



Gorda Gibradze

Since 2012, he has been working as an analyst at the "Association of Young Experts";

Since 2013, he has been working as an analyst at the "Institute of Geostrategic and Euro-Atlantic Studies of Georgia";

In 2014, he graduated from Akaki Tsereteli State University's international relations undergraduate program;

In 2016, he graduated from the International Relations and International Security Master's Program of the Caucasus International University;

Since 2019, he has been working as an invited lecturer at the "Center for Creative Arts";

In 2022, he received Ph. D. in Political Science at the Caucasus International University;

Since 2022, he has been working at the research center of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the Caucasus International University "Institute of Strategic Studies for the Study of CBRN Threats", as a nuclear security expert-analyst.



THE FACTOR OF MILITARY CONFLICTS AND NUCLEAR SECURITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY



Gorda Gibradze

THE FACTOR OF MILITARY CONFLICTS
AND NUCLEAR SECURITY IN THE
21ST CENTURY



Caucasus International University

**STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE FOR
RESEARCH CBRN THREATS**

Gorda Gibradze

**THE FACTOR OF MILITARY CONFLICTS AND
NUCLEAR SECURITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY**



Publishing House "Mtsignobari"
Tbilisi 2023

Instructor(s): Vakhtang Maisaia:

Doctor of political science, professor of Caucasus International University. Professor of University of Warsaw (Poland), Professor of San Diego State University, USIA Alumni.

Reviewers: Alike Guchua:

Doctor of political sciences, associate professor of Caucasus International University, analyst of international relations and international security. Head of the Strategic Studies Institute for Research Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Threats.

Vakhtang Kapanadze:

Major General (retired), Academic Doctor of Military Sciences, Georgian major general who was Chief of General Staff of the Georgian Armed Forces from 22 November 2013 to 22 November 2016. He held the same command from August 2004 to February 2005. Knight of the Order of Merit and the Order of Vakhtang Gorgasli, 3rd degree.

decinger: Tamar Tkabladze

The author of the book expresses his gratitude to the chancellor of the **Caucasus International University**, **Mr. Vakhtang Tsvitsivadze**, and to the **Strategic Studies Institute for Research CBRN Threats** of the same university, for the support provided for the publication of the book.

The author retains all remaining publishing rights, and neither the entire work nor its individual components may be reprinted or reproduced by any other means without the author's written permission. The author declares that the appropriate permission has been obtained for the copyrighted materials used in the paper (except for those small citations that require only a specific reference in the citation of the literature, as is accepted when writing scientific papers) and takes responsibility for all of them.

Military political conflicts and Nuclear safety are considered the main challenge of the 21st century, the study of these processes and the conclusions drawn from the research allow us to understand and perceive the main factors that contribute to or prevent the establishment of global security, as well as what threats and risks military conflicts carry.

The essence of the practical value of the paper lies in the fact that it will be a helpful source for all analysts and international security experts working on this topic. It can also be used in undergraduate and graduate programs of higher education institutions.

CONTENTS

Abbreviations	5
Preface	6
Introduction	7
Chapter I - Ukraine Processes And Nuclear Security Problem	9
Chapter II - The Nuclear Threat from Russia and International Security	18
Chapter III - Classification of conflicts in the context of military security.....	25
Chapter IV - Military conflicts and issues of their transformation in the post-Cold War period.....	30
Chapter V - Anatomy of Russian Hybrid Warfare	34
Chapter VI - International security system of the 21st century	41
Chapter VII - Middle East conflict.....	45
Chapter VIII - South Caucasus conflicts and regional security	51
Chapter IX - South Caucasus and Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.....	58
Chapter X - Analysis of the military conflict between Russia and Georgia	66
Chapter XI - Military-strategic analysis of the August war between Russia and Georgia	74
Chapter XII - Impact of Russia-Georgia military conflict on global security	84
Conclusion	93
Bibliography	96

ABBREVIATIONS

NPT - Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty;
WMD - Weapon of mass destruction;
DTRA - Defense Threat Reduction Agency;
CIS - Commonwealth of Independent States;
EU – European Union;
ENP – European Neighbour Policy;
EaP - Eastern Partnership;
EUMM – European Union Monitoring Mission;
GID – Geneva International Discussions;
IPAP – Individual Partnership Action Plan;
KFOR – Kosovo Force;
NS - North Stream;
NATO - North Atlantic Treaty Organisation;
OSCE - Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe;
BTC - Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan pipeline;
BTE - Baku – Tbilisi –Erzurum;
SCP - South Caucasus Pipeline.

PREFACE

The nuclear safety issue is one of the most discussed topics in the modern world, it has become especially relevant after the ongoing processes in Ukraine. The topic of security is connected with the establishment of a new world order and the modern challenges that the world has faced. The current military conflicts that are taking place today are considered to be a major challenge to the modern international security system.

The processes developed in the modern world made us think about such circumstances as globalization processes, a sharp increase in tension between states, and the dominance of individual entities on the world. Such a vision has created a new field where security issues are brought to the global dimension. Today, some states include global issues in their national security strategy, such as: strengthening world security in terms of health, establishing a global economic order, fight against climate change.

INTRODUCTION

Against the background of developments in the XXI century, it becomes more and more difficult to answer the question - what is security and what is its main referent? Given that the



understanding of security is broadened as much as possible, it presents itself as a largely controversial concept, the understanding of which varies depending on the discourse through which we approach the issue. On the other hand, this complexity manifests itself in different types of players trying to implement security policies and accordingly form different security approaches. The military and political situation in the world is determined by the presence of military conflicts. At the end of the 20th century, the threat of a large-scale world war through weapons of mass destruction was greatly reduced, but depending on the reality of the 21st century, these issues could turn into a large-scale war. The geopolitical situation created in the world and the existing threats lead to the formation of a new world order. A world war, in its turn, is an applied form of military violence of a global nature and international resistance, its idea represents the issue of the world political-legal arrangement and the common path of development. A military clash qualifies as a confrontation of coalitions of states, with the direct participation of all major powers, where a significant part of the countries of the world are involved.

Overcoming the "Cold War", which was caused by the ideological and political confrontation of two socio-economic systems, significantly reduced the nuclear threat of a world war.

The content of international security has expanded over the years. Today it covers a variety of interconnected issues in the world that affect survival. It ranges from the traditional or conventional modes of military power, the causes and consequences of war between states, economic strength, to ethnic, religious and ideological conflicts, trade and economic conflicts, energy supplies, science and technology, food, as well as threats to human security and the stability of states from environmental degradation, infectious diseases, climate change and the activities of non-state actors. Traditional approaches to international security usually focus on state actors and their military capacities to protect national security. However, over the last decades the definition of security has been extended to cope with the 21st century globalized international community, its rapid technological developments and global threats that emerged from this process.

CHAPTER I - UKRAINE PROCESSES AND NUCLEAR SECURITY PROBLEM

In the east and south of today's Ukraine, the Slavic population appeared in the eighteenth century. Colonists from the regions inhabited by both Russians and Ukrainians settled in these territories, and the majority of these territories today are ethnic Ukrainians. However, this colonization was organized by the authorities of the Russian Empire. This left a long-term cultural and ideological impact on the population of the mentioned areas, which is still evident today¹. The Ukrainian national movement that began in the 19th century was less influential in these "new" territories. The same trend continued in the 20th century.



Involvement in the Maidan protest movement in eastern and southern Ukraine gradually strengthened the Ukrainian state identity. Which was confirmed by the people living there. Long processes, which changed many generations, finally united the Ukrainian society around the Ukrainian state identity².

One of the main goals of Putin, obsessed with the idea of the Eurasian Union, is to influence Russia's post-Soviet countries' resources. Since only the internal resources of the Russian Federation are clearly insufficient, moreover, Russia is in a deep systematic crisis that raises the fears of

¹ *The 20th-Century History Behind Russia's Invasion of Ukraine* - <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/the-20th-century-history-behind/>
² *HOW THE US HELPED SET 'UKRAINE ON FIRE'* <https://therealnews.com/iopatonok0810ukraine?gclid=EA1aIQobChMikt2gE>

the inevitable future crash in its leaders. Russia's geostrategic expansion, in particular, establishing control over neighboring countries and their resources, is seen as a preemptive measure to avoid this collapse. From this point of view, the economic and demographic resources of Ukraine are of key importance.

Russia's attempt to regain control of the former Soviet Union is the most important. Georgia is considered to be among the countries over which Russia needs to establish some form of control. Based on the current situation, Ukraine is the most important for the Kremlin. Another aspect of Ukraine's importance is determined by its geographical location, all this is evidenced by several factors, the general view of the Kremlin regarding the fact that it is completely unacceptable that the territory, which has a long border with the central part of Russia, should not be subject to it³. Apart from Ukraine, only Kazakhstan and Belarus have this type of border with Russia. Both of these countries are already included in the customs union and, therefore, the place of these countries is in the Eurasian Union, which is the next stage of the gradation of the customs union. Therefore, from the point of view of the Kremlin, only Ukraine is problematic from at this side.

The geographical area of interest is Ukraine's wide access to the Black Sea, including the Sevastopol naval base, where the main forces of the Russian fleet are located on this sea⁴. The Yanukovich authorities, signed by the agreements, were given the right to use the Sevastopol base for 65 years. But due to the situation in Ukraine, this may be questioned⁵.

³ Standing for Democracy - <https://www.faithfulcitizens4truth.org/standing-for-democracy-in-ukraine?E>

⁴ Russia's Militarization of the Black Sea: Implications for the United States and NATO - <https://cepa.org/comprehensive-reports/russias-militarization-of-the-black/>

⁵ Russia in the Black Sea - <https://www.mei.edu/publications/russia-black-sea>



If we look at the pre-history of the conflict between the two countries, we should note that, especially recently, Russia has been implementing a clearly unfriendly policy towards Ukraine. For years it manipulated natural gas prices, while Russia pressured Ukraine to hand over Naftogaz, the Ukrainian national oil and Gas Corporation, to Gazprom. In August 2013, as the planned signing of the Association Agreement by Ukraine with the European Union approached, a trade war was added to it, where Ukrainian goods were detained at the Russian border for formal reasons. This was the Kremlin's message to the Ukrainian oligarchs that, in the case of Ukraine's European integration, Russia would ensure that their interests were significantly harmed. But Russia could not have prevented the signing of the association agreement by Ukraine, if not for the internal problems in that country, which laid the foundation for the Maidan processes and the great crisis in Ukraine⁶. During the Maidan protests, on December 17, 2013, Putin and Yanukovich signed a

⁶ Remarks by Ambassador Yovanovitch at Opening of Naftogaz Oil and Gas Forum - <https://ua.usembassy.gov/remarks-ambassador-yovanovitch/>

cooperation act, according to which Russia should provide Ukraine with a credit of 15 billion dollars and significantly reduce the price of natural gas. The cabal agreement made Yanukovich's government effectively subordinate to the Kremlin. As a result, the existing political crisis took a permanent form. This caused additional economic losses to Ukraine and created an even larger process of political destabilization⁷.

Yanukovich's autocratic regime passed the law in the Verkhovna Rada on January 16, 2014. These laws significantly limited the freedom to hold protests. Also, the punishment for defamation has been returned to the Criminal Code, which provided up to 2 years of imprisonment. It became easier to remove the immunity of MPs, which made it easier to politically prosecute members of the opposition. After the adoption of the law, a wave of protests swept the streets of Ukrainian cities. Ukrainians simply did not accept Yanukovich's course towards authoritarianism, which was against European integration and rejected everything Western, only considered integration with Russia as an important event. After that, the events in Ukraine took a truly revolutionary look.

Following these events, a NATO summit was held in Wales on September 5, 2014, the main topic of which was the resolution of the Ukraine crisis. After the summit, the situation in Ukraine changed dramatically, and in November 2014, the conflict was renewed, which took on a larger scale. The mentioned events changed the attitude towards the issue of Ukraine to a certain extent, despite the fact that at the 2014 Wales NATO summit, the member states expressed their support for Ukraine. Allies developed "A Comprehensive and Tailored Package of Measures" to help Ukraine, which meant support in four directions: rehabilitation of injured military personnel, cyber-defense, logistics, control, communication⁸. Also called on Russia to withdraw its troops from Ukraine and stop its

⁷ Russia reaches deal with Ukraine on \$15 billion bailout - <https://www.cnbc.com/2013/12/17/russia/>

⁸ Ukraine protests after Yanukovich EU deal rejection - <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-25162563>

illegal annexation of Crimea⁹. The result of this summit for Ukraine was that NATO members supported Ukraine and expressed their desire for the de-escalation of the conflict as soon as possible¹⁰.



At the Munich Security Conference in 2015, former German Chancellor Angela Merkel called the situation in Ukraine a Ukrainian-Russian conflict, therefore failure to not resolve

the conflict through diplomatic measures would be to an imminent war. In December 2014, the US Congress passed a resolution, according to which new economic sanctions were imposed on Russia and, if necessary, the supply of lethal weapons to the Ukrainian side, although this issue should be discussed with their European partners. At the same time, the European Union took a very cautious position in relation to the Ukraine crisis, on February 13, 2015, the European Parliament in Brussels did not consider a package of new economic sanctions for Russia, because on February 12, 2015, an agreement was reached in Minsk by the "Normandy Four", the leaders of Germany, France, Ukraine, and Russia. About the ceasefire.

After 7 years of the above-mentioned events, the processes in Ukraine developed very severely, on the morning of February 24, 2022, Russia launched a full-scale war in Ukraine. Russian President Putin announced the start of a "military operation" in Ukraine under the pretext of

⁹ NATO Wales Summit Guide - https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_112107.htm

¹⁰ An Evaluation of the Wales Summit: NATO builds coalitions for conflict on multiple fronts - https://natowatch.org/sites/default/files/briefing_paper.pdf

protecting the separatist regions of Donbass and Lugansk. Putin said in a televised address that "the situation requires decisive and immediate actions". "The People's Republics of Donbas appealed to Russia for help. In this regard, in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Resolution, Part 7, with the sanction of the Federal Council and the Friendship and Mutual Assistance Agreements ratified by the Federal Assembly with Donetsk and Luhansk, I have made a decision to conduct a special military operation"¹¹.



Since the beginning of the war, Russia has repeatedly threatened Ukraine and the world with the use of nuclear weapons, thereby emphasizing its strategic advantage in the war with

Ukraine. With nuclear blackmail, Russia has warned Europe to a certain extent not to engage in hostilities and not to provide economic and military aid to Ukraine¹². Among the intense threats, we should single out the statement of former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, who considered the possibility of a nuclear war acceptable if the International Criminal Court (ICC) decides to punish Moscow for alleged crimes in Ukraine¹³. "The idea to punish the country that has the largest nuclear arsenal is absurd in itself and potentially creates a threat to humanity," Medvedev said. According to Western experts, the nuclear threat of the Russian president

¹¹ Why did Russia invade Ukraine and has Putin's war failed? - <https://www.bbc.com/news/world9>

¹² What we know about the strikes on air bases hundreds of miles inside Russia - <https://www.cnn.com/2022/12/06/europe/ukraine-russia-drone-attacks-qa-intl/index.html>

¹³ Medvedev raises spectre of Russian nuclear strike on Ukraine - <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/russias-medvedev-warns-west-that-nuclear-threat/>

and privileged persons is considered in a different connotation. Shortly after the start of the war, in March and April, it was directed to stop the military intervention of the US and NATO in the war, and in September, when the Ukrainian troops own the initiative and have already begun to liberate the territories occupied by Russia, the threat is aimed at influencing the balance of power in the conflict in favor of Russia¹⁴.



US President Joseph Biden has said Russian President Vladimir Putin is "not kidding" when he talks about using tactical nuclear weapons after the failure in Ukraine. Asked by a journalist about the use of

chemical or tactical nuclear weapons, he replied: "No, no, and no. By doing this, you (Russia) will change the face of war in a way that has never happened since World War II." He further explained that Russia's actions will determine whether How the United States will respond Experts say there is no evidence that Russia will bring land-based or air-based short-range nuclear weapons to the fore, but they take the nuclear threat seriously.

CIA Director William Burns said the United States was taking seriously the threat posed by Russia, which he said was a globally significant announcement about the potential use of nuclear weapons or low-yield nuclear weapons¹⁵. In addition, according to Western experts, the involvement of the West in hostilities is perceived as a red line in

¹⁴ Medvedev asserts Russia's 'right' to use nukes to defend its territory - <https://www.timesofisrael.com/medvedev-affirms-russias-right-to-territory/>

¹⁵ The C.I.A. director meets with his Russian counterpart to warn against the use of nuclear weapons in Ukraine. - <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/14/world/europe/cia-burns/>

the Kremlin, apart from several factors, the Russian leadership has not yet made a decision on the use of nuclear weapons. In particular, the separate mobilization announced in Russia indicates that Russia still has an offensive advantage in Ukraine.

Today, Russia is known to have 460 air and ground-based nuclear warheads with close range, most of which have an explosive yield of about 10 kilotons equivalent, the same weapon that leveled Hiroshima and the deaths of more than 140,000 people within months.

On October 5, 2022, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed and ratified the final documents on the annexation of four regions of Ukraine. According to the documents, the regions of Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhia and Kherson were "admitted to the Russian Federation". On October 5, Russian President Putin also signed a decree on the confiscation of the nuclear power plant in Zaporizhia by Russia. Russia announces that a new company will be observation operate Europe's largest nuclear facility, but Ukraine's nuclear operator refuses to cooperate with the new company.



