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About/Über

TWT

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TWT International c/o
TWT GmbH Trans World Technologies
www.twt-international.com
contact@twt-international.com

Ukraine - Lost Horizons

Why the West's confrontation of Russia over Ukraine is wrong

The Western governments are not acting in the interest of the majority of their people. Especially the US Administration plays a highly questionable role as the driving force in confronting Russia over Crimea and Ukraine.

Right from the beginning of the crisis situation in Ukraine the West unnecessarily has chosen a hard line of argumentation when there would have been also the option to be more diplomatic and work out differences with Russia amiable.

The West especially within the NATO framework too quickly has taken resort in military talk and action at the cost of diplomatic effectiveness and reason.

Russia also is mismanaging the situation by not clearly addressing and communicating its intentions right from the outset therefore giving room for all kind of speculations. The separation of Crimea and its joining the Russian Federation surely is disputable. It was however triggered in reaction from events in Kiev and not from events in Moscow. Russia's strategic interest in Ukraine and Crimea up to date simply has been always of stronger and more legitimate quality than the West could claim.

No doubt Ukraine is a sovereign state and any Ukrainian political crisis under normal circumstances should be resolved through internal politics. Ukraine and the people of Ukraine must have the right for self-determination. Russia on the other hand could not be ignored and this is where the problem mainly lies.

The principal mistake of the Western governments is that in the past years if not decades they have failed in their approach towards the Russian Federation. Especially the US, NATO and the EU have aggressively followed a path of expansion into geographic areas of strategic Russian interests.

The US, NATO and the EU have always understood very well that Ukraine like other direct border countries to Russia is a threshold and a red line which should not be crossed without consulting Moscow. In general regarding Ukraine as a principle buffer zone for Russia in view of NATO and specifically regarding Crimea due to the Russian Navy's saltwater access, it's base and its overall significance for Russian Federation military capabilities.

Western appetite towards Ukraine for Russians has a similar (emotional) quality like the Cuban missile crisis had for people in the US.

All this is not difficult to research and to understand.

So what is actually happening? Western politics and crisis management of its leaders in no way appears competent. On the opposite: The US, NATO and the EU seem to behave like bullies probably defying values the West actually advertises and objectively are sensible.

The EU Administration together with national EU Governments worked without giving much thought for Ukraine when offering its association agreement to Kiev without Moscow's consent and even worse in competition to Russian interests. Self content the grandchildren of the founders of the European Union today act merely as technocrats with little diplomatic sensitivity and fortune in foreign affairs.

The only good effect from the EU's blunder in Vilnius was that parts of the

Ukrainian people were motivated to come together for dialogue and stand up in peaceful demonstrations against the corrupt government of Viktor Janukovych demonstrating for justice and civil rights.

Too bad that this civil movement too quickly and too early was high-jacked from more determined interest groups including those from abroad in East and West abroad.

Foremost the US in the aftermath of the EU Summit during the Maidan demonstrations quickly seized the opportunity to intervene in the internal affairs of Ukraine, ~~for~~ the EU. It was not so much the words used from the US envoy for Ukraine but the obvious display of sentiment and political attitude behind her statement. US, NATO and EU interest in Ukraine are legitimate but actions must be wise. The US played their cards for a moment skillfully and despite the last minute EU nations foreign ministers mission for an orderly transformation process succeeded in the struggle that their preferred candidates took interim power ousting the then still legitimate President Viktor Janukovych (against Russian interests) in a disputable way.

The following Crimean crisis and reactions from Russia could have been averted and probably were more triggered from the West than planned in Moscow.

Instead of calming the situation and seeking unbiased dialogue the West, especially US dominated NATO and the US itself followed a strategy of confrontation with Russia which the EU and EU national Governments supports albeit popular support for hard liner talk in the EU is weak.

In all this Russia seems more restraint than the West but surely is just as protective of (legitimate) own strategic interests.

The Ukrainian people seem to have lost their say in all this and already pay the ultimate price when people fight, hurt and even kill each other because of their different political convictions.

All in all there is little understanding and tolerance shown towards the other side and all stakeholders are well

advised to rethink first of all their own actions. Much would be won if all sides would first of all act to restrain themselves instead of pointing fingers and going against the other party.

The Ukrainian power struggle and the means used in this struggle are hardly in line with democratic and legal of modern nations.

The West's confrontation of Russia over Ukraine is dangerous for peace and economic development in Europe. The US is the only main player on the field which is in the game with almost nothing at stake and only to win from turmoil which has been created in Europe exactly 100 years after the start of WW I when one should expect that the nations had learned their lessons instead again to play with fire.

Many of the actors in the western political arena will want to write into the history book that all they decided and do is the best and that there was no alternative they could have followed. The truth however is that for the normal people it is almost shocking how governments and those in executive positions within the administration have largely failed in managing the crisis in an effective, diplomatic and constructive manner.

It should be seen in the future in how far it will be necessary to set up inquiries to this extent.

Besides all criticism towards the West it is also clear that the crisis has shown the inability of the Russian Federation to deal openly constructive with the situation. Surely Russia for many years already aspires to protect its interest in key areas neighboring the Russian Federation territory. Surely Russia since many years has relevant game plans in the drawer in how to act and react in crisis situations according their planning. Russian Intelligence however completely failed in properly evaluating western reactions towards pro-Russian actions in Crimea and in controlling the dynamics of the local and regional activists thus contributing to conflict and destabilization.

Between the big power politics regional oligarchs, crime and the generally discontent romantics especially in

Eastern Ukraine have found room for their own ideas and aspirations without accepting any authority or control thus contributing to a dynamic and escalation which none of the big players are able to easily contain anymore and increasing the chances for a future civil war or at least unrest in many of the Ukrainian territories for probably a long time to come.

Today it is the highest political responsibility of all stakeholders to ensure a peaceful resolution of the disputes in and around Ukraine.

Any politician or state administration executive who is instead advocating show of force, escalation and contributes to probable use of force should be recognized and listed for later investigation from competent international authorities recognized from the international community and not necessarily influenced by any of the stakeholders in the current crisis.

Ukraine in any case has a long and difficult way ahead and people in Ukraine should not expect that any outsider is helping or providing out of pure charity alone.

Both the West and Russia will not fully go into Ukraine and free Ukrainians from their existing burdens without Ukrainians having to pay the price.

One can only hope that after all the hard talk of the last months and fighting based on questionable motives diplomacy will gain momentum as like always in history it is the only means to resolve the conflict allowing peace and positive development.

The Presidential election scheduled for May 25, 2014 in any case will show a trend even its legality and the result may be disputed. Regardless what it will be and who is sworn in as next President of Ukraine the only challenge will be to pacify and to compromise until there is a positive outlook for Ukraine and the Ukrainian people regardless of historic disputes.

Dirk P. Schneider