

Fedenko Oleksandr Volodymyrovych
PhD in political sciences, associate professor, professor of the department of tactical and special disciplines, National Army Academy

Panasiuk Vasil Vasilyovych
PhD in political sciences, associate professor of the department of tactical and special disciplines, National Army Academy

Baginskiy Vitaliy Anatoliyovych
PhD in technical sciences, associate professor of the department of tactical and special disciplines, National Army Academy

SPECIAL ASPECTS OF ASSESSMENT OF MILITARY AND POLITICAL SITUATION IN UKRAINE IN THE LIGHT OF HYBRID WAR

Annotation: Military security of the state depends on the quality of assessment of the state of the military and political situation and the rationale for its development forecast.

Based on the urgency of the problem and the need for its further study, the article explores the risks and problems that have led to the events between Ukraine and Russia today. The article also analyses the development of the military and political situation in Ukraine starting up with the beginning of the occupation of Crimea and subsequent events in the South-East of our country in the light of the hybrid war that the Russian Federation has unleashed and the extent of Ukraine's responsibility for maintaining peace and security in Europe and in the world, and peaceful settlement of the conflict. The results achieved by the country in recent years are briefly reviewed. The ways of emergence of hybrid war phenomenon and its impact on "Big-time politics."

Key words: military and political situation, hybrid war, annexation, illegal armed formations, "Minsk agreements".

Military security of the state depends on the quality of assessment of the state of the military and political situation (MPS) and the rationale for forecasting its development.

Way back, in 2002, starting his research, V. Panasyuk noted: "As known, Ukraine has no enemies in the modern world and does not consider any country as a potential enemy. However, the theoretical absence of obvious adversaries and potential opponents does not mean that the country has no rigid and pragmatic competitors or sources of controversy. Despite the low probability of large-scale aggression against Ukraine in order to occupy all its territory or a large part of it, we have no right to completely reject the possibility of materialization of a crisis or conflict that could threaten the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country. They should include a wide range of challenges and threats – starting from political interference in the internal affairs of Ukraine, military and political pressure with the demonstration of force combined with the use of measures and sanctions of the economic blockade, cutting off supplies of energy resources and finishing by the military force application. Attempts to

fuel regional separatism, ethnic and religious confrontations, and so on, are also dangerous and can lead to the destabilization of situation¹.

The findings of the military and political situation evaluation constitute the basis for the formation of the military policy and military doctrine of the country, for the justification of the directions for the development of its armed forces, its military-industrial complex, and for the assessment of real existing threats. The starting point is the set of basic provisions: the assessment of military and political situation; threats to the state; military aspirations of its leaders. The study of modern wars (conflicts) and ways of their management affects the search for effective directions of reforming the national armed forces and increasing their capabilities².

In the materials of modern defense reviews, it is noted that challenges, risks and threats with high probability of occurrence by 2025 include: the existence of conflict situations and unsettled differences, as well as frozen conflicts in the region; attempts by some political forces of foreign powers to support certain political parties, groups of population according to ethnic, linguistic, and religious grounds in Ukraine; international competition for access to energy resources, control over transportation routes and facilities for the processing of the above resources; preservation of the danger of the spread of weapons of mass destruction; implementation of the destructive information action of foreign states and building out their presence in the information space of Ukraine; the development and exacerbation of regional separatism, ethnic and religious confrontation, manifestations of national egoism, the emergence of political forces that create real danger of the breakup of the state; increasing terrorist and extremist threats; enhancement of the risk of large-scale natural and technological disasters, in particular due to human interference with the ecosystem of the planet. The above threats are exacerbated by the influence of internal factors, which significantly increase the probability of crisis situations. To the latter factors experts include: the imbalance and incompleteness of public administration reforms, especially in the field of security and defense, lack of efficiency in the implementation of executive decisions, a significant level of population poverty, unemployment and corruption³.

In order to achieve the result, it is necessary to thoroughly study and explore all components of the military-political situation, especially during the hybrid war in Ukraine, for its accurate forecast and forming adequate effective means and mechanisms for confronting Russian "hybrid" expansion. This causes the problem of comprehensive, objective and continuous further analysis of this urgent contemporary issue⁴.

At present, traditional views on military conflicts are undergoing qualitative changes. First, war and armed conflict will be viewed in a wider range of forms of confrontation. Informational, political and diplomatic, as well as economic forms of struggle appear on the foreground. The tendency of ratcheting up the role of "non-

¹ Панасюк В.В. Військово-політичні аспекти інтеграції України з НАТО : дис. ... к. політ. наук : 23.00.04. Львів, 2010. с 74.

² О. Феденко, *Особливості методики оцінки воєнно-політичної обстановки в сучасних умовах* [Електронний ресурс]. Режим доступу: <http://journals.iir.kiev.ua/index.php/apmv/article/viewFile/1697/1607> (дата перегляду 6 березня 2019)

³ О. Гуржій, *Локальні війни і збройні конфлікти другої половини ХХ століття: (Історико-філософ.аспект): Монографія / О. Гуржій, С. Мосов, В. Макров та ін. – К: Т-во «Знання» України, 2006. ст.290-301*

⁴ О. Феденко, *Деякі аспекти оцінки воєнно-політичної ситуації в Україні в ході гібридної війни // Науковий журнал «Молодий вчений», № 10 (62). - Херсон. – жовтень, 2018. - С. 11-19.*

combat" forms of confrontation is confirmed. Secondly, in spite of the growing role of non-military means and forms of struggle, military force retains its importance. And, thirdly, there is a transformation of political and strategic objectives of military conflicts, as well as ways to achieve them. In this context, the attempts of the Russian Federation (RF) to become one of the superpowers and to embody their ambitions regarding the influence on the post-Soviet countries, and Ukraine in particular, act as an additional stimulus. In this regard it should be noted that constant study of the military and political situation and control over it are extremely important aspects that significantly affect the nature and content of relations between states, especially under conditions of information wars and the diversity of other components of the hybrid war. Although national science conducts the research of the consequences of the introduction by the poles of force of their interests, which added to the diversity of hybrid war components, still this issue needs further research as present studies are scarce.

