

Who Says that a World War Can't Happen Again? The Spectre of 2018

By [Joaquin Flores](#)

Global Research, December 30, 2017

Region: [Russia and FSU, USA](#)

Theme: [History](#)

From the systemic madness of Tillerson and Volker, the ongoing conflicts and uprisings in numerous reaches of the empire, to the controversial FIFA ruling, Russia under sanctions and Putin's coming last presidential term, plus revived 'popular coup' technique attempts in Latin America, things are looking up for war and down for diplomacy?

Anyone saying that another world war can't happen, hasn't understood the problem of the present global instability in its fullest sense. While the US has certainly faced deadlock with Russia over Ukraine, and loss of power and influence in the Middle-East, the coming year presents us a few items which have the serious potential to push global instability to the point of world war.

Outside of the echo chamber of the US media's insulated creation of simulated reality, where pushing for war and conflict doesn't actually lead to one, serious experts point to some very worrisome signs for the coming year.

During the working session of the Civil Forum "Belarus, Ukraine, Russia" held in Minsk on December 22nd, 2017, dedicated to the issues of the relationship between the three countries with the European Union, Belarusian, Ukrainian and Russian experts agreed that the conflict around Ukraine will not end in 2018.

An interesting thing to note about official experts on the U.S. from Eastern Europe, is their depth of knowledge of the inner workings and dynamics of American policy formation and practice. In contrast, in the U.S. we find characters like Michael McFaul who regularly confuse punditry for analysis.

As noted by Ukrainian political scientist Ruslan Bortnik,

"the Ukrainian crisis equates to the increased military budgets of European and American militarist elites".

He explains unsurprisingly that the

"Ukrainian crisis is a very profitable business on a global scale", while it will bring profit, "business will continue".

In Bortnik's opinion, "2018 can be very controversial."

This is due to the quite possible strengthening of the sanctions regime against Russia even

in upcoming February, with the sale of U.S. armament to Ukraine in the amount of 42 million dollars, with the breach of the Minsk Protocol etc.

The Ukrainian political scientist notes that “non-constructive comments of Tillerson and Volker are expanding the conflict framework”, and Russia, in its turn, does not want to compromise.

At the same time, “attempts to use the diplomatic layout as a field to achieve victory, not to resolve the crisis” are observed.

Ruslan Bortnik believes that

“after the FIFA World Cup, Russia will have a free hand, and Putin, after being elected for his last presidential term, will work to make history.”

In turn,

“as soon as the FIFA World Cup-2018 is held, Ukraine will enter the pre-election period (in 2019, both parliamentary and presidential elections will take place), any compromises for the Ukrainian authorities will be impossible, and the war factor is a very cheap and effective tool for managing the internal political situation.”

All these factors, Bortnik concludes,

“may become another escalation of the conflict in the Donbass and make it impossible to establish real peace until 2020.”

Ukrainian political scientist, director of the Information and Analytical Center “Perspektiva” Pavel Rudyakov also believes that “there is no positive scenario for Ukraine in 2018.”

In his opinion, the stability of the current regime is explained by the fact that “the Ukrainian government is legitimized by an external factor and even if there are 5% advocates of the rule, it will not matter.”

Pavel Rudyakov, who called Volker “the black demon of the Minsk process,” noted that at one time there was a hope that Americans, by sending Volker, wanted to build a dialogue with Moscow.

“But in reality we see attempts by him to provoke Russia, thereby Volker destroys the construction that could save the world,” the political scientist noted, emphasizing that “the Minsk process is holding back the format from a completely irrational steps. “

Belarusian political scientist Peter Petrovsky also believes that the confrontation around Ukraine in 2018-2019 will only increase.

According to him,

“it is possible that Ukraine will definitively abandon the railway services and close the borders with Russia.”

Despite the fact that

“Ukraine has already lost a lot in reducing trade with Russia”, the Ukrainian leadership, according to him, “has gone so far in its Russophobic statements that it does not balance the view with some benefits in Russian-Ukrainian relations, and are ready to be completely vulnerable and unprotected should there be a complete breakdown of relations.”

Peter Petrovsky notes that

“it is possible in exactly the same way as that which turned out to be possible was what we previously considered impossible until 2014”.

The extreme point in breaking relations with Russia, according to the Belarusian expert, is that Ukrainian hawks “can put in the run-up to the parliamentary and presidential elections of 2019 if such is the task.”

According to the Belarusian political scientist,

“with the main goal of the West being the final inclusion of Ukraine in the Euro-Atlantic space, here no one will even think in terms of the unity of Ukraine.”

He emphasizes that if it is necessary, Ukraine will have to finally give up both Crimea and Donbass:

“Under certain conditions, both the EU and the U.S. will be able to agree to this subject to the final Euro-Atlantic integration of Ukraine.”

