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## Russia and the Post-Soviet Space: Partners or Rivals?

*Grigory Karasin,*

*State Secretary, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation*

**Question:** *Grigory Borisovich, not one political force has received an absolute majority of votes in parliamentary elections in Moldova. What implications could that have for Russian-Moldovan relations?*

**Answer:** Moldova is a parliamentary republic. So, the February 24, 2019 parliamentary elections were of special importance for Moldova. It is worth noting that this is the first time that they were held according to a mixed system: Fifty candidates were elected on party lists and 51 were elected in single-seat constituencies.

Three political parties were elected to Moldova's new parliament: The Socialist Party, the Democratic Party and the Shor party, plus the ACUM electoral bloc, which has since split into two parliamentary factions. However, none of these political forces got an absolute majority.

Parliamentary parties are currently holding political consultations initiated by Moldovan President Igor Dodon with a view to forming a new ruling coalition. If a coalition is not formed, early parliamentary elections will be held. We hope that Moldova's future government will represent the interests of the country's entire population and follow a constructive course in its relations with the Russian Federation.

We are ready for this. Russia's fundamental interests in relations with Moldova remain immutable. They include strengthening Moldovan statehood, supporting the republic's non-bloc (neutral) status, promoting domestic political stability and interethnic harmony on the basis of democratic principles and ensuring a viable settlement for Transnistria.

In this context, I have to say that during the election campaign in Moldova, the West (with certain Moldovan politicians subserviently playing up to it) repeatedly tried to groundlessly accuse Russia of inter-

fering in the country's domestic political processes and attempting to influence voting results. Soon after the elections, the text of an open letter from U.S. Ambassador to Chisinau Dereck J. Hogan to Moldovan parliamentarians appeared in Moldova's public space. In his letter, the American diplomat made Washington's support for Moldova contingent on the sovereign state's new government staying the pro-Western course, and gave them detailed instructions on regional security, energy policy issues and domestic political priorities. What is this if not interference in internal affairs?

*Q: What is the outlook for the resolution of the Transnistrian conflict after the Moldovan parliamentary elections?*

*A:* Certain shifts in the Transnistrian settlement process have emerged recently. Meetings between Dnestr bank leaders Igor Dodon and V.N. Krasnoselsky have become regular. Agreements have been reached on several practical issues between the Dnestr banks: the resumption of traffic along the bridge across the Dnestr River near the villages of Bychok and Gura-Bicului, the notarized certification of Transnistrian higher education documents, the use of agricultural lands in the Dubasari district, and the status of Moldovan Latin-script schools in Transnistria. Now it is important to ensure the implementation of these agreements.

The May 2018 round of 5+2 talks led to another agreement – namely, on the introduction of neutral registration plates for Transnistrian motor vehicles traveling outside the region.

We very much hope that the formation of government agencies in Moldova will not have a negative impact on dialogue between Chisinau and Tiraspol or on the 5+2 negotiating format.

*Q: How realistic is a peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict? Are the Azerbaijani and Armenian authorities showing interest, taking the lead in this process?*

*A:* A Nagorno-Karabakh peace settlement remains the focus of attention for the parties to the conflict. The priority of a political settlement has been repeatedly stressed in Baku. This issue is on the foreign policy agenda of Armenia's new leadership. Naturally, compromise solutions will require time and the good will of the parties concerned.

*Q: Is the OSCE Minsk Group on Nagorno-Karabakh continuing to work? Has any progress been made?*

*A:* The search for a mutually acceptable solution is continuing with the active involvement of the Minsk Group co-chairs (Russia, the U.S. and France). In particular, they facilitated a meeting between [Azerbaijani President] Ilkham Aliyev and [Armenian Prime Minister] Nikol Pashinyan in Vienna on March 29 to discuss the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. We note with satisfaction that the meeting took place in a pleasant atmosphere. The parties mapped ways for searching a peaceful settlement of the conflict and agreed on further contacts.

On April 15, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov met with the foreign ministers of Azerbaijan and Armenia in Moscow. The Minsk Group co-chairs, as well as the personal representative of the OSCE chairperson-in-office, also participated in the meeting. As a follow-up to the summit's results, there was a comprehensive exchange of opinions on key issues and objectives for further joint efforts were set.

The ministers and co-chairs adopted a joint statement specifying the proposals for humanitarian cooperation that were discussed in Vienna. This refers to consolidating the ceasefire during the agricultural season, granting people access to their relatives detained or imprisoned on each party's territory and organizing reciprocal trips for members of the media.

In the context of mediation, the troika regularly visits the region, including Nagorno-Karabakh, where in-depth discussions on the Karabakh process take place and various peaceful settlement options are considered.

We hope that diplomatic efforts will eventually be crowned with success and peace and good-neighborliness will return to the region.

*Q: After the convention on the legal status of the Caspian Sea was signed by five coastal nations, the region finally received a full-fledged legally binding treaty. Will the convention bring a new quality to cooperation among the Caspian countries?*

We would really like to see a normalization of relations with Ukraine, our closest neighbor. We have shared historical, spiritual, cultural, and civilizational bonds.

*A:* Absolutely. First, years-long negotiations on drafting the convention, based on mutual respect for each other's interests and a painstaking search for compromise solutions, have significantly contributed to strengthening trust among the parties to Caspian format. Its signing at the Fifth Caspian Summit in Aktau became the final chord of these efforts, creating an atmosphere of predictability and good-neighborliness in the region for years to come.

Second, the convention creates a clear-cut legal framework for cooperation in various areas – security, energy, transportation, environmental management, fishing regulations and research, among others. Such a universal legal foundation opens excellent prospects for deepening comprehensive cooperation in the Caspian region. We note with satisfaction that these prospects are already being put into practice: By now, more than 10 five-nation agreements have been signed, and a wide-ranging array of documents is pending.

*Q: Kazakhstan has decided to switch from the Cyrillic-based alphabet to the Latin alphabet. How will this impact the cultural and spiritual bonds that have historically evolved between the Russian and Kazakh people? What is the rationale behind the Kazakh government's decision?*

*A:* The Kazakh side believes that the language reform will make it possible to bring together ethnic Kazakhs living in various countries, facilitate the nation's further consolidation and Kazakhstan's integration into global communication processes, and stimulate greater interest in Kazakhstan and the study of the Kazakh language within the world community.

We hope that the language reform in Kazakhstan will not infringe on the rights of the Russian-speaking population and that the process as such will not have a negative impact on the use of the Russian language in Kazakhstan. Bilingualism is a precious cultural asset of the people of the Republic of Kazakhstan that opens the way to education and employment in the entire post-Soviet space. This is not only our view: Our partners in Kazakhstan note a shortage of Russian language teachers in southern parts of the country.

*Q: Contacts between Russia and Uzbekistan have significantly intensified recently. What is the outlook for their development?*

*A:* Uzbekistan is Russia's reliable ally and partner in the Central Asian region. Relations between our countries are based on principles of equality, mutual respect and consideration for each other's interests. Contacts are maintained at all levels and watches are synchronized on current issues of Russian-Uzbek relations on a regular basis. The intensity of bilateral political dialogue is evidenced by the fact that in the past year (between March 2018 and February 2019), about 40 high-level Russian official delegations visited Uzbekistan. Direct contacts between the two countries' regions are actively developing.

The keynote of Russian-Uzbek contacts last year was the Russian president's state visit to Uzbekistan (October 18-19), which demonstrated a new quality of strategic partnership between the two countries. The main outcome of the summit was the signing of 17 bilateral documents on trade, economic, cultural, humanitarian, scientific-technical, and investment cooperation worth a total of \$27 billion, as well as the launching of several new bilateral formats, including the interregional and educational forums, plus a project to build a Russian-designed nuclear power plant in Uzbekistan.

All of this allows us to look to the future optimistically. I recently met with Uzbek First Deputy Foreign Minister I.T. Neimatov in Moscow. We discussed the timetable for political contacts in the next several months. Meetings between the two countries' heads of government and a session of the bilateral Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation are scheduled for April and May.

Furthermore, the Russian and Uzbek leadership set the goal of radically increasing bilateral trade volume from \$4.4 billion in 2018 to \$10 billion this year. Therefore, perseverance and consistent efforts are needed to take Russian-Uzbek cooperation to a qualitatively new level.

*Q:* *Can at least a partial warming of Russian-Ukrainian relations be expected after the presidential election in Ukraine?*

*A:* We would really like to see a normalization of relations with Ukraine, our closest neighbor. We have shared historical, spiritual, cultural, and civilizational bonds. Unfortunately, the Poroshenko regime has followed a course toward destroying multidimensional, wide-ranging and mutually beneficial ties with Russia at the expense of his country's interests, as well as the interests of its people. In an effort to scare the public with the mythical "Russian threat," the Kiev authorities did all they could to con-

ceal their own political failures and shift the blame for their irresponsible decisions on Russia. The results of that are well known to everyone. In the recent presidential election, the Ukrainian people essentially expressed no confidence in both Pyotr Poroshenko and the apologists of his disastrous course.

We hope that Ukraine's new leadership will have a clear grasp of reality and base their actions not on the political situation of the moment but on common sense.

*Q: How is the electoral process in Ukraine impacting the situation in the Donets Basin?*

*A:* As a matter of fact, the electoral process has bypassed the Donbass. About 3 million potential eligible voters in the self-proclaimed republics of the region (according to Ukraine's Central Electoral Commission) were unable to participate in the election. Polling stations were organized only in the Kiev-controlled territory of Donetsk and Lugansk Provinces. The same applies to displaced persons from these regions (about 1 million), who moved to other parts of Ukraine.

It's very good that there were no serious provocations during the election campaign that could have aggravated the situation in the southeast.

As for the current situation in the Donbass, it is unlikely to change in any way until Kiev realizes the need for direct dialogue with Donetsk and Lugansk. We would like to hope that Ukraine's new president, Vladimir Zelensky, who has already declared his intention to continue the Minsk process, will back up his words by practical steps toward a peaceful settlement in the Donbass.

*Q: Does the Russian Foreign Ministry have information about the number of Ukrainian citizens in Russia who would like to participate in the presidential election?*

*A:* According to various sources, up to 3 million Ukrainian citizens are in Russia on a temporary or permanent basis. However, no one will venture to say exactly how many of them would like to go to the polls. I believe their number would be quite large if they could do that without having to leave Russia, at Ukrainian missions in Russia. However, Kiev decided not to set up polling stations there.



*Q: Can the presidential election in Ukraine be considered legitimate, given that residents of the Donetsk and Lugansk people's republics were effectively denied voting rights?*

*A:* Earlier, I partially answered this question. Of course, the deliberate creation of difficulties for the expression of citizens' political preference has cast a shadow over the entire electoral process. There are inevitable questions for the authorities who are thus trying to influence the outcome of the vote. At the same time, the legitimacy of the election also depends on how fair and transparent they were, as well as on the extent to which they complied with generally accepted democratic norms and standards. So far, the election campaign has every chance of going down in history as the roughest, dirtiest and fiercest.

*Q: The Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership was terminated on Ukraine's initiative. What implications will Kiev's step have?*

*A:* Indeed, the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership between Russia and Ukraine was terminated on Kiev's initiative on April 1. We have repeatedly commented on the situation regarding the Big Treaty. We still believe that its termination was nothing but a pre-election move aimed at diverting the voters' attention to an external factor and scoring extra points. It is hard to say yet what will happen next. We would very much like to believe that the destructive stage in Russian-Ukrainian relations will be overcome. Time will tell whether Kiev's new leadership adheres to this philosophy.

*Q: Since the notorious provocative attempt by Ukrainian vessels to break through the Kerch Strait, a lot has been said about the status of the Sea of Azov, which is an enclosed sea sandwiched between Russia and Ukraine. What is the essence of Ukraine's claims? Does Kiev want to review the status of the Sea of Azov?*

*A:* Kiev is doing its utmost to politicize the issue of shipping in the Azov-Kerch water area and artificially exacerbate the situation in that region. Ukraine is less concerned by problems related to freedom and safety of navigation. All of this is being done with one obvious aim – namely, to create yet another seat of tension, as well as a pretext for ramping up sanctions against Russia.

The Kiev authorities have repeatedly stated their intention to terminate the Treaty Between the Russian Federation and Ukraine on Cooperation in the Use of the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait, but no practical steps have been taken yet. At the same time, its termination would have implications for both countries, and it is yet to be seen who would be affected more as a result.

*Q: What is Russia guided by in establishing the rules of navigation and passage from the Black Sea to the Sea of Azov?*

*A:* It is guided solely by considerations of safety of navigation in the Kerch-Yenikale Canal. Not only relevant experience and navigation skills but also strict compliance with established procedure are needed for unhindered passage. This refers to pilotage procedure that has existed since the Soviet days. It is requested in advance and coordinated through the captain of the port of Kerch. Incidentally, pilotage procedure existed in Ukraine and has been maintained since the Crimea's reunification with Russia.

*Q: How intensive is shipping traffic through the Kerch Strait?*

*A:* According to the Federal Agency for Maritime and River Transport, in 2018, the intensity of maritime traffic was up 12% compared to 2017. Over 17,000 ships passed in both directions. In January 2019, about 1,500 vessels passed through the strait, which is almost 30% more year on year. Russia and Ukraine, as well as third countries, still use this maritime artery.

*Q: In February, Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko stated that regarding the integration process, Belarus is willing to go as far as Russia is willing to go, but the issue of sovereignty is "sacred" for Minsk. How does Moscow assess prospects for allied relations with Belarus and the introduction of a single currency?*

*A:* Recently, this question has been asked very often, which is hardly surprising: A close, fraternal relationship exists between Russia and Belarus, so the citizens of both countries are not indifferent to the course that cooperation between our countries will follow.

The Russian Foreign Ministry has repeatedly assessed the status of

Russian-Belarusian cooperation. Its essence is that Belarus is Russia's most reliable strategic partner. We are interested in promoting a multidimensional bilateral dialogue. We note with satisfaction that the Belarusian side shares this approach.

This year will mark 20 years since the Treaty on the Creation of a Union State was signed on December 8, 1999. This is an opportunity to review progress in building a union state (and considerable progress has been made in that respect), analyze the existing potential, set new goals, and outline ways of achieving them. This is a priority for the Russian-Belarusian working group on the implementation of the treaty, which was established in keeping with the agreements reached at the December 2018 meetings between the Russian and Belarusian presidents. We are confident that we will be able to address all issues through joint efforts, as has often been the case regarding other, equally challenging tasks.

*Q: Georgia's new president, Salome Zurbishvili, has said there will be no cooperation with Russia. What is the reason for her harsh rejection of any engagement with Moscow, considering the explosive growth of inbound tourism from Russia, as well as the fact that Russia is Georgia's second largest trading partner?*

*A:* This is not the first time I have to comment on this famous remark by Salome Zurbishvili, who was elected president last November.

In my opinion, the Georgian president's remarks regarding the impossibility of cooperation with Russia, which is Tbilisi's second largest foreign trade partner and a significant source of revenue for the Georgian budget due to the steady growth of tourism, sound strange, to say the least.

For our part, we are still open for a transparent and constructive dialogue with the Georgian authorities at all levels.

*Q: In late February, you had a meeting with Georgian special envoy on Russian affairs Zurab Abashidze in Prague. What was discussed at the meeting and was any headway made?*

*A:* On February 27, I had another meeting with Mr. Abashidze, the Georgian prime minister's special representative, in the course of which we had a comprehensive discussion of the entire range of practical issues related to the development of bilateral relations, primarily trade, transportation and humanitarian contacts.

One result of the bilateral normalization process, which has been going on since 2012, is the growth of trade, which is up 25%, at \$1.35 billion. Russia has emerged as Georgia's second largest trading partners, especially as a major wine importer, accounting for two-thirds of Georgia's wine exports. The flow of Russian tourists to Georgia keeps growing (about 1.5 million in 2018). Transport services, in particular air transport links, are dynamically developing.

Furthermore, at our Prague meeting, we discussed prospects for the implementation of the November 9, 2011 Russian-Georgian intergovernmental agreement on basic principles for a mechanism of customs administration and monitoring of trade in light of the February 6, 2019 meeting of a corresponding joint committee in Geneva. The Russian side reiterated its readiness for the earliest possible implementation of this agreement in strict compliance with its provisions.

Despite the positive trends that have emerged, Georgia's expanding military cooperation with NATO remains a serious source of contention in bilateral relations. In this context, Zurab Abashidze noted that openly unfriendly steps and statements by high-ranking Georgian representatives are having a negative impact on the mutually beneficial process of bilateral cooperation.

*Q: Is there any dialogue between Georgia and Abkhazia and Georgia and South Ossetia?*

*A:* Direct dialogue between Georgian and Abkhazian representatives and Georgian and South Ossetian representatives is proceeding as part of Geneva discussions. Meetings within the framework of this format take place four times a year.

In addition, there is the incident prevention and response mechanism (IPRM) on the Georgian-South Ossetian border (Ergneti). A similar mechanism on the Georgian-Abkhazian border (Gal) has been blocked since July 2018 over Tbilisi's sanctions lists. We hope its operation will resume soon.

*Q: What is the status of Russia's relations with Armenia's new leadership?*

*A:* In 2018, Russian-Armenian relations developed against the backdrop of serious domestic political changes in Armenia. It is important to note

that the political forces that came to power in that friendly republic, led by Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, demonstrated their commitment to deepen allied relations and cooperation within the framework of Eurasian integration associations, as evidenced by public statements and programmatic documents. In particular, the government program for 2019-2023, which was approved by the Armenian National Assembly on February 14, 2019, prioritizes the goal of “developing the strategic alliance with the Russian Federation in various areas.” Yerevan is also committed to active participation in the EaEU [Eurasian Economic Union] and the CSTO [Collective Security Treaty Organization].

Russia and Armenia maintain an intensive political dialogue at the top and very high level. Interagency contacts, cultural and humanitarian exchanges, and meaningful cooperation at the interparliamentary level, as well as in the fields of education and science, continue.

Russia remains Armenia’s leading foreign trade partner (it accounts for over 26% of Armenia’s foreign trade and about 40% of foreign investment). Several large-scale joint economic projects are being implemented. More than 1,200 enterprises with a share of Russian capital (one-third of all joint ventures) are active in the republic. Bilateral trade turnover grew by 10.8% in 2018, to \$1.97 billion.

The Russian-Armenian Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation (its most recent meeting took place in early April in Moscow in a constructive way), as well as several other permanent mechanisms, play a major role in achieving such impressive results.

***Q: How popular is the practice of creating joint ventures with former Soviet countries, for instance, in Central Asia?***

***A:*** We note with satisfaction that strategic partnership or allied relations with Central Asian countries fully meet the interests of our countries and peoples. In this context, we attach great importance to promoting economic ties. The number of joint ventures confirms that a cooperation mechanism in this area is running smoothly. There are over 10,000 joint ventures in Central Asia and their number is steadily growing. They exist in virtually all areas of activity – from mining industries, including the uranium mining, to trade and services. For instance, the project of a wholesale and distribution center in Tajikistan is in the final stages of approval. It will use Russian-made hi-tech and innovative equipment, making it possible to increase agricultural produce storage time, boost

agricultural production and expand supplies of these products to the Russian market.

*Q: The military base in Tajikistan, which protects Central Asia against the possible infiltration of militants from the south, in particular from Afghanistan, is extremely important for Russia. In neighboring Kyrgyzstan, Russian troops are stationed for the same purpose. How do local residents react to that? Are there any forces trying to provoke discontent with the Russian presence?*

*A:* Indeed, the Russian military bases in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are not only a reliable guarantor of those countries' security, but also a key factor in ensuring regional stability, considering the growing threats posed by international terrorist organizations. The combat capability of Russian bases, in particular their air component, is also used for air surveillance on the southern flank of the CSTO's zone of responsibility.

Russia's efforts to ensure regional security receive mostly positive coverage in the local media, social networks and blogosphere. In particular, the people of Tajikistan remember very well the Russian military servicemen and border guards who gave their lives for the sake of peace and calm in the republic, and they appreciate the comprehensive support that Russia provided to the fraternal people during the difficult period of nation-building. Nevertheless, time and again, certain destructive forces try to ratchet up the criticism of Russia in the media space of the Central Asian countries, among other things, in an effort to tarnish the image of Russian military servicemen. However, such efforts do not seem to be striking a chord with the broad public in those republics.

*Q: Does the Russian Foreign Ministry have any information regarding the contribution that migrant workers in Russia make to their countries' economies?*

*A:* Labor migrants from CIS countries provide substantial financial support to their families at home. At the same time, remittances from Russia remain a significant source of revenue for those countries. More than 4 million citizens of Central Asian countries are in Russia at any given time. They transfer tens of billions of dollars to their home countries (about \$60 billion between 2013 and 2018).

In 2018, the total volume of transfers by individuals from Russia to

Armenia exceeded \$1.1 billion; to Azerbaijan, \$1 billion; to Georgia, \$630 million; to Moldova, about \$340 million, and to Ukraine, \$11 billion.

In the case of Belarus, most Belarusian migrant workers have no problem finding jobs on Russia's labor market and they enjoy preferences related to the creation of a single migration space of the Union State and the absence of a language barrier or the need to apply for a special work permit in Russia. Employment and social security for Russians and Belarusians in our two countries are regulated by bilateral agreements regarding citizens' equal rights, specifically the December 25, 1998 Agreement on Equal Rights of Citizens and the January 24, 2006 Agreement on Social Security Cooperation.

The successful operation of the common labor market in the EaEU, whose citizens can work in EaEU member countries on the same basis, is a major factor in the inflow of labor migrants to Russia. The goal is to use integration opportunities to stimulate economic growth in the EaEU countries so that both the public and businesses can feel the benefits of cooperation on a practical level.

*Q: Considering that your purview includes relations with compatriots living abroad, I would like to ask you how this part of the Russian world is responding to the processes unfolding in and around Russia.*

*A:* I can say with full confidence that its response is generally positive, as evidenced by the Russian presidential election in March 2018. Russian citizens living abroad voted for their candidate, as well as for Russia's political course overall. Remember reports about Russian citizens lining up to vote at polling stations. Russian compatriots without Russian citizenship who did not vote were also highly active. They organized broad support for the election campaign, using their media resources in almost all countries. It is important that different generations of people in the Russian community abroad shared the same spirit of enthusiasm and support for the campaign.

By the way, delegates of the Sixth World Congress of Compatriots Living Abroad, which took place in Moscow in the fall of 2018, officially approved of Russia's actions. At the forum, they determined priorities for their associations to preserve their ethnic and cultural identity, maintain Russian spiritual and civilizational presence in the world, overcome the externally imposed Russophobia, and normalize Russia's ties with

foreign countries. It is important to note that our mutual understanding with the Russian diaspora has reached a new level of systemic long-term partnership.

I would also like to note that the attitude of most of our compatriots to Russia's policy is well known not only to the Russian leadership, but also to the authorities of their host countries, whose response to that is not always unequivocal. For instance, it is no secret that the authorities in several Western countries are stepping up their efforts to impede the activity of Russian compatriots' organizations aimed at consolidating the diaspora and strengthening ties with their historical motherland. As a rule, this involves antagonizing representatives of Russian-speaking communities and exerting pressure on activists of the movement. Security agencies in the Baltic countries are particularly tough on these issues.

*Q: What difficulties do our compatriots encounter most often in the post-Soviet space and what is being done to help them?*

*A:* Most difficulties stem from the collapse of the Soviet Union and the formation of newly independent states. During the general economic, legal and linguistic disintegration, the status of the Russian-speaking population and the Russian language plunged into a period of uncertainty, and the issue of ensuring the fundamental rights and freedoms of our compatriots acquired new urgency.

Thus, the issue of citizenship in the Baltic countries remains unresolved. Hundreds of thousands of Russians and Russian-speakers in these EU countries are still unable to obtain citizenship and have to make do with the status of "noncitizens."

The Russian Federation is carrying out practical, concrete measures to protect the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of our compatriots. There are various forms and methods of action. One priority here is engagement with the multimillion-person Russian diaspora to preserve its ethnic and cultural identity, spiritual values, and the Russian language and culture. To this end, we are also active at international organizations, including the UN, the OSCE and the Council of Europe, cooperating with international and domestic NGOs.

In 2012, the Foundation for Supporting and Protecting the Rights of Compatriots Living Abroad was created by presidential decree to address practical issues. The foundation has set up 26 centers for the legal support of compatriots in 20 countries. Effective assistance has been provided to



thousands of compatriots. Last year alone, the foundation paid for legal services to protect the interests of Russian citizens and compatriots in foreign courts, including in Armenia, Georgia, Lithuania, and Estonia.

A program to facilitate the voluntary resettlement of compatriots living abroad to the Russian Federation was launched in 2007. In recent years, the tragic situation in Ukraine has had the greatest impact on the resettlement process.

In several post-Soviet states, the use of Russian has been limited to some degree or other. It is being pushed out of the official and administrative sphere; the number of Russian-language schools is declining, and professionals, native speakers of Russian, are forced to leave government agencies. We have no moral right to leave our people without care and attention. We are working to preserve the Russian-language education system, including higher education. Universities established in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Armenia, and Azerbaijan serve as positive examples of these efforts.

An array of measures is being implemented to promote the Russian language, support and strengthen its position in the world. Several advisory bodies have been established at various levels, including the presidential council on the Russian language. The Concept for State Support and Promotion of the Russian Language Abroad was adopted, as was the Russian Language federal targeted program for 2016-2020.

The Russian Foreign Ministry participates in this activity, providing comprehensive support together with the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, the Ministry of Education and Rossotrudnichestvo [Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation]. The Pushkin State Russian Language Institute, Moscow State University, the Russky Mir [Russian World] Foundation, and the International Association of Teachers of Russian Language and Literature, among others, are also involved in this process.

For example, Rossotrudnichestvo has opened language courses and centers in 58 countries at 66 Russian missions abroad. The Pushkin State Russian Language Institute has created 70 centers in 35 countries. The Russky Mir foundation has established 90 Russian-language learning centers and 130 facilities. Every year, 15,000 people from 180 countries come to study at Russian universities on Russian government quotas for foreign citizens, including compatriots living abroad.

*Q: Russian universities remain attractive for many students from CIS countries. Some of them study on Russian government grants. Could you comment on trends in this area?*

*A:* We see that young people from CIS countries are increasingly interested in studying in Russia: The number of people wishing to take training or internship programs in Russia is growing. Citizens from CIS countries have broad opportunities at higher educational institutions in Russia.

Admission to training programs subsidized from the federal budget, the budgets of Russian Federation members or local budgets is through competition on an equal footing with citizens of the Russian Federation.

Right now, 174,000 students from Central Asia are studying at Russian higher educational institutions. Some of them will be involved in formulating their countries' domestic and foreign policy. A total of 1,900 state-funded places (quotas) were allocated for foreign students from Central Asian countries in Russia in the 2018-2019 academic year.

Education is one of the most popular and promising areas of cooperation between Russia and the Transcaucasus countries. More than 11,000 Azerbaijani citizens, about 6,000 Armenian citizens and over 900 Georgian citizens are studying at Russian universities, many of them in state-funded programs.

In Armenia, a total of about 3,500 students are studying at the local branches of Moscow State University, the Russian State University of Tourism and Services, the Plekhanov Economic University, the St. Petersburg Institute of International Economic Relations, Economics and Law, and the Russian International Academy for Tourism, as well as at the Russian-Armenian University.

In Baku, Moscow State University and the I.M. Sechenov First Moscow State Medical University have their branches. According to the action plan to promote Russian-Azerbaijani cooperation through 2024, three other Russian universities will open their branches in Baku soon – namely, the Moscow State Institute (University) of International Relations, the National Research University-Higher School of Economics and the Moscow State University of Humanities and Economics.

Currently, about 19,000 Ukrainian citizens are enrolled in degree programs in Russia, including about 8,500 in federal budget-funded programs, plus over 5,000 students from Moldova, more than half of them in state-funded programs. Over 6,500 Ukrainian citizens are in vocational training programs in Russia.

Within the quota established by the Russian government for the 2018-2019 academic year, 500 places were allocated for students from Moldova (including Transnistria) and 500 for students from Ukraine (including the Donetsk and Lugansk people's republics).

Cooperation in education and training with Belarus is actively developing. Currently, more than 13,000 Belarusian students are in Russian degree programs, about 4,000 of them in state-funded programs. The legal framework of this cooperation contains over 150 treaties and agreements at various levels (governmental, departmental and academic). We are working to create a common education and training space in the Union State. It is based on ensuring equal access to education and training for citizens of both countries, the comparability of education and training programs, training terms, the unification of vocational specialties and qualifications, the sharing of educational and teaching experience and joint commemorative events, among other forms of cooperation.

We are working to provide Belarusian citizens more opportunities to enter primarily full-time state-subsidized programs at Russian universities with high global competitiveness rankings, as well as provide Belarusian students access to the best training programs in Russia. We are seeking to facilitate final tests for Russian and Belarusian high school students (the Unified State Exam and centralized testing) and integrate these exam institutions, for instance, by opening the first USE center in Minsk and a testing center in Moscow. We are considering the possibility of allocating additional state-funded places for Belarusian students.

Russian education is competitive and very much in demand. As a rule, it is easier for Russian university degree holders to find a job either in their home countries or in other CIS member states. This is facilitated by the proactive position of Russian universities, in particular through the educational exhibitions and fairs that they organize, where corresponding memorandums and agreements are signed. Preparations are currently under way for the next Moscow international education show, which will take place on April 10-13, 2019.

*Q: Recently, a lot has been said and done to simplify Russian citizenship acquisition procedure for compatriots living abroad. Exactly what restrictions and obstacles have been removed or will be removed in the near future for those who would like to obtain Russian citizenship?*

*A: One key goal of Russia's state migration policy concept for 2019-2025*

is to promote the country's demographic development – i.e., to increase Russia's permanent population.

In recent years, several legislative initiatives have been approved to simplify Russian citizenship acquisition procedure for compatriots living abroad. In particular, in 2014, a simplified procedure for the acquisition of Russian citizenship by native speakers of Russian was introduced for Ukrainian citizens living in Russia. This category of applicants was exempted from the need to officially renounce their Ukrainian citizenship in accordance with that country's law. This procedure was replaced by the requirement to apply for renunciation of citizenship to the Ukrainian authorities. A notarized copy of the application is deemed a relevant supporting document. In addition, on December 27, 2018, the Federal Law on Citizenship of the Russian Federation was amended to allow participants in the state program for the voluntary resettlement of compatriots living abroad to apply for Russian citizenship not only at the place of residence registration, but also at the place of actual residence in a Russian region that is chosen for permanent residence.

Furthermore, in keeping with this concept, work is under way to simplify citizenship acquisition procedure for in-demand, highly skilled specialists, as well as Russian university degree holders. To attract more Old Believer compatriots from Latin America to the Russian Far East and facilitate their adaptation and integration, legislation is being drafted to simplify Russian citizenship acquisition procedure for the heads of Old Believers' families.

*Q: Considering the tense situation on the borders of CSTO member states, is this organization effective enough in responding to new regional challenges and threats?*

*A:* The CSTO was originally created as a commonwealth of states to promote military cooperation in the post-Soviet space. However, in recent decades, transborder challenges and threats have become potentially more dangerous than traditional ones in terms of the aggregate damage that they cause. This fact prompted the CSTO to adapt to rapidly changing conditions and adjust its collective security priorities. The current vision of the CSTO's objectives is presented in the CSTO's strategy through 2025, which was adopted in 2016. It contains a detailed classification of domestic and external threats to the CSTO's collective security. External challenges include instability and unresolved conflicts near the

CSTO's borders, the pursuit of military superiority policies by certain third countries, the deployment of global missile defense systems, the deployment of weapons in outer space, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the growing number of nuclear countries, and so on.

The CSTO has a significant response capability – namely, the collective rapid deployment forces in the Central Asian region and the collective rapid reaction force, including special forces and special-purpose contingents, peacekeeping forces and the CSTO's collective air force. The CSTO's troops (collective forces) are always on alert. Their efficiency and coordination of action are constantly honed and enhanced during the annual exercises. In 2017, exercises began to be conducted according to a single plan aimed at preventing the penetration of terrorist groups into CSTO territory. The activities of extremist and terrorist organizations are without a doubt highly dangerous. Taking into consideration the current situation in Afghanistan, bilateral military contingents and the most sophisticated weapon systems were used in exercises conducted on the territory of Tajikistan. During Special Operation Cobalt-2018 in Kazakhstan's Almaty Province, elements of planning and conducting an operation to eliminate illegal armed groups were rehearsed.

The CSTO's efforts to combat terrorism are not limited to expanding the organization's military capability. Joint steps are being taken in the foreign policy arena and additional intelligence and security measures are being developed. In November 2018, the CSTO heads of state adopted a statement on coordinated actions against parties to armed conflicts on the side of international terrorist organizations. Work is under way to draw up a single list of organizations designated as terrorist in the CSTO member states. Needless to say, the CSTO is interested in reducing tensions in the Tajikistan-Afghanistan border area.

The dangerous connection between drug trafficking and terrorist financing is obvious. For more than 15 years, the CSTO has annually conducted Operation Channel, a major counter narcotics operation. It has been recognized as a very effective and efficient mechanism to fight this scourge. So far this year, 11.5 tons of illicit drugs have been seized, 784 drug related crimes uncovered, and about 4,000 criminal cases initiated through the coordinated actions of 20,000 law enforcement officers in CSTO countries. It is not surprising that the organization's drug control experience is closely watched by other states and international organizations concerned. In 2019, Operation Channel-Center was observed by representatives of law enforcement agencies from Afghanistan, the UK,

Iran, Italy, China, Mongolia, the U.S., Turkey and France, as well as relevant UN agencies, Interpol, the OSCE, the Central Asia Drug Action Program (CADAP), the Eurasian group on combating money laundering and financing of terrorism (EAG), the Committee of Heads of Law Enforcement Units of the CIS National Customs Authorities, the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO RATS), the CIS Coordination Bureau for Combating Organized Crime and Other Dangerous Crimes, and the Gulf Cooperation Council's Criminal Intelligence Center to Combat Drugs.

Another equally important area of the CSTO's activity is combating cyber crime. Special operations codenamed Proxy are an effective cyber-crime control mechanism. Last year, over 345,000 information resources inciting ethnic and religious hatred and promoting terrorist and extremist ideas in the interest of criminal communities were identified.

Because of a special operation to combat illegal migration, code-named Illegal-2018, more than 1,600 people on the international wanted list were apprehended, over 73,000 violations of migration laws by citizens of third countries were uncovered, some dubious financial transactions were suppressed, human trafficking routes were shut down and 1,500 criminal cases were initiated. In this context, the CSTO has expanded its activities, among other things, to prevent the most dangerous aspects of migration – namely, those related to terrorism and extremism. To this end, an array of measures is being planned to identify persons who have undergone terrorist training and are connected to terrorist groups active in the Middle East.

In conclusion, I would like to draw attention to the declaration that the presidents of the member states adopted following the November 2017 session of the Collective Security Council in connection with the 25th anniversary of the Collective Security Treaty and the 15th anniversary of the CSTO. In particular, the declaration notes that the organization is dynamically developing and effectively responding to the rapidly changing situation in the world, and its legal and regulatory framework makes it possible to take cooperation among its participants to a qualitatively new level, consolidate shared strategic goals and transform the CSTO into an effective multifunctional international and regional security organization.

*Key words:* CIS countries, Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia, EaEU, CSTO, Russky Mir [Russian World].

## **“European Problems Unsolvable Without Russian Participation”**

*Alexander Grushko,  
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation*

*Armen Oganessian, Editor-in-Chief of International Affairs: The European Parliament has passed a resolution that removes Russia from the list of strategic partners of the European Union. How would you comment on this?*

**A. Grushko:** I wouldn't make any comments at all because this resolution is just a recommendatory document. Naturally, we've read this document through, but there's nothing new in it. It brings together all the familiar bugaboos, everything Russia has been reproached with for a long time. Nor should we forget that European Parliament elections are coming. That resolution may just be an attempt to slam the door lower than usual.

**Q:** *The resolution speaks about some “five principles.” What are they?*

**A:** They are the so-called principles of Federica Mogherini, principles guiding the EU's policy toward Russia: first, full compliance with the Minsk agreements; second, building up relations with eastern and other neighbors of the EU; third, the energy security of the EU; fourth, engagement with Russia on issues of shared interest, primarily the situation in North Africa and the Middle East and the Iranian nuclear program; and fifth, support for civil society in Russia. Principles two to five are principles that underlay the EU's Russian policy before the Ukrainian crisis. As regards the Minsk agreements, by trying to make the entire spectrum of its relations with Russia dependent on these agreements, the EU gets itself into a trap, something that's obvious to everyone: Russia is not a party to the conflict, whereas Kiev, as we can see, has absolutely no intention to comply with the Minsk agreements. From time to time, the

Europeans make critical statements about domestic reforms in Ukraine that it needs to carry out to have some European prospects before it. But the EU doesn't do what it should do to ensure the implementation of the Minsk agreements – it should make stricter and more persistent use of various instruments to persuade Kiev that there is no alternative to the Minsk agreements. The only way to achieve lasting peace in Ukraine is the comprehensive implementation of the Minsk agreements, both their security and their political aspects.

*Q: For a long time, you represented Russia in NATO. How would you assess relations between Russia and NATO?*

*A:* Relations between Russia and NATO are a difficult and, for various reasons, rather painful story. Nevertheless, during the summit at Pratica di Mare, it was decided to set up the NATO-Russia Council (NRC), a body with tasks that included the joint addressing of security issues, the early detection of threats to all members of the NRC, and the organization of interaction in fields where the interests of Russia coincided with those of NATO.

The NRC has been able to develop a positive agenda, among other things mapping out ways of dealing with new threats and challenges, and has achieved some results – although some of them purely technical – that bolstered practical guarantees of security for all member states of the council.

For example, after 9/11, a system was set up in the NRC format for real-time exchanges of information about aircraft that didn't obey commands from the ground and were suspected of having been hijacked by terrorists. After the well-known developments, NATO deactivated that system to punish Russia.

We have taken effective joint action against all forms of terrorism. We came very close to the industrial implementation of the Standex project to detect explosives in public transportation facilities and in other places of mass congestion of people. There's no need to explain how important it was. Our partners halted that project as well.

Afghanistan has been one of the central items on our joint agenda. It's an objective need to join forces to eventually make Afghanistan a stable country, one that isn't a source of threats, and the NRC has found its niche in dealing with this problem. A successful project was launched to train anti-drug trafficking personnel for Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Central



Asian countries. Altogether, Russia and NATO jointly trained about 4,000 officers who took key posts in those countries. That is a serious contribution of the NRC to the cause of security. These and many other joint projects determined the quality of relations between Russia and NATO and created a positive atmosphere in them.

In 2014, the situation changed radically. NATO went back to its basics. As its first secretary general, Lord Ismay, put it, NATO was created to “keep the Soviet Union out, the Americans in, and the Germans down.” If we substitute “Germans” for “EU” in this phrase, it will essentially mean a policy that remains in place today. Today, NATO bases its policy toward Russia on Cold War blueprints.

**NATO demonizes our country and ascribes some aggressive intentions to it that don't exist, and can't exist by definition.**

*Q: Is NATO prepared to heed Russia's opinions and respect its interests?*

*A:* NATO attributes intentions to Russia that have nothing to do with Russia. NATO demonizes our country and ascribes some aggressive intentions to it that don't exist, and can't exist by definition. So, I would answer your question in the negative.

Mind you – it's not Russia but NATO that refuses to cooperate, restricts channels of communication, cuts down the range of political subjects to discuss. We've never done any of that because we go by the principle that it's better to talk than not to talk. NATO has a membership of 29 countries, and NRC meetings have brought together civilian and military leaders of the alliance and ambassadors from the 29 member states. It's a very important channel for us to communicate with all European countries and the United States, especially these days, when our Western partners have changed their approaches.

Today, because of NATO's heightened military activity on the eastern flank, – and that's where NATO puts in its principal military resources, – we realize that this new situation needs caution on both sides. We share the position of those who advocate looking for ways to de-escalate tensions and improve mechanisms for avoiding dangerous military incidents and preventing the two sides from misinterpreting each other's intentions. This was the theme of all the NRC meetings after the council started

meeting again following a two-year hiatus imposed by NATO in 2014.

However, NATO doesn't show any serious intention to move in that direction. De-escalation of tensions can be discussed at ambassadorial level, but it's only when there exist military communication channels that there can be real progress. Unfortunately, NATO still refuses to have any systemic contact with us. There have been meetings between General Curtis Scaparrotti, commander of the U.S. European Command, and General Valery Gerasimov, chief of the Russian General Staff. But, of course, such meetings can't replace daily contact between the militaries, contact that is more necessary today than ever before. This is one more area where the ball is in NATO's court.

But there is a silver lining to this cloud as well. For instance, a group has been set up under the aegis of the NRC that has worked on ways to reduce risks for civilian aircraft in the Baltic airspace during flights of warplanes. The group has achieved very concrete results.

Everyone knows the transponder story. That tension has been defused because some recommendations were worked out and because an extra flight path has been set up for our warplanes to use in flying between Kaliningrad and St. Petersburg. That's an example of a depoliticized expert solution.

*Q: NATO is moving its infrastructure closer to Russian borders. How should Russia respond?*

*A:* Russia should make a technical response. Russia has a set of options for an effective, clear and inexpensive reaction to any risk that may come from NATO activity.

NATO is involved in a whole range of measures. On the Russian flank, there are endless rotations of forces, military exercises in the immediate vicinity of our borders that are increasingly frequent and grow in scale, and infrastructure projects such as building new depots for armaments and expanding seaport and airfield facilities.

There's an air base in Estonia called Ämari, which is responsible for patrolling the airspace of the Baltic countries. It takes just a few minutes to fly from Ämari to St. Petersburg. Of course, from the point of view of military planning, this can't be neglected. We take all this into account in countermeasures that we consider necessary and we will continue to do it in response to NATO activities.

*Q: Do Georgia and Ukraine stand any chance of joining NATO in the foreseeable future?*

*A:* Not in the foreseeable future. The decision made in 2008 in Bucharest that Georgia and Ukraine will become members of NATO is a bomb under the architecture of European security. We’ve always pointed this out both to Europe and to the United States.

*Q: What do you think of the recent statement of British Defense Secretary Gavin Williamson to the effect that NATO needs a bigger role in the Arctic?*

*A:* The anti-Russian campaigns that we can see in the West constantly need new themes. There are those who think the Arctic has become an issue: it’s being militarized, Russia is taking hold of all its resources, and so NATO should send troops in there. That’s a fantasy pure and simple. Today, the Arctic is a region of international cooperation for objective reasons, and not only political reasons either, because even extracting its mineral resources requires international cooperation. It is a unique site for looking for new algorithms for economic interaction, for joint projects that would be pursued for decades if not more.

Moreover, there is every reason for the Arctic to remain a region of peace. On April 9-10, Russia will host a large-scale forum in St. Petersburg under the motto “Arctic: Territory of Dialogue” that will bring together top leaders of states. I’m sure that appeals will be issued at the forum for cooperation and for dealing with any issue on the basis of international law and without the use of military force.

*Q: NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has said that the alliance wants the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF Treaty) to be safeguarded. Would NATO be able to suggest any way of safeguarding that treaty?*

*A:* I don’t think it is today. First of all, NATO has no official position on the INF Treaty. The United States didn’t consult its allies in making its decision about the INF Treaty. That’s a fact. It was only after the United States made that decision that it commanded its allies to support its withdrawal from that treaty. Secondly, what prevented NATO from proposing universalizing the treaty earlier on? There are some lessons to learn from

the history of arms control and treaties on disarmament. Obviously, many of the rules needed adjustment to the changes in the global political situation, for example the emergence of new technologies and armaments, but it was always a verified step-by-step process. In other words, old mechanisms would cease to exist when new ones were created to replace them. These days, the Americans do whatever they please.

*Q: By the way, there were protests among the American allies as well. At least, there were expressions of concern.*

*A:* That's true. In thinking about the impacts of that American decision, you come to the conclusion that the Europeans should unanimously express concern because any intermediate-range missiles that might be deployed near the Russian borders would threaten the European strategic balance. It's not at the Canadian or Mexican border that the Americans are going to station their missiles when they leave the treaty. There are influential countries and political forces in Europe that can speak up against Europe being turned into a site of confrontation. Let's think of reactions in Europe to NATO's decision late in 1979 and early in 1980 to station Pershing II and Tomahawk missiles in five European countries. There were protests and demonstrations. The deployment of American missiles on European territory wouldn't be in anyone's interests. That's obvious to us. It's no accident, by the way, that NATO doesn't yet have any plans to deploy missiles in Europe.

We, for our part, stand ready to take any symmetric countermeasures to safeguard the balance based on the INF Treaty. We don't have any plans to station missiles in Europe or anywhere else before the United States deploys any missiles of the same kind there. Therefore, I believe that, if security interests take the upper hand, if the Europeans really don't want their continent to become a bridgehead for American armed forces and don't want complete military and geopolitical subjugation of Europe to the United States, they should rise against those plans.

*Q: What position does Russian diplomacy take on Europe?*

*A:* We take a pragmatic position, namely we continue to build up bilateral relations with all countries. Not a single EU member country has abandoned its foreign policy. We can see a queue of visitors to Moscow to keep the political dialogue going and help boost economic, cultural and

other ties. But we can't ignore the reality that those states have passed over a whole range of competences to the supranational level. Therefore, if we want to achieve anything in any specific economic sectors or political fields, such bilateral relations should be supplemented with contacts with the EU.

In 2013, the volume of trade between Russia and the EU was \$417 billion. This was a little less than what the Europeans had with the United States or China but was comparable with it. Obviously, there's a tremendous amount of problems we need to solve with the EU to lay legal and other foundations for more extensive trade.

Obviously, the EU acts as a single entity in some international formats, for instance in the Quartet on the Middle East, where we interact with it, in the Normandy format, or in the Transnistria conflict settlement process.

We are involved in a political dialogue with the EU. We pursue a uniform policy with EU countries, a policy that aims to achieve the most favorable conditions for our domestic development. This is unachievable without peace and stability in our relations.

*Q: What is the level of this political dialogue? Has this dialogue become more intensive?*

*A:* Comparing it with what we had five to ten years ago, the current level is pretty low. In the past, there were Russia-EU summits every six months, every two years the European Commission had a meeting with the Russian government, there were more than 15 standing partnership councils at ministerial level, and there were numerous consultations, about 20, on the entire spectrum of international issues. Surely, what we have today is miserable compared to that architecture of political dialogue.

Nevertheless, lately we've been having more intensive contacts on many political problems, and not only at ministerial level. These contacts are centered on the most acute international problems – Syria, the Iranian nuclear program, the situation in Latin America from the perspective of what's happening in Venezuela. There is an ongoing dialogue on visa liberalization. We have an agreement with the EU that prescribes continuous monitoring and certain adjustments. We need to keep our dialogue on migration going, and that mechanism keeps running. We also need to continue to talk to the EU on one very serious problem, terrorism. We discuss

this problem with individual EU countries that are very interested in these discussions.

*Q: Has there been any progress in the negotiations on visas?*

*A:* In loosening the visa rules, we are prepared to go as far as the EU is. By the way, it was one of the EU's strategic mistakes that at some point it got very frightened of introducing a visa-free regime. A visa-free regime would have been a demonstration not just of a new nature of relations between states but of a nature of relations that affected the interests of each citizen in Europe and Russia. It's a matter that's relevant to any family. But they put the brakes on the process. We had fulfilled all the conditions that we had formulated jointly but they hadn't fulfilled all of them. It was made clear to us that there could be no political decision to introduce a visa-free regime before visa regimes were introduced for countries that had announced that they planned to join the EU. Those were primarily Ukraine, Georgia, eastern neighborhood countries in general.

Many in Europe are kicking themselves now because it would have been a breakthrough that would have seriously improved our relations. We did introduce a simplified visa regime for people visiting St. Petersburg during sea cruises. Naturally, we introduced a visa-free regime for soccer fans. It was a very important move, although in a narrow segment. The sky didn't fall, and we were able to see that illegal entry into Russia was a manageable risk. Now we're working on other projects to significantly simplify visa rules for visiting individual Russian regions. We are willing to keep moving in that direction. If the EU said it was happy to try to negotiate a visa-free regime, we would agree to do it.

*Q: A while ago, there were suggestions about concessions for individual categories of people such as students or academics. Have there been any agreements to that effect?*

*A:* We have an agreement on visa liberalization that singles out a large segment of people eligible for a simplified visa regime. Clearly, the EU isn't unanimous on the issue. Visa rules vary from country to country: countries that have large numbers of Russian tourists need maximum simplification. Therefore, there exist pro-visas, so-called electronic visas, – you fill out a form in your own country but physically receive your visa

on your arrival. Many states realize that they should take account of the size of our country. It’s one thing for a Dane, for example, to come to our consulate in Copenhagen – he or she won’t have to travel more than 100 kilometers. But it’s a different story for people who live in Siberia – they may need to travel thousands of kilometers to the nearest consulate of the country they’re planning to go to. I’m sure that both sides need simplifying visa rules. This is perfectly achievable if the matter is depoliticized.

*Q: What are the sectors where we still have opportunities for cooperation with the EU despite our current state of relations?*

*A:* All the sectors. We haven’t used up all our opportunities for cooperation. We’ve worked persistently for a long time building four common spaces: a common economic space; a common space for freedom, security and justice; a common space of cooperation in the field of external security; and a common space on research, education and culture. We’ve made quite a lot of progress in some respects but there have been very serious setbacks in others.

Energy trade has always played a prominent role in our cooperation, at least because it’s more than half-century old and has proven to be not only viable but also, and more importantly, predictable and reliable. A lot has happened in Europe: the Cold War, armed conflicts, NATO’s air strikes against the former Yugoslavia, the disappearance of some states from the map of Europe, and the emergence of new ones on it. But energy trade has been going on because it’s based on clear ideas of how much is needed, what resources are available, and what guarantees there should be for transit. We have collaborated with Europe to develop a common investment climate, common projects, and a common legal basis to preempt politicized deviations from EU legislation such as the Third Energy Package.

We’ve worked to synchronize the electricity grids of Russia and the EU in a way that could give huge benefits both to us and to them and ensure flows of electricity between the Russian and European systems. Today, the Baltic countries want to leave our electricity system and try to connect to the EU electricity system in various ways, and thereby they give both us and themselves unnecessary problems – everything has worked for a long time and would have kept working. That’s just one tiny segment of our relations with the EU.

There have been various projects in all four spaces. For example, in

2010 we satisfied a request from the EU for military assistance in its operation in Chad and the Central African Republic. We sent in a helicopter group that made the operation successful. Based on this experience, Russia proposed signing an agreement on joint crisis settlement operations. An agreement to that effect was drawn up but never materialized because the EU moved to replace the planned deal with an agreement on conditions for Russian participation in anti-crisis operations under the leadership of the EU. We said that this was impossible because equality was a key principle for relations between Russia and the EU and it couldn't be otherwise.

These days one can hear proposals in Europe for setting up a Russia-EU security council. Let me remind you, it was our idea a while ago – we proposed setting up a Russia-EU security council as a format for us to make joint assessments of threats and challenges because we were in the same boat and both of us were vulnerable to instability in North Africa and the Middle East. We need a structure of sorts to enable us to remain in contact continuously and make joint decisions. Many Europeans believe European problems are unsolvable without Russian participation.

*Q: Some political leaders insist on lifting the sanctions. But we see that Brussels reacts negatively to this and keeps the sanctions in effect for longer and longer. Maybe it will realize eventually that the sanctions should be abandoned?*

*A: We have wide-scale political contacts. Many people tell us that there's absolutely no need for the sanctions. The Europeans' total losses as a result of their sanctions and our countermeasures, which are absolutely legitimate, are well known – they're 100 billion euros. On the other hand, the sanctions machine keeps running and would need political will and some time to stop. I think it's the key point whether the Europeans will be able to ignore pressure from across the Atlantic. At the end of the day, they should put their own interests before the interests of those who want to reformat the entire global system, not only the trans-Atlantic system, to match it with their own objectives.*

*Q: What's the outlook for Nord Stream 2?*

*A: It seems to us that there exist all objective reasons for the successful implementation of this and other projects, including Turkish Stream.*



These projects are substantiated economically, attractive commercially, and can be a serious contribution to the energy security of Europe, and to security in general. It's in the interests of both Russia and Europe to keep them running. Paradoxically, numerous political forces that are hostile toward Russia try to build political capital on the increase in the share of Russian natural gas in the total gas consumption of the EU. But it has never been a critical share, it stayed between 30% and 35%, and it stays around that level today, although last year the EU imported a record amount of gas from Russia.

This is what the objective situation looks like: the giant Groningen gas field has been supplying Europe for decades, but the Dutch government has been forced to order it to be closed by 2030 because of repeated earthquakes. The reserves in the North Sea are limited, and liquefied gas is quite expensive. Hence, objectively speaking, the EU needs to cooperate with Russia – for economic and not for political reasons.

*Q: Does the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) need reforming?*

*A:* It certainly does, which is a position that we've been persistently upholding for a long time. If we want to create a new security architecture for Europe, we should think about the Eurasian space, how we should organize it in the interest of all the players, taking account of the increasing political and economic influence of the new Asian power centers. The Eurasian space will be difficult to build if we have problems in greater Europe. For this reason, making the OSCE a more powerful, groundwork organization is a task that would meet the needs of all Europeans. We will continue to insist that the OSCE adopt a charter – it's an international organization but it has no legally binding rules. It needs to put its network of missions and institutions in order and put them on a more understandable basis. It should also get rid of the psychology of teachers and pupils that many states have. Some of the EU countries and the United States still believe that they can use the OSCE as a channel for forcing their opinions on other nations. We are also proposing a more prominent role for the OSCE as a framework for negotiations on arms control. Our line is unchangeable, and its main element is our insistence on a charter.

*Q: How does the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs assess the OSCE mission to Ukraine?*

**A:** Positively. Moreover, we've been supporting it right from the start. We continue to support it politically and provide personnel for it. It's our principle that the mission must act within the limits of its mandate. We make no secret of our critical attitude to the performance of the mission. We believe that it should monitor the conflict zone more proportionally and equally and not only work on territories controlled by Donetsk and Lugansk but also monitor what happens on the territory controlled by Kiev. We will continue to demand that the mission take a more objective stance on security matters. Among other things, we've been insisting for a long time that the mission register not merely facts of artillery attacks from each side but also destruction caused by such attacks, primarily damage to civilian infrastructures, so that it could be seen what is actually happening in the conflict zone. We also insist that the mission register very accurately all instances where Kiev departs from its commitments.

As regards security, the main issue is that no progress has been made toward the separation of the armed forces. This separation is the key point that has been approved at the top level in the Normandy format. It could have been the basis for movement to greater security along with numerous ceasefires. But unfortunately, we can see fighting going on.

As for political issues, we will certainly continue to press the mission to comprehensively fulfill its functions, among other things to provide humanitarian information – not only on the humanitarian situation in the conflict zone but also on that throughout Ukraine. Primarily, it should report violations of any civil rights – the right to speak and be educated in one's native language, the right to profess any religion whatsoever. The mission should also monitor nationalistic practices, demonstrations of nationalists. There are many conditions for the success of any mission, but the main condition is respect for both parties to a conflict. But this is impossible without objectivity because any politicization of conclusions runs against what the OSCE mission is all about.

***Q:** Does the OSCE have any stance on the elections in Ukraine?*

**A:** Practically everyone in the OSCE has said that the Copenhagen Criteria and other commitments must be fulfilled comprehensively and that no exception must be made for any state. What Kiev is doing is a gross violation of the rules.

*Q: Is Russia prepared to leave the Council of Europe if the Russian delegation to that organization doesn't have its rights fully restored before the election for the next secretary general?*

*A:* I wouldn't put it in those terms – leave or stay. The problem is somewhat different. It's true that in 2014 the Russian delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) was deprived of key powers through a series of decisions. There have been various kinds of consultations and negotiations discussing this abnormal situation and looking for steps to be taken to put an end to it. Nonetheless, nothing happened. In 2017, Russia decided to suspend paying membership dues to the Council of Europe.

We can't put up with being discriminated against because that's not our idea of what that organization should do to comply with its rules. Due to our efforts, a process has been launched to look for a way to resolve glaring contradictions between the constitutional principles and legally binding rules of the Council of Europe, which are based on principles of equality and duties of a sovereign state and clearly define the duties of PACE – to give advice and elect judges, the commissioner on human rights, and the secretary general. However, there's no rule saying that PACE has the right to deprive a state of access to these instruments. The issue is not only about the restoration of the rights of the Russian delegation.

The fundamental task is to resolve legal contradictions between founding documents of the organization. There is balanced work underway, and the secretary general is aware what danger faces the Council of Europe.

The situation is quite alarming because that's not the kind of solution that all the countries want even though there is clearly the way to resolve the crisis.

There are states that dream of Russia being removed from the Council of Europe while they would remain in that frontline status. Of course, this is not the position of the majority of Council of Europe members, which realize that it's extremely vague what kind of future the organization is going to have if Russia is not a member of it. The Council of Europe would then become a kind of appendage to the EU and cease to be attractive as an organization. There are various options we'd be happy to support. One of them is to adopt a resolution to resolve all the contradictions. Of the 47 judges in the European Court of Human Rights, 27 have been

elected with the Russian delegation staying out of the voting. In June, there will be an election for the secretary general. If we are absent from it, it'll mean that Russia hasn't been involved in any of the Council of Europe elections.

*Key words:* NATO, Russia, EU, sanctions.

## **U.S. Complicity in the 2014 Coup in Kiev as a Violation of International Law**

*A. Vylegzhanin,  
K. Kritsky*

FIVE YEARS AGO, a coup d'état took place in Kiev. Following demonstrations and arson attacks, a mob seized several government institutions, including the administration building and residence of the constitutionally elected president of Ukraine, Viktor Yanukovich. Some members of the Ukrainian president's security detail who were protecting his residence from illegal seizure were wounded and killed.<sup>1</sup> Alexander Turchinov, one of the coup leaders, began serving as the president of Ukraine even though no Ukrainian presidential election had been held.

The coup in Kiev led primarily to the U.S. assuming a leading role in Ukraine's governance – something it had neither during the period of the Russian Empire nor the Soviet era.

The February 2014 overthrow of the president in Kiev that took place without elections and in violation of the Ukrainian Constitution de facto divided the country into regions that recognized the new authorities in Kiev and those that opposed the coup (primarily the southern and eastern regions of Ukraine). This occurred not only because the Ukrainian president was unconstitutionally removed from power but primarily because the “installation” of the putschist government was accompanied by violence, and ethnic and linguistic persecution. In March 2014, the Autonomous Republic of Crimea left the new, “post-coup” Ukraine in accordance with the provision of the UN Charter on the right of peoples to self-determination. Subsequently, following a referendum in Crimea, a treaty on Crimea's reunification with Russia was signed. A confrontation

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between the new regime in Kiev\* and residents of Donetsk and Lugansk Regions turned into a protracted armed conflict.

The forcible replacement in Kiev of a constitutionally elected head of state (Yanukovich) with an unconstitutional leader (Turchinov) directly impacted Russia's national interests. Russians and Ukrainians lived together within a single state, the Russian Empire, from the 17th century until 1917.

During the Soviet period, the border between the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic did not have international legal significance. It was an administrative border. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the independent UN member states (Russia and Ukraine) that replaced them continued to maintain close economic and other ties. Their continued integration, including through joint participation in the Customs Union, objectively met the strategic interests of Ukraine and Russia.

A friendly Ukraine is also important to Russia from a national security standpoint, considering NATO's expansion toward Russia's borders that began in the early 1990s – i.e., NATO's absorption of all former member states of the Warsaw Pact, including Poland and even the former Soviet republics of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. Russia's leadership has repeatedly stressed the inadmissibility of dragging Ukraine into NATO. Words about “fraternal” relations between the peoples of Russia and Ukraine are no exaggeration: Millions of family members (both Russians and Ukrainians) live on opposite sides of the Russian-Ukrainian border,<sup>2</sup> and at least one-third of Ukraine's population speaks Russian as a native language.<sup>3</sup>

In this context, it is not surprising that Moscow considered the U.S.-orchestrated seizure of power from the head of state in Kiev an event affecting its vital interests. Something else is remarkable: The U.S. administration said that the events in Ukraine, far away from the American mainland, “constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States.”<sup>4</sup> Westerners promulgated a very different assessment of the forced ouster of Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich in 2014. The U.S. called it a “people's revolution” and said that the mob action organized in part by the U.S. ambassador in Kiev (including the killing of Berkut fighters, the state guard of

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\* Even after the coup leaders organized the election of their candidate Pyotr Poroshenko on a considerable part of the territory of Ukraine.

the Ukrainian president) was a legitimate way of expressing the will of the “Ukrainian people.”

The clash of various legal and political positions on the 2014 events in Kiev became a “tipping point” in relations between Russia and Western countries that have now degraded to the level of a new Cold War. The U.S. utilized its dominant financial-economic position in the world as well as its

powerful institutional clout in the UN and other international organizations to portray Russia as “guilty” of destabilizing the situation in Ukraine. Under U.S. pressure, anti-Russian documents are advanced and adopted at international forums. A resolution approved by the UN General Assembly in March 2014 stated that Russia had allegedly violated Ukraine’s territorial integrity,<sup>5</sup> and in December 2017, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution that even called Russia an “occupying power.”<sup>6</sup>

Allegations of Russia’s violation of international law became the formal pretext for the U.S. and its allies to impose restrictive measures on Moscow that some documents refer to as “sanctions.” Note that these measures have nothing to do with sanctions (coercive) measures that can be imposed only by the UN Security Council (Chapter VII of the UN Charter).

Similar anti-Russian positions form the basis of statements made not only in the Western media but also by most Western and international jurists. It has gotten to the point that they are not blaming the U.S. of orchestrating the coup in Kiev but are accusing Russia of committing supposedly “self-evident”<sup>7</sup> violations of international law. As British Prof. Timothy Pothier notes, only one Western academic publication in more than a hundred (!) makes an opposite claim.<sup>8</sup>

Virtually all such allegations lack a comprehensive analysis of the underlying facts constituting the “Ukrainian crisis”: Usually only a few facts taken out of context are considered and evaluated, while other circumstances are deliberately overlooked.<sup>9</sup> Additionally, such research disregards a key issue: Did U.S. involvement in organizing the forceful

While considering it acceptable to interfere in the domestic affairs of Ukraine, Syria, Venezuela and other states, the U.S. is trying to legally protect itself from the interference of other states in matters within its domestic jurisdiction.

ouster in Kiev of constitutionally elected Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich comply with the UN Charter?

### **U.S. Activities During the Protest Rallies in Kiev: Basic Facts**

IN 2012-2013, the U.S. leadership gave the Ukrainian leadership what essentially amounted to an ultimatum about choosing the “Western path” of development as opposed to integration with Russia. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in December 2012 threatened to oppose attempts to involve Ukraine in Russian integration projects, including the Customs Union.<sup>10</sup>

President Yanukovich’s decision in November 2013 not to sign an Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU led to a sharp U.S. démarche. That decision was made in full conformity with norms of international and national law; it was a domestic decision the Ukrainian head state was authorized to make. However, this did not prevent the U.S. from responding negatively, cancelling U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry’s participation in an OSCE event scheduled for November 23, 2013 in Kiev. Even more legally relevant instances of U.S. interference in 2013-2014 in Ukrainian domestic affairs include the following:

- Involvement in organizing protests against the constitutionally elected president of Ukraine. Former prime minister of Ukraine Nikolai Azarov writes: “A group of officials at the U.S. Embassy in Ukraine coordinated the activity of the opposition and militants. The opposition went to them every day as if going to work. After meeting with them, they would head to talks with Yanukovich and then report back to them on the negotiations”<sup>11</sup>;

- Because of the U.S.’s efforts, the actions of the coup leaders were “legitimized” in the West. High-ranking U.S. officials enthusiastically met with leaders of the uprising – for example, Vice-President Joe Biden, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland, Senator John McCain and others did “stunts” in Kiev (some did several) with that goal in mind during the winter of 2013-2014. They all met with coup leaders and visited the Maidan to express public support for the protesters;

- At the same time, U.S. envoys pressured the Ukrainian authorities to stop dispersing the crowds challenging the constitutionally elected president of Ukraine. In his memoirs, Joe Biden writes that he regularly asked Yanukovich to show “restraint” toward protesters; the day before the



coup in Kiev, the U.S. vice-president telephoned President Yanukovich and in effect demanded that he resign (he told the head of a sovereign state that “it was over”).<sup>12</sup> Meanwhile, the American administration constantly threatened the president with unilateral “sanctions” if Kiev used force (even within the bounds of Ukrainian law) against the coup leaders;

- Under the threat of personal “sanctions” against the Ukrainian elite, the U.S. succeeded in repealing laws the Rada adopted on January 16, 2014, that toughened the punishment for riot organizers and participants (incidentally, the measures stipulated in those laws were no more severe than those contained in U.S. laws);

- Never did the Russian Empire or the Soviet Union provide any financial assistance to protest groups in the U.S., and neither has the Russian Federation. The U.S. openly provided financial assistance to those protesting the legitimate president of Ukraine. Today, there are no accurate estimates of how much money the U.S. spent on the protest demonstrations in Kiev. Russia has said that \$5 billion in outside assistance was spent on the coup.<sup>13</sup> A more modest assessment was given in a 2014 report by the U.S. National Endowment for Democracy: It noted that \$14 million given to NGOs working in Ukraine in 2011-2014 played an important role in organizing the protests in Kiev.<sup>14</sup> According to Nuland, in 2013 alone the Americans gave about \$15 million to finance actions of the Ukrainian opposition. It is appropriate to mention funding for the Hromadske.tv television channel that provided “prompt” coverage of supposedly “legitimate” events on the Maidan;

- U.S. involvement in the forcible removal from power of the constitutionally elected president of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich is also confirmed by a telephone conversation made public on February 7, 2014, between Nuland and U.S. Ambassador to Kiev Geoffrey Pyatt.\* The two senior members of the U.S. administration unabashedly discussed the future configuration of power in Kiev after the overthrow of President Yanukovich. It is noteworthy that the fundamental appointment that was discussed in that conversation was made a few weeks later: Alexander Yatsenyuk did in fact become prime minister of Ukraine;

- The U.S. had a direct hand in the opposition’s drafting of an agreement with the president of Ukraine; it gave the opposition instructions and pressured the Ukrainian president to conclude such an agreement, which Yanukovich eventually signed on February 21, 2014. The agree-

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\* Note that U.S. authorities did not dispute the authenticity of the recording.

ment called for resolving the dispute with the opposition in a constitutional manner and holding an early Ukrainian presidential election. The guarantors of the agreement, incidentally, were the foreign ministers of Germany, France and Poland. But after the agreement was signed, the putschists seized the Ukrainian president's residence, killing presidential security guards. But the U.S. refused to acknowledge that the opposition violated the agreement; on the contrary, the U.S. hastily recognized Turchinov as the legitimate acting head of Ukraine, even though the coup clearly violated the Constitution and the putschists were unable to effectively control some areas of the country, especially Crimea and the Donbass (which considered the seizure of the Ukrainian president's residence in Kiev to be illegal);

- Information about the supply of weapons and ammunition to the putschists, the training by U.S. instructors of "subversive groups" and the involvement of such groups in the provocative shooting of protesters has so far not been confirmed with evidence, but it has not been refuted, either. It has been said, for example, that these groups received specialized training in Western countries in the tactics of street protests. This was stated in particular by Alexander Yakimenko, the former head of the Ukrainian Security Service. According to him, training camps were operating for several years in Poland, Lithuania and Latvia, where Western instructors instructed the future Kiev putschists.<sup>15</sup>

### **International Legal Qualification of Actions of One State That Constitute Interference in the Domestic Affairs of Another**

NORMS OF INTERSTATE RELATIONS establishing a state's obligation not to interfere in the domestic affairs of another state can be seen in early legal sources, when a clear distinction had not yet been made between interference in the domestic affairs of a state and an armed attack. Scholars note that agreements on noninterference in domestic affairs were reached, for example, between Russian principalities (the decision of the Council of Liubech in 1097 and the treaty of princes in 1389); in the 1721 Nystad peace treaty, in which Peter I agreed not to interfere in the domestic affairs of Sweden; under the terms of the 1774 Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca, where Russia and Turkey pledged not to interfere in the Tatar Khanate, etc.<sup>16</sup> The 1823 Monroe Doctrine proclaimed the inadmissibility of interference by European countries in affairs on the American continent and, likewise, the U.S.'s "renunciation" of interfer-

ence in European affairs (we will not dwell on the fact that under the Monroe Doctrine, Washington already back then unilaterally appropriated the role of leader of North and South America).

Such legal instruments, however, had little effect on the overall state of the international order at that time; even in the early 20th century, interference in the domestic affairs of other states, including through the use of armed force, was considered valid. The Covenant of the League of Nations did not contain direct commitments not to interfere in domestic affairs of states. At the same time, according to Art. 15 (8) of the Covenant: “If the dispute between the parties is claimed by one of them, and is found by the Council, to arise out of a matter which by international law is solely within the domestic jurisdiction of that party, the Council shall so report, and shall make no recommendation as to its settlement.” In other words, this “softly” formulated provision acknowledges that there are issues concerning exclusively the domestic jurisdiction of states. But for an issue to be designated a domestic one belonging to the jurisdiction of a state, it needed to be demonstrated as such before the Council of the League of Nations. It turned out that *ab initio* (from the beginning) domestic affairs of state did not exist; however, a specific issue could be deemed to belong to the domestic jurisdiction of a state if the Council of the League of Nations so acknowledged.

