Marine Corps Brigade of the Black Sea Fleet in the Cossack Bay of Sevastopol in the direction of the city exit. Explanation: "The Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation in Crimea has brought its troops to the enhanced security regime due to the difficult political situation in Ukraine".

- In the night of 22-23 February - a meeting of Putin with siloviks (later Putin himself confirmed it) with a mandate "to begin work on the return of Crimea to Russia".

- On February 23, at a rally in Sevastopol, "people's mayor" was "elected" - the citizen of the Russian Federation Alexei Chaly, whom FSS agents brought urgently by plane from Turkey;

- On February 24, Russian armored vehicles completely blocked entries and exits of Sevastopol;

- On February 25, a group of ships of the Black Sea Fleet, which returned from Novorossiysk after the completion of the Olympic Games in Sochi, delivered more than a thousand of armed paratroopers to Sevastopol;

- On the night of February 26-27, special forces of unit "Vypel" (of the Russian Federal Security Service's Special Forces Center) and of the 45th Separate Special Operations Regiment (of Airborne Forces of Russia) arrived secretly in military uniform without identification badges/insignias from Sevastopol to Simferopol and seized the buildings of the Verkhovna Rada and the Council of Ministers of the AR Crimea. Baricades were built in front of the buildings;

- In the morning of February 27, the Russian military forces set up checkpoints on the Perekop Isthmus and the Chongar Peninsula, through which rail and road connections be-

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tween Crimea and mainland Ukraine run. "Don Cossacks" were deployed there together with Russian military;

- On February 28, the Russian special forces without insignia seized the Simferopol airport and the Belbek airfield (Sevastopol airport). 11 Russian Mi-24 attack helicopters invaded Crimea from Russia. Four Russian military cargo aircraft Il-76MD with paratroopers, violating the airspace of Ukraine, landed at the Airfield Gvardiyske. The State Border Guard Service of Ukraine was given a notice in an ultimatum form that the planes would be landing every 15 minutes. No one was allowed to inspect the aircraft. Several dozen armored vehicles, including the "Tiger" armored vehicles and other types of equipment and weapons, which had not previously been in the military units of the Russian Federation in Crimea, started moving from Sevastopol and Gvardiyske in the direction of Simferopol. The Maritime Guard unit of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine in Balaklava was surrounded by unknown armed people;

- On March 1, Viktor Yanukovych was ousted by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Having been taken by Russian special forces to Russia on February 23, he appealed to the Russian president to "use the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation to restore legitimacy, peace, law and order, stability and protection of the population of Ukraine." Obviously, such an appeal was made under Russian dictation for the subsequent legitimization of the use of armed forces, which has already lasted in fact since February 20;

- On March 1-2, four large landing ships - "Kaliningrad", "Minsk", "Georgy Pobedonostets" of the Baltic Fleet and the "Olenegorsky Miner" of the Northern Fleet of the Russian Federation with paratroopers and technicians taken on board in Novorossiysk - entered Sevastopol one after another;

- On March 3, the blocking of all Ukrainian military units in Crimea was started; it lasted until March 25. Exits into the sea from the bays of Sevastopol and the lake Donuzlav were blocked by the ships of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation. 9 planes Il-76MD violated the airspace of Ukraine, having moved paratroopers to Crimea. The Russian Black Sea fleet commander Admiral Alexander Vitko issued an ultimatum to Ukrainian militaries: if they do not

surrender to 5:00 on March 26, it will start a real attack on units and troops of the Ukrainian Armed Forces throughout Crimea.

Kyiv had enough forces in Crimea to stop aggressor's actions, even despite the administrative chaos that prevailed in the governance system when President Viktor Yanukovych, Prime Minister M. Azarov and his government members run away from the capital, and O. Turchynov, the Speaker of the Parliament elected by the Verkhovna Rada, who was also appointed by the Parliament as acting president, could not yet control the situation.

General Oleksandr Kichtenko, a former commander of the Internal Troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, in a resonant interview on June 23, 2016, noted that Kyiv had a significant number of trained forces in Crimea: ***"There was a very strong garrison of Internal Troops: up to 3000. Internal Troops are the forces that fight also in peacetime. They carry the service of enforcement of public order, they are active troops. And the 'Tiger' Special Force Regiment was a very well trained regiment, supplied with the most modern equipment and weapons. It was stationed near Feodosia in Crimea, and if the correct decision were made to use the garrison of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in cooperation with the SSU (I just know that the 'Alfa' Group was ready for serious actions), then such sad for us developments would not happen in Crimea"*** [10]. By the way, in the military units of the Internal troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, located in Crimea, the least number of traitors was found - 44%, as compared to other security agencies, as discussed above.

Air Defense Forces of the country also failed to fulfill their mission. Air space was not closed. The shutting down by Air Defense or interceptions by fighters of several aircraft with paratroopers or attack helicopters that flew through Ukraine's airspace to Crimea could radically change the course of the Crimean campaign and history as a whole. By the way, the GS of the Armed Forces of the RF did not exclude the scenario of counteraction from the Air Defense forces of Ukraine, therefore, a fraudulent move was applied - when approaching to landing planes with paratroopers aboard served the SOS signal. Similar tricks are known for some special operations [11]. If Ukrainian fighters forced to landing to another airfield in Crimea at least one

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of the Russian cargo aircraft with paratroopers on board, this would leave the RF President the possibility on March 4, 2014 at a press conference to reject the participation of the RF Armed Forces in events in Crimea and to claim that they were local "forces of self-defense".

One more fatal mistake of the transitional authorities in Kyiv was the follow-up of the Western politicians' recommendations on the behavior model in Crimea. Refat Chubarov, the head of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people, gave an exhaustive assessment of the behavior of Western partners of Ukraine: "I was all the days in contact with the ambassadors of European countries, the United States. And there was always a request: do not provoke Russian militaries to more resolute actions. It will take some time, we will definitely find a solution. Do not let you to be provoked - it was the main and only message of our Western partners ... " [12].

Moscow had a clear understanding that during the first weeks of the Crimean campaign the West would have no clear position regarding the events taking place on the peninsula, especially since they were masked by the hybrid nature of the invasion - armed men appeared, but no firing, victims, and destructions as well. There was confidence that without Western support Ukraine would not

dare to oppose invaders. In order to prevent such resistance, a complex of measures was carried out starting from the outright psychological pressure on the top leaders of the country and up to actions from inside through various channels of influence. This deprived the opportunity to take adequate decisions and led to actual paralysis of governance. The published transcript of the meeting of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine on February 28, 2014 has eloquent proof that the leadership of Ukraine and the leaders of the political parties that took power after Yanukovich's runaway adhered to the position of avoiding resistance to the aggressor. Most clearly this turned up in the speech of the leader of the parliamentary faction of the Batkivshchyna Party, Yulia Tymoshenko, who attended the meeting of the National Security and Defense Council: "I also talked with our foreign partners, and they also confirm that Russian troops are at the borders, and ask not to make any moves. We have to listen to them, because without them we are completely powerless. Therefore, we must now beg the entire international community to stand up for Ukraine. This is our only hope. No tank should leave a box, no soldier should raise his weapon, because that would mean a loss. No state of martial law and activation of our forces! We must become the most peaceful nation on the planet, just behave like a dove of peace ... " [13].

Я також розмовляла з нашими закордонними партнерами, і вони теж підтверджують - російські війська на кордонах, і просять не робити жодних рухів. Ми маємо їх послухати, бо без них ми абсолютно безсилі.

Тому ми маємо сьогодні благодіти все міжнародне співтовариство чинити на захист України. Це наша єдина надія. Жоден танк не повинен виходити з казарми, жоден солдат не повинен підняти зброю, бо це означатиме програш.



Ніякого воєнного стану і активізації наших військ!

Ми маємо стати самою мирною нацією на планеті, просто поводити себе як голуби миру ...

Source: Verbatim record of the National Security and Defence Council session of February 28, 2014.
<http://www.rnbo.gov.ua/files/2016/stenogr.pdf>

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Thus, we can conclude that the false-targeted programming of the Ukrainian leadership on abandoning armed resistance to interventionists proved effective in this case. A Crimean expert, Andriy Klymenko, points out that the technology of the special operation on the occupation and annexation of Crimea had a number of patterns, which were then applied in other regions of Ukraine within the framework of the "Novorossia" project:

- 1) information and propaganda preparation of the territory, based on the direct intimidation of the population by the mythical repressions of the "Ukrainian fascists";
- 2) infiltration of militants ("Cossacks") from the Krasnodar Territory of the Russian Federation in support of "Cossack" organizations of Crimea: initially to create massiveness at rallies, and then to create illegal armed formations of "Crimean self-defense" on their basis;
- 3) the covert bringing of troops, mainly units of special forces, the Marine Corps, and the Airborne Forces of the RF with weaponry through the infrastructure of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation in Crimea;
- 4) capture by "green men" of strategic objects (administrative buildings, airports, seaports), blocking the sites of military units of the Army, Navy, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Road-Patrol Service, the SSU, and Internal Troops;
- 5) the formation of "self-defense bands" out of infiltrated "Cossacks", the retired Black Sea Fleet militaries, the officers of the disbanded Ukrainian militia special forces "Berkut" who participated in the shooting of the Maidan in Kyiv;
- 6) providing weapon to "self-defense bands" and gradual transfer of control over blocked military units and infrastructure to them from Russian troops;
- 7) replacement of executive authorities of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol city state administration with the help of legitimate bodies - the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC and Sevastopol city council;
- 8) legitimization of occupation and annexation by means of "referendums" on joining the Russian Federation, which were held under the control of Russian troops and "self-defense bands".

The occupation and annexation of Crimea has become quite exemplary in terms of meeting the objectives of the pre-designed plan and the sequence of its implementation. It has become to a certain extent a standard for performing hybression. Worked out pattern was immediately applied during the next stage of "Russian Spring", the "Novorossia" project.

Related consequences of Crimean blitzkrieg

The occupation and subsequent annexation of the Crimean peninsula provided Russia with a number of strategic advantages related to energy, maritime communications and foreign trade of Ukraine:

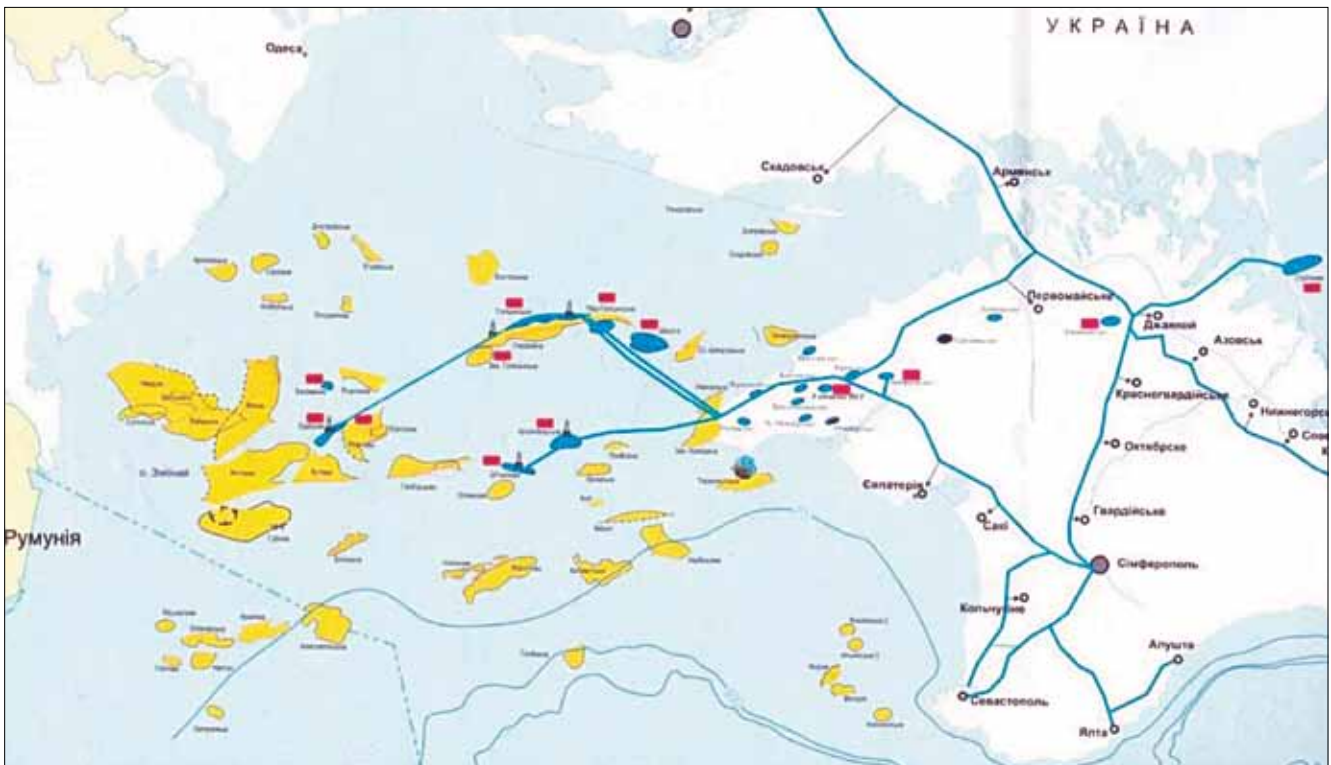
- the actual establishment of control over maritime traffic in the north-western sector of the Black Sea (between the Crimean peninsula and Odesa region) through which the main maritime communications of Ukraine pass and the lion's share of its foreign trade is carried out;
- drop-out of prospective projects of gas exploration and extraction in the Black Sea, initiated by Ukraine with the involvement of the European and American companies which were a challenge for Russian state-owned companies (development of the Scythian field in the north-western sector of the Black Sea's deep sea shelf and the Prykerchenska area in the north-eastern sector);
- squeeze out leading American and European oil and gas companies (ExxonMobil, Shell, EdF), which are concurrent to Russian state-owned ones (Gazprom, Rosneft)
- denying Ukraine access to the main offshore gas deposits and prospective hydrocarbons deposits in the Black Sea;

Takeover of the energy infrastructure in Crimea was a priority task for occupational authorities carried out with the help of formations of the so-called "self-defense", the arrived Cossacks, infiltrated "vacationers" and special forces of the Russian army. Particular attention should be paid to the capture of the maritime gas extraction facilities used by PJSC Naftogaz of Ukraine through its subsidiary JSC Chornomornaftogaz for production of natural gas outside the peninsula on the Black Sea shallow shelf beyond the 12-mile zone; that is, in the exclusive economic zone of Ukraine. To offshore gas infrastructure, seized by Russia in Ukraine beyond the Crimean peninsula, belong 90

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offshore gas and oil wells, 8 fixed offshore platforms, 8 wellhead platforms, 370 km of offshore

gas pipelines, 31 wellhead platforms including 4 drilling rigs [14].



Deposits of the Ukrainian Joint Stock Company Chornomornaftogaz on the Black Sea shelf

The seizure of Chornomornaftogaz's office took place on March 4, when a group of unknown men arrived there. The group consisted of the Russian regular soldiers without insignia, similar groups were also observed in other structural divisions of the company and at technological facilities (for example, vessels of technical fleet, drilling rigs). By March 14, all management and technological processes in the company were under full control [15].

The most striking example of the operations to establish control over the objects of energy infrastructure during hybression is the operation of capturing modern 'Petro Godovanets' and 'Independence' jack-up drilling rigs as well as 'Mys Tarkhankut' and 'Fedor Uriupin' offshore ships, acquired in 2013 at the cost of NJSC Naftogaz of Ukraine. According to INFORMNAPALM international volunteer initiative, drilling rigs were captured by the 104th Paratrooper Regiment of the 76th Paratrooper Division of Russia's airborne forces. On March 15, 2014, an airborne operation was undertaken in the Arabat Spit in the Sea of Azov. A group of Russian paratroopers landed there for capturing gas measuring station and the

Strilkove field and stayed there up to December 11, 2014. Then, operation was scaled down as it turned out that the field had no strategic significance for the gas supply to Crimea.

The then-current Minister of Energy and Coal Industry of Ukraine Yuriy Prodan informed about capturing of drilling rigs on the Black Sea shelf on March 19, 2014 in an interview with UNIAN agency. [16]

According to eyewitnesses, even after reporting on the first visits of representatives of the self-proclaimed government of Crimea, neither central office of NJSC Naftogaz of Ukraine, nor Ministry of Energy of Ukraine, nor the Ministry of Defense or the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine did not send clear instructions for further actions; a special body, envisaged for accident or emergency situations, was not formed; the individual initiatives of Chornomornaftogaz's employees turned under control of the Russian FSB and were blocked by the armed groups. Thus, the most unfortunate failure occurred with the protection of drilling rigs. They were captured by the Russian

paratroopers landed on drilling rigs not immediately, but almost three weeks after the start of the diffuse invasion of Crimea. The main problem was that under the condition of administrative chaos the Ukrainian Maritime Guard did not comply with Art. 31 of the Law of Ukraine "On the Exclusive (Maritime) Economic Zone of Ukraine", which clearly states: "Protection of the sovereign rights of Ukraine in the exclusive (maritime) economic zone and control over the exercise of rights and fulfillment of obligations of other states, Ukrainian and foreign legal entities and individuals, international organizations in it, are carried out by the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine." Similarly, the Navy of Ukraine was not capable of decisive action, since it was blocked in the bays of Sevastopol and Donuzlav. However, the Brigade of Surface Ships and the Protection and Support Division of the Western Naval Base, which are located in Odesa, could carry out the necessary actions. Also, the forces could have been deployed to the drilling rigs with the help of the military helicopters, given that the main rigs were equipped with landing pads. However, nothing happened.

Due to the capture of Ukrainian gas extraction infrastructure in the vital important north-western sector of the Black Sea, Russia has resorted to strengthening its military presence under the pretext of protecting critical energy infrastructure. In fact, this gives Russia the opportunity to block the Black Sea ports of Ukraine at any time by creating an artificial cause for this, for example, an attempt of subversive attack or capture of the offshore gas production infrastructure of the State Unitary Enterprise of the Crimean Republic Chernomorneftegaz.

Russian attack on Ukrainian boats on November 25, 2018 in the Black Sea near the illegally constructed Russian bridge over the Kerch Strait demonstrated that Russia is using a built-in infrastructure to disproportionate expansion of its military presence under the pretext of the need to protect it from subversive attack.

Power bridging of Crimea [17]

Russia, having occupied Crimea, faced serious problems with the energy supply of the peninsula. The energy deficit of Crimea traditionally amounted to ~ 83% for electricity, 100% for coal, 100% for petroleum products. In practice, Ukraine made Crimea energy self-sufficient in terms of gas sup-

ply due to the investment of NJSC Naftogaz of Ukraine in expanding operational drilling on the Black Sea shallow shelf in 2011-2013.

The energy blockade of the peninsula by Ukraine in 2015 turned out to be so unexpected for Russia as the disruption of water supply through the North-Crimean channel in 2014. It should be noted that the actions of the Ukrainian side fitted into the logic of maximizing the price of occupation for aggressor. Energy blockade has exacerbated the financial burden on the occupier's budget, as it was necessary to solve the strategic problem of reorientation of the energy consumption of Crimea from the Ukrainian direction to the Russian. The Russian Federation has again faced an underestimated scenario. It was believed that the Novorossiia project, in its original form - separation of 8-10 regions of eastern and southern Ukraine, had to solve automatically all issues of energy and resource supply of Crimea, in particular electricity and water supplies. Moreover, Ukraine, more precisely what would be left of it, would be deficient in energy, since the main sources of primary energy would fall on the territory of the so-called Novorossiia - almost all coal mining and almost half of natural gas production, as well as the lion's share of thermal energy, more than 2/3 of the nuclear generation (9 out of 15 power units of the nuclear power plant). The Novorossiia project collapsed, so Crimea automatically turned out to be in a difficult energy and resource situation.

The Crimean power system was designed in the Soviet period for the supply of electricity from the mainland to the peninsula through 4 air lines from the IPS of Ukraine [Integrated Power System of Ukraine]. Maximally, it is capable of conducting 1250 MW of power, which corresponds to the maximum amount of energy consumption on the peninsula. Crimea has a capacity of its own thermal generation of about 205.5 MW, including Sevastopol. (*Base local generation: 100 MW at Simferopol Thermal Power Plant (with a design capacity of 100 MW), 6 MW at Kamysh-Burun TPP (with a design capacity of 30 MW) and 14.5 MW at Saky TPP (design capacity of 14.5 MW), as well as Sevastopol TPP with a capacity of 60 MW.*)

All projects of transmission of power in Crimea via the power bridge and creation of additional generation on the peninsula, foreseen by Russia, will amount to a total capacity of 2225 MW, which

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is 1.8 times more than the traditional supplies of Crimea from mainland of Ukraine until 2016. **It is obvious that the greater than before occupation power is connected with the growing needs of the Russian armed forces on the territory of the peninsula, as well as perspective plans for their build-up. In addition, it is a confirmation of large-scale plans for the deployment of addi-**

tional military infrastructure that will require significant energy consumption. The general scheme of energy supply of Crimea by Russia is as follows: the transmission of electricity from the territory of the Russian Federation via energy bridge over Kerch Strait and construction of additional generating capacities on the territory of the peninsula, which will use Russian gas to be transferred to Crimea through a new gas pipeline.



Infographics. Gas supply to Crimea

In practice, Russian approach is two-fold: supplying electricity and gas to the peninsula, as well as construction of a new generation in line with expansion of the existinág. This causes criticism in the expert circles of the Russian Federation, since the Crimean energy surplus will cost much to Russian budget. In the event that all projects will be implemented, the total generation capacity in Crimea, along with the power bridge's capacity, will be 2225 MW. On the one hand, this is the result of satisfying the needs of all lobbying structures that use Russian budget for Crimea for self-enrichment. On the other hand, Moscow is trying to create a stock of capacities if the Kerch energy bridge is short-lived. The latter is quite probable, considering both the geology of the bottom of the Kerch Strait, the "storming" and the Chinese contractor during the cable transmissions. According to available information, there were serious violations of engineering norms during the execution of works. The same is true for the Kerch bridge crossing, which was built in 2018 and remains not put into operation.

Occupied Crimea: Five Years Later

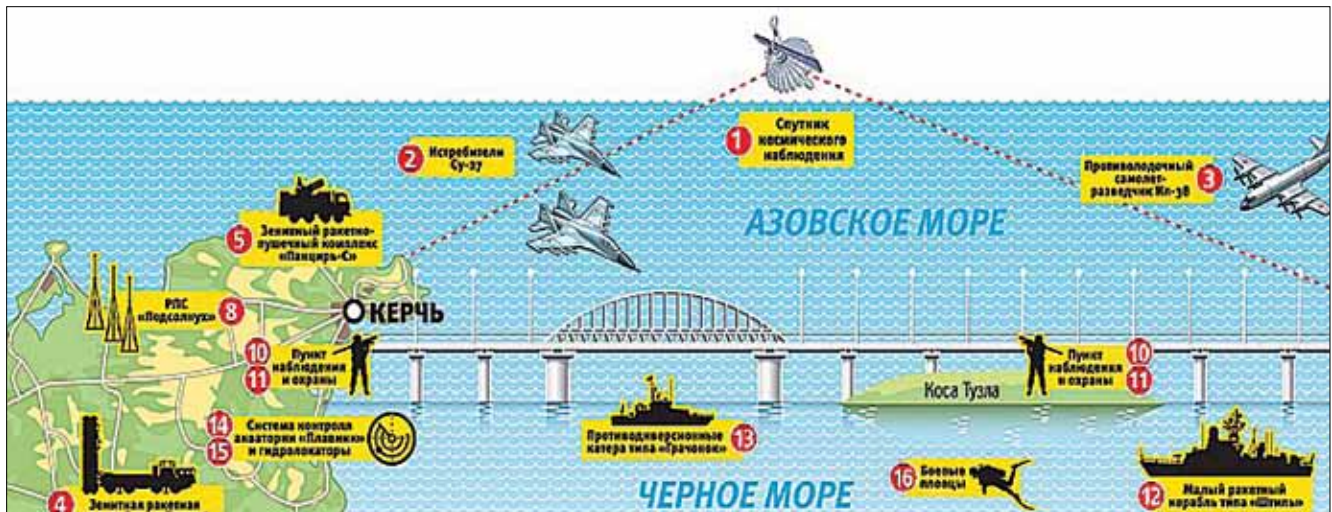
The main results of the 5th anniversary of the occupation of the peninsula amounted to several positions.

