• HUMAN SECURITY IMPLICATIONS
• MINSK AGREEMENTS IMPLEMENTATION
• CRIMEAN TATARS, AND ETC
Human Security

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HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN UKRAINE AS A FACTOR DESTABILIZING DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICY OF THE STATE

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Since 2014, the Ukrainian state has been suffering from the economic, political and social crisis, which has deepened due to constant warfare conducted by the pro-Russian terrorist groups in the Eastern Ukraine and the Kremlin annexation of the Crimean peninsula. These factors permanently influence the internal political stability of the state and personal security of its population. The latter cannot be fully guaranteed by official authorities, as a significant number of people are subjected to pressure of purely humanitarian nature. Today, the humanitarian crisis is amplified by the fact that many people from the East of Ukraine still reside in the military operations area or struggle for their lives having acquired the status of internally displaced persons. This situation leads both to a significant imbalance in implementation of the internal policy and brings humanitarian issues to the foreign policy domain. Thus, this article aims to explore a grade of impact and a role of the humanitarian factor in the implementation of domestic policy of Ukraine, as well as in the realization of its diplomatic activities in the world political arena.

Military and political crisis that erupted in Ukraine two years ago and continues now, is assuming new shapes today and is rapidly expanding the range of aspects in public life to have the overwhelming influence thereon. For the first time in the modern history, three key processes started developing simultaneously and influencing the formation and further development of the Ukrainian state and became the primary driving force for a beginning of the crisis. Firstly, leading actors of the global political scene intensified their activities in order to renew the world order and validate their roles in a new and well-formed system of international relations. Secondly, the Russian Federation, harbouring plans to restore its former power, ideologized an idea of political revenge and began to realize the foreign strategy of ‘gathering lands’, which had always been considered as a direct Russian ‘zone of influence’. Thirdly, the Ukrainian society and its political elite went through the transformational processes, which consequently forced the formation of the Ukrainian nation. However, the possibility of existence of a unified national community, being able to make its conscious choice in favour of domestic and foreign policy courses of its state, triggered provoked the Russian Federation.
**Russian Policy and Humanitarian Complex Emergency**

Initially, manipulating the issues of cultural affiliation of the population in the Southern and Eastern regions of Ukraine, as well as the idea of ‘historical necessity’ to unite the Slavic peoples, the Russian authorities managed to quickly shake all the vital mechanisms maintaining the existence of the Ukrainian state. The internal disruption of social and economic stability of the state a priori leads to its depravation from within: in this case, the military intervention was a mere tool for achieving this goal. As a result, regressive processes in the Ukrainian society are intensifying daily and reaching new dimensions. They do not take place only in the areas of domestic policy, social and economic public administration. They also cause a kind of hysteria in the society as a whole, starting from the soldiers’ post-war syndrome and ending with problems of civilians remaining in the conflict zone.

This strategy of attrition cannot be considered unreasonable, even more, so as Russia understands military and political activities as a specific sphere to be separated from humanitarian issues. The Russian politicians actually consider ‘protection of the population’ as a slogan to cover aggressive military actions. Therefore, a permanent threat to health and life, deprivation of material benefits, restriction of rights, personal restraint, and manipulation of consciousness make only a short list of challenges faced by the residents in Donbas and the Crimea.

Among other things, international humanitarian law obliges Russia, as the occupying power, to maintain law and order, respect human rights and provide food and medical care to the population under its control. It also obliges Russia to facilitate assistance by relief agencies should it be unable to provide for the population itself. However, the Russian actions prove adverse: by worsening the critical situation, Moscow received another ‘card’ that can be played an unlimited number of times destabilizing domestic and foreign policy of Ukraine.

