

Models of the «Soft Power» of Networking Terrorist Organizations (using the Example of the «Islamic State», al-Qaeda, the Taliban and the «Muslim Brotherhood»¹)

Abstract

The article is dedicated to the comparative political analysis of models of the «soft power» of networking terrorist organizations using the example of terrorist organizations and groups prohibited in the Russian Federation: «Islamic state», al-Qaeda, the Taliban, and the «Muslim Brotherhood». The object of study is the soft power. The subjects of the research are the forms, methods, models and technologies of the soft power of terrorist organizations (for example, «Islamic state» (IS), al-Qaeda, the Taliban and the «Muslim Brotherhood»). The author draws attention to the fact that terrorists of various transnational organizations and groups in their ideological and propaganda activities use the soft power in order to unite extremists, to involve new members into terrorist activities and to conduct information war with their ideological enemies (with the governments of various countries fighting against international terrorism and their direct competitors among the extremists, terrorists and Islamists). Thus, the soft power of terrorists does not repeat the forms and methods of soft power of the USA, known from the works of the American neoliberals (John. Nye, R. Kohan etc.), and which has its own model, existing in the form of a specific set of versions adapted to the ideology of each particular international terrorist group. So, the ISIS, the Taliban, al-Qaeda, the «Muslim brotherhood», each has its own model of soft power and these models are quite different from each other even in their underlying basis.

Key words: soft power, terrorism, Islamic State, control of terrorism, politics, security.

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¹ On December 29, 2014, the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation determined «Islamic State» as a terrorist organization, its activity in Russia is illegal; On February 14, 2003, the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation determined «Al-Qaeda» as a terrorist organization, its activity in Russia is illegal; On February 14, 2003, the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation determined the «Taliban» movement as a terrorist organization, its activity in Russia is illegal; On February 14, 2003, the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation determined the «Muslim Brotherhood» organization as a terrorist organization, its activity in Russia is illegal.

In modern hybrid wars (in Syria, Ukraine, Yemen, and other regions) a non-state factor presents: global and regional leaders prefer to sort out the relationships not in a direct frontal collision, but through the collision of paramilitary intermediaries, allies and satellites, including non-state actors and anti-actors of global politics and political forces that are on the stage of formation of their international political identity. This means that in hybrid wars, the world leaders prefer to act not directly, but through their agents, which can be characterized as classical (nation-states, their alliances and coalitions and international organizations) or non-classical (private military companies (PMC), armed groups of political parties and national liberation movements, home guard formed on ethnic or confessional principle, armed forces of the unrecognized state formations, volunteer corps, part of which can claim for the status of «actors beyond the sovereignty», and the other part cannot).

Furthermore, this struggle may involve organizations and groupings, leading criminal activity, including that of extremist, terrorist, radical character, with which the leaders can communicate hoping to use them for their own purposes secretly or by mutual agreement. This is evident in the war in Syria and in Donbass region. The situation with classic actors in world politics, acting as agents of the conflicting world leaders is in general clear — their military and diplomatic engagement in a hybrid conflict is traditional in nature, but a wide range of non-classical and non-state actors is a quite a colourful palette that includes sociological formations of different degrees of structuring, forming and maturity. PMCs are characterized as typical TNCs and behave the same way (according to their specialization). Different kinds of militia in terms of organization are often characterized as archaic clan, tribal, communal. Their cohesion, political and military activity, is often influenced by narrowly understood ethnic (for example, the Kurdish militia in Syria and Iraq, militia of Assyrian Christians in Syria or the Shiite

militias in Iraq) or religious (Alawite part of the army of Assad, the Kurds — Yazidis, the Druze, the Christian militia in Syria and Iraq, etc.) factors. Terrorist organizations like the ISIS and al Qaeda, which have, in addition to their own military and political agenda, the super goal of building a global Islamic state, also have a rather complicated relationship with their sponsors and with other groups of terrorists and extremists. They build the relationships in accordance with medieval rules existed in the first century of Islam. These groups could be referred to anti-actors of world politics, defined as the target and the object that must be destroyed, if only a number of modern states, such as Turkey, «Gulf States», and the United States, did not try to use them for their own purposes as a tool for implementing their foreign policy. From all mentioned above it follows that today there is a rapid process of hybridization of world politics, the centers of which are the conflicts in Syria, Ukraine, Yemen, etc. The study of these processes is not only military-political, but also social, that is why the methods of sociology of international relations should be implemented for the analysis of these processes.

