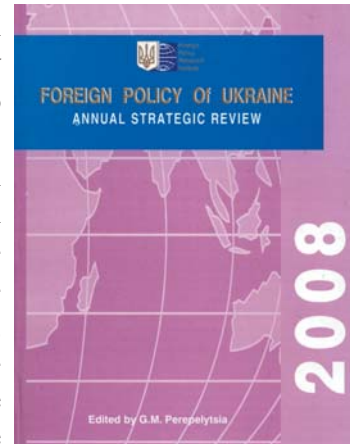


UKRAINE AND NEW CHALLENGES OF SECURITY



2008 proved to be a year of dynamic transformations of the global order, which definitely have not only opened huge opportunities, but also brought about global threats to international security. Worldwide sociological surveys found out that the list of global threats in 2008 included: greater dependence on energy resources, global financial crisis, international terrorism, Iran's nuclear program, Islamic fundamentalism, global warming and climate change and challenges generated by the policy of Russia.



Global Threats

In opinion of the international community, energy dependence and global financial crisis were the biggest global threats of 2008. American respondents tend to rank both energy dependence and financial crisis as the top threats in the list. This was cited by 87% of the surveyed Americans. European citizens recognize gravest threats to be energy dependence and global warming (82% of the surveyed). Global financial crisis was rated by Europeans as the second worst threat after energy dependence and global warming. This was the opinion of 78% of respondents in Europe. In 2007 perceptions by Americans of the threats hardly differed from today's beliefs. The only difference is that in 2008 they have moved financial crisis from the second to the first rank, alongside with energy dependence. In 2007, Europeans tended to perceive global warming as the largest threat. These days, it has been joined by energy dependence. International terrorism, which as recently as in 2006, was thought of as the most dangerous global threat, in 2008 has stepped down in perceptions of Europeans (62%) and Americans (69%) alike to the fourth rank [1].

The threat of illegal migration has become less important for the international community. Moreover, both Americans and Europeans are now less concerned about Iran's intentions to produce nuclear weapons. Apparently, this change in priorities of global threats in 2008 was caused by the fact that key trends in the sphere of international security have varying power of influence. First two trends lie in the field of global transformation of the global economic system and the system of international relations towards multi-polarity. It was these two trends that brought about the main global threat of 2008 - the imminence of the global financial and economic downturn. This transformation leads to destruction of the global financial and economic system, built around USA leadership. So it is no surprise, that Americans perceived the global financial crisis as the largest global threat. Beginnings of this financial crisis are hidden in the USA, particularly, in the state of their financial system. The critical condition of the financial system was

caused by the exorbitant growth of imbalance between consumption and production, incomes and expenses of Americans.

Annual growth of consumption and spending in USA stimulated cheap loans and speculative operations in the market of sellable mortgage-backed securities. As a result, consumer spending began contributing a lion's share (2/3) of the United States' GDP. Outcome of such financial policy was growth of loan considerably exceeding growth of Americans' incomes and of the national GDP. This is how the enormous debt gap was created in the US financial system. As of late 2008, American mortgage debt mounted to 12-13 trillion USD [2].

Aggregate financial liabilities of American citizens exceeded 140% of their annual incomes. This huge debt led to restrained consumption, which in its turn lowered demand for consumer and industrial goods and eventually slowed down the production. This is why ratings of most securities at the American stock market plummeted. Another cause of financial crisis, as experts believe, was the American banks focused on servicing international speculative flows. According to some estimates, only 5 to 7% of the overall resources were connected to the real sector of the economy, while the rest of them were used in speculative transactions [3].

Since USA is the core of the global financial system, American financial crisis rapidly spread throughout all other stock markets worldwide. Collapse of stock markets around the world resulted in the global economic crisis. Drop in demand led to dramatic contraction of output. Initially, it affected producers of end-use products, particularly, in such sectors of the economy, as automotive, aircraft construction, shipbuilding and other. This curbed demand for metal and other types of raw material. Thus, in August 2008, economic crisis hit raw material markets. Shortly after, in September, global prices for metal dropped by 18.3%, while oil prices nose-dived between August and November from 140 to 45 USD per barrel [4].

This global trend of the world economy had negatively impacted Ukraine in a number of ways. There are a number of explanations to that: extreme openness of the Ukrainian economy and low level of protection of the domestic market; export-oriented nature of Ukrainian production, raw material or semi-raw material nature of the Ukrainian export. Meanwhile, import-oriented nature of the Ukrainian consumer market led to rapid growth of the negative balance in the foreign trade, which in the first half year alone reached 7202 million USD (compare to 2343 million USD in the first half year of 2007). Export to import ratio went down to 0.84 (in 2007 it was 0.92) [5]. In general, for 2008, the negative balance in the foreign trade amounted to 11.9 billion USD or 6.7% of GDP.

The negative balance in foreign trade and import-oriented consumer market in Ukraine led to the deficit of foreign currency, devaluation of local currency and drastic increase of foreign debt. In October 2008, foreign debt mounted to the critical 60% of GDP and totaled nearly 109 billion USD [6]. Of note, almost 85% of this debt falls on the private sector of the economy.

Slowdown of industrial production in the leading countries of the world and sliding prices for metal and chemical products resulted in a slump in production in these export-generating sectors of Ukraine's economy. In chemical sector, volume of output in the current year shrank by 9.1%. In November alone output of the steel-making sector dropped by 48.8%, and in machine-building sector - by 38.8%. Decrease of industrial production for 2008 reached nearly 26.6% [7]. All this caused a collapse of the stock market in Ukraine. Thus, in the course of 2008, PFTS index sank from 1177 to 499, i.e. more than by half [8].

Contraction of production resulted in greater unemployment in Ukraine, which by the end of 2008 reached one million people. This trend is viewed as a serious challenge both to the economic and social security of Ukraine.

A substantial negative balance between sale and purchase by the population of foreign currency in the size of 1321 million USD faced by the cash currency market eventually crumbled local currency in the fourth quarter of 2008 [9]. Devaluation of Hryvnia seriously undermined

trust of depositors in the national banking system. As a result, according to the NBU's estimates only in October 2008 volume of local currency deposits decreased by 9.2 billion UAH. Overall, in the period between October 2008 and January 2009, domestic banking system became poorer by 62.5 billion UAH [10].

To rescue the situation, National Bank of Ukraine began currency interventions in the internal market, as a result of which its currency reserves in November 2009 dried up by 9 billion USD [11].