Therefore, the humanitarian crisis, which seized the Ukrainian state two years ago has transformed into a disaster of another scale, i.e. into the post-Bipolar complex emergency. This phenomenon of the post-Cold War era is known as a man-made crisis where a situation of violence causes human fatalities, forced displacement, epidemics and famine. However, in Ukraine it is combined with the weakening of economic and political structures, the reduction of social unity and a considerable deformation of public morality. From the academic standpoint, complex emergencies differ from crises as they are more prolonged, political

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2 Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, 12 August 1949 http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/ProtectionOfCivilianPersons.aspx
at root and have a significant destructive and de-structuralizing impact on all spheres of life. As a result, the response to these crises usually involves a large number of players, as well as those exclusively involved in humanitarian work, including peacekeeping missions, political and diplomatic figures.

Despite the changes in Government leadership, the political and economic reorientation, and the emergence of a vibrant civil society dedicated to the implementation of the changes, Ukraine remains far from achieving political and economic stability and internal security sought by supporters of the Euromaidan. In fact, 2016 has already proven to be a very unsettling time for the Government as frustration have mounted over the slow pace of political reforms, economic progress and international negotiations on conflict resolution.

The conflict continues affecting resident population; internally displaced persons face shortages in food, health services, basic household items and shelter, and suffer from psychological distress after more than two years of warfare. According to the European Commission’s Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department, the conflict has affected over 3.7 million people, out of which 3.1 million are estimated to be in need of humanitarian assistance.5

However, during all the years of its independence Ukraine remained uncertain about universally significant values that could unite the Ukrainian society (including humanism, patriotism, freedom, spirituality, respect for human rights, and the state’s responsibility to society). Just now, the consistent humanitarian policy becomes an important factor influencing both formation and preservation of the state’s sovereignty. Thus, by stirring humanitarian disaster, the Russian Federation affected considerable the internal situation in the country and Ukraine’s position in the international arena as well.

Within the frameworks of internal policy, humanitarian problems are not only the primary cause of social instability, but also a litmus test to determine the unity of elites

Humanitarian Impact on Internal Stability

Within the frameworks of internal policy, humanitarian problems are not only the primary cause of social instability, but also a litmus test to determine the unity of elites. An increase in tensions between the state authorities has proved a lack of their internal legitimacy. The regional elites are gradually maximizing their importance in the country, and could require more extensive rights to funding and self-government of the regions in future. The lack of social support, overweight of political and economic mistakes, and absence of reforms, multiplied by the changed political balance, turned the humanitarian crisis and all the opportunities to overcome it into a bargaining chip in the internal political game of various subjects and parties. This increases the conflict intensity within the political system itself; its players are completely deprived of public support, and

social confidence in their acts is constantly decreasing. Taking into consideration that quite consistent information and cultural policy of the Russian Federation led to the reformation of consciousness among a considerable number of citizens, to take a back seat to humanitarian issues means to split the Ukrainian society.

The delivery of humanitarian aid convoys to the so-called ‘DPR’ and ‘LPR’ allows Russia to create the illusion of supporting Ukrainian citizens that becomes quite real in crisis. In addition, the settlement of humanitarian crisis is increasingly affected by various pro-Russian national and regional actors, which often handle extremely painful political issues. The church may be positioned as the primary one. The Russian occupation of some Ukrainian territories has established a strict line of demarcation between the religious communities in Ukraine using a criterion of their attitude to the processes of national state-building. The Catholic community, following edifications of the Pope Francis, tends towards the international legal settlement of the conflict and the fastest resolution of the humanitarian crisis in the territory of Ukraine. Alternatively, the faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – the Moscow Patriarchate express their opposing political viewpoints as they openly support the Russian invaders. Making allowance for the fact that 50% of the Orthodox centres in Ukraine stay under the Moscow Patriarchate’s jurisdiction, one can argue that the religious factor can be determined as a powerful leverage to make the Ukrainian state dependent on Russia. The Orthodox canons may easily shape public opinions of the majority, as the core objective of the Orthodoxy consists in protecting humanistic ideals and human persons and condemning any encroachments on their welfare. By manipulating the humanitarian factor, the Church is able to form the worldview of Ukrainians and, therefore, provide support to certain political positions. The rubber stamp UOC – MP has become an important instrument of ideological and spiritual intervention, since it is permanently destabilizing the political situation in Ukraine and supporting its territorial fragmentation. For its part, the Russian Orthodox Church MP disseminates its slogans and judgments at the international level: this discredits the Ukrainian Orthodox community and, consequently, undermines the prestige of official Kyiv in the eyes of the faithful worldwide.

