International Affairs: Vol. 69: №1, 2023: Summary

Russia's Approach to UN Peacekeeping Operations

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THE FIRST full-scale participation of a Soviet/Russian contingent in a UN peacekeeping operation dates back to 1973, when the USSR sent 36 officers as military observers to assist in Arab-Israeli conflict settlement. The situation changed dramatically in the 1990s. In 1991 alone, Russian contingents took part in the work of UN missions in Kuwait and Iraq, followed by Cambodia in 1992. In the early 2000s, over 3,000 Russian personnel took part in UN missions in Ethiopia and Eritrea, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sierra Leone, Georgia, East Timor, and Kosovo.3 Russia has also stepped up its activities in another area: participation in UN peacekeeping operations. Russian troops were deployed as part of UN missions in the Balkans, Mozambique, Rwanda, and Angola. In 1995, the Russian contingent reached 1,764 troops, most of whom (about 1,500) operated in the former Yugoslavia.

The Balkan conflicts had a particularly significant impact on the expansion of Russia's activities in UN peacekeeping organizations. Until the early 2000s, Russian military contingents were involved primarily in the republics of the former Yugoslavia – in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo.

In parallel with UN peacekeeping, Russia also sought to play the role of the leading regional state, primarily in the post-Soviet space, eliminating hotbeds of tension such as the conflicts in South Ossetia and Transnistria. It is also worth noting that in the 1990s, Russia was the main player in resolving disputes in the post-Soviet space – in fact, neither the UN nor the OSCE established their own missions in the region, limiting their participation to military observers.

The Russian Federation's position on peacekeeping is based on the consistently postulated importance and central coordinating role of the UN in the modern world and its undeniable authority in dispute settlement. Moreover, Russia occupies one of the central positions in the Yalta-Potsdam system in which the UN serves as the connecting link, and UN Security Council membership gives the country the exclusive right to protect and promote national interests.

Russia strongly supports the strengthening of the existing peacekeeping system.

AT THE PRESENT STAGE, the major international players have been unable to overcome their differences on peacekeeping reform. In particular, the conflict in Syria has become a vivid example of the divide in the international community on issues of conflict resolution through peacekeeping.

While the US and other Western countries see protecting individual rights and freedoms and promoting liberal ideology as their main peacekeeping goals, Russia primarily focuses on the need to preserve existing statehood without regime change in order to strengthen regional security.

A key difficulty facing Russian contingents stems from the nature of the operations in which Russia has participated. They can primarily be characterized as peace enforcement operations where the modus operandi is still being actively formed and the institutionalization of norms remains superficial. In the post-Soviet space, such activities, whether by UN peacekeeping forces or with contributions from regional organizations, were characterized by the use of weapons, leading to criticism of Russia's peacekeeping activities by the international community and accusations of wanting to single-handedly eliminate hotbeds of tension in CIS territory.24 Meanwhile, Russia traditionally advocates the immutability of the three key peacekeeping principles and opposes so-called "tough peacekeeping"; this position underlies Moscow's approaches to reforming the UN peacekeeping system in general.

For Russia, UN peacekeeping and its key principles are inextricably linked with maintaining the backbone status of the UN. Russia has traditionally been in favor of maintaining the central role of the UN in peacekeeping, both at the doctrinal level and in practice, and opposes any attempts to circumvent the UN in matters of conflict settlement. At the same time, the declared importance of peacekeeping remains disproportionate to the real involvement of Moscow in terms of both funding and military personnel.

The Monroe Doctrine as the Will and Idea of the United States of America

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ON FEBRUARY 24, 2022, international relations entered a whole new stage of development affecting, albeit to varying degrees, practically all states, with no end in sight. On September 7, 2022, speaking at the Eastern Economic Forum, Russian President Vladimir Putin said that the world was experiencing "fundamental transformations." Such transformations generally require several years to be completed. By the middle of the third decade of the 21st century, two highly important signs of a new situation have become absolutely clear: a crisis of the old institutions of global governance and the new rising and developing centers of power. At the same time, the opinion that the new is just the "well-forgotten old" is confirmed. This is especially true of the US and its policies.

THE GLOBAL CRISIS, which has already affected the structure, composition, normative base, and operational methods of global governance institutions, is rooted in a crisis of the philosophical, ideological, and identity foundations of life. This means that the crisis is deep and the changes irreversible. This primarily refers to the foundations of world politics and economics established after World War II on the initiative, under the aegis, or with the direct involvement of the US. It seems that their genesis should be sought in the countries of the Western Hemisphere.

In 2023, the world public will undoubtedly mark the 200th anniversary of the famous Monroe Doctrine proclaimed on December 2, 1823. This was a unilateral declaration of the foreign policy principles of the US formulated in President James Monroe's annual address to Congress.

For two centuries, the doctrine has been viewed positively by Americans: "In the United States, the Monroe Doctrine was interpreted as the extension of the War of Independence, sheltering the Western

Hemisphere from the operation of the European balance of power," Henry Kissinger wrote in his book World Power.

Like practically every subsequent American foreign policy doctrine, the Monroe Doctrine had a false bottom. The first bottom served to propagate the ostentatious altruism of an "exceptional" – by all standards of that time – state that proclaimed to pursue the ideals of "freedom" and the "rights of nations and individuals." From the very beginning, these ideals were nothing but a fig leaf, so to speak, of the doctrine's insidious expansionist nature.

Despite Washington's frantic efforts, the Monroe Doctrine was not accepted as an official document of the Pan-American system it set up in 1889-1890 and remained a unilateral declaration of the US government. Its letter and spirit, however, remained the leitmotif of America's foreign policy, while the initiatives tested by the US in its "backyard" (the Latin American and Caribbean countries) were soon applied to the rest of the world.

The Monroe Doctrine relies on militant liberalism as the main foreign policy credo of the US. This means that in its broad "philosophical" sense, the doctrine has left the confines of the Western Hemisphere and claims worldwide relevance.

THE SPECIAL MILITARY OPERATION that Russia began in Ukraine revealed with great clarity that the world is split into those who are trying to replace law with arbitrariness and those who are insisting on legal principles and fairness in world politics. These events marked the starting point in the building of a fundamentally new polycentric and multicultural world order.

Russia's national-cultural specifics should be studied in greater detail by Russian scholars. A comprehensive approach (the only proper one!) that includes not only economic, political, and social but also philosophical, cultural, linguistic, and psychological components requires a special Russian government think tank (the Institute of Russia?) whose theoreticians and practitioners might contribute to the formation of a "national idea," the need for which has been talked about for a long time.

Legal awareness is another no less important cause of cognitive dissonance; the subject has not yet been adequately studied. Les grands systèmes de droit contemporains [The main legal systems of modernity] by French authors René David and Camille Jauffret-Spinosi stands apart: The authors draw a clear distinction between the Anglo-Saxon system of law – "common law," which is based on precedent – and the "continental" (or Romano-Germanic) legal system, which relies on codified norms, that Russia, China, and the Latin American countries use along with the states of continental Europe.

No changes should be expected today or any time soon: The Monroe mindset has become ingrained in the US – in its historical, cultural, and psychological context. The main conclusion should be sought elsewhere: Let us hope that a better understanding of this phenomenon will help us separate "the wheat from the chaff." It is vital that we abandon our naïve conviction that the words of our American partners match their deeds; it is imperative to abandon the illusion that their thinking, behavior, and legal awareness are close to our own. In this way, we will avoid cognitive dissonances that require radical responses.

Malicious Disinformation Campaigns as a Destabilizing Factor in Maintaining International Information Security

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THE US considers the Internet a primary tool in waging hybrid, psychological, and proxy wars in various combinations to achieve worldwide dominance in the global information space, given that the digital web reaches more than 60% of the world's population.

The modern reality is such that aggressive propaganda in the form of malicious disinformation campaigns was identified by Westerners on the state level first as a component of a comprehensive set of measures to contain Russia, then as a decisive element of destroying the country as a subject of international law.

In 2022, the number of cyberattacks on Russia grew by 80%. And since the beginning of the special military operation [in Ukraine], the intensity of DDoS attacks on Russian resources has grown, with the [average] length of each attack in May 2022 lasting 57 hours.

The situation in the global information space is fraught with a growing level of conflict potential due to growing dissonance between the neoliberal model of globalization and the cultural-historical (civilizational) distinctiveness of peoples defending their traditional moral values. In this connection, the primary objective of the Western community is the destruction of the Russian World by methods that include the use of the ideology of neoliberal fascism and the [West's] advantages in the domination of the infosphere.

To fully grasp the resources involved in the information war, the main content of which are numerous incidents of malicious information sabotage, it is expedient to point out the results of an analysis of the patterns of funding for the development of a number of areas of ICT (information and communications technology), media surveillance technologies, R&D, and information operations provided for under US national defense laws. From 2017 to 2022, [these budget allocations] increased by 80%: from $857 million to $1.547 billion.

A detailed study of how US media activity around Ukraine is organized shows evidence that the so-called "dissemination of tendentious information" [concept in international law – Trans.] is being outsourced.

The main thrust of this media activity is focused on the interests of the West's policy to discredit Russia during the course of the special military operation. According to the American portal Mintpress.com, NATO is actively using "troll farms" to disseminate propagandistic messages.

Ukraine, with the help of foreign consultants, has built an effective network of foreign PR agencies that actively facilitate the transmission of specifically prepared messages across the web.

A driving force in the Ukrainian information campaign is the website Ukraine.ua, which is headed by one Yaroslav Turbil, who has known ties to American intelligence agencies.

Special components of strategic communication from Ukraine intended for the Western audience are memes, which abound with Nazi symbolism. Guidelines are set for the foreign press corps to use the proper terminology and adopt the proper perspective on events. Such instructions are updated weekly.

An indicative fact may be a copy of the Ukrainian public television network's financial report for 2021. The lion's share of the channel's financial revenue comes from abroad.

In the interests of planning and implementing a comprehensive set of measures to counter anti-Russian information sabotage, all malicious activity by Russia's adversaries in the information space demands close attention and study – especially the tactics, planned/applied methods, and means of information

warfare. An instructive resource in this respect is a genuine Google document that outlines the concept, sources, and main directions of a targeted media propaganda campaign in February-March 2022.

In an interview with the mass media, Deputy Secretary of the Russian Federation Security Council Oleg Khramov stated: "It is necessary to concentrate efforts on building an entire body of systematic work, facilitated by the approval of strategic planning documents. These include, for one, the Fundamentals of State Policy for the Preservation of Russian Spiritual and Moral Values. Russian President V.V. Putin directs us to undertake vigorous work in this area: He has repeatedly emphasized that one of the reasons for the Western elites' centuries-old Russophobia is their anger at Russia, which has managed to withstand periods of colonial conquests and world wars, and has developed and strengthened on the basis of the great moral values of [Christian] Orthodoxy, Islam, Judaism, and Buddhism." This document is expected to be approved by decree of the Russian president in the near future.

A national association of international information security could be the integrator of scientific research efforts focused on countering malicious activity in the media space in the interests of improving the existing system of international law.

International Aspects of Ethnocultural Education Amid Increased Migration

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ACCORDING TO the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the number of international migrants worldwide reached 281 million in 2020, up from 221 million in 2010 and 173 million in 2000. The number of people newly arriving in various countries around the world has exceeded population growth, as the share of international migrants in the global population increased from 2.8% in 2000 to 3.2% in 2010 and 3.6% in 2020 [22, 7]. This trend is not expected to change in the coming decades, since sociopolitical instability in many regions of the world is increasing rather than decreasing.

Children are one of the most vulnerable categories of displaced persons. Globally, the total number of migrating children (often called "children on the move" in English) reached 31 million in 2020. Many of them do not have access to quality education and experience major difficulties during the adaptation and integration process. Children in a situation of forced international migration, from refugee or asylum seeker families, have a particularly hard time.

The unresolved problems of migration crises, interethnic conflicts, refugee issues, and the subsequent growing discontent of host countries' citizens have prompted governments to take measures to minimize the increasing threats. Such measures have been implemented over the past two or three decades, including, among other steps, the introduction of ethnocultural and multicultural education

and a variety of adaptation programs. This process has its own history reflected in the provisions of transnational conventions and international education standards.

The main causes of the global migration crisis and illegal migration are usually related to hunger, poverty, and lack of peace and security that prompt the search for a better life in developed countries or other states with stable economies and social welfare. Education is crucial for the successful integration into the host society of migrants from other ethnic backgrounds.

Since the 1970s, under the influence of growing public opposition to racism, apartheid, and discrimination against ethnic minorities, the concepts of anti-racist education and multicultural education have become increasingly popular in the US, Canada, and European countries.

In May 1999, a representative International Forum "For a Culture of Peace and Dialogue of Civilizations in the Third Millennium" that brought together city mayors and leaders of culture, science, and public life was held in Moscow. The forum's final document emphasized the special importance of education and upbringing for a culture of peace. As part of the city-wide program "Moscow on the Way to the Culture of Peace," a scientific and practical conference titled "A Decade of the Ethnocultural Movement in Moscow: Experience and Prospects" was held on the eve of the new millennium. Its participants commended the social significance of the efforts made over the years to harmonize interethnic relations and develop ethnocultural education that received positive assessments from UNESCO and other relevant international organizations.