So, Ukraine, as a drop of water, mirrored the whole potency of devastating power of the global financial crisis. However, negative effects of this global tendency for Ukraine appeared much stronger compared to other countries of the world, and it was so because its currency crisis coincided in time with the banking, securities, economic and political crises. This happened in circumstances of the overall worsening of internal and external macro-economic situation.

As a result, stock market of Ukraine suffered the severest losses, after 80% collapse, second only to Iceland, whose stock markets plunged by 95%. For comparison, Russian stock market dropped by 76%, Irish - by 68% and US's - by 38% [12].

Growing energy dependence perceived by Europeans and Americans as the biggest threat in 2008 apparently was caused, primarily, by the pricing factor. Thus, in the first six months of 2008, oil prices were uncontrollably going up and reached a record level of 140 USD per barrel in June. Such skyrocketing of prices for energy resources jeopardized growth of the global economy and posed global inflation risks.

In the second six months of 2008 we all observed the reverse. Economic recession in Europe and USA, as well as slowing down of growth of Indian and Chinese economies resulted in lower volumes of energy consumption worldwide, which entailed almost three times drop in oil prices in late 2008 compared to the first six months of that year. Notwithstanding, Europeans kept believing that energy dependence is a bigger threat than the financial and economic crisis. This purely European perception may be most probably explained by two reasons. First, downturn of economies of the leading European countries was not as bad as in the US. Thus, in December 2008, industrial production in Euro zone countries dropped by 2.6% compared to November 2008, and in EU-27 - by 2.3%. Compared to December 2007, industrial production in the Euro zone in December 2008 decreased by 12.0% and in EU-27 - by 11.5% [13].

Second, perception of energy threat for Europeans has geopolitical dimension, which is determined by their energy dependence from Russia, especially in natural gas supplies. Therefore, this energy dependence is most probably perceived by Europeans as dependence on the monopolist supplier.

In Ukraine, energy dependence is also understood as dependence on Russian gas supplies to meet industrial needs of Ukraine. In this context, year 2008 was marked with two outbursts of gas war between Ukraine and Russia. At the end of quarter one of 2008, «Gazprom» decided to halve volumes of gas supplies for Ukrainian consumers, using this step as a means of pressure on the Ukrainian side during negotiations of a new Agreement with «Naftogaz Ukrainy» on purchase and transit of Russian gas in 2008. In late 2008, the conflict between two parties arose from the delayed payment by NAK «Naftogaz Ukrainy» for the consumed gas to Russian Gazprom. The delay was caused by inflation processes in Ukraine.

Third tendency. Global warming is a sustainable and long-term tendency, which may lead to catastrophic and irreversible change in climate and natural environment on the planet to the extent that existence of the humanity will be no longer possible. Recognition of such unacceptable prospect scares Europeans and makes them rank global warming beside energy efficiency as the top threats in the list of worst global threats.

According to the latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), warming of climate on the planet is evidenced by: faster melting of Arctic glaciers in the last

decade with the speed 7.4% in summer and 2.7% in winter; more severe long-term droughts in tropical and subtropical zones; increase of quantity and intensity of floods caused by greater evaporation and more rain; greater intensity of tropical cyclones in northern Atlantic ocean; rising World ocean level in the last 5 years by 17 cm and heating of its waters at the depth of 3 km. Warming and rising levels of the World ocean is explained by the fact that it absorbs nearly 80% of excessive heat in the climatic system.

Change of climatic zones resulting from the global warming may cause dramatic increase of flows of illegal migration. By estimates, in 2008 over 430 million people suffered from shortage of potable water. If the tendency towards warmer climate persists, over 300 million people residing in the coastal zones will become environmental refugees. With that rapid climate changes, both flora and fauna of the natural ecosystem fail to adjust to new conditions. Moreover, these changes cause colossal losses to the world economy.

Due to losses in farming sector caused by droughts and floods, overcoming of natural disasters, addressing shortage of drinkable water and flooding of settlements, humankind loses from 5 to 20% of GDP annually [14]. Meanwhile, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions will require only 1% of the global GDP.

Like European countries, Ukraine is susceptible to climate change. Just as them, Ukraine faces a threat of having more natural disasters, more floods in the Carpathians, degradation of steppe zone in the South to deserts, flooding of coastal areas and acute shortage of drinkable water in Central and Eastern parts of the country. Each year Ukraine's economy suffers huge losses from natural disasters, and therefore needs to coordinate its efforts with European countries and international community in order to mitigate and adapt to effects of climate change. Influence of global warming gradually leads of change of farming zones and shift in winter crops sowing time.

Having signed the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and having ratified the Kyoto protocol, Ukraine undertook to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Fulfillment of these commitments must be achieved through the implementation of energy efficient technologies and development of alternative sources of energy. These conditions fully accord with Ukraine's policy of national security, as they not only help to reduce volume of harmful air emissions, but also ease the country's dependence on imported energy.

Ukraine supports EU position related to main obligations stipulated for the following period of implementation of the Kyoto protocol. These obligations particularly include: reinforcement of the developed countries' unconditional obligations to reduce GHG emissions; more efficient contributions of other countries through implementation of new and flexible responsibilities to reduce GHG emission, that arise as their economies develop; rein-vigoration of efforts in adaptation to climate change, including risk management, and application of financial mechanisms and adaptation technologies.

Ukraine support coordinated efforts in shaping a global climate change adaptation strategy, and in finding new arrangements to finance the adaptation measures. The idea of selling a percentage of the national quota of the Parties through auction to replenish the Adaptation fund requires in-depth research in order to determine principles of participation of emerging economies in this arrangement. Ukraine stands on the position that prolongation of flexible mechanisms under the Kyoto protocol for the next reporting period and development of carbon markets would contribute to modernization of economies of the countries in transition and emerging markets alike.

The fourth tendency that became clearly discernable in 2008 is about civilization differences, primarily, between the Western Euroatlantic civilization and the Muslim world. Under this tendency, cultural differences add up to political contradictions, thus straining relations between these two civilization communities and making them conflict. Conflictogen potential of the re-

lations between these civilizations is that each of them tries to preserve its own identity and secure integrity of its own information space, while rejecting elements of the other culture which might ruin this integrity. Meanwhile, each of the civilizations attempts to impose its own values onto the other civilization community.

