

## Russian-Ukrainian Conflict and Dilemma of Strategic Choice for Central Asian Countries

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**ABSTRACT:** The material provides a brief overview of the emerging international processes against the backdrop of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, the response of individual global and regional subjects of international law to the ongoing contradictions.

Also, the article reflects the negative consequences that have arisen or will arise as a result of the noted interstate contradiction. An assessment is given of the existing relationships between the conflicting subjects of international law with the countries of Central Asia, and are outlined the main factors that refrain the latter from drastic foreign policy initiatives in support of one side or another.

**KEYWORD:** conflict, dilemma of strategic choice, direct interest, potential threat, regional security system.

The emerging geopolitical tension in the world as a result of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict poses a dilemma of strategic choice for the states, including the Central Asian region. Support for the Russian Federation poses a risk of worsening relations with the United States and its allies; rapprochement with the “Western vector” may provoke discontent with the Russian Federation.

It should be taken into account that the countries of Central Asia are among the key allies and partners of Russia. Cooperation covers political, military, trade, economic, scientific, and cultural and a number of other areas.

Due to natural and fossil resources, including those of strategic importance, Central Asia is of direct interest to Russia as a stable partner in the trade and economic sphere. Moreover, Central Asia is necessary for Russia, both because of its geographic proximity and its geostrategic position.

On February 24, 2022, Russia's recognition of the independence of the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR), Luhansk People's Republic (LPR), referring to Article 51 of the UN Charter, the sanction of the Federation Council and the initiated "special military operation" on the territory of Ukraine, was negatively perceived by most European countries. The UN General Assembly adopted a Resolution, according to which Russia was recognized as an aggressor and called for an immediate withdrawal of troops.

Due to contradictory relations, Ukraine is regularly accounted for by Western countries, mainly the UK, the EU, the USA, and other necessary military equipment and ammunition, which motivates it to further confrontation with the Russian Federation. The United States adopted a law on lend-lease for Ukraine, aimed at accelerating the supply of American weapons to this country and other international legal entities in Eastern Europe in the coming years.

The actions of the Russian Federation in relation to Ukraine are also negatively assessed by a number of international experts in the field of international relations. Thus, the prominent philosopher N. Taleb (USA) noted that current events in the world will significantly aggravate the confusion in understanding the essence of this country in the broad sense of the word. In his opinion, a state that bases its legitimacy on cultural unity is doomed to hostility from others. A variant of the possible disintegration of the Russian Federation into separate independent formations is also predicted.

The desire of the Russian Federation, headed by V. Putin, to expand geopolitical hegemony by all available and accessible means, under certain conditions, in the future may cause a potential threat to the sovereignty of the Central Asian states. In this context, it is noteworthy to note the statements of V. Putin regarding the absence of the state history of Kazakhstan, as well as his statement that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, its members "... received a large number of traditional Russian historical territories in their luggage."

The available materials allow us to conclude that the precedent on the basis of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict will undoubtedly lead to a revision of the integration processes in Central Asia, diversification of attitudes towards projects under development in order to strengthen the regional security system, expand the geography of mutually beneficial cooperation to ensure further progress.

## References

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