In the beginning, I would like to mention the opinion of leading political experts and military analysts that in recent years, due to the growth of the proportion of political-diplomatic, economic, informational, cybernetic, psychological means and methods of achieving political goals in the international confrontation, the question arises concerning the fundamental change in the concept of a war itself and the whole system of knowledge associated with it. The features of modern armed conflicts make it possible to consider them as components of a new generation of wars - the hybrid war. The term "hybrid warfare" is interpreted more deeply in the Military Balance 2015 as "the use of military and non-military instruments in an integrated campaign aimed at achieving surprise, seizing the initiative and obtaining psychological benefits using diplomatic capabilities; large-scale and rapid information, electronic and cyber-attacks; cover and concealment of military and intelligence operations combined with economic pressure".

According to the authors of the article "hybrid war" is the achievement of strategic military objectives by nonmilitary warfare. For quite a long time the entire world community has been watching events taking place in Ukraine. The whole world recognizes the fact that aggression against Ukraine is being pursued by virtue of a fundamentally new type of war. It suffices to get acquainted with the Annual Report on Preliminary Investigations of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court Fatou Bensouda, dated November 14, 2016. Articles 158, 166, 169 of the latter report read as follows: "... according to the information received, the situation on the territory of Crimea and Sevastopol is equivalent to the international armed conflict between Ukraine and the Russian Federation. This international armed conflict began no later than February 26, 2014; ... later for more than two years in the territory of eastern Ukraine collisions of various degrees of tension continued between the troops of the Government of Ukraine and anti-government elements allegedly supported by the Russian Federation; ... additional information ... indicates a direct military confrontation between the Russian armed forces and the forces of the government of Ukraine, which implies the existence of an international armed conflict in the context of armed actions in eastern Ukraine at the latest from July 14, 2014 ...".

The enemy carries out its aggression not only in military terms, but also in other spheres, ranging from information and ending with social, economic or financial and trade spheres.

There is every reason to believe that the issue of aggression against Ukraine was planned in advance, in fact, the necessary development of events for its phased

introduction was actually created and expected. Thus, the chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, V. Gerasimov, in February 2013, published an article with the title that "speaks" for itself - "The value of science is in foresight." The article states that "... the rules of the war have changed significantly. The role of non-military means in achieving political and strategic goals has increased, which in some cases, in their effectiveness, far exceeded the strength of weapons. The emphasis of the applied methods of confrontation shifts towards widespread use of political, economic, informational, humanitarian and other non-military measures that are implemented with the involvement of the protest potential of the population. All this is supplemented by military measures of a latent nature, in particular, by the appliance of measures of information confrontation and actions of special operations forces. Open use of force, often under the guise of peacekeeping and crisis management, is only employed at some stage, mainly to achieve final success in the conflict."⁵

Let's consider the main components of this process. For a systematic analysis of the situation that is now in evidence in our country, we must first of all focus on the historical origins and genesis of those problems that have led us to the events taking place in Ukraine today.

In 1992 Ukraine made the necessary judicial and legal step in the context of resolving the issue of nuclear-free status by signing the Lisbon Protocol on the implementation of the provisions of the Treaty on the Reduction of Strategic Offensive Arms, and in December 1994 the Memorandum of Security Guarantees was signed in exchange for the US, Russian and the UK guarantees. Paragraph 1 of the mentioned Memorandum confirms their commitment to "... respect independence, sovereignty and existing borders of Ukraine", that is, de facto and de jure Ukraine entrusted its fate to the three great powers.

However, the problem of territorial integrity within the borders of the former USSR did not disappear. There were a number of controversial issues between Ukraine and Russia. One of those was the question of possession of the Crimean peninsula. Russia agreed that Crimea should remain part of Ukraine, while retaining its autonomous status⁶.

For a long time in its recent history Ukraine fluctuated between the "East-West" vectors. The problems were in two dimensions: internal policy and foreign policy, primarily due to the nature of relations in the Ukraine-Russia-NATO triangle. Russia's attitude to the process of NATO expansion eastwards became the permanent negative factor⁷. This became the driving force behind historical events.

Another cornerstone was the problem of the Black Sea Fleet stationing on the peninsula.

In his dissertation study V. Panasyuk testifies the validity and correctness of the assessment of the military-political situation in 2010. "The uniqueness of the Black Sea Fleet of Russia lies in the fact that it is located exactly at the place where Russia has special geopolitical interests. The Black Sea Fleet, above all, is an instrument of

⁵ В. Герасимов, *Ценность науки в предвидении* // Независимое военное обозрение. - 27.02. 2013. - № 8 (476).

⁶ Передача Кримської області РРФСР до складу УРСР. [Електронний ресурс]. Режим доступу: http://likbez.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/border-1918-1928_rus.jpg; [Електронний ресурс]. Режим доступу: <http://h.ua/story/381791/> (дата перегляду 6 березня 2019)

⁷ Панасюк В.В. *Військово-політичні аспекти інтеграції України з НАТО* : дис. ... к. політ. наук : 23.00.04. Львів, 2010. с 160.