For his part, Russian political scientist Sergey Panteleev noted that

“in Ukraine, the negative mythological image of Russia as an ‘aggressor country’ has become one of the foundations of the existence of the current Ukrainian political regime, a determining factor in their legitimization and the main commodity, which Ukraine actively sells outward.”

According to him,

“from the point of view of geopolitics, the Ukrainian crisis is a long-tested American option of holding the territory through a controlled conflict in order to weaken Russia, Germany and Europe as a whole”.

Wouldn't this seem to be why we are seeing American support for the regime in Ukraine, which has shown its complete irrelevance?

“The regime, which is kept afloat exclusively on western subsidies, information war, the restoration of an authoritarian government with a significant radical nationalist factor, ” – explains Panteleev in breaking down the key part of American politics in Ukraine.

Panteleev believes, that the smoldering conflict in Ukraine can expand, capturing Russia, Belarus and Europe.

In other words, 2018 promises to be a very interesting year indeed.

At the same time, the tough position on Ukraine taken by the Trump administration, from which Russia, on the contrary, was expected to weaken under sanctions and resolve the conflict, will be determined by the “U.S. domestic political agenda related to the need for the U.S. president to prove that he is not the ‘hand of Moscow.’ “, says Panteleev.

This is also connected with the provocative attitude of Volker towards Russia, actually aimed at failure of the Minsk process.

Meanwhile, the Russian political scientist sees a personal motive in the actions of Volker, aimed at his attempts to gain a foothold in the American political establishment at the expense of the militaristic rhetoric that is in demand today.

“In the context of the political crisis in the United States, there is a chaotization of the decision-making system, where private interests and even irrational factors become important,” the Russian political scientist says, emphasizing that “this irrationalism will determine the strengthening of the confrontational component in U.S.-Russian relations.”

At the same time, Sergey Panteleev believes that Russia will in no way agree with the U.S.-Ukrainian model of peacemaking in Donbass and will principally defend its interests in the region. Where does that leave our present ‘smoldering’ deadlock?

Russian political scientist, expert of the Russian Council for Foreign Affairs Alexander Guschin, noting that

“the goal of Ukrainian events is to weaken Russia’s influence,” also indicates that de-escalation of the conflict in the near future is not to be expected.

According to him,

“Volker’s activities show that the confrontational rhetoric continues and there is no hope that it will stop.”

Assuming that the military-political situation has an obvious tendency to aggravate, in his opinion, “Russia reacts adequately, strengthening its defense potential.”

Alexander Gushchin also draws attention to the fact that “a peacekeeping operation of the Volker variety is unacceptable for Russia”, in this regard, “the Western version of peacekeepers is unlikely to pass”, and the most likely scenario is a “simmering conflict”.

At the same time, the Russian expert considers high risks of regional conflict on the perimeter of Russia and even the possibility of a more serious crisis.

“Who said that the global war can not happen again?”,- asks the question Alexander Gushchin, noting that the current crisis will be long-term, in which the “independence of Europe will be limited.”

The Russian political scientist stresses that the NATO paradigm and the influence of the U.S. on the countries of Central and Eastern Europe will be decisive and aimed at “preventing the strategic alliance of Moscow and Berlin.”

In conclusion, Alexander Gushchin said that the world, and Ukraine in particular, need a strong Russia, since “strong Russia is not an antiquated Russia, but Russia that defends its value paradigm, its paradigm of the vision of international relations, and not bipolar, but its status as a world and a major regional power, in the sense that there is a region where she will play one of the first, and in some cases – the first role.”

Given the ‘irrationalism’ in the U.S decision making process, apparently intractable features of the U.S deep state which not even an ego driven and determined president has power to control, the chances for an increase of tensions in 2018 is absolutely guaranteed, without provisos. What’s more, the direction and tone of the day gives us strong reasons to believe that events in 2018 can easily simmer into a boil which consumes the entire region, Europe, and beyond.

Joaquin Flores is Editor-in-Chief of Fort Russ News, as well as the Director of the Belgrade based think-tank, the Center for Syncretic Studies. He was educated at California State University, Los Angeles, in the field of International Relations. He previously served as Chief Negotiator and Internal Organizer in several jurisdictions for the SEIU labor union in California. Flores has twenty years experience in community, labor, and anti-war organizing. Flores has appeared innumerable times on Iran’s ‘PressTV’ and Russia’s ‘RT’ news to share his expert opinion and analysis on current geopolitical matters.

The original source of this article is Global Research
Copyright © [Joaquin Flores](#), Global Research, 2017

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Joaquin Flores](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca
www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the

copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca