

## Hybrid War as a Form of modern international Conflicts

Iryna ZHYHLEI<sup>1</sup>, Olena SYVAK<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Zhytomyr State Technological University

Correspondence: Iryna ZHYHLEI, Zhytomyr State Technological University, E-mail: [iv\\_zhygley@ukr.net](mailto:iv_zhygley@ukr.net)

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### Abstract

In the article the concept of international conflicts has been considered, their categories have been highlighted. The basis of the structure of the international conflict has been distinguished: parties of the conflict, objects, subject and relations between the conflicting parties. International conflicts have been divided by the sphere of action; economic, political, ethical, religious, ideological and informational components have been defined. The most conflictual regions of the world have been identified. The main features of the hybrid war on the examples of conflicts in different regions and Ukraine in particular have been highlighted. In particular, the protracted nature, the expansion of the membership and political goals, the internationalization of the scale of modern international conflicts are of particular attention. The interpretation of the concept “hybrid war” and its translation in scientific research have been analyzed. The importance of the information factor in the conditions of hybrid warfare has been emphasized. The fact that each particular hybrid war has its own specific features and geopolitical context has been taken into account. The traditional and non-traditional threats of the hybrid war have been highlighted. The peculiarities of the stages of the hybrid war in Ukraine have been presented. The purpose of military operations in the hybrid war has been considered. The main features of contemporary international conflicts have been identified, each of which corresponds to the definition of the hybrid war. The consequences of hybrid wars for the civilian population as well as for business and for the country as a whole have been determined. It was substantiated that in conditions of implementation of European integration processes, uncertainties and conflicts as well as in the context of financial and economic crises, the international community is aware that further economic development should be based on a fundamentally different basis.

**Key words:** international conflict, hybrid war, Ukraine

**JEL Codes:** F51, K33, D74, Q34

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### Introduction

At the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, the world entered a qualitatively new era in the development of the international relations system, which has a steady tendency to strengthen its conflict-related potential through the complications and increasing the number of international as well as local and regional conflicts.

Wars and conflicts are indispensable companions of human history. It has been estimated that over the past five and a half millennia, mankind has gone through 15,000 wars and armed conflicts that claimed lives of more than three billion people (Hedges, 2007). From 3600 BC and to this day only 292 years were peaceful, which is 5% of this chronological interval. Other 95% of the time mankind fought. Centuries pass, and security and stability are still the most important components of sovereign development of the states.

The most conflict-related regions of the world are the Middle and Middle East countries, as well as the African continent. In the Middle East, there is a significant number of armed confrontations that have evolved from local wars into regional (Israel and Egypt, Lebanon and Syria). Most of the ongoing armed conflicts are internal and related to the struggle for power, that is, in form and content, are civil wars. In addition, there are preventive actions in the territory of Iraq and Yemen within the framework of a multinational anti-terrorist operation. The monitoring of the military conflicts in the countries of the Middle East shows that the inter-state Indo-Pakistani conflict has a cyclical character and is the most protracted among contemporary conflicts. The most active counterterrorist actions are in the Philippines and Indonesia. In the area of the Great Lakes (sub-Saharan Africa), the protracted regional war continues in its classical sense, in which the six states (Angola, Zimbabwe, Congo (Zaire), Namibia, Rwanda and

Uganda are fighting) and three large paramilitary organizations, each of which pursues a personal purpose. In addition, there are two local wars: Angola and Congo are armed with the paramilitary opposition militia, and Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Senegal – are opposed to the military faction. However, in this region, the occupation of Western Sahara by the troops of Morocco takes place. All armed conflicts relate to the 4th generation of wars: a conflict characterized by erasing the differences between war and politics directly between the military and civilian population (Wikipedia, 2018).

Within Central and South America, there is a steady trend towards maintaining Latin America's non-nuclear status and eliminating existing conflicts. In the region of Europe, Transcaucasia and Central Asia, most of the military conflicts involve the collapse of federal, regional, multi-confessional and multi-ethnic states. The monitoring of conflicts in the countries of Southeast and South Asia shows that today the conflicting parties have all types of weapons and military equipment. More than half of the existing conflicts are linked to the struggle for the territory, in all armed conflicts unconstitutional armed formations are engaged.

