
ИСТОРИЯ МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫХ ОТНОШЕНИЙ И ВНЕШНЯЯ ПОЛИТИКА

HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND FOREIGN POLICY

UDC 327(4-664)(091)“19”

INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS OF THE EUROPEAN SOCIALIST COMMONWEALTH'S COLLAPSE IN THE 1980s AND 1990s

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The article is devoted to the analysis of decrease in bloc confrontation between the two social systems in the second half of the 1980s. This process brought “cold war” to the end. The circumstances surrounding the process inspired hopes and desires to enhance global cooperation and strengthen common security. The European region played a key role in this process. The development of international relations in the European context contributed to devaluation of classical examples of threats to Europe's security and weakened socialist countries dependence from the Soviet Union. These changes were also stipulated by the Soviet leadership's refusal to adhere to the Brezhnev Doctrine. The countries of the socialist commonwealth needed to embrace radical reforms, while conservative Eastern European leaders were rejecting any attempts to introduce changes. As a result of series of velvet revolutions those leaders were deposed. That led to collapse of the real socialism. The Soviet leaders and next Russian authorities didn't manage to preserve allied relations with post-socialist countries guided by pro-Western values. At the same time, the stability in Europe was under threat. Internal political imbalances in the new democracies were creating impediments to security in Europe.

Key words: “cold war”; Brezhnev Doctrine; velvet revolutions; European socialist commonwealth's collapse; dissolution of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) and the Warsaw Pact military alliance (WAPA); post-socialist countries; Newly Independent States; Central Europe; post-socialist transformation; post-cold war Europe.

Образец цитирования:

Чесновский М. Э. Международные аспекты распада европейского социалистического содружества на рубеже 1980–90-х гг. // Журн. Белорус. гос. ун-та. Междунар. отношения. 2017. № 1. С. 3–14 (на англ.).

For citation:

Chasnouski M. E. International aspects of the European socialist commonwealth's collapse in the 1980s and 1990s. *J. Belarus. State Univ. Int. Relat.* 2017. No. 1. P. 3–14.

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МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЕ АСПЕКТЫ РАСПАДА ЕВРОПЕЙСКОГО СОЦИАЛИСТИЧЕСКОГО СОДРУЖЕСТВА НА РУБЕЖЕ 1980–90-х гг.

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Анализируется ослабление блоковой конфронтации двух общественных систем во второй половине 1980-х гг., которое привело к окончанию холодной войны. Отмечено, что в тех условиях строились планы на укрепление глобального сотрудничества и всеобщей безопасности и ведущую роль в том процессе играла Европа. Эволюция международных отношений на европейском пространстве девальвировала классические угрозы безопасности, ослабила зависимость социалистических стран от СССР, что оказалось прямым следствием отказа советского руководства от доктрины Брежнева. Показано, что страны социалистического содружества нуждались в радикальном реформировании, но консервативные восточноевропейские лидеры отторгли назревшие перемены. Серия бархатных революций смела этих лидеров и похоронила реальный социализм. Обосновывается мысль о том, что надежды советского (позднее – российского) руководства сохранить союзнические отношения с постсоциалистическими странами не сбылись, последние выстраивали на Запад векторы внешних интересов, что не укрепило стабильность в Европе. Внутривосточная разбалансированность в новых демократических государствах провоцировала возникновение проблем европейской безопасности.

Ключевые слова: холодная война; доктрина Брежнева; бархатные революции; распад европейского социалистического содружества; ликвидация СЭВ и ОВД; постсоциалистическое пространство; Новые независимые государства; Средняя Европа; постсоциалистическая трансформация; «постхолодновоевропейская» Европа.

Both internal and external aspects of the European socialist commonwealth's collapse continue to be the subject of scientific researches undertaken by historians and political scientists from post-socialist countries and major Western countries¹. This article mainly analyses causes of maturation and scenarios of velvet revolutions [1–7], changes into doctrinal clauses of the Soviet foreign policy in the second half of the 1980s which resulted into the collapse of real socialism [8–17]. Thus, “retroactively” the article fills up the deficit of concepts of transition from socialism to capitalism at that time.

Special attention must be given to the publication by E. Vyatr [18] (famous Polish Scientist and Public Leader, former Chairman of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland). He questioned the objective inevitability of refusal from socialism and hypothetically assumed the following development of scenario for satellite states overcoming the consequences of the Soviet system: a reforming path or collapse of real socialism.

There are a lot of publications by foreign authors, which reveal peculiarities of post-socialist transformations in European countries in the early 1990s [19–31]. As a result of those transformations, many countries substituted their Eastern foreign policy priorities for Western [32–48]. Such articles constitute scientific value because of inclusion of summaries of evidence-based materials.

