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INTRODUCTION

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This issue of the journal “Geography, Politics and Society” hides a wide range of topical problems related to the socio-humanitarian sphere development in modern Ukraine withstanding the hostilities – conducting of the Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) on the East of the country. The modern collection of scientific works of the Ukrainian researchers-scientists presents information about their researchers and studies of the other countries’ experience. In addition to this, they show the results of their own implementations and the received achievements in the development of new approaches to improve the socio-humanitarian sphere, which needs close attention of scientists, managers, citizens in the modern living conditions of the country.

The intensification of the integration processes at the global and regional levels, considerable instability, the dynamism of changes, as well as the growing competition between the world and regional power centers to preserve and strengthen their influence on the development of relations, have affected the development of various forms of military-political conflicts. It is, in fact, one of the greatest threats to the international safety. Ukraine has not escaped the tragedy. The military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, the war in eastern

Ukraine, especially in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, where, along with the separatists, the regular units of the Russian armed forces have been fighting against Ukraine since 2014, the annexation of the Crimea became a serious test for the Ukrainians. For the first time in the twenty-first century the country – a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council – was aggressing against neighboring states, despite their commitment to maintaining peace and security. By its actions, Russia has destroyed the existing system of the international security.

The functional role of the socio-humanitarian sphere and its components in providing the vital functions of the nation and the state has become globalized and complicated in recent years in connection with the military actions in the East of Ukraine – ATO. This conflict, as the main threat to the statehood and sovereignty of Ukraine, is becoming increasingly complex and protracted. The unannounced, hybrid war creates the challenge of statehood, the maturity of the civic consciousness of the Ukrainian people, the competence and responsibility of the leadership, the generally recognized democratic values: freedom of speech, pluralism of opinions, free political competition, etc. External aggression has demonstrated inefficiency of an

independent and adequate modern challenges of foreign, military and information policy, strategic approaches in the management of the security sector, and so on.

Problems require attention: society, preserving livelihoods for the benefit of the state in the modern realities of external aggression and economic crisis (Ukraine lost about 1/5 of its economic power), a sharp decline in living standards, bitter losses and considerable material damage, remains dissatisfied with the level and quality of life, the activity of the authorities – distrust in the state institutions. These problems are turning into deep despair, apathy and depression. In order to eliminate this danger, it is necessary to peremptorily and quickly react and act, properly diagnose and rank challenges, treats, and develop, formulate and provide timely adequate responses.

A country faced with deep economic crisis, prolonged political uncertainty, extended process of sporadic reforms in all sectors and systems of the state, limitation of budget resources, is trying to continue financing many programs of socio-humanitarian and economic spheres, what negatively affects the implementation of strategic priorities for its development.

Among other issues, the issue of studying the main tendencies of development and improvement of the mechanisms of state regulation of these spheres has become topical.

Events in eastern Ukraine in 2014 have expanded the scope of work and system of social protection – having formed new needs for the development and implementation of social protection measures for ATO members and their families. After all, international experience shows that the inadequate level of social protection of servicemen is negatively reflected on the qualitative composition of the army, reduces motivation, gives rise to dissatisfaction, etc. Implementation measures of state policy in this direction are input unsystematically, fragmentarily without taking into account actually existing objective factors and with significant restrictions of tools and resources for making changes, etc.

During 2014–2017, about 200 thousand people were mobilized in Ukraine. Since 2016, a contracted army has been introduced, more than 100 thousand reservists have volunteered to serve in the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The number of ATO-participants and their family members is constantly increasing – as of February 2017. Almost 284 thousand persons became the “veteran of the battle”, about 7 thousand – members of the families of the dead, more than 4,100 people – became invalids.

Additional pressure on the social infrastructure of the country and local communities, on state and local budgets creates 1.7 million internally displaced people, that left their homes, lost their property, broke social ties, and, in most cases, became less competitive.

Thus, there appeared two new categories of affected people due to ATO in Ukraine – the recipients of social services that require special attention of the state since the social vulnerability of these people is a phenomenon that arose suddenly. It dramatically changed the habitual life of citizens, most of which did not require state support until 2014. The aforementioned separate categories of the population of affected people’s – the participants of the ATO and the internally displaced people, and their family members, who need proper state assistance and support, rehabilitation, social and psychological adaptation, etc.

