

The Consequences of the Ukrainian Crisis and Central Asia - Test of Endurance

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ABSTRACT: The following article examines individual causes and factors of the Ukrainian crisis, assesses the state of confrontations on this ground, the dynamics of the development of international relations in the recent period.

In addition, the material describes the international relations that are taking shape against the backdrop of the Ukrainian crisis, its impact on the state of relations between the world actors of international relations, on the political, economic, food and other situation in other regions. Are given prognoses of further processes that can be provoked on this basis

KEYWORD: political crisis, conflict, dilemma of strategic choice, special military operation, sanctions, foreign policy, geopolitical consequences, regional security.

Introduction

The Ukrainian political crisis and the ensuing geopolitical tensions in the world due to the war with Russia pose a dilemma of strategic choice for the states, including the Central Asian region. Supporting the actions of the Russian Federation creates the risk of worsening relations with the United States and its allies. In turn, the maneuver in favor of the "Western vector" will cause discontent on the part of Russia.

It is well known that the countries of Central Asia are among the key allies and partners of Russia. Cooperation covers political, military, trade, economic, scientific, cultural and a number of other areas.

Main Part

First, due to its own natural and fossil resources, including those of strategic importance, the Central Asian countries are of direct interest to Russia as a stable partner in the trade and economic sphere. They act as one of the main sales markets for their own products, which is an important circumstance in the context of the escalation of Russia's "sanctions war" with Western countries.

Secondly, Central Asia is of exceptional importance for Russia due to its geographic proximity and strategic location. At the same time, the Central Asian region, due to its own natural resource and demographic potential, is located at the junction of the sphere of interests not only of Russia, but also of the United States, China, as well as a number of less influential actors. The prospects for the revival of the Silk Road also increase the already high importance of the Central Asian countries as a region at the junction of continents and areas of interest.

1	ISSN 2690-9626 (online), Published by "Global Research Network LLC" under Volume: 3 Issue: 10 in Oct-2022 https://grnjournals.us/index.php/AJSHR
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The foregoing and a number of other factors testify to the exceptional importance of the countries of the Central Asian region as a partner of Russia, especially in the context of the ever-increasing geopolitical tensions in the recent period.

It is noteworthy to note that in recent years, the priority vector of Ukraine's foreign policy has been accession to the EU and NATO, about which a corresponding provision has also been introduced into the Constitution. At the same time, Russia categorically opposes such actions, fearing threats in its direction. At the end of 2021, the Russian Federation will put forward a number of security demands to the United States and other NATO members, including a call to refrain from building up military potential to the east and withdrawing weapons from Eastern Europe.

In contrast to this, on February 19 this year, President of Ukraine V. Zelensky, in his speech at the Munich Conference (Germany), announced a possible withdrawal of the country from the agreements of the Budapest Memorandum, which provide for Kyiv's abandonment of the nuclear arsenal in exchange for security guarantees from the signatory countries (Russia, US and UK).

Such statements are perceived by the Russian Federation as the intention of the Ukraine to obtain nuclear weapons. On February 24 this year, Russia recognized the independence of the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR), the Luhansk People's Republic (LPR), referring to Article 51 of the UN Charter, the sanction of the Federation Council and announced a "special military operation" on the territory of Ukraine.

Russia's actions are justified by the need to ensure security in the DPR/LPR within the framework of the agreements reached. The main goal of the military operation is "demilitarization and denazification of Ukraine." Third countries of the Russian Federation are warned about the negative consequences in case of intervention.

President V. Zelensky declared martial law in the country and general mobilization of citizens, signed a decree on the International Defense Legion. Combat units have been formed in the regions, mainly at the expense of Belarusian volunteers, Russian prisoners of war and others who have expressed a desire to go over to the side of Ukraine.

UNHCR has disseminated information that as a result of the Russian "special military operation" and the growing military threat, more than 10 million people left Ukraine. At the same time, over 50% of this category of Ukrainian citizens are in Poland. At the same time, according to the director of the Institute of Demography of Ukraine E. Libanova, the total number of refugees is actually overestimated: people are counted both in the country of the first border crossing and at the moment they receive documents in the next state.

The military operation initiated by Russia in the direction of Ukraine was negatively perceived by most countries and international organizations. The UN General Assembly adopted a Resolution (voted by 141 countries), according to which, the Russian Federation was recognized as an aggressor country and called for the immediate withdrawal of troops.

European experts in international law regard the reference of the Russian Federation to Article 51 of the UN Charter as incorrect. It is emphasized that it is intended for self-defense against direct aggression and protection of other member countries of this international organization. LPR and DPR are not members of the UN. Representatives of the OSCE, the UN Secretary General, share this interpretation.

