

The Russia-Ukraine Conflict: Lessons for Europeans from a Polish Perspective*

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Abstract

The current Russian-Ukrainian conflict has once again altered the fate of Eastern Europe. Yet, it should be also considered as a game changer for European security. The entire European security architecture has trembled as the eastern flank of the continent has been destabilised. If the conflict cannot act as a unifier for the transatlantic community, it could well spell tougher times down the road. This danger would become particularly acute if the perception takes hold that NATO has lost its credibility to deter threats and the EU has lost its ability to be a normative power which stimulates changes in the international environment. Firstly, this article presents five fundamental lessons-learned that must be drawn from the Russian-Ukrainian conflict in order to contain the potential future challenges and threats for Europe. Secondly, it offers four recommendations which constitute a sound basis for a concrete and long-term security policy action plan in response to the conflict.

Resumo

O Conflito Russo-Ucraniano: Lições para os Europeus na Ótica Polaca

O corrente conflito russo-ucraniano alterou novamente o destino da Europa do Leste. No entanto, esta crise deve também ser considerada como um fator perturbador da segurança Europeia. Toda a arquitetura da segurança Europeia foi afetada com a instabilidade do flanco oriental do continente. Se este conflito não servir como um fator unificador da comunidade transatlântica, poderá ser um prenúncio de difíceis tempos vindouros. Acresce, ainda, que este perigo poder-se-á tornar particularmente grave caso se instale a percepção de que a NATO perdeu a sua credibilidade para dissuadir ameaças e a União Europeia a sua capacidade como potência normativa para estimular mudanças no sistema internacional. Inicialmente, este artigo apresenta cinco lições fundamentais que deverão ser retiradas do conflito russo-ucraniano de forma a conter eventuais desafios e ameaças para a Europa. Posteriormente, serão abordadas quatro recomendações que constituem uma base para um plano de ação de políticas securitárias sólidas e de longo prazo como resposta a este conflito.

* The opinions, findings and conclusions expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland.