



Speech by Andrei Illarionov at NATO PA Session in Vilnius

June 16, 2014

The Lithuania Tribune would like present you with a speech of Andrei Illarionov, Senior Fellow of the Cato Institute Centre for Global Liberty and Prosperity. The speech was delivered at the NATO PA Spring Session in Vilnius on 31 May 2014, and attracted a lot of international attention. ‘Sizzingly good speech by Andrei Illarionov to NATO in Vilnius’, Edward Lucas of the Economist wrote in his Facebook page. The speech was published in the NATO PA session in Vilnius page.

‘This is a high honour and a special pleasure for me to be here and have a chance to share with you some comments and ideas on the current state of affairs in Ukraine, in Russia, between Russia and Ukraine and in some other places. Even if the initially announced title of this talk is about Ukraine and Russia, I think it would be rather hard for me to avoid touching some other areas related to the recent developments.

Over the last several months many people around the world keep asking what is going on, what does all this mean – Mr Putin’s attack on Ukraine, occupation and annexation of Crimea, Russian regime’s intervention into Eastern Ukraine, what are Mr Putin’s real and long-term targets, where and when is he going to stop, if at all. So here are some observations combined together in ten points that I’d like to share with you. I’ll try to be brief and would be happy to answer your questions.

First point. You may hear statements that this is ‘the Ukrainian crisis’ or that this is ‘the crisis in Ukraine’. It is incorrect. It is neither ‘the crisis in Ukraine’, nor ‘the Ukrainian crisis’. This is not an internal affair of Ukraine. This is a war. This is the Russian-Ukrainian war. To be correct, this is the Mr Putin’s war against Ukraine. And this war is only an introductory chapter of a much larger event which can be called and actually has already been called ‘War’, ‘World War’, ‘the Fourth World War’. I’ll try to elaborate this later. It is not my choice of picking this particular term. It is the term that is being used by the Kremlin propaganda machine – the Fourth World War being waged now by Russia against the rest of the world.

Second point. Also, in some analytical texts we can find description of this war as a Cold War, either restoration of the 'old' Cold War or launching a 'new' Cold War. In my mind, it is neither restoration of the 'old' Cold War which ended at the brink of the 1980's and 1990's with new political and border settlement in Europe. This is neither a 'new' Cold War. I would like to attract your attention to the fact that during the Cold War that started after the Second World War and sometimes called as the Third World War, there was no occupation and annexation of any part of any European country. But now it happened. During 'classical' Cold War there were attempts to change political regimes in some countries, but the borders between the free world and the non-free world in Europe did not change. There is another important difference between the Cold War and the current war. Then there were no personal sanctions. There were some other sanctions, but not personal ones. So this war is no way a cold war. What is the correct term to name this new war remains to be seen. It is the job for analysts and politicians. Nevertheless, it is not a cold war. Once again, I would remind you that the Kremlin propaganda machine already calls it the Fourth World War.

Third point. For many people this war happened to be a kind of wake-up call. Some people are saying that for the first time the Russian troops have moved into another country. According to them, "just a few months ago everything was OK, we had wonderful relations with Russia. And all of a sudden everything has changed." Let me remind you that not only a few months ago, but a few years ago, namely six years ago, there was the Russian-Georgian war. This was the Russian aggression against independent Georgia that involved intervention of Russian troops into Georgia and their occupation of two Georgian provinces – now it is about twenty per cent of the Georgian territory. Some technologies of that Russian-Georgian war, used then, are now being exploited in Ukraine, some of them have been refreshed and updated. Unfortunately, in the West lessons of the Russian-Georgian war have not been very well studied, have not been learnt, and the conclusions from it have not been made. It was a widely shared desire for what happened six years ago to blame the President of Georgia Mikheil Saakashvili. As well as another desire to forget as soon as possible what has happened.

