

The West's Plan to "Isolate" and "Cancel" Russia

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The Western world has tried to "isolate" and "cancel" Russia, but apparently this plan has failed and Moscow remains absolutely integrated with its major trading and strategic partners. China and India remain willing to cooperate with Russia widely, increasing current levels of bilateral trade. This demonstrates how the current situation in Eastern Europe cannot be resolved by coercive means.

The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs pledged April 19 that it will strengthen cooperation with Russia, no matter what happens in the international scenario. The message comes in an official statement from the foreign ministry following a meeting held the day before between Chinese deputy MOFA Le Yucheng and Russian ambassador to Beijing Andrey Denisov. The document says:

"No matter how the international situation changes, China will, as always, strengthen strategic coordination with Russia to achieve win-win cooperation, jointly safeguard the common interests of both sides, and promote the building of a new type of international relations and a community with a shared future for mankind (...) In the first quarter of this year, the bilateral trade volume between China and Russia reached 38.2 billion US dollars, an increase of nearly 30%, [which] fully demonstrates the great resilience... of cooperation between the two countries".

Later, commenting on the statement, Ambassador Denisov stated:

"Russia always regards developing relations with China as its diplomatic priority and is ready to further deepen bilateral comprehensive strategic coordination and all-round practical cooperation in the direction set by the two heads of state (...) [Further efforts to strengthen Russia-China ties] will continuously benefit the two peoples."

Although it is a well-known fact that bilateral relations between Moscow and Beijing have improved substantially in recent years, forming an important axis of economic and diplomatic cooperation, the current message is of enormous importance, as it works as a

response to recent US pressure against China.

Last month, US President Joe Biden called his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping and during an hour-long conversation “warned” about the possible “consequences” that would be suffered by Beijing if there was not an immediate end to its economic support for Russia.

Naturally, Xi ignored Biden’s threats and the Chinese foreign ministry maintained its stance of absolute neutrality on the ongoing conflict in Ukraine. Not mixing political and economic issues is a key point of the Chinese foreign policy tradition and this is exactly what is being applied now. Beijing refuses to maintain positions on any political event outside its strategic environment, which is why it keeps the Russian military operation off the agenda in Beijing-Moscow bilateral relations, continuing to have projects to improve cooperation, independently of such extra-economic issues.

However, it is not only the Chinese who show interest in cooperating with the Russians, ignoring the Western attempts of “cancellation”. Apparently, India is about to announce its highest ever level of trade cooperation with Russia in oil. According to reliable sources quoted by the Economic Times on April 19, state-owned companies in New Delhi are planning to buy as much Russian oil as possible in the short term, considering the expected availability and low prices of the commodity.

The Indian attitude sounds absolutely pragmatic and not ideological: faced with the conflict scenario, Indians seek to benefit from the availability of Russian oil, which arises as a consequence of the sanctions applied by the West to prevent the oil from entering the European market. With large quantities available and prices dropping, it is in India’s interest to acquire as many Russian barrels as possible and this is what is about to be done.

Obviously, this was not what the West expected from the Indians. The US has always tried to make its military partnership with India – focused on creating an “anti-China axis” – a kind of hierarchical relationship, in which Indians would automatically obey and align themselves with every decision taken by the Americans.

However, despite the pressure in this direction and the constant US threats to cut ties with New Delhi, India remains convinced of defending its interests above all, making it clear that it will continue to cooperate with Russia in terms of both military trade and energy partnership.

It is impossible to look at such news and continue to believe the Western media narrative that “Russia is isolated”. Moscow has lost a part of world trade and even then, not completely, as Western countries have not yet managed to fully break off relations with Russia. On the other hand, it has not only preserved most of the global consumer market in emerging nations but has also boosted its ties with China and India, which indicates great economic support and, even more, the emergence of new intra-BRICS cooperation opportunities.

What all this means is simple to understand: the special military operation in Ukraine will not end through economic pressures, coercive measures and attempts at “cancellation”, but through the Ukrainian willingness to accept the peace terms, which are (as Russia insists) political and military neutrality and recognition of the sovereign republics of Donbass and Russian Crimea. As long as the Ukrainian government is unwilling to do so, Russia seems to continue the operation and have sufficient economic strength to maintain it.

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