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## Россия – Запад: можем ли мы выйти из тупика?

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### **Аннотация**

В статье раскрываются особенности современных противоречий между Западом и Россией. В частности, объясняются фундаментальные причины кризиса отношений, восприятие Западом России и возможные последствия развития обстановки. Особое внимание уделяется отношениям РФ с ЕС и некоторым аспектам интеграционных процессов в Евразии. Авторы предлагают свои пути и способы разрешения возникшего кризиса.

### **Ключевые слова**

Россия, Запад, ЕС, США, сдерживание, ЕАЭС, интеграционные процессы, КНР, терроризм.

### ***Introduction***

In recent years, relations between Russia and the West have deteriorated. This was the official assessment of the Russian Federation, as written in its Foreign Policy Concept and approved at the end of 2016. The document states: “Systemic issues in the Euro-Atlantic region that have accumulated over the last quarter century are manifested in the geopolitical expansion pursued by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU), while they refuse to begin implementation of political statements regarding the creation of a common European security and cooperation framework, which has resulted in a serious crisis in the relations between Russia and the Western states. The containment policy adopted by the United States and its allies towards Russia, and political, economic, information and other pressure Russia is facing from them undermine regional and global stability are detrimental to the long-term interests of all parties and run counter to the growing need for cooperation and countering transnational challenges and threats in today’s world”<sup>1</sup>. Despite the change of the American administration in January 2017, the crisis in the relations between Russia and the West is persisting. Additional evidence is found in the failure to set up an exclusive meeting between President Putin and President Trump as was planned in Vietnam in November 2017.

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<sup>1</sup> Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation / [Электронный ресурс] URL: <http://rusembindia.com/newsletter/8208-foreign-policy-concept-of-the-russian-federation-approved-by-president-of-the-russian-federation-vladimir-putin-on-november-30-2016> (accessed: 11.01.2018).

According to the NATO approach, Russia faces a consolidated Western position to confront the country in almost all spheres ranging from economy to security. This approach was adopted at the NATO Summit in Wales of 2014<sup>2</sup> and was confirmed at the latest NATO Summit in Warsaw in 2017.<sup>3</sup> The EU expressed its position in its Global Strategy.<sup>4</sup>

At the experts' level, there is a wide spectrum of views on the state of relations between Russia and its Western counterparts, as well as perspectives of its further development. The experts of the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) study the peculiarities of the current security landscape, as well as the trends and variables affecting European security. Glenn Diesen examined the evolution of their relations and identified some stumbling blocks preventing both sides from beneficial cooperation.<sup>5</sup> Jakob Tolstrup focuses on the rivalry between Russia and the EU in the former Soviet republics.<sup>6</sup> The persistent lack of trust resulting in difficulties to find common ground is a sticking point to build cooperative relations.

Of particular interest is the difference in positions the EU and NATO hold on the question how to deal with Russia. Although NATO aims at deterring Russia, it is prepared to enter into dialogue which makes the situation considerably different from during the Cold War. Surprising however is that NATO's position runs counter to the EU's position on Russia. Unlike NATO, the EU regards Russia as a challenge but not as an immediate strategic threat and is ready to cooperate with Russia in some areas. Bearing in mind the fact that most NATO member-states are also members of the EU, this Western ambivalence may look absurd. At the same time, this discrepancy gives a ray of hope that the Western position keeps the window of opportunity open for improvement of bilateral relations. Similarly, some Russian diplomats and scholars have indicated both the pitfalls and possibilities in bilateral relations.<sup>7</sup> However, the basic question which should be answered is whether the Ukrainian conflict was the only reason for the current crisis of Russia – West relations or whether it was the last straw. Another crucial question is what can be done to avoid further deterioration and how to cut through the deadlock. Obviously, in the ongoing confrontation both sides lose rather than win anything.

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<sup>2</sup> Policy Paper. The Wales Declaration on the Transatlantic Bond. Published 5 September 2014 / UK Government. London. [Электронный ресурс] 2014. URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nato-summit-2014-wales-summit-declaration/the-wales-declaration-on-the-transatlantic-bond> (accessed: 11.01.2018).