Irreconcilability of cultural differences and desire to export own system of values by all means, lies in the center of the modern intercivilization conflict. As notes Volodymyr Slutsker, «West tries to maintain and spread its own system of values, including by means of military force, and so does the East, so does the Islamic world, by running its military campaign through the so-called terrorist methods [15]. These actions are pointed at USA, as the nucleus of the Western civilization. Europe tries to avoid these confrontations with the Islamic world; however, its being a part of the Western civilization rules out this possibility.

Factors, that exacerbated these civilization differences in 2008 were, first of all, strengthening of globalization processes. If earlier civilizations were developing isolated lying in a significant distance from each other, nowadays these distances disappeared. Rapprochement of the civilizations ruined the space that once divided them. Close co-existence of these civilizations created conditions for conflicts, which are nourished, primarily, by differing values.

Second, inter-civilization differences became deeper as a result of unevenness of their economic development. Western civilization has focused on the production of research-intensive and high-tech products, which brought about radical changes in technological and geographical framework of the industrial production. This enabled them to accumulate a lion's share of material and financial resources. Oriental civilization is still represented by the prevailing majority of poor countries with backward economies, obsolete technological base, cheap labor and low environmental standards. These countries, play the role of raw material addenda to the leading Western countries, and are not able to feed their population and withstand natural catastrophes and epidemics.

Third, greater disproportion in the number of population. In countries of the Western civilization, birth rates go down and life expectancy goes up. In countries of the Eastern civilization it's the reverse, number of population grows but life expectancy shortens. These disproportions generate greater flows of illegal migration from countries of the Eastern civilization into the Western countries, which creates social tension for the latter perceived by them as a global threat.

In 2008, these intercivilization differences were exacerbated by the first two threats - aggravation of energy dependence and the financial crisis. Western countries felt their dependence on energy resources, located in Eastern countries (the Middle East and Russia). Global financial and economic crisis only deepens the gap between wealthy West and poor East. So it is no surprise, that both Europeans and Americans attribute worsening in 2008 of such global threats, as international terrorism, Islamic fundamentalism and production of nuclear weapons by Iran to deeper intercivilization contradictions with the Muslim East. Islamic fundamentalism was recognized the largest global threat by 53% of the surveyed Americans and 47% of Europeans. Americans rated equally the threats of Iran's Nuclear Weapon production program and international terrorism (69% of responses on each). Europeans are less worried about the threat of international terrorism (62% of respondents), than Americans, but are more concerned about the threat of production of nuclear weapons by Iran (52% of the surveyed) [16].

How did the aggravation of this clash of civilization manifest itself in 2008 and how will it impact Ukraine in the future? According to S.Huntington, Ukraine lies on the line of breakup between civilizations. «This line», writes S.Huntington, «runs along the borderline between Russia and Finland and Baltic countries, and cuts Belarus and Ukraine with predominantly catholic population from Eastern Ukraine, populated by Orthodox Christians». Peoples to the North and West of this line are protestant and catholic. Their unity is based on the common historical heritage. In general, level of their economic wellbeing is higher than that of peoples living to the

East of the borderline. Today they seem to be relying on stronger involvement into the economy of united Europe. «As for the peoples living to the East and South of the borderline, they are Orthodox Christians and Muslims. In their history they were part of Ottoman and Russian Empires. Overall, they are less developed economically. Establishment of stable democratic systems here looks less likely».

What did year 2008 highlight in this Huntington's statement?

First, Ukraine felt the impact of the civilization processes going on in relationship between Western European and Oriental civilizations. They revealed themselves in a bigger number of illegal migrants to the territory of Ukraine that arrive predominantly from the Near and Middle East. On the other hand, Ukraine technologically lags far behind EU countries and this gap is increasing. In its economic development, Ukraine is more and more treated as a peripheral European country with raw-material-based economy. And, similar to better developed Western countries, Ukraine is suffering from drastic drop of birth rates and decrease of ethnic Ukrainian population.

Second, its intercivizational position as a frontier country has become more complicated. Ukraine found itself in an unstable and uncertain civilization situation. It can be viewed simultaneously as a periphery of the West, i.e. of the European civilization, and as a periphery of the Eastern civilization, i.e. Eurasia. This dual periphery generates challenges faced by any periphery country. Attempts to integrate into either civilization evokes strong resistance of the other civilization community. Peripheral condition dooms the country to economic backwardness and political instability.

In parallel with exacerbation of intercivizational conflict, such peripheral countries turn either into buffer zones or place of arms for the civilization advance or, to the contrary, defense, and become the first victims of intercivizational wars. Ukraine has been in this situation a few times before and suffered a lot during the WWI and WWII.

Therefore, and third, exacerbation of the inter-civilization conflict leads to greater pressure on Ukraine from both civilization formations. Stronger inter-civilization pressure on Ukraine generates both internal and external threats to its national security.

On the one hand, Russia tries to preserve its ruling position in the cultural space of Ukraine, by destroying Ukrainian cultural identity and trying to integrate it into the Russian cultural and civilization space. On the other hand, attempts of Ukrainians to preserve their national identity and integrate into the Western civilization bump into a big barrier and find no support from the west. Explaining this lack of support the West refers to Ukraine's inter-civilization position.

Efforts of the West to instill democratic and liberal values, and promote its economic interests in Ukraine, face counter reaction on the part of Russia. Russia has put an end to these liberal and democratic values on its territory and fights violently to squeeze these values and European business interests from Ukraine's territory.

Russia stepped forward resolutely against NATO's expansion to the East, particularly, as for giving Ukraine and Georgia a prospective membership in NATO. And, although NATO did not deny such prospects to these countries, the process of the Alliance's expansion to the post-Soviet area has been suspended for an indefinite period of time.

European Union, as a representative of Western civilization, has turned down Ukraine's aspirations for EU membership altogether, explaining this refusal by Ukraine's failure to meet membership criteria and inability to share European identity [17]. Overall, events of 2008 highlighted the limits of EU possible expansion, and, therefore, possibility to extend democratic liberal values and EU's own economic interests to the East. The true reasons for refusal in EU membership prospects to Ukraine were exhaustion of its internal potential and fear of Russia, and EU's readiness to give Russia the post-Soviet space unconquered by the Western civilization.

Obviously, having stopped its civilization advancement to the East, the West will switch to the closed defense, by viewing Ukraine in prospect as a safe borderline strip for EU. It is with this philosophy was filled the policy of «neighborhood», and now is the policy of «Eastern Partnership».