Only few researches undertaken by domestic historians and political scientists [49–53] investigate the relationship between the collapse of socialism and the changing course of international relations in Europe. At the same time, better understanding and interpretation of sources and regional characteristics of the collapse of bipolar world system at the turn of 1980–1990s may shed light on some problematic issues of modern development tendencies. The above mentioned facts clearly define the objective of this article.

Collapse of the socialism system in Europe: prerequisites, process and external factors

The system established by the Russian Revolution of 1917 spread to significant amount of Eastern European States. However, one can observe its fast collapse in less than three years (1989–1991). It was not an outcome of a lost war or failed revolution, that's is why the process and the pace of the decline did surprise a lot of experts.

In recent years many experts have been claiming that they predicted such an outcome. However, the analysis of literature sources proves the opposite ten-

dency. Archie Brown, British political scientist, historian and author of the book about M. Gorbachev, noted: “in 1985 no scientist was able to predict the reforming, restructuring and global collapse of the Soviet system” [14]. Many of them claimed that the flaws of socialist system will create instability as a result of insufficiency of the system, but no one assumed that between 1989 and 1991 this system will completely cease to exist in the USSR and all European socialist states. In fact no one expected such an outcome.

¹⁾This article is based on the findings of analysis of Belarusian, Russian, Polish and German literature sources.

The reforms initiated by M. Gorbachev spurred a lot of discussions among Western analysts. Some of them believed that serious changes might occur soon, while others thought that the leadership wanted to pretend that they were introducing changes. In the mid-1980s Zbigniew Brzezinski was discussing the prospects of American-Soviet rivalry and assumed that it would continue existing because of stability of the socialist system within the USSR and communism system in the West. Later on, he was among those experts who were certain that the socialism system would collapse [32]. Such type of opinion was initially expressed only in the 1990s – the period of substitution of the former systems in the majority of Eastern European States. At the same time, the majority of Western analysts considered that the socialist system copes well with all emerging problems and despite attending difficulties it will be preserved. For example, Samuel Phillips Huntington – famous American geopolitician, socialist and theorist argued that the problems faced by the Soviet system did not fundamentally differ from those which the system had to overcome earlier [9].

European attitude to decline of the socialist system resembles conclusions of the Soviet experts. However, one may examine this issue from another perspective: did the course of history determine the inevitability of collapse of the socialist system in Europe at the turn of the 1980–1990s? In such case the science just needs to recognize the fact. Moreover, it is also possible to assume that the events were developing according to another scenario. Probably, the system was at a crossroads and it was necessary to choose between the road envisioning new changes through reforming or the road leading nowhere.

On the other hand, there were assumptions that it was possible to prevent the collapse of the socialist system. It is considered that the leaders, who wanted to preserve the system despite its radically changed structure, initiated their reforms too late. It was possible to save the system by copying the Chinese model which didn't collapse because of timely reforming. Contrary to common views, China proved that the state is able to reform the socialist system by introducing changes into the economic system and social structure [18]. Those reforms were initiated and implemented under the supervision of the Communist Party.

Let's consider the reasons and consequences of collapse of the socialist system in the USSR and European States and the path to democracy and market economy.

The first most prominent external reason which preconditioned the collapse is considered to be a *heightened confrontation between the USSR and the West*. In 1980 Ronald Reagan, elected president of the United States, intensified confrontation with socialist states, particularly with the USSR. His political views were different. Unlike his predecessor, Jimmy Carter, he was against military intervention of the USSR to

Afghanistan announced in December, 1979. This intervention was considered to be a new phenomenon. It completely differed from the intervention in Hungary or Czechoslovakia. At the same time, Western powers recognized these countries as the area of the Soviet influence.

During Carter's presidential term the Soviet Union still held a strategic initiative. Everything changed after Regan came to power. His reaction to the imposition of martial law in Poland in December, 1980 was rather sharp and categorical. Reagan constantly opposed Soviet strategies. His policy combined with public attacks against the Soviet "evil empire", was considered to be the highest point of the confrontation. The USSR was not able to withstand a new arms race and adopted a defensive posture. Only when M. Gorbachev came to power and called for a dialogue and actual easing of international tension, Washington introduced confrontation elements into its political course and initiated a mutual dialogue. It was evident that Washington retained the initiative in the final phase of the "cold war". Using its strategic advantage Washington managed to resolve the war in its favor.

The second reason which preconditioned the collapse of the socialism in Europe is considered to be the following: the impact of internal situations within socialist countries affecting the strength of ties with the USSR. In the 1970s they were in crises situation because of inefficiency of economic system, lack of democracy and an adherence to confrontation with the West. The crisis manifested itself through a weakening growth, increasing technological gap in comparison with developed Western states and the absence of strategic prospects for further internal development and building relations with the outside world. The period from the 1970s to the 1980s is referred to as "Stagnation Period". During that period the countries of the socialist commonwealth were gradually losing their trust in the USSR [16]. They were disappointed about by the lack of former Soviet power exercised immediately after the war. The fact that the USSR took the leading position in the initial phase of space exploration also worried them. The confrontational approach exercised by the United States influenced public mood and encouraged changes originating in socialist countries.

