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**ACTIONS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION REGARDING UKRAINE  
AND THEIR IMPACT ON RUSSIA'S IMAGE IN  
THE GLOBAL MEDIA**

**Introduction.** Considering the fact that in today's world the role of global media, which act as non-governmental players in the international arena, is steadily growing, and they are increasingly able to influence the behavior of international actors and build their image, taking into account this area becomes especially important in analysis and evaluation of the states actions in general. The Russian Federation is a controversial subject of international relations, whose actions are difficult to predict. This controversial conduct of the state can be traced concerning Ukraine first and foremost. This paper is devoted to the analysis of how the actions committed by the Russian Federation towards Ukraine are presented by the global media, which are currently advocated by such information companies as the BBC and CNN, and how this affects Russia's perception of the world.

**Review of recent publications.** The formation of the state images is one of the popular and relevant topics that attract the attention of many researchers nowadays. A large number of scholars deal with the issue of constructing a state image. The works of well-known foreign scholars S. Anholt and K. Dinny and domestic researchers A. Vendel, O. Harbera, O. Yevtushenko, and others are important. The role of the media in modern society is highlighted in the works of L. Artz, D. Van Belle, F. Koban, P. Robinson, P. Seib, R. Fröhlich, M. Lebedeva, N. Salim, I. Sidorskaya, who research this issue within the paradigm of the possible political influence of the media, determining their status and importance in world politics.

**Objectives of the paper.** The paper aims to review the materials of global media in the context of shaping Russia's image in the world and to analyze the coverage of Russian aggression against Ukraine by the global media based on the example of BBC and CNN companies.

**Results of research.** The current level of distant relations between the world community and the Russian Federation dates back to 2014. Russia's disregard for international law, aggression against Ukraine, and hostile action against Western countries have led to policies of sanctions and other restrictions by the international community. The events sparked a debate on the need to revise strategies for cooperation with Russia, moving from the paradigm of a strategic partnership to considering Russia as one of the main sources of instability both in neighbouring countries and among member states of European Union [5].

The events in the Crimea, as well as recent approaches to destabilizing the situation, especially in eastern Ukraine, have drawn serious criticism from the international community. At the same time, such a move strengthened the image of the Russian Federation in the eyes of the world community as a great power with significant opportunities for the projection of power, as well as the reputation of Vladimir Putin as an audacious and confident leader. Besides, events have demonstrated Russia's global propensity for risk and jumping above its head, along with improved capabilities for warfare and non-war operations in many areas – ground, air, space, marine, cyber, and information [3].

BBC World provides access to the profile of the Crimea, where the issue of annexation in the context of the Ukrainian crisis is assigned a separate column. The page describes the Crimea as the center of the worst East-West crisis since the Cold

War after Ukraine's pro-Moscow President Viktor Yanukovich was ousted as a result of fierce protests in Kyiv. Western countries consider the referendum illegal, as do the use of force by the Kremlin to seize control of the Crimean peninsula. According to the profile, the origins of Russian aggression date back to 1783, when the Crimea was annexed during the reign of Catherine II, remaining part of the empire until 1954 – the transfer of the peninsula to Ukraine under Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev [1].

A separate page on the media situation in the Crimea highlights the dominance of pro-Russian media on the peninsula, and most pro-Ukrainian colleagues have been ousted since the annexation. According to Reporters Without Borders, prominent media and journalists who opposed the annexation were "either forced to remain silent or seek refuge in Kyiv". Moscow has been accused of blocking the access to Ukrainian media by media freedom organizations [2].

Another reason for the corresponding reaction of the global media to the actions of the Russian Federation is the Russian aggression against Ukraine in Donbas. According to BBC articles in 2014, Russia was accused by the world community of organizing separatist movements in the eastern regions of Ukraine, despite the Kremlin's attempts to deny its involvement. After two months of fighting and the deaths of hundreds of people, Moscow's strong propaganda campaign against the new leadership in Kyiv is now accompanied by growing evidence of Russian troops presence in ORDLO [4].

CNN analyzes and monitors the events that led to the crisis in Ukraine. According to the research, after Russia annexed the Crimea in 2014 due to tensions with its neighbor, world leaders managed to conclude a shaky peace deal in 2015. But violence in the conflict zone in eastern Ukraine continues – in 2016 the number of victims increased, and in 2017 the outbreak of hostilities began. According to CNN, the sanctions and the events that preceded their introduction reflect the tug of war between East and West for Ukraine's future [7].

The escalation in the Sea of Azov, which took place on November 25, 2018, did not escape the attention of global media. Assessing the effect that Russia's escalation is having on the conflict as a whole, the BBC points out that the confrontation may flare up again. Pro-Russian insurgents in eastern Ukraine have Russian heavy weapons, while Ukraine is gaining Western support [6]. CNN has published a 2019 report entitled "UN tribunal rules Russia must release detained Ukrainian sailors", which emphasizes the position of the UN International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, which stated that Russia should release sailors immediately and called on both countries not to escalate the conflict.

Speaking about the trends of 2019-2021, one can see a decrease in the number of media notes on the Russian Federation in the context of Russian-Ukrainian relations compared to their rise in 2014-2016. New developments in the world in the context of the coronavirus pandemic have shifted the focus from covering Russia's actions towards Ukraine to another level. The pages of news agencies are mainly devoted to economic issues, Russia's return to the Council of Europe, the poisoning of the Russian opposition leader, and the palace of the Russian president, which are far from the events in modern Ukraine.

**Conclusion.** The image of the Russian Federation in the context of Russian-Ukrainian relations is covered by the global media, taking into account the actions taken by this state towards Ukraine. The BBC and CNN represent the annexation of the Crimea and Russia's aggression in the Donbas as illegal acts blamed by the international community and must be accompanied by sanctions against the aggressor country. The case of MN-17 and the escalation in the Sea of Azov contributed to even greater condemnation of Russia and certain losses to the country's authority. Trends in the image of the Russian Federation in recent years have been characterized by a partial shift in emphasis on Russian-Ukrainian relations to the global pandemic, economic, Russian-US relations, and the world community's response to Alexei Navalny's poisoning of Russia's violating fundamental rights and freedoms.

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