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The Government Policy

Russia wanted to use the idea of humanitarian aid to Donbas in order to send some of its military units to Ukraine. Due to maximum transparency, Ukrainian government has managed to impose its own rules as regards organization of military convoy: inspection of the cargo, its reloading to different trucks and escort by OSCE observers. It is important for the government to follow the plan and prevent convoy from being used for provocations.

President created a coordination center to plan reforms — National Council of Reforms. A powerful message is government acknowledging that every sphere of state functioning needs a public policy. No changes may take place without consultations with stake-holders and without a document, which defines overall strategy for reforms. Proceedings of National Council will be united in “Strategy 2020”, which will become a road map for Ukraine’s accession in the EU.

“Trojan horse” of Russian humanitarian aid



ATO progress in the East and territorial split of separatists into several groups make Russia look for new ways to support pro-Russian gunmen. National Security and Defense Council regularly informs about shelling of Ukrainian troops in the areas close to Ukrainian-Russian border which is done from the territory of eastern neighbor. Since ATO forces manage to hold the positions, another Kremlin’s step was to send Russian humanitarian convoy to Donbas due to deterioration of the humanitarian situation in the region.

Russian humanitarian convoy as an attempt to support pro-Russian gunmen in Donbas

According to Valeriy Chaliy, deputy head of Presidential Administration, on August 8, 2014 humanitarian convoy, escorted by Russian “peacekeepers”, already headed for the Ukrainian border. It should be noted that part of Russian regular troops, which are based near Ukrainian-Russian border for several months, have insignia of peacekeeping corps, which are not sanctioned by the UN Security Council.

Ukrainian government immediately contacted Red Cross International Committee, which confirmed that the Russian actions had not been sanctioned. Due to active diplomatic work of Ukrainian officials, international community promptly delivered straightforward statement that any crossing of the border by military units will be treated as an invasion.

**Straightforward position
of international community —
any crossing of the border by military units,
even under pretext of humanitarian mission,
will be treated as an invasion**

Ukrainian officials assured that humanitarian aid from Russia would be delivered, but after its inspection in Kharkiv region. It will also be reloaded to Red Cross trucks. Except for Russian cargo, aid from Ukraine, the USA and the EU will be sent to Luhansk. The convoy will be accompanied by the OSCE observers. However, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov said that the trucks would not be changed. Besides, the convoy is going to cross the border not in Kharkiv region, but in the area controlled by separatists.

Representatives of self-proclaimed Luhansk People's Republic do not participate in the work of contact group. It should be noted that on the territory controlled by the ATO forces there is no shortage of food and water. It is towns controlled by pro-Russian separatists where the humanitarian situation is critical. Moreover, terrorists take efforts to aggravate the situation. Therefore, there is question how the aid will be distributed in these towns and whether local people will receive it in full.

Russia's attempt to send troops disguised as peace-

keepers accompanying humanitarian cargo would have transformed the region in frozen conflict zone as moves of Ukrainian troops would be constrained. Thanks to consolidated position of international community and diplomatic work of officials, so far this threat has been diverted. The fact that Russia decided to send humanitarian aid anyway, even without military escort, may have several explanations:

- Moscow makes a step to improve its international image and creates positive news background for its domestic media, showing how it supports Donbas;
- The aid is delivered to Luhansk to prove that actual Kremlin's motives last week was to deliver humanitarian cargo, but not troops;
- Humanitarian convoy is used for provocations (for instance, terrorists will attack the convoy and Russia will accuse ATO forces) in order to bring Russian "peacekeepers" to Ukraine.

**Ukrainian government has managed to establish
a framework for Russian humanitarian aid.
The most important thing is to ensure that the terms
are followed and to prevent provocations on the way**

So far the Ukrainian government was able to prevent Russian scenarios and mobilize support of international community. A positive thing is that the government has managed to introduce framework for humanitarian aid and to underline that there are several sources for humanitarian cargo, first and foremost being Ukraine. The task for government troops is to ensure cargo escort and prevent provocations on part of Russia and pro-Russian gunmen. Another challenge is to inspect the cargo meticulously regardless of the time it may take.