In general, it becomes possible to assert that in the present day a paradoxical situation has emerged in the world: the weaker the state, the more dangerous it is, and the stronger it is, the more aggressive it is. The second paradox is that more than 100 countries and peoples have been involved in the armed struggle and no less numerous illegal paramilitary organizations. In fact, there is a world war in an “oppressive” regime characterized by extreme cruelty towards the civilian population.

The American Centre for Peace Studies (CPS) has counted 36 wars since the beginning of 2017, with 28 states directly involved (including Afghanistan (36 years), Colombia (39 years), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (22 years), India (62 years), Iraq (34 years), Myanmar (66 years), Nigeria (17 years), Pakistan (17 years), Philippines (42 years), Somalia (26 years), Sudan (31 years) and Turkey (30 years) (“Мировая карта войн. Где и за что сегодня воюет человечество”, 2018). The peculiarity of modern armed conflicts is the “erosion” of the outlines of the military conflict and the involvement of non-military means (political, economic and humanitarian) that, in their usual state, are not directly related to the classical military confrontation.

Expanding the scope of conflicts in a globalizing environment poses a serious threat to the international system in view of the danger of military and environmental disasters, the scale of mass migrations of the population, and the destabilization of the political development of individual countries and regions.

## 1. Literature review

Problems of international conflicts and crises occupy a central place in foreign and domestic studies by K. Abbott (Abbott, 2016), M. Dalton (Dalton, 2017), S.A. Ederberg, P. Eronen (Ederberg and Eronen, 2015), B. Fägersten (Fägersten, 2017), E. Newman (Newman, 2004), A. Radin (Radin, 2017), A. Rapoport (Rapoport, 1974), M.M. Ruiz (Ruiz, 2018), S.K. Sahin (Sahin, 2016), T. Sandler (Sandler, 2006), S.Ya. Bezkorovaynuy (Bezkorovaynuy, 2016), I. Izhnin (Izhnin, 2013), Y.L. Streltsov (Streltsov, 2015) and others.

The topic of the research is relevant and controversial, it attracts the attention of many scholars. So, F.G. Hoffman (Hoffman, 2007), M. Isherwood (Isherwood, 2009), Ye. Magda (Magda, 2015), N. Vlasyuk (Vlasyuk, 2015), I. Todorov (Todorov, 2016), G. Dinis (Dinis, 2016), I. Ruschenko (Ruschenko, 2015), O. Fedenko, V. Panasyuk (Fedenko and Panasyuk, 2015), G. Pocheptsov (Pocheptsov, 2015), A. Blyznyuk (Blyznyuk, 2015) discussed in their papers the phenomenon of “war of a hybrid type”. A number of publications devoted to the hybrid war have recently appeared in Ukraine. Among them, special attention is paid to the collective monograph of the Institute for Strategic Studies “World Hybrid War: Ukrainian Front” edited by V. Gorbulin (Gorbulin, 2017), O. Bazaluk's monograph “Theory of War and Peace. Geophysophy of Europe” (Bazaluk, 2016) and R. Dodonov “The Conflict in the East of Ukraine in the Mirror of Socio-Philosophical Reflection” (Dodonov, 2016). The scientific papers of these authors reveal the economic, ethnopolitical, and information features of the hybrid war. However, there is no unambiguous interpretation of this concept. In addition, the analysis of recent studies shows that the concept of “hybrid war” is not included in international legal documents.

Issues of modern military conflicts are also the objects of monitoring and analysis of international organizations (UN, EU, NATO), independent research institutions (Uppsala University, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, London International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Gallup Organization). Taking into consideration the relevance of this topic, studies are conducted in various fields of science: military science, politics, philosophy, technical sciences, philology, and others. Each scientist translates this concept differently. As a result of unambiguous translation and, accordingly, the interpretation of the concept of “hybrid war” is not presented. In

particular, for this phenomenon, names are used that characterize the conflict as: informal, non-traditional, asymmetric, unconventional, irregular, mixed, and others. Therefore, the use of this concept needs to be streamlined.

## 2. Research methodology and data

The article uses scientific methods: systematization, comparison, generalization, analysis, synthesis. The information base of the study consists of research of Ukrainian and foreign scientists, materials of domestic and international organizations, in particular, the UN, the American Centre for Peace Studies (CPS), the Center of military strategy research of the National Defense University of Ukraine, Ukrainian Institute of strategies of global development and adaptation, etc.

The application of these studies made it possible to assess the history of conflicts, their transformation, to distinguish the features inherent in hybrid wars, in particular, the war in Ukraine.