As was proved by decisions of the NATO Summit in Bucharest in 2008, Russian-Georgian war and gas conflict in early 2009, Russia, to the contrary, shifted from the long-term retreat and defense to the civilization attack on the West.

Ukraine's position between civilizations generates its internal split both inside the national elite, and among its societal groups formed by regional and civilization attribute. Aggravation of this global conflict of civilizations leads to even deeper opening between East and West of Ukraine, dividing Ukrainian people into Ukrainian and Little Russian identities. Development of internal political situation and public opinion polls among the population of Eastern and Western Ukraine in 2008 has just confirmed existence of this menacing trend for Ukraine.

Through its own example, Ukraine demonstrate accuracy of S. Huntington's statement that «elites of some civilizationally split countries, will attempt to turn them into part of the West, however, in most cases, will run into hindrances that they will have a hard time to overcome»[18]. Aspirations of Ukrainian democratically-oriented elite to realize European and Euroatlantic course, aimed at integrating Ukraine into European civilization space through membership in NATO and EU, run into violent resistance of the left and pro-Russian political forces which lean upon constituencies of Eastern and Southern regions of Ukraine.

Exacerbation of Ukraine's international position in 2008 was caused by geopolitical confrontation lapping on the civilization conflict. This confrontation is generated by the global tendency pertinent to 2008, which implies further transformation of international relations towards multipolarity. Key indication of such transformation is, first of all, weakening of US's dominant role in the world. The USA is increasingly feeling the shortage of its foreign political resource to realize its global geopolitical interests. The USA is losing its allies in the international arena. Iraqi war did not yield expected gains for the USA. Moreover, it ruins the country's international image as a global leader and unique superpower, exhausts it economic, military and social and political potential. In this sense, war in Iraq played a destructive role for the USA, similar to the war in Afghanistan, which ruined the Soviet Union as the superpower.

In 2008, number of American servicemen perished in Afghanistan exceeded the number of losses in Iraq having totaled 258 [19]. Situation in Afghanistan in the second half of 2008 worsened so much, that US military forces began hitting Pakistani territories, where Talebans set up new military bases. This extremely strained relations between the the USA and Pakistan. Taking advantage of the situation, India reinforced its influence on Afghani government. NATO mission on stabilization of the situation in Afghanistan appeared on the verge of failure.

Influence of the USA on Iran to force it abandon the program of nuclear weapons production appeared also futile. Moreover, the USA appeared unable to react to the war unleashed by Russia against Georgia. Except for stern declarations by the US State Secretary Condoleezza Rice addressed to Russia and not very big batches of humanitarian aid to looted Georgia, USA did nothing else.

Global financial crisis has considerably weakened economic potency of the USA, which yet to a larger extent undermined this super nation's ability to influence global processes, and confidence and hopes on it on the part of other countries. Loss by the USA of its might in its turn even more slacks Euro-Atlantic ties between Europe and North America. This slackening may be considered another material indication of the world's transformation into a multi-polar formation. EU begins paying increasingly less attention to US interests and fails to sustain American's global leadership. Thus, according to international surveys, in 2008, only 38% of the surveyed Europeans welcomed US's global leadership and 59% opposed it, while in 2002 the re-

spective shares were 64% and 31% [20]. Of all EU countries, Germany, Slovak Republic and Portugal (36% of support) appeared to be least supportive of restored close relations with USA, while Romania and Poland (52% and 45%) were most supportive [21].

Moreover, nearly 25% of the surveyed Europeans view US foreign policy as the biggest threat to the global stability. They also ranked China second (21%) and Russia -third (18%) in the list of threats [22]. In opinion of Americans though, the biggest threat to global stability in 2008 is policy of China and Iran (20%), while Russia and USA were ranked second most dangerous actors (14%) [23]. Meanwhile, such negative perception of USA by Europeans and slackening of transatlantic ties contributes to stronger geopolitical ambitions of EU and its leading countries. According to international studies, over 75% Europeans support EU's pretensions for the world's leadership. The largest number of the backers live in Germany (86%), Italy (83%) and Netherlands (81%). The UK and Poland appear to be more skeptical about such EU's role in the world. For 2008, the portions of adherents of these EU's ambitions fell in UK from 71% to 60%, and in Poland from 76% to 69% [24].

Weaker transatlantic links and stronger geopolitical ambitions of the EU pose a serious challenge to the all-European security in general, and to the national security of Ukraine, in particular. Weaker transatlantic links lead to the loss by the North Atlantic Alliance of ability to secure the highest level of security and defense in Europe. This will also likely undermine security of the EU, since it does not have its own defense structure and adequate defense resources, and therefore is unable to protect its members. Menacing nature of such situation, primarily for EU countries is proven by results of sociological surveys. Thus, answering the question «Are you ready to send your troops to protect Baltic countries from Russian aggression», only French, British and Italians to a large extent expressed such readiness. In the meantime, 55% of Germans said they did not, and only 22% said they did support the idea [25].

Moreover, aspiring for the global leadership, EU tries to get rid of the excessive guardianship of USA, relying in this respect on support from Russia. In this situation, Ukraine cannot be assured in guarantees of its national security achieved through such effective mechanisms as NATO membership. Evidence to that became, particularly, the NATO Bucharest Summit (2008), where such countries as Germany and France, apparently to please Russia, ignored US proposal to give Ukraine and Georgia the NATO Membership Action Plans.

Therefore, should these negative trends in USA-EU relations persist Ukraine is likely to lose its chances of accession both EU and NATO. Another evidence of EU intentions to gain support of Russia was France's permission to Russian nuclear missile cruiser «Peter the Great» to visit its major military marine base in Toulon on the eve of large-scale military maneuvers of Russian Federation's Military Ships to Venezuela, which were distinctly anti-American and anti-NATO in nature. Of note, this visit took place from November 5 to 8, 2008, after the end of the Russian-Georgian war.

This policy of dalliance with Russian with intentions to throw USA out of Europe, is dangerous first of all for the European Union. The thing is that transformation of the unipolar world into multipolar opens for Russia a window of opportunities, specifically, to revisit the world order that came into existence after the end of the Cold war, and to revise the outcomes of the collapse of the Soviet Union, i.e. to put under doubt the national sovereignty of new independent states.