Based on the current reality, the policy of nuclear deterrence is facing a great risk; The danger of using nuclear weapons and new nuclear weapons is increasing. Also, it is expected that in the near future

there will be no talk of complete nuclear disarmament, which first of all means renouncing the need to comply with Article VI of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) (the obligation is taken by the permanent

member nuclear states of the Security Council - P5); And, also, only 86 countries worldwide have signed the obligations of the international agreement, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which came into force in 2021, and the parliaments of 66 countries have ratified this agreement¹⁶.

¹⁶ Russia's nuclear threat in the Ukraine war and international security - <https://civilcouncil.org/about-ukraine/01-07-31-07-2022>

CHAPTER II - THE NUCLEAR THREAT FROM RUSSIA AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY



Nuclear weapons and their non-proliferation are considered one of the world's main challenges today, nuclear weapons are large-scale explosive devices, and their energy

source is derived from nuclear reactions. According to the theory of relativity, it is possible to convert a mass into energy. The principle of operation of nuclear weapons is based on nuclear reaction. In order for the chain reaction to start, the appropriate "fuel" in the form of uranium isotopes is necessary.

It is interesting to discuss the process of splitting the nucleus of an atom, which takes place by splitting the nucleus of heavy elements, we are talking about the principle of mass deficiency, which was explained by the great physicist Albert Einstein in the theory of relativity. Most importantly, such weapons require pure and enriched uranium. Uranium enrichment and its subsequent extraction is a very difficult technological process, and very few countries can produce it. As for the actual explosion process: the reaction is a chain, the nucleus of uranium emits neutrons during decay, which in turn collide with other nuclei of uranium and splits it¹⁷.

After the end of the Second World War, great geopolitical changes began in the world, and the periodization of the Cold War became the center of confrontation between the two superpowers of the world, America and the Soviet Union. The two countries, engaged in high competition, tried

¹⁷ *Atoms and Nuclear Reactions* - <https://kids.frontiersin.org/articles/>.

to develop more and more powerful nuclear weapons. On October 30, 1961, the Soviet Union tested the world's most powerful nuclear device. The "Tsar Bomba", as it was called, was 10 times more powerful than all other weapons used during World War II. The Soviet Union initially aimed to prove to the world, and especially to the US, that it too could produce a nuclear device, however, this move had an unexpected implication for the subsequent use of nuclear weapons. The "Tsar Bomba" belongs to the category of aviation hydrogen bombs¹⁸. It is also known as a thermonuclear weapon, commonly referred to as a more advanced and more powerful variation of the atomic bomb. At a time when in most cases either uranium or plutonium is used in atomic bombs, the hydrogen bomb also requires additional isotopes of hydrogen-deuterium and tritium¹⁹.



Since the creation of nuclear weapons, Russia has become the first state to use a direct nuclear threat against Ukraine, the threat, partially, was caused by its loss of position in the military

confrontation. Against the backdrop of Russia's threats, the risk of nuclear war has significantly increased in the world. Since the beginning of the war, since February 24, it has repeatedly threatened Ukraine and the world with the use of nuclear weapons, thus emphasizing its strategic advantage in the war with Ukraine. The objective of Russia in threatening was, to some extent, to coerce Western and NATO member states into refusing to engage in military conflict. It is also very annoyed by the political, economic, and military aid provided to Ukraine.

¹⁸ *Appliance of science: What happens when you split an atom?* - <https://www.irishexaminer.com/lifestyle/arid-30901957.html>

¹⁹ *Last-Time Weapons: How the Soviet Union Invented and Tested the World's Most Powerful Bomb* - <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge/a/31537084.html>

The events of 2022 created a crisis in the world, resulting in the largest refugee crisis in Europe since World War II, more than 6 million Ukrainians left the country, and a third of the country's population became internally displaced persons. The invasion also led to global food shortages. To recall the processes that started eight years ago, in 2014, Russia invaded Crimea and occupied it, Russian-backed separatists occupied a part of Donbas in South-Eastern Ukraine, namely Luhansk and Donetsk districts, which laid the foundation for a military conflict in the local region. In 2021, Russia began a massive military buildup near the border with Ukraine, amassing more than 190,000 troops and their equipment. During his televised address, Vladimir Putin, as always, told the world an alternative story, saying that Ukraine was ruled by neo-Nazis who oppressed and punished Russians on ethnic grounds²⁰. Then Putin announced a "special military operation" to "demilitarize and denazify" Ukraine. Within minutes, air and missile attacks began in all regions of Ukraine, including the capital, Kyiv. This was followed by a ground invasion from several directions. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky declared martial law and general mobilization for all men between the ages of 18 and 60, who were banned from leaving the country. The offensive of Russia initially began on the northern front, in the direction from Belarus to Kyiv, on the southern front from Crimea, on the northeastern front, and the eastern front from Donetsk and Luhansk²¹. The attack on the sovereign state was widely condemned at the international level²². The UN General Assembly passed a resolution condemning the invasion and demanding that Russia completely withdraw its troops from the territory of Ukraine. The International Court of Justice ordered Russia to stop military operations and the Council of Europe expelled Russia from its membership²³. Many countries have imposed sanctions on Russia, which

²⁰ *Russia-Ukraine war live: UN chief believes war in Ukraine 'will go on'; Putin in Belarus for talks with Lukashenko – as it happened* - <https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2022/dec/19/russia-ukraine-war>

²¹ *Putin calls his actions in Ukraine 'correct and timely'* - <https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-kyiv-moscow>

²² *The Impact of Sanctions and Export Controls on the Russian Federation* - <https://www.state.gov/the-impact-of-sanctions-and-export-controls>

²³ *Will International Sanctions Stop Russia in Ukraine?* - <https://www.cfr.org/>

isolated it completely. Protests of people imbued with the feeling of injustice started in different countries of the world. The wave of protests moved to Russia, against the background of the demonstrations, strengthened total control over society, and increased censorship in Russia, the words "war" and "invasion" were banned. The International Criminal Court has been investigating crimes against humanity in Ukraine since 2013 and is also investigating war crimes committed during the 2022 invasion.



In February 2014, the pro-Russian President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich, and the leaders of the Ukrainian parliamentary opposition signed a reconciliation agreement within the framework of the

Euromaidan movement, the next day he was expelled from the country in the form of impeachment when the president was deprived of his powers²⁴. Despite his escape, leaders of the Russian-speaking regions of eastern Ukraine pledged allegiance to Yanukovich, sparking pro-Russian unrest in Ukraine. The turmoil was followed by the annexation of Crimea by Russia in March 2014 and the war in Donbas.

In July 2021, Putin published an essay entitled: On the historical unity of Russians and Ukrainians, where he reaffirmed his subjective view that Russians and Ukrainians are "one nation"²⁵. He also stated that the possible accession of Ukraine to NATO and the expansion of NATO, in

[in-brief/will-international-sanctions-stop-russia-ukraine?](https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-29761799)

²⁴ *Putin: Russia helped Yanukovich to flee Ukraine* - <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-29761799>

²⁵ *How to think about war in Ukraine* - <https://snyder.substack.com/p/how-to-think-about-war-in-ukraine>

general, posed a threat to its national security. Along with many lies, he also said: "I must say that Russophobia is the first step towards genocide. You and I know what is happening in Donbas. It certainly looks a lot like genocide." Russia also condemned the Ukrainian language law. On February 15, 2022, Putin told the press: "What is happening in Donbas is exactly a genocide." These statements of Putin were of course very dangerous. To a certain extent, there were warning signs regarding NATO-Ukraine relations²⁶. In light of recent events Putin has been most annoyed by NATO's expansion into Eastern Europe, the deployment of a NATO missile defense system in Poland instilled in him a lifelong fear of being attacked.

Amid the Russia-Ukraine military conflict, Putin ordered nuclear forces to be on high alert in response to "aggressive statements" by NATO members. This order drew heavy criticism from NATO, the European Union, and the United Nations. Jens Stoltenberg called it "dangerous and irresponsible", while Stefan Dujarric said nuclear war was "unthinkable"²⁷. The director of the US Central Intelligence Agency, William Barnes, made a statement on April 14 that there were reasonable doubts that Putin would use tactical nuclear weapons against Ukraine. In case of Russian nuclear aggression, NATO's involvement in the processes would be inevitable, according to Jens Stoltenberg, NATO member states would not allow the nuclear blackmail of Russia against Central European countries. The latest threat was articulated by former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev on July 6, 2022. He did not rule out the use of nuclear weapons by Russia and considered the possibility of nuclear war to be admissible, and he also highlighted the decision-making process of the International Criminal Court (ICC) investigating the punishment of Moscow for the crime committed in Ukraine. Medvedev said that "the idea of punishing a country with the largest nuclear arsenal is itself absurd and potentially

²⁶ Ukraine's star author Kurkov says his native Russian should be curbed - <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news>

²⁷ UN spokesman says idea of nuclear conflict 'inconceivable' https://www.timesofisrael.com/liveblog_entry/un-spokesman-says-idea-of-nuclear

poses a threat to humanity".²⁸ US military experts do not rule out the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear threats. Therefore, in the war conducted by Russia against Ukraine, there is an increasing risk that the war could very soon escalate into a nuclear conflict, even with the use of short-range "tactical" weapons. According to NATO experts, in the case of using nuclear weapons, there is no guarantee that the nuclear fire will not spread to other geographical areas and the whole earth²⁹. Once nuclear weapons are used, it will be impossible to limit their use by the parties to the conflict or by other parties, as a result of which the conflict will escalate into a "global nuclear war". According to international studies, about 13,000 nuclear warheads still exist, and most of them are owned by Russia, also the nuclear development of Iran is considered a dangerous trend, the factor of China is also interesting, which has a "no-first-use" policy of nuclear weapons, and at the same time, as it appears, increases its nuclear arsenal. Amid growing threats, the United Kingdom has publicly announced its intention to increase the number of nuclear warheads. On 17 October 2022, NATO conducted a two-week exercise in Europe, known as Steadfast Noon, centered on Kleine Broegel Air Base located in Belgium, one of the six air bases in Europe that host the US nuclear arsenal. Exercises were conducted in terms of significant modernization of nuclear bases across Europe³⁰. The Steadfast Noon exercise usually takes place once a year, but 2022 was a significant one as the scale of the exercise proved to be the largest in Europe since World War II. Due to rising tensions and unprecedented fears of nuclear war, Steadfast Noon involved 14 countries (less than half of NATO's 30 allies) and about 60 aircraft. It included the fourth-generation F-16 and F-15E, as well as the fifth-generation F-35A and F-22 fighters.

²⁸ Medvedev raises spectre of Russian nuclear strike on Ukraine - <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/russias-medvedev-warns-west-that-nuclear-threat>

²⁹ NATO's Nuclear Weapons: The Rationale for 'No First Use' - <https://www.armscontrol.org/act/1999-07>

³⁰ NATO Steadfast Noon Exercise And Nuclear Modernization in Europe - <https://fas.org/blogs/security/2022/10/steadfast-noon-exercise-and-nuclear>

As for the current situation, the policy of nuclear deterrence carries great risks, the threat of using nuclear weapons and the new arms race for nuclear weapons is increasing. Also, it is expected that in the near future, the policy will be changed to complete nuclear disarmament, which means, first of all, renouncing the need to comply with Article VI of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT).

CHAPTER III - CLASSIFICATION OF CONFLICTS IN THE CONTEXT OF MILITARY SECURITY

Overcoming the "Cold War", which was caused by the ideological and political confrontation of two socio-economic systems, significantly reduced the nuclear threat of a world war. It is important to consider different forms of warfare, which include: regional, local, and coalition-military operations.



In the course of a regional war, the action takes place with the involvement of two or more states, is limited to the borders of one region, and concerns the interests of the

countries located predominantly in this region. The armed struggle is carried out using modern weapons, it may be unclear and long-term in nature.

Local war is limited in terms of political objectives and military operations. Depending on the scale of the specific local war, some of them are characterized by a low intensity of armed resistance, which is called a "small war". Some circumstances turned the local war into a full-scale armed confrontation. This is mainly a 21st-century challenge, for example, the military conflict in Syria, the end of which is a long way off.

It is also interesting to discuss the coalition war, during which hostilities take place against individual states or another military-political union. Coalition warfare has been taking place since ancient times, its main idea is the joint armed struggle against hostile coalitions and forces.



A notable example of a coalition war was the military operations carried out in the nineties of the last century: "Desert Shield" and "Desert Storm", which were carried out by America and

its allies in the Persian Gulf from August 9, 1990, to February 28, 1991. Due to the escalated situation, the war in the Persian Gulf turned out to be the largest military conflict since the Second World War. It involved 35 countries on both sides (Iraq and 34 coalition countries), but the main load, about 80% of coalition troops, came from the United States of America. The scale of the military conflict in the Persian Gulf made the involvement of 1.5 million military personnel inevitable. By November 1,



1990, the Americans had transported more than 500,000 military personnel to the Persian Gulf by air and sea³¹. It is also worth noting the involvement of Iraq in the war, which gathered large

forces in southern Kuwait, whose military strength reached 800,000. The hostilities that were going on intensively, and financially cost America the most than all the coalition countries together, it should also be noted

³¹ Persian Gulf War / HISTORY.COM EDITORSUPDATED:NOV 1, 2022ORIGINAL:NOV 9, 2009 - <https://www.history.com/topics/middle-east/>

that these military operations were a kind of final, summary stage of the great reforms that took place for almost 20 years, starting from 1973, and the successful development of which was greatly contributed by the policies of President Reagan.

The hostilities began on January 17, 1991 with aerial and naval bombardment, which continued for five weeks. During this time, as the Iraqi military found itself unable to ward off the coalition's attacks, Iraq began to fire missiles at Israel. While the coalition itself did not include Israel, the Iraqi leadership had launched the campaign under the expectation that the missile barrage would provoke an independent Israeli military response, and hoped that such a response would prompt the coalition's



Muslim-majority countries to withdraw (see Arab-Israeli conflict). However, the jeopardization attempt was ultimately unsuccessful as Israel did not respond to any Iraqi attacks, and Iraq continued to remain at odds with most Muslim-majority countries. Iraqi missile barrages aimed at coalition targets stationed in Saudi Arabia were also largely unsuccessful, and on 24 February 1991, the coalition launched a major ground assault into Iraqi-occupied Kuwait. The offensive was a decisive victory for American-led coalition forces, who liberated Kuwait and promptly began to advance past the Iraq-Kuwait border into Iraqi territory. A hundred hours after the beginning of the ground campaign, the coalition ceased its advance into Iraq and declared a ceasefire. Aerial

and ground combat was confined to Iraq, Kuwait, and areas straddling the Iraq–Saudi Arabia border³².

Military operations in the Persian Gulf were the era of the introduction of new military technologies for America, it was during that period that America became the owner of new-generation weapons and various missile systems. The war in the Persian Gulf was of global importance, it showed the civilized world that America would protect its interests far from its own country called the Middle East.

It is interesting to consider combat tactics from a technological point of view, Precision-guided munitions were heralded as the key in allowing military strikes to be made with a minimum of civilian casualties compared to previous wars, although they were not used as often as more traditional, less accurate bombs. Specific buildings in downtown Baghdad could be bombed while journalists in their hotels watched cruise missiles fly by. Precision-guided munitions amounted to approximately 7.4% of all bombs dropped by the coalition. Other bombs included cluster bombs, which disperse numerous submunitions, and daisy cutters, 15,000-pound bombs which can disintegrate everything within hundreds of yards³³. Global Positioning System (GPS) units were relatively new at the time and were important in enabling coalition units to easily navigate across the desert³⁴. Since military GPS receivers were not available for most troops, many used commercially available units. To permit these to be used to best effect, the "selective availability" feature of the GPS system was turned off for the duration of Desert Storm, allowing these commercial receivers to provide the same precision as the military equipment³⁵. Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) and satellite communication systems were also important.

³² U.S. Army Center of Military History / Operation DESERT SHIELD - <https://history.army.mil/>

³³ FAS / Military - <https://web.archive.org/web/20100328110957/>

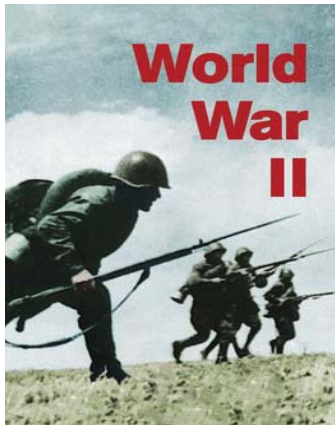
³⁴ U.S. Army Center of Military History / OPERATION DESERT STORM: 17 JANUARY to 28 FEBRUARY 1991 - <https://history.army.mil/html/bookshelves>

³⁵ Gulf War gps - <https://books.google.com/books?>

Two examples of this are the US Navy's Grumman E-2 Hawkeye and the US Air Force's Boeing E-3 Sentry. Both were used in the command and control area of operations. These systems provided essential communications links between air, ground, and naval forces. It is one of several reasons coalition forces dominated the air war. American-made color photocopiers were used to produce some of Iraq's battle plans. Some of the copiers contained concealed high-tech transmitters that revealed their positions to American electronic warfare aircraft, leading to more precise bombings³⁶.

³⁶ Something wrong with our **** chips today - <https://www.economist.com/international/2011/04/07/>

CHAPTER IV - MILITARY CONFLICTS AND ISSUES OF THEIR TRANSFORMATION IN THE POST-COLD WAR PERIOD



The topic of the "Cold War" is relevant even today in the modern world, because the issue of the distribution of territory in the geopolitical space by states has not come to an end. Initially, the Cold War arose out of differing views on the post-war world order, which created suspicion and distrust between the United States and the Soviet Union, the first such conflict occurring over the Polish question.

Before the start of the Second World War, America, and Great Britain considered the Soviet totalitarian regime as the main opponent, but the aggressive actions of Germany made Washington and London think about taking new security measures. The new concept of security was established by the military-political relationship with Russia, and the defeat of fascism became the main strategic task of the leaders of the leading countries: Franklin Roosevelt, Joseph Stalin, and Winston Churchill³⁷.