By contrast, in contemporary international law, the cornerstone of which is the UN Charter, noninterference in domestic affairs of state is a fundamental principle. It is closely related to other basic principles of international law (Art. 1 and Art. 2 of the UN Charter), such as the sovereign equality of states, the good-faith fulfilment of international obligations, the resolution of disputes by peaceful means, etc. The principle of noninterference in domestic affairs of state aims to ensure the legal equality of sovereign states whose actual military, economic and other capabilities vary, sometimes significantly.<sup>17</sup>

That principle is formulated in the UN Charter in Art. 2 (7), which states: “Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state.” In other words, the UN Charter explicitly prohibits interference in domestic affairs of state. This prohibition applies not only to the organization itself but also its member states. The introductory part of Art. 2 of the Charter states: “The Organization and its Members, in pursuit of the Purposes stated in Article 1, shall act in accordance with the following Principles.” Therefore, the UN Charter

stipulates that the principles contained therein, including those set forth in Art. 2 (7), quoted above, apply to the UN as well as to all member states. This approach is confirmed by UN General Assembly resolutions specifying the content of the basic principles of international law enshrined in the UN Charter.

The 1965 Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention in the Domestic Affairs of States and the Protection of their Independence and Sovereignty, the 1970 Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in Accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and the 1981 Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention and Interference in the Internal Affairs of States clarified the substance of the principle of noninterference in domestic affairs of states – the scope of its actions, objects and subjects. It is well known that UN resolutions are not binding. At the same time, as international legal scholars have noted, those resolutions that offer interpretations of principles and norms of international law and are adopted unanimously are more than just recommendations and carry greater legal weight,<sup>18</sup> indicating an emerging or established customary norm of international law.

In the context of Art. 2 (7) of the UN Charter, the term “intervene” should not be limited only to cases of armed intervention. The use of armed force by one state against another (except in cases of self-defense and approval by the UN Security Council of coercive measures) is already prohibited by other norms of the UN Charter. We emphasize that Art. 2 (7) of the UN Charter prohibits not only armed intervention but also any other interference in matters that essentially fall within a state’s domestic jurisdiction.

So, what exactly does a “state’s domestic jurisdiction” mean in international legal terms? This notion is commonly held to be a manifestation of state sovereignty. According to the British professor Malcolm Shaw, domestic affairs are areas in which certain activities of the state are immune from the regulation of international law.<sup>19</sup> The professor didn’t put it exactly right. Affairs that are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of states are not “immune” from international law per se; instead, under international law, other states and the UN do not have the right to interfere in such domestic affairs of a state.

Prof. Shaw says such domestic affairs include, for example, the conditions for granting citizenship to foreigners.<sup>20</sup> That is true, but scholarship includes more illustrative examples. Domestic affairs of state include

the right of a state to choose and develop its political, economic, social, and cultural identity; shape national legislation; decide to participate or not participate in a certain multilateral treaty, including the establishment of an international organization; sign or not sign a bilateral agreement with a state, and determine under what conditions to sign it, etc.<sup>21</sup>

The notion of a “state’s domestic jurisdiction” is not static but fluid. As noted by Prof. Ian Brownlie (the eighth edition of his work has been edited and republished by Prof. James Crawford), Art. 2 (7) of the UN Charter was conceived to be flexible.<sup>22</sup> In a certain period, some issues pertaining exclusively to the domestic jurisdiction of a state may cease to be considered such, but only with the consent of that sovereign state, which is most often expressed in a corresponding international agreement. For example, the provision about respect for human rights was formulated in Art. 3 (1) of the UN Charter not as a duty of a UN member state but as a goal of cooperation. But with the adoption in 1966, after the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights of two international human rights covenants (one on civil and political rights, and the other on economic, social and cultural rights), those principles were recognized by the states party to the aforementioned international covenants as their contractual obligations.

In this regard, we should agree with Prof. Nikolai Ushakov that there are domestic issues affecting a state’s vital interests that cannot be excluded from its exclusive purview, such as maintaining the historically formed national order and ensuring the rule of law on its territory.<sup>23</sup> If a state is deprived of the right to implement such domestic functions, it essentially loses the right to realize its sovereignty, which is an inherent attribute of a state.

The only exception to the principle of noninterference in domestic affairs of state is envisaged in the same Art. 2 (7) of the UN Charter: “But this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII.” In other words, if the UN Security Council carries out actions with respect to threats to peace, breaches of peace and acts of aggression, a state shall not invoke the principle of noninterference in its domestic affairs. In addition to the text of the UN Charter, this conclusion is supported by materials from the Dumbarton-Oaks Conference, where the USSR, the U.S., Great Britain, and China hammered out many of the provisions of what would become the main agreed-upon source of contemporary international law. These materials suggest that the drafters of the Charter wanted to maximally protect states from outside interference

and therefore directly enshrined only one exception to this principle. To this end, they also reformulated Art. 10 of the UN Charter (on the powers of the UN General Assembly) to prevent this body from exerting pressure (even indirectly, through discussion) on a state that is addressing a matter within its own domestic jurisdiction.<sup>24</sup>

In recent years, however, contrary to the position of such permanent members of the UN Security Council as Russia and China, as well as the stance of the majority of states in the world that position themselves as “developing,” the U.S. and other Western countries have been attempting to cast the principle of noninterference in domestic affairs of state as an outdated norm. In this regard, mechanisms and concepts are being created and promoted that do not formally contradict international law but allow certain of its rules to be creatively applied when implementing international legal policy.<sup>25</sup> At the same time, to “legitimize” intervention in domestic affairs of state, a “telescopic” interpretation of the UN Charter’s provisions on human rights is being increasingly used. Hence the U.S.’s advancement of specific concepts (such as “humanitarian intervention” or the “responsibility to protect”). U.S. legal efforts to make the principle of respect for human rights all but paramount are in the same vein.<sup>26</sup>

While not denying the need to observe international legal norms on protecting human rights, it should be noted that such a one-sided exaggeration of their significance is fraught with skewing the established system of international law. Such an exaggeration of the importance of human rights laws alone provides conceptual justification of other violations of international law, including fundamental ones (the sovereign equality of states, in particular), under the pretext of the necessity (in the view of one state) of protecting human rights in another state. In general, we believe that the creation by Western jurists of a “hierarchy” of norms of international law contained in the UN Charter does not comport with its good-faith interpretation. Such a contrived hierarchy is not in keeping with the UN Charter or the 1970 UN General Assembly resolution on the principles of international law. The latter provides that “in their interpretation and application the above principles are interrelated, and each principle should be construed in the context of the other principles.”

While considering it acceptable to interfere in the domestic affairs of Ukraine, Syria, Venezuela and other states (notably under the pretext of protecting human rights and inculcating the American understanding of the word “democracy”), the U.S. is trying to legally protect itself from the

interference of other states in matters within its domestic jurisdiction. In 1946, the U.S. adopted the so-called “Connally amendment” that gave it the exclusive right to determine which domestic issues the International Court of Justice does not have jurisdiction over. But that contradicts the obligations of the U.S. under Art. 36 (6) of the Statute of the Court: “In the event of a dispute as to whether the Court has jurisdiction, the matter shall be settled by the decision of the Court.” Later, in September 2018, Washington threatened to “sanction” members of the International Criminal Court if it launched proceedings in connection with crimes committed in Afghanistan by American troops because the U.S. considered the commencement of such proceedings to be interference in U.S. domestic affairs.

### **Finding the U.S. Guilty for Violating Obligations Under Art. 2 (7) of the UN Charter**

BELOW, in the context of the aforementioned facts and explanations of the essence of the principle of noninterference in domestic affairs of state, it is shown why U.S. actions both before and during the coup in Kiev constitute a violation of international law.

First, the U.S.’s actions to impose on Ukrainian head of state Viktor Yanukovich a “Western” path of development (toward the EU and NATO) as the only right path and, accordingly, to force the president of Ukraine to renounce further economic integration with Russia should be considered intrusion on matters pertaining to Ukraine’s domestic affairs.

Second, U.S. support for the organizers of the coup should be considered unlawful interference in the domestic affairs of Ukraine.

It was shown above that international law prohibits organizing, inciting, financing, instigating or permitting activities aimed at violating the constitutional order of another state, and it prohibits interference in a domestic political battle, even if this did not refer to the unconstitutional replacement of Viktor Yanukovich with U.S. protégé Turchinov but indeed meant a revolution – the replacement of one social system with another.<sup>27</sup>

Arguments about the legality of U.S. intervention in the events in Kiev in the context of protecting human rights cannot be accepted: (1) As demonstrated above, the rules for such protection cannot be viewed as “hierarchically” higher than other norms of international law contained in the UN Charter, including those in Art. 2 (7) pertaining to the inadmissi-

bility of interference in matters that are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of states; (2) The demonstrations in Kiev against President Viktor Yanukovich cannot be considered a protest by all Ukrainian people against alleged massive violations of human rights; these protests were not nationwide or universal but were demands, mainly economic ones, advanced by a segment of the Ukrainian population to the authorities; (3) If there were instances of human rights violations under president Yanukovich (incidentally, such instances could also be found in the U.S. under president Barack Obama), they were not widespread; in any event, they were not as numerous or substantial as the violations the putschist regime committed in Ukraine starting in 2014; the result of the latter was effectively a domestic civil war in the Donbass and the killings of the civilian Russian-speaking population.

The U.S.'s actions in Ukraine could have been lawful only if there had been a relevant decision by the UN Security Council: the only body authorized to sanction enforcement action under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. But then, of course, it would have been a very different type of action in terms of both substance and actors. The UN Security Council did not approve such a decision in Ukraine.

Third, the statements quoted above by the U.S. about imposing "sanctions" against the Kiev authorities if steps were taken to form a union with Russia\* should be regarded as interference in domestic affairs.

Fourth, in violation of the UN Charter on the inadmissibility of inter

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\* Resolutions adopted annually since 1992 by the UN General Assembly titled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba" state that restrictive measures are contrary to the principles of international law, including the principles of the sovereign equality of states and noninterference in domestic affairs, have a negative impact on human rights and are often extraterritorial in nature [The General Assembly... Reaffirming, among other principles, the sovereign equality of States, nonintervention and noninterference in their internal affairs and freedom of international trade and navigation, which are also enshrined in many international legal instruments,... Concerned about the continued promulgation and application by Member States of laws and regulations, the extraterritorial effects of which affect the sovereignty of other States, the legitimate interests of entities or persons under their jurisdiction and the freedom of trade and navigation... 2. Reiterates its call upon all States to refrain from promulgating and applying laws and measures of the kind referred in conformity with their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law... 3. Once again urges States that have and continue to apply such laws and measures to take the necessary steps to repeal or invalidate them as soon as possible in accordance with their legal regime]. Characteristically, these resolutions are consistently endorsed by the overwhelming majority of states in the world; for example, in 2018, the document was supported by 189 delegations. Only two [the U.S. and Israel] voted against it.



ference in domestic affairs of state, Washington designated Yatsenyuk as head of a new cabinet of ministers of Ukraine; moreover, at a time when the constitutionally elected president of Ukraine, Yanukovich, was still performing his official duties.

Fifth, the directing by the U.S. Embassy in Kiev of the actions of the putschist-oppositionists that former prime minister of Ukraine Nikolai Azarov described on a day by day level with documentary meticulousness was an unarguably flagrant violation by the U.S. of Art. 2 (7) of the UN Charter.<sup>28</sup>

Some of the facts we have presented of illegal U.S. interference in the domestic affairs of Ukraine in 2013-2014 have already been expounded by Russian experts at international venues, including by one of the authors of this article: in 2018 at European-based UN agencies in Geneva, as well as in Brussels, before ambassadors of NATO member states. And yet it would seem advisable to consider forming a broad international investigative commission to establish all the circumstances of the coup in Kiev, especially the Obama administration's interference in Ukrainian domestic affairs in 2013-2014.

Of course, neither the U.S. nor its NATO allies would agree to participate in such an international investigative commission. But it could be established by international associations such as the SCO, CIS, CSTO or BRICS: The member states of those organizations are not interested in U.S. intelligence services orchestrating new coups – especially in their countries – based on the formula the U.S. successfully used when it replaced constitutionally elected Viktor Yanukovich with Turchinov. Such an international investigative commission could gather information and then publish an international report about confirmed facts of illegal U.S. interference in Ukrainian domestic events in 2013-2014 that led to the coup.

An international investigation of U.S. complicity in the 2014 coup in Kiev is relevant not only because U.S. interference in the domestic affairs of other states has already been studied in international legal doctrine.<sup>29</sup> The success of the unpunished forcible replacement of the constitutionally elected Ukrainian president seems to have gone to the heads of the American intelligence services: They are trying to pull off a similar stunt right now in Venezuela. There they have also found, naturally, those who are dissatisfied with the legitimately elected (but not servile to Washington) President Nicolás Maduro. The U.S. politically censured him, calling Maduro a dictator who does not have the right to govern

Venezuela and his May 2018 election not free or fair.<sup>30</sup> Juan Guaidó, the Washington-approved leader of the protest rallies, has already been proclaimed by the U.S. and its allies head of Venezuela.

Just as it did in Kiev in 2014, the U.S. is now actively fueling protests in Venezuela against the constitutionally elected President Maduro, believing these mob rule experiments to be an expression of the will of the Venezuelan people. In Venezuela, the U.S. is using the full set of tools for interfering in the domestic affairs of a sovereign state, using among other things, U.S. sanctions, including against Venezuelan state oil company PDVSA. The U.S. also has no qualms about using technological measures: To demonstrate Maduro's alleged loss of legitimacy, the American social networks Facebook and Instagram removed from his social media profile the label confirming the authenticity of the account of the president and transferred it to Guaidó instead.

As part of the analytical discussion, we will make an observation in conclusion that in no way constitutes an attempt to restrict the freedom of Russian TV hosts. Their strong words on television about the "bad" president of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich in many ways plays into the hands of the coup leaders and the U.S. International law does not operate on the concepts of a "bad" or "good" head of state; what is significant in terms of law is whether a leader is legitimate or not. President Viktor Yanukovich was elected by all of Ukraine in accordance with the Constitution of Ukraine. Coup leader Turchinov, proclaimed the acting president of Ukraine, was not elected in accordance with the Constitution of Ukraine. The election of Pyotr Poroshenko that Turchinov and his accomplices subsequently organized in some parts of Ukraine did not automatically legitimize the post-coup regime in Kiev: Under the general principle of law, *jus ex injuria non oritur* (unjust acts cannot create law).

On the basis of that principle, the legitimacy of the next president of Ukraine is also questionable. This election is also being organized by the illegal, "post-coup" regime. Like in 2014, this person may not legally be considered the head of state elected by the people of Ukraine: Donets Basin residents will not participate in the election, and even if they did, the "post-coup" Kiev authorities no longer regard the people in the south-east as their fellow citizens. And the law that went into force in February 2018 on the so-called "reintegration of the Donbass" gives the Ukrainian president broad powers to conduct a military operation in Ukraine, thereby undermining the possibility of a peaceful settlement of the conflict in

accordance with the Minsk package of measures (which was approved by a UN Security Council resolution).<sup>31</sup>

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NOTES

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<sup>14</sup> National Endowment for Democracy is first ‘undesirable’ NGO banned in Russia // <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jul/28/national-endowment-for-democracy-banned-russia>

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*Key words:* principles of international law, noninterference in domestic affairs, coup d'état, violations of international law.

## The Brexit Ordeal: A Case Against the “End of History”

A. Kramarenko

Shakespeare’s play, his twenty-fourth –  
Time is writing it impassively.  
*Anna Akhmatova. “To Londoners”*

I would not be in the least surprised if suddenly ... in the midst of general prosperity a gentleman were to come along ... and say to us all: I say, gentlemen, hadn’t we better throw good sense to the winds ... to allow us to live once more according to our own foolish will!

*F.M. Dostoyevsky. “Notes From the Underground”*

AKHMATOVA wrote her lines in August 1940, at the height of the Battle of Britain, which for London ended with the “Phony War”: the Anglo-French opening in a match that became known as the Second World War. For the British, this was about keeping the Germans out of the British Isles, and that objective was met thanks to the genius of Winston Churchill turned into an outcast by the supporters of the appeasement policy of Nazi Germany.

The issue is different now. The British want to leave the European Union, which is becoming suspiciously like a German order in Europe because of Germany’s economic dominance. But in both cases, albeit differently, the question was/is about independence, which a country with a history like Britain’s can’t have too much of. This was convincingly demonstrated by the campaign that EU “leave” supporters carried out under the slogan of independence, ahead of the referendum on leaving the EU. As Churchill once noted, the English Channel turned out to be wider than the Atlantic Ocean.

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The drama and anguish of Brexit are stressing out not only the British but onlookers. Nevertheless, everyone will have to keep watching what is happening until the end, even though this has long gone beyond all the bounds of common sense and does no credit to the establishment, which has turned the country into a laughingstock. The nation of Shakespeare cannot pluck up the courage to implement the clear mandate of the electorate – especially since this is not a matter of war, like 80 years ago, but the general trend in the West of restoring sovereignty, of ending the era when the U.S. was, in the words of Zbigniew Brzezinski, “the last (and let’s add the succinct English word ‘ultimate’) sovereign,” placing a monopoly on sovereignty. In the past, this would have been called an empire. The Donald Trump administration itself is proposing that everyone return to national sovereignty as the basis of an era of “transactional diplomacy,” and it has repeatedly expressed willingness to support the British in their landmark break with supranational Europe. Nevertheless, uncertainty over that break continues – even after the March 29 withdrawal date set two years ago.

The situation has entered the endgame, and there is growing indication that Theresa May is already acting on her own, against the wishes of her cabinet and her party, against the will of the majority of the electorate who voted to leave the EU despite the daunting economic consequences of this step. And that she is acting in tandem (colluding) with EU leaders in an apparent attempt to either roll back Brexit or virtualize it by means of an agreement that would deprive Great Britain of its beloved free trade, making withdrawal from the European project nonsensical. Her behavior is raising more and more questions: Does she understand what she is doing, or is she acting simply out of stubbornness or a certain megalomaniacal belief that she knows what is best for the country and has a higher calling to save it from the “disaster” of a clean break with the EU without a preliminary agreement?

Strangely enough, it is not London but Brussels that is controlling the “divorce” process – something EU Brexit secretary Stephen Barclay was forced to admit, blaming this on British parliamentarians who do not support the withdrawal agreement reached with the EU. There is a sense that the prime minister’s legitimacy comes from the continent and that she is not understood in her own country. The drama is beginning to look like a genuine tragedy, prompting speculation about what, if anything, will play the role of *deus ex machina*. It is therefore especially important to look at how the situation has developed thus far (as of April 12).

Theresa May has done everything possible to create a situation of urgency, hoping to push through the House of Commons the EU withdrawal agreement reached in July 2018 as the only option – or at least the lesser of the evils for some people.

On January 15, 2019, she lost the first vote on the agreement by an unprecedented margin of 432 to 202. On January 29, the House of Commons passed a resolution (317 to 301) authorizing the government – or rather May, who has taken negotiations with EU partners into her own hands – to hold new talks

to soften the language on the Northern Ireland land border, the so-called backstop. The latter assumes retaining the status quo on the border with Ireland envisaged by the 1998 tripartite (with Dublin's participation) Belfast Agreement regardless of London's withdrawal from the EU and the nature of its subsequent relations with continental Europe, which have yet to be determined. Brussels responded by affirming its position that the text of the agreement cannot be reopened, but the wording of the Political Declaration on future relations between the UK and the EU could be thought about, which, however, does not meet parliamentarians' demand regarding their legally binding nature. Dublin has also said that no movement is possible on this issue.

At the same time, Parliament adopted a resolution against withdrawing from the EU without a prior agreement, which allowed Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn to agree to contacts with May on subsequent Brexit tactics. This, however, did not produce any results, since the Labour Party is interested in plots that would lead to early elections. The parliamentary resolution does not have force of law and therefore did not revoke the already adopted law establishing the withdrawal date. London could not move it unilaterally. The ball is thus now in the EU's court. And if partners do not show flexibility, it will have to share responsibility for a very uncivilized – for the Western alliance – rift between Great Britain and Europe.

After a series of postponements and intensive talks in Brussels, May submitted an agreement to the House of Commons for a second vote on March 12. The day before, on March 11, she managed to coordinate three documents that were to clear up parliamentarians' misgivings about the

**London has found itself at the forefront of a renewed Western conflict between the Anglo-Saxons and Germany/the EU (a new Battle for Britain?).**

backstop: the so-called joint legally binding instrument to the withdrawal agreement that the government said would permit the start of a formal dispute resolution procedure should the EU attempt to indefinitely keep London in the backstop mode – i.e., not negotiate on the future format of relations in good faith; a joint statement (to the Political Declaration) with a commitment to agree on an alternative to the backstop by December 2020, when the transition period stipulated by the agreement expires; and a unilateral declaration that outlines the British position that nothing prevents London from exiting the agreement on a land border regime in Northern Ireland if talks about future relations fail and there is no hope for an agreement.

All this chicanery was sewn with white threads, since Brussels continued to insist that the agreement could not be reopened. So that everything was crystal clear, at the request of Parliament, the Ministry of Justice was compelled to give its opinion that Britain's legal obligations under the agreement "remained unchanged." However, May managed to persuade about 40 members of the Tory faction to vote in favor of the agreement, saying that if they didn't, Britain's withdrawal from the EU would fail. The outcome of the vote was disappointing: The agreement again failed by a margin of 149 votes (in January, it failed by 230 votes); 75 conservatives voted against it (in January, 118 did). Corbyn once again said that May was just trying to buy time, not having any Plan B.

Considering the urgency already obvious to everyone, parliamentarians voted for the government to negotiate with Brussels to push back the withdrawal date. Most conservatives, including 20 ministers, voted against it because their constituents would not take lightly a postponement of the withdrawal and images of May going to bow before Brussels. May sent such an appeal to Donald Tusk, who had previously said there was a special place in hell for Brexiteers. At a March 21 summit, the decision was made to compromise with London and extend Britain's EU membership until April 12 if the agreement did not pass in Parliament or until May 22 if it was approved by the British side. Otherwise, London would have to raise the issue of a longer postponement (on extreme and humiliating conditions that observers say Brussels would certainly impose), because, according to EU rules, the British would have to participate in elections to the European Parliament, scheduled for May 23.

The government had to change tactics. May said that she would hold a third vote on the withdrawal agreement, but only if she could be sure that it would get enough votes. Prominent Brexiteers, including Boris



Johnson, ultimately agreed to vote for the agreement, just to leave the EU, but on the condition that May voluntarily resign before talks on future relations with the EU. May gave that consent (to leave after May 22, but only if the agreement was adopted) at a meeting with the parliamentary faction on March 27.

Some parliamentarians based their consent to the agreement on the position of the Democratic Unionist Party (10 seats), without whose support the Conservative minority government would not be able to stay in power. The Unionists have been the most intractable, which is understandable: The backstop is real step toward unification of the island that has even geopolitical consequences, considering that the name of the country, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, would have to be changed. The situation was complicated by an unexpected *démarche* from the officially nonpartisan speaker of the House of Commons, John Bercow, who, based on a precedent established in 1604, concluded that within the same session of Parliament, a bill cannot be put to another vote without undergoing significant changes. Formally ending the current session and starting a new one would imply the participation of the monarch, who would thus be drawn into something smacking of petty intrigue. So, the decision was made not to jeopardize the authority of the queen.

On March 26, Parliament again took Brexit into its own hands by launching the so-called indicative voting process to determine what course of action enjoys the greatest support among parliamentarians. May and senior ministers did not participate in it, so as not to tie the hands of the cabinet. Voting took place on March 27 on eight draft resolutions selected by the speaker – from withdrawing from the EU without a prior agreement (a “hard Brexit”) and canceling Brexit (London can do so unilaterally) to a new referendum on any agreement to withdraw from the EU, and leaving the EU itself while remaining in the EU Customs Union.

No bill garnered a majority of votes. The speaker suggested to continue voting, eliminating those bills that garnered the least support. At the same time, parliamentarians voted to amend the law with a postponement of the exit date, as agreed at the EU summit. The fiasco in Parliament strengthened May’s position that the existing agreement is the only opportunity to honor the commitment made to the country after the 2016 referendum to leave the EU, and to do so before the European Parliamentary elections, participation in which would have huge symbolic significance: “Look who’s still here” almost three years later.

The ultimatum given by Brussels (thus taking control of the wheel!) that the postponed Brexit dates are tied to parliamentary approval of the agreement before the end of the day on March 29, and if not, then by the British side's proposal on future steps (Europe understood this to mean extending EU membership for another year), forced May to hold a third vote that same day; otherwise, the pushed-back exit date would be considered unapproved, and London would automatically lose its EU membership.

The EU showed flexibility and did not insist on including the whole package in the vote – i.e., including the Political Declaration – as it did the previous two times. That helped formally overcome the speaker's *démarche*. The vote on it may be held later or the law amended with respect to that requirement. As expected, the agreement did not pass, by a margin of 58 votes. Its outcome was decided by 34 conservative deputies, part of whom firmly tied their position to the view of the Unionists. The Unionists could not be persuaded to support the government even with promises of additional subsidies to the region. They made it abundantly clear that what mattered to them was not Brexit but the unity of the country.

Indicative voting continued in Parliament on April 1. All four options, including participation in the Customs Union and putting various Brexit options to a referendum, failed to get a majority. Meanwhile, on April 10, Tusk convened the EU summit in case of new appeals from the British side. Michel Barnier said that further extending London's stay in the EU carries significant risks for the union and therefore would require convincing justification. He stressed that a hard Brexit had become more likely and that there is only one agreement – there would be no others.

May tried to pressure the Tories who were refusing to budge with the threat of holding early parliamentary elections, which, judging by Labour's growing ratings (it is leading the Tories by 5%), the Tories would lose. This created sharp division in the cabinet, which met for seven hours on April 2. According to the conservative *Daily Telegraph*, 14 members of the cabinet (against 10) argued for leaving the EU without an agreement as the best option for the country and the one that meets the interests of the Tories under the circumstances. At the same time, the option of holding early elections, which the prime minister cannot agree to without the support of her cabinet, was ruled out. Then May decided to seek support from Labour leader Corbyn (for most conservatives and their voters, he is an incorrigible Marxist).

On the evening of April 2, the prime minister gave an address to the nation in which she attributed her maneuver to the need to achieve national unity. She said she would ask Brussels for a postponement until May 22 while at the same time seeking to negotiate with Corbyn on a common approach to further talks with the EU, which she would present to EU leaders at their April 10 meeting as justification for such a postponement.

If she would not be able to negotiate with the opposition, a set of options would be put before Parliament and she would then take the one that succeeds, which would be obligatory for her government, to Brussels. After obtaining EU consent, she would introduce in Parliament a package of EU withdrawal documents that includes the July agreement (she finally publicly acknowledged that it cannot be reopened). She also admitted for the first time that the country could be successful if it left without an agreement, but in the long term. For now, the option of leaving with an agreement is the best solution. *The Times*, citing staffers of the prime minister, reported that she is open to participating in the Customs Union and close interaction with the EU single market, which would make any formal exit from the EU a fantasy. It remained unclear whether May's obligation to step down after May 22 would remain in effect if her agreement did pass, albeit with support from the opposition.

Boris Johnson said in an interview that a new leader and new negotiating tactics are needed. In his view, calling early elections would infuriate voters. Andrea Leadsom, the Leader of the House of Commons, finally publicly gave an appropriate characterization of the agreement, calling it a deal that implements the results of the referendum while considering the desires of those who wanted to stay in the EU. In other words, to leave and at the same time stay. Yet experience shows that such stunts cannot be pulled off in real life.

Negotiations with the Labour Party began but were a wash. May clearly needed its vote and was not ready to move toward formal membership in the Customs Union even at the level of the nonbinding Political Declaration (which would contradict the Tories' 2017 campaign platform). The Labour Party in turn needed assurances that the agreements reached with May would be honored if she resigned. On April 5, it was reported that May wrote to Tusk, asking for a postponement of the withdrawal until June 30, when the new European Parliament is to convene. At the same time, parties began the process of nominating candidates for the EU parliamentary elections in case the withdrawal did not take place before May 22.

On Sunday, April 7, May posted on Twitter another address to the nation in which she once again tried to explain why it is necessary to negotiate with the opposition: After all, the British people voted in the referendum irrespective of their usual party preferences. At the same time, she made it clear that the real choice is between the agreement and the collapse of Brexit. This blackmail of the country dramatically turned sentiment against May in the Conservative Party and its supporters and donors. In his column in the *Daily Telegraph* the following day, Boris Johnson wrote that the Tory parliamentary faction would not allow the prime minister to surrender to Corbyn.

On the evening of April 8, Downing Street was visited by a group of members of the 1922 Committee, comprising backbenchers, who informed the prime minister about the mood in the party. According to the *Daily Telegraph*, “May sat in stony silence and refused to discuss her future” (May won a December 16 vote of confidence along party lines and now formally cannot be touched for a year). Meanwhile, a group of parliamentarians usurped the legislative prerogatives of the government in violation of normal procedures and rapidly passed through the House of Commons by a margin of one vote a bill requiring the prime minister to ask Brussels to extend the withdrawal date if there would be a version of a “divorce” without an agreement. On Monday, it passed the House of Lords and, after getting the approval of the queen, became law.

In preparation for the EU summit, May made a series of calls to colleagues and visited Berlin and Paris. Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte said that an affirmative decision from the Europeans would depend on London’s sincere cooperation. Angela Merkel hinted at pushing back the withdrawal until December, and Emmanuel Macron said that a condition for an extension must be London’s exclusion from decision-making during this period in case May is replaced by a Brexiteer. Tusk proposed to leaders a “flexible” one-year extension with the possibility for an earlier withdrawal if all goes well, but on the condition that the text of the agreement not be reopened. At the same time, he urged that the British should not be humiliated (that takes the cake!). BBC political observer Laura Kuenssberg suggested that May would have liked a one-year extension but could not propose that herself, so she left the “dirty work” to her EU partners.

That was what happened at the April 10 summit: Tusk’s proposal passed, but on Macron’s insistence, the extension was granted only until October 31. If London does not participate in the European Parliamentary

elections, it must withdraw from the EU on June 1. May brought nothing to Brussels except talks with the opposition for a breakthrough. She presumably agreed with Merkel and Macron ahead of time the concessions to the Political Declaration that she could take to the Labour Party to get its vote. She had to wait five hours for her partners to reach a decision during dinner; it was announced by Tusk. Newspapers wrote about “diktat” and “humiliation.” On April 11, May spoke in Parliament, arguing for an orderly exit from the EU and saying that negotiations with the opposition will continue. That same day, Parliament recessed for the Easter holidays (until April 23). Media outlets reported that Brexiteers will insist that May reveal the date of her departure in May. There were also reports that representatives of Boris Johnson met with Unionists. It is clear that Brexiteers would prefer to break the deadlock with no obligations to the Labour Party in order to try to oust May and take control of subsequent developments.

The set of options remains very broad: The agreement passes; May resigns over another fiasco and is replaced by an acting prime minister with a collective leadership that would make proposals that are unacceptable to Brussels, allowing for blame to be pinned on partners for a hard exit; the situation in the government and the Conservative Party is becoming so chaotic that grounds are emerging for a vote of no confidence in May’s cabinet (this time, the Unionists could refuse to save the government) and, with the support of the official opposition, everything would head to a general election where the main issue would be the fate of Brexit. In a “palace coup” in response to a *de facto* “*coup d’état*” by the prime minister, who has rejected all traditions of collective leadership/responsibility, the Conservatives could trigger a vote of no confidence in the House of Commons through a mass resignation of her ministers if she does not resign herself, but it would be vital to avoid a general election, considering May’s unpredictable behavior.

Brussels would be in a difficult situation. It would be easier for it to extend London’s stay in the EU in connection with a referendum (which would take as long as 18 months) or a choice in favor of membership in the Customs Union, which would require new, simpler negotiations. It would not be clear, however, what would happen in Great Britain in either case. The simplest and most intelligible – and even practical, in these unprecedented circumstances, when May’s improvisations have brought everything into a multidimensional stalemate – option for both parties would be for Great Britain to leave without an agreement and with mutu-

al accusations, especially given that life in Europe would be a lot simpler without the British.

So, what will the “impassive hand” of time/history bring in this unprecedented political drama for the British?

The backstop, of course, is a smokescreen for Brexiteers, including their leader, Boris Johnson, who has repeatedly condemned all principle points of the agreement. Because a transparent border with Ireland was established by the Belfast Agreement, something will have to be done with it regarding the exit from the EU. That’s probably why the British agreed to the backstop even earlier: in a preliminary agreement in March 2018, when a transitional period up to January 1, 2021 was agreed to. It is just that they searched for and could not find an option for a “non-physical” physical border. There is no experience in the world of virtualizing all customs and other border control measures outside of the Customs Union and single market. This question will have to be resolved with Dublin, which will have the backing of Brussels and with which London, in turn, will still need to negotiate future trade, economic and other relations. Some rushed to call the rejection of the backstop an attempt to torpedo the Belfast Agreement, and this comes amid a protracted, two-year suspension of the functioning of the regional government.

What Euroskeptics find most objectionable is that any agreement with the EU will not allow London to spread its wings as part of May’s Global Britain concept, widely marching around the world – be it the freedom to conclude bilateral trade agreements or drastically cut taxes on businesses, following Trump’s example. Divorce could be a mobilization project of the elites in the face of growing uncertainty in the world, dictating, it would seem, the need to take cues from America.

In many ways, that is what is prompting all the twists, turns and lingering uncertainty that has gone beyond all reasonable limits. Another factor that seems to have played a key role in this whole story is May’s firm, almost obsessive conviction in her own rightness. There is no doubt she is sincere, even when she tried to pin all the blame on parliamentarians in her live address to the nation. Her initial opposition to leaving the EU presumably says a lot. A certain indicator of her sentiment was her indiscreet remark about what would happen with insulin if Great Britain gets it from the continent (she has diabetes). It didn’t occur to her that trading on WTO terms is an option. Hence the impression that she has greater understanding with EU partners than with her own parliamentarians and cabinet members, who are continuing to resign. At the same time,

May is standing firm on the position of not holding another referendum: No matter how many signatures are collected on a petition to that effect, it does not change the fact that 16 million British citizens voted to remain and 17.3 million voted to leave. The latter constitute the “silent majority,” which because of the negligence/thoughtlessness of the elite suddenly got the opportunity to speak out and took advantage of that to the fullest. Observers do not exclude the possibility that a new referendum could produce the same result.

Therefore, Brexit advocates have serious questions for May, who put off starting the negotiating process for a long time (it was launched seven months after the referendum) and then could not decide on a strategy (she hoped that the EU would offer her something acceptable). In the end, the EU offered her only what it could, guided by its own interests. It was naïve to think that London would get something that was not openly hostile and humiliating in response to its *démarche* that undermined one of the foundations of the Western alliance forged in the Cold War era.

In fact, for the time being, it is proposed under the agreement that Great Britain lose its membership rights and be on a short leash when it comes to existing EU rules. Nobody knows how negotiations will end on the modalities of already permanent relations – particularly economic and trade relations – with united Europe, but the experience of such a “vasalage” existence (according to Boris Johnson) for 21 months (under the agreement) could become fixed, fueled by fears that it could be worse.

The success of the negotiations depends on both sides, and it has yet to be proven that the opposing party is deliberately sabotaging them, especially if it is represented by 27 states and the Brussels supranational bureaucracy that is implementing what was originally a project of the elites. In other words, the issue of a referendum is seen there as something dangerous and subversive. Moreover, the EU has its own norms and rules (*acquis communautaires*) that objectively determine what Brussels can and cannot do. In any case, there is no interest there in sabotage, especially when the Germans are strangling the process of further strengthening integration primarily within the euro zone, which goes to show that a national currency coupled with fiscal independence can work wonders, albeit perhaps not right away.

May’s most fatal mistake was that while initially declaring that no agreement is better than a bad one, she quickly veered from that position, refusing to play the card of being prepared to leave without an agreement, which would have serious consequences for both sides. The EU does not

have an emergency response ready for such a complex and ambitious challenge and, therefore, the advantage here clearly remains with the national state, which can appeal to patriotism and use a more direct administrative vertical.

That was presumably President Donald Trump's advice, which he continues to issue reminders about. This was recalled by Donald Trump Jr., who wrote in a commentary in the conservative *Daily Telegraph* on March 20 that democracy in Britain is dead and the will of the people is being ignored by the Brussels elite. He even said that some suspect May of sabotage by pushing an agreement in Parliament that would forever bind Great Britain to the EU. It is hard to disagree that the country has ended up in limbo, and even the business community admits that any certainty is better than the current situation with its absolute unpredictability.

Of course, this is also about the ineptitude of the entire British elite, who could not, including because of the Tory Party's characteristic infighting and outside intervention (media mogul Rupert Murdoch, who since the time of Margaret Thatcher has been acting as somewhat of a Rasputin of British politics, is under suspicion), nominate someone who could cut the mustard at a critical time in the country's history. The key flaw is the inability to understand that from the outset, Brexit could be only "hard," and the British voted for a "naked" exit without any conditions (although the idea was to intimidate them by framing the question so starkly). Then May plowed past all her own "red lines," including the firmness of the March 29 deadline.

London has found itself at the forefront of a renewed Western conflict between the Anglo-Saxons and Germany/the EU (a new Battle for Britain?). Lacking a sense of national dignity, May does not want to or might not even be able to understand this because of the singularity of what is happening, and is therefore risking "special relations" with Washington; in this case, there is a possibility that the country will for some time "sag" over the Atlantic "between two chairs."

Without a sense of national dignity there would be neither Churchill nor de Gaulle. National dignity is rooted in history that for decades has been banished from textbooks in the West as a potential source of conflict. Faith in one's own country is based on history. Vladimir Solovyov divided everyone into people of fact and people of faith. The latter are capable of making history, of making sure that their countries are awake to history. The national consciousness of the British is still quite histori-



cal, although predominantly among the older generations who remember both world wars and are not daunted by accusations of clinging to “identity politics.”

The personal role of the prime minister also points to the crisis of the British political system: a supercentralized government that is tied to a head of government who controls not only his or her office but also parliamentary faction, and through it (when the government has a majority) the House of Commons. Moreover, in a constitutional monarchy, the prime minister in effect carries out the prerogatives of the head of state. The picture is completed by the absence of a written constitution, which leaves many issues to the discretion of the ruling party. The British themselves call their system the “most dictatorial” in the West (in the U.S., despite strong executive power, there is at least a “system of checks and balances,” with a strong Congress and judicial branch). May’s behavior would hardly have been possible in the U.S., where the head of government would have long ago been asked to have her head examined, and “football” is impossible between the executive and legislative branches, each of which operates within certain realms that are determined by the Constitution.

For London, it would be best if it left the EU without an agreement, despite all the “goodwill” it has shown. But several such opportunities have been missed, given that tension is being stoked by the EU, including through direct meddling ahead of each vote in British Parliament (e.g., “there will be no third chance,” “there will be no transition period,” etc.), not to mention its intransigence on the text of the agreement. Brussels at one time could have prevented the referendum if it had “sacrificed its principles” and compromised with David Cameron on the issue of the possibility of imposing temporary restrictions on freedom of movement considering certain circumstances. In other words, the British electorate was cornered in part by Brussels, who believed that the British would not dare part ways with Europe after 45 years of joint existence. Not everything is going smoothly in the EU, and the Union, which is struggling to survive, is not interested in letting anyone “go free” under these conditions. If there is a split, they will still have to reach an agreement on a whole range of practical issues, including border control and air traffic, since this affects the interests of both sides. And some kind of transition period is inevitable during those negotiations. And Washington has leverage over Europe if it tries to oppress the British too much: There should be some Western solidarity!

Although Great Britain itself is not particularly belaboring the humiliation of the country, on account that “everyone is at fault” (Johnson, however, who is not shy about speaking his mind, has been writing about the “rotten deal” and that May should tell “Pharaoh in Brussels: ‘Let my people Go!’ ”), a real assessment of all this chaos is given by other leading players in the Anglo world who are also worried about themselves. The position of Trump, who is disgusted by everything supranational, including the European Union, is understandable.

But Greg Sheridan, political commentator for *The Australian*, wrote on March 16: “Nothing can camouflage the horrifying failure of all British politics... And this is after the two leading parties of the country promised in elections (in 2017) to comply with the will of the electorate and on this basis received 80% of the votes... All friends of Britain feel insulted and humiliated by the chaos in the country, which occupies the second place after the U.S. in the Western alliance, is a nuclear power and a permanent member of the UN Security Council, the cradle of Western democracy and the rule of law... It is abandoning the leverage of leaving without an agreement and the freedom of liberalizing the economy that would attract investors from the continent... Britain was faced with an unenviable choice between being a hostage in the EU Customs Union indefinitely and having to consent to a deal so one-sided that the country would actually cease to exist as self-governing democracy.”

This is really serious. The BBC cites data from the F-Secure cyber security firm that indicate that foreign activity on the Internet on the topic of Brexit, observed from December 4, 2018, to February 13, 2019, was predominantly in favor of those supporting leaving the EU, and its sources were located across the ocean. The same thing happened ahead of the referendum. There are signs of a deliberate campaign of the far right. Steve Bannon, Trump’s retired strategist, has already pitched his tent in Europe to consolidate ideologically related forces opposing European elites.

However, now it is difficult to make any guesses, because really anything is possible in the coming days and weeks. That is essentially the main characteristic of what is happening. But it can be assumed that part of the British elite understands that derailing Brexit would be a national catastrophe and that, after losing self-respect (having thrown its weight around for a bit and then returning to the cowshed of the EU) and dying morally, the country will one day cease to exist physically. Therefore, a two-stage exit is possible: with the support of the U.S., other Anglo-

Saxons and their advice (since it affects the interests of the entire “collective”), leaving now with a “rotten” agreement and then with the disruption of negotiations on the permanent format of relations and their development “from scratch” – i.e., on the basis of WTO rules. Unless, of course, this time Brussels “blinks” first. The White House has “leaked” that London will be among the first to conclude a bilateral trade agreement with America (which is not possible under the current agreement and if the British participate in the EU Customs Union). It is conceivable that elections would be held to authorize London’s withdrawal from the legal obligations to the EU that it has already assumed.

Great Britain’s nonexit from the European integration project – if you take the option of the existing agreement or the derailing of Brexit (the notorious nonevent!) – would confirm the validity of the philosophy of postmodernism that characterizes the post-Cold War era as existence in the shadows of the past with the increasing virtualization of everything and everyone in the West until its radical transformation based on requirements of the time. And a clean exit from the EU, in turn, would indicate that history has resumed its course despite the ideology of “the end of history.”

As for the Euro-Atlantic geopolitical structure inherited from the Cold War era, Brexit and the sentiments it generates could help make it more like a “puff pastry.” The revival of the former antagonism between the Anglo-Saxons and the Germans; the U.S.’s bet on Eastern Europe (primarily Poland and Romania) as part of the “dual containment” of Russia and Germany; the formation of conditions for normalizing Russia’s relations with Western Europe, primarily Germany – all this will create tension in NATO and intensify conflicts in the EU, where Poland will be seeking to lay claim to the place of the British. It is difficult to say how long such trends that retrace the course of European history, particularly the interwar period, might last in a qualitatively new environment. In any event, Franco-German and Russo-German reconciliation will remain the largest stabilizing factor, the flip side of which will be greater freedom for the geopolitical and historical fantasies/hallucinations of all other players.

*Key words:* Brexit, the EU, Brussels, British Parliament.

## Germany's Experience of Overcoming the Migration Crisis in Europe

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AT A CDU/CSU PARTY CONGRESS in late 2015, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said her decision to allow all those who wished to cross the German border to do so freely was a “humanitarian imperative.”<sup>1</sup> On one hand, Germany is facing a labor shortage, which it planned to address by attracting foreigners. The plans of the German leadership to incorporate all the migrants who arrived in 2015-2016 into the national economy have not yet been fully implemented, and, conversely, the cost of supporting this group of individuals is an additional financial burden on the recipient society. It is obvious that illiterate young people who do not speak German and who wander city streets in groups and commit petty crimes are unlikely to become a driving force for modernizing industry and ensuring significant qualitative economic advancement.

On the other hand, German society, considering its prevailing “guilt complex” for the suffering inflicted on other nationalities during the Second World War and a long-established policy of tolerance and rejecting a dominant national culture, is fixated on helping the needy and accepting all foreigners with the prospect of integrating them into society with equal rights. The need to make amends to other nationalities for events that happened 70 years ago is a goal or conscious need of the Germans themselves, who view a tolerant migration policy as one possible compensation mechanism.<sup>2</sup> It is hardly possible to impose such a worldview on other states, especially those that are financially weaker or were victims of national socialism, even within united Europe.

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Of course, the current migration crisis and associated events are gradually shifting German moral attitudes toward abandoning such a “lopsided” approach that diminishes the rights of the titular majority in favor of the rights of the alien minority. When refugees who come to Germany supposedly fleeing war and needing protection systematically commit crimes against local citizens or the public learns about the number of refugees receiving social benefits, even the most peaceful and liberal-minded Germans gradually start thinking about what is happening and looking for the people responsible for this situation.

The division of society into supporters and opponents of the decisions of the federal center, the formation of a protest electorate, the crisis facing traditional parties, the popularity of populist movements and parties, mass demonstrations and the radicalization of

Two groups have formed in Europe: The first, led by Germany, is a proponent of a borderless Europe. The second group comprises states that are protecting their national interests and cultural identity.

subgroups of the general population – these have become emblematic of modern Germany. Despite such trends in German society, the political leadership continues to defend its approaches to and methods of addressing the migration issue at the national and international levels, which independent and sovereign states perceive as a form of external pressure.

*Die Welt* columnist Christoph Schiltz notes that “the migration crisis in Europe has clearly demonstrated that the European Union is increasingly becoming a club of egoists.”<sup>3</sup> Statistics indicate that 55% of applications filed between 2015 and 2017 were to Germany. “Germany and three other European states are accepting almost all migrants coming to Europe, while the rest of the countries, especially those in Eastern Europe, are denying refugees protection,” writes an expert for the magazine *Der Spiegel*.

Even though the migration crisis is de facto dividing Europe and undermining its main institutions, the Visegrad Group is confident that they have no problems with migration issues. In particular, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban is treating this not as Europe’s problem but as Germany’s problem. The authorities of Eastern European countries are willing to accept only a limited number of refugees, offering varying explanations for this: a weak economy compared to Western Europe, the

risk of the spread of terrorism, or simply a lack of experience dealing with migration issues.

As a result, two groups have formed in Europe: The first, led by Germany, a proponent of a borderless Europe, is promoting the concept of “equal burden-sharing.” The second group comprises European states that oppose Brussels’ system of refugee quotas and are protecting their national interests and cultural identity.

The European Union-Turkey agreement concluded in spring 2016 was the first sign of complications in united European policy on this issue. Following lengthy and complex negotiations on options to curb illegal migrant flows, Turkey approved Angela Merkel’s proposed initiative on cooperation and agreed to take back migrants who had illegally arrived in Greece. In turn, the EU undertook to legally accept one refugee from Turkish refugee camps in exchange for every deported person. A separate settlement was reached on the issue of providing financial assistance to the Turkish side in the amount of 3 billion euros in the short term and an additional 3 billion euros until 2018 for supporting the illegal migrants. In 2018, the European Commission confirmed the effectiveness of the agreement.<sup>4</sup> Ankara periodically issues statements about plans to abandon the deal because of the incomplete provision of the funds that official Brussels has promised in exchange for caring for the refugees and because of the suspension of dialogue on introducing visa-free travel to the European Union for Turkish citizens. Turkey’s approach is more an attempt to obtain additional preferences or expedite the disbursement of the necessary funds than genuine willingness to abandon its commitments.<sup>5</sup>

The second sign is complications in dialogue within the EU on the procedure for providing quotas for refugees who have arrived in the wake of the crisis. Over the past three years, EU summits and meetings at various levels have regularly addressed the issue of accepting and accommodating migrants in the territory of member countries based on four criteria: a country’s population size, unemployment rate, gross domestic product, and number of refugees it has previously accepted. The formula proposed by Brussels is similar to Germany’s “Königstein key”<sup>\*</sup> system. That approach does not sit well with a large group of EU members (the Visegrad Group and the Baltic states) that believes that the indigenous population should choose the people with whom they want to live.

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<sup>\*</sup>The “Königstein key” is a method of distributing refugees among Germany’s federal lands that takes into account tax revenue and local population size.

The leaders of the states believe that they will certainly lose popularity with their own electorate if they adopt an externally imposed system of forced accommodation of migrants in their territory, even if it entails various restrictions by the EU.

As far as Germany is concerned, it is actively calling for “equal burden-sharing” on the migration issue, supporting the EU’s policy. Berlin likely understands that the proposed measures to regulate migratory flows and integrate those with other cultural identities are effective and should be welcomed by all members of the integration association, taking into account the principle of “European solidarity.” Of course, this position is reinforced by the strong financial base and political role of Germany in the European Union. Germany is an export-oriented European economy that through a system of loans and other financial preferences or restrictions can use this advantage to sway its neighbors. If Germany actively utilizes such an influence-based approach, the integration association will even more urgently face the question of the expediency of preserving the existing EU model, and discussion of returning to the institution of national states will start with new strength.

In our opinion, there is no reason to say that the German migration policy is universal or has the potential to be applied in other countries. National security threats like the rise in crime, Islamization, additional financial burden, and the increased terrorist threat that Germany has faced are in no small measure a consequence of the crisis events of 2015-2016. Realistically assessing the state of affairs and fearing the repetition of a similar situation, the leaders of neighboring states violated one of the basic principles of the EU on freedom of movement and closed the borders, leaving only the possibility of transit toward Germany without the right to apply for refugee status and social benefits. Germany has made statements about the humanitarian nature of the commitments “regarding a historical test that has fallen on our time and that must be met.”<sup>6</sup> Those slogans have not resonated with Europeans who are dealing with their own domestic problems, forcing official Berlin to find a way out of the situation virtually on its own.

Three years later, with the adoption of a set of measures to curb migratory flows, the acute phase of the crisis has been overcome. In the media, potential alarmist scenarios for the development of German society, from the prospect of a “new caliphate” forming in Germany to the advent of neo-Nazis in the Bundestag, have ceased to be mainstream and have been replaced by a discussion of how to integrate the newcomer cit-

izens into society. As the press regularly confirms, neighboring states are not rushing to accept and accommodate immigrants from other countries on the basis of existing pan-European quotas and to follow Germany's practices of adapting them.

It would seemingly be difficult for the Germans to break the consolidated position of Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, the Baltic states, and, as of late, Austria and Italy. The main reason is the countries' unwillingness to financially support people with qualitatively different cultural and religious attitudes and ideas about morality and ethics who are supposedly fleeing persecution in their home country but are in fact potential criminals or organizers of terrorist acts. According to former Slovakian prime minister Robert Fico, the local population would not voluntarily accept several thousand people in their territory under quotas. "We would have to set up a special center for them where they would create their own world with crime, lawlessness and unemployment. The best preventive measure is to prevent the emergence of a closed community."<sup>7</sup>

Warsaw believes that it is necessary to accept legitimate Christian refugees who are persecuted in their homeland, not people who need better living conditions. Payments to foreign nationals are not being issued until their legal status is clarified, forcing potential asylum seekers to move on toward Germany. It is obvious that in Catholic Europe, the indigenous population is more benevolent toward those from the Christian world who are fleeing religious persecution in the Middle East. From an ethnic and religious viewpoint, they do not pose a particular problem for Europeans since they have good chances of integrating into society.

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban is a fierce opponent of introducing quotas for admitting immigrants into the EU countries. During a meeting with Angela Merkel in July 2018 concerning Hungary's refusal to take back migrants expelled from Germany under the provisions of the Dublin Regulation, Orban said that "Hungary is not the first country where refugees enter the EU; they are coming from Greece. We are acting as frontier captains, defending not only ourselves but also Germany."<sup>8</sup>

Following elections in 2017 and 2018, politics in Austria and Italy have turned from the vague principles of "European solidarity" toward policies of protecting national borders and interests. Austrian Federal Chancellor Sebastian Kurz and Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte, leaders of countries that have for geographical reasons suffered from the migration crisis, have made several decisions aimed at combating illegal



migration, fine-tuning the procedure for granting asylum and forced deportation.

In her bilateral contacts with representatives of the EU countries that actively oppose the system of refugee quotas promoted by official Brussels, the German leader emphasizes the principle of solidarity and the humanitarian nature of such activities. Distributing migrants through the quota system is proceeding with great difficulty, as confirmed by the results of an emergency two-year program of the European Commission for relocating migrants from Italy and Greece among the EU countries that was initiated in September 2015. Of the 170,000 people slated for relocation, only 29,000 were distributed and another 10,000 are in need of transportation.<sup>9</sup>

It is important to note that in 2017, Germany became the leading deporter in the EU of undocumented individuals in the country (156,710 people; about 25% of all undocumented persons in the EU). Within the framework of the humanitarian financial stimulus program, in the first half of 2018, only 7,548 foreign nationals (about 1,500 a month) who were denied refugee status went home (in 2017, that number was 29,522 people, more than 2,500 a month; and in 2016, it was about 55,000 people, about 4,500 people a month). It is premature to summarize the results, but the trend does not support the claims of the German authorities about a firm approach to the forced deportation of migrants to their countries of origin.

In this regard, it can be noted that the migration policy of the EU countries cannot be uniform and unified. The issues of preserving cultural identity and ensuring national security that the current migration crisis have exposed have become a problem that needs to be addressed jointly on the basis of equal dialogue between sovereign states and supranational institutions, rather than rigid orders from pan-European institutions.<sup>10</sup> As practice has shown, the methods and approaches Brussels is proposing, which essentially amount to a system of forced quotas, do not take into account the circumstances and characteristics of individual states and the mentality of their citizens; they only strengthen the divide within the integration association.

As for Germany, Berlin's attempt to declare itself the leader of Europe in addressing the migration issue and to present its policy as a possible solution to the situation has not found support in other countries. The economic-political and sociocultural difficulties, and the challenges and threats to national security and citizens that Germany has faced have

revealed the reluctance of the authorities to take prompt action and even the sluggishness of policy in this area. The failure of the political establishment to engage in direct dialogue with society seems to be a major flaw. Unpopular decisions that have been made without considering the interests of the indigenous majority and the lax response to the reluctance of newcomers to observe local rules and regulations has provoked a rift in German society. Thus, the general German approach to migration policy that was reflected in the handling of the 2015-2016 migrant crisis and its consequences is not advisable for use as a basis in third countries.

At the same time, some approaches and tools developed in Germany with respect to integrating migrants, refugees or persons with a so-called migration background are interesting and could potentially be considered by other states when formulating migration policy. The German approach, based on the necessity of studying the language of the host country through state-financed integrative courses as a foundation for successful integration into the recipient society, is relevant and was generally functioning properly before the crisis events. Another sound practice would seem to be the use of “integration assistants” to provide support to newly arrived refugees. These “social pilots,” as they are called in Germany, have a similar cultural identity as the newcomers.

The “Diversity Charter” project, launched in 2006 to reduce discrimination and create a comfortable working environment for all workers regardless of gender, race or religion, and increasing the chances of integration into the labor market, seems relevant. Based on Germany’s experience, it is important to not start restricting the rights of the titular majority for the sake of the rights of the alien minority and ultimately end up on the verge of losing the leading national culture, which in European countries is the Christian culture.<sup>11</sup>

Since the early 21st century, migration processes in Russia have been seen to be influencing the economic, social and domestic political situation, which in turn prompts calls for improving state governance in this area – namely, the regulatory legal framework governing migration. It is especially worth recalling that updating laws regularly meets the realities of modern state-legal development and of our country, and the positive and negative experience of European countries, including Germany, offers possibilities to improve it. In this connection, after analyzing Germany’s migration policy, relevant Russian government agencies could consider the following for possible application:

1. Drawing up a “list of safe countries of origin” like the one used by

Germany that would act as a normative and legal element countering illegal migration and potential criminals or terrorists from specific states.

2. Expanding the Russian Ministry of Labor and Employment's list of professions of foreign citizens working as highly qualified specialists who do not fall under the quota system. We suggest expanding it to include professions that are in demand in our economy: mechatronics, mobile robotics, robotized production maintenance technicians.<sup>12</sup> In this regard, the approach of the German Ministry of Labor to this issue, with a clear gradation and enumeration of occupations/professions in which there is a state need for a specific period of time, seems fairly balanced.

3. Creating a system of integration courses in Russia for migrants that, based on the German model, could provide not only language instruction but also basic familiarity with the culture, realities, history, and traditions of the host country for various groups of citizens (children of preschool/school age, workers, elderly people).

At the same time, the increased terrorist threat and the risk of potential terrorists entering Germany is a completely new phenomenon that the Germans were not ready to counteract, as the events of the last three years have shown. Within the framework of bilateral contacts, Russian law-enforcement officers could help their German counterparts to develop elements to counteract such national security challenges, including via the format of the Russian-German High-Level Working Group on Security or bilateral consultations between specialized agencies. A problem that requires joint solution is the difficulty in exchanging operational information among relevant Russian and German agencies to thwart terrorist activities.

In summary, Germany's approaches related to the decisions of official Brussels regarding regulating migratory flows and integrating migrants into society do not enjoy unanimous support in European capitals. The German authorities' stance on the universality of a migration policy for the EU (the quota system and equal burden-sharing) is being criticized. The camp of states advocating a national-oriented migration policy without external pressure and common rules continues to grow. The leaders of Hungary, Italy and Poland, representing a kind of movement of "antimigration countries," are actively promoting such positions.<sup>13</sup> In the context of the upcoming May 2019 elections to the European Parliament, it is likely that those parties that promote stances on migration policy and the related issue of national security that are nontraditional for the EU will gain more seats in the legislature.

In conclusion, the migration crisis in Europe was particularly noticeable in early 2015 due to an uptick in the flow of refugees and illegal migrants from the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia to Europe. And the reluctance of EU member countries to accept such a number of migrants and rationally distribute them served as a stimulus for the aggravation of political interaction of EU members at the present stage, which, in turn, could initiate certain disintegration processes and spur a sense of despair in the European space.

As for the situation in Germany, the acute phase of the migration crisis has passed because of swift decisions by the federal government, but the issue still remains relevant. The domestic political landscape and society are demonstrating their heterogeneity. Traditional parties are forced to compete with new forces that advocate revising migration policy and have backing from the protest electorate. The ruling elites are seeking to change the policy course toward toughening approaches (on the asylum procedure and forced deportation), which in some cases (individual qualifications on imposing an upper limit on the number of accepted refugees) are still just statements and promises.

Germany's migration policy clearly demonstrates a course toward establishing a vertical administration of migration flows, which it is trying to integrate into EU mechanisms. The migration crisis in Europe is marked by losses that are very hard to cover even for the strong German economy. Among other things, there is a growing number of terrorist acts carried out by Arab nationals, which increasingly turns locals against refugees. The failure of many immigrants from Syria, Africa and Afghanistan to adopt common European values, moral attitudes and culture also entails consequences.

However, the German experience of adapting and integrating refugees and migrants into society could prove very useful to Russia for developing its own approaches and mechanisms for managing migration. Of the greatest practical interest are the mechanisms used in special integration courses for migrants and the "list of safe countries of origin" that has generally proved to be effective.

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#### NOTES

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*Key words:* EU, Germany, Russia, migration crisis, refugees, "equal burden-sharing."

## Chinese Diplomacy in the Era of Xi Jinping

### *A. Mokretsky*

THE 19TH CONGRESS of the Communist Party of China (CPC) was held on October 18-24, 2017. Chinese media noted that the Congress took place was open and global in nature: It was covered by more than 3,600 journalists, including 1,818 correspondents from Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan and 134 countries. In addition, the idea of “comprehensively covering an event of global significance” was presented as broadcasting China’s voice to the world and explaining the country’s plan for future development.

A little more than four months later, in early March 2018, the Two Sessions\* were held, where participants discussed China’s entry into a new era: the era of “becoming a powerful nation.” An active diplomacy befitting China’s new status is becoming a hallmark of this era.

### **The Formation of a New Era of Chinese Diplomacy**

IN THE FIVE YEARS since the 18th Congress of the CPC, the term “Chinese diplomacy” has markedly expanded. It is now called “great power diplomacy with Chinese characteristics in the new era.” It should be noted that diplomacy long remained the most conservative field of the CPC’s activity and was not directly impacted by theoretical innovations. To a large extent, this was due to Deng Xiaoping’s maxim: “Don’t stick your neck out.” Finally, its time came. The term “with Chinese characteristics” first started to be used in conjunction with great power diplomacy: The term was first used in the 2016 government work report, and since the seventh plenary session of the 18th convocation (2017), it has become a fixture in party documents. The 19th Congress became a mile-

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\* The National People’s Congress and the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference [NPC and CPPCC]

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stone marking the entry of Chinese diplomacy into a new era. To determine its development trend, we must look at how the vocabulary and conceptual apparatus of Chinese diplomacy has developed in the five years since the 18th Congress.

Almost immediately after the 18th Congress, the term “new norm,” which originally referred to economic growth, emerged. State Councilor Yang Jiechi, who is responsible for foreign policy,

and Foreign Minister Wang Yi regularly mention “new conditions,” “new period,” “new circumstances,” etc. in their speeches and articles.<sup>1</sup>

Assessing the results of 2013, Wang Yi noted that Chinese diplomacy has become more active and ambitious.<sup>2</sup> The Chinese foreign minister said that China strongly defended its territorial integrity and defended maritime law (in the South China Sea, it actively opposed Japan’s position on the issue of the ownership of the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands in the East China Sea), promoted the One Belt, One Road initiative, constructively participated in addressing complex international issues and hot spots in Syria and Iran, and sent a peacekeeping contingent to Mali and military vessels to escort Syrian chemical weapons (after a UN Security Council decision on the destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles in Syria). The year 2013 was the most active in formulating key focal points of Chinese foreign policy.

In late October 2013, in Beijing, the first working session on foreign relations with neighboring countries was held in the history of the PRC. During the meeting, Xi Jinping stressed that the strategic goal of Chinese diplomacy is to promote national rejuvenation. To that end, China must strengthen friendly relations with neighboring countries and make the best use of existing strategic opportunities.<sup>3</sup> Chinese propagandists called “diplomacy with neighboring countries” the most important component of Chinese diplomacy in the “Xi Jinping era.”<sup>4</sup> Perhaps it was then that the term “Xi Jinping era,” which after the 19th Congress would become the “new era,” the era of “becoming a powerful nation,” first appeared.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry described 2014 as a “year of bountiful harvest, a year of discoveries and innovations,” during which China successfully held two forums: the CICA Summit in Shanghai and the APEC

**China’s rising confidence after the 19th Congress raises questions: How ready is the world for Pax Sinica? What chances and challenges will accompany China’s rapid growth?**

Forum in Beijing.<sup>5</sup> On November 28-29, 2014, Beijing hosted the Central Conference on Work Relating to Foreign Affairs, where special attention was paid to promoting new-type international relations, the hallmark of which was called “win-win cooperation.” Beijing understood that there was a need “on the basis of summing up our past practice and experience, to enrich and further develop principles guiding our diplomatic work and conduct diplomacy with a salient Chinese feature and a Chinese vision.”<sup>6</sup>

In 2015, China’s efforts were aimed at fully implementing the Belt and Road Initiative as part of building infrastructure “interconnectedness,” overland economic corridors and maritime bases (pivots) of cooperation; promoting humanitarian cooperation; and speeding up negotiations on Free Trade Zones (FTZ). Beijing actively participated in the commemorative session of the UN General Assembly devoted to 70th anniversary of victory in the world anti-fascist war\* and the climate summit in Paris, and it promoted its own ideas as part of the international agenda for sustainable development until 2030.

China used the 2016 Group of 20 summit in Hangzhou to formulate its position on major international trends. Xi Jinping spoke again about a common destiny and developing economic globalization in the right direction. The first systematic presentation by Chinese leaders of the term “community of common destiny” was articulated by Xi Jinping at the 70th session of the UN General Assembly in 2015.<sup>7</sup> In 2016, Wang Yi commented that the country was taking the path of “great-power diplomacy<sup>8</sup> with Chinese characteristics,” the main objectives of which are comprehensively promoting the “Chinese dream” of national rejuvenation and building a “community of shared future of mankind.” At the same time, China’s strategic choice is to pursue its own peaceful development while promoting peaceful international development.

According to the Chinese leadership, such a close relationship between Chinese and global development demonstrates China’s growing responsibility. The Chinese foreign minister for the first time said that building a new type of international relations based on win-win cooperation is a fundamental foreign policy principle. At the same time, he said that the main path of Chinese diplomacy is building various forms of partnership relations: creating partnerships and not alliances, seeking dialogue rather than confrontation. Properly understanding obligations and

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\* This is how China refers to World War II, with an emphasis on liberation from Japanese militarism.



al affairs, he said. We can say that 2016 saw the most significant lexical shift in Chinese foreign policy.

In 2017, an attempt was made to combine these innovations in a logically related concept. Chinese diplomacy started to be characterized by the word “progress,” which includes “partnership relations” shifting to “building a new type of international relations based on win-win cooperation” and forming on their basis a “community of shared future of mankind.”<sup>9</sup> Therefore, China unveiled ahead of the 19th Congress its plans for developing the international agenda that ranged from building bilateral relations to a global network of partnerships called a “community of common destiny.”

The 19th Congress presented the CPC’s new vision of the main areas and priorities of China’s foreign policy and formulated for the first time a provision on the new quality of Chinese diplomacy, which would be “comprehensive, multilevel and multifaceted.” The new, more rigorous and differentiated system of criteria corresponds with the new comprehensive nature of China’s foreign policy. It is now viewed by the leadership both quantitatively (hosting major forums, the participation of the country’s top officials in international summits, number of foreign visits, etc.) and qualitatively (conceptual contributions to the theory and practice of international relations through generating China’s own discussion platforms and strategic initiatives).

Immediately after the 19th Congress, several important events took place. On October 26, 2017, the party committee of the Chinese Foreign Ministry held an expanded meeting devoted to studying and promoting the spirit of the 19th Congress. It was emphasized that the outstanding political wisdom and tremendous theoretical courage of the general secretary of the Communist Party of China provided a powerful ideological weapon and a guide to action for realizing the Chinese Dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi noted that great-power diplomacy with Chinese characteristics must promote a new type of international relations and a community of shared future for mankind so that China’s diplomatic course and concepts assume a dominant position in human morality.

An important indicator of the CPC’s increased attention to foreign policy was Foreign Minister Wang Yi’s appointment to the post of the member of the State Council at the first session of the 13th NPC (2018). Yang Jiechi, who is responsible for foreign policy in the State Council, was elected to the CPC Politburo at the 19th Party Congress. For the first

time in 25 years, a foreign policy official became a member of the highest governing body of the CPC. The last Chinese foreign minister to become a member of the CPC Politburo was Qian Qichen, in 1992.

After the Congress, Chinese delegations traveled to many countries to raise awareness about the spirit of the 19th Congress.\* One of those delegations, headed by Li Jun, deputy head of the international relations department of the CPC, visited Russia on November 15-17, 2017. The Central Executive Committee of the United Russia party held an inter-party discussion with the CPC during a “Russia and China: Locomotives of Growth” round table. Members of the Chinese delegation also held talks with leaders of the A Just Russia party.

The foray into new frontiers for Chinese foreign policy involves the search for new forms and methods of cooperation in which China would be the initiator and play a leading role. The new direction of Chinese diplomacy after the 19th Congress became contacts at the political level with leading political parties of the world in a multilateral format.

In November 2017, Beijing held its first forum of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) of the Silk Road countries, which was attended by about 200 representatives from more than 50 countries. The forum resulted in the establishment of a standing committee and secretariat that includes prominent political and governmental figures of countries in Europe, Asia and Africa. To strengthen mutual understanding and friendship among the peoples of all countries, a network of NGOs was formed to help coordinate the activities of those organizations, exchange information, and discuss issues of joint development and humanity’s common destiny. This network now includes more than 300 organizations from more than 60 countries. Chinese media called this forum a new “Beijing consensus,” where China is given a leading role.

And a month later, in December 2017, a dialogue was held in Beijing involving the CPC and political parties of the world at the highest level. Prior to this, in October 2016, a similar dialogue (albeit on a smaller, regional scale) took place in Budapest with political parties of the Central and Eastern Europe countries in the framework of the China-CEE (16+1)

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\* According to a Xinhua News Agency report dated December 28, 2017, about 20 groups spreading the spirit of the 19th Congress visited about 40 countries, including South Africa, Sudan, Japan, Greece, Finland, etc. During meetings with politicians in other countries, Chinese delegates reflected on the successful model of Chinese development, commenting that especially in conditions when the West is experiencing problems, the Chinese model is showing value and vitality.

cooperation mechanism. Speaking at the opening ceremony in Beijing, Xi Jinping urged participants to create a new model of interparty relations based on the principles of “searching for common ground while maintaining differences,” mutual respect, and learning from each other. It should be noted that such dialogue is reminiscent of the Chinese domestic model of multiparty cooperation in the framework of the United Front, under the leadership of the CPC. The dialogue was attended by over 600 representatives from 300 political parties and 120 countries. China is clearly using its experience to actively seek new forms of political cooperation. It is constantly expanding the scope of its activities, creating its international political infrastructure and thus strengthening its role in global governance.

On June 22-23, 2018, another Central Conference on Work Relating to Foreign Affairs took place, the second during Xi Jinping’s tenure. The CPC general secretary stressed that China’s foreign policy should be guided by the diplomatic ideas of socialism with Chinese characteristics for the new era. It is important to note that in his statement, the CPC leader closely tied the goals of national rejuvenation to promoting human progress, and he mentioned building a community of common destiny together with strongly protecting state sovereignty, security and development interests. In addition, Xi Jinping called for the country to participate more actively in and guide the reform of global governance to create a better global network of partnerships.