Today, Ukraine uses a wide range of social protection measures for participants of the ATO, solves problems of this category, allocates significant budget funds. However, there is a new problem area of unresolved issues: the procedure for obtaining the status of a participant in combat operations, without which the ATO member may not have access to social protection programs, social services, and privileges. In fact, it is complex and time-consuming, therefore, a certain number of ATO participants, who actually protect the sovereignty of Ukraine, do not have social protection. Further problems include the lack of objective information of the quality and effectiveness of social services provided by government and non-governmental organizations – social partners of the state for these groups of the population; unsystematic study of needs, problems, satisfaction and attitudes of ATO participants and internally displaced people regarding the quality and effectiveness of the social protection system and social services provided; manifestations of funding shortfalls and acute problems of Ukrainian practice in the implementation of legal and regulatory guarantees of social security which demonstrate the declarative nature of the state’s obligations, which often leads to poor quality of services provided by budget and program funds, etc. These tendencies will definitely lead to the marginalization and criminalization of that particular category of people in order to increase the level of social tension.

Therefore, it is necessary to improve the legislative base that regulates the activities of the social system. They also need to improve the system of document circulation for obtaining social status and corresponding privileges, update financing by regulating the number of social benefits guaranteed by

the state and form the adequate account of needs. In addition to this, it is necessary to increase the part of the non-governmental sector in financing the costs of social protection, promote the role of social partnership of major groups of the population, business structures and the state; regularly improve the quality and effectiveness of provided social services, including by combining public and private efforts made by internally displaced people, ATO participants and their families.

In today's developments of this scientific problem, the attention of researchers to this issue is focused on issues of social, psychological and medical recovery, prevention of post-traumatic mental disorders (PTSD) for internally displaced people, ATO participants and their family members, etc. However, there are insufficiently or fragmentarily studied issues of this scientific context. According to the authors of this issue, scientific justification requires the formation of an innovatively integrated mechanism of state management of the system of social protection of ATO participants and members of their families, as a component of socio-humanitarian policy. Studying the features of social protection of separate groups of the population with the active use of advanced information technologies, automated control systems and integrated personal databases, which will provide a socio-economic effect, will allow more efficient distribution of public funds and better targeting in favor.

Military events, social tensions and conflicts in the country are also estimated by the number of loss of life and health of its citizens. Accordingly, there arises the intensification of the demand for providing timely and adequate medical services. In addition to the deterioration of the sanitary and epidemiological situation, violation of normal living conditions, reduction of budget financing of health care, direct threat to life and health, inevitable maladaptation of the health in the area of fighting, abruptly increased the intensity and variety of new types of necessary medical care (for example, as a result of gunshot wounds, contusions), etc.

Therefore, there were problems with the lack or delay of necessary medical care, defective medicine, inconsistency with the treatment required, reduced availability of medical services and medicines, especially due to their lack of and catastrophic growth, etc. Due to the difficult life circumstances, the number of people who appeal to medical institutions has sharply dropped. This additionally affects the health of the population of Ukraine. According to WHO experts, the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine has affected approximately 5 million people and led to the displacement of 1.6 million. The awareness and support

of the international community, as well as ongoing funding, are critical to responding to this health emergency. The following are areas of great concern that require immediate mobilization and action: low vaccination coverage; poor communicable diseases surveillance; inadequate access to medications for cancer patients; and lack of access to mental health and rehabilitation care (Health response..., 2017).

According to the official data of the State Statistics Service in 2014 3394 deaths were recorded as "Loss due to hostilities". The head of the United Nations Observer Mission on Human Rights in Ukraine A. Arrutunyan noted that from April 2014 to February 2015, there were recorded deaths of at least 5,809 people. Due to the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine from the beginning of the ATO till June 2017, 2696 Ukrainian soldiers were killed, 9903 were injured; according to the unofficial statistics of the "Book of Memory" site from 2014 to May 2017 – more than 3,500 people were lost (Сайт проекту "Книга Пам'яті", 2017).

The processes of population outflow due to internal migration, appropriately, ignorance of the real number of the population living in the territory of combat operations and adjacent to the ATO, have led to the fragmentation of information. Statistics on deaths or health violations among civilians, especially those originating from uncontrolled territories of Ukraine, are untimely and incomplete. They significantly reduce the reliability and quality of data to make managerial decisions at all levels. Unfortunately, with each passing day of ATO, the number of deaths of military and civilian personnel continues to rise steadily.

An important negative consequence of the ATO is the deepening of the gender imbalance in connection with death – more than 90% of officially registered deaths happened due to hostilities. Losses among men of working age, negatively affect the process of restoring generations. Combat events increase the problem of direct and indirect losses and deaths of the population.