<sup>3</sup> Заявление по итогам встречи на высшем уровне в Варшаве. Обнародовано главами государств и правительств, участвующими в заседании Североатлантического совета в Варшаве 8–9 июля 2016 / NATO Press Release [Электронный ресурс] 2016. URL: [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_133169.htm?selectedLocale=ru](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm?selectedLocale=ru) (accessed: 11.01.2018).

<sup>4</sup> A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy / [An official website of the European Union]. URL: <http://europa.eu/globalstrategy/en> (accessed: 11.01.2018).

<sup>5</sup> Diesen G. EU and NATO Relations with Russia: After the Collapse of the Soviet Union. New York: Routledge, 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Tolstrup J. Russia vs. the EU: The Competition for Influence in Post-Soviet States. Boulder: First Forum Press, 2013.

<sup>7</sup> Россия и современный мир. М.: Канон + РООИ «Реабилитация», 2016.

This article is structured as follows. The first section focuses on the regional trends and variables affecting the Russian international position in Eurasia. The second part deals with some aspects of the Russian – EU engagement.

### ***Russia and the West under a new global reality***

Relations between Russia and the West and the question how to get out of the current crisis should be considered in a wide geopolitical context as relations between geopolitical centers of power or between civilizations. The world is undergoing a transition from a unipolar to a multipolar system of international relations. Samuel Huntington predicted this, when he wrote:

“The growth of civilization-consciousness is enhanced by the dual role of the West. On the one hand, the West is at a peak of power. At the same time, however, and perhaps as a result, a return to the roots phenomenon is occurring among non-Western civilizations. Increasingly one hears references to trends toward a turning inward and "Asianization" in Japan, the end of the Nehru legacy and the "Hinduization" of India, the failure of Western ideas of socialism and nationalism and hence "re-Islamization" of the Middle East, and now a debate over Westernization versus Russianization in Boris Yeltsin's country. A West at the peak of its power confronts non-Wests that increasingly have the desire, the will and the resources to shape the world in non-Western ways”<sup>8</sup>.

The victory of the bloc of states headed by the USA did not only lead them to leadership, but also to global supremacy.

However, the achievement of this goal was prevented by at least three factors.

First, the dramatically increasing economic potential of China, closely approaching the potential of the United States. Second, the growing political and economic power of Russia, which begins to play a more active role in world politics. Third, the increasing presence of international terrorism and extremism, that led to difficult manageable migration to Europe.

Virtually, all the major global indicators for peace and security have moved in a negative direction: more military spending, increased arms trading, more violent conflicts and the continuing forward march of military technology.

According to the assessments of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the events of 2016 reinforced the view that all the elements of the European cooperative security system were under strain. A step-by-step estrangement between Russia and the member states of the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has led to a political and military policy change, military modernization and

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<sup>8</sup> Samuel P. Huntington. *The Clash of Civilizations?* // Foreign Affairs. 1993. Vol. 72. No 3. P. 26.

adapted force postures that could increase the risk of confrontation and, under crisis conditions, military clashes between major military powers<sup>9</sup>.

The current international trends and variables make the world more complex, contradictory and less predictable. It creates new risks and challenges for states to work out efficient decisions in foreign policy-making. According to President Putin, “Qualitatively new processes evolve in all spheres at the same time. The tense dynamics of the social life in various countries, the technological revolution, all this is intertwined with the changes in the international arena. The competition for the place in the world hierarchy is gaining momentum. With that many previous formulas of the global governance, conflict resolution and overcoming natural contradictions are not appropriate, often do not work while the new ones are not worked out.”<sup>10</sup>

Another significant trend is the speeding up of reformatting international relations. The Russian scholar Kapitsa stated that the historical process speeded up and it took twice as less time to cover the same historical distance. That means that the world community does not have so much time as it used to have before to assess the ongoing changes and to make the right decisions. The price of a mistake is getting even higher. New foreign-policy decisions should be made on the background of worsened relations between Russia and the West, high threat of terrorist acts in Europe, waves of illegal migrations from the Middle East and information campaigns in Western mass media about alleged Russian attempts to undermine the current world order. In some reports or articles, the authors hold that the new Cold War has become the reality of our everyday life. The crisis in relations between Russia and the West is not just a single act connected to the situation in Ukraine. According to senior Russian diplomats, “The crisis has become the manifestation of accumulated contradictions for years or even decades. It revealed consistent drawbacks of the European security system which was not brought in line with unprecedented opportunities to bridge the gap in Europe after the end of the Cold War.”<sup>11</sup>