Their idea took off in 1945 when fascism was defeated at the cost of the greatest sacrifice. In the same year, in July-August 1945, the "Big Three" meeting was



³⁷ *The Cold War (1945–1989) - „Towards a bipolar world (1945–1953)“ – 2016. pp 3-5*

held in the German city of Potsdam. The purpose of the meeting was based on the main idea of establishing a new world order. Instead of common agreement and trust, fundamental differences of opinion were revealed at the conference, because Stalin, as a great leader, wanted to spread the influence of the Soviet Union to Eastern Europe. Stalin's ideas were growing and dynamic, as the only defeater of fascism wanted to strengthen the involvement of communist parties in the countries of Europe as a whole. The period of the "Cold War" proved to be long for the world, the sharp confrontation of the leading states and the radically different ideological incompatibility brought these processes to the 90s of the last century. This period had a certain impact on humanity, the Soviet Union liberated Eastern European countries from fascism to some extent, but afterward, it occupied them itself, that was Stalin's plan to defeat fascism and spread communism, American policy in the liberation of Western Europe was different and strategic³⁸. It saw the real danger of the expansion of communism and formulated the "policy of containing the aggression of the Soviet Union". During the Cold War, America became the leader of the capitalist world, and it also sought to establish economic and political hegemony over the communist world.



With the idea of stopping Communism, America provided economic aid, through the so-called "Marshall Plan", it carried the essence of the "European Recovery Program", it provided the provision of economic aid by America to

Europe, all European states were members of the plan, except for the Soviet bloc states, the aid was refused to Spain, because of Franco's

³⁸ *Abashidze. Z. - "Cold War" past or present? - Tbilisi, 2009. p. 178-179*

autocratic regime, and West Germany. The purpose of the Marshall Plan was to prevent the crisis of the 1930s from returning to America, and maintaining a high economic index was considered a priority direction³⁹. During the Cold War, many events of historical importance took place: the establishment of post-Soviet communist regimes in Eastern European countries, the Berlin crisis (1948-49), the creation of the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany (1949), the establishment of a communist regime in China (1949), the Korean War (1950-53), the military occupation of Hungary by the USSR (1956), the construction of the Berlin Wall (1961), the Caribbean crisis (1962), the Vietnam War (1965-72), the occupation of Czechoslovakia (1968). These tense events have repeatedly put the world at risk of nuclear war. The periodization of the "Cold War" is also related to the intervention of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, this fact pushed America to strengthen in the military direction. It should be noted that 1985 is considered to be the era of transformation of the Soviet Union, the course of "perestroika" brought revolutionary changes to the Cold War and the concept of international relations⁴⁰. Strategic arms limitation took place along with all this, Soviet troops withdrew from Afghanistan, and the fall of the Berlin Wall, the overthrow of the communist regime in Eastern Europe, and the dissolution of the Soviet Union led to the end of the bipolar international system. By the end of 1992, the Soviet Union practically no longer existed, and all this led to the overthrow of the communist regime⁴¹.

The post-Cold War situation in the world is distinguished by the features of establishing peace, establishing peaceful international relations, avoiding military conflicts, and new approaches. The end of the "Cold War" fundamentally changed the international situation and put the

³⁹Marshall Plan/HISTORY.COM EDITORS UPDATED:NOV 1, 2022 ORIGINAL:DEC 16, 2009 - <https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/marshall>

⁴⁰ Soviet invasion of Afghanistan - <https://www.britannica.com/event/Soviet-invasion>

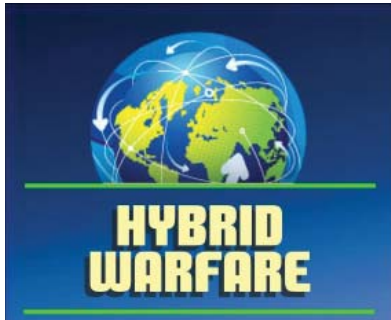
⁴¹ The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan and the U.S. Response, 1978-1980 - <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1977-1980/>



world on the path of new challenges. The main idea of the 20th century burdened by world wars, to make society think once again about the future of humanity,

the sustainability of the world order, and its perspective. The end of the "Cold War" made certain adjustments in terms of the international situation. The world facing a new reality was left with the fact that the huge union that had the largest area on the Eurasian continent, including Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus and Asia Minor, no longer existed. A country that was constantly fighting progress was destroyed. The end of the "Cold War", as described by Francis Fukuyama, ended a certain phase of humanity, as a result of the victory of liberal democracy, the world realized that there was no alternative to peace in the future coexistence.

CHAPTER V - ANATOMY OF RUSSIAN HYBRID WARFARE

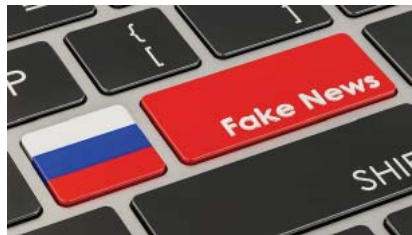


Along with the growing and dynamic development of the modern world, appeared a threat called "hybrid war". In the analysis of modern discussion of conflicts, hybrid threats are defined as follows: Actions used with diplomatic, economic, information media terrorism, criminal and cyber

warfare methods to achieve military or political goals.

In the new military practice, the term "hybrid threats" was introduced, which is a modern form of warfare, mainly focused on achieving strategic objectives without physical confrontation, especially at the initial stage of the conflict. Nowadays, the main component of war is considered to be "informational war", which is carried out by influencing the masses by controlling the mass media, this propaganda method serves to convincing people to some extent⁴². One of the most relevant topics of the information war was the Russian interference in the US elections, where the widespread involvement of fake news and trolls even led to the misleading of a certain part of the American population.

Russia is distinguished by a long history of disinformation, modern Russian propaganda is certainly not truth-oriented, the truth in Russian propaganda information is an invented commandment, it is mainly a carrier of mixed lies, the



⁴² What was the Cold War—and are we headed to another one? - <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/>

Russian propaganda machine, along with falsifying information, often along with resorting to falsification of sources, is used to undermine Western democracy. Hybrid war, that is, war through controlled chaos, selects "support groups" in the targeted state and uses them for provocative actions that serve the purposeful degradation and impoverishment of the country⁴³.

Russian propaganda remains one of the challenges for Georgia, its method shows us that Russia is the only way to economic and social well-being for Georgia, all of this underlines the fact that the Western course chosen for our country is useless. Pro-Russian forces that have been growing in the country recently are working with great efforts on the issue of integration of Georgia with Russia. Activation of Russia is especially notable during important foreign political events, when Russia's propaganda machine activates in social networks and media and starts an information war against the population. Their policy is somewhat pragmatic, as it is mainly limited to the spread of many anti-Western messages in Georgia. With this policy, Russia wants to expand its spheres of influence, as well as to be perceived as an equal player in international politics. The post-Soviet space is its area of interest, in their opinion, the unipolar world is the main competitor, which should not exist, of course, in all this, the West and NATO are meant⁴⁴. Russia wants different poles of influence where it cannot get used to competition, and the Caucasus has become its main strategic interest. Russia is fighting for the spread of its own ideas and views, in this way it undermines Western values, and it also knows very well that if Western values fail in Georgia, it will be its ideological victory. The process of Russia's hybrid war in Georgia was going on from the early period, this process became particularly active, as Georgia began to strive towards the Euro-Atlantic direction. Russian aggression nowadays is mainly directed towards Georgia and Ukraine, in 2014, after the annexation of Crimea and the well-known events in

⁴³ Carol. K. Fink - „Cold War” – 2014, pp 87-94

Ukraine, many researchers thought about the formation of Russia's "new" strategy or tactics⁴⁵.



The chief of the Russian General Staff, Valery Gerasimov, is considered to be the co-author of the modern hybrid war. In the article written by Gerasimov, the main emphasis is placed on the importance of non-military means, and he also talks about the role of information and psychological operations. In his opinion, the mind is the main target of modern warfare, and psychological warfare is one of the turning factors in the course of a military conflict⁴⁶.

Gerasimov's doctrine describes the characteristics of the new generation war, which later Russia used in Ukraine (at the time of the annexation of Crimea and the creation of foci of destabilization in Donbas). According to this doctrine, the war of the new generation is distinguished by the following characteristics:

⁴⁵ Treverton.G, Thvedt.A - „Addressing Hybrid Threats“ – 2018, pp 9-10

⁴⁶ Hybrid Warfare – New Threats, Complexity, and ‘Trust’ as the Antidote - <https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2021/11/30/hybrid-warfare>

- Military operations begin in peacetime, that is, war has not been officially declared; Instead of large-scale military operations, the conflict is characterized by small-scale, local clashes;
- There is the use of special forces and armed civilians in combat operations;
- The battle takes place in 4 different spaces: on land, in the air, at sea, and in the information field, therefore in the Russian theory of "hybrid war" an important place is given to the activity in the information space, which is one of the main tools of the new generation war.

Thanks to the military conflicts it is carrying out in Syria today, Russia has gained a lot of experience in achieving political and military goals, it has the greatest practical experience in using hybrid methods, and it uses this experience quite aggressively against Georgia⁴⁷.



The post-"Cold War" period also became a new era of inciting ethnic conflicts. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the post-Soviet countries shared a tragic fate in terms of ethnic conflicts⁴⁸. Ethnopolitical conflict is characterized by difficult and complex approaches, it mainly stems from deep historical roots. Conflicts arising from the protection of ethnic interests have a chronic

nature because their final solution is almost impossible. After all, with the change of generations, the danger of renewing the conflict is always

⁴⁷ Russia's "Hybrid Aggression" against Georgia: The Use of Local and External Tools - <https://www.csis.org/analysis/russias-hybrid-aggression-against-georgia>

⁴⁸ The 2008 Russo-Georgian War: Putin's green light - <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/the-2008-russo-georgian-war-putins>

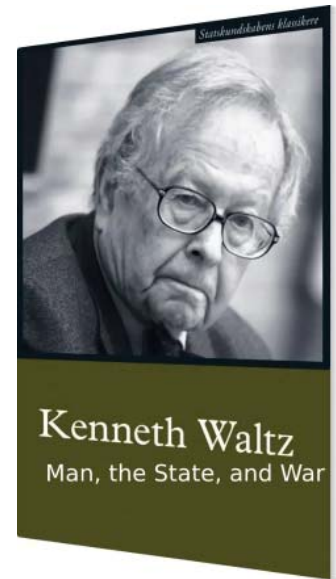
relevant. A clear example of this is the conflicts in the South Caucasus in the territory of the former Soviet Union. With the involvement of Russia, which openly provoked the conflict, in the Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region, it also supported separatist movements, and facilitated and deepened ethnic confrontations⁴⁹. The escalation of ethnic conflicts led to a bloody war, which had devastating consequences for Georgia. As a result of the Kremlin's imperialist policy, which led to an inter-ethnic armed conflict characterized by ethnonationalism, many people lost their lives, and 300,000 people were permanently displaced. Military conflicts existing in the South Caucasus could have been prevented, but the tradition of the Russian state of supporting political separatism led it all to the most difficult results. In the history of the Democratic Republic of Georgia, there has not been a single year without a conflict in the Tskhinvali region with the instigation and support of the Russians⁵⁰. The main problem of ethnopolitical conflicts is related to the "self-determination of nations", but there is a wrong understanding and perceiving of the principle of self-determination of nations, which in turn implies the formation of many new sovereign states, and the accompanying process of this event will be constant conflicts. Based on the basic principle of international law, the world community (unlike Russia) recognizes the respect for the territorial integrity of states and the principle of the inviolability of internationally recognized borders⁵¹. By grossly violating all these principles, Russia continues to violate the sovereign rights of Georgia, does not allow Georgia to develop and progress, and constantly prevents the country from building a united, strong, democratic and European-type state together with its ethnic minorities⁵².

49 Georgia: First Victim of Russia's War on Democracy - <https://cepa.org/article/georgia-first-victim-of-russias-war>

50 Georgia: A Place of Ethnic Unrest and Civil Strife - <https://adst.org/2013/11/georgia-no-peace-i-find/>

51 Georgia: Abkhazia and South Ossetia - <https://pesd.princeton.edu/node/706>

52 Never-Ending Ethnic Conflicts in Georgia - <https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2021/08/20/never-ending-ethnic>



What is the cause of war between states? The American scientist, Kenneth Waltz answered this age-old question, in his book "Man, the State and War" he distinguished three levels of international conflicts: the level of the individual, the level of the state, the level of the international system. During an ethnic conflict, the "individual level" is studied, which is associated with: mass, elite behavior. Waltz noted that ethnic groups acted in violent conflict much like states in the international system. Ethnic war brings enmity of the masses, it is caused by the violent actions of the elites, who

have done it all for the realization of their own political goals⁵³. Waltz's theory about the international system is based on one principle, in which a state poses a threat to another state by increasing its security, and the other state in turn tries to increase its own strength, and the final result of all this in most cases ends in war⁵⁴. A clear example of this theorem is the relations between Georgia and Russia, when Georgia took the path in the direction of Western values and completely modernized the army with the help of America, this fact was perceived by Russia as hostile, because the strengthening of Georgian military with the involvement of America did not work for it. This was the prerequisite for the 2008 military conflict, all the presidents of the United States had attempted a reset policy between America and Russia, after the end of the Cold War⁵⁵. These processes, sometimes even developed dynamically, but the beginning of the twenty-first century became the age of "conflict

53 Kenneth N. Waltz - *Man, the State, and War* – 1965, pp 117-139

54 ETHNIC RELATIONS AND CONFLICTS IN CENTRAL EUROPE - <https://fountainmagazine.com/1999/issue-26-april>

55 Kenneth N. Waltz - *The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory* – 1998, pp 617 - 630

of interests" for these two countries. The events of 2008 in Georgia are considered to be a date of historical importance, because once again the relations between the two countries were strained. With this war, Russia sent a clear message to the West that it would protect its national interests by any means, even violence. This circumstance indicates that Georgia is a very important country for Russia, where interests of Georgia are being sacrificed. With the military conflict of 2008, Russia deliberately hindered the integration of Georgia into NATO for several years. As a result of its aggressive military policy, it strengthened positions in the Caucasus region for almost forever. It is here that the postulates of the school of political realism intersect, which determines the realization of the national interests of Georgia in this particular case, in a complicated geostrategic situation for it.

CHAPTER VI - INTERNATIONAL SECURITY SYSTEM OF THE 21ST CENTURY

The topic of security has always been a subject of international relations research. In the conditions of a new transformation of the modern international political system, the role of security has become even more important. International security has given rise to a concept called interdependence theory. This theory is directly related to security, because states protect their territories under this principle, based on this principle, the security of one state depends on the behavior of another state. The end of the First World War gave rise to the creation of a format of collective security, which ended with the fundamental change of the international system after the Second World War⁵⁶. International security, as a form of establishing modern peace, was constantly changing. In the 21st century, terrorism, the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and military conflicts remain a security challenge, of these three factors, the proliferation of nuclear technology can be considered as the subject of discussion. In a world where globalization is dynamic, there is an increasing chance that the use of nuclear weapons will lead to possible geopolitical changes. Despite the policy of nuclear deterrence, some states are trying to strengthen their role. Armed conflicts have been the central link in the chain of international relations throughout the entire history of humanity. War was the main actor to solve accumulated problems between states, and military power represented state strength. In the doctrine of Carl von Clausewitz, "military power" was the main actor to achieve effective, specific economic and political goals⁵⁷. It was through the military force that the spheres of influence were divided, strategic territories were occupied, which had economic importance, and the most important communications were controlled. The increasing strengthening of armaments and their uncontrolled nature was a matter of increasing concern among the leaders of the contending states.

⁵⁶ Thomas S. Szayna - „, *Ethnic Conflict in Central Europe and the Balkans*” – pp 15-43

⁵⁷ Von Clausewitz on War: Six Lessons for the Modern Strategist. P.1. <https://www8>

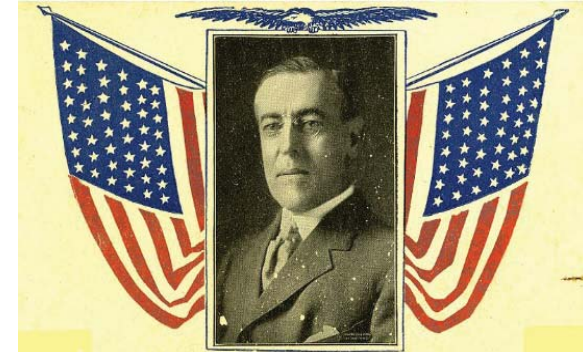


The world, tired of two world wars in the last century, began to think about peaceful coexistence, after the end of the Second World War, the issue of nuclear weapons became relevant again. The first major arms control treaty, which also included a ban on nuclear

weapons testing, was signed in 1963 between the Soviet Union, the United States, and Great Britain. This treaty prohibited nuclear explosions in the atmosphere as well as underwater, these restrictions were a necessary prerequisite because of the severe economic and medical consequences. The concept of security has always changed, and in this regard, the twenty-first century was no exception. It was the twenty-first century that gave rise to the term asymmetry, its idea within the framework of security theory is related to such a concept as "asymmetric threat". The new term, asymmetric threat, contains signs of terrorism, natural cataclysms and hybrid warfare, it also carries military and political character⁵⁸. An asymmetric war is called such a war, when the military strength of the warring parties is sharply different from each other. Basically, the term asymmetric warfare is often used to describe military operations such as guerrilla warfare, terrorism, and insurgency. In the seventies of the last century, the American researcher Andrew Mack published the article "Why big nations lose small wars" where he first talked about the use of asymmetric force, and he also explained that during the course of "asymmetric war" there was a significant violation of the balance of power between the parties involved in the conflict. The situation in the Middle East is a clear example of asymmetric warfare, the battles that are taking place between Israel and Palestine⁵⁹.

