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**THE DYNAMICS OF RELATIONSHIP CHANGES BETWEEN  
NATO AND THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AFTER  
THE CRIMEA ANNEXATION AND THE EASTERN  
UKRAINE CONFLICT**

**Introduction.** Official relations between Russia and NATO were established in 1991 at the founding meeting of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council. In the same year the Strategic Concept was adopted which identified updated security approaches. In 1994, as well as most of former socialist countries, Russia joined the Partnership for Peace program [4], the main program of cooperation in the field of security and defense between NATO and partner countries. In 1997, the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between Russia and NATO was signed, which declared the pursuit of a common goal – building a lasting and universal peace in the Euro-Atlantic area [6].

Though, later relationship between NATO and Russia started getting worse. Initially, NATO enlargement (1999, 2004), then Yugoslav intervention (1999), US exit from the ABM Treaty (2001), invasion of Iraq (2003), support for anti-Russian sentiment in Ukraine and Georgia, South Ossetian conflict (2008), the Ukrainian crisis (2013), the Crimea annexation (2014), the conflict in the east of Ukraine which is still in progress – all these events had a significant impact on the relations between Russia and NATO.

**Review of recent publications.** The issue under consideration has been studied in the research works of native and foreign scholars and discussed in numerous periodicals (“Korrespondent”, “Dzerkalo tyzhnia” [1], “Rossiyskaya gazeta” [6], “Segodnya” [7], “BBC news” [8], “WP Wiadomości” [9]). Nevertheless, this issue needs to be investigated more thoroughly.

**Objective of the paper** is to analyze the existing relations between NATO and the Russian Federation, in particular, to analyze the dynamics of their changes over the last years under the influence of the Ukrainian-Russian conflict.

**Results of the research.** In February 2014, the Crimea being part of Ukraine, was annexed by the Russian Federation. When annexing the Peninsula, Russia broke so many international agreements that listing them all seems to be a challenge. To provide a few examples, Putin trampled upon Article 2 of the United Nations Charter, the Helsinki Final Act and the Russia–Ukraine Treaty of Friendship [3].

This caused mostly negative international reaction. The Western community (NATO member states, the European Union) evaluated Russia’s actions as aggression, occupation and annexation of the part of Ukraine’s territory, undermining its territorial integrity. Due to the Russian aggression in Ukraine, NATO expressed a clear and agreed position via the statements of the leaders of the organization and the decisions taken collectively. It should be noted that already on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 2014, during the North Atlantic Council meeting the members of the Alliance gave a clear negative assessment of the actions of the Russian Federation on the territory of the Crimea and expressed their support for Ukraine. It was stated in the document as follows: "Military actions against the armed forces of Ukraine are a violation of international law and contradict the principles of the NATO-Russia Council and the Partnership for Peace. NATO members will continue to support Ukraine’s sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and the rights of the Ukrainian people to determine their future independently without external interference." [2].

Special attention should be devoted to the 17<sup>th</sup> of March, when the pseudo-referendum in the Crimea, which had been held a day before, was considered.

Stressing the illegality and illegitimacy of the pseudo-declarations which took place due to Russian military intervention, the Council members simultaneously urged the Russian Federation not to take any steps towards the annexation of the Crimea, which would be a direct violation of the UN Charter, to fulfill all its international obligations and to return "on the path of dialogue and seeking a peaceful, political solution through the direct dialogue with the government of Ukraine" [7].

In response to Russia-Ukraine conflict in the East of Ukraine, NATO has reinforced its support for capability development and capacity building in Ukraine.

**Conclusion.** Today's crisis has clearly shown that Moscow and Brussels have a completely different conceptual understanding of the European security. From many points of view, the crisis in Ukraine is an additional confirmation of the long-lasting conflicts and disputes between them. And even if it were solved soon, many points of tension both conceptual and practical by nature would remain. If to consider getting the process back to the circumstances of 1997, everything could have changed almost radically, currently the main condition is the end of the Ukrainian-Russian conflict and the return of the annexed Crimea.

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## **HOW THE FOREIGN NEWSPAPER PERIODICALS INTERPRET THE BEGINNING OF RUSSIAN AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

**Introduction.** Nowadays mass media play a crucial role in the global society. It also significantly impacts on conflict and war contexts and relations between different international actors. Consequently, this activity needs to be discussed in greater detail within this piece of research.

**Review of recent publications.** Historiography of the Russian-Ukrainian War of 2014-2018 is still in the stage of its formation. It is represented by a number of