1. Russia quickly and successfully implemented the political and administrative integration of Crimea into federation from the point of view of the domestic political priority of consolidating and prolonging the rule of the Putin regime, although at the same time it was subject to an international sanctions regime.
2. Russia has been unsuccessfully, though slower than anticipated, carrying out the "power bridging" of Crimea to the territory of the Russian mainland – in terms of communications (the Kerch Bridge, the Taurida federal highway, the reconstruction and expansion of airfields, the airport in Simferopol) and energy (gas pipeline, energy bridge, new power generating capacities).
3. In Crimea, Russia's military bridgehead for the Black Sea control and operations in the East-

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ern Mediterranean ("Syrian Express") against NATO forces has been revived and continues to grow. Crimea is given a special role in the subversive operations of the Russian special

services not only in the territory of Ukraine, but also in Bulgaria, the countries of the Western Balkans, Turkey, Georgia.



Infographics. Military protection of the Kerch Bridge

- After occupation of Crimea and construction of a 4-line power bridge, gas pipeline from Kuban, Kerch Bridge, and the implementation of the Turkish Stream project, Russia is restoring the Witte-Dukhovskiy approach in the Black and Mediterranean Seas: the new built infrastructure requires military protection, which leads to disproportionate expansion of Russian military presence under the pretext of its protection. How it works is evident from the example of the new built Kerch Bridge for the protection of which auxiliary forces and means, which justifies the militarization of the Sea of Azov, were formed.
 - Russia, guided by the principle of "who controls Crimea - controls the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea," has strengthened its status as the dominant military and political force in the region, taking into account the pre-existing control over the Georgian seacoast after the separation of Abkhazia and the restrictions of naval presence in the Black Sea for non-Black Sea-NATO member states, established by the Montreux Convention of 1936.
 - Moscow succeeded to introduce the state of the "fortress in siege" on peninsula with minimum effort, that is, the socio-political atmosphere of a permanent threat to Crimea from anywhere: from the sea by NATO, from the north by "Bandera's Ukraine".
 - The militarization of Crimea is accompanied by propaganda brain washing in society and repressions against public activists and members of the Crimean Tatar resistance movement. Now, a list of illegally imprisoned by Russia for their pro-Ukrainian position consists of 70 political prisoners.
 - Russia has begun and continues to not politicize the fact of changing the ethnic composition of the occupied Crimea, trying to squeeze Crimean Tatars and Ukrainians from the peninsula and resettle Russians there. These are hundreds of thousands of new Russian inhabitants on the peninsula, which is a significant figure given the 2.4 million population of Crimea and Sevastopol city.
- Ukraine, having been militarily defeated, nevertheless managed to increase the price of occupation for the aggressor, taking a number of steps. Although not always these steps were initiated by the authorities as was expected. Public sentiment and actions of civic activists catalyzed the adoption of the right decisions and actions.
- The blockade of the Dnipro's water supply to Crimea, established since the beginning of occupation of the peninsula, caused inadequate actions of the occupation authorities, which in turn led to salinization of the soils of the northern part of the peninsula, irreversible hydro-

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geological and meliorative processes, violation of the natural balance of fresh water on the peninsula, complication of water supply processes for different sectors of the economy, in particular for the agrarian sector.

2. The energy blockade of the peninsula forced Russia to implement large-scale and costly projects for the construction of the gas pipeline, power bridge, power plants, thermal power stations, and the restructuring of transmission grids not only on the peninsula (from the North-South configuration connected to the UES of Ukraine to the East-West configuration connected to the power system of the South of Russia) , but also in energy-deficit Kuban as part of the energy-deficit Krasnodar region.
3. The transport blockade of Crimea from the land (stopping the railway connection with the mainland), the sea (international sanctions on the ports of the peninsula) and from the air (the ban on flights to the airports of Crimea by leading international carriers), although not solid, however, significantly struck the economy of the traditionally subsidized region.
4. On the Ukrainian side, both at the level of state and private companies, were filed lawsuits for the return / compensation of lost property as a result of the Russian occupation of the peninsula. In 2018, the first results appeared. The international arbitration in Paris has satisfied the claim of the Ukrainian state-owned Oshchadbank to Russia in the amount of \$ 1.3 billion, plus interest accrued from the moment the decision had been made up to the time of actual compensation. 18 private companies from the Privat group sued \$ 159 million through the Arbitration Court in Hague.
5. In 2019-2020, a number of lawsuits of Ukraine related to the occupation of Crimea by Russia, in the international courts of various instances should be considered. Thus, PJSC Naftogaz of Ukraine estimated losses of Naftogaz Group at a value of about \$ 5 billion with interest of \$ 8 billion. In the Crimean lawsuits of Ukraine against Russia in the European Court of Human Rights there is a violation of the rights of Crimean Tatars, the prohibition of the Mejlis, violation of international conventions on the right to life and prohibition of torture.

The West resorted to sanctions against Russia for the occupation and annexation of Crimea. At the same time, Western sanctions, although they are appreciable, do not, however, cause the effect of an unacceptably high price of occupation. Russia is not without problems, but finds ways to bypass them. Ukraine proved to be unable to block the participation of foreign contractors in the implementation of key projects that Russia would not be able to implement on its own. The construction of the Kerch bridge crossing was carried out with the help of seven companies from the Netherlands, which provided Russia with the necessary technical equipment. Modern and profit-proved additional power generation in Crimea is impossible without the gas turbine installations of the German "Siemens", which eventually riched the peninsula and, although with serious technical difficulties, are installed on new power plants. Construction of the Kerch power bridge would be impossible without the participation of Chinese suppliers and contractors. In all cases, the Ukrainian side showed either inaction or lack of activity in counteracting Russia and its foreign contractors.

In fact, the problem itself is not systematic actions of the Ukrainian authorities. Despite the latest acts of Russian hybression in the Kerch Strait, on Azov and in the Black Sea near the Strait, the law "On creation of the Free Economic Zone "Crimea" and on Peculiarities of Exercising Economic Activity in the Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine", which was lobbied in 2014, has not been changed / suspended. Through a bypass path charted by corruption, the Ilmenite (raw material for the production of titanium dioxide at the Crimean Titan enterprise of the Russian-Ukrainian oligarch Dmytro Firtash) continues to fall in Crimea, although in increased volumes, which led to an environmental catastrophe in the north of Crimea at the end of summer 2018 that caused damage to the south of the Kherson region. The provision on the Crimean Tatar national territorial autonomy remains unsecured at the level of Constitution, despite the promise of the President of Ukraine.

Someone in the Ukrainian government perhaps still has a 'patterned' thinking of exercises of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in Crimea in the prewar period, when the main scenario was repeling of the attack of the naval and airborne forces of the Turkish armed forces and the suppression of the armed rebellion of Crimean Tatars in the rear. From the

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side of the supreme state leadership, due attention is not paid to the restoration of the potential of the Ukrainian Navy, both in the sense of the marine component (mosquito fleet, unmanned underwater assets), and coastal (rocket artillery units), as well as naval aviation.

Does Crimean technology of hybressia threaten anyone except Ukraine? At first glance, it can be argued that no, because even at the consequent stage of Russian aggression - the project "Novorossiiia" - it has already failed. The failure ended an attempt of a coup d'état in Montenegro. However, a lot of things indicate that this technology with

appropriate improvements and modifications to a specific case can be applied in the case of Belarus, Moldova, Kazakhstan, as well as such EU and NATO member states as Bulgaria and Latvia under certain circumstances. Therefore, the Crimean stage of the Putin wars should continue to be studied in order to work out tools for prevention and counteraction. Russia appears to be strong and invincible only against the backdrop of a divided and weak West, to the intensification of the squabbles within which Moscow is making efforts by acting through pre-established proxy mechanisms in Crimea.

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group of Special Forces of the Main Intelligence Directorate on board, landed. An-12 ran along the runway, slowed down, saboteurs jumped to concrete without waiting for the aircraft to stop. Having made a landing, the plane, without stopping, ran off and took off, releasing the runway for other planes that flew one after the other. The fighters of the Special Forces of the GRU seized the dispatching tower and ensured landing at the airfield by the landing method of the 7th Guards Airborne Division. From that the liberation campaign of the Soviet Army in Czechoslovakia began in August 1968". Viktor Suvorov. "Soviet Military Intelligence". LLC "Publishing House" Good Book". 2016

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Militarization of Crimea: Direct Military Threat to Regional Security

Occupation and militarization of Crimea by the Russian Federation transformed the peninsula into a powerful military base that ensures Moscow's complete dominance in the Black Sea. That is why it is high time for consolidated and prompt actions of Ukraine and the partner countries from NATO aimed at countering Russia's aggression in the Black Sea region.

Within five years after occupation and annexation of Crimea, Russia has transformed Ukraine's peninsula into a strong military bridgehead, which ensures Moscow's complete dominance in the Black Sea. The act of open aggression against the Ukrainian Navy vessels in the Kerch Strait on November 25, 2018 demonstrated that Russia is ready to use the strike force which it has built up in Crimea against Ukraine and other countries of the Black Sea region.

On the whole, situation monitoring during five years after occupation and annexation of Crimea supports preliminary assessment results and conclusions of the Center for Army, Conversion and Disarmament Studies (CACDS) and colleagues from the expert community: Russia persistently turns the Crimean Peninsula into a military base [1]. Moscow could not care less about humanitarian, economic, ecological aspects of Crimea's development. Destruction of agriculture, disruption of ecological balance, absence of prospects for ensuring efficient water and power supply, dire situation in vacation industry do not worry the occupants. What Russia is really interested in is the military infrastructure build-up, augmentation of the air component, enhancement of missile systems, increase of the Navy.

Purely quantitative indicators pertaining to the military grouping which occupies Crimea reflect Russia's permanent military build-up in Crimea (assessment by CACDS):

Russia's military build-up in Crimea

Table 1

	As of 1991 (when the USSR collapsed)	As of January 2014 (just prior to occupation by the RF)	As of December 2018	Plans until 2025
Service personnel	70 000	12 500	32 000	43 000
Tanks	258	—	40	100
Armored vehicles	742	92	600	1150
Artillery	229	24	170	400
Combat aircraft	170	22	122	150
Helicopters	115	37	62	95
Surface craft	105	52	71	100
Submarines	4	2	7	7

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In Crimea, the Russians continue the regular build-up of the self-contained joint task force which was formed back in summer of 2015 and which includes three basic components – land, air and naval components. At the same time, the land component plays an auxiliary role (actually, it is the occupied territory's defence), but the main emphasis is placed on the build-up of the air task force, missile and naval groupings. And since Crimea has become the “unsinkable aircraft carrier”, aviation, missiles, navy vessels and submarines are able to ensure Russia's complete dominance in the Black Sea and project its power to the Mediterranean and, if required, strike at the territory of both Ukraine and any country in the region. In fact, we see changed strategic military balance in the Black Sea and the Mediterranean Sea regions which favours the RF and creation of bridgehead with an aim of posing military threats to NATO member countries from the territory of Crimea.

As of early 2019, we can speak about Russia's rather successful implementation of the concept which involves creation of powerful naval component in Crimea armed with the Kalibr cruise missiles with a combat radius exceeding 2000 km. Since the program of creating modern Project 22350 frigates [2] practically failed, and since the delivery of Project 11356 frigates was blocked by the Ukrainian sanctions, Russia chose to concentrate on equipping its Black Sea Navy with the Buyan-M class of corvettes (Project 21630) and the Karakurt-class missile corvettes (Project 22800). Despite the fact that Russia has big problems with the engines for these ships due to the Western sanctions, these fast attack guided missile boats may become the core of the Russian Black Sea Fleet task force and create a threat to all countries in the region. The same applies to Project 636.3 submarines armed with the Kalibr cruise missiles which can hold naval forces of other Black Sea Region countries in constant suspense.

Current plans of the Russian Ministry of Defence presuppose that by 2020 in Crimea there will be up to 24 surface and underwater carriers of the Kalibr cruise missiles; total number of the latter will be 168. Thus, Russia is creating relatively inexpensive and powerful naval strike force which would control the Black Sea and present a threat to the territory of Ukraine and NATO member countries. With this, so far the prospects of changes in the balance in favour of Ukraine and NATO member

countries are negative. Without prompt consolidated action on the part of the Alliance aimed at development of naval possibilities in the Black Sea it is difficult to speak about any real (and not symbolical) countermeasures against Russia even in the medium term.

Today in Crimea complete infrastructure for transportation and storage of tactical nuclear weapons is available. In parallel with deployment of naval tactical nuclear weapon carriers, the decision about deployment of Tu-23M3 long-range strategic and maritime bomber at the Hvardiyske Air Force Base has been practically approved. They also can carry nuclear-tipped cruise missiles. Besides, in 2014 Russia's military command worked out plans for transfer to Crimea and deployment of Iskander mobile short-range ballistic missile systems which can launch nuclear-tipped missiles. Bastion mobile coastal defence missile systems which also can launch nuclear-tipped missiles are already deployed in Crimea. Thus, tactical nuclear weapons basing system has been created on the occupied peninsula.

The ongoing militarisation and military build-up in Crimea play a key role in the operations which the Russian armed forces conduct in Syria. And it is not only logistic support of the campaign, but also actual combat operations, including the Kalibr cruise missile launches from the Black Sea Fleet ships.

Characterizing Russia's possibilities in regard to control of the Black Sea and the Black Sea region, the experts mention the A2/AD concept (anti-access and area denial), i.e. restriction and denial of access and manoeuvring in the theatre of war. With this, it was believed that this concept can be implemented by Russia only in conditions of a direct armed conflict and that there existed little possibility of its implementation today when “hybrid” instruments of aggression are used against Ukraine. However, the overt act of aggression carried out by Russia on November 25, 2018 against the Ukrainian Navy ships in the Kerch Strait in which Russia's Black Sea Fleet ships, the Russian Deferral Security Service boats and aircraft of the Russian Air Force were involved, demonstrated that Russia is ready to implement the A2/AD concept in the Sea of Azov and in the Black Sea at any time. Blocking the Kerch Strait and the Sea of Azov by the Russian armed forces is a clear signal to the

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Black Sea Region countries and NATO member states that Russia establishes its own rules in the Black Sea area, and that travelling of the ships of other countries is going to be subject to consent by Moscow.

Russia brazenly ignores the basic provisions of the International Maritime Law which stipulate immunity of the naval vessels and which were formulated in the 1958 Convention on the High Seas [3] and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982 [4]: by doing this, Russia ignores the basic rules regulating the use of the World Ocean and pushes the world into accepting the notion that “might makes right”. This is being done by Russia deliberately in order to establish its own norms based upon the threat of using military force. This return to the Dark Ages is still not seen as such by some of Ukraine’s neighbours, some Black Sea Region countries and some NATO member states. In particular, Bulgaria still does not realize this, as it refuses to participate in coordinated action against Russia’s plans to occupy the Black Sea.

Russia’s overt military strike against the Ukrainian ships which took place on November 25, 2018 demonstrated that it is prepared to openly use its armed forces against Ukraine in any format and on any scale, ignoring reaction of the international community. Nowadays Russia is ready to launch a large-scale strike against Ukraine, as it was able to build up a powerful task force: the 1st tank army and 20th combined arms army in the north and in the east, as well as the 8th combined arms army which includes contingent of troops in Donbas (the 1st and the 2nd army corps in Donetsk and Luhansk) and the 150th mechanized infantry division, as well as the 20th separate mechanical infantry brigade in the South.

At the same time, there are some reasons to believe that Russia will not dare to carry out the full-scale offensive without adequate missile and close air support. By now Ukraine created the land forces which are able to effectively counter the Russian aggression, as can be seen from the situation in the zone of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict in Donbas. That is why it is highly probable that Russia is going to actively use missiles and aircraft and resort to naval operations. In this scenario Crimea is going to play a special role. Although large-scale operations are not going to be launched from the

occupied peninsula, massive missile and air strikes will target important Ukrainian military and civil infrastructure facilities from Crimea. A special role will be assigned to Russia’s Black Sea Fleet, as it will be involved in amphibious assault operations blocking the Ukrainian ports in the northern Black Sea area in order to deal a powerful blow to the economic interests of Ukraine, facilitate occupation of the southern territories of Ukraine, create a land corridor from Russia to Crimea.

The act of aggression against the Ukrainian Navy ships which took place on November 25, 2018 created a new context in the Russian-Ukrainian conflict which Russia will try to use in order to achieve the following goals:

- to force Ukraine to “voluntarily” agree to recognize new sea borders based upon annexation of Crimea and occupation of Donbas;
- to initiate a process of international recognition of territorial waters around the annexed Crimea;
- to initiate a process of international recognition of Crimea as a part of Russia;
- to ruin economy of the Ukrainian ports of Mariupol and Berdyansk with an aim, among other things, to destabilize social and economic situation in the south-east of Ukraine;
- to block navigation in the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait stipulating the possibility of unblocking it in case the annexation of Crimea is recognized as lawful;
- to make Ukraine resume water supply to Crimea and to create conditions for Russia to build a land corridor to the peninsula.

A further step which Russia may take in regard to implementation of the A2/AD concept is blockade of the Black Sea area near Odesa that will mean practical denial of access to sea for Ukraine.

In fact, today the biggest trouble is that neither Ukraine nor any other Black Sea Region countries are able to effectively counter the Russian naval dominance in the Black Sea. The Ukrainian and Romanian Navies are not strong enough for the task, and Bulgaria avoids straining relations with the RF, taking “neutral” position about important military and political issues. This opens a lot of opportunities for the RF to exert pressure on the Black

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Sea countries and NATO member states in order to achieve its own military and political goals.

In this situation only consistent, consolidated and prompt actions on the part of Ukraine and NATO countries may create conditions which would make it possible to punish the aggressor and change the strategic military balance in the Black Sea Region.

In particular, in the strategic military circles it is believed that it would be useful to significantly strengthen presence of the Ukrainian and NATO naval forces. At the same time, it is important to intensify contacts between Ukraine and Romania as much as possible in the fields of security and defence on every level, making special emphasis on enhancement of their naval capabilities. The strong alliance between Ukraine and Romania, together with practical NATO (first of all USA) support may lay a solid foundation for creation of a naval bloc which would be able to counter the Russian aggression in the Black Sea.

In the field of military equipment and armaments Ukraine has to speed up the process of strengthening its naval forces. One of the possibilities is obtaining surface craft from Ukraine's partners (the USA, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, as well as the EU countries). It is vitally important to obtain the ships armed with missiles. One of the possible options is obtaining 2 or 3 Oliver Hazard Perry-class frigates from the USA within one or two years. These ships could form a core of the Ukrainian naval forces and ensure constant presence of the Ukrainian Navy in the Black Sea areas over which Russia tries to establish its control.

Simultaneously, according to CACDS, Ukraine has to speed up implementation of its program of building its Navy, making special emphasis on the following priorities [5]:

Priority 1. New high-precision means of destruction. Making arrangements for serial production of anti-ship missiles, first of all mobile coastal missile systems, then air-launched cruise missiles, and finally missiles for guided missile boats.

Priority 2. Land component build-up. It is necessary to create conditions for fast emplacement of mines and counter amphibious assault operations. It will be useful to enhance capabilities of marine infantry and naval special operations forces.

Priority 3. Implementation of "mosquito-craft fleet" concept by creating groupings of guided missile boats for asymmetrical approach to deterring the aggressor. It is important to develop a multilevel approach in order to execute this task: in parallel with building Ukrainian boats, obtaining licenses for manufacture of smaller foreign combat vessels on the territory of Ukraine, taking Qatar and the UAE as an example (the military consider British-made 54-meter long Barzan (Vita) class vessels with two MM40 Exocet missile launchers to be suitable and affordable), as well as to take a substantiated position in negotiations regarding military technical assistance from the Western partner countries. On the one hand, it is necessary to protect national interests on the sea, i.e. to defend and to maintain them. On the other hand, it is necessary to revive almost completely destroyed school of shipbuilding.

In the field of diplomacy, it is recommended to focus on introduction of real (and not symbolical) sanctions, which would have direct impact on the economic situation in Russia, in particular:

- to create a permanently working mechanism which would regulate the international sea navigation in the Black Sea, the Kerch Strait and the Sea of Azov, and to press for the guarantees of freedom of navigation in the Black Sea, the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait areas;
- to ban Russian vessels from entering the ports of the partner countries (first of all EU, the USA);
- to block collaboration between the EU companies and Pella Shipyard (St Petersburg, Russia) Zeleny Dol Shipyard (Russia) which build missile carrier ships on the worksites in the occupied Crimea for Russia's Black Sea Fleet;
- to stop any cooperation between the EU companies and the port of Kavkaz which was involved in the construction of the Kerch Bridge and deliveries of military cargoes from Russia to Crimea;
- to impose a ban on flights of the Russian passenger planes registered in Simferopol Airport to the airports in the EU countries, since these planes were involved in violation of the Ukrainian borders in the annexed Crimea.

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In order to enhance the role of NATO in the Black Sea, it is recommended [6]:

- to set up a command unit of a multinational division in Romania, with combat elements of the US Army brigade present on a rotation basis;
- to continue and to intensify NATO military exercises in Romania and Bulgaria;
- to deploy additional elements of anti-aircraft/anti-missile defence systems in Romania by 2020;
- to deploy additional elements of the US Army Strategic Intelligence in the Black Sea area;
- to build up the intelligence system of the countries of the Black Sea Region, including unmanned aircraft systems, surface and underwater autonomous systems and ground control units;

- to augment presence of NATO naval forces in the Black Sea, taking into account restrictions stipulated in the Montreux Convention;
- to continue the dialog with Turkey in order to boost cooperation between the Navies;
- to step up pre-deployment of military equipment, armaments and other resources in order to facilitate deployment of army units on NATO's eastern flank.

In general, it is time for prompt consolidated actions by Ukraine and its NATO partners which are necessary to counter Russia's aggression. According to CACDS, this approach may create the necessary initial conditions for retaliating against Russia and changing strategic military balance in the region in our favour.

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Kerch Turning Point of the Russian Strategy in Eastern Europe

We now know that Russia's ramming, firing upon, and seizing of Ukrainian ships near the Kerch Strait and imprisoning their sailors on November 25, 2018 was an act of premeditated aggression if not piracy which includes seizing ships and taking their sailors prisoner [1]. Typically for Russia Moscow also preceded the operation with an information warfare "fake news" drive [2]. This incident highlights not only Moscow's mission to undermine if not destroy the Ukrainian state but also its equal determination to convert the Black Sea and its maritime approaches like the Sea of Azov and Kerch Strait, into a closed Russian sea, a Mare Clausum. At the same time closing the Black Sea and destroying the foundations of Ukrainian statehood all play into a grander set of strategic objectives. Thus, this premeditated action plays a part in a much vaster Russian "grand strategy" within which closure of the Black Sea and neighboring waters are only a part of the larger whole.