⁵⁸ Clausewitz and the politics of war: A contemporary theory. <https://www.tandfonline.com>

⁵⁹ „Asymmetric Warfare: Definition, Tactics & Examples“. P.1. <https://study.com/>



Woodrow Wilson, 28th President of the USA

We have to highlight the essence of "Wilsonian idealism" and its constituent parts. For Americans, the value of their faith was emphasized between philosophy and European thought. The Wilsonian idea of world order arose out of the American belief in the peaceful nature of humans and the fundamental harmony of the universe. The idea of the existence of democratic states was based on peace, people had the right to self-determination, which eliminated the cause of internal conflict, the reason of the destruction of peace and democracy. Wilson's doctrines about self-determination and collective security became the main idea in terms of self-determination of nations, according to America, war was caused not by self-determination, but by its lack, not by the absence of a balance of power, but by subordination to it. Wilson intended to establish peace based on the principle of collective security, in his opinion, world security was not the protection of national interests, but the protection of peace as a global imperative. It was necessary to have an international institution, the idea of forming such an organization first arose in London, the motive for this was not to try to create a new world order, but to search for the reason by England as to why America should be involved in the war.

CHAPTER VII - MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT

It is interesting to discuss the essence of the formation of the "League of Nations" and its idea, its existence was a conduit for the American idea and concept, despite this, Wilson considered the "universal union of states" to prevent any war and avoid military confrontation between countries. Wilson ended his presentation with an address to Germany, where he spoke about America's role, an alternative peace-building policy, his address emphasized the formation of a new approach by America and other peace-loving states of the world, which was based on law and justice⁶⁰.

According to the Wilsonian vision, the world would be based on principle and not on violence, on law and not on interest, it laid the foundation for the historical development of great powers in non-violent terms. He envisioned a world order where resistance to aggression would be based not on geopolitical but on moral considerations⁶¹. The Wilsonian version of collective security assumed that the world would unite states against aggression, injustice, and excessive selfishness. He argued that the creation of equal rights between states should become a prerequisite for maintaining future peace.

Wilson accurately identified some of the major problems of the twentieth century, particularly in the direction of how the path of power was to be transformed into peace⁶². It is worth noting that Wilson's "Idealism", i.e. offering democratic values to the world in an American form, primarily meant taking care of US national interests. In particular, on February 24, 1919, the American president announced in a public speech: **"We created this nation for the freedom of people, it will make all people free. And if we don't do all these things, America's glory will disappear, and its strength will disappear."**

⁶⁰ Kissinger. H. - „Diplomacy” – pp. 220-223 – 1994

⁶¹ D. F. Fleming - „Woodrow Wilson and Collective Security Today” – pp 611-623

⁶² Kennedy. R - „The Will to Believe: Woodrow Wilson, World War I, and America's Strategy for Peace and Security” – pp 75-103, 2009



In terms of the security format, it is interesting to consider the long-term Israeli-Palestinian military conflict. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been going on for more than half a century, everything started from

the day of the creation of the independent state of Israel on May 14, 1948. At the same time, the opinion was divided into two about the creation of two independent states. Despite much discussion, the Jews agreed to a plan to partition Palestine, the distribution of territory caused the anger of the Palestinians, who outnumbered the Jews and nevertheless, owned less land⁶³. The conflict of interests turned into military actions, the next day a coalition of Arab countries attacked Israel, the first war between Israel and the Arab Union began, which was called the "War for Independence". The UN Security Council, which tried to stop hostilities, adopted a resolution demanding a cessation of hostilities from the opposing sides. In the first half of 1949, Israel signed a cease-fire agreement. The peaceful situation did not last long. In the spring of 1967, a new conflict between Israel and its Arab neighbors resumed, Egypt signed a military pact with Jordan and Syria, the main idea was to destroy the state of Israel, but their expectations were not met, because by that time the Israeli army was already a considerable force. In the background of this acute conflict, the United States of America is involved in a peace treaty regarding the cessation of fire⁶⁴. A peace

⁶³ Jerusalem violence: The Israeli-Palestinian situation explained. P.1. <https://www.bbc.com>

⁶⁴ Evictions in Jerusalem Become Focus of Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. P.1. <https://www.nytimes.com>

treaty was concluded at the initiative of Israel, but all this did not last more than three years, in October 1973, Egypt and Syria organized two fronts against Israel, the war was ongoing intensely for three weeks, the Israeli armed forces were able to repulse the attack, they crossed the Suez Canal on the Egyptian front and almost reached the middle of Syria. During the period of war, Israel constantly experienced military progress, it used modern weapons at that time and tactically improved the army every year. Due to the created situation, Palestine resorted to the method of "asymmetric war", using special tactics, it constantly attacked Israel.

Despite technological superiority of Israel, the Palestinians did not back down and waged guerrilla warfare. After numerous military actions, since 1993, the war zone has changed and Palestinian radical organizations have appeared, which consider "terrorism" as the main means of fighting against Israel. Radical organizations were active in the Palestinian territory, they acted in Gaza and the West Bank of the Jordan River⁶⁵. It must be said that the situation between Israel and Palestine was further aggravated by Benjamin Netanyahu, the radical politician, taking over the office in Israel, who was elected for the first term as the Prime Minister of Israel in 1996, and his pre-election campaign contained aggressive statements. Netanyahu directly stated that the Palestinians were a terrorist entity whose stopping mechanism was military force. Amidst an aggressive campaign, Netanyahu won the support of an overwhelming majority of the Israeli population in the Knesset and was elected as the prime minister of the country. With his election, Israeli-Palestinian relations became the center of a new epochal struggle. Among the emerging radical organizations, one of the antagonistic organizations was represented by "Hamas". It was declared a terrorist organization: in Israel, America and EU countries. The radical antagonism of Hamas intensified more after the death of its leader Sheikh Ahmad as

⁶⁵ *The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict - „Historical and Prospective Intervention Analyses“ – 2003, pp. 10-11*

a result of Israeli airstrikes⁶⁶. In 2007, "Hamas" launched rocket attacks on the Gaza Strip, almost constantly bombing the territory of Israel. In 2009, the largest conflict between Israel and Palestine took place in the twenty-first century, where 1,300 Palestinian civilians lost their lives. Non-competitiveness in terms of military armament does not frighten Hamas and radical forces at all. From the emerging threats, the security of Israel is undergoing constant development, as the aggression against it in the Arab countries is increasing day by day.



After that, the process of peaceful negotiations was resumed, in the autumn of 2010, the Obama administration got involved in terms of peace negotiations. Secretary of State

Hillary Clinton planned a face-to-face meeting between the two sides to finally agree on the two-state idea and start implementing it. The threats of "Hamas" and the Lebanese "Hezbollah" played a big role in the process of disrupting the negotiations, they would activate violent policy if any type of agreement was reached between the parties. The radical organizations were against any agreement and made every effort to prevent the commencement of negotiations stage. Also, in the process of de-escalation of the conflict, there were attempts by the Arab states too, including Egypt, which tried to achieve reconciliation between the Palestinian political forces⁶⁷.

⁶⁶ Benjamin Netanyahu elected prime minister of Israel. P.1. <https://www.history.com/>

⁶⁷ Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu: Commando turned PM. P.1. <https://www.bbc.com/>



In 2012, the states agreed that mid-term elections should be held in the Gaza Strip, as the region should have been governed by independent political groups. But even this idea was opposed by " Hamas " and the negotiations failed. Another stage of the peace talks was resumed in 2013 at the initiative of the Secretary of State John Kerry. At the meeting held in Washington, the parties were given a deadline to present a peace plan and based on mutual coordination to agree on their position so that peaceful relations could be restored. The negotiations did not find a common goal even in this specific case. The US special representative Martin Indyk said that the main actor in the process of disruption was the state of Israel, according to him, Israel did not show enough will in terms of establishing peace. It should be noted that as time passed, neither side expressed readiness to establish peaceful relations. It should be noted that the most important fact in recent years is that in 2017, US President Donald Trump recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. " Israel is a sovereign state and like all independent countries it has the right to have a capital, " he said. Of course, this statement was met with displeasure by the Palestinian side, since it was one of the issues of dispute with the State of Israel. All this was followed by a statement from the administration of the US President, which said that the act of recognition would not hinder the issue of resolving the conflict between Israel and Palestine.

Against the background of the recent confrontation, we should highlight the actions that took place in May 2021, which once again involved the two countries in the fire of confrontation. Everything is related to half

a century of military occupation of Israel, and at the same time, the aggression of the Palestinians was caused by the fact that during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, the Israeli police imposed " uselessly strict restrictions " on them and did not allow them to gather on the steps of the " Old City ". Confrontations between Jewish and Palestinian citizens have become more frequent as tensions rise. There was a provocation by the Jewish side who marched with the slogan " Death to the Arabs " and this very fact escalated the situation. Tens of thousands of Muslim worshippers gathered near the Al-Aqsa Mosque - the third holiest site for Muslims - for the last Friday prayers of Ramadan. Many of them stayed at the protest rally related to the evictions. The Israeli police used rubber bullets and tear gas, and the demonstrators threw stones at the police. About 300 Palestinians and 20 Israeli policemen were injured during the aggressive confrontation. Taking advantage of the current chaotic situation, Hamas (which is considered an extremist group) gave an ultimatum to Israel the law enforcement officers to leave the complex and Sheikh Jara district. Israel disregarded the ultimatum, just a few minutes later rockets were launched from Gaza toward Israel.

Israel and Palestine have not been able to coexist peacefully for 70 years, the center of tension has always been observed between the two countries, recent events show that the two countries often had to confront each other due to the religious factor, a similar situation arose in 2017, when Israel installed metal detectors near the Al-Axis Mosque. It was the most intense week of confrontation since the 2014 war between Israel and Hamas.

The main goal of the security system in the twenty-first century is to ensure a stable environment in the world. In a way, it represents an interesting phenomenon, and its content is associated with the fate of a group of people, where the safety of a person at an individual level is determined. At the modern level, it is determined by the protection of the territorial sovereignty of the country. In the context of the international system,

security is the ability of countries and societies to maintain their identity and independence. The security classification model is also based on the concept of "Kenneth Waltz" a researcher of neorealism: individual, society, and state. He explained that the competition between the states was not caused by human nature but by the international anarchic system. He also spoke about the factor of force, where he considered the force to be a means of achieving the external goal of a state.

CHAPTER VIII - SOUTH CAUCASUS CONFLICTS AND REGIONAL SECURITY

Military conflicts have had an important place throughout the existence of humanity, and today the world is rich in large-scale conflicts caused by social and ethnic reasons. Ethnopolitical conflict is determined by different circumstances⁶⁸. According to German sociologist Gustav Darendoff, military conflict causes great social changes, while "social conflict" is thought to be the cause of ethnopolitical conflict⁶⁹. According to the researchers, one of the prerequisites for the occurrence of the conflict is the incompatibility of actions between the parties, many theories consider the military conflict as a confrontation of separate social interests between different political forces.



There are two forms of conflict manifestation: the use of armed means during hostilities and the non-use of these means. The use of specific cases from the forms mentioned above depends on the political and cultural level of the society. The South Caucasus is the cornerstone of ethnic conflicts, the unstable situation created in the South Caucasus

⁶⁸ Maisaiah. V, Maghradze. G - *International politics of the 21st century and the theory of "cooperative security": myth and reality - regional and global aspects - Tbilisi 2017. p. 39-40*

⁶⁹ Waltz. K. - „*Man, the State, and War*” – 1959. Pp. 239-240

after the collapse of the Soviet Union put a strain not only on the region but also on the people living in these states. From a geopolitical point of view, the South Caucasus is a strategically attractive region because it is located on a historical trade route that has connected Europe and Asia since early times. The Caucasus has always been subject to the interests of different states, from a modern political point of view: it is the arena of the main rivalry between Russia and America. Due to the diversity of the Caucasus, conflict resolution is extremely difficult, and an actor such as China is also showing interest in the region. Based on these circumstances, ethnopolitical conflicts in the Caucasus represent a major problem that is directly related to the creation of a safe environment in the region. The international community is actively involved in the process of settling the conflicts in the Caucasus, which means that it helps reduce the interests of Russia, and the conflicts in the Caucasus, based on these actions, have somehow become the main reason for the geopolitical confrontation between Russia and America.



The role of America is extremely important in the development process of post-Soviet countries, it is interested not only in the strategic location of the region

but also in preventing the interests of Russia and rigid interference in its geopolitical space. Interest slowed down in 2001, when America had more important foreign challenges, after the military operation in Iraq, the problems of the South Caucasus, to a certain extent, justifiably turned out to be outside the priority areas. After that, Georgia became a member of the anti-terrorist coalition, in September 2002, with the help of the American side, Georgia conducted anti-terrorist operations in the

Pankisi gorge. These initiatives led to a further change in geopolitical orientation towards strategic cooperation with America and Western Europe, these events further strained Georgia-Russia relations, and in the first half of the same year, reports were spread about the criminogenic situation in the Pankisi gorge, to which information was added that illegal arms trade was taking place from Chechnya to the Pankisi gorge, it was this above-mentioned difficult situation that led to the implementation of neutralization of terrorist groups by the Georgian side with American military assistance⁷⁰. 2002 is considered the year of new challenges because in this year the interests of Russia and America intersected in the Black Sea - Caspian region. Despite the fundamental incompatibility of these two countries, they agreed on one issue, which was the fight against international terrorism.

The South Caucasus has been of interest since the presidency of Bill Clinton as a strategic region. In 1997, then US Deputy Secretary of State, Strobe Talbot, called the belt leading from the South Caucasus to Central Asia "strategically of vital interest". America has been paying particular attention to the Caspian Sea basin, and its oil and gas deposits, which were often seen in Washington as an alternative to the resources of the Persian Gulf⁷¹. There was also an American interest in Azerbaijan and other countries of the South Caucasus because all these countries represented the most important transport corridors leading the Eastern resources to the Western markets.

All this was perceived by several factors because America considered Azerbaijan's resources as one of the factors of its policy towards Russia, Russia dominates the energy sector with its own resources due to the transport networks left over from the times of the Soviet Union. Its energy policy was mainly limited to subversive actions toward the neighboring

⁷⁰ Papava. V - *About the geopolitical role of the "Central Caucasus"*, 2010, p. 557 - 560

⁷¹ "Russia's policy in the North Caucasus": fear and hatred. - <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge>

countries, and the resource factor of Azerbaijan plays a turning role in the policy towards Iran and Turkey.



America's policy towards the South Caucasus region is not limited to the facts mentioned above, concerning Georgia, it is involved in the development process of various institutions, promotes the development of civil society

in the country, and the improvement of democratic processes. The circumstance related to the issue of Armenia is also interesting, here the American position is mainly aimed at the process of normalizing the relations between Ankara and Yerevan. America gives great geopolitical significance to Georgia because after the military conflict between Russia and Georgia in August 2008, Georgia received additional aid of more than one billion dollars for five years. America's support towards Georgia is dynamic, it is ready to help the country to make the right choice, and also constantly tries to save it from Russian interference⁷².



The role of the European Union concerning the South Caucasus should also be highlighted. The approach of the European Union in the South Caucasus has changed significantly since

the summer of 2008 when then-French President Nicolas Sarkozy played the role of a mediator in the ceasefire between Georgia and Russia. The

⁷² Yalovitsi: Shevardnadze told me that the Russians will not forget this for a long time – <https://www.amerikiskhma.com>

European Union, along with Russia and the United States, has become a new active actor in the region, where it is represented by its Monitoring Mission (EUMM). The increased commitment of Brussels in the South Caucasus region had a positive impact not only on Georgia but also on Armenia and Azerbaijan. However, it is clear that the common strategy of the European Union concerning the South Caucasus is still in the process of development⁷³.

It has been many years since integration with Europe has become the political choice of Georgia. The European Union invests significant efforts and resources in Georgia and assists the government and the civil sector in democratic processes and economic development. With the ratification of the Association Agreement, a new stage in the relations between the European Union and Georgia has begun, probably all of this is aimed at deepening the political, economic, and trade relations between the European Union and Georgia⁷⁴.

The European Union promotes the development of stable democratic institutions, through which the country will focus on such common interests as energy security and sustainable economic development, this will additionally allow the region to develop in different directions. To achieve the goal of close cooperation between truly democratic states, experts and decision-makers of the parties must strengthen their efforts to develop strategic and real political solutions for a closer partnership.

It is interesting to discuss America-Russia relations in the background of the last decade. The relationship between America and Russia has worsened recently, as the interference of the Russian side in the American election system has further strained the relationship between the two countries. The Russian political establishment perceives America as an antagonistic state, they perceive the relations between America

⁷³ "Human Rights Watch" report on human rights in Georgia. p. 1 <https://old.civil.ge/>

⁷⁴ Central Asia: U.S. Says Resolving Conflicts A Top Priority. P.1. <https://www.rferl.org>

and Georgia as a direct threat, because the control of the post-Soviet space is Russia's main area of interest⁷⁵.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, which is perceived as a personal tragedy for today's Russia, many things have changed in the life of post-Soviet countries. The armed conflicts in the post-Soviet territory brought many victims, Russia is the main source of the conflicts, especially because it wanted a chaotic situation in the South Caucasus because it created additional problems for America and the European Union. Russia's policy towards Georgia plays an important role in terms of regional control because the North Caucasus is distinguished by its instability, all of this becomes a favorable fact for Russia. Based on these circumstances, without the control of Georgia, Russia will not be able to spread its influence in the South Caucasus. With this action, Russia controls the East-West energy corridor, as it wants to weaken Turkish and Western interests in the region. In addition to all the facts mentioned above, we should also add that Russia also uses the Georgian transit line for its close connection with Armenia, at the same time it perceives the independence of Georgia as a serious threat and deliberately hinders its development in a pro-Western and pro-European direction. The main goal of the northern neighbor is to polarize the Georgian society, and it also wants to create an endless conflict situation in the region, against this background, it continues the process of bordering the country.

