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Scotland and Catalonia: common and different in the struggle for independence

The results of the Scottish referendum, its consequences for Scotland and the prospects of using its experience by the nationalists of Catalonia are analyzed. The current political situation in Spain and the recent events in Catalonia including proclaiming the Declaration of Sovereignty, attempts to hold a referendum, adoption of the Road map to secede from Spain in 2017 are studied. The Spanish Constitution as the base of the territorial integrity of the country is considered. The economic component of the conflict, in particular the arguments against and in favor of separation and the discussions on the future EU membership of Scotland and Catalonia are analyzed. Referendums are important for the ensuring rights of nations, but the need to involve the international community including international organizations in order to avoid «pseudo-referendums» are emphasized.

Keywords: Scotland, Catalonia, referendum, nationalism, secession, independence.

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Шотландія та Каталонія: загальне та відмінне в боротьбі за незалежність

Проаналізовані результати шотландського референдуму, його можливі наслідки для Шотландії та перспективи використання його досвіду націоналістами Каталонії. Вивчена сучасна політична ситуація в Іспанії та останні події в Каталонії, в частині, проголошення Декларації про суверенітет, спроби провести референдум, прийняття Плана обрєтєння незалежності Каталонії до 2017 року і т.д. Розглянута Конституція Іспанії як основа територіальної цілості країни. Проаналізована економічна складова конфлікту, в частині аргументи проти і в користь відділення, а також дискусії по вопросу будучого членства в ЕС Шотландії та Каталонії. Поскільки проведення референдумів являється важливим для реалізації прав нації, відзначено необхідність привертєння мирового сообщєства, в том числє міжнародних організацій, во избежание «псевдореферендумов».

Ключевые слова: Шотландия, Каталония, референдум, национализм, отделение, независимость.

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UNITED STATES' POLICY IN SOUTH CAUCASUS

The article notes the South Caucasus region is rich in oil and gas resources. In this regard, the article discusses the US approaches to the oil policy of the country of the South Caucasus. It is noted that the support of the US energy policy of Azerbaijan Republic is the guarantor of uninterrupted energy supply of the European countries.

Keywords: industrial revolution, global growth and security, Strategic Partnership, territorial integrity, Corporation, international politics, sensitive geopolitical area.

(стаття друкується мовою оригіналу)

The industrial revolution had an important effect on geopolitics, because energy and its source has become an essential and very important factor for every country in the world. Therefore, the role of the supplier and the reliable

access to it has gained great relevance. This is what seems to ensure global growth and security. This implies that in the future the survival of the Earth will greatly depend on the energy politics. The vulnerability of the situation becomes clear to everyone when in times of crisis, because oil prices start to fluctuate and become unpredictable [5].

The area under investigation has gained importance after the collapse of the Soviet Union, due to its rich gas and oil resources, which is important for every country around the world. But it is not only important for these reasons, the geographical features of the area also make it quite important for the international politics scene. Its main neighbours are Iran, Turkey and Russia, all of them have great regional power. In addition, there are quite big gas and oil reserves in the Caspian Sea, too, which caused regional conflicts and fights for economic and political power in the area.

Although it is physically isolated, it is located in a very sensitive geopolitical area which means there is lot of attention towards this region. Because of these, the world powers consider the area of great importance and therefore they intend to fight for it. In 2008 a turning point came in the life of the region with the Russian invasion and the declaration of the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

This led to a completely new strategic environment. For Russia this was the first time after the Soviet–Afghan war that it had to send troops to its borders and that it had to redefine its borders. After this step, the other world powers started to have concerns about the future plans of the countries in the area [6].

The Policy of the United States after August 2008

The strong support of the USA can be seen in the U.S.–Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership, which was signed in January 2009. In this the two countries declare that they share the same interest in maintaining a strong, independent and democratic Georgia.

In the history of the USA this was not the only charter signed, since there was one with Ukraine in 2008 and with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in 1998.

There are three main pillars of this charter. The first is in connection with security. In this section they state that «the United States and Georgia intend to expand the scope of their ongoing defence and security cooperation programs to defeat (threats to global peace and stability) and to promote peace and stability» [17]. The two countries believed that this would help Georgia with its application to the NATO.