By the mid-1990s, the Russian public education system included about 9,000 "national" schools.

Currently, the most popular forms of studying the ethnocultural component (native language and culture) are native language and literature courses taught as part of the educational program offered in Russian. The subject area "Foundations of the Spiritual and Moral Culture of the Peoples of Russia" offers another possibility for including the ethnocultural component in the educational process; its potential to address the issue has not yet been sufficiently utilized. The supplementary education system is also important for preserving and developing the ethnocultural component.

Education is the only field that, regardless of any strategy or policy, promotes the integration and socialization of members of different ethnic groups, migrants, and ethnic minorities. Promoting faster integration of migrants and ethnic minorities is an issue that should be a priority for regional authorities, education leadership, and individual teachers.

Unfortunately, we currently see the leadership of a number of Western countries turning away from the UN charter principles and international legal documents aimed at the sustainable development of equitable and quality education for all, respect for World Heritage, and support for cultural diversity and multilingualism of the peoples of the world. Contrary to earlier commitments, they are introducing unfriendly rules of "cancel culture," a policy of isolation and oppression against Russian culture, language and education. However, cancelling Dostoevsky, Pushkin, Chekhov, or Tchaikovsky ignores the fact that Russian culture is a global heritage and part of Western culture. Culture should unite and build bridges between peoples, rather than divide them. We hope that the situation changes for the better, and that the principles of international and intercultural cooperation, as well as the ideas of a culture of peace, will once again become necessary and important for the entire international community.

Reasons for the West's Hatred of Russia

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RUSSIA as a state and civilization and Russian statehood as an institution have acted for centuries as system-forming factors of the world order. They have, at various times, exerted influence of varying intensity and significance on the shape, character, and content of international relations, while also being influenced by them. The West's hostility toward Russia arose, took shape, and began to actively manifest itself as one of the constants of this influence, occasionally reaching the level of outright hatred and spiraling into attacks against Russian statehood, which invariably mobilized the country's peoples to rebuff the aggressors.

The origins of Russian statehood and sovereignty date back to the reign of Prince Oleg (879-912), who de facto became the first legitimate head of the Old Russian state and established the principle that Russia is independent of any authority other than its own. By nailing his shield to the gates of Constantinople, he declared Russia's entry into the international arena, codified in 941 under his successor Prince Igor in an agreement with the Byzantine Empire. The treaty is considered the first international document in which one of the parties is a state named Russia.

Unlike other European powers, Russia never participated in colonial wars and partitions on other continents but expanded by annexing neighboring territories and advancing on its Eurasian continent toward Siberia and the Far East. The fact that Russia was acquiring new territories and possessions caused envy, jealousy, and concern in Europe and beyond. Karl Marx wrote about this: "Ancient maps of Russia are unfolded before us, displaying even larger European dimensions than she can boast of now: Her perpetual movement of aggrandizement from the ninth to the 11th century is anxiously pointed out."

The Muscovite state entered the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the modern era as an impressive political force, having united vast expanses in eastern Europe and ready to take its rightful place in the European and global landscape. Western visitors started seeping into Moscow and, upon their return, talked about the wealth and power of Muscovite Rus. This was news to many in the West.

The Russian state, gaining strength in the international arena, fought its way forward with difficulty, constantly overcoming the resistance of Western countries and having to resist their aggression almost from the very beginning. The appearance between 1198 and 1201 on Russia's western borders of the Teutonic Order and the Order of the Sword – the supposed source of certain still existing aggressive inclinations and deep political structures of the West – was a direct threat to the Russian state, which soon resulted in brutal aggression.

The riches of the vast country continued to beckon, and in order to gain access to them, the Jesuit Antonio Possevino, papal ambassador to the court of Ivan the Terrible, formulated the doctrine of the dismemberment of Russia in 1582 and proposed it to Pope Gregory XIII. In 1604, the Polish invasion of Moscow began. It marked the beginning of the Time of Troubles, which ended with the expulsion of the invaders.

Western aggression against Russia and attacks on its statehood became collective starting in the 19th century. In 1812, Russia repelled not only the invasion of the French, who comprised only about half of Napoleon's united army, but the collective aggression of all of Europe involving many states. In fact, this intervention ushered in a new era in relations between the West and Russia characterized by the fact that the Western countries began to act against the Russian state in concert both on the diplomatic field and on the battlefield.

After World War I, Russia's former allies and opponents once again formed a united front to attack it, for the first time establishing a community with the participation of Japan that formed the concept of the "collective West."

The West's hatred of Russia and desire to destroy it are hard to attribute to ideological differences, as was suggested back when the world was bipolar; bipolarity is gone, but the hatred remains. The ideological explanation of its aggressive attitude toward Russia is merely a cover for the true goals of the West. The opinion of British historian Arnold Toynbee seems much more convincing and confirmed by the facts of history and modernity. He claimed that aggression is the only form of communication between the West and the outside world, and the history of diplomacy of the Western powers, entranced by Western democracy, easily reads like a list of sheer follies and misfortunes of mankind.

The deeds of the Western rulers, which far outpaced those of the Russian sovereign in terms of the cruelty of reprisals and number of victims, are not discussed or condemned, as if they never took place. Once again, the West clearly uses double standards, avoiding talking about the historical crimes of its rulers while readily talking about the barbarism and cruelty of the Russians on every possible occasion.

Envy, jealousy, fear, intolerance toward Christian Orthodoxy and Russian spirituality, and the perception of the vast country as an alien and hostile force are the historic components of the West's hatred of Russia. But this may not be sufficient to explain why the West not only feels resentment toward Russia but constantly seeks to destroy it by attacking Russian statehood. The main reason lies, apparently, in Russia's rich natural resources, the consumption of which in the world (and, accordingly, their importance for humankind) is steadily growing.

The West, with its inexhaustible colonial plunder instinct and centurieslong habit of living comfortably at the expense of others, counted on the disintegration and dismemberment of Russia from within (as happened with the Soviet Union) in order to seize the much-coveted Russian wealth.

It seems important to understand that the West of colonialism and oppression, having realized that the world is becoming different and will no longer be the way the West wants, might be ready for the most dangerous and reckless schemes in the name of maintaining its former dominant position. The collective will and determination of the peoples have the power to curb its aggressive aspirations, so the world community must unite for global action.

Polish Geopolitical Ambitions and Their Consequences

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A NEW BALANCE of power in the European space is taking shape before our eyes, and the space itself might acquire a new configuration. This new trend is emerging as a consequence of the active and increasingly aggressive foreign policy activities of the Republic of Poland, supported by the US and Great Britain, which are interested, for various reasons, in creating a new alignment of forces in Europe. The transatlantic community is characterized not only by the unity of the participating states, but also by the rivalry between them. In the last 10 to 15 years, the East European region has become the main object of competition between the leading West European countries and the US. Let us take a closer look at

the content of this process, where the foreign policy interests of Poland have become the central element.

Having achieved the objective of joining NATO and the European Union, Poland was simultaneously developing its own projects to increase its influence in the East European region.

In the 2000s, Poland was bursting with ideas and projects aimed at consolidating the East European countries: the idea of creating the Community of Democratic Choice (2005), the Eastern Partnership (2008), the Three Seas initiative (2015), the Lublin Triangle (2020), and the European Commonwealth (2022).

In all these projects, Poland was assigned the main role. The Visegrád group had no geopolitical weight, and Poland gradually lost interest in it.

The concept of the Three Seas initiative is not exclusively Polish, although it is based on the ideas of Józef Piłsudski, chief of state of Poland in the 1920s. He wanted to turn the country into a major political player whose interests had to be considered both in Europe and beyond.

The reasons why the Americans converged in common interests with Poland have historical roots and are in part connected with the refusal of two important European partners – France and Germany – to support the US military invasion of Iraq. Moreover, Russia joined them [in their refusal]. The Americans were deeply offended; they clearly saw that even NATO allies were difficult to rely on. Several years later, the Americans, through the mouth of US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, divided the EU into two parts: Old Europe and New Europe. He said Germany and France were Old Europe, while the "new" states of Eastern Europe, which supported the US, belonged to New Europe. Strictly speaking, this statement may be considered a starting point in the formation of a new principal strategic line in the behavior of the US toward West European countries, consisting in creating opposition to France and Germany.

The Three Seas project is part of the strategic plans of the US and has both political and economic content. Its creation essentially leads to the formation of a kind of regional union within the EU. This will inevitably give rise to certain friction between the two, but it fully meets the strategic objectives of NATO/the US, specifying the military tasks of the bloc on the eastern flank. The "union" within the EU is the loosening of this integration union. But the US has never advocated a strong EU. It can be strong, but obedient. The creation of the Three Seas achieves this objective.

Since Nord Stream 2 made Germany the main gas hub of the EU and the distributor of Russian gas to other countries, Poland's pipeline project was designed to counteract this trend and compete in providing gas to the East European countries, boosting the importance of Poland in the region.

The Polish project received active political support from the US, as it allowed the latter to wedge into the contradictions between Russia and the EU in the energy sector, to increase its opportunities to promote shale liquefied gas to the European market, "saving" the EU from dependence on Russian gas supplies.

In the 2000s, Poland seized the initiative to develop the East European region from Germany and the EU. The Eastern Partnership, its adoption by the EU, was the apogee of Poland's active foreign policy and turned it into a leading political player in the region, stimulating the US's heightened interest in it. Poland gradually became an increasingly important partner for the US.

Analysis of the evolution of Poland's Eastern policy reveals not only its historical roots, but also the shift of its interests toward more global projects in the East European region, contributing to its emergence as an influential player in the European space.

The Three Seas project, and its implementation, means yet another redivision of the European space, but in this case no longer in the interests of West European countries. It is about the formation of the East European region as a relatively independent center of power in continental Europe. This will be a de facto union within the EU, which implies the creation of a well-developed technical infrastructure between the south and the north of the region, which could be used to strengthen NATO's eastern military flank in this region. Activities in this area have been carried out for a number of years, bypassing the 1997 Founding Act. At the same time, attempts by some West European countries (primarily France) to increase the military capabilities of the EU are being minimized. This, of course, diverts their resources from the rearmament of NATO.

Relying on and using Poland and other participants in the Three Seas initiative, the US is creating a market for its liquefied natural gas, since in both the north and south of the region, the infrastructure for receiving and distributing it among countries is being built. The Americans are taking historical revenge for 1981, when Germany ignored US demands not to build a gas pipeline from the USSR.

Three Seas recreates, under the new conditions, the "cordon sanitaire" of the first half of the 20th century, but back then it was aimed at preventing the penetration of the "communist threat" while today it has a broader role: to strengthen the control and influence of the US in Europe using new strategic allies from among the countries of Eastern and Southeastern Europe and the Baltic states and to neutralize major Western European states and their cooperation with Russia. What we are seeing is the process of shaping a new Europe as the West's response to the dramatic changes in the world order. This is a long-term trend that requires Russia to strengthen the strategic planning of its foreign policy activities.

Unpredictable America: The US Midterm Elections

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THE NOVEMBER 8, 2022 US midterm elections, which elected all members of the House of Representatives of the US Congress (435), a third of the Senate (33 + 2 vacant seats, of which 21 were held by Republicans and 14 by Democrats), as well as the governors of 36 states (with Republicans defending 20 seats and Democrats defending 16), were watched with intense interest around the globe.

Midterm elections in the US usually focus on domestic issues and only indirectly touch on foreign policy. However, amid the current international tension caused by the confrontation between Russia and the US-led collective West that has over the last 30 years reached a critical level, when the global media is openly discussing the possibility of a second edition of the 1962 Cuban missile crisis and the chances of the use of nuclear weapons have increased dramatically, drawing a clear demarcation line between US domestic and foreign policy has proved extremely difficult.

With regard to President Joe Biden, in the presidential election of 2020, which was a year of lofty plans and promises to American voters, he received 81.3 million votes, or 51.3%.[1] The 2022 midterm elections were supposed to be an express test of the president's work on implementing them.

A RADICAL SHIFT in American public sentiment regarding Biden's job performance came in late summer 2021, when his approval and disapproval ratings first matched at 48% (based on an integrated figure of public opinion polls conducted by leading US polling agencies) and then began to steadily diverge, with the share of those who disapprove of the president's job performance gaining the preponderance.

Expectations of an imminent "Red ninth wave" were so high that they became an independent political and psychological factor in American politics. Against this backdrop, summarizing the results turned into a political drama. However, by and large, the results of the midterms in terms of the balance of power in US society can be regarded as the preservation of the existing balance of political forces and the status quo established in the US after the 2020 presidential election, which was regarded by US public opinion as an unprecedented defeat of the Republican Party and Trump personally and as a historic victory of the Democratic Party and Biden personally.

In terms of the overall distribution of votes between the Democratic and Republican parties in the 2022 midterm elections, when out of approximately 102 million Americans who voted, about 53 million, or 51%, voted for Republican Party nominees and only about 49 million, or 47.1%, cast their votes for Democratic Party candidates,6 this really needs in-depth analysis and reflection.

A FUNDAMENTAL FACTOR in American politics in recent years has been the split of American society into two political camps, diametrically opposed in their value orientation, which turned out to be quite stable and approximately equal in number of supporters. This split had been rapidly widening long before Trump and emerged, fully formed, with his coming to power in January 2017.