Such studies are necessary for the construction of a strategy for the activities of enterprises operating in conflict zones, both in terms of operational activities and their socially responsible activities.

## 3. Results and discussions

Defining the international conflict, its nature and its main characteristics have numerous variants within the limits of modern scientific approaches and are carried out on the basis of their classification.

The provisions of the UN Charter make it possible to distinguish two categories of international conflicts: 1) those that threaten international peace and security, and 2) those that do not have a threat (UN Charter, 2005), but the UN has not formulated general criteria for this classification. During the analysis of scientific sources (Boulding, 1962); (Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff, 2000); (Wright, 1955); (Doronina, 1981) the main components of international conflicts have been identified.

According to the results of the analysis of scientific literature, it has been established that an international conflict can be considered as if it occurs with the participation of subjects of international relations and has implications for the current state of international relations. Under the international conflict, we mean the long-standing state of active or passive struggle of two or more participants in international relations regarding the realization of their interests, which are incompatible with the interests of the opposite side. Respectively, the parties of the conflict, objects, subject and relations between the conflicting parties form the basis of the structure of the international conflict. Thus, in our study the hybrid war as one of the forms of contemporary international conflicts has been defined, special attention will be paid to the division of international conflicts within the sphere of action, namely the elimination of the economic, political, ethical, religious, ideological and informational components of modern international conflicts (Fig. 1).

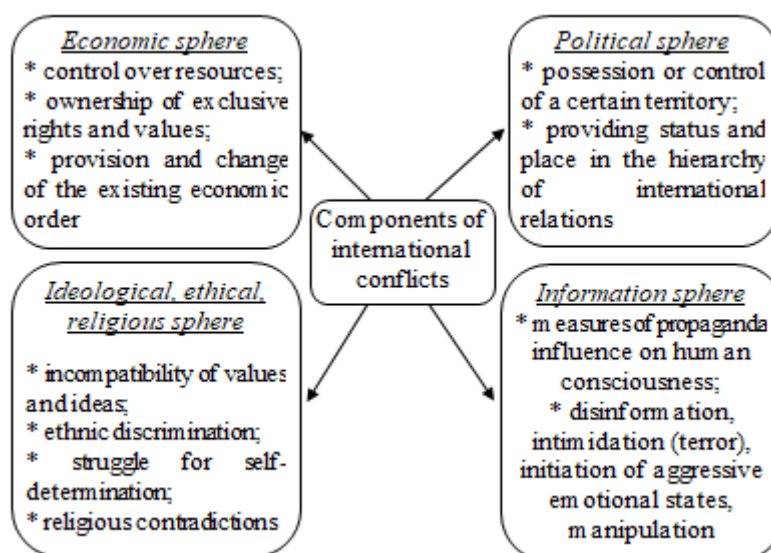


Figure no. 1. Components of modern international conflicts in the sphere of action

Source: own elaboration

The resonant world events of recent years, in particular, the revolutionary government changes as well as armed conflicts in the countries of North Africa, the Middle East and the former Soviet Union, show the emergence of new forms and methods used by the leading governments trying to achieve its foreign policy goals and to resolve intergovernmental issues. The blurriness and uncertainty of the nature of modern conflicts leads to the uncertainty of the relevant terminology: conflicts in the gray zone, gray wars, unrestricted conflicts, asymmetric warfare, unconventional warfare), irregular warfare, compound warfare or hybrid warfare, etc. Moreover, it is not clear whether these types of conflicts are related to the fourth generation of wars or should we talk about the fifth generation.

In fact, the “hybrid war” is defined as combination of incompatible, namely: a fragmentary and situational combination of different methods and theories of war, their integration into different spheres, especially political, religious, ideological, ethical, economic and informational.

One of the peculiarities of modern international conflicts is that they often become protracted (Middle East, Yugoslavia, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Chechnya, Ukraine, etc.), tend to expand the membership, internationalization and expansion into wars with broader political objectives. In the XX – beginning of the XXI century the dynamics of a radical rethinking of the nature of the war, forms, methods, tools to achieve its goals has sharply accelerated. A special place among them belongs to the concept of hybrid war, although its content, according to many military theorists, is not marked by a special originality. In our view, this concept should be considered in the context of modern international conflicts. In fact, the “hybrid war” is defined as incompatible concurrence, namely: a fragmentary and situational combination of different methods and theories of war, their integration into different spheres, especially political, religious, ideological, ethical, economic and informational.