The third reason which made European socialist countries choose democratic path was the policy of M. Gorbachev (General Secretary of the Central Committee of Communist Party of the Soviet Union) elected in March, 1985. Considering hegemonic tendencies of this superpower in Eastern Europe, it is possible to conclude that *changes within the USSR served as an inevitable accelerator of other systematic transformations in socialist states*.

M. Gorbachev did not have a clear reforms project, but he realized the inevitability of changes. He was confused between favoring radical reforms and complete refusal from them. He was afraid (not without

a reason) of possible counterattacks by conservatives. He was also opposing the increasing attempts of democrats to support radical reforms. Such kind of maneuvering exacerbated splitting in the Soviet leadership structure; in summer 1991 there was even an unsuccessful attempt to carry out a coup d'état. In a short time period in December, 1991 M. Gorbachev stepped down. This was the year of the USSR dissolution.

Gorbachev's policy (perestroika) only resembled a series of improvised attempts. Its main goals were the following: reforming the Soviet Union and ending conflict with Western powers (within the domestic policy domain that meant ensuring glasnost ("openness" or "publicity"). Authorities planned to expand the freedom of speech and association, reform the economy (preserving command-administrative system), increase authorities of State power bodies (supervised by the established institution of the presidency) and push communist party into the background. On the international arena M. Gorbachev carried out talks aimed to reduce the amount of arms, withdraw troops from Afghanistan, renounce Brezhnev Doctrine and provide limited sovereignty to several socialist States [39]. The last point became crucial and inspired rapid changes in socialist European states.

Each reform step could improve the foreign policy of the Soviets and internal and external situation within the socialist camp. However, they were initiated too late. In the late 1980s the process of their adoption was rather accelerated because of the crises. The outcome of these reforms didn't meet the expectations, while there was no constant supervision over their consistency and mandatory implementation. M. Gorbachev intended to undertake reforms and preserve the socialist Soviet Union. He considered that a new commonwealth of sovereign socialist countries would be headed by Marxists-reformers. In any case, he failed to achieve his goals because of underestimation of many factors.

He did not take into account the weakness of regimes in the socialist bloc states. In 1968 refusal from Brezhnev Doctrine could allow Czechoslovak reformers (similar situation occurred in Hungary and Poland) led by Alexander Dubček carry out a program titled "socialism with a human face". Twenty years later Dubček could possibly be considered a symbolic figure of velvet revolution aimed at overthrowing rather than reforming the socialist system [25]. In other words, Gorbachev's reforms were initiated too late to save the socialist system. They did establish democratic character and partially transformed the system by reforms initiated at a high level in order to establish social-democratic state with mixed economy.

Radical critics of social systems claim that the economy of that period was not prone to reforming and each attempt to reform it was destined to fail. It is difficult to support or refute such a diagnosis. The collapse of socialism in Europe confirms that statement, but modified form of socialism still exists in China. It is still unclear if reformers in the USSR were in obviously losing position or were defeated by conservative forces opposing the regime because of delayed reforms [14]. We also have to understand that the Chinese experiment still has not been completed and we have to wait for its outcomes. The price paid by the regime for the delayed initiation was rather high. It became impossible to prevent accelerated decline of socialism. As a consequence, this process accelerated the collapse of conservative regimes in socialist European states.

Gorbachev's team lived in the past era, although considered the opposite. The team had an opinion that refusal from Brezhnev Doctrine would improve the relations between European reformers and Soviet leaders. In fact, all those measures were implemented too late. The positions of the ruling reformers were rather weak. Even in such states as Hungary and Poland they were not able to maintain popularity. Local communities were not ready to entrust their destiny to them at a time when it was possible to shape the destiny without their guidance. In the first phase of reforms M. Gorbachev also was suspicious about "reformers" from Eastern Europe. He doubted that conservative communist leaders denying any changes would support perestroika. Gorbachev's team never assumed the possibility of dissolution of the USSR that is why it was unable to control this process [14].

Thus, introducing democratization of political structures of the USSR, allowing political pluralism and open elections, weakening positions of the communist party and denying Brezhnev Doctrine Soviet reformers in a course of restructuring period (perestroika) accelerated the collapse of the socialist system despite their intention to introduce reforms and democratization principles.

External motives of velvet revolutions in Eastern European countries were based on a mixture of two processes: negative reaction of conservative Eastern European leaders to an introduction of any changes into the system and refusal of the Soviet leaders from the policy aimed at restricting the sovereignty of member-states.