Moscow's determination to destroy Ukrainian statehood and gain de facto complete control of the Black Sea, de jure, economically, politically, and operationally is bound up with its long-lasting imperial sense of entitlement not only to the Black Sea and Ukraine but also to the status of an uncontested great and imperial Mediterranean power [3]. A major reason for this determination is bound up with defending those waters against a presumed NATO attack as well as claiming the imperial heritage of a great Mediterranean and Middle Eastern power as well as hegemony over the Black Sea. In turn, reclaiming that imperial and Soviet heritage means retaining a permanent capability in the Mediterranean to deter NATO and other adversaries and project offensive power beyond Russia and the former Soviet Union's boundaries as we have seen since 2015 in Syria and beyond.

Since 2014 Moscow has gone beyond seizing Crimea, declaring the Sea of Azov and Kerch Strait as its own waters to menacing other littoral states and for the first time projecting power in areas beyond the erstwhile Soviet borders, i.e. Syria. By so doing it has opened up a Pandora's box of economic and potentially military threats and warfare not only against Ukraine but all the other littoral states of the Black Sea. In turn Moscow's highly successful Syrian operation has opened the door upon which it was already leaning to power projection into the entire Middle East and the Mediterranean. In those quests the enhanced capabilities of the Russian Navy have played and continue to play a crucial role. Therefore, the significance of the incident near the Kerch Strait goes far beyond the threat Russia's activity poses to Ukraine to comprise its growing ambitions in the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. Indeed, operations in the Mediterranean would be unsustainable and inconceivable if Russia could not dominate the Black Sea. And such domination, as Russian military and political leaders well understand, depends upon Moscow retaining air superiority over the entire Black Sea. Prior naval experience in the Mediterranean has shown the Russians that without adequate air defense to negate allied air superiority their navy would be forced into "kamikaze" operations. Therefore, naval operations are unsustainable there or in the Black Sea without air control and superiority in the theater [4]. This is why Moscow has made obtaining air superiority over the Black Sea and creating an anti-access area denial (A2AD) capability there to deny entry to foreign air forces, especially in the framework of NATO's adherence to critical air forces' priorities.

In turn, the determination to close the Black Sea to foreign naval forces and acquire this superiority returns us to the notion that Russian security entails the insecurity of all of its neighbors since the air and fleet capability needed to enforce this superiority possesses and inherently offensive capa-

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bility directed not only against other littoral states from the Caucasus to the Balkans, including Syria in Eastern Mediterranean, but also a fire capability that goes far into the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas. And Moscow's operations in the Black and Mediterranean Seas are at the same time exceptionally revelatory concerning Russia's strategic means and ends as well as the fact that once again Russian security entails everyone else's insecurity.

Recent newspaper articles have highlighted Russia's threat to transatlantic cables and sea lines of communication (SLOC). Russian submarines, entering into the North Atlantic either through the Baltic Sea or the Arctic have been observed in the vicinity of the vital trans-Atlantic cable network and could also interdict troop or other transports in a time of crisis [5]. However NATO and its members have also grasped that threat for some months if not years and it is one of the factors that has led to the reorganization of NATO's command structure [6]. The new Atlantic Command has at its primary task ensuring the security of the undersea cables and the SLOC [7]. But vital as the security of the trans-Atlantic SLOC is, it is by no means the alpha and omega of the threats posed by Russia's naval probes to European security, e.g. in the Black Sea and the Mediterranean.

Even though the navy has traditionally been and most likely will be the stepchild of the new Russian military procurement plan through 2025, programs now in force demonstrate Moscow's intention of striking at allied navies or restricting their access to critical waterways possessing significance for European security. This program is particularly visible in the Eastern Mediterranean, Middle East and all the way from Central Asia and if fully consummated could put much of European energy supplies (editor's note: alternative to Russian natural gas supplies) under permanent Russian threat. Indeed, if and when Moscow's grand design is realized, Russia will have achieved something the Soviet Navy sought but could not sustain or realize with incomparably greater conventional firepower than the Soviet Navy possessed.

The first step towards achieving these objectives was the creation of the Mediterranean Eskadra (Squadron) based on the old Soviet deployment in 2013. Then the conversion of the Black Sea into a Mare Clausum took place subsequent to the annexation of Crimea in 2014 [8]. As this writer

and others have observed, since 2014 a sustained buildup of Russian forces in Crimea and the Black Sea have gone far towards creating a layered A2AD (anti-access and area denial) zone in that sea although NATO has begun to react to the threat and exercise forces there [9]. That layered defense consists of a combined arms (air, land, and sea) integrated air defense system (IADS) and powerful anti-ship missiles deliverable from each of those forces. Moscow has also moved nuclear-capable forces to the Crimea and Black Sea to further display its determination to keep NATO out but also to use the umbrella it has created as the basis for an even more expansive strategy (resembling that used by the Egyptian Army in the Yom Kippur War of 1973) from which it can project power further out and deny those areas to NATO or at least threaten Alliance with heavy costs [10]. And beyond that Russia in 2017 began work on the Syrian bases at Tartus and Khmeimim to make them ready for hosting nuclear-capable warships and planes as well [11]. These trends clearly bespeak an interest in warfighting operations under conditions of a nuclear and conventional umbrella as suggested throughout this essay.

Moscow is evidently building a nuclear weapons storage facility in Crimea suggesting it will base if not deploy nuclear weapons there [12]. Among the weapons being deployed are nuclear-capable Kalibr' sea launched cruise missiles (SLCM) that have now also been deployed to the coast of Syria. So it is clear that Moscow intends to raise the specter of nuclear escalation in the Black Sea and the Mediterranean [13]. Thus today we are at a point where prominent experts, e.g. James Sherr of Chatham House, and former USAREUR Commander Lt. General Fredrick (Ben) Hodges (Ret) all see "the wider Black Sea region as the major area of potential friction with Russia in the next decade [14]."

For example, in and around Ukraine, the possibility exists of an amphibious operation on Ukraine's coast to isolate Mariupol and the southern Ukrainian coast all the way to Odesa from the Ukraine [15]. This amphibious operation could easily entail ship-based massed fire strikes. Another possibility is the use of Russia's airborne forces alone or in conjunction with an amphibious operation or a naval operation based on fire strikes from ship to shore. The fact that Moscow's entire airborne force is participating in the fall-2018 Vostok-2018

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operation in the Far East suggests its preparation for a potential “desant” upon Ukraine’s Black Sea coast [16].

At present the specific threats we see in the Black Sea are directed against Ukraine and Romania. But because Romania is a NATO ally and Ukraine is steadily drawing ever closer to European security organizations who identify its cause with their own, any further fighting in this maritime zone is fraught with danger and is unlikely to be confined to the Black Sea [17]. Indeed there is good reason to believe that naval operations in and around the Black Sea will inevitably entail operations a on shore and against land-based forces and defenses in both countries. Russian writers, in assessing the lessons of Syria, have argued that in implementing future construction plans for new submarines, and also in the modernization of the majority of the surface fleet, the Russian Navy will, by the end of the next decade, *be capable of carrying out massed missile strikes against the surface and land targets of the likely opponent*. Each fleet will have enough ships and submarines armed with Kalibr cruise missiles and Polymet-Redut air defense missiles to have a seriously enhanced combat capability [18]. (italics in the original)

For example, in response to talk of NATO exercises, Andrei Kelin, a spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs labeled such exercises destabilizing and further added that, “This is not NATO’s maritime space and it has no relation to the alliance [19].” More recently, Russian defense establishment has announced that nuclear-capable “Kalibr” (NATO codename SS-N-27) ship-based missiles will be “permanently based” in the Eastern Mediterranean, thus providing a capable and reliable reach for Moscow’s forces in the region [20]. These deployments began in the fall of 2018 [21]. Such missiles, with a range of up to 300 kilometers (3M-54, 3M-14), give even older Russian vessels a sufficient offensive as well as defensive counter-punch to strike at naval or even shore-based targets. Moreover, Russia will also conduct permanent exercises in the Mediterranean to go with its permanent deployment there [22].

Consequently as a result of the annexation of Crimea it is not just Ukraine that is in the eye of the Russian hurricane but also other littoral countries, e.g. Romania. Seizure of the Ukrainian Crimea by Russia de facto widens Russian exclusive mari-

time zone and makes it adjacent to the exclusive maritime zone of Romania, that puts Romania at greater risk from both maritime operation and land attack to the Dniester and beyond [23]. Indeed, the Federal Constitutional Law on Crimea’s annexation to the Russian Federation states that, “the demarcation of Black Sea territorial waters is established based on the international treaties made by the Russian federation.” According to the Munich-based expert, Vladimir Socor, “This vague wording appears to imply that Russia deems the agreements made with Ukraine on territorial demarcation with other countries are no longer valid, and suggest that Russia might try to negotiate and modify the current demarcation agreements [24].” And that means Russia could easily incite pressure against Romania and its critical maritime energy facilities that it has already frequently menaced by overflights (of fighter aircrafts) and the like [25].

Thus, Romania now experiences what one writer calls “periodic threats of annihilation for hosting American ballistic missile defense, exercises simulating Romania’s invasion, and repeated violations of air (and naval) space [26].” But Russian pressure is not confined to military threats either by land through Transnistria and Moldova or by sea and air from the Black Sea. Russia’s maritime and other incursions or probes also seem to be directed against Romania’s efforts to secure its energy independence and integrate fully with Western energy institutions and companies. It is quite likely that Moscow, for example wants to prevent Moldova from escaping its dependence on Russian gas transmissions from Ukraine or perhaps from Russian gas in general as President Igor Dodon has now expressed interest in alternative gas routes like the Iasi – Ungehi (Romania - Moldova gas pipeline [27]. But it also clearly wants to retain a capacity to threaten Romania, the most pro-American state of the region.

Russia’s Grand Objectives

However, the Kerch Strait incident points to grander Russian objectives, namely the reconstitution of the old Tsarist and Soviet empire. The Russian economic warfare against Ukraine and political campaign to undermine the government and the impending Ukrainian elections speaks to its determination to destroy the basis of any independent Ukrainian statehood as does the incessant stream of official lying that the Ukrainian government is

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the result of a Fascist coup in 2014 that placed a “junta” in power. As the eminent British expert James Sherr has recounted, elite belief in Russia virtually unanimously believes that there is no such thing as an independent Ukraine. Or to say it in Russian, “*Samostoiatel’naia Ukraina nikogda ne byla i nikogda ne budet*” (An independent Ukraine never has existed and never will). Putin actually warned us about Ukraine for at the Bucharest NATO summit in 2008. He told President Bush, “But George don’t you understand that Ukraine is not a state.” Putin further claimed that most of its territory was a Russian gift in the 1950s. Moreover, while Western Ukraine belonged to Eastern Europe, Eastern Ukraine was “ours”. Furthermore, if Ukraine did enter NATO Russia would then detach Eastern Ukraine (and the Crimea) and graft it onto Russia. Thus Ukraine would cease to exist as a state [28].

Long before the seizure of Crimea, both Ukraine and Russia agreed (*editor’s note: it is bilateral agreement of 2003*) to regard the Sea of Azov as the internal waters of each state. Thus, the states had shared sovereignty over that body of water; in the case of disputes, they would resolve them jointly. This result held until the invasion of Crimea. Now, Russian President Vladimir Putin claims—in utter defiance of both facts and international law—that Sevastopol has always been Russian, and Crimea is now Russian and will never be detached from Russia. Further, Moscow says that there is no need to renegotiate the original treaty with Ukraine governing the status of the Sea of Azov. In other words, the Sea of Azov is Russian waters as is the Kerch Strait and that is the end of the story. But while making these statements, Moscow had built a bridge over the Kerch Strait and completes building railway upon that bridge. This bridge was deliberately built at a height that all but precludes Ukrainian commercial traffic of Panamax vessels from operating in the Sea of Azov, thus placing the port of Mariupol in economic jeopardy. And in another contravention of international law, it has declared that it will block any NATO attempt to send ships into the Sea of Azov, even if they are invited by Ukraine.

Even well before the Kerch Strait incident on November 25, 2018 Russian officials were boarding Ukrainian ships illegally, enforcing a blockade of the Sea of Azov and of Ukraine’s coastline while also reinforcing its fleet in the area. Additionally,

they are threatening to launch a variety of potential military operations against Ukraine: naval shelling of land targets, an amphibious operation against Mariupol or the coastline, and another ground force invasion, all supported by naval artillery. In other words, Moscow is conducting not only a high-handed violation of Ukrainian sovereignty but also openly contravening the enshrined principle of the Freedom of the Seas, a threat that goes far beyond the Black Sea and Europe.

Likewise, before and since the incident near the Kerch Strait Russia was building up its forces and now has apparently accelerated this process all along the front with Ukraine. This buildup has given rise to almost daily warnings from Kyiv of the likelihood of a new Russian offensive to either cut off Ukrainian forces from the Sea of Azov or worse to attack, presumably in order to detach, the entire remaining Ukrainian coastline, including Odesa, using some combination of land and sea (if not air) forces. The objective, as in 2014, would be to seize that territory, join it, along with Crimea, to Russia, create a land bridge to the Russian occupied territory of Transnistria, the original objective of the 2014 invasion [29]. The outcome would then be a rump Ukrainian state with no prospect of autonomous viability and that would be a de facto Russian protectorate if not a territory prey to what we now see are Russian-encouraged Hungarian revanchist designs on the Carpathians [30]. Thus, Ukraine with such a cropped territory could not survive on its own.

Indeed, there is good reason to believe that the original military objective of the Ukrainian campaign was to carve out a belt of Russian territory embracing Donetsk and Luhansk provinces in Ukraine, Ukraine’s entire Crimean coast and Crimea itself all the way to Transnistria, thus destroying any basis for Ukrainian independent statehood, amputating its territory, and creating a new jurisdiction entitled “Novorossia” [31]. The plan apparently entailed inciting uprisings in Odesa that would be the trigger for a force of 2000 previously deployed Special Forces at Tiraspol airport in Transnistria to march the 105 km to Odesa and annex not only Crimea but also all of Ukraine’s Black Sea coast and Transnistria to Russia in a single contiguous belt [32]. So Russia’s current operations here along with the construction of the bridge over the Kerch Strait that has triggered the activity in the Sea of Azov suggest the consistency of the opera-

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tion to create an unbreakable and irrevocable land bridge from Russia to Crimea if not beyond [33].

Moscow's blockade of the Sea of Azov appears likely to extend to the coast of Ukraine, including Odesa, and may also be directed at seizing hydrocarbon deposits that still remain under Ukrainian control on Ukraine's sector of the Black Sea just as the seizure of gas production facilities and drilling rigs was a primary goal of the initial Crimean operation [34]. Thus Russian operations in this sea partake not only of straightforward military coercion but also of economic warfare. And thus without firing shot or acting in an ostentatiously illegal manner Russia has managed to deftly combine military and economic pressure together, a sure indicator of what has now come to be called maritime or naval hybrid warfare [35].

Beyond this possibility or possibly combined with it is the option of an amphibious operation on Ukraine's coast to isolate Mariupol and the southern Ukrainian coast all the way to Odesa from the Ukraine [36]. This amphibious operation could easily entail ship-based massed fire strikes. Another possibility is the use of Russia's airborne forces alone or in conjunction with an amphibious operation or a naval operation based on fire strikes from ship to shore. The fact that Moscow's entire airborne force is participating in the fall-2018 Vostok-2018 operation in the Far East suggests its preparation for a potential "desant" upon Ukraine's Black Sea coast [37].

However, Moscow's objectives go beyond Ukraine. Emboldened by the tepid Western response to the Kerch Strait incident Putin has moved onto the seizure of Belarus and brutal efforts to force it to incorporate with Russia, ceased to exist as an autonomous formation and accept Russian military bases. Utilizing Russia's economic power over Belarus, the Kremlin has issued an unambiguous ultimatum to Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka: either total integration or no more subsidies to the Belarusian economy. However, relations between Moscow and Minsk are unlikely to face a rapid escalation of tension. Russian President Vladimir Putin is obviously preparing not a blitzkrieg but a long siege of Belarus.[38]

Russia's imperial ambitions do not stop here for it is clear that Russia refuses to accept de jure the sovereignty and territorial integrity of any of the

post-Soviet states either in Europe or in the former USSR that were created in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union. This author, along with other Western scholars has long since noted this fact [39]. But Russian diplomats continue to claim that the post-1989 settlement in Europe and the former USSR is illegitimate, i.e. the disintegration of the USSR was not just what Putin called the greatest catastrophe of the twentieth century, but also fundamentally illegitimate and therefore must be undone or reversed. Writing about the current status of the Helsinki Treaty Russian academician in the journal of the Russian Foreign Ministry Vladimir Petrovsky cites the Russian diplomat Lev Voronkov as follows: "How can it be that the 35 states that participated in the Conference on Security and Cooperation (CSCE) and that agreed in Helsinki in 1975 on the inviolability of European borders and the territorial integrity of states turn into 56 CSCE participating members a little more than two decades later? At the same time, the Helsinki Final Act does not provide for or envision the peaceful redrawing of European borders, which the Soviet Union strongly opposed."

Petrovsky similarly quotes the Soviet diplomat Anatoly Adamishin: "The idea of Helsinki essentially served the arrangements between the East and West at a time when those words implied two different social systems. The original idea was left hanging as soon as that division disappeared – and it did so contrary to the principles of border inviolability and territorial integrity set forth in the Final Act rather than in accordance with them."

In this view it is clear that taking full control of Ukraine, Belarus and the Black Sea also spells the doom of any prospect for the de facto independence of the Caucasus and would also de facto subordinate Turkey to Russian designs, in return for energy deliveries and unstinting support for Erdogan's dictatorship. Indeed, at the end of 2018 Putin, discussing Russian cooperation with Turkey went beyond their dialogue in Syria to state that, "I'm sure Turkey and Russia will go on to strengthen security in Eurasia." To the degree that such cooperation develops it undermines any prospect of resistance to Russian imperialism in the Black Sea and the Caucasus, all but neutralizes NATO with regard to those zones, and facilitates open deployment of Russian military bases throughout the Eastern Mediterranean in ways that challenge NATO, Middle Eastern, and Balkan states.

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Conclusions

Having nothing to offer Russia but empire and imperial circuses Putin has fallen into the situation of Catherine the Great who claimed “I have no way to defend my frontiers but to extend them.” But the revival of Russian imperialism in today’s Europe can only mean permanent war across multiple domains because of the resistance to be expected to such empire-building. This war is already occurring in multiple domains, not just the military one but also information, economics, etc. In other words, the incident near the Kerch Strait, when seen in the larger strategic context, represents only one move in a long-term multi-domain or multi-dimensional war against Ukraine and the West. And to deter Russia let alone win this war the govern-

ments of the West along with that of Ukraine must step up their entire political “game”. The integrity of the Ukrainian state, not just territorially but also economically, politically, and spiritually are at risk as are those of the West. So unless we grasp the nature of the challenge and realize it includes but far transcends the buildup of naval or other military capabilities we and Ukraine will remain permanently at risk. The incident near the Kerch Strait was a “firebell in the night” but the fire will not stop at that Strait or the sea of Azov, or even Ukraine. Unchallenged it will sooner or later burn through Europe unless we rise to the occasion. If we might paraphrase Lord Nelson at Trafalgar, Ukraine can save itself by its exertions and Europe by its example.

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Polish View on Russian occupation of Crimea and ways of its solution

The article focuses on possible ways of reintegration of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. Regaining control over Crimea may become realistic only if a number of pre-requisites are in place - internal weakness of the Russian Federation, strengthening of Western sanctions against Russia and success of Ukrainian reforms. Due to the fact that it is very difficult to obtain the combination of these conditions and that the process may require a lot of time, reintegration of Crimea can be implemented only in the long term. Since the manoeuvring area available to Kyiv is limited, Ukraine has to take into account the importance of the abovementioned pre-requisites when implementing its policy in regard to Crimea and the RF. Kyiv may gain success only if it keeps reintegration high on Ukraine's political agenda.

- situational reaction to the existing security challenges;
- filing lawsuits in regard to compensation for the lost property;
- battling for “minds” of the international community on the issues connected with recognition of the annexation and protection of human rights in Crimea;
- regulating social and economic relations with the occupied ARC;
- attempting to solve problems of inhabitants of Crimea, e.g. in the fields of education and health care;
- information policy in relation to the ARC [1].

The list given above covers the key directions of Ukraine's actions; however, all of them are chaotic, insufficiently structured and interconnected. Therefore, the main drawback of Kyiv's policy in relation to Crimea is the lack of comprehensiveness and clarity in formulation of the goals.

Preface

As of the beginning of 2019, it can be stated that for the Ukrainian state bodies' reintegration of Crimea is not a priority and the State policy in regard to the Crimean problem lacks consistency. When assessing this policy, the restricted area for manoeuvring is a mitigating factor – even if Kyiv's actions were next to ideal, this would not drastically change the existing *status quo* due to the circumstances which Ukraine cannot control. Developers of the draft Strategy for information reintegration of Crimea believe that the State policy in regard to the peninsula focuses on:

Problems of Crimea are an integral part of a wider context of the Ukrainian-Russian war, and the Kremlin did not give up and would hardly give up its aggressive/hybrid aspirations in regard to Ukraine in the foreseeable future. That is why in the conflict with Russia Ukraine is going to be on the defensive for quite a long time yet. As a result, effectiveness of the policy in relation to the peninsula depends to a large extent on its performance in the conflict with Russia on all other fronts. The RF implements its aggression in cold blood, consistently, using hybrid methods. With this, it uses the “creeping” *step-by-step* tactics every time it crosses another boundary; this extension in time has to create an illusion that there

is no aggression whatsoever [2]. In fact, the Kremlin's actions demonstrate its undisguised desire to transform the Sea of Azov into Russia's internal waters. It is obvious that the next link in the chain of events will be complete blockade of the Ukrainian ports on the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea, and, probably, an attempt to obtain a land corridor from the so-called DPR to the occupied Crimea. Therefore, the strategy of reintegration of Crimea which by definition must be an offensive one, cannot but take into consideration the requirement in constant strengthening of the defence capability of the country in all of its aspects – military, political, economic, power- and information-related, etc. And as of the beginning of 2019, the gaps and drawbacks are hardly in short supply here.

There still exists the risk of “peaceful” settlement of the situation in Donbas on the Kremlin's conditions, which will almost certainly mean conservation of the “Crimean issue”, that is it will be a major step toward recognition of the annexation (although it will hardly be *de jure* recognition). This scenario has a chance to be implemented in case of political changes as a result of presidential and parliamentary elections. Actions of the Russian Federation in relation to the separate districts of Donetsk and Luhansk Regions (ORDLO) will be traded for Kyiv's consent to “forget” about Crimea. In this context it should be noted that, as of the beginning of 2019, the RF demonstrates complete lack of readiness to negotiate changes in the status of Crimea. Moreover, in the Ukrainian media space Crimea moves further and further into the background. Should this trend continue, the risk of the political trade-offs in regard to ORDLO and the ARC will increase due to the drop in public demand for reintegration of Crimea.

No matter how things turn out, reintegration of peninsula has a number of latent threats to the national interests of Ukraine; especially if we take into account its European and Euro-Atlantic aspirations. According to the Warsaw-based governmental Center for Eastern Studies, in 2016 the level of actual integration of Crimea into the RF in cultural and social spheres was significantly higher than the level of its integration into the mainland Ukraine prior to the annexation [3]. Besides, for the inhabitants of Crimea the dominant factor is adaptation, which is further advanced by Russia's determination, albeit with a sharp authoritative flavour. Taking into account the time factor

and the actions of the RF, the world view and economic links that connect the population of Crimea with the RF are sure to become stronger yet. That is why we have to admit the simple fact that in order to reintegrate the ARC Ukraine must be prepared to take drastic measures which are necessary for mitigation of the related risks.

Based upon the abovementioned facts, reintegration of the ARC would be possible only if the following interconnected pre-conditions are met:

- **consolidation of the international anti-Putin coalition and strengthening of sanctions against the RF** – due to the fact that potentials of the RF and Ukraine are not equal, active support of the West is a necessary pre-requisite not only for reintegration of Crimea but also for survival of Ukraine;
- **collapse of the current regime and internal chaos in Russia** – chaos must deprive the Kremlin of the possibility to respond, including with the use of armed forces, to the return of control over the peninsula to Ukraine;
- **the Ukrainian success story** – reintegration will be problematic without the success of reforms and radical changes in Ukraine – Ukraine must become a magnet which would attract the population of Crimea.