One of the major factors that, along with smuggling of oil and cultural values, contribute to the sustainability of the existence of such terrorist groups as the Islamic State, al-Qaeda operating from Syria called Jabhat al-Nusra), the «Muslim Brotherhood» and the Taliban have their own system of ideology and propaganda, which recently have more often been called the «soft power» of Islamists. Due to the well-established ideological, agitation and propaganda work, the recruiters of the ISIS, the Taliban and al-Qaeda involve young people (not only Muslim, but also converts from Christians) in their activities to compensate combat losses in manpower, hire professionals in the area of information warfare and cyber intelligence service, economy, oil and mineral exploration, public administration and local self-government. Owing to their own model and format of «soft power», Islamists from

the ISIS, al-Qaeda and other groups can lead armed open or sabotage and guerrilla wars against the entire Western world for years, refilling their resources daily with the help of political parties, movements, public associations, diaspora, legally operating worldwide, which share their views and political position. The «Muslim brotherhood» is remarkable for this, they actively recruit highly educated intellectuals, University professors, leading scientists, analysts, representatives of national political elites, using them as agents and distribution channels of soft power, as well as in order to develop new models of ideological, value and propaganda influence on individual and mass consciousness of citizens in various countries around the world

The ideological influence of the Islamists can be called the soft power because a significant part of the younger members of these groups were led to the jihadists by their world outlook, values and views on the world and its most acute problems (among which the most serious are the problems of social and political inequality, poverty, lack of social mobility), as well as the confidence of these groups in their own power and ability to solve these problems. The ideology of all groups — the Taliban, al — Qaeda, the ISIS and the «Muslim Brotherhood», which is closely connected to Islamism and Islamic modernism, such concepts as social justice, equality, absence of class and, tribal differences, fraternity, mutual help and mutual support in any situation (i. e., collectivism) are actively used. If al-Qaeda and the Taliban are tolerant to social inequality, the ISIS strongly votes for the elimination of social inequality and ensures each adherent equal opportunities, on the condition that he/she will fully follow the way of life, norms and the canons established in the ISIS.

A significant role in the attraction of soft power of the ISIS is played by a special social community, which is built on the Islamists seized from Syria and Iraq territories, in which the principles of social justice — in the form they are understood in the ideology

of the ISIS — along with the canons of Islam of Salafi persuasion, are one of the main regulators of social relations. Young people, recruited by ISIS campaigners, are taught that they will live in tough but fair world where justice is the same for the rich and the poor, for field commanders and ordinary Mujaheddins, and this is a sufficient reason for many of them to leave home and to go to war on the side of ISIS in Libya, Syria or Iraq.

A long-term practice of the struggle against the ideological work of the extremists has shown that the call for absolute justice, equality and fraternity has not lost its appeal: not only young people from the lowest, poorest strata of society, where they have not ever had and will never have any prospects in life, join the ISIS, but children of wealthy parents, who follow the emotional impulse, supported at the appropriate level by the soft power of the Islamists, give up all their possessions (money, real estate, expensive cars, valuable papers, etc.) in the property of the ISIS and become as poor as the Mujaheddens, who came to the ISIS from distant villages. None of the scientists can explain this phenomenon, because its nature lies in a special kind of appeal of the soft power. The Islamists, of course, have this power.

Each terrorist organization: the ISIS, al-Qaeda, the Taliban, the «Muslim Brotherhood», has its model of soft power. The basis for all of these models is radical Islamism, as a rule, the Salafitism. However, apart from Islam, in these models there are absolutely different principles and mechanisms of influence on individual and mass consciousness: each model has its own individual characteristics and differences defined with specific goals and objectives of each of the terrorist organizations on the one hand and with staff, responsible for ideology and propaganda, on the other hand.