The first International Import Expo, held in Shanghai in November 2018, deserves special mention. It was attended by representatives of 172 countries (almost all nations of the world), international and regional organizations, and more than 3,200 companies. Agreements worth about \$60 billion were signed (which, according to Chinese statistics, is more than half of Russian-Chinese trade turnover for 2018).<sup>10</sup> Beijing stressed that it does not intend to rest on its laurels and wishes to continue holding such events: The exhibition showed “China’s complete determination to defend global free trade,” “China’s sincere intention to open its market to the world so that everyone can enjoy a chance to develop.”<sup>11</sup>

China has thus become more active (owing to its hosting of major international summits, Beijing is presenting itself as a host, not a guest); it has become more proactive (the number of new initiatives and concepts is constantly growing, while old ideas are being improved, and the range of partners – from states and governments to political parties – is growing); and it has become more responsible (China is formulating its own

agenda for global governance and is proclaiming new goals for the international community: the idea of a “common destiny”).

Xi Jinping plays a central role in all these processes. The CPC general secretary has assumed the functions of someone who not only determines but also personally implements foreign policy. The six-part documentary “Great Power Diplomacy” that came out in 2017 provides statistics on Xi Jinping’s international activities. In particular, it states that in a period of five years, the Chinese president went abroad 28 times, flying a total of 570,000 kilometers. Spending a total of 193 days on foreign visits, Xi Jinping visited five continents, 56 countries, as well as several important international and regional organizations. These figures are significantly higher than those of his predecessors. The activity of the country’s leader has become the embodiment of China’s new diplomacy and Xi’s personal style. The leader of the country has for the first time in recent history became the face of China’s foreign policy.

The Chinese leadership and experts note that the country is still going through a significant period of strategic opportunity. At the same time, Yang Jiemian, former director of the Shanghai Academy of International Studies, believes that China’s assessment of that stage has changed. While previously Beijing was in favor of the period of opportunity offered by the outside world (this position was articulated at the first meeting on foreign affairs in August 2006), now the source of opportunity has shifted inward: The most important opportunity is China’s own continuous development and power. In other words, a passive attitude toward international affairs changed to an active position. China went from a passive observer and participant to an active member and promoter of its own ideas. This idea was expressed in the 19th Congress report as follows: China’s international influence, inspiration and creativity is growing stronger, and it is making a new significant contribution to world peace and development.

### **Multivector, Multilevel and Comprehensive Diplomacy**

AN IMPORTANT ASPECT of the formation of the new foreign policy doctrine is its targeted nature. For each region of the world, China has its own foreign policy strategy, presented in the form of policy documents adopted by the Chinese Foreign Ministry. For example, during an official visit to four African countries (Ethiopia, Nigeria, Angola, and Kenya) on May 4 11, 2014, Chinese State Council Premier Li Keqiang, speaking at

the headquarters of the African Union (AU) in Addis Ababa, announced the 461 Program.<sup>12</sup> Official meetings are held within the framework of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation. First held in 2000, it is an effective channel for collective communication and lobbying Chinese interests in region.<sup>13</sup> During the June 5, 2014 China-Arab States Cooperation Forum, the 1+2+3 Road Map was presented.<sup>14</sup> At a meeting with leaders of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on July 17, 2014, Xi Jinping proposed the 1+3+6 cooperation model,<sup>15</sup> etc.

Thus, to date, the following mechanisms are functioning: The SCO, cooperation through China+ASEAN, the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum, high-level meetings between China and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (16+1), international dialogue between China and the countries of Oceania, the China-Latin America and Caribbean Countries Cooperation Forum, etc. It is important to note that most of these forums and venues appeared before the 18th Congress, but they have received substantial development since Xi Jinping came to power.

The Sixth Forum on China-Africa Cooperation took place in Johannesburg (South Africa) in December 2015, where China revamped its policies toward the African countries (the previous policy was put in writing in 2006). The 2006 document noted that African countries are actively involved in South-South cooperation, promote North-South dialogue and are playing a greater role in international affairs. Africa's enhanced international role and importance was one reason why China developed this program. In it, Beijing established a "new type of strategic partnership" and "multivector collaboration."\* This interaction included politics, economics, humanitarian ties, and security (specifically, peace and security) with more detailed differentiation of these areas.

In the new program, Beijing intends to develop comprehensive strategic cooperation and partnership relations, as well as strengthen the Chinese-African community. China maintains that the entire African continent is a priority of its foreign policy. "Despite changes in the international situation, China and the African countries have always been good friends, partners and brothers; coordination and support on global and regional agenda issues has significantly deepened."<sup>16</sup> The reference to "brothers" suggests the restoration of active Chinese policies toward African states characteristic of China's foreign policy in 1950-1970. As

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\* The term "multivector" has been used in government reports since 2005.

the prominent Chinese international observer Wang Zefei noted, the dialectics of the connection of China's development with the world can be seen based on the example of the African continent: "If China is well-developed, Africa has more opportunities available to it; the more developed Africa is, the more incentives China has."<sup>17</sup>

In September 2018, in Beijing, another Forum on China-Africa Cooperation was held. Xi Jinping met with 54 African representatives, including 40 presidents, 10 prime ministers, one vice-president, and the chairman of the African Union. China was visited by 249 high-level officials and ministers of various government departments. Also present were UN Secretary-General António Guterres and 26 representatives of international and regional (mostly African) organizations, as well as more than 3,200 other attendees.<sup>18</sup> The number of signed documents also testifies to the scale of the forum. According to the Chinese Foreign Ministry, the parties reached 150 agreements, including a memorandum on cooperation on implementing the One Belt, One Road initiative that China signed with 28 countries and the AU. According to the document, China and the signatory countries will link/couple China's development strategies and the African Agenda-2063.

There are other policies as well. On November 5, 2008, the first document concerning China's Latin America and Caribbean policy was adopted<sup>19</sup> (On November 24, 2016, a second such document was published<sup>20</sup>); on April 2, 2014, a document for Europe was approved<sup>21</sup> (an updated version of this document appeared in December 2018<sup>22</sup>); and on January 13, 2016, a document was adopted for the Arab states.<sup>23</sup> In January 2018, the white paper "China's Arctic Policy" was published for the first time.<sup>24</sup>

It is worth noting that the first editions of the documents on Africa, Latin America and Europe (including the white paper on the Arctic) are mostly referential and contain background information. They set out general provisions on the role and place of specific regions in modern world politics, a brief historical overview of the development of ties with China, and basic/universal principles of Chinese diplomacy: sincere friendship, equality, mutual benefit, joint prosperity, mutual learning, etc. These documents showed China's growing interest in specific regions.

More recent editions (under Xi) focus more on the mechanisms/institutions of cooperation that have been created and the conceptual framework for collaboration. Repeating the basic principles of interaction, Chinese authors concentrate on new terminology: "community of des-

tiny,” “the concept of the proper understanding of obligation and benefit” and a specially developed policy for the African continent consisting of four Chinese characters: “truth,” “practicality,” “closeness” (“likeness”), and “sincerity.” It is noteworthy that Beijing is willing to continue deepening comprehensive cooperation beyond just the framework of bilateral ties. An important role is given to the China-Africa cooperation mechanism, cooperation with regional organizations like the African Union, and trilateral cooperation (such as China-Latin America and the Caribbean countries).

### **“Active Defense” of the People’s Liberation Army’s Diplomacy**

MILITARY DIPLOMACY is becoming an increasingly important focus of China’s foreign policy. For decades, China has severely criticized the arms race and military activity of other states, but changes are occurring in this area, too. After the 19th Congress, an article by PLA Rear Admiral Yang Yi in which he closely linked a rich state and a powerful army with peaceful development appeared on the website Huanqiu shibao.<sup>25</sup> China has for many years ranked second in the world in terms of military spending and is developing fundamentally new types of weapons that are setting global standards in some areas.

China is successfully fostering an international image of a “civilized mentor,” as demonstrated by the PLA’s active participation in UN international peacekeeping operations, as well as its escorting of ships in the Gulf of Aden. Speaking at the 70th anniversary session of the United Nations in 2015, Xi Jinping announced the decision to establish a China-UN peace and development trust fund with a capital of \$1 billion for a period of 10 years.

China has joined the UN’s new Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System and has made efforts to establish a permanent contingent of peacekeeping police forces, giving it a reserve strength of 8,000 people. China also intends in the next five years to allocate \$100 million in military aid grants for establishing an African standby force and an African rapid reaction force for crisis situations. In addition to the “ornamental” role of security and peacekeeping operations, such steps are aimed at achieving several goals: improving the experience and training of military personnel in actual combat conditions, testing its own military equipment and technologies, protecting Chinese citizens, infrastructure and other projects involving Chinese capital, etc.

Escorting civilian ships in the Gulf of Aden, helping fight pirates (via assistance to Somalia and other African countries), establishing a base in Djibouti and other Chinese activities in international waters send an important signal to the international community: China is moving toward the “center of the world stage” and intends to play a role as a responsible global power, so the world should get used to Chinese ships showing up anywhere in the world to implement the strategic and tactical objectives of China and the CPC. In particular, one of the missions assigned to the PLA in the new Military Strategy of China (2015) is “effective protection of security interests abroad.”<sup>26</sup> Chinese generals believe that the stronger the Chinese Army, the stronger security around the world.

Publication of such material that seamlessly associates the country’s peaceful development with the establishment of a powerful army clearly evinces above all the implementation of the party’s objective of calming the international community. Here the main arguments are that a strong/powerful China guarantees peace throughout the world and the ability to win all wars without fighting – i.e., achieve what military strategist Sun Tzu wrote: cause any enemy that threatens China to back down before its power (see its strength and retreat).

Speaking at the UN’s Geneva headquarters in 2017, the Chinese chairman reminded the international community that “[the art of] war is of vital importance to the state. It is a matter of life and death, a road to either survival or ruin.”<sup>27</sup> The point of the remark is that wars should be waged cautiously or not at all. For several millennia, the concept of “peace” has been engrained in the blood of the Chinese civilization, embedded in the genes of the Chinese people. The Chinese leader stressed that China will resolutely pursue peaceful development but remember that for 100 years after the Opium War of 1840, it often put up with aggression and violations, and tasted the bitter fruits of military disasters and troubles.

The argument is increasingly being made in the Chinese press that nobody likes the weak and “if you are weak, you are going to get a beating.” The Chinese expert community believes that today the collective West is constraining China’s rejuvenation, and therefore the peaceful development of countries is facing major pressure and challenges.

### **China’s “Soft Power”**

ECONOMIC POTENTIAL and military power are necessary but not



enough for becoming a global power in the modern era and returning China to the center of the world stage. An important emerging aspect of Chinese diplomacy is the active use of “soft power” resources: creating an attractive image of the country abroad. China began talking about “soft power” and actively developing it after the value of the Chinese experience was recognized by the international community. A formal indicator of this was the emergence of the concept of the “Beijing consensus,” which transformed the Chinese model into “soft power” and created a positive image that could be used to strengthen China’s political influence in the world.

The following actions of the Chinese leadership are designed to achieve this goal.

Conducting people’s diplomacy or “diplomacy for the people.” The legitimate interests of Chinese nationals abroad are protected based on the principle of “the individual as the foundation.” Russian expert Yevgeny Rumyantsev associates this thesis with two party objectives: This looks, on the one hand, like a “prompt response” by the Chinese Foreign Ministry’s party organization to Xi Jinping’s “mass line” slogan, and on the other, like a “justification of the policy of ensuring the political, economic and other interests of Chinese abroad.”<sup>28</sup>

After the beginning of reform and opening up in China, the number of people desiring to go abroad to study, do business or go sightseeing markedly increased. By July 2017, China had concluded bilateral agreements on a visa-free regime with 131 states. A “12308 hotline” was established for Chinese citizens involved in accidents abroad. In addition, in the five years after 18th Congress, China successfully conducted nine mass evacuations of its nationals (including from Libya and Yemen), and reviewed about 300,000 consular cases.

The desire to achieve ethical and cultural development within the country through the distribution of “indigenous socialist values” (or “core values of socialism”). These include national values (prosperity and power, democracy, education, and harmony), social values (freedom, equality, justice, and the rule of law) and individual values (patriotism, selflessness, virtue, and friendship).

Russian researchers Olga Borokh and Alexander Lomanov comment that “for Chinese culture to succeed on the world stage, the cultural identity of the Chinese people needs to be strengthened; the Chinese need to be instilled with a pride in their own culture, and they must offer attractive and competitive cultural products. Before Chinese values become

part of ‘soft power’ outside the country, the ‘core values of socialism’ must become an effective tool for consolidating Chinese society.”<sup>29</sup>

An important aspect of manifesting China’s “soft power” is its own example. Li Daokui, head of the Center for China in the World Economy at Tsinghua University, believes that China’s “soft power” influence will certainly increase “to the extent that China comes up with suitable solutions to its domestic problems.”<sup>30</sup> Prof. Jin Canrong, associate dean of the School of International Studies at Renmin University of China, thinks similarly. He calls the community of common destiny project a prescription against various internal and external splits in the waning authority of the West and its stratification/fragmentation.<sup>31</sup> The expert is convinced that if China can succeed in modernizing (especially in terms of people’s happiness), this will serve as an example for other states.

The report of the 19th Congress emphasizes the idea that China’s entry into the new era “has provided a new option for all countries and nations of the world that are hoping to both accelerate their development and preserve their independence.”<sup>32</sup> Chinese experts are insisting that China continue to play and further develop the role of “representative” of developing states.\* That is because this is not only necessary for its own development but the “moral responsibility” the international community has bestowed on China.<sup>33</sup>

The active promotion of Chinese “fairy tales” (“stories,” “histories”) oriented on people abroad, particularly the younger generation and foreign audiences. Xinhua News Agency publishes a variety of photos and videos every day, and in 2018, it published weekly short (up to 10 minutes) documentary films called “Photo Album of the State.” It also publishes programs for young people: “Youth TALKS.” Documentaries have been released on diplomacy (“Great Power Diplomacy”), the PLA (“A Mighty Army”), development (“My Amazing Country” and “Splendid China”), scientific and technological potential (“Innovative China”), a six-series television program (“Our Amazing New Era”), a special edition involving foreign experts following the 19th Congress (“Perceptions of China’s New Era”), etc.

Each of these documentary films contains substantial information (statistical data, interviews with Chinese and foreign experts, recollec-

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\* In particular, this is the conclusion of Li Kaishen, a researcher at the Institute of International Issues at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences.

tions of former politicians and ordinary workers, etc.) directly prepared for the 19th Congress. After recounting China's historical development in various fields (diplomacy, economy, military, science and technology, etc.), the producers note the significant growth of the integrated power of the state, the creation of its own development model, China's contribution to addressing global and regional issues, pride in the successes of their country and self-confidence. After watching the films, the impression is formed that the current development challenges stem from lack of experience, but they are easily overcome thanks to the wisdom and hard work of the Chinese people.

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THE 19TH CONGRESS proclaimed the concept of "great power diplomacy with Chinese characteristics in the new era" or the "Xi Jinping era," which will be enriched in both theory and practice. In other words, China will be "more active and deeply involved in reforming the system of global governance, nominate more new concepts, initiatives and projects, and contribute more Chinese wisdom and strength to the international community."<sup>34</sup> And the general secretary of the CPC will act as the "top diplomat" who will acquaint every corner of the world with the "figure of a responsible great power that ardently loves peace and pursues mutual benefit."<sup>35</sup>

China's rising confidence after the 19th Congress raises questions: How ready is the world for Pax Sinica (Lat. "the Chinese World")? What chances and challenges will accompany China's rapid growth? It is obvious that the growth of China's ambitions "in all azimuths"\* is sparked by Beijing's desire to protect what it has attained and look ahead to what was previously unattainable.<sup>36</sup> By building its own world order ("tianxia") through a system of a new type of international relations and a community of common destiny, China is implementing, according to Yang Jiechi, the "diplomatic ideas of Xi Jinping," who believes "global development is his specific task."

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Official website of the Chinese Foreign Ministry. 22.12.2016 // <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/web/zyxw/t1426163.shtml> (date of access: 27.06.2018). 杨洁篪: 深入学习贯彻

\* Yury Galenovich very accurately characterizes modern China's foreign policy as "global, transcontinental and transoceanic, including the Arctic and Antarctica."

习近平总书记外交思想不断谱写中国特色大国外交新篇章。Official website of the Chinese Foreign Ministry. 17.07.2017// <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/web/zyxw/t1478237.shtml> (date of access: 27.06.2018).

<sup>2</sup> Xinhua News Agency. 08.03.2014 // [http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2014-03/08/c\\_119669879.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2014-03/08/c_119669879.htm) (date of access: 09.03.2018).

<sup>3</sup> *Ci Tszinpin: Kitai budet prodvigat druzheskiye otnosheniya s sopredelnymi stranami* // <http://russian.people.com.cn/31521/8437415.html> (date of access: 03.07.2018).

<sup>4</sup> 周边外交的习近平色彩 [The colors of Xi Jinping's diplomacy with neighboring countries] // *Shijie Zhizhi*. No. 2, 2015, p. 14.

<sup>5</sup> 外交部长解码2015中国大国外交 [Foreign Ministry decodes China's great-power diplomacy in 2015] // <http://world.people.com.cn/n/2015/0309/c1002-26658121.html> (date of access: 26.03.2018).

<sup>6</sup> 习近平出席中央外事工作会议并发表重要讲话 [Xi Jinping addresses Central Conference on Work Relating to Foreign Affairs] // Xinhua News Agency. 29.11.2014 // [http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2014-11/29/c\\_1113457723.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2014-11/29/c_1113457723.htm) (date of access: 26.03.2018).

<sup>7</sup> Xi Jinping's address to the 70th session of the UN. Xinhua News Agency. 29.09.2015 // [http://www.xinhuanet.com/2015-09/29/c\\_1116703645.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/2015-09/29/c_1116703645.htm) (date of access: 27.06.2018).

<sup>8</sup> The term "great power" was first used with respect to diplomacy in the 2015 government work report: "Great Power Diplomacy is Moving Steadily Forward." Official website of the State Council of the People's Republic of China. 16.03.2015 // [http://www.gov.cn/guowuyuan/2015-03/16/content\\_2835101.htm](http://www.gov.cn/guowuyuan/2015-03/16/content_2835101.htm) (date of access: 30.04.2018).

<sup>9</sup> Official website of the Foreign Ministry of China. 08.03.2017 // <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/web/zyxw/t1444203.shtml> (date of access: 08.03.2018).

<sup>10</sup> Chinese Commerce Ministry spokesman Gao Feng at a regular press conference called 2018 a "year of achievements in trade and economic cooperation between China and Russia." The volume of trade in 2018 exceeded \$100 billion by mid-December, breaking a historical record // *Renmin Ribao*. 11.01.2019.

<sup>11</sup> 以习近平外交思想为引领 不断开创中国特色大国外交新局面 [Guided by the diplomatic ideas of Xi Jinping, constantly open up a new future for great power diplomacy with Chinese characteristics] // *Zyushi*. 2019. No. 1 // [http://www.qstheory.cn/dukan/qs/2019-01/01/c\\_1123923828.htm](http://www.qstheory.cn/dukan/qs/2019-01/01/c_1123923828.htm) (date of access: 01.02.2019).

<sup>12</sup> The "461 formula," where 4 stands for four principles ("equality, solidarity/mutual trust, tolerance in development issues, innovative cooperation"); 6 stands for six large projects ("industrial cooperation, financial cooperation, poverty alleviation cooperation, environmental protection cooperation, civil and cultural exchanges cooperation, peace and security cooperation); and 1 stands for the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation // [http://news.xinhuanet.com/world/2014-05/06/c\\_126465334.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/world/2014-05/06/c_126465334.htm); [http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_chn/zyxw\\_602251/t1154141.shtml](http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_chn/zyxw_602251/t1154141.shtml)

<sup>13</sup> The forum is attended by representatives of China, 48 African countries that are forum members (with the exception of Swaziland and Burkina Faso, which do not have diplomatic relations with the people's Republic of China), as well as a number of regional organizations. The most recent forum was held in 2018, in Beijing // <http://www.focac.org/chn>; Russian International Affairs Council expert Tatyana Deich calls it a factor of Chinese influence. For details, see: Deich T. *Kitai "zavoyovyvayet" Afriky* // <http://rus-siancouncil.ru/analytics-and-comments/analytics/kitay-zavoevyvaet-afriku> (date of

access: 04.03.2018).

<sup>14</sup> In the “1+2+3” structure, 1 stands for building mutually beneficial, secure, reliable, long-term, and friendly Sino-Arab relations of strategic energy cooperation; 2 stands for two wings or two supports (infrastructure building, and trade and investment liberalization, facilitation or relief); and 3 stands for Sino-Arab cooperation based on three breakthrough high-technology areas (nuclear power, civilian satellites and new energy) // [http://news.xinhuanet.com/world/2014-06/05/c\\_1111003387.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/world/2014-06/05/c_1111003387.htm)

<sup>15</sup> In the 1+3+6 model, 1 is the “plan” of cooperation between China and the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean from 2015 to 2019; 3 is three locomotives or engines of trade, investment and finance (the Chinese side hopes in 10 years to bring the volume of trade with countries of the region to \$500 billion and the total amount of Chinese investment in the Latin American economy to \$250 billion); and 6 refers to six spheres (energy; infrastructure development; agriculture; manufacturing; scientific and technological innovation; and cooperation in information technology) // [http://news.xinhuanet.com/world/2014-07/18/c\\_1111688827.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/world/2014-07/18/c_1111688827.htm)

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## **Territorial Integrity of States and the Right of Peoples to Self-Determination: Why They Do Not Contradict Each Other**

*Yu. Knyazev*

BOTH PRINCIPLES mentioned in the title of this article were included in the UN Charter for good reason, despite their seeming contradiction. They concern not only the generally accepted conditions for settling international conflicts but also the very existence of multinational states, their internal homogeneity and interethnic contradictions that periodically arise.

Controversy over this issue intensified in connection with the secession of Kosovo from Serbia against the will of the latter, which called this a clear violation of its territorial integrity.

Recent events have revived the question of the relationship between the principles of territorial integrity and the right of peoples to self-determination.

It became most acute in connection with the reunification of Crimea with Russia that received diametrically opposed assessments from the collective West and the Russian Federation. The former considered this act a forceful violation of Ukraine's territorial integrity, and the latter proceeded from the proclamation in the UN Charter of the right to self-determination for the people of Crimea.

The topic was also made relevant by referendums on Scotland's independence from Great Britain and Catalonia's independence from Spain that were held by the local population and deemed failed by the central authorities due to a lack of votes in the case of the former and because it was considered unconstitutional in the case of the latter. These events, and especially the separation of Crimea from Ukraine, heightens the controversy over which of the two international principles should be preferred in cases where they supposedly come into mutual contradiction.

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## How to Properly Understand the Two Controversial Principles

THE DISCREPANCIES in the understanding of the aforesaid principles were amplified by the fact that the disputing sides applied double standards to similar cases when defending the correctness of their position. In the case of Kosovo, the West recognized the legality of its secession by declaring it a special case, a kind of exception to the general rule guaranteeing the territorial integrity of any state (but for some reason not of Serbia, which some obviously did not like). In the case of Crimea, the Western countries considered a similar act to be a violation of international law and imposed stringent sanctions against Russia and the Crimean population.

Vladimir Putin in a speech at the Valdai Forum in Sochi raised a vital issue for the modern time of streamlining the rules of interstate communication, of not tolerating their arbitrary interpretation by the powerful, of abolishing double standards and of ensuring liability for the consequences of acts that violate international law. The principled approach to understanding the current volatile foreign policy situation and ways of rehabilitating it that the Russian president outlined has enduring value and undeniable appeal for the international community.

Our president returned to this problem at a meeting of the Valdai Forum in October 2017. He elaborated on the conclusion of the International Court of Justice in The Hague on July 22, 2010, that states that Kosovo's declaration of independence on February 17, 2008, did not violate international law. He also referred to the opinion of the U.S. State Department that the principle of territorial integrity does not preclude the emergence of new states on the territories of existing states and that if a declaration of independence violates domestic law, that does not mean there has been a violation of international law. I can add that there are not many states in the world whose constitutions provide a real possibility for their inhabitants to separate part of their territory. Therefore, peoples expressing their self-determination are a priori acting contrary to national law and do not need the consent of the central authorities. The main thing here is the unwillingness of a people to be part of a certain state, and the convincing justification of that unwillingness is concern for their own identity, well-being and free development.

Despite repeated explanations of our position, there is still a sense of some understatement in the understanding of the issue of the legal justification for the secession of Crimea from Ukraine and its accession to



Russia. This act, unequivocally regarded by the U.S. and Western Europe as a violation of Ukraine's territorial integrity, will remain a stumbling block in mutual relations until the issue is fully clarified on the basis of universal consensus.

In practical terms, without the resolution of this situation at the international level, the people of Crimea and Russia as a whole will feel negativity toward themselves from a significant part of the international

community and suffer from economic, humanitarian and other sanctions that have been imposed and are continuously expanding.

The irreconcilability of the Russian and Western approaches to the Crimean problem, due to purely political reasons, is often presented as the predominant adherence in this case to only one of the two fundamental principles of international relations. These principles are believed to be inherently contradictory and are selectively used by each side to protect their own interests in cases with different origins and circumstances. Such an understanding leads not only to a blurring of the meaning of important norms of international law but also to the creation and perpetuation of tensions in the world. In fact, the two principles discussed in this article do not contradict each other if understood correctly. Is it possible to imagine that in the same document, the UN Charter, its authors accidentally included rules that preclude each other? Rather, it should be assumed that it is advantageous for specific countries to understand those rules in their own way. Let us try to uncover the essence of each of the two principles and demonstrate their consistency.

Territorial integrity is violated only in the case of an armed incursion by one state into the territory of another. This principle, therefore, regulates interstate relations. The question of the right of peoples to self-determination arises when a dispute emerges between peoples within one state. So, one principle relates to the implementation of a state's foreign policy while the other relates to its domestic policy and the opposing attitude of other states toward a specific domestic issue. The clear distinction between the external and internal causes of the emergence of international disputes fundamentally removes the seemingly contradictory nature of the two principles.

**In a multinational state, despite its seeming strength, constant preemptive work must be done to prevent the emergence of separatist trends and strengthen the unity of the state.**

When exercising the right of peoples to self-determination, what is fundamental is not a territory's formal affiliation to a state but the desire of the people living in that territory to decide their future fate, including seceding from the country that does not suit them. It is obvious that the legal entity is not the soulless territory but the people living in it. The question of whether to form an independent state or join another state is also a decision the people alone must make in the process of self-determination, and this inalienable right must be respected by the international community. Of course, there must be strong grounds for secession (suppression of national identity, economic and social oppression, infringement of political rights and freedoms) that could be considered by the international community and verified in the United Nations in transparent procedures prior to making a final decision on the international recognition of the act of self-determination.

In the process of reunifying Crimea with Russia, the right of the Crimean peoples to self-determination was exercised in full compliance with existing norms of international law in their aforementioned understanding. There was no forcible interference, much less an armed invasion, by Russia in Crimean territory and consequently no violation of the territorial integrity of one state by another.

There are two important reasons why Crimea reunited with Russia and did not remain independent or join any other state. First, that was the desire of the Russian majority of the Crimean population. They had wound up in an inferior position in independent Ukraine and were therefore from the outset campaigning for an autonomous status for the peninsula while dreaming about returning to their historical homeland. Second, Russia was willing to admit this people who were torn from it in the recent past by a misunderstanding along with the territory of their permanent residence, which was settled by our ancestors at the cost of numerous human sacrifices and heroically defended from fascist invaders by a new generation in the Great Patriotic War. Nikita Khrushchev voluntarily transferred the Crimean region of the RSFSR to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic for the convenience of administrative management, and that transfer should be viewed as nothing but a misunderstanding. Anyway, it was not done so that the Crimean peninsula would be forever alienated from Russia and wind up in another state.

Since there was no foreign intervention on Ukrainian territory at the time of the proclamation of Crimea's independence, the Crimean case does not fall under the Budapest memorandum that guarantees the invio-

lability of Ukraine's borders only in case of external aggression. Consequently, there was no indisputable reason to apply the provisions of the memorandum, even if it had been ratified by the Russian side by that time.

Many of these arguments were intensified by the fears of the Crimean people that they would be forcefully suppressed by the new Russophobic government that had come to power in Kiev as a result of the coup d'état. The Russian population of Crimea was frightened by Kiev's hasty attempts to considerably limit the use of the Russian language, as well as by the infiltration into the peninsula of extremists from the western regions of Ukraine, including on special trains. It was obvious that Kiev would not accept the "dissenting opinion" of Crimean residents regarding the events of 2014 on Independence Square and afterward, and that it would not stop before use of force. Today it can be considered undeniable that the Crimean land and the population of the peninsula would have become the first target of the "antiterrorist operation" of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, to send a lesson to other indecisive regions. The monstrous consequences of this can be evaluated based on the example of the Donbass and Lugansk, which became telling victims of the "single Ukrainian state" policy, despite Ukraine's actual national and linguistic heterogeneity.

Russia's motivation to accept Crimea and Sevastopol as independent subjects was also determined by Russia's concern for the fate of the Black Sea Fleet and justified fears of the peninsula turning into an "unsinkable aircraft carrier" of hostile outside forces. An important factor was that the region historically belonged to the Russian state, except when it was part of independent Ukraine for a short while, which led to the degradation of physical infrastructure and the oppression of the Russian population.

All these arguments were frankly and repeatedly stated by the Russian leadership but were not heard in the West, which, according to U.S. President Barack Obama, decided to punish Russia and Crimea with severe sanctions, forcing them to pay dearly for taking the law into their own hands.

The fundamental difference between the cases of Crimea and Kosovo, which many consider to be similar, is that, first, there was no nationwide referendum in Kosovo, which is mandatory for the self-determination procedure, and second, the territory of Kosovo, which had always belonged to Serbia and was the cradle of the Serbian state, was subsequently settled by foreign Albanians who displaced the indigenous

Slavic population and openly sought to transform the province of Kosovo and Metohija into their ethnically pure territory. These undeniable historical facts, deliberately overlooked by the foreign patrons of the Kosovo Albanians, give grounds to the Serbs not to recognize the secession of Kosovo, which took place without their consent and without a territorial demarcation between the Serb and Albanian national communities. In addition, the proclamation of an independent Kosovo followed a foreign military bombing campaign of the territories of Serbia and Kosovo, which does not give reason to consider this case, unlike the Crimean one, a purely domestic affair, as there was prior foreign armed intervention by the U.S. and NATO.

The initiators of the anti-Russian sanctions imposed as punishment for the accession of Crimea to Russia did not want to use diplomatic and political means that may have, with the help of convincing arguments, gotten Russia to change its position on some controversial issues. Instead, they unilaterally and categorically interpreted the voluntary withdrawal of Crimea from Ukraine as a violation of the territorial integrity of the latter, even though the people of the peninsula overwhelmingly voted in a referendum in favor of returning to Russia, exercising their right to self-determination. The earnest desire of Crimean citizens to rejoin their historical homeland is indisputable, and it can be confirmed at any time by a new referendum under the strictest international monitoring. It is symptomatic that even Pyotr Poroshenko once said that Crimea would be able to return to Ukraine only when the latter becomes more attractive than Russia. Consequently, a state can and must keep hold of a specific territory by creating comfortable living conditions for the people living there, not by using force.

The escalation of intrastate national and territorial conflicts into international conflicts that exacerbate the foreign policy situation in the world and the explosive practices of overcoming them should serve as a lesson for all states and the international community in general.

### **Lessons for Multinational States**

OF COURSE, while recognizing the right of peoples to self-determination in any form suitable to them, it is impossible to remain indifferent to the plight of large multicultural states. These states exist in the world because they meet the interests of many ethnic groups advocating for the preservation of those states. But this does not undo the internal separatist

tendencies that lead not only to the weakening but sometimes to the collapse of these states.

Some time ago, the slogan “small is beautiful” was very popular, and was mainly attributed to small businesses. This euphoria gradually waned when it became clear that it is hard for small businesses to survive in a globalized world market dominated by large multinational corporations and banks. The opposite maxim, “big is strong,” appeared. States face a similar dilemma. Many people believe that the size of a country is not so important; the main thing is that it is highly developed, rich and comfortable for living. But unlike idealists, pragmatists do not agree with that assertion, citing a lot of arguments in favor of a large state in general and a multinational one in particular. Let’s try to enumerate the advantages of such countries from the viewpoint not of the authorities, which always advocate for their preservation on account of their own survival, but from the viewpoint of a specific citizen belonging to an ethnic minority and not the titular nationality.

The most obvious advantage is greater security from external threats from neighboring and other hostile countries. This is especially important for members of persecuted peoples and religions, who are compelled to resist overt aggression and latent assimilation on the part of more numerous and stronger nations and religious, cultural and social formations.

Living in a large multinational state allows representatives of small ethnic groups to preserve their identity, culture and ancestral customs under the protection of a powerful state machine (if it is focused on this and not the suppression of ethnic minorities, which, unfortunately, is also possible), as well as to develop all this both in a narrow ethnic environment and throughout the vast territory of the common country. Representatives of an ethnic culture get space for self-affirmation and become known and relevant at the national level as well as on the global level as ambassadors of a large and respected country.

In a multinational state, people receive additional motives for patriotic pride and other positive emotions from feeling involved in common achievements in economy, science, culture, and sports. Many small countries remain unknown in these areas, while small ethnic groups in large states are more likely to display their talents and show them to the world – and, most importantly, to feel directly part of all the successes and achievements of their large homeland. This feeling is deeply rooted in people and clearly manifested in international sports competitions, when all the people root for their own athletes and wish them victory.

The various economic and social benefits of living in a large country are also obvious, since its natural and production resources, wherever they are located, are usually distributed more evenly among its inhabitants. Granted, this is not always to everyone's liking, and residents of richer regions often complain of such practices, seeking to distribute profits to their benefit.

Economic separatism is highly developed in the world and serves as a pretext for fighting for independence just as much as the oppressed and depressed state of ethnic minorities. Thus, the collapse of the SFRY occurred mainly because the more developed republics, Slovenia and Croatia, did not want to share with the less developed republics and rightly believed that independence would give them more material benefits. The Soviet Union also collapsed, among other things, because of the unwillingness of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus to "feed Central Asia," as well as the desire of the more developed Baltic republics to leave the poor and undemocratic country. The same root causes are prompting the relatively more developed and wealthier Scotland and Catalonia to seek their independence.

There are also many examples of less prosperous regions separating from the center, but these are mainly cases of peoples that are unwilling to live in their former states because they are unhappy with how they are treated by the titular nations and their state structures. This was what motivated the secession from Serbia of Kosovo; the unrecognized republics of Abkhazia and South Ossetia from Georgia; Nagorno-Karabakh from Azerbaijan; Transnistria from Moldova; and Crimea from Ukraine.

Separatist sentiments are oftentimes motivated by fears about the well-being of national languages or an unwillingness to tolerate harassment based on the deliberate restriction of the use of a native language and instruction in it in schools and universities. The most obvious example is Ukraine, where both motives are manifest. The unwillingness of the Kiev authorities to acknowledge that not only Ukrainian but also Russian people live in their independent state in about equal ratios (if you consider not just the ethnic structure but also the predominance of the Russian-speaking population) and their aspiration to impose a ban on using and studying the Russian language for the sake of preserving the status of Ukrainian as the state language compel the Russian-speaking and other ethnic groups living in Ukraine to oppose the discrimination of their native languages and the forced transformation of the country into a monolingual state.

In addition to fears that the Ukrainian language will lose out to the Russian language in free competition, the current Ukrainian authorities are also guided by the erroneous belief that their country can only be independent if it uses the Ukrainian language exclusively. English and other foreign languages are permitted, just not Russian, which supposedly will hinder the identity of the new state. But, as is known, there are many states in the world whose inhabitants speak the languages of their former home country or neighboring states, which does not prevent them from being independent. These include Latin American countries that speak Spanish and Portuguese, the Arab countries of North Africa and the Middle East, German-speaking Austria, not to mention those countries where there are two state languages (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Finland) or several languages (Switzerland, Canada, and Crimea as a member of the Russian Federation). Therefore, Ukraine's position on the language issue contradicts world practice and international legal norms that have been adopted by the European Union and guarantee that ethnic minorities can use their native language and receive instruction in it in regions which are densely populated by them.

Language often serves as a stumbling block in any multinational state. For national minorities, studying the state language is an additional difficulty. They must master at least three languages: their native language, the state language and a foreign language. Unwillingness to accept this as inevitable can make it difficult for individuals to choose a professional career and hinders their self-fulfillment in their own country. If teaching in the mother tongue is guaranteed only in primary schools, and if only the state language is used in universities and in the public sector, then people of the nontitular nation are for certain put in an unequal position. They are compelled for their own well-being to opt for schooling not in their native language but in the state language. Consequently, allowing ethnic minorities to use their native tongue only in areas of their compact settlement essentially results in their gradual assimilation into the titular nation. That is why the Maidan government of Ukraine is refusing to recognize the Russian language as the second state language and is seeking to ban it even at the domestic level, and Russian-speaking citizens, on the contrary, are rightly advocating for a bilingual state.

Of course, any multinational state that cares about its territorial integrity does not accept separatism. But countering it with force only mutes the conflict and pushes it inward, merely postponing the inevitable secession of the rebellious region. A rift can be avoided only through long

and systematic work designed to identify the real causes of discontent and by taking corrective action. To this end, the most appropriate approach is direct negotiations and other methods of benevolent dialogue that show a willingness to make concessions on the most sensitive issues related to the vital interests of the discontented people.

The Spanish government made a big mistake by betting on the use of force and coercion instead of entering negotiations with the legal authorities of Catalonia immediately after the referendum on independence. Many substantial arguments could have been made to preserve the unity of the country and, at the very least, put off the final resolution of the issue until the real sentiments of the Catalans, which are not so unequivocal yet, are elucidated. Instead, there was an escalation of the conflict with unpredictable consequences. Even if it is possible to avoid the secession of Catalonia now, it may happen later, but at a higher cost: the increase in animosity toward the central government on the part of an even greater number of the local population and the expansion of separatist sentiments that could result in Spain breaking apart in the future.

In a multinational state, despite its seeming strength, constant preemptive work must be done to prevent the emergence of separatist trends and strengthen the unity of the state. This is especially important for Russia, which is inhabited by representatives of about 200 nationalities, professing various religions and having ancient cultural roots. Unlike, for example, the U.S., which positions itself as a melting pot for immigrants from all over the world, Russia encompasses many ethnic groups living in dense communities in their historical territories and wishing to preserve their own identity. Therefore, such thoughtless proposals as arbitrarily changing the administrative divisions of the country, mechanically redistributing territory to larger regions without taking into account the ethnic makeup of their populations would mean its destruction, since this could be perceived by ethnic minorities as depriving them of their historical identity and national community.

Our country has always had a respectful attitude toward all peoples living on its territory and has not encroached on their identity and national homogeneity. This is inherent in the genes of the Russian people and is highly valued by other ethnic groups that feel comfortable living in the common great state. Because of this, neighboring nations have been drawn to Russia regardless of their distinctive national and religious features and have voluntarily become part of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union together with the Russian people. And the USSR disinte-



grated not because of interethnic strife but because of the inability of the Communist leadership to cope with economic difficulties and the latest political challenges, as well as the desire of narrow republican elites to become independent and not accountable to the center.

Separatist sentiments can be avoided only by having an even more respectful and attentive attitude toward all national minorities living in Russia. As the sad experience of the disintegrated Soviet Union showed, it was not enough to proclaim at the official level the equality of the Union republics and to hold nationwide events to acquaint the public with the national characteristics and cultural achievements of their peoples. It is also necessary to systematically remind every citizen of the benefits that ethnic groups receive from living in a large state and the risks they would face if they separated from the historical homeland. A good example is the fate of some former Soviet republics that, after becoming independent states, lost not only their previous socioeconomic gains but also ended up unable to give their citizens work and a basic livelihood, which these citizens were then forced to acquire abroad as migrant laborers.

Even in the most prosperous countries the national question cannot be considered conclusively solved. The strength of multinational states is constantly being tested and needs to be confirmed at new stages of domestic development and international interaction. And efforts to improve interethnic relations must be carried out constantly and carefully, concentrating on specific ethnic groups and their vital interests. Then no problems would arise with the realization of the right of peoples to self-determination. If they do emerge because of internal reasons and are resolved by legally settling the matter through secession, then this is not a violation from the outside of a state's territorial integrity, which is guaranteed by international law only in the event of an attack by another state.

### **Lessons for the World Community**

MORE GENERAL CONCLUSIONS suggest themselves, associated with the deep crisis in our relations with Western countries that emerged because of Crimea's reunification with Russia. The Crimean issue served as a trigger for the West to unleash a new Cold War against the Russian state waged by all possible means except armed force. Its causes and methods differ from the well-known Cold War against the USSR and world socialism, but the focus and goals remain the same.

The global confrontation between capitalism and socialism that deter-

mined the balance of world forces in the second half of the 20th century and was called the Cold War was replaced after the collapse of the Soviet Union by a latent rivalry between the U.S.-led Euro-Atlantic coalition of developed states and the rapidly developing countries that were in effect defying American hegemony. Among those countries was Russia, which became the main irritant for the hegemons who were losing their power, because it began to firmly defend its interests and state sovereignty, and openly advocated for a multipolar world in opposition to American domination.

The new Cold War, dubbed a hybrid one, is being waged in several spheres: political, economic, ideological, and informational. What sets it apart from the previous Cold War is the greater cruelty and intransigence of its initiators, as well as the indiscriminate choice of means for combating the opponent to bring about its ultimate defeat. The sides have switched roles. While earlier the initiators of confrontation were considered the socialist countries led by the USSR in an effort to undermine the capitalist system, which was forced to defend itself, today the initiative is coming from the U.S., NATO and the European Union, which have made it their mission to discredit and weaken Russia. Thus, just like in the first Cold War, at the forefront of this conflict are the USA and Russia, which became the successor of the USSR.

Many experts are puzzled about why another confrontation has emerged between the same great powers after the ideological disagreements between them based on the competition of the two socioeconomic systems they embodied had seemingly disappeared. Indeed, the ideological differences based on social classes were smoothed out with the collapse of socialism, the disintegration of the USSR and the disappearance of the world system of socialism. Russia became a capitalist country and ceased to ideologically oppose itself to the rest of the world. Politically, however, in the early 21st century, it issued a challenge to the U.S. and the entire Western world that was even more dangerous than the ideological offensive of socialism and its spread mainly in less developed and peripheral countries. This time, the danger threatens not capitalism in general and its domination in some countries but specifically the U.S. as an ideologist of messianic superiority and exceptionalism, and a real hegemon on the world stage. The ideological confrontation thus continued, but it moved from one ideological sphere to another, stepping into the political plane of clashing national interests.

U.S. discontent with Russia's behavior has been growing since it

began to take an independent stance on a number of acute international conflicts, starting with NATO's bombing of Yugoslavia and not sanctioned by the UN occupation of Iraq. Anti-Russian sentiments intensified after Russian President Vladimir Putin's famous speech in 2007 at the Munich Security Conference where he talked about the existence of Russian national interests and their disregard by the West. During the 2008 Russo-Georgian war unleashed by Mikhail Saakashvili, Russia demonstrated that it is prepared to steadfastly defend its interests. The result of the war was Russia's recognition of the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia from Georgia.

The U.S. and the Western world had to accept this success of Russia. Moreover, President Barack Obama initiated a "reset" in U.S.-Russian relations, hoping to benefit from cooperation on several important projects and soften the anti-American propaganda rhetoric from Russia. But Russia's principled position on the Syrian issue once again excluded it as a convenient partner for the U.S. The constructive role of President Putin, who got Syria to abandon chemical weapons and prevented a U.S. military intervention, was highly regarded by the international community and perceived as a defeat for President Obama.

The American establishment and Obama personally decided to harshly punish Russia and its president for disobedience – for refusing to follow the established rules of the unipolar world that do not permit the free will of individual states. It was necessary only to find the most suitable occasion, which soon emerged after the coup d'état in Ukraine and the subsequent reunification of Crimea with Russia. Our country was accused of violating the international principle of respect for the territorial integrity of a sovereign state. However, Russia was guided in this case by the right of peoples to self-determination, which is also contained in the UN Charter.

The growing discontent with Russia's foreign policy turned into an open Cold War against it immediately after the start of antigovernment speeches in Ukraine (the Euromaidan), culminating in nationalist, openly anti-Russian forces seizing power. The coup d'état was orchestrated and approved by the U.S. and EU authorities, which supported Kiev's steps aimed at suppressing the Russian-speaking population throughout the country and carrying out military punitive operations against the residents of Donetsk and Lugansk Provinces who did not recognize the coup and did not wish to submit to the hostile authorities.

The entire arsenal is currently being brought to bear against Russia

under the pretext of punishing it for annexing Crimea and supporting the rebel population in Novorossiia. This arsenal includes political isolation, personal administrative and financial sanctions, information-based defamation with the use of lies and fraud, and sectoral economic sanctions in the credit-financial, defense-industrial and technological spheres. The only means not being used yet is military force, although military assets are being amassed on Russia's border in view of the Cold War possibly turning "hot."

Timid hopes that the coming to power of President Donald Trump, who said during the election campaign that he wanted to get along with Russia, would ease the onslaught against it were not borne out. Trump did not want to cooperate in the fight against international terrorism in Syria, he launched missile strikes against this country under false pretexts, and he continued and even intensified the sanctions war to the point of undermining diplomatic relations between the two countries.

It is difficult to say how long this Cold War will last. Even if military action against Donetsk and Lugansk does not resume and a political solution to that issue is found that would allow for lifting the sanctions and countersanctions, the punishment of Russia for Crimea could last indefinitely, or rather, until the problematic return of the peninsula to Ukraine, as U.S. representatives stated on the first anniversary of the Crimean events. In any case, Russia needs to be prepared for a prolonged information war and sanctions, and it must rely primarily on its own strength and cooperation with countries that the West has failed to draw into its reckless endeavor. Since exchanging sanctions and countersanctions harms not only Russia but also their initiators, more and more countries will advocate for lifting them and normalizing mutual trade and economic ties.

In the fight against sanctions practices, all the numerous countries affected by sanctions that were wrongfully imposed without a decision by the UN Security Council should band together and act as part of a common front. In addition to Russia, these include China, North Korea, Cuba, Iran and some other sovereign states. Only in this case would it be possible to hope that the vital interests of the world community will prevail and the new Cold War will gradually fizzle out, yielding to political and diplomatic methods of solving controversial issues.

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The differing positions on complex international issues related to the consequences of the reunification of Crimea with Russia as well as the historical circumstances of the accidental (by the will of Khrushchev, who did not foresee, of course, the possible collapse of the Soviet Union) fact that the peninsula wound up within the borders of modern Ukraine could from the very beginning of the domestic Ukrainian conflicts have been the subject of discussion by the interested parties, during which the Russian side could have made convincing arguments to show that its actions comply with all norms of international law and basic common sense. That chance was lost through the fault of the Western countries, which from the outset took the path of confrontation and unleashing a Cold War against Russia.

However, a meaningful discussion on clarifying the substance and correct interpretation of the two fundamental principles of international relations considered in this article would be very useful. Russia must not reject a discussion of this issue at the very least because preserving the status quo puts our state and the people of Crimea in the disadvantageous position of being accused of alleged violations and therefore subject to all possible sanctions.

Therefore, it is in Russia's interest to initiate discussion of this issue at international forums and in appropriate organizations where it is possible to prove its correctness. Moreover, excluding double standards in the understanding and application of the inviolability of the territorial integrity of states and the right of peoples to self-determination would allow for finding a mutually acceptable solution to the acute Ukrainian crisis that would consider the interests of the unrecognized DPR and LPR and possibly pave the way for determining the international status of such self-proclaimed state formations as Transnistria, Nagorno-Karabakh, South Ossetia, and Abkhazia.

We need to take not a defensive and apologetic stance but an assertive and principled position on this issue to prove our rightness based on the norms of international law and the need to observe the world order despite the desire of destructive forces to undermine it in their own selfish interests. Then the actions and motives of Russia will receive greater understanding and support from the broad international community.

*Key words:* territorial integrity, self-determination of peoples, Kosovo, Crimea, sanctions, assimilation, Cold War.

## **Does Russian Federalism Need Modernization? If So, What Kind?**

*R. Yengibaryan*

THE WORLD is paying close and steadily growing attention to history, politics and practice of federalism, Russia being no exception. The subject has been covered in hundreds of books and thousands of articles; it was discussed at numerous scientific conferences and seminars yet the interest in it is not subsiding. It is increasing because federalism, its role and place in the contemporary world is gaining importance. Despite the serious and obvious achievements of the scientific theory of federalism it has not yet adequately expressed the essence and the far from simple and, in fact, contradictory nature of this phenomenon, hence new concepts and new doctrines.

We cannot and should not ignore the very special dynamics of changes in the political-territorial structures in many countries and regions that have become obvious in recent decades and caused deep-cutting and comprehensive changes in the field of federalism and new and highly varied forms of its outcrops.

In a very short historical period, Russia lived through a crisis of Soviet federalism and disintegration of the Soviet Union; it became an independent state; suppressed the threats of further disintegration and adopted a fundamentally new Constitution. It was a highly important choice: Russia connected its future with democratic federalism and is looking for the ways of its further perfection.

### **Federalism in the Contemporary World**

BEFORE GOING AHEAD with a discussion of whether Russia needs federalism, we should sort out what has been said about its worldwide

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experience, which is frequently misinterpreted, while its past and present place and role are underestimated.

There are twenty-five federative states scattered across all continents. There are Russia, the FRG, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina in Europe; the United States, Canada, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico,

Venezuela, the Federation of Saint Christopher and Nevis in America; India, Pakistan, Malaysia and the UAE in Asia; Nigeria, Ethiopia, Tanzania and the Comoro Islands in Africa; Australia and Micronesia in Australia and Oceania. The Swiss Confederation that differs from all others by the level of centralization can be referred to the same group; this applies to the European Union as well. Together, federations account for slightly more than one-tenth of the total number of states.

Some of the former federations disintegrated to become unitary states yet in the 20th century, the number of federative states in the world was steadily increasing: in the postwar period, it rose three times over. The last decade saw several new federations: contemporary Yugoslavia (1992), Belgium (1993), Ethiopia (1994), the Croat-Bosniak Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1994). It should be said that there is a certain number of states the political-territorial order of which is found at the crossroads of unitarism and federalism and demonstrates the features of both chief state-territorial forms. Such are Great Britain, Italy, Spain, Sri Lanka, Papua-New Guinea, etc. They are frequently described as “semi-federative,” “quasi-federations,” “sham federations,” “states of autonomies,” “regionalist states,” etc. There are reasons to predict that the principles of federalism in the political-territorial organization of the countries of the world will continue spreading.

It seems that the potentials of federalism will be widely used at the state and inter-state levels. This is amply confirmed by the rapidly widening and deepening regional integration and globalization that have already created varied interstate alliances of the confederative type. Some of them might move further toward federations of the states involved. The European Union is a pertinent example: despite certain problems its common representative, executive and judicial structures have already left the confederation frameworks.

Today, the continued existence of the nationality principle as one of the cornerstones of the organization of the Russian Federation is archaic.

Federalism has already demonstrated its usefulness and viability in the highly developed (the U.S., FRG, Canada, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, Australia, etc.), medium-developed (Russia, India, Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Yugoslavia, etc.) and poorly developed countries (Nigeria, Malaysia, Ethiopia, Tanzania, etc.). It is hardly correct to say that federalism and the level of democracy, political regime and the form of governance are interconnected. World experience has demonstrated that there are truly democratic and totalitarian countries, republics and monarchies among the federations (even if in the formal-legal sense). Such are Belgium, the UAE, some of the subjects of Malaysia, etc.

The connection between federalism and the territorial factor is more obvious: out of the eight biggest states (over 2.5 million sq. km each), seven (Russia, Canada, the U.S., Brazil, Australia, India, Argentina) have been federations for a long time. This should not be taken to mean that vast countries cannot be unitary (China, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, etc. can be cited as pertinent examples) or that smaller states (Belgium, Austria, the UAE, etc.) cannot be federations. The same applies to the medium-sized countries such as Ethiopia, Nigeria, Tanzania, Pakistan, Venezuela, etc.

The impact of the ethnic factor on the country's political-territorial organization deserves special mention. The majority of federations is based on the territorial principle and ignores the ethnic component. This fully applies to the United States, the FRG, Brazil, Argentina, Austria, Australia, Venezuela, the UAE, etc. Some of them are polyethnic yet their ethnic groups are either too small or do not live in compact groups. The majority of federations, however, are mono-ethnic; small groups of other ethnicities do not require ethno-territorial federation subjects of their own. It is equally clear that not all polyethnic countries prefer federative state order; such are China, Spain, Vietnam, Indonesia, Sudan, etc.

On the other hand, we cannot ignore the more or less close ties between federalism and the ethnic factor. Indeed, over a third of the federations is based on the national-territorial principle or, at least, takes this factor into account. This is true of Russia, Belgium, the Croat-Bosniak Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ethiopia, India, Switzerland, Canada, Pakistan. Some of them (Russia, India, Canada, Ethiopia, Pakistan) rely on the territorial and ethno-territorial principles. In Russia, for example, there are 57 territorial (krajs, regions and federal cities) and 32 national-territorial federation (republics, autonomous regions and autonomous districts) subjects. In Canada, there are nine English-speak-



ing provinces and Francophone Quebec; in Switzerland that in the course of history was developing as a single territory, there are cantons that use German, French, Italian or a mixture of these tongues. In multinational Nigeria, the federation is based on the territorial principle. The ethnonational factor here is not a reason to consolidate, as could be expected, the traditionally strong ethnic and tribal ties and relationships in the country's socio-political life but to play them down by neglecting the ethno-territorial borders or even contrary to them.

The crisis of relations between nations and much stronger separatist trends of the late 1980s and early 1990s together with the practically simultaneous disintegration of three polyethnic federations (the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia) revived anti-federalist trends and national-state nihilism in the first place.

The voices of those in Russia who wanted to move away from federalism and national statehood toward Russia as a unitary state became fairly loud even though time and conditions for building it up were wrong. The idea of self-identification and a national state was highly popular not only in Russia's margins but also in its center. This was confirmed by the events in Chechnya and the sentiments prevailing in Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, etc.

These ideas and practical suggestions were not supported in the process of building up a new Russian statehood; they were rejected when the Treaty of Federation was signed in March 1992, and in late 1993 when the new Constitution was drafted and passed. They did not appear in the new Concept of the State National Policy of the RF adopted in the middle of 1996 and later, in 2000-2001 when certain measures were taken to modernize the Russian statehood. This does not mean that the problem has disappeared: it resurfaces from time to time in different variants on different occasions.

I have already written that it is wrong to establish a rigid and indispensable association between federalism and democracy, between federalism and the republic: this stems from a wrong idea that a federation is an inevitably democratic state. It is a fact that an authoritarian or even totalitarian state may be a federation in a formally legal sense. This does not refute the widely accepted provision that true federalism is possible only in a truly democratic and law-governed state and civil society; this federalism is one of the main trends and means of realization of democracy and its principle of separation of powers along the vertical, in the first place.

No wonder the formula "federation is a special, territorial form of

democracy” is highly popular in Russia and in other countries. There are two ways that lead to federations. One of them starts from below as contractual federations that passed the transitory stage of confederation. Such are the federations of the United States, Switzerland, Germany after 1866, the Soviet Union, former Yugoslavia, Tanzania, the UAE and others. Some federations were formed from above when the supreme power of a unitary state passed a new Constitution or amended the old one. They are constitutional rather than contractual federations. More likely than not, their subjects are formed through widening independence, autonomy of the formally non-state territorial units. This was how federations appeared in Russia and Austria in 1918, in India in 1948, the FRG in 1949, Pakistan in 1970, Belgium in 1993, etc.

Federations do not necessarily follow the ethnic principle; polyethnic countries are not inevitably federations. Mono-ethnic states, likewise, are free to become federations. The fact that many peoples (ethnicities) live and develop within unitary (simple and complex) states does not mean that if a multinational state opts for a federation the ethnic factor has no important role to play in the process. It frequently determines the structure of the future federation and finally pushes the country toward a complete or partial national-territorial structure.

The fact that today about one-third of the world’s federations embrace the ethnic-national factor means that Russia is not alone in its class. More than that: the Bolsheviks and Marxism in general cannot and should not be accused of inventing national-territorial federalism. We know that Marxism insisted, with all other things being equal, on the advantages of a unitary democratically centralized state and, on the whole, rejected federalism. It was accepted only under exceptional circumstances, specifically in the conditions that required solution of an acute national question. Lenin referred to Marx as “an enemy of federalism” who had never been “in favor of petty states, or the splitting up of states in general, or the principle of federation” [1, 2]. Before the October 1917 revolution, Lenin and his party fully agreed with this approach; they strongly objected to federalization of prerevolutionary Russia; they saw future Russia as a unitary, democratically centralized state that guaranteed national-territorial autonomy [3, 4, 5, 6].

Under pressure of objective conditions, viz. the rapidly developing national movements and national awareness of the peoples of Russia, the Bolsheviks abandoned their previous ideas about the national-state order in Russia: they moved from regional self-administration to wider regional autonomy and further on to national-territorial federalism.

In mid- and late 1917, the country came dangerously close to disintegration. Ukraine, Belarus, Transcaucasia, the Baltics and other parts of the country demanded federalization or even separation from Russia. In May 1918, that is, half a year after the October Revolution of 1917, Lenin had to admit: “It is not the Great Power status of Russia that we are defending – of that nothing is left but Russia proper.”

This does not mean that I refuse to deny the nominal and fictitious, in many respects, nature of Soviet federalism and its errors in the sphere of national relations. Soviet federalism, however, played an important role in preventing complete disintegration of one of the most multinational and the biggest countries of the world; it promoted ethnocultural consolidation, helped preserve cultural specifics of peoples. It leveled social, economic and cultural development of ethnicities, combined the advanced and the national-specific in their lifestyle, culture and linguistic development and brought Soviet peoples closer together.

At the same time, the fact that the USSR and the RSFSR as part of it were strictly centralized unitary states was recognized in political-legal writings first outside and, later, inside the Soviet Union.

On the other hand, the Russian Federation is a federation of a special type; it is a state association of the Russian people and scores of other peoples. In all respects – population strength, cultural and economic development and the territory – Russia surpassed its subjects, the former fringes of the Russian Empire. It was an association with a huge civilizational potential. Russians comprised over four-fifths of the total population of the RF who lived and are living on its territory and are in the majority practically in all of its regions.

This means that Russia could choose a different, unitary form of its political-territorial organization with certain autonomous elements; this was a popular opinion prior to the 1917 revolution. For the reasons enumerated above, the country moved toward federalization; the RSFSR was developing as a “federation in a federation” and could not, therefore, be equal to the union federation. This means that it was not national-territorial federalism that led to totalitarianism and nationalism. It was the totalitarian regime and its nationalities policy that led Soviet quasi-federalism into a crisis, and, in the final analysis, to the Soviet Union’s disintegration. In the same way, it was not federalism that caused crisis in the Soviet economy; the crisis of economy was the economic reason of the crisis of Soviet federalism.

This means that the Soviet Union fell apart not because its structure

was faulty from the very beginning but because firm, sustainable and true federalism is possible only in the context of real democracy, civil society, the law-governed state, wide local self-administration, etc.

To sum up: The legal and political-economic substantiation of the federal form of Russia's state order is unassailable and, as such, has no alternatives. The main issue, however, remains pending: is the national-territorial principle of organization of the Russian Federation expedient? There are a huge number of arguments in favor of the geographic-economic principle as opposed to the national-territorial.

First, the federative order of our country, its political stability and viability of inter-federal relations are facts; this means that we should move to a new economically and politically more expedient model.

Second, the priority of the geographic-economic principle in the organization of the Russian Federation does not mean that the national and ethnic specifics of the region would be pushed aside. We should take into account the fact that further democratization will create new questions: why are certain ethnicities more autonomous than others with comparable development levels, population strengths and national self-awareness (Avars, Lezgians, Laks, Circassians and others)? The problem is too complicated and too sensitive to be discussed here in depth. It seems that the question why five or six ethnicities out of hundreds of others have the status of federation subjects (even if in the minority in corresponding territories) requires a straightforward and logical answer.

Today, the continued existence of the nationality principle as one of the cornerstones of the organization of the Russian Federation is archaic. It is hardly compatible with the world trends of organization of political nations, in which democratic and economic freedoms determine all, including state-forming, processes. At the same time, religious and national preferences and national cultures will be developing for a long time to come; this means that we should demonstrate tolerance and mutual respect.

On the other hand, national and religious isolation cannot play the main role in social life. This has been amply confirmed by globalization: millions of people migrate in search of economic well-being, in the first place; they know that they will have to suppress the level of their national and cultural identity in favor of new cultural milieus. In the Russian Federation, the integrating role of globalization unfolding on the world-wide scale will be played by its enlarged subjects.

The priority of the geographic-economic principle will not only make the federation subjects bigger; it will make them economically more inde-

pendent. Today, the level of economic development of the RF subjects, the volume and profitability, population strength and territories are very different. This is not logical; more than that – this negatively affects the relationships between the federal center and its subjects. The center's role in distributing budget money and leveling the subjects by social-economic and other parameters is disproportionately big. This might ignite disagreements and conflicts between the subjects and the federal center.

It seems logical that in the long-term perspective the subjects of the Russian Federation should basically synchronize their development pace; today, it is practically impossible. Certain federation subjects cannot support and patronize less developed and less dynamic subjects indefinitely long. The present national-territorial organization of the Russian Federation is not conducive to sustainable development and integration of regions. This much is clear. The cultural and civilizational differences cannot and should not promote their isolation from the rest of the country and their exclusion from the common development efforts.

The federal center should demonstrate its political will: it should combine economic assistance to any specific region with the demand that it should become integrated and should develop according to common rules.

We should say that today Russian federalism does not fully perform its role of a unifier and integrator: this is a problem with possible negative repercussions.

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THE THEORY of federalism was first realized in the United States in 1789; it was and still remains a classical example. The federative state order has several advantages the main being decentralized and balanced power. As political units, its subjects have certain social and political rights registered in and protected by the federal Constitution and their own Constitutions. This speaks of a higher political-legal level of their protection and, in particular, protection of human rights and freedoms.

The second advantage of the federative order is created by the arrangement according to which local conflicts and disagreements are first discussed at the local level and, if unresolved, raised to the federal level in a diluted variant. The federative order has demonstrated its efficiency and dynamism especially when dealing with inter-national and inter-ethnic conflicts. In a federation, all national and ethnic minorities are more directly involved in dealing with their problems at the local level

and, through their representatives, at the federal level. This means that the local population is not only involved in governance at the federal level; it produces a local political and administrative elite which, in the course of time, becomes a pillar of federal power, conductor of its decisions and, what is no less important, a vehicle of its governance culture.

It goes without saying that the model of supra-national federalism is the democratic civilizational maximum for any multinational state: it ensures the rights and freedoms of its citizens irrespective of national, racial, gender, ideological, etc. specifics that separates any individual from the rest of the nation. It is commonly believed that the United States has moved closer than others to this ideal. The recent radical-liberal years of its development have stirred doubts in the absolute universality of federalism. Complete equality of all population groups in any country when it comes to the realization of their civil and political rights is attainable, yet not all people can integrate equally successfully in a society because of different intellectual, spiritual and moral qualities. This needs no arguments. It is for this reason that the level of well-being and GDP per capita of different population groups in the United States are very different despite the state's considerable efforts to bring them closer.

In his monograph *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity* Samuel Huntington offered several tables and numerous figures to demonstrate that not all national-ethnic groups are equally successfully integrated in the country's social-political context. It turned out that successful White people with European roots are invariably followed by Jews, Japanese, Koreans, Chinese, and Indians; the same should be said of Latinos (the term used in the United States) who inundated the country; Afro-Americans and Native Americans habitually occupy the very bottom of the social pyramid despite the biggest and highly varied preferences offered by the state. Here is an example: 18% of all admission places at American universities are reserved for these population groups. This injustice stirs up indignation in White and other Americans and leads to protests and court proceedings [6].

The absolute majority of twenty-six federal states unites representatives of the same civilization, race and confession. Guided by the need to remain politically correct, the political-judicial science for a long time turned a blind eye to civilizational, racial and national problems of social life; it concentrated instead on similarities and dissimilarities in the juridical and legal sides of state construction in the federative states, federalism as a social-legal phenomenon with an obvious civilizational-national bias.

The Soviet Union's disintegration, as well as the disappearance of the Yugoslav and Czechoslovak federations, confirmed that multinational and multi-confessional federative states are less stable; they find it much harder to retain their state-legal unity. Russia and India are two out of twenty-six federative states with subjects that represent Islamic civilization (here I mean the subjects, not the population). The Federative Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a special case. Islam was imposed on the Bosnians, a South Slavic people, under Turkish rule; the other subjects of this federation are Serbs who are Orthodox Christians and Croats who are Catholics. They comprise 51% and about 45% of the population; the rest are Roma and other peoples. In the last 20 years, the Muslim part has caught up with the Christians where its population strength is concerned and is increasing at a fast pace. The federative states of Islamic civilization – Pakistan, Nigeria, the UAE, Malaysia, the Republic of Iraq, Sudan, South Sudan – have no subjects that belong to other, let alone Christian, civilizations. In the present conditions, this is next to impossible.

In the next half century, in view of the rapid demographic growth in the subjects of the Russian Federation that belong to Islamic civilization (Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Chechnya, Ingushetia, Dagestan, Kabardino-Balkaria, and Karachaevo-Cherkessia) as compared with the Russian and other Christian population, Russia, likewise, will face the danger of losing its civilization. In view of about 20 million Muslims from Central Asia who have moved to Russia, the democratic procedures, general elections in the first place, will create power structures in which the majority will belong to members of Islamic civilization,

The example of the last 20 to 30 years has demonstrated that no compact Christian enclaves (the Copts in Egypt being the only exception) have survived in Islamic countries (Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Egypt) and on the African continent. Their populations moved to Europe or Russia (from Central Asia, Azerbaijan and the Northern Caucasus) or even further, to the United States and Australia. In Russia, we cannot and should not expect a miracle: the Russian Christian part of its population will not sharply increase its demographic activity nor the Islamic population will restrict, for some reason and on its own initiative, the birth rate in its republics. Islamic mentality, socio-cultural criteria, organization of everyday life and the future of their children greatly differ from Russian characteristics. Russia is facing a danger of disintegration or a new self-identification by contracting its territory to the space with the purely Russian-Christian population. There is no other option...

It seems that federalization of the world will go on and will spread to new states and new territories. In Europe, this is possible for the UK, Spain and, probably, Italy. A couple of FRG subjects (probably Bavaria and Saxony) might become independent states. I am convinced that Ukraine will be further fragmented into two or three subjects. So far, Turkey preserves its territorial integrity by cruel violence; the process continues, however, and will hardly be stemmed. I have in mind the powerful Kurdish independence movement. Africa is in turmoil: it has entered the period of creating nation-states that Europe left behind in the Middle Ages.

Mexico and Canada are facing huge geopolitical changes; the same probably can be said about Brazil and Colombia. It seems that the 21st century will be as active as its predecessor. Unification, separation and national identification of various countries are going on unabated. European, American and partly Russian civilizations will face the danger of Islamic inundation. Countries of similar civilizations will move toward cooperation and visa-free regimes within their spaces. I regret to say that geometric demography of Islamic peoples and African population will cause all kinds of cataclysms. Hundreds of millions of new socially deprived poor and hungry people whom nobody needs will try to move into better-off regions of the world under the slogan of globalization, freedom of movement and migration. Those who are able to protect themselves will survive. Others will be plunged back into the Middle Ages, Asian-Islamic style, with inequality, slavery and mud.

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*Key words:* federalism, Russian Federation, federalism in the contemporary world, culture, civilization, specifics of regional development.



## **False Flags as a Method of Information Warfare**

*Ye. Ivanov*

TODAY'S international political competition is largely about states and political groups trying to undermine one another's prestige, and they far from always use peaceful means in doing so. The arsenals that are used in such struggles include false flags – attacks, sometimes causing heavy casualties, that are falsely blamed on their adversaries by those who carry them out.

False flags are nothing new in the history of international conflicts. They have been used as a stratagem to provoke armed attacks for quite a while. On the night of August 31, 1939, SS personnel dressed as Polish soldiers attacked a radio tower in Gleiwitz, Germany, in an operation that was codenamed *Grossmutter gestorben* (Grandmother died) or Operation Himmler and was used by Nazi Germany as a pretext for what started World War II in Europe – the German invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939. *Grossmutter gestorben* involved putting to death concentration camp prisoners who were said to be Germans killed in the attack and were referred to as *Konserve* (canned food). The operation was meant to generate public relations support for the invasion of Poland.

Quite many conflicts that took place between the two world wars were provoked in similar ways. The killing of Japanese gendarme Shakuni Matsushima sparked a Japanese-Soviet armed clash in summer 1938. The Japanese government claimed that Matsushima had been killed on the territory of Manchukuo but in actual fact he had illegally crossed the border onto Soviet territory, which means that the incident was nothing else than a ruse to justify Japanese expansion in China, including expansion toward the Soviet border.<sup>1</sup>

In a similar incident in March 1938, a Polish soldier was killed on the

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demarcation line between Poland and Lithuania. Poland immediately blamed the Lithuanian military, deployed about 100,000 troops along the demarcation line and started getting ready for war. It was only the personal intervention of Maxim Litvinov, the people's commissar for foreign affairs of the Soviet Union, that prevented a war.<sup>2</sup>

All these incidents followed basically the same pattern: a country secretly engineered an attack against its own citizens and blamed it on another country in a bid to justify an aggression against that country.

Traditional warfare methods were unusable in the post-World War II bipolar world order since a clash between the two poles, the United States and the Soviet Union, would have triggered a global catastrophe. For this reason, false flags ceased to be a means of provoking war and became a means of propaganda, a method of blackening the image of an adversary state or besmirching the reputation of a domestic opposition group and a tactic for demoralization and stirring public fears.

Both of these kinds of false flags – those targeting a foreign state and those targeting a domestic opposition group – are means of information and psychological pressure. Quite often, false flags are employed by external forces, mostly large countries, and analyzing them is essential because such countries are normally major international actors and because understanding the mechanism of their false flags is necessary for developing effective countermeasures.

