

TRANSDNIESTRIAN CONFLICT IN THE REPUBLIC IN MOLDOVA: GEOPOLITICAL IMPLICATIONS

The article deals with geopolitical interests of Ukraine, Russian Federation, Romania, the USA, the EU and the NATO in the Trans-Dniester region of the Republic of Moldova which after the collapse of the USSR turned into the territory with unsettled ethnopolitical conflict.

Key words: *geopolitics, interest, security, the Republic of Moldova, Trans-Dniester conflict, mediatory mission, negotiation process, status of Transdniestria*

В статті аналізуються геополітичні інтереси України, Російської Федерації, Румунії, США, ЄС і НАТО в Придністровському регіоні Республіки Молдова, що з розпадом СРСР перетворився на територію з неврегульованим етнополітичним конфліктом

Ключові слова: *геополітика, інтерес, безпека, Республіка Молдова, Придністровський конфлікт, посередницька місія, переговорний процес, статус Придністров'я*

В статье анализируются геополитические интересы Украины, Российской Федерации, Румынии, США, ЕС, НАТО в Приднестровском регионе Республики Молдова, который с распадом СССР превратился на территорию с неурегулированным этнополитическим конфликтом

Ключевые слова: *геополитика, интерес, безопасность, Республика Молдова, Приднестровский конфликт, посредническая миссия, переговорный процесс, статус Приднестровья*

Transdniestrian conflict in Moldova, which is the deployment area directly near the borders of our state, special attention is Ukrainian and foreign scientists [1-14]. But its geopolitical component of research, in our opinion, is not enough, despite the fact that one of the most difficult obstacles in the process of settlement is the existence of a number of geopolitical interest in the preservation of the Transdniestrian conflict. For them a deeper understanding should consider these different-and, in many cases, conflicting interests of international actors that take

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place in the area of existence of the Transdniestrian conflict. One of the most influential forces in the former Soviet Union are Russia, interest and involvement which to deploy and conflict resolution in Transdniestria allow participants to enroll its first plan. Considering the motives of on these territories, please note that in foreign policy, Russia not only refuses to restore the status of great power, but earnestly seeks to continue to remain an influential center of the formation of the whole geopolitical landscape of Europe, especially - Eastern Europe and Black Sea region. Transdniestria is an important military and strategic foothold in Russia, providing its influence in Southeast Europe and the Balkans. So it makes the existence of a regional association of the Black Sea states as GUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova) created, according to many analysts [1, 5] as an alternative to Russian influence in the region. Conservation status of key figures in this space will significantly limit the RF pro-Western aspirations of Moldova and slow down the process of strengthening the influence of NATO and the United States in the region.

Since Russia does not intend to engage in the process of European integration, seeking sole leadership in Eastern Europe, it expected a difficult relationship with NATO and the EU. Such claims of Russia, of course, lead to a conflict of interest, and hence the resumption of danger regional confrontation in Europe. Under these conditions, the role of the Transdniestrian problem and its impact on international processes significantly increase.

In addition to the above, has a significant influence of military-political factor - namely, the presence in Transdniestria Russian arms. According to the Istanbul agreements in 1999 Russia undertook obligations to eliminate them by 2002 but, despite the partial fulfillment of commitments by Moscow, the bulk of arms and remain in the area. Besides the obvious reluctance to lose the last military capabilities that provide a sense of security against potential military power of Moldova, the cause remaining unresolved the issue is Russia's unwillingness to leave the last military outpost in the region and thus losing one of the effective leverage on the situation, because Transdniestria is also a lever of political

influence of Russia in Ukraine. That is why the "Transdnestrian Moldovan Republic (PMR)" is a strategic partner of Russia. Focuses on Russia Tiraspol allows it to influence him such cultural area south and east of Ukraine, Crimea. Problem questions of cultural and ideological orientation of the population last concern of the Ukrainian authorities for territorial integrity and is a special means of political pressure on it from Russia.

One of the main levers of Russian influence in Transdnestria is the Institute of Russian citizenship. By 2000, Russia gave his nationality more than 60 thousand Transdnestrians and strongly increases for this huge number of small regions. Obviously, until the withdrawal of the last Russian soldier from Transdnestria there will be 100-120 thousand citizens of the Russian Federation, which will appear in the hands of all the real power in the region, which calls itself an independent country. Education, culture, law basically has long been cut by Russian standards. The language of the Transdnestrian political elite are Russian. In addition to this factor, special attention should be the attitude of Moscow to Kyiv mediation mission, namely to strengthen its role in the region. With the change of foreign policy priorities of Ukraine and its growing weight in the negotiation process as a force that best suits Chisinau, Tiraspol, Brussels and Washington, respectively there is a danger (in terms of the Kremlin) to reduce the weight of Russia and its capacity to maintain the status of determining a player near the Black Sea .