This trend is a relatively new phenomenon in the functioning of the American political system, and it reflects its increasing dysfunctionality. The election results are a consequence of stagnation in American politics and extreme forms of political polarization. As a result, the pyrrhic victory of one of the parties in national elections does not mean that it receives a clear and precise mandate to lead the country, and no deep reforms nor regrouping of the party ranks follow yet another humiliating defeat.

Trump's active participation in the 2022 midterm elections was expressed not only in numerous rallies with his supporters, but also in direct endorsement of Republican Party candidates both during the primary elections and during the general campaign.

Even though many high-profile Republican candidates lost, such as Doug Mastriano in Pennsylvania in the race for governor's seat, or Adam Laxalt in the Nevada Senate race, in general, out of eight high-profile Republican governor nominees endorsed by Trump, five lost and three ran successful campaigns; in the Senate elections, six candidates won and three lost; and in the elections to the House of Representatives, nine candidates won while six were bitterly defeated.

With such an understanding of the nature of the 2022 midterm elections, where the "extremist" Republican candidates endorsed by Trump were opposed by the consistent fighters for the "ideals of American democracy" supported by the White House, the outcome of the elections becomes quite understandable and even very predictable. It also explains why the deterioration of the socioeconomic situation of tens and hundreds of millions of American citizens, rampant crime, the immigration crisis, and a number of other acute problems of US social development had no significant impact on the changes in the alignment of political forces in the US.

The economic factor played a significant and perhaps even decisive role in the outcome of the midterm elections. In American political campaigns, the "magic" third quarter is well known – i.e., the period from July to September, whose economic indicators come out in late October, right before the elections. American political scientists have long noticed that positive economic trends in the third quarter of an election year often create the effect of "winning the trend" for the ruling party, making it possible to

talk about a progressive improvement in the economy or the beginning of a turning point toward a "bright" economic future.

THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC that hit the US in 2020 fundamentally changed the organizational foundations of the presidential campaign, bringing to the forefront early voting and voting by mail, which were actively used by the Democratic Party and its candidates. These elements, especially vote-by-mail, have prompted numerous allegations from Republicans of electoral fraud.

Growing political polarization combined with partisanship on Capitol Hill will almost certainly paralyze the work of the US federal government, which may also affect its foreign policy. There is no doubt that the numerous House investigations planned by Republicans will bring back the atmosphere of the mid-1970s, dominated by the Watergate scandal. The uncertainty of prospects for the further development of the US is also heightened by possible crisis shocks in the American economy, which may be greatly contributed to by the rapidly growing national debt that has exceeded $31 trillion and that the 118th Congress will have to address in earnest.

China's Development of the Hydrogen Economy

Alexander Kartashov, *third secretary, Russian Embassy in China; a.kartashov@hotmail. Com*

ENERGY is the basis of all economies, and its quality and stable supply are key to the organization of production, economic development, and living standards. China is the world's largest economy and biggest consumer of primary energy. In 2021, it consumed about 5.24 billion [metric] tons of coal equivalent. But the country still faces considerable risks in terms of energy supply stability and quality.

In autumn 2021, China experienced an energy crisis. Efforts by regional administrations to implement central government directives to maximize the use of renewable energy and abandon coal had upset the supply-and-demand balance in the coal market. Prices for coal, which accounted for 56% of China's total energy consumption, spiked, causing many thermal power plants to cut their generation volumes. This triggered rolling outages in some provinces and brought some industrial facilities to a halt. Arguably, the crisis could be blamed on regulatory faults, shortages of primary energy, grid defects, and technological vulnerabilities of the use of renewable energy. Given China's role in international trade, the crisis might have been damaging to the world economy, but the Chinese government was quick to normalize the situation by revising pricing mechanisms and by measures to boost the mining and import of coal.

The crisis showed that at their current level of development, neither wind nor solar energy technologies can stably provide China with enough electricity, thus confirming the continuing importance of fossil fuels for the Chinese economy.

The Medium- and Long-term Plan for the Development of the Hydrogen Energy Industry (2021-2035), approved by the National Development and Reform Commission and the National Energy Administration in February 2022, definitively enshrined hydrogen's status as part of China's energy strategy. The document defines the principles and directions for the development of the industry, sets key tasks, and outlines methods for their implementation. The plan sets out China's vision of hydrogen as an important element of the global energy transition.

The plan is divided into three principal sections. By 2025, China is to create a comprehensive environment for developing the hydrogen energy industry and create relevant legislation for the hydrogen sector.

In the second stage, between 2025 and 2030, the hydrogen industry will be equipped with innovative technology, and essential mechanisms will be established to increase hydrogen production using renewable energy and to deliver it to end users.

Hydrogen is expected to become one of China's main energy sources by the time the program is completed.

Green hydrogen is primarily a fuel made through water electrolysis using "clean" electricity (some experts speak of "yellow" hydrogen obtained using nuclear energy). A key advantage of electrolysis powered by renewable energy is the possibility of the territorial distribution of generating capacity based on market needs, which would cut costs and largely solve the problem of storing hydrogen and delivering it to end users.

Along with the development of local hydrogen production, industry representatives in China are studying a proposal to build clusters of such facilities in areas rich in renewable energy sources. For example, there could be aggregations of facilities in coastal areas and in western China, with the former powered by sea wind and the latter by solar energy.

Chinese researchers are also exploring alternative methods of hydrogen production. For instance, experimental facilities have been set up to produce hydrogen fuel through waste processing, and research is being done on using water photolysis to obtain hydrogen.

The technological independence of China's hydrogen industry is one of the country's priorities. The state stimulates hydrogen technology research and supports the practical application of its achievements. China has been intensively developing its own manufacture of components for hydrogen fuel cells. Chinese analysts estimate that Chinese-made components accounted for 60% of all hydrogen fuel cell components used in China in 2020 compared with an estimated level of 30% in 2017.

The adoption of the 2021-2035 plan was a positive signal to investors and stimulated market activity. In June 2022, three hydrogen energy companies held initial public offerings (IPOs) of shares on the Shanghai Stock Exchange, and some other companies are planning IPOs, too. In addition, high fossil fuel prices since early 2022 have been stimulating investment in hydrogen and other alternative energy.

If Chinese technologies for storing hydrogen and other renewable forms of energy prove commercially successful, China can be expected to move away from fossil fuels, primarily coal, more quickly. This would affect the architecture of international energy trade, as China is the world's main consumer and importer of energy. In addition, new energy industries consume large amounts of metal; therefore, due to China's rapid development of the hydrogen, wind, and solar energy industries and its growing resources for exporting equipment for producing and using new energy, it needs more metals, including rare earth elements.

European countries, the US, Japan, and South Korea are also focusing on new types of energy. China can be expected to face tougher competition from those countries both in commodity markets (primarily metal and ore) and in the sales market of manufactured products and technological solutions. Developing clean energy industries in various countries with potential consequent competition for sales markets and for the assertion of technological standards may lead to new geopolitical tensions and exacerbate current ones, but simultaneously open new opportunities for international cooperation.

China's Experience in Protecting National Cyber Sovereignty

Olga Melnikova, *Candidate of Science (Political Science);* omelnikoff70@mail.ru

IN TODAY'S WORLD, the preservation of digital sovereignty is not only a pressing imperative, but also a guarantee of existence for any independent state – a way to avoid potential conflicts in the information environment.

The concept of "digital sovereignty" has many aspects. In the classical sense, sovereignty is directly related to territory and the prerogatives of power clearly limited by it. But unlike the territorial boundaries of the state, the information space has no borders. This man-made and intangible realm, which actually forms an additional new dimension of human existence, is a fundamentally new phenomenon capable of transforming economic, political, and social reality. Digital sovereignty is unique in that, unlike territorial sovereignty, it cannot be limited in either space or time.

One attribute of digital sovereignty is the right to independent management of digital resources operating in the national segments of the digital space. This right implies the possibility of regulating, supervising, and controlling the activities of digital platforms, as well as blocking information posted on them by state-authorized bodies and organizations in accordance with national legislation in the interests of the state itself.

The uncertainty and unpredictability generated by the information space – or, more precisely, the activities of its subjects – require correction through the adoption of regulatory decisions at the international level. Currently, no international legal norms capable of regulating activities in the information space have been developed. The world community has not yet been able to form a special branch of international law (similar to air, sea, and outer space law) that would regulate relations in the digital space. At the same time, the existing international legislation may not always be sufficiently applicable to the digital environment.

Having recognized in a timely manner the importance of ICT for both national and global growth, the Chinese authorities have bet on developing the ICT sector and transforming the country into a leading manufacturer of high-tech products. Each of the stages of China's movement in this direction has its own specifics.

Today, the Chinese economic model is focused not on imitation but on the development of its own innovative potential. In the policy documents of the Communist Party of China, digitalization of the economy is recognized as the main driver of reforms – a condition for increasing global competitiveness and ensuring the technological independence and defense capability of the country. State-owned enterprises are assigned the leading role in promoting digitalization.

As a world leader in the roll-out of 5G technologies, China not only provides a new generation of communication services within the country but also promotes its dissemination in other countries.

It is impossible to ignore the rapid growth in popularity of the Chinese social network TikTok, designed for viewing and downloading short videos lasting no more than 60 seconds.

The rapid expansion of the IT sector of the Chinese economy puts additional pressure on the issue of adequately protecting China's national information space and securing its critical infrastructure, and, in essence, the issue of safeguarding the country's information sovereignty.

The sovereignization of national cyberspace in China began in the late 1980s, when the country began to join the Internet. Since then, the Chinese authorities have managed to build in the digital field one of

the most uncompromising and effective regulatory regimes, which has a complex nature and a multi-level structure. It implies, first of all, the filtering of information using special technical methods, software, and human censors, as well as the introduction of a system of surveillance and punishment against both information suppliers and users. The main purpose of such a regime is to maintain state control in the national segment of the Internet, to protect Chinese Internet users from unwanted information and its negative impact.

Individuals and legal entities are prohibited from establishing direct international connections, and the entry points to the Global Network are under strict state control. The tools available to the state enable it to quickly block any Internet resource. At the same time, an ecosystem of domestic services has been created in the Chinese segment of the Internet, whose functionality surpasses that of foreign analogues.

Today, the Chinese segment of the Internet is controlled by several government agencies: the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology of the People's Republic of China, which is responsible solely for technical issues; the Department of Internet Security and Protection of the Ministry of State Security of the People's Republic of China; the Central Cyberspace Affairs Commission under the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China; and the National Radio and Television Administration at the ministry level, controlled by the Public Relations Department of the CPC, entrusted with the tasks of regulating ICT and is responsible for blocking Internet providers from accessing pornographic resources and gambling sites.

In building its Internet security system, the Chinese leadership relies not only on relevant state agencies and departments but also forces Internet service providers, content providers, Internet cafe operators, and private IT companies to cooperate. At the same time, Internet service providers are tasked with keeping a full record of all information appearing on websites and comments to it, recording the time of publication, user registration names, and the IP addresses they use to access the Internet. These records are subject to storage for 60 days. Internet service providers create filtering mechanisms, monitor user activity on the Internet, and provide reports to relevant state authorities.

The so-called cyberpolice, which have been operating since 2000 as units within police departments, works to address the deficiencies and flaws of automatic filtering. These units were specially created by the MPS to monitor Internet content.

The degree of censorship also varies depending on geography: The most stringent restrictions are imposed in the Xinjiang Uyghur and Tibetan Autonomous Regions. But censorship does not cover the special administrative regions of Hong Kong and Macau, where access to Internet content is fully open.

The purpose of Internet censorship is not the total eradication of any political or public criticism in social media. Chinese users are able, for example, to publish uncensored critical messages addressed to the government and government officials. But censors act when an information event that is negative for the Chinese authorities becomes "viral" and, "driven" from the outside, can provoke panic, mass political demonstrations, or conflicts.

The idea of ensuring the digital sovereignty of the state in the context of the use of global information networks is based on four principles. The first principle assumes that every country should be able to fully control its segment of the Internet. According to the second principle, the state has the right to protect its segment of the Internet from any external attacks. The third principle assumes that all countries should have equal opportunities in using Internet resources. Finally, in accordance with the fourth principle, no external actors should control countries' DNS root servers through which access to national segments of the Internet is gained.

China's experience is interesting because under current conditions, when, in essence, no system of international law exists to regulate relations in cyberspace, when Western countries are deliberately

seeking to sabotage the development of norms of responsible behavior of states in this area and impose on the international community some amorphous so-called rules of conduct that benefit only a limited number of leaders of the Western world, one country has been able to defend its national interests both in the digital realm and, more broadly, with regard to the protection of its sovereignty and security.

165th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations Between Russia and Uruguay: History and Modernity

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Keywords: Russia, Uruguay, relations, equality, respect, cooperation, pragmatism, culture, compatriots

DECEMBER 10, 2022 marks the 165th anniversary of the establishment of Russian-Uruguayan relations. Their long history has had its ups and downs, pauses and breakthroughs, but the feelings of goodwill and sympathy between our peoples have always been evident. Bilateral cooperation has always rested on the strong foundation of strictly observed principles of equality, mutual respect, and noninterference in each other's domestic affairs.