Hybrid conflicts and hybrid threats today are seen as an important feature of the international safe environment that is in a state of systemic crisis. At the same time, military and analytical communities lack unity in understanding the phenomenon of hybrid warfare.

The concept of “hybrid warfare” appeared in 2005 in Western scientific thought, but still this military-political phenomenon has many concepts and definitions. Discussions on hybrid threats and a hybrid method of military action arose on the wave of first generalizations of Hezbollah’s effective work during the second Lebanese war in 2006. For the first time, the mention of this term was highlighted in the speech of Lieutenant General James Mattis in 2005 (McCulloh, and Richard, 2013). Together with F. Hoffman, analyzing the challenges of globalization of military science and technology, they came to the conclusion that future wars will be determined by hybrid methods and strategies (Mattis and Hoffman, 2005).

But the turning point in recognizing the hybrid threat should be considered the release of defense review “Quadrennial Defense Review” (QDR, 2006) in the United States in 2006. Its authors convincingly proved the effectiveness of the hybrid war, and soon the entire Western military establishment, mainly in the United States, Britain and Israel, recognized this fact at the conceptual level, although without the appropriate consensus among politicians, academics and military experts in understanding this phenomenon.

Although it should be noted that the separate components of the hybrid war were observed at the end of the 20th century: in military campaigns against Iraq (1991, 1996 and 2003), in the Balkans (1999), in Afghanistan (2001), in Libya (2011) and in Syria (2011-2016). The leaders of the Russian Federation fully demonstrated openly the methods and technologies used in the hybrid war at various geographical destinations – during the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh, aggression (two wars) and the occupation of the Republic of Ichkeria (Chechnya), the military conflict in Moldova Transnistria, aggression against Georgia with the occupation of North Ossetia and Abkhazia, during the Russo-Georgian war. In fact, Ukraine is now in a state of war, the feature of which is its so-called “hybrid” character (Radkovets', 2014); (Horbulin, 2017); (Smola, 2015).

The search for answers to the challenges that Ukraine faces due to the hybrid war should begin with the study of the nature of the hybrid threat itself. After all, understanding the features and logic of the hybrid war will give the key to find out the weaknesses of this strategy.

The military-political phenomenon that has taken place in Ukraine since 2014, to date has many definitions and characteristics in the scientific and special literature. Specialists from different fields translate this concept in different ways and, accordingly, interpret it in different ways (Table 1).

**Table 1. Analysis of the translation of keywords related to the concept of “hybrid war” in scientific papers**

Direction of research	Key words in Ukrainian	English equivalents
Military sciences (Holopatyuk, 2017); (Frolov, 2017)	агресор, гібридна війна, сектор безпеки і оборони, сили оборони, стратегічне керівництво, конвенційний військовий конфлікт, сучасний військовий конфлікт, складові особливості	aggressor, hybrid war, security and defense sector, defense, strategic leadership, quarantinable military conflict, modern military conflict, constituents, features
Politics (Magda, 2014)	гібридна війна, інформаційна війна, міжнародний імідж, українсько-російська війна, кремлівська агресія, “народні уряд й армія”, дезінформація, деморалізація	hybrid warfare, information warfare, international image, Ukrainian and Russian war, kremlin aggression, “people's army and government”, misinformation, demoralization
Philosophy (Dodonov, 2016)	Східна Україна, криза, війна, гібридна війна, агресія, конфлікт	Eastern Ukraine, crisis, war, hybrid war, aggression, conflict
Technical sciences (Horbulin, 2014)	війна, стратегічний аналіз, асиметрія, міжнародна політика, гібридна війна, Україна, військовий, енергетичний та інформаційний складники “гібридної війни”	war, strategic analysis, asymmetry, international politics, hybrid war, Ukraine, military, energy and information components of the “hybrid war”
Psychology (Aleshchenko, 2016)	гібридна війна, інформаційно-психологічна війна, інформаційно-психологічні операції, інформаційні маніпулятивні технології, психологічний тиск, ЗС України, особовий склад	hybrid war, information and psychological warfare, information-psychological operations, information manipulative technologies, psychological pressure, the Ukrainian armed forces, personnel
Philology (Blyznyuk, 2015)	гібридна війна, пропаганда, інформаційні технології, інформаційний простір	hybrid warfare, propaganda, information technologies, information space

Source: own elaboration

As a result of the analysis of scientific and special literature, it has been established that scientists use the term “hybrid war”, “hybrid warfare”, “information warfare”, “Ukrainian and Russian war”, “Kremlin Aggression”, “information and psychological warfare”.