At the same time, do not underestimate the impact that have a Transdnestrian and other "frozen" conflicts in the post-Soviet political situation in Russia itself. For it is more important are the processes of consolidation of Russian society through the forced creation of an enemy in the person of independent former Soviet republics. They strenuously not only seemingly infringement Russian peoples but open declaration of pro-Western orientation of its own national development. «Neostalinism» ideological cliches and archetypes mental Kremlin propaganda during the "cold war" successfully in public consciousness and have substantially influenced the political consciousness and behavior of

ordinary Russians. Especially hard exploited the idea of ousting Russia from the areas that historically were under its influence. All this leads to the formation of "phantom pain" injured public consciousness that gives rise to aggressive revanchist sentiments in society.

Thus, the unresolved conflict in Transdniestria is beneficial for the Kremlin, since allowing a foothold in the region to pressure on Moldova and Ukraine. Therefore we can state that the Transdniestrian conflict remains frozen in the power of geopolitical circumstances and factors, chief among which is Russia's geopolitical interests. To strengthen its geopolitical position in the region Russia is trying to discredit Ukraine by adding in the information space explicit insinuations like the development scenario of the future accession of Transdniestria to Ukraine. For a time, some Russian and Transdniestrian media heavily exploited the idea of the possible inclusion of Transdniestria to the Ukraine. Distributed information space and more "solve" the Transdniestrian problem. Thus, in autumn 2000 in "Nezavisimaya Gazeta" published an article S.Hradyrovsky [3]. Publication to establish condominium that is owned jointly by Transnistria. Condominium, according to the author should make each other guarantor countries of peaceful settlement of the Transdniestria conflict - Russia and Ukraine.

Of course, that Ukraine should consider various options for settlement of the Transdniestria conflict, if only because the Ukrainian minority in Moldova is the largest, and most of Transdniestria is located on the historic Ukrainian lands. If changes in the public status of Moldova, Transdniestria by the Moscow memorandum in 1997, has the right to self-determination. More in the document does not say anything about this. Meanwhile, the real claim to the land can not nobody, except for Ukraine. This is recognized even by extreme Romanian nationalists, who see the borders of Great Romania along the Dniester. Russia it prefers not to talk or throw in the information space application of certain of its members and leaders of the self-proclaimed "PMR", that "Transdniestria - is and will be Russian land." So, in Transdniestria, we are dealing with purely pragmatic interests of Russia, contrary to the interests of other parties to the process.

In this context it is worth noting that the problem of Transdniestria regarded by Moscow much more than a local problem in the framework of Russian-Moldovan relations. For Russia, there is urgent need to suspend the processes of political exclusion in the region. Accordingly, the military presence in the area of the Transdniestrian conflict is regarded by Russia as a kind of leverage not only the development of peace process, but also the processes in Moldova, in its foreign policy on the development of general political and economic situation abroad. Inhibition peace process and the preservation of Russian military presence, giving it legal status of the functions of peacekeeping mission today is a matter of principle for Russia.

Performing a complete fulfillment of the Istanbul OSCE Summit (1999) on the withdrawal of Russian troops and weapons from the territory of Moldova, as the persistence of European organizations in this area, significantly reduce Russia's influence on the peace process. But the slowness of the withdrawal of the 14th Army in Transdniestria Russia can provide actual opportunities through pressure on Tiraspol (using the same fact and the withdrawal of Russian troops) to obtain concessions to Chisinau on the status of Transdniestria in the "common state" in exchange for consent leadership of Moldova's legal registration status of the Russian contingent, as guarantor under the future agreement on a final settlement, and also in matters regarding the future format of the peacekeeping operation. The influence of another foreign player - Romania - the process of the Transdniestrian conflict settlement in the early 1990's was marked by the intention of joining "historic lands" which actually means union with the Republic of Moldova into one state. The dominance of this trend at the beginning of the 1990s largely contributed to the emergence of the Transdniestria conflict. Recently, the Romanian foreign policy dominated by another trend, which also determines the efforts of Romania to join the settlement of the Transdniestria conflict: on the one hand, Bucharest to be the exporter of security in the Black Sea Basin and thereby improve their image in the West, on the other - even minimal participation of Romania in the negotiation process can give it to pretend to be a regional leader in

the area of the Black Sea. It should be noted that, according to many analysts, such ambitions Romania are objective grounds. Because the country is a member of NATO and the EU. This state, with considerable potential in various fields, claimed to be the main strategic U.S. ally in the Black Sea can today become a full-fledged regional leader. To make a significant impact on regional policy, Romania has to fulfill an active role in the super-state associations in the region.

