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THE CRISIS OF EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE CONTEMPORARY SECURITY SYSTEM

Bubnov Igor*c.hist.s., as.prof.*

ORCID: 0000-0001-5155-0780

Odesa I.I.Mechnikov National University,

Odesa, Frantsuz'kyy b-r 24/26, 65000

Abstract. *The article analyzes the phenomenon of the crisis of effectiveness of international organizations in the contemporary international security system under conditions of transformation of the world order and increasing complexity of global threats. The key factors causing the decline in the effectiveness of international institutions are examined, including political fragmentation, competition among centers of power, institutional constraints, resource asymmetry, and the inadequacy of traditional response mechanisms to the nature of modern hybrid threats. Special attention is paid to the analysis of the activities of the United Nations, the European Union, and NATO in the context of the Russian–Ukrainian war as a kind of “capacity test” for the international security system. The necessity of transforming international organizations through reforming decision-making mechanisms, strengthening interaction between global and regional structures, developing integrated approaches to counter hybrid and cyber threats, and forming a multilevel model of security governance is substantiated. It is concluded that overcoming the crisis of effectiveness of international organizations is possible provided their institutional adaptation and a transition to preventive strategies for ensuring international stability.*

Key words: *international organizations, international security, world order, United Nations, European Union, NATO, hybrid threats, multipolarity, global governance.*

Introduction.

The contemporary international security system is undergoing profound transformation, accompanied by a growing number and complexity of threats. The combination of traditional interstate conflicts with new challenges—hybrid wars, cyberattacks, information operations, climate change, and humanitarian crises—highlights the issue of the effectiveness of international organizations. The Russian–Ukrainian war has become a kind of «test of capacity» for global and regional security institutions, demonstrating both their ability to mobilize resources and undertake collective actions, and their structural limitations associated with political fragmentation, a lack of coordinated decision-making, and insufficient adaptability to new forms of threats.

Under these conditions, international organizations – the United Nations, the European Union, and NATO – are increasingly finding themselves in situations where



their traditional response mechanisms do not fully correspond to the dynamics of contemporary crises. This necessitates a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of the «crisis of effectiveness» of international institutions, manifested in the gap between the declared principles of collective security and the actual outcomes of their activities.

Problem statement.

The relevance of this study is determined by the need to identify the causes and manifestations of the crisis of effectiveness of international organizations, as well as to assess their ability to adapt to the conditions of a multipolar world. Despite institutional expansion, the accumulation of experience, and the growing role of international structures in global governance, their activities often face limitations that reduce the effectiveness of security policy. The analysis of these processes is necessary for the formation of new models of international interaction and for enhancing the capacity of international organizations to respond to the complex challenges of modernity.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the causes, manifestations, and consequences of the crisis of effectiveness of international organizations in the contemporary security system, as well as to identify possible directions for their institutional and strategic transformation.

The issue of the role of international organizations in maintaining global stability has traditionally been considered through the prism of institutional theory in international relations. In particular, the works of O. Potiekhin [1], S. Fedunyak [2], and N. Yakovenko [3] focus on the impact of the Russian–Ukrainian war on the rethinking of the activities of leading security institutions in the context of their transition from a policy of containment to a policy of active response. The authors emphasize that these structures are becoming not only defensive alliances but also platforms for political solidarity and strategic coordination within the Euro-Atlantic space.

A study by A. Graef highlights the crisis of the traditional system of arms control in Europe, caused by new technological challenges, in particular the use of unmanned systems and artificial intelligence in the military sphere [4].



The works of T. Alekseev [5] and S. Zaderayko [6] emphasize the need to strengthen the role of international organizations in resolving armed conflicts and countering information threats.

Of particular interest is the research by O. Rafalskyi [7], who analyzes changes in the role and significance of international organizations in the context of the transformation of the international order.

In general, the analyzed sources indicate that in conditions of global instability, international organizations become mechanisms for adapting the world order, but face challenges related to effectiveness, coordination of decisions, and limited resources. This creates the need for new models of multilevel interaction between states, regional structures, and global security institutions.

The destruction of the old system of world order, which was almost officially acknowledged for the first time by key world leaders at the 56th World Economic Forum in Davos (January 19–23, 2026), necessitates a rethinking of the role of international organizations as systemic actors of global governance.

Against this background, radical assertions have emerged regarding the inevitable decline of old structures, primarily the United Nations and other organizations that were created within the framework of the world order established after the Second World War [8].