The majority of socialist leaders within the Warsaw Treaty Organization of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance (WAPA)¹ didn't share the Western approach towards civil rights issues, cultural ties, freedom of movement, free information and ideas

¹The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) was an economic organization established in 1949. It comprised the following countries: USSR, Bulgaria, Hungary, German Democratic Republic, Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Albania (joined in 1961), Mongolia (since 1962), Cuba (since 1972), Vietnam (since 1978); since 1964 Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia participated in work of separate bodies of the organization.

exchange prescribed by the Helsinki Final Act in 1975. At meetings organized by the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA)¹ and the WAPA they expressed worries related to potential inability of the Party and the State to exercise control over the population as result of harmful effects of the Helsinki process [45]. M. Gorbachev, implementing his democratization policy course and introducing glasnost, had an opposite opinion. The enforced adoption of norms and mechanisms approved at meetings of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and especially at a meeting in Vienna in late 1989 [33] increased political and ideological corrosion of the state socialism².

The Soviet leaders encouraged conservative leaders of communist parties in Czechoslovakia, German Democratic Republic, Romania and Bulgaria to initiate reform policies of glasnost and perestroika. They even sympathized with Poland and Hungary, which initiated a series of reforms in 1988–1989s [30]. It is considered that the Kremlin's refusal to follow Brezhnev Doctrine sparked a series of internal changes. The formal rejection of the Doctrine providing the USSR with a right to intervene into the internal affairs of other Soviet bloc states occurred in July, 1988 during Gorbachev's visit to Warsaw. A month later, leaders of the Polish People's Republic agreed to enter into negotiations with Lech Wałęsa, the leader of illegal organization entitled "Solidarnosc". It was not a matter of pure chance. There was no doubt that the Soviet leader had already informed his European allies about such kind of policy changes. On 6 July, 1989 at a meeting of the Council of Europe M. Gorbachev formally declared renunciation of the Brezhnev Doctrine and the principle of "spheres of influence". "The social and political systems earlier were subject to changes. It means that they might also change in the future". M. Gorbachev also considered that the citizens of a country shall be entitled to make their own choices as for the adoption of these changes. Any interference in internal affairs and any attempt to limit friendly, allied or any other type of sovereignty were considered unacceptable [8]. At the same time, the opposition in Eastern Europe viewed this statement as a symbol of freedom.

Resolutions approved by the 1st Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR (the session was held on 25 May, 1989) served as an immediate impetus for revolutionary changes in European socialist states. The Congress admitted the inevitability of political system reforming within the Soviet Union. In a course of implementation of reforms it was

possible to observe the formation of institutional structures of the opposition which were gradually splitting the leadership within the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). Echo of these events immediately reflected in the countries of the socialist commonwealth. Starting from spring 1989, opposition representatives both inside of ruling parties (Hungary) and outside of them (Poland) intensively began claiming significant share of power. Their principles guided the actions of the Soviet opposition. Opposition and some leaders of the CPSU (including its General Secretary M. Gorbachev) approved the reform path but didn't consider their consequences [8].

In compliance with round-table discussions in 1989, Poland held elections in which participated several candidates (alternative elections). They brought victory to "Solidarnosc" [25] and laid the foundation to a wave of radical transformations in the countries abandoning socialism. The process was spreading from north to south. It manifested through different forms and aimed at renunciation of such social order as state socialism.

The outcomes of negotiations between Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party and the united opposition (22 March – 18 September) determined the evolutionary path to the regime change. The pro-Soviet leaders had to resign and on 23 October Hungarians declared Hungarian Republic. Hungarian People's Republic ceased to exist. Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party was renamed to Hungarian Socialist Party with a clearly defined social democratic program.

On 9 November, the world witnessed the fall of the Berlin Wall accompanied by overthrowing of former rulers of German Democratic Republic; less than in a year, on 10 October, 1999 both German states reunited.

On 17 November, 1989 there was velvet revolution in Czechoslovakia. This term appeared during the November events which started with a large student demonstration [3]. Initially the term was introduced by Western experts and then it was picked up by V. Gavel and Slovak opposition leaders who also used a synonymic term "delicate". The term "velvet revolution" was coined to describe the 10-day events of November, 1989. The term is also applied in a broader context to describe the changes that took place in 1989 in other Eastern European countries as result of which the region was renamed into Central Europe.

In November, 1989, pressure against T. Zhivkov started to emerge at the plenum of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party. He was

¹Warsaw Pact military alliance (WAPA) was established in 1955; Warsaw Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Aid was signed on 14 May, 1955. Signatory States: Bulgaria, Hungary, German Democratic Republic, Poland, Romania, USSR, Czechoslovakia and Albania (since 1962 ceased taking part in the activities of the Organization, in 1968 ceased to be a member), entered into force on 5 June, 1955).

²Different terms are used in order to define the structure of society, which existed till the end of 1980s: "proto-socialism" (a term coined by Marxist theorists), "real socialism", "bureaucratic socialism", "Soviet-type socialism" and even "totalitarian socialism" (referring to a totalitarian state and its repressive regime).

forced to resign from all senior posts. On 18 November, hundred thousand oppositioners took part in a rally in Bulgaria after which the majority of the pre-war political parties were restored.