Analyzing interests in the area of the Transdnistria conflict of his subjects, as the U.S. and the EU, please note that their policy in this region significantly activated only with the beginning of the XXI century. They are relatively indifferent attitude and passive in the first decade of conflict explained by many factors, we can mention, including the priority of solving other European conflicts, and acquiescence of the West to recognize the priority of Russian interests in the Transdnistrian region in exchange for a renunciation of the struggle for influence in the Balkans and lack of U.S. strategy in the former Soviet Union, the formation of which coincided with the arrival of U.S. neoconservatives and others. Before joining the White House administration of President B. Obama in January 2009 can be confidently stated that Transdnistria is a zone of national interests of the United States. Not because the U.S. left bank of the Dniester interesting, but that and this is a vast area could destabilize the whole of Europe. Obviously, the Transdnistria question for the U.S. at the beginning of the XXI century. was primarily question the elimination of the Russian military presence.

The United States understands that, having decided the problem of Russian arms and a limited contingent of Russian troops in Transdnistria, they receive a number of issues, including the risk of progressive, uncontrolled saturation these weapons Balkans that primarily threatens Europe, destabilizing its south-eastern outskirts and further leads to excessive costs on the settlement still existing conflicts here. Not less stimulus is pro-Russian mood management "PMR" and its entire population. Demilitarizing region that looms close to the new borders of NATO, to realize the political and legal options geopolitical scenario that the interests of Washington.

In Transnistria the U.S. have a chance to show their ability to resolve ethnic conflicts, as the conflict in eastern Moldova has features that distinguish it from all others. First, it lacks a factor of Islamic extremism and fundamentalism. On both banks of the Dniester live mostly - but orthodox. Second, the brief time an armed conflict, lack of real parties - Vost possible to solve the problem by force. Thirdly, almost twenty peaceful existence divided Moldova with a large ne - rehovornym potential. Unlike other "hot" points, there is no irreconcilability between nations.

The strategic goal of NATO in this part of the world associated with the need to increase security and stability in the region. After the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to NATO has been completed construction safety belt around the conflict zones in the Balkans, which will transform the Black Sea in the region, which will be held at Central - trade route between East and West, especially in terms of energy transport.

Analyzing foreign influences on the Transnistrian conflict, we should not ignore the interests in the region of another influential geopolitical player - the European Union. First, be aware that problems exist and lack of regulation of Transnistrian conflict is a significant threat to European security. This statement explains several factors. First, the geopolitical location of the conflict zone, because, after EU enlargement in 2007, it is on its eastern borders. Second, many oposed - forged participants who have different interests that do not contribute to the processes of European unification. Third, this region can destabilize the whole European security system. Fourth, this problem can become a kind of laboratory to develop an algorithm settlement of such conflicts.

Confirmation of interest in the EU in resolving ethnic conflicts in Europe in general and particu - Transnistria has become a document "Secure Europe in a world that better" [9, p. 295], prepared in 2003 It outlines the main directions of strengthening the security of the EU, including the important role of spreading "security zone" in areas that directly - nucleus are directly adjacent to its borders.

"Security Zones" European Union, as outlined in the document covers the following state posttra – dyanskoho space as Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus and keep you - South Caucasus. It solve political problems in these countries is a key factor in building a "safe Europe." Indeed, since 2007 the border between Romania and Moldova became the EU. Currently, this border is one of the most open and transparent in Eastern Europe. In light of the acute and relevant to the problem of trafficking arms and drugs, which can be directed to less developed countries of Europe and Asia across the Moldovan-Romanian border to the EU. Therefore, the existence of such a zone of instability as the Transdnestrrian-Moldovan and such unrecognized by the international community, so public education is not in front of her legal and ethical obligations as "PMR" is a direct threat to stability and security in united Europe.