⁷⁵ *On Piping Out Caspian Oil, U.S. Insists the Cheaper, Shorter Way Isn't Better.* P.1. <https://www.nytimes.com/>



Russia permanently provided economic and military aid to the separatist region of South Ossetia, according to Ronald Asmus, military forces were being mobilized in South Ossetia even before the August war. The author's book, based on numerous interviews, examines Russia's role in the ongoing military conflict. Russia deliberately obstructed the resolution of the frozen conflicts in Abkhazia and Ossetia for years. Vladimir Putin was somewhat annoyed, he thought that the West took advantage of the weakness of Russia and strengthened its interests in the South Caucasus at the expense of this country. It was looking for a solution, to give a sufficient answer to the West, and it also wanted to restore the status of a strong state for Russia in the world political arena⁷⁶.

⁷⁶ *THE AUGUST WAR, TEN YEARS ON: A RETROSPECTIVE ON THE RUSSO-GEORGIAN WAR* -<https://warontherocks.com>

CHAPTER IX - SOUTH CAUCASUS AND NAGORNO-KARABAKH CONFLICT

The political stability of the South Caucasus depends not only on the involvement of all three states in the region but also on the economic, political, and energy interests of Russia, the European Union, Iran, and China. The deep historical past of the region, it is characterized by weak statehood and unresolved conflicts. Among the security challenges of the South Caucasus region, the separatist conflicts have the leading place, which, with the involvement of external forces, belong to the number of unresolved conflicts. Of course, Russia is the main actor in the conflicts, among them, Turkey also has its own geopolitical interests. Growing military conflicts in the Middle East, which have become permanent, have a significant impact on the conflicts in the South Caucasus. It is difficult for any government to fully formulate and implement the concept of national security. This case is especially difficult for Georgia, its existence as an independent post-Soviet country because it has a difficult neighborhood. Georgia has a serious internal challenge in terms of maintaining unity and consolidating.

National security is a system of common national values, it also includes all the vital conditions of cultural-political unity that ensure its sustainable existence and development. Traditionally, national security meant ensuring the country's territorial integrity and its internal political stability. In the context of the historical reality during which national security as a political dictionary term was introduced, its established understanding reflected the main essence of the security problem facing the nations of the world at that time. Historically, the security of a country meant the protection of its population and livelihood. The term "national security" was coined by Theodore Roosevelt, the president of the USA from 1901-1909. In 1904, he sent an appeal to the US Congress in which the occupation of the territories of Panama, where the canal was to be built in the future, was justified by the interests of the national security

of the country. It was due to Th. Roosevelt, that from the beginning of the 20th century, US foreign policy became more active, and global political and economic interests of this country became a priority. Since then, the concept of "national security" has been refined and expanded. For example, the famous American political scientist Hans Morgenthau included not only the military, but also all issues related to the interests of the country, in the problems of national security. The USA was the first country in the world to adopt the appropriate law to solve national security problems (1947) and in the same year created a special structure - "National Security Council". In the later period, the scientific research of the mentioned problems expanded even more in the world, although the USA remained the leader in this regard. Many scientific works and articles (W. Lipman, J. Renner, R. Kenan, etc.) were published, where national security issues were discussed. Former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger noted that national security includes all areas where issues of community vitality are decided. He believes that Th. Roosevelt was the first American president to argue that the United States must spread its influence around the world and build relations with other countries based on the concept of national interest. Also, according to Zbigniew Brzezinski, a well-known Polish scientist, and political figure, the security of the country depends not only on military strength but also on strength in economic, social, political, moral, and other fields.

The national security format has three conceptual components:

- Concept of national security (local level)
- National Security Dilemma (Regional Level)
- National Security Deadlock (Transregional Level)

From the above-mentioned components, what constitutes a national security deadlock should be separately defined.

A national security deadlock is a state of political governance in a country that results in any major political decision being made by the country's leadership to increase the scale of threats, both inside and outside the country. As an example, we can cite the asymmetric military threat facing Georgia, the so-called "creeping occupation", which directly violates the sovereignty of the country and cannot be stopped⁷⁷.

Transformation in a positive context of relations with minorities in Georgia is particularly difficult due to the intra-ethnic violence that has occurred in recent years, affecting Ossetian and Abkhaz minorities. The independence of Georgia was accompanied by the de facto secession of South Ossetia and Abkhazia in the 1990s, the violence set the stage for large-scale and prolonged Russian intervention. The resulting conflict gave rise to the problem of permanent forced displacement, and the conflict had a serious impact on the economic and political development of Georgia, long-term negotiations had no result in the issue of conflict resolution. Large-scale hostilities resumed in 2008, which was followed by Russia's invasion of Georgia.



The development of the South Caucasus is directly related to the issue of resolving ethnopolitical conflicts, the Nagorno-Karabakh military conflict should be outlined. The precondition for the current conflict is

that there is a dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which is still considered unresolved. The reason for the military confrontation was the territory, which Armenia attaches historical importance to, because Nagorno-Karabakh is a part of the historical Karabakh, it used to fully

⁷⁷ Digging out of Deadlock in Nagorno-Karabakh. P.1. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/>

integrate the whole of Nagorno-Karabakh at different times, and a large part of which was included in the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan, and the fact that there is no exact territorial description of the historical Karabakh is an issue of a dispute too.

The fate of the long-term territorial dispute between Armenians and Azerbaijanis was decided by Joseph Stalin in 1921 when he declared Nagorno-Karabakh as a disputed territory under Soviet Azerbaijan. With this decision, he laid the foundation for eternal military conflicts between Armenians and Azerbaijanis. Since the 1980s, 80% of the entire population of Nagorno-Karabakh consisted of ethnic Armenians, due to this situation, the separation of the autonomous unit of Nagorno-Karabakh from Azerbaijan has become increasingly urgent. Of course, "peacemaker" Russia was at least involved in the resulting conflict. During the rule of Mikhail Gorbachev, in 1988, a military confrontation began between Armenians and Azerbaijanis, and all this resulted in the forced displacement of 300,000 Armenians in the territory of the Soviet Union

The conflict between the two countries was considered the first military confrontation on the territory of the Soviet Union at that time, but the relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan were at a critical point even before the military confrontation⁷⁸. The cause of the military confrontation was the desire of the Armenian-speaking population of Nagorno-Karabakh to integrate with the Soviet Republic of Armenia. This act caused irritation of Soviet Azerbaijan, which escalated into a military confrontation. In 1991, Armenia canceled the status of the Nagorno-Karabakh autonomous region at its own initiative, all of this involved both countries in the war confrontation, the and resulting conflict proved to be devastating for the economy of Armenia because it was put under an economic blockade by Azerbaijan and Turkey. Along with the changes in the political situation, the Azerbaijani side aimed to restore

⁷⁸ The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: A Visual Explainer. P.1. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/>

territorial integrity, it closely cooperated with the Turkish authorities, and the already collapsed Soviet Union and avoided relations with the newly emerged Russian authorities, because Russia was the instigator of all ethnopolitical conflicts in the confrontation of the countries of the former Soviet Union. In 1992, the countries included in the South Caucasus became members of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). OSCE has implemented certain measures in terms of conflict resolution. These processes did not stop the conflict between the two countries. In the military operations of 1994, Armenia established control over the entire Karabakh, and at the same time, they occupied other Azerbaijani territories⁷⁹. To de-escalate the situation, a meeting of the Armenian and Azerbaijani parties took place, which ended with the agreement of the "Bishkek Protocol".

It should also be noted how the Armenian side managed to mobilize military resources. In this situation, there are many different circumstances, first of all, the Russian factor and their military assistance to Armenia should be mentioned⁸⁰. Also, the weak position of Azerbaijan concerning autonomous units, meaning that Azerbaijan could not transform into a strong state in that period for certain reasons and, at the same time, they openly accused the Russians of providing military assistance, which played a decisive role in the victory of the Armenians.

The format of the OSCE Minsk Group, which provided for a cessation of hostilities and called on the parties to negotiate, could not play an important role in the resulting process, because its peace format did not provide for forced negotiations between the parties. Since 1993, the OSCE has been actively involved in the peace negotiation process, it offered the parties a new format where Nagorno-Karabakh appeared for the first time as a party to the conflict. As a result of the resolution, the United Nations Security Council (UN) became involved in the process

⁷⁹ Kakachia. K, Meister. S, Fricke. B. - *Geopolitics and Security: A New Strategy for the South Caucasus* - 2018, pp. 37-42

⁸⁰ *Mapping the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict*. P.1.

and called on the parties to fulfill all the obligations initiated by the OSCE. Based on the facts of the past, the conflict between the opposing parties could not be settled⁸¹.

The involvement of the OSCE Minsk Group in the conflict situation has been going on for several decades, the form and idea of the format are constructive and prevent the escalation of the conflict, but other circumstances have turned the conflict into endless hostilities⁸².



The countries included in the Minsk Group (America, Russia) were not very interested in the fate of Armenia and Azerbaijan, they were mainly

busy with their geopolitical interests in the region, here, of course, the geopolitical manipulation of Russia, America, and NATO was clearly visible. We have to highlight Russia's role in the conflict, it is constantly wearing a "mantle of peace", specifically in this conflict situation it wanted tension more than peace in the South Caucasus, the open support of Armenia indicated that it would turn Russia into a strategic partner. The northern neighbor was not interested in the legal side of the conflict, Russia wanted only one, total control over the South Caucasus. The regalia of the resulting military conflict is defined in various ways, as it is referred to as the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict⁸³.

⁸¹ *Why the Long Conflict Over Nagorno-Karabakh Could Heat Up Again* – P.1. <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/>

⁸² *Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe - Nagorno Karabakh (OSCE - NK)*. P.1. <https://www.canada.ca/en.html>

⁸³ *On the OSCE Minsk Group, CiO Personal Representative, and High-Level Planning Group* - <https://osce.usmission.gov/on-the-report-on-the-osce-minsk-conference/>

Military conflicts in the world are characterized by legal forms, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict also has a legal suit, but the involved parties are less interested in it, if there is no international legal presence in the process, it is less likely to reach a consensus. The position of Azerbaijan was based on the fact that the actions carried out by Armenia were perceived as the occupation of Azerbaijani territories⁸⁴, this is where the legal factor comes into play because Azerbaijan did not have documentary evidence that would support the facts of the invasion of the Armenian army. It does not control large parts of Nagorno-Karabakh, which borders Armenia, and the people in that area do not acknowledge the regular presence of the Armenian army. As mentioned above, since 1993, the United Nations has openly called on the parties involved in the conflict to negotiate for peace, it has condemned the conduct of military actions against the civilian population, the new resolution, which was passed on October 14, 1993, provided for the de-occupation of the occupied territories, the creation of a peaceful environment for the local population, and at the same time, both parties should have been involved in the settlement of peace and security in the region. The UN resolution also referred to the military actions of Yerevan, which were considered illegal by the UN, and the Armenian position was explained by the fact that they were defending their own historical land⁸⁵, as it concerned the interests of the ethnic Armenian population⁸⁶.

When discussing the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, we must take into account the current geopolitical situation in the South Caucasus. Hostilities between the two states are encouraged by manipulating the parties involved in the conflict⁸⁷. The Russian factor is particularly noteworthy, as we mentioned above, it was not at all interested in the

⁸⁴ Nagorno-Karabakh profile – <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-18270325>

⁸⁵ Geukjian. O. - *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in the South Caucasus* – 2012. pp 185-190

⁸⁶ Krüger. H - *The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: A Legal Analysis* – 2010. pp 50-55

⁸⁷ *What does the equal rights principle in OSCE Minsk Group Statement mean for Nagorno-Karabakh?* - <http://www.virtualkarabakh.az/en/post-item/>

positions of the parties involved in the conflict and symbolically called on them to peacefully resolve their territorial disputes. The approaches developed concerning the settlement of the conflict situation included various "package options" where the interested parties were given options for the settlement of the conflict and its resolution. In these processes, the main role of the OSCE was visible more than that of other organizations or states⁸⁸.

⁸⁸ *Russia and the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: A Careful Balancing* - <https://www.ispionline.it/it/pubblicazione>

CHAPTER X - ANALYSIS OF THE MILITARY CONFLICT BETWEEN RUSSIA AND GEORGIA

The role of Russia is negatively reflected in the development of modern Georgia. This is manifested in the annexation and occupation of twenty percent of the territory of Georgia, and it is also actively involved in changing the foreign and domestic political vector of Georgia. The goal of the aggressive policy of Russia is to have satellite countries on the territory of the former Soviet empire, which should act as a kind of buffer zone for the rest of the countries, and it also perceives as hostile the presence of a successful and democratic state near its borders. The determinant of the foreign policy of Russia is the so-called Soft power, which is used in an economic and ideological form in the countries of the South Caucasus and is also focused on inciting anti-Western sentiment on an international scale.

From a geopolitical point of view, the Caucasus region is a space of strategic importance, which is one of the connectors of the trade route to Asia. Great importance is attached to Russia's policy in the region, which considers totalitarian control over the entire South Caucasus region as a starting point. The attempt of any post-Soviet republic to integrate with the European and Western direction is a cause of aggression on the part of Russia, this was exactly the manifestation of the 2008 Russia-Georgia military conflict.

One of the main goals of the Russian policy concerning Georgia is to change the western course of the country, stir up pro-Russian sentiments and hinder the development of the country in the Euro-Atlantic direction. Despite encroaching on Georgia's sovereignty in various ways, Russia failed to change the Georgian vector.

We should consider the military conflict between Russia and Georgia according to the global, regional and local levels, that is, the level of policy analysis, within the framework of the research method.

Global level - It is one of the parts of the international system, which consists of interconnected and interdependent units that do not have superior power and the essence of systems itself is determined by the following processes: globalization, terrorism, weapons of mass destruction (especially involving asymmetric threats).

One of the main challenges for Georgia remains the aggressive factor of the state policy implemented by the Russian Federation. Occupation of part of Georgian territory by Russia violates the sovereignty of the country and is the main source of political, economic, and social destabilization in the country. Carrying out aggression against Georgia is a usual event for Russia, but due to the pressure of the West, it is not able to carry out open military aggression. If Russia sees the danger of losing its influence in the Caucasus region, in this case we should expect large-scale military aggression, Russia uses elements of "soft power" in Georgia, which mainly strengthens pro-Russian sentiments in the country.

American political scientist Joseph Nye, warned us from the early days that America and the rest of the world should show a more serious attitude toward Russia. Nye, who played an important role in shaping Western thought during the late Cold War, cites that the notion that Europe might want to significantly strengthen ties with Russia or China at the expense of transatlantic relations is exaggerated. He also spoke in an interview with the Balkan Service of Radio Freedom about the fact that Europeans were not very interested in economic relations with China because they were still afraid of Russia.



By using pro-Russian propaganda and Russian "soft power" and by constantly demonstrating its own military power, Russia is trying to establish the view in the Georgian society that

the security of the country and territorial integrity cannot be ensured without considering the Russian factor. With the encouragement of Russia, the public-political groups operating in Georgia are purposefully trying to change the course of Georgian society for the good of Russia. Also, to a certain extent, the return of Georgian products to the Russian market, and the simplification of the visa regime, are part of the policy through which Russia is trying to weaken pro-Western sentiments.

In the format of the regional level, we should also consider the geopolitical interests of Turkey in the South Caucasus, in particular Georgia. Turkey, which is a member of NATO, exercises strategic control over the bordering states. To some extent, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of independent states in the Caucasus played a decisive role in the formation of the regional policy of Turkey. At the beginning of the 90s of the 20th century, Turkey had quite ambitious goals concerning the Caucasus, its main goal was regional dominance. The relations of Turkey with the Caucasus countries, especially before the collapse of the Soviet Union, were limited in nature. The relations were completely dependent on the Soviet Union and the official visit of the representatives of Turkey to the countries of the region was conducted through Russia and under its strict control.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the foreign policy of Turkey was revised and its approach to the region changed. The main goal of the Republic of Turkey was to gain a leadership role in the South Caucasus region and to increase the sphere of influence. The situation created in the Caucasus, which followed the collapse of the Soviet Union, gave rise to ethnic problems, and the created situation brought new strategic opportunities for Turkey in the region. It should be noted that Turkey always supported and recognized the territorial integrity of Georgia, and it was actively involved in establishing peace and stability in the region.

The model of the issue of security in the region was put forward by Turkey in 2008 during the Georgia-Russia August war, the project

included the "Caucasus Security Platform". The goal was to create a stable environment in the region, former Prime Minister of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced the implementation of the plan on August 11, 2008, during a meeting with President Dmitry Medvedev in Moscow. According to Erdogan's initiative, the role of the facilitator in the peace talks should also be granted to the UN, and according to the new initiative, five countries should be the participants of the "Security Platform": Georgia, Turkey, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Russia. Georgia protested the implementation of any format of dialogue with the occupying country, America and Iran, which had a certain interest in the region, were also involved in the project. Russia put an end to the peace initiative of Turkey, when on August 26, 2008, after the war with Georgia, it recognized the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Even though Turkey wanted to de-escalate the conflict to some extent, Russia saw it differently, it was less interested in the formation of the "Caucasus security platform".