In this way, by weakening USA's influence on Europe, discrediting NATO and cleaving the European Union, Russia will be in the position to restore its dominating influence on the European continent. Main directions of such geostrategical attack on the West were discerned in 2008. First of them was aimed at the weakening of the American dominance. It is achieved by backing up such EU countries as Germany and France in their opposition to USA policy; fuelling a large-scale anti-American hysteria both inside and outside Russia; intentions to form an anti-

American alliance from such countries as China and Iran, and India; pushing economic, political and military presence of USA out of Central Asia and whole post-Soviet space. The most successful strokes dealt by Russia to US interests in this respect were Russia's victory in its war with Georgia, severe policy towards CIS countries which attempt to develop close relationship with the United States of America, decision made by Kyrgyzstan under Russia's pressure to close American air base in Manas, and closing of a Russia-Tajik agreement on transfer under control of the RF Ministry of Defense of a military air field Gissar together with the space surveillance station.

By forcing out American presence from the Post-Soviet space and weakening Washington's influence on Europe, Russia tries to build parity relations with USA on the basis of force balance as an equally strong geopolitical power. V.Putin believes that preconditions for such parity attitude to USA must be refusal to place elements of American Antimissile defense systems in Europe, turning down Ukraine's aspirations for NATO membership, and recognition by the USA and EU that they erroneously supported colored revolutions in Ukraine and Georgia [26].

Obviously, for Ukraine, the above requirements of Russia in the context of relationship with USA mean that Ukraine may abandon prospects for NATO membership, and refuse from its relations with USA on the level of strategic partnership. As for Ukraine, then in this context, Russia's policy is aimed at Ukraine's isolation and convincing of the American party to stop supporting sovereignty of the Ukrainian state and a democratic way of its development.

The second direction of Russia's strategic advances to the West was aimed against NATO. With help from Germany and France, Russia managed to block provision of the NATO Membership Action Plans to Ukraine and Georgia at the NATO Bucharest summit in April and at a summit of foreign affairs ministers of NATO in December 2008. Having reinstated control over the Caucasus as a result of Russian-Georgian war, set up a military base in Tajikistan and a military formation ODKB in Central Asia, and got rid of an American air base in Manas (Kyrgyzstan), Russia threatens to close a corridor of logistic support of NATO mission in Afghanistan. In this way, Russia received a possibility to directly press on the Alliance's painful point, putting it on the verge of defeat in the war with Talebs in Afghanistan. As declared Dmytro Rogozin, the permanent representative of the Russian Federation in NATO, according to the current official position (of Moscow), American presence in Afghanistan contributes to greater instability in the region [27].

Russian unfolded a third direction of its geostrategical advance in the direction of the EU. Major striking force in Russia's offensive on the European Union was its growing geopolitical ambitions, energy resources and demonstration of military force, which manifested in 2008 in the breaking of war against Georgia and its occupation, and in the intentions to place in Kaliningrad oblast of missiles pointed at European countries. Russia's President D. Medvedev, has repeatedly demonstrated to Europe its readiness to reverse to the relations of the cold war [28]. However, confrontation with Russia in no way responds to interests of the leading European states, first of all, such as Germany, France and Italy. Not in the interests of these countries would be the military confrontation between Russia and the United States of America, which could ruin the whole landscape of security in Europe on which the EU is relying. That's why, return to the cold war relations scares the EU even more, than Russia itself.

On the other hand, the integration concept whereby the European Union tried to integrate Russia into the Great Europe, has finally failed. Therefore, EU no longer requires from Russia democratic values and is ready to recognize Russia's right to determine the fate of post-Soviet countries. Russia's strategy aimed at the split of European Union, has succeeded. In this strategy Russia prefers bilateral relations with the EU leading countries, such as Italy, Germany and France, while neglecting interests of other EU countries. Thus, Russian policy towards EU countries results in uncoordinated policy of the European countries towards Russia.

Lack of the common consolidated position vis-a-vis Russia makes EU weak and unable to endure Russia's geopolitical offensive. Year 2008 may be considered the beginning of the European Union's geopolitical capitulation before Russia. Existence of two principally different approaches indicate that EU has a not-concerted and uncertain policy with respect to Russia. In line with one of the approaches, Russia is a threat which needs to be softly restrained. This approach is followed by mainly countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the new country-members. Whereas older country-members - Western European countries - recognize in Russia a potential partner which should be integrated into the European system.

Although all EU countries tend to believe that the main form of relations should be cooperation, the nature and essence of these relations is understood differently. Thus, Germany, France and Italy are building their strategic partnership with Russia contrary to principles of the EU common foreign policy, relying on Russia as on potential collaborator in contesting US policy. Greece and Cyprus are viewed as Trojan horses by the EU for their most consistent support of Russia. Austria, Belgium, Finland, Slovak Republic and Portugal are considered friendly pragmatists, whose relations with Russia, although not as close as the former two groups' of EU countries, however, are aimed at deepening of the economic cooperation. Another nine countries, specifically, Czech Republic, Latvia, Denmark, Sweden and UK are very reserved in their attitude to Russia, while adequately assess its foreign policy and those threats which it generates for the European security. Finally, Poland, Lithuania and Estonia attempt to openly resist Russia's geopolitical offence on Europe.

Therefore, intercivilization conflict added up on the exacerbation of geopolitical confrontation between Russia and West make situation of Ukraine, which finds itself in the buffer zone, all the worse. Aggravation of this geopolitical and inter-civilization confrontation, in the middle of which Ukraine appears now, raises even greater challenges and external and internal threats to its national security. Surrendering to Russia for the sake of securing cooperation with Russia, European Union is ready to accept all geopolitical requirements it puts forward to the West. Not only European Union killed all Ukraine's prospects for EU membership and political integration into the European commonwealth, it prompts the new US President Barack Obama through EU's political experts to give up supporting Ukraine's and Georgia's aspirations for NATO membership [29].

Suspension of NATO expansion and putting off the decision on the Ukraine's and Georgia's membership prospects for an indefinite term, strips these countries of a possibility to defend their security through joining the collective defense system available to democratic countries. Losing the level of strategic partnership with USA to please Russia's interests, deprives Ukraine of the international mechanisms to sustain its sovereignty, national independence, security and possibility to exit the buffer zone and integrate into the European civilization space.