Ukraine is regularly fed by Western countries (Great Britain, the EU, the USA, etc.) with the necessary military equipment and ammunition, which motivates it to further confrontation with the Russian Federation. At a press conference held in Brussels, NATO Secretary General J. Stoltenberg stated that the members of the alliance provided assistance to Ukraine in the amount of about \$8 billion.

Ukrainian troops are currently using heavy weapons received from foreign partners at the front. In addition to anti-tank, anti-aircraft missile systems "Javelin" and "Stinger", there are American 155-mm howitzers in service. According to the Deputy Minister of Defense of Ukraine A. Malyar, negotiations are also underway to accelerate the pace of receiving assistance.

At the same time, the United States is increasing pressure on the Russian Federation, despite the growing risk of the conflict going beyond Ukraine. May 9 this year US President John Bidenon signed the law on Lend-Lease for Ukraine. It is assumed that this step will significantly speed up the supply of American weapons to Ukraine. The US administration expects to provide military equipment to Ukraine and other Eastern European countries until 2023.

In an interview with CNN, American Senator Democrat B. Cardin noted that the lend-lease law is a kind of signal to European and other US allies. According to him, "this law will allow us to provide Ukraine with the necessary equipment to defend against Putin's aggression in a timely manner" ... that they need to further increase their efforts at a time when we hope to find ways to ensure that Ukraine succeeds in this military operation.

The prominent philosopher N. Taleb (USA) expressed the opinion that the current war will exacerbate confusion among Russians and their supporters in understanding the state as a nation in the ethnic sense and the state as an administrative unit. A state that wants to base its legitimacy on cultural unity is doomed to hostility from others. The disintegration of the Russian Federation into separate entities is also not ruled out.

He noted that the EU countries have plans to abandon Russian oil in the next few months. In his opinion, these measures will lead to a reduction in state revenues in the Russian Federation, which will cause a wave of separatist sentiments among Russians and actualize the mood in the Russian regions to secede from a single federal state.

The current conditions and other related problems contribute to minimizing the volume of international trade, rising food and energy prices, and provoking economic stagnation. In turn, it creates an atmosphere of unpredictability for the countries of Central Asia in geopolitical and other respects.

In the Central Asian countries, members of the EAEU (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan), since the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, there has been a certain collapse of the national currency and a fall in the stock market. Due to interconnectedness, the situation also affects other regional subjects of international law.

From the point of view of the economy, Tajikistan is significantly connected and dependent on the Russian Federation. In terms of foreign trade turnover, Russia occupies the first place for it. In 2021, the trade turnover between the two countries exceeded \$1.352 billion. Moreover, the current situation or the imposition of sanctions against the Russian Federation, where there are more than a million Tajik migrants, will have a significant impact on the Tajik economy.

Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, as well as Uzbekistan are considered a significant Russian economic and political partner. Uzbek exports to Russia amount to 2.05 billion dollars (12% of the total), imports - about 5.45 billion dollars (21%). About 2.2 million Uzbek labor migrants work in the Russian Federation, remittances are carried out in the amount of more than 7-8 billion dollars a year.

Due to the deterioration of the economic and other situation in the country due to sanctions, enterprises in Russia that operate at the expense of labor from Central Asia may close. This will lead to a change in migration policy on the part of the Russian Federation to provide its citizens, including refugees with jobs.

At the same time, it is noteworthy to note that the desire of the Russian Federation led by V. Putin to expand its geopolitical hegemony by all available means does not exclude a potential threat to the sovereignty of the states of Central Asia, including Uzbekistan. In this context, V. Putin's statements regarding the lack of the

state history of Kazakhstan, as well as his statement that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, "one or another republic received a large number of traditional Russian historical territories as baggage" cause concern.

Considering that the Russian Federation, when invading Ukraine, aimed primarily at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, the countries of Central Asia will need to rethink interaction and cooperation in this regard through the prism of repeating a similar scenario in their region.

Conclusion

The available materials allow us to conclude that, regardless of the outcome of hostilities, the Russian Federation will find itself in diplomatic isolation and under the pressure of comprehensive sanctions. This circumstance, due to the proximity of borders, economies, as well as the well-established relations and other objective reasons, will affect the geopolitical situation in the Central Asian countries.

The precedent on the basis of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict may lead to a revision of the integration processes in Central Asia in order to strengthen the regional security system. It is possible that the most mutually beneficial regional projects will emerge on the basis of existing associations.

Based on the foregoing, it should be noted that the countries of Central Asia in their foreign policy maneuvers will need a thorough analysis of possible geopolitical consequences through the prism of maintaining and strengthening regional security.

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