One of the main false flag projects has been the creation of clandestine militarized groups in Western European countries to counter communist and other domestic left-wing parties, a joint initiative by NATO and U.S. and British intelligence services. Special attention was paid to Italy, the country with Western Europe's most powerful communist movement. The Italian part of the project was codenamed Operation Gladio, but subsequently the name was extended to groups of this kind throughout Western Europe. The project had the declared purposes of blocking Soviet influence and launching guerrilla warfare if the Soviet Union and its allies deployed troops in Western Europe.

But this is not what the project was truly about. U.S. National Security Council Directive 10/2 of June 18, 1948, instructed the CIA to carry out covert operations across the world that it defined as operations that "are conducted or sponsored by this Government against hostile foreign states or groups or in support of friendly foreign states or groups but which are so planned and executed that any US Government responsibility for them is not evident to unauthorized persons and that if uncovered

the US Government can plausibly disclaim any responsibility for them.”<sup>3</sup>

The directive prescribed types of such operations, which included “propaganda; economic warfare; preventive direct action, including sabotage, demolition and evacuation measures; subversion against hostile states, including assistance to underground resistance movements [and] guerrillas ... and support of indigenous anti-Communist elements in threatened countries of the free world.”<sup>4</sup> Such operations should not include “armed conflict by recognized military forces, espionage, counter-espionage, and cover and deception for military operations.” Hence even an official U.S. administration document gave the go-ahead to false flags, including sabotage, to destabilize foreign countries, something that was done repeatedly afterwards.

Italy was the scene of the United States’ most intensive false flags. At first, the CIA limited itself to financial support for the Christian Democracy (DC) party and propaganda pamphlets against the Communist Party. This brought DC victory at the 1948 parliamentary elections, in which the Christian Democrats defeated the left-wing coalition by a vote of 48% versus 31%,<sup>5</sup> but didn’t work as well as that for them at the next elections five years later, in which DC mustered only 40% while the Popular Democratic Front, a Communist-Socialist coalition, won 35%. In April 1963, DC received 38%, the Communist Party 25% and the Socialist Party 14% of the vote.

The left-wing parties in effect dominated parliament and predictably sought a coalition to form a government. This ran against the plans of the United States, which embarked on a series of moves designed to minimize left-wing presence in government. Clandestine armed units commanded by Colonel Renzo Rocca, director of the Italian Defense Ministry’s information service, assaulted DC offices and the headquarters of several newspapers as part of a scheme codenamed Piano Solo and coordinated by the commander of the carabinieri, General Giovanni de Lorenzo, CIA officials Vernon Walters and William King Harvey, and Rocca himself.

**Skripal’s poisoning was in the interest of those who sought to blacken the reputation of our country and to raise obstacles to its cooperation with the EU, including its energy trade.**

The attacks were claimed to have been leftist work, and as a result DC's right wing forced Prime Minister Aldo Moro to fire the Socialist ministers.<sup>6</sup> Piano Solo was a successful false flag with CIA involvement, an operation that reversed the growing role of the Communists and Socialists in government and undermined their popularity.

Yet right-wing extremists wanted to go further. In 1965, Rocca called an ultrarightist congress in Rome to consider action against communism. Speakers were in favor of non-violent action but expressed readiness to use any means. Sabotage was undoubtedly an option – right-wing militants had been taught to use weapons and explosives by American and British instructors at a military base in Sardinia.<sup>7</sup> In pursuing a strategy aimed at making the population mistrust and fear the left-wing parties, Italian army, carabinieri and intelligence officers who had close ties to NATO and the CIA organized militant groups that carried out terrorist attacks. Surely there simultaneously existed left radical organizations in Italy such as the Red Brigades that also practiced terrorism, but their terrorist attacks targeted specific individuals – officials, military officers, bankers, judges – and were amateurish technically, while Gladio was a professional mass-scale terrorist operation with attacks perpetrated in places of mass congestion of people in a bid to blame as many deaths as possible on leftists.

This strategy began to be put into practice with a bombing at the National Agrarian Bank headquarters on the Piazza Fontana square in Milan in 1969 with 16 people being killed and 88 injured. The attack was immediately blamed on the Communists, and bomb fragments were planted on left-wing publisher Giangiacomo Feltrinelli. Later, General Gianadelio Maletti, a former head of military counterintelligence, said at a court trial that the bombing had been part of a U.S. plot to prevent the Communists from taking power.<sup>8</sup> A bombing in Peteano in May 1972 had the same purpose. Judge Felice Casson was able to prove that C4 explosive – the type used in the attack – couldn't be used in those days without permission from NATO, and the bomber, Vincenzo Vinciguerra, said that Italian intelligence officers had helped him organize the bombing as an anti-Communist scheme.<sup>9</sup>

Later, there were several other large-scale attacks. In 1974, eight people were killed and 102 injured in a bombing during a demonstration in Brescia, and 12 people died and 48 were injured in a bombing on the Italicus Express, a train that was traveling from Rome to Munich. In 1980, a bombing at the central train station in Bologna claimed 85 lives

and left more than 200 people injured. The Italian government falsely blamed the Bologna massacre, one of the deadliest terrorist attacks in European history, on the Red Brigades. As numerous other large-scale terrorist attacks, the Bologna bombing was an anti-Communist false flag.

The Bologna attack wasn't an independent effort by Italian secret services. It was part of a strategy overseen from abroad. Vinciguerra, for instance, said that Gladio had been guided by NATO. NATO wouldn't have had its easiest of times had the Communists formed a government in Italy<sup>10</sup> – the United States believed that in that case Italy would immediately leave NATO and that this might cause the alliance to collapse.<sup>11</sup> American intelligence services directed their Italian counterparts and Italian neo-fascists to carry out attacks that were essentially false flags because they were easy to ascribe to forces that were influential enough to prevent the United States from keeping Italy under control.

Support for allies wasn't the purpose of all U.S. false flags. Some aimed to destabilize countries hostile to the United States. The best example were developments in Chile between 1970 and 1973, when that country's president was Salvador Allende, who was carrying out economic reforms aimed at reducing the country's dependence on the United States and curbing the power of Chile's pro-U.S. tycoons.

In Chile, just as in Italy, there existed a left-wing extremist organization that was similar to the Red Brigades and was called the Revolutionary Left Movement (MIR). Claiming to be the main defenders of the rights of working people, MIR often resorted to terrorism during the presidencies of Jorge Alessandri and Eduardo Frei.

It is no surprise, therefore, that the right-wing National Party and the centrist Christian Democratic Party accused the entire left wing of Chile's political spectrum of essentially following MIR principles. Quite often, MIR raised fair demands, but it stated them in ways such as bank robberies and bombings of governmental buildings. During Allende's election campaign, MIR leader Miguel Enríquez didn't directly support Allende but called for an end to such forms of action.<sup>12</sup> MIR then took a different but still radical path, which included arbitrary land expropriations in a bid to radicalize Allende's agrarian reform.

The moment Allende was declared winner of the 1970 presidential election, the United States set itself the task of overthrowing him at any cost. Washington opted for trying to create tension in Chile via means such as terrorist attacks that could be blamed on Allende's Popular Unity coalition. On September 16, 1970, the CIA set up a group for Chile with

Thomas Karamessines, the CIA deputy director for plans, at the head. The group developed what became known as Project FUBELT, an operation to bring about a coup in Chile by destabilizing the situation in the country through an information war, economic sabotage and terrorism.<sup>13</sup> To organize terrorist attacks and riots that would be blamed on left-wing parties, the CIA set up a group that was named Fatherland and Liberty (PyL).<sup>14</sup> PyL, which was headed by lawyer Pablo Rodríguez, and a group led by retired general Roberto Viaux, who had been the main planner of a 1969 attempted coup against Eduardo Frei, joined forces to remove the main obstacle to an anti-Allende coup, General René Schneider, commander-in-chief of the Chilean army. Schneider was to be kidnapped in an alleged leftist plot. Three unsuccessful kidnap attempts were made with Schneider being shot dead during the third attempt. The police were quick to find out the true plotters, scuttling the CIA plan to bar Allende from taking power.

This by no means discouraged the United States from using false flags in fighting the Popular Unity government. After Allende took office, there was an attempt to provoke a panic among bank clients by spreading rumors that the new government would nationalize all banks and they would lose their savings. To drive this scheme home, right-wing extremists carried out a series of bank raids that the opposition press blamed on MIR.<sup>15</sup> On October 13, 1970, PyL militants carried out a bombing at the University of Santiago and left a leftist pamphlet on the explosion site.<sup>16</sup> The police, largely under pressure from Popular Unity, exposed the destabilization strategy during its first phase and arrested terrorist leaders, one of whom admitted that Chilean right-wing extremist groups had been acting in close coordination with the CIA.<sup>17</sup>

The main purpose of those activities was to portray Allende as a political nonentity. Moreover, the CIA expected that attributing terrorist attacks to left-wing groups would fuel suspicions that Allende was protecting terrorists and thereby provoke senior military officers into a coup to “stabilize” the situation. However, these plans fell through, and on November 3, 1970, Allende was sworn in as president.

Between 1970 and 1973, the United States left no stone unturned to make life difficult for Chile’s population, to block reforms launched by the Popular Unity government, and to undermine its popularity. At first, this policy took the form of pressure on U.S. private banks and international banks to suspend financial support for Chile.<sup>18</sup> Soon, MIR militants became active and began to expropriate land or to incite farmers to seize

someone else's land. Subsequently MIR announced it was setting up its own, parallel authorities, thereby playing into the hands of the right-wing opposition.

Allende reacted in a determined way – there were arrests of MIR militants. Remarkably, *El Mercurio*, an opposition newspaper some of whose funding came from the United States, defended the left-wing militants, which would have been strange if the activities of part of MIR hadn't been part of the anti-Popular Unity strategy. Later, it transpired that one of the MIR leaders, Osvaldo Romo, had been working for the CIA and after the 1973 coup, in General Augusto Pinochet's DINA secret police.<sup>19</sup>

In 1972-1973, Chile was rocked by a wave of violence that included railroad bombings, attacks on convoys carrying food and other goods, and fake anti-government demonstrations<sup>20</sup> and produced an atmosphere of fear, apathy, and hopelessness. As a result, the population, though it did support Allende, failed to defend him during Pinochet's September 1973 coup. The coup was coordinated by U.S. intelligence services, portrayed as a measure to avert a national crisis, and put the country under dictatorial rule for a decade and a half.

Terrorism, including false flags, played the main role in creating a nationwide chaos that ensured the success of the American plans to topple Allende.

Terrorism isn't the only tactics to stir public hatred and mistrust of a government. "Unknown snipers," a common feature of "color revolutions," have the same mission. Quite often, opposition groups hire snipers for killings that can be blamed on the government, bring public wrath on it, and trigger a coup. This isn't logical – selective gunfire won't help a government disperse demonstrations but is bound to spark public fury. But revolutions, cynical as it may sound, need their martyrs, and if the government doesn't kill any protesters, the opposition may fake martyrdom and win more support.

Military experts believe that "unknown snipers" tactics go back to the clash between Soviet troops and members of Lithuanian nationalist organization Sajudis in January 1991. Thirteen people, including an Alpha group lieutenant, were killed by snipers who fired from the Vilnius television tower. A bullet extracted from one of the victims during an autopsy was proven to be of a type used in Mosin-Nagant rifles made in 1891, which in itself overturns official Lithuanian allegations that the fire came from the Soviet troops.<sup>21</sup>

A former member of Sajudis, which had its own armed groups by

1991, recalled that “people were firing on fellow citizens” with the aim of making the Lithuanians hate the Soviet Union.<sup>22</sup> As a result, Lithuania’s secession from the Soviet Union became a foregone conclusion while the Soviet army and security services had their reputations seriously undermined by false accusations and by their virtual betrayal by the Soviet leadership. The stained image of the Soviet armed forces and security services was, in turn, one of the causes of the collapse of the Soviet Union. The false flag in Vilnius benefited not only its organizers but all enemies of the Soviet Union and post-Soviet Russia, who still describe it as Soviet gunfire against defenseless Lithuanians and a Soviet aggression against Lithuania.

Typically, killings perpetrated by “unknown snipers” are hyped in the media as sacrificial deaths, as it were, in a bid to stir hatred for the authorities. In Iran, student Neda Agha-Soltan, who was shot dead during the Green Movement in 2009, in a sense came to be seen as a martyr by the protesters although she hadn’t even been an activist. Green Movement organizers and Western media blamed her murder on Basij, a paramilitary organization that is part of the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. However, Mohammad Hassan Ghadiri Abyaneh, the then Iranian ambassador to Mexico, said the CIA had had a hand in her killing.<sup>23</sup>

Alexander Lukoyanov, a researcher at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, concurs with the Iranian diplomat.<sup>24</sup> Destabilization of Iran has been one of the objectives of the United States since 1979, when the Islamic Revolution overthrew the pro-American regime of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. The new leadership nationalized Iran’s oil industry and launched a policy that undermined U.S. influence in the Middle East. One of the patriarchs of American neo-conservatism, Norman Podhoretz, insisted that action against “Islamofascism” should be one of the main tasks of U.S. foreign policy.<sup>25</sup> All this supports the theory of American involvement in Agha-Soltan’s murder in a bid to fan protests. The Iranian government drew no benefit from this crime.

In a similar situation during protests in Kiev in winter 2014, 22 people were killed and 29 wounded by snipers who were firing on police, Maidan activists and passersby from several positions on Institutka Street. The sniping enraged both the police and opposition activists and, coupled with Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich’s wrong order to move army and police forces out of Kiev, brought forward the coup.

The illegal new government blamed the sniping on the Berkut special police force and on Yanukovich. However, the logic of Yanukovich’s con-



duct and other facts suggest that it is not Yanukovich but the putschists who needed the sniping. The widely hyped myth of the “Heavenly Hundred” – civilians allegedly shot dead by Berkut fighters – was no more than a ploy by the putschists to justify their refusal to hold talks with Yanukovich and legitimize the coup of February 21.

The sniping in Kiev was part of a strategy coordinated from abroad. There is no doubt that the coup was orchestrated by the United States and European Union countries. Victoria Nuland, a former U.S. assistant secretary of state for European and Eurasian affairs, said openly that the United States had invested about \$5 billion to support “the aspirations of the Ukrainian people to have a strong, democratic government.”<sup>26</sup>

The foreign ministers of Germany, France and Poland became guarantors of an agreement between Yanukovich and the opposition to end all violence and form a new government. On Yanukovich’s part, this was a patently opportunistic compromise, but it could have stabilized the situation and wreck the opposition’s plans to seize power. The United States was the main beneficiary of the Ukrainian coup because it hoped the new government would give the Americans the green light to set up naval bases in Odessa and Sevastopol. The sniping that ratcheted up the confrontation on the Maidan was a great help to the United States.

On November 16, 2017, the Italian website *Gli occhi della guerra* carried an article that quoted former Estonian foreign minister Urmas Paet as saying in a telephone call with then EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton that “there is a very strong conviction that behind the snipers ... is someone from the new coalition.”<sup>27</sup> Snipers cited in the article were Georgians closely linked to Mikheil Saakashvili. Some of them said that the sniping had been commissioned by S. Pashinsky and V. Parasyuk, at that time opposition leaders and today members of the Verkhovna Rada, Ukraine’s parliament. The shooting was coordinated by Mamuka Mamulashvili, a military adviser to Saakashvili, and Brian Christopher Boyenger, a former officer and marksman in the U.S. 101st Airborne Division. The snipers claimed that the purpose of the shooting had been to set the protesters against Berkut in order to destabilize the situation. Chaotic bullets that hit both protesters and police achieved that goal.

The opposition expected that instability would prevent an early presidential election, which it was quite likely to lose. The involvement of a retired U.S. army officer and people from Saakashvili’s entourage – the former Georgian president had close ties to U.S. diplomats and intelli-

gence services – is evidence that the United States was one of the beneficiaries of the Institutka Street massacre. The snipers provided the opposition and the West with a strong public relations position – the shootings were blamed on Yanukovich and were used to justify the coup that blew up the agreements between the president and opposition.

False flags are, besides, a major tactic in the information war that the West, mainly the United States and Britain, is waging against Russia. Anti-Russian false flags normally aim to spoil Russia's global image rather bringing about a change of government in our country. While in some other countries, false flags have succeeded in stirring anti-government feelings, this has never been the case in Russia, even though many allegedly liberal Russian public figures and human rights defenders falsely accuse the Russian government of unlawful actions. To sum up, anti-Russian false flags are designed to discredit rather than to destabilize. The former Soviet Union practically never was a false flag target because it enjoyed a tremendous international prestige and was an equal adversary to the West in information and ideological affairs.

The second Chechen war began with the incursion of gangs led by Shamil Basayev into Dagestan. The Russian army fought them, and in response the terrorists blew up apartment blocks in Moscow, Buynaksk, and Volgodonsk. Soon there emerged allegations that those bombings had been the work of the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) and had been masterminded by FSB Deputy Director, Rear Admiral German Ugryumov, who was killed in Chechnya in May 2001.

The authors of this theory were Alexander Litvinenko, an FSB officer who defected to Britain, and historian Yury Felshtinsky, who set it out in their book *Blowing Up Russia: Terror from Within*. To support it and compromise the Russian government and President Vladimir Putin, a lie was circulated to the effect that the bombers had said they had been ordered to carry out the attacks by the FSB.<sup>28</sup> This campaign was the brainchild of Russian defector oligarch Boris Berezovsky. Soon British intelligence services got involved in it. Litvinenko met with Martin Flint, an officer in the MI5, and BBC journalist Glenmore Trehear-Harvey, who, according to some sources, was an undercover intelligence officer, and told them that not only the apartment block bombings had been the work of the FSB but also the seizure by terrorists of the theater in Dubrovka and the assassination of former State Duma deputy Sergey Yushenkov.<sup>29</sup> In fact, Berezovsky himself, the inspirer of that libel, had said earlier on that the FSB had nothing to do with any of those crimes.<sup>30</sup> He needed to spread

those lies to obtain asylum in Britain and avoid extradition to Russia, where he had been charged with several counts of fraud.

The assassination of Litvinenko was another false flag targeting Russia's prestige – numerous mismatches in the story make this obvious. For example, the British government made no comment on the cause of Litvinenko's death. The theory that Litvinenko was poisoned with a radioactive substance – first thallium and then polonium-210 was named – was put forward by Alexander Goldfarb, executive director of the International Foundation for Civil Liberties, who had worked at the Kurchatov Institute of Atomic Energy in the former Soviet Union.<sup>31</sup>

According to researchers at a laboratory in Sarov that is Russia's only producer of polonium-210, an attempt to poison someone with this radioactive metal would also inevitably kill numerous people around, including the killer.<sup>32</sup> The lab's being Russia's only source of polonium-210 was used by Litvinenko's murderers as evidence incriminating the Russian government. Despite its absurdity, the theory of Litvinenko's polonium-210 poisoning continues to be propagated by Western media and British politicians.

In March 2018, Litvinenko's father, Walter Litvinenko, said in a television program that his son had been poisoned by Goldfarb and had at first been diagnosed with food poisoning.<sup>33</sup> Walter Litvinenko expressed suspicion that his son's assassination had been a CIA plot – Goldfarb worked for the agency. Though it's just a personal opinion, there are sound reasons for it. The U.S. political elite had vested interest in tension between Russia and Europe. The CIA wasn't the only beneficiary of Litvinenko's murder. Another one was the British government, which used the crime as a pretext to turn down a proposal by the Russian Prosecutor General's Office for a bilateral agreement on mutual extraditions.<sup>34</sup>

The poisoning in the British city of Salisbury in March 2018 of another Russian turncoat, Sergey Skripal, a former colonel in Russia's GRU military intelligence agency, and his daughter Yulia Skripal can also be considered a false flag. The fact that Russia was blamed for this crime just a day after it was committed suggests that the poisoning had been planned well in advance.

It was completely illogical to accuse Russia of poisoning the Skripals. Why would Moscow have needed to remove a traitor who had been released eight years before as part of a spy swap anyway, least of all two weeks before a Russian presidential election and three months before the

Russia-hosted FIFA World Cup. The British government resorted to a barefaced lie: citing a defense laboratory at the Porton Down science park, Prime Minister Theresa May claimed that the Skripals had been poisoned with Novichok nerve agent manufactured in Russia. Although the laboratory said it had been unable to identify the agent's source country, the United States, Britain and other EU countries imposed new sanctions on Russia, among other things expelling some Russian diplomats posted in them.

Skripal's poisoning was in the interest of those who sought to blacken the reputation of our country and to raise obstacles to its cooperation with the EU, including its energy trade. The United States is up in arms against the Nord Stream 2 natural gas pipeline project, claiming that Russia uses it as a means of political pressure on European countries. Meanwhile, the United States makes no secret of plans to boost its exports of liquefied natural gas to Europe, a market where Russia is a strong competitor.

Hence the Skripal affair may well have been a false flag engineered by the United States as a means of unfair competition, expecting that Russia's stained reputation would lead to Nord Stream 2 being scrapped. However, the German government said it would stick to Nord Stream 2 and on March 27 gave permission to the construction of an offshore pipeline section in Germany's exclusive economic zone.<sup>35</sup> So, the Skripal false flag hasn't worked despite anti-Russian hysteria in Western media.

There are, besides, indirect forms of pressure on Russia – false flags targeting supporters of Russia. These have included the crash of a Malaysian Airlines Boeing 777 in Donbass in summer 2014, and regular chemical attacks in Syria, some of them imitational, that are blamed on the Syrian army while Russia is accused of supporting the “dictatorship” of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. Russia's direct military presence in Syria prevents a U.S. invasion of that country, although the United States has carried out several air strikes against Syrian army forces that were allegedly retaliations for chemical attacks. Those strikes impeded action against terrorists who do use chemical weapons.

Russia can successfully combat false flags and eliminate their effects if it follows a few simple rules. First, Russian intelligence and law enforcement services should take effective measures to prevent foreign secret services, extremists or terrorists from carrying out any attacks that could be blamed on the Russian government. If such attacks happen outside Russia and are unpreventable, diplomats and media should get

involved. Being on the defensive and try to prove its innocence would be the wrong tactic for Russia to use. Russia should go on the counteroffensive. It should prove the adversary's points to be untenable, and even level accusations at the presumed beneficiary of a false flag.

This was, in fact, the position Russia took in the Skripal affair. Moscow didn't try to prove its innocence but openly condemned Britain, the United States and the EU for slapping unfounded accusations on our country, and even hinted that they had vested interest in that crime. This position meant not only refusal to discuss false accusations but also an attempt to inflict public relations damage on Western countries.

And finally, false flags should be prevented from sowing panic among Russia's population, causing mistrust of the state, and creating a general atmosphere of fear or apathy. The government should use sanctions against panic inciters.

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#### NOTES

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*Key words:* provocation, conflict, secret services, operation, United States, NATO, CIA, Italy, Chile, subversive activities, terrorism.

## **Cross-Border Context of Maritime Spatial Planning in the European Union**

*M. Kolesnikova*

USE OF THE SEA in the modern era is marked by the widespread use by coastal states of maritime spatial planning (MSP). In 2014, almost 40 countries developed or implemented territorial plans for delimiting offshore zones within national EEZs (exclusive economic zones\*) and determining their industrial purpose. This practice is employed by states all over the world, including Australia, Israel, Canada, New Zealand, Norway, China, the U.S., the EU member states, as well as several other countries in Africa, Asia, Oceania, North and Central America [8, pp. 14 18].

It is projected that by 2024, maritime spatial plans in the world could reach 100 [8, p. 7]. Thus, their number will increase two and a half times compared to 2014. If those predictions come true, by 2024, more countries with access to the sea could join the process of demarcating maritime areas. If offshore zones continue to expand as projected, the total area of EEZs subject to planning will increase 25% to 30% by 2025.

Large-scale planning of offshore zones to a certain extent impacts the development of international maritime activities. The use of territorial plans and fixed rules regarding the zoning of specific waters benefits littoral states and gives them the ability to regulate the use of waters in their EEZs and, in particular, to achieve economic, environmental and in some cases political goals. For example, experts say that Israel launched the MSP process for its territorial sea and EEZ to ensure energy security. This is tied to the discovery of gas fields on the Levantine Sea shelf (part of the Mediterranean), although the country has an agreement on maritime delimitation in the Mediterranean only with Cyprus [8, p. 77].

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\* An exclusive economic zone is an area beyond and adjacent to a territorial sea subject to specific legal regulations. It must not extend beyond 200 nautical miles from the base-lines from which the breadth of a territorial sea is measured [4, p. 54].

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The regulation of activities in offshore areas will limit the use by other countries of waters in EEZs. For example, EEZs are affected by three of the six freedoms of the high seas (Art. 87 of the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea) that are unrelated to the development of resources, i.e., freedom of navigation, overflights and the laying of cables and pipelines [1, p. 60]. The delineation by littoral states of territorially restricted sea lanes for shipping in these maritime areas limits the freedom of navigation of other states.

### **Aspects of the Development of Maritime Spatial Planning**

FOREIGN RESEARCHERS consider MSP a “future-oriented” process that will serve to minimize conflicts stemming from the use of maritime areas and ease pressure on the marine environment [10, p. 12]. Its fundamental principle is the ecosystem-based approach to maritime activity. The concept of this approach is associated with governance based on the “best understanding of the ecological interactions and processes necessary to sustain ecosystem structure and function” and aims to promote the sustainable development of oceans and their resources [5, p. 60].

There are several definitions of MSP, one of which was proposed by UNESCO’s Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC-UNESCO). The commission considers MSP a public process of analyzing and allocating the spatial and temporal distribution of human activities in marine areas to achieve ecological, economic and social objectives that have been specified through a political process [21]. Planning maritime space is one element of the “marine spatial management process” and includes additional elements such as addressing legal issues, research, monitoring, financing, etc. [17].

Through widespread use, MSP serves as a practical tool to “determine how best to use and distribute maritime space, as well as establish a mechanism of interaction between users of this space with a view to achieving a balance between industrial, socioeconomic development and the preservation of nature within the water area through an open discussion involving all stakeholders” [8, p. 10].

The initial stage of maritime space planning is considered the late 1970s, when Australia began demarcating waters of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. Maritime zoning is now part of MSP, and measures to determine maritime zones for implementing MSP normally include relevant maps and rules for maritime areas [20, p. 13].



MSP development was later supported by the U.S. This is evidenced by the fact that from 2005 to 2007, a step-by-step guide for developing MSP was drafted by a Working Group on Ocean Zoning at the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis at the University of California, Santa Barbara [12, p. 7].

Promoting MSP at the international level is an important part of the work of IOC-UNESCO. The organization supports the process as “a practical way to create and establish a more rational organization of the use of marine space and the interactions between its uses, to balance demands for development with the need to protect marine ecosystems, and to achieve social and economic objectives in an open and planned way” [7]. In 2011, the commission included an MSP initiative in its own Integrated Coastal Area Management strategy.

IOC-UNESCO collects, summarizes and analyzes documents on MSP international practice, relying since 2011 on the financial support of the American Moore Foundation (established in 2000). Since 2006, the organization has produced several studies, reports and educational material on the subject, including a presentational compendium of MSP (2007), a first-of-its kind international guide for implementing mechanisms for marine spatial planning (2009), and a guide for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of already implemented marine spatial plans (2014).

In addition, IOC-UNESCO organizes and hosts international thematic events. The first international workshop on MSP was organized by it along with the Man and the Biosphere program of UNESCO’s ecological and earth sciences division in November 2006, in Paris. The organization also provides information support for MSP development in the world – in particular, managing a specialized Internet resource (<http://msp.ioc-unesco.org>).

Other international organizations involved in MSP development processes include the World Ocean Council. It was established in 2008 as a nonprofit organization and deals with issues related to sustainable development of the oceans. The organization is registered in the U.S. and Great Britain.

**Use of the sea in the modern era is marked by the widespread use by coastal states of maritime spatial planning (MSP).**

The European Union is among other national and international organizations and integration associations actively advocating the introduction and expansion of MSP.

### **The EU Maritime Spatial Planning Directive**

THE BASIC REQUIREMENTS for MSP in the EU countries are laid out in the 2014/89 EU Maritime Spatial Planning Directive. The document was approved by the European Parliament and the European Council on July 23, 2014, and officially entered into force on September 18, 2014. One of the documents that served as the basis for its development was the “Road Map” (2008) that presented 10 relevant principles of maritime spatial planning in the EU.

The directive defines MSP as an instrument that works across sectors to implement the integrated maritime policy of the European Union (2007) and stipulates obligations for EU member states regarding organizing maritime planning processes. The document applies to those EU countries that have access to the maritime (ocean) waters (Art. 15, Point 4). Borders of relevant marine waters, including the seabed and subsoil, are defined in Art. 3 [11]. Each EU country can independently plan maritime activities and develop existing national policies, rules or mechanisms, but they must conform to the requirements of the directive. The main results of the implementation of its requirements should be relevant laws, regulations and administrative provisions of EU member states that are elaborated and put into effect (the deadline for implementation is September 18, 2016). In addition, national administrative bodies are to be established (by September 18, 2016) and maritime spatial plans are to be prepared (by March 31, 2021).

Directive 2014/89/EU organizes MSP activities in a way that puts the activity of EU member states regarding their use of adjacent waters under management and oversight [2, p. 2]. Failure to comply with the requirements of the document results in sanctions. For example, on December 7, 2017, three countries – Bulgaria, Greece and Finland – were listed as violators of EU law for not complying with the provisions of the directive. Finland’s violations were only partial and related only to the Åland Islands. These countries did not notify the European Commission of measures to incorporate into national legislation the EU’s MSP standards contained in the directive. As a result, penalties were placed on them that were to be in effect until the violations are rectified [2, p. 2].

The efforts of the EU to advance MSP demonstrate its interest in using and developing this mechanism. In conjunction with the establishment by the directive of a deadline for implementing its individual requirements in 2021 (maritime spatial plans, see above), this involves further development of relevant EU legislation and the development of subsequent documents after 2021.

### **Naval Activities and Marine Planning**

THE MAIN stated purpose of maritime spatial planning is regulating economic activity on the sea as well as protecting nature [8, p. 7]. Meanwhile, the EU MSP Directive affects the military component, too, although Article 2 (Point 2) indicates that the document does not apply to activities whose sole purpose is defense or national security.

According to the directive (Article 8), plans for the maritime areas of EU member states must define the spatial and “temporal” distribution of aquaculture areas; fishing areas; installations and infrastructures for the exploration, exploitation and extraction of oil, gas and other energy resources, of minerals and aggregates, and for the production of energy from renewable sources; as well as maritime transportation routes and traffic flows. States must also identify the location of nature and species conservation sites and protected areas, raw materials extraction areas, scientific research areas, submarine cable and pipeline routes, places for tourism, and underwater cultural heritage. In addition to the above, the list includes military training areas [11].

This suggests that maritime spatial plans will eventually govern naval activities insofar as delineating maritime areas and their use in the interests of the armed forces of EU member states.

### **Development of the Cross-Border Component of MSP**

ONE DIRECTION of MSP development in the EU is promoting cross-border cooperation to ensure the coordination of territorial plans and development of common standards. The EU’s 2014 MSP Directive among other things aims to implement a cross-border approach to planning processes in certain maritime areas – the Northern, Baltic, Mediterranean and Black Seas. A list of regions is provided in the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (2008). This document defines the environmental requirements for the marine environment and serves as the

ecological basis of the EU's integrated maritime policy and the 2014 Directive. At the same time, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive also envisions developing cooperation among EU member states in common marine regions (or subregions), including with non-EU countries.

In 2009, the European Commission announced its intention to promote regional cooperation in developing instruments that cross sectors for the integrated maritime policy of the EU. This included developing MSP processes and integrated coastal management areas with countries that are not EU members but share the same ocean basins with them. In addition, the EU proposed expanding cooperation in the above areas with key EU partners: Canada, Norway, Japan, the U.S., Brazil, India, Russia, China [9].

An important stage in the development of cross-border MSP cooperation was the Second International Conference on MSP (March 15-17, 2017), which was organized jointly by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries and the IOC-UNESCO with a view to analyzing the current state of MSP. The result of the Conference was a joint road map for accelerating the development of maritime planning processes in the world. One implementation area of the road map is called Transboundary Marine/Maritime Spatial Planning. This includes joint activities by the IOC-UNESCO, the European Commission's Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, as well as their member states and other UN agencies, to develop guidelines to promote and implement cross-border MSP. In addition, there are plans to launch pilot projects (2018) and hold an International Conference (2021) [16].

In November 2018, the European Commission and the IOC-UNESCO launched a new joint initiative to promote cross-border MSP practices at the global level. The program is to last three years. It includes plans to develop guidelines on international cross-border maritime planning and implement two pilot projects in the West Mediterranean and Southeast Pacific [18].

### **Global Promotion of MSP**

IT IS OBVIOUS that MSP is generally shifting from cross-border cooperation in certain marine basins (maritime regions) to multilateral international cooperation throughout the world's oceans. Thus, MSP process-

es are gradually becoming international (global), in particular, to achieve the goals of the global governance of the world's oceans [3, p. 207].

The European Union sees MSP as one tool that it plans to use to develop international ocean governance and enhance the EU's role as a strong global actor. The EU assigns itself a leading role in establishing a worldwide system of ocean governance/ocean governance framework; it sees itself as a global actor, as well as a "champion for sustainable development" and "user of ocean resources" [14].

The EU believes that its experience in developing a sustainable approach to ocean management could serve as a basis for developing international ocean governance [15, p. 4]. In particular, this refers to the EU's 2014 MSP directive.

To realize those plans, the EU is operating in the framework of implementing the 14th Sustainable Development Goal (common abbreviation SDG 14). It should be recalled that on September 25, 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted a final resolution, "Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," which entered into force on January 1, 2016. The document is a 15-year action plan (2015 to 2030) that identifies 17 sustainable development goals. Their achievement is to promote human prosperity while ensuring the "protection of the planet" [6]. Oceans are singled out as a separate development area important for people's lives, formulated as "Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development" [19].

On November 10, 2016, a joint communication from the European Parliament, the EU Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions titled "International Ocean Governance: an agenda for the future of our oceans" outlined a program of action that the EU intends to use to strengthen its global and regional positions to create the governance mechanisms for the world's oceans. The communication outlines 14 EU action areas for establishing and ensuring sustainable international governance of the world's oceans in the three priority areas for the EU. They include improving the international ocean governance framework; reducing pressure on oceans and seas and creating the conditions for a sustainable blue economy; and strengthening international ocean research [13].

To reduce pressure on the marine environment and develop the blue economy, the EU calls for steps to encourage MSP at the global level. For example, in 2017, the European Commission planned to start drafting international guidelines for promoting MSP.

Those actions are aimed at developing global governance of resources and ocean spaces.

### **Conclusions**

MARITIME spatial planning is increasingly being used in the development of the maritime activity of coastal countries. Increased activity in this area to a certain extent benefits coastal states, as it allows them to regulate the use of maritime spaces in their EEZs in order to achieve economic, environmental and political goals.

Its development is supported by many coastal countries, primarily the U.S., as evidenced by the country's active participation in processes to develop and proliferate it globally. Maritime spatial planning is facilitated by international organizations – in particular, UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission and the Division for Ocean Affairs. The European Union, advocating the expansion of these processes in the EU and in the world, relies on their support and cooperates with them in this area.

Regulatory documents developed by the EU make it possible to regulate the promotion of maritime spatial planning among EU littoral states, as well as to encourage international MSP cooperation in specific marine areas.

The basic document establishing the EU's MSP requirements for its member states is the 2014 Maritime Spatial Planning Directive. By implementing maritime spatial planning mechanisms, the EU plans to regulate economic, social and environmental aspects of ocean use, as well as certain aspects of military activities. Interest in using and developing maritime spatial planning in conjunction with the directive's deadline for implementing its individual requirements in 2021 assumes further development of EU legislation in this field and the development of subsequent documents after 2021.

The EU's emphasis on cross-border cooperation in the field of maritime spatial planning is a stepping stone to the next stage of MSP development and a transition to ocean governance on an international (global) level. The EU is focusing on international documents such as the 2015 UN General Assembly resolution on "Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development."

A communication approved by the EU in 2016 on international ocean governance and a Road Map approved in 2017 on accelerating MSP

development identify specific areas of interest to the EU, list tasks for achieving the goals, as well as implementation deadlines. Based on these documents, we can conclude that for the EU, maritime spatial planning is one tool the EU is contemplating using to develop cross-border cooperation and strengthen its regional and global positions when it comes to forming international ocean governance mechanisms.

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*Key words:* The European Union, maritime spatial planning, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO, cross-border cooperation, international ocean governance.



## **How American Presidential Contenders Talk About Russia**

*David S. Foglesong*

CAN AMERICAN POLITICIANS talk sensibly about Russia? Major statements in the last year by leading contenders for the next presidential election in 2020 are not encouraging: they have presented severely distorted views of Russia and grossly exaggerated threats from the Kremlin. However, some influential politicians in the United States do have more realistic and balanced perspectives on Russia. Observers who wish for improved American-Russian relations should therefore be patient and not abandon all hope.

A year ago, former Vice President Joe Biden published one of the longest statements, an article in *Foreign Affairs* that outlined “How to Stand Up to the Kremlin.” To his credit, Biden was relatively level-headed about Russian interference in the 2016 election: in contrast to those who hyperbolically likened it to the Pearl Harbor or 9/11 attacks, he treated Russian efforts to influence foreign elections as a problem to be managed, not as an existential threat. However, Biden also presented a nightmarish view of “tyranny” in Russia allegedly facing drastic demographic and economic decline. Popular support for Putin’s “kleptocracy” is so shallow, Biden claimed, that it would quickly disappear if the regime did not maintain “a chokehold on society.”

That kind of caricature, which encourages notions that Washington does not need to think seriously about how to engage with Russia, was soon challenged by a high turnout election in March 2018, when more than 70 percent of voters marked their ballots for President Vladimir Putin. Many American commentators dismissed the election as a sham because of the Kremlin’s domination of television coverage and its exclusion of some potential challengers. But the election result basically reflected genuine popular approval of Putin (ranging between 60 and 80 percent), which is rooted in beliefs that he is a strong leader who restored

stability after the chaos of the 1990s and revived Russian national pride. The stereotypical notion of Russia as a backward land of totalitarian repression was also contradicted in June, when more than 80,000 Americans who visited for the World Cup saw for themselves Russian cities that are clean, modern, friendly, and lively. Many American politicians, including Biden, have wished for years that Putin were not the leader of Russia. But the reality U.S. policymakers must face is that he will be President until 2024.

What to do? Biden's recommendation boils down to long-term containment, deterrence, and vigilance. Although he recognizes a need to "keep talking to Moscow," the sole purpose he indicates is to avoid dangerous miscalculations. Thus, Biden's grim vision offers little hope for any improvement in the future from the present tense stalemate.

Much like Biden, Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders envisions standing up to and telling off Putin. In *Where We Go from Here*, published in November 2018, Sanders combined a pacific vision of the future with a militant policy in the present. He is rightly critical of how "the arms merchants of the world grow increasingly rich as governments spend trillions of dollars on weapons of destruction" and he dreams of a world in which swords will be beaten into plowshares. At the same time, Sanders vows "to work in solidarity with supporters of democracy around the globe, including in Russia," and in an aggressively Wilsonian vein he declares that "in the struggle of democracy versus authoritarianism, we intend to win."

The trouble with that combative stance is that it disregards how crusades under the banner of democracy against autocracy have led to catastrophic wars from Iraq to Libya and have had counterproductive effects in Russia. As former Ambassador to Russia Michael McFaul's vivid recent memoir, *From Cold War to Hot Peace*, amply shows, his confrontational championing of democracy failed: While antagonizing Putin, it made it easier for the Kremlin to depict the small minority of Russian liberals as clients of America and led some prominent Russian democrats to distance themselves from the emotional and ideological ambassador. (During McFaul's 2012-2014 ambassadorship, the percentage of Russians with positive views of America fell from 52 to 23.)

The flourishing democracy McFaul and Sanders would like to see in Russia is not likely to spring up in the harsh glare of foreign denunciation and exhortation; it is more likely to grow in the softer light of reduced international tension. Mikhail Gorbachev's democratization of the USSR

that began after summit meetings with Ronald Reagan eased Soviet fears and warmed superpower relations. Aware of that precedent, McFaul recognized at the start of the Obama administration in 2009 that “a more benign international environment for the Russian government would create better conditions for democratic change internally.” Unfortunately, McFaul later forgot his insight that “confrontation with the Kremlin would impede democratization.”

The most effective way to advance democracy around the world is not to grandstand about support for democrats in countries where the U.S. has very little credibility but to make American democracy at home truly a model that others will want to emulate. That will require facing problems such as racism, inequality, police brutality, and paralyzing partisanship that plagued America long before the 2016 election. Pugnacious preoccupation with Putin is a distraction from that goal, not a way to pursue it.

Although Sanders recognizes that “the global war on terror has been a disaster for the American people and for American leadership,” he champions a different kind of war, a global battle against “oligarchy and authoritarianism.” To mobilize support for that fight, Sanders makes Putin a symbol of all the “demagogues” and “kleptocrats” who “use divisiveness and abuse as a tool for enriching themselves and those loyal to them.” While Kremlin officials and loyalists have indeed indulged in self-aggrandizement, that began in the 1990s under Boris Yeltsin, whom Americans lionized as a great democratic reformer while tycoons pillaged the economy. Loudly calling for a worldwide struggle against oligarchy and making Putin the locus of that evil, as Sanders does, will make it much more difficult to engage in quiet and effective diplomacy – a lesson Ronald Reagan learned in the 1980s. It also will complicate the quest to turn spears into pruning hooks that Sanders extolls.

One of Sanders’ major rivals on the left wing of the Democratic Party is Senator Elizabeth Warren, who formally announced her candidacy in

If major incidents that inflame hostilities can be avoided in the next two years, there is reason to hope that eventually more American political leaders will recognize the need to move beyond the recent futile efforts to isolate, punish, and demonize Russia.

February. Warren set out her vision of “A Foreign Policy for All” in the January/February 2019 issue of *Foreign Affairs*. While her sharp criticism of how American post-Cold War foreign policy has served the interests of large corporations is bold and vigorous, her alarmist depiction of Russia is ill informed and unwise.

According to Warren, “Russia became belligerent and resurgent” in response to the U.S. promotion of rapid privatization and a wild form of capitalism in the 1990s. That inaccurate statement disregards how, in his first years as President of Russia at the start of the 21st century, Vladimir Putin eagerly pursued a strategic and economic partnership with the United States as he sought to revive Russia after the deep depression of the 1990s. When terrorists attacked America on September 11, 2001, Putin was the first foreign leader to call the White House to offer support. He then ordered the Russian military and intelligence services to provide important assistance to the American war against al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan. When the George W. Bush administration announced withdrawal from the ABM treaty in 2001 and then encouraged NATO expansion into the Baltic states that had been part of the former Soviet Union, Putin expressed only mild opposition because he still prioritized a partnership with Washington.

Politicians and journalists who vilify Putin ignore that history because it contradicts their claims that he is innately anti-American and aggressive. The truth is that Russia gradually reacted to U.S. policies that repeatedly threatened its interests and security, including the war against Iraq in 2003, the drive to incorporate Georgia and Ukraine into NATO, and the placement of missile defense systems in Eastern Europe. If Warren and other prospective presidential candidates are to develop a sound strategy toward Russia they must first have an accurate understanding of the origins of contemporary Russian foreign policies and attitudes toward the United States, which have been strongly affected by U.S. military interventions from Kosovo and Iraq to Syria and Libya.

Warren’s foreign policy vision is disappointing in several other ways. Although her desire to reduce defense spending to “sustainable levels” will be welcomed by many progressive Americans, she does not appear to have thought through how she will be able to do that after stoking fears of “a revanchist Russia that threatens Europe” (a view that disregards how key European leaders have continued to see Russia as a partner in dealing with issues such as the maintenance of the nuclear agreement with Iran). Warren declares that Washington should “impose strong, tar-

geted penalties on Russia” as if that had not already been done, repeatedly, with no positive effect. She categorizes Putin as one of the dictators who remain in power “because they hold unwilling populations under brutal control” – disregarding how surveys of Russian public opinion have shown persistent high support for Putin and conveying a terribly distorted view of Russia as if it were one of the “captive nations” of the Cold War.

The Senator from Massachusetts invokes the memory of President John F. Kennedy in connection with her vision of how to “project American strength and values throughout the world,” but she appears to have forgotten Kennedy’s speech at American University in June 1963. In that courageous address, delivered less than eight months after the Cuban missile crisis brought the United States and the USSR to the edge of nuclear war, Kennedy urged Americans to reexamine their attitudes toward the Communist Soviet Union. Making a dramatic shift from his earlier posture as a militant Cold Warrior, Kennedy implored Americans “not to see only a distorted and desperate view of the other side” and he reminded them that “history teaches us that enmities between nations . . . do not last forever.” Instead of demonizing the Soviets, Kennedy argued, Americans should focus on promoting a gradual evolution toward peaceful relations and problem solving. Kennedy’s farsighted speech helped to clear the way for a limited test ban treaty that he hoped would help to “check the spiraling arms race.” By the fall of 1963, when Kennedy authorized the sale of wheat to the Soviet Union, U.S. relations with the USSR were more hopeful than almost anyone could have anticipated a year earlier. Warren and other prospective presidential candidates should remember Kennedy’s wise leadership on relations with Russia in the last months of his life as a model of the kind of thoughtful, articulate president we need in the third decade of the twenty-first century.

In contrast to Kennedy, Biden, Sanders, and Warren have portrayed Russia as a perpetual enemy, distorted its people’s attitudes, and exaggerated the threats it poses. They also have failed to consider how constructive dialogue with Russian leaders could promote common interests such as curbing costly spending on the modernization of nuclear arsenals, countering the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and combating Islamist terrorism. While Kennedy envisioned the possibility of moving beyond Cold War confrontation, the three senior prospective Democratic candidates have embraced establishment perspectives that are holdovers from the Cold War.

Even some of the younger presidential aspirants have been unable to

resist the temptation to attack President Donald Trump by linking him to Russia. When Senator Kamala Harris of California announced her campaign for the presidency at the beginning of February, she claimed that foreign powers are “infecting the White House like malware.” She also asserted that in 2016 Russia not only interfered in the presidential election but also attacked “our very American identity.”

An even younger Democratic candidate, Representative Tulsi Gabbard of Hawaii, who has sharply criticized U.S. interventions for “regime change” around the world, is likely to face intense criticism of any statements that can be construed as “soft” on Russia. On February 1, NBC News claimed that social media experts had detected “stirrings of a possible campaign of support” for Gabbard by online accounts associated with Russia. An NBC reporter went so far as to assert that “The Kremlin already has a crush on Tulsi Gabbard.”

Although it will therefore be difficult for presidential candidates to talk reasonably about Russia, some prominent American politicians do realize the need for better relations between the two countries. For example, California Governor Jerry Brown recognized that common interests, such as avoiding nuclear war, addressing climate change and promoting mutually beneficial economic development, are much more important for the long term than the political conflicts that have marred relations in the last few years. Other politicians with sober and thoughtful perspectives on Russia include Democratic Representative Ro Khanna of California and Republican Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky.

If major incidents that inflame hostilities can be avoided in the next two years, there is reason to hope that eventually more American political leaders will recognize the need to move beyond the recent futile efforts to isolate, punish, and demonize Russia. During the McCarthyist hysteria of the early 1950s, when Republicans accused Democratic officials of being soft on communism or even of being traitorous agents of the Kremlin, respectful dialogue between Washington and Moscow was almost unthinkable. Yet by the summer of 1955, the McCarthyist fever broke and Eisenhower and Khrushchev met at Geneva. The resumption of discussions between top American and Soviet leaders would culminate – after some unfortunate and dangerous interruptions – in the test ban treaty and the partial *détente* of 1963. If leaders in Moscow and Washington show patience and restraint in the coming years, it is possible to hope for a similar improvement in relations, particularly after the presidential election in November 2020.

## **Informational Confrontation in the Military-Technical Sphere**

*O. Bogovkova*

INFORMATIONAL WORK is among the most important elements of a state's modern military-technical policy. The tasks, target audience and specific nature of sources would seemingly set the methods of information work in the military-technical field far apart from this work in other areas – for example, in domestic policy, the economy or culture and ideology. However, as we shall see in this article, that is not quite the case.

Indeed, the target audience in this field would seem to be not the broad masses, as is the case in some domains with significance for the general public (the economy, social life, education, etc.). So, the concept of mass media in its purest form – i.e., as it took shape in 1960-1970, whereby the audience is viewed as a commodity that media outlets offer to advertisers and when the bigger the audience the better – does not apply in this situation. Indirectly, however, this concept does get used in the military-technical sphere with respect to the so-called agenda-forming and the dependency model of mass-media effects [1].

In short, it looks like this: Technical articles in the media are still oriented toward the public, but indirectly, since military-political decisions are not made by the public. They shape the agenda – i.e., the narrative about the significance of a specific military-technical topic – and then the topic is subsequently inserted into the overall informational context as needed.

For example, portraying Russia as a belligerent power with super-powered weapons, including those that Western armed forces cannot defeat (in the electronic or cyber spheres), or, conversely, as a country with dangerous ambitions but an unchecked and erratic military-political leadership and inefficient technology that leads to unpredictable conse-

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quences when used. Such information models, embedded in the public consciousness, undoubtedly affect the military-technical decisions countries make.

In addition, active dissemination of this kind of information enhances the feeling of instability in the world and heightens perceptions of the threats coming from Russia. And in situations of instability, the audience becomes less critical of news articles and analysis; it becomes easier for requisite opinions to be introduced, spread and circulated.

In this regard, the military-technical positioning of Russia and any country in the media is just one element of foreign policy informational work, and its objectives are the same as general foreign policy objectives (building an international reputation, influencing international cooperation) and economic objectives (undermining an adversary's competitiveness, weakening this adversary's military-industrial enterprises and its ties with foreign partners).

With that in mind, Western countries are very active in the military-technical sector of the information space. The overall volume of articles, reporting and analytical materials in the foreign media does not compare with the volume of materials in the Russian mass media (both domestically and abroad). Also disproportionate is the number of specific texts devoted to narrow military-technical topics and the frequency with which important issues are mentioned. On the contrary, the Russian press frequently utilizes translations of foreign materials, which only increases the influence of outside concepts and views. An analysis of military-technical articles in the foreign media suggests that this informational work in Western countries is built on a systemic approach and the use of standard methods that have proven effective in other areas.

Use of these methods by foreign (American, European) experts, who are the most advanced and experienced in the field of propaganda, can easily be seen in the "information manipulation" of aviation topics: the Su-57 and advanced Russian aircraft. Therefore, we will examine a series of articles about the Su-57 published from May to July 2018, as well as several articles on a Russian-Indian project to develop a joint aircraft and advanced Russian fighters (April-May 2018). The articles were taken from *The National Interest*, *Business Insider*, *Jane's*, *Diplomat*, as well as several Russian media outlets (TASS, Svobodnaya pressa, Vzgl'yad, and Sputnik).

*The National Interest* published eight articles on the Su-57 in May-June 2018. The sheer number of articles and volume of text (articles with



seven or eight paragraphs) is incomparably greater than the frequency with which this topic is discussed in the Russian media in the opposing context (for example, only a few short articles in TASS and Sputnik).

Among *The National Interest* articles in the specified period, two were about Russian stealth fighters and the possible use of nuclear weapons on the Su-57, and the remaining six were devoted to comparing the Su-57 with the American F-22, F-15, F-35, the Chinese J-20 and even the Russian Su-35.

In an article of May 11, 2018, with the colorful title “Why Russia Can’t Build a Stealth Fighter (And Might Not Have To)”, the author uses standard informational confrontation methods:

- unsubstantiated assertions primarily from technical or “restricted access” commercial information (“Russia would not allow India access to the jet’s source codes,” information about “lackluster avionics, less than stellar stealth and underpowered engines” of the Su-57 variant jointly developed by Russia and India);

- doses of negative and positive information presented in the needed order, ending on a negative note (for Russia) (“the Russians are working on improving the avionics and the engines are going to be replaced”; “the Indian concern about the Su-57’s stealth is valid – there is very little that can be done to meaningfully and substantially improve the aircraft’s radar cross section”);

- citations of unnamed sources, including those used by other publications;

- assertions about the “obviousness” of some facts (“numerous radar cross section hotspots on the Su-57 airframe that are immediately obvious to the trained eye”);

- extrapolating long-held assumptions to a specific (military-technical) area and using historical references as evidence (in particular, the opinion about Russia’s weak ability to put designs into production and its backward machine tools: “The Russians – who in the post-Soviet era

Russian political structures (including military ones) proceed from the need to show and establish the truth. This is contrary to the principles established by the leadership and media in Western countries that consider truth and the actual content of events irrelevant.

have relied on imported manufacturing tools primarily from Europe – simply do not have the precise manufacturing capabilities to mass-produce a stealth aircraft”);

- presenting the views of the opposing side in a suitable way to convince the audience of objectivity (“from the Russian perspective...”);

- frequent use of technical terms (without their explanation) and scientific argumentation, mostly general scientific concepts (“this is simply a matter of physics”);

- a simple, clear and emotional conclusion (“Would it work? No one knows. We’ll have to wait for World War III to start before we find out for sure”).

A whole series of *The National Interest* articles are devoted to “virtual matchups” between the Su-57 and other aircraft of various types and countries. In a little over a month, the journal published six articles purporting to present in-depth analysis of the technical and operational differences between the Su-57 and the modern F-22, the old F-15 and even the Russian Su-35. In reality, however, these “technical” articles that claim to be based on scientific rigor use the same standard propaganda techniques:

- emotionally loaded speech and relevant vocabulary (“the Lockheed Martin F-22 Raptor is the king of the skies,” “How the Navy’s New Block III Super Hornet Could Crush China’s J-20 or Russia’s Su-57”);

- the use of binary pairs in the right context (“the old plane might soon be able to unstealth Moscow’s latest fighter” – the old one being the F-15 and the latest Su-57);

- baseless, exaggerated claims (“unquestionably the best air superiority fighter ever” – the F-22 or F-15);

- referencing previously engrained, disseminated and therefore “obvious” opinions (“after the 2008 Russia-Georgian war, where it became apparent that Moscow urgently needed to reform and modernize the rapidly decaying fragments of the Soviet military that remained under its control”);

- extensive use of “very likely,” “possibly,” etc. in the right context (“The Russians seem to recognize that the initial version of the Su-57 will not offer a particularly more useful capability than the Su-35”; “it does not seem likely that the Russians...”; “it is probably much more likely that Moscow...”; “it might be that the Su-57 does not have a particularly bright future”);

- lack of accurate technical comparisons (the specifications of aircraft

engines are not compared, but it is nevertheless asserted that the new Su 57 engine “is not proving to be as reliable as initially hoped”);

- repetition from article to article of sentences (or even paragraphs) without providing supporting evidence in order to pass them off as a universally accepted truth (for example, the bit about the radar cross section hotspots on the Su 57 airframe);

- elements of narrativity (“equipped with the Legion pod, the F-5C would easily negate any stealth advantage that the Su-57 offers” and then use its “immensely powerful Raytheon AN/APG-63(v)3 active electronically scanned array” and “engage [the Su-57] with its long-range Raytheon AIM 120D AMRAAM missiles,” etc.);

- quoting conclusive opinions without citing a specific source (“feedback from the naval aviators who flew [on these planes] during the exercise”) in the same context as the much more nebulous views of individuals (Captain David ‘DW’ Kindley: “Can’t talk about specific experiments and specific threats, but IRST [F/A 18E/F New Block III Super Hornet] is designed to be a long-range counter-stealth technology”);

- positive assessments of the adversary are always accompanied by doubt (“if the technique works, the Russians will have negated the Raptor’s stealth”);

- shifting accents to get readers to formulate the right understanding of cause and effect relationships (“Turkish officials have begun discussions about the possibility of purchasing Russia’s stealth, fifth-generation Su-57 fighter jet, should Washington renege on the F-35 deliveries”);

- always concluding articles on a positive note for its side.

In general, all these and other similar methods are part of the standard approach to composing informational-propaganda texts. To determine the entire set of these methods and their systematization, a more complete analysis of media materials is needed, including a rhetorical analysis, content analysis and in part a narrative analysis.

At the theoretical level, we can talk about a unified methodology of information work that authors use even in the specific military-technical field that amounts to specific techniques for composing and structuring texts, speculative logic and reasoning, use of expressive means and stylistic techniques, rhetorical forms and images [2].

Semiotic elements are also used. An article dated June 4, 2018, for example, touched on the topic of the Su-57 being used to carry nuclear weapons. The content of the article is vague (references to U.S. doctrinal documents, unfounded assertions by “Russian experts,” vague musings of

Russian analysts, statements about the absence of an official position of the Russian Ministry of Defense). The article reveals nothing new and from a professional standpoint is uninteresting. But it doesn't matter, because here "nuclear weapons" serve as a semiotic symbol that evokes a host of relationships, attitudes and associations, and in this article, regardless of its depth and meaningfulness of content, this symbol is correlated with another symbol: the Su-57. References to the 1987 INF Treaty and Trump's Nuclear Posture Review are used to shore up this correlation. Now the Su-57 is not just a standalone product but a plane "that can carry nuclear weapons."

However, the use of semiotics is nothing new; it is also used in articles on domestic politics, economics and social issues.

The problem for the military-technical field is that for the Western media, it is just like any other topic, so the content, truthful or not, does not matter: Foreign experts write military-technical articles just as they would write articles in any other field, armed with their traditional tools. This is similar to the laws of formal logic that can be used in any domain without specifying the substance of the assertions that are used in a logical formulation.

However, a different attitude prevails in Russian media and political circles toward the military-technical sphere because of its closed nature, "sensitivity" and certain exclusivity. Very often, Russian political structures (including military ones) proceed from the need to show and establish the truth. This is contrary to the principles established by the leadership and media in Western countries that consider truth and the actual content of events irrelevant.

For this reason, the Russian side is constantly playing catch-up. It is forced to respond to provocative falsifications. And this has extremely negative consequences, because in the information sphere, the first to speak is right. And the pretext for another information wave could be any statement by any person, unreasonable assumptions, or dubious photographs: The actual content does not matter.

Take, for example, the recent statement by India about possibly withdrawing from the FGFA project (joint Russian-Indian development of a fifth-generation aircraft), which of course was immediately picked up by the Western media – and in complete accordance with the canons of the genre. Information about India's withdrawal from the project was presented in an April 20, 2018, article in IHS *Jane's Defence Weekly* as follows: "Senior Indian officials... recently informed a visiting Russian min-

isterial delegation that India was withdrawing from the programme.” And later the article took a completely different tone: “The Indian officials are believed to have stated that the IAF could, at a later date, ‘revisit’ the FGFA project or alternatively acquire the fully developed platform.” And the Diplomat, in an article dated April 23, 2018, for example, immediately reported the entire “history” of Russian-Indian differences, prefaced with loud assertions that this “decision... is unsurprising and has been a long time coming” and that the FGFA program (“saga,” according to the author) “was plagued by disagreements and delays right from the beginning.”

An even more salient example is a July statement by Russian Deputy Prime Minister Yury Borisov that “it does not make sense to speed up work on mass-producing the fifth-generation aircraft” [3].

The first paragraph of a *Business Insider* article dated July 12, 2018, stated that the Su-57 “would not see mass production.” Phrases about “nonstop praise” and “dubious claims about [the aircraft’s] abilities” give a mocking hue to the Borisov statement quoted later. The views of unknown or even unnamed experts are presented that have the same mocking tone: The experts claim that Borisov feels that apparently “the plane is so much better than everything out there that Russia doesn’t need to build it.” References are made to previous news about India’s possible withdrawal from the FGFA project, and in this context, it is stated that “now, India has been discussed as a potential buyer of the F-35.” Mention is also made of the possibility of the Su-57 aircraft carrying nuclear weapons. The conclusion is made that “Russia is more or less admitting defeat” and “is getting left behind in the world of top-class militaries.” And the *Diplomat*, which positions itself as a more objective publication, for example, when quoting Borisov more extensively, provides its own fabrications about the reasons: budget problems and technical difficulties.

Interestingly, many Russian media outlets carried the topic in the same context (“Russia Does Not Need the Su-57,” Svobodnaya pressa; “Su-57 Proves to Be an Expensive and Useless Toy,” Vzglyad), wittingly or unwittingly acting in accordance with the information confrontation model of Western countries.

Therefore, it is not surprising that subsequent reporting (for example, on the Lipetsk aviation center soon receiving the fifth-generation Su 57 fighter) was poorly covered by the Russian press and not mentioned at all in the Western press.

What conclusion can be drawn from this small study?

The military-technical realm is no different than any other sphere in the information space. The same laws, methods and techniques – unscrupulous but effective – are used. Media materials on military-technical issues are texts for achieving a goal rather than presenting the truth.

The above analysis is virtually silent about the actual characteristics of the Su-57, about the real state of the Russian-Indian FGFA project or the Russian aviation industry. It is instead focused on how those issues are presented in the mass media, and on the objectives and methods of this presentation. And currently Western media outlets are far ahead.

To successfully oppose them in the information space, the Russian side must pursue a more aggressive policy, keep a close watch for any potential occasion (formal and informal statements, assumptions, expert reports, and other analytical materials, regardless of the reliability of sources) and any material that could be used to advance its position and for its own purposes. Countering foreign professionals in the field of military-technical propaganda will be impossible unless objectives are conceptualized differently: moving from the search for truth to persuasive self-positioning and the concept of launching the first information attack while at the same time continuing to pursue the concept of responding to attacks. The techniques for successfully meeting these challenges are already known: They are clearly reflected in the Western media. They are the most effective instruments in information warfare today.

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*Key words:* informational confrontation, military-technical policy, media.

## **Digital Technology in the Foreign Policy Information Support Systems of the United States, Great Britain and Germany**

*O. Melnikova*

### **Information Support of Foreign Policy Activity as a Function of Diplomacy**

THE DYNAMISM of the modern world, the growing interdependence of its subjects, and the rapid development of information and communication technologies (ICT) contribute to a significant intensification of interstate dialogue, as well as the emergence of new forms and methods of influencing international audiences. In these conditions, the role diplomatic agencies play in providing information support of foreign policy activity (ISFPA) and how they do so is changing.

The aforementioned role of diplomatic agencies traditionally involves three aspects: informing foreign partners about the official position of their state, obtaining similar information from other countries and exchanging views. The work of all representative agencies abroad includes such important tasks as informing the leadership of their country about the political and economic situation in the host country, directly participating in providing information support for the foreign policy of their state in countries of accreditation and strengthening the positive image of their country internationally. This activity is carried out primarily through traditional (print, radio and television) and electronic media outlets.

However, under the influence of ICT, the very essence of the infor-

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mational-communicative function of modern diplomacy is transforming; its content is changing. These days, when establishing dialogue with various states, diplomats are becoming “strategically motivated handlers of public opinion” [19, pp. 655-656] that must be able to not only observe but also independently generate the flow of information they need.

The foreign relations agencies of various governments, regardless of how they are organized and their legal status, have a lot in common in terms of their functions and role in the foreign policy mechanism. Many similar areas can be identified in how the diplomatic offices of various countries carry out the ISFPA function that is conditioned by the overriding role of informational awareness, which is a crucial element of all diplomatic work.

To identify the distinctive features of implementing informational-communicative functions and how the diplomatic agencies of various countries use ICT, we will examine the ISFPA systems of the United States, Germany and Great Britain. There are several reasons why an analysis of the methods and forms of work of foreign diplomatic offices is necessary: First, to gain insight into the positive experience of organizing ISFPA of those international political actors who act assertively on the international stage; and second, to develop adequate measures to counteract anti-Russian media attacks and minimize their negative effects.

### **Information Technology in the Foreign Policy Support System of the United States**

ONE OF RUSSIA’S most active and aggressive adversaries in the information field is the United States of America, which experts say has “overwhelming superiority over other participants in the international system when it comes to exerting broad, extraterritorial informational influence” [20, p. 106].

The U.S. diplomatic system is one of the most extensive in the world. It is represented by 260 diplomatic and consular agencies in 160 countries. The staff of U.S. representative offices abroad is not homogeneous: in addition to employees with a background in diplomacy (so-called “career diplomats” who hold only 15% to 25% of posts [5, p. 17]), foreign policy functions are exercised by the political appointees of another 28 institutions of the country [5, p. 39]. The U.S. Department of State is headed by the U.S. secretary of state, who, through staffers, handles the day-to-day international activity of the state and addresses pressing issues



as the principal foreign policy adviser to the president. The State Department has a special post of coordinator for cyber issues, which today are regarded as the main U.S. foreign policy imperative [33].

The State Department works closely with the National Security Council, which is responsible for, among other things, issues concerning U.S. foreign policy [26], the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the U.S. Department of Defense.

In addition, the U.S. has several organizations that are connected one way or another with ISFPA. One of them is the small but well financed Office of Strategic Influence (OSI), created after the 9/11 terrorist attacks [3]. A core function of the office is coordinating the distribution of current information to other countries, as well as developing all “instruments of influencing foreign audiences” for the Defense Department [3]. The range of such tools is very broad: It includes disseminating through the public relations system of “white” information based on veracious data and carrying out “black” disinformation campaigns, organizing covert campaigns, using psychological pressure and “promoting information” to foreign news media through outside intermediary firms that have no obvious connection to the Pentagon. The OSI’s budget is classified, although it is known to amount to hundreds of millions of dollars.

According to *The Daily Beast*, the State Department also has the Global Engagement Center (GEC) [24], which was originally created to counter the propaganda of the Islamic State and is now focused on countering the Russian “propaganda of Vladimir Putin” and supporting “objective Russian journalism.” U.S. information policy toward Russia is reflected in the 2017 U.S. National Security Strategy. The document notes that the most serious threats to the U.S. are the “revisionist powers” of China and Russia that “challenge American power, influence, and interests, attempting to erode American security and prosperity” [30]. Unlike the 2015 National Security Strategy, which stated that the U.S. would deter Russian aggression through sanctions and other measures, “countering Moscow’s deceptive propaganda with the unvarnished truth” [27], in the 2017 strategy, the U.S. openly declares its intention to pursue an even tougher policy against Russia until the latter stops impeding the

In the context of information security, the “dominance” of American content on the Internet worries not only Russia and China, but also the countries of the EU.

main American goal of preserving the U.S.'s position as the sole global leader [30].

Within the State Department, information and operational support of senior state officials is performed by the Executive Secretariat: a headquarters of sorts whose main but not sole function is monitoring information. Day-to-day work in the State Department is carried out by administrations whose duties are typical of the foreign affairs departments of any state. The only unique department is the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, whose job is to collect, develop, analyze, and synthesize "political intelligence" received from U.S. representative offices abroad.

The essence of the American approach to the information support of foreign policy was defined back in the 1950s in a campaign speech by President Dwight Eisenhower (1953-1961) [29, p. 53; 23, pp. 122-125]. " 'Many people think psychological warfare means just the use of propaganda, like the controversial Voice of America. Certainly, the use of propaganda, of the written and spoken word, of every means known to transmit ideas, is an essential part of winning other people to your side. But propaganda is not the most important part in this struggle.' Real psychological warfare, he explained, extended beyond government propaganda agencies to include such factors as 'diplomacy, the spreading of ideas through every medium of communication, mutual economic assistance, trade and barter, friendly contacts through travel and correspondence and sports.' What was needed was a 'psychological effort put forth on a national scale,' – a comprehensive national security strategy that integrated psychological considerations with other elements of U.S. foreign policy" [12, pp. 57 58].

Later, in the 1970s, the State Department's basic requirements for the information service were formulated by a team led by William Macomber. They amounted to four principles: rapid flow of the information needed to make urgent decisions in critical situations; accuracy in gathering, relaying, reproducing, and using data; rigorous selection of information, including getting rid of any irrelevant information as well as consideration of information that could prove useful; flexibility of information, enabling it to be used in various situations [4, p. 8].

Russian political scientists Georgy Rudov and Yelena Ponomaryova identify two specific areas in the U.S. foreign policy information support system [17]: a special program for diplomatic signaling (DS) implemented through media outlets and a digital public diplomacy program [10, p. 71, 77]. Signaling is an informal means of informing about possible for-

eign policy changes that targets primarily decision makers. Public diplomacy is designed for the widest possible audience and intended to formulate a favorable public opinion toward a country [17].

Official and public diplomacy have gradually been merging in U.S. diplomatic practice, implying that diplomats abroad must act as lobbyists, consultants and experts on humanitarian issues. This approach was piloted by U.S. Ambassador to Russia Michael McFaul, who from his very first days in Russia sought to establish “cooperation with public associations and other civil society entities, mostly opposition-oriented” [11, p. 48]. As a result, communication channels with official Russian agencies were largely lost.

The U.S. Information Agency became part of the State Department following a structural reform in the 1990s. Since then, the U.S. foreign policy agency headed by the secretary of state has been responsible for the information support of the country’s foreign policy [21, p. 126].

The State Department’s information resources underwent a real revolution, however, with the spread of global electronic networks, which sparked the development of new public diplomacy tools and broadened perceptions about the possibility of purposefully increasing soft power resources. In fact, the U.S. was the first to become aware of the advantages of the new stage of development of the Web and its place in public information policy [20, pp. 108-109]. Ben Scott, an adviser to the U.S. secretary of state, said in 2012 that American diplomacy considers social networks one of the main tools of U.S. foreign policy [23, p. 284].

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, America’s top diplomat during Obama’s first term, formulated along with her deputy on public diplomacy Judith McHale and innovative technologies adviser Alec Ross new approaches to understanding public diplomacy that were closely linked to the use of the latest ICT in U.S. foreign policy practice. Collectively, U.S. public diplomacy objectives were identified as expanding the targeted influence of foreign audiences; forming a positive attitude abroad toward the objectives and implementation methods of U.S. foreign and domestic policy; creating favorable conditions for the U.S. to act in the international arena and securing the support of public opinion; building long-term and trusting relationships with foreign audiences; achieving better understanding abroad of American values; increasing the interaction of American citizens and government with the people of other countries; and improving the attractiveness and image of the state.

