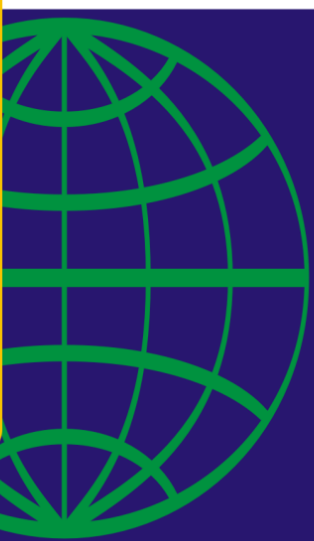


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## UKRAINE – THE EUROPEAN UNION



### KEY THEME ANALYSIS

#### **WILL THE BRUSSELS ATTACKS HAVE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE EU–UKRAINE RELATIONS?**

*At first glance, terrorist attacks in Brussels airport and subway on March 22, which killed more than three dozen people, have no relevance to the development of EU–Ukraine relations. However, the experience of previous year's terrorist attacks in Paris leaves no doubt that Moscow will try to use the Brussels tragedy for its own purposes, contributing to strengthening positions of Eurosceptics and seeking to convince the EU capitals that Russia is more important partner than Ukraine.*

The ISIS took responsibility for the terrorist attacks in Brussels, but actually it is common practice for the terrorist groups to take responsibility for the attacks on the adversaries – to attract more followers who share the terrorist methods. However, several questions arise. One of them is **why the "Islamic state" decided to strike at Brussels thus provoking NATO**, if according to the Kremlin's propaganda it was only Russia who effectively fought against ISIS? **Another question is why the Brussels attacks happened just before the visit of John Kerry to Moscow, shifting the emphasis in negotiations in advantageous for the Kremlin direction**, similar to the previous year's attacks in Paris right before the G-20 summit?

The head of the foreign-affairs committee in Russian parliament **Aleksey Pushkov in his commentary unexpectedly associated terrorist attack in Brussels with NATO's increased military presence in the Baltic States.**<sup>1</sup> And parliamentary **Speaker Sergey Naryshkin in his commentary mentioned sanctions against Russia**, "enthusiastically promoted" by the EU and NATO governments "instead of decisive actions to fight terrorism."<sup>2</sup> Isn't it strange that top Russian politicians associated the terrorist attacks in Brussels with the issues of NATO presence in Baltic and sanctions?

The head of the Security Service of Ukraine **Vasyl Hrytsak said he would not be surprised, if Brussels explosion "were a part of Russia's hybrid war."**<sup>3</sup> Surely, no one in Brussels would dare to voice such a version; however, no one supported Sergey Naryshkin's 'initiative' on joint anti-terrorist coalition.<sup>4</sup> To compare: after the tragic events in Paris of November 2015, French President went to Moscow for discussing the joint anti-terrorist coalition. But this time, NATO Deputy Secretary

<sup>1</sup> [https://twitter.com/Alexey\\_Pushkov/status/712190947816316928](https://twitter.com/Alexey_Pushkov/status/712190947816316928)

<sup>2</sup> <http://ria.ru/world/20160322/1394601010.html>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2016/03/22/7102893>

<sup>4</sup> <http://tass.ru/politika/2982448>

General Alexander Vershbow made it clear that the Alliance will not make deal with Russia for the sake of fighting terrorism.<sup>5</sup>

Although Russia failed to impose on West its anti-terrorist 'assistance,' but the Brussels attacks contribute to the objectives pursued by Russia in its policy towards the EU and Ukraine.

**The attacks will certainly strengthen the position of Eurosceptics and radical political forces in the European Union.** Attacks have nothing in common with the European integration, but European populists speculate as if tragic events resulted from the EU common foreign policy, particularly in the field of migration. Russia-sponsored populists ignore the fact that terrorists were the EU citizens, not migrants.

**Rising support for Eurosceptics and right-wing radicals plays into the hands of the Kremlin, because it undermines unity in the EU, including the positions on the extension of sanctions against Russia.** And the ruling European parties have to take into account such public moods. In March 2016, the right-wing populist "Alternative for Germany" was elected to three federal parliaments – in Rhineland-Palatinate, Baden-Wuerttemberg and Saxony-Anhalt. Given that one of the ruling parties in German coalition – the Social Democrats – also tends to quick lifting of sanctions against Russia, the situation is not too favourable for Ukraine.