Russia's achievement of the two main military and political goals: the preservation of military-political control, in particular over Crimea, over Ukraine's foreign and military policies in the Black Sea region. Russia seeks to consolidate the presence of the Black Sea Fleet on the territory of Ukraine for an indefinite period of time and to extend its influence on the political, cultural, social and economic environment of Sevastopol and Crimea in general. "⁸

After lengthy intensive negotiations in 1997, a so-called Great Treaty was concluded between Ukraine and Russia, according to which it was decided to divide the Black Sea Fleet, and for the Russian part - to retain its right to use Sevastopol as a base until 2017. As a result of this treaty, Russia abandoned territorial claims and recognized the existing borders of Ukraine. Despite this, unfortunately, the very presence of the naval base of Russia on the territory of Ukraine played the role of "Trojan horse" in capturing Crimea in the future⁹.

At the time of declaration of independence, Ukraine was the second most important component of the Soviet economy after Russia. A quarter of agricultural production of the USSR belonged to its share, and the Ukrainian industry provided other republics with a large number of unique equipment. However, after the collapse of the USSR, the economy turned out to be fickle and deformed. Thus, 95% of enterprises were subordinated to Moscow, almost 80% of the total production did not have a completed technological cycle, 40% of technologically obsolete machinery and equipment required urgent replacement. Unfortunately, instead of taking effective management decisions and getting the economy out of the crisis, the process of governance corruption took place¹⁰.

Russia's trade war against Ukraine began in 2012 with the prohibition of certain types of Ukrainian products, but became systematic and comprehensive after the Revolution of Virtue, in parallel with the military aggression of the Russian Federation in Crimea and Donbass. Russia's use of the policy of economic pressure as a method of hybrid war has become one of the negative factors in the development of the domestic economy over the last few years. At the same time, the RF government decided to ban the import of certain types of agricultural products, raw materials and food from Ukraine. The trade embargo applies to meat and meat products, fish, dairy products, vegetables and fruits, flour products - products that accounted for almost half (46%) of our agricultural exports to Russia. Thuswise, simple calculations show that Ukraine currently supplies only about 1% of the exported products to the Russian consumer. Today, Ukrainian agricultural producers generally supply their products to over 190 countries, including the states of Asia and Africa in addition to the European Union¹¹.

⁸ Панасюк В.В. Військово-політичні аспекти інтеграції України з НАТО : дис. ... к. політ. наук : 23.00.04. Львів, 2010. с. 59.

⁹ Феденко О.В., Ожаревський В.А. Розвиток кризової ситуації в Україні: деякі воєнно-політичні наслідки // Вісник Львівського університету: серія «Міжнародні відносини», № 38. - Львів: ЛНУ ім. І. Франка. - 2016. - С. 127-139.

¹⁰ Світлична В.В. Економічна криза // Історія України [Електронний ресурс]. Режим доступу: (westudents.com.ua/glavy/ 30432-ekonomichna kriza.html)

¹¹ Павленко О. Торгово-економічна війна з Росією: здобутки і втрати для українського виробника [Електронний ресурс]. Режим доступу: <https://www.obozrevatel.com/blogs/23491-torgovo-ekonomichna-vijna-z-rosieyu-zdobutki-i-vtrati-dlya-ukrainskogo-virobnika.htm> (дата перегляду 6 березня 2019)

Gas confrontation between Russia and Ukraine began almost immediately after the formation of our countries. One of the first Russian-Ukrainian gas conflicts took place on February 20, 1993, when the concern Gazprom announced its intention to stop supplying gas to Ukraine. The reason was Ukraine's debt of \$ 300 million. That year we for the first time paid for gas by weapons and also, as part of the payment, handed over part of the Black Sea Fleet. The year of 2004 surprised us by the level of arrogance and creativity of Ukrainian corruption. On February 2, 2006, Naftogaz and RUE set up a joint venture UkrGas-Energo, which began to sell gas to the industry. As a result of this deal, Ukraine lost the opportunity to buy Central Asian gas directly and once for all became dependent on a "gas-pipe" needle. After the next change of power, Y. Tymoshenko initiated the transition to direct relations between Naftogaz and Gazprom, which led to the second gas war in 2009. The war, like most of the previous ones, ended in a crushing defeat. Being a monopolist on the market, Gazprom could demand any price and that actually happened.

And then they only had to work individually with our politicians. Everyone was ready to give way to something. The price for gas has never been an economic indicator - it has always been a policy. The price could be lowered for political concessions. Then, it was inevitably raised to demand the following political concessions. Over the 5- year period of time the price for gas became almost 10 times higher and rose from \$ 50, under the contract of L. Kuchma, to rather badly disguised \$ 450 by the agreement of Yulia Tymoshenko in 2009. The contract with the base price of \$ 450, following the principle "take or pay" and inadequately high purchasing obligations, condemned all subsequent governments to confront the Russians. Our economy was extremely gas-consuming. Experts estimate that in 2009 Ukraine consumed more gas than France, India or Argentina. In 2010-2013 the Russian-Ukrainian gas war went on to a new stage characterized by a backstage opaque negotiation process and a kind of "political barter." Thus, on April 21, 2010, Kharkiv agreements were signed, according to which the term of presence of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation in Sevastopol was extended from 2017 to 2042 with an automatic extension for 5 years. With the onset of aggression the Kremlin announced cancellation of all discounts and new gas price for Ukraine, namely 485 dollars.

In June 2014 Naftogaz Company filed its first lawsuit with the Stockholm Arbitrage. As a result of two arbitration proceedings in Stockholm, Gazprom has to pay 2.5 billion dollars in favor of Naftogaz¹².