Local level - local conflicts are mainly undergoing in the vicinity of NATO member states, we should think of the 2008 Russia-Georgia military confrontation as a limited military confrontation.

Local war is considered to be limited according to the following components: political goals, spatial expansion of hostilities, the number of produced armed forces and means. Local war is characterized by the low intensity of armed resistance, which is manifested in the form of a "small war". The military confrontation between Russia and Georgia transformed into a political and military conflict between the two countries, which did not develop into a large-scale military confrontation. Based on the area of confrontation, the actions of the parties involved in the war were considered as actions of a limited scale. It should also be noted that the military confrontation was characterized by low intensity, where the hostilities were more limited, target-based and, at the same time, politically thought-out, all of which is explained by the fact that the

goal of Russia was to restore control over the former Soviet countries in some form⁸⁹.

As we mentioned above, Russia was preparing for all these actions much earlier, in 2012 Vladimir Putin declared that the Russian General Staff prepared a war plan with Georgia at the end of 2006 and the beginning of 2007, and Russia decided to implement this plan in 2008.

All the priority directions that Georgia introduced after the war were fully supported by the United States of America, this included the restoration of the occupied territories of Georgia by Russia, because of the pressure from the West, Russia could not fully reveal its aggressive face. Geopolitics of a state that became a continental state after the Soviet Union, which has some interests in the Black and Baltic Seas, but has no contact with Central Europe. This means that Russia, which ruled the Soviet Union and was a super state, has transformed into a regional state with a difficult economic reality and a difficult socio-demographic situation.

The goals and objectives facing Russia are as follows:

- ✓ to become a full-fledged part of Europe;
- ✓ to regain the old glory and reach the level of a "superpower" (this is impossible from the given situation);
- ✓ to maintain its positions in the world political arena at any cost.

Russia has a long history of imperialist inclinations, it produces the latest models of modern weapons, and its military policy is aimed at one thing - to become a fully militaristic state, its strengthening in the military direction is conditioned by the response to the West, also, in terms of dominating neighboring states, especially in relation to Georgia and Ukraine, which the last decade clearly proved.

⁸⁹ *THE AUGUST WAR, TEN YEARS ON: A RETROSPECTIVE ON THE RUSSO-GEORGIAN WAR.*, 17.2018. p.1. <https://warontherocks.com>

The Russian scenario towards Georgia is determined by international processes related to NATO and America, it tries to return the role of a global actor that was largely lost after the collapse of the Soviet Union, and in fact, openly opposes the West to become a leading force in the distribution of spheres of influence.

The limited military conflict of August 2008, which lasted for 7 days, Russia refers to as a "local war", in its foreign policy messages it explained that the US-inspired color revolutions and the spread of Western democracy in the former post-Soviet countries were perceived as a conflict of interests, because Russia considers the South Caucasus region as its sphere of influence and will not allow Western interests to be pursued there.

In order to justify the military aggression carried out in Georgia, Russia claimed that its forces invaded the territory of Georgia "forcibly" after the unexpected attack of Georgia on Tskhinvali. According to reports, the armed forces of Georgia moved towards the Tskhinvali region only after the separatists' intensive artillery bombardment of Georgian villages caused the casualties of civilians. Russia officially joined the hostilities on August 8, bringing its own army units and heavy equipment into the region⁹⁰.

Only the above was not enough for Russia and it started aerial bombardment of other regions of Georgia. Russia was preparing for this military confrontation for months, followed a detailed plan and quickly occupied the territories of Georgia, justifying this aggressive behavior by protect its "own citizens" in the Tskhinvali region.

During the armed conflict, which subsequently became known as the "Five-Day War", the Russian side justified its military intervention with fabricated lies about the genocide of the Ossetian population. Russia, as an aggressor disguised as a "peacekeeper", deployed Russian

⁹⁰ *Russia's 'Neo-Imperialism' Is a Product of Complex Factors*. 10.2020. p.1.



peacekeeping troops on the territory of South Ossetia, who were there under the agreement signed in Sochi in 1992. Russian disinformation campaign blamed the Georgian side for the explosion of

the building of the Russian peacekeeping forces, where two military personnel were declared wounded and five dead.

It should be noted that the events of that time did not have a fact-finding commission, this commission should have investigated the reasons for the start of the conflict between the parties and also should have created a report that could thoroughly substantiate or refute the allegations of the parties⁹¹.

As for the illegitimate accusation of Russians and South Ossetians regarding genocide, the guilt of Georgians accused of this intention cannot be proven. One of the most serious accusations made by Russia required an analysis of the mentioned evidence, due to the heavy negative connotation caused by the use of the term "genocide". According to the conclusion, which was based on the fundamental principles of international law, it is stated that in order to obtain the result of genocide, it is necessary to have evidence that proves the existence of a deliberate intent to commit the crime of genocide. Therefore, there is only one conclusion, that the Russian military operation in South Ossetia was carried out grossly, violating the international law.

James Werch, associate vice chancellor for international affairs at the University of Washington, distinguishes between "specific narratives"

⁹¹ Russia's 'Neo-Imperialism' Is a Product of Complex Factors . 10.2020. p.1.

that are created in connection with specific events (for example, the August War). According to Werch, the Russian "pattern of the narrative" looks like a variation, the attitude of the official representatives directly reflected the Russian pattern of the narrative. They claimed that their citizens (the residents of the Tskhinvali region were given Russian passports a few months earlier) were victims of the attack. All of this is evidenced by the words of Vitaly Churkin, the ambassador of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, "of course, Russia was a victim", and he also emphasizes the peaceful life of Russia before the war, which had no desire to invade other people's territory, it just became the respondent to Georgian provocation⁹².

The events mentioned above became the main idea of the Russian narrative, an important part of this narrative is evidenced by Vladimir Putin's statement (we remind you that this statement was made on August 12, during the most active period of the conflict). "Now I will explain what happened there. Let us recall how the Second World War began. On September 1, 1939, Nazi Germany invaded Poland. Then they attacked the Soviet Union. In your opinion, how should the Russian army behave? Should it have stopped at the German border?" This narrative was perfectly understandable and acceptable to the Russian political elite, but incomprehensible to the civilized world.

The second statement of Vladimir Putin is also worth highlighting: "American partners were training the Georgian military. They spent a lot of financial resources, sending many military instructors to train the Georgian army. Instead of taking care of solving ethnic confrontations and conflicts, they encouraged the military operations of the Georgian side. Naturally, therefore we had to answer." These statements clearly show Russia's attitude towards Georgia, its aggressive plans were formed before 2008, and by confronting Georgia, it wanted to undermine NATO's interests in the South Caucasus region.

⁹² Cohen. A. Hamilton. R - , *The Russian Military and the Georgia War*, 2011. pp.10-12

CHAPTER XI - MILITARY-STRATEGIC ANALYSIS OF THE AUGUST WAR BETWEEN RUSSIA AND GEORGIA

It should also be determined here that in the conditions of the current international security system, when the format of the international order created according to the theory of the balance of power was introduced



again, the essence of the military conflict took on a new dimension. In our opinion, under such conditions, a military conflict can be defined as a confrontation that has started and developed between actors, which is characterized by

the full use of military potential and where certain limited geostrategic and geopolitical goals are being achieved, although it may not have the appearance of a full-scale war⁹³. Based on the general approaches, the Russia-Georgia military conflict of August 2008 represents this kind of phenomenon. Based on the dynamics of modern international security, the course and development of military conflicts are based on the following factors:

1. Geographical factors determine the tactical position of any actor's armed forces;
2. During the course of military conflicts, the development of battles and hostilities takes place at high paces;
3. Interrelation of all types of military operations;
4. Military conflicts take place in various physical environments.

⁹³ *Lessons from the Russo-Georgian War: Seven Years Later, 08.08.2015 p.1.*
<https://www.bbc.com>

At the same time, in terms of geopolitical and geostrategic identification and classification of the Russia-Georgia armed conflict, it should be distinguished that modern military conflicts are divided into three categories according to their content and development processes:

1. Limited military conflict - This kind of conflicts are characterized by empirical military quantitative criteria and their course is characterized as follows: during the period of hostilities, the number of opposing sides ranges from -7-30 thousand fighters, up to 150 tanks, up to 300 armored vehicles, up to 10-15 light combat aircraft (more often fighters and training aircraft) and up to 20 military helicopters. The conflicts in Transnistria (in 1992-93), the Ossetian-Ingush armed conflict in 1992, military operations in the Tskhinvali region (in 1990-1992), etc., corresponded to such criteria.
2. Limited War - This type of military conflict has the following definition - it is a war in which the opposing parties do not fully use their military power and weapons. It has a kind of limited character, on the other hand, they do not carry out full-scale offensive combat operations with the potential opponent in all directions. The qualitative parameters of a limited war exceed the parameters of a limited military conflict, and the example of the Black Sea region has its own political, diplomatic and military-technical features. In this regard, the adaptation of the two conflict zones in the region to the definition of a limited war should be distinguished. Military actions in Nagorno-Karabakh and Bosnia-Herzegovina in the 90s of the previous century can be considered as such;
3. Local War - Its definition can be expressed as follows - a war characterized by limited military-strategic goals and conducted by one state, through its limited armed forces, against one or more states (or its separatist forces) in a small territorial area (region). According to this classification, from the ongoing military conflicts

in the Black Sea region, can be characterized the hostilities in the territory of Chechnya and Kosovo, in the 90s of the last century. The hostilities between NATO and the armed forces of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which began on March 24, 1999, meet the same classification .

With the above-named classification, it is possible to determine to which typology of military conflict the Russia-Georgia war of August 2008 belongs. For this purpose, it is desirable to implement a suitable research method and to make a proper military-strategic analysis based on it⁹⁴.



Event analysis method: The specifics of the Russia-Georgia war are manifested in the theater of combat operations (operational theater) near the Caucasus Range, which

included the Tskhinvali region, and was distinguished by interesting geographical and operational planning features. Conventionally, the primary functional characteristic of the so-called "Tskhinvali region" theater is its continuity in the west-east direction, and in the meridian direction, it is characterized by a difficult mountainous terrain, which in turn limited the intensive use of combat equipment, primarily armored vehicles and tank units. This theater represented a continuous area, which is not limited by significant internal hydrological contradictions anywhere, but on the contrary, it is limited by mountainous terrain, where it is divided by strategic heights - for example, the Tsvariakhos mountain and Dzari road, which are located on the highlands. The continuity of the theater was manifested also in the fact that its component sub-theaters (areas of operations) were directly overlapping each other.

⁹⁴ Georgia v. Russia: Strasbourg court rules in 2008 war case. P.1. <https://www.bbc.com>

Both sub-theaters (Java and the city of Tskhinvali) directly border each other (tactical groups and command centers of Tskhinvali separatists and Russian military units were mainly located here), and to the south, the Liakhvi Valley-Akhalgori, Georgian military-political command centers were located, at the local-tactical level, nearby were also located the managing staff of the Georgian peacekeeping forces and the government structures of the local pro-Georgian Provisional Administration of South Ossetia. A functional feature of the Tskhinvali region theater of operations itself was that the depth and length of the theater were more or less balanced, where the size of the theater in the direction of parallel was much greater than in the direction of meridian⁹⁵. This circumstance sharply limited the use of military potential and combat equipment in large quantities, on both sides, which was confirmed later, directly during the hostilities, and which, in turn, was determined by geographical dimensions and operational scope. To compare in the general context (meaning the geostrategic context), the theater of combat operations in the Tskhinvali region, conditionally and in general terms, was more similar to the typology of the Central European theater during the "Cold War" period - in the case of military confrontation between NATO and the Warsaw Pact⁹⁶. The ground and mountain massif, as a unifying component of the theater, is one of the essential functional characteristics of the theater of the Tskhinvali region. That is why the theater can be characterized by the following military-strategic features:

- ❖ Critical role of mountain-ground communications for the sustainability of the theater;
- ❖ The necessity to control the air and ground space surrounding these communications;
- ❖ The greatest importance of the second echelons and reserves

⁹⁵ Commentary: How Putin defeated Saakashvili but lost to Georgia.

⁹⁶ Independent International Fact-Finding Commission on the Conflict in Georgia", Tbilisi - 2009. <https://smr.gov.ge/uploads/prev/11415b.pdf>

- ❖ Symmetry of the theater, which means that the success over any sub-theater of the theater is of critical importance for the entire theater (failure to capture the Java region and the Roki Tunnel caused the military defeat of the Georgian Armed Forces against the enemy).

At the same time, symmetry precluded conducting isolated operations on the theater. Each individual operation would be successful only in the context of theater-wide strategic actions. At the same time, one of the interesting specific features of this theater was its urbanized character, namely in the city of Tskhinvali. Here, small settlements merged, especially in the direction from the east to the west⁹⁷. Such a more or less abundance of settlements would, naturally, affect the nature of combat operations. The military-political leadership of the Ossetian separatists, as well as their curators from the Russian Federation, considered their military potential and planned the defense organization of Tskhinvali so intelligently that it became clear what purpose was served by appointing the generals of the special services of the Russian Federation to various positions in the separatist government of so-called "South Ossetia". All buildings and structures where defensive positions were located were pre-selected - mainly, centers of resistance were organized in the central districts of Tskhinvali⁹⁸. At the same time, advanced surveillance points were placed on the Ossetian side at the entrance Crosspoint of Tbeti and Tskhinvali, similar surveillance and resistance centers were prepared for the intelligence groups of the Main Intelligence Division of the General Staff of the Russian Federation⁹⁹. From a general point of view, it is worth noting that the defense plan of Tskhinvali was prepared according to the combat charter of the Russian ground troops. Due to this circumstance, at the beginning of hostilities, the combat units of the Ossetian

97 *August 2008 Planned War?*, 9.2012. p.1

98 Katsitadze.k - "Fundamentals of Strategy", "Rainbow" publishing house, editor - Vakhtang Kapanadze, Tbilisi, 2007, p. 110-113

99 Karkarashvili. G. - "This is our homeland is burning", Tbilisi, 2009, p. 66

separatists allowed the units of the Georgian Army to penetrate to the center of Tskhinvali and shifted their main attention to the protection of the central key buildings of the city, thus placing the units of Georgian army into the so-called "Bag of fire" .

At the same time, an important geostrategic feature of the Tskhinvali theater of operations was the determination of the military-operational gravity centers of the warring parties during the period of operations, which can be distinguished by the existence of geographical operational lines. As it is known, the centers of gravity are determined by various factors. At first glance, the center of gravity is determined by geographic conditions, and can be viewed as a geography-based gravity condition¹⁰⁰. On the other hand, the center of gravity represents the points, the occupation of which dismantles the linkage. It can be defined as one, failure or loss of which destroys the sustainability of the armed forces. However, the center may not be a populated place after all (although in most cases it really is). This point can be an airport, a logistics warehouse, a communication, a communication hub or head or management of an operation. In some cases, the center of gravity is also the one that breaks the link between the forces on the back and front lines . There is also an official definition of what the center of gravity is, developed by the US Department of Defense-Pentagon. According to this definition, "The center of gravity is the source of power that provides moral or physical strength, freedom of action or will to act"¹⁰¹.

Thus, it is interesting how the centers of gravity of the warring parties were defined in the conditions of the August Russia-Georgia war (in this case, meaning the geographical operational lines or position centers). In this case, the center of gravity of the Ossetian-Russian joint military

100 Katsitadze.k - "Fundamentals of Strategy", "Rainbow" publishing house, editor - Vakhtang Kapanadze, Tbilisi, 2007, p. 210-211

101 *Report of the international fact-finding mission related to the conflict in Georgia*, first, second and third volumes, Tbilisi, September, 2009, pp. 70-71

units can really be considered the settlement of Java¹⁰². The reason for such a consideration is given by the fact that since 2007 there has been information about the construction of a closed Russian military city in Java. Also, the separatist government of the so-called "South Ossetia", under the command of the so-called "President" Eduard Kokoiti moved to Java just two days before hostilities began. It was a military base and had the appropriate infrastructure. Armored vehicles, ammunition, and a certain amount of fuel were stored in Java, which the army of the Russian Federation would definitely need in case of starting hostilities (and it happened in August 2008). At the base, devoid of any external monitoring mechanism, a few months before the start of the war, Russia deployed both artillery and tank units. Later, as it became known on the Internet, the reinforced Russian military contingent was admitted to Java in advance¹⁰³. The following units were in combat readiness:

- a) One motor rifle battalion of the 135th motor rifle regiment
- b) Reconnaissance Platoon
- c) An unspecified number of tank and mechanized units as well as reconnaissance components
- d) According to unspecified data, the units of the 10th and 22nd special forces brigades of the main intelligence division of the General Staff of the Russian Federation were deployed in Tskhinvali in advance.

As for the center of gravity of the Georgian Armed Forces, it could be and probably was the city of Akhalkgori and its surrounding area with Georgian settlements. It was in this area that the main tactical-level logistics and command communication lines were located, and Akhalkgori was considered one of the main important strategic communication centers.

¹⁰² Karkarashvili. G. - "This is our homeland is burning", Tbilisi, 2009, p. 38-39

¹⁰³ Telephone interview-consultation with Doctor of Military Sciences, former Chief of the General Staff, retired Major General Vakhtang Kapanadze, Head of Military Research of the "Geokas" Center, Tbilisi, August 8, 2022, at 19:00 in the evening.

Based on the above-mentioned circumstances, it is already clear that both sides used a relatively limited number of manpower and combat equipment in this theater during the hostilities. In general, it should be noted that at the beginning of the military conflict, both sides had the following types of military potential:

As of August 2008, the total strength of the Georgian Armed Forces was 29,000 military personnel, plus 60,000-100,000 reserve resources. Armament included 200 battle tanks (T-55 – 40 units, T-72 – 165 units), 80 armored vehicles, 11 reconnaissance vehicles, up to 150 units of artillery systems, 40 salvo rocket systems, 180 mortars, 25 SU-25 fighter jets, 15 combat-training jet L-39 ("Albatross"), 28 helicopters, anti-missile complexes, including medium-range, "Buk" system, etc.

