

ГЕОПОЛІТИЧНІ ПРІОРИТЕТИ УКРАЇНИ

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RUSSIA'S AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE: DEMOCRATIC VALUES CHALLENGED

Створення НАТО базувалося на спільних цінностях ліберальної демократії. Росія демонстративно кинула виклик системі цінностей, що виникла за результатами Другої світової та «холодної війни». Жертви гібридної агресії не готові визнати цей факт. Світ став свідком нової геополітичної ситуації, пов'язаної насамперед із спробами знищити стійку систему міжнародних відносин та міжнародного права. Отже, перемога над сучасною російською агресією, зокрема гібридною, можлива лише шляхом консолідації Заходу на основі спільних ліберально-демократичних цінностей, які потребують захисту та просування в сучасних умовах геополітичних потрясінь та невизначеності.

Ключові слова: міжнародна безпека, НАТО, російська агресія, ЄС, гібридна війна, ліберально-демократичні цінності, принципи демократії, свобода людини та верховенство права, примирлива позиція Заходу.

The creation of NATO was based on the shared values of liberal democracy. Russia demonstratively challenged the value system that emerged from the results of the Second World War and the Cold War. Victims of hybrid aggression are not ready to admit this fact. The world has witnessed the new geopolitical situation connected primarily with the attempts to destroy a sustainable system of international relations and international law. Russia's policy towards Ukraine is supported by certain political and business circles of the West. Lifting, or at least easing, sanctions is required by certain representatives of large businesses interested in restoring normal trade and economic relations with Russia. The pro-Russian and anti-Ukrainian ultra-national, nationalist and euro-sceptical (isolationist) parties of the European Union countries are voicing similar demands in support of Russia and against Ukraine. The West's conciliatory position on Moscow's control over the Crimea and part of the Donbas will further undermine international law and the key principles underlying the current world order formed after the Cold War. The current situation is as follows. Ukraine sets

requirements for a settlement which Russia does not accept. It is not going to review the status quo provided by military means. The desired goal of Ukraine is full control over the country's own territory. It can only be achieved in the long term by combining diplomatic and military means. Victory over contemporary Russian aggression, in particular the hybrid one, is possible only through consolidation of the West on the basis of common liberal-democratic values that need protecting and promoting under current conditions of geopolitical turmoil and uncertainty.

Keywords: *international security, NATO, Russian aggression, the EU, hybrid war, liberal-democratic values, principles of democracy, freedom of the individual and the rule of law, conciliatory position of the West.*

The topicality of the research is determined by the current geopolitical challenges to international security, the search for adequate responses to the changing world situation. Studying the value dimensions of international relations in the context of contemporary Russian aggression has a considerable scientific and practical significance.

The relevance of the study is driven by contemporary geopolitical challenges to European security, the search for adequate responses to the changing situation in Central and Eastern Europe. The study of the Central and Eastern Europe's resistance in the context of the current Russian aggression is of paramount scientific and practical importance. Some aspects of the problem have been the subject of scientific research by many Ukrainian and foreign scholars. In particular, there should be mentioned the works by T. Berezovets [1], V. Brehunencko [3], O. Vlasyuk [4], P. Gai-Nizhnik [5], V. Horbulin [6; 7], O. Zadorozhny [8], T. Kuzio [25], E. Mahda [10], B. Parakhonsky [14], H. Perepelytsia [15], Yu. Radkovets [17], I. Rushchenko [18], S. Sayapin [27], K. Skorkin [19], Yu. Temirov [20], D. Timchuk [21], V. Tkachenko [22], M. H. Van Herpen [23], P. Khomensky [24], among many others.

Almost 70 years ago, the North Atlantic Treaty was concluded. In its Preamble, its members, reaffirming their commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and their desire to live peacefully with all peoples and governments, were determined to protect freedom, the common heritage of their peoples and their civilization, based on the principles of democracy, freedom of the individual and the rule of law [28]. That is, the creation of NATO was based on the shared values of liberal democracy. However, there were times when the Alliance individual members (in particular Greece, Turkey) departed from their values in their domestic policies, but remained loyal to the collective security embodied in article 5. Under conditions of the Cold War other NATO members looked at it not very meticulously.

However, the value dimension has come to the forefront since early 2014. Moreover, it was at that time when the problems of classical geopolitics, balance of powers, struggle over the territory and sphere of influence became relevant again. This thesis has been confirmed by the Russian annexation of the Crimea and its invasion in eastern Ukraine. These events became the first, since the end of the Second World War, large-scale attempt of the coercive change of the European borders. At the European Council meet-

ing on March 6, 2014, it was decided to introduce three levels of sanctions against Russia.