The necessary steps have already been taken to reorganize the provision of services, work of staff, personnel management and attitude towards people in the health system. Emergency warning and assistance system (possible sabotage, terrorist acts, etc.) is being improved. Different algorithms for action in specific emergency situations with a clear definition of the orders of the activities of the performers are being developed. Coordinated co-operation with a wide range of non-hospital partners – military, volunteers, international and domestic public organizations, the media, etc – has already been established.

The greatest attention needs to be given to the prospect of negative consequences for the health of the population of Ukraine, related to life damage, deterioration of health, the suffering of people in connection with military events, forced displacements, various types of deficiencies, outbreaks of diseases, violation of human rights and dignity. It is believed that long-term damage to people as well as to the development of society may be even greater than a direct loss. The sphere of negative influence will affect future lives of Ukrainians, especially the mental and social health of the population of the country: children lose opportunities for education and long-term development, adults – for decent, fruitful work and family prosperity, etc.

The conditions of the ATO are characterized by the negative influence of environmental factors – climatologic – weather conditions, constant stress, lack of sleep, moral and physical exhaustion for human, that is worsed by inappropriate nutrition in contemporary Ukraine. During the last decade, increased stress-relatedness at the mass population level has become an inevitable companion of socio-economic and social changes in the state and, naturally, has caused a change in the level and composition of the class of pathology of the digestive organs – almost half of the number of mobilized servicemen were found with different degrees of restriction, the leading place was occupied by stress disorders, cardiovascular diseases, diseases of the nervous system, diseases of the digestive system and only in the fifth place – wounded and injured (Щорічна..., 2017). The organization of high-grade and high-quality nutrition of troops is one of the most important tasks of the medical service that has to be resolved, considering that nutrition is one of the main risk factors for the development of non-infectious diseases.

The modern provision of militaries with products, their delivery and preparation systems therefore requires full revision and improvement in connection with changes in production technologies in the food industry. The first steps were made by the decree of the Cabinet of Ministers dated October 3, 2016, No. 696 «On Amendments to the Nutrition Standards of Servicemen of the Armed Forces and Other Military Forces» (Про внесення..., 2016), the standards of nutrition have been improved, provision is made for an occasional (breakfast, lunch, dinner) issue of a new norm taking into account the amount of rations necessary to provide troops a full meal. Undoubtedly, the legal regulation and practical mechanisms of provision and delivery of food to the ATO zone has to be under attention for further improvement in the context of the state's defense capability strengthening and the militaries' health maintainance. When

developing a nutrition policy, it is necessary to rely on the existing mechanisms for providing food for militaries, taking into account international experience and experience gained during the ATO.

In order to minimize the negative impact of social conflicts on the life and health of the population today and in the future, it is necessary to move from crisis management to a comprehensive long-term strategy to prevent threats while restoring economic and socio-humanitarian areas and, preferably, the final resolution of the conflict.

As you know, the population of Ukraine is prolonged in a state of constant stress, which determines the aggravation of existing and the development of new diseases. Sociological studies show that over 80% of citizens living in cities not controlled by Ukraine have psychological symptoms associated with «military trauma», PTSD, mental health problems, alcoholism, increased anxiety, especially among women, depression, oppression of mood and anxiety among the population, etc.

Particular attention and development require the problem of adaptation to the peaceful life of the demobilized ATO participants, veterans of combat operations, who received significant psychological injuries while taking part in hostilities. The constant increase in the number of combatants in Ukraine today is actualizing and increasing the need for rehabilitation (physical, mental) and medical and social assistance. It is necessary to strengthen the national mental health system in the long-term perspective, using the help and experience of the international community, because mental health is a guarantee of the welfare and productivity of people, communities and countries recovering from emergencies. The psycho-traumatic consequences of war events and the difficult economic situation are considered to be the most modern social stress factors that can lead to maladaptation and disorientation due to social stress of the population, deforming the psyche, deepening depressive mood, producing intrapersonal and interpersonal conflicts. This disadaptation can lead to mental and personality disorders, accelerated psychosomatic states with alcohol, drug abuse, etc., and, remotely in time, PTSD.

Traumatic events change the psyche of a person, which requires the formation and creation of new adaptive models of the functioning of the person and positive behavior models with a sense of belonging to the group, the importance of their own life experience, as a valuable asset, skills of using positive adaptive strategies.

