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BILATERAL UKRAINE-CHINA RELATIONS AT THE CURRENT STAGE

Abstract

Foreign policy is one of the most important directions of sovereign states' activity. An especially important place in foreign policy shaping is bilateral relations between states. For Ukraine, such vectors of foreign policy as European, Euro-Atlantic, Eurasian and Asian are traditionally important. In particular, the implementation of the Asian foreign policy vector and the establishment of effective relations with the People's Republic of China as one of the leaders of world economic development is a very important task for Ukrainian diplomacy at this time. The analysis of foreign and Ukrainian sources regarding this topic demonstrates the interest of researchers in bilateral Ukrainian-Chinese relations.

One of the important trends in world socio-political development is globalization processes. In this article the author examines the state of bilateral Ukrainian-Chinese relations at the present stage characterized by dynamic globalization rate. In the results of the conducted study one can note that currently there are certain obstacles to the effective development of bilateral relations between Ukraine and China, however at the same time there is sufficient potential for further intensification of bilateral relations between the indicated countries. On the basis of the analysis, one can conclude that among the successes of Ukraine's foreign policy over the past few years, one can identify the establishment of a fairly fruitful relationship with the People's Republic of China: cooperation in the agricultural and trade sectors, transport sphere, cultural exchanges.

At the same time, it is necessary to strengthen the effective use of the foreign policy resource for more effective cooperation with the People's Republic of China — one of the most powerful current leaders of world economic development. It is important to avoid controversial military and political issues. It is vital to establish effective international cooperation with this country, which would allow achieving mutually beneficial goals. This is related to further research prospects concerning further development of Ukraine's relations with the countries of the Asia-Pacific region, in particular with the states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation).

Keywords: international security, foreign policy, national interest, China, Ukraine, economic development

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ДВОСТОРОННІ УКРАЇНСЬКО-КИТАЙСЬКІ ВІДНОСИНИ НА СУЧАСНОМУ ЕТАПІ

Резюме

У статті досліджено актуальне питання стану двосторонніх українсько-китайських відносин. Метою цієї статті є дослідження стану двосторонніх українсько-китайських відносин на сучасному етапі. Дослідження проведено на основі методології контент-аналізу, а також порівняльного та історичного методів. У результатах дослідження можна констатувати, що на нинішньому етапі існують певні перешкоди для ефективного розвитку двосторонніх відносин між Україною та Китаєм, утім існує достатній потенціал для подальшої інтенсифікації двосторонніх відносин між зазначеними країнами. На основі проведеного аналізу можна зробити висновок, що серед успіхів зовнішньої політики України протягом останніх років можна виокремити налагодження достатньо плідних відносин з КНР: співпраця у сільськогосподарській та торговельній галузях, окреслення транспортних коридорів, культурні обміни. Водночас необхідно посилити ефективне використання зовнішньополітичного ресурсу для більш ефективної співпраці з КНР, уникаючи суперечливих військово-політичних питань.

Ключові слова: міжнародна безпека, зовнішня політика, національний інтерес, Китай, Україна, економічний розвиток

1. Introduction

Foreign policy is one of the most important directions of sovereign states' activity. An especially vital place in foreign policy shaping is bilateral relations between states. For Ukraine, such vectors of foreign policy as European, Euro-Atlantic, Eurasian and Asian are traditionally important. In particular, the implementation of the Asian foreign policy vector and the establishment of effective ties with the People's Republic of China as one of the modern leaders of economic development is a very important task for Ukrainian diplomacy at this time.

Consequently, this issue is of considerable research interest, and it is worth examining the current state of bilateral Ukrainian-Chinese relations in greater detail, in particular with regard to economic, military and political aspects. The **analysis** of foreign and Ukrainian sources regarding this topic indicates the interest of researchers in bilateral Ukrainian-Chinese relations. In particular, these issues were studied by S. Shergin, G. Maksak, M. Kulinich, G. Rudenko, I. Vishnevskaya, I. Lossovsky, O. Naboka, I. Podolynna, M. Rubtsova, Y. Stolyarchuk, N. Tatarenko.

Thus, the goal of this article is to study bilateral Ukrainian-Chinese relations at the present period.