As we know, the word “hybrid” is from lat. means a certain product that occurs as a result of the interbreeding of its various species. According to its popular name, the hybrid war, unlike the “traditional” military killing, is the crossing of “genetically” different forms of social action. This is a new combination of old items that were used before. So, the Internet Encyclopedia Wikipedia defines the Hybrid Warfare as a “military strategy that combines conventional warfare, small war and cyberwar”. It is also noted that this term is also used in cases where it is necessary to describe a flexible and complex dynamics of combat space (Battlespace), which provides easy adaptation and flexible reaction.

Golopatyuk L.S., Tymoshenko R.I. (Golopatyuk and Tymoshenko, 2017) highlights a number of peculiarities that are specific for real and potential modern military conflicts: general (time frames, levels, goals and parties), political and military, economic, informational, international and legal. According to the military doctrine of Ukraine in 2015 (Voyenna doktryna Ukrayiny, 2015), the current military conflict in Ukraine has two peculiarities: the asymmetric use of military force by unforeseen by law armed formations, the comprehensive use of military and non-military

instruments: economic, political, informational and psychological. In Table 2 the authors' views on the interpretation of the concept of "hybrid war" have been analysed.

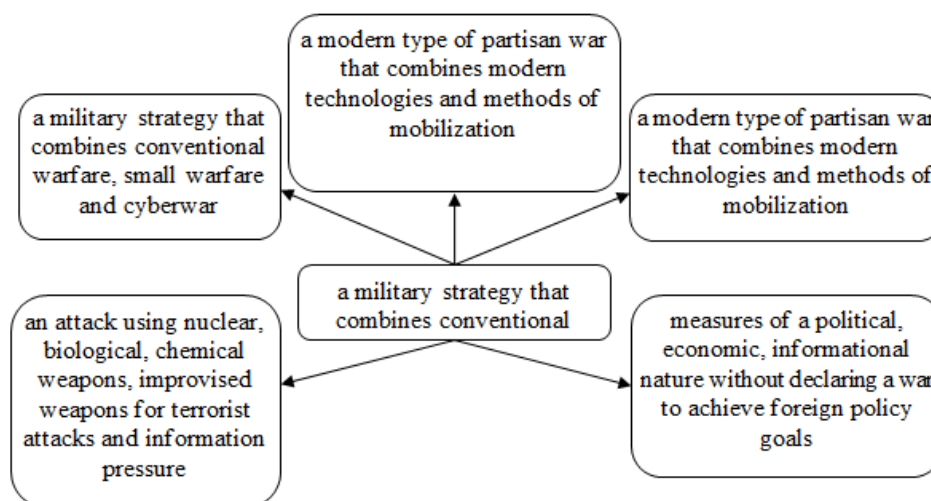
**Table 2. Analysis of the interpretation of the concept of "hybrid war" in scientific research**