National council of reforms as a presidential policy tool

President of Ukraine established National Council of Reforms — the agency responsible for elaboration and implementation of reforms "for the public, together with the public and under the public control". It is a response to experts' criticism against Ukrainian government. The experts claim that lack of results in reform implementation is caused by lack of comprehensive vision how to consistently transform the country.

**President wants that reforms in Ukraine are planned
and implemented "for the public, together with the
public and under the public control"**

**In Ukraine a prime task of politicians
is to replicate draft laws, but not to make
comprehensive strategies for changes**

No ministry in Ukraine grounds its work on public policies — documents which define framework for a state body regardless of the person who is charge of it. In Ukraine officials do not elaborate public policies. It seems that a prime task for politicians is to produce new draft laws. According to different estimates, for the last years more than 12 thousand draft laws were submitted to Verkhovna Rada, yet quantity is not transformed in quality.

As a matter of comparison, in Great Britain government decisions are based on 223 public policies. These documents are in open access on the websites of state agencies. They provide details on what problems a policy is aimed to solve, what actions should be taken, what stake holders have been consulted in the process and what legislative acts the policy is based on. Dmytro Shymkiv, deputy head of Presidential Administration acknowledged that one of the government problems in Ukraine is lack of public policies.

Petro Poroshenko went even further and said that all the reform projects elaborated by the National Council of Reforms should be joined into “Strategy 2020”. He also approved an idea to create temporary agencies for reforms which will not be integrated into ministries or other state bodies as corrupt state bodies with command and administrative management logic are unable to reform themselves.

President called judicial reform “reform of reforms”

President called judicial reform “reform of reforms” as it is independent and honest courts that are to ensure rule of law, but not rule of power. Petro Poroshenko also insists on immediate adoption of anticorruption strategy and law on anticorruption bureau. Other important areas to be reformed are healthcare, civil service and police. President defined investment attraction, anti-trust changes and deregulation as priority tasks. Petro Poroshenko is sure that in a short run the number of controlling agencies will be reduced from 83 to 19.

The final aim of “Strategy 2020” is Ukraine submitting an application for the EU accession. Framework for the strategy will be the Association Agreement with the EU, which is a sort of road map what changes Ukraine needs to implement in order to meet the European standards. Meanwhile, ratification of the Association Agreement is artificially postponed, which is heavily criticized by the society.

A positive thing is a transparent competition among NGOs to delegate their representatives to the National Council

The key principles of the National Council of Reforms are consultations with experts and transparency of government activities. A positive thing is a transparent competition among NGOs to delegate their representatives to the National Council. The official announcement in mass media included clear requirements for the candidates, application package and deadlines. According to Dmytro Shymkiv, as of August 7, 2014 100 candidates submitted their application for four positions in the Council. Besides, experts who will not be accepted to the National Council of Reforms, will be able to work in the Advisory Council and expert groups.

Petro Poroshenko’s propositions on reforms are an attempt to seize the initiative from the government whose work in the sphere of reforms was unsatisfactory for the last six months

Establishment of the National Council of Reforms shows that President is eager to lead the changes demanded by post-revolutionary society. For six months the government pronounced some statements that reforms are needed, but the progress was achieved only in tax reform and in higher education reform. Changes in healthcare system, courts and law enforcement agencies, which have top priority for President, are slowed down by resistance of political influence groups and the system itself. Therefore, Petro Poroshenko’s propositions are an attempt to seize the initiative from the government, though, according to the current Constitution, President has limited authority in terms of state policy implementation. A serious advantage of the new agency responsible for reforms is public nature of member selection as well as declarations of transparency in its work.

Economic Situation

Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine offered package of economic reforms, which encompasses changes in tax and budget legislation and lays ground for budget decentralization. It is the second version of tax reform proposed by the government in a month. There is no cooperation between different ministries in terms of reform elaboration.

Russian sanctions against Ukrainian produce aggravate food crisis in Crimea. Ban on dairy products resulted in their shortage on the peninsula. In their turn, international sanctions related to ban on flights to Crimea resulted in bankruptcy of Russian low-cost "Dobrolet".