The Ukrainian representatives in the Trilateral Contact Group, which is responsible for negotiations to settle the conflict in Donbas, increasingly promote an idea that the humanitarian crisis should influence the elimination of this conflict. This essentially contradicts those basic European values, which have been determined by Ukrainians as major ones. Humanism has a universal positional nature; it is possible from some reflexive perspectives. Not all but just a few countries are able to reach such perspectives, as their leaders often conceive modern life in terms of social, political, economic or cultural ideologies. As a result, the trite disregard of social needs divides the population into two opposition camps, which are no longer able to defend the national identity of the state to be really necessary for the protection of its sovereignty. Under these conditions, the society loses its moral and ethical principles.

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6 Pope Francis meets with the President of Ukraine, 20 November 2015 http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2015/11/20/pope_francis_meets_with_the_president_of_ukraine/1188323

Their integration into the segmental society does not make any sense – neither social nor political. Morality dies. Conventional wisdom maintains that most of the population is deprived of their daily benefits by persons who primarily require supporting their lives. In fact, an internal social conflict between the Ukrainians who are originally from different regions of the state arises.

According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, there are about 1.6 million internally displaced persons, who have fled their homes due to the conflict in Ukraine. Between 800 thousand and 1 million IDPs are living in territories controlled by the Government, where some continue to face discrimination in accessing public services. OHCHR has observed that some IDPs are returning to their homes, while others are unable to do so due to the destruction or military use of their property.8 According to the UN and Russian official sources, over 1 million Ukrainians are seeking asylum or protection abroad, with the majority going to Russia and Belarus9.

Such conditions advance the further transfer of issues regarding the internal humanitarian crisis in Ukraine to the international level. Whereas Ukrainian authorities consider this situation as an opportunity to implement a coordinated humanitarian policy, other actors of the international relations strive using it to review their commitments to Russia, including not only political, but also legal, financial, and energy ones.

The Ukrainian state generally receives humanitarian assistance in the course of activities carried out by the international governmental and non-governmental organizations. Despite that, the effective control of this process is placed at the end of the agenda of international negotiations on the Ukrainian issue.

**Diplomatic Consideration of the Ukrainian Crisis**

Nowadays, the system of international relations is critically overloaded with local conflicts of various intensity and activities of different quasi-states resulting from palliative, temporary and incomplete solutions to these conflicts. Key actors of the international arena strive maintaining the fragile status quo when the international system does not undergo radical transformations and cannot become uncontrollable. Today, changes in the status of its actors are not allowable either to the United States or to the European Union. However, Russia tries acting at cross-purposes. Responding to criticism regarding the inactivity while implementing an international mechanism for humanitarian assistance to be envisaged in the Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements, Moscow considers the establishment of the common economic and humanitarian space from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, which could be implemented through the convergence of the European and Eurasian integration processes.10

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10 Выступление Постоянного представителя Российской Федерации при ОБСЕ А. К. Лукашевича на совместном заседании Постоянного совета ОБСЕ и Форума по сотрудничеству в области безопасности. – Вена. – 9 марта 2016 г. http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/2134250
Regrettably, the Russian approach to negotiations makes sense. The movement in the wake of foreign policy of its partners causes specific risks for the national interests in Ukraine. The main one is an increasingly clear desire of Ukrainian partners to negotiate the normalization of relations with Russia with no regard to Ukraine's position or even at its account. To determine an actual position of the Western countries on the Ukrainian issue is much more difficult: sanctions against Russia have already become burdensome for them, and the current immigration crisis sidelines even an opportunity to resolve the issue on the Ukrainian IDPs. The Kremlin quite successfully uses the humanitarian factor while playing its foreign policy game. Suffering from social and economic problems, the Ukrainian authorities are simply unable to realize all the transformations required within the implementation of the Minsk Agreements in time. The pressure on the Ukrainian officials is growing, but the humanitarian crisis is making a sharp comeback.

