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POLITICAL PROBLEMS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

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TNCS AND DIPLOMACY IN THE CONDITIONS OF GLOBAL POLYCENTRICITY

The emerging polycentric world is characterized by uncertainty and conflict-ness. Transnational companies, the most important subject of the world economy and politics, adapt very effectively to these peculiarities. They develop network structures, they are aimed at tough competition in the market, they use advanced forecasting methods and make more flexible decisions. Competitive intelligence services have been established and are working productively to reduce uncertainty. TNCs change the attractive features of their brands in a timely manner, depending on the market priorities and consumer demand. The foreign policy services of the various countries can learn a lot from the experience of TNCs in the global economic and political arena.

Key words: *uncertainty, TNC, network diplomacy, forecasting, intelligence, competitive intelligence, soft power, attractiveness policy, Statoil, LUKOIL.*

All countries, international organizations and other actors in the world politics and economy are committed to stability and sustainability. These properties are extremely difficult to achieve at the early stages of the formation of a new world order, which seems to be a polycentric world. The essential features of its formation are the uncertainty and conflictness of international relations¹ They are manifested in various projections and lead to an aggravation of the world situation. Uncertainty in international affairs is a challenge that needs to be addressed effectively. The main subjects of the world economy and politics, each with its own specifics, are trying to find these answers some more and some less success-

¹ Mikhaylenko A. N. A Polycentric world: what will it be like? // Issues of political science. – 2015. – № 4 (20). – Pp. 89-101; Mikhaylenko A. N. Foreign policy of Russia in conditions of global uncertainty // Ethnosocium i mezhnatsionalnaya kultura. – 2017. – № 7 (109). – Pp. 132-142.

fully. The answers found by this or that subject of world politics can be used by analogy by other subjects.

Of the many political and economic subjects, transnational companies (TNCs) are quite effective in dealing with uncertainty. According to UNCTAD¹ TNCs produce more than 50% of the world's industrial production, sell more than 60% of the world's foreign trade turnover and carry out more than 90% of foreign direct investment in foreign countries. Their weight in the world is constantly growing and the economic situation of many of them is comparable with the economies of considerably large countries. Thus, the gross value added of Walmart is comparable to the GDP of Vietnam, with a population of almost 100 million and a market value of Apple is higher than the Dutch GDP. The role of non-state actors, including TNCs, in world political affairs is constantly increasing.

Thus, from the political point of view, transnational companies seem to be an interesting object of research. Various aspects of the activities of TNCs² are being studied, but not much attention is paid to the factors of their success in the face of uncertainty. In this article, we will look at how TNCs respond to the uncertainty of international markets and how their achievements can be used in world politics. In our view, the world economy is dealing with uncertainty much better than politics. The article discusses the main factors of success of TNCs in the face of uncertainty and concludes that politicians have much to learn from the heads of transnational companies in terms of orientation in today's unpredictable world.

TNCs in the Environment of Global Economic and Political Uncertainty

According to American Enterprise Institute, Fortune 500 firms 2016, list of five hundred largest American companies includes only 12% of the companies that were in that list in 1955³. In other words, there is a constant updating of the list of the most successful companies due to "creative destruction". Those of them that stand still and do not develop immediately drop out of it. There is an increase in the rate of change in another well-known list of TNCs maintained by a consulting company S&P. It is necessary to be prepared for these changes, because rapid adaptation to novelty is an important factor in ensuring the suc-

¹ World Investment Report 2015: Reforming International Investment. United Nations, 2015. – URL: http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/wir2015_en.pdf (accessed 05.01.02018).

² Davidenko I. V. Impact of transnational corporations on the economic security of the country. Abstract of thesis for the degree of Candidate of Sciences (economy). – M., 2016; Kharlanov A. S. Corporate strategies in the international market // International Economy. – 2016. – № 1.

³ Mark J. Perry. Fortune 500 firms 1955 v. 2016: Only 12% remain, thanks to the creative destruction that fuels economic prosperity. – URL: <http://www.aei.org/publication/fortune-500-firms-1955-v-2016-only-12-remain-thanks-to-the-creative-destruction-that-fuels-economic-prosperity/> (accessed 05.01.02018).

cess of a multinational company. What do leading TNCs do to ensure success in the face of rapid, unpredictable changes?

There are separate publications that analyze the impact of uncertainty on the decision-making in multinational companies.¹ Such newly developing field of knowledge as studies, among other things, the mechanisms of economic decision-making under uncertainty.² Large TNCs take into account such aspects of these processes, as the high rate of change and the emergence of disruptive technologies. Experts believe that it is necessary to increase flexibility as a response to unpredictability, to expand the range of persons involved in decision-making and to ensure transparency of data. There is less space for slow hierarchical structures in any transnational business. At the same time, network structures more adapted to uncertainty are successfully progressing.