The efficient functioning of the Euro-Asian security system can be ensured if we take into account some more trends and variables which go beyond Europe but influence its work. They are the following:

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<sup>9</sup> Armaments, Disarmament and International Security / SIPRI Yearbook 2017. Summary. Stockholm: SIPRI. 2017. URL: <https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2017-09/yb17-summary-eng.pdf> (accessed: 11.01.2018).

<sup>10</sup> Выступление Президента Путина на заседании Международного дискуссионного клуба «Валдай» 19 октября 2017 / President of Russia [Official Site]. URL: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/55882> (accessed: 11.01.2018).

<sup>11</sup> Россия и современный мир. М.: Канон + РООИ «Реабилитация», 2016. С. 30.

The center of weight of the world politics and economy is shifting towards the Pacific.

New organizations based both in Europe and Asia such as the SCO and EAEU (Eurasian Economic Union) play an increasingly important role.

Both the SCO and the EAEU are not supposed to replace older supranational organisations such as the EU or NATO. They work in parallel and serve as an additional pillar to ensure the stability in the Eurasian region in case the old organizations make a mistake or do not cope with their obligations. The case of illegal migration to Europe is one example. At the regional level, the new entities fill the security gap and work as an insurance policy. The interference of NATO is not always favorable as its activity may run counter to the interests of some regional actors and violate the norms of international law. At the same time, the EU's policy of promoting the Eastern Partnership program drives a wedge between some former Soviet Republics and Russia.

As for shaping the relations between Russia and the West some other variables play a role. First, the attitude of some major Western countries vis-a-vis Russia which is still heavily influenced by the heritage of the Cold War. "From the very beginning Russia came out for shaping "an open architecture" based on the principles of equal cooperation and mutual trust without balance of threats, counter threats and philosophy of mutual containment in Europe."<sup>12</sup> Being a successor of the Soviet Union, Russia is perceived as the loser of the Cold War. This approach was articulated by the influential US Senator Lugar who held, "Enlargement (of NATO) is linked to the US support for Bosnian Muslims, as well as Ukraine. These moves have been seen as part of a larger strategic design to consolidate the geostrategic gains of the Cold War at Russia's expense".<sup>13</sup> This is a mistake as the Cold War ended after the demolition of the Berlin Wall in 1989 when the Soviet Union still existed, while modern Russia did not. By treating Russia as a loser, Western nations disregarded Russian interests and made decisions without taking into account the Russian position, as was the case during the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999 or NATO's expansion toward the East.<sup>14</sup> These operations proved that NATO was not a defensive alliance as it claimed but an offensive one. The bombing Yugoslavia was a violation of international law which did not lead to invoking Article V of the NATO charter.

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Hearings Before the Subcommittee on European Affairs of the Committee on Foreign Relations United States Senate. Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1995. P. 46.

<sup>14</sup> Иванов О. Россия-НАТО: точка невозврата // Обозреватель-Observer. 2015. № 1. С. 300.

Second, an independent Russian foreign policy aimed at ensuring and defending Russian national interests is regarded as revisionist and nationalistic. According to the Western approach, it is an attempt to build a new Soviet empire and to undermine the existing world order. This is a deliberate or accidental misperception of the essence of Russian foreign policy goals. In fact, there is a clash of two positions and different attitudes when it comes to the changing world order. Russia supports a multipolar development of the world system. This position is shared by new rising powers like China, India, Brazil and some others. The SCO, BRICS and EAEU are the manifestation of this scenario. Meanwhile, the USA and its allies take a firm stance on preserving a unipolar world system where the US plays the role of “a benevolent”, global hegemony. The US takes a hard line on Russia and does not stop at deploying military force to maintain its hegemonic position in the world.