Since then, the interaction of American diplomats with foreign audi-

ences through global Internet resources has become an integral part of the American foreign policy information support system. For example, President Obama has more than 24 million followers on Facebook [18, p. 25] and about 70 million on Twitter. The current President Donald Trump has almost 20 million real subscribers on Twitter, and these figures are rapidly rising [22].

According to official figures, American foreign policy officials have over 200 official accounts on social networks, 100 of which are associated with embassies. The work is carried out primarily on sites such as Facebook, Dبلوماسية, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Communities@State. Communication on official Twitter feeds are supported in many languages.

Two aspects of Washington's information policy implemented through global Internet resources (Web sites, Web services) stand out: first, ample opportunities to manage the foreign audience that come with combining techniques for manipulating the agenda and gauging the responses of social network users. Second, information dominance that allows it to assertively manipulate the content of global information platforms [20, pp. 105-106].

In light of the above, very notable is the text of the new U.S. National Cyber Strategy, approved in September 2018, that focuses not only on the security of American information systems but also on "expanding American influence abroad," renewing "American commitment to advance our interests across cyberspace" and the "continuous competition against strategic adversaries" [28], including Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea.

As a result, information in the interests of one country prevails on the Internet. Confirmation of this is the fact that, despite the almost limitless diversity of Internet content, information that corresponds to the political interests of the U.S. is in many cases the most accessible. According to experts, this "skewing" is due not so much to technical reasons (the deliberate moderation or use of personal data) as to the lack of a counterbalance in the form of a competitive information policy from other states.

Thus, American diplomats' use of Twitter to engage in dialogue with audiences helps openly promote their positions. The press services of other countries use the same service in a more traditional way, presenting in monologue form only the official opinion, which in the current conditions turns out to be ineffective. In addition, in the latter case, the content often never changes or adapts to the interests and communication style of the relevant audience.

The U.S. model is supported by several State Department divisions engaged exclusively in digital diplomacy, social networks and network communities. These divisions include: (1) an electronic communications center that is responsible for supporting multiple platforms of the State Department's official representative office; (2) the Rapid Response Unit, which monitors the reaction on social networks to processes that could potentially impact U.S. national interests; (3) an audience research department that develops analyses of social networks, including the visualization of collected data; (4) the Office of Digital Engagement, which is responsible for managing multiple social networking platforms, including four State Department Facebook pages with an audience exceeding one million users; (5) the Office of Strategic Information and Outreach, which is part of the Strategic Communication Center for preventing terrorism and is intended to take measures to counter extremism and misinformation about the U.S. on the Internet; (6) the Office of Policy, Planning and Resources, which oversees the implementation of public diplomacy; (7) the Policy Division, whose official mission is to maintain interaction between the state and the various public diplomacy institutions.

It is worth noting that the Central Intelligence Agency, the Pentagon, as well as the United States Agency for International Development, have similar structures.

The functions performed by the listed departments includes developing and implementing a range of informational campaigns: content analysis of international and national social networks, blogs and chats; creating videos that present, for example, extremists in an unfavorable light; spreading positive information about the U.S.; mobile app development, etc. Work is done in various languages, including Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, French, Russian, and Spanish. It is significant that the bulk of these campaigns are linked to the official work of the State Department. Relaying unofficial information in the interests of the state and its political line is carried out predominantly by nonstate actors [20, pp. 110-111].

### **Organizational Features of the Information Activities of the U.S. Foreign Policy Agency**

WASHINGTON'S main method of countering Internet content that it does not like is to cram the information space with pro-American information. Hillary Clinton once said in this regard: "It has historically been proven time and time again, the better answer to offensive speech is more

speech. People can and should speak out against intolerance and hatred. By exposing ideas to debate, those with merit tend to be strengthened, while weak and false ideas tend to fade away; perhaps not instantly, but eventually" [25].

In the context of information security, the "dominance" of American content on the Internet worries not only Russia and China, but also the countries of the EU. Hence the complaints against the U.S. regarding the liberal use of Europeans' personal data, conflicts over international companies not paying taxes in the countries where they generate their basic revenue, and the resentment over the persistent and blatant refusal by American site holders to comply with the standards of European legislation. For example, Facebook, in line with the new privacy policy, stated that it was willing to provide any information in response to a formal request only if it believes the request was "required by law," corresponds to the laws of this country and "is consistent with internationally recognized standards" [13].

Thus, the information support of U.S. foreign policy is primarily assertive by nature and implemented through all available media channels but with a special emphasis on the opportunities offered by global electronic networks. The policy is intended to seize the entire global information space for the unimpeded implementation of American foreign policy.

The second organizational feature of the information activity of the U.S. foreign policy department is the distribution of powers in the information field and the responsibility for implementing them among several government agencies: The State Department, the Defense Department and the CIA. This results in a close link between the State Department's diplomatic activities and the tasks handled by intelligence services. This approach makes it possible to fully study a potential adversary and maximally develop information campaigns. At the same time, the State Department is by no means the chief actor in the foreign policy information support system, even though it is responsible for this work.

Oleg Karpovich, however, points out that the U.S. does not have an independent agency responsible for informational and psychological operations. The consequence is the lack of long-term strategy for planning such operations, which often "negates existing tactical successes in conducting information engagement, as happened in Iraq and Afghanistan" [7, p. 125]. The large number of "participants" coupled with the absence of a single coordination center renders the analysis of

gathered information ineffective and allows for “critical errors” in planning and execution.

### **Information Strategy of the British Foreign Office**

WE WILL turn now to the ISFPA practice of Great Britain. “Her Majesty’s Diplomatic Service,” whose central agency is the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (aka, the Foreign Office), has 270 agencies worldwide: embassies and consulates-general (British diplomatic missions, permanent representatives to international organizations) that employ more than 14,000 people promoting British national interests.

As a department of the British government, the British Foreign Office works to:

- protect the country’s national security by countering terrorism and arms proliferation and by reducing conflict;
- promote the interests of the United Kingdom abroad, promote the prosperity of the UK, increase exports and investment in the country, expand its markets by guaranteeing access to resources, promote sustained growth;
- support British citizens worldwide through a modern and effective consular service.

The Foreign Office (along with foreign diplomatic missions) retains its traditionally key role in developing and implementing the main aspects of the country’s foreign policy. These include maintaining political relations with other states, ensuring the country’s participation in international organizations and global problem-solving efforts, informing the international community about events in the country, promoting English language and culture abroad, and protecting the interests of the country’s citizens abroad. The Foreign Office’s activities at home and abroad are aimed at ensuring the national security of the state and the prosperity of its citizens.

The Foreign Office has functional units, among the largest of which is a research department, whose tasks include analyzing the domestic situation in foreign countries and processing information obtained from various sources. The office has several subunits whose activities relate to ISFPA, notably an information policy division, a foreign information department and a news department.

Recent years have seen a dramatic increase in the flow of information to the Foreign Office. Daily messages and telegrams from embassies

alone number in the several thousands. In addition to these data, the staff of Foreign Office departments also use other information sources: reports from British correspondents abroad, material received through mutual agreement from the UK's NATO and EU partners, and briefs and analyses prepared by research institutes and universities.

Diplomats have become more involved in foreign trade and information and propaganda efforts, as well as in international scientific and technical cooperation. For example, any British Embassy generally has an Information and Cultural Affairs Department. British diplomats are becoming increasingly active in such areas as social contacts, communication with journalists, travel around the country, promoting British products, assisting visiting compatriots.

In 2013, the Foreign Office adopted a "digital strategy," implying the active use of new information resources in foreign policy activity [5, p. 37]. Digital strategy is seen as a tool for reaching a new, broader foreign audience via social networks, delivering foreign policy information, as well exerting due influence on users. Diplomats are the most active on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, which they are required to use to pursue the foreign policy priorities of the state.

The Foreign Office's official Web site provides instructions for work on social networks, including special recommendations for Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Flickr [31].

British diplomats are to use the Internet to "monitor events abroad, gather information, identify key persons of influence, gauge foreign public opinion on social networks, possibly incorporate ideas disseminated in local circles into foreign policy, monitor elections abroad, determine influential Internet users in the host country during crisis situations, and organize forums of developers of software for certain events" [5, p. 38]. The British actively used social networks during the "Arab Spring" to reach out to the population of countries in the region.

The stance of the British media and political establishment on Russia's information policy remains, like that of other Western countries, sharply negative. For example, the closure in Great Britain of the bank accounts of the Russia Today television company in fall 2016 can be seen as a direct violation of the freedom of the press and human rights. No official explanations were given for blocking accounts that had funds for paying employee salaries, insurance and travel expenses. However, it is known that earlier the British media regulator Ofcom accused RT of supposedly biased coverage of developments in Syria and Ukraine [2].



Other examples in the same vein include unsubstantiated charges against Russia in the poisoning of Sergey and Yulia Skripal and the subsequent expulsion of 23 Russian diplomats; the uncovering of correspondence between a BBC journalist and a French colleague showing evidence of a cynical search for a “Russian trace” in the mass protests in France, etc. Finally, in November 2018, thanks to the efforts of a group of anonymous hackers, material from the Integrity Initiative, an anti-Russian project run by the UK’s Institute for Statecraft, became public. From the published material and explanations the Foreign Office gave about it, it follows that since 2017, the office allocated 2.2 million pounds to project developers that went toward, among other things, preparing instructions for conducting an information war with Russia and organizing relevant program clusters in nine European countries, including Germany, France and Spain [16].

### **Organization of Foreign Policy Information Support in the German Foreign Ministry**

A FEW WORDS must also be said about the organization of ISFPA in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), which liaises with other states and international intergovernmental organizations through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a network of nearly 230 foreign diplomatic offices. The main functions of Germany’s central foreign policy agency include representing the interests of the state in the international arena, promoting international exchange, and providing protection and assistance to German citizens abroad.

The ministry has a Culture and Communications Department whose central objective is planning, coordinating and implementing Germany’s policies on culture, education, and public and media relations abroad. The latter is regarded as one of the most important aspects of Germany’s foreign policy, promoting increased interest abroad in Germany’s foreign policy and a deeper understanding of “German identity” and “European values” among the population of other states.

The department has ten divisions, many of which deal with various aspects of media relations: They supervise the activities of several institutions (the Goethe Institute), media (Deutsche Welle, etc.) and associations for international cultural relations with foreign countries. They also work closely with various political foundations, NGOs and media entities.

Because the German Foreign Ministry is directly responsible for fostering a positive image of the country in the world, it is tasked with developing a wide variety of cultural programs and projects for promoting the German language abroad. For example, it organizes “Germany Year” events that include numerous cultural, economic, scientific, educational, and, of course, political campaigns.

The “Review 2014 – Rethinking Foreign Policy” project that the German Foreign Ministry launched a few years ago includes, for example, discussions on a wide range of foreign policy issues with a view to defining Germany’s role in the modern world. The project aims to involve the public and experts both within the country and abroad. In addition to discussion forums involving Foreign Ministry staff and experts, the project has a Web site, [www.review2014.de](http://www.review2014.de), where materials about the discussions and their results are posted.

The ministry’s foreign offices working in various countries do a lot of public relations and media work. For example, the press service of the German Embassy in Moscow provides services to both the media and anyone interested in Germany (tourists, students). The department offers a wealth of information about the country, its foreign policy and German-Russian relations. The press service provides information about upcoming events and projects, as well as promotes contemporary and relevant insights on Germany. It regularly issues press releases and organizes press conferences and conversations on a variety of topics. The division also provides visa support for Russian and German journalists, and their accreditation.

The unified Web site of Germany’s official representative offices in Russia [6] (the German Embassy in Moscow and consulates in Yekaterinburg, Kaliningrad, Novosibirsk, and St. Petersburg) notes that “the most up-to-date information on all matters relating to Germany can be found on the official Web site, as well as in social networks and on the Russian-language pages of the information portal about Germany” [15].

However, it should be noted that the information policy of modern Germany, a NATO member state, closely follows that of the U.S. Suffice it to recall the allegations the German newspaper *Die Welt* leveled against Russian propaganda. Meanwhile, the work of *Die Welt* journalists cannot claim to be objective, since it is committed “to supporting the transatlantic alliance and solidarity with the U.S. in the community free values” [14].

Assertive German media policies are also promoted in social net-

works, where Twitter and Facebook again have priority. For example, Russian Twitter users have repeatedly drawn the attention of Russian diplomats to the intrusive promotion of the Russian-language edition of German broadcaster Deutsche Welle: “Is Russia surrounded only by enemies? Then come here: News without embellishment and without hysterics.” Such is the “German propaganda pure and simple” [14].

In terms of the positive experience of the diplomatic agencies of other states, mention should be made of the robust training of ambassadors for “direct” work with the media that, for example, the Swedish Foreign Ministry conducts. All newly appointed heads of diplomatic missions undergo mandatory training organized by the ministry’s press service to develop skills for conducting “open mic” conversations with reporters, as well as learn techniques for holding press conferences and briefings, and how to act in front of TV cameras.

The main function of the Japanese Foreign Ministry is foreign policy planning and implementation; gathering foreign information ranks fifth on its list of priorities. In practice, however, the opposite is true: priority is given to the information function. Characteristically, Japanese diplomats focus on collecting information mainly through “open methods.” At the same time, great importance is attached to obtaining first-hand information. This work is done by regional offices. They are not responsible for analyzing this data; that is done by the Information and Analysis Department. Informational and analytical activities are also carried out by Foreign Ministry advisers who are retired diplomats and more broadly and comprehensively by research institutes.

One specific method of the Japanese Foreign Ministry’s information work is that the conclusions of its analysts (even on major issues) are often based on processing seemingly minor details. The ability to analyze small open-access events and facts, and the art of combining them in a single system and then making general conclusions based on logical inferences in many cases replaces for the Japanese the work that intelligence agencies do in other countries. “The Japanese,” wrote diplomat Vladimir Vinogradov, “may not seek information directly about phenomenon that interests them; they collect indirect data that allow them to recreate this phenomenon” [4, p. 165].

Thus, almost all foreign countries these days have developed methods and forms of information support for foreign policy activities that rely on a system of managing traditional media and the widespread introduction of new communication technologies. With the rapid development of ICT,

the information function of diplomatic agencies is itself undergoing some changes (their audience is constantly growing) and so are the ways of providing information support for foreign policy activity (in connection with the ambitious introduction of such tools as social networks, Web portals, etc.).

“Digital diplomacy” (cyber diplomacy) is a new concept in the lexicon of foreign policy departments and is considered the most important channel for working with foreign audiences, providing an opportunity to directly relay official state positions and shape public opinion. The use by official diplomatic offices and their employees of social networks to establish direct contact with foreign audiences should be viewed as a sign of the times that reflects the specificity of the current stage of evolution of the ISFPA systems of foreign countries. This type of communication is most widely implemented by staff at U.S. diplomatic missions.

The Western countries are also currently united by a common approach to the information policy of the Russian Federation. The point of this approach is to confront Russia (and China) in the global information space. Audacity is the hallmark of the information tactics Western media use in this case: The basis of any attack against the Russian state is always the presumption of Russia’s guilt. Under the pretext of exposing “Kremlin propaganda,” the country is being dragged into information conflicts that force it to take a position that is by no means beneficial to itself. This is damaging the state’s international image and adversely affecting the mentality of Russian citizens. Western information efforts are partly designed to undermine integration processes involving the Russian Federation and, more generally, devalue the idea of the Russian world. This threatens the security of not only Russia but also several other states.

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*Key words:* diplomatic activity, information support of foreign policy, digital diplomacy, United States Department of State, Foreign Office (United Kingdom), German Foreign Ministry.

## **The Yugoslav Crisis: Lessons and Repercussions**

*A. Frolov*

“History is not a teacher, but a supervisor. She does not teach anything, but only punishes us for not knowing our lessons.”

*Vasily Klyuchevsky*

TWENTY YEARS AGO, NATO unleashed a war in the very heart of Europe against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) that left blood-chilling memories on the continent. It brought destruction, loss of numerous civilian lives, serious social and political problems in Europe and elsewhere in the world, juridical disagreements, conflicts and crises not yet resolved by either the European or world community.

### **The Ins and Outs of the Events**

THE TRAGEDY of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY/FRY) was rooted in its postwar history. The leader of the Yugoslav Resistance Movement, Marshal Josip Broz Tito, enjoyed the full confidence of Stalin to the extent that the Soviet leader, who planned to station Soviet troops in the countries of what is known today as Central Europe, did not place them in Yugoslavia. Convinced that Tito was moving in the same direction as the Soviet Union, Stalin believed that he could stand opposed to the Western world on his own. After the war, however, the country gradually changed its course. Tito's wartime successes and his no less impressive peacetime initiatives increased his authority and “went to his head.” Emboldened, he began acting independently without preliminary consultations with Moscow. Stalin never forgave his excessive independence and was especially displeased with Tito's resolution to build up a

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Balkan federation without Moscow's blessing. The relations between the two countries became hostile; the League of Communists of Yugoslavia was anathematized by Moscow.

Khrushchev tried hard to restore former closeness and allied relations with Yugoslavia and failed. The Yugoslav leaders had found their comfortable niche in international affairs, viz. equidistance from the West and the East that made their country an object of benevolent attention of both. The United States and its allies courted the country that in fact moved away from Moscow; Moscow did the same to prevent Belgrade from closing ranks (God forbid!) under American banners.

Yugoslavia traded briskly with the West and the East. It got the status of the most favored nation from the United States, while the Soviet Union was forever deprived of it at the height of the *détente* on the initiative of two American pettifoggers, Senator Henry Jackson and Congressman Charles Vanik. Belgrade sold a lot of its products (many of them far from perfect) to the East in exchange for cheap fuels; its currency (dinar) was treated as freely convertible, while a tourist trip of Soviet citizens to Yugoslavia, as a visit to a capitalist country. Belgrade and Yadrin, the shops that traded in Yugoslav goods attracted huge crowds in Moscow. Tito exploited his country's status of a bridge between the West and the East to become a member (and remain for many years co-chairman) of the Non-Aligned Movement founded in 1961 at the Belgrade Conference.

As soon as the Soviet Union, one of the poles of worldwide confrontation, left the scene, Yugoslavia, no longer an object of haggling, sank into a quagmire of internal contradictions and gradual disintegration. No longer an attractive woman, it became an irritating beggar: a fast and amazing transformation. The Non-Aligned Movement lost its former meaning: in the past, it had avoided both capitalism Western-style and socialism Soviet-style. In an absence of the latter, isolation from "victorious capitalism" became senseless. Globalization removed state borders and offered earlier unimaginable contacts. Neither Washington nor Brussels needed Yugoslavia as a united federation. Moscow was too busy at home to look around while the Soviet consumers inspired by the prospects of cooperation with the West no longer needed imports from Yugoslavia.

It seems that the leaders of the FRY, a trimmed version of the previous country, were slow on the uptake. The United States that replaced the disintegrated Soviet Union in Southern and Eastern Europe was little, if at all, interested in the domestic problems of Yugoslavia. The new master



wanted to adjust the Balkans to its tastes which meant, in particular, weak, disunited and multi-vectoral Yugoslavia. Slobodan Milosevic, president of the smaller version of Yugoslavia, remained convinced that, very much like in the past, he would get away with everything. It was his worst error: from that time on, he had no rights while the new master proved to be no less (even if not more) harsh than Stalin. In his time, Stalin had not been reckless enough to invade Yugoslavia to remove its leader; American President Clinton did not hesitate.

The FRY did not and could not threaten the United States or NATO either militarily or economically. Seen from America, the country was neither fish nor fowl: it never wanted to join either NATO or the EU since its policy did not harmonize with these institutions; it betrayed no intention to join the newly born Eurozone; it had its

own currency and pursued its own monetary policy. The West, on its side, preferred to deal with small dependent countries. Yugoslavia that wanted to preserve at least its trimmed federation threatened the West by its disobedience and, therefore, should be punished.

As fate would have it, Yugoslavia burdened by unfavorable external and internal factors and circumstances aggravated by crises outside (in Bosnia, its closest neighbor) and inside its borders (in Kosovo (Metohija)) found itself in the center of what the military-political circles of the United States devised for Europe as part of their wide strategic plans.

NATO that had lost its main target (the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Treaty Organization) was losing, despite lavish funding, its political and ideological rationale. Its disoriented generals were obviously at a loss. The bloc needed a motivation, an outstanding action to mobilize its relaxed members, inspire them and reanimate the structure. For over a decade, the NATO countries had not been threatened either practically or even theoretically; nobody claimed their territories. They should be

Aggression against Yugoslavia meant that NATO went outside the limits of its territory and its responsibilities as defined by Article 5 of its Charter, which says that the use of armed force is possible in cases of "an armed attack against one or more [members] in Europe or North America."

awakened and inspired. The Yugoslav crisis, Yugoslavia proved to be the best choice.

The Kosovo crisis was of secondary importance for Washington; this explains why Kosovar Albanians worked hard to milk the situation for all it was worth. In fact, their interests and those of the leaders of the United States and NATO coincided, at least partially. No wonder the Kosovo delegates remained intransigent when talking to Belgrade at the negotiation table on the eve of the airstrikes. The fact that the United States refused to help finance any programs to help Albanian refugees within the framework of the United Nations (which would have been inevitable if the Kosovo crisis exacerbated) meant that the U.S. was contemplating the use of force to solve the problem.<sup>1</sup>

It was necessary to inspire the weakly motivated American military-industrial complex with new orders and new targets that could be specified only in the course of a real war. It was necessary, in particular, to test the latest achievements of military technologies including such masterpieces of military industry as B-1B bombers, the F-117 Nighthawk, the first operational aircraft to be designed on the basis of stealth technology, etc.

Much time had passed since the last big military operation – driving Iraq out of Kuwait in January-February 1991; the American military were bored and might even lose their military skills. The Pentagon needed more money and got it in the wake of the Yugoslav drama. In 2000, its budget was increased by about \$13 billion (up to \$300 billion); the process was continued – in five years it grew by about 1.5 times.

For political reasons, the U.S. Administration needed a distraction. In January 1998, the United States had been plunged into a noisy scandal around the sexual ties between the 42nd President Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky, White House intern, that developed into a campaign of state importance. The president's political adversaries were pushing for impeachment; late in 1998, the votes in the House of Representatives were approximately equal; the same happened in the Senate with an insignificant Republican majority.

It proved impossible to gather the needed majority (2/3) for impeachment; the president was de facto acquitted, yet common people continued discussing the scandal. President Clinton was a lame duck anyway; yet the inexorably approaching date of the next presidential election forced the Democratic Party to act promptly to improve its tarnished reputation. “Democratic Party candidate and sitting vice president Al Gore said that

Clinton's scandal had been 'a drag' that deflated the enthusiasm of their party's base and had the effect of reducing Democratic votes."<sup>2</sup>

Some experts pointed to the interconnection between the sexual scandal associated with Bill Clinton and the events unfolding in Yugoslavia. "It seems that the huge attention to the scandal was an instrument of diverting attention of the media from the intervention of NATO."<sup>3</sup> This is not totally correct: Bill Clinton and the Democrats were building up tension around Yugoslavia that ended in a war to suppress an interest in the sexual scandal and detract public attention from it.

There was a purely economic reason. On January 1, 1999, 11 out of 15 (at that time) members of the European Union presented at the world financial markets the Euro as a common European currency. (Three years later coins and banknotes came into circulation.) Very worried by the unificatory processes unfolding in Europe and the possibility of an alternative financial and, probably, political power center, Washington needed a problem that would slow down the European advances. As could be expected, the U.S. shifted the burden of restoration of the war-ravaged infrastructure on Europeans and not because they had spent less money than the Americans on the military phase of the operation.

Stephen Zunes, Professor at the University of San Francisco, has written that "there's a fair amount of evidence to suggest that the Clinton Administration falsely assumed the threat of bombing would lead to a last-minute capitulation by Milosevic, but, having made the threat, felt obligated to follow through."<sup>4</sup> This looks far-fetched: in all previous wars and conflicts, nobody capitulated at the first signs of danger while Americans invariably had to support their verbal threats and warnings with limited interventions that later turned out to be longer and wider.

In this way, the military phase of the operation was being prepared at full speed; Milosevic was demonized while brainwashing in the United States and in Europe went on at full speed.

### **Beyond Norms and Borders**

THE FORMAT of an article does not allow me to go into details of how pressure was built up, how aggression was prepared and realized. This has been covered in detail in the chronicles of that time. This was not my aim, anyway. Here are, however, highly important political-legal aspects that deserve more attention: the international norms and rules violated by the invaders.

First, aggression against Yugoslavia meant that NATO went outside the limits of its territory and its responsibilities as defined by Article 5 of the Charter of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which says that the use of armed force is possible in cases of “an armed attack against one or more [members] in Europe or North America.”<sup>5</sup> Yugoslavia did not attack any of the Alliance’s members and did not invade their territories. The fact that Yugoslavia was a European country was the only (geographical) association with the Charter.

According to the same charter, as soon as hostilities began, “any such armed attack and all measures taken as a result thereof shall immediately be reported to the Security Council. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security.”<sup>6</sup> This means that as soon as the UN SC was informed NATO was expected to discontinue its armed operation. This was not done.

The United States (very much as earlier in case of Korea and Vietnam) acted without a mandate of the UN Security Council for the simple reason that it would have been vetoed by the Russian Federation. Washington began bombing without informing the UN SC: it obviously placed its interests above international law.

International laws were repeatedly violated in case of Kosovo, internationally recognized as part of Serbia; this was, legally speaking, an internal conflict. “In addition, the democratically elected president of the self-proclaimed, if unrecognized, Kosovar Albanian Republic, Ibrahim Rugova, didn’t request such intervention. In fact, he opposed it. He obviously did not want an invasion” but NATO pushed him aside: the “rescuers” arrived uninvited.

The position of the United States can be explained, to a certain extent, by Washington’s great displeasure with the UN on the whole that irritated Washington by some of its obviously anti-American resolutions. Displeased with the UN leadership, Washington was deliberately lagging behind with its funding (under the agreement the United States was responsible for 20% of financing). In 1999, it refused to pay \$1 billion, the amount it poured into one week of the military operation in Yugoslavia. This explains in part why Washington ignored the UN in case of Yugoslavia as well.

The U.S. leaders not only violated international law but also the laws of their own country. Professor Zunes has pointed out that it is the prerogative of Congress to declare a war. This time the U.S. leaders per-

formed a trick: under the War Powers Resolution of 1973, the president had the right to commit the United States to an armed conflict within a span of 60 days (the interval that allowed Congress either to continue fighting or stop the military operation) in case of “a national emergency” (probably an echo of Pearl Harbor).

There was no “state of national emergency,” while the attempts to put Milosevic on the same footing with Hitler “were hyperbolic in terms of the ability to threaten any nation beyond the borders of the old Yugoslavia.” The same fully applies to his alleged desire to unfold a war on the territory of former SFRY in order to subjugate it.<sup>7</sup> Professor Zunes has pointed out: “As a result, some have questioned U.S. double standards towards intervention such as why the United States didn’t intervene in far more serious humanitarian crises, particularly in Rwanda in 1994, where there clearly was an actual genocide in progress.”<sup>8</sup> In this way, he has defused the arguments the Clinton Administration used to start the military operation in Yugoslavia and questioned the right of the president to launch a war.

As could be expected, the operation did not end in 60 days; the military operation of the North Atlantic Alliance went on for 11 weeks; NATO delivered over 2 thousand airstrikes at Yugoslavia with 429 thousand pieces of ammunition (some of them depleted uranium bombs); the operation claimed about 20 thousand civilian and 1 thousand military lives; over 5 thousand were wounded; 1 thousand missed. Albanians were not spared either: in May 1999, the airstrike at the Albanian village of Koriša killed from 48 to 87 (according to different sources) and wounded from 60 to 100 people.

### **Russia’s Mediation Mission**

WHEN preparing for the use of force in Yugoslavia, the United States had to take Russia into account as the only state that could stand up against its plans. American assessments of Russia’s military forces did not stir up any apprehensions: after the Chechen campaign of 1994-1995, the Russian army was in dubious state.

Here is an interesting quote from a document of U.S. Congress (to which the right to declare a war belongs):

“Russian military readiness is at the lowest level since the 1930s. Among the armed services, the strategic nuclear forces have generally maintained a reasonable level of readiness, although even their readiness

has reportedly declined somewhat. Elsewhere, readiness has fallen sharply.

“In 1995, the German Foreign Ministry estimated that fewer than half of Russia’s ground force divisions were ‘operational’.... in 1995, only 20 percent of Russia’s tanks were operational.... the Russian General Staff was hard-pressed to find combat-ready forces for the invasion of Chechnya and actually had to send in naval infantry units from as far away as Vladivostok.... After the Chechen campaign of 1994-1995 the situation worsened. Russia’s military research and development (R&D) establishment faces similar difficulties because of reduced defense spending. As with defense industry, few R&D institutes or labs have closed. But many scientists who are nominally employed there receive no salaries and are forced to work elsewhere, often in non-scientific jobs in the service sector.... Funds for training made up one percent of the formal 1997 defense budget.... Nearly all sources agree that Russian military morale has sunk to a low level. One major reason is the government’s persistent failure to pay salaries on time. From beginning to end, operations in Chechnya revealed very low levels of combat readiness. Readiness has deteriorated since then.”<sup>9</sup> To be continued with a great share of sadness.

On the whole, in Russia, NATO bombings were denounced; protest actions were held outside the American embassy in Moscow; one of the protestors used an RPG-18 Mukha to fire at the embassy building. Everybody knows about Primakov's Loop over the Atlantic when chairman of the government of the Russian Federation who flew to the United States turned his plane back as soon as he learned that the war had begun. On March 24, President Yeltsin called on the NATO countries to stop the military adventure.

At that time, American leaders did not want to rupture all relations with Moscow: a mediation mission of sorts was offered as an alternative. On April 14, President Yeltsin appointed retired premier Viktor Chernomyrdin his special representative on settling the conflict in Yugoslavia which was a not a conflict but a war with Yugoslavia. Russian experts criticized the mission on several points:

- Being involved as an intermediary, Russia did not want to quarrel with the West over Yugoslavia.
- The West (the U.S.) was satisfied with the choice of the intermediary.
- In effect, Russia’s mission was limited to informing Milosevic about the ultimatums of the West (NATO and the U.S.).

- The intermediary wasted a lot of time getting to the essence of the problem instead of immediately coming to the point.

- The initiative pushed aside professional diplomacy.<sup>10</sup>

It is much easier to criticize than to go to the point. First, the mission had its internal logic: the intermediary had to find out who were ready to side with Moscow; the visit to Yugoslavia was the second step followed by the visit to the West. The intermediary proceeded from the social-economic context of Russia that was rising from the economic disaster caused by the 1998 crisis. The relations with the West, the only source of money, would be inevitably strained by Russia's mediation mission.

Second, as the main actors in Yugoslavia, the U.S. and NATO were free to recognize or reject Russia's mission as a fig leaf of sorts. We could have expected that more experienced experts in international relations or diplomats were appointed but their level would look inadequate to Washington. It remains to be seen whether presidents and heads of state would have taken the words of the Russian representative into account. We should turn to what the man who organized the mission had to say about it: "I imposed a very hard mission on Viktor Stepanovich [Chernomyrdin. – *Ed.*]. At that moment, there were no other politicians to whom I could entrust it. Chernomyrdin was known and respected both in Yugoslavia and in the West; he was a weighty figure in the eyes of the American political elite. This unique combination allowed him to discuss the issue with an eye at the result: prompt discontinuation of fighting."<sup>11</sup>

This is true: for several years, Chernomyrdin was a co-chair of the U.S.-Russian Joint Commission on Economic and Technological Cooperation (the Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission); he had contacts in Washington and personal contacts with European leaders – Helmut Kohl, Jacques Chirac, Tony Blair, NATO head Xavier Solana, and President of Yugoslavia Slobodan Milosevic. No other person, except Primakov, in Boris Yeltsin's closest circle could compete with Chernomyrdin in this respect. However, at the time Primakov was filling the official post of chairman of the government of the Russian Federation. (On May 12, 1999, Yeltsin dismissed him.) All other available persons did not fit the category while many of top Russian official and unofficial figures had no personal contacts with Milosevic, let alone Bill Clinton.

Third, in world practice, ultimatums are a weapon of an aggressor rather than of its victim. This explains why the Russian intermediary had to inform the Yugoslav side about the positions and demands of the

NATO members, the United States in the first place, and to operate in a very limited political space.

Fourth, no matter how many people can or want to become intermediaries in crises and armed conflicts, more likely than not this role goes to those whom the world knows well and who are not necessarily career diplomats. They might be retired presidents, premiers, heads and presidents of international organizations: former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, world-famous former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, former Prime Minister of Sweden Olof Palme, and, later, former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. Intermediaries of a lower level stir up suspicions among the sides involved in a conflict that they are not serious enough.

And, finally, about the speed of decision-making. The bombing that was going on for three weeks unabated probably required more haste. Chernomyrdin, however, decided to act without haste: he built up a staff of professionals, ensured support of the presidents of former union republics – Belarus, Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan and discussed the matter with ambassadors of the leading Western countries stationed in Moscow before going to Yugoslavia, Western Europe and the United States.

“We had to take into account the state of Russia’s economy, oil prices and our debts,” Viktor Chernomyrdin told me about the conditions in which he had to carry out his mission. “Russia’s sovereign debt was \$140 billion, or nearly 80% of GDP. We borrowed money in the West and our economy depended on it, the debts should be returned. Economy was nearly dead; we had no money to pay salaries. Oil cost was \$17 per barrel. Today, it is twice as high [the conversation took place in 2004]. To start a war with the West meant to bite the hand that fed us. Economic problems apart, our armed forces were in a sad state. Only 30% of weapons were up to the mark. The rest was inherited from Soviet times (rearmament began in 2004-2005). We had no chances: the state of our economy and armed forces excluded an armed conflict with the West. Yugoslavia should be saved, this much was clear but not at the price of a war with the United States and NATO. The West was on the horseback, for it the sky was the limit, yet we should force it to see reason. It is highly irresponsible to say that we could have done this or that but never bothered.”

It should be said that Americans played cat and mouse with the Russian mission: they offered variants (within strictly outlined limits) according to the ups and downs on the battlefield.



The main question is: Why did the American side agree to the mission (Russian, of all variants) mission? In all previous regional wars and conflicts, Washington never invited a third side as an intermediary.

The answer should be sought for in the political and military contexts. First, aggression against a Slavic country was very painful for Russia. Second, as one of the permanent members of the UN SC, a nuclear power and the only force that could oppose NATO's aggression in Yugoslavia, Russia should be somehow pacified. It would be unwise to irritate President Yeltsin with a nuclear football at his disposal: nobody could predict his actions if Russia was ignored. The United States did not want a mess in its relations with Russia in all other directions: Chinese, Iranian, Middle Eastern, etc.

The U.S. hoped that airstrikes would be enough to avoid a ground operation (with the following loss of American and NATO lives and damage to the images of their leaders) that would become inevitable if the airstrikes had failed. Washington was determined to change the situation in its favor within the legal 60-day limit.

There is the third and no less important argument: the leaders of the Alliance that had been relaxing far too long were not sure of a cakewalk in the Balkans. A stubborn resistance of the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) was fraught with complete loss of face for NATO. Russia was needed as an alternative airfield of sorts hence a carrot of mediation.

Here is another question: Who suggested the initiative and Russia as an intermediary? Boris Yeltsin offered no answer to this question; he wrote that Russia could have been drawn into fighting if the war lasted a couple of months longer. To avoid this, Russia needed an instrument of pressure on NATO and Milosevic.<sup>12</sup> Viktor Chernomyrdin wrote in his memoirs that Americans had come up with the initiative when the conflict had gone too far and that they had pointed to him as the best choice for the role of an intermediary. At the same time, the then Vice-President of the United States Al Gore hinted that this suggestion carried certain risks for Washington.<sup>13</sup>

The intermediary effort was not a big success, but it was not a failure either. It brought peace and invited lukewarm acceptance in Russia and Yugoslavia. European leaders thanked Russia for its peacekeeping mission, an indirect admission of its authority on the continent. Personally, Chernomyrdin was disappointed to the extent that he refused to attend the final meeting in Bonn with EU representatives and let Martti Ahtisaari to report on his first and last visit to Belgrade. The United States, likewise,

did not achieve all its aims. Milosevic was not removed from his post. (Later, by political and economic manipulations he was ousted from power and transferred to the International Criminal Court in The Hague for crimes against humanity where met his untimely death.)

### **Yugoslavia: Lessons for Russia, Europe and the World**

IT WAS AFTER THE WAR in Yugoslavia that the principled disagreement emerged between Russia and the West on the methods of dealing with international problems. The gap continued widening even if certain positions were drawn closer for tactical reasons.

In the wake of the Yugoslav war, Russia staked on the development and improvement of its conventional armaments and armed forces which should receive better weapons and upgrade their combat capabilities and battle readiness. Today, the Russian Armed Forces that can bring any aggressor to reason are one of the results of the drama in Yugoslavia.

Europeans have finally realized that they should think about their security rather than wait for what they will be offered from across the ocean. The recently announced course at a European army is an evidence of this.

It seems that the United States should learn the lessons of the Yugoslav war. The developments in the world force America to think about profits and domination yet not infrequently its plans and calculations prove to be wrong. Let us turn to history. In 1904, the U.S. supported Japan in its war with Russia morally and, as it turned out later, materially. "I was thoroughly well pleased with the Japanese victory, for Japan is playing our game," said President Theodore Roosevelt in 1905.<sup>14</sup> By the irony of fate, in December 1941, Japanese began a war with the United States by destroying the American military base in Pearl Harbor, they sunk four battleships, two destroyers, 188 warplanes, killed nearly 2.5 thousand military, seriously damaged four battleships, three cruisers, nearly 160 warplanes, and wounded nearly 1,200. Nearly one thousand military died on the battleship Arizona.

Americans responded with nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki when the war was moving toward its end. The United States paid for these two nuclear bombs with long and bloody wars in Asia (first in Korea and later in Vietnam), in which the number of American losses (not only those killed and crippled but also those with mental and drinking problems and broken families) was close to the number of those who

had perished in nuclear bombings in August 1945. In Vietnam alone, America lost nearly 60 thousand while 150 thousand were gravely wounded.

In Yugoslavia, the United States pretended to defend Muslims, Kosovo Albanians. By the irony of fate, two years later, Muslim extremists delivered a heavy blow at the United States by destroying on September 11, 2001 the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center, the ruins of which buried 2.5 thousand. The United States responded with an invasion in Afghanistan only to be confronted by Al-Qaeda, which they had created. The war is going on for 18 years now.

On February 5, 2003, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell displayed, at a plenary session of the UN SC, the now famous model vial of anthrax to support his claims that Iraq produced chemical weapons. Having invaded the country, the United States found neither chemical weapons nor Al-Qaeda against which Iraqi dictator Saddam Husain had waged an uncompromising struggle. At the end of the day, Al-Qaeda and its armed cells have spread far and wide across Iraq to become well-known by massive suicide bomber attacks and chemical weapons it brought to Iraq.

The Caliphate the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL) is the main child of the American armed operation in Iraq. It spread to Syria and finally occupied the territory much bigger than the territory of Iraq officially recognized by the UN. Officers of the Iraqi army with a good fighting experience fled American occupation to fill commanding posts in ISIL. It has mobile armed forces and well-equipped armed units supported by oil money. Its members are bold and cruel; two world's strongest armed forces – of the United States and Russia – needed more than four years to suppress them. The same was needed to defeat fascist Germany in World War II. This is merely the history and logic of the events.

Once violated, international law is no longer respected as unassailable; state sovereignty no longer protects against aggression; the legitimacy of any regime can be doubted at the whim of external actors. The world after Yugoslavia became less safe; today, the world community should pool forces to improve the situation and return the world to the norms of international law.

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Zunes S. *The US War on Yugoslavia: Ten Years Later* // [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/stephen-zunes/the-us-war-on-yugoslavia\\_b\\_211172.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/stephen-zunes/the-us-war-on-yugoslavia_b_211172.html)

<sup>2</sup> [https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skandal\\_Clinton\\_-\\_Lewinski](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skandal_Clinton_-_Lewinski)

<sup>3</sup> [https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bombardirovki\\_Yugoslavii\\_\(1999\)](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bombardirovki_Yugoslavii_(1999))

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Severoatlanticheskiy dogovor Washington, Federalny okrug Columbia, 4 April 1949 // [https://www.nato.int/cps/ru/natohq/official\\_texts\\_17120.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/ru/natohq/official_texts_17120.htm)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Zunes S. Op. cit.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. Post factum Bill Clinton took the blame. He has written, in particular: “The failure to try to stop Rwanda’s tragedies became one of the greatest regrets of my presidency” // [https://bookscafe.net/book/klinton\\_bill-zhit\\_otdavaya-162178.html](https://bookscafe.net/book/klinton_bill-zhit_otdavaya-162178.html), p. 38.

<sup>9</sup> Goldman, Stuart D. *Russian Conventional Armed Forces: On the Verge of Collapse?* September 4, 1997. Wash.: Congressional Research Service. The Library of Congress, pp. 19-28.

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<sup>11</sup> Yeltsin B. *Presidentskiy marafon*. Moscow: Izdatelstvo AST, 2006, p. 287.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 288.

<sup>13</sup> Chernomyrdin V. *Iyzov*. Moscow: Moskovskiy pisatel’, 2003, p. 39.

<sup>14</sup> Quoted from: Lan V.I. *SShA ot ispano-amerikanskoy do Pervoy mirovoy voyny*. Moscow: Nauka, 1975, p. 169.

*Key words:* NATO, the U.S., the EU, Russia, Yugoslavia, S. Milosevic, B. Clinton, B. Yeltsin, Kosovo, Russia’s mediation mission.

## 78 Days of War That Cannot Be Forgotten or Forgiven

*Igor Gojkovic,  
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IT WAS WEDNESDAY, March 24, 1999. At eight o'clock in the evening, the first NATO shells fell on military and civilian facilities in Belgrade, Pristina, and Nis. The NATO operation against Yugoslavia, officially codenamed "Allied Force," had begun. Meanwhile, the U.S. Armed Forces' involvement in the NATO operation was codenamed "Noble Anvil," commonly called "Merciful Angel" in Serbia.

In Podgorica, the first bombs fell on the airport as a passenger aircraft on a regularly scheduled flight from Belgrade was landing. A 78-day crime spree began. The Yugoslav government declared martial law. Residents of Belgrade for the first time saw air defense systems in action in the night sky over the darkened city. And they heard alarm sirens for the first time since Tito's death in 1980. During the first bombing and cruise missile attacks, which lasted three hours on the first night of the assault, more than 40 facilities were struck: five airports, five barracks, communication centers, command posts, warehouses, and two military plants of the Obilic thermal power station in Kosovo. Ten soldiers were killed and 38 were injured.

NATO bombers flew mainly from military bases in Italy and entered Yugoslav airspace from the territory of Albania, Croatia, Bosnia, Hungary, Macedonia, and Bulgaria. Cruise missiles were launched from ships and submarines of the U.S. Sixth Fleet in the Adriatic and Ionian Seas. Over 430 enemy aircraft took part in the first night of bombing of Serbia and Montenegro.

The attacks involved aircraft from the U.S., Great Britain, France, Spain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Canada, Turkey, Italy, and Germany. They represented almost the entire NATO alliance, except for Iceland and

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Luxembourg, which had no military aircraft, and Greece, which declined to participate in the bombing of Serbia. Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland, which had just joined the alliance, did not have enough time to prepare to participate in the attack.

Even though the NATO-led criminals publicly claimed to be using high-precision weapons, more missiles and bombs hit civilian targets than military ones. They bombed everything: administrative buildings, houses, schools, the residence of the head of state, government buildings, hospitals, maternity homes, kindergartens, industrial facilities, the editorial offices of newspapers and magazines, cultural monuments, churches, monasteries.

In addition to civilian facilities, bombs fell on the Crvena Zastava automobile plant in Kragujevac, a tobacco factory in Nis, civilian factories in Cacak and Valjevo, and the main thermal-electric power plant in Belgrade. The bombing of oil refineries in Pancevo and Novi Sad led to a major environmental disaster, the consequences of which are felt yet today. NATO bombs destroyed or severely damaged 25,000 homes, 470 kilometers of roads and 595 km of railways.

In early April, the aggressor decided to make bridges its main target. Novi Sad was particularly damaged. Not a single bridge over the Danube River was left fully intact. Crossings were destroyed in Backa Palanka, in Beska, in Ostrznica, in Raska, and throughout Pomoravlju and southern Serbia. A total of 38 bridges were destroyed and 44 were seriously damaged.

Then Belgrade's citizens, who live on the banks of two large rivers, spontaneously began to gather on the bridges across the Danube and Sava Rivers and shielded them with their own bodies around the clock. This civic action was broadcast on live TV. The aggressor did not dare bomb them.

During the three months of NATO aggression, the criminals dropped 22,000 tons of bombs: 3 kg for every inhabitant of Serbia. More than 1,150 aircraft launched a total 30,000 air strikes against Serbia, launched 1,300 cruise missiles and dropped 37,000 cluster bombs, which are prohibited under the Geneva Convention. In three months, the aggressor spent a sum of money that could have fed 80 million people over that same time, according to NATO's own estimates. Yugoslavia suffered direct material damage of almost \$130 billion.

The crimes of NATO aircraft against the civilian population of Serbia and Montenegro are recorded in black letters in the history of Europe. The

downtown area of Aleksinac was completely destroyed; more than 20 people were killed and more than 50 injured. On April 12, a passenger train was destroyed at the entrance to the Grdelica Gorge. The exact number of victims has not been determined.

On April 3, the aggressor bombed a bus carrying women and children near Pec, killing 20 passengers and injuring 43 others. In the town of Murino, Montenegro, where not a single military unit was located, six civilians, including three primary school students, were killed and

eight were injured during the bombing of a bridge over the Lim River on April 30. At least 40 innocent civilians were killed on May 1 when a NATO missile destroyed a passenger bus traveling from Nis to Podujevo. A market and hospital in Nis were bombed on May 7 with cluster bombs. Fifteen civilians were killed and more than 70 were wounded. Bombs dropped on May 14 on a convoy of Albanian refugees near the village of Korisa killed 87 civilians and wounded about 100 others. German planes bombed a bridge in the town of Varvarin on May 30, leaving 10 people dead and more than 30 wounded.

On the last night in May, in Surdulica, NATO aircraft bombed a gerontological center, a lung disease sanatorium and a pavilion that was housing refugees from Republika Srpska Krajina: 20 people were killed and 88 injured.

The destruction of the Chinese Embassy building in Belgrade on May 7 that left three Chinese diplomats dead and several of the mission's staff injured stirred international controversy.

It was proved that the aggressors used depleted uranium shells, which have enormous lethal and destructive force. And the consequences of their use will be manifest for many decades.

In 78 days of bombing, 1,002 military and police officers and almost 4,000 civilians, including children, infirm and elderly people, were killed. These civilian casualties were called "collateral damage" by NATO spokesman Jamie Shea. About 12,500 people were injured: 6,000 civilians, including 2,700 children.

At the time, almost all Western TV channels showed heartbreaking stories about crowds of Albanian refugees who were allegedly expelled

The crimes of NATO aircraft against the civilian population of Serbia and Montenegro are recorded in black letters in the history of Europe.

from Kosovo by Serbian forces. But the truth was quite different. Local Albanians were fleeing, but not from the Serbs: They were fleeing NATO bombs, which did not discriminate based on ethnicity. For example, on April 14, NATO aircraft fired twice on a convoy of Albanian refugees on the Prizren-Djakovica road, killing more than 75 ethnic Albanians. The attack took place in broad daylight in front of witnesses, so NATO and Western media outlets were unable to blame the Serbian side.

At a time when the aggressor was trying to “blind” Serbia’s air defenses by electronic means, the Yugoslav Army was rendered valuable assistance by more than 30,000 amateur radio operators who through their radio stations organized a radio network that reported attacks by enemy airplanes and cruise missiles. This was particularly effective in cases where enemy aircraft and helicopters were flying extremely low, outside the radar range.

In early 1999, the Yugoslav Air Force only had 16 relatively modern Mig-29 aircraft. The military leadership, even before the bombing began, understood that the three remaining Mig-21 squadrons did not even have a theoretical chance of surviving an unequal battle with the most modern NATO fighters. The operational life of these aircraft had already expired, and they needed overhaul maintenance that could not be conducted because of international sanctions.

The only runway that remained virtually untouched was at the Slatina military airport near Pristina, which the aggressor planned to use after a ground invasion of Kosovo. All the infrastructure around it was destroyed.

Because the opponent had technical and numerical superiority, it could be opposed only using a creative approach. For example, equipment and military infrastructure were carefully disguised. The Air Force and Air Defense Forces redeployed mobile elements 689 times without once being discovered. Military cunning made it possible to avoid large losses of human life and military equipment.

The Yugoslav Air Defense Force was also armed with obsolete Soviet 2K12 Kub and S-125M Neva systems. Even so, on March 27, an American F-117A (“Night Hawk”) tactical stealth bomber was shot down. For NATO’s military command, this was a real shock: How could something that could not be seen be shot down?

The F-117 aircraft took off from the Italian base of Aviano and then through Slovenia and Hungary, entering Serbian airspace along the border with Romania. At 8:36 pm, it dropped two GBU-10 Paveway II laser-



guided bombs on the Yugoslav underground command center in Strazevica, in the Belgrade district of Rakovica. After returning toward Hungary at about 8:40 pm, it was discovered on the radar by the unit of Lt. Col. Dani, located on the outskirts of the village of Simanovci, 30 km west of Belgrade. Radar contact was lost twice in one minute, but the plane showed up clearly on the screen a third time. At that moment, the air defense battery fired a volley of two Russian-made 5V27D missiles. The "Night Hawk," the pride of American aviation, crashed in the village of Budjanovci. The serial number of the Russian missile, NZh7433, has gone down in history.

The F-117 in the village Budjanovci became the first and only aircraft of this type in the world to be officially shot down. Its wreckage is now in the Aviation Museum at Nikola Tesla Airport in Belgrade. Some parts of the American bomber were hauled away by locals and journalists as souvenirs, while other parts were transferred to the armies of friendly countries.

This event meant not only the loss of the most modern U.S. combat aircraft, but it also destroyed the myth about the invulnerability of the F-117 aircraft, which for many years had invaluable psychological value for U.S. military operations. It was an intellectual, financial and technological defeat, the consequences of which immeasurably exceeded the material losses. The downing of the first American stealth aircraft on March 27, 1999, horrified the top military brass of the U.S. It was not just a plane that was brought down but a whole concept!

On May 2, 1999, an equally significant event took place: An American F-16CG was destroyed 35 km west of Belgrade. The plane, piloted by David Goldfein (now a general, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force), came down in the village of Nakucani, on the slopes of Mount Cer. Parts of the plane and unfired missiles were scattered over an area of more than 2 hectares.

The pilot ejected, and many residents together with hunters and local police immediately gathered where he landed and began looking for him. At around 4:30 a.m., three American helicopters appeared from the direction of Bosnia, flying very low through gorges and over the riverbeds of small rivers. They flew over the crash site, and the crowd of locals, hunters, police officers and several soldiers began to shoot at the aggressors. American special forces, whose faces were clearly visible in the helicopters, returned fire, but fortunately no one was injured on the ground. American bullets left visible traces on the walls of houses, and

about 200 shell casings were found in the grass. After a short shootout, the helicopters flew to the village of Sinosevic, where Goldfein was hiding in a vineyard. He was picked up and taken to Bosnia.

On the ground were a pilot's seat, a parachute, a pistol, a helmet, accessories, and blood-soaked gloves. That morning, more than 10,000 people arrived in the village of Nakucani from surrounding villages, rejoicing over another downed enemy aircraft. All of them wanted to take something from the wreckage of the plane as a souvenir to commemorate this historic moment. The local gypsies also wanted in on the action: They tied ropes around the plane's engine and tried to drag it away, to scrap the metal.

On the morning of May 20, 1999, another enemy aircraft was shot down in Croatia, in the Spacvan forest near the Serbian border. The Croatian firefighters who put out the blaze described the downed plane as something like a black flying saucer with rounded edges and no vertical stabilizer. NATO soldiers from Bosnia soon arrived at the site, surrounded it and blocked outside access to the wreckage. Over the next three months, everything that remained of the mysterious airplane was removed in covered trucks. In addition, even the entire top layer of the earth was removed; a small lake is on the site today. Belgrade media outlets immediately reported that another pride of American aviation, a B-2A bomber, had been shot down, but there is no official evidence.

In general, data on NATO's actual losses of military personnel and equipment during the hostilities against Yugoslavia still vary greatly depending on sources.

The exploits of Yugoslav pilots, who fought using Yugoslav-made Orao and Super Galeb G-4 planes, which supported the Pristina Corps in Kosovo and Metohija, have been unjustly forgotten. From March 25 to 4 April, 1999, these obsolete ground-attack aircraft attacked 15 positions and facilities of Albanian terrorists on 24 occasions.

Despite the almost round-the-clock presence of enemy aircraft in the air, transport helicopters carried out 104 flights carrying 94 wounded soldiers from the frontier of Kobar and Djeravica, and evacuated the bodies of dead soldiers. And on the return trip, they ferried reinforcements, ammunition and goods. The helicopters used the "small step" tactic (the helicopters flew directly over roads, constantly changing speed from 40-50 km per hour to 100 km/h) and simulated the movement of cars so that enemy AEW aircraft would not identify them as helicopters. Sometimes the enemy did detect them, but the pilots were warned in time, and they

managed to land their helicopters at the first suitable site. After waiting a while, the helicopters would again take to the air. The “small step” tactic made it possible to minimize losses in the struggle with an overwhelmingly superior opponent.

“Civilized” Europe caused a lot of grief for the Serbian people. And today, some in Serbia are ready to extend a hand of friendship to those who two decades ago killed their relatives, friends and neighbors. But those who defended their country like Col. Gvozden Urosevic will never extend them a hand. He said he was invited to meet with Dale Zelko, the pilot of the downed F 117A, who traveled to Serbia in 2012. He refused: “Many of our children have died, and I will never forget and forgive NATO.”

*Key words:* Yugoslavia, bombings, NATO operations, American stealth bomber, Russian missiles, civilian losses.

## Back to the Future

*P. Frolov*

I only wished to say that ideas that have great results are always simple ones. My whole idea is that if vicious people are united and constitute a power, then honest folk must do the same. Now that's simple enough.

*Leo Tolstoy, War and Peace*

TWENTY YEARS AGO, in March 1999, NATO launched aggression against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It ended 78 days later with the so-called Kumanovo Agreement and the de facto separation of Kosovo and Metohija from Yugoslavia. Practically all NATO members sent their air forces to bomb peaceful cities and villages, causing huge losses to the national economy, destroying infrastructure and claiming over 1700 civilian lives, about 400 of them children, commemorated by the heart-piercing monument in the very center of Belgrade in Tašmajdan Park.

Four year later, in 2003, the country that in the 20th century had reached unimaginable heights of social prosperity and played an active role in building the postwar world, perished at the turn of the 21st century; unable to cope with the challenges of the new post-socialist epoch, it disappeared from the political maps of Europe. This country was Yugoslavia.

It was in the late 19th century that the idea of a united state of South Slavs appeared. The Austrian and Croatian (Austro-Hungarian at the time) scholars called the Slavic population Yugoslavs and their culture and literature Yugoslavian. While Austria-Hungary was eliminating all ethnic distinctions to realize its expansionist designs in the Balkans, the Southern Slavs did the same to achieve political unity, economic and ethno-cultural development and prosperity.

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**Pyotr Frolov**, Minister Counselor, Embassy of the Russian Federation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2015-2018); [ioselezneva@gmail.com](mailto:ioselezneva@gmail.com)

By the 1870s, Turkey had lost a lot of its former positions in Europe: it could no longer control the Balkans; a gradual process of its withdrawal from Europe was actively stimulated by Russia, Great Britain, Italy, Germany, and France.

For a fairly long time, Russia had been supporting the national-liberation movement of the Orthodox Slavs of the Balkans, even if with a certain apprehension lest it developed into a powerful federation of Southern Slavs. Russia hoped that it would be able to control the Balkan peoples by pulling secret diplomatic strings to pursue its own not always noble aims.

By the early 20th century, Europe had been divided into two opposing blocs: The Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy (no longer a member by the beginning of World War I) and the Entente of Russia and France; Great Britain joined later. These two military-political alliances chose the Balkan Peninsula as a battlefield where they could rely on the national-liberation movements of the Balkan peoples to consolidate their positions and weaken those of the opponent.

Religious patchwork of the Balkans made their task much easier. Serbs, Montenegrins and Macedonians, Croats, Slovenians and Bosnians (at that time Muslim Serbs), all of them Slavic peoples, followed different faiths. History has taught us that religion was and remains the main contradiction that outweighed in the past and outweighs today kinship relationships. At all times, Croats and Slovenians looked at the West hence their Catholicism. Having escaped Ottoman yoke, the majority of them showed practically no opposition to Austrian and German domination. Serbs are an Orthodox people; after the Kosovo Field tragedy of 1389, they, for several centuries, remained under Ottoman domination. Decades of their struggle for liberation developed into a highly specific type of national identity and the conviction that Russia was their patron and defender.

Having fallen under Turkey's domination, a certain part of the South Slavs (there were quite a few of them) who live now in the territory of contemporary Bosnia and Herzegovina embraced Islam. To disentangle

In 2003, the country that in the 20th century had reached unimaginable heights of social prosperity and played an active role in building the post-war world disappeared from the political maps of Europe.

themselves from the Turkish rule, part of the Orthodox Serbs moved to the territories ruled by the Hapsburgs where they formed regions of compact settlement (*krajina*) in the territory of contemporary Croatia.

This religious panoply made it much easier for practically all participants in the Balkan political process to rely on the “divide and rule” principle. Having de facto occupied Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1907, the Austro-Hungarian Empire was skillfully using it in its own interests. To remain in control, the empire fanned national strife between the Orthodox, Catholic Croats and Muslim Serbs and promoted the idea of exclusiveness of Croats who as Catholics tended to the German, that is Western, values. Unification of Bosnia and Herzegovina with Austria pursued no practical aims; this was done to undermine the influence of Russia in the region and prevent possible unification of Bosnia and the Kingdom of Serbia.

Great Britain was doing the same: it used the so-called Macedonian Question to put pressure on the Turkish government. London threatened Turkey with a separation of this province (part of the Ottoman Empire) by a decision of the Congress of Berlin, a simple and efficient instrument of blackmail.

The great European powers looked at the Balkans as a huge chessboard; they moved figures and played chess games without thinking about the local population. Today, in the early 21st century after two world wars, having seen the genocide of Slavs and the Holocaust of Jews, we know that political movements might be ugly and inhuman, that they might divide people into right and wrong depending on nationalities and religions. In the Balkans, this role belonged to the Ustaše (the movement of Croatian nationalists).

This movement was taking shape under the strong influence of German Nazism and Italian Fascism. Ethnic purges of Serbs, Jews and Roma explain why independent Croatia was defined as a criminal state on par with Nazi Germany. Nobody can and will hardly be able in future to assess the wounds left by the Ustaše crimes in the memory of Serbs, Bosnians, Slovenes, and Montenegrins. This probably explains why Josip Broz Tito relied on internationalism to set up Yugoslavia after World War II; this was accepted with a lot of enthusiasm by all population groups and strata irrespective of nationality and religion since Serbian and Islamic nationalisms were no less dangerous.

These principles that dominated social consciousness for a long time made it possible to replace the backward Kingdom of Yugoslavia brim-

ming with social and religious contradictions with the industrially developed and flourishing socialist Yugoslavia. Here is a little-known fact: it laid the foundation of a new community of people – the Yugoslav people. While the 1971 population census identified slightly more than 270 thousand who spoke of themselves as Yugoslavs, ten years later, in 1981, there were 1 million 200 thousand of them. This figure is almost twice as many as the numerical strength of Montenegrins, one of the titular nations of the socialist federation. Serbia demonstrated the biggest share of Yugoslavs (26%) and was followed by Bosnia and Herzegovina with 26%. According to expert assessments, by 1990, on the eve of the country's disintegration, up to 7% of its population spoke of themselves as Yugoslavs.

During the Cold War, it was the turn of the Soviet Union and the United States to play the Yugoslavian card to settle the problems of global standoff.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall,\* ideology was promptly squeezed out by ethnocultural confrontation, an inevitable product of the country's national and ethnic patchiness. Actively encouraged from abroad, this confrontation created an idea of an exclusiveness of one social-religious group and fanned aggressive intolerance of other nationalities and religions. The country was divided into ethnic groups; the influence of the so-called fraternal countries became even greater than before. At the early stages of the political crisis in Yugoslavia, united Germany chose an incredibly harsh line and persuaded the other EU members to recognize Croatia and Slovenia as independent states. The leading countries of Europe and the Vatican closed ranks to support co-religionists; they never stopped to think that the sub-regional crisis might become regional. Some Islamic states extended material and military support to Bosnian Muslims; Iran supplied them with armaments. Patronized by Tehran, groups of Lebanese militants crossed the border into Bosnia to train and organize its armed forces. By late 1992, Saudi Arabia had been in fact supplying Bosnian Muslims with weapons and foodstuffs; it should be said that on its side Germany helped Bosnian Croats. Overall, support of the "fraternal peoples" boiled down to supplies of armaments. As could

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\* By that time, the country was in a deep economic crisis. The Government of the SFRY contemplated two variants: either return to planned economy and turning to COMECON for help or complete restoration of capitalism. In 1989, there was no choice but restoration of the capitalist system that rekindled nationalist feelings in Croatia, Bosnia and Serbia.

be expected, this and Russia's vague position on Yugoslavia ended in a civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while the united forces of Muslims and Croats finally moved against the Serbs.

Until the early 1990s, ethnic and religious identities of Yugoslavian population were still undeveloped, yet, as it turned out later, the process had considerable potential.

As the conflict in Bosnia was evolving, the positions of different countries and their disagreements over means and forms of its settlement were increasingly clearly defined by their civilizational affiliation. Populists inside the country, religious leaders and the media of Croats, Serbs and Bosnians acquired a powerful instrument of fanning a civil war. Once more European powers interfered in the division of the spheres of influence, unfortunately with the help of the time-tested "divide and rule" principle. Anyway, the socialist Yugoslavia was doomed. Its disintegration became inevitable, but the European community should have done everything to avoid the bloodshed.

Today, the notions of Slavs and Slavdom have been pushed aside or even diluted by the contradictions of European multiculturalism. Because of its dubious contribution to the process of forming the Slavic unity, Russia, likewise, carefully avoids the subject.\*

It was expected that in the age of globalization and multipolarity national features of world politics will gradually become a thing of the past yet in our relationships with the West or, rather, in its approaches to us this subject has acquired new overtones.

In its attitude to the Slavic world, the "civilized" Western community acted from the positions of absolute superiority, moral, intellectual and cultural exclusiveness that brings "light" and "joy" to undeveloped, coarse, ill-mannered, unsophisticated Slavs who know nothing of democracy and freedom; whose slavish nature stems from their lifestyle and the world outlook. Our Anglo-American allies never abandoned their lecturing manner; they went on in their didactic style at the height of our "friendship" during World War II when the Red Army and the National-Liberation Army of Yugoslavia were not merely needed but were indis-

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\* Fyodor Dostoevsky warned in his time: "Russia must seriously prepare herself to watch all these liberated Slavs rushing rapturously off to Europe to be infected by European forms, both political and social, to the point where their own personalities are lost; and so they will have to undergo a whole long period of Europeanism before comprehending anything of their own significance as Slavs and their particular Slavic mission among humanity."



pensable. Let me point out that in 1941-1945 it was only the Yugoslav peoples that created on its own the Balkan front of struggle against German and Italian aggressors.

It should be said that this model was not stillborn. The Slavic brothers (Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians) played the main role in the Soviet Union's disintegration. After 1991, the world became unipolar with the inevitable and uncontested domination of one superpower, one society and its values. Having settled the problem "within the family," Czechoslovakia quietly fell apart. Yugoslavia, the product of painstaking efforts of many generations of Southern Slavs, exploded with a great deal of noise. Ukraine followed suit. The developments in this country are accompanied by unprecedentedly strong sanctions and information pressure on our country while the United States is increasingly claiming the role of the only global leader. This means that we should ponder on a simple and or even banal conclusion: Russia, imperial, capitalist, socialist or democratic, does not fit the logic of the Western civilizational model: It should be either diluted and destroyed or disunited and dissolved in Western civilization that envies our spaces and our resources.

The civilizational conflict is bloody and cruel; it develops according to the logic of a total war, a war of extermination.\* Theoreticians and practitioners of the "golden billion" betray no haste; they act competently, thoroughly and consistently, something that our style often lacks. They shatter the post-Soviet states and blow them up from inside to encircle Russia, put pressure on it and create a belt of chaos and instability along its borders so that to prevent Russia's continuous development. In this context, the set of actions used for the destruction of Yugoslavia was a logical and continuous line to deal with the entire Slavic world. Yugoslavia of the past suited the interests of Russia rather than those of the collective West.

On the other hand, its heritage is one of the subjects of lively academic discussions across the post-Yugoslavian space called the Yugosphere in the former SFRY republics. In his recently published book *Jugoslavija*,

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\* In his *The Clash of Civilizations*, Samuel Huntington showed us the fault line, that is, potential civilizational conflict that replaced ideological confrontation: "This line runs along what are now the boundaries between Finland and Russia and between the Baltic states and Russia, cuts through Belarus and Ukraine separating the more Catholic western Ukraine from Orthodox eastern Ukraine, swings westward separating Transylvania from the rest of Romania, and then goes through Yugoslavia almost exactly along the line now separating Croatia and Slovenia from the rest of Yugoslavia." (This work was published before the SRY fell apart.)

*zemlja snova* (Yugoslavia, Land of Dreams), Slovenian historian Božidar Jezernik has written that common Yugoslavian past is very important for all peoples of the former federal republic and identified the main problem: this past is frequently presented in negative rather than positive light. In yet another book *Jugoslavenstvo poslije svega* (Yugoslavenism after Everything), Croatian journalist and writer Dragan Markovina born in Mostar (Bosnia) talks about a single Yugoslavian cultural space that should be recreated. The post-Yugoslavian world, as we know it today, will never shed off the ideas tied to its own Yugoslavian identity, as mysterious and incomprehensible as the Balkans themselves. The architecture of the relationships in Southeastern Europe, irrespective of the prospects and development scenarios of the European Union, depends, to a great extent, on these ideas.

The resolution adopted by the conference of linguists of the Balkan states held last year in Sarajevo calls its participants to abandon politicization of the language issue in the post-Yugoslavia region and preserve its old definition – the Serbo-Croatian tongue.

So far, those of the politicians who built their careers on the ruins of a united state are wrangling with the concept of Jugoslavenstvo: they have nothing to show to the world except aggressive nationalist rhetoric. The programs of practically all political movements in the Balkans reveal their Euro-integrating ambitions and... nothing else. It seems that irritation in Brussels is gradually building up. European tolerance, as an international and mono-cultural idea copied by D students, has nevertheless preserved the idea of peaceful coexistence of peoples and confessions. Having found nothing of the sort in the Balkans, still mostly traditional, Europeans, with their “good ideas” rejected, found themselves in a dead end. According to *Le Monde*, the Balkan countries that remained outside the European Union should demonstrate an annual economic growth of 6% to reach, by the year 2030, the average EU figures. This is impossible which means that the former republics of Yugoslavia will remain locked in the EU “antechamber” for a long time. Today, even Europe has started asking itself whether what it did to Yugoslavia was wise and whether it would be more reasonable to go back to a confederation of sorts to add efficiency to the process of drawing Serbia, B&H, Montenegro, Macedonia, and Albania closer to the EU.

Despite the problems and contradictions that have not yet been overcome, the former republics of the SFRY are gradually bringing their relations back to normal. It is possible, even if far from easy, to push aside

“negative historical legacy.” To get out of political dead ends, it is necessary to suppress confrontation, develop cooperation and move gradually to civil society; it is necessary to push aside mutual claims and solve existing problems. This can be achieved with the help of a pragmatic component that helps normalize economic and, as a result, political relations in the territory of the former SFRY. Irrespective of prospects of EU and NATO membership for some of the post-Yugoslav states, people do not want to lose their historical ties, their friends, relatives and partners.

The Balkan states should become masters in their home; this is an old idea. Today, however, it has become much more important to tune up economic, cultural and, later, political cooperation. It can be deepened if the integration initiatives of President of Serbia Aleksandar Vucic that have much in common with the German-British Berlin Process are realized.\*

In this context the importance of a profound comprehensive and consistent analysis of the processes unfolding in the Balkans becomes obvious. It is equally obvious that in the Balkans our country should practice proactive rather than reactive policies.

*Key words:* Yugoslavia, NATO aggression, the Balkans, bombings.

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\* In April 2017, speaking at the International Economic Fair in Mostar, new Serbian leader Aleksandar Vucic, inspired by the idea that had been in the air for some time, presented his idea of a single economic space: “My dream is to have a customs union with all Balkan states, all the territories.” He said that it should include former Yugoslavia and Albania and that the common idea was to talk of unification with each other. “When we connect all of us with infrastructure, we will connect people. Everything that Josef Broz Tito did in his time was not for iron and concrete, this was done to bring people closer together.”

## Contemporary Integration Processes in the Post-Soviet Space

### Conference opening session

#### Welcoming remarks

*Armen Oganesyanyan,*  
*Editor-in-Chief of International Affairs.*

COLLEAGUES, FRIENDS, we are grateful to you for your participation in our regular conference, which has already become traditional, on the distinctive features of modern processes in the post-Soviet space. This is our ninth conference. We will discuss regional security issues in the post-Soviet space; the advantages and benefits of the Silk Road running from China to Russia's northern shores via Central Asia; the issue of federalization; engagement with the Russian diaspora in the former Soviet republics, and the media component of modern politics. I wish you an interesting and meaningful discussion. And now, again in keeping with tradition, I give the floor to Russian Foreign Ministry representative, Alexey Drobinin, deputy director of the Foreign Policy Planning Department, who will read a message of greetings from Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to the participants of our conference.

