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# UKRAINE – THE EUROPEAN UNION



## KEY THEME ANALYSIS

### ***EVENTS IN UKRAINE HAVE EXPOSED THE LACK OF PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY AND WEAKNESS OF THE EU'S FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY***

The political crisis in Ukraine has demonstrated the inability of the European Union to act on the pre-emption, as well as to elaborate promptly a coordinated position even on the issues, which affect directly the interests and the security of the EU. 'The Guardian' is right saying that **"Ukraine crisis exposes Europe's policy vacuum", and "Europe now appears at a loss over how to respond to a crisis it played a big role in creating"**<sup>1</sup>.

At first, the EU was unable to predict the influence of Russia's 'credit' proposals to the change of Kyiv's foreign policy. Then the EU turned out to be unable to find the formula for negotiations with the Ukrainian government, which could help to avoid further deterioration of the situation in Ukraine. Even the threat of civil war at the very borders of the EU, which could hit painfully both the economy and the safety of the European Union, has not forced Brussels to move from the statements and declarations to the elaboration of the coherent and effective foreign policy. President of the U.S.-Ukraine Business Council Morgan Williams rightly said that "the absence of the serious financial package from the West was the final nail in the coffin of the agreement with the EU", and Western governments should finally understand that Ukraine is unable to cope with the Russian pressure solely<sup>2</sup>.

The EU proposals for mediation in the settlement of the political crisis without the financial aid package to compensate for the Russian pressure were doomed to failure. Controversial statements about possible personal sanctions have also made a bad deal, because each party of the confrontation has heard what it wanted to heard. Statements by a number of European politicians about the possibility of sanctions gave false guidelines to the opposition leaders (judging by Vitali Klitschko's numerous interviews to German newspaper one can conclude that he has been pinning much hopes on such sanctions). At the same time, the Ukrainian authorities took into account the position of France and Germany, who had made it clear that there would be no sanctions, unless massive bloodshed.

After several people had been killed in Kyiv, French President Francois Hollande made the statement condemning the violence and calling for dialogue between the

<sup>1</sup> Ukraine crisis exposes Europe's policy vacuum. - <http://www.theguardian.com/global/2014/jan/23/ukraine-crisis-exposes-europe-policy-vacuum>

<sup>2</sup> ЄС та МВФ теж винні в розвороті до Росії – Морган Вільямс. - <http://ukrainian.voanews.com/content/morgan-williams/1832481.html>

government and the opposition. President of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso and German Chancellor Angela Merkel made phone calls to Viktor Yanukovich. And European Commissioner Stefan Füle visited Kyiv on January 24-25, where he met Viktor Yanukovich and the opposition leaders. **But the European officials did not made any concrete proposals for solving the economic crisis, which makes Ukraine so dependent on the Russian loans.**

**Instead, some signs of 'soft' foreign policy isolation have appeared.** The program of participation of Ukrainian Prime Minister Mykola Azarov at the World Economic Forum in Davos has been significantly reduced. Bulgarian President Rosen Plevneliev has postponed his visit to Kyiv. The Secretary General of the Council of Europe Thorbjørn Jagland has postponed the holding of the meeting of the Steering Committee of Ukraine-CE, scheduled for January 22, 2014. And President of the European Parliament Martin Schulz has spoken openly for the first time about the possibility of sanctions against Ukrainian officials.

There is a danger that if the Moscow influence on the processes in Ukraine continues to grow, then the Brussels might lose the interest in the negotiations with Kyiv as an equal partner. **A significant part of the EU-Russia summit in Brussels on January 28, was dedicated to discussing the Ukrainian theme.** In fact, the leaders of the EU and Russia discussed the fate of Ukraine without the participation of Kyiv. Can the Ukraine's interests be really protected in such format of negotiations?

**It is extremely important for Ukraine not to lose its international subjectivity and to be able to protect its interests. And it is impossible to provide this when focusing only on one foreign policy vector** (in this case, the Russian one). It is impossible as well to enlist the support of the EU, ignoring the position of the European partners and trying to use the European integration just as factor of bargaining with Moscow.

## UKRAINE – NATO



### KEY THEME ANALYSIS

#### ***NATO'S DISTANCING FROM UKRAINIAN CRISIS AS A REFLECTION OF BARACK OBAMA'S FOREIGN POLICY***

**NATO's passive position concerning the crisis in Ukraine was caused by two main factors:**

1. The relations between Ukraine and NATO have declined since 2010, and the 'special partnership' has turned into a program of practical cooperation. The curtailing of the political dimension of cooperation has left the Alliance without political and legal basis to offer Ukraine the mediation.