On 22 December, 1989 as a result of uprising in Romania N. Ceaușescu was ousted. His regime was replaced for a new one. The Parties representing the National Salvation Front (NSF) came to power and on 29 December the Socialist Republic of Romania was renamed to Romania. The uprising was followed by bloodshed. I. Iliescu (ex-communist and then NSF leader) believed that there was a necessity to initiate a trial against Ceaușescu and his wife by special military tribunal. Indeed, their execution by firing squad on 25 December marked the end of shootings in Bucharest. According to Iliescu then Washington was not against military intervention of the USSR in Romania in order to restore the order. However, Soviet leaders decided not to intervene into socialist countries affairs [44].

From spring 1990 communists in the Republic of Yugoslavia were suffering constant defeats at elections. The slow spread of the revolutionary wave was also typical to that region. It was spreading in north-southern direction from Slovenia and Croatia to Serbia and Macedonia.

At the end of 1988, almost simultaneously, people's fronts in the Baltic States expressed intention to withdraw from the USSR. Post-socialist development of these republics was based on a principle of refusal from the recent Soviet past and substitution of former geopolitical priorities to Western values [22]. By the end of the 1990s the territory occupied by these states became known as "Baltic states" and an integral part of the Central European Subregion.

Loyalty to changes in the social structure in Eastern Europe demonstrated by M. Gorbachev's team created hope that the Soviet Union would be able to preserve allied relations with Eastern Europe after a series of velvet revolutions. Mainly they were concerned about the proper functioning of the CMEA and the WAPA.

The assumption that the modified CMEA would continue to operate turned out to be wrong. New authorities of allied countries didn't intend to be dependent from the USSR in politico-military and economic aspects. Further coexistence of institutions of international socialist integration was questioned. At 45th session of the CMEA (January, 1990, Sofia) Czechoslovak representatives demanded radical transformation of the structure of this international organization. The outcome of these negotiations turned out to be rather complicated:

transformation didn't take place, but in any case, the CMEA was liquidated in compliance with the Protocol adopted at the end of June, 1991 at a session in Budapest [29].

The Soviet diplomacy still tried to preserve the modified WAPA, but its attempts were not successful. Only Romania and partially Poland supported the USSR. Czechoslovak and Hungarian diplomats were insisting on liquidation of military establishments within the WAPA and modification of its political structure for the purpose of establishment of a full-fledged security institution. This project was discussed at the WAPA session in Moscow in early June, 1990. In autumn 1990, the Agreement on Military Structures Liquidation was reached. The Agreement was signed in February, 1991. The WAPA's military structures were fully liquidated by 31 March [29].

Further events: attempts by the Soviet leaders to suppress liberation aspirations of the Baltic Republics, intervention of the Soviet troops in the Baltic States in January, 1991, polarized positions of Gorbachev's team and power elites of former socialist countries (satellites of the USSR). The positions of some WAPA members have been radicalized. Some of them were demanding to terminate the Pact. This demand was firmly supported by diplomats from Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, Poland and Hungary. On 1 July, 1991 a Protocol on WAPA liquidation was signed in Prague [29].

It was evident that loyalty of the Soviet leadership to democratic changes in socialist European states aroused a lot of controversies among conservative leaders in the European region. This loyalty could be classified as a prerequisite of a series of velvet revolutions. Anti-communist political elites, which came to power after revolutions, didn't approve the positions of the USSR as for perestroika (restructuring) of the Soviet system. Their desire not to develop close foreign policy partnership with the USSR resulted in collapse of the CMEA and the WAPA. At the same time, post-socialist leaders welcomed Moscow's refusal from an adherence to Brezhnev Doctrine and the principle of "spheres of influence". In February, 1990 in his address to the US Congress, a new president of Czechoslovakia V. Havel noted that velvet revolutions became possible only after the proposal of changes by the Soviet President M. Gorbachev. Due to his proposal the following purposes have been achieved: denationalization, desovietization and desatellization [33].

Peculiarities of security maintenance in the European region

In the early 1990s, when bloc confrontation ceased to exist, (known as "cold war") there was a feeling that there would be no repeated ideological confrontation in the world. These turbulent processes adjusted the role of Europe on international arena. Again, it was

viewed as a model of international security. At the same time, despite the loss of control over considerable amount of leverages that could impact the world situation, European countries were building up equally important potential: other world regions viewed them

as a model for *integration processes development* which were manifested through the ability to renew itself, expression of shared responsibility, genuine partnership and mediation in a course of global issues solving. It is considered that Europeans made significant progress in the first half of 1990s. They were inclined to believe that military conflicts and ideological intolerance were vestiges of the past. They were hoping for a new and peaceful era of prosperity which would offer new opportunities for resolution of international, regional and bilateral crises in a manner of civilized mediation and respectful dialogue between States [49].