In 1866, at the request of the Russian envoy to Brazil, an unofficial Russian consulate was established in Montevideo. That same year, an Uruguayan consulate was opened in Taganrog. Relations with the Oriental Republic strengthened in 1886 after the visit to Uruguay of the Russian envoy to Brazil and Argentina, Alexander Ionin, who was received first by President Francisco Antonio Vidal, and then by President Máximo Santos, (after he overthrew and succeeded President Vidal). In his reports to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs leadership, Ionin emphasized the importance of Uruguay's geographical location, "Montevideo commands the mouth of La Plata, and this river with its tributaries is the main artery for communication with the entire interior of South America."

The period of the Great Patriotic War (World War II) constituted a turning point in relations between our two countries. Uruguay, like most Latin American countries, did not participate in the battles of the Second World War. The country remained neutral throughout most of the military campaign, and Montevideo's official declaration of war against Nazi Germany and Japan took place on the eve of the victory, in February 1945.

Nevertheless, the tragic news of the outbreak of the Second World War did not leave our compatriots living in Uruguay at the time indifferent. They set up special committees to collect aid for the Soviet people. Medicine, clothing, and food were sent to the Soviet Union in addition to money.

The restoration of democratic civil rule in Uruguay in 1985 led to more active bilateral political, trade, and economic interactions. The USSR and Uruguay signed several agreements – on the supply of Soviet machinery and equipment and on cultural and scientific cooperation.

The two countries also maintain an ongoing inter-parliamentary dialogue. In 2018 and 2019, the heads of both chambers of the General Assembly of Uruguay, Lucía Topolansky and Cecilia Bottino, as well as MERCOSUR Parliament President Daniel Caggiani, visited Russia to participate in the "Development of Parliamentarism" International Forum.

A solid base of treaties and legislation has been established between the two countries. The most significant documents include the friendship and cooperation agreement, intergovernmental agreements on cooperation in culture and science, on fighting illicit drug trafficking, mutual assistance in customs matters, and the conditions for waiving visa formalities for reciprocal travel by citizens of the two countries.

At present, despite the difficult international situation, trade and economic relations with Uruguay continue to develop both bilaterally and multilaterally. In this respect, it is important to note that the Uruguayan capital is home to the headquarters of leading regional organizations, including the Latin American Integration Association (LAIA/ALADI), in which Russia has observer status, and the General Secretariat of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR).

Cultural ties have always occupied a special place in the development of relations between our countries.

As part of the celebration of the 165th anniversary of RussianUruguayan diplomatic relations, the Russian Embassy prepared and held a series of cultural events, including an exhibition of Russian folk crafts in the Museum of Art History and a virtual exhibition on the diplomatic mission's website featuring about 100 archival photographs and documents.

The Russian diplomatic mission is actively engaged in strengthening scientific and academic ties. A competitive selection of those wishing to receive free higher education in Russia under the government program of state scholarships for foreigners takes place annually. In 2022, under the quota allocated for Uruguay by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation, four applications were submitted by Uruguayan applicants, who successfully passed the entrance examinations and were enrolled in Russian universities.

The important date in the history of Russian-Uruguayan relations celebrated this year should become an impetus for the further development and strengthening of our entire network of bilateral ties built on a long tradition of friendship and mutually beneficial cooperation. Looking back and analyzing our shared eventful past, we also look with optimism to the promising future when we can fully tap the enormous potential of our bilateral relations for the benefit of the citizens of our countries.

Contemporary Integration Processes in the Post-Soviet Space

The 13th International Conference in Yalta, Republic of Crimea, was organized by the journal International Affairs with support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation on September 26-30, 2022.

Keywords: denazificztion, Post-Soviet Space, International Conference in Yalta, Integration Processes, Information warfare

The War for Values and Ideas Continues

Armen Oganesyan, *Editor-in-Chief, International Affairs*

Not long ago, I read an interview with a well-known Russian expert that took me by surprise. I quote: "Generally, the American rule book on which the world is based does not include our 'red line.' So the only thing that can stop the US in this situation is fear – its own fear of the next step. That is all. There is

nothing else." What gave me pause was the idea that there is in fact an American rule book on which the world is based. And our esteemed expert states this in all seriousness.

Today, we are saying that Europe is not sovereign. But is the US sovereign? Does everything depend on it? No, of course not. Acknowledging that the whole world depends on it means putting yourself into a false situation. Maybe the whole world depends on transnational companies? This has also been talked about a lot. The issue of a "collective Biden" also comes up. But what might this "collective Biden" entail? Biden is a little puppet – sick and miserable in his own way.

I would like for us to raise questions related to global politics. Can an oversimplification of all that is going on lead to wrong conclusions? Is it possible to spook America but not those who rule the world?

There is another very important thing that concerns scenarios for the development of events in Ukraine. The answer to the question of what Russians and Ukrainians are – two parts of one people or two separate fraternal peoples – is crucial to all ideological, informational, educational, and media activities in Russia and Ukraine, as well as in near and distant countries. This is primarily the problem of interpreting a common history.

As we were once taught at Moscow State University, the Russian language is made richer by dialects. Without them, language withers and loses its positive dynamics. So it is necessary to determine the nature of the Ukrainian language. After all, the question now is whether to use state budget funds to open schools where Ukrainian is taught.

I would like for us to discuss this context, which is very important for our further development. The answer to this question is crucial to how we will work in the information space and in education, so as to avoid what [former second secretary of the CPSU] Yegor Kuzmich Ligachov described as ideological confusion. Unless we clearly define our position, then, when we write textbooks and make documentaries or feature films, we will inevitably slip into ideological confusion.

To the Organizers and Attendees of the 13th International Conference on Contemporary Integration Processes in the Post-Soviet Space

Sergey Lavrov, *Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation*

I AM PLEASED to greet the organizers and attendees of the 13th Yalta international conference on Contemporary Integration Processes in the Post-Soviet Space.

Your forum consistently brings together a representative group of diplomats, lawmakers, scholars, and experts in various fields. These annual meetings in the hospitable city of Yalta provide opportunities for the comprehensive consideration of a wide range of international problems.

It is encouraging to note that the current forum, too, has an extensive agenda, ranging from an analysis of key trends in world development to assessments of the situation in the post-Soviet space. The inclusion in the range of topics of landmark dates such as the 220th anniversary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia and the centenary of the USSR reflects the continuity of Russian history and the enduring significance of its milestone events to our nation and to the entire world.

I am sure that the conference will take place in a creative atmosphere and that the forum will be useful to all its participants.

I wish you successful work and all the best.

To the Organizers and Attendees of the 13th International Conference on Contemporary Integration Processes in the Post-Soviet Space

Sergey Aksyonov, *Head of the Republic of Crimea*

DEAR FRIENDS,
I am pleased to once again welcome you to our hospitable land, Crimea.

Your conference, which has become a good intellectual and diplomatic tradition in Crimea, is taking place in a special historical period characterized by significant changes in the global geopolitical processes leading to a multipolar world order. Russia is the driving force behind these changes, while the Crimean experience in combating attempts to colonize the Russian World, in legitimate self-determination, and in integration into the Russian space may be examined as a model to be followed by the liberated territories of former Ukraine.

Today, we see that the situation in Ukraine is steadily deteriorating. The administration in Ukraine is being replaced by external neocolonial military rule. Washington and the NATO countries, disregarding the interests of ordinary Ukrainians and crossing all red lines, continue to pump increasingly destructive weapons into Ukraine and, in a bid to fan the confrontation with Russia, send in thousands of mercenaries, throwing our brothers, the people of Ukraine, into the crucible of the escalating conflict.

I am confident that Russia will achieve in Ukraine all the objectives set by the Russian leadership.

I believe that in this situation, scholarly and practical discussions at the 13th Yalta international conference of the journal International Affairs will be of special importance to the expert, scholarly, and diplomatic communities of Russia and all other countries that have emerged in the postSoviet space. We expect these discussions to lead to insightful conclusions and accurate forecasts that would be of theoretical and practical use to our country and its friends. This is very much in the interest of the Republic of Crimea, which is at the forefront of the fight against the anti-Russian aggression.

The Ukraine Crisis and the New World Order

Georgy Muradov, *Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Crimea, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Crimea to the President of Russia*

LET ME START by stating that all of us have become wartime people. In fact, it seems to me that we are only just entering this complicated war period. For more than 10 years I have been speaking at our conferences about something I would call a world barometer. It moved from the "crisis" mark to "confrontation," then to "conflict," and today it is arguably even pointing to "war," and it is probably moving to the extreme that can be marked "disaster."

We have been saying since 2014 – for eight years – that the Western world has been on a dangerous path of trying to tear down Russia or wipe it off the map. The international community is increasingly discussing the threat of nuclear war, and one wonders what can be done to oppose the destructive policy of the West, which, like Kiev, is pursuing the logic of blackmail and using the threat of universal disaster to intimidate the international community. This paradigm of behavior means that it is pointless to expect any condemnation of the strikes against the dam of the Kakhovka Hydroelectric Plant or any demands to halt the shelling of the Zaporozhye Nuclear Power Plant.

Today they are trumpeting the threat of nuclear war supposedly coming from Putin. But it is obvious to us that they are the ones preaching nuclear war. The US and the European Union are trying to divert our attention from Russia's concrete conflict and confrontation with the West and NATO by claiming that we

have unleashed an unprovoked war against Ukraine and that they have had nothing to do with this. They are hyping the myth that Russia is planning nuclear strikes in Ukraine. Russia would never dream of this – if nothing else because our own people live in Ukraine.

We will always remember that in 1990 and 1991, Western countries promised the leadership of the Soviet Union not to expand NATO eastward. Thirty years ago, for the first time in centuries, our country was fragmented without war because it fell for assurances of eternal friendship from our perfidious friends, granting them unlimited access to the riches of our home, making them prosperous, which created an illusion of their victory over us. Those were years of deceit and plunder, years when everything that had been created in former times was sold off for a song.

With Western support, the Kiev regime is seeking to destroy the actual identity of the people as members of the Russian World. The Nazi government of Ukraine openly pursues this policy, which goes against the principles of international law. We see the salvation of the population of those territories through the free expression of its will, via a referendum, as a form of defense against that action to destroy Russian civilization.

The US and NATO, which are waging a full-scale war against Russia in Ukraine, are the only potential source of such a threat. There are large numbers – thousands and thousands – of NATO personnel there; they oversee all operations and Western heavy weapons systems. Ukraine can be a threat as a territory pumped up with Western weapons. But in any case, our countermeasures should target the US, because it is the US that is masterminding this war aimed at destroying our country. We already have sufficient grounds to retaliate against Washington.

If we base our actions on Bismarck's statement and the well-known [Arnold] Toynbee paradigm that the West follows today – i.e., that the response should be stronger than the challenge in order to rule out further challenges – the Western aggression will soon come to an end. If, on the other hand, we are spineless, which our enemies will see as weakness, we will provoke the enemy into being even more aggressive and into seeking to drive Russia to collapse.

Trends and Prospects for the Evolution of the System of International Relations

Deputy Director, *Foreign Policy Planning Department, Russian Foreign Ministry*

I would like to single out five long-term trends in the makeup and evolution of the modern system of international relations and the world as a whole.

The first trend is the evolution of a multipolar order in global politics and the growing complexity of international relations. A new balance has yet to be found.

The second trend is the crisis of globalization based on US financial, currency, technological, and cultural domination. The center of gravity in the global economy has shifted to the Asia-Pacific region.

The third trend is the desire of the US-led Western community to regain its dominant position and privileged access to the advantages of the international system of the division of labor. Methods of achieving these objectives vary: Right now, an ideologized value approach has prevailed that could be tentatively described as "democracies vs. authoritarian regimes."

The fourth trend is the growing role of the force factor in international relations. The nature of policy based on the use of force is changing, and the boundary between military and nonmilitary methods of interstate confrontation, between the state of war and peace, is becoming blurred.

The fifth trend is that Russia and other leading powers have entered an acute phase of rivalry over the right to establish the basic principles of the world order and multilateral interaction under new international conditions.

In my opinion, these trends will continue to determine the context of international relations for years to come.

The 30-year-long era of Russia's generally constructive interaction with the West has come to an end. It was replaced by a prolonged and harsh confrontation, potentially riskier than the Cold War. Concepts such as mutual deterrence, the balance of power, and the prevention of a nuclear conflict are returning to the foreign policy realm. At the same time, the arms control concept seems to be gone.

Taking into account the fundamental differences between Russia and the West, as well as the prospect that they could continue for at least another four to six years, it is very likely that conflicts will break out in a cascade-like way in various parts of the world.

Since the objective of routing Russia on the battlefield has been publicly announced, there is nothing stopping us from putting forward a long-term strategic objective – namely, to minimize the US presence in Eurasia and to bring about the disbandment of NATO, which has effectively lost its raison d'être, and the disintegration of the Russophobic European Union.

Another shift is related to the reconfiguration of the world order and international institutions formed as a result of World War II, a process that has significantly accelerated since the start of the special military operation. Amid the mounting disagreements, our opponents have set a course to remove Russia from the multilateral organizations, platforms, and regulatory mechanisms under their control.