The current confrontation between Russia and some Western countries is the result of the contradiction in the conceptual understanding of world politics’ evolvement which cannot be resolved overnight and will remain topical for years to come. The task is how to mitigate its negative impact on bilateral relations and the world situations on the whole.

Third, some leaders in major Western countries perceive integration projects like EAEU as a Russian plot to revive a brand new Soviet Union with Russia as its leader. In particular, in December 2012, at the ministerial meeting of OSCE in Dublin, the US Secretary of State Clinton was calling for the Western states to counteract what she labeled as the re-Sovietization of the former Soviet Union space. Her target was the EAEU. However, the truth is that it was the President of Kazakhstan Nazarbayev who first came up with the idea of creating an integration project back in 1994 when he spoke at Moscow State University.

Fourth, relations between Russia and the West are affected by NATO’s decision to seize all political and military cooperation with Russia. Moreover, NATO announced the return to a strategy of containment regarding Russia after the outbreak of the Ukrainian crisis in 2014. Though NATO officials do not draw a parallel between today’s strategy and the one which existed during the Cold War, as there is simultaneously a dialogue with Russia; nevertheless, the reconsideration of NATO’s attitude to Russia brings us back to the spirit of the Cold War. It is unproductive to go back to what the Polish Foreign Minister Vaschikovsky called for, “It is high time to refuse from the cooperation with Russia on international issues and to go back to the “traditional methods” of NATO-members defense.”<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Усова Е. США толкают Россию к холодной войне / Утро.ру. [Электронный ресурс] 13.05.2016. URL: <http://www.utro.ru/articles/2016/05/13/1281998.shtml> (accessed: 11.01.2018).

On top of that, sanctions introduced by the EU can explain why there is a huge distrust between Russia and Western nations. Relations lacking trust lead to asymmetric bipolarity, as for example between NATO and CSTO. There is no cooperation at all between these two entities. Since CSTO's existence, NATO has been refusing to establish official relations with the organization focusing on bilateral relations with its members. This kind of approach does not facilitate fighting threats like terrorism, extremism and proliferation of WMD.

Despite the systemic crisis between Russia and the West there is a potential to remedy the situation. It would be advisable to look at the experience of *détente* in the 1970s. At that time, the basic principle was to focus on what brought both opposing sides together rather than to focus on what took them apart. In addition, it would be useful to change the tone of our social intercourse and to refrain from demonizing each other. Henry Kissinger rightly pointed out that the demonization of President Putin by the West is not a policy but an alibi for its absence. It is also desirable to work out a more balanced approach. That is, to cooperate in the areas where our interests coincide and where we can achieve positive results. Among such areas, we mention fighting terrorism, non-proliferation of WMD and dealing with illegal migration. Unfortunately, both the EU and NATO keep away from tackling the roots of instability in the Middle East though NATO's strategic concept states such goal as crisis management beyond its geographical zone of responsibility.

The EU naval operation *Sophia* is aimed at conducting new surveillance activities and gathering information on illegal trafficking of oil exports as well as enhancing the possibilities for sharing information on human trafficking with member states' law enforcement agencies, Frontex and Europol. Despite Russia's active involvement in the Middle East crisis resolution it is not invited by the EU to work together which is necessary and useful in order to deal properly with such serious, non-traditional challenges. Looking at the Syrian Crisis, it is Russia that made a crucial contribution in the ongoing process of resolving the conflict in the region. Working together will make it possible to realize the huge potential and to build trust in our relations. On the whole, Russian cooperation with Frontex in such areas as risk analysis, information systems and exchange of data on situation awareness is especially important because of the waves of illegal migrants coming from the Middle East.

It is significant to put an emphasis on pragmatism in Russian-EU relations rather than try to adapt to each other values. The fact that our values may not fully coincide should not be an obstacle for our cooperation. It is advisable that the pragmatic approach takes the upper hand in the EU attitude vis-a-vis Russia so it would facilitate our joint work in important areas where interests overlap.

