

## LESSONS FROM UKRAINE'S CRISIS

### Summary

The author presents her vision of the international and Ukraine's national security in the 21st century context, analyzes new challenges and security threats searching for the reason of collapse of the modern security system. According to the author, the current reality of international relations proves that the international security system collapsed. At the same time, nonetheless the Common Foreign and Security Policy of EU, European political co-operation has further institutional development. All the research conclusions are based on the national security situation in nowadays Ukraine.

**Key words:** global security, national security, defense system, sovereignty, challenges, Russia-Ukraine conflict, UN, OSCE, NATO.

Modern turbulent world of the 21st century has rejected fundamentals of international law and remains in a painful condition of search for new global security scenarios. The international security model that reflected geopolitical interests of the USSR and the USA provided for bipolar existence and formed two ideologically opposite camps, as well as two different economic systems. What will substitute for the bipolarity? Various analytical schools make claims about possible scenario of formation of global postindustrial society. However, in our opinion, not all the countries will attain the postindustrial level at the same time. Therefore, the transition period most probably will be long and painful. Or it can result into constant confrontation of world main powers in pursuit of global leadership. Is some mutual understanding among them possible? Perhaps no one can answer this question. We witness confrontation, conflict and disrupt of all the international coexistence norms that were acceptable for the world in the recent past.

Since there is no new model developed to protect humanity, countries preserve and use outdated system of international security. Loosening seemingly strong UN security system, aggravation of disagreements and conflicts – not between the blocks but between single countries – proves that a new model of international relations of postindustrial development comes into agenda. It also brings new security system that knocks at the door with uncertainty, civilization crises, and the most dangerous – threat of a new redivision of the world.

Confrontations have moved from the global level to the regional level. They are going on not between world alliances, but between regional unions. Wars are fought not between interstate unions but between single countries. The reasons of these conflicts are all same, motives are all same and terrible consequences are all same. These new complex disagreements have entered into fierce conflict with the outdated model of world security imposed by the victors of the World War II in 1945.

Since there is no option, any victim of international aggression searching for protection and national security has to appeal to the existing system of protection and use the mechanisms already in place. Such mechanisms include universal component of the UN system, regional component of regional security structures in every geographical region, as well as security mechanism of bilateral relations.

National security is a combination of long-term arrangements of programs and purposes – military, economic, propagandistic etc. Their realization is designed to guarantee sovereignty and national security of the state.

A sovereign, independent and stable Ukraine, firmly committed to democracy and the rule of law, is key to Euro-Atlantic security. National interests of Ukraine stated in its legislative acts reflect fundamental values and aspirations of the Ukrainian people. National security is based on the principals of independent legal personality of the Ukrainian state. Such principals can be

guaranteed to our state only by a strong security organization that is nowadays North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

On 23 December 2014, the Ukrainian Parliament adopted a new law cancelling the non-aligned status of Ukraine. The law states that Ukraine's previous non-aligned status proved to be ineffective in guaranteeing Ukraine's security and protecting the country from external aggression and pressure, and also aims to deepen Ukrainian cooperation with the European Union and NATO in order to achieve the criteria which are required for membership in both alliances. Joining NATO is declared a strategic aim of Ukraine. In particular, in his annual address to the Parliament of Ukraine in 2016, the President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko said there is no alternative to Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic integration. And that Ukraine will continue developing and enlarging cooperation with NATO until the criteria of NATO membership are fully achieved<sup>1</sup>.

On the global security level, the UN once again has failed in its role to provide for peaceful coexistence of the countries, as it is stated in its Charter. Ukraine, as a member state and founder of the UN, in time of Russian military aggression against its territorial integrity turned to the UN for protection. Territorial claims of Russia that resulted in annexation of Crimea peninsula in 2014 and military intervention in Eastern Ukraine started in 1992 when Russia declared for the first time its aim to return Crimea to Russia, then in 1993 Russia claimed again the city of Sevastopol and in 2003 tried to annex Ukrainian isle Tuzla.

Ukraine's position on the current conflict is clear: this is a military intervention of Russia; Russia must stop the intervention and withdraw its regular military forces as well as its mercenaries from the territory of Ukraine. Ukraine has also asked UN to introduce the UN peacekeeping forces in the conflict zone. However, Russia has blocked this UN decision though its veto power. Annexationist actions of Russia, unfortunately, have not resulted in unanimous reproof of the international community, European community in particular. Despite sanctions against Russia introduced by the EU and the USA, on the ground, Ukraine stayed one to one with the invader. Russia continues to make a persistent state of instability in Eastern Ukraine, which has led to the loss of more than 10,000 lives<sup>2</sup>. There are constant violations of ceasefire agreements along the line of contact primarily by Russian-backed militants. It violates the Package of Measures for the Implementation of Minsk Agreements that provided for immediate and comprehensive ceasefire in certain areas of military confrontation, as well as Russia's commitment to withdraw its forces and military equipment from the territory of Ukraine.