Russia demonstratively challenged the value system that emerged from the results of the Second World War and the Cold War. There is no doubt that the response that Russia will receive to its aggressive strategy will determine the European and world security in the future. Russian aggression is carried out comprehensively and includes the informational and propagandistic component, economic and diplomatic pressure, while military operations are carried out secretly, with the use of illegal armed units. Currently, hybrid weapons are used not only against Ukraine but also against the West and are being used successfully. Victims of hybrid aggression are not ready to admit that they were the victims of a hybrid war. Russia intervenes in the elections in other countries. The democratic model of a state is limited in its ability to respond to hidden threats to its security – Russia has started a large-scale offensive, which is generously sponsored by it. Relatively small funding of such activities has an explosive geopolitical effect [21].

On the territory of the EU and NATO countries, Russia carries out its powerful propaganda activities with perfect impunity. Mechanisms of implementation are various: pro-Russian disinformation, distortion of the facts about the war in the Donbas, creation of pro-Russian organizations and relevant news sites that cover news in the necessary light. The main propaganda messages are to create a hostile image of the United States and to spread disinformation about the “Nazi” authorities in Ukraine and a large number of neo-Nazi organizations. All countries of the European Union and the Alliance are extremely vulnerable to propaganda and disinformation spread by Russia and are trying to intensify their efforts to confront them. Russia uses various channels and means, including cyberattacks and dissemination of fake news.

Therefore, it is not surprising that the illusions regarding Russia are preserved. In addition, there is a very powerful economic factor. Certain EU countries incur losses in exports due to the sanctions imposed on Russia because of its aggression in Ukraine. According to a study by the Kiel Institute for World Economy, among the Western countries Germany’s losses in trade account for 40%, those of Great Britain make 7.9%, those of France – 4.1%, and those of the United States – 0.6% [13]. The situation around the construction of the gas pipeline “Nord Stream-2” goes fast beyond the boundaries of economic relations, gaining a geopolitical meaning. Actually, this is not surprising, because for a long time Russia has been using energy weapons in the field of big politics. Since the early 2000s, the Kremlin has been trying to use its own opportunities in the field of hydrocarbon exports to resolve political problems, seeking to force the West to engage in dialogue with it on equal terms. Unlike the energy confrontation of the 2000s, the United States are trying to say their decisive word in the situation with the North Stream-2. They should not be considered philanthropists and benefactors; in the context of Russia’s desire to strengthen its own influence Washington has intentions to respond asymmetrically and rather rigidly, without forgetting their own economic interests. Ukrainian President P. Poroshenko is convinced that the North Stream 2 project is the “Krem-

lin's purely geopolitical project, which has nothing to do with economic and private interests, but only aims to undermine the unity of Europe. As soon as Russian gas fills the North Stream-2 pipelines bypassing Ukraine and Eastern Europe, there will be no longer any reason for the Kremlin to restrain itself from further offensive. As far as the North Stream-2 issue is concerned, Europe has two options: either to opt for those who support it, or to build an unnecessary gas pipeline that connects Europe with those who openly despise it [9]. It is no coincidence that the 2018 Annual National Program under the auspices of the Ukraine-NATO Commission indicates taking measures to stop the implementation of the North Stream 2 energy project among the priority tasks for the current year [16]. Construction of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline affects the interests of Poland and Ukraine, while Russia will maintain the status of raw materials supplier to Europe, and will make Germany a large energy hub. A Polish publicist Z. Parafianovych points out that, despite the separation of the Crimea and part of Donbass from Ukraine, the interference in Syria on the part of Bashar al-Assad, accused of the war crimes, interference in the US elections and the use of chemical weapons in the UK, the isolation of the Russian president remains a fiction [2].

So, it should be noted that in today's geopolitical situation, value motives continue to struggle with purely mercantile ones. As Eu. Bystrytsky argued, Ukraine is responsible for European values in front of Europe, in front of the West. It is responsible for this by the lives of its soldiers, tens of thousands of deaths [26].

Recently, some politicians have considered Ukraine as a problem for Europe. But in fact, Ukraine today is more likely to be part of solving many problems, including in relations between Europe and Russia. In order to realize this, it is necessary to get over the same "loss" that Ukraine has gotten over – to get rid of illusions about Russia. First of all, it is necessary to stop de facto treating the Russian Federation as a democratic and civilized state, because by definition it is not this kind of the state. One cannot treat Russia as a civilized state as it is run by an uncivilized, authoritarian government. The Russian Federation reacts only to the concrete manifestations of its opponents' forces, not to the declarations, diplomatic demarches, etc. Western partners should realize that Russia regards Ukraine as its existential enemy, questioning the latter's right to exist as an independent state and pursues the ultimate goal of the total destruction of Ukraine as a subject of international law and geopolitical reality.

