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**RUSSIA IN THE GLOBAL WORLD:
A NEW STAGE FOR BUILDING THE INTERACTION OF LEGAL SYSTEMS**

The first quarter of the new millennium can rightfully claim to be the prologue to a new stage of human history. The preceding twentieth century was marked by the collapse of traditional centuries-old empires, the emergence and destruction of a bipolar world, and the political and economic revival of ancient civilizations.²

In all changes that occurred in the twentieth century, Russia has played one of the major roles in the status of

a superpower. This applies to both politics and law, whether it is the international law of the United Nations or the formation of the Soviet national legal system, which had a significant impact on the other countries of the Eastern bloc.

The emerging change of epochs raises the question of the place and role of Russia in shaping of the world legal order of the 21st century and definition of mechanisms of possible interaction between Russian law and other national legal systems. This problem is relevant because any plans for positioning of the state in the global world (except for the military plans, and even that to a certain extent) must be implemented within certain legal frameworks.

The global system of international relations that has formed by the end of the last millennium was based on a fairly well-structured hierarchy of sources of the international law. Among these sources, international treaties (universal, regional, and bilateral) played the central role. The established system of international organizations – universal and regional, as well as the application of legal mechanisms of national law governing international private relations – from family and inheritance relations to commercial investment projects – ensured the stability of the international legal order. The collapse of the USSR and the Eastern bloc, the toilsome process of shaping the legal system of the Russian Federation as an independent state and the legal successor of the USSR [4, c. 30–51]; instability of the CIS as a structure in transition – all this led to the need for significant adjustments in the internal legal policy of Russia and its clear positioning in the entire spectrum of chang-

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² This is most evident in the example of the PRC. China’s GDP in 1980 was \$305.3 billion, and in 2021 it will be \$17.46 trillion. In addition, in a relatively short historical period, China has become one of the leading space and nuclear powers.

ing international relations. It should be noted, however, that there is no “Chinese wall” between the domestic and foreign legal policy in the modern world. These two areas are engaged in a certain interaction.

To build a legal policy in a global world, the minimum requirement is that its principles are embraced by the global community. An example of such a necessary step is the speech of the president of Russia in the Bundestag in 2001 and in Munich in 2007, emphasizing the perniciousness and futility of building a unipolar world. Perhaps at that time the West had not developed faith in Russia’s ability to overcome serious problems that persisted inside the country and take its proper place on the new political map of the world, so, in fact, they continued the path of building a unipolar world without regard to what was said.

It is fair to say that the goals set by the West were partially realized: the crisis in Georgia and the coup in Ukraine demonstrated the invalidity of the idea of a union of independent states in the territory of the former Soviet Union. However, the diversity of development paths for the states in a changing world has revealed the limitations of the Western unipolar dominance.

The two crises that have broken out in recent years – the pandemic and Ukraine – regardless of whether we consider them objective (the first as a product of biological evolution and the second as one of the options of historical development) or man-made, put the question of the system of post-crisis world order before the world community with redoubled force.

The Ukrainian crisis is by no means the last page of the prologue to the future history in which the United States and Russia will not be the only/no-alternative protagonists. Besides, it is far from being complete, especially in terms of the legal framework. A far greater challenge lies ahead for the world community in solving the contradictions between the two world economies, the U.S. and China. This forecast is due to the fact that despite China’s consistent policy aimed at the peaceful resolution of existing contradictions, including economic ones, the U.S. contributes to the persisting military and political tensions, associated, in particular, with Taiwan, which is a major issue for China. In this case, the forecasts of events, as well as the legal framework for a possible crisis, are especially vague.

However, history teaches us that all confrontations between states get somehow resolved in the end. Even wars between major powers eventually give the world some kind of legal order for a certain period.

In addressing the history, we should note that the emerging picture does not seem surreal. It is enough to recall the experience of building a system of international relations as a result of World War II. Then, after the collapse of the order formed at the end of World War I, the foundations for a new model were laid in Yalta. Now it is, if not ruined, bulging at the seams. Who will shape the next legal order? What will be new in it and what will remain traditional? And finally, how can Russia retain a place in it similar to its current status as a permanent member of the UN?

The society is changing, and any superpower can face the question of its own status in future world history. Even during the 1943 Teheran Conference, the Prime Minister of the British Empire – the largest state on the planet at the time – in discussing the opening of a second front, said he had felt like this: “On one side of me, cross-legged, sat

a huge Russian bear; and on the other, a huge American bison. And between them sat a poor little English donkey...” [1]. Today we can treat this statement of W. Churchill in different ways, especially in the part concerning his vision of the future relations between the superpowers and the place (and a special one) of Great Britain in world politics. Another thing is of importance. The bright politician of his time, despite the certain international isolation of the Soviet Union that preceded World War II and the enormous losses that the state suffered in the early years of fighting, correctly assessed further role and possibilities of the USSR, still struggling for victory.