At the same time, the number of oligarchs grew at a time when the living standards of ordinary Ukrainians gradually decreased. With the rise of Yanukovich to the presidential power in 2010, protest sentiment began to increase rapidly. And this is precisely one of the factors of the war of a new generation by the edition of V. Gerasimov, the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation¹³. Economic instability in the state, manifestations of corruption in all spheres of life led to the fact that society simply demanded changes for the better and

¹² Історія газових війн України: коли все почалося та чим закінчиться. [Електронний ресурс].

Режим доступу:

https://24tv.ua/istoriya_gazovih_viyv_ukrayini_koli_vse_pochalosya_ta_chim_zakinchitsya_n942253

(дата перегляду 6 березня 2019)

¹³ Герасимов В. Ценность науки в предвидении // Независимое военное обозрение. - 27.02. 2013. - № 8 (476).

the opening of new opportunities for the development of the country. The improvement of life was associated with the signing of the Association Agreement with the European Union (EU) by the then President of Ukraine on November 28, 2013 in Vilnius. However, a week before the Vilnius summit the government announced its decision to suspend the process of preparation for the signing of the agreement on the association of Ukraine with the EU. This, in fact, was the reason for the rapid development of events, which in the future became truly remarkable in the history of our country. So, on November 21, 2013, several journalists, using social networks, appealed to all non-indifferent people to go to the Independence Square in Kyiv. By the end of the day there were about 1500 people in the rally. In a few days special police force "Berkut" attacked students who were staying on the Independence Square overnight. Young men were clubbed, chased in the streets, kicked. The country was shocked by the unprecedented roughness of the beating and the fact that the victims were mainly young people, sincere in their aspirations for the good for their country. The following day more than 100 thousand participants gathered on the Maidan. Independence Square became the center of peaceful resistance.

Maidans also appeared in other regions of Ukraine. However, it often required more heroism to take part in protests in the regions than in the capital. The events in Kyiv on February 18-20, 2014, during which more than a hundred protesters were shot and several thousands injured became the final and most dramatic stage of the Revolution of Goodwill. After the bloody massacre of the Maidan some of regime's forced supporters turned away from Yanukovich,. The events of EuroMaidan aggravated the contradictions between Kyiv and the south-eastern regions, in particular Crimea and Donbass, where positions of President Yanukovich and the ones of his supporters from the Party of Regions were strong. For some residents of the south-eastern regions the events of EuroMaidan were associated with riots, an attempt upon "stability", and so on.

The Russian Federation could not accept the fact that Ukraine comes out of its sphere of influence. The political leadership of Russia took advantage of the unstable socio-political situation in Ukraine and moved to the implementation of the imperial project "Rus World" and "Novorossia" which began with the annexation of Crimea. The "cumulative effect" of the complex of events of "hybrid war" in Ukraine was provided by the implementation of a system of integrated and interdependent preparatory and executive activities related to the coordination of a significant number of participants operating in the territory of the target country and beyond. Within the framework of such measures the aggressor party implemented the following steps: the search for sources of sustainable financing of the protest movement, armed formations both from outside interested supporters and with the use of internal possibilities; the discovery of protest political unions and social groups capable of participating in planned actions of a non-violent nature and then of a forceful one, up to a civil war; definition of practical slogans that are as close as possible to the real requirements of protest social groups, whose actions can be used to delegitimize and break the existing power; preparing leaders capable of leading a political protest; training of field commanders and militants in field camps for acts of violence, the organization of mobilization posts abroad and the routes of mercenary transfers; ensuring the support of

the opposition and its expansion into the regions¹⁴. It is already clear that in the process of organizing, planning and conducting by Russian special services of the military, or more specifically, special operation, a number of appropriate preparatory measures had been taken before the start of its active phase. This was done through the use of trained people, primarily Ukrainian citizens, by moving them to the territory where it was planned to organize and conduct an operation to destabilize the situation. This complex of preparatory measures resulted, in fact, in total separatist control over the infrastructure system on the designated territory, over state authorities and representatives of local security structures (SSU, Ministry of Internal Affairs, etc.), creation of a "favourable conditions" regime in the area of the State border. In the east of Ukraine and in Crimea Moscow demonstrated rapid, and therefore prearranged, creation of "pressure groups" and "agents of influence", consisting of "elements of the local population and authorities", but those who were guided and supported from the outside, and this tactic was used as if for the protection of ethnic minorities.

Incidentally, an appropriate remark from the Kurt Volker Special Representative of the US Department of State for Ukraine on the forum in Kyiv on September 14-15, 2018 can be cited. "... The only place where the Russian-speaking population of Ukraine suffers is where Russia intervened where Russia occupied ..."

During April-May 2014, the forces of the FSB of Russia, the Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Russia and illegal armed formations from among mercenaries of different nationalities carried out systematic armed attacks on local authorities, key infrastructure and mass media facilities in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts (regions). Analyzing the events which took place in Ukraine over a specified period of time, one can testify that all seizures of administrative buildings, territories and objects were carried out in a well-planned and pre-arranged scenario. All the participants of those acts of terrorism acted in concert in a mode of constant clarification of the order of interaction^{15,16}. On September 10, 2018, on the air of the Internet-channel "Roy-TV" I.Hirkin (Strelkov) stated that "... [the economy] of the Donbas was destroyed ... In principle, some benefit was gained: there was sucked from there a certain number of skilled personnel, who Russian modern defense enterprises lacked ..., it [Donbas] was stupidly robbed under the general leadership of our friend ... Vladislav Surkov ... «

The annexation of the Crimean peninsula by the Russian Army began on February 20, 2014. Separatist sentiment in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (ARC), directed from Russia, exploded with a powerful force. So, on February 23, a 20 thousandth rally took place in Sevastopol, where it was decided not to transfer taxes to Kyiv, and the citizen of the Russian Federation O. Chalyy was proclaimed as a city

¹⁴ Феденко О.В., Ожаревський В.А. Розвиток кризової ситуації в Україні: деякі воєнно-політичні наслідки // Вісник Львівського університету: серія «Міжнародні відносини», № 38. - Львів: ЛНУ ім. І. Франка. - 2016. - С. 127-139.