Author	Definition of the concept of "hybrid war"
Magda Ye. (Magda, 2015)	measures of a political, economic, informational nature without the declaration of war in accordance with the norms of international law
Doroshkevych A. (Doroshkevych, 2015)	hybrid wars are mainly aimed at informational and psychological impact on the population, economic-political confrontation, while the force operations used in parallel aim at not so much conquest or containment of the territory as chaos, a continuous conflict and the constant generation of provocations and staging for zombie media military events
Trebin M. (Trebin, 2014)	1) a combination of conventional and unconventional hostilities and the respective participants in this war (along with armed forces, actors include terrorists, mercenaries, partisans, militias, banditry, special forces of other states, etc.); 2) the struggle for the minds and souls of people, that is, the information struggle, where the main actors are not military, but civilians: media, television, the Internet, other means of mass communication
Freier N. (Freier, 2009)	simultaneous merging of irregular and traditional challenges when combined with an updated catastrophic challenge — for example, the potential threat that cyber-attacks pose to economic and energy infrastructure — has distinct implications for the Russian hybrid threat construct.
Murray W., Mansoor P. (Murray and Mansoor, 2012)	labor-intensive and long-term affairs; they are difficult struggles that defy the domestic logic of opinion polls and election cycles. Hybrid wars are also the most likely conflicts of the twentyfirst century; competitors may use hybrid forces to wear down America's military capabilities in extended campaigns of exhaustion
Newson R.A. (Newson, 2014)	combining conventional, irregular, and asymmetric means, including persistent manipulation of political and ideological conflict, and can combine special operations and conventional military forces; intelligence agents; political provocateurs; media manipulation and information warfare; economic intimidation; cyber-attacks; use of proxies and surrogates, para-militaries, terrorist, and criminal elements
Lanoszka A. (Lanoszka, 2016)	marriage of conventional deterrence and insurgent tactics. Rather than being a new form of conflict, hybrid warfare is a strategy that the belligerent uses to advance its political goals on the battlefield by applying military force subversively
Hoffman S. (Hoffman, 2017)	the opponent which simultaneously and adaptive applies integrated connecting the conventional weapon and irregular tactics, the terrorism and criminal elements in the space of the fight for the political objectives achievement
Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) (2011)	the diverse and dynamic combination of regular forces, irregular forces, terrorist forces, criminal elements, or a combination of these forces and elements all unified to achieve mutually benefitting effects

Bond M.S. (Bond, 2007)	involves the use of a very comprehensive and nuanced variety of military activities, resources, programs and applications, dimensioned in such a way that they lead to a non-violent, persuasive maximization of the political and economic influence to reform the governments or hostile movements, as well as the reversal of the trend of the conditions of instability in the political, social and economic areas, characteristic to the collapsed or failed states.
Nemeth W.J. (Nemeth, 2002)	the contemporary form of guerrilla warfare, is a continuation of pre-state warfare that has become more effective because it employs both modern technology and modern mobilization methods

Source: own elaboration

Thus, during the analysis of the scientific literature it was discovered that the concept of “hybrid war” is interpreted from different points of view (Fig. 2).



**Figure no. 2. Definition of the concept of “hybrid war” in modern research**

Source: own elaboration

At the moment, researchers note that the meaning of the concept of “hybrid war” is changing compared to the initial use. In the case of Russia and Ukraine, every specific element of this “hybrid war” is not new in nature and used in almost all the wars of the past, but the coherence and interconnection of these elements, the dynamism and flexibility of their application, as well as the increasing weight of the information factor, are unique. Moreover, the information factor in some cases becomes an independent component and is no less important than the military one. Each particular hybrid war has its own peculiarities and geopolitical context.

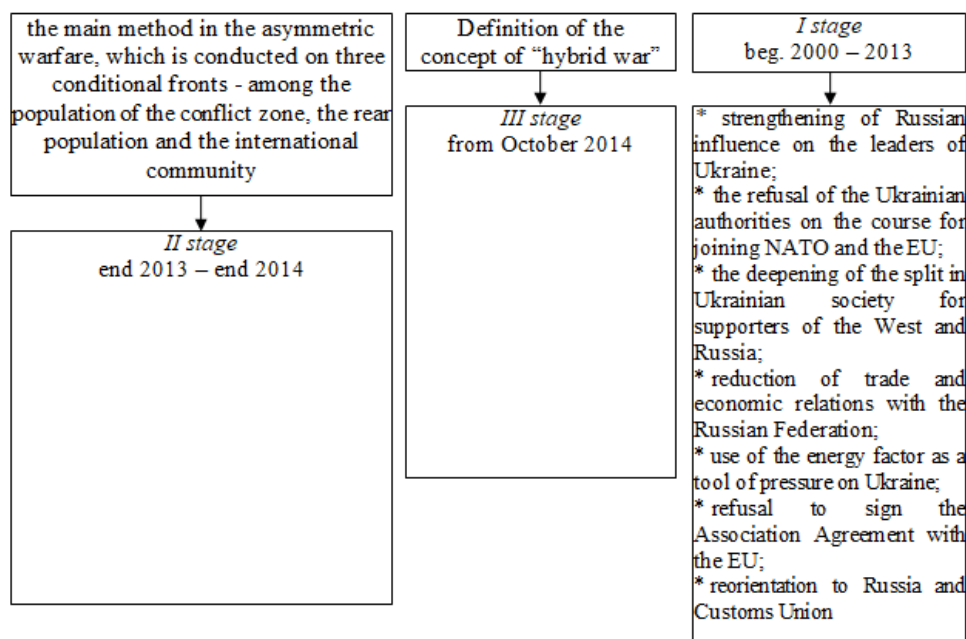
Actually, the hybrid war can be defined in the most general terms as a set of prepared in advance and operationally implemented actions of military, diplomatic, economic, informational character, aimed at achieving strategic goals. The components of the hybrid war include traditional and non-traditional threats, terrorism, and subversive actions when using the latest non-template technologies to counteract the superiority of the enemy in the armed forces. It is worth noting that the idea of a hybrid war is not new. Military history knows a lot of examples of asymmetric wars using nonlinear tactics and irregular armed formations that are more ancient counterparts of the modern hybrid war. The ratio and extent of the influence of these components on the overall result, their role and place in a particular confrontation is determined by the level of development of society.