A. C. Skakunova, when exploring the decision-making process during the selection of strategy for the development of world leading automobile companies under uncertainty, reveals such internal factors as complexity and diversity of products, attitude to risks and flexibility in decision-making.³ As for the external factors, they include market growth rates, market barriers, competitive environment and others. The above author identifies factors influencing the development of the global automotive industry that form the basis for the changes in the strategies of TNCs. Among them are changes in consumer preferences, the emergence of alternative fuels and others.

The most important element of the TNC decision-making process under conditions of uncertainty is prediction. Forecasts of British Petroleum are widely used not only by private business, but also by government agencies around the world. Complex methods in forecasting are used more and more widely. In recent years, software tools and methods are used more and more actively. For example, Netflix announced a competition with a prize pool of US\$ 1 mln for the creation of a computer program that will help determine which movies will appeal to viewers. Informatization of TNC activities is manifested in many other aspects.

The development of a global strategy of a multinational company today requires the improvement of existing and the use of new approaches, tools and methods of forecasting. K. A. Kozenyashev notes that among other things the role of scenario approaches on different time horizons becomes a tool for the change management.⁴ He analyzes differences between scenarios, forecasts

¹ See, for example: How to develop business in an era of change. Collected papers. – URL: http://hbr-russia.ru/special/terrasoft_HBR.pdf (date: 05.01.02018).

² Kaneman D., Slovik P., Tversky A. Decision-making in uncertainty: Rules and preconceptions. – M.: Gumanitarny center, 2005.

³ Skakunova A. C. Alternative investment strategies of the world's leading automobile companies. Abstract of thesis for the degree of Candidate of Sciences (economy). – M., 2017.

⁴ Kozenyashev K. A. Development strategies of vertically integrated oil companies in the conditions of formation of a new world energy order. Abstract of thesis for the degree of Candidate of Sciences (economy). – M., 2015.

and visions as the tools of strategic management of oil companies development. The importance of the scenario approach is also noted by George Ringland, according to whom scenario is an «element of strategic planning based on the ways and technologies aimed at managing uncertainties of the future».¹

On the basis of scenario approaches, forecasts are developed, the most popular among which are the materials of the International Energy Agency, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, the Energy Information Department of the US Department of Energy, Eurogas, MIT, Shell, ExxonMobil, as well as widely used abroad TIMES scenario models from the family of MARKAL, SECURE, PRIMES, etc. They form the basis for the development of concepts not only for the global oil industry, but also for the entire energy sector in the medium and, most importantly, in the long term.

In the study of the activities of TNCs we note their focus on competition, their willingness to face the unexpected strategy of competitors and to find a way out of a difficult situation. It is worth noting that transnational companies call each other competitors, whereas states traditionally call each other partners in the process of foreign policy cooperation. However, in the US National Defense Strategy, released at the end of 2017, the world is no longer defined as a partner world, but as a competitive world, and the US National Defense Strategy states that “the return of a long-term strategic competition with China and Russia is a central challenge to the welfare and security of the United States”.² TNCs are equally ready to cooperate with competitors, but competition is in the first place.

This is especially true in the most dynamic markets. Thus, the world market of soft drinks is very dynamic and changeable, new items in it replace each other with a fair frequency. Such transnational companies as Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, Danone, Nestle and Unilever Group are the constant leaders of the world market, which causes high and tough competition, especially growing during the period of instability. Despite the turbulence of the environment, flexible approaches to managing the strategies of these world-renowned TNCs have allowed them to hold their positions by reorienting from saturated, developed markets in the US and Europe to the rapidly growing markets with significant potential returns.³ In addition, the author draws attention to the virtualization of TNC activities as a method of increasing competitiveness, as well as to the coordination of the interests of many groups and participants of the market system at each stage of the chosen competitive strategy of TNC.

¹ Ringland G. Scenario Planning. Choir Press. – 2014. – P. 127.

² Summary of the 2018 National Defense Strategy of the United States of America. Sharpening the American Military's Competitive Edge. – URL: <https://www.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2018-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.pdf> (accessed 05.01.02018).

³ Chernova V. Yu. Transformation of the global strategy of leading multinational companies in the global market of non-alcoholic products. Abstract of thesis for the degree of Candidate of Sciences (economy). – M., 2016.