It is difficult to imagine successful integration without such configuration. Subsequently, any strategy of Kyiv in regard to Crimea must be targeting crystallization of the above mentioned pre-requisites. All of them will require time, and that is why reintegration of Crimea in the short or medium term is highly improbable. Minimal, though not very realistic, term is five years; it is more realistic to set plans for at least 10 years ahead. At the same time, there is a number of actions that have to be conducted now in regard to Crimea, despite the fact that the prospects for rapid reintegration are rather bleak.

Economic issues

Furtherance of the increase in the value of occupation must be the foundation of economic policy in relation to Crimea and the RF. Arguments to the contrary which claim that in this way Ukraine contributes to severing the relations between the

peninsula and the mainland Ukraine do not hold water, since it is already a done deed, and it will deepen, no matter which policy Ukraine implements. Therefore, the first and already partially accomplished task is economic blockade of the peninsula. A special role in this belongs to the ban of supplies of electricity, oil products and water from the mainland Ukraine to Crimea – effectiveness of this blockade must not give rise to any doubts. The Kremlin has to implement costly infrastructure projects (gas pipeline, power “bridge”, electric power networks, thermal power plants), which provides opportunities for the sanctions to be strengthened (how Kyiv is going to use these opportunities is another matter).

Another long-awaited step must be liquidation of the Crimean Free Economic Zone (FEZ) [4]. Effectiveness of this regime is, to put it mildly, questionable. It profits, if at all, only the oligarchic structures which continue their operations in the ARC, despite the occupation. Besides, the existence of the FEZ brings about reputational losses in the international arena, which, to some extent, spoils efforts aimed at strengthening the Western sanctions against the RF.

The third element is the continuation of court battles in order to get compensation for the loss of property on the peninsula [5]. It's a fact that in the “post-annexation” period the Ukrainian complainants secured several resounding victories over the Russian respondent parties in the international courts. In May 2018 in a lawsuit filed by 18 Ukrainian companies and 1 physical body the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague ruled that the penalty amounting to 159 mln US dollars was to be paid as a compensation for the loss of property incurred by the annexation [6]. In November 1.3 bln USD were awarded to Oschadbank. Numerous courts are now considering other claims, and more and more Ukrainian subjects make public their intentions to go to court with lawsuits in regard to loss of property in Crimea. Although it is clear that Russia is going to reject to execute court judgments, this line of action is rather successful so far. The things that can be improved here are coordination of actions between the State and commercial structures, and media coverage of the juridical victories. For instance, Oschadbank's victory was practically “drowned” in the sea of news concerning the events in the Kerch Strait, thus failing to have the desired effect.

The fourth economic element is the most distant in time and it concerns the development of the economic strategy for the reintegrated peninsula. Now it is quite clear that recovery of the Crimean economy after the control is regained will require a special, unique approach and prompt action. It's mandatory to give a clear signal to the international business community which would get the latter more interested to invest in Crimea. It is necessary to start working on development of such strategy right now.

Sanctions policy

In this component it is important to follow two vectors. **Firstly, it is necessary to fill in the gaps which exist in the sanctions policy of the West and Ukraine itself.** The State bodies have to use the results of works conducted by the experts of CACDS who constantly monitor implementation of sanctions against the RF imposed for annexation of the ARC [7]. The experts of the Center stated that there still exist a lot of “gaps” in the sanctions regime. For example, there are no sanctions imposed on Leningrad-based Pella Shipyard which builds missile corvettes at the Theodosia wharf. Pella is not only missing from the sanctions lists, but it also owns a wharf in Hamburg, Germany. Another example is Zalyv Shipyard in Kerch which builds ships for Russia's Black Sea Fleet from the portfolio of orders of Russia's Zeleny Dol Shipyard (it belongs to Ak Bars Holding Company JSC). The above mentioned shipyards plan to build 9 missile corvettes, which would step up further militarisation of the peninsula.

The attention has also to be paid to the port of Kavkaz that serves as a hub for handling banned cargoes – the latter are transited through this Russia port to or from Crimean ports. In this port the goods receive the certificates which confirm their allegedly Russian origin in case of export operations and the acceptance acts in case of import operations. It is worth reminding that media activity abroad meets with some success – as a result of coverage of the news about delivery of ilmenite from Norway and Germany to the peninsula via the port of Kavkaz in 2017, such deals were cut short. The port played a key role in illegal construction of the bridge across the Kerch Strait, but the port authorities were never made to face the consequences. The CACDS experts point out that the Russian airlines continue their flights to the

Crimean airports, and afterwards their planes were allowed to land in the European countries. The 2017 monitoring campaign identified 164 such planes. They should be included in the sanctions list; the ban on their servicing and maintenance in the European airports should be put in place.

Finally, the issue of servicemen who violated the oath of allegiance during the annexation remains unresolved. Kyiv should compile sanctions lists of servicemen and officials who violated the oath following the annexation of the peninsula [8].

Secondly, the Ukrainian policy in regard to sanctions requires unification, system approach and media support. The State structures have to persecute the law violators in the occupied Crimea and ensure that their cases are extensively covered by the media both in Ukraine and abroad. It is logical to surmise that the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine or one of its structures would have to deal with the issue. At the moment the official Kyiv resorts only to techniques of rhetoric (and not on a regular basis, at that) and practically ignores this issue. It is understandable that the Ukrainian sanctions against the Russian entities or individuals will yield only limited results. However, against this backdrop it is possible and even advisable to launch information campaigns in Ukraine and especially abroad. Besides, the international community must get a clear signal that Ukraine dishes out harsh punishment to the violators. Only then it can be expected that the West will do the same. It is recommended to establish direct communication links with the corresponding bodies in other key countries which committed themselves to implement the sanctions policy (for example, the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) in the USA). This would make it possible to coordinate actions and exchange information about the entities or individuals which are potentially subject to Western sanctions.

Protection of the hostages' rights

The wide range of actions to which Russia resorts when dealing with the Ukrainian political prisoners and prisoners of war demonstrates that the Kremlin is using them in a number of ways to achieve its political goals [9]. There are attempts to get its own population spooked by "Ukrainian spies and saboteurs", tactical manoeuvres which

target foreign policy of Ukraine, public claims to the effect that the annexation is final, demonstration of Kyiv's inefficiency and helplessness in protecting the rights of the Ukrainian citizens, attempts to bargain in the hope for trade-offs and, which is quite possible, preparation of *casus belli* for the military intervention by staging provocations – subversive and terrorist acts "executed by the Ukrainian secret services" in the RF [10]. This problem has become an important one long ago and now it is bound to get deeper. **Thus, it presents a challenge to Ukraine which has to monitor and promptly respond to dangerous manifestations of this course taken by Moscow on a constant basis and ideally pre-empt the Kremlin's plans.** In this context it is difficult to differentiate between the Crimean prisoners and the wronged individuals in other parts of Ukraine.

Of course, the manoeuvring area is narrow or very narrow – Moscow recognizes the principle of might which at this moment is its trump card. However, even the existing opportunities are not always used in an optimal way, and Ukraine may not allow itself to make the slightest mistakes in its battle waged to protect the rights of the citizens unlawfully detained by the RF. Just take the epic case of financing the basic needs of political prisoners. The State bodies seem to not see the potential of civic organizations working in this sphere. Kyiv definitely underestimates the necessity of working with the international community which receives insufficient information about breaches of the law by the Russians. Therefore it is necessary to input more effort into coverage of these topics by the Western media (it is still more important, as the Western democracies have a special attitude toward the subject of the human rights) Besides, it is impossible not to realize that the leaders of some of the partner countries have theoretical chances to help free the Ukrainian citizens. Intervention of Recep Erdogan, President of Turkey, is a good example of effectiveness of such instruments. Still another drawback is the absence of constant monitoring of those individuals – judges or law enforcement officials – who are guilty of violation of the Ukrainian citizens' rights on the occupied territories. The corresponding data bases are to become a part of media and diplomatic efforts; they are to be used when revising the sanctions lists.

Security sector

With the war factor in mind, it is impossible not to overlook the security aspect, too. Build-up and strengthening of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, as well as reformation of the law enforcement organs, which are expected to be implemented in the long term are of vital importance for reintegration of the peninsula. Even if reintegration is peaceful, a powerful army is going to be needed to deter aggression. It is trite but true – the absolute priority must be given to radical strengthening of the Ukrainian Navy [11]. Detailed review of reforms in the sphere of security is outside the scope of this publication, but it is worthwhile to focus on other aspects associated with this issue. What is meant here is the activity aimed at creation of a better balance of forces in the region. It is safe to say that today the RF has complete dominance in the Black Sea. Ukraine has to do its utmost best to ensure constant presence of evergrowing number of NATO ships in the area, taking into account the restrictions stipulated by the Montreux Convention. In this context the military cooperation and coordination of actions with Romania become very important [12].

The same applies to strengthening of the relations with Turkey. This issue is of a particular importance, since there is a potential risk that eventually the security situation in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov will escalate. Intensification of cooperation with Ankara which has grown in the last few years is absolutely justified and appropriate. Military and technical cooperation has to play a key role in this process [13].

Information policy

It is obvious that the information component is a necessary tool for reintegration of the peninsula. Kyiv authorities are often berated for the lack of effectiveness in bringing information to the population of Crimea. But in reality, it would be quite naïve to count on changes in the attitude of population in the occupied ARC in favour of Ukraine, if there are no pre-requisites which were mentioned earlier in the text. Nonetheless, the activities on the information front must be stepped up. On December 28, 2018 the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved the Strategy for Information Reintegration of Crimea. The document sets ambitious goals [14], in particular: to instill the belief that reintegration of Crimea is inevitable and that there is no threat

to the inhabitants of the ARC in this connection, to gain support of the Crimean population on the issue of Ukraine's integrity, to ensure clear understanding of the "Crimean issue" by the international community. At the same time, the realistic assessment of the current *status quo* that only the third goal can be successfully achieved. Implementation of the first two tasks seems to be *wishful thinking* – the goals may be achieved only if Putin's regime collapses and the RF will be weakened on both domestic and international fronts. At the same time, it has to be noted that the Strategy mentions the threats to its implementation, stating, for example, that "there are technical restrictions in regard to bringing its content across to the population of Crimea".

Based upon the above mentioned, the key targets should be the population of the mainland Ukraine and the international community. Work with the first targeted sector should be considered an effort to counter the Kremlin's hybrid methods of manipulating the public opinion. It also should be considered a consolidating factor; the would-be reintegration of Crimea has to be one of the elements comprising a national idea. As a result, the support of reintegration by the population must be in no doubt, which in its turn will influence the activity of public leaders. The goals of the international vector of the information policy are obvious – stronger conviction in the illegal nature of the annexation and Russia's impudent behaviour in the post-annexation period – violation of the human rights and the sanctions regime, militarisation of Crimea [15], provocations by the Black Sea Fleet, etc.

A good step stipulated in the Strategy is the plan to form a permanent expert committee at the Ministry of Information Policy which would deal with creation of mechanisms of coordination between the public at large and the State. It could be useful to create a pool of non-governmental organizations, experts and journalists – actively working on the international media platforms – and to hold a regular dialog with them. Not denying the importance of information activities, we have to admit that, especially in the struggle for the minds of the people abroad, an essential role will be played by bursts of activity during crises or in situations which have public resonance (for example, the incident with shelling and detention of the Ukrainian ships and crew).

Possible scenarios of reintegration

Theoretically there exist several scenarios in regard to return of the Ukrainian control over the peninsula. The first scenario is a “**military**” one. Due to a number of reasons – militarisation of Crimea following the annexation, presence of powerful groupings of the Russian Army along the entire Ukrainian-Russian border, in ORDLO and Transnistria, insufficient potential of the Ukrainian Armed Forces to launch an offensive (and especially the Air Force and the Navy which are absolutely necessary for this kind of operations), geographical peculiarities of the peninsula, possible international reaction, lack of strong pro-Ukrainian sentiment in the ARC – it would be absolutely unwise for Ukraine to choose this variant. At the same time, it should be noted that it would be difficult to return the control over the peninsula without resorting to some heavy-handed methods.

The second scenario which is frequently discussed can be called an “**insurgent**” one. According to it, the population of the peninsula is going to realize that living inside the same organism together with the RF is a dead end, and this is going to push the population of Crimea toward insurgency which eventually will receive support from the mainland Ukraine. As things stand now, this variant is not realistic.

The third – “**peaceful**” – scenario has theoretical chances to be implemented. By using a complex of actions to be undertaken on diplomatic, political, and economic and information fronts, the pre-requisites which were mentioned earlier can be created. In such circumstances for the significant part of the inhabitants of Crimea the mainland Ukraine will become a very attractive place, a symbol of success. Sometimes a diplomatic component is separated from this scenario as a separate self-contained reintegration tool [16]. According to this scenario, Crimea would be returned to Ukraine as a result of agreements between the RF, Ukraine and, potentially, the Western countries. However, the weak point of both “peaceful” and “diplomatic” scenarios is that they do not pay enough atten-

tion to the risks for Ukraine connected with the reintegration of the peninsula. Besides, this variant means a compromise, but there can be no compromise when the territorial integrity is at stake.

Finally, the “**peaceful+**” scenario seems to be the optimal one. It differs from the “peaceful” scenario only in that it will be necessary to use some elements of the hard-handed methods. Due to the fact that pro-Russian and anti-Ukrainian sentiments can be said to have rather strong impact on the Crimean population, the mere demonstration of the Ukraine’s attractiveness (as a magnet) is not enough to implement reintegration. Sooner or later this approach will lead to post-reintegration security problems. The actual situation in the occupied ARC and the aftermath of the occupation make it necessary to use force (on a limited scale), especially since after the occupation a large number of extremists and radical elements will remain on the territory of the peninsula.

Due to a number of factors, the available manoeuvring for Ukraine to respond to the Russian occupation of Crimea, is limited. Reintegration of the peninsula is possible only in the long term and only if three pre-requisites exist – internal weakness and chaos in the RF, strengthening of the Western sanctions against the RF and success of reforms in Ukraine. The State policy in regard to Crimea should be aimed at creation or appearance of these pre-requisites. There is no doubt that for Kyiv the optimal variant of reintegration of Crimea is implementation of the “peaceful+” scenario – a complex of closely interrelated measures in the fields of diplomacy, economy, humanitarian and information policy which will be supported by building the new Ukrainian Armed Forces. However, so far the course taken by Ukraine in relation to Crimea resembles a situational approach. This approach may gain consistency only if the reintegration is realistic, and not merely declarative, priority of the State policy.

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Main consequences of the Russian annexation for the Crimean economy

The article is devoted to the analysis of the economic situation in Crimea that occurred because of the peninsula's annexation by the Russian Federation. The first priority of the Russian policy is nationalization of the Ukrainian state-owned and other property, because of which profit-making enterprises and resort facilities are transferred to Russian holding companies or purchased by Russian oligarchs at a fraction of the cost. Russian investments into the economy of Crimea are based on the federal budget allocations used to fund large infrastructure projects (the Kerch Strait Bridge, the Tavrida highway, etc.). As for the Crimean industry, only the sectors having orders on an ad hoc basis (extraction of building materials, manufacturing of steel structures for the bridge, etc.) and military industrial complex enterprises demonstrate certain growth. The agrarian sector is in a difficult position due to the reduction in agricultural yields and livestock number. The foreign trade of Crimea has decreased tenfold.

Economic potential of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol before the occupation was quite significant – as far as the Gross Regional Product (GRP) is concerned, the peninsula occupied the 10th place among all regions of Ukraine [1, p. 12]. Following the annexation, Crimea's GRP has decreased almost twofold - from \$7.2 bln to \$4.7 bln [2]. Nevertheless, even this reduction allows Crimea to be ahead of the Republic of Chechnya, Ivanovo, Kostroma, Pskov and Kurgan Regions (twice higher), Kabardino-Balkaria and

Northern Ossetia (almost thrice higher), Ingushetia and Altay (seven times higher).

Expropriation of the Ukrainian property. On March 17, 2014 (i.e. on the second day after the so-called referendum) Verkhovna Rada of the ARC, the authority of which has been revoked by the Ukrainian Parliament on March 15, approves the Decree “On independence of Crimea”. According to this document, all Ukrainian property belonging to the State and trade unions, as well as all public property are declared a “property of the Republic of Crimea” [3].

According to some Russian lawyers, declaration about “nationalization” of the Ukrainian property one day prior to the official unification with the Russian Federation allows Moscow to avoid accusations in appropriation of the Ukrainian property, violation of bilateral agreements and its own legislative norms which require buyout of the nationalized property [4, pp.126-127].

Strategic enterprises located on the peninsula – PJSC SE Chornomornaftogaz, Crimean assets of the PJSC Ukrtransgaz, SE Feodosiia Oil Products Supply Enterprise, Kerch Ferry Service, sea trade ports (Kerch, Feodosiia, Yalta, Sevastopol, Evpatoria) and fishing ports (Kerch and Sevastopol) – were the first to go under control of Crimea.

During 2014-15 not only the State-owned enterprises (facilities of Ukroboronprom Concern, Massandra Winery, Novy Svit Winery, but also even privately owned assets (PJSC Krymkhlib, PJSC Ukrtelecom, PJSC DTEK Krymenergo, assets belonging to the Ukrainian businessman Ihor Kolomoyskyi and others have been “nationalized” (*de facto* expropriated without any compensation to the owners). In Sevastopol, the process of “nationalization” was proceeding more slowly, but in

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the end, almost all enterprises of the shipbuilding industry have become municipal property.

According to preliminary assessments by the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine, in monetary equivalent the losses of the State-owned property exceeded one trillion hryvnias. In its lawsuit against the RF NJSC Naftogaz of Ukraine claimed that the cost of its Crimean assets amounted to \$5 bln [5]. Ukraine's Oschadbank has already received the decision of the international arbitration court in accordance with which Russia is to compensate \$1.3 bln for the losses caused by the annexation of Crimea [6].

Management of the nationalized property. Following the expropriation of the Ukrainian property, the process of its transfer to federal property or to property of the RF entities, incorporation in the Russian holding companies by means of auctions or sale of shares to Russian oligarchs, has begun. For example, Massandra Winery has been transferred to the Department of Administrative Affairs of the President of the RF, and the Children's Health Centre in Satera near Alushta has been given to the Republic of Chechnya without any compensation.

The ship repair enterprises, which are important for the Russian military industrial complex, are gradually given to the Russian holding companies by means of leasing, transfer to federal property and sales of shares. For instance, Sevastopol Marine Plant has been leased for 49 years to JSC Zvezdochka Ship Repair Centre, which belongs to the United Shipbuilding Corporation. In autumn 2015, Feodosiia More Shipyard was given the status of federal state-owned unitary enterprise, and in May 2018 Putin signed a decree about the transfer of this shipyard to Russia's Rostec Corporation. Sevastopol Aviation Enterprise has been transferred to federal property and it will be incorporated into Vertolety Rossii Company by 2020.

Some of the Crimean enterprises, which compete with the Russian companies, are deliberately made bankrupt and subsequently liquidated. Feodosiia-based Skloplastik Plant that had a status of the leading enterprise in the field of manufacture of polymer materials, motor boats and yachts, has

been bankrupted shortly after the annexation; today it is a production shop of More Shipyard.

Some of the "nationalized" Ukrainian enterprises and other facilities have been sold to Russian business people at auctions in 2017-2018. For example, Novy Svit Winery has been acquired for mere 1.5 bln roubles (\$22.7 mln) by the Southern Project Company of St. Petersburg, which belongs to Rossia Bank (the main shareholder is Yuri Kovalchuk).

Late in 2018 Krymtelecom Company, which was set up using the "nationalized" property of Ukrtelecom, Kyivstar and other Ukrainian companies, has been sold for 998 mln roubles (\$15 mln). The entire package of shares has been acquired by the Russian UKIP LLC, which belongs to Vladimir Zaritsky, ex-commander of the rocket troops and artillery. In summer 2015 this Russian company has also bought 3 sanatoria on the South Coast ("Miskhor", "Ai-Petri" and "Dyulbar") for mere 1.5 bln roubles, although, according to the Ukrainian experts, the minimal price of each of them was \$20 mln [7]. Livadia Sanatorium, together with other cultural heritage buildings, has been purchased for 500 mln roubles (\$8 mln) by Russian oligarch Konstantin Malofeyev. The nationalized Foros Sanatorium, which belonged to the Ukrainian businessman Ihor Kolomoyskyi, has been sold to the Federation of Trade Unions of Tatarstan back in 2016 for 1.4 bln roubles (\$18 mln).

In total, from 117 recreational facilities nationalized in 2014 only 11 remained property of Crimea and they also are to be sold one of these days. In 2019 the remaining part of the "republican" property – Feodosiia Optical Plant, Krymkhlib and several other enterprises – are going to be sold at auction.

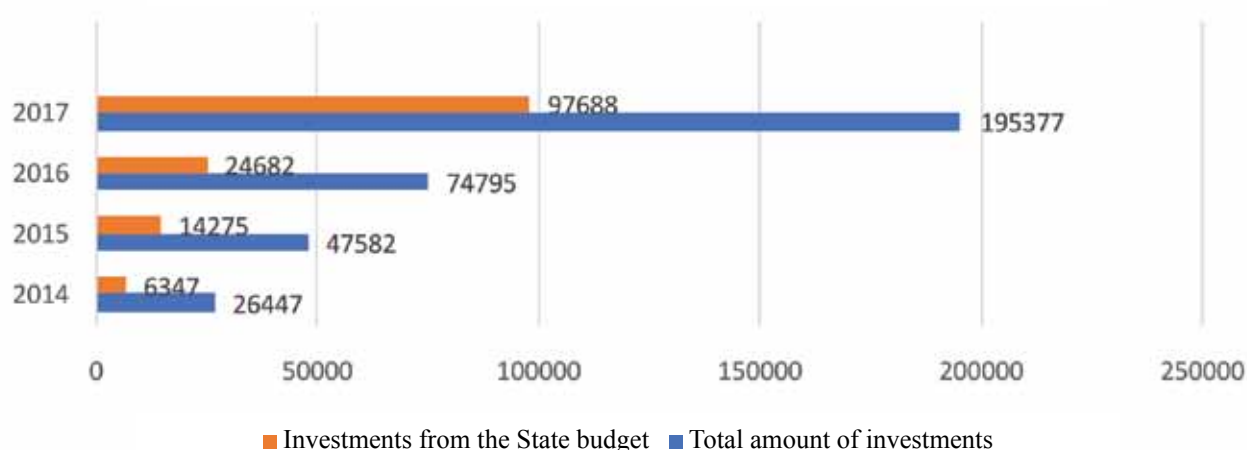
Investments. Total amount of investments into Crimea (the ARC and Sevastopol) in 2014-2017 exceeded 550 bln roubles (around \$6.8 bln, taking into account average weighted US dollar exchange rate). During 3 quarters of 2018 investments into the Crimean economy amounted to 153.6 bln roubles (\$2.4 bln); in this amount the budget money comprises from 48.4% (in Sevastopol) to 61% (in the ARC) [8].

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The State money arrives in Crimea in accordance with the Federal Special Purpose Program of Social and Economic Development of the Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol. The budget of the latter until 2022 is 877.8 bln roubles. Based upon data for November 2018, financial expenses connected with implementation of the Program

amounted to 442 bln roubles, or 63% of the total capital investments [9]. However, the main portion of these means is allocated to implementation of infrastructure projects (bridge over the Kerch Strait, Tavrida Highway) and renovation or installation of new power transmission lines, water supply pipelines and sewerage systems.

