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Friedrich Naumann
STIFTUNG
FÜR DIE FREIHEIT



UKRAINE – THE EUROPEAN UNION



KEY THEME ANALYSIS

THE EU POLICY TOWARDS UKRAINE HAS NOT CHANGED SINCE THE EUROMAIDAN

The position of the European Union during the Russian aggression in Ukraine differs little from the EU policy during the confrontation between the Ukrainian people and the Yanukovich regime. Like before, the EU is trying to use the resolutions and statements to compensate for the lack of real actions. The Union of the richest countries with a half a billion population continues to avoid the responsibility for the fate of the continent, and shows a lack of the clear common foreign policy. It is becoming increasingly understandable that, despite the formidable economic and military opportunities, **the EU has not yet become a global geopolitical player**, and continues to lose and to retreat without the resistance.

A few months ago we could talk about the lack of understanding by European officials of the nature of the Russian regime, which is futile to negotiate to without being backed by force. However, the recent statements of the European leaders indicate that now they are fully aware of what Putin's regime is. The question is why in this case, **the EU continues to play the game, imposed by the Kremlin, which famous Russian political analyst Lilia Shevtsova justly named 'the imitation game'**: *"The West made a mistake involving into the imitation game with the Kremlin, pretending as if Russia is the same democracy like the other members of the G-8. The West made a huge mistake by letting its politicians, experts and businesses to create on their own territories the machine to launder Russian, Ukrainian and Kazakh criminal money."*¹

We can assume that there are at least three main reasons of such EU policy: 1) Russian money; 2) European confidence in the own security; 3) indecisiveness of Kyiv.

Tens of billions euros and dollars from Russia (by the way, this money was previously paid by the Europeans for the Russian oil and gas) do not strengthen the European economy much (because exports to Russia is actually a small part of the whole European exports), but enrich a number of European 'experts', advisors, politicians and bureaucrats, including the highest level. Herewith one should keep in mind that in Russia the big business, the state apparatus and the security services compose one integral system. Hardly anyone else except for the Putin knows how many current European leaders will work in Russian companies after the retirement, following the example of the former German chancellor Gerhard Schroeder.

It is clear that **the leaders of the 'old' Europe believe that their countries**

¹ Російський політолог: Помилка Заходу в тому, що він ув'язався в гру імітації із кремлівською владою. - <http://tyzhden.ua/News/107996>.

will not face the Russian aggression, and therefore they don't want to lose even a few percent of their exports for the sake of Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova, and even for the sake of the Baltic States. However, while betraying the Poland in 1939, the French and the British governments were also convinced that Hitler's Germany would not attack them. And it's not about the current intentions of Putin, but about the objective conditions of the Russian economy, which growth had stopped. Therefore Putin's regime will need more and more external victories. And the line, at which the Europe could continue to refrain from interfering, will be crossed much faster than the officials in Brussels, Berlin and Paris hope.

The unclear policy of the new Ukrainian authorities may also be a significant reason for the passivity of the EU. The events in Crimea could be somehow explained with Ukraine's unpreparedness to the aggression, but two months of inactivity in Eastern and Southern Ukraine raise many questions about the competence and about the real intentions of Kyiv. Berlin, Paris and London hardly can understand why the state with the hundreds of thousands of the security forces, many of whom had served in 'hot spots' all around the world, can't manage to neutralize one thousand extremists (the data of the Ministry of Internal Affairs²), most of whom are poorly armed.

The European Parliament Resolution of 17 April 2014 had to make Kyiv more determined. The EP "expresses its full support for and solidarity with the Government of Ukraine as it seeks to re-establish authority in the occupied cities" and "recalls that the Ukrainian authorities have the full right to use all necessary measures, including the right to self-defence as defined in Article 51 of the UN Charter"³. However, the Resolution did not make Kyiv more determined in conducting of the so-called 'anti-terrorist operation'. The separatists continue to capture the cities and the towns (on June 28 Konstyantynivka town in the Donetsk region was captured), to fire with impunity on the Ukrainian military aircraft, to seize hostages (including the OSCE inspectors and the staff of the Security Service of Ukraine), and to beat the participants of the meetings in favour of the unity of Ukraine.

On the one hand, it is hard to expect the activity of the EU against the background of such Kyiv's indecision. On the other hand, **if the European Union is going to become a geopolitical power, it has to show more initiative and more persistence, including the communication with its partners.** The official Kyiv would hardly refuse the expert assistance of the EU about the concrete actions to address the current crisis. Shy hints about more decisive action in the EP Resolutions are not the inadequate measures in the situation when the EU opponent is already waging war and is annexing the territories, which had to become a part of the European Union sometime.

