

TRANSNISTRIA – A “BRIDGE HEAD” OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION FOR ATTACKING UKRAINE

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Motto:

„Nobody should fantasize about the possibility to gain military superiority against Russia. We will never allow this to happen.”

Vladimir Putin

Abstract:

The breakaway republic - de facto state - of Transnistria has steadily been edging closer and closer to Russia, but the Kremlin does not seem all that enthusiastic.

The EU ought to take specific action to prevent Moldova from becoming the next victim of Russian aggression.

Transnistria could represent a Russian bridge head in the East of Europe.

There is a real chance that the breakaway region in the Eastern part of the country, the Transnistrian republic, might follow in the footsteps of Crimea and be accepted into the Russian Federation as a new federal subject.

The annexation of Crimea by force dramatically changes the security situation in the Black Sea region.

After the annexation of Crimea (March 2014) by the Russian Federation, UN observers are trying to figure out what is going on with Russian Federation troops on the Ukrainian border. As a result of the talks, the subject of Republic of Transnistria was also reached.

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Fig. 1- Annexation of the Crimea by the Russian Federation (March 2014)

The Russian Federation reserves the right to intervene anywhere on the territory of the former Soviet republics.

If the Russian Federation were to take over Transnistria, Ukraine would have Russian troops on three borders instead of two. That would mean that the Russians would then put their hands on Odessa and take what remains of southeast Ukraine. With the annexation of Crimea to the Russian Federation, the Dniester becomes a war line for the Russian Federation.

Transnistria has borders with Moldova and Ukraine and has no access to the Black Sea.



Fig. 2 - Map of Transnistria, the breakaway republic and de facto state sandwiched between Moldova and Ukraine, 2008¹

¹ <https://www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/p%C3%A5l-kolst%C3%B8/transnistria-is-bridge-too-far-for-russia>, accessed on 05.11.2018.

The Transnistrian region, the Donbas and Crimea, is the first line of the Russian front. If this line falls - militarily or politically – Putin’s “Iron Curtain” can get the Prut, the Danube Delta and the Romanian-Ukrainian border established in the Hague, but also South of Chernautzi and Hertza or Maramures Tisza.

The secret plan of the Russian Federation is to create a common frontier with the Republic of Moldova and Romania through the Odessa region.

The Russian Federation seeks to remove new portions of territory from the Kiev government (those that could make the land link between Donbas and Crimea; those concerning control of the Danube mouths, respectively the Dniester estuary area, the Bailey, the Snake Island).



Fig. 3 - Annexation of the Snake Island, Transnistria and Gagauzia by the Russian Federation²

The annexation of Crimea demonstrates that the Russian Federation will go as far as the West will allow it to go. Its obvious intention is to reconstitute the Soviet Union.

The Russian military units on the territory of the Republic of Moldova (Transnistria) could multiply and become a bridge head for attacking Ukraine.

² <http://www.ziare.com/international/ucraina/generalul-constantin-degeratu-moscova-nu-crede-in-lacrimi-singurul-limbaj-inteles-e-cel-al-foitei-interviu-1356075>, accessed on 05.11.2018;



Fig. 4 - Crimea as “bridgehead” to Transnistria for the destabilization of Ukraine³

The Russian Federation is in the middle of an offensive campaign, it has achieved some geopolitical objectives at the Black Sea (Crimea, Abkhazia, South Ossetia), it may also target others (the mouths of the Danube, Snake Island) and may be tempted to test the viability of NATO's Article 5.

In the Black Sea area, the Russian Federation reached a culmination of military dominance and is in a full-expansion process.

Keywords: Russian Federation; Transnistria; Crimea; Bridgehead; mouths of the Danube; Snake Island; Eastern Europe

³ https://adevarul.ro/moldova/politica/expert-militar-transnistria-ar-putea-deveni-cap-pod-rusiei-atacare-ucrainei-1_5314284ac7b855ff56d204b3/index.html, accessed on 05.11.2018.