**Russian State budget investments into economy of the ARC,
in mln US dollars**



Percentage of private investments into the economy of the ARC is gradually decreasing - from 61.4% to 37.3% during 2014-2017 [2, p.151]. In 2018, percentage of bank loans to entrepreneurs drastically increases – from 0.3% in the total volume in 2017 to 26.6% in the ARC and to 43.3% in Sevastopol [8]. This provides evidence of the fact that the problem of the Crimean banks' financial provision is being gradually resolved. However, the Russians cannot improve the situation regarding foreign investments due to the EU sanctions, that is why the percentage of foreign investments has decreased from 7.2% in 2014 to 1.2% in 2017 [2, p. 151].

Russia's free economic zone on the peninsula.

In order to attract investments on January 1, 2015 the Russian authorities set up a free economic zone (FEZ); its taxation regime is valid on the territory of the occupied ARC and Sevastopol. For the residents of the FEZ a preferential rate concerning profit tax during the first 3 years is 2%, starting from the fourth year it is 6%, from the ninth year – up to 13.5%. Moreover, during the first seven

years a resident of the FEZ pays only 7.6% of insurance fees, which is significantly less than the standard fee in Russia.

Due to the preferential taxation in 2015-2018, the number of the FEZ residents has increased to 1848 [10] (1380 in the ARC and 468 in Sevastopol). It is 21 times higher than the number of the residents of the FEZ Alabuga in Tatarstan, and 132 times higher than the number of residents of the FEZ "Titan Valley" in Sverdlovsk Region.

Total amount of investments declared by the participants of the FEZ exceeds 150 bln roubles (60 bln hryvnias), and they are counted as a part of the total volume of investments. However, in reality only 7% of the FEZ residents invested in the economy of Crimea [11], and the remaining residents merely enjoy preferential taxation possibilities of the zone. Thus, tax arrears caused by the FEZ in 2015-2017 have exceeded 11 bln roubles (4.2 bln hryvnias), and the 2018 tax arrears will amount to not less than 10 bln roubles (3.8 bln hryvnias). That goes to say that during 4 years of existence of

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the FEZ the Crimean budget did not receive 21 bln roubles (8 bln hryvnias) in taxes.

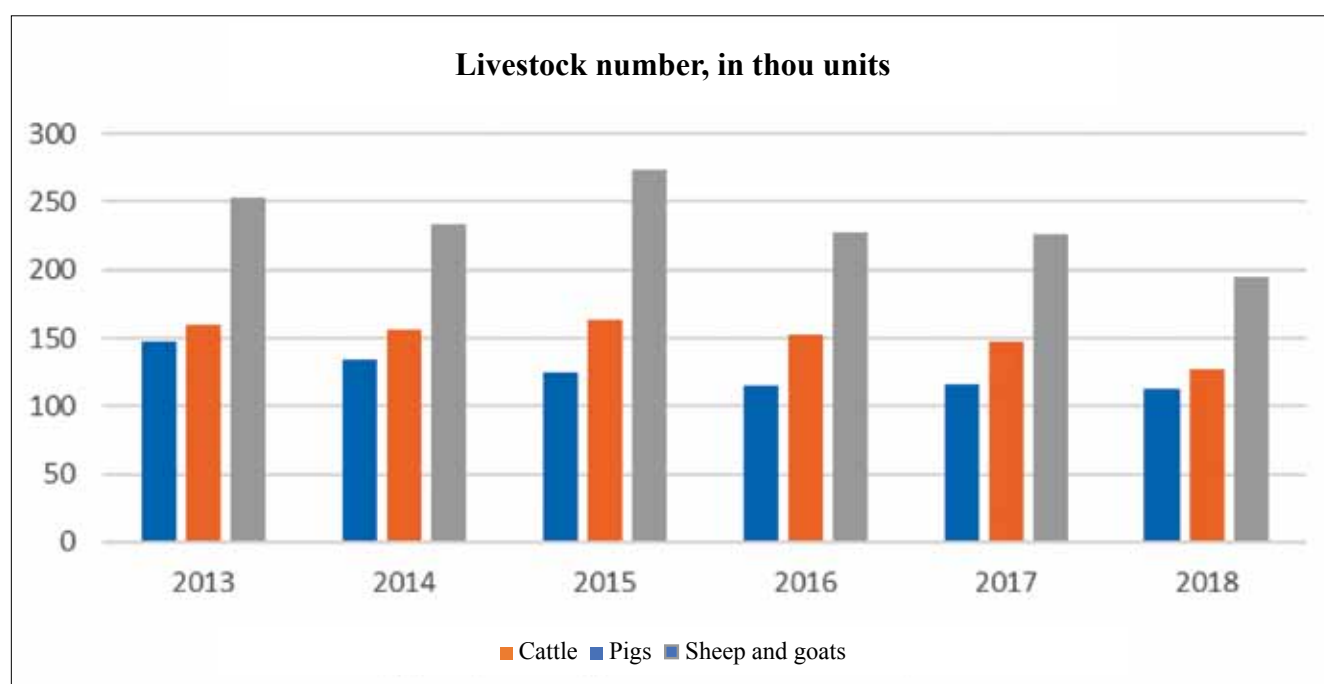
This situation forced the Russian authorities to cancel favourable taxation for those FEZ residents who do not execute investment projects on the territory of the peninsula by introducing amendments to the Tax Code.

Reduction of economic potential of Crimea.

During the last 5 years, the industrial production in Crimea faced a number of serious problems. Breaking of long-established economic ties with the mainland Ukraine has reduced possibility to purchase raw materials and to sell the finished goods. Because of Ukraine's refusal to supply Dnieper River water and electricity to the peninsula, the production cost of the goods produced in Crimea has significantly increased. Taking into account transportation costs and unwillingness of the Russians to let the Crimean companies sell their goods on the Russian territory, the sales possibilities are very limited. That is why the only branches of industry, which actively develop on the peninsula, are the raw materials industry that implements infrastructure construction projects, and the enterprises, which produce the goods that are necessary for Russia's defence industrial complex (DIC).

As far as the sphere of production is concerned, in 2017 the highest growth is demonstrated by the manufacture of finished metal products – almost 4 times higher than in 2016 (this growth rate is closely connected with orders for metal structures for the “Crimean bridge”), as well as the manufacture of electric equipment (orders from the DIC) [2, p.86]. In 2018, these growing sectors were joined by transport machine building, where a 30% growth in production has been achieved due to orders from the military [12]. In general, the share of military equipment production comprises one third of the total volume of the manufactured goods.

In the situation when the Crimean industry shows at least limited success, the peninsula's agricultural sector is in crisis. Due to shortages of water (85% of water were supplied to the peninsula through the North-Crimean canal from the mainland Ukraine, the area of irrigated soil decreased 10-fold – from 136 thou ha to 14 thou ha. Some crops are cultivated no longer, and the others yield much less than before. For example, in 2017 production of potatoes dropped nearly twofold in comparison with 2013 – from 402 thou t to 212 thou t, vegetables – by one third (from 437thou t to 334 thou t) [2, p.95].



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The balance was maintained owing to good sunflower seed and grain crops. However, due to drought in 2018 the grain crops yielded the worst results in the last 18 years (760.5 thou t); the sunflower seed crop was 2.4 times less than in 2013 which was a similar year as far as the climatic conditions are concerned [12].

Due to expansive epidemics of livestock that, according to the farmers, were aimed at destruction of local farms that competed with the Russians, and due to high prices for fodder, as well as complicated Russian regulations concerning acceptance of the animal products, the number of livestock dropped drastically. As compared to 2013, the number of cattle decreased by 20%, sheep and goats – by 23%, pigs – by a third. This led to a 19% drop in meat production and a 60% drop in milk production.

Foreign trade. Annexation by Russia has wielded major influence on the volumes of the peninsula's foreign trade. During 2014-2017 the ARC's foreign trade turnover decreased 21-fold (export – 30-fold, import – 16.6-fold). Similar situation can be witnessed in Sevastopol: export dropped 18.5-fold, import -7-fold. This situation is caused by the reasons described below. Firstly, after the annexation export from Crimea to Russia, which in 2013 amounted to 247.6 mln US dollars (27%) [1, p.497], has disappeared. Instead, Ukraine became one of the Crimea's "foreign partners"; in 2014-2015 Ukraine was responsible for 26% of total

Crimea's exports and 45% of Crimea's imports [14]. When the Ukrainian government introduced restrictions concerning supply of goods to the occupied Crimea in 2015, the foreign trade turnover of the peninsula diminished still further.

Secondly, a serious blow to Crimea's foreign trade was dealt by the Western sanctions policy: the EU bans export of 250 products from Crimea (raw materials and minerals) and does not allow importation of equipment. However, these products comprised the basis of Crimea's trade with the European Union. Due to these restrictions export of the Crimean products to the EU all but stopped in 2015, and import of the goods from Europe dropped 8.2-fold [14]. In later years, Krymstat (Crimea's Statistics Agency) stopped publication of data pertaining to geographical structure of the peninsula's foreign trade.

Thus, annexation of the peninsula gave Russia its sizable economic potential, that significantly decreased in the years spent under occupation. This is caused not only by the objective factors (breaking of long-established economic ties with the economy of the mainland Ukraine and the Western sanctions), but also, to much larger extent, by Russia's economic policy which is aimed at supporting only military industrial complex, liquidation of the Crimean enterprises that compete with the Russian companies, and privatization of Crimea's property by the Russian oligarchs.

FOCUS ON: ECONOMY OF THE OCCUPIED CRIMEA

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Russian Attack on the Ukrainian Navy Vessels in Foreign Think Tanks' Assessments

Russia Attacks Ukraine Again. How Should Ukraine, NATO, and the West Respond?

By Melinda Haring, Atlantic Council,
November 26, 2018

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/q-a-russia-attacks-ukraine-again-how-should-ukraine-nato-and-the-west-respond>

On November 25, Russia fired on the Ukrainian Navy in the Black Sea, injuring at least two Ukrainian sailors. Many experts have warned that Russia is opening a new front in its forgotten war in Ukraine on the Black and Azov Seas, illegally boarding commercial Ukrainian vessels and increasing its military presence to about 120 patrol boats and ships. We asked Atlantic Council experts and friends the following: How should Ukraine respond? How should NATO and the West react to this latest round of Russian aggression? What would it take to force the Kremlin to stop its menacing actions in Ukraine and around the world?



*Anders Åslund,
Senior Fellow
at the Atlantic
Council*

NATO and the United States should send naval ships into the Black Sea into the neighborhood of the Sea of Azov to guarantee that it stays open to international shipping. This would be in full compliance with the UN Law of the Sea Convention of 1982 and the Montreux Convention on the regime of the straits of 1936.



*Ian Brzezinski,
Senior Fellow
at the Atlantic
Council's
Scowcroft Center
on International
Security
(from Twitter)*

This is not a provocation but military aggression by Russia against Ukraine. Putin is testing the

West's resolve. The West's response should include sectoral economic sanctions and transfer of more lethal assistance to Ukraine, including anti-ship missiles.



*Michael Carpenter,
former US Deputy
Assistant Secretary
of Defense,
Senior Director
at the Biden Center,
and Nonresident
Senior Fellow
at the Atlantic
Council*

Russia's seizure of Ukrainian ships transiting the Kerch Strait between the Black and Azov Seas is a part of a larger Russian strategy to gain control over the Azov Sea and blockade Ukrainian maritime traffic in and out of the Kerch Strait. This move is clearly a violation of international law and adds a new dimension to Russia's four-and-a-half-year-old war against Ukraine.

The United States should respond immediately by giving Ukraine radars to boost its maritime domain awareness and land-based anti-ship missiles so it can defend its Azov Sea littoral. The United States should also impose a complete asset freeze on at least one major Russian bank, such as Sberbank,

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VTB, or Gazprombank. The sanctioning of a Russian bank—or several banks if Russia fails to respond initially—should be made conditional on Russia restoring Ukraine's access to its own ports and withdrawing its troops from the Donbas. Until this happens, the costs on the Kremlin should continue to mount.



Peter Dickinson,
*Nonresident Fellow
at the Atlantic
Council
and Publisher,
Business Ukraine
Magazine*

The international community must learn the lessons of 2014 and prevent Moscow from closing the Kerch Strait and creating new military realities on the ground. The most effective way of doing this would be to send a multinational naval task force to pass through the Kerch Strait without delay and dock at Mariupol. This would test Moscow's resolve and expose the limitations of Russian bullying. Failure to do this will lead to the long-term blockade of Ukraine's southeastern seaboard and mounting Russian efforts to disrupt shipping to the Odesa region, bringing the world significantly closer to a major conflict escalation. One thing is certain, the time for expressions of grave concern is long over.



John Herbst,
*Director
of the Eurasia
Center and former
US Ambassador
to Ukraine*

If the West does not react—and if Western media facilitate this by focusing on sideshows like "Martial Law"—then Putin will have won another gamble.



Adrian Karatnycky,
*Senior Fellow
at the Atlantic
Council's Eurasia
Center
and Managing
Partner of
Myrmidon
Group LLC*

NATO, the United States, and the West should respond with a ratcheting up of sanctions, creating a much larger naval presence in the Black Sea, and increasing lethal military assistance to Ukraine. Increased sanctions are also called for and if Russia persists in its military aggression, the expulsion of Russia from the SWIFT banking system should be implemented.



Phillip A. Karber,
*President
of the Potomac
Foundation*

By any standard of international behavior—invasion and occupation of sovereign territory, attack on peaceful shipping, high levels of violence, and repeated violation of international law—Russia is waging war on Ukraine. Ukraine has been under daily attack for almost five years—longer than America was in World War II. How much longer can Ukrainians hold the line alone, and what are the consequences for Europe and the United States when they can't?

Its time to spell it like it smells—its war! Russia has not been stopped by sanctions, platitudes or the Minsk II ceasefire. Like bullies everywhere they only understand force. The issue is not about "declarations" but decisive action:

- 1) Ukraine needs to go on a full wartime level of mobilization;
- 2) The West needs to provide the financial support—a real "lend lease" program—to make that possible;

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- 3) The Ukrainian military needs to be re-equipped with modern Western military technology;
- 4) NATO needs Ukraine as much as Ukraine needs to be a member of the Alliance, the sooner that is consummated the better;
- 5) Only the United States can incentivize Russia to stop the war—by providing Ukraine with the hardware needed to sustain a long-term competitive posture and taking a leadership role at the peace table.



***Volodymyr Ogrysko,
former Minister
for Foreign Affairs
of Ukraine and CEO
of the Center
for Russian Studies
in Kyiv***

Russia has opened a hot new front against Ukraine, this time in the Black Sea region.

What should our Western partners do?

First, realize that Russian aggression is not only against Ukraine. It is also against the West. Second, stop delivering statements like “we are concerned.” This time is over. It’s time to react.

The West should react in three ways:

- 1) Punish Russia by imposing not only personal or targeted sanctions but also introducing sectoral sanctions, including on the financial sector, import of all know-how goods especially for oil and gas industry and any dual-use goods, and banning Russian airplanes from entering the air space of NATO counties.
- 2) Increase NATO’s military presence in the Black Sea and start military patrol over the region by inviting Ukraine and Georgia to join.
- 3) Start a full-scale “lend-lease military program” for Ukraine as a practical step according to the Budapest Memorandum. The United States, the United Kingdom, and France should show their leadership.

Only by combining our efforts can we stop the Russian aggressor.



***Steven Pifer,
William J. Perry
fellow at Stanford
and nonresident
senior fellow
at the Brookings
Institution***

The November 25 incidents in the Kerch Strait and Russia’s closure of the strait suggest that Moscow is opening a new phase in its conflict against Ukraine. That blockade halts shipping to the Ukrainian ports of Mariupol, Berdyansk and others on the Sea of Azov that are important trade outlets for eastern Ukraine. That will increase economic pressure on Kyiv in the run-up to the March presidential election.

Russia’s blockade of the Kerch Strait is illegal under international law. The United States and Europe should make clear their readiness to impose new sanctions on Russia if the strait is not reopened immediately. Those sanctions should include measures to target exports and imports through Russian ports on the Sea of Azov and Black Sea, e.g., by banning US- and EU member state-flagged ships from calling on those ports and by not allowing ships that originate at those Russian ports to enter U.S. or European harbors.



***Anders Fogh
Rasmussen, CEO
of Rasmussen Global,
Founder of Alliance
of Democracies,
former NATO
Secretary General,
and Prime Minister
of Denmark
(from Twitter)***

Russia’s aggression in the Sea of Azov must stop immediately: after ramming a Ukrainian ship, they have now opened fire. Moscow’s illegal actions must be met with a robust international response. Putin responds only to power.

Russia and Ukraine's Naval Clash on November 25

*By Ihor Kabanenko, Admiral of the Navy of Ukraine (retd.),
Former First Deputy Chief of the General Staff
Of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (2012-2013),
Former Deputy Minister of Defence of Ukraine
The Jamestown Foundation, Publication:
Eurasia Daily Monitor Volume: 15 Issue: 167,*

<https://jamestown.org/program/strategic-implications-of-russia-and-ukraines-naval-clash-on-november-25/>

Russian Coast Guard assets rammed a Ukrainian naval tugboat, on November 25, and then opened fire on it and two accompanying Gurza-class gunboats, which were sailing from Odesa to Mariupol. Subsequently, Russian personnel forcibly boarded the vessels, resulting in injuries to six Ukrainian sailors. The damaged Ukrainian naval ships were seized by the Russians and directed to the port of Kerch, in occupied Crimea. The Ukrainian crews remain in Russian custody. The Russian side fired upon the Ukrainian ships in Black Sea international waters, off the southeastern coast of Crimea.

Russia has been ignoring all political pressure. Reportedly, Moscow deployed about 40 combat ships and boats to the Sea of Azov between April and June 2018 alone. And according to the commander of the Ukrainian naval forces, Admiral Ihor Voronchenko, the number of Russian vessels there increased to 120 warships and smaller boats as of October. Russia's seven newest built patrol ships, equipped with artillery weapons and on-deck helicopters, were re-deployed to the Sea of Azov from the North and the Baltic Fleets in early November.

Furthermore, Russia has achieved power domination in this sea, including the creation of a so-called anti-access and area denial (A2/AD) "bubble." The disproportionate use of weapons by Russian forces against the Ukrainian naval grouping this past weekend demonstrated Moscow's readiness to implement tough military scenarios to limit Ukraine's freedom of navigation, military and non-military, within the Russian A2/AD zone—in the Sea of Azov and beyond. As the government in Moscow pointedly declared, "Russia will rigidly stop any encroachment on its sovereignty and security"; though, it bears

pointing out that Ukraine has never encroached on either when it comes to Russia. Intercepted radio communications of the Russian Coast Guard assets involved in the November 25 incident demonstrate that Russia's aggressive activities directed against the Ukrainian naval vessels were planned ahead of time and employed high-level command-and-control (C2) coordination: the Russian actions were not the result of spur-of-the-moment decisions made as the situation unfolded.

The Kremlin likely will continue to carry out forcible inspections of merchant vessels traveling to and from the Ukrainian Azov Sea ports of Mariupol and Berdyansk via the Kerch Strait. These tactics are designed to create unacceptable conditions for merchant shipments to/from Mariupol and Berdyansk, to destabilize Ukraine's foreign trade economy by spoiling its logistics model, and to exacerbate the sensitive socio-economic situation in Ukraine's coastal regions of the Sea of Azov. Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko noted earlier this year that this Russian activity should be considered a key element of Russia's plans to create a land corridor to occupied Crimea. This aspect needs to be considered seriously within the broader context of Russia's on-again, off-again geopolitical project to create so-called "Novorossiia" on southeastern Ukrainian territory.

Meanwhile, the Ukraine-Russia bilateral law on the Sea of Azov, signed by both sides in 2003, complicates an already difficult situation. This document envisages the delimitation of both states' territorial waters and maritime exclusive economic zones in the Azov Sea; but Russia has blocked any Ukrainian attempts to do so even after the Ukrainian Verkhovna Rada ratified the agreement. It should be noted that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine has accused Russia of a manipulative interpretation of the 2003 Ukraine-Russia Sea of Azov bilateral agreement. Kyiv charges that on the one hand, Moscow is carrying out unlawful inspections of ships, while on the other hand it claims it wants to preserve the agreement. At the same time, Kyiv has yet to unilaterally mark out its territorial waters in the Sea of Azov. Consequently, the Ukrainian coast line in the Azov Sea remains wide open.

All security developments in the Sea of Azov have direct implications for the entire Black Sea region. Thus, any successful provocative steps Russia may take in the Azov Sea are likely to be replicated in the

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Black Sea, where Moscow has already created an AD zone around several Ukrainian oil rigs that Russia captured in 2014, leaving only a narrow corridor for merchant shipping to and from Odesa.

The Ukrainian government has much left to do to protect its sovereign maritime rights and territorial integrity, including accepting its two Island-class boats from the United States as soon as possible and perhaps buying more of them as well as intensifying naval cooperation with the US to be able to procure other high speed “mosquito” platforms, like Mark V or VI patrol boats.

Caspian Flotilla Highlights Growing International Role of Russia’s Coastal Navy

*Paul Goble,
The Jamestown Foundation, Publication: Eurasia
Daily Monitor Volume: 15*

December 4, 2018

<https://jamestown.org/program/caspian-flotilla-highlights-growing-international-role-of-russias-coastal-navy/>

Many military commentators in Moscow and the West have pointed to Russia’s loss of a navy capable of blue-water actions, but they have not focused on the ways in which Russia is beefing up its coastal surface forces and using them to project power internationally. The recent Russian seizure of three Ukrainian military vessels trying to enter the Kerch Strait should, thus, force a rethink. That aggressive action suggests that, unlike many countries, Russia views its coastal forces not as a defensive weapon alone but as one it can effectively deploy offensively in adjoining waters and countries.

The Russian Federation has the longest seacoast of any country in the world and has coastal units in many parts of it, although it is having difficulty building enough ships and attracting enough personnel to man them along the longest portion of that coastline, in the Arctic. But perhaps the most important of these coastal forces, other than the one now on display in the Sea of Azov and around occupied Crimea, is the Caspian Flotilla. For a long time, most analysts in the West viewed the naval force in the Caspian Sea as a decaying irrelevancy. However, this attitude is quickly shifting

considering that Russia has been redeploying Caspian Flotilla ships to the Sea of Azov via internal canals as well as relocating the Flotilla from its historical port at Astrakhan to a more modern one in Kaspiysk.

In a Svobodnaya Pressa commentary entitled “Russia has Shifted Its Caspian Flotilla to Open Waters,” Sergey Ishchenko points to the increasing importance of the Caspian Flotilla not only as a coast guard, but also as an important means of projecting Russian power around the Caspian and in support of Russian naval operations elsewhere—such as, in the Sea of Azov and Kerch Strait, against Ukraine. This represents a complete turnaround from the collapse of this part of the Russian fleet in the 1990s. According to Ishchenko, that rebound in the Caspian is set to continue with more ships and more personnel, both naval and marine, entering service in the coming months.

The Caspian Flotilla attracted sudden increased attention starting in 2015, when several of its ships launched cruise missiles against targets in Syria. And since then, it has also been notable as a source for ships for the Sea of Azov. But much more symbolic of the Caspian Flotilla’s new importance is the ongoing relocation of its main base from Astrakhan (to which it was forced to retreat in the early 1990s) to Kaspiysk, in Dagestan, where its ships and personnel can be deployed more easily and effectively against threats emanating from Russia’s still-restive North Caucasus or from the other littoral states, Azerbaijan, Iran, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan.