Thereafter, the new legal order based on the UN Charter was shaped by states sharing different, often fundamentally diverse values. Nevertheless, they were allied states, which was a factor of success in creating a new system of international relations based on the international treaty as the main source of international law.

Importantly, if in international relations individual states unilaterally take actions demonstrating friendly or, on the contrary, unfriendly politics, these actions are most often opportunistic. They do not oblige this state to stay on the same course. In contrast, an international treaty, more than any other source of international law, clearly illustrates the entire process of harmonizing the will of states, and reflects the goals and possibilities of their foreign policy. Thereafter, the parties to the treaty are obliged to follow its spirit and letter [3]. In today’s context, it is important to identify the constituent parts/elements of the mechanism for elaborating international treaties and the role of each of them in shaping the emerging legal order. Besides, it is necessary to understand which states should participate in this process so that the agreed legal order is no less stable than the one created following World War II. It seems that shaping the new legal order will not depend solely on the will of the allies and classical diplomacy, as was the case in the past. The decisive factor will be the balance of economic and military power of the main players in the international arena, as well as the reliability of political and legal alliances between states in the two new world poles.

The current crisis clearly demonstrates that world politics depends not so much on the will of sovereign states as on the superpowers. As Putin noted at the plenary session of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum in 2017, “there are not so many countries in the world that have sovereignty...” [2]. In fact, only the superpowers have the real sovereignty.

The world does not agree to the unipolar order imposed on it. However, it seems that we are not about to enter the era of the parade of sovereign states, although the current international law postulates sovereign equality of countries as one of its basic principles. A new model of a bipolar world formed by the superpowers seems more realistic.

Now, in the face of the military confrontation, one of the poles has emerged. Political scientists have dubbed it the “collective West.” There are some contradictions within it, but so far it is acting in a very coherent way. The crisis provoked by it can be qualified as a new form of hybrid warfare against Russia, and its anti-Russian front is legally quite structured. Its military and political basis is NATO, acting on the grounds of an international treaty and as an international organization (subject of international law) for many years. The economic basis is the established associa-

tion of the United States and the European Union. Unlike NATO, it does not have a full-fledged treaty arrangement, but U.S. sanctioning decisions and other economic measures against third countries are duplicated by the European Union. The legal practice of recent years is distinguished by the fact that the European Union has adopted the aggressive American legal principle of extraterritoriality of national law, which had not previously been supported in Europe.

So what can the second pole be and what place can Russia occupy in it? To answer this question, one must first assess whether Russia needs the second world pole, taking into account the fact that it is militarily independent and has a self-sufficient resource base. This self-sufficiency may be acceptable for a country and society based on the worship of an idea, such as the idea of an ideal state. However, historical experience shows that this does not last long. Russia needs a large, diversified market to develop. The country, with its current population, demographic problems, and inherent international claims, cannot create a modern market within its national boundaries. The country's development is possible only if it is effectively integrated into the world economy with an international agenda agreed upon with the interested states.

Since Russia's economic potential is great, but not yet sufficient for world leadership, it needs allies to establish itself in the world markets and especially to develop its high-tech sector. This is the purpose of continued cooperation with such economic giants as China and India; besides, new organizational structures are being formed, particularly with the BRICS countries.

In today's political reality, China and India oppose the "collective West" by not agreeing to join sweeping sanctions against Russia, but this, in itself, is not an evidence of an established alliance that fights against Western domination. As for the uneasy relations among the BRICS countries, all of them, including Russia, have a difficult way to go in order to achieve mutual understanding and trust, to develop an independent system of international cooperation, and especially to create a sustainable legal framework for it. This can most likely be accomplished through a "ho-

izontal model" of economic integration, that is based on the coordinated positions of the process participants, without the obvious dominance of one of the countries.

Thus, in the new global world Russia faces the following legal challenges that need to be addressed to determine its place among the superpowers:

- conclusion of post-war treaties guaranteeing its security from NATO;
- ensuring the interests and rights of states whose independence Russia has recognized by February 24, 2022;
- ensuring the interests and rights of other territories that have exercised the right of self-determination.

Taking into account the fact that economic relations with the countries of the "collective West" are maintained even in the context of the sanctions war, Russia should nevertheless reconsider the contractual system in economic relations both with individual countries and with the European Union as a whole.

The first step in a radical change of the economic world order can be the departure from the system of dollar settlements. The international financial system is currently changing; for Russia it is associated primarily with the role of the dollar as the main reserve currency and beginning of mutual settlements in national currencies.

Russia's main objective is to maintain its position as one of the initiators of the concept of a new legal order and to actively participate in its creation and functioning.

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