Foreign and domestic TNCs are much more devoted adherents of Proteus, the god of the variability, than states represented by their foreign services. G. Rometti, IBM CEO, emphasized that the ability to change lies “in the DNA” of the company led by her, which has 400 thousand employees in 170 countries.¹ Russian TNCs are also ready for changes. Thus, the strategy of LUKOIL, one of the largest Russian TNCs, provides for a variety of changes in the oil market and ways of responding to them.² The company strives to achieve its strategic goals by strengthening its position in the industry in three areas. It plans to achieve this by implementing new projects in the Exploration and Production, Processing, and Trade and Marketing segments. The company is working to develop its competitive advantages through the use of modern technologies. The company’s strategy states continuous optimization of processes using the existing assets in order to maximize efficiency. As is clear, all three areas are associated with the changes taking place in the industry. Meanwhile, as we have already noted in one of the previous works, the key words in the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation are “stability” and “sustainability”.³

An important area of TNC activity in the face of uncertainty is the support of positive initiatives for the common good. The common good is a distant beacon that helps companies not to lose the motion vector in the poor visibility conditions. Thus, Walmart, which only in the USA has about 4.6 thousand shops and isn't famous for high salaries or good working conditions, is placing now a big bet on the renewable energy. It recently announced that it will reduce emissions from its network of suppliers by 1 billion tons of greenhouse gases by 2030. This is the same as if more than 200 million cars per year disappeared from the world's roads. In foreign policy, such a beacon could probably be the «the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development», which the UN member-states adopted on September 25, 2015.⁴

When it comes to management and TNCs, Western companies and Western management experience come to mind in the first place. Meanwhile, in the era of polycentricity, the experience of other centers of power, such as Japan and China should also be of interest.⁵ In these countries companies use the principle of «foresight», which means the ability to draw conclusions based on mi-

¹ Ginny Rometti, IBM CEO: “You have to be constantly uncomfortable.” – Dec.7, 2017. – URL: <http://hbr-russia.ru/liderstvo/lidery/a24201/> (Date: 05.01.2018).

² LUKOIL. Company corporate profile. – URL: <http://www.lukoil.ru/Company/CorporateProfile> (date: 05.01.2018).

³ Mikhaylenko A. N. Russian foreign policy in conditions of global uncertainty // *Ethnosocial and ethnic culture*. – 2017. – № 7 (109). – Pp. 132-142.

⁴ Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. UN document A/RES/70/1 of Sept. 25, 2015.

⁵ Romanova E. M. Features of using the experience of corporate governance of Japan and China in Russia // *Rossiyskiy vneshnepoliticheskiy vestnik*. – 2017. – № 12. – Pp. 26-42.

nor signs and weak signals. In accordance with their worldview, the Chinese strive to develop the ability to survive in the conditions of constant chaos and to grow the «seeds of future changes,» turning chaos into harmony. Such strategy and tactics better correspond to the current situation of uncertainty in the world economy and politics than characteristic of stability clarity and determinance. Responses of foreign policy services.

Most of the above-mentioned areas of uncertainty management applied by the TNCs are also present in foreign policy. The format of the article does not allow to consider in detail all their diversity. Let's focus only on some of them. Thus, it has been repeatedly stated at various international forums that in recent decades there has been an acceleration of foreign policy. This is evidenced by the increasing rate of changes in the concepts of Russia's foreign policy. The first of them was adopted in 1993, the second – in 2000, the third – in 2008, the fourth – in 2013, and finally, the fifth – in 2016. If this rate of change in concepts is maintained, the next one will have to be adopted already this year, if it is needed at all. This situation does not meet the requirements of the Federal Law of June 28, 2014 № 172-FZ «On strategic planning in the Russian Federation», according to which domestic national security strategies should be adjusted every six years, and foreign policy concepts should be brought into line with the updated strategies.¹

At the same time, the experience of TNCs shows that the increase in the rate of change does not lead to a slip of companies on the competitive surface. Many production cycles in multinational companies from the beginning of a new idea to the release of a product to the market are long-term and take up to 10 years. Therefore, TNCs combine the acceleration of change noted above with the deepening of their elaboration. The acceleration of foreign policy processes places higher demands on diplomatic activity, the readiness of diplomats, and the expansion of their competence. Deepening in foreign policy requires a higher quality of forecasting and research support for foreign policy activities.

