

June 26, 2014

# New Putin Doctrine: Prelude to "New Cold War"?

By IIJIMA Kazutaka

Russian President Vladimir PUTIN has forcibly advanced annexation of Ukraine and Crimean peninsula to Russia, raising concerns among countries of the West that "he intends to transform drastically the post-war international system." In which direction does he intend to transform it? "The new Putin doctrine," presumably a key to this question, has emerged from his public address, says Vladimir RYZHKOV, 47, former member of Russia's lower house of parliament and a liberal political commentator, in an article he contributed to Moscow Times. Analyzing PUTIN's address on March 18 in which he proposed annexation of Crimean peninsula to the upper and lower houses of parliament, RYZHKOV holds that Russia, taking advantage of its military might, appears to defend at all cost its special interests in the former Soviet bloc. In this article, RYZHKOV refers to President PUTIN's new doctrine composed of seven points.

The first point is that "Russia no longer regards the West as a trustworthy partner." President PUTIN asserts that "Although the Cold War is already history, the West is still in pursuit of containment policy against Russia as in the days of the Cold War. Russia therefore has no choice but to act in order to cope with this harsh reality from now on." The second point is that "Russia no longer considers itself part of the European civilization." The reason is that, while Russia is a democratic country, it is a special type of democracy. The country rejected communist and pseudo democracy." To be specific, it is emphasized that "If more than ninety percent of the nation is in support of annexation of Crimean peninsula, the annexation should be considered legitimate in accordance with the democratic principles." The third point is that "The international law is no longer a system of rules or set of reference point." According to President PUTIN, "The international law has been reduced to a menu of options from which every powerful state is free to choose whatever suites its interests." He also stresses that "Russia is now a powerful country and thus has the right to flaunt its own double standards just like the U.S. "

The fourth point is that "the new doctrine is applies to the entire territory of the former Soviet Union." This is a warning that "Russia will take action if any of the

former Soviet republics intends to join EU or NATO." It is assumed that "Russia will call on other major powers of the world to amend the rules of the game." The fifth point is that "A great power could meddle in the domestic affairs of small countries if the military and political interests of the former are exposed to risk." This could be regarded as "practical approval of interference with the internal affairs of small nations by great powers." The sixth point is that "International organizations as the United Nations now play a greatly diminished role." This indicates "how often the U.S. and its allies conducted military operations without authorization of the United Nations in the past twenty years." The seventh point is that "the new doctrine is based on a fundamentally new balance of power in the world." This calls for responses to a new global environment in which "while the military and economic influence of the West is in sharp decline, emerging powers in Asia and Africa are gaining influence," and foresees that "the world will become extremely unstable and the number of military conflict will increase."

Having given an overview of the new doctrine with the seven points above, RYZHKOV warns that President PUTIN's successful annexation of the Crimean peninsula is a dangerous sign of Russia's intention to venture into other areas. This seems to indicate the possibility of Russia's military intervention into such areas with many Russian inhabitants as east Ukraine and Pridnestrovia in eastern Moldova. This new doctrine could be interpreted as Russia's bold distrust against the U.S. and Europe with intentions to take any measures to defend at all cost its special interests in the former Soviet bloc with little regard to the international law. This is an accelerated version of "maintenance of influence upon the former Soviet bloc" and it is assumed that Russia will hereafter undertake seriously the task of establishing "Eurasian Union" which is virtually a revival of former Soviet Union. If this doctrine is to be implemented, there would be a danger of outbreak of a "new Cold War" between Russia and countries of the West.

**(This is the English translation of an article written by IJIMA Kazutaka, Journalist, which originally appeared on the e - Forum "Giron - Hyakushutsu" of GFJ on April 8, 2014.)**