: For all the acuteness of the current situation, we are seeing some indisputable pluses. The main one is the shedding of illusions [and] the ongoing process of our country's escape from the paradigm of its absorption by the West as an economic semi-colony. Clearly, strengthening the identity of the Russian state and society is a necessary condition for Russia's effective foreign policy once it emerges from all forms of dependence on the West.

In foreign policy, it is the transition to the idea that Russia is an independent, self-sufficient country/civilization where the common Eurasian fate is key to the development and prosperity of peoples.

Safeguarding CIS Regional Security: Problems of Unity

Anton Arefyev, *Deputy Head of a department at the CIS Anti-Terrorism Center, Candidate of Science (Political Science)*

THE YEAR 2022 saw rapid changes to the geopolitical situation caused by domestic and foreign security threats to member countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Conflicts in CIS countries or in their immediate vicinity have highlighted disagreements between them and the lack of a common CIS strategy for addressing security threats.

Afghanistan's falling under Taliban control has effectively set a precedent for a country coming under the rule of a terrorist organization – if you do not count the one-year tenure of Mohamed Morsi, leader of the political wing of the Muslim Brotherhood, as president of Egypt.

Undoubtedly, the Taliban's successes have become grounds for other extremist groups to assume that similar achievements are possible in other territories. There has been a surge in terrorist propaganda in

various languages, including Russian and Tajik, which carries the threat of radicalization to the whole of Central Asia.

Yet Afghanistan is a hotbed of threats of various kinds. Illicit drug production is not declining, the notorious problem of inclusiveness in government remains unsolved, and weapons left behind by the Americans get sold on the black market. To make matters worse, the Afghan economy is in a dismal state.

It is more alarming, however, that the Taliban may fail to react if terrorist groups deployed in northern Afghanistan, such as Islamic State and Jamaat Ansarullah units, take action in countries north of the border. Moreover, it is possible that the Taliban would not just look on but do all it could to support such activities.

Domestic extremist threats are also becoming a headache for the CIS countries. In January 2022, Kazakhstan had to deal with attempts by extremist organizations to incite public protests and exploit them to destabilize the situation and carry out a coup.

The situation changed somewhat when practical denazification measures had to replace diplomacy. Belarus has proven to be the only full-fledged ally of Russia. Belarus borders Ukraine and, therefore, unlike other CIS countries, is directly affected by the Ukraine problem. Belarusian radicals who plotted a series of terrorist attacks in Belarus a while ago obtained weapons from Ukraine.

The Ukrainian conflict re-exacerbated the problem of mercenary terrorists that had been a source of anxiety for many countries at the peak of the Syrian war, except that today none of our Western partners remembers UN Security Council resolutions on combating this phenomenon.

The West's use of Ukraine as a bridgehead for anti-Russian action entails the threat of foreign terrorists being deployed to Ukrainian territory. Not only might such terrorists be used to destabilize the situation in neighboring countries (Belarus, Russia, and Moldova) but they might also be redeployed to other countries – lands where they might be used by some actors to try to overthrow legitimate governments should some domestic turmoil arise.

The CIS countries need clear regional security priorities that do not depend on what the West would say.

Geopolitics and the Evolution of National Historical Discourse

Karine Bechet-Golovko, *Visiting Professor, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Doctor of Public Law (France)*

Based on people's right to self-determination, this definition of a nation arises from "two things … One is the past, the other is the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of memories; the other is present consent, the desire to live together, the desire to continue to invest in the heritage that we have jointly received…. A nation is therefore a great solidarity constituted by the feeling of sacrifices made and those that one is still disposed to make…. I summarize, Messieurs. Man is a slave neither of his race, his language, his religion, the course of his rivers, nor the direction of his mountain ranges. A great aggregation of men, in sane mind and warm heart, created a moral conscience that calls itself a nation."

As we understand it, a nation creates its historical discourse in which it lives and develops, sharing its experience, creating the image of its heroes, remembering its past and building its future. By defining its discourse, a country defines itself as a nation and defines its place in the world order, since all countries live in the same political space, but all historical discourses are competitive and not always compatible.

Only a sovereign state can create its national historical discourse. On the other hand, there is no state without a national historical discourse, since a state can legitimately exist only as a sovereign one. However, not every state has absolute sovereignty.

During the past 30 years, the world order has undergone a major transformation, while international processes have become largely global. The change has occurred because one of the two blocs collapsed, destabilizing the balance of forces. At present, the legitimacy of the unipolar world system is in question, but other, precisely political blocs, which could effectively compete with the US and its allies, have yet to be created.

As we can see, before long, the "right" people appeared in the Ukrainian government, which made it possible to make all the necessary decisions. Also, legally speaking, so-called lustration was launched with the help of European institutions, which helped radically change the discourse of the Ukrainian elite. Naturally, this process began before 2014, but in recent years, it has become further radicalized. The reason for the impasse is that Ukraine as a new artificial state has to produce its own historical discourse as a basis for its existence separately from Russia. Ukraine's historical discourse should therefore be different from the Russian historical discourse. Since objectively only a mythical, destructive, anti-Russian "countervalue" discourse can be created there, Ukraine is being forced to reject its past and its values – everything that it took centuries to create.

As a result, Ukraine has emerged as an Atlantic protectorate; it is not in a position to formulate its own historical discourse or determine its existence, since it has already ceased to exist politically.

A national historical discourse is not only an essential prerequisite for a state's existence as a state, but also a guarantee of social stability. Ukraine is a good and pitiful example of the risks of losing one's sovereignty and dissolving in globalization.

The "Ukrainian Card" in Washington's Great Game

Yury Sayamov, *UNESCO Chair, Lomonosov Moscow State University*

The so-called Russian card has held a special place in international diplomatic stratagems in various periods. The West has pulled it out like an ace from a card sharp's sleeve every time it has had to cite the mythical "Russian threat" or, on the contrary, claim that a particular international issue could not be resolved without Russia. When the West engineered the "Ukraine issue," the so-called "Ukrainian card" also emerged, which enemies of the Russian state began to play actively to separate Russia from Ukraine and use it in their own interests. The intention was primarily to weaken and dismember Russia, which has accompanied the "Ukraine issue" throughout its existence, since Ukraine's unification with Russia in 1654.

However, Western strategists failed to separate Ukraine from Russia either then or later, until a union state that had brought together many peoples was blown up from within by its own treacherous elite.

The aim of Ukraine's reconfiguration from part of a common civilization with Russia going back to the Kievan Rus era into a Westernled criminal community was to use this geopolitical space to destroy the neighboring Russian state as a center of power and gravity for other states that were upholding their sovereignty. Washington began to actively play the "Ukrainian card" against Russia when it realized that Russia was not following the US's lead and was regaining the role of an independent great power, demonstrating to the whole world its rejection of US hegemony and its refusal to play by the US's rules.

An excuse was needed to ramp up economic sanctions against Russia, and the "Ukrainian card" fit the bill nicely. The Americans fueled antiRussian sentiment in Ukraine by taking advantage of national specifics – Ukrainian nationalism, which, as it became clear, had smoldered under Soviet rule,

manifesting itself in bursts of communist Ukrainization between 1923 and 1932, as well as during the rule of unabashed nationalist Pyotr Shelest.

In playing the "Ukrainian card" against Russia, the US pursued several objectives. Russia was building up its potential and increasingly emerging as a competitor to the US, primarily in arms exports and on the energy market. In the foreign policy realm, Russia's independent stance and its refusal to follow American rules was dangerous to the US due to a possible chain reaction of disobedience from other countries. In military terms, NATO's objective remained unchanged – i.e., to advance toward Russia's borders to subsequently destroy it as an independent, self-sufficient state. To that end, they needed a military bridgehead along or very near Russian borders, which the US acquired in the form of Ukraine, converting the Kiev regime and making it obedient.

Nevertheless, it is proving impossible to beat Russia; Ukraine is increasingly becoming disposable material, and the US is faced with the question of what to do next. The referendums that were held on the territories liberated by Russia came as an unpleasant surprise to the US and as a point of no return to the previous, precrisis status of Ukrainian statehood. At this stage, playing the "Ukrainian card" has produced an effect opposite to the one intended. Russia, which [the US] intended to weaken, demoralize, and eventually destroy, has in fact strengthened, consolidated, and raised its geopolitical status.

Kiev has lost its own economic resources to support Ukrainian statehood, having become dependent on the US and the West, which, due to their traditional pragmatism, would hardly want to keep pouring billions of dollars into Ukraine if they saw no point in that.

Americans are increasingly wondering why so much money has to be spent on Ukraine, which the overwhelming majority of Americans cannot even locate on a map.

It seems that the "Ukrainian card" in Washington's great game is becoming perhaps the riskiest geopolitical venture to ever threaten the security of the planet to such an extent, since it is effectively putting the world on the brink of a nuclear war. The Doomsday Clock is ticking down, but a global disaster can and must still be averted.

The Ukrainian Crisis and Its Consequences for Italian Politics

Eliseo Bertolasi, *Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) Representative in Italy, political analyst, journalist, Candidate of Sciences (Anthropology)*

THE SANCTIONS on Russia are beginning to have a negative impact – not on Russia but on the countries that have imposed them. In Italy, the sanctions against Russia have become sanctions against Italy.

To weaken a state severely, its production capacity and its economy must first be destroyed. Energy is the lifeblood of a country's industry and production. Without it, the economy will die very quickly. Because of the sanctions imposed on Russia, the Italian economy is stalling, and companies are forced to shutter because they cannot pay their soaring gas and electricity bills.

The governments of European states, especially of the impoverished Balts, the angry Poles, and the Finns rushing to join NATO, are seeking to outdo each other in the ferocity of their declarations of desire to break off all relations with Russia.

Italy is neither a free nor sovereign country. How can a country make independent decisions with foreign troops deployed on its territory?! After the end of World War II, numerous NATO and US bases were established in Italy. That is why we cannot talk about sovereignty under a military occupation regime. Only those allowed by Washington ever come to power in Italy. There are no alternatives.

We have witnessed how Italy's Prime Minister Mario Draghi was among the European leaders with the toughest stance on Russia.

All of this goes against Italian national interests and plunges Italy into crisis, poverty, and war.

The exact list of arms sent to Ukraine is unknown, because the Italian government has issued an order, approved by parliament, classifying information on such deliveries.

Using progovernment media, the authorities have been trying to "enlist" 60 million Italians in this undeclared war against the Russian Federation. Compelling propaganda and psychological influence techniques were already tested and applied (unfortunately, with success) during the [COVID-19] pandemic.

But today this has proven ineffective. Perhaps, over time, the Italian people have developed antibodies to propaganda, especially when it becomes constant and intrusive. Italians are skeptical about the government's decision to meet [Ukrainian President Vladimir] Zelensky's demands and unconditionally support Ukraine.

WITHIN TWO MONTHS of the start of the special operation, more than 100,000 people had arrived in Italy from Ukraine. These are mainly residents of the western regions of Ukraine or relatives of Ukrainians living in Italy. We have seen a new influx of foreigners who have merged with refugees from Africa and the Middle East arriving on the Italian coast every day.

Ukrainian migrants behave as they do in Ukraine. They are mentally immersed in an endless Maidan movement and seek to spread their slogans and hatred of Russians among Italians. The problem is that, while staying in Italy, they are convinced that manifesting their hatred of Russians is a normal thing – as if Russophobia is generally accepted behavior.

In Italy and other European countries, the authorities provide a number of subsidies, benefits, and privileges to Ukrainian "refugees" that would gladden the hearts of many poor Italian pensioners and unemployed who are obliged to scavenge for food and line up at food banks.

The point is that Ukrainians in Italy can do what they want because they are permitted to do so and because they know that they have the backing of all parliamentary parties and the official media.

We are witnessing the Ukrainization of Europe, but we should not forget that forced Ukrainization of society is a tool of Nazification. And this is only the beginning. The European countries do not hesitate to legitimize Ukrainian Nazism, which will very soon pose a big threat to European nations.

Western "democratic" governments have never actually had any moral problems with Nazism and, as in the case of Ukraine, have turned a blind eye to its manifestations.

This process is not spontaneous. It was launched after proper preparations: History was rewritten, and the meaning of anti-fascism was changed. In postwar Europe, an entire generation grew up on the myth of the US as the "savior" of Europe from Hitler.

Recognition of the Nazi nature of the Kiev regime also means recognition of the Nazification of Europe. This explains the growing totalitarian tendencies among European governments, which have brought so-called "democratic" political systems to a crisis and which, in actual fact, are increasingly based on plutocracies that will go to any lengths to stay in power.

The Need to Establish a Legal Mechanism for the Denazification of Ukraine: The Importance of Putting Denazification on a Criminal Law Basis

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DENAZIFICATION is strategically and conceptually one of the most complicated tasks of the current special military operation in Ukraine. Political and military action is a sine qua non of denazification, but denazification also needs to involve a set of long-term ideological, educational, cultural, philosophical, and historiographical measures whose results would be visible after years of systematic and careful work. In other words, the denazification of Ukraine should have a solid basis and a soft "superstructure."

A criminal law mechanism is yet another indispensable condition for denazification. Such a mechanism would be part of the "basis" rather than "superstructure," inevitably accompanying all military and political activities and consolidating their results once the military action is over.