2. Methods

The research was conducted with the help of the method of content analysis, as well as comparative and historical methodology. Content analysis was utilized in order to determine values implied behind political statements. The comparative method allowed defining differences and similarities among phenomena pertinent to foreign policy and international relations issues. The historical method allowed to study the development of Ukraine-China bilateral relations in order to better understand their current state.

3. Results

One of the important trends in world socio-political development is globalization processes. Economic development at the beginning of the 21st century indicates significant dynamization of transformational processes in the world economy and its systemic changes [7, p. 250]. The result is gradual shaping of a global model of economic development, which, on the one hand, integrates the structural elements of the international economic system and provides it with a coherent structure based on production and exchange internationalization, growth of transnationalization and integration of national economies, and, on the other hand, leads to restructuring of world economic space [7, p. 250]. Current restructuring processes do not deny the very idea of convergence, since it has long become an imperative need and, at the same time, a challenge [8, p. 18].

It should be noted that growing international interdependence is further increasing. It can be described as a state of the international system, characterized by enhanced relations among states, which make their development and future interdependent [2, p. 11]. In view of domination of a complex interdependence of states, the military force loses the role of a decisive factor in protecting national interests. Everyone's safety becomes a guarantee of the security of all [2, p. 11].

Analysis of the rapid and effective development of socio-economic processes in the People's Republic of China proves the effectiveness of the government's actions to achieve its goals. In particular, economic reforms initiated in the 1980s by Deng Xiaoping led to shaping of a new powerful, large state, which has an increasingly significant role in the processes of globalization, as well as in international relations [4, p. 85]. First of all, it should be noted that China's experience in carrying out socio-economic transformations is especially interesting for those countries that are trying to achieve sustainable growth and maintain their own national identity [4, p. 85]. China's development policy is marked by consistency, which is related to the ideals of economic growth and structural transformation [6, p. 107].

It is worth noting that among the countries of Northeast Asia, Ukraine's relations with China, Japan and the Republic of Korea are developing most dynamically. At present, Ukraine faces the task of strengthening her influence, activating foreign policy and Ukraine's economic presence in the region, which is impossible without state programs and strategies for developing cooperation with the above-mentioned countries. The priority areas for cooperation with the countries of Southeast Asia for Ukraine are as follows: trade and economy, investment, energy, space, air and shipbuilding transport, educational and cultural sectors [3, p. 71].

In particular, as regards the analysis of the specific principles of Ukraine's foreign policy implementation in relation to the Asia-Pacific region (APR) and the People's Republic of China it is worth mentioning the study «Ukrainian Prism: Foreign Policy 2016» conducted by the Public Organization «Foreign Policy Council «Ukrainian Prism» with the support of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. The general conclusion is that dynamic economic development of the Asia-Pacific region, presence of large markets for Ukrainian products continues to be beyond the reach of Ukraine's foreign policy. Ukraine has yet to achieve a lot in preparing a comprehensive strategy for the development of relations with the Asia-Pacific region, despite the fact that this need was noted at various levels of government [9, p. 123]. The agreements signed in 2016 are singular and are mainly declarations of intent; and despite a number of higher-level visits to the countries of the region in 2016, there was insufficient positive dynamics in international relations [9, p. 123].

Among the important and even key partners of Ukraine in the region one can distinguish Japan. In 2016 one can note the dialogue with Malaysia, which served as a central component in investigating the disaster of the Malaysian MH17 flight in Donetsk region, however, given the number and importance of countries in the indicated region, this political interest was not enough [9, p. 124]. In 2016, the executive branch did not demonstrate active interaction among ministries and departments in implementing regional policy on the Asia Pacific Region: certain successes can be attributed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the State Phytosanitary Service of Ukraine, which quickly obtained

permits for the export of Ukrainian agricultural products to Indonesia (this contributed to the adoption of new Indonesian legislation in this area) [9, p. 124].