The second encouraging factor within the framework of international context is considered to be the desire to ensure security within the entire international community with a special focus on the peoples living in Continental Europe. Political leaders realized that their peoples are not secured against contemporary challenges destabilizing the security situation in global world. However, pure awareness of that problem didn't considerably change national, regional and global policies. The emerged concept of universal and inclusive security didn't contribute to profound transformation of public consciousness and comprehensive restructurings within national and international institutions.

The end of the "cold war" couldn't prevent the occurrence of inter-state conflicts and it didn't indicate a return to the former system of international relations based on the balance of forces and changing alliances. Nuclear weapons and an increasingly growing strength of conventional weapons have become deterrent factors limiting the possibility to use a war as policy tool. The new international situation created opportunities to ensure effective collective security and establish the rule of international law under which an application of military force for resolution of conflicts between states loses any meaning [49].

Possession of nuclear weapons viewed as deterrent of potential aggressors did cross out any attempts to maintain peace based on nuclear powers' refusal from their destructive views. Each of the five countries officially possessing nuclear weapons expressed an intention to keep an adequate amount of weapon throughout the period during which either their partners or rivals would preserve it. They all proved the necessity to preserve it in case of new nuclear weapons deployment by one or several other States. However, for this purpose it was enough to keep no more than one fifth of the current volume (probably even less) [49].

The security of Europe was mainly endangered not by potential confrontation between states, but by emerging conflicts within them. This is one more distinctive feature of post-socialist Europe. In 2–3 years after the collapse of the USSR it was possible to witness a variety of local (regional) episodes in which the leading international actors (Soviet and Western blocks) were trying to establish their spheres of influence. New challenges were substituting the previously prevailing

threat of global nuclear catastrophe. Among them were the following: internal strifes, armed clashes and even civil wars [49].

In these conditions, there was an increasing conviction that both principals and procedures for security provision should be considerably changed. The international community should be entitled to intervene into internal affairs of conflict-affected countries in order to ensure safety of the population suffering from such conflicts. Europe recognized the need for a new security system based on mutual assurances and refusal from an old horridification practice. These steps were undertaken in order to encourage the sovereign States to cooperate in solving national security issues.

An implementation of multilateral warranties is considered to be the major prerogative of international organizations acting on a local level. They were supposed to be charged with a task of problematic issues tracking instead of solving them. That meant that all the functions hypothetically performed by a single European organization were supposed to be delegated to the UN Security Council. Instead of creating a hierarchy of regional security institutions, Europe had to introduce and recognize pluralist democracy, the rule of law and respect for civil rights (including minorities' rights) as main prerequisites of security on the continent.

In the early 1990s it was also possible to observe another distinguished feature of European security mechanism: *depreciation of classical types of threats* mainly related to an accumulation of weapons and block confrontation; *emergence of new problems (rooted to the old types of problematic issues)* such as international terrorism, organized crime, drug trafficking, unsupervised proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, financial, economic and environmental crises as well as massive epidemics. Separatism and other manifestations of national and religious extremism provoked a serious of regional conflicts in the territory of post-socialist Europe. It is considered that hundreds of thousands residents of Newly Independent States became victims of these regional conflicts.

New threats and challenges in Newly Independent States could be classified into four groups:

- ethnic and religious conflicts stipulated by lack of democratic and public institutions. It is not a secret that many Western European States in comparison with Newly Independent States were demonstrating higher efficiency while dealing with separatist movements. Protests and demands of ethnic, national, religious and linguistic groups in the West are considered to be an integral component of the legal framework of deterrence policy;

- political instability related to transformation of single-party totalitarian systems in pluralistic democracy;

- social tensions as a result of transition from directorial economic models, controlled by central authorities, to market-based economic models;

- environmental risks mainly resulted from poor designing and nuclear power and chemical plants operation [49].

The presence of tension within the post-socialist region determined the direction of the evolution of geopolitical processes and neglected any consolidation attempts; evolution divided Newly Independent States into two groups based on their overseas interests. Loss of geopolitical influence within the group of post-Soviet countries (CIS) has simplified the formation of European security system in which NATO played the central role. The intention to build single Europe and transfer powers to the UN Security Council finally failed. New dividing lines appeared in Europe. They were shifted to the east from the former lines existing during the “cold war”. The majority of countries of the second group (Middle Europe) sub-delegated their security and defense problems to the NATO, their main objective was an entry into the NATO.

It should be noted that the continent was not doomed to pass through the system of new world order formation based on “winner takes all” principle. During the unification of Germany, the Soviet leadership missed an opportunity to limit the NATO expansion to the territory of German Democratic Republic and further to the East. Later, in the early 1990s, the CIS expressed an intention to establish a comprehensive security system on the basis of the OSCE, but their intension didn't find support [49]. As a result, they were disappointed by the changes occurred and advocated for the review of accepted decisions. The OSCE was also losing its former positions and in the end it became rather marginalized.