**Eurosceptics and right-wing radicals actively oppose the EU's rapprochement with Ukraine. Strengthening of their positions at the eve of the Dutch referendum on the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement was a gift to Moscow.** In this sense, the Brussels attacks took place very "timely" for Russia. A lot of Dutch residents are scared by Russian propaganda's stories about the 'civil' war in Ukraine, and believe that it is safer to vote against the Association.

**Terrorist attacks overshadow the prospects of visa-free regime for Ukraine.** In March 2016, Ukrainian parliament adopted amendments to the law on electronic income tax declarations, which was among the conditions for visa-free regime. But given the rise of terrorist threats, it is unclear whether Brussels will agree to provide a visa-free regime for Ukraine. With that, it should be noted that Kyiv could adopt all the needed "visa-free" laws in 2014, and get the visa-free regime before all those terrorist attacks happened.

***It is important that for the sake of fighting against one group of terrorists, the West does not turn a blind eye to the actions of another one, and does not create ghostly coalitions with those who pursue quite different goals. In a statement on Brussels terrorist attacks, Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs reminded that Ukraine also "suffers from terrorist attacks."***<sup>6</sup> ***Given the number of Russian citizens fighting in the ranks of the "Islamic state" and terrorist groups in Donbas, it's quite a time to internationally recognise Russia as a state – sponsor of terrorism.***

***Given Ukraine's considerable experience in preventing crimes of terrorism as part of a hybrid war, Kyiv should actively offer its assistance to the EU, thus becoming an important contributor to the common European security.***

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.dw.com/ru/замгенсека-нато-сделки-с-москвой-ради-борьбы-с-терроризмом-не-будет/a-19141980>

<sup>6</sup> <http://nato.mfa.gov.ua/ua/press-center/news/45991-komentar-mzs-ukrajini-u-zvjazku-z-teroristichnimi-aktami-u-bryusseli-22-bereznya>

## UKRAINE – NATO



### KEY THEME ANALYSIS

#### ***A NEW CONCEPT FOR DEVELOPMENT OF UKRAINE'S SECURITY AND DEFENCE SECTOR ENVISAGES A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT REFORMS, BUT NOT A COURSE TOWARDS NATO MEMBERSHIP***

*On March 14, 2016, Petro Poroshenko signed a decree that enacted a decision of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine "On the Concept for development of the security and defence sector of Ukraine."*<sup>7</sup>

The document states that the Concept "contributes to the shaping of security and defence sector as a comprehensive functional unit administered from the single centre; its development is based on the unified planning framework to achieve common capabilities that can adequately and flexibly respond to the complex nature of current threats to the national security of Ukraine, taking into account simultaneous hazards of different nature and impact." So, actually it is about shaping the **integrated security and defence system with single management that can effectively resist multi-level threats, including the hybrid ones**. Such a task objectively results from the identified shortcomings in Ukraine's security and defence sector emerged during the Russian aggression, especially in its first months, namely, the lack of proper coordination in decision-making, inconsistency of functions and powers of different elements of security and defence system, and unpreparedness to address contemporary hybrid threats.

Reform of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, among other tasks, envisages the implementation by the end of 2017 of such important measures as the **creation of special operations forces, immediate reaction forces, increasing capacity and reserve forces**. The location of permanent deployment of the Armed Forces units will be revised taking into account the current security environment. By the end of 2020, the **military command of Ukrainian Armed Forces will be reformed in accordance with the J-structure, similar to the headquarters of NATO member states**. By that time, the indicators of military training achievements are to reach NATO standards.

**State border security** and protection of Ukraine's sovereign rights in its exclusive maritime economic zone, as well as **protection from emergency situations** – are **transferred to the competence of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIF)**. The National Guard of Ukraine as a military force with law enforcement functions is also a part of the MIF, but **at the time of martial law the National Guard would serve under command of the Ministry of Defence**. Such decision

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.president.gov.ua/documents/922016-19832>



seems to be grounded; however, uncertainty may arise in case of hybrid aggression similar to the current one, when martial law is not formally declared.

**Ukraine's state border with Russia is to be fully equipped** with modern technical means of surveillance only by the end of 2020, although previously the officials voiced more optimistic terms. Rapid reaction border forces are to be established by the same time.

Fundamental **adjustment of functions of the Security Service of Ukraine** (SSU) is planned – it will focus more on counterintelligence protection, combating terrorism, cybercrimes and information operations. Such changes are justified both in terms of best international practices and the nature of modern threats, and in terms of avoiding overlapping of functions with other law enforcement agencies. However, the text of Concept envisages such a vaguely defined function for the SSU as "Combating organized crime in various areas (with subsequent step-by-step optimization of the SSU authorities as stipulated in the legislation)." Therefore, the actual result of reforming depends on how such "optimization" will be specified in legislation.