Following the example of TNCs, the problem of breakthroughs in foreign policy is of great interest, as their role in world development is likely to increase. Let us recall the words of Russian President Vladimir Putin on the situation in Syria in the summer of 2017: “You know, whoever reacted to this in whatever way, but I can tell you that this is one of the breakthroughs that we managed to make, by the way, in the course of working with President Trump.”² It is necessary to strive to understand their nature and to master their mechanisms of regulation. The breakthrough itself is a huge success, but I would like the breakthroughs to happen not accidentally, but regularly. To do this, it is necessary to study them

¹ Ryabkov S. A. Russian direction: Barak Obama leaves behind just ruins // International affairs. – 2016. – № 12. – Pp. 6-18.

² Vladimir Putin's press conference following the G20 Summit on July 8, 2017. – URL: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/55017> (date: 07.01.2018).

systematically, because a breakthrough is a leap, and any development, including foreign policy, takes place in leaps.

Among the various areas of research on this issue, it would be advisable to pay attention to the dialectical opposition of the breakthrough – failure. They are not uncommon in the foreign policy of the world, and their study could contribute to a more effective implementation of national interests. Brexit could be considered as an example of a major political failure in the development of the European Union, no matter how European politicians presented this event to the general public. Former and current employees of the US administration consider one of the most significant failures of US intelligence their failure to develop an accurate forecast of the timing of the North Korean nuclear missile program. As a result, Pyongyang has a missile capable of delivering a nuclear warhead to the United States. The American administration has overlooked at this direction a lot of “critical turns” and has met with many surprises.¹ Terms “turns” and “surprises” could be the subject of an in-depth study of the world politics.

In the above-mentioned breakthrough in Syria, another pattern that is used in TNCs is also evident: in conditions of uncertainty, it is advisable to expand the range of persons involved in decision-making. In this case, the decision on Syria was taken not behind the scenes, “tete-a-tete”, other players with significant interests in the region were involved in this process. In such case, more significant factors are taken into account and due to this such decisions are becoming more defensible, although it is more difficult to take them. Working in this direction, it is desirable not to break the existing international formats, but to complete them in order to increase their efficiency, as evidenced by the popular wisdom “to break is easier than to build.”

In terms of understanding the breakthroughs, it is necessary to study the “turning points” in the foreign policy of other countries. We are witnessing such a turn in Japanese policy towards the Chinese initiative “One Belt, One Road”. Since the announcement of this initiative by China in 2013, Tokyo has been constantly against it, and suddenly in May 2017, the Japanese sent a representative delegation to the One Belt, One Road Forum in Beijing, headed by T. Nikai, Secretary General of the Liberal Democratic party. Moreover, in early June 2017, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, when drawing on Asia’s “dream”, supported the idea of OBOR as the most important link between East and West.² Understanding such reassessments and turns in foreign policy of other countries would permit using such instruments more subtly.

¹ David E. Sanger, William J. Broadjan. U.S. Miscalculated the Nuclear Progress of North Korea by Years // The New York Times, January 7, 2018.

² Asia’s Dream: Linking the Pacific and Eurasia – Speech by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe at the Banquet of the 23rd International Conference on The Future of Asia June 5, 2017. – URL: http://japan.kantei.go.jp/97_abe/statement/201706/1222768_11579.html?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter2017-07-09 (accessed 07.01.2018).

Analysis of the list of the world largest TNCs shows that companies in the field of information technology occupy an increasingly high place in it. Previously, raw materials, primarily energy companies, won prizes in this list. There are few of such companies in the current list, instead among the ten largest TNCs we see Apple, Microsoft, IBM, Walmart (which works in the retail sector, but very actively uses information technology), Google and AT&T Inc. Russia is in line with this trend: in the summer of 2017, the Russian Government approved the program “Digital Economy of the Russian Federation”. However, we should not limit ourselves to the economy, the experience of TNCs shows the need for digitization of national foreign policy.

In turn, the digitization of national foreign policy can be considered as an element of solving a broader task, that of developing Russian network diplomacy. Not only the experience of TNCs, but also the diplomatic theory and practice of the countries of the world attest to the necessity and urgency of such decision. Foreign policy analysts are carefully studying the prospects of modern diplomacy.¹ There are different directions of development of network diplomacy, including public, digital, Twitter diplomacy and others. It is noted, for example, that about two thirds of the world’s foreign ministers now have their own Twitter pages, and this activity is becoming increasingly multifaceted. Detailed consideration of the issues of development of network diplomacy deserves a separate study.

Forecasting methods are widely used in foreign policy, as in TNCs. From recent domestic foreign policy forecasts we will name, for example, the work of scientists of the Institute of World Economy and International Relations², RIAC Forecasting Report on Russia’s Foreign Policy in 2018³ and research by Foreign Policy Analysis Group.⁴

Among the foreign forecasts it is impossible not to recall the regularly published reports of the American National Intelligence Council on global trends⁵ From a methodological point of view, it would be useful to compare the accuracy of political and economic forecasts, as well as the similarities and differences in the means and methods of their preparation.