Presence of many complex tasks for executive bodies regarding the Asia-Pacific vector requires set-up of coordination structures for regional activities within the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine. One can hardly consider a positive sign that the basic strategic documents of Ukraine almost do not mention the Asia-Pacific region—except for the Military Doctrine, where this region is defined as important in the context of international security [9, p. 124]. Indirectly strategic objectives for Ukrainian policy in the region are determined by the Strategic Defense Bulletin of Ukraine defined by Decree of the President of Ukraine: large-scale tasks of reforming the military security sector of the country require NATO's comprehensive assistance, which in the current state of interaction within the Alliance enables one to involve NATO partners, including partners in Asia Pacific Region [9, p. 124]. The strategic importance of the integrative approach to Ukraine's cooperation with the Asia-Pacific region is stated in the Analytical Report for the Annual Address of the President of Ukraine to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine «On the Internal and External Situation of Ukraine in 2016», which, in particular, points at the importance of «cooperation with regional and transregional associations», the need to get ASEAN's markets as quickly as possible and to join the investment projects of the association [9, p. 124]. The appointment of a Permanent Representative to the ASEAN Secretariat, as well as Ukraine's participation in the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), is considered an important task of the Ukrainian policy in the region.

In 2016 the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko made a number of visits to the countries of the Asia-Pacific region. In particular, there was a state visit to Indonesia (August 5–7, 2016) and official visits to Japan (April 5–7, 2016) and Malaysia (August 3–5, 2016) [9, p. 124]. The visits were aimed at solving several tasks: try to expand the support to Kyiv in confrontation with Moscow, to increase the volume of investments in the Ukrainian economy and to provide Ukrainian producers with access to regional markets, first of all, to the markets of food products [9, p. 125]. The same issues were discussed during the meetings of P. Poroshenko with leaders of Japan, New Zealand and Malaysia during the UN General Assembly in New York in 2016.

In the context of implementation of the Asian vector of Ukraine's foreign policy, it is also worth noting the extremely urgent issue of the disaster of the Malaysian aircraft MH17. In January 2016, an Agreement between Ukraine and Malaysia on the extension of the stay of Malaysian personnel in Ukraine in the interests of investigating the MH17 aircraft crash came into force [9, p. 125]. Ukraine has assumed the support of Japan, Australia and the Republic of Korea regarding illegality of the restriction by the Russian Federation of transit, announced at the General Council of the WTO on February 24 and July 27, 2016 [9, p. 125]. This is an important resource in the procedure of appeals against the Russian Federation, which, according to our Government, have already led to direct losses of \$ 0.4 billion [9, p. 125].

One can note the important success of Ukrainian diplomacy in establishing fruitful relations with a number of states in the region, in particular signing of a series of intergovernmental agreements. For example, an agreement on mutual legal assistance in criminal cases, on extradition of offenders and on avoidance of double taxation was signed with Malaysia on August 4, 2016 [9, p. 125].

In addition, a considerable result of Ukraine's policy in the region is the strengthening of the state's position in the regional agricultural markets. In 2016 Ukraine became one of the four largest suppliers of food wheat to Indonesia (1.2 million tons) [9, p. 125]. Negotiations are underway on the return of Ukrainian dairy producers to the Japanese market (they are expected to begin deliveries in the fall of 2017); Ukrainian companies began supplying dairy products to the People's Republic of China (a positive decision on the access of Ukrainian producers to the Chinese market was approved in September 2015) [9, p. 125]. Indonesia abolished visas for Ukrainian citizens for short-term visits, and Ukraine began consultations with Indonesia on a free trade area [9, p. 125].

With regard to the bilateral relations of Ukraine with the People's Republic of China, one can single out important achievements in this direction. The parliamentary group of the Verkhovna Rada of

Ukraine on inter-parliamentary relations with China is proud of its record number — it has 237 deputies, but the Parliamentary foreign affairs committee meetings in 2016 were not very focused on China [9, p. 87]. One exception is the Verkhovna Rada's initiative to create a coordinating body with the aim of developing a strategy for Ukraine's accession to the «One Belt, One Way» project, but obviously this level of coordination was more appropriate for relevant structures of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine [9, p. 88]. A sign of positive dynamics was the appointment of the new Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Ukraine Dou Wei. He quickly established relations with the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine A. Parubiy and the Prime Minister of Ukraine V. Groysman. At the end of 2016 the first Silk Road forum with participation of Ukrainian high officials took place in Kyiv under his auspices [9, p. 88].

In 2016, a number of strategic documents were signed with China, but their implementation was slowed down. Formally, the reason was a delay in holding a regular meeting of the Intergovernmental Commission on Cooperation, but in fact — due to the lack of political will [9, p. 88]. Also, Ukraine has not yet approved an export strategy for trade and economic relations with China (under the draft Law of Ukraine «On State Financial Support for Export»), and liberalization of visa regime for citizens of the People's Republic of China was not implemented [9, p. 88]. Apart from a brief meeting between P. Poroshenko and Xi Jinping during the Washington Summit on Nuclear Security there were no more contacts at the highest political level, and despite the urgent need, a meeting of the bilateral Intergovernmental Commission on Cooperation was not held [9, p. 88].