Today, the West's readiness to counteract serious armed conflicts or direct military aggression is extremely low, because security policy is based on the use of regulatory instruments, that is, "soft power". It can be effective in maintaining stability, but it is totally unacceptable to neutralize tougher security challenges.

Russia's policy towards Ukraine is supported by certain political and business circles of the West. Lifting, or at least easing, sanctions is required by certain representatives of large businesses interested in restoring normal trade and economic relations with Russia. The pro-Russian and anti-Ukrainian ultra-national, nationalist and euro-sceptical (isolationist) parties of the Euro-

pean Union countries are voicing similar demands in support of Russia and against Ukraine. It is noteworthy that the right-populist party "Alternative to Germany" got into the nineteenth composition of the German parliament for the first time (received 12.6%). Its electorate is concentrated mainly in the eastern lands (formerly GDR), where Russian influences are more powerful [12].

At the same time, an absolute majority of NATO member states do not adhere to the requirement to have defence spending at least 2% of GDP. In 2014, only 3 countries (United States, Great Britain and Greece) fulfilled this requirement, now there are 8 such countries, and only by 2024 all Allies must comply with this condition.

The West's conciliatory position on Moscow's control over the Crimea and part of the Donbas will further undermine international law and the key principles underlying the current world order formed after the Cold War. The current situation is as follows. Ukraine sets requirements for a settlement which Russia does not accept. It is not going to review the status quo provided by military means. The desired goal of Ukraine is full control over the country's own territory. It can only be achieved in the long term by combining diplomatic and military means.

Moreover, the practice shows that, from the point of view of international security, Eastern Europe is a zone where there is no effective system of solving military, political and economic conflicts, their prevention and support of peaceful coexistence. The Donbas War, which began in 2014 and continues, the annexation of the Crimea, as well as the Russian-Georgian war in 2008 showed that neither the OSCE nor the UN, the Council of Europe, the CIS, or any other international organization (possibly with the exception of NATO) can reliably ensure the inviolability of borders [11].

There remains a contradiction between the democratic and liberal values that determine Ukraine's support in the face of Russian aggression and the desire to "understand Russia", in particular due to the mercantile interests and the influence of Russian propaganda. At the same time, there is no reasonable alternative to further cooperation between the West and Ukraine, both through the existing mechanisms of the EU and NATO, and through bilateral cooperation.

In the world, we have witnessed the new geopolitical situation connected primarily with the attempts to destroy a sustainable system of international relations and international law. Trying to hinder Ukraine's aspirations to the European future, the Russian Federation occupied a part of the territory of Ukraine – the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, the city of Sevastopol, certain regions of Donetsk and Luhansk regions – and attempts to disrupt the unity of the democratic world, undermine the foundations of international security and enable the use of force on the international scene. By sharing common values and strategic goals with the EU, Ukraine views accession into the political and economic structures of the European Union as a priority area of its foreign and domestic policies. The Ukraine-EU Association Agreement defines strategic guidelines for conducting systemic political and socio-economic reforms in Ukraine, and a broad-based adaptation of Ukraine's legislation to the EU

norms and rules. Ukraine will ensure gradual convergence in the field of foreign and defence policy and will develop cooperation within the framework of the EU Common Security and Defence Policy to strengthen the capacity of the security and defence sector, as well as to maintain international security and stability. At the sub-regional level, Ukraine will continue to actively use existing formats – the Visegrad Group, Euroregions and others – to ensure the protection of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the state, the implementation of economic and energy projects and initiatives. The main goals of the Ukraine's national security are: to minimize threats to state sovereignty and create conditions for restoring the territorial integrity of Ukraine within the internationally recognized state borders of Ukraine, to guarantee the peaceful future of Ukraine as a sovereign and independent, democratic, social, legal state; to ensure the rights and freedoms of man and citizen, providing a new quality of economic, social and humanitarian development, to ensure Ukraine's accession into the European Union and to create the conditions for joining NATO.

Among the topical threats to the national security of Ukraine are, first of all, the aggressive actions of Russia, which are being carried out to exhaust the Ukrainian economy and undermine social and political stability in order to destroy Ukraine's statehood and seize its territory. However, there are other traditional threats that also tend to exacerbate; in particular, the ineffectiveness of the national security and defence system of Ukraine, corruption and ineffective system of public administration, economic crisis, depletion of the country's financial resources, deteriorated living standards of the population, threats to energy security, threats to information security, threats to cybersecurity and security of information resources, threats to the security of critical infrastructure, threats to environmental security.