Long-lasting events in the Donbass, which will require a lot of time for a final settlement, have radically and irreversibly changed the socio-psychological

situation in Ukraine, exacerbating the sense of justice like never before. Unprecedented processes related to the ATO caused human, moral, political, environmental and economic losses, radically changed the relations in society.

Another crucial up-to-date to Ukraine is an issue relies to the language problem, the argues during the whole period of the independence of the country swinging the society to the two sides: of the priority of Ukrainian language as the state one or to the bilingualism codified by law. Unfortunately, the factors like the dalliance in the implementation of the language policy in Verkhovna Rada played a dramatic part in the events of 2014 in Ukraine – the language was used as a tool of manipulations and the deconstruction of Ukrainian. Undoubtedly, the language confrontation in Ukraine exists. The permanent refusals to solve that problem bringing the opposite reaction of people. The Director of the Institute of Ukrainian language of the NAS of Ukraine P. Grytsenko fairly admits: “the confrontation about the language will remain until the role and place of each language in the life of our society – Ukrainian, Russian as the language of the national minority, other languages is clearly defined and underlined by the new law” (Глуховський, Груздєв, 2017).

There is an urgent problem risen in contemporary Ukraine due to the fact of the irredentism that from a potential has become to a certain extent latent problem, connected with the existence of pro-Russian sentiments in Crimea and eastern regions of Ukraine, turned into a real threat to the territorial integrity of the state in the context of a nationwide political crisis in early 2014. Irredentism, as a political phenomenon, the emergence of which can be explained by a whole set of reasons, both objective and subjective, has the powerful influence on domestic and foreign policies progresses in the modern world, deserves the attention of scholars. Ethnopolitical processes largely determine the dynamic picture of the modern world; the nature of interaction between different ethnic groups is critical for these processes. One of the articles in that issue studied distinguish between irredentism as a form of separatism initiated by national minorities and the policy of irredentism as a course of a kin-state. The formation of the information society, interconnection of globalization and regionalization, the development of democracy and more rapid pace, complexity and scale of the political processes in present Ukraine produced the tendency of politicization of ethnic groups. Quite often, they cause interstate conflicts, which are characterized by duration, irrationality and difficulty in settling (Gokcek, 2010; Kim, 2016).

The centrifugal tendencies allows to interpret irredentism as a type of separatism. Also, irredentism can be evaluated quite positively from the point of view of the realization of the right of the ethnic group to self-determination, but it is considered negatively from the standpoint of maintaining the integrity of the borders of the state in which the irredenta resides. The «Great Idea» is the core of irredentist demands due to ethnic ideology, which justifies the special historical mission – unification of groups of separated people. In fact, the current policy of irredentism has the nature of expansionism and seeks to revive a «great power» – a striking example is Russia's policy regarding the border areas of Ukraine. We're agree with the authour, that he world community should develop a coordinated position so that Russian irredentism, guided by the idea of spreading the «Russian World», has not become a dangerous precedent.

Political and diplomatic support from the West, the world community in conjunction with the Minsk accords, is an important factor that adds opportunities for Ukraine to resist. The creation of an international coalition in support of Ukraine, the maintenance of this coalition in an active state, the prolongation, deepening and strengthening of the sanctions regime, which has been taking place for 4 years – are effective means for prompting negotiations to end the ATO and military aggression.

Many aspects of Ukrainian life have been transformed during these difficult more than three years of ATO on the territory of the state. Ensuring the effective functioning of national systems of social protection and health care is an important task of the state as well as military or economic growth as factors of ensuring national security. It is extremely important today to learn how to evaluate qualitatively existing and potential threats and risks to life and health of the population, to anticipate, to avoid, if possible, or to actually influence their formation and consequences. Minimization and prevention of real and potential consequences of the social health of citizens is one of the priority directions for the development of modern mechanisms of proper and balanced state administration. Its consistent implementation will lobby for the interests of preserving and improving the health, quality reproduction, long-term development and productive life of the Ukrainian people.

Given the foregoing, the future development of the Ukrainian Nation, carried out in the newly created conditions of economic, ecological, socio-psychological and political realities, another mental reality, requires carrying out prolonged scientific researchers in order to formulate and implement state

policy; directed primarily at reducing the powerful socio-psychological tension, integration of Ukrainian society, catalyze the strengthening of national identity and national unity on the backdrop of a significant increase in the level and quality of life of Ukrainians.

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