The ISIS builds its ideology on promoting the advantages of «a new, free and fair society» — a worldwide Islamic Caliphate, which they build in the occupied territories of Syria and Iraq. The core concept of their ideology and soft power is the principle

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of justice, in defense of which they speak (in their own opinion, of course). The ISIS stands for a society of equal opportunities, elimination of all class barriers and for the primacy of the principle of justice in any sphere of public relations. Their ideological appeals, after removal of Islam context, seems to be quite secular and carry the messages clear to even the illiterate peasant or herdsman: «land — to peasants!», «factories — to workers!», «water — to sailors!», «capitalists — to pitchfork» etc. These slogans in general are the same as the slogans of the Bolsheviks and the Trotskyites. There is no coincidence in the fact that the ISIS is referred to as «neo-Bolsheviks», it is necessary to note the revolutionary nature of the ideology and the organization and there are attempts (especially in Turkey and the Gulf countries) to extradite the terrorist activities of the ISIS for the «Great Sunni revolution», «The Sunni liberation uprising». Such a character of the ideology of the ISIS is probably connected with the fact that it has not been elaborated by jihadists and radical Sunni preachers, during the formation of the ISIS in 2006 (based on the Iraqi cell of al-Qaeda, involving coordination of the CIA), it joined twelve Sunni groups fighting against the occupied country from US troops and NATO, which consisted of former soldiers and officers from Saddam Hussein's army and former officials of the Baath party. Most likely, they developed pseudo-revolutionary ideology for the ISIS, which took quite a lot of ideology of the Baath, Arab Renaissance and pan-Arabism. In fact, the Soviet ideology can be seen: the ISIS propagandists often say that in the fight for fair world they just replaced the collapsed Soviet Union, which firmly struggled for justice, equality, fraternity until the end. However, in 1991 the Soviet Union split and the Russian Federation was busy with its own problems — it stopped struggling for a fair world order, and then followed the path of capitalism. As a result, according to the ISIS, the successor of the Soviet Union had to appear, and the ISIS has become the one. These con-

clusions of the leaders of the ISIS are connected with the image of the Soviet Union. This is not a coincidence: many officials of the administration of Saddam Hussein, as well as militaries, received the education in the Soviet Union.

A rather complicated mosaic pattern occurs when trying to deal with the ideology and soft power of the Taliban. The ideology of the Taliban today is not homogenous — it resembles a «layer cake» consisting of three layers or levels. Each of these levels corresponds to its ideological base and its ideological concept. It is connected not even with the fact that the Pakistani Taliban is different from Afghan Taliban, and not with the fact that the core of the combat forces of the Taliban (non-national movements, for example, Pashtun) are the Pakistani and Afghan Pashtuns, introduced by hundreds of different tribes. It is connected with the fact that the Taliban is now experiencing a generational crisis, there clearly are three different generations of leaders, and these generations have different values and views of the world. This creates a crisis that affects all spheres of activities of the Taliban, including ideology. Therefore, the ideology and soft power of the Taliban is «multilayer».

The first and the oldest generation of the Taliban is represented by the field commanders of the Mujaheddin who fought with the Soviet Union and then with the Northern Alliance. These are such figures as Mullah Omar reported to be likely dead two or three years ago. When they were young, these leaders did not put up struggling with their enemies, both «foreign invaders», and opponents within the country, today they are the elderly and they realize that they has spent their entire life in the battles and campaigns, and they did not have an opportunity to enjoy the wealth and position they have. For these reasons (the desire to age in peace and comfort), they now are quite peaceful and conciliatory and hinder the enthusiasm of the younger generation of field commanders, eager to continue the war against «crusaders» and their collaborators. These figures still have

the power, but cause sharp discontent of the younger generation of Mujaheddin, among which the popularity of jihadism, similar to the one being preached by the ISIS agitators, is rapidly growing.