In our view, even considering the existing crisis of effectiveness of traditional international organizations in the contemporary security system, the situation requires a more balanced and substantiated assessment. In particular, one can agree with S. Fedunyak's opinion that contemporary conflicts have acquired a multidimensional character and that international institutions should therefore become the key environment for the formation of new norms and practices of interstate interaction [2, p.135]. Equally valid is T. Alekseev's assertion that a new architecture of "distributed security" should emerge at the intersection of the UN and regional structures, where international organizations transform into integrated components of a unified response mechanism [5, p.11].

Undoubtedly, the contemporary system of functioning of international



organizations must undergo gradual transformation in order to ensure a more effective and efficient response to various security threats. For this reason, the analysis of manifestations of the crisis of effectiveness of international organizations and the search for ways to overcome it are both important and relevant.

One of the key manifestations of the crisis of effectiveness of international organizations is institutional constraints caused by the complexity of decision-making procedures and political dependence on the positions of leading states. The practice of the last decade shows that formal mechanisms often do not correspond to the intensity of threats, while decisions of the UN Security Council are blocked by the veto right. This leads to the strengthening of regional governance formats in which the EU and NATO act as compensatory centers of stability, particularly in the Euro-Atlantic space. A key response to contemporary security threats should be the process of interaction between traditional international organizations and various newly created regional alliances of states. These alliances may be large and comprehensive or simply systems of economic, humanitarian, or military cooperation among neighboring states. Under such conditions, security issues can be considered not only in the context of balancing the power of leading world states but also in the sphere of interests of regional superpowers. This will ensure greater efficiency and effectiveness in decision-making, taking into account the security concerns of specific states.

This approach can to some extent mitigate another factor that causes a decline in the effectiveness of international organizations in security matters, namely the process of political fragmentation and the intensification of competition among global centers of power. The transition to a multipolar model of international relations strengthens competition among leading centers of power, which complicates the development of a common position within international organizations. Divergences in the interests of the member states of the UN, the EU, and NATO reduce the level of coordination and the effectiveness of collective decisions, which has been particularly evident, among other things, in the context of the Russian–Ukrainian war [9, p.1479].

A significant factor in the crisis of effectiveness of international organizations is also the uneven distribution of resources among their member states. Conditions of



economic and military asymmetry determine a serious dependence of collective security on the positions and capabilities of individual states, which weakens the institutional autonomy of international structures.

As noted, contemporary threats have a complex and hybrid character, which accordingly requires integrated approaches to security governance. According to O. Gref, these phenomena are interconnected and form a «network architecture of risks», where the vulnerability of one state creates a threat to the entire system [4, p.231]. Under such conditions, traditional tools of international organizations – diplomacy, economic sanctions, peacekeeping missions, etc. – often prove insufficient to counter cyber threats, information operations and transnational crises. This indicates the need to update strategic approaches and expand the functional tools of international institutions.

Although, in our opinion, the UN still remains a key universal mechanism for maintaining peace, its activities increasingly acquire merely a coordinative and monitoring character. Similarly, the European Union increasingly demonstrates a tendency to strengthen its own defense autonomy and strategic subjectivity in order to compensate for the shortcomings of global security mechanisms. In turn, NATO, which remains the most adaptive element of the Euro-Atlantic security architecture, today faces challenges related to hybrid threats and the need to modernize strategic concepts.

These circumstances, as noted by S. Fedunyak, lead to the fact that maintaining global stability today is determined by the simultaneous combination of three levels: international, regional and national, where international organizations already act as coordinators, rather than dominant actors [2, p.137].

Overcoming the crisis of effectiveness of international organizations in security matters should involve comprehensive reform of their structures and procedures. Among the key directions of such transformation, one can single out, in particular: reforming decision-making mechanisms within the UN; strengthening the strategic autonomy and defense capabilities of the EU; developing integrated mechanisms to counter hybrid and cyber threats within NATO; deepening interaction between global and regional organizations and alliances of states; integrating security, humanitarian,



digital, and environmental dimensions into a unified system of strategic planning.

Conclusions

The crisis of effectiveness of international organizations in the contemporary security system is an objective consequence of the transformation of the world order and the growing complexity of global threats. The analysis of the activities of key international organizations (the UN, the EU, and NATO) shows that, despite the growing role of these institutions in international processes, the effectiveness of collective security mechanisms largely depends on the political will of member states, their resource capacity, and their ability for institutional adaptation.

The formation of a new model of international security requires a transition from reactive to preventive strategies, the development of multilevel governance, and the creation of flexible mechanisms for responding to crisis situations. In this context, further scholarly research should be aimed at developing innovative models of global governance capable of ensuring the effectiveness of international organizations in the conditions of increasing instability of the world order.

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