China seeks to establish relations with Ukraine, first of all, in the economic sphere, avoiding controversial political issues. Her interest in building safer and more economical transport routes to Europe stipulates motivation to connect Ukraine to the «One Belt, One Way» initiative and to create a free trade zone with Ukraine [9, p. 88]. At the same time for Ukraine these two initiatives are of very different significance. Regarding the latter one the official Kiev took a rather cautious stance, whereas the former one concerning the implementation of the international transport corridor is considered quite urgent and beneficial. Ukraine tries to act decisively and has already prepared a draft Plan of Action Ukraine-People's Republic of China on the joint implementation of economic belts of the Great Silk Road («Road Map») [9, p. 89]. At the beginning of the year, a test train of 10 cars and 20 containers was sent from Illichivsk to China on the route Georgia — Azerbaijan — Kazakhstan — China [9, p. 89].

The revival of Ukraine's relations with China's regional rival — Japan was viewed negatively by China. Beijing does not rush with inviting Ukraine to the format of financial cooperation with the states of Central and Eastern Europe «16 + 1» [9, p. 89]. Thus, due to lack of activity on the part of Ukraine, the key role of the East European transport hub for Chinese goods was received by Bilorus.

The development of Ukrainian-Chinese business is hampered by the insufficient level of business ethics and presence of a significant corruption component in economic and financial processes in our country. In addition, trade relations with China are characterized by asymmetry: China ranks second out of all economic partners of Ukraine in terms of trade turnover (2015), but the Ukrainian share in international trade of the People's Republic of China is less than 0.1% [9, p. 89]. In nine months of 2016, the volume of trade between the countries amounted to just over 4.5 billion U.S. dollars, which is twice less than five years ago [9, p. 89]. China demonstrates her interest in technological developments in Ukraine. The situation with the sale of the plane An-225 «Mriya» has shown the existence of weaknesses in the state system of legal protection of intellectual property [9, p. 89].

Growing international interdependence of sovereign nation states at the current period is undoubtful. According to the definition of the founder of transnationalism theory K. Deutsch, integration is «creation of a community of security among states of a region» [1, p. 20]. Based on this definition, it is imperative to involve China in joint projects in the military sphere, such as conducting military trainings, exchanging specialists, etc. [1, p. 20]. S. Shergin claims that a stabilizing factor, a connecting link between the two worlds is currently the ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting), which unites 51 participants — 30 European and 21 Asian ones [10, p. 176]. According to analyst I. Podolynna, in

order to obtain large-scale investments from China for the implementation of infrastructure projects in Ukraine, the following prerequisites are needed: — internal political stability; — establishment of personal ties between the leaders of Ukraine and the leaders of the People's Republic of China; — state guarantees; — permission to engage in projects for both technologies and some products made in China; — preparation of investment projects in accordance with the requirements of world standards or standards of the People's Republic of China [5, p. 90].

China has been and remains a strategic partner of Ukraine in many aspects. First of all, in terms of diversification of trade relations, cooperation, implementation of joint investment projects in Ukraine, development of individual industries (oil and gas production, agrarian complex, etc.) [5, p. 90]. However, it is important to establish effective international cooperation with this country, which would allow achieving mutually beneficial goals.

4. Conclusions

It can be noted that at the present stage there are certain obstacles to the effective development of bilateral relations between Ukraine and China, however there is sufficient potential for further intensification of bilateral relations between the indicated countries. On the basis of the analysis, one can conclude that among the successes of Ukraine's foreign policy over the past few years, it is possible to identify the establishment of a fairly fruitful relationship with the People's Republic of China: cooperation in the agricultural and trade sectors, transport sphere, cultural exchanges. At the same time, it is necessary to strengthen the effective use of the foreign policy resources for more effective cooperation with the People's Republic of China—one of the most powerful current leaders of world economic development. It is important to avoid current controversial military and political issues. This is related to further research prospects concerning further development of Ukraine's relations with the countries of the Asia-Pacific region, in particular with the states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation).

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