But there was no Ukrainian Mikheil Saakashvili in Ukraine three months ago. There was Viktor Yanukovich over there – one of the most pro-Russian and pro-Putin presidents in the whole post-Soviet space. Nevertheless, the Russian troops started military operation on occupation and annexation of Crimea on 20 February, as the Russian Ministry of Defense made known recently. But it was two days before Mr Yanukovich has signed an agreement with three opposition leaders and with three European Foreign Ministers and four days before Mr Yanukovich ran from the territory of Ukraine on a board of the Russian navy ship. Therefore, this Russian aggression has happened not as a result of the Maidan revolution, not as a result of the so-called overthrow of Mr Yanukovich, as Russian propaganda tries to convince populace. The aggression started when pro-Putin Yanukovich was a full-fledged and legitimate President of Ukraine. Therefore, it does not matter whether Mr Mikheil Saakashvili in Georgia or Viktor Yanukovich in Ukraine or whoever else happened to be a leader of the country that is being considered as lying in the spheres of Russian regime's imperial interests. Regardless of personalities, any country might become a target of Mr Putin's aggression.

Fourth. Moreover, twenty plus years ago there was no Russian-Ukrainian war, there was no Russian-Georgian war. But then there were wars in Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Transnistria. If there is something in the Crimean occupation and in the Russian intervention in Eastern Ukraine that we can be thankful for, it is for a crystal clear confirmation and demonstration in the eyes of the whole world of the way how all these operations of early 1990s have been performed by Russian spetsnaz, commandos, the so-called volunteers, as well as by Chechens, Dagestanians, South Ossetians and others. It is open, public, world-wide demonstration of the

methods undertaken in all those cases, meaning Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Transnistria, Russian-Georgian war, Russian-Ukrainian war.

But the earlier cases of the very similar operations with participation of another 'little green men' were occupation and annexation of the territories not in the post-Soviet countries. It was occupation and annexation of three Baltic States in 1940. I would like to attract your attention to the little booklet that has been distributed among the delegates of this Assembly '*Lessons of History. The Silent Occupation of 1940*', that shows some basic methods undertaken now in Ukraine, six years ago in Georgia, twenty plus years in Transnistria, have been tried for the first time in the Baltic States in 1940s. Thank to our Lithuanian hosts for preparing this booklet which is very important for understanding the crucial historic connection between all these cases of aggression.

To be absolutely correct, these methods can be traced even to earlier times, to the so-called 'October Revolution' in Russia. Those methods include military coup, establishing of a terrorist regime, killing, torturing, murdering political opponents, falsifying elections and referendums, launching propaganda machine, building authoritarian or totalitarian regime – either in Russia or in Cuba, or in North Korea or in some other places.

My fifth point concerns Ukraine. Certainly, right now it is a huge topic to discuss. But I would like to mention probably the most important process that goes underway in Ukraine over the last twenty years since the country received its independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union. This is a process of gradual, but historically very fast political Westernization of the country. Sometimes it has also the shape of Ukrainization. Essentially, this is a spread of Western-type institutions on more and more territories of Ukraine and of Western-type behaviour for more and more people in Ukraine. In the election of 1991 the Western orientation, Western values, pro-Western politicians got support of only three out of twenty five Ukrainian oblasts. Then, the frontier between the pro-Western-oriented territories and, I would not say, pro-Russian, but pro-Soviet orientated oblasts was moving fast from North-West of Ukraine to its South-East. For some period of time, there was an impression (incorrect one) that the process stalled with roughly half of the country regularly voting for the so-called Orange Revolution, pro-Western forces, and another half voting for the so-called Blue and White Coalition, the pro-Soviet forces. In reality, the process nevertheless continued and intensified very much, especially under two previous Presidents – Yushenko and Yanukovich. By summer 2013 pro-Western, pro-European forces in Ukraine were clearly winning with a very solid gap over pro-Soviet, the so-called pro-Eurasian forces. Having understood that Ukraine is leaving the pro-Soviet, pro-Eastern, pro-Eurasian sphere of imperial influence, Mr Putin had launched his anti-Ukrainian war.

My next, sixth, point is about pre-history and the ideological basis of this Russian-Ukrainian war. This war is not an accident, it is not something that happened all of a sudden, due to which Mr Putin 'was dragged' into Ukraine, as some people claim, or 'was forced to take Crimea'. No. This war was carefully planned and prepared for many years. There are several milestones on this way I would like to mention.

First of all, for the corporation of the KGB/FSB officers that was ascending to power in Russia in the 1990's and finally got absolute power in Russia in the 2000s, Ukraine was never considered to be a sovereign, independent state. On 25 March 1999, Vyacheslav Chernovil, dissident and human rights activist in Soviet times, the leader of the Peoples' *Ruch* movement, and a candidate in the 1999 presidential elections in Ukraine, was assassinated in a carefully organised car accident on the Road Boryspol-Zolotonosha. The investigation by FBU, security service of

Ukraine, has established that several groups of FSB officers have been sent to Ukraine prior to this accident to fulfil this job.

