

The US President's Political Positioning in Global Political Process: Modern Approaches to Understanding of Security against the Background of Political and Legal Consequences of COVID-19 Spread

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Abstract: Modernity is marked by unfolding of a range of political trends that change drastically the understanding of observed political and legal phenomena and processes and the utilization of approaches existing in modern political and legal doctrines. Growing scope and multifaceted characteristics of subjective and objective factors wielding impact on development of world political order and essential in the context of identifying some implicit and causal nature of political aspects makes various issues of political and legal theory and practice increasingly more complicated. Ceaseless updating of index of political images and meanings, simultaneous existence of conflicting activity and communicational modes, intricacy and interdependence are far from all the features that partially explain for the dynamics and the extrapolation of political and legal changes we are observing in global sphere. The security concept embedded in the matrix of political and legal paradigms of today's global political process against the background of COVID-19 spread takes on a radically new meaning (actual research of the US President's political positioning in global political process as one of the political actors with crucial influence has special importance in the framework of this issue).


1 INTRODUCTION


Modern events unfolding in global political and legal space and having a definite impact in the framework of inter-state decisions against the background of COVID-19 spread require a serious adjustment and clarification as regards their understanding and explanation (given the hitherto unseen speed and amplitude of dynamics both the semantic content of political and legal changes and the tools for their comprehension are changing). Global community deals with difficult issues embracing virtually all the phenomena and the processes of modern state's political and legal life.

Today we are faced with an extremely differentiated system of possibilities and mechanisms of assimilating the modern global political and legal discourse. They are often difficult to identify and analyse (the principles of unpredictability and uncertainty). What seems actual today may lose its significance tomorrow. Specific aspects of political and legal reality may have totally different categorical and semantic dominants and variants.

The issues of related to determining of readiness to perceive a new reality in principle and to identify one's own status through the prism of existing notions and subjects in global political and legal space are acquiring new significance. Against the background of immersion into an extremely fragile and

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simultaneously complex world of political and legal meanings the ability to reflect on observed changes and to formulate serviceable guidelines of actions decreases – this is associated with some polysubjectivity and syncretism of political and legal environment (which also means the presence of features as inversion and volatility in it).

General trends are observed today in most states whose engagement in global political process has some degree of inclusiveness and incorporation. This problem is further complicated by the deflection of certain styles and formats of political decision-making, which are characteristic of particular political leaders (Yeletsy, 2021). An equally important aspect deserving attention deals with the feature of modern conflicting reality that highlights the degree of trust in political and legal decisions.

2 METHODOLOGY

There are some reasons for supposing that reference to an interdisciplinary (multiparadigmatic) approach that envisions, among other things, a definite overcoming of limitations of theoretical and methodological aspects is necessary. In the first place, there is a question of leveling out the negative impact produced by pathos of some classical theories and choosing the positive grounds that imply a critical approach.

It is about using the following group of methods: the system method, the structural and functional method, the descriptive method, the discourse method.

3 RESULTS

Today we are witnessing the aftermaths of what the experts in postbichevioralism and poststructuralism said at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries – activity of political subjects is turning immediately dependent on the impact of latently forming causal relationships, which have the potential of entropy and irreversibility. Their superimposition on each other produces a certain effect of summation and cumulateness making it necessary to design a different trajectory of political activity. First, there is a need to reevaluate the problem of enforceability and controllability. Second, some issues of independence and openness (publicity) are getting a different interpretation.

The bulk of political and legal phenomena and processes should be reviewed, the direct dependence on specific circumstances should be less noticeable in the current context. In most cases ideologizing and value-related conditioning are perceived as factors of constraint making a fruitful and mutually beneficial organization of political and legal communication impossible.

Applicability of existing theories and concepts in the framework of world political problems should also be revised and (if possible) reformulated (at the same time global political elite is not ready for it (Kuvaldin, 2021). It would make sense to discard the trite cliché and the standardized procedure that are dysfunctional in today's conditions and do not have the right to exist.

The security problem has acquired a new significance in light of recent global political and legal development, the range of which has expanded over the past few years, – from the transformation of geopolitical status of the Middle East to the search for mutually acceptable ways of constructing inter-state cooperation against the background of COVID-19 spread. While limelight is given to the demands for an overhauled definition of security there is no ignoring the risks and the threats that encountered everywhere nowadays.

The issues related to coordination of modern states' positions in global political arena and commitment to approved guidelines of inter-state interaction in classical sense prompt us to turn to the consideration of theoretic grounds of comprehending the security concept, albeit in a different context. Some approaches do not find confirmations in everyday political and legal practice. Validity of other approaches has been proved, but in slightly modified versions. At the same time categorization of certain aspects of today's political and legal reality calls for an emphasis on completely new positions.