For the same period, the operational-strategic unit of the Russian Federation – in the North Caucasus Military District, which was separated from the Tskhinvali theater of operations, included the 58th Army, the 20th motor rifle division and the 7th Airborne Division. Their total number was 100 thousand military personnel. Their armament included 620 battle tanks, 200 armored vehicles, 875 artillery systems. To support them, there were 60 units of Su-24 front-line fighters, 100 of Mig-29 aircrafts, 60 Su-25 aircrafts, 75 Mi-24 attack helicopters¹⁰⁴.

This does not mean that both sides have fully used their military arsenal and manpower at the beginning of hostilities in this theater. In general, it should be said that in real conditions, during the beginning and ongoing hostilities between August 7-12, 2008, both sides used a limited military contingent, which was determined precisely by the military-strategic factors of the theater of combat operations in the Tskhinvali region, that have been discussed above¹⁰⁵.

¹⁰⁴ Kulikov. A. Runov. In "All Caucasian Wars of Russia", a complete encyclopedia, Yauza-Eksmo publishing house "Moscow, 2013, pp. 537-540

¹⁰⁵ Pukhov.R - „The Tanks of August“, Centre for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies, Moscow, Russia, 2010, pp.141-142

This is evidenced by specific empirical and quantitative data on the participation of military units of both sides during the war. It should also be noted that Georgia has actually fully utilized the potential of its armed forces¹⁰⁶.

Specifically, the military contingent of the Russian Federation, which invaded the territory of sovereign Georgia and carried out military aggression and intervention, included units of the 19th, 42nd Divisions, 76th and 98th Airborne Combat Divisions of the 58th Army and the Divisions of the 10th, 22nd and 45th brigades of the Main Intelligence Division of the General Staff of the Russian. In total, the number of military interventionist groups of the Russian Federation in the zone of the theater of combat operations in Tskhinvali amounted to 16 thousand military personnel, 130 battle tanks, 105 units of artillery and missile systems, 40 units of salvo fire artillery systems, 400 units of armored vehicles, 400 units of military transport vehicles, 60 units of combat vehicle (more tactical level, for example Russian "Tigers"). Along with this, such an operational group was supported by local Abkhazian and Ossetian separatist military units, the total number of which did not exceed probably 6500 fighters¹⁰⁷.

The military potential of the Georgian Armed Forces, at the period of the war of August 2008, which were intended for the Tskhinvali theater of operations, in order to prevent military provocations by the armed forces of the Russian Federation, amounted to 18 thousand military personnel, 120 combat tanks, 30 units of artillery and missile systems, 40 units of salvo fire artillery system, 80 artillery and missile system units, 120 armored vehicles and combat vehicles (for example, combat vehicles of Turkish production "Cobra" and "Ejdeer")¹⁰⁸. With the given combat potential, the Command of the Armed Forces of Georgia could freely

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.143-144

¹⁰⁷ Karkarashvili. G. - "This is our homeland is burning", Tbilisi, 2009, p. 53

¹⁰⁸ Pukhov. R - "The Tanks of August", Centre for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies, Moscow, Russia, 2010, pp.143-144

use the so-called "Maneuverable war" strategy, which meant the wide use of such tactical units as: encirclement, detour, so-called maneuvers of "pincers" etc. But the mentioned elements were never used, which affected the final result at some extent.

Overall, it should be noted that the estimated number of Georgian armed forces, which was at the disposal of the country's commander-in-chief, in the direction of "South Ossetia" was: up to 15,000 military personnel of the Ministry of Defense, up to 5,000 personnel of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and up to 30,000 reservists (considering them as a combat operational reserve represents an absolutely less effective component, which unfortunately paid off completely during the military operations). At the same time, Kodori was protected by up to 500 personnel of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and 2500 military personnel from the Ministry of Defense¹⁰⁹. Such was the operational grouping of the Georgian Armed Forces in the direction of this theater. At the same time, the operational grouping of the Armed Forces of Georgia, in turn, consisted of the following units: the 1st Mechanized Brigade, the 2nd Infantry Brigade, the 3rd Infantry Brigade, the 4th Infantry Brigade, the 5th Infantry Brigade and the 1st Artillery Brigade¹¹⁰.

To sum up, if we make a general assessment, the war of August 2008 is more inclined to be considered as a limited military conflict, and the pace of its development and a short period further strengthen the mentioned classifier (the factor of the quantitative component is considered in the above - see above - although Georgia fully used its combat potential and for Georgia, in the context of a special case, the said military conflict can be considered as a local war). In the development of the mentioned conceptual approach, the theory of so-called "securitization" and its models: "rings" of military and political security, within which this conflict was discussed.

¹⁰⁹ Karkarashvili. G. - "This is our homeland is burning", Tbilisi, 2009, p. 38-39

¹¹⁰ "Report of the international fact-finding mission related to the conflict in Georgia", first, second and third volumes, Tbilisi, September, 2009, pp. 70-71

CHAPTER XII - IMPACT OF RUSSIA-GEORGIA MILITARY CONFLICT ON GLOBAL SECURITY

The Russian political system has become more and more variable over time, along with the changes, the state has transformed into a totalitarian entity, one of its characteristic features is the aggressive form of foreign policy, which it uses especially towards neighboring states. Russia mainly addresses hardline strategies, which involve the consistent use of military and non-military means, to eliminate the influence of America and its allies in the former post-Soviet countries. The foreign policy priorities of Russia have shifted towards weakening the US-led international system, which includes the security of almost all leading European states.

After the Russia-Georgia military conflict, the hostilities moved to the hottest spot on the planet in the Middle East, namely Syria.

The Syrian conflict began in August 2011, when the Free Syrian Army, formed by seven retired generals, for the first time responded to the Bashar al-Assad's regime which was opening fire on its own population¹¹¹.

The interests of Russia in the Middle East should be highlighted during the course of hostilities - military involvement of Russia in the Syrian conflict confirms its long-standing desire to assume some type of geostrategic leadership role in the Mediterranean region. The official involvement of Russia in the Syrian conflict in September 2015 saved the Assad regime from total defeat. Russia, its ally Iran, and the Assad regime combined forces, but consistently managed to take down the points of resistance in various regions of Syria¹¹². Throughout this time, Russia was observing the development of events, it supported the Assad regime from the beginning, however, until September 2015, Vladimir Putin refrained from military involvement. In 2016, Russia continued to

¹¹¹ How Russia's Putin became the go-to man on Syria. 5.2020. p.1. <https://www.bbc.com>

¹¹² Russia and the war in Syria: In for the long haul, 10.2020. p.1. <https://www.dw.com>

support Assad by military means, allowing government forces to capture Aleppo and gain a military advantage.

Interests of the Russian Federation in Syria: Although Russia cited the fight against terrorism as the sole reason for intervening in the Syrian conflict, its motives were determined by various factors:

- ✓ Russia wanted to end the Syrian conflict in a way where it would appear as the main actor and show the civilized world that it has the power to solve global conflicts.
- ✓ Russia did not want a conflict with Turkey, which it used in a conspiracy against the Americans, and therefore, the existence of Iranian military bases in Syria was unacceptable to it, since Russia feared that in this case Iran, compared to Russia, could have more influence on the Assad regime.
- ✓ It is also worth noting that the North Caucasian fighters, who were too much of a headache for Russia, were left in Syria for a long time.

The undergoing conflict, which continues today and is considered the biggest political mistake of the 21st century, has cost Russia a lot. As of today, it is in the interests of Russia to end the Syrian civil war as soon as possible, because these processes have taken a lot of time and money from Russia¹¹³.

Fighting for hegemony, Russia, which carried out its geopolitical interests in the Middle East, made such a partner in the form of Bashar al-Assad, who killed civilians with chemical weapons. All this once again reveals the image of Russia in the world political arena, today it is less possible to implement its hegemonic goals in the Near East¹¹⁴.

¹¹³ Russia's Intervention in Syria: Historical and Geopolitical Context , 15.2020. p.1. <https://www.fpri.org>

¹¹⁴ Syria Used Chemical Weapons 3 Times in One Week, Watchdog Says, 3.2017. p.1. <https://www.nytimes.com>

Parallel to the events in the Middle East, Russia created a political crisis in Ukraine too. The events in Ukraine, which began in 2014, are connected with the concentration of pro-Russian forces in Ukrainian politics. The people who gathered on the Maidan had a legitimate protest because then-President Yanukovich refused to sign the Association Agreement between the European Union and Ukraine. The wave of protests swept across Ukraine and the events developed in a revolutionary scenario.

After the fugitive Yanukovich, the Russian Federation began to carry out military aggression against the new government of Ukraine, which found its manifestation in the occupation of Crimea. Russia decided to punish Ukraine, as it did with Georgia, for the chosen foreign policy course, Ukraine played a key role in the national and state interests of Russia, free trade between Ukraine and the European Union was causing Russia's irritation, as it saw a potential threat of Ukraine's rapprochement with Europe, ultimately ratification of this document failed due to political pressure from Russia. As we mentioned above, the pressure was not enough for Russia and it violated the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine by military aggression.

The interests of Russia in Ukraine are determined by several factors:

- Economic connection - Russia is a large buyer of certain types of products produced in Ukraine, surprisingly, Russia is largely dependent on the services of Ukrainian specialists in the military sector. (in the space and rocket construction component)
- The Black Sea Fleet on the Crimean Peninsula is of great strategic importance for Russia, which allows Russia to strengthen its positions in the Black Sea and also closely monitor NATO's positioning.
- Russia has been trying for a long time to reduce its dependence on Ukraine and to export its gas to Europe without passing through the territory of Ukraine. The Russian energy direction, which

includes the construction of the new "South Stream". The project envisaged the supply of Russian natural gas from the Black Sea coast to Bulgaria, from where it was to be supplied to the countries of Southern and Central Europe, including Hungary, Serbia and Austria. The mentioned project could not be implemented in the end.

It is also worth noting the issue of the coexistence of Russian and Ukrainian people, as you know, the eastern region of the country is inhabited by ethnic Russians, they consider their identity to be inseparable and bear a common culture. Therefore, Russia is hostile to Ukraine's communion with Western values, because, in their opinion, this will turn the Ukrainian nation towards Russophobia¹¹⁵.

The actions of Russia are determined by the above-mentioned circumstances, and its main idea is the reincarnation of the Soviet state, the creation of a superpower that will be the main actor. As a result of the expressed military aggression towards Georgia, we got the occupation of twenty percent of the territories and the internal migration of internally displaced persons. With the same form and changed geopolitical goals Russia occupied Crimea, despite numerous calls from the international community it does not even considering to stop the borderization process in Georgia. Georgian-Ukrainian problems are identical, because both countries have one big hostile power, in the form of the Russian Federation¹¹⁶.

The existing problems, which Russia artificially created in Ukraine, was followed by severe sanctions from the West, in 2014 NATO stopped all military cooperation with Russia, and the European Union extended the sanctions against Russia due to the annexation of Crimea in 2017 until June 23, 2018¹¹⁷. This was followed by the bill adopted by the US on

¹¹⁵ Pomerantsev. P - "Nothing is real and everything is possible" - pp. 21-23. Tbilisi - 2017

¹¹⁶ Causes and Potential Solutions to the Ukraine and Russia Conflict, 27.2020

¹¹⁷ Russia and the United States Negotiate the Future of Ukraine, 1.2014, <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/russia>

August 2, 2017, which provided for new sanctions against Russia, Iran and North Korea. The main purpose of the sanctions was to never recognize the illegal annexation of Crimea by Russia and the separation of any territory from Ukraine by military force¹¹⁸. The sanctions used were also divided into several parts: America wanted to reduce the Russian energy resource, which was known as the "Nord Stream 2" project, Washington opposed the implementation of the pipeline project, because it would increase Europe's dependence on Russian energy sources and give Russia leverage over Eastern European transit countries. The importance of "Nord Stream 2" as a project is indeed of a strategic importance for Russia, it will allow to reduce dependence on Ukraine as a transit country to a minimum in the coming years and establish a direct connection with Germany, the main consumer of Russian gas.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was an increase in Russian influence in Ukraine, especially in the territories of southern Ukraine. The historical past indicates that the Russian Empire founded new cities on the territory of Ukraine for military-political and economic purposes: Sevastopol, Nikolaev (present-day Mykolaiv), Ekaterinoslav (present-day Dnepropetrovsk), Odessa. "New Russia" (Новороссия) was created on the territory of central and eastern Ukraine through the efforts of tsarist Russia. Due to these events, the Russian political elite refers to the southern and eastern regions of Ukraine, especially after the annexation of Crimea in 2014, under the name of "New Russia", thereby emphasizing the existence of its own historical rights to these territories of Ukraine.

Ukrainian is increasingly being spoken in the western and central regions of modern Ukraine, people living in these regions support the integration of Ukraine into the Euro-Atlantic structures. And the position of the people living in the east and south of the country is leaning in favor of Russia. The existence of two different Ukraine's is due to historical

¹¹⁸ *Russia and the United States Negotiate the Future of Ukraine*, 1.2014, <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/russia>

processes, the Russian factor contributes to all of this, which was reflected in the results of different historical development of Ukrainian regions over the centuries. Today, the different views of the society on the historical past and political future of Ukraine represent an important barrier to the formation of the Ukrainian statehood.

At the start of the conflict in Ukraine, the Kremlin denied the presence of its military in eastern Ukraine. It claimed that Russian equipment and soldiers did not even cross the border. The Russian state media, which was the main source of disinformation, referred to the central government of Ukraine as a "fascist junta". However, despite the disinformation and propaganda, few people believed the credibility of the Russian version. Partly, the reason for this was considered to be the experience of Georgia in 2008¹¹⁹.

Russian propaganda, similarly to the events in Ukraine, in the case of Georgia also claimed that its goal was only to protect the peacekeepers and prevent the genocide of Ossetians. The position of Russia was aimed at only one thing, to blame Georgia for the start of the war and to try to "present itself as a peacemaker" in the international arena.

Researcher Svante Cornell, director of the "Caucasus and Central Asia Institute", wrote that Russia spent a lot of financial resources to make the world believe that the war was started not by Russia, but by Georgia. Also, in his opinion, Russia continues the process of borderization to have the basis for escalation prepared in the country¹²⁰. The events in Ukraine clearly showed the world community the goals of Russia and also partially answered the questions surrounding the events of 2008. British journalist Peter Pomerantsev, who has been actively writing and working

¹¹⁹ *Treasury Sanctions Illegitimate Russian-Backed Crimean Officials and Railroad Company Linking Crimea to Russia*, 29.2020, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases>

¹²⁰ *Nord Stream 2 spells pain for Ukraine*, 14.2020, <https://www.gtreview.com/magazine/volume> -

on Russian propaganda since 2013, says that "we heard the same in the case of Ukraine, because many people blamed Ukraine for the conflict, Russia does not need to do much, because there is an opinion (which is interesting to investigate) about the hegemon, which we understand both in Georgia and Ukraine, that we should not allow them to provoke, because we know what Russia is and what its foreign policy is, we know that they are aggressive and we know how they will respond. We must know our place."

One cannot fail to mention the role of one of the main weapons of Russia - propaganda, the entry of Russian TV companies into the state service, which began after Vladimir Putin came to power . After him taking over the office, total control of the media began, and for the first time this happened in 2001 with "NTV", the reason for which was the criticism of actions of Russia in the second war in Chechnya. Objectively covered events dramatically changed the media environment in Russia . He further strengthened media propaganda and created "Russia Today" and "Sputnik". Today, "Sputnik" broadcasts in 34 countries and transmits information in 30 languages, these media companies were represented as the main disinformation machine in the 2008 war¹²¹.

The media propaganda of Kremlin was at its height during the August war, the TV company HTB and its satellite media outlets were spreading such disinformation that was telling about how Georgia attacked the so-called South Ossetia, destroyed the settlements and the city of Tskhinvali, and that Russian warplanes entered the territory of Georgia to stop bloodshed and further destabilization¹²².

August 8 was specially chosen by the Russian media as the date of massive dissemination of the same information. The mentioned date is considered to be the Russian version of the beginning of the Russian-

¹²¹ *Russian-language media: Can Ukraine compete with the Kremlin?*, 15.04.2021, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/kremlin/>

¹²² *Is Russia going to war with Ukraine and other questions*, 13.04.2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world>

Georgian conflict, according to which the Georgian side first started military operations, and the Russian troops entered the territory of Georgia only after that¹²³ . The Russian media somewhat denied August 9, also calling the photos taken by The Reuters a forgery, which showed the bombing of the city of Gori by Russian aviation. It unleashed a targeted disinformation campaign on August 10, with Russian media publishing materials claiming that footage of the Gori bombing was staged and Reuters photos were fake. This fact is evidenced by the fake interview of Alexei Venediktov, a journalist of the Russian portal "Эхо Москвы" with Reuters, on August 13, who accused one of the authoritative English news agencies of spreading fake photo material¹²⁴ . According to the report published by the American intelligence agencies in 2017, in July 2016, the editor-in-chief of Russia's main propaganda channel (Russia Today) Margarita Simonian told the Kommersant newspaper that in August 2008, when the "Russian Ministry of Defense was at war with Georgia, Russia Today was implementing information war against the whole Western world" .