Moscow has spent enormous funds and effort to transform Kaspiysk into its main base on the Caspian, Ishchenko says. The total amount is classified, but it is known that in planning for the expansion and move, the Russian defense ministry spent “almost a half billion rubles [\$70 million]. That figure is impressive, he continues, because the new base in Kaspiysk already had many facilities and naval personnel: Even before this build-up, there was the 414th Marine Battalion, the 177th Regiment of “Black Berets,” the 847th Coastal Rocket Division, the 305th Radar Center, and a helicopter squadron, not to mention various ships of the Federal Security Service (FSB) Coast Guard. Now, Moscow is simultaneously building more facilities, expanding existing units, and introducing new ones, Ishchenko continues.

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Much of the infrastructure for this new base is already operational, the military analyst says; but more is planned, with the final completion of the base now set for the end of 2020. This will make the Caspian Flotilla not only the most powerful surface force on that body of water but also correct a fundamental mistake Moscow made in the 1990s. At that time, the Russian government was forced to withdraw the headquarters of the Caspian Flotilla from Baku, where it had been located during the Soviet era, to Astrakhan, where it was allowed, until about five years ago, to decay.

According to Ishchenko, the Flotilla and its personnel were literally driven out of the capital of the newly independent Azerbaijan by “bandit attacks,” efforts to suborn and recruit Russian sailors, and the Azerbaijani government’s constant monitoring of the Russians’ communications. At the time, he suggests, some in the Russian navy wanted to put the main base of the Caspian Flotilla in Dagestan, but that choice was rejected because this North-east Caucasus republic was then so unstable that few believed that the naval ships would be safe there. Hence, the decision was made to base it in Astrakhan.

The Caspian Flotilla might have died completely, Ishchenko says, drawing on his own personal experience in the defense ministry in the 1990s, had it not been for Boris Zinin, then a counter-admiral and later a vice admiral. “In spite of political circumstances,” Zinin organized the first rebasing and worked hard to protect what assets the Caspian Flotilla had at that time. In his memoirs, the Russian commentator says, the admiral makes it clear that he always wanted to have the Flotilla based in Dagestan, where it now is—and where, Ishchenko says, it should be.

Given the Caspian Flotilla’s growing capabilities over the last few years, including not only cruise missiles and marines capable of conducting operations on land but also ships that can be sent through canals to the Sea of Azov and even further, this naval unit will not be a backwater but an essential part of Russian military strategy. “Such a force,” Ishchenko concludes, “is especially worth preserving in the case of any war.” His words take on particular importance in the current environment.

Will Trump let Russia take the Azov Sea?

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2018/11/28/will-trump-let-russia-take-azov-sea/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.45ab2e869aa8

Alexander Vershbow, a distinguished fellow at the Atlantic Council’s Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security. He was previously deputy secretary general of NATO, U.S. ambassador to Russia and assistant secretary of defense.

*The Washington Post,
November 28, 2018*

Russia’s illegal blockade and closure of the Kerch Strait on Sunday and its violent seizure of three Ukrainian ships are clear violations of international law and of bilateral Ukrainian-Russian agreements. It was a direct act of aggression by Russia’s navy and security services against a sovereign state that was acting within its rights in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, whose waters are shared by Russia and Ukraine. These actions can only be seen as premeditated actions aimed at destabilizing Ukraine in the run-up to Ukraine’s 2019 elections and crippling its economy. The Trump administration has condemned these steps rhetorically but has yet to threaten any specific measures in response. That is a mistake. If these events bring little more than a slap on the wrist, Russian President Vladimir Putin will see this as a green light for further escalation, to include a full blockade or even the illegal annexation of the Azov Sea, as well as new offensive actions in Eastern Ukraine.

Rhetorical condemnation by the United States and the European Union is necessary but not sufficient. The United States and its European allies need to impose real costs on Russia if it doesn’t reverse course, including tighter economic sanctions on Russian shipping companies, banks and individual Putin cronies involved in trade with illegally occupied portions of Ukraine.

An essential first step should be seeking agreement by Germany to freeze or, preferably, cancel the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline from Russia to Germany via the Baltic Sea. Once operational, Nord Stream 2 — which bypasses Ukraine — will make the Ukrainian gas transit system unsustainable, costing Ukraine billions of dollars in lost revenue and a 3 percent drop in GDP. Russia’s multiple provocations make absurd European ef-

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forts to obtain Russian guarantees of continued gas transit through Ukraine after Nord Stream 2 comes on line. If Berlin balks, the United States should extend sanctions under the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act to international energy companies participating in the Nord Stream 2 project.

The United States and its allies should also expand NATO's naval presence in the Black Sea to demonstrate support for Ukraine and for freedom of navigation in international waters,

which has been challenged by Russia's actions. The United States and its allies should consider increased support to the Ukrainian Navy as well, including provision of coastal defense systems for deployment along the Azov Sea coast. Without such measures, Russia will believe it can continue to escalate with impunity — today against Ukraine, tomorrow against the West.

The question today is: Will Trump let Russia take the Azov Sea as well?

Serhii SHUMSKYI

Member of the Ukrainian Navy

Veterans Association

Maritime Doctrine of Ukraine until 2035 and Naval Strategy of the Armed Forces of Ukraine until 2035: In-depth analysis

The aggression of the Russian Federation at sea during 2018 and, in particular the act of armed aggression against Ukraine near the Kerch Strait committed by Russia on November 25, 2018, forced Ukraine to return its maritime policy and naval operations to the list of the State's top priorities.

Preface

Since 2014, when Russia occupied the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, it consistently worked to increase and strengthen its Army and Navy in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. If in 2014 the RF naval potential in the Black Sea appeared to be significantly weaker than its land and aerospace forces, which were deployed in that region, in 2018 the naval potential reached the level, which ensures Russia's dominance in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov.

Dominance of Russia's Navy in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov manifested itself already in the beginning of 2018 as *de facto* blockade of our sea trade navigation in the Sea of Azov. Moreover, on November 25, 2018 the RF defence agencies committed an overt act of armed aggression against Ukraine in the Black Sea near the Kerch Strait – they seized Ukrainian Navy boats and auxiliary vessel and illegally detained their crews, seriously wounding three Ukrainian sailors in the process.

Intensification of the aggressive actions of the RF is aimed at establishing Russia's military dominance at sea and exerting further pressure on economic potential of Ukraine, now in the sphere of maritime navigation, while simultaneously maintaining pressure on the Ukrainian economy from the mainland.

The Ukrainian State, albeit belatedly, responded to Russia's actions by implementing a package of military, political, diplomatic and legal measures in order to improve the country's capability to counter probable escalation of aggression by the Russian Federation from the sea.

Important and painful issue of the need in improvement of doctrinal strategic and legal basis concerning the maritime policy of the country has been also addressed. During one month starting from November 25 two significant documents were made public:

1. On November 29, 2018 at the International Conference of Maritime Security in Kyiv the Ukrainian Navy Command presented the Strategy of the Ukrainian Navy until 2035 which was prepared during the last year;
2. On December 18, 2018, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine issued its Decree No 1108, which introduced the long-awaited changes into the Maritime doctrine of Ukraine of Ukraine until 2035 that originally came into force by the Decree of the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers No 1307 of October 7, 2009.

It is plain to see that the Cabinet of Ministers was in no hurry to execute the President's order to prepare a new revision of the Ukraine's Maritime doctrine within three months after publication of the Presidential Decree No 287/2015 "On decision of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine of May 6, 2015 "On strategy for national security of Ukraine" of May 26, 2015. Instead of three months allocated for execution of the task, it took the Cabinet of Ministers three and a half years to even start thinking about it. It cannot be excluded that if not for the fact of the Russia's armed aggression committed on November 25, 2018, this term would be prolonged still longer.

It would be too demanding to expect perfection in a document that saw the light of day only under pressure of the events which brought the military threat to the level unseen before. However, the three-year term encourages optimism. Let us analyse the two above-mentioned documents of doctrinal and strategic planning in more detail.

Analysis of legislative and regulatory framework in regard to Ukraine's Maritime policy

First, it should be noted that today the issues pertaining to the Maritime policy are regulated by the following legislative acts:

1. Law of Ukraine "On National Security" of June 21, 2018;
2. Strategy of national security, which came into force upon publication of the Decree of the President of Ukraine No 287/2015 "On decision of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine of May 6, 2015 "On strategy for national security of Ukraine" of May 26, 2015;
3. Military doctrine of Ukraine, which came into force upon publication of the Decree of the President of Ukraine No 555/2015 "On decision of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine of September 2, 2015 "On new revision of the Military doctrine of Ukraine" for national security of Ukraine" of September 24, 2015;
4. Concept of development of security and defence sector of Ukraine, which came into force upon publication of the Decree of the President of Ukraine No 92/2016 "On decision of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine of March 4, 2016 "On concept of development of security and defence sector of Ukraine" of March 14, 2016;
5. Strategic Defence Bulletin of Ukraine, established by the Decree of the President of Ukraine No 240/2016 "On decision of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine of May 20, 2016 "On Strategic Defence Bulletin of Ukraine" of June 6, 2016;
6. State defence orders (basic figures) for 2018-2020, approved by the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of February 14, 2018;

7. Maritime doctrine of Ukraine until 2035, as presented in the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No 1108 of December 2018;
8. National transport strategy of Ukraine until 2030, approved by the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No 430 of May 30, 2018;
9. Strategy of development of the Ukrainian sea ports until 2038, approved by the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No 548 of July 11, 2013;
10. Naval Strategy of the Armed Forces of Ukraine until 2035 of November 2018.

Practical aspects of maritime activities are regulated by the corresponding international and Ukrainian legislation.

All the above-mentioned documents, except for the Strategy of development of the Ukrainian sea-ports, were compiled and amended in conditions of military conflict with the Russian Federation in the period from 2014 to 2018. Therefore, all of them reflect the drastic change in the military and political situation inside or around Ukraine, which took place in the beginning of 2014.

Between the two documents being analysed, Ukraine's Maritime Doctrine until 2035 with amendments introduced by the Decree of the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers of December 18, 2018, was prepared after the events of November 25; that is why we expect to find the latest views of the Ukrainian State authorities on the future of Ukraine's maritime activities in it.

Revised edition of the Maritime Doctrine of Ukraine until 2035

In this document pertaining to the latest period of strategic planning the eye meets novelties reflecting the views of the State's top authorities on the maritime policy and peculiarities of the current day naval activities which are quite different from the views the State leaders had prior to November 25:

1. The document clearly defines national interests of Ukraine at sea and measures pertaining to their protection, among which the most important one is maintaining free use of high seas; it mentions the necessity to protect the State's sovereignty not only on the ground, but also in internal waters, territorial sea, in the air above

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them, on the sea bottom and underground within its borders; the State returns to paying attention to the task of protecting sovereign rights and jurisdiction of Ukraine not only within the limits of the exclusive (marine) economic zone, but also in strategically important regions of the sea, as well as the national interests of Ukraine in the World Ocean; it states the requirement in ensuring control over vitally important communication routes (territorial waters, Kerch-Yenikale Canal, approaches to sea ports, estuaries of Pivdenny Buh and Dnieper Rivers, other areas of intensive navigation);

2. On the goal level, the document states that the State's maritime policy is aimed at the implementation of the national interests in the Black Sea, the Sea of Azov, the Kerch Strait and other areas of the World Ocean, protection of sovereignty and territorial integrity of the State, countering aggression and ensuring defence from the sea;
3. On the threat assessment level, the document widens definition of manifestations of the RF aggression in the sphere of maritime activities which are aimed at:
 - a. legitimization of the temporary occupation of the Ukrainian territory, loss of Ukraine's sovereignty and jurisdiction in its exclusive (marine) economic zone, as well as recognition of the new borders by the international community;
 - b. encroachment on the national interests of Ukraine at sea;
 - c. interference with the Ukraine's maritime economic activities;
 - d. further violation of the territorial integrity by means of escalation of aggression in coastal regions, internal sea waters and territorial waters of Ukraine;
 - e. conducting intelligence and subversive activities in coastal regions and at the maritime industry facilities, in internal waters, territorial waters and exclusive (marine) economic zone of Ukraine, giving support to terrorist organizations on the territory of Ukraine using the sea;
 - f. obtaining unlawful profit as a result of extraction and use of resources and infrastructure of the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine;
- g. restriction of freedom of navigation, including navigation of the Ukrainian ships and vessels of Ukraine's partner countries in the Black Sea, the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait;
- h. depriving Ukraine of access to transit cargo routes and partial loss of Ukraine's transit potential.
4. Among the tasks of the maritime policy there stand out the requirement to ensure protection of commercial navigation and the maritime economy facilities in the zone of Ukraine's national interests, including the World Ocean; ensuring naval presence of Ukraine in the strategically important areas of the World Ocean;
5. Among the measures which are required to achieve the aims of the maritime policy, the document specifies strengthening of the Ukrainian Navy in order to protect the national interests at sea in case of threats from the sea;
6. The document mentions the following basic measures that is necessary to implement to step up the naval activities:
 - a. countering the aggression of the Russian Federation and regaining territories and sea areas seized by Russia, protection of the country from the sea, effective defence and promotion of the national interests by means of: swift identification and response to threats in the national interests zone, including the World Ocean, confirmation of priority of development of the naval potential during preparation and implementation of concept documents concerning development of security and defence sector; restoration of combat potential of the Ukrainian Navy and the Ukrainian Coast Guard, creation of the necessary naval base infrastructure, as well as its reconstruction after the temporarily occupied territories are returned to the jurisdiction of Ukraine, and other measures;
 - b. naval potential of Ukraine must as soon as possible reach the level sufficient to promptly neutralize and liquidate threats to the national security and to provide reliable protection of the country from the sea, for

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which purpose the following measures are stipulated: revival and development of marine air force, coastal rocket troops and marine infantry, naval auxiliary units, building of state-of-the-art ships (boats), high-tech anti-ship sea-, air- and coast-based weapons, other armaments and military equipment, storages of weapons, ammunition and equipment for ships; formation of sufficient number of military units of the Ukrainian Navy and the Coast Guard in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov; maintaining the naval potential of Ukraine on the level sufficient to deter and to counter external aggression from the sea, ensuring protection of the national interests in certain areas of the World Ocean, etc.;

- c. development of the Navy and the Coast Guard base infrastructure;
 - d. development of the Navy and the Coast Guard command and control system by means of: establishing military operation control units for two separate naval forces – in the Sea of Azov and in the Black Sea;
 - e. the document specifically accentuates the requirement in strengthening the potential of the Navy and the Coast Guard in the Sea of Azov;
 - f. development and State's support of the defence industrial complex aimed at strengthening of the naval potential of Ukraine by placement of orders for novel weapons and military equipment for the Navy;
 - g. ensuring preparation of the State bodies and the maritime industry structures for defence in case of attacks from the sea by means of improvement of qualifications and skills of top officials and specialists, coordination of actions with the Naval Forces in order to defend the sea coast and naval infrastructure facilities, as well as mobilization measures;
 - h. restoration of the specialists' education and training system;
 - i. changing orientation of military and technical cooperation from the east (the Russian Federation) to the West (NATO and the EU).
7. In the document the views on distribution of tasks between the security and defence forces are presented like this:

- a. The main role in defence and protection of the Ukraine's national interests at sea is assigned to the Ukrainian Navy, and not to the Coast Guard, as it was stipulated in the doctrinal documents of the earlier period; this document stipulates prompt and complete restoration of the combat potential of the Naval Forces to the level which would enable them to counter military threats, including building of modern ships (boats); the zone of responsibility of the Navy is specified with more precision and it is expanded to include internal waters, territorial sea, exclusive (marine) economic zone, certain areas of the sea and the World Ocean; the document accentuates the need in achieving maximum coordination between the Navy and the Coast Guard, ensuring that they already to execute various tasks and to effectively participate in joint-force and interdepartmental groupings (formations).
- b. The Coastal Guard belonging to the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine retains its functions as the protector of the sovereign rights of Ukraine in its exclusive (marine) economic zone (the main executive agency) and the guarantor of the integrity of Ukraine's borders.

The advantages of the Maritime Doctrine of Ukraine until 2035 as presented in the revised edition of December 18, 2018 are as follows:

- 1. Presentation of the detailed list of threats to the national integrity of Ukraine caused by the actions of the Russian Federation at sea;
- 2. Clear statement about restoration of sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, return of territories and sea areas seized by the Russian Federation as the aim of the State maritime policy;
- 3. Changing orientation from protection (with the Coastal Guard as the main executive agency) to defence (with the Navy of Ukraine as the main executive agency) of the national interests, sovereignty and sovereign rights of Ukraine in the juridically established sea areas;
- 4. Emphasis on the need to confirm the priority of the development of the Naval Forces during preparation and implementation of the concept documents concerning the issues of security and defence sector development;

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5. Expansion of the horizons of strategic thinking of the State authorities beyond Ukraine's sea borders onto the entire World Ocean, as it would reflect their status of the leaders of the great sea power.

The drawbacks of the document are as follows:

1. Lack of balance between the strategic aims of the maritime policy and the stated principles of the naval activities, i.e. restoration of Ukraine's sovereignty over territories and sea areas temporarily occupied by the Russian Federation, on the one hand, and the specified levels of combat potential of the Ukrainian Navy and the Coastal Guard, sufficient only to deter and to counter aggression (defence), on the other hand; the document does not put the task of bringing the combat potential to the level required for military restoration of the Ukrainian sovereignty over the temporarily occupied territories and sea areas; it also does not assign the concrete task to the Naval Forces in security and defence sphere; when defining directions of development of the naval potential, doctrinal priority is still given to revival and development of coastal components over restoration and enhancement of the combat potential of the maritime component. Therefore, it seems that we are going to liberate the occupied territories resorting exclusively to political and diplomatic means, which in the Doctrine are given a higher priority than restoration of the naval potential;
2. Not very precise and ambiguous definition of the levels to which the naval potential must be raised: in the part of the document which describes the principles of implementation of maritime policy the level of NATO and the EU countries is specified as the necessary one, but, at the same time, in the description of the tasks aimed at stepping up naval activities it is said that the naval potential is considered sufficient if it enables swift neutralization and liquidation of threats to the national security, as well as efficient protection of the country against the attacks coming from the sea;
3. The persons responsible for execution of the document had not enough time to thoroughly prepare the new revision of the Maritime Doctrine and so they had to limit themselves to introduction of some changes; that greatly influ-

enced the overall quality of the document. It is easy to notice the lack of balance between the views on development of various kinds of maritime activities, methodological and systemic drawbacks of the previous revision of the doctrine concerning description of the doctrine's view on the development of other, different from naval, maritime activities. For example:

- a. The document accentuates the task of building modern ships (boats) with the purpose of restoration of combat capabilities of the Naval Forces and build-up of the country's naval potential in general, but the task is not mentioned in the section "Restoration of Shipbuilding", though experience of the countries with highly developed shipbuilding teaches us that State military orders stimulate revival and development of this branch;
- b. Section "*Development of Port Facilities*" does not reflect the need in the development of the Navy and the Coastal Guard base infrastructure in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov areas;
- c. The doctrine misses innovative and unorthodox solutions in regard to intensification and significant increase in the effectiveness of both individual maritime activities and implementation of the State's maritime policy in general, with massive involvement of the public at large. For example, strong promotion of "yacht tourism" (small floating craft under sail) can be useful for furthering "marine mentality" in the society, but it is not even mentioned in the section "Market of touristic and recreational services", although this activity is very popular all around Europe. Instead, this recreational activity is mentioned in the section "Development of cruise ship industry" – the section for rich people. It is no wonder, since in high season a one-day rent of a sailing boat in Odesa costs as much as a two-week rent of a premium-class sailing boat at the Masurian Lakes in Poland. Another reason is that in Poland practically all young people have sailing licenses for small floating craft under sail; that is why, unlike our country, the demand there is huge. We could achieve the same in Ukraine, if owning a sailing license would be as popular/prestigious as

owning a car driving license. This requires support from the State, because such project is too “adventurous”/risky for the business people. Anyway, there is no mention of such project(s) in the doctrine;

- d. Since this document is positioned as the principal doctrine, which reflects the State’s view on the issues of maritime policy, it is strange to encounter non-scientific terms in the text (for example, “the Southern Ocean”) without any explanation of what is meant.

Thus, the Maritime Doctrine of Ukraine until 2035 with amendments of December 18, 2018, despite the obvious progress in presentation of the views on the ways of development of the naval activities in the process of implementation of the State maritime policy, still contains systemic and methodological drawbacks of the previous revision of the document. Description doctrinal views on development of the naval activities reveals an attempt to promote the “response-to-the-attack” approach, instead of proactive approach to challenges and threats to the national interests of Ukraine at sea. The State authorities do not have courage to call a spade a spade and assign the task of protecting sovereignty of Ukraine to those bodies and structures which are called upon to counter military aggression, to deter, localize and liquidate the consequences of the aggression – that is to Ukraine’s Armed Forces and to other military formations, with provision of the required support and resources for their speedy preparation for execution of the assigned tasks and acquisition of the necessary combat skills. Instead, the doctrine preaches against the use of military power to fight back the evil and extolls advantages of the peaceful settlement of conflicts. This approach has failed to impress the aggressor so far, but instead it has given Russia time and possibility to consistently build up the pressure. It is very surprising that it has taken the Cabinet of Ministers more than three and a half years to address the task of preparing a revised edition of the Maritime Doctrine. It cannot be excluded that this foot-dragging has been caused by impossibility to select an acceptable moderator/coordinator, as the Maritime Doctrine covers all activities that are within the sphere of authority of the Ministries represented in the Cabinet of Ministers: Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Infrastructure, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, Ministry

of Agrarian Policy and Food, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Science and Education, Ministry of Regional Development, Construction, Housing and Communal Services. Which one of them had to execute the assigned task? Which one is to blame? Only the threat of Russia stepping up its armed aggression at sea aimed at destroying Ukraine’s export potential made the Cabinet of Ministers hastily do in three weeks what was kept on ice for three and a half years.

Naval Strategy of the Armed Forces of Ukraine until 2035

Logically, the basic document, which plans strategic development and Navy’s activities, had to be deprived from doctrinal and strategic documents of the higher, central level of authority. Moreover, indeed, the Naval Strategy of the Armed Forces (the Strategy hereinafter) confirms the fact that it was compiled in compliance with the Law of Ukraine “On National Security”, Strategy of Nationality Security of Ukraine and the Decree “On Implementation of Strategic Defence Bulletin”. The text of the Strategy mentions the Military Doctrine of Ukraine as a source of inspiration. Upon introduction of the corresponding amendments to the Maritime doctrine of Ukraine (the Doctrine hereinafter) on December 18, 2018, it became obvious that it is necessary to take into account the requirements and provisions of this doctrine as the main source for preparation of the Strategy.

Unfortunately, the Strategy was prepared before the amendments were introduced to the Doctrine that is why we do not find any references to it in the text. However, we are going to analyse how these two documents are related and how they can be used together within the framework of a single system of planning and implementation of Ukrainian naval activities.

The first thing that meets the eye is the definition of the current stage of the development of the Ukrainian Naval Forces, which is called “reform” in the text of the Strategy, meanwhile in the Doctrine and other Ukraine’s doctrinal and strategic documents such words as “revival”, “development”, “building”, “improvement”, are used. In our opinion, the terms used in the State documents suit the current stage of development of the Ukrainian Naval Forces better.

Besides, the Strategy sees the aim of the existence of the Ukrainian Naval Forces in deterrence of aggression, protection of sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, ensuring maritime security economic growth and international stability in cooperation with the national security and defence agencies of other countries, strategic partnership at sea and from the sea. The Strategy does not mention the need to create conditions for liberation of the temporarily occupied territories of Crimea. Among the aims of the use of the Navy, the emphasis is on prevention of enemy's actions with subsequent control over the specific sea area. The Navy Command sees the ways to achieve its goals in implementations of measures pertaining to anti-aircraft, anti-boat, anti-ship operations, emplacement of mines and mine countermeasures operations, electronic warfare, missile and artillery strikes, amphibious landing operations, specific activities at sea and on rivers, control of the situation at sea, ensuring safety of navigation, struggle against terrorism and spreading of weapons of mass destruction at sea, protection of maritime infrastructure facilities, participation in the international naval operations and exercises under the aegis of NATO, the EU, the UNO, other forms of military cooperation with the partner countries and organizations; interoperation with NATO.