In fact, we should discuss the presentation of the best approaches for a particular stage:

1. Standard (legal) approach. Security is an institutionalized construct in the framework of norms and principles of international law. The security concept is thought of in terms of legality and illegality. State activity in foreign policy is based on legal and regulatory parameters approved and endorsed by majority of representatives of global community. Extensive attention is paid to transparency and declarativeness.

2. Institutional approach. Security is formulated and guaranteed primarily by international organizations and institutions as well as political associations and alliances of states. This means that

features like referentiality and collectivity are encouraged.

3. Factor-related approach. The security concept is subject to understanding proceeding from consideration of a set of mostly objectively conditioned factors: scale of crisis manifestations, efficaciousness of adaptation and neutralization practices, specifics of technological development and advance of information technologies in modern states, general level of world social development, nature of distribution of political roles and functions (even or uneven) among representatives of global political elite and influence of political leaders on global political arena. Because of this determining in terms and possibilities of ensuring security is highly dependent to situation and alterable.

4. Structural approach. Globally security represents the full set of the following elements: social, political and legal, economic, military, environmental and anthropological. Essential task in this context is to identify and characterize such characteristics as syncretism and complementarity between these components.

5. Constructivist (purpose-oriented) approach. Comprehending security means to extrapolate the purely individual political and legal targets and objectives at the global level, this presupposes taking account of political experience and chronological specifics of political events (subjectivity and intersubjectivity in separate cases). Semantic context of consideration of the security problem is justified by the resource and the strategic potential of a particular personality.

6. Conflict-generating approach. Criteria and requirements of security with regard to development in global political and legal space are formulated on basis of understanding of need to resolve real conflicts between states. Security is proclaimed to be a set of possibilities generated by the way of overcoming existing risks and threats. In other words, security is viewed as a kind of guarantee of defusing the tension. Ensuring security is the paramount objective of overcoming the differences that arise.

These approaches can be viewed as classical ones and standing in line with logic of development of inter-state relations nowadays. Simultaneously, however, some relatively recent approaches, which are now receiving greater attention, are also important: the hermeneutic approach (a series of comprehension methods and techniques that enable us to draw attention to some covert aspects and mean some practical value) and the synthetic approach (a set of several theoretical and methodological

principles and explanatory models, which are not mutually exclusive or limiting each other).

The US political and legal problems are characterized by «emphasizing» some negative aspects of uneven and (in some way) fatal multipolarity of modern world. Particularly, it is about Washington's official pivot to «great power competition» as the conceptual framework of the US foreign policy orientation (Mankoff, 2020). In this context, the United States can be viewed as a catalyst not only aggravating the existing contradictions within political blocs of states, but also projecting the failure of some international institutions. Infusion of the system of international relations (to be more exact, the system of business contacts and the practice of signing top-level deals) with destructive and unbalancing elements correlates with the name of D. Trump that brought up a wave of misunderstanding and criticism on the part of members of global community. A change of political course by J. Biden towards revenge-seeking and revision of some initiatives undertaken by the 45th US President does not mean that global skeptical community abandoned its earlier priorities.

Most academic and publicistic (media) sources offer a critical view of some specific lessons of D. Trump's presidency: they mostly accuse him of taking political and legal steps that deepened the systemic split between political camps of Democrats and Republicans inside the country and made the USA one of the main political outsiders at the level of international relations. In practical terms this takes the form of pegging labels such as «political pariah», «populist», «instigator», «troublemaker» that abound in the American media products – isolationist label was also actively used by members of the American political establishment (Kupchan, 2021). For his part, D. Trump has also repeatedly criticized, among others, both the US Congress and the international organizations such as NATO and WTO.

One can agree or disagree with comments on and assessments of D. Trump's activity – it depends on the system of scientific research and expert reference points. One cannot ignore the very important fact that D. Trump has, in fact, brought cybersecurity to limelight as one of the most important topics and called attention to a number of issues regarding the design of more modern forms and ways of protecting data storage systems and spaces. Before him this topic had not been explored strategically or substantively. D. Trump outlined a more or less evidence-based format of actions towards of intellectual property protection, strengthening the technological sophistication of existing infrastructure, maintenance

of a competitive advantage in regulation of digital space, monitoring of possible attempts to gain unauthorized access, etc.

It is noteworthy that in early 2021 the UN reached consensus on endorsing a report by the UN Open-Ended Working Group on Achievements in the Field of Informatization and Telecommunications that takes account of the key provisions of previous discussions and, on top of that, acknowledges some issues raised by the UN General Assembly First Committee (Disarmament and International Security). This proves the importance of inclusion of the cybersecurity concept in global political and legal agenda and the high potential of its discussions in the framework of global community.

