

Ukrainian Crisis as an Episode of Geopolitical Struggle between Superpowers

News:

G7 leaders in final declaration of summit, held in Japan, claimed that they are ready to prolong sanctions against Russia and stressed that prolongation of sanctions depends on how Russia will implement Minsk Agreement. (Source: [http://zn.ua/WORLD/g7-prizvala-prinyat-konkretnye-shagi-dlya-prekrascheniya-ognya-na-vostoke-ukrainy-deklaraciya-sammita-214593 .html](http://zn.ua/WORLD/g7-prizvala-prinyat-konkretnye-shagi-dlya-prekrascheniya-ognya-na-vostoke-ukrainy-deklaraciya-sammita-214593.html))

Comment:

Two years have passed since Russia annexed Crimea but it seems that all efforts applied on Russia to force it to respect so called international law were unsuccessful.

Political analysts claim the following reason: EU and the US initially chose a soft way to influence Russia via applying economic sanctions. They argue that aggressive influence can provoke unpredictable consequences such as local war, World War III or even nuclear war.

Objectively these concerns are real, but I want to draw your attention to the following:

Present day Russia in ideological, economical, political and military aspects is not comparable with the USSR. Being deprived of ideology and as a result lacking a system approach to economy, inner and foreign policy, Russian leadership (Prime-Minister D. Medvedev) even in Crimea that is supposed to be a shop window of Russia's economical achievements says to pensioners: "We have no money now. When we will find money we will index your pensions. So hold on. With best wishes, be in a good mood and health!".

Russia's outright saber-rattling would be impossible if EU and especially US had another stand in Ukrainian crisis.

As for the EU, its stand can be briefly formulated with such words – "want, but can not". EU definitely lacks enough extents of military and economic resources to restrain Russia. Political inhomogeneity of EU, its dependence on Russian energy resources, nearness to Russia – all of these forces EU to act very carefully.

As for the US, its stand can be briefly formulated as "can, but do not want". Present-day Russia and its policy is beneficial for US along all Russia's borders. **Let us list all these factors from Far East to Europe:**

1. China's expansion

Doubtless that weakening of Russia and its disintegration as a result will lead to strengthening of China. As it is known the US pursue a policy of squeezing of China by creating strong states and instability near its borders. Russia is a significant component of this policy on northern borders of China.

2. Stability in Central Asia

As it is known stability in Central Asia is guaranteed by dictatorships, most of which depend on Russia's military forces. Weakening and the disintegration of Russia most probably will lead to initiating in region processes similar to Arab spring, when population of Central Asia will fill streets and demand to build a political system that will fit aspirations of people. Such scenario will lead to catastrophic consequences for domination of US in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

3. Weakening of Europe and keeping it in NATO's fairway.

Undoubtedly a revisionist policy of Kremlin will bring huge damage to Europe. This was

repeatedly said by European politicians. Economic weakening of Europe is profitable for US since EU competes with US, while Euro challenges dollar in its position of major reserve currency.

In addition, enemy intentions of Russia near EU borders gave new meaning for NATO, which experienced existentialist crisis since collapse of USSR in 1991.

Commenting on Munich speech of Putin (February 10th 2007) US Senator Lindsey Graham said: “By his sole speech he (Pr. Putin) donated for consolidation of US and Europe much more than we have achieved in decade”.

It is also worse to mention the comment by Minister of Foreign Affairs of Czech Republic Karel Schwarzenberg: “We have to thank President Putin, who not only took good care (to create) great publicity for this conference, greater than we expected, but who clearly and convincingly argued why NATO should be enlarged.”

As it is known after aggression of Russia towards Ukraine, strengthening of NATO is seen in whole Europe.

It is also worse to mention that the US are interested in reorientation of EU from Russian energy resources to resources from other parts of world.

4. Forcing Russia for joint resolution of international issues.

Isolation of Russia as a result of its aggression towards Ukraine made Russia compliant in a joint resolution of different international issues. Present-day Russia agrees to be US partner on any conditions in order to get rid of isolation.

We witnessed how Russia played a mediatory role in conclusion of agreement on Iran’s nuclear program in summer 2015. On September 30 2015, Russian military forces initiated air strikes in Syria. The US and Russia play a joint game in Syria. From one side America as a “good policemen” tries to persuade rebels to sit around bargaining table with Assad, and from another side there is Russia – a “bad policemen” which helps Assad to destroy rebels until they agree with peace negotiations.

Summing up we should say that now the US considers its presence profitable in the world arena of a “bear, which will not give to anyone its own taiga”. I do not claim that the US can solve the Ukrainian crisis in one month, but I say about factors that make acting with maturity not profitable for US.

As for Russia we should say that being ideologically weak, while having imperial ambitions formed for centuries, Russia is not able to realize that sabre-rattling in a long-term outlook will give it nothing but harm. Russia is blind with its own short-term success, such as a treacherous annexation of Crimea and bloody campaign in Syria.

Therefore, in the foreseeable future any serious changes in the Ukrainian crisis are not expected. The situation will change when the above-mentioned factors are neutralized. In that situation we will witness real pressure on Russia which will result not in destroying Russia but in bringing it to a position of submissive “international partner”, which will never dare break any established rules.

As for people of Ukraine, we see that its natural desire to have better changes became a hostage of geopolitical interests of superpowers that broke all responsibilities that were signed under the Budapest Memorandum in 1994.

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by

Fadl Amzayev

Head of the Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir in Ukraine