By the end of the 1990s, due to reinforced globalization, the area of tension considerably increased. On the one hand, the States have become interdependable because of regional conflicts posing a threat to European security and stability. In this regard, it is worth to mention Yugoslavian crisis. On the other hand, uneven economic development led to crisis capacities accumulation in the majority of countries on the continent. These capacities gave rise to different extremist political organizations using terror and violence as the main tool for achieving their objectives.

It is worth to mention the following aspect of European security after the end of the “cold war”: *impact of consequences of global formational and ideological confrontation* upon the collapse of the socialist system. It was possible to witness the reunification of Germany, collapse of Czechoslovakia, the USSR and Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. New 21 states appeared on a map (Newly Independent States). The WAPA ceased to exist and was substituted by new institutions for military and political cooperation: North Atlantic Cooperation Council (currently Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) and Partnership for Peace (PFP). Until the end of 1995, the new European order was founded on adherence to provisions of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe by all 30 mem-

ber-states. As a result, heavy weapons cuts were initiated on the territory from the Atlantic to the Urals (reduced at least by 50 thousand units). Moreover, the withdrawal of the former Soviet troops from Central Europe and the Baltic States prompted establishment of military stability and political predictability. The meeting of the OSCE in Paris and conclusion of the Stability Pact for Europe regulating political-military aspects of security, laid the foundation for a new type of relations among all member-states. Implementation of decisions and recommendations worked out at OSCE Conference on Confidence- and Security-building Measures in Vienna encouraged greater mutual openness. Common values and international policy approaches have become stronger and spread across the whole Europe [49].

Almost all post-socialist countries committed themselves to principles of democracy, political pluralism, market economy and the rule of law. Their agreement to respect international standards established in the West and covering the areas of civil rights and fundamental freedoms has granted an opportunity to many countries (with a few exceptions) to become full-fledged members of the Council of Europe. The majority of Newly Independent States expressed an intention to join the NATO and the EU. They were referred to as Central Europe. This region comprised small and medium-sized countries. Currently it comprises 16 states. Today the term “Central Europe” is used to describe common historical past, similar social, ideological, political, cultural, psychological and other components of the former socialist camp. It is also applied with a reference to geopolitical sub region expressing an intention to be integrated into the western structures.

Thus, it is possible to conclude than in early 1990s after the “cold war” states had an unprecedented opportunity to strengthen their global cooperation. New context decreased the amount of disputes and tensions. The international climate was getting warmer, new disarmament opportunities were established. It is considered that disarmament became possible because of crucial transformations on the territory of the former Soviet Union and its European partners from the socialist camp. However, the future reality significantly differed from the above mentioned expectations. The collapse of the socialist system in Europe and the end of the “cold war” did not eliminate security issues on the Continent. Throughout XX–XXI centuries a number of confrontational factors defining the power and strength of a certain European state have been considerably increasing due to the following factors: growing meaning of financial power, diversity of banking systems, promptness and efficiency of communications, introduction and provision of access to information infrastructure. At the same time “classic” political and military tools of foreign policy retained their significance. As a result, security situation in Europe has not become lasting and more predictable.

Laying the foundations for a new European order

The collapse of European socialism system gave an opportunity to undertake the third attempt of world policy transformation in the XX century. As a common practice, the new model of European order has become an example for the whole world.

The search for a new model of European security once again has been initiated after the end of the “cold war”. Initially, the confrontation strategy did ensure certain order. Dangerous situations did occur, at the same time it was considered that they were initiated and later on resolved by two opposing parties: the NATO and the WAPA. At these periods both blocks realized that an extensive tension may provoke a new world war with an application of nuclear weapons [39].

After the “cold war” and the collapse of the Eastern military-political bloc, the countries were ensuring balance on the continent by themselves. Powers, granted to the countries, have completely changed the security situation. Guided by national priorities they were not able to ensure stability (even in the future prospect such attempts are destined to fail). The system of European order was taking into account national sovereignties and the interests of each state on the Continent. This was rather unpredictable and potentially dangerous. “Parades of sovereignties” in 1989 and 1991 sparked a lot of national conflicts, which potentially could result in inter-state military tensions. In accordance with the worst case scenario these military tensions could even escalate into a nuclear catastrophe.

National and state interests didn't form the basis of European security. One more time it was possible to witness attempts to find an alternative ensuring relative balance. It seemed that the system of multi-layer order could ensure balance on the continent. That meant that major decisions were supposed to be taken at European level, while others – at the regional. Remaining issues were supposed to be addressed at national state level. In such case certain states would be deprived of sole sovereignty because of its distribution at European, regional and national levels. Thus, the new European order assumed transition of equal parts of national sovereignty of each state to the highest (supranational security and cooperation structures) and lowest levels (sub-regional interaction forms). Nation states were playing an important role, while large-scale issues were resolved at European and regional levels. The cooperation on security issues was established on three levels in order to ensure a balance of interest of all states, thus contributing to lasting European order [49].