Cabinet of Ministers presented package of economic reforms

Last week Prime Minister presented "Package of economic growth" which consists of a concept on tax reform, concept of payroll tax reform, suggestions on financial decentralization and establishment of Financial Investigations Service.

Yatsenyuk's "Package of economic growth" consists of a concept on tax reform, concept of payroll tax reform, suggestions on financial decentralization and establishment of Financial Investigations Service

In the context of proposed reforms there were registered only draft laws "On grounds for prevention and fight against economic crimes" and amendments to Budget, Tax and Customs Code.

It is already the second concept of tax reform proposed by government for the last month. It was written by Ministry of Finances and State Fiscal Service. The previous concept was elaborated by Ministry of Economy, which proposed to decrease number of taxes down to eight, to introduce differentiated VAT rate, to cut single social tax from 36.77% to 18%, to reconcile accounting and taxation, to ensure budget decentralization. The question is why ministries do not coordinate their efforts and present a new tax reform every month.

Changes do not decrease tax pressure on economic agents as many duties are transformed into already existing taxes

A positive thing about the concept is decrease in tax number down to nine. However, it does not decrease tax pressure on economic agents due to the fact that many



duties are transformed into already existing taxes. In order to decrease tax pressure, it is necessary to revise rates and taxation basis for the industries where tax evasion is the most significant. The concept also does not include VAT reform, though this tax is believed to be the most corrupt one.

Easier tax administration — introduction of single quarterly reporting period — will positively influence economic agents and tax agencies. Another step is to introduce electronic administration of all taxes and dues.

Establishment of Financial Investigations Service will significantly decrease number of civil servants who work in the area of economic security. The authorities of the agency described in the draft law are unclear. It is important that this body fulfill functions of prevention and fight against economic crimes, but not pressure on business.

Concept of payroll tax reform will not solve the problem of "shadow salaries". It is proposed that for minimum

wage single social tax will increase from 36.76% to 37% or 41%, while for other amounts single social tax rate will be lower - 19% or 15%. It does not mention how the budget losses will be compensated. This innovation decreases tax burden on entrepreneurs who pay taxes, but it does not provide additional stimuli for bringing salaries out of shadow as overall tax burden does not decrease.

Concept of payroll tax reform will not solve the problem of “shadow salaries”

The problem may be solved through reform of stock market which would allow non-government life insurance, decrease of overall tax burden on salary income to the European average — 36.1% and introduction of efficient sanctions against businessmen who violate labor legislation. In the short run it will lead to budget losses which may be compensated through review of taxation basis and rates for other taxes.

The problem may be solved through reform of stock market

The draft law “On amendments to the Budget Code (on budget decentralization)” enlarges income basis for local budgets as part of taxes and dues will be transferred from state budget to local ones. It is also proposed to introduce new kinds of transfers, in particular, basic subsidy, and a new system to equalize state taxes (income tax and individual income tax) according to income level of every citizen. These initiatives are positive, but they only lay ground for budget decentralization.

Amendments to Budget Code lay ground to budget decentralization, nothing more

A positive development is that budget-funded entities get a right to accumulate its own funds in banking institutions. However, in this case the entity loses its status. This provision is unlikely to be popular as no one would like to lose the possibility to get loans and cover cash gaps from single treasury account.

Another problem is cancellation of threshold volume of state debt and guaranteed state debt at the end of budget period (nowadays it makes up 60% of nominal GDP), which may influence economic security of Ukraine. This issue does not concern budget decentralization, so the government just wants to avoid responsibility for surpassing 60% threshold of state debt which may happen quite soon.

For budget decentralization a specific sequence of reforms is needed

For budget decentralization the following sequence of reforms is needed: sector reforms — education, health-care, utilities — which will define actual volume of expenses needed; budget and tax reform — revision of local taxes and duties and inter-budget transfers; introduction of middle-range forecast of local budgets coupled with target program method of local budget fulfillment; administrative reform will help to divide authorities between local and national bodies; budget decentralization itself — transfer of authorities from center to local level with respective financial resources.