Other global threats which directly impacted Ukraine's security in 2008 include rampant piracy in the international shipping areas. August 25, 2008 in the Indian Ocean, Somali pirates seized vessel «Faina» with Ukrainian crew, carrying 33 T-72 tanks, ammunition and grenade launchers produced in Ukraine. Ukrainian sailors and the weaponry were held captives for 133 days. This is the longest term of imprisonment for the whole history of modern piracy. Only after pirates received 3.2 million of ransom, they released the ship [30]. As noted Gennady Moskal, a member of Ukrainian Parliament, «Situation around the capturing of 17 Ukrainians and the weaponry from «Faina» ship which we were supplying under a closed contract, demonstrated that Ukraine's special services were totally unprepared to withstand serious challenges arising in the modern world» [31]. In 2008, Somali pirates captured a total of over 50 ships as a result of nearly 100 armed attacks [32].

Direct threats to Ukraine's national security in 2008 also included the global spread of HIV-infection. In 2008, Ukraine has become one of the top ranking countries in the world by the

speed of growth of the epidemic. Officially, there are 50,000 HIV-infected people registered in Ukraine. However, in reality their number may reach at least 400,000. It means that 1% of Ukraine's population may be infected with HIV. 74% of these are injection drug-users [33].

Regional Threats

Notwithstanding the widespread influence of the global threats, the national security of Ukraine is most susceptible to regional threats. After all, the existence and development of a state depend on its security and extent of stability in external environment. Building of the regional security and neutralization of regional threats are two key priorities of the foreign policy of Ukraine in the sphere of security. Besides, transition to the multi-polar world is connected to an aggressive fight of each geopolitical pole for spheres of influence and dominance in a specific region. Capture of such spheres of influence will lead to the conflict of interests among different geopolitical poles in regions, and thus to the outbreak of a number of regional and local conflicts. Such a multi-polar world will bring more instability and conflicts into the international world system than a unipolar one. Now this instability will move from the global to regional level creating a major challenge to the regional security.

The range of regional threats to the national security of Ukraine, which has been highlighted during 2008, can be demonstrated by means of several methodological approaches. If we are to note them in chronological order, the first quarter of 2008 would have been marked by escalation of a new «gas» war with Russia that put the status of Ukraine's energy security under a real threat. Notwithstanding high level agreements between Ukraine and Russia in gas and energy spheres that had been reached in Moscow on February 12, 2008, «Gasprom» RF warned about the second reduction of gas supply to Ukraine on March 4, 2008. The volume of gas supply reduction was about 50% of Ukraine's energy demand. In response, «Naftogas» of Ukraine declared that they «could reduce the volume of Russian gas that was pumped through Ukrainian territory to Europe in case «Gasprom» would continue reducing gas supplies to Ukrainian consumers» [34]. As a result of a brief but critical conflict, Ukrainian and Russian sides reached an Agreement on the development of relations between their respective economic management entities in the gas sphere on March 12, 2008. Due to this Agreement Ukraine managed to meet its own gas demand for 2008 fully and to save the price of 179.5 US dollars per 1000 m³, which was stipulated in the state budget for the current year. Although the price for transit of Russian gas to Europe via Ukraine remained unchanged - 1.7 US dollars per 1000 m³ per 100 km [35] of transport distance. The removal of the «UkrGas-Energo» commercial intermediate party could be referred to the other advantages of Ukraine's signed Agreement, and, due to this, the state got back about 2/3 of its local market gas distribution for industrial consumption through NAK «Naftogas».

However, the presence of the «RosukrEnergie» commercial intermediate party's gas in the Ukrainian market remained a rather serious threat to the energy security of Ukraine in the gas sector. Due to its presence, «Gasprom» RF had direct access to the home market of Ukraine and an opportunity to take under its control a part of the internal networks of gas distribution and supply in its territory. Another challenge was concluded in the fact that basic principles for signing long-term contracts on Russian gas supply to Ukraine had not been determined. This was a precursor for the escalation of new, more widespread «gas» war with Russia at the beginning of 2009. By this time European Union was also involved.

In the third quarter of 2008 Ukraine suffered from a massive natural disaster. On July 23-27, as a result of heavy showers, 784 inhabited localities were flooded in six regions of Western Ukraine. Nine thousand houses suffered from water damage, 360 highway bridges and 560 foot-bridges were destroyed. The disaster claimed 36 lives [36]. More than 25 thousand people were evacuated. The government estimated losses of this disaster at 4 billion hryvnias, and UNO experts estimated them at 650-870 million US dollars [37]. According to specialists' an inten-

sive deforestation in the Carpathian Mountains was the *causa proxima*, worsened by global warming.

In addition to distress, which had been caused by this massive flooding to the ecological and social security of Ukraine, the real threat of war arose in the third quarter. It was caused by a war started by Russia against Georgia, which came at the beginning of August, 2008. The plans of this war might have been concluded in the military occupation of Georgia: overthrowing its national sovereignty, M. Saakashvili's removal and establishment of pro-Kremlin regime in the country, which had to be supported by means of Russian occupation forces'. Russian aggression had obviously been directed from the separatist districts of Georgia: Abkhazia or South Ossetia. Actions of Russian troops and Abkhazian or Ossetia paramilitary units would not look like open aggression in such a case.

This operation by itself provided for launching an offensive from two sides: South Ossetia and Abkhazia, along with the possible creation of an additional beach-head in the Poti city region in order to attack from the South, with a simultaneous blockade of maritime and land boundaries of Georgia. Just to accomplish these two last missions in Poti region, the RF Black Sea Fleet's naval shock troops were sent. On August 9, 2008 Russian air forces started attacking Georgian cities. On August 10 Russian land forces of about 15 thousand soldiers dislodged Georgian troops from Tshinvali city and on the next day they launched an offensive against the Gori city, which was occupied on August 12. Then Russian troop columns went towards the direction of Tbilisi [38]. Another tank column went towards Poti. On August 11 Russian air forces started attacking Tbilisi. Tbilisi was under the real threat of being stormed by Russian troops.

On August 12, 2008 Russian troops, together with Abkhazian military units supported by Russian air forces in Abkhazia territory, started attacking in the Kodori Gorge district, totally occupied it and conquered the whole Upper Abkhazia [39]. The local population had to leave this district.

During several days Georgia faced the real threat of losing its sovereignty. Ukraine, as well as the entire international community, saw the salvation of this situation in immediate armistice and prompt reconciliation of the Russian and Georgian conflict.