As for changes in the US internal policy course and the US foreign policy course after J. Biden's arrival, the main immediate prospects of his presidency remain very vague for the time being and it is still too early to consider them seriously in a comprehensive way. In fact, J. Biden has found himself in a rather precarious situation. On the one hand, representatives of the Democratic Party wing insistently demand to rethink the key political and legal decisions made by former White House master. On the other hand, some image-makers of the 46th US President stress the importance of keeping up independence and unbiased character (although the initial political and legal background was generally positive, because 58% of Americans in early 2021 expressed their approval of work done by J. Biden to explain his political steps, as evidenced by public opinion monitoring ted by Pew Research Center (Pew Research Center, 2021).

What is the way to build political and legal cooperation with the United States given the situation as it is? What arguments should be invoked in process of political and legal decision-making with account of the US interests? To which degree is it necessary to exercise caution in process of discussions the outstanding problems? Which forms would suit the delimitation of different areas of responsibility? Most questions of this kind are directly related to improved understanding of security in the context of the US President's political and legal actions. More problematic is reflection on the US President's political positioning in modern global political process in the framework of the security concept (in this case political positioning is seen, first and foremost, through the prism of image and stylistic features of political and legal activity).

Criteria and requirements of security are extremely tangible when it comes to immediately influencing a political figure. As a public political

personality the US President has a definite set of rhetorical tools and skills that have to be resorted to (and that are profitable to resort to). An important factor here is selection of concepts and formulas that are most understandable to other parties in terms of political and legal features as well as the diligent treatment of these concepts and formulas. Manipulations with incorrectly chosen political and legal guidelines can trigger the severing of agreements that have been reached and, in addition to it, the freezing of any serious interestedness at the supranational level in principle.

The US President's media activity in process of global building communication forms is a highly controversial issue in the context of some questions looks as follows: what forms of participation should be espoused? What political and legal tools should be used to steer the event? Which political and legal ways would use the produced information and communication background in its advantage? What format should use to answer the questions from journalists and moderators?

The US President has serious official and political and legal resources in the context of foreign policy. What is the basis of using them? What are the limits of their utilization? What are the fundamental features of political and legal tools activating in the context of participation in global political handling? What is the validity of their activation? What are the key aspects of global political situation that directly adjust the choice of political and technological elements of working together?

Formulation and replication of characteristics of the American President's political image accepted as appropriate and tolerable is also an acute theme. The key reference point here is the positivization of a peculiar phenomenology in the global context: connection with certain political and legal events, certain political and legal agenda (this issue, however, does not confine to rhetorical, communicational, resource or image aspects).

A definite pool of central issues fitting into the problems of the US President's political positioning in the context of the security concept looks as follows:

- compliance with norms and principles of international law, implementation of basic provisions of international law in national legislation of the United States;
- establishing the contours and the guidelines of national security of the United States, coordinating the configuration of foreign policy activities with other parties.

There is no need to dwell in detail on the key strategic documents and the genesis of

implementation of the US national security strategy (structure of activity of workgroups, assessment of results of foresight research ordered by the government structures, degree to which proposals made in specific public reports are translated into real practice, efficiency of organization of some seminars where high-ranking experts are invited), some scientific literature offers a sufficient number of works in this respect. So the key to understanding the security problem being actualized today is to prepare a rational basis for reformatting the habitual way of thinking of the American political establishment on security-related issues (the American political establishment sees the need to confront adversaries and competitors by using any suitable resources for this as a central reference point). Along with it, concept of today's world as a world of strong sovereign and independent states with their own culture and national dream successfully develop side by side in prosperity, freedom and peace is fixed as a key guideline (Kramarenko, 2018). This highly limited approach requires adjustments as a minimum towards enhancing flexibility and consideration of spatial and temporal factor.

It is unlikely that adjustments of world political and legal order will be done in format of unipolarity in the future (Diplomatic Academy Of The Ministry Of Foreign Affairs Of The Russian Federation, 2020). Globally the United States with D. Trump managed to recognize this fact, although in a somewhat peculiar manner. Despite a number of confrontational actions by the 45th US President, which provoked controversy and contradictory evaluation of political leaders of most influential states, but were undertaken with aim of rearranging of global political situation, one can plainly see that it is impossible to achieve success alone. Security is inconceivable as something formulated by one side only. Each year interdependence of the main political actors will be getting stronger, thus ensuring the priority of resolution of all emerging issues through negotiations.

For the US President the security concept is seen primarily as a problem of the ratio of expenditures and results achieved. As a minimum, the following options are possible: to abandon such an imperative or to draw up an appropriate system of arguments (counterarguments) and resources. To maintain a leading influential position in modern world in line with precepts of theory is a truly utopian task. The US foreign policy activity is facing this key challenge today.