With the trade war with Russia spiralling, Crimea turns out most affected

Socio-economic situation in Crimea keeps deteriorating, with Ukrainian companies finding it more difficult to operate on the peninsula. One of the main reasons behind this is the trade war with Ukraine and the reverse impact of sanctions that Russia introduced against Ukraine.

Sanctions that Russia introduced against Ukraine have a reverse impact in Crimea

As a result of the ban on the import of Ukrainian dairy products into Russia, sales outlets in Crimea are suffering from dairy products deficit. The problem is aggravated by the fact that Ukraine was the main supplier of raw milk

to Crimea for further processing. In order to solve shortage of dairy products, Russia is elaborating several projects aimed at the creation of milk factories in Crimea within the state program on the development of agricultural sector. The aim of the projects is to provide dairy products to all Crimean residents. However, even in case such projects are implemented in a short period of time, such factories will be able to effectively operate only in one year or even more.

Russia uses both systemic and single restrictive measures in trade war with Ukraine. In particular, at the beginning of August the Russian agricultural controlling body in charge of Crimea and Sevastopol banned the import of two consignments of cattle and sausages from Ukraine due

to the alleged violations of delivery norms by Ukrainian producers.

Active implementation of Russian legislation in Crimea creates additional problems for Crimean residents and Ukrainian companies. Ukrainian companies which decided to continue operating on the Crimean market had to re-register in accordance with the Russian legislation. The time period allowed for this registration runs from July 1 until December 31, 2014.

**Implementation of Russian legislation in Crimea
has a negative impact on Crimean residents
and Ukrainian companies**

There is an increasing number of reports on the illegal corporate raiding of Ukrainian companies which had not been registered according to the Russian legislation. The armed seizure of Kyivstar office in Simferopol caused a stir among the public. As a result, Kyivstar company decided to suspend the provision of its services in Crimea. MTS Ukraine also experienced similar problems, resulting in the temporal suspension of the provision of its services. Now, this mobile operator is serving its clients on the basis of technical roaming at tariffs close to those that Crimean residents had before. Technical indicators of those mobile networks belong to a new Crimean operator “K-Telekom” which is operating under the brand of Win Mobile.

International and Ukrainian sanctions have been imposed on Russian airlines

International sanctions against Russia regarding the prohibition of flights to Crimea yielded some results. Russian airline “Dobrolet” announced that it had stopped operating flights for an indefinite period of time as a result of European sanctions.

**The bankruptcy of Russian Dobrolet
as a result of sanctions**

Dobrolet is a subsidiary of Aeroflot. It was supposed to become a low-cost alternative to other airlines. As soon as European sanctions were introduced, foreign lessor decided to have its aircrafts back and the insurance on the leased aircrafts was cancelled.

**The EU and US fear to introduce sanctions
against big Russian airlines**

Such measures may be now applied to all airlines that operate flights to Crimea and use leased aircrafts. But the EU and the US do not want to introduce similar sanctions in regard to major Russian airlines, as they fear reverse counter-measures from Russia. If Russia forbids international airlines from crossing its own airspace, this may lead to a change in travel routes and will affect flight prices. Russia already announced the introduction of re-

strictions on flights operated by Ukrainian airlines. Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev announced that Ukrainian airlines were prohibited from operating transit flights in a number of countries (Georgia, Armenia, Turkey, and Azerbaijan). Such a restriction will have a major impact on prices and travel routes, as the flight to the aforementioned destinations will now take longer. In case Russia closes transit flights over its territory, Ukrainian airlines will have to change the travel routes completely as well as increase prices, which will eventually affect their competitiveness.

**Ukraine also introduced sanctions
against Russian airlines**

Now Russia keeps operating flights to Crimea. Simferopol airport serves around 110-120 flights daily, which are operated by 25 airlines from more than 30 Russian cities. Ukraine, in its turn, introduced sanctions against Russian airlines. At the end of July, 13 Russian airlines, in particular Aeroflot, S7 Airlines, Ak Bars Aero, Gasprom Avia, and Ural Airlines, were fined by the Ukrainian State Air Traffic Services for UAH 106 million (USD 8.86 million) for operating flights to Crimea, which Ukraine considers occupied territory.