Two more specific points need to be made. First, crimes that are Nazi in nature must not be confused with war crimes, though Nazi crimes may in fact also be war crimes.

Second, unlike war crimes legislation with its established reliable and generally recognized institutional infrastructure based on international law, the denazification of Ukraine cannot be based on any legislation other than Russian legislation. Today, one naturally cannot expect any serious international cooperation in a bid to develop an international legal basis for Ukraine's denazification, and this makes Ukrainian denazification different from the denazification of Germany after World War II.

RUSSIAN CRIMINAL LAW does not provide an effective mechanism for denazification in Ukraine or in its former territories. Nor could it have been expected to provide such a mechanism under current historical circumstances.

With Russia traditionally moving between crackdowns (usually on the Internet) and struggles for online freedom, administrative prejudice does sometimes seem like a good compromise. But would it be a good criminal law framework for Ukraine's denazification – i.e., a legal mechanism for dismantling an ideology that has led to civil war and tens of thousands of deaths, let alone risks of even more disastrous consequences? This is a rhetorical question.

AN EFFECTIVE criminal law mechanism for Ukraine's denazification must be based on a new concept. This should involve a dynamic and not a historically static interpretation of the phenomenon of Ukrainian Nazism, which is not the German Nazism of the 1930s and 1940s but the Nazism of the first quarter of the 21st century with its own characteristics.

This should be the concept underlying a criminal law norm dedicated specifically to denazifying Ukraine. The latter's denazification can hardly be effective otherwise. Our goal here is not to flesh out this norm in all its technical aspects. In general terms, it should amount to a ban on the creation, propagation, and support of any ideology that denies the historical role of Russia, the legitimacy of its state institutions, the legitimacy of its sovereignty over certain territories in various historical periods, its culture, language, right to political and state self-determination, and anyone's right to share its political, religious, and cultural values. This norm should be part of Chapter 34 of the Criminal Code, "Crimes against the Peace and Security of Humankind," and, naturally, it should not replace Article 354.1, which prohibits the rehabilitation of the German version of Nazism, but should be added to it. These norms would combine to form an effective legal mechanism for the denazification of Ukraine, not an ad hoc but a fundamental mechanism, which is strategically important.

Foundations of the Ukraine Crisis: Important Lessons of Soviet History

Andrey Sidorov, *Assistant Professor, Chair of International Relations and Foreign Policy of Russia, Moscow State Institute (University) of International Relations, Candidate of Science (History)*

TODAY, the historical dimension of the Ukraine crisis has acquired special importance: It is rooted in the history and myths of Soviet Ukrainianism and the way in which the Soviet state was organized. In the history of the Soviet Union, the Ukrainian SSR was more than the birthplace of contemporary Ukraine, it was the alpha and omega of Soviet statehood and played a special or even unique role in its fate.

Lenin and the Bolsheviks rejected the idea of the three elements of the Russian nation and treated Ukrainians and Byelorussians as separate nationalities. In his approach to the nationalities question, Lenin relied on his thesis of tsarist Russia as a "prison of nations," a "reactionary and oppressing state" dominated by Great Russians who oppressed the rest of the population and treated them practically as slaves.

Lenin and his comrades-in-arms saw the concept of Ukrainianism (which they tried to imbue with a "socialist content" for use in their own interests) as an effective weapon against the Russian Anti-Bolshevik movement. Soviet Ukraine with the capital in Kharkov had been proclaimed a month before Russia became the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic.

The Ukrainian SSR was rapidly acquiring the features of a real state.

In the Soviet Union, the Ukrainian SSR within the borders of Malorossiya and Novorossiya played the key role as the only republic with a population strength more or less equal to that of the RSFSR. This made the Union more or less logical and convincing; otherwise, it would have looked asymmetric and would have hardly been built up in the form we knew it.

The Soviet state was deliberately detached from any national or geographical specifics to make it impossible to get rid of the Communist ideology without destroying the country's territorial integrity and without making Russians a divided people. The "Lenin Soviet Union" (Vladimir Putin's definition) that replaced the Russian Empire as a result of the 1917 revolutions was a prolonged mistake.

A normative Ukrainian language was hastily formed on orders from Moscow to be used by the Party, state organizations, the military, and state security agencies. Schools and higher education institutions switched to the newly invented language; bilingualism was eliminated.

In 2003, president of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma wrote in his well-known book Ukraina – ne Rossiya [Ukraine is not Russia]: "Irrespective of what we think about the 1920s, we should acknowledge that without the Ukrainization of schools back then, we might not have our independence today."

In Soviet times the RSFSR subsidized all the other republics, including the Ukrainian SSR. Throughout the Gorbachev perestroika era, the Union Center pumped out resources from the central Russian regions.

The RSFSR was de facto deprived of political agency, which allowed the Ukrainian SSR to develop, over time, into the most important loadbearing element of the Soviet Union, the main political base on which its ruling elite was raised. Stalin consistently increased its territory. During World War II, the republic acquired eight Western regions that previously belonged to Poland, Rumania, and Czechoslovakia.

With Stalin's death, his personal dictatorship was replaced by a fundamentally different structure of power in which key roles belonged to various groups that represented ministries or regions. The Ukrainian SSR acquired even more weight. Khrushchev, first secretary of the CC CPSU in 1953, never missed a chance to speak of his Ukrainianism. He had spent the bulk of his political life in Ukraine and relied in his struggle for the country's highest post on the Ukrainian elite.

The number of Ukrainians, at least according to their passports, steadily increased throughout the Soviet era. The government encouraged Russians to register as Ukrainians. The common people gained nothing from that, yet Party and state officials and the creative intelligentsia gained a lot as members of a "titular" nation. The distinction between Russians and Ukrainians remained fairly vague.

The separatism of the Ukrainian elite played a huge role in the Soviet Union's disintegration. They used the failed coup in Moscow to stage their own successful coup. On August 24, 1991, Ukraine proclaimed independence, which was confirmed by the very dubious referendum of December 1. On December 2 (a week before the meeting in Belovezhskaya Pushcha) Boris Yeltsin agreed to recognize Ukrainian independence without preliminary conditions and established diplomatic relations with it. The administrative borders between the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic were neither historical, nor ethnic, nor natural, yet Yeltsin and his cronies accepted them as international without a murmur.

After the special military operation ends and in view of the territories reunited with Russia, we will probably need a total reconstruction and reestablishment of contemporary Russia. And it will be fundamentally important not to take the path of creating a USSR 2.0 and not to allow the emergence in the new subjects of political Ukrainianism (be it moderate, fraternal, etc.). Banderization of Novorossiya and Malorossiya should be opposed by natural Russification. They should return "home" to historical Russia. And to win the special military operation, we must suppress our "internal Ukraine" – the Russophobic ideology inside Russia that is part of the Soviet legacy.

Between East and West: Ukrainian Political Thought of the Early 20th Century as the Foundation of the Geopolitical Philosophy of the Ukrainian Elite

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Olga Moskalenko, *Assistant Professor, Institute of Social Sciences and International Relations, FGAOU VO Sevastopol State University, Candidate of Science (Philology)*

THE GRADUALLY ACCELERATING conflict between Russia and Ukraine has already led to the regional destabilization of Eastern Europe. In the last 30 years, the West that relied on the logic of "British balance" has pitted the periphery of historical Russia against the center and transformed a former Soviet republic and fraternal people into a militarypolitical battlefield and a battering ram against the Russian Federation, another post-Soviet republic. In the post-Soviet years, the geopolitical space around Russia has shrunk to an extent that demands a systemic revision of state approaches to the spaces of its priority interests.

The first 20 years of the 21st century were marked by increased interest in Ukraine, and not just in its historical dimension. In his essay "On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians," published in June 2021 in Russian, Ukrainian, and English, Vladimir Putin defined the ideological platform as the main space of confrontation in the contemporary world. The wall that separated Russia from Ukraine and that divided the hitherto single spiritual and historical space was a result not only of efforts by external forces but of Russia's miscalculations. The result was a forced change of the Ukrainian identity, a spiritual demarcation: Ukraine was transformed into an anti-Russia that presupposed separation from and enmity with Russia.

The Ukrainian diaspora in the West was especially interested by the legacy of Lipinsky, the man who "revived the national ideology of Ukraine," according to Nazaruk. In his article "V. Lypyns'kyj's Idea of Nation," Eugene Pyziur summarized Lipinsky's lectures delivered at a seminar on Ukrainian studies at Harvard University in 1972 and paid particular attention to his idea of a union of three Rus peoples hitherto unknown not only to the wide public but also to specialists. We will deal with that concept later.

It should be said that the Ukrainian Research Institute at Harvard University opened by Ivan Rudnitsky plays the leading role in the interpretation and popularization of the Ukrainian ideological and political heritage; it publishes the well-known and highly influential journal *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*.

Today, relations between Russia and Ukraine are continuing the trajectory of dramatic deterioration; they are emotionally overburdened and, having reached the level of mutual destruction within the "British balance" mechanism, are extremely prone to conflict. While before 2014 there had been debate about the foreign policy course, the "Crimean Spring" set the country on the pro-Western and anti-Russian development path.

Ukrainian geopolitical ideas related to cooperation with Europe – or, more broadly, with the West and Russia – at a time when the imperial center was weakening or even disintegrating can be tentatively divided into three groups: pro-Russian (Dragomanov, Lipinsky, Grushevsky); pro-Western, or, in fact, anti-Russian (Lipa, Rudnitsky, Zhuk); and autochthonous (Anton Sinyavsky). The latter spoke of Ukraine as a bridge between the North and the South, between the West and the East even within the Soviet project.

Mikhail Grushevsky (b. 1866, Poland, d. 1934, Russia) skillfully balanced between Russia and the West in his works.

Geopolitical factors formed the basis of his thinking. Until the Fourth Universal proclaimed on January 22, 1918, Grushevsky was, on the whole, a pro-Russian politician convinced that Ukraine was not strong enough to preserve its independence without outside support and that, therefore, broad autonomy in a Russian democratic republic would be the best option.

Yury Lipa (b. 1900, Ukraine, d. 1944, Ukrainian SSR), author of the Ukrainian geopolitical concept, defined the North-South axis as strategic. He commented that while Ukrainians developed into a nation on the shores of the rivers of the Southern Black Sea coast, the Russians developed into a nation in the Volga basin.

In his book Razdeleniye Rossii [The Division of Russia], Lipa wrote that although Russians settled over a vast area during many centuries of expansion, many of those territories never became truly Russian.

An analysis of Ukrainian sociopolitical thought of the late 19th and early 20th centuries reveals the obvious conventionality of the so-called pro-Russian vector: Its ideologists invariably formulated many conditions and limitations for possible rapprochement with Russia, as well as many options for Ukraine's independent development. The meaning of their texts allows dual interpretations. At the same time, the anti-Russian vector is represented by consistent arguments that defy alternative interpretations. Those who study the contemporary foreign policy definition of the Ukrainian state generally follow the path taken by their predecessors. In fact, the fragmentation of Ukraine's geopolitical space cannot be excluded no matter how the Ukraine crisis unfolds. In historical retrospective, this period will be similar to the Ruin of 1657 to 1687. Russia's increased political activity in Ukraine inevitably increases the importance of a deeper understanding of the ideological and political essence of this space, including study of the mechanisms of outside humanitarian influences and shifting political identity.

Managed Neo-Nazism as a Tool of Ukrainian Statehood

Alexander Ananyev, *Senior Counselor, Permanent Mission of Russia to the United Nations in New York (2001-2006)*

THE DENAZIFICATION of Ukraine must primarily be based on a legal definition of the Ukrainian ruling regime as a Nazi system and on legal proof of our right to eradicate this phenomenon in the neighboring, formerly fraternal country.

Nationalism was noticeable in western Ukraine back in the Soviet era but began to develop unhindered during perestroika.

Ukrainian functionaries quipped cynically that throughout the postSoviet period, Ukraine's policy was made in Kiev, its underlying ideology was formulated in the West, and its election outcomes were determined by voting in the southeast of the country. Even the fiveyear presidential tenure of Viktor Yushchenko, who was intensively pushing Ukraine into the arms of the West, failed to bring about any sharp change in public mentality. After Yushchenko's term ended, Ukrainians elected Viktor Yanukovich, who was considered a pro-Russian politician. Despite massive nationalist propaganda, the predominantly Russian-speaking southeast persistently rejected the imposed ideology and its heroes, and this affected the voting results.

This is a key point! The Maidan movement failed to represent the majority of the population, while foreign support for it and attempts from abroad to provoke it into more resolute action contravened international relations norms.

The West has been denying the Nazi essence of the Ukrainian regime established after the coup of 2014 because that regime has taken a more tolerant stance toward Jews than the German Nazis did. But the German Nazism concept implies millions of people killed during the Holocaust, the massive persecution and extermination of members of various ethnic and social groups such as Jews, Slavs, Gypsies, homosexuals, Freemasons, the terminally ill, and the disabled during Nazi rule in Germany.

But even though the discriminatory killings of large groups of Slavs have been declared acts of genocide in the United Nations Genocide Convention, there have been revisions of the Holocaust concept of late. Some historians have argued that the persecution of Slavs cannot be considered part of the Holocaust,9 as Nazi Germany did not plan to annihilate all Slavs. For instance, the Nazis considered the Slovaks and Croats valuable allies.