The researches of the Institute for Development of Freedom of Information in recent years reveal the spread of post-war Russian propaganda in Georgia, which on the one hand constantly sows the fear of the renewal of the war, and on the other hand, deliberately stirs up mistrust due to the chosen course of Georgia and to a certain extent says that in the event of the start of the war, the strategic Partners of Georgia will not be able to protect it¹²⁵. Russian propaganda accuses Georgia of carrying out aggressive actions not only in the international arena, but also in the domestic political discourse and considers the former ruling party and its leader as the main source of the military conflict¹²⁶.

¹²³ *Inside a pro-Russia propaganda machine in Ukraine*, 13.2017, <https://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-trending>

¹²⁴ *Inside a pro-Russia propaganda machine in Ukraine*, 13.2017, <https://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-trending>

¹²⁵ *Russian propaganda after August 2008 and the war*, 6.2018 - <https://www.mythdetector.ge/ka/myth/rusuli>

¹²⁶ *Inside Russia's state-media propaganda machine*, 13.2017, <https://www.politico.eu/article/russia>

Despite the Russian disinformation campaign, which tries to change people's worldview, according to various studies, it is confirmed that the vast majority of the Georgian population wants integration with the West, despite pro-Russian sentiments, they support Georgia's involvement in Euro-Atlantic institutions.

CONCLUSION

Weapons of mass destruction (WMD) combine three classes of weapons systems: atomic (nuclear), biological, and chemical. They differ from conventional weapons both in their incomparably greater destructive power and in the scale of damage caused by their use and subsequent events. The total power of the weapons of mass destruction available in the world today is much greater than it would be necessary to completely destroy life on earth. Therefore, one of the main issues of West-East relations from the time of the Cold War to the present day was the limitation of the production of weapons of mass destruction and disarmament. The efforts of the democratic countries of the world are aimed at preventing this weapon from ending up in the hands of authoritarian and irresponsible regimes. The US Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) is involved in the localization of these processes.

The stable situation of the countries of the South Caucasus plays an important role in the foreign policy of those states that have a great geopolitical interest in this region. The role of America serves to eliminate conflict situations in the region, while the policy of Russia in the region is focused on establishing an unstable situation and dominating over the created situation as the main actor to pursue its own interests.

As a result of the conducted research and based on the specificity of the topic, the following approaches were distinguished: It is considered one of the priorities of the foreign policy of Russia to disconnect the countries in the South Caucasus from each other, this implies the transformation of their bilateral relations into a tripartite one, with the involvement of Russia, of course.

Russia is somewhat involved in the resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, but its interests are expressed in the total control over Armenia. As for the Georgian-Azerbaijani relations, which are confined to the strategic partnership, it is a source of some discomfort for Russia,

because it views the Georgian-Azerbaijani alliance with skepticism. For the benefit of Russia, there is uncertainty between Georgia and Azerbaijan regarding the issue of Davit Gareji. (The problem related to this section of the Georgia-Azerbaijan border has been escalating from time to time for years, and after negotiations between the authorities, it has been resolved only temporarily).

The role of America concerning the region is sharply different from the one of Russia, it tries to maintain a balance with all states. In terms of settling the conflict, along with America, the European Union too did not achieve anything important, Washington's interests are mainly focused on the correct distribution of energy resources, security issues, and also the development of democratic processes.

Fundamental importance is given to the development of democratic processes in the countries of the South Caucasus, and political-economic reforms are also important in the process of formation of civil society. These processes started in Armenia, which ended with the revolution in 2018, the common large-scale speeches were highlighted by the pro-Western leader Nikol Pashinyan, his arrival at the office of the prime minister changed the foreign policy of Armenia to some extent, which was to some extent dependent on Russia.

Two years after the appointment of Nikol Pashinyan, the "frozen conflict" was revived once more, we may assume that this happened with the involvement of Russia too, because since 2016, Russian-Armenian relations have been undergoing negatively at a certain stage. Strengthening of democratic processes in the region will contribute to regional stability, acceleration of the integration of the countries of the South Caucasus towards the Western and European directions, and will have a positive impact on the process of peaceful settlement of ethno-political conflicts.

In connection with the events developed in Georgia in 2008, where Russia emerged as an aggressor and was perceived by the international community as a country that occupied territories from its neighbor through military means. On August 7, 2008, the Russian Federation openly got involved in the conflict in the territory of the former South Ossetia Autonomous District and carried out a large-scale military intervention in Georgia. After the events of August, normalization of the situation in the conflict regions is not possible even today, against the background of Russia's aggressive foreign policy, Russian military bases were formed in two regions of Georgia. With the encouragement of the separatist regimes, the illegal detention of the Georgian population takes place, they permanently continue to annex the territories of Georgia.

Against the background of asymmetric threats, the demand for Georgia to be involved in the processes of ensuring global security and to neutralizing the threats coming from Russia is growing even more. It is clear from the ongoing processes in the Caucasus that it is an important part of the international security system, the West, Russia and Turkey are the leading political actors in the process, who have their own direct interests.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Abashidze. Z. - "Cold War" past or present? - Tbilisi, 2009.
2. Asmus. R. - "A Little War That Shook the World" - 2010.
3. August 2008 Planned War?, 9.2012.
4. Carol. K. Fink - „Cold War” – 2014.
5. Cem. I - Turkish Foreign Policy: Opening New Horizons for Turkey at The Beginning Of a New Millennium 2002.
6. Geukjian. O. - Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in the South Caucasus – 2012
7. Cohen. A. Hamilton. R - „The Russian Military and the Georgia War”, 2011.
8. Dahrendorf.R - Class and class conflict in industrial society, 1959.
9. Gegeshidze. A. - "Opening the European perspective of Georgia" - 2018.
10. D. F. Fleming - „ Woodrow Wilson and Collective Security Today“ - 2006
11. Kenneth N. Waltz - The Origins of War in Neorealist Theory – 1998.
12. Kenneth N. Waltz - Man, the State, and War – 1965.
13. Katsitadze.K - "Fundamentals of Strategy", "Rainbow" publishing house, editor - Vakhtang Kapanadze, Tbilisi, 2007.
14. Kennedy. R - „ The Will to Believe: Woodrow Wilson, World War I, and America’s Strategy for Peace and Security” – 2009.
15. Kakachia. K, Meister. S, Fricke. B. - Geopolitics and Security: A New Strategy for the South Caucasus – 2018.
16. Krüger. H - The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: A Legal Analysis – 2010. pp 50-55
17. Karkarashvili. G. - "This is our homeland is burning", Tbilisi, 2009.
18. Kulikov. A. Runov. In “All Caucasian Wars of Russia”, a complete encyclopedia, Yauza-Eksmo publishing house “Moscow, 2013.
19. Kissinger. H. - „Diplomacy” – 1994.
20. Thomas S. Szayna - „ Ethnic Conflict in Central Europe and the Balkans”
21. Pomerantsev. P - "Nothing is real and everything is possible" - Tbilisi – 2017
22. The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict - „Historical and Prospective Intervention Analyses“ – 2003.
23. Treverton.G, Thvedt.A - „Addressing Hybrid Threats“ – 2018.
24. Maisaiah. V, Maghradze. G - International politics of the 21st century and the theory of "cooperative security": myth and reality - regional and global aspects - Tbilisi 2017.
25. Pukhov.R - „The Tanks of August“, Centre for Analysis of Strategies and Technologies, Moscow, Russia, 2010,
26. Papava. V - About the geopolitical role of the "Central Caucasus", 2010.
27. Waltz. K. - „Man, the State, and War” – 1959.

INTERNET RESOURCES:

28. „Asymmetric Warfare: Definition, Tactics & Examples“. P.1. <https://study.com/>
29. Giorgi Antidze / Operation "Desert Storm" - 30 years since the outstanding military campaign - <https://geocase.ge/ka/publications>
30. Clausewitz and the politics of war: A contemporary theory. <https://www.tandfonline.com>
31. Central Asia: U.S. Says Resolving Conflicts A Top Priority. P.1. <https://www.rferl.org>
32. Digging out of Deadlock in Nagorno-Karabakh. P.1. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/>
33. Persian Gulf War / HISTORY.COM EDITORSUPDATED:NOV 1, 2022ORIGINAL:NOV 9, 2009 - <https://www.history.com/topics/middle-east>
34. U.S. Army Center of Military History / Operation DESERT SHIELD - <https://history.army.mil>
35. U.S. Army Center of Military History / OPERATION DESERT STORM: 17 JANUARY to 28 FEBRUARY 1991 - <https://history.army.mil/html/bookshelves>
36. The Cold War (1945–1989) - „Towards a bipolar world (1945–1953)“ – 2016.
37. Marshall Plan / HISTORY.COM EDITORSUPDATED:NOV 1, 2022ORIGINAL:DEC 16, 2009 - <https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/marshall>
38. Soviet invasion of Afghanistan - <https://www.britannica.com/event/Soviet-invasion>
39. The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan and the U.S. Response, 1978–1980 - <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1977-1980/>
40. What was the Cold War—and are we headed to another one? - <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/>
41. Hybrid Warfare – New Threats, Complexity, and ‘Trust’ as the Antidote - <https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2021/11/30/hybrid-warfare>
42. The Evolution of Russian Hybrid Warfare: Executive Summary - <https://cepa.org/comprehensive-reports/the-evolution-of-russian>
43. RUSSIAN HYBRID WARFARE - <https://www.understandingwar.org/report/russian-hybrid-warfare>
44. Russia’s “Hybrid Aggression” against Georgia: The Use of Local and External Tools <https://www.csis.org/analysis/russias-hybrid-aggression-against-georgia>
45. The 2008 Russo-Georgian War: Putin’s green light - <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/the-2008-russo-georgian-war-putins>
46. Georgia: First Victim of Russia’s War on Democracy - <https://cepa.org/article/georgia-first-victim-of-russias-war>
47. Georgia: A Place of Ethnic Unrest and Civil Strife - <https://adst.org/2013/11/georgia-no-peace-i-find/>
48. Georgia: Abkhazia and South Ossetia - <https://pesd.princeton.edu/node/706>
49. Never-Ending Ethnic Conflicts in Georgia - <https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2021/08/20/never-ending-ethnic>
50. ETHNIC RELATIONS AND CONFLICTS IN CENTRAL EUROPE - <https://fountainmagazine.com/1999/issue-26-april>
51. Von Clausewitz on War: Six Lessons for the Modern Strategist. P.1. <https://www8>
52. Jerusalem violence: The Israeli-Palestinian situation explained. P.1. <https://www.bbc.com>
53. Evictions in Jerusalem Become Focus of Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. P.1. <https://www.nytimes.com>
54. Benjamin Netanyahu elected prime minister of Israel. P.1. <https://www.history.com/>

55. Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu: Commando turned PM. P.1. <https://www.bbc.com>
56. Martin Indyk: 'Change of leadership on both sides' needed. P.1. <https://www.dw.com/>
57. Russia's policy in the North Caucasus": fear and hatred. - <https://www.radiotavisupleba.ge>
58. Yalovitsi: Shevardnadze told me that the Russians will not forget this for a long time <https://www.amerikishkma.com>
59. "Human Rights Watch" report on human rights in Georgia. p. 1 <https://old.civil.ge/>
60. On Piping Out Caspian Oil, U.S. Insists the Cheaper, Shorter Way Isn't Better. P.1. <https://www.nytimes.com/>
61. Simakovsky: In 2008, we failed to calculate Russia's geopolitical goals. p. 1. <https://www.amerikishkma.com>
62. EU relations with Georgia. P.1. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/>
63. THE AUGUST WAR, TEN YEARS ON: A RETROSPECTIVE ON THE RUSSO-GEORGIAN WAR -<https://warontherocks.com>
64. Digging out of Deadlock in Nagorno-Karabakh. P.1. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/>
65. The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: A Visual Explainer. P.1. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/>
66. Mapping the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict. P.1.
67. Why the Long Conflict Over Nagorno-Karabakh Could Heat Up Again – P.1. <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/>
68. Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe - Nagorno Karabakh (OSCE - NK). P.1. <https://www.canada.ca/en.html>
69. On the OSCE Minsk Group, CiO Personal Representative, and High-Level Planning Group - <https://osce.usmission.gov/on-the-report-on-the-osce-minsk-conference/>
70. Nagorno-Karabakh profile – <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-18270325>
71. What does the equal rights principle in OSCE Minsk Group Statement mean for Nagorno-Karabakh? - <http://www.virtualkarabakh.az/en/post-item/>
72. Russia and the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: A Careful Balancing - <https://www.ispionline.it/it/pubblicazione>
73. THE AUGUST WAR, TEN YEARS ON: A RETROSPECTIVE ON THE RUSSO-GEORGIAN WAR., 17.2018. p.1. <https://warontherocks.com>
74. Russia's 'Neo-Imperialism' Is a Product of Complex Factors . 10.2020. p.1.
75. Lessons from the Russo-Georgian War: Seven Years Later, 08.08.2015 p.1. <https://www.bbc.com>
76. Georgia v. Russia: Strasbourg court rules in 2008 war case. P.1. <https://www.bbc.com>
77. Independent International Fact-Finding Commission on the Conflict in Georgia", Tbilisi - 2009. <https://smr.gov.ge/uploads/prev/11415b.pdf>
78. Commentary: How Putin defeated Saakashvili but lost to Georgia.
79. "Report of the international fact-finding mission related to the conflict in Georgia", first, second and third volumes, Tbilisi, September, 2009.
80. Telephone interview-consultation with Doctor of Military Sciences, former Chief of the General Staff, retired Major General Vakhtang Kapanadze, Head of Military Research of the "Geokas" Center, Tbilisi, August 8, 2022, at 19:00 in the evening.
81. How Russia's Putin became the go-to man on Syria. 5.2020. p.1. <https://www.bbc.comn>
82. Russia and the war in Syria: In for the long haul, 10.2020. p.1. <https://www.dw.com>
83. Russia's Intervention in Syria: Historical and Geopolitical Context , 15.2020. p.1. <https://www.fpri.org>

84. Syria Used Chemical Weapons 3 Times in One Week, Watchdog Says, 3.2017. p.1. <https://www.nytimes.com>
85. Crimea crisis: What is happening between Ukraine and Russia? | Euronews Answers, 30.2018. p.1. <https://www.euronews.com>
86. Ukraine: Conflict at the Crossroads of Europe and Russia – 5.2020. p.1. <https://www.cfr.org>
87. Causes and Potential Solutions to the Ukraine and Russia Conflict, 27.2020 - <https://www.e-ir.info>
88. Russia and the United States Negotiate the Future of Ukraine, 1.2014 , <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/russia>
89. Treasury Sanctions Illegitimate Russian-Backed Crimean Officials and Railroad Company Linking Crimea to Russia, 29.2020, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases>
90. Nord Stream 2 spells pain for Ukraine, 14.2020, <https://www.gtreview.com/magazine/volume>
91. Congress, Nord Stream II, and Ukraine , 12.2019, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/d>
92. Ukrainian Extremists Will Only Triumph if Russia Invades, 17.2014, <https://newrepublic.com/article/117395/historic>
93. Russian-language media: Can Ukraine compete with the Kremlin?, 15.04.2021, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/kremlin/>
94. Is Russia going to war with Ukraine and other questions, 13.04.2021, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world>
95. Inside a pro-Russia propaganda machine in Ukraine, 13.2017, <https://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-trending>
96. Inside Russia's state-media propaganda machine, 13.2017, <https://www.politico.eu/article/russia>
97. Russian propaganda after August 2008 and the war, 6.2018 - <https://www.mythdetector.ge/ka/myth/rusuli>

98. The 20th-Century History Behind Russia's Invasion of Ukraine -<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/the-20th-century-history-behind>
99. HOW THE US HELPED SET 'UKRAINE ON FIRE' <https://therealnews.com/iipatonok0810ukraine?>
100. Standing for Democracy - <https://www.faithfulcitizens4truth.org/standing-for-democracy-in-ukraine?E>
101. Russia's Militarization of the Black Sea: Implications for the United States and NATO - <https://cepa.org/comprehensive-reports/russias-militarizationite/>
102. Russia in the Black Sea - <https://www.mei.edu/publications/russia-black-sea>
103. Remarks by Ambassador Yovanovitch at Opening of Naftogaz Oil and Gas Forum - <https://ua.usembassy.gov/remarks-ambassador-yovanovitch>
104. Russia reaches deal with Ukraine on \$15 billion bailout - <https://www.cnbc.com/2013/12/17/russia-reaches/>
105. Ukraine protests after Yanukovich EU deal rejection - <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-25162563>
106. NATO Wales Summit Guide - https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_112107.htm
107. An Evaluation of the Wales Summit: NATO builds coalitions for conflict on multiple fronts - <https://natowatch.org/pdf>
108. Why did Russia invade Ukraine and has Putin's war failed? - <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe89>
109. What we know about the strikes on air bases hundreds of miles inside Russia - <https://www.cnn.com/2022/12/06/europe/ukraine-russia-drone-attacks-l/index.html>
110. Medvedev raises spectre of Russian nuclear strike on Ukraine - <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/russias-medvedev-warns-west-09-27/>
111. Medvedev asserts Russia's 'right' to use nukes to defend its territory - <https://www.timesofisrael.com/medvedev-affirms-russias-right/>

112. The C.I.A. director meets with his Russian counterpart to warn against the use of nuclear weapons in Ukraine. - <https://www.nytimes.com/cia-burns-ukraine-russia-nuclear.html>
113. Russia's nuclear threat in the Ukraine war and international security - <https://civilcouncil.org/about-2>
114. Why the Long Conflict Over Nagorno-Karabakh Could Heat Up Again, 8.02.2019, <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/art>,
- 115.166. Why did Nagorno-Karabakh spark a conflict? 12.11.2020 - <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe>



www.mtsignobari.ge

დაიბეჭდა შპს „მნიგნობარის“ სტამბაში

0102, ქ. თბილისი, კიევის ქ. №10; ტელ.: 294 05 71