The second generation of the Taliban consists of the field commanders who joined the Taliban during the fight against the Northern Alliance, but long before the invasion of the USA and NATO in Afghanistan. The main ideology of this generation of field commanders and fighters is patriotism: they see the purpose and meaning of life in the struggle with foreign invaders and believe that the war will end, if the last foreign soldier is destroyed or leaves the land of Afghanistan. For them the most important thing in the war is the protection of national interests of Afghanistan. They are nationally oriented figures, who are in irreconcilable enmity with jihadists from the ISIS and other groups, for whom national interests, sovereignty and borders of any state is nothing, and global Jihad is the only purpose of existence. The ideology and soft power in this category of the Taliban has a pronounced national-state character.

The third generation of the Taliban consists of young fighters who were born and brought up in the conditions of permanent war of all against all in Afghanistan and joined the Taliban after the start of the fight with KFOR (Kosovo Force). They are mostly convinced jihadists sympathetic to the ISIS and considering the ISIS is an example of the true Islamist State. Their ideology and values are not different from the ideology of the ISIS. They are willing to accept the leadership of the ISIS, but this is prevented by the commanders of the older generation — those who insist on the national-state and national-patriotic positions and for whom the war has always been and remains the internal matter of Afghanistan. For young people of the Taliban infected with the virus of jihadism the older generation of Taliban commanders is a clear and unfortunate hindrance which should be eliminated in the interests of the «Great Sunni Revolution» conducted by the Arab «brotherhood» from the ISIS.

These generational characteristics of the modern cadre of the Taliban outline the general character of their ideology and soft power: the ideology of the Taliban clearly expresses points of view of all three generations, which cannot interfere with each other even within a single movement.

For practical implementation of its model of soft power and ideological influence, the Taliban, as well as the ISIS, has an excellent staff of agitators and propagandists: the Taliban holds very complex information and psychological operations in the public and in virtual online space — the blogosphere and social networks. At the same time, their ideological campaigns are aimed generally at people of their «home regions» — Afghanistan and Pakistan. The external influence on the population of the countries where the Taliban does not have its interests and especially international public opinion are not interesting for the Taliban. But at the level of the local press — TV, printed and electronic editions, radio — the propaganda work of the Taliban is very well established: the programs are aired in most local and several foreign languages and dialects. Newspapers, brochures, and other promotional materials are regularly delivered to remote settlements. This provides a constant flow of new generations of young people to the Taliban.

The case with the ideology and soft power of al-Qaeda is different. Unlike the Taliban and the ISIS (although the ISIS consists of velayets, but the core is still in Syria and Iraq), al-Qaeda is a terrorist organization built on the network principle and consisting of separate, independently functioning terrorist cells with a high degree of freedom of choice of strategy, tactics, goals, targets, and forms of carrying out terrorist attacks. In the Arabian Peninsula AQAP operates (al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula), its military wing controls quite a large lot of the territory (with several major cities and towns) in Yemen. Fighters of this al Qaeda unit, ousted by the Saudis to Yemen because of threats to organize an overturn in

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Saudi Arabia, are fighting with Shia-Zaidi (the«Huthis») and, in fact, contribute to Saudi Arabia in achieving its military objectives in Yemen. So, during a visit to the city of Taiz the BBC correspondent saw the armed forces of the Saudis [the Saudis — AM] fighting with the Houthis, together with the militants of «al-Qaeda».

In the Maghreb and the majority of the so-called French Africa the unit «al-Qaeda in the Maghreb» operates — on its account there are attacks in the capital of Mali, in Libya, in Algeria and planning of terrorist attacks in Europe. Some politicians associate the organization of the terrorist attack in Paris on the night of 13 to 14 November 2015 with the activities of al Qaeda in the Maghreb: in particular, such statement was declared by the US President B. Obama several hours after the tragedy. The official version of the events, which French authorities stick to, places the responsibility for the terrorist attacks in Paris on the ISIS, which was confirmed by the official statements of the leaders of the ISIS. Meanwhile, immediately after the terrorist attacks in Paris the version arises that the attack was the revenge of the Tuareg for French mercilessly bombing their cities during the conflict in Mali.