Political competition

Vitali Klitschko has been Mayor of Kyiv and Head of Kyiv City State Administration for two months now. During this period Vitali Klitschko managed to fulfil some items of his election program. The latter contains seven chapters with the priorities such as fight against corruption, transparent and effective management of state budget, investments, security and well-being of Kyiv residents, and close communication with the public.

Klitschko's appointments to public positions have drawn harsh criticism. The denial of access to public information has also come in for criticism as it violates Ukrainian legislation. From now on, Ukrainian nation-

als will not be able to obtain information on draft decisions, memos, and orders. Both Klitschko's HR policy and the denial of access to public information are regarded as negative aspects of Klitschko's activity in the position of Mayor of Kyiv and Head of Kyiv City State Administration.

It has been a long time since Ukrainian oligarchs become key political players. However, the Revolution of Dignity provided for the changes in the rules of political game. If businessmen want to influence political processes in Ukraine, they ought to come out of the shadow and express their stance on the future of Ukrainian state and much-needed reforms.

First results of Klitschko's term in office

In order to implement his program, Vitali Klitschko needs Kyiv local administration coffers replenished. Kyiv authorities turned out incapable of replenishing local budget on their own. For this reason, UDAR parliamentary faction backed unpopular government initiatives proposed by Arseniy Yatseniuk. Thus, as a result of political agreements, Kyiv local budget received financial assistance worth UAH 1.8 billion. Given the general budget cuts and reduction of social programs, this financial assistance may help Vitali Klitschko tackle the budget deficit and prepare Ukrainian capital for the heating season.

**As a result of political agreements,
Kyiv local budget received financial assistance
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One of the main problems faced by Klitschko is the absence of team of reformers. As MPs from UDAR party expressed no wish to give up their mandate and work at local level, UDAR leader was forced to engage representatives of big business, property developers, as well as members of Oleksandr Popov's and Leonid Chernovetskiy's teams. These functionaries were granted positions of deputies heads and heads in public enterprises and departments. Most of them are suspected of participation in shadowy schemes and non-transparent manipulations. For example, ex-deputy head of Kyiv City State Council during Oleksandr Popov's term in office Ruslan Kramarenko is still in charge of the most corruption-stricken activities, such as land, financial and investment programmes. The fact that former mem-



bers of Yanukovych-Chernovetskiy team are now part of Klitschko's team question the possibility of lustration in Kyiv. Klitschko's HR policy has drawn much criticism from both journalists and the general public.

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from both journalists and the general public**

The denial of access to public information on the official website of Kyiv City State Council also came in for harsh criticism. Kyiv Administration responds to official requests, but Ukrainians cannot find the information they need on the website.

In his election program Vitali Klitschko pledged to dismantle barricades and tents on the Maidan Square without applying brutal force as well as remove street kiosks, increase the number of kindergartens and park zones in residential areas, protect Bilychi forest, and forbid traffic in Andriyivskiy Descent.

Klitschko has fulfilled his promise to dismantle tents and barricades in the Maidan. Klitschko attempted to solve this problem through talks, but the Maidan activists refused to give in and expressed no desire to vacate the traffic zone. Vitali Klitschko took a risky political decision, as the use of police during the dismantlement of tents was heavily criticized and compared to the 2013-2014 winter events.

Kyiv Mayor solved the problem of salary exposure, which was to be paid off to public workers in the amount of UAH 370 million. Another Klitschko's success is the return of Bilychi forest to Kyiv municipality and the prohibition of traffic in Andriyivskiy Descent during weekends and holidays. All other promises remained on paper or were partially fulfilled.

Though the solution for utilities problems has been announced as program priority, real steps in this direction have not been taken. Many Kyiv residents were disconnected from hot water supply. There are no new kindergartens in Kyiv, and no money was allocated for the maintenance and development of green zones.