Today's neo-Nazism is based on the manipulation of public opinion and simulacrums of democracy such as "free" elections, parliamentarianism, multi-party systems, "pluralism" in the mass media, and declarations of the rights of the individual and sexual minorities.

Neo-Nazism is not a system where a leader controls crowds through the media; it is a system where the media gives crowds the illusion that they are guided by a wise leader. The leader is, in fact, an imitation, a product of media hypnosis, and therefore can easily be replaced if necessary. A good example is Zelensky being elected president because he played the main character [the Ukrainian president] in the popular TV show "Servant of the People." Scenes are changed by simulated elections or in other ways.

This anti-constitutional coup and the creation of the neo-Nazi regime made Ukraine an American tool for deterring Russia – an "anti-Russia," as it were. This precluded the emergence of a capable, sane government in Kiev that could be negotiated with. Therefore, demilitarization and denazification are indispensable to restoring our good-neighborly relations with Ukraine.

Russia as the legal successor to the Soviet Union has the right to use force against countries that seek to revive Nazism, to revise the Yalta-Potsdam system of international relations, or to justify Nazism or Nazi crimes.

Information Warfare in the Context of the Special Military Operation in Ukraine

Andrey Manoylo, *Professor, Department of International Relations and Russian Foreign Policy, Moscow State Institute (University) of International Relations, Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Doctor of Science (Political Science)*

THE MODERN WORLD finds itself in a state of growing turbulence and chaos in the system of international relations typified by hybrid wars, trade wars, and "color revolutions." At the same time, the strained relations between Russia and the West are not accidental, but objective consequences of the historical process itself. The only variables in this process are the concrete circumstances and official pretexts of the clash between Russia and Ukraine. This clash was provoked by the West, which had been preparing this conflict for at least the last 10 years.

The first six months of the special military operation (SMO) in Ukraine have provided unique experience in the use of various forms and methods of information and psychological warfare under actual combat conditions. That said, it cannot be argued that the start of the SMO in Ukraine saw the appearance of any new information warfare technologies. Rather, we are seeing a return to old, tried and true methods of special propaganda that had been nearly forgotten in an era where information operations are monopolized by intelligence services playing their operative games via open telecommunications networks channels.

WHEN IT began the SMO, the Russian side counted on completing it quickly, solely by military force, and signing a peace agreement. This plan hinged on the element of surprise. [The Russian side] assumed that by the time the global community finally snapped out of it, the war would already be over and, as is well known, the winners would not be judged (the Crimea had already proven that).

As for the Ukrainian side, it was fully prepared for the informational measures of the allied forces, since by the time the SMO began it had a system of psychological operations (PSYOPS) centers that had been competently set up by American specialists.

Once the SMO began, the Russian side did not face "colonial troops" trained by American instructors in the "European tactics" of information warfare. Instead, [it faced] those very agencies of the US, Great Britain, and others operating "under a false flag" and using Ukrainian nationalists to do their work.

AS PART OF Ukraine's integration into NATO structures, personnel at its PSYOPS centers are being trained by recruited instructors from special units of the US and other Western countries – in particular, American specialists from the 4th Psychological Operations Group (4th POG, previously called the 4th Military Information Support Group).

In terms of informational-psychological operations, the Netherlands is providing substantial help to Kiev. In particular, there is strong support for Ukraine through a well-developed network of media that promote Ukrainian narratives. It must be noted that the Netherlands and Great Britain interact and complement one another in this endeavor (and more).

BUCHA was chosen as a provocation site because it sounds similar to the English word "butcher." The provocation itself was technologically similar to those that the collective West had carried out against Russia earlier.

WITH THE START of the SMO, the information conflict between Russia and the US (in which the Ukrainian side is being used as a beachhead and a counteragent) came to be entirely restructured in terms of the special operations undertaken by our countries.

The SMO exposed one other objective of fabrications: to serve as a tool of secret control, motivating the opponent to deliberately reproduce the fabricated stories via its own channels of communication (mass media, social networks, messengers, etc. that they operate).

This system of spreading fabrications is really nothing new and is fully in line with the basic principle of specialized information intelligence operations: You only have to prod your opponents once, and everything else they are bound to do themselves: They will spoil their own covert operations, expose their own agents, and all the time be completely certain that they are doing everything correctly, because they have no other way out.

ONCE the SMO began, the classic methods of special propaganda (known from the Cold War) and primitive fabrications with gross defects in "assembly" came to the fore, displacing from the theater of operations more subtle tools for organizing ideological sabotage: multi-step maneuvers and operative games of intelligence services.

Six months after the start of the SMO, many tasks involved in the denazification and demilitarization of Ukraine have not yet been fully accomplished, and over time we should expect strategic information operations like the Argentine cocaine case, the Ryanair case, and the notorious Skripal case to return to the battlefield in different forms, adapted to a new theater of warfare.

Kuban CyberSecurity Conference 2022

Keywords: cybersecurity, information security, Kuban CSC, ICT, cybercrimes, cyber technologies, IIS, cyber threats, digitalization

ON OCTOBER 13-14, 2022, Sochi hosted the Kuban CyberSecurity Conference 2022 (Kuban CSC 2022) – this year's iteration of an international forum that, under a directive by the Russian president, is organized annually by the administration of Krasnodar Territory and the territory's Association for Digital Development with support from Russia's Security Council, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Justice Ministry, the Internal Affairs Ministry, the Federal Security Service (FSB), the Prosecutor General's Office, and the Russian Investigative Committee.

The more than 500 attendees of the 2022 conference included government figures, diplomats, scholars, academics, and employees of 20 large information and communications technology (ICT) companies from Russia, Belarus, Brazil, the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, India, Jordan, Lebanon, Madagascar, Syria, Tanzania, the United Arab Emirates, and Uzbekistan.

The speakers talked about their countries' positions on international information security issues and presented cutting-edge methods for preventing, detecting, and solving crimes committed with the use of ICTs. The conference included a Russian national competition in the practical application of information security mechanisms: Kuban CTF 2022.

Message of Greetings to the Organizers and Attendees of the International Conference on Information Security (Sochi, October 13-14, 2022)

Oleg Khramov, *Deputy Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, Chairman of the Interdepartmental Commission on Information Security of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, Chairman of the Interdepartmental Commission on Information Security of the Security Council of the Russian Federation*

DEAR Organizers and Attendees of the International Conference on Information Security,

The administration of Krasnodar Territory and the territory's Association for Digital Development have once again brought together in Kuban government figures, academics, diplomats, businesspeople, and leading Russian and foreign experts.

Significantly, this conference will focus on new challenges and threats to international information security, global unity in seeking security and stability for the global information space, key security issues in the use of information and communications technologies, and the search for effective ways to build a system of international information security guarantees.

I expect that the packed program of the forum, which includes specialized panel discussions and roundtables, will enable the conference to consider key aspects of the defense of critical information infrastructure and key measures to prevent the criminal abuse of ICTs.

As usual, the outlook for global and regional cooperation in building a secure ICT environment and combating cybercrime will be a priority discussion point.

I am sure that the conference will be one more opportunity to exchange experience, share professional knowledge and practical skills, and establish efficient cooperation in the interests of building a system of guarantees of international information security.

I wish the organizers and attendees successful and fruitful work.

Speech at the Plenary Session of the Kuban CSC 2022 International Conference on Information Security

Andrey Krutskikh, *Special Representative of the Russian President for International Cooperation on International Information Security, adviser to the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs*

New technologies have always been and remain a key factor that ultimately determine the global costs and benefits of the policies pursued by states, of particular technological innovations, and of the scientific and technical revolution in general.

Information and communication technologies (ICT) are no exception. Born as a "toy" for geniuses, they were immediately harnessed and militarized by the US military-industrial complex. In a relatively short historical time, ICT have become an effective tool in the arsenal of state military and foreign policy. According to public data, more than a hundred countries today are actually "building cyber muscle," creating cyber strike forces, holding war games, and adopting corresponding doctrines and strategies.

Several Western countries have already officially declared their readiness to carry out so-called "preemptive" cyber strikes or, to put it more bluntly, are asserting their right to cyber aggression. The world record in "cyber brazenness" has been broken by the Kiev regime, which publicly declared that it had created a 300,000-strong cyber army of hackers. The "cyber noose" tactic has become an integral element of the Western sanctions policy.

Foreseeing the negative consequences of the information space being turned into a theater of military operations, as provided for by the current NATO doctrine, we were the first, back in 1998, to call on the international community from the rostrum of the UN to formulate rules for the responsible behavior of states in cyberspace.

Unfortunately, I must say that, except for short periods of time, the US has actively opposed Russian peaceful initiatives on international information security (IIS). Any political progress toward compromises has been achieved at the cost of great diplomatic effort.

Today's Washington does not need negotiations. It cannot get concessions from us through negotiation, and its diktat does not work. The US hopes to resolve global political issues, in its own words, "on the battlefield." Its lead negotiator on digital issues, recently approved by Congress, publicly stated a few days ago that the cyber containment of Russia was a goal of US policy. Nothing doing. As the great Russian wrestler Ivan Poddubny said, "the mat will show."

Russian diplomats and the country's political leadership have enough restraint, will, and resolve to pull the world back from the brink of disaster without sacrificing an inch of Russia's national interests.

International Information Security: New Challenges and Threats

Sergey Boiko, *Head of the Information Security Department, Russian Security Council*

Challenges and threats are increasing and becoming more sophisticated and massive as they spread to all areas of life.

The main threats are clearly formulated in the Fundamentals of Russian State Policy in the Field of International Information Security, approved by Presidential Decree No. 213 of April 12, 2021.

These threats involve the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in military-political and other areas in order to undermine (infringe upon) the sovereignty and violate the territorial integrity of states and to take other actions in the global information space that hinder international peace, security, and stability.

Threats also come from the use of ICT for terrorist purposes, including the propaganda of terrorism and recruitment of new members for terrorist groups.

Events of the past few years have highlighted the growing threat of the use of ICT for cyberattacks against state information resources, including critical information infrastructure.

Today, this threat in effect reflects the essence of the Western countries' neocolonialist information policy with regard to sovereign developing countries.

The new threats to Russia's information security, which can also be regarded as threats to international information security, are reflected in Russia's updated National Security Strategy, approved by Presidential Decree No. 400 of July 2, 2021.

We are currently encountering a sharp increase in the number of cyberattacks against Russian information resources, mostly from the territory of foreign states. Such attacks have reached an unprecedented scale in recent years. As a result, information security specialists, including attendees of this conference, have to cope with heavy and sometimes unsustainable workloads.

Disinformation is being spread, including deliberately false reports of threats of terrorist acts designed to destabilize the sociopolitical situation not only in the Russian Federation, but also in other sovereign states.

An increasingly apparent threat to international information security is the desire of transnational corporations to consolidate their Internet monopoly and control all information resources by imposing their own censorship and blocking alternative Internet platforms (without legal grounds and in violation of international law).

These days, distorted views of historical facts and events taking place in both Russia and the world are being foisted on Internet users for political reasons.

A serious threat to international information security is the anonymity ensured by means of ICT in order to facilitate crime and expand opportunities for laundering criminal proceeds, financing terrorism, and trafficking narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

The increased vulnerability of Russian information resources, including critical information infrastructure facilities, to impacts from abroad owing to the use of foreign information technologies and telecommunications equipment in our country should undoubtedly be seen as a threat to information security.

A number of measures have already been taken in this area, and this work will be continued.

On the Importance of Creating International Law-Enforcement Cooperation Mechanisms to Counter the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes

Andrey Vikhlyayev, *Member of the Interagency Working Group of the Russian Federation on the Development of a Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes*

The active rollout and use of digital technologies largely determine the progressive development of each country and of the world as a whole. Machine learning, artificial intelligence, robotics, and new digital products increasingly provide the basis for economic growth, while digital platforms and electronic document management systems radically improve the performance of organizations, enterprises, business structures, and social and educational institutions

Digitalization is a significant resource for improving people's quality of life and promoting development in many areas.

At the same time, we should all be aware of the potential risks, threats, and challenges in the digital environment.

In this context, I think it important to create effective legal mechanisms to ensure information security based on the best practices in detecting, preventing, suppressing, and investigating crimes committed using ICT. Such legal regulation should take into account the specific nature of this sector and enable it to develop digital technologies while ensuring their safe and secure use by individuals, society, and the state.

One of the most important ways to improve the international information security system in this context is to create conditions that enable law enforcement to use mechanisms for the mutual exchange of information that would help detect, prevent, suppress, and investigate cybercrimes without delay.

It is important to elaborate a single set of rules, a set of universal international standards that would take into account the rights and interests of all states as much as possible and would be able to ensure the safe and secure functioning of the global information space. This is a difficult but feasible task, and events such as this conference enable us to take certain steps toward coordinating international documents designed to ensure international information security.

In order to maximize the effectiveness of these activities, we suggest working together to strengthen international information security.

We hope that today's speeches by conference participants will provide invaluable material that will help lawmakers create legal mechanisms enabling the effective detection, prevention, suppression, and investigation of crimes committed using information and communications technologies.