In the section about the economy, Georgia and the USA «intend to pursue an Enhanced Bilateral Investment Treaty, to expand Georgian access to the General System of Preferences, and to explore the possibility of a Free–Trade Agreement» [17]. There are goals about the energy security, too, which include bigger energy production, better energy efficiency, and better physical security of energy transit from Georgia to Europe.

While about democratization, the parties «pledge cooperation to bolster independent media, freedom of expression, and access to objective news and information» [17]. In addition they intended to make the rule of law even stronger. In order to achieve this, the USA promised to educate judges, lawyers and other members of the legislative sector.

However, after the charter had been signed there were concerns from the side of Georgia that it did not get enough security guarantees. Some observers stated that the aim of the USA was to fight those assumptions which say that the

United States have given their consent to increase the Russian dominance in the region [7].

Another issue was about the revival of the USA–Russian relations that restarted in 2009. This concern was about the weakening ties with Georgia due to the strengthening of the relationship with Russia and the concessions the USA was willing to give to it. However, Obama tried to address this issue by stating that the question of Georgia and its sovereignty and territorial integrity is one in which the two world powers allow disagreement [12].

Later, during bilateral meetings between the two countries, Obama emphasized the importance of the statements made in the charter, such as the honesty of police, the rule of law, free market reforms and free elections. Moreover, he thanked the country for its support in Afghanistan. He even announced in a press conference that he and the Georgian president agreed on making the defense cooperation stronger. He also assured Georgia about its help with the application to the NATO [11]. After this some doubts occurred from the Russian side towards the defense policy of Georgia and the USA, although the latter stated that this had not changed.

In 2013 there were quite frequent meetings between the two sides. On 24 April Secretary Kerry and Maia Panjikidze Georgian Foreign Minister had their first meeting in Brussels, at a NATO foreign ministerial meeting. Here the USA pointed out a few things, but did not go into great details. Not much after, President Saakashvili travelled to the USA, where he visited Secretary Kerry, and Senator John McCain and some other important politicians. Later, in July, Deputy Secretary of State William Burns visited the Georgian capital city, where he made it clear that the USA still considers the country's democratic development, Euro–Atlantic aspirations, sovereignty and integrity high priority. In August another meeting was held, where the Georgian Defense Minister stated the country's defense needs, although not much information leaked about the answer of the USA (Kucera, 2013).

In September 2013, the Georgian President had a speech, to which USA Ambassador to Georgia Richard Norland reacted. He made it clear that the USA has problems with the barriers that Russia is building alongside the borders of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. In the same time, he warned Saakashvili about the human rights problems that appeared during his time being president. However, he also ensured Georgia about its support for strengthening the rule of law in the country [18].

In the same time, some observers were not fond of several aspects of the cooperation between the two countries. They mentioned that although there have been some changes and improvements, all in all many measures have indicated problems towards democracy. They doubted that the USA should not commit to the defense of Georgia just based on its support in Afghanistan and the USA should definitely not grant unquestionable support to Georgia in connection with its territorial integrity. They suggest that the country should support reconciliation and reintegration of regions into Georgia.

On the other hand, there were observers who had completely different point of views about the situation and they disagreed that there were democratic problems with the elections. These observers suggested that the USA should increase its political and economic support to Georgia. They even asked for providing Georgia with defensive weapons in order to be able to protect itself from Russia.

However, most observers agree that diplomatic recognition should not be extended towards the breakaway regions without reaching a worldwide consensus [13].

The USA has a very significant role in the aid system towards Transcaucasian countries, since it is the biggest bilateral aid donor of this region. Though, for example, in Armenia it created some kind of dependence of population on USAID. For this reason, in 2012, the Administration reduced the sum of the aid for that period for European and Eurasian countries and it indicated that the reason for it is that many countries had developed [1]. This tendency continued in the following years, too, since the estimated spending has kept decreasing since that year.

The USA Congress has established a new assistance program in January 2004, which was called the Millennium Challenge account. The aim of this contract was to reduce poverty in countries that were eligible for the aid. The requirements included certain levels of economic freedom, the countries' investments in community programs and their democratization efforts. The Millennium Challenge Corporation was in charge of this program and according to it Georgia was eligible for support. Even in spite of the fact that there was still certain level of corruption in the country which was against the criteria of the account. In 2005 the compact was signed between the two countries for 295.3 million USD. There were numerous projects within this agreement, such as road works between Javakheti and Samtskhe, gas pipeline maintenance, establishing a small business investment fund, creating agricultural grants, making municipal and rural water supply better, irrigation and solid waste handling. When the Russian–Georgian conflict occurred in 2008 the MCC granted extra support for the country in order to build roads, water facilities and natural gas storage facilities.