The principle tasks of achieving these were:

- prohibition of attacking Tbilisi by Russian troops;
- an immediate cease-fire between Russian and Georgian sides and concluding the armistice;
- withdrawal of Russian troops from Georgian territory and lifting the military occupation;
- dismantling the blockade from Georgia;
- reintegration of Georgian territory.

Were Ukraine's actions adequate in that situation, which had arisen during the period of armed escalation of the conflict, and what role did they play in its settlement? First of all, Ukraine's efforts were directed to saving Georgian sovereignty and territorial integrity and to reestablish peace in the region.

In this regard Ukraine took the respective military and political-diplomatic measures to reach these purposes. Within the military technical cooperation measures, Ukraine provided Georgia with defense technology and arms with the purpose of strengthening Georgian defensive capability. These arming systems were mostly defensive in nature. The land forces anti-aircraft defense «Buk» complexes were especially in this category. They were meant to defend strategic targets against massive attacks of enemy's air forces. Because of the mountainous landscape of most of its territory the aggressor would principally rely on using its air forces in the war against Georgia.

Ukraine warned the Russian side about the right to close its territorial waters for the Black Sea Fleet's ships, which were supposed to participate in the war against Georgia and were based in Ukrainian territory. This was Ukraine's another important step. Russia involved Ukraine into this conflict by means of using these ships against Georgia, as long as they started attacking Georgia and its armed forces from Ukrainian territory. These actions by Russia were especially unacceptable because Georgia was a GUAM member, and within the bilateral agreements Ukraine was responsible for its security. So Ukraine helped Georgia preserve its sovereignty and independence by means of true military, political and diplomatic support.

In the fourth quarter of 2008 the economic security of Ukraine suffered from a destructive impact, which had been caused by the world finance and economic crisis. This world crisis led to the rapid reduction of foreign investments into Ukraine and the slump of Ukrainian exports. As a result, declines in production were followed by the fall of national currency - hryvnia. From October 1, 2008 the currency exchange rate fell from 5.11 per 1 US dollar to 9.6. The hryvnia exchange rate caused panic demand for currency within the population and companies. The National Bank tried to stop hryvnia's falling by means of massive interventions. In October it provided the exchange with 4.1 billion US dollars, and with 3 billion US dollars in November. However, such intervention did not change the negative trend in the banking sector. The panic was provoked by the forcible takeover of «Prominvestbank», which later was resold to Russian «Vnesheconombank».

On October-November, 2008 alone the volumes of hryvnia deposits were reduced by 13.4% to 109.7 billion hryvnias in Ukrainian banks [40]. At the end of the year Ukraine was among the countries, which were hit hardest by the world financial crisis. If during January-September, 2008 Ukraine's GDP rose by 6.9%, then in October with the beginning of the financial and economic crisis it reduced by 2.1%, and in November it fell by 14% [41]. On December, 2008 GDP fall was slowed coming to only 10%. On November, 2008 the reduction in industrial production came to 28.6%, and in December - 26.6% [42]. Ukraine has not suffered from such a massive financial and economic crisis since its way out of the downturn of 90s.

We can get more complete view of the complex of threats to Ukraine's national security, which came from the international environment in 2008, by means of the expert evaluation method. In accordance with this method: Ukraine's transforming into a buffer zone; worsening its international image; economic recession; restriction of Ukraine's access to energy resources, foreign markets and investments; involving Ukraine in foreign subjects' confrontation, annexation of the part of its territory by another state; and, spreading international conflicts over Ukrainian territory were among the most real external threats to Ukraine's national security. According to the above-mentioned threats we can see them all being concluded in three spheres of the national security - military, economic and foreign-policy (geopolitical) ones. By the results of expert evaluation we also can see that first of all the principal threats are determined by such factors as the «gas» war with Russia, war between Russia and Georgia on the Caucasus, and the world financial and economic crisis. In this context, expert evaluation of the threats coincided with the threats' chronological analysis given above.

The Russian-Georgian conflict, in which Ukraine had tried to take an active part for its settlement and the defense of the territorial integrity principle and the state sovereignty, made the following threats actual for its national security: involving Ukraine into the confrontation of international subjects; spreading international conflicts over the territory of Ukraine; and, involving Ukraine in the armed conflicts on the territory of its neighbor countries. By expert evaluation the reality of these threats increased significantly in 2008 in comparison with 2007. Thus, there is the threat of involving Ukraine into the confrontation of international subjects according to 51.8% of expert's questioned in comparison with 26.3% in 2007. The amount of those who considered involving Ukraine into the armed conflicts on the territory of its neighbor countries being

a real threat, increased from 14% to 26%. First of all, such an increase was determined by participation of the RF Black Sea Fleet's ships, which were located on the territory of Ukraine, at the military operations against Georgia and by the active political and diplomatic measures on Georgian sovereignty defense, which had been taken by Ukraine. Under the influence of these factors the amount of those who are convinced in spreading the international conflicts over the territory of Ukraine has increased by 7% to 22%, and also we can see the increase of the threat of annexation of a part of Ukrainian territory by 16% to 29.6%. First of all, this threat was obviously conditioned by Russian troops' occupation of Georgia, and annexation of South Ossetia and Abkhazia by means of recognition of their independence by Russia.

As the experts mention the decrease of security agencies' effectiveness, which do not provide safe defense from the existing and potential threats, belong to the other military threats of 2008. Ukraine's inability to release its crew from the pirate captive on «Faina» ship, unprecedented lack of financing for the Armed Forces for the last several years, fire and explosions in the 61st arsenal of the land troops of the Armed Forces of Ukraine near Lozova station in Kharkiv oblast, which had caused evacuation of 900 local people, and, also inability of the Naval Forces and other security agencies to actively and adequately fulfill the President's Decree on closing the territorial waters for the RF Black Sea Fleet's ships if needed, which participated at the military operations against Georgia were factors and events, which caused such threats.

The restriction of Ukraine's access to energy suppliers was principally caused by the «gas» war with Russia. And at the same time this threat keeps growing from year to year. If in 2007, 64.8% questioned experts had stated this threat, their numbers increased to 70.4% in 2008.

The economic recession threat, which has increased from 56.8% to 81.5% of experts questioned and Ukraine's access to the foreign markets and investments, which also has increased by 21.7% to 64.8% in 2008, are mainly conditioned by the financial and economic crisis.