*Alexey Drobinin*

IT GIVES ME great pleasure on behalf of the Russian Foreign Ministry leadership to read out a message of greetings from Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

"I cordially welcome the participants in the conference organized by the journal *International Affairs* with support from the Russian Foreign Ministry.

"Your intellectual rally is always distinguished by a comprehensive,

wide-ranging agenda and an authoritative makeup of participants representing political, social, business, and academic circles from Russia and other countries. In the current international situation, a depoliticized exchange of views on an array of pressing international and regional issues deserves respect and support.

“In keeping with tradition, you focus on a wide range of issues – from a search for optimal ways of resolving conflicts to harmonizing various integration processes in Eurasia. Russia will continue working to help resolve these problems, including by promoting Russian President Vladimir Putin’s initiative regarding the formation of a Greater Eurasian Community – a space of inclusive economic cooperation. We believe that the implementation of this comprehensive initiative, which is open to accession for all Asian and European countries, could eventually serve as a basis for an upgraded continental security architecture.

Russia will continue working to promote President Vladimir Putin’s initiative regarding the formation of a Greater Eurasian Community – a space of inclusive economic cooperation.

“I am convinced that this conference will be held in a friendly and informal atmosphere, allowing its participants to establish mutually beneficial contacts, as well as duly appreciate the unique identity of the Crimean Peninsula.

“I wish you a productive discussion and all the very best.

Sergey Lavrov

***Georgy Muradov,***

***Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Republic of Crimea, RC Permanent Representative to the President of the Russian Federation***

ON BEHALF OF S.V. Aksyonov, the head of the Republic of Crimea, I cordially welcome all participants in this forum. The RC Council of Ministers is well aware that the Yalta forum, organized by the journal *International Affairs*, is a very important event where approaches, assessments and solutions to current international problems in general and in the Eurasian space in particular are worked out. I congratulate you on the fact that veteran participants have met again. All new participants are also welcome to the Crimean land.

Unfortunately, there is little hope that our civilizational development will be favorable in the foreseeable future. On the contrary, there is every reason for concern. Crimea has to overcome numerous long-running difficulties, primarily economic difficulties. Here are just a few examples. As you know, mobile roaming charges are being scrapped in Russia, as well as in several CIS member states. There is no need to explain how important an affordable communication system is for more effective integration. In the RC, however, it is impossible to abolish roaming charges right now. The situation regarding the banks in the RC is similar. Over the last two or three years, their number has fallen from 30 to 10, of which two or three at the very best are still functioning.

There is a lot of work to be done. We will be unable to move forward without a clear understanding of the RC's role in the history of our nation and our civilization that has evolved around Russia over centuries and until the RC is involved in international processes.

S.V. Aksyonov's visit to Syria was practically the only official visit abroad by the RC head in four and a half years. In the international arena, we seek to follow paths that are not off limits to us. We would like to meet with the leaders of our closest allies. I am referring to the Eurasian Economic Union, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Armenia. However, we are still waiting for approval. This is the goal of our foreign policy discourse.

We can see how the situation has been developing in recent years: the escalation of aggression around Russia and its civilizational foundations. We are currently going through an extremely difficult stage, when a blow is being struck at Orthodox Christianity, which has shaped our national consciousness and is a binding idea for many ethnic groups in Russia. It is a multidimensional blow, one that is closely linked to the international situation. It is being struck at our country in conjunction with the Ukrainian nationalist and largely Nazi ruling clique.

So, why are there attempts not only to break Russia up into parts, but also to wipe out the civilizational space around Russia and essentially to destroy civilization? This is because Russia is a very powerful country that has colossal vitality and has received a strong emotional impetus in connection with the "Crimean spring" and the reunification of our people with their historical motherland. It is important to note that when other people are reunified, for instance in Germany, the entire world welcomes that. However, when Russian people reunify, the Western world begins aggressively to stamp their feet and bang their fists on the table. We often

remind our Western partners that we have been cut to pieces, but the gathering of the Russian world will continue.

Here is what was said at our conference before the Independence Square uprising. I wrote about this in the summer of 2013, and then later in the fall we discussed it here: “The division of historical Russia into parts, threatening the destruction of one of the world’s system-critical civilizational alliances that have existed for centuries in Eastern Europe and North Asia – that is not a local event of the 1990s, not the disintegration of the USSR, which existed for a historically short period, but just the beginning of a dangerous titanic process of transforming the order that had been established long time ago.” We were considering the future of the 10-million-strong indigenous Russian people living in Ukraine. Would they share the same fate as in the Baltic countries? What would happen to the Russian language in Ukraine, the native tongue of almost half of its population? What would happen to the Russian Orthodox Church, which is indigenous to Ukraine?

So, even back then, we already saw and understood everything. And what did we do to prevent that from happening? Without answering this question, I will put it to the forum participants. This is what I would like our discussion to focus on.

***Sergey Lankin,***

***Russian Foreign Ministry Representative to the Republic of Crimea***

IT GIVES ME great pleasure to welcome the conference participants on Crimean land.

This year has seen many significant events and important developments. First of all, in April, a new airport opened in Simferopol and in May, a new highway was built. We cannot say that there are no problems, but overall, the trends are positive. International contacts are steadily developing, and international events take place almost every week. Suffice it to recall the Fourth Yalta International Economic Forum and the 12th International Festival “The Great Russian Word.” Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova held a series of briefings in Crimea: in Artek, Sevastopol, Kerch, and Koktebel. This year, Russia’s permanent representative to the UN Vasily Nebenzya visited our region. He went to Artek and traveled around Crimea. A very positive impression.

*Igor Khalevinsky,  
Chairman of the Board, Russian Diplomats Association*

THE RUSSIAN DIPLOMATS ASSOCIATION cordially welcomes the participants in the forum, where all thoughts and ideas are expressed frankly and openly. The fact that it is taking place on the Crimean land makes it particularly significant, because Crimea's reunification with Russia is truly a major historical and geopolitical event of the 21st century. We need to do all we can to ensure that Crimea develops dynamically as part of the Russian Federation. The forum makes many practical recommendations and theoretical insights. We are grateful to the forum's organizers for making it a permanent and meaningful institution.

### **Session 1**

#### **International Security Systems in the Post-Soviet Space: Ways, Methods and Prospects of Conflict Resolution**

##### **The main threats and challenges to international security at the current stage of global development**

*Alexey Drobinin  
Deputy Director, Foreign Policy Planning Department, Ministry of  
Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation*

IN CHOOSING A TOPIC for these remarks, I thought about setting a certain framework for further discussions, which, judging by our program and the established tradition, will to a very largely extent be concerned with processes related to the post-Soviet space, the CIS space, and integration processes in this space. I believe it would also be useful to take a look at what is happening in the international arena and serves as the military-political and geopolitical backdrop of ongoing developments in the post-Soviet space.

To discuss challenges and threats to international security, I believe it is important to say a few words about where we are in terms of global development. The main trend of global development for over a decade now has been transition to a new world order, which is characterized by the existence of several independent, full-fledged, self-sufficient centers of economic development and political influence. There is a clear-cut and solid economic basis for that.



We believe that the globalization processes, which have accelerated since the beginning of this millennium, have provided a basis for a new polycentric system. I will cite some figures to make this clear. According to PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), the G7's GDP measured at purchasing power parities (PPP) was \$36.9 trillion in 2016. The GDP (PPP) of seven major leading emerging markets was \$45.4 trillion. What are these countries? China, India, Russia, Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, and Turkey. Dynamics are just as important as static indicators. Thus, according to PwC projections for 2030, the GDP (PPP) of the new "group of seven" will be almost double that of the G7: \$78.7 trillion compared to \$44.1 trillion.

I would like to draw your attention to the fact that there are four BRICS members among the seven new centers: China, India, Brazil, and Russia, plus major regional powers such as Indonesia, Mexico and Turkey. Turkey is also a NATO member. However, economic indicators are not the only criterion for assessing the current situation and the transitional stage in the evolution of international relations. We have to acknowledge that the new centers of economic growth are interested in strengthening their sovereignty and preserving their national, cultural and religious identity. It is worth noting that this interest is not directly linked to economic development.

For instance, Iran is persistently upholding its national interests and identity despite external pressure and economic sanctions. There are also other examples. This leads us to conclude that this process will continue. It will be complicated and will naturally have a multidimensional impact on the main players in the international arena. Right now, old leaders see this objective change as a threat to their international positions, to their economic development, and they keep holding on to the outdated concept of unipolarity, which, in our opinion, has actually failed to materialize.

Right now, perhaps the most important global process is the current U.S. administration's attempts to destroy the institutions and relations that have been the core of globalization and the legal institutional fabric of international relations in recent decades. We are seeing attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of sovereign states, to use force bypassing the UN Security Council, obsession with unilateral sanctions and the extraterritorial application of national laws. The result of all these actions is the devaluation and erosion of international law, the growing potential for conflict and the narrowing or shrinking of international cooperation.

Some of Washington's unilateral steps are particularly disturbing in

terms of regional and international security, for example, the withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on Iran's nuclear program. This step can not only cause serious, probably irreparable damage to the international nonproliferation regime, but also undermine regional stability in the Middle East.

Furthermore, the U.S. withdraws from UNESCO, the UN Human Rights Council and the Paris Climate Agreement, refuses to follow international principles regarding the Middle East peace process, and threatens to withdraw from the World Trade Organization. Clearly, all these steps (this process is bound to continue) are creating a rather difficult situation in international relations and impacting not only large countries, but also all other international players.

I would also like to mention that one consequence of such policy would be weakening or putting at risk strategic stability, which since the 1960s has traditionally been the core of relations between the USSR and the U.S. and now Russia and the U.S. as two major nuclear powers. Right now, we are seeing attempts by the U.S. to question several international arms control agreements. This refers to the complicated situation around the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate- and Shorter-Range Missiles (INF). The U.S. has accused Russia of noncompliance with its INF commitments, but at the same time refuses to conduct an expert dialogue on Russia's grievances against the Americans, in particular, the deployment of MK-41 missile launching systems in Romania and Poland as part of U.S. global missile defense. These installations can be converted into cruise missile launchers, which is prohibited by the treaty.

The U.S. is upgrading unmanned aerial vehicles with strike potential, refusing to recognize that this falls under the provisions of the treaty. Moreover, there are missile defense and target missile tests. Target missiles in such tests are launched from the ground and are in fact medium-range missiles. Such launches are also prohibited by the treaty. In short, the situation around the INF treaty, a cornerstone of European security, is complicated.

Another important treaty, which is currently also under serious pressure, is the 2010 Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START). The treaty will expire in February 2021. However, the Russian side has yet to receive satisfactory answers to the questions posed to the U.S. side within the framework of bilateral Russian-U.S. dialogue.

The problem here is the U.S.'s announcement that it has reached the

benchmarks specified in New START. In our view, these statements are unsatisfactory, since the Americans have excluded a certain number of ballistic missile launchers, submarines and heavy bombers from the treaty limitations by modifying them but have not provided the necessary and sufficient guarantees that these launchers have been rendered incapable of carrying nuclear weapons. Dialogue on these issues is ongoing, and unfortunately, our concerns have not yet been resolved. At the same time, preserving treaty limitations on strategic offensive weapons is key to ensuring strategic stability. This is why the Russian president proposed extending New START by five years, on the condition that the U.S. side fully meets its commitments under the current treaty.

The U.S.'s other actions also pose a serious challenge to the entire international security system. I have already mentioned the deployment of a global missile defense system. Furthermore, there are preparations for deploying strike weapon systems in circumterrestrial space; technological development and buildup of conventional weapons, and the refusal to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). We are also seeing efforts to politicize the activity of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), and we take note of the confrontational nature of the U.S.'s new nuclear doctrine, published in February 2018. On top of that, the U.S. defense budget for fiscal year 2019 is unprecedented: \$716 billion. There are also large-scale nuclear weapon modernization programs.

In Europe, we are seeing a sharp increase in the military activity of the North Atlantic alliance, the expansion of NATO's military infrastructure and its approach toward the Russian borders. The alliance continues to pursue its "open doors" policy. The focus is now on the Balkan Peninsula. Montenegro became a full NATO member in 2017. At the July 2018 NATO summit, Macedonia was formally invited to begin membership talks. Macedonia has not yet resolved its problems with Greece, but NATO is already in a hurry to issue an invitation. And NATO officials keep talking about their desire to see Georgia and Ukraine join the alliance. All this escalates tension in Europe and creates security risks for European countries.

I would also like to consider some regional challenges to international security that under certain circumstances could have very negative consequences. First of all, Syria. The conflict in that country has been in a hot phase for more than seven years now. The situation is complicated by the fact that several outside players are involved in the conflict. Some of

them support the antigovernment opposition, including extremist groups, which have been designated “terrorist” organizations by the UN Security Council.

I will not dwell on this now, but I would just like to point out that our diplomatic efforts are currently focused on contacts with the Syrian government, representatives of the opposition, including the armed opposition, guarantor countries of the Astana process, and the team of the special envoy of the UN secretary-general for Syria. Our efforts are aimed at forming a committee to draft a new constitution with representatives of the government, the opposition and civil society, and the committee’s subsequent activity with UN assistance. In addition, mobilizing the international community for providing humanitarian aid and facilitating the reconstruction of the country’s socioeconomic infrastructure is of particular importance at this stage.

In the south, the situation in Afghanistan is also cause for serious concern. It is characterized by an increasing scale of drug trafficking and a high level of the terrorist threat, as evidenced by the attempts of Islamic State groups to strengthen their influence in Afghanistan and consolidate their positions in the country’s northern provinces, on the border with Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.

The Russian leadership believes that launching a national reconciliation process with the leading role of the Afghan people themselves should be a key element of stabilization in Afghanistan. We support all efforts aimed at achieving this goal. In 2017, Russia launched what is known as the Moscow format of consultations on Afghanistan with the participation of representatives of all neighboring countries, the Afghan government and the Taliban movement. The next meeting within the Moscow format is currently pending, and we hope that it will take place in the next several weeks.

In the Far East, there is a flurry of political and diplomatic activity around the nuclear problem on the Korean peninsula, which could potentially become a source of very serious aggravation on Russia’s eastern borders. Right now, we are seeing the Americans becoming deeper involved in resolving this situation. For our part, we are ready to facilitate further contacts between North Korea and South Korea, as well as between North Korea and the United States, in the interests of normalizing bilateral relations between them and reaching agreements to end the state of war on the Korean peninsula. In addition, we will support all efforts aimed at the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, which, in

our opinion, should take into account the principles of consistency and synchronization in the process of the parties taking confidence building measures and providing Pyongyang essential international security guarantees.

The situation in Ukraine will, without a doubt, remain the focus of our attention. I would just like to point out that right now the crisis could be effectively resolved through the consistent implementation of the Minsk agreements. To reiterate, so far, we believe that this is possible. Their implementation is being sabotaged by the Kiev authorities. An additional complicating factor has been preparations for a presidential election. As we can see, all political forces in Ukraine have entered a pre-electoral mode, and this is affecting the prospects for talks on the implementation of the Minsk agreements. Clearly, under any circumstances, in formulating its position, Russia will take into account the choice made by the people of the Donets Basin, the expression of their political preference. However, if Kiev opts for measures based on the use of force, then, as the Russian leadership has repeatedly stated, such a decision would have a very negative impact on the prospects for Ukrainian statehood.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that, of course, Russia does not look for confrontation with anyone; it does not seek revenge or revisionism, as it stands accused of; it is not interested in starting a new arms race and does not want to impose its views on anyone. Russia's main foreign policy priority is to create a favorable environment for dynamic domestic development. As an independent center of global politics and a guarantor of global stability, Russia is open to honest and mutually beneficial cooperation with all countries that demonstrate their readiness to improve the atmosphere of interstate dialogue and strengthen the international security system.

### **Implementation of Peace Agreements as the Main Goal of the Minsk Negotiating Process**

*Natalia Nikonorova,  
Acting Foreign Minister of the Donetsk People's Republic (Ukraine)*

THE COUP D'ÉTAT carried out by nationalist forces in Kiev in violation of the Agreement on the Settlement of Crisis in Ukraine (February 21, 2014; the signing witnessed by the foreign ministers of Germany, France and Poland) triggered a standoff in the country. As a result, pro-Western

radical forces illegally seized power and established an authoritarian regime in the country. That was followed by aggressive actions of the new Ukrainian authorities against the people of the Donbass, sending army units and military hardware to our region without any reason.

The rejection of that situation by residents of eastern regions led to the creation of the Donetsk and Lugansk people's republics independent from Kiev. The Ukrainian leadership, which illegally came to power and was not entirely independent in their actions, decided to use military force to resolve the conflict, launching an "antiterrorist operation" in Donetsk and Lugansk Provinces. So, we see that the current conflict was caused by purely political factors, which are still at work.

The Ukrainian authorities' inability to achieve their goals by force, as well as numerous military setbacks suffered in the confrontation with the republics' militia, compelled them to sign peace agreements. On September 5, 2014, in Minsk, representatives of the Kiev government and the Donbass signed the Protocol on the Results of Consultations of the Trilateral Contact Group under the auspices of the OSCE and the Russian Federation. On September 19, 2014, the same representatives agreed to a follow-up memorandum to the Minsk Protocol, clarifying peacemaking measures.

The government of Ukraine sabotaged the agreements and made another attempt to carry out an offensive operation in the Donbass, which further escalated violence, subsequently leading to the defeat of the Ukrainian Armed Forces and the signing of the Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements (February 12, 2015).

These documents provide a plan, as well as a political and legal mechanism for resolving the conflict. They are based on compromise, specifically the obligation to carry out Constitutional reform, grant special status to certain districts in the Donbass and amnesty to all participants in the conflict, while preserving Ukraine's territorial integrity.

Special attention should be paid to the mechanism for implementing the main provisions of the Minsk agreements, namely the need to coordinate positions on all issues concerning the Donbass with DPR and LPR representatives, as enshrined in the UN Security Council Resolution No. 2202, the Package of Measures being its integral part. To this end, Minsk provides a negotiating platform for regular meetings of the Trilateral Contact Group and four working groups on the main aspects of a peaceful settlement. Right now, this platform is the only opportunity for direct dialogue between the parties to the conflict, i.e., Kiev and the Donbass.

However, despite the provisions of the Minsk agreements and the basic principles of conflict resolution, the Ukrainian side continues to evade negotiations with representatives of the republics, refusing to recognize them as entities subject to international law.

This position is completely at odds with the logic of the peace process. Numerous international doctrinal sources note the need for direct dialogue between conflicting parties regardless of their legal status. Peace talks between a national government and insurgents are also a practice that is widely and successfully used in resolving national conflicts.

The Minsk agreements provide for the implementation of measures in four main areas: security, humanitarian, economic, and political. However, the implementation of political aspects of the agreements is by far the most important, since obviously their implementation is key to eliminating the root causes of the ongoing conflict in the Donbass. This is essentially a foundation for achieving a lasting peace, as well as a guarantee for restoring confidence.

As mentioned above, granting special status to the republics and enshrining it in the Constitution is the foundation of the political process. International documents, as well as an experience in peaceful settlement, show that this is among the most successful mechanisms for eliminating the root causes of a conflict.

Another measure as part of the conflict resolution mechanism in the Donbass is the amnesty of participants in the Donbass events, as provided for in the fifth paragraph of the Package of Measures. It is important to note that this provision of the Minsk agreements is in full compliance with the requirements of international humanitarian law, in particular the Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949 and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts.

In keeping with the Minsk agreements, one final stage of a political settlement should be the election of bodies of local self-governance. However, the implementation of this component of a political settlement will only be possible after the implementation of the main points of the peace plan.

Right now, the Ukrainian government is not independent in its domestic or foreign policy, and this also applies to its obligations under the Package of Measures. The activities of Ukraine's current ruling authorities are aimed at pushing the people of the Donbass republics from the single legal and sociocultural space, and therefore the likelihood of the country preserving its integrity within the existing borders is decreasing.

As for the Minsk negotiation process, it should not be forgotten that it helped stop the active phase of bloodshed and gave hope for a lasting peace. However, right now, there are no effective levers to ensure the complete implementation of this mechanism, which is due to a lack of constructive dialogue between the parties to the conflict. Nevertheless, this process has a significant positive effect, specifically in deterring full-blown hostilities, that is, preserving the greatest possible value: human lives.

The Donbass representatives have repeatedly reiterated at the Minsk negotiation platform their willingness for compromise for the sake of peace. However, as long as the other party to the conflict is not ready for this, significant progress is unlikely.

At the same time, over the past four and a half years, industrial enterprises have continued to operate in our territories, various economic sectors have continued to develop, public order has been maintained, and social guarantees ensured. Moreover, the humanitarian program for the reunification of the people of the Donbass helps provide assistance to our fellow countrymen living on the other side of the demarcation line, in the Ukraine-controlled part of Donetsk and Lugansk Provinces. However, it must be said that the republics need qualified specialists, which is an acute problem.

It is no secret that when hostilities broke out, many qualified specialists from various sectors and branches of the economy had to leave the Donbass. Following the signing of the Minsk agreements, a significant number of these specialists returned and continue to work for the benefit of our people. However, right now, there is high demand for medical specialists in the Donetsk People's Republic: doctors and nurses. Agriculture and energy specialists are also in demand. So, there is a pressing need for efficient personnel training programs at higher educational institutions, the search for personnel reserves, and the provision of acceptable working conditions.

**A. Oganesyan:** *Are our Western European partners really interested in the Minsk agreements or is this some kind of diplomatic game?*

**N. Nikonorova:** Work on the implementation of these agreements is proceeding at two levels. These are the Normandy format, involving guarantor countries, and the Minsk format, with the participation of OSCE coordinators. I can tell you quite frankly that the situation has changed great-



ly since the negotiations began, compared to the Minsk negotiation platform. We would like to believe that this is due to the republics' firm position on the bona fide implementation of existing agreements. At the same time, the Ukrainian side is always trying to find excuses to avoid clearly stating its position on a specific issue, carrying out its obligations or following established procedure or explaining why this happens.

We believe that even OSCE representatives, who were initially biased and always defended the Ukrainian side, have become tired, and it is increasingly difficult for them to hide the fact that the Ukrainian side is doing nothing. There are some hard, undeniable facts. For instance, the Ukrainian side agreed to hold local elections based on the first-past-the-post system, which was reported by an OSCE coordinator (it was the first consensus on political issues), but then, six months later, the Ukrainian side changed its negotiators and stated that it was the personal opinion of their former representative. This is the kind of situations we have to deal with.

The OSCE presents its position as neutral and objective – as a mediator's position, but it seems that there is some kind of game under way.

The OSCE presents its position as neutral and objective – as a mediator's position, but it seems that there is some kind of game under way. At first, it was even more pronounced. We would like to hope that eventually, our mediators' position will in fact become absolutely neutral.

**G. Muradov:** Ukraine's current leadership is unable to implement the Minsk agreements. It seems to me that even if Poroshenko and his team do not win the upcoming election and the next dynasty of Ukrainian politicians continue this line, they all see eye to eye on the issue. What is your take on the situation in Ukraine in the short or medium term?

**N. Nikonorova:** Unfortunately, the political and legal situation in Ukraine continues to deteriorate. We are closely watching everything that is happening there and monitoring all the legal acts that are adopted in Ukraine, because most of them affect the rights of Donbass residents. We can see no improvement and do not expect any positive changes in Ukraine's position in the foreseeable future.

You know what an important occasion it was when the Russian leader

signed a decree on the recognition of our passports, diplomas and qualifications. Maybe such small steps, such de facto recognitions and improvements in the life of our people will help us move forward. Important integration processes are under way with Russian Federation members; we have a program to promote social, cultural, scientific, and expert integration, and a decision was made to expand this program. We are working to extend the integration process to the business sector, bringing on board our entrepreneurs, state enterprises and industry. All of this shows that these processes are going well. Our best hope is legal recognition or integration into the Russian Federation, as in the case of Crimea. Needless to say, this scenario would be more pleasant and attractive to us. However, we realize that Russia is a guarantor of the peace process and does not violate norms of international law.

### **Greater Eurasia and Security**

*Vladimir Shtoll,*

*Editor-in-Chief of Obozrevatel/Observer, Professor, Doctor of Science (Political Science)*

NATIONAL SECURITY is always at the center of attention for any government striving to preserve its country's sovereignty. Participation in international organizations at the regional and global level is one way of ensuring a country's security by diplomatic means, among other things, by improving its international reputation and creating a positive image.

Historically, Russia (Muscovy, the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union or the Russian Federation) always had to defend its territory and civilization from encroachments by all sorts of "landsnechts." The 21st century has not changed the situation in any way: Methods have changed, but the essence remains the same – namely, to divide it into small pseudostates, seize its natural resources and incite ethnic and religious enmity.

In this context, Russia's participation in the SCO [Shanghai Cooperation Organization] and the Greater Eurasia project has become increasingly important recently. These are Russia's eastern and southern border areas and they have a significant impact on socioeconomic stability in South and Central Asia, as well as in the Arab world. Many countries in the region are politically unstable and have a huge potential for conflict due to accumulated political, national and religious disagreements fueled by extraregional actors. The difficulties involved in main-

taining constitutional order in these countries are primarily related to the activities of terrorist organizations and their networks. This applies above all to Syria and Iraq with the weakened but not completely defeated ISIS; the uncontrolled situation in Afghanistan that has existed for a very long time despite the presence of U.S. and NATO military forces; Lebanon and the Arab East as a whole, and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

However, despite the existing risks and threats, the SCO and the Greater Eurasia project could facilitate the economic development of participating states, and as a result, help stabilize the sociopolitical situation in these countries.

The SCO was created in 2001 primarily to combat extremism, terrorism and drug trafficking in its member countries. Naturally, its documents reflect all the goals and objectives that are pursued by most international organizations.

The Greater Eurasia project, launched in 2015 (according to the UN, Greater Eurasia includes 105 countries in Europe, Asia and North Africa and accounts for nine-tenths of globally generated energy, about three-quarters of global GDP and four-fifth of the world's population), was based on the idea of bringing together the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), the Silk Road Economic Belt and the European Union into a wide-ranging integration project (the idea was put forward by Nursultan Nazarbayev at the UN General Assembly).

In 2015, Russian President Vladimir Putin, in his Message to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, formulated the concept of Greater Eurasian partnership of EAEU, ASEAN and SCO member countries, as well as SCO partners.

The Greater Eurasian partnership initiative was also supported by China. Concerted efforts by Moscow and Beijing make this geopolitical association viable as a basis for a multipolar world as the antithesis of a unipolar world (*Pax Americana*). However, the Russian-Chinese strategic alliance is a real threat to U.S. domination.

The U.S. has been developing various projects and concepts to protect its unipolar world. In this context, it is important to note the concept of Greater Central Asia (2005), which is based on the U.S.'s desire to confine the influence of Russia and China to their geographical borders. The U.S. completely ruled out the post-Soviet Central Asian republics' partnership with Moscow and planned to direct all investment and infrastructure projects to South Asia, in particular Afghanistan to resolve its social, economic and political problems under the military umbrella of

Washington and its NATO allies. This would secure full control of Russia's border regions, as well as those of China and Iran as their geopolitical opponents.

Greater Central Asia envisioned the creation of an alliance of Central Asian countries plus Afghanistan. However, this is nothing new. This is simply a variation of the Greater Middle East project that never materialized, most likely for reasons beyond the U.S.'s control.

Without abandoning the idea of Greater Central Asia and the Greater Middle East, the Americans put forward a regional concept known as the New Silk Road: a network of trade and transportation links from Central Asian countries to the southern coast of India and Pakistan. All that was projected to the problems of Afghanistan, which has for many decades been a sought-after target. It was part of the big game because of its strategic position in the heart of the region.

It should be noted that in keeping with tradition, China's Silk Road runs from the east to the west, whereas the New Silk Road runs from the north to the south – that is to say, in this case China's contacts with Greater Central Asia are ruled out.

Thus, the U.S. is striving to take control of the entire vast region of Central and South Asia under any pretext and citing any noble goals. The U.S. ignores the fact that these are not North American Indian tribes, but peoples with a centuries-old civilization and established traditional society and statehood, albeit often with authoritarian rule. Nevertheless, the U.S. is promoting the ideas of Western liberalism with its values that are alien to that region.

The crisis in the Middle East, the situation in Afghanistan and the possibility of ISIS cells moving from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan to countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus should lead SCO member countries as participants in the Silk Road Economic Belt project to the conclusion that it is necessary to create an organization to neutralize security threats on their territory.

However, there are also threats coming from outside the region. Thus, the U.S. is highly active in the post-Soviet Central Asian republics, sponsoring religious extremist organizations operating outside the bounds of traditional Islam. At the same time, Washington is very concerned that Afghanistan could move into the sphere of the SCO's influence, where it currently has observer status.

To increase the SCO's potential to ensure regional security and stability, it is essential to alter its status, i.e., create a nonpermanent peace-

keeping contingent to use preventive diplomacy or peace enforcement, which is in keeping with the UN Charter.

At present, the following organizations are active in the Eurasian space: the CSTO, created on Russia's initiative and responsible for security in three regions (Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia); the Urumqi Treaty Organization (China's initiative), a quadrilateral antiterrorism alliance, including China, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Tajikistan, and the SCO.

Each of these associations has its own goals, objectives and interests, but all of them face the same risks, threats and problems: terrorism, extremism, drug trafficking, and, as a result, threats to vital infrastructure, industrial infrastructure and their sovereignty. This should serve as a basis for their security cooperation.

### **Prospects for the Settlement of the Conflict in Southeastern Ukraine**

*Vasily Semyonov,*

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ANY ANALYSIS of the situation in southeastern Ukraine is complicated by the confrontation of several parties in the region, using politicized assessments or deliberately spreading unreliable information.

Different forecasts and scenarios are similar in their negative assessment of the situation and a lack of prospects for normalization. Thus, scenarios by authors of the Vneshnyaya politika [Foreign Policy] agency relate the course of events to the level of Western support for the Kiev regime. They believe that the regime can maintain its stability with enough support, and if this support weakens, it could become destabilized and partially isolated, albeit keeping the situation under control. In general, these authors believe that an inertial scenario is the most likely. It is worth noting that experts in the U.S. intelligence community, who assess global security threats, also believe that an inertial scenario in Ukraine is the most likely, including the preservation of the conflict and armed confrontation, growing social division, more corruption, and a decline in living standards.

The development of the situation in the region is predetermined by the interests of the main external players (the U.S., Russia, the EU, and China), methods of their implementation and the domestic situation in

these countries. Sociopolitical and economic processes in Ukraine, the Donetsk and Lugansk people's republics are also important. Unpredictable armed clashes are also possible.

Actions of the "collective West" are dictated by the U.S., using the Ukrainian factor as an element of the anaconda strategy, aimed at blocking and wearing out the Russian Federation. However, breaking the blockade around the Donbass, as well as the questionable effectiveness of sanctions, suggests that all talk about "stifling" Russia's economy is not serious enough. What's more, external sanctions often have the opposite effect, contributing to growth and boosting industrial and agricultural production in Russia. Nevertheless, the U.S. and its allies are ready to fight "to the last Ukrainian" and escalate the confrontation in the Donbass, believing that the consequences of an economic collapse and sociopolitical degradation in Ukraine would be a problem for Russia. U.S. Special Representative for Ukraine Kurt Volker insists that the DPR and the LPR should be disbanded. He is opposed to Kiev's direct talks with them and places responsibility for the crisis in the region exclusively on Russia.

The Ukrainian side deliberately steers all attempts at a peaceful settlement into a vicious circle of misinterpretation. Thus, the Minsk agreements, designed to reduce tension in the region, have gotten stuck in disputes about the order of priority in implementing the security provisions of the agreements. The proposal regarding the disengagement of the sides with the help of peacekeepers immediately prompted Poroshenko to consider using the latter to quickly "cleanse" the Donbass according to a Croatian scenario.

The presidential election in Ukraine, set for March 2019, has become an element of destabilization. The main question for the candidates is related to the prospects for resolving the conflict in the southeast of the country, since polls show that almost two-thirds of Ukrainians want the conflict to be brought to an end. Not surprisingly, Poroshenko, who unleashed the war in the region, is only in fifth or sixth place. This could prompt him to artificially escalate the situation and declare martial law, cancel the election and hold on to power. It is obvious that the U.S. as a prudent "external manager" is grooming a new candidate – from all indications, this is Yulia Tymoshenko, who was invited to a dinner party at the White House and had a meeting with Kurt Volker.

As for the European Union, there is no consensus on the issue under consideration. Several EU members speak out against anti-Russian sanc-

tions, favor the recognition of Crimea and are against the war in the Donbass. European politicians are tired of constant problems with the Ukrainian authorities. What's more, they are reluctant to pay for U.S. interests, incurring losses over sanctions. EU members are also aware that rampant corruption in Ukraine reduces financial and other assistance to naught. However, this is not the only problem: The 2014 association agreement between Ukraine and the EU envisioned reform of the judicial and electoral systems, but so far there has been no satisfactory result. Many EU experts attribute Kiev's economic and sociopolitical failures to the systemic inefficiency of local elites that have evolved in the process of the "redistribution" of revenues from Russian gas transit to Europe.

The situation is unstable not only in southeastern Ukraine. Many of its Western neighbors are every so often in conflict with the Kiev authorities on territorial and other issues. These include Poland, Hungary and Romania, and there are growing differences with Moldova and Serbia. Kiev has often initiated disputes with its neighbors to demonstrate its firm stance to the electorate. However, some disagreements may prove to be more than the Ukrainian political class can handle. For instance, some experts believe that the root cause of the well-known conflict over the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance (known the anti-Bandera Act) is Poland's claim to so-called Eastern Little Poland (Galicia and Volhynia) and its desire to strengthen its influence on migrant workers from Ukraine. Therefore, while escalating the conflict in the Donbass, the Kiev regime should remember the problems on the country's western borders.

As for China, it is buying up assets in Ukraine, making targeted investment in raw materials, energy, uranium ore mining, agriculture, and infrastructure (\$7 billion) and is showing interest in the black soil zone. China needs Ukraine as a passage to the EU. It invests mainly in raw materials industries and is interested in transferring environmentally harmful industries to Ukraine. China could gradually replace Russia in Ukraine's economy in the medium term. The growth of China's presence was reflected in Poroshenko's request for the Chinese leadership to help resolve the conflict in the Donbass.

Under these circumstances, Russia relies on UN Security Council Resolution No. 2202 and recognizes Ukraine and the Donbass republics as the parties to the conflict, but not the Russian Federation. There is a view that the coup in Kiev was incited and supported by the U.S., which ignored the fact that it was rejected by a significant portion of the

Ukrainian people. Russia stresses that if the Donbass is annexed by Ukraine without granting it special status as provided for by the Minsk agreements, the consequences of that would be extremely severe. Despite all obstacles, Russia is helping the Donbass overcome its isolation, providing economic and social assistance.

The Kiev authorities realize that escalation of tension and confrontation around the Donbass and Crimea is a key to preserving their regime, as well as a means of mobilization and attracting support from the outside. Radical approaches prevail over pragmatic interests and are fraught with a complete rupture of relations with Russia, even at the cost of an economic collapse.

The degradation of the country's state institutions and industry is aggravated by corruption, a social crisis and division of society with regard to the Independence Square uprising. There is growing distrust of the government. Rampant crime and radicalism are depriving the state of its monopoly on violence. The Kiev regime will not resolve the conflict, and the victory of forces capable of reconciling with the Donbass is unlikely. So, Kiev is doomed to deeper confrontation with Russia. Under such circumstances, it is extremely important that Russia has expressed its readiness to support the Donbass in the event of a large-scale aggression.

Neither a big war nor a political settlement is likely in the foreseeable future. The "neither peace nor war" situation is beneficial for Kiev, which will blame the "aggressor country" for the decline of the utilities and housing maintenance sector, meager wages, etc. It is also beneficial for Washington as a source of systemic instability on the border with Russia. Major provocations are possible. The risk of a large-scale clash will increase along with the economic and sociopolitical degradation of the Kiev regime. The elections in Ukraine could change the political landscape, but not bring a tangible improvement in the situation around the Donbass and Crimea.

There are three possible scenarios for the Donbass. Scenario No. 1 (negative): nonrecognition of the republics, inadequate integration into the Russian economy, a final break with Ukraine, economic decline, the continuing outflow of people, and social degradation. Scenario No. 2: Russia's de facto recognition of the DPR and the LPR, the development of economic ties, the inflow of capital, population growth and higher living standards. Scenario No. 3 (optimistic): Russia's de jure recognition of the republics, a referendum on their inclusion into the Russian



Federation, an inflow of investment, and the integration of the DPR and LPR economies into the Russian economy.

**Alexey Drobinin:** As a foreign policy agency representative, I would like to ask a somewhat unexpected question. Are there any political forces or elite groups in Ukraine that we could view as possible partners in dialogue, interaction?

**Vasily Semyonov:** Right now, we do not see any real elite groups or individuals in Ukraine who could be relied on.

**Natalia Nikonorova:** Unfortunately, I have to agree with Vasily Stanislavovich [Semyonov]. There is no real political force for dialogue, in particular between the Russian Federation and any representatives of Ukraine's ruling establishment. As far as the existing opposition bloc is concerned, there are some leftovers from regional parties. These political figures are trying to position themselves as people loyal to Russia, Donetsk and Lugansk, but here I can speak on behalf of Donetsk. We do not trust these political forces. They had a chance in 2014 to settle the armed conflict. They had the resources and powers to prevent it, take necessary measures to prevent what is now happening in the Donetsk Basin, but unfortunately, they did not do that.

However, the overall picture is not that bleak. I would like to go back to the question of what the Ukrainian public thinks about Russia and the conflict in the southeastern Ukraine. According to a poll conducted by an international organization, most respondents are in favor of a peaceful settlement and the fulfillment of corresponding obligations, regardless of how that would impact Ukraine.

Still, we do have concerns that the situation could deteriorate, because it is necessary to take into account the state policy of forced Ukrainization, the policy of instilling fear of Russia. This is being done on a massive scale; there are media attacks against Russia, and illegal acts are adopted. Every day, people hear stories of Russia attacking Ukraine and Ukraine being forced to defend itself. In other words, they are playing on fear, not even on hatred. If we allow this to continue, of course, the situation will only get worse. For our part, we are trying to communicate with political leaders. There are still people in Ukraine who respect our common history, who treat Russia with brotherly affection and have a good understanding of what is happening in Ukrainian politics right now.

These are small public organizations that conduct surveys and discreetly engage with Donetsk and Lugansk. We maintain these contacts and exchange information. I am sure that none of the people who favor a peaceful settlement of the conflict will be elected.

We expect the situation to deteriorate after the election. At the same time, we believe that a new leader could be instrumental in improving and normalizing relations and restoring peace and stability.

### **The Situation in the South Caucasus and Its Effects on International and Regional Security**

*Stanislav Ivanov,*  
*senior research associate, Center for International Security at the Ye.M. Primakov National Research Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO), Russian Academy of Sciences, Candidate of Science (History)*

THE SOUTH CAUCASUS, which is also referred to as Transcaucasia or the Transcaucasus, is a vast region south of the Greater Caucasus range. It is home to five states – Abkhazia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, and South Ossetia – and one self-proclaimed republic, Nagorno-Karabakh. Despite conflicts in it that remain unresolved, the South Caucasus retains an important role that it has traditionally played in global politics and in the world economy due to its geographical position of bordering Russia, Turkey and Iran, its access to the Black and Caspian seas, its rich natural resources, and its opportunities for the transit of oil, natural gas and other strategic commodities from Central Asia, China, India and other countries to Europe. In the long term, the South Caucasus and the Black Sea-Caspian region may become key elements of two planned transportation arteries, East-West (part of the Belt and Road Initiative, also known as the Silk Road Economic Belt) and North-South.

The main security threats to the South Caucasus include:

- domestic political tensions in South Caucasus countries and statehood, social and economic problems in them;
- ongoing confrontations between Georgia and Abkhazia and between Azerbaijan and Armenia;
- attempts by external players such as the United States and NATO to build up military presence in the region.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the governments of Georgia

and Azerbaijan, under pressure from nationalist and radical extremist groups, used armed force to maintain control of what had been autonomous republics in the two countries in the Soviet era. Instead of respectful negotiations and proposals for cooperation on equal terms in building new statehood, the Georgian and Azerbaijani leaders sent tanks, artillery and warplanes to pacify their national minorities – the Abkhaz, Ossetians and Armenians. Predictably, all that this achieved was to give a boost to the minorities' drive for independence.

The consequences of those armed conflicts included hundreds of thousands of refugees, deeper ethnic and religious rifts, the severance of traditional ties and transportation routes, and the destruction of economic infrastructures. Many people fled to Russia.

It is increasingly obvious that the territorial integrity principle and the right of peoples to self-determination, which are among the pillars of the postwar world order approved by the United Nations, conflict with each other when governments ignore the legitimate rights and freedoms of national minorities. Some smaller ethnic groups have preferred to form independent states to avoid definitive assimilation with the loss of their ethnic identity. There have been quite many instances of peaceful and just resolution of such conflicts. They include the division of Czechoslovakia into two sovereign states – the Czech Republic and Slovakia, – the acquisition of extensive autonomy by Quebec, and Iraqi Kurdistan becoming one of the constituent territories of new federal democratic Iraq.

The Georgian government unleashed a large-scale war of sabotage against Abkhazia and afterward attempted a new military invasion of South Ossetia with hundreds of Ossetian civilians and militiamen and Russian peacekeepers being killed or injured as a result. All this forced Russia to recognize those republics as independent states and sign treaties on friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance with them. Russian peacekeepers deployed on the Abkhaz-Georgian and South Ossetian-Georgian borders sustained what, in proportional terms, had been an unprecedented death and injury toll in the entire world history of peacekeeping operations.

The Russian peacekeepers stabilized the situation along those borders, bringing armed attacks and sabotage to an end. However, Georgia continues to boycott Abkhazia and South Ossetia and to try, with Western support, to bring them back under its jurisdiction, this time through economic blockades and soft power. Although those frozen conflicts hinder the economic development of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, they cause

economic problems to Georgia as well and raise obstacles to transportation and to various projects throughout the Black Sea region.

And yet the greatest source of danger is the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. A protocol between Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia that was signed in the Kyrgyzstan capital Bishkek in May 1994 officially established a fragile truce that has been violated repeatedly. The worst violation took place on April 2-5, 2016, when several hundred troops and civilians were killed or wounded on both sides during an Azerbaijani offensive. There can be no alternative to negotiations as the means of settling this conflict, and it is in Stepanakert, not in the capitals of foreign countries, that the solution should be looked for.

Russia as a country bordering the South Caucasus and as a global power is anxiously following the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and trying to safeguard its traditionally friendly and fruitful relations both with Azerbaijan and with Armenia. Millions of Azerbaijanis, Armenians, Georgians and tens of thousands of Ossetians, Abkhaz, Kurds and other natives of the South Caucasus live in Russia. Most of them are Russian citizens.

Apparently, neither the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict nor other similar conflicts in the South Caucasus have ethnic or religious roots as some pseudo-experts and politicians claim but have been caused by the arrogance and shortsighted sectarian, chauvinism-tinged policies of the post-Soviet governments of the region's countries. The collapse of the Soviet Union motivated those governments to seek to turn their countries into unitary states, disregard the interests of their national or religious minorities, and sometimes take a negative attitude to Russia and to the ethnic Russian communities of the South Caucasus.

Russia helped achieve the Bishkek ceasefire agreement of 1994, organizes regular Azerbaijani-Armenian summits, and continues to look for a compromise between Azerbaijan and Armenia on the basis of the Madrid Principles and in the format of the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Russia promises support for a settlement formula that would satisfy all the parties to the conflict and offers to be a guarantor of such a settlement.

The soured relations between the West and Russia and the United States' unilateral withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal negatively affect the situation in the South Caucasus and nearby regions. U.S.-Russian confrontation that drove the two nations to the brink of a new Cold War narrow down opportunities for global consolidated action to ensure secu-

rity in the South Caucasus and worldwide. The increasing range of sanctions imposed on Russia by the United States and its allies and the West's anti-Russian rhetoric make it more difficult to deal with global problems such as regional conflicts, international terrorism, drug trafficking, organized crime, and environmental pollution.

Since both the United States and Russia are permanent members of the UN Security Council, their disagreements on key issues prevent the council from making effective decisions, for instance from trying to achieve peace in Syria or helping settle the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. U.S. plans for the full-scale resumption of sanctions against Iran also negatively impact the situation in the South Caucasus and areas bordering it.

Iran and Turkey, countries that border each other, play important roles in South Caucasus politics. Iran tries to develop fruitful economic relations with Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia, and even offers to mediate in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict but is strongly against extraregional actors, primarily the United States, other NATO countries, and Israel, becoming involved in South Caucasus affairs. Trade and economic relations with Iran are vital for Armenia due to the latter's ongoing economic blockade by Turkey and Azerbaijan.

Turkey continues to intensively build up relations with Georgia and Azerbaijan in various fields, including military. Among other things, Turkey helps Azerbaijan and Georgia build efficient armed forces. It holds joint military exercises with the two countries, trains military personnel for them, supplies them with state-of-the-art weapons, and sends advisers and other military specialists to them. Turkey officially supported Azerbaijan's offensive against Nagorno-Karabakh in April 2016 and encourages Azerbaijan in every way to try a military solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh problem. In doing so, the Turkish government cites its recent punitive armed action against the Turkish and Syrian Kurds that it claims was successful – Operation Euphrates Shield and Operation Olive Branch. Thereby, Turkey is provoking a new wave of tension in the region.

The soured relations between the West and Russia and the United States' unilateral withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal negatively affect the situation in the South Caucasus and nearby regions.

Armenia has been forced to react by continual imports of weapons. Military cooperation with Russia, help from the Collective Security Treaty Organization and imports of Russian arms are key factors in keeping Armenia's armed forces battle-ready and efficient.

The arms race in the South Caucasus is undoubtedly a heavy burden on the budgets of its countries. It affects the economy of Azerbaijan, for instance, despite large amounts of foreign currency the country raises by selling its own hydrocarbons and by being a transit stage for Central Asian hydrocarbons on their way to Europe. Russia tries to keep its weapons exports to Azerbaijan balanced with its arms sales to Armenia and stands ready to limit its weapons exports to both countries if Turkey, Israel and other weapons-exporting nations do the same. It would be sensible to freeze arms exports to the South Caucasus before its conflicts are settled politically.

Obviously, Turkey is going out of its way to boost its influence in the South Caucasus, gain a strong foothold in the region, and make it part of a transportation corridor to connect the country to Central Asia and Afghanistan. This is in tune with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's policy to restore Turkey's positions among Turkic nations situated on what used to be the territory of the Ottoman Empire.

Turkey has also been involved in violence in Syria and Iraq. Between 2012 and 2017, Turkey was a transit channel for tens of thousands of Islamist militants from all over the world. Georgian and Azerbaijani Muslims who went to the "jihad" in the "Islamic Caliphate" traveled through Turkey on their way. After the jihadists were defeated toward the end of 2017, surviving militants from Azerbaijan and from Georgia's Adjara region, Pankisi Gorge and Kvemo Kartli province have been returning home. Brainwashed and having combat experience, they may recruit militants from local young people or form terrorist sleeper cells. Armenia has had to accept more than 20,000 ethnic Armenian refugees from Syria and Iraq, which entailed considerable state expenditure. Armenia's new leadership has said that it stands ready to join forces with Russia in carrying out a humanitarian mission to Aleppo and other parts of Syria where there are ethnic Armenian communities.

Armenia and Iran are the two states pursuing the most balanced foreign policies, which aim to defuse confrontations in the region. Armenia maintains relations in diverse fields with Russia, Iran, Georgia, and France. It cooperates on a bilateral or multilateral basis with various countries in the formats of international and regional organizations,

including the United Nations, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), NATO, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC), and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Armenia seeks to be a trade bridge between EU and EAEU member countries.

### **The Post-Soviet Space in the Context of the World Order**

*Alexander Stoppe,  
Head, Analytical Department of the Standing Committee of the Union State*

DEAR CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS, dear Mr. Oganessian,

The state secretary of the Union State, Grigory Rapota, has asked me to pass you his wishes of successful work. May I also thank you for inviting me to participate in this conference.

As regards the theme of this session, let me start by saying that the views I'm going to express in my presentation may not coincide with the opinions of the leadership of the Standing Committee.

A few words about terminology. I hope that, by post-Soviet space, the organizers of this conference mean the territory of the former Soviet Union excluding the Baltic republics because otherwise we would have an entirely different kind of discussion.

Rephrasing the first line of the Communist Manifesto, which had its 170th anniversary this year, a specter is haunting Europe – the specter of a new world conflict.

It wouldn't be inappropriate to recall some statements of two "gurus" of American foreign policy, Zbigniew Brzezinski and Henry Kissinger.

According to what Brzezinski said at a ceremony in 2011 in which he was accepting the Alexis de Tocqueville Prize, a prize named after a French historian, sociologist and politician, the international security and stability system is constantly experiencing regional and global threats and is on the brink of crisis. "Socio-economically, the world is becoming a single playing-field in which three dynamic realities increasingly prevail: globalization, 'internetization,' and deregulation. The foregoing crisis of global power is further complicated by the appearance of the sudden phe-

nomenon of mass political awakening,” Brzezinski said. This “awakening,” he claimed, had both positive and negative, and objective and subjective aspects.

Kissinger said in his book *World Order*, which was first published in 2014: “In the world of geopolitics, the order established and proclaimed as universal by the Western countries stands at a turning point.”

Since then little has changed in the world. In fact, more serious threats and challenges have emerged. There practically are no political scientists who don’t say that global civilization has entered an era of changes caused by critical environmental and resource problems, by stronger protectionist trends, and by more intense antagonisms.

However, this doesn’t mean that the world is irreversibly heading for an apocalypse. Threats of catastrophe don’t inevitably materialize. There is practically always more than one route to take, but it takes intelligence, professionalism, determination, openness to dialogue, and consensus to make the correct choice. Even from the point of view of “points of bifurcation” – an idea that political scientists have come to be so fond of, – it is changes in the nodal elements of a complex organized system that have the greatest importance. The nodal elements of the system of international relations are decision-making centers, especially the top-level ones.

Other means of stabilization and chaos prevention are integration mechanisms. Integration mechanisms can’t work without the consensus of those involved in them, and so they would inevitably become islands of stability in the unstable world of today.

The “from Lisbon to Vladivostok” thesis, which was put forward by the president of Russia eight years ago, has lost none of its significance. In fact, it has become even more significant. The existence of the Union State and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the strengthening of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), and the further development of BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) will help maintain peace and stability.

Of course, it needs to be borne in mind that globalization has brought about an era of “new mercantilism,” which is partly a reaction to globalization. National interests again take priority. The United States, Britain and Spain are good examples. For this reason, any attempt to sacrifice national interests for allied interests or for mutual integration would work if it were accepted by all the countries involved and offered clear long-term benefits to all of them.

The post-Soviet space is an example of such an approach. By the way,



it's worth mentioning that Russia has never tried to force anyone to set up associations aimed at integration. In fact, back in 1998, a multispeed and multilevel integration principle was put at the basis of the mutual integration of post-Soviet countries. The CIS, the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC), the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), the CSTO, and the SCO are good examples of application of this principle.

However, integration would have limited success if it were based on economy alone and did not involve mutual trust, cultural ties and the joint handling of political threats and challenges.

In this respect, post-Soviet integration processes have serious advantages – the post-Soviet nations not only have huge experience of cooperation but have also had a common history and a record of fighting common enemies. Those in former Soviet republics who forget it slide into disgusting forms of nationalism.

The CIS is a pioneering project in a sense – it's hard to find any other instance in history where, instead of each taking its own path, 12 parts of a former state, not a former colonial power and its colonies, came together to deal with vital issues and tried to bolster their independence at the same time.

Today's Eurasian integration is, moreover, not only an economic but also a civilizational process. This is a very important point, one that needs to be addressed separately, in a sober-minded and unpoliticized way. One doesn't even need Samuel Huntington's reasoning to see that this civilizational factor may have serious impacts not only on the future of Eurasia but on that of the whole of Europe.

The post-Eurasian space, just as the entire world, is under pressure from the United States, which tries to replace the current world order with a unipolar system based on the American consumer society model. Washington's policy of ignoring the interests of sovereign states is an excellent illustration. One can trace a desire behind this to force on other countries a form of government that is ostensibly democratic but essentially authoritarian, which makes string pulling an easier job for Washington. Ukraine is a good example.

At the same time, Washington's maniacally persistent efforts to force its leadership on the international community means that the United States is losing its global leading positions. Behind the United States' current international policy is a fear of losing control of the world financial system and of ceasing to be the world's dominant power. This fear gets stronger each time a new sign appears that the neo-colonial dollar-based

financial system is crumbling, something that may result in a sharp decline of living standards in the United States. This might provoke a social outburst in the United States since American society is not immune to situations of this kind (in fact, over the past few decades, it has lost whatever immunity it did have).

Therefore, global domination is a life-or-death issue for the American ruling elite, and so it's highly likely that the United States will use its entire might to maintain and strengthen its global hegemony. I'm sure that, among other things, we'll soon see this manifested in the United States' relations with China.

The large-scale migration into European Union countries as a result of the United States' "democratization" policy in the Middle East, its politically motivated unfair competition, and its pressure on governments that fail to take their cue from it is evidence of Washington's increasing aggressiveness. One would be well-advised to remember the historical lesson that a global leader that resorts to irresponsible behavior in trying to salvage its leadership creates a major threat to international security, a threat that may lead to a world war.

Apparently, the United States has also reached a dangerous point in its relations with Russia as the leader in the post-Soviet space. Support by the United States and its allies for the 2014 coup in Ukraine that was anti-constitutional and, as it became clear afterward, anti-Russian, has been the best example.

The threat of the stationing of missiles in the Baltic countries and Poland creates a situation that differs little from the situation that preceded the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. Many of those present at this conference remember what that crisis could have led to.

Surely Russia is not a leading economic power. However, there is ample historical evidence that Russia has played a pivotal role in defending European and world civilization against external threats. The most vivid current example is Russia's energetic action in Syria against Islamic State, that global evil.

Russia's civilizational mission is primarily determined by the high cultural and moral values of Russian society, the domination of spiritual over material values in it, a creative spirit, the prioritization of public interests as opposed to Western individualism, and openness to self-enrichment by borrowing elements from other cultures. Much of what I've listed is the product of close interaction between the Russians and other peoples living in what is today the post-Soviet space.

Most importantly, there needs to be a balance of interests among the post-Soviet countries that would increase their combined power to a point where it can guarantee them security and the possibility of development in this era of extremely fierce international competition and increasing likelihood of a global conflict. There does exist an institutional basis for this, and the Union State, the CSTO, the EAEU, and the SCO are elements of it.

Ill-wishers realize that the combined power of Russia, the country accumulating the world's largest human and natural capital, and the new independent states that were republics of the Soviet Union would be able to protect the post-Soviet space from any external threats in times of crisis. I'm sure that this is not a utopia. Common sense would make it achievable, and competent policies in the post-Soviet space would help as well.

The history of the Union State, in which there are equal opportunities both for Belarusians and for Russians, opportunities that can enable them to feel at home both in Belarus and in Russia, is a good example. As for problems, there always are some, even in happy families. We'll tackle them.

### **The Information Component of Security in the Post-Soviet Space**

*Inna Tarasova,*  
*member of the Expert Council of the Committee on Commonwealth of Independent States Affairs, Eurasian Integration, and Relations with Compatriots of the 7th State Duma*

SOFT POWER is given a key role in building a positive image of Russia, at least in the eyes of the population of CIS countries, especially its Russian-speaking part, which is built into the context of the Russian cultural space and is willing to see our country as a geopolitical partner.

Information is an important instrument of soft power. Modern information technologies (ITs) offer unprecedented opportunities for psychological, political, social, and other influence on the population of the entire planet.

In the post-Soviet space, Russia is the natural integrating center and plays the determining role in building a single Eurasian information space. However, the Russian government is not getting down to developing an information strategy for the post-Soviet space, although it does pay

quite a lot of attention to information confrontations with countries such as the United States, Britain, Germany, or France. Ukraine may be the only exception.

I would like to dwell on some of the gaps in Russia's information policy toward CIS countries.

Do Russian media often analyze what media in other CIS countries say? The answer is obvious – they don't. All the time we watch talk shows on all our TV channels during which it's discussed what Donald Trump, Theresa May or Angela Merkel have said about Russia. But we are practically never told how media in CIS countries react to various Russian foreign policy moves, although, of course, the post-Soviet space is the number one target audience for Russian media.

However, it's practically impossible to develop any effective information strategy for the CIS without knowing what kind of information is provided by media in CIS countries and without knowing how the population of those countries reacts to what happens in Russia.

If you go to the inosmi.ru website and put "Belarusian media about Russia" in the search box, all you get is an item for September 2017 mentioning the Zapad 2017 Russian-Belarusian military exercise. If you look for news about Kyrgyzstan, you get a report on the Interaction 2018 military exercise of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (the CSTO member countries had for the first time adopted a joint plan for the use of armed forces). On Turkmenistan, there's an item on the purchase of Turkmen natural gas by Gazprom in return for some economic and political concessions by Turkmenistan.

The bulk of Russian news about CIS countries is about military or political cooperation between our states or about business projects by transnational corporations. In other words, the CIS media don't come within the range of interests of the Russian media. News agencies based in some CIS countries have branches in other CIS countries but those are less popular than branches of other foreign media groups.

Analysts believe that even Kazakhstan, which is normally seen as Russia's most reliable partner in the post-Soviet space, takes far from pro-Russian positions on many issues. Let's, for example, recall the appointment of former British prime minister Tony Blair as an adviser to Nursultan Nazarbayev, negative attitudes to Kazakhstan's Russian-speaking community, permanent propaganda against Russia in the Kazakh media, and Kazakhstan's participation in building a so-called pan-Turkic world under the leadership of Turkey.

In Kyrgyzstan, the media environment is increasingly competitive. Russian television channels have been becoming less popular recently because of a lack of content, either in Russian or in Kyrgyz, specifically targeting audiences in Kyrgyzstan. The most popular radio stations are Kyrgyz state stations and the local branch of Radio Liberty, which is financed by the U.S. Congress and is called Azattyk. Young people are moving into the Internet, where Russian media don't play any role to talk about. Pro-American, pro-Turkish and Russian opposition media maintain strong presence in Kyrgyzstan.

In Moldova, in 2017 parliament passed a bill to ban news programs from Russia. Earlier on, parliament passed a bill on measures against "foreign propaganda," including supposed Russian propaganda. The new legislation prohibits relaying television and radio programs with military or political content if they have been produced in countries that have not ratified the European Convention on Transfrontier Television.

The situation is the same in practically all CIS countries.

For contrast's sake, let me give you an example of Chinese use of information as a soft power method. China tries to exercise its influence on the neighboring states of Central Asia – which some people call cultural invasion – through channels such as information, education, and tourism. China has practically had to start from scratch as it had an extremely negative image in nearly all Central Asian countries because of current conflicts with the Chinese. Today, this situation is largely a thing of the past. This partly goes to the credit of the Chinese media. For example, Chinese journalists write numerous reports and make television programs specially for Kyrgyzstan in which they describe Chinese achievements.

Remarkably, much of the Chinese media content for Kyrgyzstan is in Russian. Chinese content targeting Central Asia mainly focuses on art, geography, technology, Chinese customs, and Chinese achievements. This range of subjects wins large young audiences in member countries of the Eurasian Economic Union.

There's one more subject I'd like to raise. Too few tourists from CIS countries visit Russia, and this is largely the result of scant information from Russia. According to the Russian Federal Agency for Tourism (Rosturizm), most of the foreign tourists who visited Russia in 2017 were nationals of China, Germany, South Korea, the United States, Israel, Britain, or Italy. There's no CIS country on this list.

In some of the CIS countries, the lack of state support drives media

companies into dependence on some businesses or crime rings, provokes inflows of foreign capital into the media of those nations, or leads to foreign media establishing their presence in those countries.

Russian-language media are in the worst situation. Russian television has its air time reduced or gets ousted from its frequencies by local or third-country channels. One of the reasons given for this are Russian arrears of payment for rebroadcasting Russian programs. Meanwhile, decreases in information from Russia entail heavier media pressure from the West.

The White House has developed its first cybersecurity strategy for 15 years (as we know, cybersecurity is a component of information security), in which a section entitled "Advance American Influence" says in part: "Collaboration with allies and partners is also essential to ensure we can continue to benefit from the cross-border communications, content creation, and commerce generated by the open, interoperable architecture of the Internet."

The U.S. Defense Department has complained in a report that the United States fails to pay enough attention to information confrontations with other countries and insisted on the use of advanced technologies and sociocultural analysis to organize information campaigns abroad and combat "disinformation" from Russia and China in collaboration with allies and partners. Is that not a plan of action against Russia?!

Moreover, the United States plans to provide a two-year allocation of \$160 million for its so-called Global Engagement Center, whose tasks include countering "foreign state and non-state propaganda." U.S. media say the GEC will be the United States' first post-Cold War centralized response to Russian propaganda. A bill is being prepared to provide \$100 million to support "objective, Russian-language, independent media" and support programs to counter fake news.

So, does it really make sense for us to be afraid of being accused of cultural invasion?

One can agree with analysts who argue that Russia (Russian officials, to be more precise) bases its policies toward CIS countries on partnership with local business groups and takes little notice of the interests of the population of those countries. That is one of the main problems of Russia's entire system of interaction with its post-Soviet neighbors.

Nevertheless, despite the persistent demonization of Russia by Western countries, the population of many of the post-Soviet countries supports the idea of dialogue with Russia. I wouldn't be objective if I didn't mention that the importance of the influence of Russian information

on CIS countries from the viewpoint of the security of the post-Soviet space is reflected in the activities of the Russian government. The Federal Agency for Commonwealth of Independent States Affairs, Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation (Rosstrudnichestvo), the Foreign Ministry, and both houses of the Russian parliament do a large amount of work in applying soft power in the post-Soviet space. For instance, a bill was prepared recently to simplify the procedure for the acquisition of Russian citizenship by citizens of CIS countries.

RT television, which was formerly called Russia Today, successfully broadcasts to Western audiences, being watched by 70 million people every week. But the CIS is not a priority audience for it.

Surely there have been positive developments, for example the SputnikPro educational project for journalists in CIS countries, which teaches standards and technologies to be used by a multimedia news agency. There have been masterclasses in Minsk, Tbilisi, and Yerevan. Journalists from the Sputnik and Rossiya Segodnya news agencies have been sharing experience that may be of interest to fellow journalists who write or broadcast in Russian. Sputnik's Internet portal for each country, where it operates, exists in two versions, one in the language of that country and one in Russian. Journalists from competing media groups get invited to create a competitive atmosphere. SputnikPro is the first project of this kind to be run by a Russian media company in the post-Soviet space. But, unfortunately, this is still a long way from organizing systemic television for the post-Soviet space. Meanwhile, Western media have been running events of this kind for a long time and win post-Soviet, especially young, audiences.

Another excellent instance of cooperation is a project to send Russian teachers to Tajikistan to teach at secondary schools where instruction was in Russian. The teachers went to Tajikistan in September 2018. This project came into being during an interparliamentary forum in Dushanbe in October 2016, and the chair of the Federation Council, Valentina Matviyenko, took charge of it. This project was the starting point of much closer educational and cultural cooperation.

"If there were no Russian language, we wouldn't be able to talk to our neighbors – Uzbeks, Turkmen, and Kazakhs. For us the Russian language is a means of communication on a global scale," said Mahmadsaid Ubaydulloyev, chairman of the Majlisi Milli, the upper house of the Majlisi Oli, the Tajik parliament.

The Tajik website Asia-Plus provides detailed progress reports on the project, describes its achievements and numerous problems it has involved, but Russian media ceased to cover the subject as soon as its inauguration was over.

What I've said makes clear that we need to pay extremely close attention to what happens in the CIS and that Russia should develop an information strategy for the CIS that should be one of our soft power priorities.

**A. Pogorelov:** In my view, it should first of all be pointed out to CIS bodies – the Interparliamentary Assembly and others – that there still is no strategy for the information security of CIS countries. We are told that there is work under way to develop such a strategy, a team of scholars has been put together for the purpose and has been working for several years already, but there has been no progress.

**Alexander Sharikov:** I don't agree that there's no information policy for the CIS. There is the Concept for the Formation of the Information Space of the Commonwealth of Independent States, which was adopted in 1996. There are a television channel and a radio station that discuss problems in the post-Soviet space – they are parts of the Mir television and radio company, which has been set up by eight member countries of the CIS.

### **Problems of Mediation**

**Natalya Mikhaylova,**  
*Acting Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Donetsk People's Republic, Ukraine*

IN DEALING with international and domestic conflicts there increasingly often arises the question about the most effective methods to achieve peace. It has been the subject of numerous studies, but there still is no consensus among researchers.

Documents released by various international organizations have repeatedly stressed the importance of mediation between parties to conflicts. This makes us assume that mediation is the most effective means of resolution of disputes and conflicts. In view of this, it is worth focusing on some problems that it may involve.

First of all, let me point out that Article 33 of the Charter of the United



Nations qualifies mediation as a “peaceful means” of resolving a dispute. The United Nations Guidance for Effective Mediation sets basic principles for mediation.

A reference guide of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe entitled *Mediation and Dialogue Facilitation in the OSCE* contains recommendations on ways of putting the United Nations Guidance into practice through OSCE mechanisms.

The United Nations Guidance and the OSCE reference guide neither are binding documents nor lay down any clear rules. This gives mediators vast powers in choosing their strategy for negotiations and for specific moves. Unfortunately, quite often such a strategy is based on the mediator’s subjective interpretation of its mission, nor can it be ruled out that the mediator would be pursuing its own interests.

One important point is that mediation only works if it is voluntarily accepted by the conflict parties. We assume that the parties would feel negative about any attempt to force mediation on them and that therefore in such situations mediation is not helpful. External pressure may produce temporary conciliation, but as soon as it is relieved a huge risk will arise of the conflict flaring up again.

Another key condition for effective mediation is the mediator’s impartiality. It is essential for the parties to have confidence in the mediator and hold honest and effective negotiations.

Normally, a mediator’s choice of strategy is crucial to its mission. There are two main categories of mediation strategies in international practice – peaceful political methods, that is negotiations, and coercive pressure.

In our view, the latter kind may give the parties artificial and temporary stimuli to settlement, but when the mediator and those stimuli are gone there will be a risk of the conflict being rekindled.

We believe that a detailed analysis of the mediatory activities of the OSCE as one of the members of the Trilateral Contact Group on Ukraine would be essential for working out an optimum strategy.

For more than four years, Ukraine has been plagued by a domestic military conflict. This conflict was sparked by a coup that brought a government into power that doesn’t want to respect the interests of the population of the Donbass. After the new government tried to suppress peaceful demonstrations in southeastern Ukraine, the population of those territories proclaimed the Donetsk People’s Republic and the Lugansk People’s Republic in that territory. The OSCE has been making attempts to settle this conflict but all of them were fruitless. The main reason is that

the Ukrainian government has no political will to meet its commitments. Moreover, Ukraine has proven to be a dishonest negotiator because it has constantly been going back on commitments that initially brought about consensus. Ukraine was able to take this line because there had been no clear framework for negotiations, because points that had been agreed on hadn't been recorded in any intermediary documents or in minutes of meetings, and because the OSCE hadn't reacted to Ukraine's departures from its commitments.

This example makes it obvious that negotiations need a regulatory and documentary framework. The regulation of negotiations and the documentation of all their results can eliminate shortcomings in the strategy the talks are based on. It is also important to put the parties' compliance with agreements they have reached under external monitoring.

Hence, arguably, an optimum mediation strategy is a peaceful political strategy that involves regulated negotiations with documented results. It is a strategy involving a set procedure for negotiations with the recording of all their results, including intermediate, and possible departures by the parties from their commitments.

To sum up, the voluntary acceptance of mediation by conflict parties and the mediator's impartiality and optimum strategy are the main conditions for successful mediation.

## Session Two

### Ethnicity Issues in Former Soviet Republics

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THERE IS A COUNTRY where various ethnic and religious groups have for centuries lived together in harmony, some of which profess Orthodox Christianity, some Islam, some Judaism, and some Buddhism. That country is Russia. Ethnic (and religious) relations have always been on public agendas here. This issue was considered an aspect of national security by the political elites in the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union, as well as by the political elite of post-Soviet Russia.

It's a well-known truth that "if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand."

Today, foreign countries, including former Soviet republics, would have been able to borrow Russian experience of ethnic relations if they wanted to. This would help resolve conflicts in the post-Soviet region and in general make Europe and Central Asia more secure.

The ethnic relations issues of Russia are different from those of Europe, one reason being that the ethnic communities of Russia have lived in the country for centuries and are to a significant extent integrated into Russian society culturally and politically. One more reason is that practically every ethnic group in Russia lives on its indigenous land, and such territories are administrative units.

I think that discussions about issues of federalization in Russia and in the post-Soviet space as a whole, about ethnic relations, the status of various ethnic groups, and common historical memory would sooner or later result in a situation where anyone who considers Russia their home feels comfortable and secure here and possesses all civil rights.

### **Some Comments on the Federal Structure of Russia at the End of the 20th and Beginning of the 21st Centuries**

*Yury Bulatov,*

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SHORTLY BEFORE the disbandment of the Soviet Union, Boris Yeltsin, the first president of Russia, urged his fellow citizens to start with a clean slate in building a new federation. Take as much sovereignty as you can carry, he said during a visit to Kazan in the summer of 1990. Autonomous territories that had been units of the former Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) responded with an uncontrolled drive for more autonomy.