Three years after the conflict, the MCC said they had finished their compact with the country.

However, in the same year the MCC reported that a new compact would be signed with the country, because Georgia indicated that they would like to work out an education program to enhance the school system. As a result, the two parties signed a new contract about 140 million USD in order to make the quality of secondary school education better. This program included teacher education and school reconstructions and degree programs.

Then around the political problems in 2008 the USA expressed serious doubts about Armenia and as a result it halted road–building projects and suspended some road works. Eventually, the MCC cancelled 67.1 million USD funds for road building, due to its dissatisfaction with the democratization process in Armenia.

Concerning security assistance, the USA has provided it to the region and emphasized the importance of it after 11 September 2001. There have been several programs in the region, such as the Georgia Deployment Program, which started in 2009 and was planned for more years, and the Caspian Regional Maritime Security Cooperation.

According to General Bantz John Craddock, who used to be a EUCOM Commander the Caspian Regional Maritime Security Cooperation program intended to «coordinate and complement U.S. government security cooperation activities in Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan. U.S. Naval Forces Europe continues to promote Maritime Safety and Security and Maritime Domain Awareness in the Caspian Sea through routine engagement with Azerbaijan. These efforts aim to

bolster Azerbaijan's capabilities to 'observe, evaluate, and respond' to events in their maritime domain» [20].

Georgia was in a unique situation due to the conflict with Russia in 2008. During this period, the military capabilities have been damaged and therefore General Craddock travelled to the country to take a closer look of how the USA can help Georgia in the given situation. This led to the topic of the yearly bilateral consultation on military issues and many deficiencies were found as a result of these investigations. The main areas that needed serious improvement were defense facilities, strategies, doctrine and military education.

Next year, General James Cartwright visited the country with the aim of assessing the country's defense needs. He emphasized the importance of self-defense and internal defense as well as the tools that are needed in order to serve these purposes [8].

However, there have been some voices saying that the USA has rearmed Georgia, these claims have been denied by the USA. They stated that although there was aid granted for the country after the conflict, none of this went to the Ministry of Defense.

It needs to be mentioned that some members of the Congress did not agree with the fact that the USA did not give defensive weapons to Georgia, while Russia occupies its territory. Some more consultations followed this and in 2011 Representative Mike Turner stated that NATO members should help Georgia in establishing a defensive system, because a strong Georgia is in the interest of all the countries in the NATO [9].

At the end of 2011, Obama brought to force the National Defense Authorization Act. The next year a report was needed which was received by the Congress on 30 April in 2012. In this report the results of the bilateral security collaboration could be seen. In this report it became evident that the defense cooperation between the two countries has two main pillars. These are the support from the USA in order to develop the army in Georgia and in order to help the country's contribution to ISAF. The first pillar was supported by 63 cooperative trainings, education and several visits in 2011, while 23 trainings were held in 2012. Georgia was requesting continuously for military equipment and services and as the report states the USA tried to fulfil all of these. Some requests aimed at supporting ISAF deployments, while most of them were about defense development [14].

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Політика США в Південному Кавказі

Південно-Кавказький регіон є багатим нафтовим і газовим ресурсом. У зв'язку з цим в статті розглядаються підходи США на нафтову політику країни Південного Кавказу. Відзначається, що підтримка США енергетичної політики Азербайджанської Республіки є гарантом безперебійного постачання європейських країн енергоресурсами.

Ключові слова: промислова революція, глобальне зростання і безпека, стратегічне партнерство, територіальна цілісність, корпорація, Міжнародна політика, чутливий геополітичний простір.

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Політика США в Южном Кавказе

Южно-Кавказский регион является богатым нефтяным и газовым ресурсом. В связи с этим в статье рассматриваются подходы США на нефтяную политику страны Южного Кавказа. Отмечается, что поддержка США энергетической политики Азербайджанской Республіки является гарантом бесперебойного снабжения европейских стран энергоресурсами.

Ключевые слова: промышленная революция, глобальный рост и безопасность, стратегическое партнерство, территориальная целостность, корпорація, Международная политика, чувствительное геополитическое пространство.

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