¹ For a review of foreign literature on the subject, see: Jorge Heine, Joseph F. Turcotte. From Club to Network Diplomacy. Oxford Bibliographies: Oxford Bibliographies in International Relations. Last modified: 28 April 2016. DOI: 10.1093/OBO/9780199743292-0137. – URL: <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199743292/obo-9780199743292-0137.xml> (accessed 07.01.2018).

² Russia and the world: 2018. Annual forecast: Economy and Foreign Policy / Project leads : A. A. Dynkin, V. G. Baranovsky. – M.: IMEMO RAN, 2017.

³ RIAC Forecasting Report. Russia’s Foreign Policy: Looking Towards 2018. – URL: <http://russiancouncil.ru/forecast2018> (date: 07.01.2018).

⁴ Global Trends in 2018. Annual forecast by Foreign Policy Analysis Group. – M.: LLC Foreign Policy Analysis Group, 2018.

⁵ Paradox of progress. A publication of the National Intelligence Council. Global Trends. – January 2017.

Perhaps the more accurate forecasts of economists are partly due to the fact that the world economy in most aspects is measured quantitatively, and this makes it possible to more accurately predict its development. In this regard, it is advisable to conduct further research on the problems of measuring world politics. As for the so-called hard power, there are quite a lot of such measurements and indices. A more complex problem is the measurement of soft influence. But even here the scientific community, including the Russian one, is carrying out the relevant work. Thus, on October 20, 2017, the Second international conference SOFT POWER: Theory, Resources, Discourse was held in Yekaterinburg (the author took part in it). The organizers of the conference pointed to the participants that “among the new trends in the study of soft power, which will be analyzed during the conference, is the turn from the study of general conceptual aspects of the phenomenon of soft power to the analysis of soft power rating systems and measuring instruments”.¹ Such research work should be carried out in other areas of world politics.

Active intelligence activities

Competitive intelligence is a reliable tool used by TNCs to improve their performance in an uncertain environment. The purpose of intelligence is precisely to reduce the degree of uncertainty, as we wrote in our previous works.² In this regard, transnational companies are following the example of the state intelligence services, which have been very active recently. Thus, CIA Director Mike Pompeo openly stated in BBC interview that “we have the best spy service in the world... We go there (abroad) and do everything in our power to get secret information that can help the American people.”³

In terms of active intelligence activities, TNCs, to put it mildly, do not lag behind the states. There are competitive intelligence units that provide the management with intelligence information in 90% of the top U.S. Fortune companies.⁴ For example, Norwegian TNC Statoil works in more than 30 countries and employs about 21 thousand workers, its assets exceed US\$ 130 billion. The company's management requires the competitive intelligence service to provide in-

¹ The second international conference SOFT POWER: theory, resources, discourse. – URL: http://www.kon-ferenc.ru/konferenc15_07_17_6.html (accessed: 09.01.2018).

² Mikhailenko A. N. Intelligence activities in the modern world // *Observer*. – 2012. – № 12. – Pp. 61-74; Mikhailenko A. N. *Competitive intelligence*. – Saratov: Amirit, 2016.

³ Korera G. Head of the CIA: Russia will try to intervene in the November elections in the United States. 30 January 2018 // BBC Russian service. – URL: <http://www.bbc.com/russian/news-42868581> (accessed 09.01.2018).

⁴ Top Tips: Setting up a Market or Competitive Intelligence Function. Digimind Insights. N.p., 30 Aug. 2012. Web. 02 Jan. 2014. – URL: <https://blog.digimind.com/en/en-int/setting-up-an-intel-function/> (accessed 09.01.2018).

formation on strategic topics: competitive trends, breakthrough technologies, innovations, insights, external context of Statoil's activities, etc.

In the structure of Statoil, the Competitor Analysis team is included in the competitor analysis group. Organizationally it is a part the Corporate Strategy and Innovation unit, which reports directly to the company's Board of Directors and its Executive Committee. This is extremely important, because each additional administrative link leads to a decrease in the efficiency of information activities of competitive intelligence. The success of the Norwegian TNC is largely due to its corporate intelligence.