¹⁵ Феденко О.В., Панасюк В.В. Деякі проблемні питання сучасної війни // WSPÓŁCZESNA POLITYKA BEZPIECZEŃSTWA. Aspekty polityczne, gospodarcze i militarne. WYDAWNICTWO UNIwersytetu RZESZOWSKIEGO, 23-24.06.2015р., - RZESZÓW 2016. - С.91 – 103.

¹⁶ Феденко О.В., Панасюк В.В. Еволюція змісту сучасної війни // Військово-науковий вісник, № 24 - Львів: НАСВ, 2015. - С.219-230.

mayor. At the same time, on 25 February, separatists' actions were held in front of the Crimean parliament. On the night of February 27, the parliament and the government of the Crimea were captured by "unknown" militants and the flag of the Russian Federation was raised over the parliament. However, that fact did not prevent the deputies of the Supreme Council of the Crimea from gathering together and deciding to appoint a referendum on the status of autonomy on May 25.

On the same day, the Belbek airport was seized in Sevastopol, the Kerch ferry service was stopped. Almost simultaneously, Russian soldiers without distinctive signs, so-called "green men" started blockading Ukrainian military units and facilities on the peninsula, the Simferopol airport was captured. Soon, the referendum date was changed twice: it was first postponed until March 30, and then until March 16. At the same time, on March 1, the self-proclaimed "the head of the Council of Ministers of the ARC" Sergei Aksenov appealed to Putin to assist in "ensuring peace and tranquility" on the territory of the Crimea. In response, on the same day, the Russian president sent a proposal to the Russian Federation to deploy Russian troops in the Crimea. On March 1, 2014 both chambers of the State Duma voted for the deployment of Russian troops in the territory of Ukraine and in the Crimea in particular¹⁷. Since then, Russian troops began large-scale military actions aimed at blocking Ukrainian military bases in the territory of the ARC, seizing administrative facilities, controlling transport highways and other strategically important sites.

In the course of the Crimean operation in February-March 2014, the Russian forces just "demonstrated the combination of both rapid deployments, electronic warfare, information operations, maritime capabilities, airborne assault and special forces, and a large-scale use of cyberspace and strategic communications for directed and effective information campaign for both internal and external audiences¹⁸."

And this is the fact which was confirmed by the president of Russia in the famous documentary film "Crimea. The Way to the Motherland". Also, Putin's citation was quoted by B. Nemtsov in the Independent Expert Report "Putin. War ":" ... It was in the night of 22/ 23 February. I told all my colleagues that the situation unfolded in such a way in Ukraine, that we are forced to begin work on the return of the Crimea to Russia. Do you know what was our advantage about? It was I who was in charge of everything. Not because I did everything properly but when the first persons of the state do this, it is easy for the performers to work. ... In order to block and disarm 20,000 people who are well-armed, it is necessary to have a proper personnel of good quantity and quality. We needed specialists who were able to do this. Therefore, I gave instructions to the Ministry of Defense under the guise of strengthening the protection

¹⁷ Совет Федерации единогласно принял Постановление об использовании Вооруженных Сил Российской Федерации на территории Украины. 1 марта 2014 года. [Электронный ресурс]. Режим доступа: <http://council.gov.ru/events/news/39851/> (дата перегляду 6 березня 2019)

¹⁸ Феденко О.В., Ожаревський В.А. Розвиток кризової ситуації в Україні: деякі військово-політичні наслідки // Вісник Львівського університету: серія «Міжнародні відносини», № 38. - Львів: ЛНУ ім. І. Франка. - 2016. - С. 127-139.

of our military facilities in the Crimea to transfer special units of the Main Intelligence Department and the forces of the Marines, paratroopers¹⁹... . "

Admiral I. Kasatonov confirmed that at the beginning of the operation aimed at annexing the Crimea, in February 2014, the Black Sea Fleet (BSF) secured a secret deploy of Russian Special Forces to the peninsula. "... The Black Sea Fleet prepared a foothold, the officers knew what was happening around. The event scenarios were worked out on the maps. That is, the fleet coped with the tasks - "polite people" were deployed, in the night of 27/ 28 February, the Verkhovna Rada of Crimea was taken ...", - said the admiral in an interview with RIA Novosti. He explained that "polite people" were army special forces, which were brought by air and by sea. The operation was carried out with the total disguise of displacements and was absolutely unexpected, both for the Ukrainian military and for the western intelligence. According to him, "... there was used a wide range of measures for the premature disinformation of the enemy, the regime of strict radio silence in the period of concentration of the forces, as well as the skilful use of the Sevastopol base, transport vehicles, which brought the armed forces to the Crimea ..." It should be noted that as for the purposes, tasks, the involved forces and the means of action of the RF in the territory of the Crimean peninsula the operation was a typical special one.²⁰ Such events are fully consistent with the content of p.15 of the new edition of the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation, which contains new forms and methods of conducting the "hybrid war", which the Kremlin is currently testing in the territory of Ukraine in accordance with the list of features and peculiarities of modern military conflicts.