For example, Tatarstan adopted a “Declaration of the State Sovereignty of the Republic of Tatarstan” in 1990 that unilaterally proclaimed a new status for the republic. Chukotka announced that it wanted to join the new federation as an equal federal unit, not as a division of a federal unit. Some of the regions asked the Russian president for permission to set up new republics – the republics of Pomorye, Primorye, Novosibirsk, Omsk, and others. Altogether, Moscow was asked for approval of more than 50 projects to set up new administrative territories.

One of them was a project to set up an “international ecological park” as a constituent territory of the federation.

The constitution adopted in December 1993 divided Russia into 89 federal territories, 32 of which were ethnic regions and the rest simply territorial units.

However, the “parade of sovereignties” was going on and took a new form – legal nihilism. It became fashionable for a federal region to adopt a constitution for itself with provisions that contradicted the 1993 Russian constitution. The constitutions of the majority of constituent republics declared them sovereign states. The republics reserved the right to suspend federal laws if the latter ran against their constitutions.

Russia had begun to balance on the dangerous brink of transforming into an amorphous confederation. Vladimir Putin, during his first year of presidency, made a critical assessment of the nature of Russian federalism. In his address to parliament in 2000, he said directly that Russia was a decentralized state and not a proper federation. Federal relations in the country were not properly developed, he complained.

What is the difference between the federal structure of present-day Russia and that of the former Soviet Union?

Firstly, unlike the Soviet Union, which was a federation of ethnic communities, Russia has a mixed federal structure based on the ethnic and territorial principles. Today’s Russia is a federation of ethnic communities and administrative territories.

Secondly, the Soviet Union was a symmetric federation – all the federal units had the same legal status of a union republic. Today’s Russia is an asymmetric federation with units differing in status from one another – it consists of republics, krajs (territories), oblasts (regions), federal cities, one autonomous oblast, and autonomous okrugs (districts). Moreover, some of the units are incomparable to others in terms of area, population size, and political and economic weight. A “federation of elephants and ants” – that’s how Russia is sometimes labeled in Russian and foreign media.

Thirdly, while the constitutions of all Soviet republics formally allowed them to secede from the Soviet Union, today’s Russian constitution indirectly prohibits the constituent units from leaving Russia. The constitution says that Russia’s federal structure is based on the equality and self-determination of the country’s ethnic groups. But the constitution doesn’t limit the self-determination principle to politics but extends it to economic, social, cultural and other affairs. Thereby it puts a mild ban on

secession. Western federal constitutions are harsher about this: they ban federation units from seceding, from unilaterally changing their status, and from establishing independent relations with other units.

It is essential to take Soviet federal experience into account in making potential amendments to Russia's federal structure. The main point is that the collapse of the Soviet Union was not only the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century but also confirmed a

serious lesson of world history: practically any federation based on the ethnic principle will be relatively short-lived. It is only the territorial principle that can be a reliable guarantee of the viability of a federation.

It goes to the credit of Putin that, by exercising his powers, he was able to stop disintegration processes in Russia during his first presidential term. The majority of regional laws that contradicted the 1993 constitution were repealed. Putin also argued that agreements between the central government and regional administrations behind the backs of other regional administrations would be an unacceptable practice. However, it isn't an easy task to ensure harmonious interaction between the center and regions. That is why Putin, in his address to parliament on March 1, 2018, reiterated that Russia is a multiethnic country with a complex federal structure.

Some opposition politicians persistently suggest radical overhauls of Russia's federal structure. Some want it to be reformed on the basis of the territorial principle. Mikhail Prokhorov's Civic Platform party has proposed abolishing all administrative units based on the ethnic principle. Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDPR), has put forward essentially the same proposal – he suggested dividing Russia into guberniyas (“governorates,” the term for the principal administrative units in prerevolutionary Russia). From time to time, there emerge projects for a transitional structure that would mainly be based on the territorial principle but would include autonomous regions where indigenous ethnic groups make up more than 50% of the population, while other ethnic groups would just have a right to “cultural autonomy.”

There are hotheads who insist on bringing out a new constitution – the sixth one for the past 100 years – in order to formalize the proposed restructuring of the federation. However, those initiatives, if put into prac-

Russia had begun to balance on the dangerous brink of transforming into an amorphous confederation.

tice, could upset the current balance of power in Russia and have unpredictable consequences. None of Russia's ethnic groups is prepared to renounce its identity. Ethnocratic regimes in Russia's ethnic regions are intensively promoting local ethnic cultures. This is a trend that is on the ascent. What should be done to reverse it? Where does one start?

One thing is clear: administrative measures wouldn't be sufficient. Economic forums are held in various parts of Russia whose participants, among them senior Russian officials, discuss which form of innovation – nano technology, digital economy, or anything else – would be the best motive force of Russia's economic development. This reflects a desire to put the country's federal structure on a solid economic basis. Obviously, changing the federation model is not on the agenda.

### **The Eurasian Peoples' Assembly as a New Format of Public Diplomacy**

*Igor Khalevinsky,  
Chairman of the Council of the Association of Russian Diplomats*

MY PRESENTATION will be positive all the way through. So, get prepared for pleasant things. At the session yesterday, we had a lively discussion about suggested models for our integration, and I pointed out the appropriate statement of our Turkish fellow delegate that integration projects will be very effective if they are initiated by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). I would like to share my own experience of witnessing public influence in matters of war, peace, and the friendship of peoples.

On May 27, 2017, an association was established that was named the Eurasian Peoples' Assembly. About 2,500 delegates came from 62 countries to its first congress, which was held in Moscow. You'll know that being at a congress is like being in a fourth dimension: people of common sense talk about unity, friendship, the interpenetration of cultures, music, poetry, science. It was an atmosphere that gave you a feeling that that was what our future would be like.

The Eurasian Peoples' Assembly is an important instrument for public diplomacy, and public diplomacy is acquiring a special meaning. It is an extensive channel for interaction between civil society and governments, for the unification of people regardless of gender, race and ethnicity, for supporting public and governmental initiatives to provide peace guarantees and build harmony, for the strengthening of good-neighborly

relations and friendship between nations, for joining forces to safeguard the Eurasian continent with its entire natural, cultural and historical diversity, and for providing conditions for secure and comfortable life. Care for young generations is one of today's priorities, and therefore the assembly has a youth wing. The assembly also uses new formats for interaction with civil society institutions and governments in Eurasian countries.

The main instruments are peacemaking dialogue, public diplomacy, integration projects, and forms of interethnic communication. The assembly is open to a broad dialogue with anyone who shares the idea of harmonious, coordinated and mutually supplementary efforts by governments and NGOs to safeguard peace and strengthen friendship among Eurasian countries. The assembly is an international association of NGOs.

There were 40 dialogue platforms during the first congress – roundtables, masterclasses, flash mobs. There were 130 speakers, 53 of them foreigners. The assembly is potentially a very effective promotion channel for integration. The assembly is governed by the General Council and its structure includes specialized bodies such as the Council for Intellectual Culture, the Eurasia as a Health Territory Council, and the Literary Council of Writers and Readers. The councils have their activities supplemented by various projects. For example, there has been a literary project – we've had three literary festivals. The last one was held in Sochi. Poets and writers from 54 countries were present. This has been admired a great deal. When we were visiting UNESCO, its deputy director general said to us that the assembly was like UNESCO in scale and in parameters.

This Eurasian movement brings together all kinds of groups. There were even representatives of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta at the congress. There were Americans there as well, although they live in another continent but were attracted by the humanitarian nature of our congress.

There have been Days of the Eurasian Peoples' Assembly in Serbia, France, Kyrgyzstan, and India. Days of the Assembly are events that involve meetings with public figures and politicians that end up in various kinds of agreements and in the organization of new forms of contacts with the host country. The General Council quite often holds meetings in various countries, where its members meet with local intellectuals, young people, students, and foreign ministry officials. All this produces huge impacts.

The Eurasian Peoples' Assembly plays an immense role. Anyone is free to join the assembly, I invite everybody, primarily people from Donetsk and Lugansk.

## **The Ethnopolitical Model of Post-Soviet Latvia: Principal Trends**

*Vladimir Simindey,  
Head of Research Programs, Historical Memory Foundation*

I WOULD LIKE to focus on Latvia, but much of what I'm going to say also applies to the neighboring states of Estonia and Lithuania. I'm going to speak about the forming of the ethnopolitical model for post-Soviet Latvia. To start with, it needs to be mentioned that the motive forces of those processes were not only, and not as much, independent action groups as the so-called popular fronts that had been set up by the Communist Party and the State Security Committee (KGB), for example the Popular Front of Latvia. Initially all this was represented as a form of support for perestroika, support for central authority, a way to prevent the evil and conservative powers in the Moscow leadership from raising obstacles to the overhaul and modernization of the Soviet Union, and to help speed up those processes. But very soon the Popular Front of Latvia became the driving force of a movement to create what in effect was going to be a Latvia for Latvians, though at first it offered guarantees, if not of ethnic equality, but certainly of respect for the interests of all the various ethnic communities in the country. Subsequently there was a tough confrontation with forces that wanted the Soviet Union to be safeguarded and there were largely ethnically based divisions within the Communist Party and other institutions.

Russia considers present-day Latvia to be a new independent state that arose on the basis of the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic after the collapse of the Soviet Union whereas Latvia's official ideology maintains that the country is a reincarnation of the pre-World War II independent republic of Latvia, brands the Soviet period of Latvia's history as Soviet occupation, declares its status as part of the Soviet Union illegal, and claims that 1990 and 1991 were the years of Latvia's revival. The Supreme Council (parliament), in which the Popular Front, courtesy of the Communist Party and the KGB, held the majority of seats, became a catalyst for negative developments after the putsch. In October 1991, the Supreme Council passed a law that in effect stripped a large proportion of people who had elected it of Latvian citizenship. This has been one of the extremely rare examples in history where a legislature annulled the electoral rights of some of the voters who had elected it.



As we can see, this represents the extremely quick creation of an ethnopolitical model for an ethnocratic state. But surely nationalism was not the sole reason for this. There undoubtedly were political motives behind it as well. The way I see it there existed a union of two groups. One of them were national communists, who mainly wanted privatization so that they could get hold of some of the denationalized wealth and naturally the redistribution of power. The other were highly influential Latvian émigrés. It was émigrés who brought the revanchist nationalist ideology to Latvia. This ideology partly stemmed from complexes caused by Latvia's loss of independence without resistance in 1940. Moreover, some of the émigrés had collaborated with the Nazis and fought in Nazi forces during World War II, and some had been involved in the Cold War on the side of the United States, and that was also partly where this ideology was rooted.

Émigrés also had material interests to pursue – they sought restitution of property they had owned before 1940. Naturally, all unrepaid secured loans were written off. For instance, a house that had been left with a bank as security before 1940 would unquestionably be returned to its owner or to their direct descendants. The annulment of the voting rights of a large proportion of the population served to strengthen the union of these two groups and to enable them to create a sustainable government system that largely remains in place.

For obvious reasons, the émigré factor has declined since the 1990s, but nationalist rhetoric and activism are gaining momentum.

These days, Latvia's ruling elite is trying to use the Western sanctions against Russia to carry out the final solution of the Russian question – not physical annihilation, of course, but ousting the Russian language from the education system and methodically cutting off all ties with Russia, up to cultural contacts. That is a very alarming trend. We should think what we can do to reverse it.

### **Russian Speakers in Estonia: The Post-Soviet Experience**

*Rodion Denisov,  
journalist, publisher and editor-in-chief of the Tribuna.ee portal,  
Estonia*

ONE CAN increasingly notice Russian media and some Russian officials to somewhat distance themselves from the Russian-speaking minority:

well yes, they are our own people but somehow not completely because it's supposedly been their choice to live outside their own country – they're emigrants, aren't they?

As an indigenous Russian-speaking resident of Estonia I'm both surprised and offended to hear that. There's one simple truth that should come home to people who say so: Estonia's Russian speakers are not people who have left their country – it's their country that has taken leave of them and now pretends there are none of its people left in Estonia.

As of 1989, Russian speakers – not only ethnic Russians but also members of other ethnic groups for whom Russian is the native language or one of the native languages – accounted for about 38% of Estonia's population. By 2010, their proportion shrank to 31% due to emigration and natural decrease.

Estonia's total population is about 1.3 million, and it includes about 400,000 people who are not ethnic Estonians. In that group, between 90,000 and 130,000 according to different estimates are citizens of Russia. This makes Estonia the world's country with the largest proportion of permanent residents who are Russian citizens.

Since 1991, the year when the Soviet Union ceased to exist and Estonia became an independent state, the living standards and social status of the Estonia's Russian-speaking community have been declining steadily.

Since the moment of restoration of Estonia's independence (in terms of the official ideology, the independence of 1991 represented the restoration of the independence of the prewar Republic of Estonia), the Estonian state has pursued a consistent policy to marginalize and ultimately assimilate non-Estonians. At first hundreds of thousands of non-Estonians were deprived of the right to automatically acquire Estonian citizenship, and therefore couldn't take part in elections. Then came dismissals from state institutions for what was alleged to be an inadequate command of the Estonian language. After that, so-called Russian parties were ousted from parliament (not without the involvement of intelligence services), and Russian-speaking politicians who preferred not to join Estonian parties were portrayed as fringe figures.

When silent Russian-speaking members of principal Estonian parties were the only Russian speakers left in parliament, the powers that be set about destroying education in the Russian language as the chief means of safeguarding the distinctive mentality of Russian speakers. Estonia hasn't yet gone as far as neighboring Latvia, but it is following essentially the

same scenario. All higher education in Russian has been abolished. Secondary education in Russian is next in line. There has been no specialized training of teachers for Russian-speaking schools for about 20 years already, and, as a result, teachers in those schools are on average either approaching or past retirement age.

At the remaining Russian-speaking schools, 60% of the curricula in senior grades is taught in Estonian. Key Estonian parties promise that, after the parliamentary elections of March 2019, the country will embark on the abolition of all education in Russian except for some optional courses.

Simultaneously, all Russian-language daily newspapers were closed under various pretexts. In Soviet Estonia, there were three principal Russian-language dailies – *Sovetskaya Estoniya* (Soviet Estonia), *Molodezh Estonii* (Estonian Youth), and *Vecherniy Tallin* (Tallinn in the Evening). *Molodezh Estonii* was the longest survivor. I was the last chief editor of that paper, which was bankrupted in 2010. Since then, despite the rapid development of electronic media, not a single Russian-language newspaper in Estonia has enjoyed as much public influence as *Molodezh Estonii*, for instance. *Molodezh Estonii* was every day lying on the desks of the president, prime minister, all members of parliament, and foreign diplomats.

By the way, the closure of proper Russian-language newspapers put an end to a system that kept Russian-language journalism in Estonia alive (practically all present-day Russian-language journalists learned their skills from *Molodezh Estonii*), a Russian-language business club, as it were, and a center for activities related to the Russian-speaking – *Molodezh Estonii* had a supplement entitled *Sootechestvennik* (The Compatriot) and organized business meetings and other events for Russian speakers.

Among Russian-speaking journalists who have adequate professional standards and a good sense of the Russian language and who are well known in the Russian-speaking community there is practically no one younger than 40. There are no young stars among them. Nor is there any environment for such stars to come into being. Several major Estonian newspapers have Russian versions but work for them is not journalism as such but rather translation or writing heavily biased articles. The criteria there naturally don't include good style or loyalty to Russian culture. It's the other way around if anything.

Two years ago, the Russian news agency Sputnik got established in

Estonia, but it has been unable to win any considerable audience or influence – apparently, the Estonian authorities use it as a kind of bugaboo for the nationalism-obsessed electorate.

Sputnik's bank accounts in Estonia have been seized, security services have interviewed public figures who had the boldness to make comments to the agency, and all governmental bodies and state institutions are banned from having any contacts with it. Under these circumstances, it is the only upside of Sputnik's continued presence in Estonia that it can provide some of the Russian-speaking journalists who remain in Estonia with a source of living and a chance to avoid losing their professional skills.

In fact, the only free expression opportunities for Russian-speaking journalists are social networks, the *MK-Estoniya weekly*, the cultural magazine *Krasivaya zhizn* (Beautiful Life), the Tribuna.ee portal, and some other, comparatively small online publications. The latter usually have no outside support and are driven by the enthusiasm and sense of mission of their publishers. Plus, there are a few newspapers in the mainly Russian-speaking northeast of Estonia.

After the Crimean developments, Estonia set up a Russian-language television channel, ETV+, which focused on public and legal issues and provided jobs for some Russian-speaking journalists but can hardly be seen as one of the bodies that enable Russian-language journalism to maintain adequate standards and keep Estonia's Russian-speaking intelligentsia in existence. ETV+ has clear political objectives, and helping safeguard the identity of the Russian-speaking community is at the very bottom of its list of goals. In fact, the purpose of setting up this channel was to make it a means of changing this identity and facilitating the assimilation of Russian speakers.

The Russian-speaking community does receive information from Russia through the Internet and Russian television, but, since the Russian cultural environment in Estonia is shrinking, and consequently there don't, in effect, emerge any new generations of the Russian-speaking intelligentsia, the Russian World is clearly withdrawing from Estonia quite fast. If these processes go on, in several decades' time, Estonia's Russian speakers will cease to identify themselves as culturally Russian and, moreover, feel any connection to Russia.

Is there a solution? There can't be any without help from Russia. Russia would be able to help if it wanted to even strictly within the limits of Estonian law.

For instance, Estonia has the Law of 1993 on Cultural Autonomy for National Minorities. It puts ethnic Russians among national minorities that have a right to establish cultural autonomy bodies. But it takes quite a lot of effort to set up such bodies – making lists, electing governing bodies, getting registration, etc. Registration is possible only after hundreds of thousands of people have been listed. But that costs money that the Russian-speaking community doesn't have. There have been several attempts to do the procedure in reverse order – to get an entity registered before making lists but the authorities didn't permit this. They said the law didn't allow it.

Obviously, many Estonian politicians would be less than happy with the emergence of a registered Russian cultural autonomy, but they wouldn't be able to pre-empt this if the lists were made by an influential Russian organization.

Under the 1993 law, a national minority's cultural autonomy status includes its right to establish schools with instruction in its language, organize its own press, set up cultural associations, and obtain funding from the state and from other external sources. It seems to me it's worth thinking what can be done in that way. There is a chance to mobilize Russian speakers in Estonia and give them opportunities to safeguard their culture and identity.

Russia might also consider opening private schools in Estonia, including schools that would use Russian curricula.

And, of course, more Russian speakers from Estonia should be able to study in Russia. Today, several dozen enroll for free tuition at Russian institutions of higher education yearly, but that's a drop in the bucket. This practice should be expanded a great deal. Business projects that are focused on the interests of the Russian-speaking community, primarily cultural and media projects, also need help.

If there were proper Russian-language media in Estonia, they would give birth to new stars of journalism, and afterward to politicians and cultural figures who could influence public opinion. Media of this kind wouldn't be commercially profitable in present-day Estonia, but they would help safeguard the identity of the country's Russian speakers. Those of them who are graduates of Russian universities would also be able to help their fellow Russian speakers keep their roots and Russian identity.

Someone may say that, compared to global problems or to what's happening in Ukraine, the problems of Estonia's Russian-speaking com-

munity are not too significant. But the Russian World is an edifice that consists of many blocks, and it can't exist if even one of them is missing.

Russia should make up its mind whether it does have some interests in the Baltic region or whether it doesn't care and definitively forfeits all its influence on it. All is not lost yet, but Russia might be back to square one in 20 years' time if it doesn't act.

### **Multilingualism in the Education Systems of Central Asian Countries**

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IN DISCUSSING MULTILINGUALISM in the education systems of Central Asian countries, foreign experts primarily suggest instruction simultaneously in two or more languages and the legalization of systems of this kind. This is important, but for us the main point is what role the Russian language will play in Central Asia's changing polyethnic societies. Will Russian just be one of the minority languages? Or will it continue to play an important role – not being an official language as a while ago but still playing a role no less important in everyday life, the role of a language of interethnic communication? What can be done to prevent new legislation on languages in Central Asian countries from infringing on the rights of Russian speakers or from reducing the scale of learning Russian in the long term?

The language situation in the Central Asian countries is the product of 20th-century political processes. The multiethnic character of Central Asian societies, the marking of borders that gave rise to the problem of ethnic enclaves, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the consequent independence of its Central Asian republics with their languages receiving full-scale official status and the Russian language losing its prominent role triggered serious changes in those countries' education systems. This means that the assertion of multilingualism and multiculturalism via education can be, among other things, an instrument for conflict prevention.

The education systems of the Central Asian countries have faced numerous challenges in the independence era. There have been infra-

structural and strategic issues to be dealt with, chiefly in secondary and higher education.

On the one hand, the governments of the new independent nations have had to govern populations that were divided geographically, socially, culturally, religiously, and linguistically and provide them with education in their native languages. On the other hand, those countries have been building national unity and strengthening their sovereignty. Education became a key determinant of their path of development.

Arguably, the Central Asian countries have completed an initial and very important stage in building their national education systems, although undoubtedly some of them have achieved more than others in terms of organization, logistics and effectiveness.

There is much that the Central Asian countries, and accordingly their education systems, have in common. Their education systems are all based on the education system of the former Soviet Union, which has undergone some changes during the independence era but can underlie future educational reforms. Young people make large proportions of the population in all of them (their numbers have grown by about 20 million over the past 28 years). The ethnic composition of the population of all the countries has changed because of the emigration of Slavs and increases in the proportions of speakers of other languages – Turkic in all the countries except Tajikistan. All the countries are experiencing serious social and economic problems.

In all Central Asian countries, the state continues to play the determining role in the education systems, and there is a high rate of attendance in primary and secondary education. The masses have little access to higher education in all the countries except Kazakhstan.

In each Central Asian country, higher education not only builds professional communities and helps create a middle class but also has what can be described as a mission of helping the nation choose its general development path. The role of the official language in society and teaching in that language can be considered part of this mission, as can involvement in global educational developments, the selection of educational projects, and the hosting of branches of foreign universities. Teaching in several languages is nothing new for Central Asia. In 1991, Uzbekistan used seven languages in its education system, Kazakhstan used five and so did Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan used at least four each.

Multilingual education is an area that involves a range of problems.

Graduates of school with teaching in minority languages often have an inadequate command of the official language, something that can bar them from higher education and from involvement in public affairs. There are no systems for training or retraining of personnel for teaching in minority languages, and many in this category of teachers have inadequate professional standards. Textbooks and guidance manuals for teaching in minority languages are in short supply.

International organizations provide support for Central Asian multilingual education policies. This includes assistance from the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), from UNESCO, which is running the Unity in Diversity project, and from the Central Asia Education Programme of the High Commissioner on National Minorities of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). This program is supported financially by the Danish government. These organizations mainly help to put multilingualism into practice in educational in collaboration with Central Asian governments and give practical support to work on multilingualism-related legislation.

These international bodies' advocacy of multilingual education is based on a belief that multilingualism and multiculturalism can be a means of conflict prevention. The Unity in Diversity program covers all five Central Asian countries. In Kyrgyzstan, projects by international organizations are given priority in the national education strategy and in governmental international commitments. Special attention is paid to Kyrgyz, one of the country's official languages, in social integration processes.

International experts, in addition to speaking about the above-mentioned challenges of multilingual education in Central Asia, argue that ethnic majorities and minorities alike set limited goals to such education and generally have limited perception of it.

Russia attaches special importance to regional organizations as formats for its cooperation with Central Asian countries. One such organization is the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), an association with plans that include forming a common education space. It is impossible to safeguard close cultural contacts and maintain high standards for teaching Russian and for teaching in Russian without cooperation between national education systems.

It is also essential to know Russian as the intercommunication language for all the countries in the region.

In former Soviet Central Asia, Russian was not only an official lan-



guage and a language of interethnic communication but also a means of access to world art and literature, and a good command of it was essential for career progress. Since then Russian has lost this prominent role, but economic developments mean its current status may need boosting.

In recent years, the use of Russian in the education systems of all Central Asian countries has been declining. Today, there are fewer secondary schools and classes at higher education institutions where instruction is in Russian than several years ago. Because of the emigration of Russian speakers, the rising average age of teachers of Russian, and decreasing enrollments in undergraduate and postgraduate Russian language programs, often there is simply no one to teach the Russian language or curriculum courses in Russian, or otherwise the teaching is done by people for whom Russian is practically a foreign language. Due to demographic developments, there are children at schools with Russian as the language of instruction who are not native Russian speakers, children who do not speak Russian at home. There is an obvious need for Russian to remain in use in the Central Asian countries. It is an official policy in all those countries to keep Russian in use.

In Kazakhstan, for instance, quite a lot has been done, and it is not limited to laws and national programs. Russian is one of the languages covered by the State Program of Development and Functioning of Languages of Kazakhstan for 2011-2020, a document aiming to ensure “a harmonious language policy ensuring full-scale functioning of the state language as a major factor in the strengthening of national unity with the simultaneous preservation of the languages of all ethnoses of Kazakhstan.”

Kazakhstan is a multilingual country. Its population represents an estimated 117 ethnic groups, which accordingly speak 117 languages. The Kazakh constitution accords the status of “the state language” to Kazakh and says that Russian “shall be officially used on equal grounds with the Kazakh language in state institutions and in bodies of local government.” The state, the constitution says, “shall take action to provide conditions for the learning and development of the languages of the people of Kazakhstan.” There is also a law entitled “On Languages in the Republic of Kazakhstan.” Kazakh is spoken by about 66.01% of the population (about 11.5 million people), Russian by 21.05% (3.6 million), and the other 115 languages by the rest of the population – 2.2 million or 12.94%.

The main factors in the language situation in Kazakhstan are the emi-

gration of Slavs, an increase in the Turkic population, mass-scale bilingualism, many ethnic groups, and generally a good command of the Russian language by ethnic Kazakhs. In 2017, Kazakh was the language of 70% of the content of the country's media.

Instruction at primary and secondary schools is conducted in five languages – Kazakh, Russian, Uzbek, Tajik, and Uighur, but secondary school graduation exams can be taken only in Kazakh or Russian. At state secondary schools, 60% of students choose to be taught in Kazakh, 35% in Russian, and 3% in Uzbek.

In Kyrgyzstan, whose population of 6.2 million represents more than 30 ethnic groups, teaching is done in four languages – Kyrgyz, Russian, Uzbek, and Tajik. According to 2018 statistics, the country's population includes 4.59 million Kyrgyz, 918,000 Uzbeks, 352,000 Russians, 70,000 Dungans, 57,000 Uighurs, and 54,000 Tajiks. The Kyrgyz constitution declares Kyrgyz “the state language” and Russian “an official language.” Kyrgyzstan also has other legislation on languages. It includes the law “On the State Language of the Kyrgyz Republic” and the law “On the Official Language of the Kyrgyz Republic.” There also are strategies, including the National Program for the Development of the State Language and the Reforming of the Language Policy in the Kyrgyz Republic for the Period from 2014 to 2020 and programs for multicultural and multilingual education. There are, besides, official concepts for mechanisms to ensure better proficiency in the Kyrgyz language and for its wider use.

By and large, measures to boost the scale of use of the Kyrgyz language have not been very effective. Of the Kyrgyz citizens for whom Kyrgyz is not a native language, only about 10% know it. It is a national plan that, “by 2020, all senior personnel in governmental bodies, regardless of their ethnicity, should have a command of the state and official languages meeting the C1 level and a command of one of the international languages meeting the B2 level.” In recent years, serious attention has been paid to Kyrgyz as the language of professional training and to building specialist terminologies in Kyrgyz.

As regards Russian, its scale of use as a native language is shrinking, school curricula allot fewer hours for learning Russian, and schools are very short of teachers of Russian even though there are 11 higher education institutions that train teachers of the Russian language and Russian literature both for schools where Russian is the language of instruction and for those with instruction in other languages.

Kyrgyzstan has been running a multilingual education program for about 15 years. The program is mainly funded by international donors. Experts stress that graduates of schools with teaching in Kyrgyz, Uzbek or Tajik generally have a poor command of Russian and that graduates of schools with instruction in languages other than Kyrgyz do not know the latter.

The situation in Tajikistan is also complicated. In 2016, ethnic Tajiks accounted for 84.26% of Tajikistan's then population of 8.77 million. Uzbeks made up 13.94%, Kyrgyz 0.8%, Russians 0.46%, Turkmen 0.2%, and others 0.34%.

More than 80% of the population consider Tajik their native language. Uzbek is the mother tongue of the second-largest proportion of the population. Russian, Kyrgyz and the Pamir languages are the other principal minority languages.

Use of Russian plummeted in scale in Tajikistan in the 1990s but began to go up again afterward due to high demand for education in Russian, mainly among ethnic Tajiks. Russian is the native and first language for only about 3% of the population but the second or third language for about 70%.

Schools teach in five languages – Tajik, Uzbek, Russian, Turkmen, and Kyrgyz. Textbooks for Kyrgyz schools are supplied by Kyrgyzstan and those for Russian schools partly by Russia. Uzbek and Turkmen schools found themselves in a worse situation a while ago – they were practically unable to use textbooks from Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan as those countries had gone over to the Latin alphabet, abandoning Cyrillic.

There exists a practice of putting together bilateral teams to write textbooks. Yet textbooks remain in short supply, and there are serious problems with the training of teachers and providing them with methodological guidelines. There is a new trend in Tajikistan – secondary education in English. Tajik and Russian are the languages of the higher education system.

Turkmenistan is the Central Asian country with the lowest scale of use of Russian. The official language, Turkmen with its written version based on the Latin alphabet, is the mother tongue of 85.6% of the population. Uzbeks make up 5.8%, Russians 5.1% and members of other ethnic groups 3.5% of the population. This means that Russian is spoken on only a limited scale, as are Uzbek or Baluchi, for example. There is little use of Russian in the education system, even though there is high demand to have children enrolled in classes where education is in Russian as a for-

eign language. All schools where all instruction was in Russian except one, the A.S. Pushkin Joint Turkmen-Russian Secondary General Education School, had their last graduation year in 2002. The A.S. Pushkin School is today the only school in Turkmenistan where the entire instruction is in Russian. The school, which is simultaneously under the jurisdiction of the education ministries of Russia and Turkmenistan, is experiencing serious shortages of teaching methodology material and personnel – there only are two higher education institutions in the country training Russian language teachers.

In Uzbekistan, there has been great demand in recent years for education in Russian and for learning Russian. The Russian language has no legal status in Uzbekistan, but Russian may be qualified as a “language of interethnic communication” or one of the “other languages” under the 1989 law “On the State Language.”

Uzbekistan’s population represents more than 130 ethnic groups. Hence, special importance is attached in the country to ethnic harmony, and support for multilingualism in education is an official policy. Schools teach is conducted in seven languages – Uzbek, Russian, Karakalpak, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Turkmen, and Tajik.

Although 85% of the population speak Turkic languages – Uzbek, Karakalpak, Kazakh, Turkmen, Uighur, Kyrgyz, and Azeri, – public life in Uzbekistan is in effect bilingual with laws and various documents written in Uzbek and Russian. Russian is one of the languages in every tier of the country’s education system. In Karakalpakstan, an autonomous republic in Uzbekistan, Karakalpak is an official language along with Uzbek.

One feature of the language situation in Uzbekistan is that different languages have traditionally been used in different spheres. Kazakh, Tajik and some other languages are mainly used in families and in informal discourse generally, although there are regular schools and lyceums where instruction is in Tajik and Kazakh and Kazakh is also a language of instruction at some higher education institutions.

What has been said suggests the following conclusions: first, an integrated society is the product of a set of factors, and failure to know the official language of a country is not the only obstacle to creating an integrated society with its own identity. Changes are needed to interpersonal contacts and personal behavior, on the one hand, and to national strategies and laws, on the other. Social integration should be a two-way street: national minorities should have a good command of the official language

and should have guarantees that they will maintain their own identity, for example via education in their own language.

Russian soft power experts should pay special attention to impacts of language policies on education. Legislation on languages brought out in the Central Asian republics three decades ago bolstered the role of their own languages and Russian and served to increase the scale of their use in all spheres of society, including schools. Guidelines for language policies that are being developed in Central Asian countries make it increasingly obvious that such policies would aim to strengthen the positions of their national official languages.

In designing educational strategies and road maps, it is essential to focus on secondary education as an instrument for the integration of ethnic minorities. While the official languages are the languages of instruction in the majority of Central Asian schools and there are many that teach in Russian, most children and teenagers from ethnic minorities attend schools where they are taught in their own language, and those schools are key channels for governments to form common values for new generations.

The Central Asian countries publish textbooks and other teaching material – albeit some are more successful than others in doing so, – develop advanced training programs for ethnic minority school teachers and launch initiatives to promote intercultural dialogue and enhance the knowledge of the official languages and Russian among youth. It is essential to popularize Russian as an interethnic communication language in the education systems.

Civil society and other non-state actors help ensure equal access to education. Besides state schools, there are growing numbers of private educational institutions, from local schools to international lyceums, which help deal with challenges of education in a multicultural society. Grassroots action to obtain equal access to education takes the form of Sunday schools and organizations such as youth clubs and cultural centers. Russian cultural foundations would be able to help them play more significant roles in people's diplomacy.

Since Russia is the main political and economic partner of the Central Asian countries, it is essential that the Russian language should retain the special role that it plays in their education systems.

Since Russia is the main political and economic partner of the Central Asian countries, it is essential that the Russian language should retain the special role that it plays in their education systems. It is important, for this reason, that the member countries of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) should make up a single education space. It is a vital condition for the deep mutual economic integration of the EAEU member countries, including building a common labor market, that their education systems should rest on the same principles. This would entail the harmonization of education qualifications and professional standards, and the mutual recognition of education diplomas and academic degrees. This may eventually lead to the creation of a common education market with a single set of standards.

As regards the Russian language, it is vital to maintain its status in Central Asia as a means of interethnic communication; to continue to promote the teaching of Russian at all levels of the education systems; to improve the training and retraining of Russian language teachers; to update methods of teaching Russian; and to launch programs to raise motivation to learn Russian.

### **Remembering the Russian Diaspora and Looking for a Common Past in the Post-Soviet Space**

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I REPRESENT the Alexander Solzhenitsyn House of Russia Abroad, which is located in Moscow, but I'd like to warn you immediately that my voice is the voice of someone "in the field," someone who works very intensively among Russian speakers abroad.

Russia Abroad is a distinctive phenomenon, and both words should be spelled with capital letters. As we know, 2018 was the centenary year for Russia Abroad. Russia Abroad is an established term, and that is very important for our conference because terminology is a key point, one that has been raised already. Properly speaking, Russia Abroad applies to a diaspora formed by the so-called first wave of emigration – post-revolutionary, post-Bolshevik emigration.

This centenary is a good thing, one that would be helpful in all our initiatives, but at the same time interpretations and terms like those seri-

ously limit our perception of what are the modern and historical Russian diasporas. I don't think I need to explain what tremendous resources, both positive and negative, any diaspora possesses. But sometimes I think of the words of Yevgeny Yevtushenko, "They've given me a lot of wealth but didn't say what I can do with it."

We don't understand too well how we should work with modern diasporas. I'd like to go back to Rodion Denisov's presentation. Everything seems terrible – Russians are leaving Estonia; the Russian language is disappearing. But, by the way, Estonia, namely Tallinn, Tallinn University, is today one of the main centers of study of Russian emigration and Russian diasporas, diasporas not just in the post-Soviet space but worldwide. This brings me to what seems to me a very important point, a point that has already been raised by some of my fellow delegates. Surely there are "wars of memory" today throughout the post-Soviet space – throughout the world, for that matter. Surely new states create new basic narratives, new basic mythologies. We know what they come up with, but it's a more serious issue how we respond to it.

We constantly talk about Russians living in various countries. We realize that what is meant by that is a cultural and historical identity and not an ethnic identity. Our opponents surely don't realize that. We pump huge amounts of money into the promotion of the Russian language, which is undoubtedly necessary, but the global world has changed radically, and so have its diasporas.

When we go to Latin America, for example, we come across Russians who can speak no Russian at all, who have never known the Russian language, who are third-generation descendants of Russian White emigres but for whom Russia, both modern and historical, and the values of Russian civilization are highly important, – in fact, in filling forms, they quite often put their nationality as "Russian-Argentine." This makes me wonder, and this is actually the main problem I'm worried about: are we perhaps going too far in supporting and promoting the Russian language? We ought to remember that cultural and historical memory is one of the main criteria of so-called Russianness. If there exists cultural and historical memory and if it is passed from generation to generation in a family, I think the result will be much more serious and effective.

There's one more point I'd like to make. It has taken us about 100 years to realize that neither political nor religious nor other differences affect the existence of a single Russian cultural and historical space. This winter, the first museum of Russia Abroad will be opened in Moscow.

Thereby our state and our civil society are paying tribute to people who were forced to become refugees after the October Revolution. It also seems to me that it's a matter of choice to maintain one's Russian identity – you won't lose your Russian identity if you don't want to.

People's diplomacy is the only way for us to stay in contact with the Russian emigre diaspora. Of course, people's diplomacy means activities via numerous nongovernmental organizations, and the smaller such organizations are the better. It's a case where globalism would be out of place.

And yet one more point: there will only be collective memory if there are joint projects. This should be our main task and our main way to be in contact both with our compatriots and with the titular ethnic groups of the countries where they live. Pooling efforts is the best response to today's challenges.

### **Population of the Russian-Ukrainian Borderland: Its Construction and Dynamics**

*Igor Tatarinov,*

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THE CONSIDERABLY WORSENEDED RELATIONS between Russia and Ukraine crop up as territorial claims at different levels. The border between Russia and Ukraine, the statehood of which has a historically meagre background, is artificial and contradictory. The February 2014 events in Kiev pushed the issue of the Ukrainian border and the borderland to the forefront.

Today, the term “borderland” is applied to the territories stretching along state borders with certain functions to perform and specifics to be considered. Identity is a concept which means that an individual has a self-awareness; it is also a new combination of old and new identification fragments rather than a mere sum-total of identities.

Disintegration of the Russian Empire and crumbling of the common Russian identity gave chance to the national-state identities of Ukrainians and Byelorussians, to people of Transcaucasia and other regions of the previously united country. In the studied space, Ukrainian won “the struggle between a Ukrainian and a Maloross”: the ethnonym “Ukrainian” replaced the term “Maloross” (Little Russian) previously used to define the population of the south of Russia. The leaders of the Ukrainian



People's Republic (UNR) and Hetman Pavel Skoropadsky placed it in the center of their national-state concept. The Bolsheviks, likewise, relied on it to plant their variant of the Ukrainian identity Soviet-style in people's minds.

They went even further: the newly created identity received a high status. Disintegrated common-Russian identity gave the Soviet leaders a chance to promote Ukrainian identity by opposing it, among other things, to Russian identity and stressing that Ukrainians were a nation on its own right. The term "Maloross" acquired negative connotations while the ethnonym "Ukrainian" was associated with the successes of socialist construction.

In the 1920s, the Soviet leaders launched a process of administrative-territorial division of regions and republics based on political and economic expediency and accompanied by squabbles over the borders between republics and numerous appeals to the center. In their language policy, Bolsheviks relied on Lenin's works *The Right of Nations to Self-Determination* and *Critical Remarks on the National Question*, in which he had admitted that the "politically united territories whose population speak a single language" should become republics. This means that language was identified with nationality. Republics were formed according to the languages they used as the main determination of nationality, as indicated by Lenin. Self-awareness as an important element of historical codification was pushed aside.

As could be expected, in some places, their ethnically homogenous population was divided between two republics; their divided economies changed their orientations; in some places, economic centers disintegrated. At the same time, the historical context permitted no different approach. After the Soviet Union's disintegration when the former Soviet republics became independent states, population of the Russian-Ukrainian borderland was confronted with everyday far from simple problems.

Back in the 1920s, the Russian side involved in the delimitation between Russia and Ukraine pointed to the ambiguous "linguistic situation" in certain disputed border districts. It was decided that a new administrative border should be based on economic characteristics. According to the 1897 census, the population of Central Black Earth Region of Russia was classified as "Malorosses" who nevertheless reacted with a lot of concern or even negative feelings to their Ukrainization actively promoted in the 1920s.

For example, the chairman of the Ostrogozhsk executive committee deemed it necessary to say that “the majority of the uezd population do not consider themselves ‘Malorosses’; Ukrainization in the uezd is absolutely impossible because it might turn our life upside down.” In 1917, the local administrative unit had already polled the village population to find out whether they preferred school education in Ukrainian. The answers revealed the fact that people were against Ukrainization: nine out of 44 village communities answered affirmatively, the others said nay. The experience of Ukrainization of schools “in the points with the predominantly Ukrainian population” was equally negative. “During the polls carried out in schools in the last, 1923/1924 school year, people resolutely rejected teaching in Ukrainian.”

Population of Taganrog and Eastern Donbass that became parts of Ukraine in 1920, likewise, rejected Ukrainian as a language of school education: “We have forgotten the Ukrainian, we and our children learn Russian with a great deal of enthusiasm. We do not understand Ukrainian literature.” It should be said that there was a considerable share of Ukrainians in these stretches of the borderland who admitted that they did not know Ukrainian and had no desire to study it or teach their children in this language. The traces of mixed identity can be seen today. As late as in the 2000s, respondents from the Kantemirovka settlement, Voronezh Region, said: “I am Ukrainian, but deep in my heart I am Russian.”

The Soviet state identity was built up as a supra-ethnic instrument of integration. It never achieved its final shape: by the late 1980s, it slid into a deep crisis and could not provide adequate answers to deepening ethno-cultural isolation unfolding in the Soviet republics. An illusion of Soviet identity survived in certain contact zones of the borderland, the Russian-Ukrainian borderland and polyethnic Donbass in the first place. The majority of the Orthodox population of Eastern Ukraine associates itself with the canonical Moscow Patriarchate, is fully aware of its historical ties and territorial and cultural closeness to Russia and accepts the Russian Federation’s foreign policy, cultural and civilizational orientations as a priority.

This was an example of the evolution of Soviet identity into the Russian state identity and continuity of these identities. The Russian-Ukrainian borderland is divided by the state border into two more or less equal parts. Some of the urban agglomerations of Donbass, Slobzhanshchina (Sloboda Ukraine) and agricultural areas of the borderland are divided by the state border.

The related empirical material is especially interesting. The field studies carried out in 2000 and 2013 revealed the extent to which the borderland nature of the contact area determines the self-identification of the population of the Lugansk Province of Ukraine (which has the longest border with the Russian Federation). The ethno-cultural and axiological realities and the attitude to other important issues are identical on both sides of the border. The collected empirical material suggests that the local people look at the state border between Russia and Ukraine as a border between “us.” These opinions are consistent: in 2009, 71.8% of the respondents thought so; in 2013, their share was 72.6%. On the other hand, only 8.5% and 11.9% respectively, supported the traditional idea of a state border designed to protect “us” from “others.”

From this, it follows that about half of the polled believed that the border was unnecessary (47.6%) or insisted that the regime should be more open and pointed to the Schengen Area of the European Union as an example (41.3%). Practically all of them insisted that “the border does not figure prominently in our lives, yet we would like it to be more transparent to give us more chances to communicate with our relatives in Russia. Some problems are cropping up.... Border crossing is sometimes a headache. It takes a lot of time; you have to wait in lines for a long time.”

Those who live in the north of the Lugansk Province are convinced that the political border split Sloboda Ukraine. In the south, they think the same about Donbass. A woman from the Krasnodon District pointed to this ethnic and cultural unity in an interview: “I am dead set against the border. There might be certain dangers, but we are one people; there are no borders in our minds. No borders at all! Everybody will support me. We are one race. We are Slavs. This is all I can say.”

It should be indicated that, according to the scale of social distance, people from Eastern Ukraine feel closer to those who live in Russia than to those from Western Ukraine. The respondents were culturally much more comfortable in Russian cities than in certain cities in the west of Ukraine.

In Rostov-on-Don, for example, 40.4% of the polled who visited the city were quite comfortable “in their cultural milieu”; the share of those who felt the same in Lvov was much lower (17.7%). In Lugansk, people said: “I never feel that we live in the borderland. This is a common city like many others. Population and its mentality are the same.” Field studies have demonstrated that the friendly relations between Russians and

Ukrainians were stable even if the ruling circles do not support these feelings.

It should be said in conclusion that in the newly formed post-Soviet states the destruction of old identity was accompanied by accelerated construction of new history and ethnic, social, cultural and other identities; the past was rejected and deliberately discredited. Most of the constructs of new identity were potentially conflicting which is confirmed by the latest developments in the post-Soviet space. In Ukraine, for example, the conflict of regional identities piled up against the background of inadequate ethnocentric constructs in an absence of a consistent national identity in the minds of the majority. People in Donbass, on their side, consistently reject the Ukrainian state identity and think of themselves as part of the Russian World.

Empirical materials confirm that the Ukrainian state is superimposed on the ethnic and regional borders. The population of the Ukrainian-Russian borderland typically perceives those who live on the other side of the border as “us.”

The population of Eastern Ukraine does not look at the border with the Russian Federation as a border with “others.” On the Russian side of the border, the borderland population preserved fragments of its old ethnic Ukrainian identity while clearly associating themselves with the Russian state identity.

Seen from Eastern Ukraine, Russia is a culturally close, fraternal and friendly country that occupies the central place in foreign policy priorities of the population of Eastern Ukraine. It is not a political but, rather, civilizational choice that rests on the social, cultural and wide economic ties with Russia.

Social, cultural and ethnic closeness and shared values and world views together with common historical memory and the foreign policy vector allow us to speak about a homogenous and common Russian-Ukrainian borderland identity.

A clear awareness of Russia’s millennium-long uninterrupted state and historical experience and an absolute conviction that the key cultural and civilizational constants adjusted to the contemporary period will survive are the clear markers of the Russian-Ukrainian borderland identity. Their positive connotation is highly important: it supplies them with heroic and sacral meanings and is a powerful source of identity.

**Sociocultural Institutions of Ukraine Today:  
A Factor of Social Progress  
or a Mouthpiece of New State Policy and Ideology?**

*Olga Semyonova,  
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Sciences*

IN POST-SOVIET UKRAINE, all sorts of sociocultural institutions (SCI) are entrusted with the task of disseminating the new state policy and ideology. Today, they strongly affect all spheres of social life – economy, politics, legislation, and law and order. I can say that the obvious desire of Ukraine to use the sociocultural institutes (education, literature, the media, museums, and religion) to change the nation's historical memory is a great mistake.

Let us analyze the main development trends of the contemporary cultural institutions in Ukraine: theaters, libraries, museum, parks, and art schools. The dynamics are obvious: archives, museums and libraries are integrated into the contemporary information space. They are present, to a steadily increasing degree, in the digital space of social communication; they offer information services and resources. Museum and library sites (the Dnepropetrovsk National Historical Museum, the Rovno and Kherson regional museums) organize webinars and blogs. Many contemporary sociocultural institutions publish, exhibit and popularize their materials in digital space which increases their influence in society.

It goes without saying that the state is actively using the traditional sociocultural institutions to shape Ukrainian state awareness. To reform the nation's historical memory, the state has mobilized all available resources, both normative and departmental sociocultural institutions, recreational centers and folklore groups. New organizations have also appeared, the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory (UINM) being one of them. It was set up by a decision of President Yushchenko in 2005 to create a new Ukrainian history and to shape and realize a new state Ukrainian policy.

Its functions are highly varied. It collects information and eyewitness accounts of political repressions, Ukrainian liberation movement, mass famine; it issues print and video products, sums up legal practices related to its competence, supervises registration and preservations of places where victims of the famine are buried; erects monuments and installs

memorial signs; works with the younger generation; helps public organizations, and shapes national memory by encouraging creation of museum and library funds, museum exhibitions and teaching programs.

The list of its tasks and functions and its widest powers testify to the highly important role the UINM plays in changing historical memory in Ukraine.

The Center for the Studies of the Liberation Movement (TsIOD) is another example of transforming the historical memory in Ukraine; set up in 2002, this scientific-research and public organization in 2012 joined the Platform of European Memory and Conscience, the international project set up to study totalitarianism in Europe in the 20th century to prevent its revival. This project collects materials related to the crimes committed by totalitarian regimes. In the process of de-Communization launched in the countries of Eastern Europe and former Soviet republics, history is revised and actively re-written. Heroes become criminals and vice versa.

As could be expected, Ukraine has become one of the active members of the Platform, while the Center is involved practically in all its projects. It studies the activities of OUN and UPA with the help of invited scholars; popularizes the national-liberation struggle waged by these organizations; shapes their positive image in people's minds and preserves documents and material evidence of their activities. The Center has already published 20 issues of the Ukrainian Liberation Movement collection.

These new centers have already created new heroes, new historical subjects, reassessed values and attitude to OUN and UPA. The following facts can be described as sociocultural repercussions:

(1) Starting with 2007/2008 academic year, schools, higher educational and other educational and cultural establishments have been organizing annual Memory Day of the Victims of Great Famine and the Memory Day of the Victims of Political Repressions;

(2) A Museum of Soviet Occupation was opened in Kiev. In Lvov, the local lore museum exhibits materials about the liberation movement in Ukraine, about armed OUN underground, the Ukrainian division Galicia, documents related to the history of the Gulag, etc.

(3) In line with the de-Communization laws of May 21, 2015 and on a recommendation of UINM, lists of the monuments of the Communist regime that should be removed and of settlements and streets in Ukraine that should be renamed were compiled;

(4) The leaders of Ukraine are waging an active struggle against the

Soviet and Communist symbols. In 2015, on the eve of the Victory Day, the holiday Victory Day over Fascism in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945 was annulled. A new memorial date – Victory Day over Nazism in World War II, 1939-1949 – was established by Law No. 2539 of April 9, 2015.

It should be said that, despite the frantic efforts to change the past, the cultural space and historical memory of the citizens of Ukraine were not unified. S.V. Kozlov has pointed to the following factors:

- the population of southeast Ukraine used and is still using Russian and remains devoted to Russian culture;

- attacks of intellectuals from the country's western and central regions at the "imperial past" stirred up rejection among the majority of those living in the Southeast;

- in an absence in this macro-region of nationalist-minded intellectuals, business circles and industrial bureaucracy enjoy a lot of influence.

This means that, despite its active cultural policy promoted through sociocultural structures in post-Soviet Ukraine, there appeared two variants of historical memory: West Ukrainian and East Ukrainian which explains the cultural split in society.

Adopted in February 2016, the Long-Term Strategy of the Development of Ukrainian Culture confirms that it is highly important to develop state sociocultural structures to create a new historical memory in Ukraine. Any national state legitimizes its existence through turning to the past to achieve consolidation of its people into a nation, substantiate its borders and justify its policies. To reach these aims, the ideological base (nationalism-Ukrainism) and the mechanism of ideological dissemination should rely on indiscriminate and aggressive rejection of the past which means "uprooting" history and transformation of historical memory.

The above suggests the following:

- as potential factors of social progress, the contemporary sociocultural institutions of Ukraine are in a difficult situation: they must cope with a new function imposed on them, viz. shaping a new historical memory;

- the contemporary SCI of Ukraine are confronted with the task of composing a new official national history either by trimming or by rewriting;

- this policy, as a rule, leads to a crisis of the state and a tragic split in society.

## Broadcasting in Russian in the Near Abroad

*Alexander Sharikov,*

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IN 2018, the Faculty of Communications, Media and Design of the NRU “Higher School of Economics” compiled a statistical picture of Russian-language broadcasting in the world carried out by radio stations with radio transmitters outside the administrative borders of the Russian Federation. In October 2018, there were 448 radio stations in 57 countries of the world, mainly in Europe (245) and Asia (152).

Our comparison of these results of 2018 with the results obtained in 2010 by the Federal Agency for Mass Media and Communication of the RF in the course of a similar investigation revealed the following trends. First, the number of Russian-language broadcasting radio stations abroad jumped from 175 to 448 in the near and far abroad (for example, they appeared in the UAE, Madagascar and Thailand). Second, the number of countries with international government broadcasting in Russian decreased (that happened in Hungary, Italy, Canada, the U.S., Sweden and others). Third, the number of Russian-language local-level radio stations increased. In the last eight years, the number of Russian-language FM broadcasting stations in Great Britain, Germany, the U.S., and some other countries increased partly due to an expansion of Russia’s commercial, mostly music, stations such as Avtoradio, Russkoe Radio, Evropa Plus, and Retro FM.

About three-fourths of the Russian-language radio stations broadcasting abroad work on the territory of post-Soviet republics outside the borders of the Russian Federation. Table 1 presents their distribution by the former Soviet republics.

The biggest number (59) of the Russian-language radio stations was registered in Kazakhstan; Belarus with 48 radio stations comes second followed by Ukraine (28).

It was decided to divide the total number of the Russian-language radio stations broadcasting abroad into four groups according to their origins. The biggest (183) of them consists of local-level stations broadcasting in Russian. The biggest number of them (41) is found in Kazakhstan, Belarus (39), Latvia (17), and Ukraine (17). They are mostly city and regional radio stations set up by local self-administrations or local commercial FM-broadcasting stations.



**Table 1**  
**Distribution of Russian-Language Radio Stations by the Countries of Near Abroad**

Country	Number of stations
Abkhazia	6
Azerbaijan	4
Armenia	11
Belarus	48
Georgia	3
DPR	23
Kazakhstan	59
Kyrgyzstan	22
Latvia	21
Lithuania	7
LPR	15
Moldova	18
NKR	4
Transnistria	26
South Ossetia	6
Tajikistan	9
Turkmenistan	--
Uzbekistan	8
Ukraine	28
Estonia	12
Total	330

The second group (82) consists of Russian radio stations; they are concentrated in Kyrgyzstan (10), the Donetsk People's Republic (10) and the Transnistrian Moldovan Republic (10) and are absent in Turkmenistan and Ukraine (if we don't count the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics). This group consists of state and commercial radio stations.

The state radio stations broadcasting in the post-Soviet space belong to the All-Russia State Television and Broadcasting Company (Radio Rossii, Mayak, Vesti-FM) as well as Radio Zvezda, Radio-Sputnik and Radio-Mir. There are 27 non-state Russian stations, which is a lot. The following radio stations represented the non-musical class: Komsomolskaya pravda, Radio-Vera and oppositional Echo of Moscow. They broadcast local programs as well.

The third group consists of radio stations broadcasting in Russian unrelated either to the countries where they work or to Russia. There are 19 of them in the near abroad; they are either local versions of well-known broadcasting state companies from Poland (Polish Radio), France (Radio France Internationale), Japan (Radio of Japan) or international religious stations that broadcast on medium frequencies from Lithuania; Radio France Internationale being the only exception that uses FM in big cities of Armenia (Yerevan), Georgia (Tbilisi, Kutaisi) and Moldova (Chişinău). In recent years, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, the relict of the Cold War, switched to the medium and FM frequencies to broadcast in Russian.

The stations of vague origins were lumped together into a separate group. They are local broadcasters some of them exploiting (most probably illegally) the prominent brands of Russian radio stations such as Business-FM, Vesti, etc.

If we push aside commercial broadcasters and local radio stations and analyze the presence in the post-Soviet territories of propagandistic Russian-language broadcasters from third countries, on the one hand, and Russian state radio stations, on the other, we will get the following picture of the West-Russia standoff.

Some of the countries of the near abroad have closed their territories to Russian-language Western broadcasters and keep them open to Russian state broadcasters. They are the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics, the Republic of South Ossetia, Abkhazia, the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic as well as Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Some other countries, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, the Transnistrian Moldovan Republic among them, allow both sides to broadcast within their borders, and Russia's state radio stations are represented there in bigger numbers.

Georgia, Lithuania and Estonia with not a single Russian state station and a wide range of Western broadcasters are on the opposite pole. Armenia and Moldova are not too far away from them: the number of Western propagandistic radio stations is much bigger than the number of

Russian state broadcasters. Four countries (Belarus, Latvia, Turkmenistan, and Ukraine) are distancing themselves both from the Western propagandistic Russian-language broadcasters and Russian state broadcasters. Neither the former nor the latter are represented on their territories. They (Turkmenistan being the only exception) let Russian musical commercial radio stations to broadcast in their space. Azerbaijan has chosen a very special position: one pro-Western radio station vs. one Russian state radio station.

In this way, we have identified the following development trends of Russian-language broadcasting in the near abroad:

- the number of Russian-language radio stations increased between 2010 and 2018;

- their greatest number is found in Kazakhstan, Belarus and Ukraine; the smallest, in Georgia, Azerbaijan and the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. There is no Russian-language broadcasting in Turkmenistan;

- most of the Russian-language radio stations is local. There are broadcasting stations of some of the Russian state and commercial radio stations in their territories as well as Russian-language radio stations of third countries (state broadcasters of Poland, France, Japan, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, and religious broadcasters);

- post-Soviet space has become an arena of informational confrontation between the Russian state radio stations and Russian-language Western propagandistic broadcasters. The balance between them in any given country reflects its attitude to Russia.

**A. Oganessian:** What we have to say about Latvia and the methods used there to suppress the press attracts little attention. Radio proved to be more viable. It is much easier to tune in the medium than the short waves, yet this requires motivation. In Soviet times, many of the Soviet citizens were motivated: they listened to alternative radio stations. This interest was gradually dissipating. The situation in Ukraine is critical; FM broadcasting is banned. There is a powerful transmitter to bring FM to Crimea. It seems that powerful broadcasting is needed in certain situations. We broadcast where we can. In Ukraine, we drove ourselves into a corner. Today, broadcasting in medium wavelength would have been highly efficient in Ukraine. Our audience would have been as large as in Transnistria. Today, Ukraine is closed to our broadcasters. Will you study this problem?

*A. Sharikov:* Yes, we plan to do this. We plan to study not only broadcasting and TV but all media.

**The Role and Place of the Armenian Diaspora  
in Deepening and Developing Allied and Strategic Relations  
Between Russia and Armenia**

*Aram Khachatryan,  
Deputy Chairman, Center for Support of Russian-Armenian Strategic  
and Social Initiatives*

THE REVOLUTIONARY EVENTS in Armenia in April-May 2018 that changed the political leadership demonstrated that the Armenian diaspora in Russia is not homogenous, it is weakly organized and has found itself, for different reasons, in a crisis. Today, it should clearly define its role in Russia's public and political space.

The Armenian organizations mainly appeared in Russia after the Soviet Union's disintegration, in the late 1990s and in the first years of the new millennium.

Several years ago, in my interview in Russian to IA REGNUM entitled According to Retired Lieutenant-Colonel, the Armenian Diaspora in Russia is Completely Disunited (<https://regnum.ru/news/1455260.html>), I tried to answer some of the related questions and outlined the problems that should be promptly resolved. Regrettably, the problems were not addressed, let alone resolved. In other words, the gap is still where it was.

This means that we should explain to ourselves and the society what the Armenian diaspora in Russia is today, what its organizational forms are and where it goes.

Until the early 20th century, Armenian settlements in Russia occupied a very special place in the Armenian diaspora (Spyurka) and played an important political, economic and cultural role in the life of the Armenian people. Meanwhile, the Armenian community of Russia (the term diaspora that has found its place in literature yet has not acquired a clear definition is used here more or less conditionally) is highly heterogeneous socially, ethnically and culturally.

The early 1990s saw massive economic migration of Armenians from Armenia to Russia; they were driven by total worsening of social and economic conditions caused, among other things, by the Soviet Union's disintegration. The process is still going on and, due to certain objective fac-

tors prevailing in post-Soviet space in the last two decades, will continue for a fairly long time. Many of those who set up financial or commercial structures and are actively involved in promoting the economic interests of groups representing business circles, rather than of Armenia, were brought to Russia by the wave of Armenian migration of the 1990s.

The Armenian diaspora in Russia is divided into highly specific groups each with its own specific features. The first of them includes the so-called “old” part of the Russian Armenians who lived in Russia since time immemorial and continue living

here. The second is formed by Armenians who moved to Russia during Soviet years; the third consists of Armenians who moved to Russia in the late 1980s-early 1990s after the destructive Spitak earthquake and at the height of the confrontation between Armenians and Azeris, the Sumgait and Baku pogroms, etc.

It should be said that the majority of the entities created by the Armenian diaspora in Russia were set up by businessmen and entrepreneurs seeking recognition and certain status to promote their businesses. Accordingly, they financed these organizations, and this explains why, despite the attributes of independent leadership, these public organizations were, in the final analysis, dependent on the money of physical persons, their political preferences and/or personal tastes. No wonder most of these entities, despite their loud declarations, became, sooner or later, a “one-man show.”

For a very long time, Armenians have been and remain an inalienable part of Russia’s ethno-political landscape. The fact that Armenians have been living in Russia for a long time plays an important role in the positive assessment of the Armenian diaspora in Russia while its public, political, trade, economic, cultural, and educational role helped consolidate Russia’s statehood.

There are many prominent state and public figures, businessmen, scientists, cultural figures, generals, marshals, scholars, aircraft designers, composers, artists, writers, doctors, actors, sportsmen, etc. in the Armenian diaspora integrated into the social-economic life of the great

Certain propaganda campaigns, as part of much wider efforts to destroy the multinational society of Russia, push the discussions of real problems into the quagmire of hysterics and mutual accusations.

country. Their contribution to the development of the Soviet Union can be described as great and very special; today, Armenians continue their creative work for the sake of the Russian Federation.

As distinct from the Armenian diasporas in other countries, France and the United States in the first place, the Armenian diaspora of Russia is structurally inert and lacks systemic approach to its initiatives. There are about twenty Armenian organizations in this country, the all-Russia Union of Armenians of Russia among them, but they are weakly connected and lack coordination. The statements of their leaders are rarely more than one-time PR actions which are staying within the limits of ad hoc sociopolitical and public events. There are all sorts of Armenian public structures operating in many regions of Russia that prefer to concentrate on their own narrow tasks within their regions or municipalities.

Diasporas with numerous very complicated mechanisms of interaction with the non-Armenian world are highly important for Armenia and the Armenian world. This outstanding cultural and historical phenomenon allows the Third Republic of Armenia to function in the far from simple and dynamically developing world. The factor of the diaspora played its great role in the early 1990s at the height of the armed confrontation with Azerbaijan.

According to different sources, there are about 10 million Armenians in the world; 3 million of them live in Armenia, the remaining 7 million live in different countries. The biggest Armenian diasporas are functioning in Russia, the United States, France, Georgia, Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Argentina, and some other states. These countries, with the exception of Russia, are persistently trying to influence social and political processes in Armenia through the Armenian local organizations in their territories.

Armenians are one of the peoples the history of which was unfolding in their own country and, due to certain tragic circumstances, outside its limits. In many countries, Armenian settlements appeared in the Middle Ages; the history of each of them is unique; there is, however, a lot of common features between them.

Today, social passivity of the Armenian organizations of Russia explains their weakness: exceptions are few and cannot improve the picture. Unlike the Armenian organizations in the United States, France, Argentina, Lebanon and other countries, in Russia they have been deprived, for several decades, of close attention of the people at the helm in the Republic of Armenia. They were not in fact respected, and meetings of Armenian officials with their leaders were mostly meaningless

and very rare. On the other side, many international Armenian organizations in different countries have been and are benevolently disposed to Russia and helped it as much as they could.

Today, in the conditions of the dynamically (but not constructively) functioning information exchange, some negative facts and their interpretations are used purportedly to undermine the relations between Russia and Armenia. To tell the truth, certain propaganda campaigns, as part of much wider efforts to destroy the multinational society of Russia, push the discussions of real problems into the quagmire of hysterics and mutual accusations.

According to information supplied by different experts and sociological centers, there are 2.5 to 1.8 million ethnic Armenians in the Russian Federation, which is a lot. Despite the huge potential of the Armenian diasporal structures, they cannot, in an absence of a coordinating organizations, tap to the full their capabilities to start close cooperation with their historical homeland, among other things.

Confessional closeness adds a lot to the cultural and civilizational closeness of Russia and Armenia, of Russians and Armenians. It is especially revealed in the fact that there are saints worshipped by the Russian Orthodox Church and the Armenian Apostolic Church.

Wide contacts in Russia, Armenia and other countries where Armenians have been living for a long time presuppose a gradual emergence of a new line in the bilateral relations free from “slogans and toasts” and designed to exercise a more businesslike approach to all problems.

Today, any diaspora should be treated as a base for a more efficient policy of any state in which it lives and to which it is tied by myriads of threads. The Armenian diaspora is not an exception in this respect; it is a force able to influence regional and international processes. In Russia, its considerable positive experience and strategic relations between Russia and Armenia, the importance of which defies any doubts, allow us to look at Russia as a state close to Armenians.

In its relations with Armenia, Russia can rely on its traditional political and economic instruments and the potentials of its Armenian diaspora. The communities and associations that are active not only in Moscow but practically in all regions of Russia are the main consolidating force. I regret to say that the structures of state power of Russia designed to realize the foreign policy course (including its humanitarian component) do not do enough in this respect and do not tap to the full the potential of the Armenian diaspora.

I want to conclude by saying that Armenians' love for Russia is traditional and is "absorbed with mother's milk" so to speak. It is laid at the genetic level and no force, no dirt that is periodically thrown in by outside forces can uproot this love. Rulers come and go while peoples remain. The eternal love between our peoples is not only part of our souls confirmed by words and creations of many Russian and Armenian poets and writers; it was practically confirmed at the fateful moments of our history, especially during the Great Patriotic War when Russians and Armenians were fighting side-by-side against the "brown plague" of fascism and finally broke its backbone.

The active and creative role of Russian Armenians is an important factor of Russia's ethnic and confessional stability and security, its economic development and foreign policy.

I am convinced that a new organizational structure of the Armenian diaspora of Russia equal to the demands and challenges of our time will become a real force that will consolidate the centuries-old friendship between Russia and Armenia and promptly resolve all old and new problems in the spirit of mutual understanding in line with constructive partnership and cooperation.

### **On Humanitarian Cooperation With the Self-Proclaimed Republics in Ukraine**

*Artyom Bobrov,  
Second Secretary, Representation of the Foreign Ministry of the  
Russian Federation in Rostov-on-Don*

I WOULD LIKE to talk, among other things, about certain aspects of the political and economic development of the Rostov Region amid the continued tension in southeastern Ukraine, namely, in the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics. Cooperation between the Rostov Region and the republics rests on the historically confirmed social and humanitarian contacts, up to and including the common border of over 500 km long.

Information supplied by the region's migration services and numerous meetings with officials of the municipalities situated close to the state border testify that in the first six months of 2018 the number of Ukrainians who cross the state border every day for their own purposes increased by several times against the pre-crisis 2013. Every day, about 5



thousand citizens of Ukraine enter the Rostov Region; approximately the same number leaves it every day. This means that the region's transborder territory became a place where Ukrainians satisfy their personal needs by buying foodstuffs, clothes, fuel, etc.

There are no reasons to believe that the situation will change any time soon especially since in December 2017 the city acquired the airport, which is the biggest in the South of Russia and which will probably be used by people from Donbass, among others. This suggests that the level of social and humanitarian contacts between those who live in the neighboring territories will rise.

I will detract a little from the main subject of my presentation by saying that the current difficult situation in Ukraine was caused by the attempts of its political elite to consolidate the segmented society of post-Soviet Ukraine into a single political nation.

The elite selected the ambiguous project rooted in the quasi-scientific deliberations of the Ukrainian nationalists of the early 20th century.

This is not the only explanation of the ideological, cultural and religious contradictions that, in the final analysis, generated a destructive conflict in Ukraine. It, however, should be considered when trying to create a firm foundation for humanitarian and sociocultural interaction.

In view of economic, social and humanitarian contradictions and disagreements, we can surmise that regional cooperation with the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics might be realized in the sphere of public diplomacy that can potentially minimize the sociopolitical threats.

President Putin's decree "About Recognition of the Documents and Registration Numbers Issued to the Citizens of Ukraine and Persons Without Citizenship Living in Territories of Certain Districts of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions of Ukraine" of February 18, 2017 that allows the interested Russian NGOs to optimize the public diplomacy resources played an important role in identifying the landmarks of humanitarian interaction with the people's republics.

The School of Russian Policy and Diplomacy forum held in August 2017 can be cited as an example of efficient realization of public diplomacy practices.

The discussion format tested for the first time in the Southern Federal District was attended by students, post-graduate students and young

politicians from Abkhazia, Armenia, Moldova, Ukraine (Poltava Region), South Ossetia, and the DNR and LNR. The delegates of the Poltava Region said that their involvement caused a lot of information pressure from Ukrainian authorities that might, as we know, develop into real threats and repressions. Those who represented the DNR and LNR called to closer humanitarian cooperation among the young people and between states and regions represented at the conference.

The members of the youth parliament of the LNR formed in July 2017 who attended the forum said that they planned, together with the People's Council of the LNR and colleagues from the DNR, to formulate a common concept of realization of the principles of youth diplomacy of both people's republics.

Public diplomacy has certain advantages when it comes to the relations with the self-proclaimed republics in Ukraine: everything that is done is perceived by the recipient country fairly openly and, in most cases, without insurmountable disagreements. This is explained, in the first place, by the common system of values, close mentalities and close civilizational approaches.

There are, however, geoeconomic interests that should not be ignored: encouraged from abroad, they might break the cultural and axiological ties between the peoples of the South of Russia and Donbass to orientate the latter in the opposite direction. We have every reason to expect that the younger generations, the members of which are more demanding when it comes to their right to self-identification, will become the main target.

This problem should be resolved since in August 2017 the European Endowment for Democracy launched the City Hub project in the territory of the Lugansk Region controlled by Ukraine designed to identify youth leaders to tune up coordination between those who live in the region and in the self-proclaimed Lugansk People's Republic.

A similar project Go East Global was launched to support the existing and potential leaders of the local communities in Donbass.

So far, the future of both projects remains vague, yet it should be said that the situation is not static. In Ukraine, the European and American non-governmental structures rely on the perfectly tuned-up methods of brainwashing. We have to admit with concern a high probability of their realization in the unrecognized republics.