2. The position of the United States as the sole leader of NATO is determined by Barack Obama's reluctance to increase tensions with Russia at the time of finding ways to resolve the Syrian and Iranian issues. Advantages of such politics for the U.S. are questionable, and many experts consider that the recent decisions on Syria and Iran were closer to the interests of Moscow than of Washington.

We should note **the significant differences in the approaches of the Senate and of the U.S. State Department to the Ukrainian issue**. On January 7, 2014 the Senate passed a resolution, which called on the U.S. and the EU to work together to support actively the peaceful and democratic solution of the current crisis in Ukraine. Senators called on the Ukrainian government to refrain from using force, and mentioned the possibility of personal sanctions. At the same time, Kyiv's officials are aware well that Washington's foreign policy is being implemented by the State Department, not by the Republican senators who unsuccessfully urged Barack Obama to conduct more decisive foreign course.

Within two months of political crisis in Ukraine Barack Obama did not make any statement on this issue. On January 15, at the Hearings of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the representatives of the State Department did not support the proposal of Senator John McCain to elaborate more resolute policy towards Kyiv. The next day Ukrainian Parliament adopted a package of laws, which limited significantly the rights of protesters. The statement of the U.S. State Department about deep concern was de-facto ignored by the Ukrainian side, as well as similar statements by the representatives of the EU, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, and the UN. Only after several protesters had been killed in Kyiv, the Vice President Joe Biden in phone conversation urged Viktor Yanukovich to take steps to stop the violence and to take into consideration the legitimate interests of peaceful demonstrators.

Judging by the speeches of the U.S. State Department representatives at the Hearing of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee and by the interview of Zbigniew

Brzezinski to 'Ukrainska Pravda', we can conclude that Washington plans to wait for the results of the presidential elections of 2015, hoping for the Vitali Klitschko's win<sup>3</sup>.

**Therefore, the NATO position concerning the crisis in Ukraine was also passive.** After nearly two months of silence on the Ukrainian events, on January 22, 2014 Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen made a very brief statement, in which he "strongly condemned the use of violence" in Ukraine and urged all parties to a "real dialogue"<sup>4</sup>. Fogh Rasmussen said also to the German newspaper 'Tagesspiegel' that NATO will continue to support the freedom of choice for the Russia's neighbors in questions of security and sovereignty<sup>5</sup>. On January 23, President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly Hugh Bayley said that the PA members plan to visit Kyiv in early February to discuss with the MPs the prospects of the political dialogue in Ukraine.

**Against this background, Ukraine and NATO continue, as if by inertia, to execute the agreements on practical cooperation.** On January 16, 2014 a meeting of the Core Group of the NATO-Ukraine Joint Working Group on Defence Reform was held at NATO Headquarters in Brussels. Ukrainian delegation was headed by First Deputy secretary of the Council of National Security and Defence of Ukraine Oleksander Medvedko; and the NATO delegation was headed by Deputy Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs and Security Policy James Appathurai. The sides discussed the priorities for NATO-Ukraine defense cooperation in 2014. Besides, in January 2014 the Navy frigate of the Armed Forces of Ukraine 'Hetman Sahaidachny', after successful participation in NATO anti-piracy operations, began to patrol the coast of Somalia in the framework of the EU NAVFOR ATALANTA. And Feodosia Detached Battalion of Marines of the Ukrainian Navy began its six-month operational stand-by in the NATO Response Force and the EU Battle Group HELBROC.

**Director of the Foreign Policy Research Institute Grygoriy Perepelytsia considers that the NATO-Ukraine military and political cooperation is likely to be curtailed** due to the absence of the realistic political platform for the further military and political cooperation, while the Ukrainian policy of balancing between the Euro-Atlantic countries and Russia has been exhausted. Grygoriy Perepelytsia believes that Ukraine's accession to the Collective Security Treaty Organization in the short-term perspective is doubtful, but the conclusion of bilateral agreements in the field of security and defense, such as Armenia has signed, is more probable.

It is also clear that **even in case of the resumption of the European integration course, the question of Ukraine's membership in NATO will not be at the agenda in the nearest future**, given the cautiousness of U.S. and the EU concerning the Russia's position.