In Syria, al-Qaeda operates under the name of Jabhat al-Nusra — this is its military wing. In 2006 in Iraq, the local branch of al-Qaeda after a merger with another twelve radical groups changed its name to «Islamic State of Iraq» (now ISIS). Strong units of al — Qaida operate in Afghanistan and Pakistan, as well as in Jordan, where after the death of Osama bin Laden all the top leadership of al-Qaeda appeared to be (by nationality they are mostly Jordanians). There are the units of Al-Qaeda in European countries: the UK, France, Germany, Belgium, etc. All of them are autonomous, have a high degree of autonomy, including development of their own models and concepts of ideology and soft power.

The ideology of al-Qaeda, emerged and formed during the war with the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, is based on two main theses:

1) fight against the infidels and foreign invaders, whom they call «crusaders», 2) disregard of state borders and other formal divisions that define the modern world, in which the main actors in international relations are national states. Al-Qaeda in its nature and form of organization is a transnational subversive — reconnaissance and terrorist network; it is a kind of multinational corporation which purpose is not obtaining and maximizing profits, but political transformation of the world. That is why the basis of the ideology of al-Qaeda are corporate values, ensuring corporate unity of all participants of the network regardless of geographic distance of the units and the control center; and then on the second place come the ideologies of pan-Islamism, jihadism, fighting against the Christian world — with the same «crusaders»: Russia, the USA and the EU. All this forms the common frame, the general construction of a model of soft power of al-Qaeda, based on the denial of the modern world order with national states and national borders and on the recognition of the supremacy of the new forms of quasi-state entities — global political (extremist, Islamist, terrorist) networks. This framework of regional al — Qaida units are filled with their own meanings and their own content, including those messages which are best perceived by the population of each individual region. That is why the soft power of al-Qaeda, on the one hand, has mosaic character and has strongly pronounced regional specificity and, on the other hand, it is always exactly tuned to the hopes and aspirations of the population of their region and therefore has a high penetrating, convincing and stimulating effect.

The most subtle in terms of formation of the information and propaganda is the terrorist group the «Muslim brotherhood», which many politicians and experts for some reason like to call «soft Islamists» — without much reason, just basing only on the fact that in the situations when the terrorists of the ISIS and al-Qaeda prefer to go ahead, the «Muslim brotherhood» prefer to bribe local elites and

do the same thing, but by proxy. Perhaps, this is partially due to the residual stress, which many European (and not only European) politicians experienced, when in Egypt, as a result of legitimate elections that meet all democratic demands, the leader of the Egyptian cell of the «Muslim brotherhood» Mohamed Morsi was elected to the post of President. As a result, within three years many political figures were in a state of cognitive dissonance: they were forced to shake hands with the terrorist, who unexpectedly became the legitimate President of Egypt. Although, in theory, he should have been immediately arrested or eliminated during the capture.

In its model of soft power the «Muslim brotherhood», being the same geographically distributed network terrorist organization as al-Qaeda, rely on its own corporate values, the most important of which, after the imperative of the «unity of all true Muslim believers», is the reliance on a high level of intelligence and education in the surroundings of its leadership, on the development of managerial decisions by using the resources of their own «think tanks», in which they attract intellectuals all around the Muslim world. The «Muslim brotherhood» acts through their sympathizers' representatives of political, scientific, and financial elites; their ideology forms the motivational needs of the elites and the middle class: those segments of the population whose members hold in their hands the control over these or those countries. Therefore, among the heads of cells of the «Muslim brotherhood» there are a lot of college professors and sophisticated intellectuals. The «Muslim brotherhood» isolate the most promising and talented young politicians from the political environment in different countries and make them their agents. Mohamed Morsi may be an example of such a promotion, a former University Professor, or the current President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who was the member of the radical group «Grey wolves» when he was young.

