"HYBRID WARFARE: A GEOSTRATEGIC CHALLENGE TO GEORGIA'S NATIONAL SECURITY" THE IMPORTANCE OF THE "GREEN ENERGY DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSMISSION" PROJECT FOR THE BLACK SEA BASIN AND GEORGIAS ENERGY SECURITY

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The events that took place in the region at the beginning of last year, in particular the hostilities that began in Eastern Europe and are still ongoing, have created new challenges for Europe, especially in the direction of importing energy resources, as market diversification in the direction of gas and electricity supply is more relevant today than ever before. All this has created a completely new reality that has created the need for alternative energy flow routes for Europe.

The four-party agreement on the development and transfer of green energy was signed in December last year in the Romanian capital Bucharest. The agreement was signed by four states: Georgia, Azerbaijan, Romania and Hungary. The project represents a completely new and modern option for the export of trans-Caspian energy flows and, in its own way, is the most important regional project, which brings the South Caucasus and Europe even closer, this time in terms of the supply of electricity flows. The project includes a 1,195-kilometer power transmission cable by 2029, which will supply electricity from Azerbaijan to Europe through the Black Sea basin. Specifically, the power transmission network will transport electricity from Azerbaijan through the Black Sea and territorial waters of Georgia to the Romanian port city of Constanta.

And from Eastern Europe to Romania to Central Europe to Hungary, and from there to Western European countries, the power transmission network will pass under the Black Sea, which will be much safer and somewhat innovative for the export of electricity. Out of 1,195 km of the transmission cable, 1,100 km will pass under the seabed and 95 km on land on the Romania-Hungary connecting section. The power transmission cable will have a capacity of 500 kilowatts. The estimated cost of the project is two billion euros. Within the framework of the project, in addition to Azerbaijan, Georgia will also have the opportunity to export electricity to Romania.

The construction of an optical fiber Internet cable is also being considered in parallel, which will connect Georgia and Romania by means of communication. The project turns Georgia into an energy hub, and Kiev will further strengthen its strategic location in the Eurasian space. In terms of occupying the middle corridor

The country already enjoys the status of a Eurasian corridor thanks to the initiation of the Trans-Caspian projects of the last century. The project will increase Georgia's geopolitical and geostrategic importance immeasurably after the commissioning of the transmission network, increase the country's energy independence, strengthen the country's energy security, which will directly increase Georgia's national security, create a means of producing local energy resources, especially in the areas of solar and wind energy, and all this will create opportunities for the construction of new hydroelectric power plants, which will significantly reduce the country's dependence on energy imports, especially in terms of electricity. It is also highly likely that all this will have a positive impact on tariff policy, namely by reducing tariffs for electricity and Internet communications and, accordingly, by reducing taxes.

The project will also be of great importance for the security of the Black Sea Basin, especially for the waters and territorial waters controlled by Georgia. The security of the Black Sea Basin is regulated by Article 41 of the Montreux Convention. However, the current situation in the region, in particular the hostilities that began in Eastern Europe at the beginning of last year, significantly increases the challenges and threats to the security of the Black Sea Basin, due to the geographical situation in the southwestern part of Ukraine, where it has access to the Black Sea through the three controlled regions of Odessa, Mykolaiv, and Kherson. The situation there, especially in the Kherson region, where the immediate spatial area of the front line passes, significantly increases the threats and risks from the Ukrainian maritime waters and territorial waters throughout the Black Sea Basin.

In this context, we can consider the floating mines with their ends cut off, which were used by the Ukrainian Navy shortly after the start of hostilities in the immediate coastal maritime spaces of Odessa, Mykolaiv, and Kherson. In order to mine the waters in order to prevent the landing of a potential naval landing by an enemy country, however, due to a technical malfunction of the mines (the mines are Soviet-made military equipment), the mine-laying operation failed and a large part of the mines went out of control. Due to the storms in the Black Sea, a large part of about 1,000 floating mines were deployed in the Black Sea due to the circulation principle. This circumstance poses a great threat to the Black Sea, both directly to the natural fauna and waters of the sea, as well as to the cargo direction of the Black Sea.

Also to all countries of the Black Sea Basin, there are high risks due to the TTM of the mines that they will enter the coastal zone of the territorial waters of the member states of the basin. The first case has already been recorded in Georgia. Relevant units of the Ministry of Internal Affairs are working 24 hours a day. All the country's border areas on the Black Sea are being controlled as much as possible, both the coastal zones and the entire maritime waters and the areas under the control of our country. Depths of territorial waters.

It is worth noting that the above-mentioned circumstance, namely the uncontrolled presence of floating mines with their moorings cut off, may pose a threat to the future construction of the Black Sea power transmission cable project, despite the fact that the said power transmission cable will be placed on the Black Sea bed. The uncontrolled presence of floating mines is due to the tactical and technical characteristics of the mines, namely, taking into account the fact that the mines, due to the absence of a regulating mooring, can both rise to the shore and sink to the bottom in the sea.

These maneuvers largely depend on environmental conditions, weather and the specific nature of the Black Sea. Taking into account the above-mentioned circumstances, the permanent implementation of large-scale demining works is on the agenda, which, due to the above-mentioned circumstances, will be quite difficult to perform.

Out of the 3400 km long Black Sea coastline, the Georgian section represents 310 km, while the maritime volume of the power transmission cable will be 1100 km. Based on the principle of circulation of the Black Sea basin, in particular, taking into account the fact that water constantly circulates and moves, the neutralization of the mentioned mines will be critically important both for the safety of the power transmission cable project itself, as well as for the coastal zones of the Black Sea basin and the countries included in it in general.

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