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<sup>3</sup> Збігнев Бжезінський: Янукович зрозумів, що не має шансів на чесних виборах. Тому пішов під парасольку Путіна. - <http://www.pravda.com.ua/articles/2014/01/15/7009577/>

<sup>4</sup> Statement by the NATO Secretary General on events in Ukraine. - [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news\\_106351.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_106351.htm)

<sup>5</sup> Ukrainische Opposition lehnt Regierungsaemter ab. - <http://www.tagesspiegel.de/zeitung/ukrainische-opposition-lehnt-regierungsaemter-ab/9384920.html>

# FOREIGN POLICY OF UKRAINE



## KEY THEME ANALYSIS

### **RUSSIAN SCENARIO IN UKRAINE: BETTING ON THE SPLIT?**

**Russian officials, including the Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, warned the EU to refrain from the interference into the internal affairs of Ukraine, but did not restrain themselves** from the public allusions to their Ukrainian colleagues about the need for a military resolution of the crisis<sup>6</sup>. Given the dependence of the Ukrainian economy on Russian loans, being issued in parts, such hints may be considered as a condition for the continuation of the financing, and therefore as a political pressure and interference into the internal affairs.

One should take into account the alarming fact that some pro-government politicians and some local officials in the eastern regions of Ukraine make statements, which are more in tune with Moscow than with Kyiv. They even call the population of the eastern and the western regions of Ukraine “two different nations”. Russian politicians, including Vladimir Putin, have repeatedly called Ukraine an artificial formation<sup>7</sup>; and the ideologist of the Russian ruling party Aleksandr Dugin in his book ‘Foundations of Geopolitics’ has proposed to divide the territory of Ukraine into several parts<sup>8</sup>. Pro-Russian forces in Ukraine stir tensions between the East and the West of Ukraine, and promote simultaneously the idea of the federalization.

**Russia and the providers of its interests in Ukraine are trying to persuade the authorities to the military scenario, which could lead to the civil war and to the collapse of the country. It is obvious, that neither Viktor Yanukovich, nor the opposition is interested in such scenario.** But such scenario may be attractive for the politicians, who hope to get top positions in the new Russian provinces.

The Russian government is also interested in the suppression of the Ukrainian protests because of the fear that the Russian society might be inspired by the Ukrainian example. The Russian opposition has already openly expressed its support for the Ukrainian protesters.

We should also note that **after getting a discount on Russian gas, Ukrainian government has refused to sign an agreement with Slovakia on the gas reverse from Europe.** In 2013 the Ukrainian side requested persistently the European Union to help in the arrangement of this agreement, which could greatly contribute to the real

<sup>6</sup> Лавров розповідає, що заворушення в Україні стимулюють ззовні. - <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2014/01/21/7010377/>

<sup>7</sup> Источник Ё: Путин не считает Украину государством. - <http://korrespondent.net/ukraine/politics/426945>

<sup>8</sup> Дугин А. Основы геополитики. Геополитическое будущее России. Мыслить пространством. - Москва: Арктогея-центр, 2000. – С.377-383.



energy independence of Ukraine. With the assistance of the EU, the agreement was finally ready for signing, but Ukraine abandoned it for the sake of Russian gas discount, which might be reviewed on a quarterly basis. The question is: will Slovakia be still ready to sign the agreement, if Russia rejects to give Ukraine discount for the next quarter?

**Russia may temporary reduce its pressure on Ukraine during the Olympic Games in Sochi**, because Vladimir Putin wants to use the Olympics as a presentation of the modern strength of Russia. Many world leaders, including Barack Obama and Angela Merkel have already said they did not intend to attend the Games. Even the release of the most famous Russian prisoners Mikhail Khodorkovsky and Platon Lebedev has not provided the desired effect. Further escalation in Ukraine, which world public clearly associate with the Russia's pressure, can bury the Kremlin's ambitious plans to develop its reputation on the Olympics (while Russia's preparation to the Games cost dozens billions of dollars).

But it is highly improbable that Vladimir Putin will completely abandon his plans for Ukraine in the sake of the Olympics. It is likely that after the Games are closed, the pressure on Ukraine will be strengthened. **So, Kyiv and Brussels have about a month to find the arrangement, which will give Ukraine the opportunity to save the territorial integrity, sovereignty, international subjectivity and the ability to choose freely its foreign policy.**