### *Focusing on EU – Russia relations*

At present, the EU is shaping its relations with Russia on the basis of the following guiding principles. “The first of these guiding principles is the full implementation of the Minsk agreements as a key element for any substantial change in our relations. By the way, this is an important week, it is the week where two years ago the illegal annexation of Crimea took place and we re-stated our common strong position of non-Recognition of the annexation of Crimea. The second principle is strengthening relations with our Eastern Partners and other neighbors, in particular in Central Asia, and we had very good discussions on how to proceed in this respect.

Third, strengthening internal European Union resilience, in particular in view of energy security, hybrid threats and strategic communication, but not only. Fourth principle we all agreed on is the need for selective engagement with Russia, both on foreign policy issues — this is clear, when it comes to Iran or the Middle East Peace Process or Syria, but also DPRK, migration or counter-terrorism, climate change - but also in other areas where there is a clear European Union's interest. The fifth of our guiding principles is the willingness to support more and more the Russian civil society and engage and invest in people-to-people contacts and exchanges and policies that are related to that, with a particular view to the youth of Russia and the youth of the European Union because we see the future of our countries as something we need to invest into.”<sup>16</sup> In this respect, some questions should be raised. Are these principles an invitation to enter into a dialogue in search for a basis for cooperation or are they presenting an ultimatum? If it is an ultimatum, it will run counter to the spirit of cooperation. Moreover, this approach contradicts democratic principles which envisage discussion, taking into account each other's interests and compromise. It would be more productive to agree on joint principles in order to work together.

Also significant, would be to reject a desire for a consolidation of Russia–EU relations based on the EU's standards. The Russian experience in dealing with Asian countries is worth being examined. Instead of unification, we should try to harmonize our interests and strategies. In this case, harmonization will become the key approach in our relations.

Russian relations with the European Union depend first and foremost on Russian-American relations. The influence of the United States on the European Union is very strong. That is why it is necessary for Russia to improve relations with the United States. Even during

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<sup>16</sup> Remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini at the press conference following the Foreign Affairs Council/ EEAS Press Team. [An official website of the European Union] 14.03.2016. URL: [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/5490/remarks-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-press-conference-following-foreign\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/5490/remarks-high-representativevice-president-federica-mogherini-press-conference-following-foreign_en) (accessed: 11.01.2018).



the Cold War, ideological and political differences didn't prevent the governments and people of both countries from helping each other and contributing to bringing stability to the world order. Russia and the United States maintained friendly relations since the foundation of the U.S. as a nation and throughout the entire nineteenth century. Russia took the position of friendly neutrality during the American War of Independence (1775–1783), the Anglo-American War (1812–1814) as well as during the American Civil War (1861–1865).

Russia and the U.S. have a common historical legacy and were close allies in the First and Second World War. Despite geopolitical confrontation; Russia and the U.S. can agree on with a pragmatic agenda, especially during a period of common challenges and threats.

In the past, Americans contributed to and can further contribute to the modernization of Russia; trade and economic relations are remaining a good tool for improving their inter-governmental cooperation. Both Russians and Americans have a common past, of which they can be proud. Spreading awareness about their shared history will alleviate tensions<sup>17</sup>.

The forming of a partnership with the EU should be a priority and the geostrategic direction to overcome the deadlock in the relations between Russia and the West. The significance of Russian-European relations is determined by the Russian belonging to the Christian European civilization as well as by close historical, economic, political and cultural ties between Russia and other European countries.

The Western focus regarding Russia prioritizes the influence of the American elites, which considers that it is impossible to transform Russia into a civilized country and a full partner of the West, and regards a hard stance towards Russia as an important condition for securing the status of the USA as the sole superpower. These circles are hatching plans to further weaken Russia, until its transformation into a "loose Confederation" and its subsequent disintegration into three independent States<sup>18</sup>.

Such position reflects a geopolitical idea proposed by Zbigniew Brzezinski about the decentralization of Russia and its transformation into a loose Confederation consisting of three republics: a Far Eastern, a Siberian and a European<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> Zhuravleva V.I. Through the lens of history: When Russia and the US were allies / Russia Direct. [Электронный ресурс] May 9, 2016. URL: <http://www.russia-direct.org/opinion/through-lens-history-when-russia-and-us-were-allies> (accessed: 11.01.2018).