Not in the near future, but only in 2035 the Central Command expects the Navy to become a modern, swift-acting and innovative force which is capable of protecting the Ukrainian people and the national interests of the country at sea and in coastal areas by carrying out resolute asymmetrical operations performed by highly motivated and skilled military personnel eager to be victorious. The main ways for implementation of the above mentioned concept can be balanced stage-by-stage development of the combat potential of the Ukrainian Naval Forces with gradual increase in complexity of tasks and potential on physical, conceptual and moral levels, including creation of the forces, their education and training for participation in naval and joint-force operations, supply of weapons, military equipment, other technical means, taking into account current threats, economic possibilities and development priorities.

The strategic concept of the Navy central command was prepared based upon the assessment of threats and challenges; the latter are analysed in detail in the revised edition of the Doctrine. The Strategy

does not tackle the issue of the national interests at sea; the complete, or at least workable, list of these threats is not given. The same applies to the list of tasks assigned to the Navy in the doctrinal documents pertaining to the highest level strategic planning, which evokes justified suspicions that the above-mentioned tasks were not taken into consideration when the strategic concept of the Navy central command was formulated.

The above-mentioned drawbacks led to further methodological mistakes. Instead of using the task-object method for formulation of the concept, the persons who were involved in preparation of the Strategy chose to use the time-based planning method, not bothering to explain the mechanisms of preparation or the time when the Navy would be capable of executing the tasks assigned to it by the documents of strategic planning. In conditions when the Navy command has no influence on budget planning and budget priorities of the State, this approach is populist and voluntarist in nature. As a result, instead of being an effective means of influencing the State's budget and strategic planning, the Strategy seems to become "a document for document's sake".

The structure of the Strategy as the document of departmental strategic planning is similar to the structure of the basic documents that is traditional for the Western corporate management culture. However, the desire of the people who prepared the Strategy to put the document into the Procrustean bed of the Ukrainian bureaucratic tradition can be clearly seen. That is why such mandatory, as far as the Ukrainian tradition in regard to similar documents goes, sections as definition of Ukraine's interests or understanding of the assigned tasks, assessment of threats and challenges, our own potential, environment and theatre of hostilities, formulation of aims, goals, concepts are scattered throughout the chapters and clauses of the Strategy arranged in accordance with the Western corporate culture patterns. Unprepared user or reader of the document may think that the Strategy somewhat lacks logical rigor.

In general, the Strategy:

1. is excessively theoretical in nature;
2. suffers from numerous unrequired evaluative judgements instead of judgements based on calculations, for example, "it requires significant resources and is time consuming", with no ex-

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planation whether there is any relationship between these factors and what their nature is;

3. is full of empty, non-specific, purely political slogans and declarations, for instance, "... Verkhovna Rada and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine have to provide the necessary resources...";
4. mentions and places hopes on "partners, NATO and the EU" too often, and at the same time counters the Navy with the authorized State institutions of Ukraine;
5. contains serious ideological contradictions which may disorient both the people who will be preparing subsequent documents and the people who are supposed to implement the Strategy; for example, after initially specifying the Values of the Naval Forces, the Strategy often uses the term "NATO values" which is not explained anywhere in the text, although all other doctrinal documents of Ukraine mention only "NATO standards and procedures", or at least "NATO approaches" when speaking about practical implementation of the Doctrine for development of the security and defence sector;
6. introduces stereotypes of doctrinal nature, such as all too frequently used statement about the need to build up the potential in order to be able "to conquer an enemy that is stronger" (and what do we do if the enemy proves to be weaker?);
7. uses, as summands in the planning formulations, the parameters which the Navy Command cannot control, for example "economic potential of the State", or "development priorities"; it seems to be an attempt to distance themselves from responsibility for the failure to implement the Strategy;
8. betrays lack of confidence and misses specifics, as for example in empty and dimensionless declaration that "development of the existing and future potential of the Ukrainian Naval Forces (*sic!*) will have impact on protection of economic interests, ensuring sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine at sea" (what impact exactly?).

Besides, the document suffers from incorrect use of the established terms, for example, instead of "security and defence sector" the form "defence and security sector" is used; instead of "NATO member states – "partner countries", instead of "actions,

or aggressive actions, or aggression of the Russian Federation" – "aggressive ambitions of the Russian Federation", etc. Lack of detailed data in regard to regulatory and basic source documents also decreases integrity, value and overall quality of the Strategy.

Thus, we have to state that the Strategy is inferior to the Doctrine in terms of quality. The Maritime Doctrine of Ukraine until 2035 in the revised edition of December 18, 2018 is more progressive, more proactive, better-grounded and more specific in nature; notwithstanding the drawbacks, it is a declaration of deep paradigm shift in the State's attitude to maritime policy, organization of maritime activities and, in particular, the naval activities. In spite of all prior documents, the State specified the Ukrainian Naval Forces as the principal guarantor of Ukraine's security and the defender of its national interests at sea. The State has intentions to empower the Naval Forces so that they are able to effectively protect the State's interests right away and not some ten or twenty years from now.

The Strategy of the Ukrainian Navy presented by the Naval Forces of Ukraine has quite expectedly become obsolete even at the time of its preparation, since it could not envisage such a fast change in military and political situation at sea and, consequently, the State policy in regard to development and implementation of naval activities. Therefore, it appears that now it is time for the Ukrainian Navy to revise its self-assessment, to change its attitude from the standpoint of the offended unwanted child to the attitude of the favourite child. Obviously, it would require some practical measures to be taken. First, it is necessary:

1. To shift the paradigm of "Naval mentality", which does not excludes the need in personnel changes in the Navy's command staff;
2. To discard the Strategy which saw the light of day after so much pain and suffering, and to promptly prepare a new strategic planning document for reconstruction and development of the Navy based upon the provisions of the revised Maritime doctrine;
3. To establish close cooperation with the corresponding governmental structures in order to ensure implementation of the plans at the stage of strategic operational and tactical planning and especially during practical fulfilment of the plans.

On the other hand, it is high time that the State and the Government top officials finally pay their attention to the fact that the maritime activities, albeit close in nature to the activities of the majority of the existing ministries, differs greatly from traditional “ground” approaches due to peculiarities of water environment as an element of God’s world. It is not for nothing that throughout the world, the issues concerning water (maritime) policy, strategy and use are addressed and dealt with by separate integral management-cum-coordination bodies, and water (maritime) activities are regulated by a special code of judicial procedure. Failure to take this into account increases the risk of taking inefficient decisions, inaction/sabotage on the part of the leading structures of the “ground” sector which have continental mentality. Experience gained in the years of Ukraine’s independence shows us that this leads to destruction of the maritime economy sector, loss of the State’s offshore assets, and finally, loss of the status of the sea power. In order to avoid this scenario in the future it is necessary to separate the system of shaping and introducing timely corrections to the State maritime policy and management of maritime activities within the framework of the State control system. Now it is time to create a fully authorized integral coordination-management unit headed by a high-ranking official no lower than a Deputy Prime Minister. This unit has to tackle the tasks of shaping policies and coordinating processes of interdepartmental planning, to controlling financial and other means in all aspects of implementation of the State maritime policy and maritime activities.

Conclusions:

1. Aggressive actions of the Russian Federation at sea during 2018 and especially the act of overt armed aggression against Ukraine committed by Russia on November 28, 2018 in the sea area near Crimea and the Kerch Strait forced Ukraine to revise priorities of its maritime policy, maritime activities and naval activities.
2. Following years of inactivity and being subject to the “left-over principle” in its management, the Ukrainian Naval Forces obtained a chance

to recover its real operational (combat) potential and to become the State’s “favourite child” within the structure of the security and defence sector of Ukraine. They can take advantage of this opportunity only if there is a paradigm shift in thinking, and, possibly, if there are personnel changes in the Navy’s command staff. The Navy must become more confident, professional, pro-active, modern, and effective.

3. In order to improve effectiveness of maritime policy and management of all kinds of maritime activities it is recommended to create an authorized integral coordination-cum-management body within the structure of the State Administration, which could be headed by a high-ranking official no lower than a Deputy Prime Minister. This body has to tackle the tasks of shaping policies and coordinating processes of interdepartmental planning, to controlling financial and other means in all aspects of implementation of the State maritime policy and maritime activities. It is strongly recommended to set up a separate Maritime Policy Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and the corresponding body within the structure of the Office of the President of Ukraine.
4. Due to the fact that the State maritime policy failed to be implemented throughout all the years of Ukraine’s independence and that with the existing system of governance such policy requires long-term planning and a lot of time for implementation, it is advisable to create mechanisms for managing long-term State projects within the governmental structure of Ukraine; such mechanisms should not be affected by periodic personnel changes in the government or in any of its branches. What kind of mechanisms should they be? – Let’s think about it! The world’s experience gives us many options: from creation of still another chamber of Parliament that would be more stable than Parliament based upon election/party principle to institution of monarchy-for-life. We believe that the right mechanisms will be found and implemented within the democratic discourse.

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Idel-Ural: Polyethnic Volcano of the Russian Federation

Idel-Ural is a historical region in the East of the European part of the Russian Federation. Even now, being under the total control and pressure from Moscow, the peoples of Idel-Ural continue their struggle for national identity and sovereignty. The region remains a hidden geopolitical hotspot that can manifest itself in conditions of the current political turbulence.

In the east of the European part of Russia there is a historical region which is called Povolzh'ye (region along the Volga River) by the Russians and Idel-Ural by the indigenous population. The region consists of six states: Erzia-Mokshania (Mordovia), Chuvashia, Mari El, Tatarstan, Udmurtia and Bashkortostan which have their own unique cultures created by seven indigenous peoples.



Fig. 1. Map of Idel-Ural
Source: <https://www.idelreal.org/a/29506451.html>

Finno-Ugrian peoples of Erzia, Moksha, Mari and the Udmurts live near their Turkic neighbours: Chuvashes, Tatars and Bashkirs. Idel-Ural states are so much different from the neighboring Russian regions that Moscow had to give each of them the status of an independent republic with its own constitution, state language and organs of governance. Today these republican attributes are

rather a theatrical decoration which conceals harsh centralism and submission to Moscow.

It was not always like that. In the early 1990s, when the federal center was weak and irresolute, each of the republics obtained numerous sovereign rights. During that time national parties, civic and political organizations mushroomed, and there was hope that the republics can be let “float freely”.

Territory and demography of Idel-Ural

Idel-Ural is the territory where two worlds – the Turkic and the Finno-Ugrian cultures – meet and actively interact. Notwithstanding the differences in religion and cultural traditions, interaction of Turkic and Finno-Ugrian peoples did not give rise to bitter feud or isolationism. Quite the contrary, Idel-Ural can be called an integral space that preserves identity of the title nations for many centuries by presenting opposition to russification and blurring of ethnic, linguistic and religious lines.

All Idel-Ural republics are located in the eastern part of Europe. As of the beginning of 2019, they are parts of the Russian Federation. Erzia-Mokshania (Republic of Mordovia) is the westernmost state of the region. The distance from the western border of Mordovia to the eastern border of Ukraine is around 500 km. In the east of Idel-Ural there is Bashkortostan – Europe's easternmost country. Total area of Idel-Ural is 320 708 km². Population of Idel-Ural is 12 189 127 people [1]. That goes to say that Idel-Ural's territory is comparable to the territory of Poland (312 685 km²), and its population is comparable to population of Greece (10 741 165 people) [2].

In 1919-1925 Bashkortostan, and thus Idel-Ural, had common border with Kazakh Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (that was the name of Kazakhstan at the time). However, in 1925 Bolsheviks excluded Province of Orenburg from the Soviet Kazakhstan and gave it to the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR). Capital of Kazakhstan was transferred from Orenburg to Kzyl-Orda. Thus, the so-called Orenburg corridor which divided the two Turk republics was formed. At first the corridor that separated Kazakhstan from Bashkortostan was only 30 km wide. The fear that friendship between Bashkirian and Kazakh peoples would become "too close" made Moscow "revise the borders" several times. As a result, the corridor increased nearly twofold. Today Idel-Ural republics have no exits to external borders, and the distance between the southern border of Bashkortostan and the northern border of Kazakhstan is approximately 50 km.

Tatarstan – leading political player in the region

Tatarstan is located in the geographical center of Idel-Ural. Being rich in natural resources, it

has always aspired to both economic and political self-sufficiency. Although the Tatarian nation was digested by Muscovy and now by the Russian Federation for half a millennium, the Volga Tatars managed to keep their identity, and now they serve as an example for their neighbours. The Tatars achieved great successes in development of culture – the first Tatarian book saw the light of day in 1612 (it was a Tatarian grammar book). Kazan has become an important book-publishing center of the Russian Empire. The books were published not only in Tatarian language, but also in the languages of almost all Idel-Ural peoples. One of the first measures of the sovereign Tatarstan in the early 1990s was foundation of the Tatarian Magarif Publishing House which has published one and a half thousand books with total circulation of 18.5 mln copies in less than thirty years [3, 2].

Today, in addition to the republican authorities, a lot of volunteers work to further develop Tatarian science and culture. Not only classical works of the world literature (including the works of ancient philosophers), but also modern-day scientific studies in the fields of physics, mathematics, medicine, astronomy, etc., are translated to Tatarian language. The Tatarian translators work more with English and Turkish languages than with Russian language. In the last few years there appeared dozens of TED video lectures translated into Tatarian. There are even programming textbooks in Tatarian – it is something unimaginable for a majority of the indigenous peoples of the Russian Federation [4].

Such great achievements in development and preservation of the Tatarian culture would have been impossible without significant intellectual and financial resources. Resistivity of the Tatarian nation to assimilation processes is due to a number of the national features: determination, persistency, entrepreneurial skills, and belief in Islam in combination with maintenance of national traditions. The Tatarian infrastructure, education and science projects, together with meagre autonomy for implementation of its own humanitarian policy which Moscow begrudgingly granted to the republic, show that Tatarstan is very important for the Russian economy. Every year the republic appears in the TOP-10 of the most economically developed constituent entities of the Russian Federation. Tatarstan is a region where important industries are concentrated: oil production and oil processing,

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aircraft engineering, communication, production of explosives, machine-building, car production. Important Russian infrastructure facilities are located on the territory of the republic: oil and gas pipelines, two international airports, railway lines, bridges across Volga and Sviyaga. [5, 20–21].

For many centuries Moscow tried to neutralize the Tatarian drive for revival of sovereignty by involving the Tatarian people in the process of Russia's expansion (Russian Empire, the USSR and later the RF). However, with the onset of Perestroika the desire to restore the Tatarian nation reappeared. In 1988-1990 Tatarstan saw appearance and development of political parties, civic organizations and movements which Moscow could not control: Tatarian Civic Center. Azatlyk Youth Alliance, the Party of Tatar National Independence Ittifak, Milli Mejlis (a self-proclaimed pan-Tatar parliament established to create opposition to the republican parliament which was controlled by the Communists), etc.

Founded in April 1990, the Ittifak Party ("ittifak" is "harmony" in Tatarian) openly declared that it had intentions to fight for the sovereignty of the republic. The party quickly gained popularity among Tatarian urban intellectual class and radical youth. Tatarstan was the first among the republics of Idel-

Ural to declare independence (30. 08. 1990) and to proclaim its intention to be a self-sustained sovereign state. In 1991 in the RSFSR presidential elections were held; Tatarstan was also electing the President of the republic. Tatarian radical circles supported by the official Kazan authorities tried to boycott elections of the President of Russia on the territory of the republic. As a result, 36. 6% of Tatarian voters took part in the election of the President of Russia, and 65% - in the election of the President of Tatarstan. In Tatarstan Boris Yeltsin received 16. 5% of the votes, and Mintimer Shaimiev – 44. 8% [6, 4].

At first, in 1990 the party nomenclature of Tatarstan tried to ignore the new political players. Later, in the first half of 1991 the Communist-led officialdom of Tatarstan made an attempt to use national movement in its "game of counterweights" with Moscow spooking the Kremlin with the nationalists coming to power and claiming that dialog with the latter would be impossible. However, in December 1991 positions of the Tatarian national movement represented first of all by the Tatarian Civic Center and the Ittifak Party strengthened: individual organizational units were made larger, managerial personnel for local party cells were prepared, publication of their own periodicals got underway.



Hater kone (Remembrance Day in Tat.), national celebration of shahids who fell in the battles against the army of Ivan the Terrible in 1552. Demonstrators carry a placard that reads "Our goal – independence!" Kazan, 2013.

On October 24, 1991 Tatarstan has declared sovereignty. Independent status of the republic was confirmed by referendum in 1992. Soon after that Tatarstan refused to sign the Federal Agreement and even approved its own constitution [7]. Up to the early 1994 Tatarstan tried to carry out its independent policy balancing between the ideas of complete independence and maintenance of economic links with Russia. Finally, under pressure from Moscow Shaimiev caved in: on February 1994 the Agreement of mutual delegation of authority has been concluded between Tatarstan and the Russian Federation. In accordance with this Agreement, Tatarstan became an associated country unified with Russia within a confederation. From that moment on Kazan tried to keep its sovereignty which dwindled over the years, meanwhile Moscow overmastered Tatarstan with its resources still further.

Exceptional role of Bashkortostan

One of the reasons why Kazan has lost in its political confrontation with Moscow was the fact that Tatarstan had no common borders with independent states. In the early 1990s Idel-Ural was surrounded on all sides by "Russian sea", and it could have exit to an external border only in the south.

Unlike Tatarstan, Bashkortostan entered Perestroika under quite different initial conditions. The Bashkirs inherited a whole lot of ethnic and territorial problems from Stalin's national policy. The modern-day borders of the Republic of Bashkortostan differ greatly from Bash Kurdistan for which the Bashkirian national hero Ahmet Zaki Validi has been fighting in 1919. At that time, one hundred years ago the Bashkirian Republic (Bash Kurdistan is another official name) included the eastern part of today's Bashkortostan and several enclaves in the south and in the east. Bash Kurdistan had no towns, its capital was in the village of Temyasovo. At the same time, the republic had an advantage – relatively high level of ethnic homogeneity – over 60% of population were Bashkirs [8].

However, in 1921, when Ahmet Zaki Validi has emigrated, the new head of the Bashkirian government Mulayan Khalikov asked Moscow to expand the Bashkirian borders. Eventually, Bashkortostan was given vast territories with towns, quarries, railway lines, but the republic lost its monolithic stature.

When Perestroika arrived, Bashkortostan was in a poor state. In the general population structure the Russians comprised 39.27%, the Tatars – 28.42%, and the Bashkirs only 21.91% [9].

Therefore, the Bashkirs had to face not only the danger of russification, but also the risk to "dissolve" among the Tatars who were more numerous and more influential. In 1988 an idea of creating a civic organization that would deal with the issues of Bashkirian national revival quickly gained popularity among the Bashkirian intellectual class. In May 1989 the founding convention of the Republican Club of Bashkirian Culture was held in Ufa; Rashit Shaukr, a poet, became the head of the Club [10, 125]. In December of the same year the first congress of representatives of the Bashkirian people was held; 989 delegates took part in its work. The congress approved the statute of the Bashkirian People's Center "Ural". Aims, goals and structure of this organization were similar to those of the Tatarian Civic Center. The BPC "Ural" launched a campaign aimed at forcing central authorities to grant Bashkortostan a Union Republic status. At first the attitude of the party leaders of Bashkortostan toward the activities of the BPC "Ural" and the above mentioned campaign was negative. However, with time, when they grasped practical benefits they could get from the sovereignty of the republic, Bashkortostan leaders changed their attitude toward the BPC "Ural" [11].

The BPC "Ural" has played an exceptionally important role in the process of sovereignization of Bashkortostan that resulted in approval of the Declaration of Sovereignty of the Bashkirian Republic by the Supreme Council of the BASSR on October 11 1990. At the same time, the BPC "Ural" put a lot of effort into countering the Tatarian national aspirations which spooked the Bashkirian intellectual class. The position of Tatars who lived in Bashkortostan was quite radical: they demanded that the Tatarian language was given the status of a state official language, along with the Russian and Bashkirian languages, and that the western regions of the republic were transferred to Tatarstan. In 1991 the Tatarian Civic Center in Bashkortostan even demanded to hold a referendum in the western regions of Bashkortostan seeking popular support there for transfer of those territories to Tatarstan [12].

The situation was further complicated by populist, and sometimes aggressive, declarations from

both Tatarian and Bashkirian sides. Now it is obvious that growth of national movement triggered by the collapse of the USSR, gave rise not only to the development of the national self-awareness and dissemination of ideas of the national identity, but also stirred up latent conflicts between two brotherly Turkic peoples – the Tatars and the Bashkirs.

Chuvashes and their contacts with Finno-Ugrian people

The Chuvashian national movement in 1988-1991 had rather favourable initial conditions. Even though some part of Chuvash people found themselves outside Chuvashia, this republic was the most monoethnic one in Idel-Ural – 67. 8% of its population represented the title ethnos. Making use of the first benefit of Perestroika – glasnost – the Chuvashes formed a number of social and political organizations which were independent of the Communist Party. Among them, the most influential organizations were the Chuvash Civic Cultural Center (ChCCC), the Chuvash National Revival Party (ChNRP), and the Chuvashian National Congress (ChNC). The ChCCC stood for national cultural autonomy and was basically involved in educational activities, dedicating a lot of time to working with the Chuvashian expatriate communities outside of Chuvashia. The ChNRP and the ChNC did not limit themselves to only cultural agenda and fought for sovereignty of the Chuvashian Republic [13]. Let us notionally call this group (ChNRP and ChNC) a republican one.

In December 1989 elections to the Supreme Council of the Chuvashian ASSR were held, in which the republicans took an active part. Based upon the results of the elections, the Communists were able to form a parliamentary fraction consisting of 101 parliamentarians (the Parliament had 200 members). The National Democratic fraction which included the republicans headed by a prominent Chuvashian scientist Atner Huzangay consisted of almost 20 parliamentarians [14, 22].

The biggest achievement of the republicans was approval of the declaration of sovereignty of the Chuvashian Republic by the Supreme Council of the Chuvashian ASSR on October 24 1990, and soon afterwards the Law “On Languages in the Chuvashian Republic”. In late August 1991 the Chuvashian Parliament supported by the Chuvashian national movement established the institution of presidency.

In December of the same year the first democratic Presidential election were held. 58. 6% of the total number of voters took part in the election. Parliamentarian Atner Huzangay and Lev Prokopyev, ex-Prime Minister, representative of the party nomenclature, made it to the second round of the election. Although Hunzagay has won (he received 46% of votes), the election was declared invalid, since the candidate did not win 50% of votes stipulated in the Law [15].

Huzangay's defeat has been taken by the representatives of the intellectual class as a defeat of the national movement. The first President of Chuvashia became Nikolai Fedorov who completely surrendered to Moscow's policy of centralization and behaved rather as a governor and not as a president. This helped Fedorov to stay in the office till 2010. In 2012 the institution of presidency in Chuvashia was liquidated.

