

Example of term paper on a paper prepared for

[Parts of the World](#), [Europe](#)



“ U. S. Foreign Policy Responses to the 2014 Crisis in Ukraine”

International Relations

“ I certify that all material presented in this assignment is my own work except where I have clearly acknowledged the work of others by means of accurate citation. I have read and understand the University’s Academic Integrity Policy.”

Local political events that constantly happen all over the world have impact, though not always immediately palpable, on the interests of the United States and its citizens. While some can be insignificant and barely affect economic or defense sector, the others can lead to the redefinition of the geopolitical positions and redistribution of influence of the world powers. As Zakheim claims in his article on the Obama West Point speech, the Obama Administration has been known for its policy of isolationism, or realism, depending on how to view it. President Obama has come to power with promises to withdraw American troops from Iraq and Afghanistan and lessen the American presence in the local and domestic conflicts of other countries. Americans dissatisfied with the disastrous war in Iraq, crisis of 2008 and draining military expenditures, voted for peace and increased attention to the internal problems. However, the necessity to meet the people’s demands has currently placed the Obama Administration in a disadvantageous position on the international arena. As the President highlighted in his recent West Point speech on May 28: “ Today, according to self-described realists, conflicts in Syria or Ukraine or the Central African Republic are not ours to solve.” Although the non-intervention policy does not mean America will remain neutral in the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian conflict, the question is

whether the current United States foreign policy and its measures taken in regards to the Ukraine crisis and against further expansion of Russian influence in the area are enough to maintain America's strong position on the global scene without losing the trust of its people and allies.

Ukrainian decline has begun long before its people took their dissatisfaction with the government to the streets in November 2013. According to the profound McMahon's analysis, the events that unfolded at the end of 2013 and beginning of 2014 were a consequence of a long-term social, political and economic stagnation of the country. For this reason, before addressing the adequacy of the U. S. response to the Ukrainian events, it will be beneficial to gain a thorough insight into the history of the crisis.

The dissolution of the Soviet Union left Ukraine with underdeveloped economy and government that comprised of the former Soviet officials. The established clan system presented a stable way to retain power in the hands of dictatorial leaders, including oligarchs, who were the actual policy makers in Ukraine. Viktor Yanukovich and many politicians still holding powerful positions are examples of the cronyism that inevitably led to corruption and socio-economic decay of the country shredded by the ruling establishment, including the President and his own family, according to the Woehrel's report on the Ukraine crisis. In the demise of the Ukrainian economy and despite the "brotherly" bonds with Russia, the former President Yanukovich chose in 2012 the course to the EU integration. However, the Ukrainian plans were disrupted by the Russian trade sanctions imposed in response to the Ukrainian pro-European choice. Eventually, Viktor Yanukovich was pressured to cancel the signing of the Association Agreement in November 2013 citing

harsh economic consequences for Ukraine upon entering into the competition with the EU goods in case the markets of the partners would become mutually open. Within the days of the announcement, the Independence Square of Kyiv gathered thousands of people, mainly students, protesting against the pro-Russian course and for the EU integration. The subsequent crackdown led to a new wave of powerful protests of hundreds of thousands also known as Euromaidan that demanded the resignation of the government. Further clashes between the elite 'Berkut' police and the protesters resulted in over a hundred killed and more wounded at the end of February, when the President Yanukovich fled the country. The newly formed interim government headed by one of the opposition leaders Arseniy Yatsenyuk has been recognized by Russia as an "illegitimate Kiev regime." Meanwhile, the United States welcomed the Supreme Council (the Verkhovna Rada) and Yatsenyuk Administration as democratic and legal. This move was predictable given the active support of Euromaidan democratic initiatives by the United States interested in Ukraine's European integration and increase in political and economic independence from Russia. Although the declared goal of the support was to help Ukraine on its way to democracy and economic prosperity, the underlying reasons laid in the power redefinition in the Eastern Europe. Given that Ukraine has always been a buffer zone between the NATO on one side and the Russian Federation on the other, the Western allies could not lose Ukraine and let Russia come too close to the NATO borders. Another issue that would emerge with the Euromaidan fiasco would be the factual power takeover by Russia of the Ukrainian gas pipelines that are the