<sup>18</sup> Баранов Н.А. Россия и Европейский союз: геополитический контекст / [Электронный ресурс] 20 июня 2016. URL: <http://nicbar.ru/home/stati/364-rossiya-i-evropejskij-soyuz-geopoliticheskij-kontekst> (accessed: 11.01.2018).

<sup>19</sup> Бжезинский Зб. Великая шахматная доска (Господство Америки и ее геостратегические императивы) / Пер. О.Ю. Уральской. М.: Международные отношения. 1998. С. 240.

The restoration of Russian-European relations will take time. In the EU's A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy Russia is accused of violation of international law and destabilisation of Ukraine.

The document notes: "Managing the relationship with Russia represents a key strategic challenge. A consistent and united approach must remain the cornerstone of EU policy towards Russia. Substantial changes in relations between the EU and Russia are premised upon full respect for international law and the principles underpinning the European security order, including the Helsinki Final Act and the Paris Charter. We will not recognise Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea nor accept the destabilisation of eastern Ukraine. We will strengthen the EU, enhance the resilience of our eastern neighbours, and uphold their right to determine freely their approach towards the EU. At the same time, the EU and Russia are interdependent. We will therefore engage Russia to discuss disagreements and cooperate if and when our interests overlap<sup>20</sup>".

"In addition to those foreign policy issues on which we currently cooperate, selective engagement could take place over matters of European interest too, including climate, the Arctic, maritime security, education, research and cross-border cooperation. Engagement should also include deeper societal ties through facilitated travel for students, civil society and business".<sup>21</sup>

The next step in the direction of improving relations between Russia and the West is the development of economic relations and the elimination of economic sanctions.

The US and the EU produce together 60% of global GDP, they own 33% of world trade in goods and 42% services markets, a USA–EU trade agreement would cover 46% of the world economy.

In 2016, the share of European Union in Russia's foreign trade decreased from 44.8% to 42.8%. Russian trade with European countries, showed a negative trend. The foreign trade turnover with Germany fell by 11.1% to 40.7 billion dollars, with the Netherlands by 17% to 32.3 billion dollars, and with Italy by 35% to 19.8 billion dollars.

The only exception was France, with which trade increased by 14% to \$ 13.3 billion due to the increase of Russian gas supplies and grain.

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<sup>20</sup> Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy / [An official website of the European Union]. URL: <http://europa.eu/globalstrategy/en> (accessed: 11.01.2018). P. 33.

<sup>21</sup> Shared Vision, Common Action: A Stronger Europe. A Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy / [An official website of the European Union]. URL: <http://europa.eu/globalstrategy/en> (accessed: 11.01.2018). P. 147.

The volume of trade with Turkey, also because of existing trade restrictions, fell by 32% and amounted to only 15.8 billion dollars<sup>22</sup>.

Sanctions, initiated by the United States, have caused the European economies much more significant damage than the US economy. Russia lost from the sanctions regime 50–52 billion dollars, while the countries that imposed them, have lost about 100 billion.

This was stated by Russian president Vladimir Putin during the annual ‘direct line’ in June 2017. In addition, he stated that US sanctions led to a decline of Russia's GDP by one percent. Vladimir Putin expressed with confidence that the sanctions did not drastically affect the state of the Russian economy<sup>23</sup>.

It should be noted that despite the sanctions in the first half of 2017 the foreign trade turnover of Russia with European countries significantly increased. It reached \$270.4 billion and increased by 28.1% compared to the same period of the previous year.<sup>24</sup>

Economy and trade have always been a driver for the development of international relations. Seeing the futility of economic sanctions against Russia, the Western countries will sooner or later be forced to abandon them. This is evidenced by the growing interest of Western business representatives in economic forums held in Russia, and also by the growth of foreign investments in the Russian economy.

Bloomberg reported that in 2016 funds investing in Russian shares, invested 1.14 billion dollars compared to 208 million in 2015. Non-European countries begin to fill the investment niche in the Russian economy left by the EU members as a result of sanctions. However, Western countries did not stop the “sanctions war” against Russia.