The efficiency of the Eastern Partnership summit in Prague on April 24, with the participation of the European Commissioner Štefan Füle was questionable, because three days later, the U.S. Vice President Joe Biden had to convince by phone the Czech Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka to agree on the new sanctions against Russia.⁴ It is obviously, that the European capitals lack either the desire or the authority to do the

² МВС підрахувало кількість сепаратистів і захоплених ними будівель. - <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2014/04/23/7023378>.

³ European Parliament resolution of 17 April 2014 on Russian pressure on Eastern Partnership countries and in particular destabilisation of eastern Ukraine. - <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-%2f%2fEP%2f%2fTEXT%2bTA%2b20140417%2bTOC%2bDOC%2bXML%2bV0%2f%2fEN&language=EN>.

⁴ Байден погодив з прем'єрами Чехії та Угорщини нові санкції проти РФ. - <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2014/04/27/7023762>; Чехія та Словаччина не підтримають посилення санкцій проти Росії. - <http://www.dw.de/чехія-та-словаччина-не-підтримають-посилення-санкцій-проти-росії/a-17590292>.

job, which therefore Washington has to do. It is time for the EU to learn how to solve their issues, including the consolidation of the position, when it turns out that some of its members prefer to take the advantages without sacrificing anything for the common good.

The EU response to the **Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk proposal on the creation of the European Energy Union** (which should purchase gas for all the EU member states) will be another 'litmus test' of the EU willingness to make the strategic decisions about its future, not the 'fig leaves' of the ineffective sanctions. The creation of the European Energy Union might deprive Moscow of the possibility to put pressure on the European capitals with gas leverage, provoking the disputes among them. It is obviously, that such Energy Union (if created) should engage to the cooperation the EU partner states also, such as Ukraine, if the latter will not be occupied by Russia by that time.



UKRAINE – NATO



KEY THEME ANALYSIS

JOE BIDEN'S VISIT TO KYIV AS A SYMBOLIC SUPPORT FOR THE 'SPECIAL PARTNER'

The two-day visit of the U.S. Vice President Joseph Biden to Kyiv on April 21-22, 2014 was just another symbolic gesture of support for Ukraine. There were again the speeches about the isolation of Russia in case of the continuation of its poorly disguised aggression in Eastern Ukraine. There were again the promises to help Ukraine with the energy independence, with obtaining the IMF loans, and the promises of \$50 million help to carry out the political and economic reforms.

The aid to protect Ukraine from the current Russian aggression turned out to be modest: only communications equipment and technologies for the destruction of explosives for the \$20 million. It's surely better than nothing; however one should hardly disagree with experts of the Brent Scowcroft Center for the International Security at the Atlantic Council that it would be more effective to provide Ukraine with the air defence facilities, as well as with the small-calibre weapons.⁵ On the other hand, given the propensity of the Ukrainian law enforcement forces to give up without a fight and to leave their military equipment for the separatists and to the Russians, one can understand the anxiety of the Americans that their military equipment might be captured by the Russians.

It is clear that **the United States are guided by their own national interests, and their strategic goal is to isolate Putin's Russia, not to save Ukraine.** Providing Ukraine with the robust military assistance could make the Russia's aggression unpromising, but could not destroy the Russian economy and consequently to ruin the Putin's regime. At the same time, the economic sanctions could do it. Unfortunately, new government in Kyiv has not managed yet to convince its 'allies' that the preservation of the sovereignty of Ukraine may be of greater value for them than the economic collapse of Russia.

Chairman of the U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs Ed Royce said that his country was ready for "a series of actions that will lead to collapse of the Russian economy."⁶ If Washington still reserves for Moscow the option of returning to 'reset' policy, it is probably just because of the difficulties it faces in persuading the EU leaders to act simultaneously.

However, one should keep in mind that the sanctions would make the significant effect on the Russia's economy in two or three years, and only if implemented by all the European Union countries. At the same time, **the conflict is rapidly approaching the NATO borders, and Russia's actions indicate that it will not stop in**

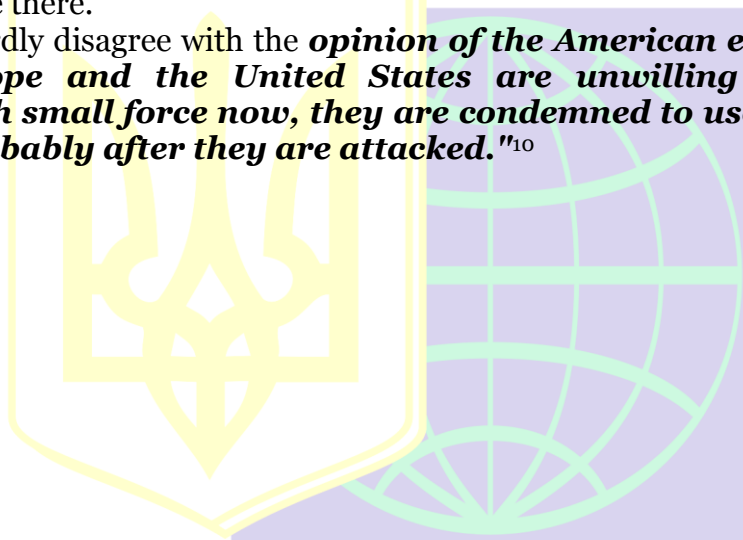
⁵ Эксперт: Байден має запропонувати Україні поставки зброї. - <http://www.dw.de/експерт-байден-мас-запропонувати-україні-поставки-зброї/a-17580214>.