Those who live in the parts of the Lugansk and Donetsk regions controlled by Ukraine are very much interested in the following initiatives:

the humanitarian action of the Catholic Church “The Pope for Ukraine” (Vatican); the free online courses Prometheus; the representation of the Stabilization Support Services (Canada), the Council for Refugees (Denmark), the international organization Save the Children; International Organization for Migration (Germany), Man in Trouble (the Czech Republic), and the international organization MercyCorps.

It should be said that they are not necessarily benevolent and humanitarian; some of them try to attract temporal migrants from the zones of fighting in Donbass.

These people are taught free of charge how to get grants, start businesses, write business plans in different areas and they are offered free consultations on the legal aspects of entrepreneurship.

In the past, all sorts of international programs were targeting mainly the western and central regions of Ukraine; today, they are moving south-east. If the scenario under which the DNR and LNR will become regions of Ukraine with equal rights (that so far looks surrealistic) is realized, their citizens who were taught all sorts of programs sponsored by European funds might come back and call on their compatriots to turn away from the Russian World.

It is highly important to concentrate the efforts of the subjects of the Russian Federation and the Southern Federal District in particular, on closer interaction with the regional NGOs and public associations to tune up constructive cooperation with the young leaders of both people’s republics. The potential of public diplomacy allows us to create the platform to further realize the initiatives designed to consolidate the positions of Russia in Donbass and, in future, in the rest of Ukraine.

**R. Denisov:** Everything that my colleagues said about the support extended to NGOs is highly topical. In my Estonia, for example, Western NGOs are small, about 20 members, not more yet each of them can invite his/her friends, probably as many as one hundred. This is how Americans work, they are very efficient.

**N. Nikonorova:** I was very much impressed by what Olga Semyonova said about two alternative histories of Ukraine. I recently saw how far this has gone. An article was published in a journal from the list of the Higher Attestation Commission, in which the author was trying to prove the Ukrainian roots of Jesus Christ. This was not a joke.

### Session III

## The Silk Road in the Post-Soviet Space: Reality or Utopia?

### “The New Silk Road” – Hallucinations of Meanings

*Alexander Stoppe,*  
*Head, Analytical Department, Standing Committee of the Union State*

DEAR PARTICIPANTS of the conference,

It seems that the question that serves the title of our session, The Silk Road in the Post-Soviet Space: Reality or Utopia? can be answered as follows. The post-Soviet space needs transborder transport corridors yet currently their realization is a utopia. The declared intentions can be described, to a certain extent, as hallucinations of meanings.

Today, in the conditions of uncompromising competition unfolding in the world, the CIS countries rely on the Single Economic Space and the EAEU as instruments of their economic development. This presupposes free movement of goods, workforce and capital across the entire territory which badly needs a developed transport infrastructure. Since the times of the Roman Empire, roads promoted economic development of the regions they crossed. In Russia, too, a single state appeared thanks to rivers as transport arteries.

Today, the Union State sees the formation of a Single Economic Space, of which a united transport system is an inalienable part, as one of its major tasks. We should admit that so far, the transport infrastructure in Belarus and Russia leaves much to be desired.

Both countries have already adopted strategic documents related to the development of their transport infrastructure: The Complex Plan of Modernization and Widening the Main Infrastructure for the Period till 2014 in Russia and the State Program of the Development of Transport Complex till 2020 in the Republic of Belarus.

The Treaty on the Union between Belarus and Russia of December 8, 1999 envisages a united transport system that includes all transport corridors (Article 17).

Improvement and further perfection of the transport infrastructure is part of the Priority Development Trends of the Union State for 2018-2022; this was discussed at the meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Union State on June 13, 2018 and the Fifth Forum of the regions of Belarus and Russia on October 10-12, 2018.

These meetings concentrated on two issues: first, involvement of Belarus and Russia in the realization of the so-called Silk Road and the high-speed railway Moscow-Minsk as part of this project and the development of transport network between Minsk and St. Petersburg.

Here are certain comments. First, the slogan One Belt – One Road used in relation to the New Silk Road is slightly ambiguous. Indeed, there is one belt yet there can be many roads, not all of them crossing Belarus and Russia. There are other variants like crossing Transcaucasia (TRACECA), Iran or Turkey. This is a highly competitive milieu which means that if we are seriously interested in the development of transit transport potential as an instrument of economic development we should fight for it. Our plans should include high-speed railways that will connect us with China and Western Europe, China-Europe highways of international class as well as joint transport logistic companies.

The Moscow-Kazan 770 km-long project can be regarded as part of the future high-speed (200 to 400 km/hour) Eurasia railway.

The transport corridor between Minsk and St. Petersburg is highly important for the further development of economic and cultural ties, including tourism. The present state of the railways and highways does not fully correspond either to the level of the relations between Belarus and the Northwest of Russia or to the development level of the roads in the contemporary world. This means that when talking about the future we should have in mind a high-speed railway and high-quality highway between Minsk and the two Russian capitals. I am talking about the “golden triangle” to borrow an expression from Grigory Rapota, State Secretary of the Union State: Moscow-Minsk-St. Petersburg-Moscow.

This high-speed transportation triangle will resolve the problems of transportation and some of the political issues. It will encourage young Belarusians to learn more about the history of Russia and the culture of Moscow and St. Petersburg, two world-famous centers. The Russian youth, in its turn, will learn more about the Belarusian history (Minsk, Brest, Khatyn, Mogilev). Freight traffic that is steadily increasing should not be forgotten either.

High-tech and high-speed transcontinental highway and cargo/passenger corridor across the territories of Belarus and Russia will become a system-forming factor of economic development on the Eurasian continent.

This project and solution of numerous economic and social tasks in the regions crossed by the highway can be described as an important prac-

tical step toward coordinating the processes of forming the EAEU and China's One Belt-One Road project.

The same relates to the modernization of the Moscow-St. Petersburg-Pskov-Minsk highway as part of the general Eurasian project (China-Western Europe). This high-tech and fully used highway may give the lease of life to the Russian and Belarusian regions that it will cross.

Meridian, another highly discussed project, is expected to connect Kazakhstan and Belarus across the southern part of Russia.

At the same time, this issue is much wider: joint development of international and national transport corridors will affect the industrial, food and demographic aspects, promote inter-regional transborder cooperation and create even more links in the common space of the Union State and EAEU.

When studying the subject of transit corridors, I learned that the GDP of transit territories rose by 3 to 9%, that is, was much faster than elsewhere.

High-speed highways are rather costly, yet they should be built in the interests of the transit regions, in the first place. As part of transnational transit corridors, they attract money of private investors and partners from third countries especially if they are interested in using the transit routes to/from China.

In December 2017, speaking at a big press conference, President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin deemed it necessary to point out that in the near future development of infrastructure (roads, ports, airports, and means of communication in the first place) will become one of Russia's priorities.

It has already been said that similar approaches are practiced in Belarus: its transport potential will be increased through modernization of transit transport corridors.

Today, the question of increasing the transit capacity of the Baikal-Amur and Trans-Siberian railways are being discussed. Not only Russia but also Belarus, Kazakhstan and China need Trans-Siberian Railway for freight moving to/from the regions that border on Europe, Far East and the Asian-Pacific countries. Railway transit from Germany to China is about 20 days shorter than the sea route. Both projects (the Baikal-Amur and Trans-Siberian railways) will considerably increase the international freight traffic, container traffic in the first place.

I would like to point out in conclusion that the world is gradually acquiring a unified market and transport-communication infrastructure

that makes the relationships between regional and world leaders (both state and non-state actors) more competitive. In the mid- and long-term perspective, control over markets and transport routes will increase under pressure of the dynamic economic development of the Asia-Pacific countries. Competition for the involvement in projects of international transport corridors will intensify because they will create united economic space, lower tariff and customs barriers and will make it much easier to reach commodity markets, achieve economic integration and gain political influence.

The fact that the world economic leaders – China, the United States and the EU – spare no effort to create their variants of land international transport corridors to connect Europe and China speaks volumes about their increasing political significance.

Russia and Belarus should look at transport corridors as a key to the world transportation system and the world logistics space. Time has come to identify the goals, formulate the ideology of transport development using, among other things, the institution of the Union State to coordinate the mechanisms, identify investment sources and potential investors (China, the EU members, transnational companies, etc.).

We should create a comprehensive Roadmap of the development of transport infrastructure in the Eurasian space for the next 5 to 10 years that will include high-tech high-speed highways between Russia, Belarus, the EAEU members, Western Europe, and China; draw transnational transport companies into logistics and the services sphere. In fact, we should work to realize the utopia or “to make dreams a reality” to quote from a Soviet song. This will render the question about the New Silk Road in the post-Soviet space, which served as a headline in this presentation, meaningless.

***Yelena Khalevinskaya,***  
***session moderator***

THE ONE BELT-ONE ROAD program serves China’s interests first and foremost. Each country that hopes that it will cross its territory tries, on its own, to find a niche in this huge megaproject. Today, they are gradually drawn into a severe competition for huge transport corridors. As we all know, there are no precise geographic maps of the Silk Road. At the same time, Chinese investors, on their side, do not demonstrate a lot of enthusiasm – they are waiting for national governments to be involved.

More than that, they will use market mechanisms of investment. This means that if Russia or Belarus within the Union State want to become transit territories for the cargoes moved from China to Europe, they should start working on the project's financial side. The project is China-oriented, yet we should find a niche of our own. Our Far East development program means that we should be interested in the development of the Trans-Siberian Railway, in the first place.

There are many questions. Our conference should prompt certain conclusions about Russia's national interests to be involved in the so far utopian project, still a brainchild of investors and politicians.

*A. Stoppe:* I cannot agree with what is said about China as the only beneficiary. According to very moderate assessments, western China moves to Europe on average \$690 billion-worth of goods. It takes 90 days to bring them to Europe by sea. About \$7 billion-worth of goods (that is 10% of the total) is moved across Russia which means infrastructure. Talking about railways and highways, we should bear in mind that two lines, dividing lines and avoidance of crossings are a far from simple project. Any state will find it profitable to develop transport network in its regions. The Far East development program is not about this. Look at the Trans-Siberian or the Baikal-Amur railways. The northern point of the Baikal-Amur railway is separated by 700 km from the Trans-Siberian railway. This is a purely logistic and a key financial problem.

This is all about money, or rather, its shortage because it is still unclear on which conditions the private sector can join the project, the same relates to extra-budget funding, especially in the part related to railways. There are no product-sharing rules related to oil and gas and no clear legal basis. Here is another important thing: in China, people have accepted the fact that all roads (there are 100 thousand km of them) are toll roads. The price is low (about 2 CNY) yet money is accumulating. The same is true of Kazakhstan. In Belarus with its state economy, the use of roads is free. It is very hard to arrive at the mechanisms of investments, yet all countries involved, not only China, will profit in the final analysis.

*Ye. Khalevinskaya:* Economically these projects are not that efficient. Indeed, 1 kg of goods delivered from China to Hamburg by sea will cost from \$0.12 to \$0.13: freight is cheap. Today, test wagons are moved from China to Germany: five fully loaded wagons from China vs. one fully loaded wagon from Germany, which means that four German trains are



moved empty. In fact, the efficiency of these investments is fairly debatable. We should calculate everything: roads, infrastructures and goods prices.

**V. Semyonov:** You have touched upon a very important point. The set of security threats and risks is big enough. There are talks behind the scene that the total cost of the Silk Road project will reach about \$3 trillion. This is a lot. About a year and a half ago, the Silk Road Fund could boast of about \$40 billion, a mere pittance. Chinese are quite right when they offer no maps, etc. They are waiting for those who will offer the best conditions and who will be ready to invest. It is in Russia's interests to be involved in the project. Even if ten years later China will not be a great economic power, Russia will have the roads.

### **The Eurasian Economic Community as an Example of Post-Soviet Integration**

**Arif Asalioglu,**  
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WHILE THEY CEASED to cooperate with one another due to the collapse of Soviet economic and military structures, former Soviet republics came up against a strong need to make their economies elements of the world economy. For this reason, between 1992 and 2000, numerous cooperation and integration initiatives were put forward in the post-Soviet space. However, most of those initiatives never materialized. After the 2000s, there emerged significant trends for cooperation and integration in the post-Soviet space. The main reason was that post-Soviet countries had come to see their mutual integration as an important instrument in their foreign policies. Strategies developed by the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC) prompted politicians and experts to resume debates on a proposal for a "Eurasian Union."

Due to its institutional structure and evolutionary processes, EurAsEC holds a special place among organizations that emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The first step toward integration in the post-Soviet space was taken during a EurAsEC summit in Dushanbe on October 6, 2007, as Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus, which were EurAsEC members, set up a governing body for the subsequent trilateral

Customs Union. The union officially came into existence on January 1, 2010. On November 18, 2012, the three countries took the next step by establishing the Common Economic Space. Then a plan was announced to set up an association on January 1, 2015, that became known as the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

### **Key Integration Factors**

POST-SOVIET COUNTRIES made unsuccessful attempts to develop economic strategies, and had relatively ineffective foreign trade. They usually exported commodities and imported consumer goods. Bureaucratic barriers, customs restrictions, and security measures hampered cooperation among them. Declining production triggered vast-scale and rapidly growing unemployment, and consequently falling living standards. Economic failures and the impoverishment of the majority of the population set off social and political tensions in former Soviet republics. Their governments opted for their mutual integration as a natural way to defuse those tensions, and repeatedly made loud declarations about this.

However, of 880 documents adopted by the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) by the end of 1997, only 130 were enforced because of the incompetence of CIS bodies that were authorized to enforce them. In explaining this incompetence, experts argue that the CIS was poorly organized. With some differences, the same applies to the Central Asian Union. There still exists no environment in the post-Soviet space for creating effective associations. The poor organization of cooperation and limited financial resources resulted in other priorities being put on the agenda. After a while, Central Asian countries felt a need to develop a harmonious integration strategy.

There came realization that there was no one's evil intent behind proposed integration and that integration was in tune with global cooperation and could speed up development, but integration processes that began turned out to be insufficient and controversial. The reason was that the countries that were involved in those processes differed from one another demographically, ethnically, socially, and economically and some possessed poorer resources than others. There also were problems caused by differences in the nature, speed and scale of reforms in different post-Soviet countries.

The CIS, whose chief mission was to establish political, sociocultural and economic structures to replace former Soviet frameworks, was able

to lay foundations for cooperation among ex-Soviet republics. But it still has not become a full-scale union, mainly because of an untenable integration strategy that its leadership is trying to develop.

The other reasons include skepticism about integration on the part of CIS member countries, which gained independence comparatively recently and are building their national identities; incompetence on the part of officials in them who are in charge of integration; the fear of the leaders of some of

the countries that they will lose their top governmental posts, which they owe to their nations' acquisition of independence; the fact that each member state chooses its own economic policy on the basis of national priorities and disregards the economic concerns of other member states; shortages of money for building integration structures and for political coordination; and a lack of a clear idea among the member states of who is their common adversary or enemy.

Russia, which sees the CIS territory as a sphere of its strategic interests, sees the expansion of NATO into this territory and "color revolutions" in it as the main threats to itself. "Color revolutions" is the term used for NATO-backed revolutions such as the revolutions in the former Yugoslavia (2000), Lebanon (2005), (Georgia) 2003, Ukraine (2004), (Kyrgyzstan) 2005, and (Moldova) 2009.

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### **Practical Integration**

ECONOMIC and social rehabilitation in Russia in the 2000s made the country the world's center of attention again. Between 2001 and 2010, Russia's gross domestic product nearly trebled, and modernization reforms were implemented in many sectors. According to 2011 statistics, Russia had a GDP of about \$2.5 trillion, which was about twice the size of other post-Soviet countries.

This economic factor and Russia's cultural ties explain why Russia oversees integration in the post-Soviet space. Russia is indisputably also the source of funding for political and economic aspects of integration and is naturally the region's leader due to its military, political, and economic power.

The abovementioned factors, which played a role in abortive attempts at regional cooperation made before the emergence of the EurAsEC, underwent some changes in the 2000s. Post-Soviet countries adopted a pragmatic attitude to integration. Commissions and subcommittees charged with helping organize integration increased in number significantly, and officials who were appointed in that period held different views on integration than their predecessors. There was a clearer pro-integration political will.

In that period, the main point of the integration strategy was a plan to act in the EurAsEC format and simultaneously seek accession to the World Trade Organization. After Russia joined the WTO, EurAsEC adopted a strategy for WTO accession negotiations. Russia's customs tariffs were accepted by other members of the Customs Union.

Regional leaders who were afraid to be left outside globalization saw integration as an important foreign policy instrument – as a source of power in international affairs. Minor regional players saw integration as a defense against negative effects of globalization. This fact affected integration processes in the post-Soviet space. For example, integration enables Russia and Kazakhstan, the two pillars of the CIS, to control the policy of others and makes it more difficult for China and the United States to influence CIS member countries.

### **Key Characteristics of the Post-Soviet Integration Model**

IN 2011, a year after Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus set up the Customs Union, the CIS established a free trade area that, in addition to those three countries, brought together Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. The Customs Union introduced zero tariffs for those countries the moment the area officially came into existence.

A broader interpretation was put on security, which is the top priority for most governments. Security was no longer seen as a purely military concern – for example, environmental security, economic security, and cybersecurity came into the political vocabulary of post-Soviet countries. The Customs Union, besides the economic aspect, provides Kazakhstan, Russia and Belarus with a coordination mechanism for cross-border security control, namely for dealing with problems such as human trafficking, drug trafficking, and migration. The EAEU is pursuing initiatives for joint action in numerous fields, including border security, migration, environmental protection, social affairs, transportation, and agriculture.

These initiatives represent a new approach to regional affairs. There are commissions at the EAEU that are working on such initiatives. The Eurasian Development Bank, the United Transport and Logistics Company and the United Technological Innovation Center for Eurasia are examples of efficient institutional interaction.

One noteworthy aspect of post-Soviet integration processes is the clout of political elites and bureaucracies in post-Soviet countries. The selection of personnel for the executive apparatus of the CIS is still nationally based, and this means that no supranational institutional culture has been created.

### **Latvia as a Bridge Between East and West**

*Nikolay Kabanov,*

*Chairman of the Board of the DVINA association and a member of the Saeima (parliament of Latvia)*

THE WESTERN DVINA is the main river of Latvia, a river that connects Russia, Belarus and Latvia and flows into the Baltic Sea. I will try to analyze the transit branch of our country from the perspective of Baltic Sea ports and the port industry of Russia. In the early 1990s, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia were effectively the only Baltic Sea gates of the Soviet Union. In 1996, the port of St. Petersburg handled only 42% of the cargo turnover of Russia on the Baltic coast. Meanwhile, there was no alternative to Riga, Ventspils or Liepaja in many respects. Those ports paid their way and were quite well off. In fact, the Latvian ports are systemic continuations of Russian transit corridors and were systemic continuations of Soviet corridors in the past.

As regards railroads, they clearly form a radial network that extends from inner Eurasia to the Baltic. Riga is the main port, Ventspils is the main oil port, and Liepaja only became a civilian port in the early 1990s; before that, it had mainly been a naval port, although it had been built as the main port for the export of Russian grain and vegetable oil in the 1890s. All the railroad routes and pipelines are transit facilities. As for the entire Latvian transit industry, 80% of the freight it handles comes from inner Eurasia.

Much has been said about alternative transit corridors from China to Western Europe. In this connection, I'd like to mention the Urumqi-Riga-Rotterdam project, which was launched in 2017. Only two trains have

used that corridor. They covered more than 11,000 kilometers and then went on to the Netherlands by sea. Unfortunately, in 2018, there was no turnover at all. I don't think there was any conspiracy behind that, it was just poor work, lack of coordination between Latvian and Russian railroads, and logistic failures, and everybody now has to deal with the consequences. One of the trains, which was a Chinese train, was met ceremonially by the president, prime minister and a brass band, but the whole thing turned out to be a lot of dust.

Latvian ports are, in technical terms, the gems of the Baltic transportation infrastructure. They have very good mooring facilities. The maximum depth of the water in Riga, for example, is 18 meters, and that in Ventspils 17.5 meters. Those ports are accessible to Panamax tankers. In the meantime, Russia has built completely new facilities in the Leningrad region and has spent just 20 years on this. We've seen Ust-Luga show a freight turnover of 93 million tons for 2016, which was 50% more than the amount handled by all Latvian ports put together. And that despite Ust-Luga being in effect a personnel rotation village without any infrastructure of its own or any permanent population. There just are about 3,000 people who operate the heavily automated berthing equipment. The turnover of Primorsk is 64 million tons and is comparable to the aggregate turnover of all Latvian ports put together. The turnover of Vysotsk is half that of Ventspils. But 20 years ago, there was just St. Petersburg and nothing else.

The Russian ports on the Baltic have narrow specializations. Ust-Luga, for example, is an oil port. These days, crude oil is carried through Latvia by rail. We had a pipeline since the Soviet period, since 1961.

In 2003, it was shut down. For the next 10 years, there just remained some technical oil in it, and eventually 100,000 tons of that oil, about 20 trainloads, was sold off. There was a big court action about who that oil belonged to. Eventually Belarus proved in court that the oil was Belarusian. These days Russia is the only beneficiary of transit from the eastern Baltic. This is logical because Russia carries its own cargo. At the same time, Russia is putting serious political pressure on Belarus to make it move oil products from the Ventspils port to Russian ports.

That's what the situation is like: for Belarusian railroads, transit is twice as expensive. There will be a covert war between Latvian and Russian ports for Belarusian cargo. The only hope of the Latvian ports are two Belarusian oil refineries – one in Novopolotsk, which is going to be enlarged, and one in Mozyr. For this reason, the president of Belarus,

Alexander Lukashenko, is planning a visit to Latvia. It will be his first official visit to the country. Lukashenko has never been to the European Union.

Recently, the Belarusian foreign minister, Vladimir Makei, visited Latvia. Whereas political relations between Russia and Latvia are frozen, Belarus has a lively dialogue with Latvia. Even the Belarusian defense minister has visited Latvia – he came in December 2016 and signed a Belarusian-Latvian agreement to cooperate in the language, sports and environmental training of armed forces officers, to take measures to prevent adverse incidents, and to ban weapons of mass destruction.

Of all the ports of the Baltic countries, Riga is the fastest-growing one. Over the past 20 years, its cargo turnover has grown from 7.5 million to 37 million tons. This is largely the result of its immense area – there are more than 100 berths over a stretch of 12 kilometers on the banks of the Daugava River.

The port reached its record turnover of 41.1 million tons in 2014. After that there has been some decline. However, it would still be possible to enlarge it a great deal by developing territories that are located a long way from the center of Riga. I'd like to draw your attention to the Riga Fertilizer Terminal (RFT), 51% of which belongs to the Russian holding company ceremonially. Uralchem is the biggest taxpayer in Latvia and undoubtedly holds first place for the amount of money it pays as tax per employee – the company officially has fewer than 100 employees but has been paying about one billion euros per year as tax.

There is yet another quite complicated project, the so-called Russian Island, a plan to build a large berth for the transit of coal. Coal is one of the main types of cargo handled by the Riga port. An increase of 7% was recorded for 2017, but the launching of Russian Island has been put off. For two years, it has been impossible to hire enough stevedores though all the necessary infrastructure has been created – a rail line has been laid and electricity and natural gas supply facilities have been put in place, but people don't want jobs there because it isn't clear who would pay them for relocation.

The Ventspils port is a developing industrial cluster. It is moving from oil specialization to some industrial projects. Very large ships, vessels of up to 166,000 gross register tons, call in there. The Liepaja port specializes in timber and grain. There is some Russian cultural heritage in the city of Liepaja – a naval cathedral that is similar architecturally to the naval cathedral in Kronstadt in Russia. Slavs make up a significant pro-

portion of the population in Liepaja, as in other large ports. In Liepaja, between 30% and 40% of the population is Slav.

In summing up, I'd like to say that economy is the main channel of soft power. Russia's influence on the politics and society of Latvia is and will be proportional to its role in the Latvian economy. Today Russia is Latvia's third-biggest trading partner while the United States is just its number-ten partner.

**A. Oganesyanyan:** You have cited very impressive import and export statistics. What needs to be done to make Russia and Latvia want to sustain their current scale of trade?

**N. Kabanov:** I think mega projects are a thing of the past. For example, when Yury Luzhkov was mayor of Moscow, there was a project to organize the manufacture of buses at the Riga Autobus Factory, but that came to nothing. I believe in small-scale niche projects. The Russian chocolate company Pobeda has launched a manufacturing site in Ventspils to seek markets in various countries, including the United States. It will use the EU certificate. It has already bought packaging equipment. I believe that projects of between 1 million and 10 million euros can be successful. We need about 100 of them to get things going.

### **The Role of Uzbekistan in the Belt and Road Initiative: Achievements and Problems**

**Alo Khodzhayev,**  
*political scientist and independent journalist, Candidate of Science (Philosophy)*

I WOULD LIKE to start with a comment that the esteemed organizers of this conference have obviously gone too far by using the word "utopia," apparently in a bid to stir interest in this range of subjects. Naturally, the idealistic Utopia ("non-existent place") of Thomas More and the "City of the Sun" of Tommaso Campanella have nothing to do with the cross-civilizational interaction of peoples in Eurasia, interaction that, despite all the resistance, has been analyzed thoroughly and is based on real opportunities. Surely this large-scale and bold initiative was initially considered to be a romantic restoration of the historic Great Silk Road, but very soon it won support from dozens of states. Normal economic globalization



with increasingly extensive trade and transportation links between countries cannot be a utopia.

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is a plan for economic, and to some extent political, rapprochement and cooperation between neighboring regions. Of course, this initiative is by no means to everyone's liking, but attempts to revive diverse ties between the East and West are becoming an irreversible trend. Clearly, Asia is on a path to becoming the global economic and political center, and this is primarily in the interests of China, which is trying to assert itself as a new superpower with its own spheres of influence.

This affects the role of Europe and the global political opportunities of Russia. As we know, this cross-Eurasian communication system began to take shape long before the Common Era. I'd like to stress that our cities such as Samarkand, Bukhara and Khiva were always the hubs of that system. That system wasn't about trade alone. For example, Shah Rukh, who was the son of the great statesman and soldier Amir Timur (Tamerlane) and the father of the brilliant astronomer Ulugh Beg, sent delegations to China and India in seeking to establish political, economic, scholarly, and cultural ties with them. The historian Abd-al-Razzaq Samarqandi and the artist Giyasiddin Nakkosh left behind valuable records of trips they had taken.

There are hundreds of examples of this kind. It was no accident that UNESCO, in pursuing its "Silk Roads: Roads of Dialogue" project, has set up a think tank in Samarkand called the International Institute for Central Asian Studies. Currently the Louvre Museum and the Art and Culture Development Foundation of the Uzbek Ministry of Culture are organizing a large-scale exhibition in Paris to be entitled "Civilizations and Cultures along the Silk Road."

Today, Silk Road is the brand name for a planned pan-Eurasian and intercontinental transportation system that is being promoted by China in collaboration with Russia, Kazakhstan and other countries. The BRI has become a key element in a strategy to boost the economic development of the entire region and create markets for Chinese goods demand for which in Europe and the United States is going down. In other words, the BRI is a far from altruistic project.

Via the BRI, China pursues a diversity of goals, which include making its goods cheaper and quicker to deliver to their buyers and enabling it to win stronger positions in its current markets in Europe and Asia and conquer new markets in Africa and the Middle East.

The BRI, which the Chinese call “One Belt One Road,” is planned to include a network of infrastructure projects throughout the world. The initiative may stimulate interactions among Central Asian countries and reforms in them. On the other hand, Central Asian states run the risks of falling under growing Chinese geopolitical and economic influence, having commodity specialization forced on their economies, having inflows of Chinese labor, and building up indebtedness to China.

Yet there would be indisputable advantages for them. These would include new rail arteries crossing Central Asia. Besides, there exists the Turkmenistan-China gas pipeline, which passes through Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan and was launched in 2009.

We realize that Russia has its own major interests to pursue via the BRI. They include helping achieve political stability in Central Asian and Middle Eastern countries. Afghan drugs, militant Islamic fundamentalism, and uncontrolled migration caused by military conflicts threaten both Russia and Uzbekistan. At the end of the day, the only way to eliminate these threats is to speed up economic development and raise living standards in all Central Asian countries, and that is essentially what the BRI is about.

China has signed cooperation agreements concerning the BRI with 103 countries and international organizations. By June 2018, China’s trade with countries lying along the BRI route exceeded \$5 trillion, making China the biggest trading partner for 25 countries. Chinese direct investments in foreign countries exceed \$70 billion, having grown by an average of 7.2% per year. New contracts have been signed to a total of \$500 billion, a sum that has shown an average annual increase of 19.2%. Chinese enterprises have set up economic cooperation zones in various foreign countries with a total of \$28.9 billion invested in them. There are about 4,000 enterprises in the zones that pay taxes to a total of more than \$2 billion and have provided jobs for 244,000 people.

The Xinhua news agency has reported that China’s trade with BRI participant countries has been growing by 10.4%, which is faster than its trade with any other nations and is 2.5% higher than the average increase in its foreign trade. A Chinese international exhibition in November 2018 stirred a great deal of interest.

As regards Uzbekistan’s economic partnership with China, it takes several forms:

1. Trade. Uzbek-Chinese trade reached a volume of \$2.81 billion for the first half of 2018, which was a year-on-year increase of 33.8%.

2. Investment. There are more than 900 companies with partially Chinese capital, and the number is growing steadily. Uzbek companies with partly Chinese capital have created about 20,000 jobs. China has invested more than \$7.8 billion in Uzbekistan. There are three stably operating strands of the Turkmenistan-China pipeline. Large-scale projects such as the Angren-Pap railroad tunnel, the Peng Sheng Industrial Park, the Khodzhasayat section of the Dengizkul gas condensate field, and the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan automotive corridor have begun to bear fruit.

3. Tourism. In 2017, nearly 20,000 Chinese tourists visited Uzbekistan, and even more did for the first several months of 2018. China is an increasingly popular destination for Uzbek tourists as well. Both countries put a lot of effort in tourism advertising. Tashkent recently hosted an international fair entitled “Tourism along the Silk Road,” and a specialized university has been set up in Samarkand, the Silk Road International University of Tourism.

4. Arts. Chinese performers took part in the Oriental Tunes international festival in Samarkand and in the first Maqom Art International Forum in Shahrissabz. China and Uzbekistan have jointly organized and carried through a film festival, a New Year’s gala concert, a scholarly conference, and other events. There are increasingly extensive youth exchanges. Chinese central television has shown a program about Uzbek cuisine, which was seen by nearly 150 million people.

5. Education. Chinese students take increasing interest in Uzbek culture and the Uzbek language. Uzbek language courses have been opened at the Central Universities for Nationalities in Beijing, at Lanzhou University, and at foreign language schools in Beijing and Shanghai. A total of more than 2,000 Uzbek citizens are studying in China and at Confucius Institute in Samarkand. Incidentally, China is abandoning its tradition of exporting its culture and makes only minimal borrowing of foreign civilizational values.

But the resources for cooperation are far from exhausted. Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has put special emphasis on the importance of building out Uzbekistan’s transportation and communications infrastructure. At a meeting in Qingdao in June, the leaders of Uzbekistan and China reached important agreements on diverse forms of cooperation. For Uzbekistan and other Central Asian countries, the time spent on the customs examination of agricultural produce has been reduced by 90%. Transit is growing in volume due to increasing deliveries to Central

Asian countries, mainly deliveries from South Korea to Uzbekistan, which account for 67% of the total.

The inconsistent and nervous behavior of Islam Karimov, the former president of Uzbekistan, in his contacts with the leaders of neighboring countries and Russia had negative impacts on all aspects of the BRI. But since then the situation has changed radically. For instance, Uzbekistan's trade with countries that it borders is growing rapidly. In 2017, a total of 33 million tons of Uzbek cargo was taken out of Uzbekistan by all forms of transportation. Transportation services accounted for 6.6% of GDP. But that is patently insufficient. There are, however, obstacles to the integration of the transportation systems of the Central Asian countries into international transportation networks. To overcome them, they need to develop a harmonized set of principles for the development of transportation, to simplify their visa, transit and customs formalities, normalize their tariff policies, and improve the infrastructures of their transportation corridors.

Eight countries in the region that have no sea access spend sums on the transit of their exports that reach between 70% and 80% of the cost of the exports. Inefficient customs procedures make carriers waste up to 40% of their transportation time. Experts estimate that cooperation among Central Asian countries may result in the regional GDP doubling or more than doubling over the next decade. Central Asia's geostrategic position of connecting principal international markets gives special significance to cooperation among the region's nations.

At an international conference in Tashkent in September that was entitled "Central Asia in the System of International Transport Corridors: Strategic Prospects and Unrealized Opportunities," Uzbekistan put forward four proposals: developing a strategy for the development of Central Asian transportation corridors; establishing a joint management system for the transportation networks of the member countries of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization; setting up a council to oversee the regional transportation systems; and developing, in collaboration with the World Tourism Organization, guidelines for a strategy for tourism in Central Asia as part of the BRI.

Oleg Belozerov, chief executive of Russian Railways and chairman of the Council for Rail Transport of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), announced at the conference that Russia was planning 50% discounts on charges for freight carriage to and from Central Asian countries. Uzbekistan signed some agreements: agreements with Kazakhstan

to extend 2018 preferential tariffs to 2019, to have the O'zbekiston Temir Yo'llari (Uzbekistan Railways) open offices in the Kazakh cities of Astana and Aktau, and to set up a joint venture to organize container cargo transportation between China and Central Asia; an accord on cooperation between O'zbekiston Temir Yo'llari and Belarusian Railway; and an Uzbek-Chinese memorandum on cooperation in rail transportation.

There are plans to build a transportation corridor from Russia to India to run through Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Iran, and Oman and an Uzbekistan-Kyrgyzstan-China railroad that would link up with the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railroad and provide access to southern and Eastern Europe and the Middle East as part of the East-West project.

Another planned rail line would run from Hairatan to Herat via Mazar-i-Sharif and form a transportation corridor in Afghanistan with access to Iranian, Pakistani and Indian railroads under the North-South project.

The BRI was most likely discussed at the First Russia-Uzbekistan Interregional Cooperation Forum that was part of the program for a recent visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin to Tashkent. Russia is Uzbekistan's main trading partner. The 2017 volume of Uzbek-Russian trade amounted to \$4.81 billion, which marked a year-on-year increase of 14.8%. It included exports to a total of \$2.10 billion and imports that were worth \$2.71 billion, which were 17.2% and 12.9% up on 2016 respectively. Trade for the period from January to July 2018 reached \$3.23 billion (a year-on-year increase of 24%), including exports of \$1.14 billion (an increase of 1.4%) and imports of \$2.09 billion (an increase of 41.3%).

The BRI is open to integration with other projects. There is a proposal for integrating BRI activities with the activities of the Eurasian Economic Union, and there are negotiations with Russia under way on some points of the proposal. There also is work in progress on the BRI's proposed integration with Kazakhstan's Nurly Zhol program, with Turkey's Central Corridor project, with Mongolia's Path of Development program, with Vietnam's Two Corridors and One Economic Circle plan, with Britain's Northern Powerhouse program, with Poland's Amber Road plan, with the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity – a project by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) – and with plans put forward by Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, and Hungary.

It seems appropriate to mention here that less than a month ago Uzbekistan adopted an innovation strategy for the next few years that aims to ensure the nation a place among the top 50 countries in the Global

Innovation Index. In this connection, let me stress once again that Central Asia has an inadequate infrastructure. Here are World Bank statistics on the cost of the import of one container of cargo. While the average global cost is \$1,877, it costs \$5,265 to import a container of cargo into Kazakhstan, \$6,452 into Uzbekistan, and more than \$10,000 into Tajikistan. Those are the highest costs in the world.

Hopefully, the planned rail corridors will make deliveries quicker and cheaper, and it will be possible to use funds saved thereby to raise living standards and speed up modernization. This is an essential condition for the BRI's to stimulate development in Central Asia. Objectively speaking, however, it is not the prerogative of China to build economic ties within the supercontinent.

Russia, Japan, India, Turkey, and Kazakhstan all have their own infrastructure programs. Japan and India are the main challengers of Chinese domination in Asia. Central Asian countries must balance between their great neighbors, which, although obviously cooperating with one another in some ways, have largely different objectives. This contradictory logic of cooperation and competition determines the essence of various concepts for a proposed Eurasian transportation network.

Other major players – the European Union, South Korea, Turkey, and Iran – have their own infrastructure projects and are cautious about the BRI. They take part in some of the BRI undertakings but pursue activities rivaling other BRI endeavors. They seek to keep the BRI at arm's length although their projects are by no means comparable to the Chinese initiative in scale. China alone has a truly strategic supercontinental plan – to create a new version of the former great Chinese nation by 2050, a nation with a per capita income of between \$40,000 and \$45,000.

China's potential successes in building a Eurasian transportation network would be the main source of infrastructure-centered competition. Cooperation with China offers indisputable benefits to Russia, Uzbekistan and many other countries despite an obvious negative U.S. position. There is ample evidence that the United States makes maximum use of chaos in various countries, terrorist organizations and coup attempts to sustain its purported status of the unlimited and unconditional world leader.

The EU has no clear position. It has branded the BRI as an opaque threat to free trade. Journalist Pepe Escobar, in an article published in *Asia Times*, argues that the BRI is an attempt by Chinese conglomerates to gain unfair market advantages for themselves. At the same time,

Greece, Italy, Germany, and Spain believe that they can benefit from the BRI. But by and large, the EU fears that the BRI is the starting point of Made in China 2025 (MIC 2025), a Beijing initiative to make China a high-tech leader by 2025.

To sum up, let me stress again that Chinese economic presence in Central Asia is a mixed blessing. China's successful penetration of key Central Asian industries has failed to make its relations with Central Asian countries equal and mutually beneficial, to bring about the comprehensive development of those nations, or to bolster their security, in other words, it has had little to do with their long-term interests. China's focus on the import of industrial commodities from Central Asia threatens to become a drain on the region's natural resources and kill off manufacturing in the region, which might spark economic and social crises. But China doesn't need a destabilized region near its borders. Xinjiang would be particularly vulnerable as its economy is largely dependent on Central Asia and it is beset with problems of ethnic separatism and Islamic radicalism.

One more point: Central Asia can achieve political and economic integration only if all its countries come together to work for it and if they harmonize all the models they have propounded. Central Asia needs a strategy where national priorities are balanced with regional concerns. This is a hard task, but it is accomplishable if the great states sincerely want to join forces in tackling it.

### **The 2013-2014 Sociopolitical Crisis in Ukraine and Problems of the Silk Road**

*Sergey Yurchenko,  
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BY 2013-2014, having followed a foreign policy of maneuvering between centers of power that we designate as the West and the East, Ukraine had used all conceivable behavior models. The first model can be metaphorically described as "dog in the manger," since it implied equidistance from both centers of power with minimal benefits to the country. The second model – "gate crashing" – implied a spurt towards integration into European structures despite a relatively reserved approach on the part of these structures and their distancing from Ukraine in that period. The third model, called "together forever," was a promise

of integration (mainly economic) with Russia. And the fourth model can be called “prodigal son.”

The fourth model implied maneuvering between West and East, on the assumption that both West and East understood the essence of this model. In order to go beyond the scope of this maneuvering, pursued under the guise of an optimistic multi-vector policy, from around March and April 2013 the Ukrainian foreign policy elite began looking for points of support outside Ukraine’s “sacramental” choice between Europe and America, on the one hand, and Russia, on the other. Accordingly, that was when it began to pay greater attention to cooperation with China as a center of economic growth that can be described as follows: God created the Earth, and everything else has been created in China. The idea here was to connect the 21st century Chinese factory and the large European market with high purchasing power.

Contacts between Ukrainian and Crimean leaders and China increased in the spring of 2013. That year, four Crimean delegations visited China, with government policy culminating in a visit to China by Ukrainian President Yanukovich in December 2013. During that visit, the parties discussed issues of great concern to Crimeans. In exchange for material assistance to Ukraine promised by China, Yanukovich promised to build a deep water port in Saki or to authorize its construction with the transfer of tens of thousands of square kilometers of land (including Crimean land) to the Chinese for the use of Chinese labor.

It is difficult to say how the situation would have evolved, but the events of February 2014 showed the following. Since one can clearly see the hand of Washington behind the Euromaidan that took place in Kiev at that time, the United States will do its utmost to torpedo projects involving the creation of corridors such as the Silk Road. At the same time, China has continued to establish points of support along the various routes that could connect it with Europe, just as it did during the existence of the Ukrainian state in its pre-2014 format.

We also see this in Crimea. The number of Chinese students here is increasing, although not rapidly, and Chinese businesses have stepped up their activities and have been trying to lease land in Crimea. China has intensified its cultural expansion with the opening of a Chinese Cultural and Information Center in Yalta. The number of Chinese visiting Crimea for different reasons is increasing. This does not amount to a qualitative change in the situation, but, in my view, is evidence of China’s continued interest in Crimea as one of the support points along the routes that could



link China with Europe. As regards Euro-Atlantic geopolitics, there is nothing worse for the United States than Eurasian consolidation around any project. In this sense, considering the theme of this session, we can say that this project is currently impossible. China is gathering strength to put it into effect.

### **International Relations and the New Silk Road Project**

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ONE OF THE QUESTIONS for discussion – whether the New Silk Road (NSR) project is realistic or utopian – deserves a separate analysis, because it is a gigantic undertaking that could significantly change the geopolitical picture and the pattern of international relations in the world.

The New Silk Road project was announced in 2013 as a Chinese strategic initiative that has come to be known as the One Belt, One Road (Belt and Road) Initiative. Based on the historical legacy of the Great Silk Road of ancient times and the Middle Ages, which was used to supply Europe with Chinese silk, tea, spices, porcelain, and many other goods in exchange for European goods, this initiative provides for the development of modern land and sea routes along the old ones. The overland routes are part of a program called the Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB), while the sea routes are grouped together under the title of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road (MSR). A railway line running through Pakistan is being built along the southern route, and a line connecting China, Mongolia, and Russia will follow the northern route.

The SREB project provides for the creation of three transport corridors. The northern corridor will run from China to Europe through Central Asia and Russia. The central corridor will run from China to the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean through Central Asia and West Asia, including the Middle East (without its African part) and Transcaucasia. The Southern corridor will pass through Southeast Asia and South Asia to the Indian Ocean. The MSR includes two sea routes: from the Chinese coast to the South Pacific region through the South China Sea and from China to Europe through the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean.

However, it would be a mistake to regard this huge initiative only as an economic and transportation project. China makes no secret of the fact

that it views this project as a tool of soft power and a way to expand its influence. Transport construction should lead to the development of infrastructure, movement of capital, and science and technology transfer. Economic development will promote political cooperation along all NSR routes. It is no accident that Chinese President Xi Jinping's proposal to implement this project became a major focus of China's foreign policy and was included in the 13th Five-Year Plan as a priority area. Against the background of the emergence of a new world order, China plans to take a step of great importance that could help it gain leadership in the still nebulous system of international relations that is beginning to take shape.

But the future of the NSR project depends not only on China. The attitude of other states involved and of the world as a whole is also very important. As Xi Jinping said in this context, the Belt and Road project will not be a solo performance by China, but "a real chorus comprising all countries along the routes."

In March 2015, China's National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Commerce published a joint document entitled "Vision and Actions on Jointly Building Silk Road Economic Belt and 21st Century Maritime Silk Road." According to that document, this initiative seeks to carry on the spirit of the ancient Silk Road as an example of peace and cooperation between the East and the West and shows China's willingness to assume responsibility for promoting common development based on the principles of peaceful coexistence, openness, cooperation, and mutual benefit.

Between "vibrant East Asia" and "developed Europe" there is a connecting link in the form of Central Asia with huge and largely untapped potential for economic development. The NSR is presented in the document as China's contribution to the creation of a new world order in a situation where the existing order is crumbling and needs to be replaced with a new model based on good will and peaceful cooperation. At the same time, in order to assume the role of world leader, China needs a strategic partnership with Russia. Thus, in putting forward its economic project, China sees it as an important part of its efforts to shape geopolitical processes that would allow it to achieve world leadership.

As it competes with the United States, China is under pressure from the American geopolitical and geoeconomic strategy in this region, whose purpose is to ensure U.S. leadership in Central and South Asia through cooperation with Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India. In the Asia-Pacific Region, where China is surrounded by countries that (with the exception

of North Korea and Vietnam) are U.S. allies or are under strong American influence, the project has also met with U.S. opposition. In implementing its policy of a “return to the Asia-Pacific,” the United States relies on these countries in its intention to prevent China from breaking through into the geopolitical space of the Pacific Ocean by means of its Maritime Silk Road or its Silk Road Economic Belt.

Thus, the “Belt and Road” concept and the U.S. concept of a “return to the Asia-Pacific” and domination in Central and South Asia (the target regions of the Chinese project) lie in the realm of the intensifying geopolitical struggle between China and the United States.

**In order to assume the role of world leader, China needs a strategic partnership with Russia.**

Russia’s position is of special importance in this context. This position was agreed in the Joint Declaration of the Russian Federation and the People’s Republic of China on Cooperation in Coordinating the Development of the Eurasian Economic Union and the Silk Road Economic Belt of May 8, 2015. Russia supported the SREB project and expressed its willingness to engage in close cooperation with China so as to promote the implementation of this initiative. The Chinese side, in turn, supported Russia’s active efforts to promote integration processes within the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

The parties will work together to coordinate the construction of the SREB and the development of the EAEU, ensure sustainable growth of the regional economy, strengthen regional economic integration, and promote regional peace and development based on the principles of transparency, mutual respect, equality, and openness to all interested countries in Asia and Europe. The joint work will be carried on through bilateral and multilateral mechanisms with active use of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) platform.

The focus areas of cooperation include expansion and optimization of investment and trade, implementation of joint projects, such as industrial parks and cross-border zones, and closer financial cooperation through the Silk Road Fund (SRF), the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), and the SCO Bank. The SRF has a total capital of \$40 billion, and the AIIB has an authorized capital of \$100 billion and a membership of more than 80 states of Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, which increases the international attractiveness of its projects.

The joining of the two projects – EAEU and SREB – calls for consolidation, and the SCO provides good opportunities for its achievement. Today, the SCO is a full-fledged platform for regional cooperation with a global dimension. Its use to integrate the two projects can help to relieve mutual anxieties and develop a common strategy on sensitive issues, such as reducing dependence on the dollar and U.S. dictates. Russian-Chinese cooperation on the EAEU and SREB projects is an opportunity for these two emerging giants of the modern world to contribute to economic globalization and political multipolarity, subject to the mutually conditioned *modus vivendi*, *modus operandi*, and *modus procedendi* for these projects.

The New Silk Road project will draw into its orbit about 63% of the world's total population and will account for at least 30% of global economic production, estimated at about \$21 trillion. Such a strengthening of China, which the United States regards as its main foreign policy rival in the international arena, is unacceptable to Washington, since China's rise is perceived as a challenge and a threat. Xi Jinping's 2012 proposal to build a new type of international relations with the U.S. based on mutually beneficial peaceful cooperation has not been implemented. In practice, that initiative, known in China as the "concept of a new type of major power relations," has been of little interest to Washington politicians, who still opt for confrontation and use of force in resolving international disputes.

However, this initiative has proved to be relevant in Russia, which has maintained all-round relations of strategic cooperation and partnership with China since 1996. Speaking at the 4th World Peace Forum in June 2015, Igor Ivanov, president of the Russian International Affairs Council and former minister of foreign affairs of Russia, said that China and Russia had established a new type of major power relations never before seen in history. This new type of partnership has the following characteristics: it is not an alliance or coalition against any third country; cooperation between China and Russia has its drivers and logical basis; it does not pose a threat to neighboring countries or other major powers; Russia and China prefer to complement rather than contain or counter-balance each other, maintaining complementary political, economic, humanitarian, and other relations.

An article entitled "China-Russia: When Are Emotions Appropriate?" published in the journal *Mirovaya ekonomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya*, presents an analysis of current relations between Russia and

China from an economic and political perspective. But in China, a country with a unique culture based on Confucianism, where relations are believed to be founded on trust, bilateral relations are placed in a wider context of priorities, values, and meanings. President Xi Jinping's speech in Seoul on July 4, 2014, is evidence that trust is proclaimed as a fundamental principle of Chinese foreign policy.

LSE Ideas, a well-known think tank of the London School of Economics that studies international affairs, diplomacy, and grand strategy, has published a series of articles on the geopolitics of Eurasian economic integration. Some contributors, such as Rilka Dragneva and Kataryna Wolczuk ("Eurasian Economic Integration: Institutions, Promises and Faultlines"), Timofei V. Bordachev and Andrei S. Skriba ("Russia's Eurasian Integration Policies"), and Laure Delcour ("Faithful but Constrained? Armenia's Half-Hearted Support for Russia's Regional Integration Policies in the Post-Soviet Space") are pessimistic about the EAEU project, arguing that it is a Russian foreign policy tool that threatens the independence of its member states.

Such theories are intensively promoted in the West, which is unwilling to accept the political realities as they are and refuses to recognize the status of Russia and China as world powers and leaders in the Eurasian space. There was a time when Russia tried to adapt to the West in the post-bipolar world, but was perceived only as a "gas station," with some political leaders in Washington trying to present the great power as a raw materials appendage.

Similarly, the United States has ignored China's repeated proposals for comprehensive cooperation. Washington has preferred to hold on to the myth of a "Chinese threat" and to accuse China of shirking its "responsibility" and allegedly not doing enough to "pressure" North Korea over the difficult issue of denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula. Amazingly, Washington politicians refuse to understand that a stable Eurasia with friendly and prosperous Russia and China is geopolitically more advantageous to the West than an area of dangerous and unpredictable recession rapidly increasing its military capabilities.

In the conditions of systemic crisis and erosion of the existing unbalanced world order, the problem of preventing a situation where intensifying competition between the great powers could lead to a global conflict that would threaten the very existence of mankind is back on the international agenda. By defining Russia and China as potential threats and trying to thwart their plans for peaceful development on the distant Eurasian

continent, American foreign policy is actually undermining the strategic future of its own country. In an increasingly interconnected and interdependent multipolar world, this future cannot be ensured in isolation from the future of these powers and relations in the U.S.-China-Russia triangle.

Deng Xiaoping's concept of "setting aside disputes and pursuing joint development" gets a modern interpretation in the Chinese Belt and Road megaproject, whose purpose is to achieve broad cooperation in the common interest of its participants. A study of this megaproject and its influence on the long-term economic development of the European Union, China and Russia conducted at the Lomonosov Moscow State University by academicians Askar Akayev and Viktor Sadovnichiy using mathematical modeling and forecasting methods has confirmed the great domestic and international potential of the Chinese initiative. It is a matter of both putting into practice the Chinese Dream – a slogan proclaimed by Xi Jinping in 2013 as a call for the revival of the Great Chinese nation and the construction of a "moderately prosperous society" with living standards comparable to those of the most developed countries – and developing a new model of international cooperation for the 21st century.

The study has identified certain problems that could arise during the implementation of the Chinese megaproject, but has found no reason to consider it unrealistic. On the contrary, its authors believe that "it is precisely here, in Eurasia, that China has a good chance to build its own type of global community, a fairer one than its Western version. This community, as Beijing sees it, will not be governed from a single center or be confined to one universal economic system, since it assumes a polycentric world order and a diversity of economic systems in society. It will emerge from active and all-round equitable interaction and mutually beneficial cooperation between neighboring countries and regions, producing a synergistic effect on development."

According to the study, mutual trade between China and the European Union will increase. For Russia, this implies the need to "diversify the product mix of its exports to China to include high technology products" and efforts to "restore and expand normal trade and economic ties with EU countries while actively developing its trade and economic cooperation with China and other APEC countries established in recent years."

As for the United States, China is not prepared to share Washington's view or top the list of America's geopolitical adversaries. U.S. hegemony and a unipolar world where might is right are in conflict with Chinese notions of world order, but Beijing understands that the economies of the

two countries are closely interconnected and that a serious conflict could have catastrophic consequences for both of them. China's alignment with Russia, which has also met with difficulties in relations with the U.S., is seen in Beijing as joint responsibility for the future of the world in the present conditions. While there is general support in China for integration with Russia, some say that China should not help Russia "weather the storm" because this could affect China's interests, particularly in its cooperation with the West.

In Russia, pro-Western circles also question the advisability of closer relations with China, since the United States is dissatisfied with the increasing cooperation between China and Russia. In its desire to enlist the support of as many states as possible for the Chinese idea of creating a new international order, Beijing interacts with Russia using the new BRICS format, Eurasian integration mechanisms, and the New Silk Road project. The developing political interaction between the two countries and their firm stand on Syria have prevented the West from escalating military action in the Middle East, constituting a factor that restrains the aggressive impulses of the U.S. and NATO.

The American political scientist Zbigniew Brzezinski called Eurasia a "grand chessboard," the scene of a continued struggle for global domination, and the chief geopolitical prize for America. Based on the formula of geopolitician Mackinder, "Who rules the World Island (Eurasia) commands the World," Brzezinski warned the United States against losing control over Eurasia as this could result in its exclusion from active integration processes in the area. This may be why the United States is so concerned about the development of Eurasian integration processes along the lines of Chinese and Russian economic projects and tries to prevent their implementation.

Against the background of the geopolitical games and ambitions in the Eurasian space of a state that is geographically unrelated to it, China and Russia have been developing and implementing concrete integration projects within the EAEU and SREB, which bring together the peoples involved in their implementation. Under the SREB project, the EAEU countries and China cooperate in the modernization and development of transport infrastructure, construction, energy, natural resource development, and high technologies.

China assumes that economic integration with neighboring countries is a favorable environment for its development, while its peaceful development, in turn, promotes the development of its neighbors and other par-

ticipants in joint projects. The establishment of a more reliable (compared to the sea route) overland route from the Asia-Pacific Region to Europe through Eurasia will shorten the distance by up to 50%, promising huge profits for the project participants. Kazakhstan and China have agreed to integrate the SREB with Kazakhstan's Nurdy Zhol (Bright Path) development program. A Russian project called Trans-Eurasian Belt Development (TEPR) and the program for modernizing the Trans-Siberian Railway (TSR) and the Baikal-Amur Mainline (BAM) could be integrated with the northern branch of the SERB, thus helping to tap the potential of Siberia and the Far East as Russia's "priority development zones."

The construction of a high-speed railway from Beijing to Moscow (HSR Eurasia) through Kazakhstan is a project that opens wide prospects for development along this route. It is expected to increase population mobility and spur the development of large agglomerations and the creation of new jobs along the route. The journey time between Moscow and Beijing will be only two days. Advanced high-speed rail technologies with trains running at 200 to 400 kilometers per hour will promote the innovative development of construction, engineering, and the IT sector.

Along with Russia and Kazakhstan, Belarus is also willing to take part in Eurasian integration projects designed to give China access to EU markets. The Chinese side, in turn, has expressed its willingness to integrate the SREB strategy with the national development strategy of Belarus.

To summarize, one can say that the Chinese megaproject is perfectly realistic in the absence of disasters and shocks that could jeopardize its implementation. It offers unique opportunities for Eurasia and the whole world to develop economic and political cooperation in the interest of sustainable development, peace, and the establishment of a new, safer and fairer world order.

**Ye. Khalevinskaya:** The theme of this session reminds me of Magritte's self-portrait titled "Clairvoyance." It shows the artist sitting in front of an easel and staring at an unhatched egg on the table, while the canvas depicts a magnificent adult eagle in flight. We don't know what will come out of the egg – a dragon, a serpent or a flying eagle. This is why it is still too early to make forecasts about the future of the Silk Road, but since the project already exists it should obviously be studied and evaluated in economic terms. We cannot say that it is utopian. Nor should we throw our-



selves into China's arms. The thing to do is to examine the project not only from a geopolitical, but primarily from an economic perspective. We could start with yuan bonds. We have bonds denominated in dollars and euros; today, there are also structured bonds. Why not take part in this project? Yuan-denominated bonds are the safest way here.

**A. Oganessian:** It is impossible to summarize something that cannot be summarized. I only want to emphasize that we often talk about the difference between the Chinese and Russian mentalities. *Per aspera ad astra*. In Russia, this often means from utopia into an abyss, while the Chinese way is from utopia to the stars, as the Chinese understand it. We can only follow their example. Our idea of the future is a five-year period, while the Chinese plan their future for centuries ahead. Maybe it is really a utopia that leads to the stars. We must understand where and at what stage we fit into the project. On the other hand, our thinking is also right, because "Man proposes, God disposes." This is our favorite proverb, and a very apt one. We don't know how the world will develop. But it is quite right that at each stage we should evaluate the advantages and disadvantages for Russia, regardless of anyone else. This requires sober calculation and an understanding of what we need. All of these papers were very interesting, and I am very grateful to you for that.

## From Nuclear Monopoly to Nuclear Parity: About V.L. Mal'kov's Book\* and More

### *A. Filitov*

WAY BACK IN 1990, the Washington-based United States Institute of Peace, one of many American “think tanks,” held a colloquium with then still Soviet historians on a topic that is still relevant today: How the Cold War began, what kept it from turning “hot,” and what lessons are we to draw from it all. Elspeth Rostow made the unexpected remark that the Nobel Peace Prize should be awarded to the atomic bomb. I don't recall whether she was a member of the American delegation or was simply accompanying her spouse Walt Rostow (author of the famous “The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto” who during the Vietnam War was President Johnson's special assistant for national security affairs and, incidentally, a fierce “hawk”).

But I do remember the effect of her statement: The discussion, which had been progressing quite sluggishly, immediately perked up. The effect was long-term: This statement was recalled by Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., a leading U.S. historian (and, incidentally, also a presidential assistant, but to Kennedy, not Johnson), in his largely remarkable article about the results of the Cold War: “The reason that the Cold War never exploded into ‘hot war’ was surely, and by providential irony, the invention of nuclear weapons. One is inclined to support the suggestion [expressed, it seems, by Elspeth Rostow – *A. F.*] that the Nobel Peace Prize should have gone to the atomic bomb.”<sup>1</sup>

For me personally, a scholar of German history, the aforementioned discussion in 1990 was the starting point for reflection on how the beginning of the “atomic age” influenced the development of the issue of post-war Germany. These reflections (and relevant research) have led to a con-

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\* V.L. Mal'kov. *Vkhozhdeniye v yadernuyu eru. Atomnaya diplomatiya: ot nachala k paritetu*. Moscow: Mezhdunarodniye otnosheniya, 2018. 648 pp.

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clusion very similar to the one embodied in the laconic and brilliant expression of our well-known diplomat Valentin Falin: "The splitting of the atom split Germany."<sup>2</sup>

This was about more than just the fact that the Soviet nuclear project was in vital need of uranium from the Soviet zone of occupation, and ensuring its supply required a level of loyalty and cooperation from the German authorities that in the situation could be provided only by the German Communists, and this put severe restrictions on the initial liberal model that was the basis of Soviet planning for postwar Germany and that opened the prospect of preserving its unity.

Equally important were military imperatives: As long as the U.S. had a monopoly on nuclear weapons, the security of the USSR was facing such a horrific threat that, to neutralize it, the far-Western toehold had to be maintained as a launching point for a counterattack on Western Europe; an army equipped with conventional, nonnuclear weapons was enough to ensure the success of such a counterattack. So peace was maintained in Europe despite such outbursts of tension as the first and second Berlin crises.

The achievement of nuclear-missile parity effectively made a Soviet military presence in Central Europe redundant and unnecessary from a security standpoint.

The same logic that acted against preserving Germany's unity now acted in favor of restoring it. The fact that almost two decades elapsed between the achievement of parity and Germany's unification can be explained by the inertia of the Cold War, the faults of diplomacy and the reluctance of the West to alter the existing paradigm.

It seems there was no fatal inevitability of a fracturing of Germany and Europe as a whole, even despite the U.S. nuclear monopoly. Europe's refusal to enter a bloc structure under American hegemony would have alleviated Soviet fears about nuclear blackmail by the U.S. The issue is, of course, controversial and goes beyond the scope of the book, the reading of which again prompted recollection of the Washington discussion 30 years ago.

The author of "Entering the Atomic Age: Nuclear Diplomacy From Inception to Parity," V.L. Mal'kov, an acclaimed Russian expert on American history, also participated in that discussion. Perhaps for him (and not just me), it also served as an impetus to study the "nuclear factor" in our fragile but nevertheless saved (so far!) world. There soon appeared a substantial work on this subject based on the study of domes-

tic American realities,<sup>3</sup> and now a new, more expansive work has appeared that draws on more sources and focuses on a philosophical generalization of recent history in its global dimension.

The author mentions the idea of awarding the Nobel Prize to the atomic bomb – granted, without indicating who raised that idea and where – but precedes this mention with a quote from the well-known Soviet and Russian nuclear physicist Yuly Khariton: “Perhaps the main paradox of our time is that the most sophisticated weapon of mass destruction has so far contributed to peace on earth as a powerful deterrent” (pp. 623-624). And while Mal’kov interprets both statements as reflecting “similar sentiments,” everything in the book suggests that the viewpoint expressed by Khariton is more accurate in this case than the opinion expressed at the American forum.

The reader is right to ask: What exactly is the difference? In our opinion, there is a difference, and it is substantial. Prizes are not awarded to inanimate objects; they recognize the merits of concrete individuals, and for the named American authors, this was another variation of the idea of American “exceptionalism”: The atomic bomb is an “American invention”; only American scientists could implement the atomic project; only American intelligence services could keep it secret; only American politicians could decide to launch it without being firmly confident in its feasibility; and only they could have the courage to use weapons of mass destruction against civilians without any military necessity – all in order to create a weapon to deter aggression and create a lasting world order.

Mal’kov thoroughly parses all this reasoning, and his answers are simple and convincing. Of course, there is no reason to downplay the achievements of the scientists involved in the Manhattan Project, but we should remember that many of them were emigrants from Europe who fled Nazi terror, and a significant contribution was made by nuclear specialists from Great Britain (which has been known for a long time) and France (this is known about much less, and Mal’kov’s work is greatly complementing our knowledge on this issue). Yes, the FBI and military counterintelligence set up a draconian monitoring and detection system around enterprises and laboratories of the atomic project, but it failed to keep the media from reporting in August 1944 that the U.S. was successfully completing work to use nuclear energy for military purposes, directly citing one of the main sites where this work was taking place: a factory in Hanford (p. 145).

They failed to prevent those involved in the Manhattan Project from

giving classified information to Soviet intelligence agents: The motive in this case was the anti-fascist attitude characteristic of many of them; it is hardly possible to talk about them as “spies” in the way this term is usually understood. As far as politicians are concerned, the book suggests the need for a differentiated approach. There was Roosevelt, who was motivated mainly by fears (proved unfounded) that the Nazis would get nuclear weapons first and was strongly pressured by reactionaries both inside and outside the country (especially Churchill) to not share “atomic secrets” with the Soviet ally.

His successor, Truman, was a different story. There are varying opinions about what motivated the actions of this politician, the founder of “nuclear diplomacy,” and Mal’kov faithfully lists them, including the least probable options, such as the supposed “remorse syndrome” for Hiroshima and Nagasaki that plagued him and compelled him to refrain from using nuclear weapons against the USSR (p. 611). A weightier argument, which he makes earlier, is the insufficient number of atomic bombs and delivery vehicles.

Another factor is the position of “junior partners,” particularly the British government. While during the war years London pushed Washington to show maximum firmness with the USSR, in the postwar period, the trend was rather the opposite. After a press conference during the Korean War where Truman said that he did not rule out the possibility of using nuclear weapons in Korea (the “remorse syndrome,” if it existed, had vanished), British Prime Minister Clement Attlee hurried to Washington to urge the U.S. president to show prudence.<sup>4</sup> It worked. Later, even Churchill, after becoming prime minister again, also tried to act in the same vein as Eisenhower and Dulles, also not entirely unsuccessfully.

The most important thing, which Mal’kov convincingly demonstrates, is that the appearance and first use of nuclear weapons did not stabilize, but, on the contrary, destabilized the international system and led to an arms race and everything associated with the concept of the Cold War. Balance was restored when the U.S.’s nuclear monopoly was broken, when both sides of the international conflict possessed nuclear weapons and they began to serve as a deterrent for the potential aggressor. This was achieved at the cost of the incredible efforts of those involved in the Soviet atomic project, and if we talk about who was worthy of a Nobel Peace Prize, they were. This great feat of Soviet scientists and all the Soviet people has already been reflected in the writings of Russian authors.<sup>5</sup>

The first test of the atomic bomb in the USSR on August 29, 1949, did not yet create a situation of nuclear parity. By this time the U.S. already had over 200 nuclear warheads in its arsenal, which prompted recklessness and irresponsible threats from not only military leaders but also top U.S. politicians (we already cited one such example: the Truman escapade during the Korean War). Some people were advocating a “pre-ventive” nuclear strike against the USSR. The turning point came later. As Mal’kov writes, “after the USSR tested the world’s first transportable hydrogen bomb on August 12, 1953, the calculations of mutual losses in the event of the outbreak of war were viewed as counterproductive, if not totally senseless” (p. 616).

When reading the final chapters of Mal’kov’s book, what is striking is the surprising parallelism of assessments about the “nuclear factor” coming from politicians who were polarized in all other respects. Everyone knows the remarks of Georgy Malenkov, at the time the highest-ranking member of the Soviet leadership, who said that nuclear war would lead to the “destruction of world civilization.” That remark was made on March 12, 1954. And now it turns out that U.S. Secretary of State John Dulles said essentially the same thing (the “risk of the disappearance of ‘Western civilization’ as a result of a war using the increasing power of nuclear weapons”) but a little later, in May of the same year, and not in public but “behind the tightly closed doors of the U.S. National Security Council” (p. 632).

In fact, Dulles was advocating publicly for a strategy of “massive retribution” aimed at the “victory” of the West in a nuclear war! Obviously, this clear contradiction between rhetoric and common sense that is characteristic of American policy for a long time hampered even partial agreements to curb the nuclear race. As Mal’kov notes with regret, “no treaty framework regulating the legal status of the newest weapons, the scope of their testing and application, was created” (p. 630).

A “treaty framework” was in fact nonexistent for a long time (the first fruits was the 1963 Partial Test Ban Treaty), but it was established early enough. Here it makes sense to cite an excerpt from a little-known document: a report of USSR Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov at the March (1954) Plenum of the CC CPSU on the results of a meeting of the heads of the foreign affairs agencies of the Soviet Union, the U.S., Great Britain and France that took place in Berlin from January 25 to February 18, 1954. The meeting was devoted primarily to what turned out to be an essentially unproductive discussion of German and Austrian issues, the

plenum was told. But the participants learned something else that was not being written about in the newspapers and that was shrouded in secrecy.

“During the Berlin meeting, I had two talks with Secretary of State Dulles regarding the nuclear issue,” Molotov said. “The exchange of views in Berlin with Dulles concerned the procedure of the order of the nuclear issue [sic. – *A. F.*]. According to the U.S. government’s proposal, it was agreed that for some time this discussion will be conducted in Washington between representatives of two states, the U.S. and the USSR, and Dulles strongly emphasized that this period of bilateral negotiations should last as long as possible. The U.S. said that at a later stage it would be possible to involve England, France, as well as Canada and Belgium in these negotiations. We expressed the desire that the People’s Republic of China, as well as Czechoslovakia, take part in these discussions. However, the question of which states other than the USSR and the U.S. will be involved in negotiations on the nuclear issue is still subject to agreement in the future.”

Molotov also reported that he had given Dulles a draft declaration by the five Great Powers on rejecting the use of nuclear weapons, that there would be an exchange of views on this project, and that Dulles said that the Soviet ambassador in Washington would “soon” receive proposals related to President Eisenhower’s “Atoms for Peace” speech.<sup>6</sup>

The business-like tone of the Soviet minister’s statements, devoid of propaganda clichés, is striking. There is a sense that he recognized a shared responsibility with the U.S. for preventing nuclear war. And this is the same Molotov who lashed out at Malenkov for his remark that such a war would lead to the “destruction of world civilization,” which supposedly deviates from the Marxist approach that posits that only capitalism faces destruction and socialism always wins, no matter what. What can explain this contradiction? Was this feigned optimism intended to strengthen his position in future negotiations or was it to “cheer up” the people? Or was this a lack of conceptual reflection on the realities of the nuclear age?

Nuclear weapons are indeed an instrument of peace when nuclear parity is achieved and maintained; they may threaten a nuclear war if a party takes steps toward disrupting that parity, when a nuclear arms race begins. I think that is the most significant lesson that can be learned from Mal’kov’s fundamental study.

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Schlesinger, Arthur Jr. *Some Lessons from the Cold War // The End of the Cold War: Its*

*Meaning and Implications* / Ed. by Michael J. Hogan. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> Falin V.M. *Bez skidok na obstoyatelstva. Politicheskiye vspominaniya*. Moscow: Respublika, Sovremennik, 1999, p. 141.

<sup>3</sup> Mal'kov V.L. *'Mankhettenskiy proyekt.'* *Razvedka i diplomatiya*. Moscow: Nauka, 1995.

<sup>4</sup> See: Acheson, Dean. *Present at the Creation*. New York, 1970, pp. 618-619.

<sup>5</sup> See, in particular: *Atomnyy proyekt SSSR: dokumenty i materialy v 3-kh tomakh* / Edited by L.D. Ryabev. Moscow, 1998-2008; *Istoriya sovetskogo atomnogo proyekta: dokumenty, vspominaniya, issledovaniya* / Edited by V.P. Vizgin. St. Petersburg, 2002; Gubarev V.S. *Atomnaya bomba. Khronika velikikh otkrytiy*. Moscow, 2009; Smirnov Yu.N. *Yadernyy vek: vzglyad iznutri*. Troitsk, 2010, etc.

<sup>6</sup> Russian State Archive of Modern History (RGANI). F. 7. Op. 1. D. 77. L. 69-74. "Atoms for Peace" is the theme of a speech that U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower gave to a UN General Assembly session on December 8, 1953. V.L. Mal'kov gives it a positive assessment, revising the standard interpretation established in Soviet historiography.

*Key words:* nuclear monopoly, nuclear parity, atomic bomb.