The beginning of the massive preparation to the whole-fledged aggression against Ukraine can be detected as early as summer 2003 when Mr Putin admitted that it is “completely unacceptable that the cradle of the Russian state, the mother of the Russian cities, Kiev, also the site of the ancient Kiev Pechersk Lavra, lies beyond the boundaries of the current Russian Federation. Later the legend (falsified as it appeared) of the baptism in 989 of the great Prince Vladimir Svyatoslavovich in the Greek city of Khersones, now within city limits of Sevastopol, have been brought to the attention of Mr Putin. Therefore, according to this approach the only two truly holy places of the Eastern Orthodox Church that most of the Russian population belongs to, namely, Kiev and Khersones (or Korsun in Russian, in modern Sevastopol), happen to be on the territory of Ukraine, not in Russia. That was considered unacceptable and the plan was developed to bring these two holy places under the Russian control.

You know that on 5 September, 2004 another presidential candidate in the Ukrainian presidential election, Viktor Yuschenko, was poisoned with dioxin and barely survived.

The radical addition to the methods of propaganda war was massive corruption of the Ukrainian officialdom as well as Russian subversive actions in Ukraine. Possible military solution of the ‘Ukrainian question’ has been adopted in the end of 2004, after the refusal of the then Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma at the airport Vnukovo-2 meeting on 2 December 2004 with Vladimir Putin to use force (including Russian troops) against demonstrators of the Orange Revolution and after the final victory of Viktor Yuschenko in the third round of the presidential elections on 26 December 2004.

One of the versions of the military campaign against Ukraine with a possible use of nuclear strike against Ukrainian troops near Kiev has been published on 21 April 2008 in the magazine *Russkiy Jurnal* under the title *The Operation Mechanical Orange*.

On 4 April 2008 during the NATO summit in Bucharest Vladimir Putin told George Bush that Ukraine is not a real state, while half of the territory of Ukraine is historically Russian one and should actually belong to Russia.

Over the last five years the concept of the so-called *Russian World* has been developed. According to this concept, there are no such ethnic groups as Ukrainians and Byelorussians. Ukrainians, Byelorussians and Russians are the parts of one Russian ethnic nation and should be brought under the same government roof. There are many facts over the last five years can illustrate this. Publicly this ideological concept has been pronounced on 27 July 2013 in Kiev during the official ceremony of 1025 years’ anniversary of the baptism of Rus. A quotation of Mr Putin: “*The civilization choice has been made not only for Ukraine, but for the whole holy Russia. It makes us united nation.*” In that speech Putin for the first time has switched from using with the name Ukraine preposition “in” that in the Russian language is used with the state, but not territory, and that Mr Putin was using before regularly, to preposition “on” that in the Russian language is used with a territory, not a state. So, instead of saying “in Ukraine” he started to say “on Ukraine” with a very distinct flavour of non-recognition of independence and sovereignty of the Ukrainian state.

Two days later, on 29 July 2013, with the attack of the Russia’s Chief Sanitary Doctor Onishchenko on chocolate candy producer *Roschen*, the Russian government began sanitary, trade and economy war against Ukraine.

Later, in November 2013, the economic war has been expanded into diplomatic campaign that forced Mr Yanukovich finally retreat from signing the Ukraine-EU Association Agreement.

Military campaign, as I have mentioned already, was started on 20 February 2014. That has been commemorated in the medal coined on the request of the Russian Ministry of Defense under the title “For the Return of Crimea, February 20 to March 18”.