Unlike other similar organizations, the «Muslim brotherhood» has its own foreign

concept, which includes both existing national states and international organizations. According to this concept, the main role of the «Muslim brotherhood» is in forming of the global agenda and in solving international challenges, which the «Muslim brotherhood» plans to fight with, creating under its egis private «voluntary coalitions». So, the middle East initiative of M. Morsi (while being Egyptian President) on the creation of so-called «Islamic Quartet» to resolve the Syrian crisis is well-known; M. Morsi called on the most influential countries in the region — Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Iran to form a military-political bloc for the suppression of the civil war in Syria. This kind of concepts (in scale and quality of development) exists neither in the ISIS nor in al-Qaeda and the Taliban. The main ideological goal of the ISIS is a quasi-state formation «World Islamic Caliphate» that copies the Muslim autocracies of the middle ages and living accordingly to the medieval canons; the idea is effective, but utterly outdated, not leading to the creation of a new modern state that can compete with the existing national states, and therefore is — short-lived. National state doctrine of the Taliban comes to a simple formula «country without crusaders» and does not provide any change of state borders of Afghanistan, but only changing the form of government and the political regime currently existing in the country. Al-Qaeda denies the importance of borders and sovereignty of national — countries, claiming that its terrorist network by definition is extraterritorial and does not recognize the demarcation and dividing lines set by the «crusaders» to define the territorial boundaries of national countries.

These are the models of soft power of various terrorist organizations that the Russian Federation has to fight with on various fronts, both virtual and real, such as the war in Syria. At the same time, in the ideological fight against Islamist groups such as the ISIS and al-Qaeda, Russia uses its own model of soft power, based on the firm determination to defend the legitimate rights of people to

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choose their own destiny and the leaders who will govern the state; in this respect, Russian soft power is also based on the concept of justice, but which is fundamentally different from what people understand it in the Islamists, «privatizing» the common heritage of —justice —and making it available only for a limited circle of «friends». Syrian citizens in grateful for the peace and freedom that Russian military brought them give their children Russian names or give them names such as «Russia», «Army», Syrian soldiers walking around with shirts with the image of our pilot, who heroically died defending the Syrian people — these are the examples of Russian soft power.

Unfortunately, it is necessary to admit that the armed conflict in Syria will continue for a very long time. The resolution of the UN Security Council 2015. — № 2254 () on the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic contains a detailed, incremental plan of settling the armed conflict between the Assad regime and the opposition (the guarantors of the execution of this plan are the USA and Russia, who introduced the resolution to a vote in the Security Council), there is no firm assurance that it will be executed by all parties of the conflict, including the United States and its allies, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, having the influence on the armed opposition. Criticizing Russia's actions in Syria, the USA and its allies are trying to prevent the creation of the coalition in the region under Moscow leadership. This is carried out because such coalition is able to create a new network architecture throughout the Arab world.

In October 2015, Saudi Arabia and Turkey joined to the US calls for Russia to stop air strikes of the positions of the «moderate opposition» in Syria. Meanwhile, neither the USA nor its allies in the region were able to explain exactly where this «moderate opposition» is and how it distinguished from terrorist organizations. Funded by the USA and its allies antiauthority formation in Syria have already mixed with such terrorist structure — as «Islam-

ic state», banned in Russia, and «Jabhat al-Nusra». It is well known fact, and the talks about «moderate opposition» are just a political move. The main goal of this move is to save from destruction at least part of the essentially terrorist structures, in which in the past a lot of money was invested. The USA and its allies — Turkey and some Arab monarchies of the Persian Gulf — formed and brought up this so-called «opposition» for a long time. They spent money on purchase of weapons, training on the latest methods of warfare. That is a very serious and expensive project. And then suddenly Russia makes a «knight's move» and begins to strike on this business project. Currently it is impossible to distinguish «moderate» opposition from «immoderate» one in the project. For example, the USA consider Jabhat al-Nusra as «moderate», meanwhile, it is an organization which considers itself the successor to the Syrian cell of al-Qaeda. They cut heads exactly as the «Islamic state» and maybe even more intensively. Many videos posted online that non-experts relate to the activities of the ISIS, actually record the executions carried out by the militants of «Jabhat al-Nusra». They are dangerous, they are not «moderate», and they are just not as well-known as the advertised «Islamic state».