⁶ Конгресмен пообіцяв колапс економіки Росії у відповідь на пряме вторгнення. - <http://ukrainian.voanews.com/content/article/1898788.html>.

Ukraine. On April 16, the ‘parliament’ of self-proclaimed Transnistria adopted unanimously an appeal to Putin and to the Russian State Duma with a request to recognize the Transnistrian independence with the subsequent annexation by Russia.⁷ The next day Mr. Putin, during the ‘hot line’ with the Russian citizens, said about the need "to let the inhabitants of Transnistria to choose their own destiny."⁸ So, the Kremlin has already approved the ‘Crimean scenario’ for Transnistria, and **there is a high probability that Russian special forces will invade to Moldova from Transnistria (the ‘Donetsk scenario’). Therefore a NATO member Romania will be involved into the conflict. The ‘pro-Russian separatists’ might erupt in the Baltic states as well. And Russia might also declare officially its non-involvement; therefore the NATO would find itself in a complicated situation, because the pro-Russian lobby in the Alliance would insist again that the situation would be beyond the jurisdiction of Article 5.**

It is clearly, that aggressive Putin’s policy will not be stopped with the NATO press releases, in which the false allegations of Russian propaganda are refutes.⁹ It is also unlikely that the Kremlin will worry much about a dozen of French and Canadian fighter jets and 150 American Marines in Poland, as well as about 150 Marines in Lithuania. Five NATO warships arriving to the Baltic Sea are also unlikely to help much because the threat comes from the land, and Russia has a multiple preponderance in people and military hardware there.

One will hardly disagree with the ***opinion of the American expert Henry R. Nau: "If Europe and the United States are unwilling to arm their diplomacy with small force now, they are condemned to use much greater force later, probably after they are attacked."***¹⁰



⁷ Приднестровье обратилось к России за признанием. - <http://tiras.ru/tema-dnja/40150-pridnestrove-obratilos-k-rossii-za-priznaniem-i-prisoedineniem-k-rossii.html>.

⁸ Путін натякнув, що не проти приєднати Придністров'я. -

http://espresso.tv/news/2014/04/17/putin_natyaknuv_scho_ne_proty_pryyednuvaty_prydnistrovya.

⁹ Russia's accusations - setting the record straight - http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_109141.htm.

¹⁰ NATO should act now, not later. - <http://www.dw.de/nato-should-act-now-not-later/a-17582668>.

FOREIGN POLICY OF UKRAINE



KEY THEME ANALYSIS

GENEVA STATEMENT AS A TOOL FOR THOSE WHO ACT, AND AS AN EXCUSE FOR THOSE WHO DON'T WANT TO ACT OR ARE NOT CAPABLE TO ACT

The hours of negotiations of the heads of foreign policy authorities of Ukraine, Russia, the EU and the U.S. on April 17, 2014 resulted in a joint **Geneva Statement as a diplomatic compromise, which provisions could be interpreted by each side on its own mind**. This factor implicates the advantages and the disadvantage of the document. It is clear, that all the advantages are for the side, which has enough political will and resources to implement the document according to its own vision. And the weak side may use the document only to justify its inaction.

The Ukrainian experts believe that the most positive result is the very fact of the negotiations since the Russian side had not agree previously to communicate in the official format with the new Ukrainian authorities. Among **other positive aspects for Ukraine** are the following: not including into the joint statement the ideas of the federalization, of the Russian language status and of the need to form a coalition government with the participation of the Party of Regions – all these ideas have been actively promoted by the Russian side.

On the other hand, the text of the statement includes a provision on the need for the constitutional reform, which should be jointly prepared by all the political parties and representatives of all the regions. Given that the representatives of the Party of Regions, of the Communists, and of some eastern regional councils are just the 'repeaters' of the Kremlin's demands for the constitutional reform, **in fact it means the involvement of the Russian side to the discussion of a new Ukrainian Constitution**. Among the **other negative aspects for Ukraine** are the following: Geneva Statement does not envisage the withdrawal of the Russian troops from the Ukrainian borders; it does not envisage the cancellation of the State Duma decision, which allows Putin to garrison troops into Ukraine; nothing is said about the Moscow's refuse to support the separatists, as well as about the recognition of Russia as a party to the conflict, and about the unacceptability of the annexation of the Crimea.