The new ideological concept of the Russian World has been developed further during Mr Putin’s press conference on 17 April 2014. Then probably for the first time in the history of Russia its leader, Mr Putin, spoke about “*the powerful genetic code of the Russian nation, that makes us, Russians, different from other nations and especially compared to the so-called Western genetic code*”. One of the most important genetic features of the Russian genetic code, Mr Putin found, is the ability “*to die for the common cause publicly, in front of the eyes of the community*”. This is at least the second time that Mr Putin spoke publicly about the Russian genetic code and called for sacrifices of his compatriots. The previous one was on 23 February 2012, the day of the Soviet Army and Navy, during his rally for the third (illegal) term of his presidency. Then Putin cited Russian poet Michail Lermontov “*Let’s die near Moscow, Like our brothers died! And we promised to die...*”

After the press conference of 17 April 2014 the Russian official mass media machine took a new level of virulent heat with key propaganda persons explaining to the public what it meant. One of them Mr Mamontov, whose office, as press claimed, is located inside FSB building on Lubianka, on 29 April has explained that the unfolding war will be the world war, “*the Russia’s war against the rest of the world*”. Sergei Kurginyan, another veteran of propaganda wars, since the times when he worked for the KGB head Kryuchkov, the leader of the August 1991 coup, has clarified that the new war will not be “the Third One”. According to him, the Third World War was the Cold one that ended in early 1990’s. Therefore, the new war is the Fourth World War. Another warrior of propaganda troops, Sergei Markov, on 14 May 2014 has explained in the *Moscow Times* article that the purpose of this new Putin’s war against the Western alliance is to break it into two parts: into hostile Anglo-Saxon world, that should be destroyed, and friendly Continental Europe.

Seventh. As it appears, the current campaign launched by Mr Putin has three basic levels and three main targets.

First level, Ukraine: Ukraine must be either under Mr Putin’s control or it should be destroyed as independent and sovereign state. This is the first chapter in recreation of the Russian World.

Second level: creation of the so-called ‘Russian World’. “Under the roof of the Russian state, the so-called Russian world should unite the ‘largest divided nation of the world’ – Russians.” This slogan is a pure borrowing from the Nazi propaganda of 1930’s in times of their reparations to the Second World War and from Slobodan Milosevic in his attempts to create the so-called Great Serbia in the 1990s. The categories of people included into this so-called Russian World are four:

- first, ethnic Russians, regardless of where they live;
- second, Russian-speaking people, regardless of their ethnicity;
- third, compatriots and their off-springs who ever lived on the territory of the USSR;

- fourth, compatriots and their off-springs who ever lived on the territory of the Russian Empire.

Unfortunately, this Russian World concept is not a fantasy written by weird people. This is an actual law adopted by the Russian State Duma that created the legal basis for the 'protection' compatriots abroad. Moreover, another law has been adopted by Duma that gave legal rights to use Russian troops in other countries beyond the Russian borders.

The third level of this war is the whole world while its target is the Western Alliance. The Western Alliance must be broken into two camps. The first one is Anglo-Saxon World. It includes the US, the UK and the so-called 'Front States'. The term is apparently borrowed from the war against the Apartheid in South Africa. The Front states include Poland and three Baltic States. This camp should be destroyed. Another part of the Western Alliance is the Continental Europe that should either become neutral to new Putin's Russia or could even turn into Russian ally.

Eighth point is a character of this war, namely, unconventional war. This is a new war by many regards, especially by type of warfare being used. Several terms are being used now to describe this war – 'hybrid war', 'unusual war', 'unconventional war'. What is special about it is that the new technologies are being used simultaneously, combining hard and soft power. I would mention some of them in which, as we can see, the aggressor has achieved, as he believes, some level of excellence:

-intelligence;

-counter-intelligence (very serious mistakes and failures of the Western intelligence including NATO happened);

-information, disinformation and propaganda war, which now became one of the most powerful instruments;

-cyber war;

-wide use of special forces and commandos of different types;

-wide use of the so-called non-government actors, including business, NGOs, religious organisations, criminals, private persons that are acting relatively independently, but under the overall guidance and centralized command;

-wide use of subversive actions;

-new (terrorist) tactics using women and children as human shields in attacks on military and civil objects;

-energy warfare;

-economic warfare, including trade, sanitary, financial and other instruments;

-corruption that has been developed to a new level, to almost full buy-out of the political and military leaderships of the targeted countries, with Ukraine happens to be one of the very clear examples;

-the 'fifth column' – in Ukraine, in other post-Soviet states and in the West, including Europe;

-the so-called 'Putintern', the Putin International, a new combination of different political parties and politicians that are being supported by Mr Putin and who are supporting Mr Putin.

One of the most important observations on this unconventional warfare is that there are no more clearly defined and visible geographical, political or military borders. Borders can be everywhere, within each country. This is probably one of the most specific characteristics of this new Fourth World War.