The Concept states that "in order to improve the effectiveness of the intelligence agencies of Ukraine, **the Joint Committee on Intelligence under the President of Ukraine** is established." It is also determined that under martial law, at the President's decision **the Military office of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine can be transformed into the Supreme Command**. Among the important tasks set in the Concept is **full independence from Russia in production of arms and military equipment, to be achieved by 2020**. The document also envisages other vital tasks, including creating conditions for **effective public control over the security and defence sector**.

Among the shortcomings of the Concept one should note **the lack of clarity in numerous tasks**, which are often defined as "improvement," "optimization," "development," "building capacities", "reforming," etc. Given that the Concept is a basic document for a number of other normative acts and laws to be adopted, it would be advisable to clearly define how the "improving" and "reforming" should be made – to prevent the possible eroding of the planned changes.

Another major drawback is **the lack of clear task to prepare for NATO membership**. Although the document refers to the "NATO standards" and "operational and technical interoperability," but the prospect of membership is not even mentioned.

Instead, it is written about the *"shaping of collective security systems with participation of Ukraine."* NATO is *already a well-established* system of collective security, so, Ukraine may *join* it, but not take part in its *shaping*. Hypothetically, the authors of the Concept could mean shaping of the EU collective security system, but it is still unclear why the word "systems" is used in plural. **Anyway, Ukrainian authorities once again proved reluctance to clearly indicate the course towards NATO membership**. Moreover, among the medium-term security threats to Ukraine the Concept lists the *"possible usage of Ukraine's territory for combat actions in case of military conflict between the NATO member states and the Russian Federation."* In this wording Ukraine actually considers itself as a third party in possible conflict between Russia and NATO, and not as a member or at least an ally of the latter.

**In general, the Concept for development of Ukraine's security and defence sector is a well-prepared document, which envisages a number of important reforms, but has the same shortcomings as other national documents of strategic nature.** A large number of tasks are set insufficiently clearly that opens opportunities for emasculation of reforms during drafting

normative acts for the practical implementation of the Concept. A significant drawback is **the lack of a clear set task of preparing Ukraine for NATO membership.**



## FOREIGN POLICY OF UKRAINE



### KEY THEME ANALYSIS

#### **SHOULD UKRAINE PARTICIPATE IN THE WASHINGTON NUCLEAR SECURITY SUMMIT?**

*More than 50 world leaders visited the fourth Nuclear Security Summit in Washington; however, the practical effectiveness of this event is questionable, except for the PR effect to its initiator Barack Obama. Should Ukraine participate in this summit at the highest level? National experts consider this question disputable.*

The key topic of the Washington summit, held on March 31 – April 1, 2016, was **non-proliferation of nuclear materials** to prevent their falling into the hands of terrorists. Actually, there was no chance to achieve any breakthrough in the field of nuclear safety at this summit, given that Russia, Iran and North Korea ignored it – and these countries are exactly those, whose nuclear policy causes most concern. Arguably, the main aim of the event was to summarize efforts of the current U.S. President in the sphere of nuclear security. Barack Obama called this issue his top priority and considers that he succeeded in this sphere. He obviously wants to be remembered as a president who contributed to the nuclear safety, than as politician under whose rule the United States has lost the role of world leader.

Ukraine's participation in summit at the highest level became a debatable issue at least for two reasons. **Firstly, Barack Obama actually sabotaged the implementation of the Budapest Memorandum of 1994**, denying effective assistance to Ukraine as a victim of Russian aggression. Speaking in the Senate, former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine **John Herbst rightly mentioned that violation of the Budapest memorandum was "perhaps the biggest ever shock for the non-proliferation movement."**<sup>8</sup> Given the nature of the fighting in Donbas, John Herbst assumed that 25 U.S. Javelins could help Ukraine to keep Debaltseve from being captured by Russian tanks.

**Actually, Ukraine's insecurity is the most revealing example for the countries seeking to possess nuclear weapons.** Failure of the Obama administration to honour the security guarantees granted to Kyiv in exchange for nuclear disarmament, for a long time removed from the world agenda the issue of

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-politycs/1982735-ssa-maut-priednatisa-do-minska2-j-nadati-zbrou-ukraini-gerbst.html>

voluntary renunciation of nuclear weapons.