It is clear that restoring the territorial integrity of Ukraine and the integrity of democratic institutions throughout its territory, the reintegration of temporarily occupied territories after their release is a strategic task of national security policy. This requires the creation of an effective security and defence sector. It is about introducing an integrated system of education, combat and special training for security and defence sector personnel involving teachers, instructors from NATO member states and the EU, the formation of a new security culture; improvement of fiscal policy in the field of Ukraine's national security and defence by gradually increasing the ratio of budget expenditures for security and defence sector entities to develop combat training and operational activities in accordance with the practice of NATO member states; comprehensive improvement of the Ukrainian legislation on national security and defence, in particular the adoption of the Law of Ukraine on Amendments to the Law of Ukraine "On Fundamentals of National Security of Ukraine" (new edition), which will define the mechanisms of national security and defence leadership, will regulate the structure and composition of the security and defence sector, management system, coordination and interaction of its bodies; centralized management of the security and defence sector in peacetime, in crisis situations threatening national security, and in a special period, interagency coordination and interaction; reconciliation of the conceptions (programs) for reforming and

developing the security and defence sector and the defence industry in a single plan; improvement of the public system of strategic planning, creation of a unified system of monitoring, analysis, forecasting and decision-making in the field of national security and defence, ensuring effective coordination and functioning of a unified system of situational centres of the relevant bodies of state power of the security and defence sector; introducing an integrated system of education, combat and special training for security and defence sector personnel involving teachers, instructors from NATO member states, the EU, the formation of a new security culture; improving the fiscal policy in the field of national security and defence of Ukraine by gradually increasing the ratio of budget expenditures on security and defence sector entities to develop combat training and operational activities in accordance with the practice of NATO member states; the application of the program-targeted approach to determining the amount of financial and logistical resources necessary for the effective functioning of the security and defence sector and the defence industrial complex; professionalization of the security and defence sector, raising the professional level of the personnel, its effective motivation for the proper execution of tasks for the purpose, the most expedient reduction of the service units in the sector's bodies; qualitative improvement of the system of democratic civil control over the security and defence sector, strengthening parliamentary control in this area; the development of the system of military patriotic education, the introduction of military training and civil defence programs in general secondary, vocational and higher education institutions.

Ukraine's foreign policy activities in the field of guaranteeing the national security will be based on the policy of European and Euro-Atlantic integration and implemented at different levels – global, regional, and sub-regional. At the regional level, efforts will be directed towards the establishment of an effective cooperation system in Central and Eastern Europe in order to ensure security and stability. First and foremost, OSCE and Council of Europe tools and capacities will be used. Particular attention will be paid to developing security mechanisms in the Black Sea region. Together with its European allies, Ukraine will pursue the policy of denuclearization and demilitarization of the Black Sea region; will facilitate the return to the regime of the renewed Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe; will take an active part in working out existing and introducing new security initiatives aimed at strengthening stability and collective security in Europe. In order to carry out active foreign policy activities, the development of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine should be aimed at forming a European-style foreign policy department equipped with the necessary resources for effective promotion of the national interests of the country.

According to the Atlantic Council's think-tanks, Ukraine should declare a state of emergency throughout the whole territory, break diplomatic relations with the Russian Federation, introduce a visa regime with the aggressor-country, denounce the agreement on Azov and other treaties of a political nature with Russia, stop the movement of Russian citizens across the Ukrainian-Russian border, stop import from Russia, neutralize Russia's fifth column in Ukraine. The Western countries are expected to finally consolidate them-

selves and suspend Russia's participation in the Council of Europe activities, to strengthen economic sanctions. It is about introducing non-point-based sanctions against individuals or institutions, but about sectoral ones. In particular, it is necessary to exclude Russia from the financial system SWIFT, to ban the export of high-tech products to Russia, especially for the oil and gas industry and dual-use goods, to ban Aeroflot flights to the EU and NATO countries, to freeze the assets of Russian "Sberbank", "VTB Bank", "Gazprombank", to impose sanctions on export-import of goods from the ports of Russia in the Black and Azov seas, to prohibit ships under the flags of the United States and the EU to enter Russian ports, and Russian ships deployed there to enter ports of the EU and the US, to stop "North Stream-2". The military steps should include strengthening of the military presence of the NATO ships in the Black Sea, to provide Ukraine with a large-scale program of the Lend-Lease to re-arm the Armed Forces and to equip them with modern military armaments [29].

Consequently, victory over contemporary Russian aggression, in particular the hybrid one, is possible only through consolidation of the West (and Ukraine as its inseparable part) on the basis of common liberal-democratic values that need being protected and promoted under contemporary condition of geopolitical turmoil and uncertainty.

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