Ninth point is necessity to have a counter strategy. How to respond to this unconventional war? It is now a time to create, elaborate, and develop a counter strategy. Without such a strategy it is impossible to achieve any serious results.

First of all, it is necessary to understand that this is a war. This is not a joke, this is not an accident, this is not a mistake, this is not a bad dream. It will not go away by itself. This is a war. As in any war, you either win or lose. And it is up to you what choice you will make.

Second, it is crucial to understand the essence of the beast, which is aggressive Putin's regime. It is aggressive internally, within the country, – against own people, against the Chechens' movement, against the democratic opposition, against business people. And it is aggressive externally – against Georgia, against Ukraine, against the Baltic countries and others. Unfortunately, this regime became much more powerful recently with its victories in Ukraine, after it received substantial support from significant portion of the Russian population. So, right now we are dealing not only with the regime, but also with significant part of the Russian society that became visibly revisionist and revanchists. One needs to understand this fact.

Third, it is important to understand the necessity of preparation of the medium- to long-term strategy, like "Fourteen Points of Woodrow Wilson" in the First World War, or the "Atlantic Charter" in the Second World War, or Winston Churchill's Fulton speech, or Truman Doctrine. It is important to understand the problem, to understand the long-term targets of the counter strategy and identify main instruments to achieve those targets.

Fourth, it is necessary to understand the mistakes already been made. I won't mention them, but if there are questions I am ready to talk about this.

Fifth, it is important to come to understanding and agreement on the medium-term and long-term targets of this counter strategy.

And sixth, it is crucial to start to implement the strategy, regularly correcting the course. There is a prepared draft document for the consideration of the appropriate authorities of the NATO countries. It is now under necessary scrutiny. It is the first step, but certainly it is not the last one. I would like to invite everybody here to work on this document and on similar documents.

Tenth point. It is impossible to discuss all elements of the counter strategy right now. But I'd like to mention at least some crucial elements of it.

First, in purely *military area*, it is quite clear that victory in this war cannot be achieved without serious adjustments made to the existing military doctrine. Certainly, soft power is wonderful,

but by itself it does not deter the use of force. As we have seen, in this so-called hybrid war the traditional, conventional military methods do not work fully.

Second area which became one of the most important in this attack – *information, disinformation and propaganda warfare*. We see that one country after another falls victims of this propaganda war. The first victim of that warfare was significant part of the Russian population, some part of Ukrainian population, populations of other countries, including post-Soviet countries and countries of Western and Central Europe as well. This is a very delicate issue because there are no readily available instruments that would work also in defense of the most cherished freedoms – freedom of information and freedom of speech. We need to develop something that would preserve these freedoms and nevertheless would not allow unlimited use of propaganda warfare which appears as a very dangerous instrument.

In the area of *international law*, it is absolutely crucial to develop a new definition of aggression. There is the definition of aggression that has been adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1974. Now, with the new instruments used in this unconventional war this definition should be updated. In 1939, when the Soviet Union attacked Finland, the League of Nations has discussed this issue and within two weeks has taken the decision to expulse aggressor out of the League of Nations. On a contrast, today, 75 years later, the aggressor has already undertaken two absolutely clear undisputed attacks on independent countries, has occupied territories, has annexed Crimea, but nothing similar to the decision of 1939 appeared. One need to think what should be done to aggressor in the new environment. The legal result of the implementation of this strategy should be kind of a Helsinki Act-2, legal confirmation of borders in Europe that must to be signed by all member states, including the Russian administration, either the current one or a new one.

Area of politics. Theory of democratic peace claims that democracies do not fight each other. Overwhelming practice supports this theory. That is why the only way to solve the problem strategically is to make Russia a democratic state, regardless of how long it would take. This is the only solution to this international crisis and to all these wars – from the Russian-Ukrainian one to the Forth World one. To some extent this problem can be compared with the Germany problem in the Second World War. By definition this should be a very special part of the strategy, but nobody can assure that a new war will be started, better prepared, with more bloodshed and more casualties, unless Russia sooner or later becomes a democratic state. Only then one can say that a more or less stable world is achieved, with reasonably lasting peace and Europe whole, free, democratic and with peace with all its members and neighbors.

Thank you.