By the way, *Bloomberg* informed that **the Obama administration proposes to appoint Rose Gottemoeller as NATO Deputy Secretary General after resignation of Alexander Vershbow. Ms. Gottemoeller participated in shaping the Budapest Memorandum** and now holds the position of Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security.<sup>9</sup> She supports the idea of U.S.–Russia negotiations on complete rejection of tactical nuclear weapons. If Moscow's adherence to such possible arrangements is guaranteed similarly to the security assurances under the Budapest Memorandum, then the European NATO members will have reasons to be worry about.

**The second factor, why some Ukrainian experts considered Petro Poroshenko should not participate in the summit – was the lack of positive messages from Kyiv** that weakened its negotiating position.<sup>10</sup> The political crisis and unclear situation over the government, the lack of reforms and strengthening of corruption – annoy Ukraine's Western partners. Against this background, **the results of Petro Poroshenko meetings with Barack Obama and Joseph Biden proved the useless of expectations for the further assistance – both the U.S. leaders said that Kyiv would not receive the third tranche of loan guarantees at \$1 billion until the new government appointed.**

It should be noted that despite sceptical forecasts, Ukrainian President still managed to meet with his American counterpart. Besides, **Petro Poroshenko met with Secretary of State John Kerry**, who informed about his talks in Moscow; **with Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker**; and with representatives of American military industry companies. During Poroshenko's visit to the U.S., **Ukrainian and Australian governments signed an agreement on cooperation in using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.** Ukrainian President also met with the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, whom he called for the deployment of the international security mission in Donbas.

We should also note **Petro Poroshenko's strong speech at the Forum "Ukraine's Battle for Freedom Continues," held on March 30, in the Capitol.** The main messages of the statement were the following:

- Ukraine remains committed to the full implementation of the Minsk agreements, but **the local elections in Donbas can be held only after the deployment of the enhanced OSCE police mission** and beginning of restoration of Ukraine's control over the state border. Attempts to legitimize the Russian occupation through farce elections are unacceptable;

- **"Ukraine remains among the key contributors to success of the Obama Nuclear Security initiative," but "What did we get in response? We got security assurances under the 1994 Budapest Memorandum." So, "we, Ukrainians, are entitled to call upon the Western guarantors under the Memorandum to take all possible efforts to restore international justice and order";**

- **"I believe that there is a real chance for President Obama to mark his presidential term with settlement of the conflict in Donbas."** – Thus, Ukrainian President actually called upon his American colleague to not wash hands of the Russia-Ukraine conflict seeking to transmit the problem to successor;

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.bloombergview.com/articles/2016-03-11/hawks-see-obama-s-nato-pick-as-soft-on-russia>

<sup>10</sup> напр., див.: <http://ukrainian.voanews.com/content/poroshenko-washington/3261167.html>;  
<http://mfaua.org/2016/03/31/diplomaticnij-turizm-poroshenka-v-ssha>



– **Petro Poroshenko also urged the U.S. to not avoid responsibility of the world leader:** "In the times of global weakness, there is a thing that counts more than anything else – leadership. It is a privilege and a heavy burden. Not everyone wants it. Not everyone deserves it. ... In these times of doubt, I urge America to be strong and believe in itself – just like people of goodwill worldwide keep believing in America."<sup>11</sup>

At the press conference on the results of the summit, **Barack Obama ‘comforted’ that situation in Ukraine could be even more insecure, if Kyiv did not abandon its stocks of highly enriched uranium in 2012.**<sup>12</sup> However, Mr. Obama forgot to add that present insecure situation would not happen at all, if the guarantors of the Budapest Memorandum fulfilled their obligations.

**Following the summit, Petro Poroshenko said that the participants “discussed a new initiative on security guarantees for the countries that do not have a nuclear arsenal.”**<sup>13</sup> He added that "it is a topic to be discussed in the future." So, one can conclude that no accords on this issue were reached – and actually it was hardly possible to expect success. No one will believe in security guarantees, until those given to Ukraine by the Budapest Memorandum are met.

*Thus, Ukraine's participation in the Nuclear Security Summit has left a contradictory impression. On the one hand, President held a lot of high-level meetings and got a chance to directly seek for the support of American establishment. On the other hand, **the meetings and appeals for fulfilment of promises and security guarantees will succeed only after Kyiv begins to properly implement own commitments – on reforms and combating corruption.***

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.president.gov.ua/news/vistup-prezidenta-ukrayini-na-forumi-bitva-ukrayini-za-svobo-36927>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-abroad/1993246-obama-nazvav-adernu-nebezpeku-akoi-vdalosa-uniknuti-ukraini.html>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.president.gov.ua/news/vazhlivo-mati-mozhlivist-obminyatisya-dumkami-ta-skoordinuva-36939>