main source of gas for Europe. In this case scenario, the main American ally would find itself in an intricate political and economic situation of Russia dictating the conditions of Russo-European cooperation by means of gas cut-offs or threats to raise gas prices, the measures that have been previously taken by Russia. The solutions for European gas independence, as suggested by Richard Haass, the President of the Council on Foreign Relations, lie in the construction of the infrastructure to transfer American gas to Europe, and the search of the Middle-Eastern gas partners. The first option is time-consuming, and the last one is complicated by the unstable political situation in the Middle East. Thus, without having working options, Europe is bound to seek diplomatic means to resolve the conflict without harsh methods that would provoke Russian counteractions. Understanding the European situation and taking into account the necessary cooperation with Russia in the Middle East, Afghanistan and North Korea, the U. S. government had to take the diplomatic path to communicate its demands to Russia.

The main events that followed the ouster of Yanukovych were Russian annexation of Crimea, Russian participation in the separatist movement in the Eastern Ukraine and the failed Geneva arrangements between Russia, Ukraine, the European Union, and the United States. The illegal Crimean annexation under the guise of referendum has been justified by the Russian government as the defense of the Crimean Russian ethnic minorities (over 50% of the Crimean population) from persecution on the language and nationality basis, using the controversies around the Russian language status as the trigger. Russia penetrated the peninsula under cover of the local self-defense units relocating heavily armed Russian troops to main military points

and providing the support for the illegal referendum on March 16, with further annexation on March 18. The referendum was not recognized by the democratic countries. Nonetheless, the United States was not ready to provide military force to return Ukraine its territory. Such actions from both countries testified the ineffectiveness of the international obligations of the two world powers in case of interest collisions. According to the Budapest Memorandum of 1994, the United States, Great Britain and Russia reaffirmed their commitments to respect the Ukrainian territorial integrity and sovereignty as Ukraine gave up its enormous nuclear arsenal. Although Russia has breached its obligations, the U. S. sanctions response failed to return the annexed territory. Apart from sending the navy to the Black Sea to increase its military presence, the United States has applied sanctions against Russian, Crimean and Ukrainian politicians. However, the sanctions turned out to have almost no effect on Russia that followed up with support of the separatist movements in the Eastern Ukraine. The Geneva arrangements aimed at relieving the conflict by diplomatic means did not come to force due to lack of actions from the Russian side. Another round of sanctions against Putin's cronies, as well as the abrogation of several initiatives between Russia and the United States, though resulted in economic consequences, they did not actually isolate Russia from the international community, especially China, Iran and Syria, its long-term allies.

The Ambassador of Ukraine to the United States urged the ally to help Ukraine retain its territorial integrity. The United States has provided the financial aid to help recover the almost-default Ukrainian economy, including

the repatriation of the assets stolen by the previous government. Refusing to send lethal military aid to Ukrainian army, according to the Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland, the country has responded to the Ukrainian requests with \$18 million in the non-lethal security assistance. At the same time, it is undeniable that the recent changes in the conflict happened after the Ukrainian Presidential elections recognized by Russia, which means the consent of Mr. Putin to engage in negotiations on the issue, which initiative the U. S. wholeheartedly supports.

The aforesaid facts have proven the weakening of the American position in in the eyes of major international actions, including the Russian Federation, Iran, China and the European Union. In particular, after Iran agreed to reduce its nuclear power in response to America lifting sanctions, the country feels reluctant to continue its nuclear disarmament given the failure of the States to actively protect Ukraine or help it with lethal military aid to regain its territory formerly safeguarded by the Budapest memorandum. At the same time, the Russian Federation realized its current strong position in the world by witnessing the discreet American reaction to its unlawful actions. As the United States has previously rushed into a number of wars and conflicts in various world regions, including the Middle East, the country will have to follow a complicated and compromising path to become neutral and military inactive. The international and internal opponents might view this new policy as a weakness of the Obama Administration that will lead to isolationism and loss of the U. S. reputation as a world leader. However, on the other hand, the military withdrawal of the United States from several hotspots across the world may lead to the improvement in the economic and defense areas of

