

The 1999 NATO Aggression on Yugoslavia - A Turning Point

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*On March 24th, the Belgrade Forum for a World of Equals, Generals and Admirals Association of Serbia, Veterans Association SUBNOR of Serbia and some other independent associations and think tanks, will mark **24th anniversary of the NATO aggression on Serbia and Montenegro** (FR of Yugoslavia) honoring fallen heroes of the defense of the country as well as all the victims of this illegal and criminal act.*

At the NATO high level conference held on 28-30 of April 2000 in Bratislava, USA representatives had confirmed explicitly to the allies and then-candidate allies, three important motives for the "war against Yugoslavia": first, to take away Kosovo (and Metohija) from Serbia and make it a separate, independent state; second, to turn it into the Balkans carrier of US troops; and, third, to make precedent for military interventions all around the world without seeking UNSC mandate.

The NATO aggression has been widely understood as the demonstration of unlimited use of force primarily towards Russia. It should also be noted that during the aggression, US planes bombed Chinese Embassy in Belgrade killing three Chinese journalists. NATO explanation was that the bombing of Chinese Embassy was a mistake due to the pilots use of outdated map, but not too many believed in the explanation.

As it is widely recognized, this aggression was undertaken in violation of the basic principles of International Law, including violation of the UN Charter and without authorization of the UN Security Council. Having regard that Yugoslavia was not a threat to any NATO member country, the NATO leadership thus violated even its own founding act while NATO member countries violated their own constitutions insofar that they acted without authorization of their respective parliaments.

While it was falsely presented by the mass media as "humanitarian intervention", in fact it was the war of NATO/US geopolitical expansion towards East, towards Russian borders, also setting the precedent for other aggressions which followed: Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and

Syria. Immediate establishment of the major US military base “Bondstil” near Urosevac, Kosovo and Metohija, was only the first in a long chain of the new US military bases in the central and Eastern Europe: Bulgaria (3), Romania (3), Poland.

Thus NATO did not only bring the first war on European soil but at the same time gave extraordinary impetus to the process of intensive militarization of the Old Continent. All member countries were obliged to meet 2% of their GDP military spending to adapt civilian infrastructure to the new military requirements, to limit sale of major companies to only EU and NATO prospective investors (“for security reasons”), not to import new technologies from “unreliable suppliers” (5G), not to buy gas and oil from those who use them “to undermine security of Europe”.

Missiles including those with depleted uranium bombs, cluster bombs had definitely been falling on Serbia and Montenegro, killing their citizens and destroying their economy. Serbia still is recovering from immense economic and social losses. Belgrade and other major cities, even in the very central parts, still continue to live with ruins and debris of government and other buildings bombed by NATO. But at the same time, the 1999 NATO aggression on Serbia and Montenegro (FRY) had destroyed the whole security and cooperation architecture of Europe and the world, annulling Teheran, Jalta, Potsdam, Helsinki and other agreements and pillars of the post Second World War Order, thus ushering disorder, insecurity and chaos.

NATO aggression ended by the UN SC resolution 1244 (1999) guaranteeing sovereignty and territorial integrity of FRY (Serbia) and large autonomy for the Province of Kosovo and Metohija within Serbia. The aggression, however, has continued ever since by other means. The objective to take out the Autonomous Province from Serbia got a new framework. While the Province has been under UN mandate and KFOR mostly composed of NATO troops empowered to guarantee equal security for all, about 250,000 Serbs and other non-Albanians have been purged, their homes burnt, lands usurped. In 2008, former KLA terrorist leadership, proclaimed unilateral secession. NATO & EU countries, with exception of Spain, Romania, Slovakia, Greece and Cyprus, were among first to recognize secession, fully aware that it was contrary to the international law, UN SC 1244 resolution, and Serbia’s Constitution.

Lately, Serbia is under unprecedented pressure from the USA/NATO/EU not to oppose Kosovo’s membership in the international organizations, including UN, to establish good neighboring relations based on equality, mutual respect of sovereignty and territorial integrity, to mutually recognize state and national symbols, establish quasi-diplomatic relations.

Under the guise of “normalization of relations” the West, led by the USA, seeks in fact to oblige Serbia to de facto recognize a new state of Kosovo resulting from the 1999 NATO aggression. Promises of membership to the EU, investments and donations are being exploited to lure Serbia to recognize secession of the part of own state territory, thus renouncing of all the rights based on the international law, UN Charter, UN SC guarantees as well as on own Constitution. All these demands are contained in the so-called “Agreement on the path of normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia” presented to Serbia on February 27th, 2023 and confirmed on March 18, 2023, in Ohrid, Northern Macedonia, in the form of an, more or less, open ultimatum. Interestingly, this ultimatum, accompanied with threats of economic, financial and other measures and restrictions in the case of non-

compliance, will be confirmed by European Council on March 24th, 2023, the exact date when NATO started bombing Belgrade, Pristine and other cities all over Serbia 24 years ago.

What are real reasons for all these? To make Kosovo eligible to join NATO and even unite with Albania; to establish complete NATO-ization of the Balkans, encompassing Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina; to push away Russian and Chinese presence from the Balkans; to remove objection of five EU member states (four NATO) to the recognition of unilateral secession of Kosovo, thus reestablishing unity within alliances.

The NATO aggression on Serbia and Montenegro (FRY) in 1999 was the turning point of the Alliance from defensive to aggressive, of Europe partially autonomous to complete submission to the USA in pursuit of globalization of the interventionism and global confrontation with Russia and China. Although, it did appear the peak of unipolar arrogance and USA/NATO hegemony, it was wake up call to everybody who believes in new democratic world order.

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