It is safe to say that the growing global uncertainty requires increased intelligence. This general pattern applies to all countries, including Russia. Foreign partners argue that Russian intelligence, which has a glorious historical tradition, does not rest on its laurels. So, in the middle of summer 2017, the American channel CNN distributed information, according to which after the presidential elections in the United States Russian intelligence has significantly strengthened its work in the country.¹ The need for additional information was explained by the fact that President Trump turned out to be very unpredictable. According to the US intelligence services, at that time about 150 Russian intelligence officers worked in the USA, much more than in other countries. Only a naive person would believe that the intelligence services of other countries slept at that time and did not perform their main function: providing the political leadership of their countries with the necessary strategic information.

The experience of competitive intelligence services of TNCs shows a new trend: a widespread use of "big data" processing techniques. The study of databases, social networks and other electronic sources provides a significant amount of interesting information to competitive intelligence services. The same trend can be observed in the intelligence activities of individual countries. For example, in the UK, the lion's share of the budget of the intelligence community, which includes the MI6 Intelligence service, the MI5 Counterintelligence service and the GCHQ Government Communications Center, falls on the latter, and the number of its employees is more than two times higher than that of MI5 and MI6 combined.² This trend should be taken into account in the development of intelligence issues within the framework of the domestic foreign policy strategy.

Another trend in competitive intelligence is that the most successful multinational companies seek synergies between customer service, marketing, strategic planning, human resources, research and other services of the company and the

¹ Brown P., Prokupecz Sh., Perez E. Russia steps up spying efforts after election, CNN July 7, 2017. – URL: <http://edition.cnn.com/2017/07/06/politics/russia-steps-up-spying-efforts-after-election/index.html> (accessed on 09.01.2018).

² Hopkins N., Borger J., Harding L. GCHQ: inside the top secret world of Britain's biggest spy agency // *The Guardian*, 2 Aug 2013.

competitive intelligence service. Taking into account that more than 90% of information in competitive intelligence is extracted from open sources, such cooperation of various divisions of the company is very productive. This experience should also be used in diplomatic activities. Diplomats should know the basic intelligence needs of their country. They should have at least some initial training on the basics of intelligence activities so that they can make a stronger contribution to the realization of Russia's national interests.

The most important function of competitive intelligence services in TNCs is to identify the facts of the use by the participants in economic interaction of the techniques of unfair competition. These techniques are defined in national and international legislation. Federal Law No. 135-FZ of 26 July 2006 "On protection of competition" is in force in Russia. In international law, many legal acts have been directed against unfair competition, starting with the Paris Convention of 1883 "On the protection of industrial property" and ending with the ever-evolving legislation of the World Trade Organization on this issue. We can cite such well known examples of unfair competition techniques used by transnational companies as the diesel scandal with the world-famous BMW or unfair actions by Uber.

In world politics, there is no legal definition of unfair politics. Meanwhile, according to Sergey Lavrov, the United States is increasingly resorting to unfair methods, the range of which is very wide "from the deployment of the global missile defense system to unilateral sanctions, extraterritorial application of its own legislation and ... threats to solve any international problems exclusively according to their own scenario, without stopping before anything, including the use of rough military force."¹ Many scientists and politicians note that US political sanctions are aimed at obtaining economic competitive advantages. Research is needed on how unfair foreign policy practices of the United States and some other countries can be limited within the framework of the new global developing economic and political order.

Attractiveness Policy

The most important direction of foreign policy development in the world in modern conditions is the so-called soft power, which would be more accurate to call the policy of attractiveness. Political sciences study various aspects of such policy.² Uncertainty on the world arena dictates a sharp expansion of the policy

¹ Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's speech and answers to media questions during a press conference on the results of Russian diplomacy in 2017. - Moscow, 15 January 2018. - URL: http://www.mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/3018203 (accessed: 09.01.2018).

² Kobelkov A. N. The role of "soft power" in bilateral German-Turkish relations // *Voprosy politologii*. - 2017. - № 2 (26). - Pp. 147-154; Krenvalk A. A., Volobuev K. V. Modern football in the context of the implementation of the state "soft power" // *Voprosy politologii*. - 2017. - № 3 (27). - Pp. 161-170.

of attractiveness (soft power) in international relations. This is because international law cannot keep up with global political changes. It is difficult to adhere to the clearly established legal norms, as part of the so-called hard power, hence follows the necessity to find new, unexplored paths in the world affairs that would subsequently find their proper legal forms in international treaties and agreements. To find such forms is only a part of the case, it is equally important to convince other countries of the correctness of such path and to involve them in following it.