Later, on March 16, 2014, the so-called "referendum" on the independence of the Crimea, by which the occupation authorities tried to legitimize the capture of the territory, was organized. Soon, on March 18, in Moscow, the President of the Russian Federation, along with the self-proclaimed Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the ARC Sergey Aksenov, Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada V. Konstantinov and the chairman of the Sevastopol city administration O. Chalyy, signed the act of Crimea's joining to Russia.

However, on July 2, 2014, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) recognized such Russian actions as military ones²¹.

¹⁹ Немцов Б. Независимый экспертный доклад «Путин. Война» май 2015года. Москва. [Электронный ресурс]. Режим доступа: <http://russiahousenews.info/politics-news/putin-voyna-doklad-borisa-nemtsova> (дата перегляду 6 березня 2019)

²⁰ Феденко О.В., Ожаревський В.А. Розвиток кризової ситуації в Україні: деякі воєнно-політичні наслідки // Вісник Львівського університету: серія «Міжнародні відносини», № 38. - Львів: ЛНУ ім. І. Франка. - 2016. - С. 127-139.

²¹ Російська збройна агресія проти України. [Електронний ресурс]. Режим доступу: [https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%A0%D0%BE%D1%81%D1%96%D0%B9%D1%81%D1%8C%D0%BA%D0%B0_%D0%B7%D0%B1%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B9%D0%BD%D0%B0_%D0%B0%D0%B3%D1%80%D0%B5%D1%81%D1%96%D1%8F_%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%BE%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%A3%D0%BA%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%97%D0%BD%D0%B8_\(%D0%B7_2014\)\(дата_перегляду_6_березня_2019\)](https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D0%A0%D0%BE%D1%81%D1%96%D0%B9%D1%81%D1%8C%D0%BA%D0%B0_%D0%B7%D0%B1%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B9%D0%BD%D0%B0_%D0%B0%D0%B3%D1%80%D0%B5%D1%81%D1%96%D1%8F_%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%BE%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%A3%D0%BA%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%97%D0%BD%D0%B8_(%D0%B7_2014)(дата_перегляду_6_березня_2019))

The information war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine deliberately began immediately after the proclamation of Ukraine's independence and has acquired particularly aggressive forms since the annexation of Crimea. Actually, this was an attempt to misinform not only Ukrainian citizens, but also Russian citizens and the world community as a whole.

The situation in other territories of the south-eastern part of Ukraine was developing following the example of the events in the Crimea. The military and political leadership of the Russian Federation hoped for the same course of events in other regions of the south and east of Ukraine. But it never happened. The invaders and local separatists met with resistance.

Dramatic events in the spring of 2014 were held in Kharkiv, Odessa, Dnipropetrovsk, Mykolaiv, and Kherson. It was not possible to escalate the rioting and achieve control over these cities, and that was the purpose of the separatists. In these regions, the Ukrainian authorities were established. In April 2014, the epicenter of the events was transferred to Slavyansk and Kramatorsk, where on April 12 armed militants seized the administrative buildings and operated under the Crimean scenario.

Former "commander-in-chief" of the "Donetsk People's Republic" Igor Hirkin recognized his responsibility for the beginning of the military conflict in the Donbas. He stated in his interview to the newspaper "Zavtra": "... I pulled the trigger of the war. If our unit had not crossed the border, it eventually would have ended, as in Kharkiv, as in Odessa. There would have been dozens of deaths, wounded, arrested and it would have come to an end. Actually, the flywheel of war, which has been going on, was launched by our squad ... The squad "mixed all the cards", starting to fight and destroy "sabotage groups". And I have personal responsibility for what is happening there. I am responsible that Donetsk is being fired until this time. Of course, I am responsible for the fact that we left Slavyansk. If we had stayed in Slavyansk, then in a week, a maximum of two, Donetsk would have fallen. Instead, after leaving, we had been holding Donetsk until "vacationers" arrived..."^{22 23}..

The Ukrainian authorities responded by announcing the Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO, from April 30, 18th - Operation of the Unified Forces (OUF) with the involvement of the Armed Forces (AF). Gradually, the confrontation grew into a large-scale military conflict. One of the most tragic episodes of the ATO took place on May 22, when militants attacked a checkpoint of the Armed Forces of Ukraine near Volnovakha, which resulted in 18 Ukrainian soldiers killed and 32 wounded. This is the first number of losses of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. This is precisely the moment when the consciousness of the troops changed completely when everyone realized that there was a genuine, brutal war.

²² Бывший лидер ДНР взял ответственность за начало боевых действий на Донбассе. [Электронный ресурс]. Режим доступа: <http://news.bigmir.net/ukraine/860140-Strelkov-Voiny-na-Donbasse-nachal-ya> (дата перегляду 6 березня 2019)

²³ Хроника войны на Донбассе: от митингов к танкам [Электронный ресурс]. Режим доступа: <http://mediarnbo.org/2014/10/18/hronika-voynyi-na-donbasse-ot-mitingov/?lang=ru> (дата перегляду 6 березня 2019)

In the middle of May, the Kremlin came to the conclusion that the Ukrainian state's operational capacity and the combat capability of the Ukrainian Army in particular had been underestimated. All the attempts to start the riots in the southern and central regions of Ukraine were prevented. Thanks to the patriotic upsurge of the society, the new leadership of the state was able not only to bring parts of the Armed Forces and the National Guard of Ukraine (NGU) to the Donbas, but also to begin to reestablish the constitutional order in the liberated territories. Along with this, the Russian leadership decided to consolidate itself in the Donbas and ensure strong negotiating positions until the moment of the inauguration of the newly elected President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko. In order to do this, it was necessary to establish control over the most parts of the Donbas, to keep the units of the Armed Forces, NGU and numerous volunteer battalions from further advancing to the Donetsk and Luhansk regions in order to bring instability and the absence of control over the region and to achieve the autonomy and federalization of Ukraine. But when it became clear that it was impossible to stop the Ukrainians, the sabotage groups of the Russian Special Forces and the mercenaries began to operate throughout the Donbas. From mid-July 2014, the Armed Forces of Russia began to take direct part in hostilities against the Armed Forces of Ukraine.^{24 25 26 27}.