On the regional security level, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Council of Europe and the European Union constitute European security framework. OSCE has a well-earned reputation for dealing with the politico-military aspects of security. It has played a central role in fostering security in Europe and is an integral element of its comprehensive approach to security. It can help with mitigating tensions, de-conflicting movements and improving confidence, as long as parties in conflict show political willingness to cooperate. However, the role of OSCE in Russia-Ukraine conflict has not proven to be effective. Words not swords. OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) established in order to have a key role in helping to deescalate the Russian-Ukraine conflict mostly fails in its mission.

The most criticism focuses on the presence of Russians within the monitoring mission. Critics have argued that these Russian observers "make a mockery of the OSCE's efforts to monitor a conflict they regard as fuelled and directed by the Kremlin"<sup>3</sup>. As a Polish former Ukraine monitor

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<sup>1</sup> BBC News 23 December 2014/ Ukraine votes to drop non-aligned status// <<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-30587924>>

<sup>2</sup> Kyiv Post 23 December 2014/ Poroshenko says Ukraine has no alternative to Euro-Atlantic integration <<https://www.kyivpost.com/article/content/mav-25-presidential-election/poroshenko-savs-ukraine-has-no-alternative-to-euro-atlantic-integration-375941.html>>

<sup>3</sup> NATO Fact Sheet, July 2016/ Comprehensive Assistance Package for Ukraine// <[http://www.nato.int/nato\\_static\\_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf\\_2016\\_09/20160920\\_160920-compreh-ass-package-ukraine-en.pdf](http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2016_09/20160920_160920-compreh-ass-package-ukraine-en.pdf)>

has stated “political correctness” and consensus culture within OSCE allow Russia to compromise effectiveness of Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine”<sup>4</sup>.

There is an interesting variant of cooperation of the EU and Ukraine in the sphere of security, which includes counter-measures against common threats: the Russian war, terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, illegal export of weapons, etc.

Ukraine had made a range of commitments in the security sphere under the Action Plan of the European Neighbourhood Policy. In addition to the above forms of cooperation, training-related cooperation components are also developing - i.e. participation of Ukrainian military units in joint military formations of the EU (e.g. exercises of multi-national Tisza battalion with participation of Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine). Accounting for NATO standards, the exercise participants plasticised efficient methods of operations at the mountainous terrain, deployment and logistic support of multi-national forces.

What are prospects of Ukraine in the sphere of EU security and defence? We believe, that national military formations may take part in the already mentioned joint Poland – (Ukraine) – Hungary and Romania battalion, police formations and in the sphere of air transportation. Ukraine even now rather actively cooperates with the EU in the sphere of foreign and security policy. At the same time, the situation in Ukraine is hindered by external and internal instability. In addressing threats, that are rather difficult to Ukraine to address alone, our country expects for support of European countries, including our strategic partners.

We may assume that two strategic directions - Euro-integration and Euro-Atlantic ones - will remain priorities for our country. Negotiations on the new Ukraine-EU agreement should be finalised - preferably as an Association Agreement, including provisions on the Free Trade Zone as its important component. Negotiations on visa-free travel for Ukrainian nationals is realised. The most optimal option in this sphere might include provision of so called "road map" to Ukraine, stipulating gradual phase out of visa requirements. In the political sphere, European integration determines modernisation of the legislative framework of Ukraine, democratisation of its political and institutional systems. Cooperation with the EU will facilitate enhancement of Ukrainian social conditions to the level of European standards, improvement of living standards and wellbeing of the country's population. At the same time, integration with the EU guarantees that participants will be protected against aggressions and territorial claims.

Relations with NATO should be shaped by an annual national program, that would provide a new format of relations between Ukraine and the alliance. The current situation analysis shows that existing security mechanisms, that Ukraine is part of, are impotent to stop and punish the aggressor. The only powerful security mechanism in place is NATO. Relations between NATO and Ukraine date back to early 1990s and have since developed into one of the most substantial NATO's partnerships. Main mechanism of NATO-Ukraine cooperation was established by the Charter of Distinctive Partnership signed by Ukrainian and Allied Heads of NATO States in 1997. The Charter established the NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC) to take cooperation forward.

Cooperation has deepened over time with Ukraine being the only partner to have contributed actively to all NATO-led operations and missions. Cooperation between NATO and Ukraine cover a wide range of areas including peace-support operations, defense and security sector reform, military-to-military cooperation, armaments, civil emergency planning, etc. Priority is given to support for comprehensive reform in the security and defense sector, which is vital for Ukraine's democratic development and for strengthening its ability to defend itself.

As mentioned above, Ukrainian government is convinced that NATO membership is the only option to provide for the state sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine<sup>1</sup>. From the very beginning of Russia-Ukraine conflict, NATO has adopted a firm position in support of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, condemning Russia's illegal and illegitimate annexation of

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<sup>4</sup> NATO Warsaw Summit Communiqué. Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Warsaw 8-9 July 2016// <[http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_133169.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm)>

Crimea and the violence and insecurity in Eastern Ukraine caused by Russia and Russian-backed separatists.

Since 2014, in the wake of Russia-Ukraine conflict, cooperation has been intensified in order to provide for capability development and capacity building in Ukraine. NATO Warsaw summit (8-9 July 2016) endorsed a Comprehensive Assistance Package (CAP) for Ukraine<sup>ii</sup> that is designed to further develop the Distinctive Partnership between NATO and Ukraine. Moreover, NATO has proposed a new Enhanced Opportunities Program to Ukraine that will help to develop Ukraine's defense system in accordance with the NATO standards of Partnership Interoperability Initiative<sup>5</sup>.

As part of their response to the Russian aggressive actions against Ukraine, NATO member states decided at the Wales Summit, in September 2014, to launch five new Trust Funds to assist Ukraine in five critical areas: Command, Control, Communications and Computers (C4); Logistics and Standardization; Cyber Defense; Military Career Transition; and Medical Rehabilitation. The total budget of these new funds is about € 9 million; and the Allies and partner countries have already contributed more than a half of this amount. Besides, in response to a request from Ukraine, NATO agreed in June 2015 to launch a sixth Trust Fund on Counter-Improvised Explosive Devices and Explosive Ordnance Disposal<sup>6</sup>.

The NATO program of military-to-military cooperation is financed mainly by the United States. By July 2016, the US has provided a total of over 600 million US dollars to Ukraine in the sphere of defense and security. This figure includes the cost of supplies of night vision devices, secure radio communications equipment, Humvee military vehicles, and counter-mortar and counter-artillery radar systems<sup>7</sup>.

Taking into account a more demanding security environment, NATO has to invest in defense of its allies under threat, first of all Ukraine. Although most US political elite supports the US programs to arm Ukraine, some of them do not welcome Ukraine's wish to become a NATO member. Thus former US national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski although calling on the US to arm Ukraine, keeps repeating that Ukraine will not be a member of NATO: "It doesn't follow that a country whose security NATO has an interest in has to be a NATO member. NATO can have an interest in its security, but without having it in NATO"<sup>8</sup>. "Ukraine should be free to choose its political identity, its political philosophy, and institutionalize it by closer links with Europe. But at the same time, Russia should be assured credibly that Ukraine will not become a member of NATO. I still think this is the formula for a solution", he says<sup>9</sup>. It reminds of historical parallels of Anschluss of Austria and division of Czechoslovakia according to Munich agreement in 1938 when strategic allies – France and Great Britain in order not to tease Nazi Germany refused to defend them. As a result, Germany conquered half of the world. We should not forget the lessons of history – *magistra vitae*, the teacher of life.

Drawing the conclusion, changes on the European continent, aggressive policy of Russia, Russian military intervention in Ukraine helped NATO to revive its activity, change tactics and develop new strategy. Nevertheless, Ukraine has not yet received a complex protection system. The introduced sanctions against Russia, although helpful, do not provide for synergetic effect since they are targeted and dispersed. Among the positive tendencies, Ukraine with support of its allies overcomes its military backwardness and learns to fight. However, this is not enough to overcome

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<sup>5</sup> East European Security Research Initiative, 7 November 2016/ NATO Trust Funds' Assistance to Ukraine// <<http://eesri.org/2016/11/nato-trust-funds-assistance-to-ukraine>>

<sup>6</sup> Europe Insight, 13 June 2016/ NATO military assistance to Ukraine: is it enough?// <<http://europeinsight.net/nato-military-assistance-to-ukraine-is-it-enough>>

<sup>7</sup> East European Security Research Initiative, 7 November 2016/ NATO Trust Funds' Assistance to Ukraine// <<http://eesri.org/2016/11/nato-trust-funds-assistance-to-ukraine>>

<sup>8</sup> Atlantic Council, 2 July 2014/ Brzezinski: The West Should Arm Ukraine// <<http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/natosource/brzezinski-the-west-should-arm-ukraine>>

<sup>9</sup> Spiegel Online, 2 July 2015/ Brzezinski on Russia 'We Are Already In a Cold War'// <<http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/interview-with-zbigniew-brzezinski-on-russia-and-ukraine-a-1041795.html>>

the aggressor. Most acute is the issue of inefficacy of outdated protection mechanisms – UN, OSCE – all this gives the aggressor political and military advantage. Non-punitive and all-permissive global security system intensifies revanchism and aggressiveness, which creates new challenges to global and regional security.

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