Another reason for the growth of the role of attractiveness policy is the existence of conflicts in international law. One of best known cases, considered by many as a conflict of law, is the contradiction between the principles of territorial integrity and the right of peoples to self-determination. An example in this regard is the situation with the reunification of Crimea and Russia. Ukraine and many countries supporting it emphasize the principle of territorial integrity and talk about Russia's "aggression" and "occupation" of Crimea. Crimeans themselves, supported by Russia and some other countries, stand up for the principle of self-determination. It was implemented in the referendum in the spring of 2014 and both sides have convincing, from their point of view, arguments. Obviously, in the context of global uncertainty, the policy of attractiveness of decisions should play a greater role. Foreign politicians, coming to Crimea, see that there are no concentration camps or barbed wire typical for occupation and that an absolute majority of Crimeans support reunification with Russia. The problem is to make this knowledge available to the general world public.

The growing importance of the attractiveness policy is evident in the TNCs change in the requirements for employees. Today, more and more sought after are employees with soft skills against those with hard skills. The latter include all the narrow professional competencies that allow people to resolve well-set production tasks. The first group of skills allows a person to be successful due to the ability to convince others, to reveal the attractiveness of ideas, to work in a team, to take responsibility and to be flexible. These are the qualities that are necessary for the work in unpredictable conditions. Transnational companies, including such Russian company as, for example, Sberbank, carry out purposeful work aimed at developing soft skills of its employees.¹ Russian diplomats should also do this. Russian scientists and diplomats are required to take new approaches to the development of the national policy of attractiveness.

Russia is still quite strong in its policy of attractiveness. The achievements of the international news channel "Russia Today," Twitter diplomacy of the Russian Embassy in the UK and other foreign policy structures are so obvious that Western countries are forced not to compete or cooperate with them, but to try to limit their activities. Is it time to calm down on such achievements of Russian attractiveness policy? I do not think there can be a positive answer to that ques-

¹ "Business environment is becoming very dynamic today" // Kommersant. – April 28, 2017.

tion. It is necessary to look for new opportunities to enhance the attractiveness of Russia and its foreign policy in the world. Domestic TNCs can play an important role in this regard, as evidenced by China's experience.

Chinese brands react quickly to the changes in the external circumstances. Chinese car brand Trumpchi proposed to change the name of the car of the same name because it sounds very much as the name of the current American President, and "Trump" in Chinese means "the best" and Chi – "for China." Recently, the desire of large Chinese TNCs to create a positive image of their country among foreign partners has become noticeable. About three dozen of Chinese TNCs are very popular all over the world, including the long-known Lenovo and Huawei and the relatively recent Alibaba and ELEX. 8 out of 10 people in the world recognize the name Huawei because it is advertised by one of the best world football players L. Messi. ELEX has 50 million users in 40 countries. This is a huge audience, the influence on which means a lot in world politics. Russian TNCs and diplomacy should have studied in more detail this Chinese experience of developing the policy of attractiveness.

The role of international branding in the activities of TNCs is very large. So, T. Beregovskaya, analyzing this aspect, draws attention to the following points: turbulence of the world economy, shorter life cycle of goods, diversification of international sales channels, differentiation of the effective demand of the world population.¹ It's no need to have a rich imagination to see that most of the above aspects are to some extent present in the foreign policy. Diversification of transport corridors, the emergence of new important foreign policy players, sharp turns in foreign policy are regularly manifested in the international arena. The search query "turbulent" made by the author of this text on the website of the Russian Foreign Ministry brought 181 answers: turbulent, it turns out, is not only foreign economic but also foreign political environment. Effective reaction to the foreign policy changes can contribute to the strengthening of the Russian policy of attraction.

Role of personalities

TNC leaders with virtuoso business thinking are increasingly engaged by the society for the resolution of the top priority state tasks. There were plenty of examples of this remarkable process in 2017. Emanuel Macron, a former investment banker and then Minister of Economy, Finance and Digital Economy, was elected President of France in spring 2017. In the summer of 2017, billionaire H. Battulga won the election and became President of Mongolia. In October 2017, the party of billionaire A. Babish won the parliamentary elections in the

¹ Beregovskaya T. A. The role of international branding in improving the marketing strategies of transnational corporations. Abstract of thesis for the degree of Candidate of Sciences (economy). – M., 2016.

Czech Republic. Billionaire Sebastian Pinera won presidential election in Chile in December 2017. This repetition means it is systematic and not random phenomenon.

Big businessmen bring business approaches to public administration. Often, these approaches differ significantly from the usual ones adopted in the system of public administration. It's not that this or that person stands out among entrepreneurs. If he is elected in a national referendum or invited from business to a high position in the system of public administration, it means that his abilities and competencies are needed today for the effective development of not one, even a very large company, but the whole country. It is obvious that the skills that large businessmen receive in their activities correspond to the needs of public administration in the conditions of growing uncertainty in the world arena.