However, that did not prevent Ukrainian units from liberating of one locality after another. The circle around the mercenaries and separatist groups was gradually closing.

Fighting for Ilovajsk is a special episode of the war in Eastern Ukraine (August 2014), during which there was fierce fighting between the units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and NGU on the one hand and units of the so-called Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) and regular units of the RF Armed Forces on the other hand. The character of the battles was determined by the strategic significance of Ilovajsk, which is located 25 km east of Donetsk. A successful operation to capture Ilovajsk and return it under the control of the Armed Forces of Ukraine would have cut off the supply of weapons and prevented movement of militants to Donetsk. Ukrainian troops were able to take control over the most part of the city. However, after 8 battalion tactical groups (BTG) of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation were deployed on August 23-24, 2014 the local group was surrounded. At the same time, on August 29, Russian President

²⁴ Совет Федерации единогласно принял Постановление об использовании Вооруженных Сил Российской Федерации на территории Украины. 1 марта 2014 года. [Электронный ресурс]. Режим доступа: <http://council.gov.ru/events/news/39851/> (дата перегляду 6 березня 2019)

²⁵ Бывший лидер ДНР взял ответственность за начало боевых действий на Донбассе. [Электронный ресурс]. Режим доступа: <http://news.bigmir.net/ukraine/860140-Strelkov-Voiny-na-Donbasse-nachal-ya> (дата перегляду 6 березня 2019)

²⁶ Хроника войны на Донбассе: от митингов к танкам [Электронный ресурс]. Режим доступа: <http://mediarbo.org/2014/10/18/hronika-voyny-na-donbasse-ot-mitingov/?lang=ru> (дата перегляду 6 березня 2019)

²⁷ На Донбасі знаходяться війська РФ, рівні силам майже всіх країн НАТО [Электронный ресурс]. Режим доступа: <https://www.unian.ua/war/2164596-na-donbasi-znahodyatsya-viyska-rf-rivni-silam-mayje-vsih-krajin-nato-matios.html> (дата перегляду 6 березня 2019)

Vladimir Putin appealed to fighters to open a humanitarian corridor for the Ukrainian military who were surrounded. On August 30, Ukrainian military armed groups began to move from the city, but the columns were insidiously shot. The events near Ilovajsk became a turning point in the war in Eastern Ukraine. Recognizing that the hybrid war was lost, the Kremlin was forced to move to an open armed aggression with even greater involvement of the regular units of the Russian army²⁸.

The extreme losses on both sides forced the Ukrainian and Russian leadership to conclude a Minsk Armistice within the contact group of Ukraine-Russia-OSCE with the involvement of representatives of terrorist organizations of the DNR and LNR.

After the events in Ilovajsk, for the first time in the years of independence, the army began to be radically reformed, and the terrorists in the Donbas started to receive endless humanitarian convoys from Russia.

The events that took place in the city of Debaltsevo deserve particular attention. On January 22, 2015, an offensive operation was launched with the help of a mixed group of forces of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation and illegal armed groups (IAG) in order to surround and destroy the operational tactical group of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and seize an important railway junction, as well as transport routes in the city of Debaltsevo. Operation planning and coordination of the IAG Corps and the units of the RF Armed Forces were carried out under the direct supervision of the representatives of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. So, on January 22, following the artillery fire, with the support of tanks and artillery of the RF Armed Forces, the forces of two battalion tactical groups of the DNR the offensive operation began immediately from the left and right flanks of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. In a heavy battle, the enemy was stopped and forced to abandon a violent further advance. These events demonstrated that, in spite of the significant losses, the Ukrainian Armed Forces are able to conduct active hostilities and fight back not only the IAG, but also well-prepared elite units of the regular RF Armed Forces.²⁹

Due to the escalation of the situation in the Donbas, a new format of negotiations on a peaceful settlement of the conflict more known as "Minsk-2" is formed. Norman Four sat at the negotiating table. As former French President F. Hollande recalls in his book "Lessons of Power": "... the discussions lasted almost a day and in a very complex atmosphere ...". The result was a 13- point agreement, which was to stop the war. According to the agreement each side was to withdraw the heavy weapons, a safe buffer zone should have been made, and the OSCE should have been involved to monitor the situation. The Treaty entered into history as "Minsk agreements".

Despite this, both sides continue to build up the forces. From Russia there are new humanitarian convoys, Ukraine has carried out six waves of mobilization.