Instead, **it is written in the statement that "all sides must refrain from any violence", which is not correct**, because it is not write to bracket the criminal seizure of state buildings and of the hostages by armed separatists and Russian saboteurs, and the legal actions of the Ukrainian law enforcement forces to protect citizens and the state sovereignty.

One might consider as advantage the provisions that "all illegal armed groups must

be disarmed" and "all illegally seized buildings must be returned to legitimate owners". But it might be an advantage only in case if the Ukrainian side had enough determination and abilities to implement these provisions. In fact, it resulted in wasting time on hopeless negotiations with the separatists (who do not take decisions themselves, but just perform the orders from the Kremlin), so the latter have won time to get more weapons and to strengthen their position.

But the most drawback of the Geneva Statement was the fact that Moscow had never the intention to follow it. And this was obvious to everyone; let's just recall the restrained comments by Barack Obama, Catherine Ashton and Arseniy Yatsenyuk on the prospects of the implementation of the agreements by the Russians. Neither the daily public calls of the U.S. and the European leaders with demands to execute the agreements, nor the threats of tougher sanctions could change the position of Moscow. A week after the Geneva meeting Barack Obama and John Kerry had to admit that *Russia had done nothing to implement the agreements*¹¹.

It can be assumed that Washington and Brussels needed the Geneva Statement to win the time and to get the additional argument to convince all the EU member states in the inability of the diplomatic resolution of the conflict with Russia, because the latter lacks the relevant intention; therefore there is a need for the tougher sanctions.

The additional sanctions against Russia were agreed in the format of G-7, on April 25. G-7 Leaders Statement on Ukraine welcomed the positive steps taken by Ukraine to meet its commitments under the Geneva agreements, and condemned Russia's annexation of Crimea and its support for the separatists. Among the important provisions of the G-7 Statement there is a mentioning of the "working towards constitutional reform and decentralization" (in fact, it reflects the requirement of Russia). We may consider as a positive signal the provision that G-7 response to the annexation of Crimea will "include but not limited to the economic, trade and financial areas".¹² **For the first time G-7 countries mentioned about the possibility of any further response to the Russian aggression, in addition to the economic sanctions.** Now the Kremlin has to guess if it means the possibility of the military assistance to Ukraine.

On April 28, the U.S. and the EU declared the imposition of additional sanctions against a number of influential Russian politicians and affiliated businesses, in particular, against the head of 'Rosneft' Igor Sechin, the Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration Vyacheslav Volodin, the Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Kozak, the head of the Duma Committee of Foreign Affairs Alexei Pushkov, and against the businesses of Gennady Timchenko and of Rotenberg brothers, who are close to the Kremlin.

Moscow took advantage of the Geneva Statement to 'buy time' and to accuse Ukraine for not fulfilling the agreements, that allegedly creates a pretext for Russia's troops to entry into Ukraine.¹³ Herewith, ***the representative of the Russian Federation to the UN Vitaly Churkin does not hide the fact that the intervention is planned at the 'Georgian scenario': 'There are relevant norms in the UN Charter, Art. 51 of the Charter, which speaks of self-defence, and which we,***

¹¹ Обама бачить, що Росія не намагається вгамувати сепаратистів в Україні. -

<http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2014/04/24/7023436>; Керрі: В Україні все було спокійно, поки не втрутилася Росія. - <http://ukrainian.voanews.com/content/article/1901490.html>.

¹² G-7 Leaders Statement on Ukraine. - <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/04/25/g-7-leaders-statement-ukraine>.

¹³ Интервью Сергея Лаврова RT: Ничего из того, о чём мы договорились в Женеве, киевские власти не выполнили. - <http://russian.rt.com/article/28975>.

by the way, activated during the conflict in the Caucasus in 2008".¹⁴

So, the Geneva agreement have granted to the parties of the conflict the possibility to 'buy time' for the implementation of the previously planned measures. The U.S. and the EU have introduced the additional sanctions, very close to the Putin's entourage. Moscow has continued the preparations for the invasion into Ukraine, pushing its troops to the borders and facilitating the activity of the separatists. ***The only mystery that remains – is what Ukraine has done, in addition to the announced antiterrorist operation, which has not been actually carried out.***



¹⁴ Russia: Invading Ukraine Would Be Self-Defense. - http://www.slate.com/blogs/the_world_/2014/04/25/article_51_russia_says_invading_ukraine_could_be_justified_a_s_self_defense.html.