Proof of this is also declared June 5, 2010 Germany and Russia intend to create a new platform to develop options for resolving the Transdnestrria conflict as a committee of - EU foreign and security policy at the level of Foreign Ministers parties. Ukraine to participate in the new initiative is called. And this despite the fact that in the hands of Ukraine are unique leverage both Moldova and Transdnestrria on, first of all - a factor common border. Probably in Kiev is not fully realize that our country continues to fall with real negotiating arrangements for the Transdnestrrian settlement. This happens largely because the Ukraine, seems not fully formulated its national interests in Moldova and the Transdnestrrian settlement.

National interests and geopolitical interests in Ukraine and Transdnestrria in the Black Sea region as a whole can be divided in several areas. Thus, among the most obvious can be identified interests associated with the presence of a large number of Ukrainian citizens in the "TMR", deterring economic flows, common borders, and thus the existence and security issues and more. Ukraine's interest in active participation in resolving the Transnistria conflict is related also to the fact that its defining role in this process can be regarded as one of the conditions for more rapid progress towards European integration, because it not only contribute

to the establishment in Ukraine's image positively in the West as one of the intermediary in the conflict, but finally remove the question of likelihood of occurrence of Transdniestrian in its composition.

Ukraine is interested in the territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova in its internationally recognized borders, as all other scenarios contain explicit threat of Ukrainian interests. Ukraine should contribute to finding a political solution - understanding between Chisinau and Tiraspol on the basis of restoring the integrity of the Republic of Moldova as a democratic, European-oriented state of the competitive market economy, capable governance and open society in which the principles of rule of law will be provided with basic human rights, including including minority rights, one of the largest of which is Ukrainian. According to the census of Transdniestria since 2004 over 160 thousand (28.8%) of the region are ethnic Ukrainian [12, p.14]. Thus in an exclusive interview with the consul of Ukraine in Balti (Moldova) has been given the information that about 70 thousand inhabitants of this region are citizens of Ukraine [12, p. 15]. Ukraine's interest lies in the fact that according to the weekly "ZN" in Transdniestrian concentrated 30-35% of the Ukrainian capital, ie, almost a third of the economy of the unrecognized republic controlled by Ukrainian business [12, p. 15].

Also, Ukraine is interested not only territorially integral, but also in European oriented Moldova. Thus in Kyiv understand European orientation of Moldova not only in strengthening traditional ties with Romania (although such links is entirely natural), how to conduct a consistent policy of adaptation to European norms and rules through the implementation of models of associative relations with the EU (Agreement Association) to preserve the strategic ambitions of Chisinau in the future to acquire full membership in the European Union. Ukraine is interested in relationship to Chisinau from Bucharest and Kyiv were complementary, bearing a synergy, not the spirit of confrontation.

Ukraine and Moldova, as members of the EU "Eastern Partnership" can be used although limited, but real possibilities of cooperation in this format at least because both countries are at comparable levels of capabilities. Ukraine closes, and

Moldova started negotiations with the EU Association Agreement, part of which is a comprehensive free trade regime, which provides not only a liberal tariff policy, but substantial regulatory reforms that have to approach the regulatory environment in both countries to the EU standards. Coordination or at least exchange experiences on issues of proper negotiation process is highly desirable - to borrow the best practices and to avoid mistakes that were committed in another country - pioneer (Ukraine).

Both countries have agreements with the EU on visa facilitation and now rightly seek a full implementation of existing commitments by EU and revision of certain provisions of these agreements in the direction of extension granted their preferences for certain categories of citizens. Both countries seek the EU as soon as possible visa-free regime. To do this, but the political coordination would be appropriate to exchange practical know-how. Ukrainian party should pay attention to the fact that Moldova is Ukraine went on some essential aspects that make up the criteria for entry visa - especially in Moldova is about two years, citizens can receive passports to travel abroad with biometric data. In Ukraine, such a possibility yet.

Finally, given the experience of other countries in the past, especially the Visegrad Four, Ukraine and Moldova could be more thoroughly and to coordinate their foreign policy efforts and thereby achieve synergy where there is a coincidence of national interests - and such cases in practice is much more than their cases significant differences. Confirmed by the available legal framework of Ukrainian-Moldovan intergovernmental relations and the active participation of Ukraine in the settlement of the Transdnistria conflict. This is because the zone of instability is located right near the Ukrainian border, affects the political and economic interests. Unresolved conflicts in Transdnistria threatens Ukraine's national interests, affects the process of integration into European structures.

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