²⁸ Хроника войны на Донбассе: от митингов к танкам [Электронный ресурс]. Режим доступа: <http://mediarnbo.org/2014/10/18/hronika-voynui-na-donbasse-ot-mitingov/?lang=ru> (дата перегляду 6 березня 2019)

²⁹ Проведення ЗС РФ та НЗФ «ДНР/ЛНР» наступальної операції в районі м. Дебальцеве [Електронний ресурс]. Режим доступа: <https://novynarnia.com/2016/02/04/rokovini-debaltseva-genshtab-vidav-analiz-golovnoyi-bitvi-2015-go/> (дата перегляду 6 березня 2019)

Hundreds of enterprises of the military industrial complex have produced and repaired thousands items of military equipment. Prior to the draft budget of 2019, by a special decree of the National Security and Defense Council of 06.09.2018, the President of Ukraine prioritized "... the development, production and procurement of new models of weapons and military equipment, namely high-precision missile armament, armored and artillery equipment, ammunition, precision weapons ...".

Since 2015 international partners have been helping Ukraine. Joint training is being conducted, funds are provided for trust funds, non-lethal and lethal weapons and equipment, including Canadian thermal imagers and first aid kits, American "Javelin" and "Humvee", etc. are supplied. Western military experts are more interested in their professional aspects in the events in Ukraine. It is just about studying that "... the next-generation military actions are likely to be extremely dispersed and largely uncertain; the frontier of division between peace and war will be blurred until it is completely extinct."»³⁰

To date, the Russian side continues to keep, in the immediate vicinity of the State Border and in the Occupied Territory of Ukraine, a group of troops of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation and the IAG with a total number of about 40 thousand troops with their direct subordination to the headquarters of the newly formed 8th Army.

The climate in the ATO / JFO zone remains complicated and is characterized by constant exacerbation of the situation. The Russian side and the IAG led by it hold the troops and the command units of the ATO / JFO in the state of constant military and informational tension with the aim of exhausting them physically and psychologically. They also keep an opportunity and a cause to aggravate the situation in order to achieve their political goals. The potential factor of the aggravation of the situation throughout the separation line in the ATO / JFO zone is the activation of the IAG's activities, in particular the reconnaissance groups and enemy snipers.

Thus, Moscow's actions in Ukraine are a classic example of the use of external power. Therefore, the most extensive methods of struggle, which are used by some Russian scholars under the term irredentism, are used to refer to the policy of the state, the party or the political movement for the unification of the people, the nation and the ethnic group within a single country that is considered a private form of nationalism. In the section "Strong Russia in the Complicated World" of the election program of the party of the president of the Russian Federation it is said that "... the one-sided movement of our partners, who do not take into account the opinion of Russia and its interests, will receive an appropriate assessment and our response ..." As we see the law of force is in action.³¹ That is why we now have such a situation in the Crimea and in the south-east of Ukraine. The Russian Federation cannot accept that Ukraine comes out

³⁰ Феденко О.В., Деякі аспекти оцінки воєнно-політичної ситуації в Україні в ході гібридної війни // Науковий журнал «Молодий вчений», № 10 (62). - Херсон. – жовтень, 2018. - С. 11-19.

³¹ Феденко О.В. Гібридна війна в Україні за законом сили // Науковий журнал «Молодий вчений», № 4(31). - Херсон. - 2016. - с. 660

of its sphere of influence and without its permission. "... If Russia opposes the countries to become closer to Brussels ... I would advise it to look at this from a different angle ... Because they (the countries) see in the Alliance a greater guarantee of their security, prosperity and democracy. Russia should think about what drives these countries to make such decisions ... "said Deputy Secretary General of NATO for Policy and Security A.Alvarogonnesales on September 14 at the annual YES conference in Kyiv.

Today, Ukraine continues to demonstrate to the world community that it fully understands its responsibility for maintaining peace and security in Europe and the world and advocates for a peaceful settlement of the conflict. On this occasion, it is necessary to emphasize that, in the fields of international law, Ukraine is also vigorously fighting for the peaceful solution of a wide range of issues. Thus, the European Court of Human Rights has determined the first procedural hearing on Ukraine's action on human rights which have been violated in the Crimea and the occupation of the peninsula on February 27, 2019.

Briefly analyzing the results achieved by the country in recent years, we want to note that reforms continue in many areas, but not all of them have been successful. A war nowhere has ever contributed to the prosperity of a country. But we can confidently say that the country has survived and created the prerequisites for further development:

- the activity and capacity of the international coalition in support of Ukraine is ensured, for example, some resolutions of the security organizations of the world;

- the defense capability of our state has been substantially strengthened. The combat capability of the Ukrainian army, the military-industrial complex has been restored and a comprehensive reform to implement NATO standards has begun;

- due to the Association Agreement with the EU on January 1, 2016 free trade area has started to be applied. By the decision of the European Commission on June 11, 2017, citizens of Ukraine with biometric passports received the right to travel visa-free to the EU and certain individual member nations of the Schengen zone;

- macroeconomic, financial and banking stabilization, restructuring of external debt has been provided, gold and foreign exchange reserves have been significantly increased, the banking system has been healed and all prerequisites for the restoration of economic growth have been created;

- the institutions to counter corruption continue to be formed and act - the National Anti-Corruption Bureau, the National Agency for the Prevention of Corruption, the State Bureau of Investigations and the Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office have been established. Citizens' income declaration is introduced. A particularly important achievement is the creation of conditions for energy independence from the Russian Federation. Today Ukraine buys gas in Europe. The next priorities of domestic and foreign policy are, first of all, the further implementation of Minsk agreements in order to maintain peace and renew the Ukrainian sovereignty over the occupied territories due to the plan of their reintegration; further implementation of educational, judicial, tax and healthcare reform.

It is worth taking into consideration that the cementing factor of national security of the country is the national consciousness of its citizens. It is appropriate to quote Bernard Montgomery's statement here: "... after all, it is extremely important to remember that the true strength of the country is not in its armed forces, not in its gold and dollar reserves but in the national character, in its people. "

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