What are these skills? According to the data of the global independent business Association Conference Board, in 2000-2013 a quarter of the General Directors of Fortune 500 companies were dismissed. A quarter of them did it against their will. The study showed that effective CEOs demonstrate four qualities necessary for success: they are determined, reliable, able to enlist the support and proactive in a changing environment.¹ Successful top managers make decisions sooner, faster and with more conviction than others. They do so at all times, even in the face of lack of data and on unclear issues. D. Barton global managing partner of McKinsey noted that the main quality of a successful top manager is "the ability to cope with situations that are not written in textbooks. The head of the company is constantly faced with situations for which it is impossible to create instructions."² It is also very important for the CEO to catch the first signs of change, the so-called "weak signals". It is obvious that such qualities should be inherent in the highest civil servants who form and implement the foreign policy of the country. Relevant skills should be incorporated into their training programs.

In this regard, it makes sense to recall the story with the inauguration of US Secretary of state R. Tillerson, former head of the giant TNC Exxon Mobil. According to the usual practice, the newly appointed Secretary of State partially or completely changes the leadership of the State Department in order to pursue a new political line. It is usual for TNCs, when the company's management is changed, to conduct a thorough audit and to determine the state of affairs in the company for a possible change in its strategy. That's exactly what J. Tillerson did, he initiated a deep study of the State Department. It turned out that during the presidency of Barak Obama the State Department was very bloated. Some of its units competed with each other, performing similar functions. Resources had

¹ Lytkina-Botellyo E., Powell K., Kincaid, S., Van D. What distinguishes successful CEOs. – August 10, 2017. – URL: http://hbr-russia.ru/karera/professionalnyy-i-lichnostnyy-rost/a22471/?utm_source=mailerlite&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=editorchoise29082017 (accessed 09.01.2018).

² Ibid.

been used inefficiently, as reflected, for example, in the fact that at least 10 different information systems had been installed in the Department. The issues of diplomatic security, most important for the diplomats, as well as Washington's support for American embassies in the different countries, were poorly addressed. It was also revealed that coordination of the State Department with other public authorities was very poor.¹ A view from a different, unusual perspective, helped to identify flaws that significantly impeded the effective work of the State Department.

It can be assumed that it is not fully justified to put two worlds on the same Board: the world of economy and the world of politics. There is a perception that the world of economics is the world of accuracy, formulas, EBITDA, etc., while the world of politics is a game in which the more sophisticated and cunning wins.² Indeed, there is a difference between these two worlds, the examination of which requires a separate study. But there is also a lot in common between them, as evidenced by the success of large businessmen in the state political field, including foreign policy. In this sense, the strategies and techniques used by multinational companies for orientation in uncertain conditions may be of great interest to politicians.

If you trust American TV channel CNN, the Russian intelligence hit the "top ten" defining D. Trump as 'unpredictable.' N. Haley, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, said in early 2018 that world leaders are literally glued to Twitter, reading President Trump's tweets and seeking to understand future actions of the United States. They consider Trump unpredictable, do not know how the US will behave in any particular period of time, and therefore behave much more cautiously. N. Haley, who grew up on the cult of exclusivity of the United States, cannot imagine that the world leaders have much more interesting things to do than reading President Trump's Tweets. And yet, let us note that she does not deny such President Trump's trait. Moreover, she believes that unpredictability serves a good service to American foreign policy.³

This approach to unpredictability is the opposite of yesterday's cult of stability. The ideal of stability and resilience is very attractive, but the new era brings new demands to ideals. Indefinite, conflict, changeable, unpredictable period of formation of the polycentric world will increasingly require caution, flexibility in changes and speed in making informed decisions. The methods of TNC actions considered in the article, factors taken into account when making strategic decisions give a hint in what directions it is necessary to develop the system of the

¹ Carafano J. Tillerson Is Trying to Replicate Jim Baker's State Department // *The National Interest*, August 10, 2017. – URL: <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/tillerson-trying-replicate-jim-bakers-state-department-21858?page=show> (accessed 09.01.2018).

² Boyes R. Putin's Middle East game made fools of the US // *The Times*, November 29, 2017.

³ Gaudiano N. Haley: World perception of Trump as 'unpredictable' isn't a bad thing // *USA Today*, Jan. 7, 2018.

state foreign policy in modern conditions. These two areas – TNCs and foreign policy – are different in many respects, but they have much in common, and this suggests that the search in this direction can be fruitful.

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