the country, as well as give Obama a chance to win the next Presidential elections. Finally, the United States history has proven that the decrease of the country's international presence has always been temporary and led to renewed strengthening of the global position and establishment of the beneficial relations. Regardless of the current critic of the U. S. foreign policy, it is clear that restraining from the military actions or lethal aid for Ukraine will help avoid the outbreak of a new Cold War with the Russian Federation. For this reason, as long as the diplomatic means to influence Russian international behavior have not been exhausted, have effect and are justified, the best option for the U. S. foreign policy makers is to insist on the conflict resolutions by the parties, including by way of sanctions and other ways of pressure without physical presence in the conflict zones.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Council on Foreign Relations, “ Budapest Memorandums On Security Assurances”, December 5, 1994, <http://www.cfr.org/arms-control-disarmament-and-nonproliferation/budapest-memorandums-security-assurances-1994/p32484> [Accessed May 26, 2014].

Mid. ru, “ MFA Of Russia | 03/07/2014 | Comment By The Information And Press Department Of The Russian Ministry Of Foreign Affairs Regarding The Situation In Ukraine”, March 7, 2014, http://www.mid.ru/BDOMP/Brp_4.nsf/arh/370A01FB82D770EA44257C9900613CD6?OpenDocument [Accessed May 26, 2014].

Motsyk, Olexandr, “ Letter Of Ambassador Of Ukraine To The USA O. Motsyk To The US Congress – News”, Embassy Of Ukraine In The United States Of <https://assignbuster.com/example-of-term-paper-on-a-paper-prepared-for/>

America | Ministry Of Foreign Affairs Of Ukraine, March 7, 2014, <http://usa.mfa.gov.ua/en/press-center/news/19064-letter-of-ambassador-of-ukraine-to-the-usa-o-motsyk-to-the-us-congress> [Accessed May 28, 2014].

Nuland, Victoria, “ Russia's Destabilization Of Ukraine”, U. S. Department Of State, May 8, 2014, <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/2014/may/225773.htm> [Accessed May 28, 2014].

Rubin, Eric, “ U. S. Foreign Policy Toward Ukraine”, U. S. Department Of State, March 6, 2014, <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/2014/mar/223023.htm> [Accessed May 30, 2014].

The White House, “ President Obama Speaks To West Point Graduates”, Video, May 28, 2014, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2014/05/28/america-must-always-lead-president-obama-addresses-west-point-graduates> [Accessed May 29, 2014].

Whitehouse.gov, “ FACT SHEET: International Support For Ukraine | The White House”, March 4, 2014, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/03/04/fact-sheet-international-support-ukraine> [Accessed May 29, 2014].

Whitehouse.gov, “ FACT SHEET: Ukraine-Related Sanctions | The White House”, March 17, 2014, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/03/17/fact-sheet-ukraine-related-sanctions> [Accessed May 30, 2014].

Secondary Sources

Haass, Richard N, “ How To Respond To Ukraine's Crisis?”, Bernard Gwertzman, In person, Council on Foreign Relations, March 3, 2014 <http://www.cfr.org/ukraine/respond-ukraines-crisis/p32522> [Accessed May

25, 2014].

McMahon, Robert, “ Ukraine In Crisis”, Council On Foreign Relations, May 5, 2014, <http://www.cfr.org/ukraine/ukraine-crisis/p32540> [Accessed May 25, 2014].

Woehrel, Steven, “ Ukraine: Current Issues And U. S. Policy”, Congressional Research Service, May 20, 2014, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33460.pdf> [Accessed May 26, 2014].

Zakheim, Dov S, “ Was Obama's West Point Speech A Pitch For Isolationism?”, Foreign Policy May 29, 2014, http://shadow.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2014/05/29/was_obamas_west_point_speech_a_pitch_for_isolationism [Accessed May 30, 2014].