Three levels format of the European order was supported by the majority of countries of the Continent and by major intergovernmental institutions, including the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. The European Union has become a prototype of such system. In addition to national and state

cooperation the union envisages regionalization (functioning of euro-regions) and supranational integration processes (rights of the EU bodies to approve decisions binding for all member-states). It is clear that the EU represented a simplified model in the context of European security system.

Authors of a new security model took into account the fact that in comparison with other world regions, Europe significantly benefited from the end of the “cold war”. Milestone decisions were taken in this region and they managed to cease the global confrontation between the blocks. The collapse of the iron curtain opened unrepresented opportunities for cooperation and convergence of states and peoples on the basis of shared democratic values. In these conditions the new European order for security and stability maintenance could become a prototype of post-cold war world order where the UN Security Council would act as supranational guarantor and safety regulator.

In the first half of the 1990s politicians and experts were convinced that because of geopolitical diversity of world regions the international order after the end of the “cold war” would depend on a number of factors, including:

- Europe's success in promoting its political and military unity;
- sovereign status preservation in case of states emerged on the former Soviet territory;
- establishment of democratic order in Russia, which will prevent imperial aspirations and return to centralized dictatorship and an application of violence.

Many analysts were convinced that Europe would be a center of a new world order formation, but the USA was supposed to play a crucial role in each of these regions in the near-term perspective. At that time the USA was the only remaining superpower. No other state had similar levers to control economic and social aspects in the world community. In fact, the special status of the USA was already affected by domestic issues. Thus, Z. Bzhezinski considered that Washington should focus more on domestic affairs, otherwise dynamic Japan and the unified Europe might undermine its leading positions and assume significant share of political and military aspects at the very beginning of the XXI century. People's Republic of China adhered to the same foreign policy strategy [32].

The above-mentioned factors contributed to the maintenance of peace in Europe. Post-socialist countries played a crucial role in further deepening and expansion of European stability and integration processes. European order became dependent on deliberate adherence to western values and controversial Russian attempts to establish close ties with Europe, the USA, the NATO and the EU.

However, this movement quite differed from the Pan-European process of security provision because of activities of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (supervised political integration processes on the Continent). Generally speaking, the organization pursued the following goal: minimization of possible negative consequences upon an acquisition of the remaining part of the Continent by civilized Western Europe.

In fact, a lot of complications arise on the way of conflict-free Europe formation. In the early 1990s the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe strengthened its positions and was recognized as Pan-European Organization. Starting from the middle 1990s, the NATO acted as a single political and military organization charged with security preservation task. The NATO and the CSCE were competing between each other offering different security concepts to Europe (pro NATO and Pan-European concepts). This competition could result in potential conflicts on the territory of Europe as well as could create obstacles on the path to stability on the Continent. In reality it was possible to observe the weakening of cooperation processes in Europe, halted cooperation between numerous European and Euro-Atlantic structures tackling vital security issues on the Continent.

Thus, in the 1980s and 1990s the foundations of international order have been considerably modified. Those changes were triggered by collapse of European socialist system which, according to majority of Western political scientists and experts, changed the pattern of international relations. The term velvet (“decent”) revolutions was coined to describe the process of collapse of socialism. Velvet revolutions not only changed the system but also modified the

direction of social and political development of Eastern Europe. They also marked a tectonic shift in global geopolitics. The events lead to the collapse of bipolar Yalta-Potsdam system. The security vacuum after the collapse of Eastern block was filled by the NATO.

The revolutions gave rise to a new social development paradigm. They were also followed by profound system processes, new socio-political regimes introduction, proclamation of democratic development principles and revision of identities by the affected states. Peoples of the former socialist republics no longer wanted to be associated with the “real socialism”. Velvet revolutions were also accompanied by glocalization – the idea that in globalization local conditions must be considered.

At the same time, as a result of dissolution of the USSR, interstate military, political and economic institutions ceased to exist. Previously they were associated with socialist way of life (the WAPA and the CMEA were referred to as the main institutions). Former socialist countries were no longer subordinate to the USSR and were forced to find the means to preserve their sovereignty. They were establishing new foreign policy priorities and development strategies. In some regions it was possible to witness the application of military means (Yugoslavia). Post-Socialist reorientation of Newly Independent States was accompanied by complex imbalance in internal political life, economic and social relations. This reorientation led to new challenges and risks. Dreams about stability were not fulfilled. In terms of security ensuring, Europeans gave preference to the NATO. This choice ruined the dream about unified Europe and a “common European house”. The lines splitting Europe didn’t disappear. They have just been shifted to the East, closer to the Russian borders.

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Received by editorial board 22.02.2016.