International Cooperation on Information Security: Strategies, Agreements, and New Legal Models

Olga Melnikova, *Section Head, Department of International Information Security, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Candidate of Science (Political Science)*

Russia was at the forefront of negotiations on international information security (IIS) and has been shaping key conceptual approaches and cutting-edge ideas on the international track for more than 20 years. We initiated the creation of a new algorithm for IIS negotiations.

Russia's main approaches in this area are aimed at forming a global IIS system based on the principles of preventing conflicts in the information space and encouraging the use of ICT for peaceful purposes, as well as involving the entire global community in the development of universally accepted binding norms of international law in the field of IIS.

The constructive agenda proposed by Russia has systematically provoked a negative response from Western countries, which seek to preserve their technological leadership, continue unilateral enforcement in the ICT field, and usurp the right to independently assign responsibility for cyber incidents.

Amid the transformation of international relations, the policy of the US and its allies, including on IIS, has become fiercely anti-Russian. A deliberately orchestrated campaign was launched to oust our country and its representatives from international telecommunications, ICT, and postal services organizations.

Meanwhile, in practice, it is Russia that is being targeted with real hostilities in cyberspace.

Immediately after the start of the SMO ([Russian] special military operation [in Ukraine]), the Anonymous hacker group declared "cyber war against the Russian government," and its members repeatedly claimed responsibility for hacker attacks on the websites of Russian government agencies and media outlets.

The ICT guidelines promoted by Russia continue to enjoy the approval of most members of the global community. This is confirmed by the impressive and unwavering support for the two main negotiation processes that were launched at the UN on Russia's initiative and have consolidated the intellectual leadership of our country in promoting the IIS topic in the international arena.

The first one is the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on security of and in the use of information and communications technologies 2021- 2025, established in 2021, one of whose priorities is to develop norms of responsible state behavior in the information space.

The second one is the Ad Hoc Committee to Elaborate a Comprehensive International Convention on Countering the Use of Information and Communications Technologies for Criminal Purposes, established in 2021.

IIS issues are on the agendas of regional organizations such as the CIS, SCO, BRICS, ASEAN (ARF), and the OSCE.

Russia has always actively used the platform of the specialized UN agency, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), resisting the West's attempts to limit its functionality, but in reality, its authority and significance. At the ITU, Moscow consistently promotes the internationalization of Internet governance and the equal participation of all states without exception in this process; it is no coincidence that our country was chosen as the host for the 20th UN Internet Governance Forum in 2025.

Cooperation with regional organizations on IIS is growing consistently stronger. We are actively working with partners within the CIS, SCO, and CSTO. We are systematically developing cooperation with the APAC countries.

Today, one task is to move on to creating specific content for our initiatives. Russia's intellectual leadership can and should be complemented by real projects. A significant role in this process could be given to Russian IT companies, whose state support is designated a priority task to ensure the accelerated development of the IT industry.

Revolution, Diplomacy, Mozart: On the 150th Birthday of Georgy Chicherin

Nikita Shevtsov, *Head, Department of International Journalism, Moscow State Institute (University) of International Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Professor, Candidate of Science (History); n_shevtsov@mail.ru*

ON ONE OF THE central streets of the historical center of Tambov stands an inconspicuous wooden mansion with a mezzanine, slightly lost among the modern multi-story buildings. It stands wall to wall with low, auxiliary buildings converted into residential space. Together with the mansion, they once formed a single vast estate. Today, a fence separates the mansion with a small plot of land from the other buildings.

The house with a mezzanine is now the house-museum of Georgy Chicherin, an outstanding diplomat who served as the first people's commissar for foreign affairs of the Soviet Union. The museum does not see many visitors. Unfortunately, not everyone knows about Chicherin nowadays. Still, visitors do come almost every day and learn a lot not only about Chicherin himself, but also about the time when our country, finding itself in a diplomatic blockade, consistently overcame international isolation, asserting its authority on the world stage.

It should be noted that Chicherin did not live long in the house on Bolshaya Street, now known as Sovetskaya. But he always remembered the first years of his life, spent in Tambov.

The future diplomat was born on November 12, 1872, in the countryside estate of Karaul that belonged to his uncle Boris Chicherin. Incidentally, Boris Chicherin was a major commentator and philosopher. He was considered a prominent representative of Russian liberalism of the 19th century. The philosopher Vladimir Solovyov called him the most educated person not only among Russians, but also among many Europeans.

Relationships in the Chicherin family, with all due respect for the parents, were based on mutual respect. The sons and the daughter enjoyed sufficient freedom and were often present during the conversations of adults, who did not hide their liberal views on events taking place both in Russia and abroad. Chicherin's parents could not be called oppositionists, but they did not always approve of the policies of the ruling elites.

As for the nationalized Chicherins' house in Tambov, it housed an orphanage and various other institutions, including at one time a Folk Art Center. It was only in 1987 that, by the decision of the Executive Committee of the Tambov Council of People's Deputies and with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, a museum was opened in the house, which became a branch of the Tambov Regional Museum of Local Lore.

Speaking at the exhibition opening, Ambassador-at-Large Mikhail Shvydkoy, special envoy of the president of the Russian Federation for international cultural cooperation, talked about Chicherin's life and work and rightly called himself and fellow diplomats "diplomats of the Chicherin school."

The exhibition offers a chance to learn a lot about Chicherin's formation as a diplomat and about his work as the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, first of the RSFSR, and then of the USSR.

Georgy Vasilyevich gave up diplomatic for revolutionary work. He began to travel around Europe. In France, he participated in the publication of the Russian-language newspaper Moryak. During the First World War, he collaborated with the emigrant newspaper Nashe Slovo, published in Paris. He wrote articles under the pseudonym Orn, derived from Ornatsky.

Once in his homeland, Chicherin assumed the post of Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the RSFSR in January 1918. On March 13, he became acting people's commissar, and on May 30, he was appointed head of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs. He replaced Trotsky, who left that post without any regrets: He was more interested in the ideas of the world revolution at the time and did not attach much importance to diplomacy and its institutions.

Chicherin, the top Soviet diplomat, essentially had to start from scratch. Russia found itself in international isolation. Diplomatic personnel who would be experienced and, most importantly, devoted to the new government, were in short supply. Step by step, the country was strengthening its international standing, which was greatly facilitated by Georgy Chicherin's efforts. He proved to be a wise, consistent diplomat, who managed to unite around himself staff who were talented, although inexperienced at first, and who became worthy colleagues and peers of their leader.

Some accused Chicherin of being soft, almost indecisive, but the people's commissar's seeming acquiescence masked an iron will, determination, and the dedication of a diplomat and an intellectual, which brought amazing results.

Georgy Chicherin's diplomatic career came to an end on July 21, 1930, when he left the NKID due to deteriorating health. But, of course, Chicherin's "diplomatic differences" with his deputy Maxim Litvinov, who enjoyed Stalin's great confidence, were a no less weighty reason for his resignation.

Georgy Chicherin died on July 7, 1936, and was buried at the Novodevichy Cemetery in Moscow. We remember him as an outstanding diplomat, revolutionary, and ardent admirer of Mozart's music.

Averell Harriman: Oligarch in the Diplomatic Service (Part 3)

Ivan Kravchenko, *Counsellor of the General Secretariat of the MFA of Russia; kravt-iv@ yandex.ru*

EVERY WAR has winners, losers, and beneficiaries – and the latter two are rarely or practically never one and the same, especially in large, drawnout conflicts. The victor, having won at a high price by investing a lot of resources and, frequently, every ounce of strength, emerges from the war exhausted. The beneficiary, on the other hand, avoids direct involvement, spends a minimal amount of resources, skillfully distributes the burden of losses among the warring sides, and bets on the victor at just the right

moment to reap maximal political and economic benefit from its limited involvement. Winning the war waged by others without making it their own has been the ultimate strategic pursuit of all political actors of all ages – as cliché and cynical as that may sound.

The US sought to do precisely that during both world wars. World War I opened the world to America to pursue its business interests, albeit to a limited extent: Great Britain and France, the two largest colonial powers at the time, were still too strong. But the situation was different in 1944, when World War II was drawing to close.

Harriman never tired of warning Washington that the "time has come when we must make clear what we expect of them as the price of our goodwill. Unless we take issue with the present policy there is every indication that the Soviet Union will become a world bully wherever their interests are involved."3 Relationships must be based on the principle of reciprocity and resolute demands of mutual concessions. Those in Stalin's closest circle who were ready to play by American rules should be supported, while the Soviet leader should be persuaded that those who insisted on an unyielding course were creating problems for him.

American diplomacy should be firm and resolute yet cautious: The old ties must not be broken when pursuing the desired results.

When Harriman on November 10 described Stalin's plan … the President responded with a troubling question: If the Russians go in, will they ever go out?"

Even though the "junior partner" was rapidly gaining political weight, the US still held enough trump cards to win. Averell frequently recalled that the Soviet Union would perhaps need a lot more in postwar reconstruction than it had needed in wartime supplies, and that the US should use this in its interests.

Harriman was right: On January 3, 1945, he received from Molotov an "oddly conceived" proposal that stated that the Soviet government considered it possible to place orders on the basis of long-tern credits to the amount of $6 billion to be repaid in 30 years at an annual interest rate of 2.25% with no payment for the first nine years. The US ambassador remarked that Molotov's was the strangest request he had have ever received from a potential borrower.

The American president, therefore, was in no rush to roll out a Soviet policy. He preferred to work subtly, to conceal his intentions, to act with circumspection; he avoided direct conflicts, never invited Soviet countermeasures, and avoided resource-intensive conflicts. He was convinced that it was possible to negotiate with Stalin on American conditions, regardless of the Soviet leader's nature – at least to buy time.

The president fell victim to his own genius and exceptionalism. Roosevelt's biggest strategic miscalculation was that he tried to play with Stalin from the logic of the mind, while Stalin understood only the logic of power. Harriman was one of the first to recognize this.

Yalta was ridiculed as a capitulation by an exhausted president, the Yalta critics contending that the president had been fleeced by the Soviet dictator and that many problems in Soviet-American relations had been laid down there. Harriman, for his part, was convinced that "the postwar problems have resulted not from the understandings reached at Yalta but from the fact that Stalin failed to carry out those understandings and from aggressive actions by the Kremlin."

"The news of Roosevelt's death … reached Spaso House during a farewell party the Harrimans were giving for John Melby, who was being transferred to Washington." After promptly ending the party and bidding the guests goodnight, Harriman, who had not told anybody what had happened, called the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs at 2:50 a.m. to inform about the sad event and request

meetings with Molotov and Stalin. Despite the late hour, the People's Commissar went in person to the ambassador's residence to express his condolences.

That same day, "Stalin greeted Harriman in silence when they met at eight o'clock that evening, holding his hand for perhaps thirty seconds before asking him to sit down." This attitude appeared to be one of bewilderment and concern about the significance of this tragic event.

It turned out, as Harriman had expected, that the new president knew next to nothing about Roosevelt's Soviet strategy. Truman asked his advisers, who – especially Harriman – sought to explain to Truman what they had unsuccessfully tried to convey to Roosevelt.

Harriman was convinced that communist regimes in Eastern Europe were a forced measure.

Having listened to his advisers, the new president concluded that the Soviet Union needed America more than America needed it. Perhaps Harriman had been too vehement in his desire to persuade the new president, or the new president overdid it in his zeal to pose as a strong and principled leader – either way, the results were far from positive.

Harriman was convinced that Truman's frankness was out of place. Not a timid man himself, "Harriman was shaken by the vehemence with which Truman sailed into 'Old Ironass,' and he feared his new boss had overdone it and given Molotov an excuse to tell Stalin that Roosevelt's policy toward the Soviets was being abandoned."

The death of Roosevelt put an end to the post-Yalta "honeymoon"; the scope of the loss became clear much later. America had lost the messiah. Stalin had lost the man willing to negotiate with him on acceptable terms. This was a huge blow to Soviet interests. For his part, Harriman had lost his benefactor, guide, and protector in the world of big politics. His future was no longer guaranteed.

But even the euphoria of Germany's defeat and capitulation could not suppress the ambassador's persistent feeling that Soviet-American cooperation was crumbling before his very eyes. The enthusiasm of Tehran and Yalta was retreating in the face of the clear realization that "alliances, like the men who forged them, were not eternal."

None of the new global leaders, elated by their victories, was willing to yield. Each move merely increased antagonisms and widened the gap between the former allies. Friendship was possible only on American, not Soviet, terms.

This was a new era of relations between the two countries that Harriman could hardly fit into as the US ambassador to the Soviet Union. A man of unique intuition and political instincts, Averell knew that he stood to gain more from leaving in a timely manner than attempting to cling to a post that offered no prospects under the new conditions.

He knew that adversaries should not be pushed into a corner; they should be given a way out and a chance to save face. Even during heated debates, he never lost his sense of tact: Politeness and respect for his interlocutor were hallmark traits of his. Harriman's combination of flexibility and firmness, among other things, won him the respect of his adversaries[93] and credibility among the American elite. This capital worked to his benefit for the rest of his life. The end of his mission in the Soviet Union marked the beginning of a new and long journey in American politics marked by no less ambitious tasks and high-profile accomplishments that forever inscribed his name in world history.