The primary reason for such a situation is one of the main drawbacks of the Minsk negotiations caused by the placement of fundamental issues of the internal policy of Ukraine on the agenda of these talks. Up until this weakness is not fixed, the negotiation process will be ineffective and arrangements to be reached will not be legitimate. However, the status of the Eastern regions of Ukraine is a top priority not only for Russia, but also for the West. The Russian diplomacy managed to turn its own goal into the purpose of most Western partners. The main objective of the 'hybrid' return of the Donbas to the jurisdiction of the Ukrainian authorities is maintenance of the so-called 'grey zone' of instability in the East of Ukraine. This formal 'return' may guarantee Russia the removal of economic sanctions imposed by the West and the ability to manipulate the population of the Eastern regions undermining the unity and power of the Ukrainian state. Moscow could continue building up its military presence near Ukrainian borders and in the Crimea. In return, the issue on de-occupation of the Crimean Peninsula would be put beyond the diplomatic negotiations with foreign partners: the official Moscow would continue persuading the world to recognize its illegal annexation and neutralize all the attempts of the Ukrainian side to shift the issue on return of this territory in its favour.

International discussions on the internal structure of the Ukrainian state do not only undermine its sovereignty, but also significantly harm the effectiveness of diplomatic interaction. Diplomacy is particularly forceful in a sphere of foreign and international policy, but its effectiveness is much lower in the field of domestic policy. Internally, Ukrainians need a moral consensus between authorities and citizens regarding the key issues of the foreign policy, especially when they relate to the national sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the state. State leaders should receive a considerable vote of confidence from the public, which, in turn, should know that the authorities defend its security. Such relationships allow ensuring the existence of a stable political system and a monolithic social platform, which altogether form the basis of foreign policy. At the international level, narrowing the scope of negotiations
and their focus on foreign policy, security and humanitarian aspects may become a logical step made in the nearest future. The consideration of humanitarian issues could significantly strengthen the authority of the Government inside of the country and, consequently, improve the credibility of the state in the international arena.

Conclusions

Ukraine has managed to have the political support of the US and the EU regarding the pressure put on Russia in order for the Minsk Agreements to be implemented. Nevertheless, it failed to put forward new political initiatives to accelerate their realization and to create new mechanisms for monitoring its compliance with the commitments. In contrast to the Ukrainian tactics, the Kremlin is quite successfully forming its ‘flexible alliances’ with the EU and NATO members influencing some opponents with energy and information factors. The establishment of the status quo in the Donbas region, rather than the social and humanitarian aspects of its further development, remains the underlying issue. The United States stands up for the norms and principles of international law and tries to preserve the established world order. Thus, Germany and France strive preventing harmful effects of the Ukrainian crisis on the political, economic and humanitarian relations between Europe and the Russian Federation. The relationships of the vast majority of the EU countries with Ukraine are still considered through the prism of their ties with Russia. The preservation of the European security system and the respective positions of the EU leaders therein is their primary task while solving the Ukrainian-Russian conflict.

The humanitarian crisis in Ukraine has become a problem to be exclusively tackled by the national authorities. Its solution is the path to political, economic and social reconstruction of the country. However, the narrow agenda of the international negotiations to settle the conflict, as well as the Russian reluctance to lose a key leverage influencing the political situation in Ukraine, brings the importance of these issues at the world political level almost to nought. In fact, the resolution of the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine is dissonant with the objectives of the foreign policy of the leading actors of international relations.

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