Meanwhile Atner Huzangay focused on development and enhancement of the influence of the ChNC (he became the leader of this organization in 1992). At its founding convention the ChNC came out with a radical program: complete sovereignty of Chuvashia, approval of the Constitution and the Laws “On Language” and “On Chuvashian Citizenship”, in accordance with which Chuvashia was to become a self-sustained republic with presidential government. Finally, the Chuvashian Parliament approved the Law “On Languages in the Chuvashian Republic” but in “compromise variant” to which the Communist majority agreed – both Chuvashian and Russian languages were declared to be the state official languages. In 1993 Huzangay and a group of his followers prepared and made the Chuvashian Parliament approve the “State Program of implementation of the Law “On Languages in the Chuvashian Republic” for the period of time between 1993 and 2000 and beyond”. The Program stipulated a number of measures pertaining to positive discrimination which were to strengthen positions of the Chuvashian language in the republic [16, 2]. The ChNC established effective communication with civic and political structures of the Idel-Ural peoples. In 1994 the organization held a founding convention of the Assembly of the Peoples of the Urals and Povolzhye which was attended by representatives of all influential national faces of the region [17]. In December 1994 the Chuvashian President N. Fedorov found in himself enough courage to

criticize Moscow's policy in the Caucasus region. During his meeting with the representatives of political parties and civic organizations he said: "He who really loves Russia, knows its history, who acts responsibly in politics, may not protect Russia's territorial integrity by brazenly violating the human rights and sacrificing thousands of human lives, because the principle of territorial integrity is a political category, and the right to sovereignty is about the living people" [18]. Several days after this statement the Assembly of the Peoples of the Urals and Povolzhye greeted creation of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria and condemned intervention of the federal army. The Assembly stated that it considers aggression against the Chechens a threat to the Bashkirs, Maris, Mokshians, Erzians, Bashkirs, Tatars and Chuvashes [19]. Soon afterwards, on January 1995, on initiative of President Fedorov a meeting was held in Cheboksary which was attended by the representatives of the indigenous republics. The aim of the meeting was work out a consolidated position in regard to Moscow's aggression against the ChRI. The meeting was also attended by the Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Mordovia N. Biryukov, President of the Republic of Mari El V. Zotin, Vice President of the Republic of Tatarstan V. Likhachev, President of the Republic of Bashkortostan M. Rakhimov, Prime Minister of the Republic of Karelia V. Stepanov, Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Udmurtia V. Tubilov. The participants of the meeting emphatically condemned intervention of the federal army and demanded to stop combat operations in Chechnya [20]. In February 1995 a delegation of parliamentarians of the Supreme Council of the Chuvashian Republic headed by the Chairman of the Assembly of the Peoples of the Urals and Povolzhye visited the ChRI and met with President Dzhokhar Dudayev. During the meeting the Chuvashian delegation voiced support for the Chechen authorities and stated that "the Chuvashian Republic does not recognize the State Duma of the Russian Federation as its parliament" [21, 59]. In the beginning of 1996, after a series of terrorist acts the blame for which Moscow put the blame on the Chechen resistance movement, the position of the Chuvashian top authorities in regard to the Chechen war underwent changes. However, in the spring of the same year the Parliament of Chuvashia found courage in itself to pass a declaration in regard to the situation in Chechnya calling for immediate cessation of hostilities [22].

In 1996, following the Russian presidential election in Chuvashia which proved to be Yeltsin's debacle (only 26.6% of the votes), N. Fedorov allowed himself to launch some arrows of criticisms at the Chuvashian people. As a result, a conflict between the republicans and the President broke out. However, in 1997 Gennady Arkhipov became the head of the ChNC. During his time in the office the organization lost all remnants of independence and gave up on opposing Moscow.

Peculiar features of the Finno-Ugrian revival

The national revival of the Finno-Ugrian peoples in 1988-1991 on the territory of Idel-Ural was not as politically prominent as in the case with the Turkic peoples. However, the Finno-Ugrians of Idel-Ural were able to hold their own national congress: the Udmurts in November, the Erzians and the Mokshians in March 1992, the Maris in October 1992, the congress of the Finno-Ugrian peoples of Russia in May 1992 (Izhevsk). All those congresses carried similar resolutions which called for democratization of political and social life in the republics, national revival of the Finno-Ugrian peoples. Certain influence on formation of the attitudes and opinions which dominated at the congresses, especially among the national intellectual class was exerted by Estonia, since many representatives of the Finno-Ugrian republics of Russia were alumni of Tartu University [23].

The Maris were the people who fought for their political rights more actively than others. They created several national organizations: Mari Ushem Youth Alliance (1989), U Vii (1989), Kugeze Mlande (1991). The latter called for separation of Mari El from the RF and complete state sovereignty. The number of Kugeze Mlande members always was small, but the organization proved to be very active. Moderate Mari Ushem became pan-national Mari organization which united thousands of teachers, scientists, cultural workers.

It should be noted that the Mari people is comprised of several sub-ethnoses. Usually Mari are classified into Hill Mari and Meadow Mari. Each of these sub-ethnoses has its own distinct dialect (some researchers consider these dialects two separate languages). Hill Mari are less numerous, they embraced Christianity a long time ago and almost completely renounced their pagan beliefs. The rest of the republic is inhabited by Meadow Mari who are pagans. According to the poll conducted in

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2000-2003, in the Republic of Mari 7% of population are pure pagans, 60% practice both Christian religion and pagan rites, and only 30% are Orthodox Christians who are predominantly ethnic Russians. Mari expatriate communities scattered around other Idel-Ural republics are descendants of pagans who fled from forcible Christianization. Thus, 90% of Mari diaspora on the territory of Idel-Ural are practicing pagans [24].

In 1990 the local Parliament passed declaration of sovereignty and announced establishment of the 4th Mari Soviet Socialist Republic. Soon afterwards institution of presidency was introduced in the republic, and in December 1991 the presidential election was held. The pre-election campaign and its results were very similar to those of Chuvashia: participation of a representative of the national movement in the election, his defeat and concentration of power in the hands of former representatives of the party nomenclature.

After the political fiasco the Mari organizations focused on civic activities. Simultaneously, the ideas of revival of Mari identity were actively promoted by means of religion. Traditional religious cults had significantly stronger influence on the Maris than they did on Erzians, Mokshansians or Udmurts. All influential Mari organizations, such as Mari Ushem, U Vii, Kugeze Mlande combined social activity with revival of paganism. These organizations were able to register the first big pagan association "Oshmari-Chimari" ("White mari – Pure mari") in Russia in 1991. In the same year the first collection of various pagan prayers in Mari language was published [25]. Notwithstanding the fact that the Mari people belong to the Finno-Ugrian group, they look to Tatarstan as an example to follow in order to implement their plans of revival. Numerous terms and even some religious postulates were borrowed by the Maris from Islam through the Tatars.

Following the collapse of the USSR, the Mari paganism began to play a significant role in the political life of the republic. The same cannot be said about Erzia-Mokshania and Udmurtia. President Vladimir Zotin elected in 1991 was a Hill Mari. He invited Kazan Bishop Anastasy to his inauguration. This initiative met with strong opposition from the paganist lobby in all State branches. The pressure on Zotin was so strong that he had to invite also the Supreme kart (animist priest) of Osh-

mari-Chimari Aleksandr Yuzikain who was placed next to the Orthodox bishop in the VIP box. As a result, the President of Mari El received blessings in both traditions – orthodox and pagan.

The national revival of Udmurtia was proceeding in the wake of the neighbours and had but a few manifestations worth mentioning. When the USSR was collapsing, percentage of the Udmurts in the population structure of Udmurtia was only 30% (compare with 52% in 1926); that is why the Udmurts could neither occupy key managerial positions in the republic nor dictate their own "rules of the game" in politics [26]. The characteristic feature of the national political revival of the Udmurts in 1988-1991 was the intensified cooperation with the international Finno-Ugrian movement: establishment of close contacts with civic organizations and funds based in Estonia, Finland and Hungary; fast development of the Udmurtia literature (especially translations).

Like in Udmurtia, the demographic situation in Erzia-Mokshania was complicated – the major part of Erzia and the Moksha people was living elsewhere; these peoples comprised only 32. 5% of the population of the republic. At the same time, here the process of the national revival proceeded faster than in Udmurtia due to extremely weak positions of Moscow Patriarchate in Mordovia – only 10 parishes in 1987 [27].

Return of the Erzians and the Mokshians to their national identities met with the challenges presented by russification, urbanization and demographic crisis. But more challenges were to be faced. Some part of the national elites of the Moksha people and, to a lesser extent, of the Ezrians came out with a concept that erzia and moksha are sub-ethnoses of the single Mordovian people. This concept met with fierce opposition from the representatives of the Erzia national movement who saw the Mordovian project as an instrument of assimilation of the Erzians into the Russian identity.

In the spring of 1989 the republic saw the appearance of Velmema Civic Center that quickly gained popularity and gathered both Ezrians and Mokshansians under its flag. Soon after its creation some active members of the Center felt that rigid frames of the national cultural activity do not suit them, and Velmema broke up. Moderate members set up an organization called Vaigel' which is en-

gaged in activities connected with the revival and dissemination of national traditions; more radical members created the Erzia-Mokshanian civic movement called Mastorava which deals not only with the national revival of erzia and moksha but also strives to represent their interests in the power structures.

Due to the activities of Velmeme, Vaigel' and Mastorava societies the situation in relation to implementation of the rights of erzia and moksha in Mordovia underwent significant changes. The National Theatre was opened, the National Culture Center Department was opened, the Law "On Languages" was passed, and the work with expatriate communities was on the rise. The above mentioned organizations became a "talent pool" for new social organizations of erzia and moksha: Od Vii, Erziava, Litova and Yurkhtava, Mastorava and Erzian Mastor newspapers. Activities of all mentioned organizations and societies allowed Erzia and Moksha national movements to switch from the ethnographic phase to political phase in their development.

Religious revival which proceeded in two opposing directions – return to traditional monotheistic religion (Ineshkipazia) and development of Lutheranism – has played an important role on the process of de-russification, especially among the Erzians.

In the early 1990s the leader of the Erzia national movement was Mariz Kemal who has become the main ideologist of the "Two languages – two peoples" concept. This concept did not recognize the existence of the Mordovian people as a union of sub-ethnoses – erzia and moksha [28]. Mariz Kemal worked to set up societies of traditional erzia beliefs. This phenomenon first appeared after establishment of the Mordovian Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROCh) (1990). At that time the Erzia intellectuals came out with an idea of using the national language at religious services. They hoped to be able to revive the erzia identity at least within the ROCh. The failure of those hopes has radicalized the erzia believers, stimulated the national intellectual class to work toward the revival of ethnic religion – religion of the god Ineshkipaz.

In 1992 Ms. Kemal was able to find sponsors from among the erzia entrepreneurs who financed the first national prayer session in one of Mordovian

villages. Kemal was pronounced Ozava (erzia priestess), and the erzia national faith issue became the subject of discussions by scientists and theologians in Saransk [29].

In parallel with the revival of Ineshkipazia in Mordovia, the Moksha-Erzia Evangelic Lutheran Church has been established.

In late 1980s a talented erzia ethno-futurist artist Andrey Alyoshkin moved to Leningrad. There he made a number of paintings in which he tried to reveal the essence of the ancient beliefs of erzia and moksha. A Lutheran pastor Arvo Survo – a leader of the religious revival movement of the Ingrian Finns – noticed the talented artist and converted him to Lutheranism.

After Alyoshkin returned from Leningrad to Saransk, he received nationwide recognition. He was elected the Chairman of the Artists' Society of Mordovia, he became one of the leaders of the Society for Studies of Finno-Ugric Culture. The famous artist was able to convince several representatives of Saransk intellectual class that the future of Christianity in Mordovia lies with Lutheranism. In 1991 the Mordovian Martin Luther Christian Church was established. The activists demand that the Church is given a plot of land for construction of the temple. Arvo Survo holds his first services. Finnish Lutherans promise financial support. The artist's brother Alexey becomes the first clerk of the church. However, shortly after its registration the church faces numerous challenges: the ROCh launches an aggressive campaign against the "Finno-Ugric sect", and soon the Finns offended by wayward behaviour of the Erzians and the Mokshanians withdraw their support. The conflict with the Finns was caused by the abysmal differences in the approach to activities of the church and its sacraments. The Alyoshkin brothers did not want to adhere to traditional protestant principles; they also rejected new secular trends which exist in the Finnish Lutheranism. On the one hand, they tried to sacralise the activity of the new church, and on the other hand, they get closer to people by combining elements of orthodox Christian religion (in particular, revering icons) and national traditions (erzia and moksha national attire, folk songs, etc.) in religious services.

Lutheranism left a significant imprint in the contemporary history of erzia and moksha. Even to-

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day on the territory of Erzia-Mokshania there are several parishes which belong to the Ingrian Evangelic Lutheran Church.

Moscow's struggle against the national movements of Idel-Ural

The major part of national and political achievements of the Idel-Ural peoples is the result of a short period of relative freedom in the USSR and later in the Russian Federation from 1988 to 1999.

After Vladimir Putin came to power, the Kremlin headed for rigid centralization. The most independent and rich constituent entities of the federation, first of all Tatarstan, fell victims to this policy. In 1998 the Tatar newspaper *Altyn Urda* was shut on accusations that it stirred up national hatred. For some time the newspaper was published unofficially, but eventually the authorities closed it completely. In 2001 the Russian legislation banned activities of the national political and national parties. Numerous civic organizations and movements of the indigenous peoples stopped their activities due to legal persecution and pressure from security services. Among them were the Party of Tatar National Independence *Ittifak*, the Mari Kugeze Mlande, the Chuvashian National Revival Party, etc. In 2002 the founder of the Erzia Od Vii

organization Yovlan Olo suddenly died in Saransk falling victim to some mysterious disease.

During the first ten years of Putin's time in the office, only in Tatarstan 690 Tatar schools were liquidated. Leaders of Tatar national movement Fauzia Bairamova, Rafis Kashapov, Nail Nabiullin were legally persecuted.

Sovereignty of all Idel-Ural republics was significantly limited. The institution of presidency was abolished everywhere, except for Tatarstan.

In 2018 amendments to the Federal Law "On Languages" have been introduced. In accordance with them, the official state languages of the national republics ceased to be mandatory for teaching in general education schools. A lot of teachers of Tatar, Bashkirian, Chuvash and other languages lost their jobs because of these amendments.

However, notwithstanding total control over any manifestations of political and civic activities, the struggle for implementation of the rights of the indigenous peoples of Idel-Ural continues. In the spring of 2018 a group of political emigrants announced the establishment of the Free Idel-Ural civic movement which intends to wage nonviolent struggle for sovereignty of the six republics of Povolzhye Region [30].



Fig. 3. The founders of the Free Idel-Ural movement (left to right): Sires Bolyaen (erzia), Rostislav Martynyuk (Ukrainian, member of Kyiv-based Erzian Val society), Rafis Kashapov (Tatar), and Ilmir Imayev (Tatar). Kyiv, March 21, 2018

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Despite the fact that the current political climate in Russia does not make it possible to speak of any serious transformations inside the federation, the national movements of the Idel-Ural peoples continue their activities in conditions of total control

and unprecedented pressure. Therefore, Idel-Ural remains to be a hidden geopolitical factor which may manifest itself in conditions of today's political unrest.

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The escalation of tensions around the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait and threats to European security

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Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

24 January 2019

1. The Parliamentary Assembly is deeply concerned about the escalation of tensions between the Russian Federation and Ukraine in the region of the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait, which culminated on 25 November 2018 when three Ukrainian warships were maneuvering from Odesa, on the Ukrainian Black Sea coast, to the city of Mariupol on the Sea of Azov.
2. The Russian Border Service of the Federal Security Service opened fire on the above-mentioned vessels, seized them and captured 24 Ukrainian servicemen, three of whom were wounded. The incident took place in the Black Sea, near the entrance to the Kerch Strait. There is, however, disagreement between Ukraine and Russia about the exact location and its specific legal status. Currently, the Ukrainian servicemen are being detained in Russia. The Assembly condemns the use of military force by the Russian Federation against Ukrainian warships and their crews.
3. On 26 November 2018, martial law was introduced in several regions of Ukraine, for 30 days, by a directive “on extreme measures to ensure the national sovereignty and independence of Ukraine”. The Assembly welcomes the lifting of martial law in Ukraine on 26 December 2018.
4. The Assembly underlines that the Russian Federation and Ukraine are members of the Council of Europe and have committed themselves to its Statute (ETS No. 1) which requires the pursuit of peace based on justice and international co-operation, which is vital for the preservation of human society and civilisation. They have both committed themselves to solve their conflicts peacefully.
5. Referring to the Treaty between the Russian Federation and Ukraine on Cooperation in the Use of the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait, signed in December 2003 and ratified by both countries in April 2004, the Assembly notes that, according to Article 2.1 of the Treaty, the free passage of merchant vessels and warships of both the Russian Federation and Ukraine in the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait, which are shared territorial waters, must be respected and freedom of passage ensured.
6. The Assembly therefore urges the Russian Federation to:
 - 6.1. immediately release the Ukrainian servicemen and ensure they are granted the necessary medical, legal and/or consular assistance in accordance with relevant provisions of international humanitarian law such as the Geneva Conventions;
 - 6.2. ensure freedom of passage in the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait in accordance with the above-mentioned Treaty and any other mutually agreed procedures and to respect the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea;
 - 6.3. refrain from violence in the case of differing opinions about alleged border violations and rather follow the above-mentioned and other international procedures for dispute solutions.

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7. The Assembly calls on the authorities of the Russian Federation and of Ukraine to:
 - 7.1. respect both the Treaty on the Use of the Sea of Azov and Kerch Strait and the agreed regulations for navigation through the Canal;
 - 7.2. refrain from any further steps which might aggravate the legal disputes between Ukraine and the Russian Federation, escalate the conflict and threaten security in the wider region. It fully supports the efforts made through diplomatic channels and legal procedures of both sides concerned.
8. For its part, the Assembly:
 - 8.1. reiterates its commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders and recalls in this respect Resolution 1990 (2014) on the reconsideration on substantive grounds of the previously ratified credentials of the Russian delegation, Resolution 2034 (2015) on the challenge, on substantive grounds, of the still unratified credentials of the delegation of the Russian Federation, Resolution 2063 (2015) on the consideration of the annulment of the previously ratified credentials of the delegation of the Russian Federation (follow-up to paragraph 16 of Resolution 2034 (2015)) and Resolution 2132 (2016) on the political consequences of the Russian aggression in Ukraine;
 - 8.2. expresses great concern about the construction by Russia of the bridge over the Kerch Strait, which it considers illegal and another breach of Ukraine's sovereignty, as well as about Russia's policy regarding the selective search of Ukrainian and international ships, which hinder navigation to and from the Sea of Azov;
 - 8.3. supports the proposal by the European Parliament that the mandate of the Special Monitoring Mission Ukraine of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), which covers the entire territory of Ukraine, including maritime areas, also covers the new area of tensions in and around the Sea of Azov;
 - 8.4. supports the proposal, made by Germany and France, that third country observers monitor shipping traffic and guarantee freedom of navigation in the Kerch Strait;
 - 8.5. urges Council of Europe member States to do everything in their power to avoid a further escalation of violence with potentially dangerous consequences for security in the wider region;
 - 8.6. calls on the international bodies which have competence in the field, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT), to visit the Ukrainian servicemen in prison, pending their release, and supports any diplomatic action taken by member States aimed at their release.

STATEMENT OF THE FORUM FOR UKRAINIAN-POLISH PARTNERSHIP

Oświadczenie w związku z piątą rocznicą aneksji Krymu i Sewastopola

Członkowie Polsko-Ukraińskiego Forum Partnerstwa, zebrani na bilateralnej naradzie roboczej w dniu 24 stycznia 2019 r. w Rzeszowie, wobec zbliżającej się piątej rocznicy napaści Rosji na Ukrainę i bezprawnej aneksji Krymu oraz Sewastopola, uznają za konieczne ponownie potwierdzić polsko-ukraińską wspólnotę ocen i poglądów na tę kwestię.

Zgodnie przypominamy, że w lutym 2014 r. miało miejsce naruszenie integralności terytorialnej suwerennej Ukrainy, a następnie, od marca 2014 r. nielegalna okupacja Krymu. Jeszcze raz wyrażamy stanowczy sprzeciw wobec rosyjskiej agresji i późniejszych działań mających na celu utrwalenie jej skutków. Krym pozostaje niezmiennie częścią terytorium Ukrainy.

Chcemy podkreślić znaczenie stanowiska zajętego przez społeczność międzynarodową sformułowanego m.in.:

1. w rezolucji Zgromadzenia Ogólnego ONZ nr 28/262 z 27 marca 2014 r.,
2. w potępieniu rosyjskiej agresji przez Radę Europejską z 3 marca 2014 r.,
3. w Deklaracji Krymskiej z 25 lipca 2018 r., ogłoszonej przez USA, do której dołączyła Polska, jednoznacznie opowiadającej się za odbudowaniem integralności terytorialnej Ukrainy.

Jednocześnie pragniemy zwrócić uwagę na szkodliwość postaw kompromisowych reprezentowanych przez część europejskich i światowych środowisk politycznych, działaczy kulturalnych i społecznych, którzy odwiedzając Krym i biorąc udział w przedsięwzięciach organizowanych przez rosyjską administrację okupacyjną na półwyspie, akceptują łamanie prawa międzynarodowego i stosowanie przemocy w stosunkach między państwami.

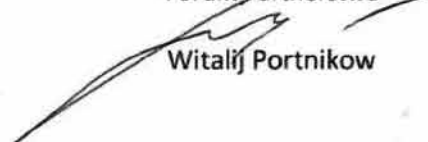
Z wielkim niepokojem obserwujemy pogarszanie się sytuacji na Krymie w związku z aneksją i okupacją, niestosowaniem praw człowieka na tym terytorium: prześladowanie i zastraszanie oraz dławienie swobód Tatarów krymskich, Ukraińców i przedstawicieli innych narodowości. Domagamy się także uwolnienia ponad 70 więźniów politycznych – mieszkańców Krymu, bezprawnie pozbawionych wolności i więzionych w rosyjskich zakładach karnych.

Pragniemy zaznaczyć, że rosyjski atak w Cieśninie Kerczeńskiej na jednostki marynarki ukraińskiej stanowi kolejny akt agresji Rosji wobec Ukrainy i pokazuje brak woli Moskwy rozwiązania konfliktu drogą pokojową. Wyrażamy przekonanie, że takie działania Rosji potwierdzają konieczność utrzymania stosowanych przez UE i USA sankcji wobec Rosji a nawet ich wzmocnienia.

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POLSKO-UKRAIŃSKIE FORUM PARTNERSTWA



УКРАЇНСЬКО-ПОЛЬСЬКИЙ ФОРУМ ПАРТНЕРСТВА

Notes

[illegible]



TRAGEDY IN KERCH COLLEGE

21 persons
dead

Militarization
of public life and
educational system
has going on.



CRIMEAN
HUMAN RIGHTS
GROUP



RIGHT TO FREEDOM AND RIGHT TO A FAIR TRIAL

37 persons were deprived
of liberty under politically
reasoned criminal cases,
including **13** civilians and
24 prisoners of war.

New politically reasoned
criminal proceedings have
been opened against
44 persons, **9** persons
deprived of liberty under
administrative cases.



FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLIES

Persecutions for
attending peaceful
assemblies have going
on, with the freedom
of assemblies being
further restricted.*

Minimum **1** administra-
tive arrest for **5** days
for attending the peaceful
assembly. Penalties for
the total amount of min
RUR 25,000 for
attending the assembly.

*A new legislative restriction: an admini-
strative liability for non-submitting a
notice on the peaceful assembly in time,
for non-indicating its purpose or
non-notifying the rejection to hold it in
time, has been introduced.

A new resolution of 'Sevastopol Govern-
ment' on reducing the number of allowed
locations for holding peaceful
assemblies.



MILITARY CRIME: CONSCRIPTION TO THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION ARMED FORCES

Min **5800** were called
up for the military
service during the spring
and autumn campaigns.

34 sentences for
evading the military
service.



FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE AND RELIGION

Min **17** penalties
for 'unlawful missionary
activities' amounting to
RUR285,000 in total.

The first **criminal**
proceedings have been
opened against the
'Jehovah Witnesses'.

OCCUPATION OF CRIMEA AND HUMAN RIGHTS: YEAR 2018 RESUME



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