Accusing Russia of attacks on «moderate» groups, the USA and its allies began a long-term combination, the aim of which is to preserve American control over the region. While the Americans imitated the fight against the ISIS, Russia attempted to organize a real and effective international anti-terrorist coalition. And many Arab countries went to the rapprochement with Russia on this issue. After that, the USA and its allies feared that Russia will form an international front under its control, which will first deal with the puppet Islamist groups that were armed and trained by Americans and the Gulf countries, and then the front will build a new architecture of international relations in the Arab world. Speaking in defense of seemingly useful terrorist organizations today, the

countries in the region make a mistake. After all, unlike the USA, they are in a direct reach of the militants.

The whole complexity of the Syrian situation lies in the fact that the Syrian conflict turned out to involve influential world powers (the USA, Russia, the EU and regional leaders), the vital interests of which in this region diverge significantly. So, for Russia the main thing is a speedy victory over international terrorism, the destruction of Daish (ISIS), Jabhat al-Nusra and other terrorist groups and restoring peace for the Syrian people, the opportunity to live peacefully, raise a family, to vote freely for the future of the country. For the USA the destruction of Daish is not a priority; more important thing for them is to remove Bashar al-Assad with the help of Daish and other «opposition» and then force its European allies to deal with terrorists. The strategic goal of the USA is to guide Syria to the Libyan way, to make Assad repeat the Gaddafi's fate. Russia with its successful military operations in Syria (implemented jointly with the Syrian government army), obviously, prevents this. Turkey, earning a lot of money on the resale of oil produced on the territory controlled by the Islamic state and Jabhat al-Nusra (the Syrian branch of al — Qaida) for a long time, is not interested in business partnerships, blocked today in Aleppo and cut off by the Syrian army and the Kurds from supply lines (of weapons and fighters being moved from the territory of Turkey), to be destroyed. Qatar, which supplied and financed Jabhat al-Nusra for a long time, has the same motives, and Saudi Arabia, on the balance of which there is Jaish al-Islam: all these extremist groups are their business projects, in which a lot of money is invested and will be lost, if the Russian and the Syrian continue destroying terrorists, despite the pressure from the West. That is why both the USA and the Gulf monarchies will try not to destroy the terrorists, but to preserve their combat core (cadre), displacing them to Jordan or opening them a «corridor» to exit from the territory of Syria — for exam-

ple, to Yemen. There fighters can rest, mobilise the force and get ready to wage a war against Assad or any of his legitimate successor again.

After the adoption of the resolution on Syria by the UN Security Council, the fate of the combat units of the Islamic state and Jabhat al-Nusra in Syria is solved: they are doomed to extermination. If the Syrian and the Russian army destroy a group of terrorists in Aleppo, and the United States and its allies deploy the attack on al-Raqqa and conquer it, Syria will be cleared from terrorists. In case of agreed actions of Russia and the USA, this can happen in the coming months. Then, perhaps, peace will be established in Syria for some time. According to the peace plan, all Syrian opposition groups consisting of Syrian citizens (not foreign mercenaries, not jihadists) and not closely connected with the Islamic state, «shave the beards» and become «moderate opposition» which may be negotiated with. These people — former militants — will go to elections of the President of Syria, according to the plan of peaceful settlement contained in UN Security Council Resolution № 2254. However, their essence will not change only because they call themselves «the moderate opposition». As a result, Syria may face the threat of a full color revolution, which will unfold according to the classical scenario: if in the election Assad will get the most votes (and it will happen, as the population freed from Islamic state territories will vote for Assad), «moderate opposition» will contest the election results, declare their non-recognition, dug up the weapons and color revolution will turn into an armed rebellion very quickly. Then the civil war will take place, the front line will be held by the Syrian army against the international terrorism of jihadists from around the world, just — what is happening in Syria now. However, there is a hope that these plans of the enemies of Syrian people will be shattered by Russia again, in its favorite incomprehensible way.

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