A typical hybrid war consists of three main stages: preparatory, active and final. Features of the stages of the hybrid war in Ukraine are presented in Fig. 3.

The main features of the hybrid war in Ukraine are the destabilization of the country through the intensification of the internal conflict, attempts to destroy the state through a catastrophic destruction of economy and infrastructure.

In the report of J. Calha, “Hybrid Warfare: NATO’s new Strategic Challenge?” (Calha, 2015), when assessing the peculiarities of Russia’s actions, it is emphasized that the Government of the Russian Federation is using the internal weakness of Ukraine due to, first of all, non-military methods (such as political, informational, economic intimidation and manipulation), which are supported by the threat of the use of regular troops.

The purpose of military activities in the hybrid war is to create chaos, a continuous long-term conflict, the constant generation of provocations and staging military events to cover the media dependent on them.



**Figure no. 3. Stages of the hybrid war on the territory of Ukraine**

Source: own elaboration

### Conclusions

The results of the analysis of contemporary international conflicts give grounds for asserting that they have the following features: 1) rising the role of political, economic, informational means during preparation and in the course of the conflict; 2) increasing the role of information-psychological operations in achieving the objectives of conflicts; 3) the creation of coalitions and multinational forces; 4) the dependence of the political decision on participation in the conflict on public opinion at the domestic and international levels; 5) continuous improvement of forms and methods of conducting armed struggle, in particular, asymmetric actions. Taking into account the aforementioned, we agree with the position of representatives of the military sciences who use the English equivalent of the “hybrid war” to translate the term rather than “warfare”, since the latter means “methods of warfare” (biological, chemical, etc.). Accordingly, the “hybrid war in Ukraine” is a kind of modern military conflict, which involves actions carried out by combining political, economic, informational, international-legal and military conflict scenarios in order to achieve military-strategic goals. It should also be noted that military force in this type of conflict is not decisive.

A “hybrid war” is a form of international conflict that combines fundamentally different types and methods of warfare that are coordinated to achieve common goals. The peculiarities of “hybrid wars” include: the beginning of aggression without the official declaration of war, the concealment by the aggressor country of its participation in the conflict; the use of irregular armed formations; neglect by the aggressor of international standards of conduct of hostilities, current agreements and agreements; mutual measures of political and economic pressure (for the formal preservation of ties between the two countries); wide propaganda and counter-propaganda with various methods of



informational and psychological influence in order to discredit authorities; constructive influence, political manipulation and misinformation; confrontation in the cybernetic space.

An analysis of the above-mentioned peculiarities of conducting modern “military-political conflicts” of the “hybrid type” provides grounds for confirmation of the presence of their influence on the safety of life of the civilian population and doing business. The consequences of modern “hybrid wars” include: direct losses among the civilian population, a large number of injured people; increasing the intensity of migration processes, increasing the number of refugees, internally displaced people and evacuated people; a decline in the economy, and, as a result, a decline in living standards and social protection; damage and destruction of infrastructure objects; violation of the life support systems, the emergence of centers of defeat from secondary factors of the use of weapons (destruction of nuclear power plants, chemically hazardous objects, hydraulic structures), causing damage to the environment.

In the context of European integration processes, uncertainties and conflicts, and in the context of financial and economic crises, the international community is aware that further economic development must be based on a fundamentally different basis. It should be linked to increased control over risks, balancing financial and non-financial interests and should be directed towards sustainable development of the economy and society. One of the ways of solving the current situation in Ukraine is to implement the concept of corporate social responsibility, taking into account the risks that may arise during conflicts.

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