The other real and potential threats are determined by further immersion of Ukraine into a buffer zone. This threat's effect has systematic character and trend to strengthening. In 2007 62.7% questioned experts had stated this threat as real, and their amount increased to 75.9% in 2008. The international relations transformation from unipolar to multi-pole system considerably complicates position of the countries, which fell in a buffer zone state. As the fight between centers of force for capturing spheres of influence and controlling specific geographical space keeps growing, buffer zones become the first objects of such fight. The year 2008 showed that Ukraine as well as Georgia was in a focus of this geopolitical confrontation when leading geopolitical players had used them as a base for strengthening their own influence in the region.

Such geopolitical confrontation puts pressure upon Ukraine from the sides of competing centers of force and leads to loss of Ukraine's personality. Therefore, the survey of experts in 2008 not occasionally has shown growing threat of Ukraine's involvement in confrontation between international subjects of 25.5% in comparison with 2007.

Escalation of confrontation between competing geopolitical players where Ukraine has been involved, and its further immersion into a buffer zone, leads to the strengthening of external influences on the internal political situation in the country, intensifying internal political instability and sharpening internal political contradictions between its leading political authorities. Such influence intensifies the internal political crisis in Ukraine, which has endured for more than one year. The President of Ukraine, V. Yushenko's Decree on termination of the authority of the Verkhovna Rada of VI convocation and declaring the pre-term parliamentary elections was a peak of 2008. However, the BYT faction blocked the elections by means of refusal to vote at the expenses of the state budget money, which had been provided for the elections. In his turn the President stopped implementing the Decree because of the world financial and economic crisis.

In the permanent political crisis situation and under the conditions of strong external influence, each political center tries to use the influence of external geopolitical players to strengthen

its own positions in this critical and uncompromising fight for the political authority in the country. The fighting centers' different geopolitical orientation just intensifies the regional contradictions between South-Eastern, South-Western and Central parts of Ukraine.

The availability of such external influences of the permanent political crisis and intensification of the regional contradictions intensifies a trend to dividing Ukrainian society into Ukrainian and Russian cultural tradition. Such division is considered to be an evidence of the civilization break of Ukraine. This trend is also being intensified by the massive information influence on Ukraine from the Russian side. By means of information influence, Russia tries to capture Ukraine as a buffer zone in its opposition to the Western world. Russian information and cultural influence is directed to creating, in the consciousness of Ukrainians as well as Russians, the impression that Ukraine is a state which has not actualized itself, having appeared by mistake in the world map and which cannot have a prospective in the future. In that way the thought is instilled that this historical mistake has to be corrected by means of returning Ukraine to Russia.

Such ideological cliché met an especially favorable perception in the environment of the Russian-speaking populations in the Eastern and South-Eastern regions of Ukraine. So by the results of Razumkov's center questioning, the number of those who consider Ukraine as being a mother land keeps permanently reducing among the Crimea citizens. If in 2006 the overwhelming majority of 74% Crimean citizens had perceived Ukraine as their mother land so in 2008 their amount reduced to 40%. Those who, on the contrary, do not accept Ukraine as their own country increased from 22.2% to 32.9% in comparison with 2006. In 2006 the proportion of those Crimean citizens, who would choose Ukraine being their motherland if they had a choice, was 57%, and declined to only 31% in 2008. Just 28.6% Crimean citizens recognized themselves being Ukrainian patriots and 49.3% of them did not⁴³. The increase of the negative impression of Ukraine among its Eastern and South-Eastern regions population created a base for the separatist trends revival. In 2008, 32.4% of the citizens of the Crimean Autonomy had separatist moods. Such amount of population who have separatist mood promotes the creation of radical political organizations, which choose separatism being their slogan. So in 2008 the Security Service of Ukraine accused in encroachment on the territorial integrity of Ukraine the leaders of the «People's front «Sevastopol-Crimea-Russia» and the leaders of the «National Assembly of the Carpatho-Ruthenians» [44]. The Donetsk Republic movement becomes more active, and it is aimed to create «Donetsk Federative Republic» in the Eastern region of Ukraine, to proclaim its state sovereignty, and join Russia [45]. Recently about 33.3% of the questioned experts, in comparison with 29% of 2007, confirmed the existence of the threat of the state territorial integrity violation under the influence of the internal factors. Such separatist organizations quite often attract to themselves the international special services' attention. Being in a buffer zone position promotes active work of foreign secret services on the territory of Ukraine. In 2008, the Security Service of Ukraine took preventive measures to restrict the activities of foreign secret services, which were harmful to the interests of Ukraine, while 12 other demarches were made by the official representatives of foreign secret services. Conducting information-psychological campaigns with the help of the international states' special services in Ukraine also contributes to the separatist trends' revival. On March 21, 2008 in a speech at the meeting of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine, which was especially dedicated to the state's information security issue, V. Yuschenko, the President of Ukraine, had noted that «the foreign states' information expansion» was the principal threat to the national security of the state. The President emphasized attention on the wide presence of the international television companies, radio stations, printed Mass Media and internet editions in the home information space [47]. The amount of foreign television programs are 66% of cable networks' content which is seen by

more than 20 million citizens of Ukraine, the Ukrainian product part comes to 50% in the radio air. The amount of programming, which is broadcast in the state language, is less than 30% [48].

In economic and technological terms, perception of Ukraine as a buffer zone leads to a slow loss of its transportation potential. Its partners in the East as well as in the West try to avoid this buffer zone while building transport communications and dividing traffic. The financial and economic crisis complicated the transport field condition in the economy of Ukraine even more. This period is characterized by fall of the demand for freight and passenger traffic, multiple growths of prices for the material resources, and a low ability of Ukrainian carriers to compete in internal and international markets. As a result of such conditions, the reduction of the rail way transportation reached 40%, of bus passenger traffic came to 30%, while freight motor transportations fell by 70% [49]. Almost a third part of water access is under unsatisfactory technical condition that restricts the potential capability of the state ports.

The systematic political, financial and economic crisis of Ukraine, along with the negative external factors, led to a worsening of Ukraine's international image in comparison with 2007. If in 2007 this threat had been recognized by 82.3% of questioned experts, 92.6% recognized it in 2008. As a result, loss of the positive international image of Ukraine remains one of the principal challenges to the state in the foreign-policy sphere.

Therefore, the year 2008 was marked by a whole range of global and regional threats to Ukraine.

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