In modern situation it is impossible to establish an alternative picture of the world that rejects generally

accepted political and legal norms and principles. At the same time the United States is still considering the matters of security in the framework of outdated system of coordinates. J. Biden will have to resolve a number of problems that concern the formulation of modern understanding of security. An acceptable formula in this case can rely on the following steps: renunciation of unilateral actions, adoption of a line at coordinating positions with stakeholders, manifestation of openness towards cooperation and participation in an overhaul of jointly utilized tools with regard to changing circumstances.

This issue acquires a personalized implementation in the sense that the range of goals and objectives of political and legal decision-makers have to grapple with is enlarged, therefore the number of obligations increases and the field of responsibility widens. Ensuring security is a condition, the fulfillment of which is more necessary than ever for purpose of stabilizing social relations within state and maintaining one's own encouraging political image abroad.

4 DISCUSSION

Some experts indicate that in modern conditions it is essential to identify the basis of modern understanding of security. It is necessary to answer the question, which option can be considered the most «working» one in spectrum of numerous definitions of the concept and approaches to the choice of scientific research tools. Should security be understood as a set of specific techniques and tools for attaining a goal (the group of operational definitions) or directly as a goal itself (the group of purposive-rational definitions)? Does security reflect a particular level of protection or mean a set of guarantees of this protection? Is security conditioned more by internal political (national security) or external political (international security) factors? Is security a concept underpinned by the interests of state rather than by the interests of a group of states? In this context we cannot talk about formulation of an unambiguous definition, because in principle no category of social and humanitarian sciences implies its presence. It is rather a question of narrowing the subject field, in the framework of which the security concept should be placed.

The viewpoint of some classical realists who believe that the security concept should not be understood in the framework of clearly defined dichotomy can be viewed as the one that holds water. It is impossible to discuss the presence or the absence

of security. The crux of this matter is security ensured to a bigger or a smaller degree. Moreover, we cannot but mention the viewpoint that the category of «threat» should be used instead of the category of «force» in the context of discussion of security. This reinforces the reference point that today it does not stand to reason to ignore some provisions of classical approaches (despite a number of unprecedented political and legal changes in modern world).

In addition, the question of thinking about security in terms of need to ensure it – what actions political leadership is ready to take in order to provide certain guarantees and assurances and what basis it should proceed from – is also debatable. Modern understanding of principles, conditions, procedural and activity-related peculiarities and concrete results of ensuring security in the framework of modern global political process rests of the following provisions:

- the extent to which members of global political establishment are prepared to sacrifice the potential bonuses and benefits;
- how consistent and predictable political leaders of modern states are in implementing collective actions and activities;
- the degree to which political actors are demonstrated the reliability with respect to each other's political and legal steps and decisions through the prism of ability to regularly confirm the commitment to one's own declared proposals and initiatives);
- the degree to which the key political players are convinced about prospects for and limits to implementing the joint political and legal projects (what is the degree of sensitivity to possible changes and willingness to conduct a fruitful dialogue);
- how relevant the specifics of participation and the concrete results achieved (evenness, symmetry) are;
- how effective the joint work based on results of discussions and meetings.

Beyond any doubt, the main but not the only task in the course of discussing the security problem today is to rebuff the pressure from influential political actors (as well as representatives of global academic community) who defend narrowly oriented and biased positions impeding any solution to existing problems in principle. This was the case with scientific research of experience in the field of security in Latin America and Central Asia, where methodology of European political and legal science was taken as a basis. This brought about erroneous

conclusions and made these scientific works devoid of consistency in general (Khudaykulova, 2016).

5 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the aforesaid, the US President's political positioning in global political process at this stage is rather dubiously blended into the outline of this problem – much is complicated by the aftermaths of the COVID-19 pandemic (Burns, 2020). Choice of J. Biden's team in respect to implementation of foreign policy and geopolitical projects remains unclear, but today it is necessary to focus, first of all, on some extremely important aspects. First, it is recommendable to avoid what would be wrong and irresponsible from political and legal viewpoints. Second, it is necessary to formalize the adoption of refusing to preserve modern world that relies on use of military and political force and full-scale promotion of the American influence. In addition to it, rejection of tainting labels and subjectivist interpretations such as «political aggression» and «economic coercion» is also fruitful. This does not mean being vulnerable to weakness, but much rather invokes a willingness to compromise in order to show favor and thereby expand the boundaries for achieving actual goals.

Political and legal paradigm of the US President's political positioning in the framework of world political problems should match the criteria of engagement and activity and imply the acceptance of a growing number of drivers that affect the transformation of today's world political and legal order. It is useful to be able to correctly combine the guidelines of ensuring self-sufficiency (strengthening one's own competitive advantages) and inclusion in bulk of modern transactions. Stating the limits of applicability of the well-known principle of restraint in political and legal relations would have a positive effect. Some scientific researches done by the American authors – particularly, in the framework of the Cambridge Studies in International Relations (Steele, 2019) – confirm this.

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