The leaders of European countries and the USA try to find new reasons to continue sanctions in order to put more pressure on the Russian Federation.

In November 2017, the U.S. Congress contributed to tensions in U.S.-Russia relations between by approving the U.S.’ draft military budget for 2018. This document was published under the title “America First. A Budget Blueprint to Make America Great Again”.

The military budget of the U.S. provides for the allocation of \$ 4.6 billion to protect European NATO allies from Russian aggression.

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<sup>22</sup> Быркова Е. Внешняя торговля России в 2016 году: цифры и факты / Провэд.рф [Электронный ресурс] <http://xn--b1ae2adf4f.xn--p1ai/analytics/research/40407-vneshnyaya-topgovlya-possii-v-2016-godu-tsifry-i-fakty.html> (дата обращения: 5 декабря 2017).

<sup>23</sup> Президент сравнил потери России и Запада от санкций / Lenta.ru [Электронный ресурс] 15.06.2017. URL: <https://lenta.ru/news/2017/06/15/sanctions/> (accessed: 11.01.2018).

<sup>24</sup> Быркова Т. Внешняя торговля России в 2017 году: итоги первого полугодия URL: <http://xn--b1ae2adf4f.xn--p1ai/analytics/research/43722-vneshnyaya-topgovlya-possii-v-2017-godu-itogi-pepvogo-polugodiya.html> (дата обращения: 5 декабря 2017).

The funds are intended to strengthen the US military presence in Europe, the expansion of the program exercises and strengthening of infrastructure. \$350 million will be allocated to military assistance to Ukraine<sup>25</sup>.

In November 2017, the United States “awarded” Russia an extra portion “of special economic measures”, as they call it, which this time extended to the defense sector. In fact, these sanctions are another attempt to oust Russia from the corresponding segment of the European and the future global market. The crisis in relations between Russia and the West continues.

### **Conclusion**

Relations between Russia and the West are characterized by the struggle of two opposite trends: geopolitical rivalry and geopolitical cooperation.

The first trend is related to the intensification of geopolitical rivalry between the centers of power, the weakening of the positions of the US and its allies in international relations and the strengthening of Russia's position, which due to the growing economic and military potential, began to play a more active role in world politics. This caused a backlash from the Western countries. In the new US national security strategy adopted in late 2017, Russia is accused of challenging American power, influence and interests, attempting to erode American security and prosperity.

The second trend is connected to objective globalization processes occurring in the world, increasing interdependence among states in the political, economic, financial, spiritual, information and other spheres. Mutually beneficial cooperation between geopolitical actors has always contributed to social progress, helped to combat threats and challenges to international and national security.

The containment policy adopted by the United States and its allies towards Russia is detrimental to the long-term interests of all parties and runs counter to the growing need for cooperation and addressing transnational challenges and threats in today's world.

As the content analysis of the guidance documents of Russia, the United States and the European Union on international and defense policy indicates, all parties express their willingness to cooperate on issues where their interests overlap. First of all, such areas include the fight against terrorism and extremism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, drug trafficking, illegal migration, protection of the natural environment, etc.

An increasing number of countries in the European Union, realizing the extent of the damage suffered, are in favor of lifting economic sanctions from Russia.

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<sup>25</sup> Что помешало Путину и Трампу? Кризис в отношениях США и России продолжается // Аргументы и факты. 2017. № 46. С. 2.

This gives us hope that sooner or later it will be possible to melt the ice of the "Cold War" in relations between Russia and the West. How soon this will happen, will largely depend on the position of the United States, which continues to exert a significant influence on its overseas allies' foreign policy towards Russia.

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## **Russia and the West: Can We Get out of the Deadlock?**

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### **Abstract**

This article focuses on the peculiarities of the current contradictions between the Russian Federation and the West. In particular, it explains the fundamental reasons for the crisis in their relations, the Western perception of Russia and possible consequences of the situation's evolution. Special attention is paid to relations between Russia and the EU and some facets of the integration processes in Eurasia. The authors propose a way to resolve the crisis.

### **Keywords**

Russia, the West, EU, U.S.A., containment, deterrence, EAEU, integration processes, China, terrorism.