There is no progress in utilities reform and infrastructure improvement

The statements of local authorities regarding the construction of bridges and metro stations are overtly populist. The issues of street kiosks still needs solution. Despite the fact that they offer many jobs, such street points of sale result in hundreds of millions of hryvnias being circulated within the shadow sector of economy. After demonstrative de-installation of some booths in 20-meter metro zone, Hidropark and Trukhaniv island, the fight against illegal trade outlets has stopped.

Ukrainian oligarchs should become public politicians

After the collapse of the Soviet Union there was a rapid growth of crime rate, property redistribution and opaque privatization of big industrial objects in Ukraine. It was right after the fall of the Soviet Union that big financial and industrial groups linked to specific region, industry and political elites were created. Ukrainian oligarchs became key players in Ukrainian politics. Participation of the rich in political life of their country is not a crime, yet this participation should be public and transparent. Oligarchs should become public politicians and declare their political platform and ideology. In addition, self-identification as to the state policy is also essential to oligarchs.

Participation of the rich in political life of their country is right as long as it is transparent and legal

In the 1990s the most influential financial groups were from Donetsk (Yukhym Zviatilskiy, Rinat Akhmetov, the Kluyev brothers, Serhiy Taruta), Kharkiv (Yevhen Kushnariov, Oleksandr Feldman, Oleksandr Kahanovskiy), Dnipropetrovsk (Serhiy Tihipko, Pavlo Lazarenko, Yulia Tymoshenko, Ihor Kolomoyskiy, the Franchuk

brothers) and Kyiv (the Surkis brothers, Viktor Pinchuk, Vasyl Khmelnytskyi).

Each of these financial-industrial groups had its own factions of deputies, ministries in the government and influence in the regions. Leaders of these groups tried to take central power. For the last twenty years, clans of oligarch have been exerting direct influence on the creation and directions of domestic and foreign policy of Ukraine. All Ukrainian presidents relied on oligarchs.

In 2010 Donetsk elites gained a victory in Kyiv when Viktor Yanukovich won presidential elections. As a result of Yanukovich's victory, big business and financial flows were adjusted to Yanukovich and "his family". Oligarchs were openly sponsoring political parties, backing candidates in specific constituencies and managing state affairs.

Most political players have gathered around groups of Kolomoyskiy, Firtash-Liovochkin and Poroshenko

After the fall of the oligarch regime, the situation became more complicated and confused. Representatives of big business do not openly support any politi-

cal parties or projects. Most political players concentrate around groups of Kolomoyskiy, Firtash-Lyovochkin and Poroshenko.

The biggest competition is seen between Ihor Kolomoyskiy and Firtash-Lyovochkin alliance. Each of these groups has powerful media and financial resources. For example, now there is a public conflict between Oleh Lyashko, who is associated with Serhiy Lyovochkin, and Deputy Chairman of Dnipropetrovsk Regional State Administration Borys Filatov, a member of Kolomoyskiy's team.

Filatov accused Lyashko of self-promotion in ATO zone as well as disclosure of confidential military information via the Internet. In turn, TV channel Inter presented several materials showing Ihor Kolomoyskiy in a negative light.

Petro Poroshenko prefers to stay away from the conflict between the two biggest groups of influence in

Ukrainian politics. Political tug-of-war between two political players always benefits a third party.

Petro Poroshenko prefers to stay away from the conflict between the two biggest groups of influence in Ukrainian politics

Ukrainian oligarchs should demonstrate an open political stance on reforms as well as they should stop playing a dirty political game. Another important aspect of political competition is a competition of programs and policy papers, where political parties should expound on their strategic vision of Ukraine's future.

Competition between parties based on electoral technologies and manipulations is unacceptable, being a relic from the Kuchma-Yanukovych times.

The aim of the publication is to provide objective information on current political events in Ukraine and thorough analysis of major tendencies in domestic politics. Such analysis will assist in setting priorities in the process of implementing reforms in Ukraine and in evaluating quality of state decisions from the viewpoint of their impact and sustainability. Special attention is paid to evaluation of political competition in Ukraine and ability of key political players to address challenges.

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