The US Strengthens Its Presence in Mongolia

In recent years, Mongolia has received increasing attention in a comprehensive and multifaceted US strategy aimed at dominating the Eurasian continent. To a certain extent, this is due to the colossal amounts of natural resources and economic opportunities the country has, which are of undoubted interest for American industrial and business circles. However, this is even more connected with Washington's intentions to use the "ancestral home of Genghis Khan" to oppose Russia and the PRC, with an emphasis on the "separation" of the Mongolian people, taking into account the presence in China of Inner Mongolia a very extensive autonomous region bordering with it and with Russia.

Experts have reported that the Americans are clearly striving to establish bilateral ties with Ulaanbaatar and include Mongolia in its closest allies (along with Singapore, Taiwan and New Zealand) in the Indo-Pacific region. Analysts think that the idea of cooperating with Ulaanbaatar has become especially relevant for the United States in light of its tense relations with both Russia and China in recent years.

In terms of the total volume of foreign direct investment (FDI) in Mongolia, the United States ranks 6th (3.3%), behind China and Japan, but ahead of Russia. To a large extent, US investors are showing interest in the Mongolian mining industry, in particular in the development of the largest coal deposit, Tavan Tolgoi. Although American investors consider Mongolia one of the most promising markets in East Asia, their investment activities in this
country are hampered by a cumbersome and ineffective bureaucracy, high levels of corruption and recurring financial conflicts caused by the Mongolian “resource nationalism”.

Recently, in the speeches of American politicians, one can hear more and more "about the pride of the United States that it is Mongolia's third neighbor". On the subject, the United States refers to a concept that appeared in the vocabulary of Mongolian politicians after the revolution of the early 1990s. Geographically, Mongolia shares borders with only two countries, Russia and China, but Ulaanbaatar has already repeatedly declared that today it does not intend to close all its military-political and economic contacts on these two states alone. That is why Mongolia is considered a third neighbor to those countries with which the republic maintains its closest relations, naming, in particular, the United States, Japan, South Korea, Australia and the EU countries, with which Mongolia expects to balance the Russian and Chinese influence in region.

The vector of Washington expansion it’s spheres of influence in Asia has been visible for a long time. Back in 2011, Democratic Party representative Hillary Clinton, then Secretary of State, announced that the presence of the United States in Asia is a prerequisite for maintaining American global leadership, since it is in Asia that "the bulk of 21st century history will be written." The key adversary of Washington in the region today remains China, which appears in the doctrinal documents of the United States as one of the key threats.

In the US national security document "Strategic Framework for Engineering and Technology" recently declassified by the White House and adopted in 2018, Mongolia is considered, along with Japan, the Republic of Korea and Taiwan, among the main partners in containing China’s “economic aggression” by engaging in various American projects. One of the expressions of this policy was the allocation of $ 350 million to Ulaanbaatar to modernize the capital’s water supply system, which became the largest one-time US investment in the region. Meanwhile, Washington systematically seeks to emphasize that the gratuitous nature of American aid supposedly compares favorably with China's infrastructure programs, which, as a rule, imply the development of connected loans.

In order to increase America’s presence in Mongolia in 2019, the USAID resumed its work, which in early 2021 announced the financing of two programs to promote agricultural development in the amount of $ 4.3 million.

With the active participation of the USAID, there has recently been an active expansion of activities in Mongolia by numerous NGOs, many of which were created in various directions to "expand democracy. " So, according to the Ministry of Justice and Internal Affairs of Mongolia, in 2019 more than 20 thousand NPOs were officially registered in this country (and this is for 3 million of the population!), Most of which are financed from abroad. For example, activists of the Mongolian Youth Union NGO are implementing a project according to which Mongolian politicians are included in the black or white list according to the degree of their corruption. But at the same time, it turns out that the MSM coordinates these lists with the leadership of such American structures as the Peace Corps and USAID! Now it is clear why those Mongolian politicians who are considered to be “pro-Russian” are mainly included in the so-called “black” list. Being put on such a “black” list, it is already unlikely that you will be included in the number of deputies of the Mongolian parliament...

Another example is the active work in Mongolia with local politicians (mainly with parliamentarians) and their electorate of another NGO, the International Republican Institute (IRI), which in 2016 was banned in Russia due to gross interference in internal affairs countries. This NGO regularly organizes trips for Mongolian legislators and other prominent Mongolian political leaders to the United States, which can reasonably be regarded as bribery.

In addition, with the active support of the US Embassy in Mongolia, the Soros Foundation, such a religious sect as the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, banned in Russia, and a number of others, are operating today. Judging by the financial statements, money is not spared for Mongolia, especially American structures disguised as NGOs and acting to promote "American-style democracy." Taking into account their significant number for a modest 3 million population, Mongolia should have long ago become a "world stronghold of democracy and prosperity," which, however, is clearly not visible... the goals and objectives set for them, primarily in the confrontation between Russia and China.

In order to avoid becoming completely controlled by foreign influence, for Mongolia it is long overdue to adopt a law "on foreign agents", as, incidentally, did the United States itself, having adopted the FARA (Foreign Agents Registration Act) law back in 1938. By the way, not only in the United States, but also in many other countries, such activities with foreign participation are strictly controlled, in particular, in Great Britain, Israel, India, Germany and other countries that responsibly approach their security and political sovereignty.

In 2018, the military was added to the political and economic aspect of American policy towards Mongolia.
Ulaanbaatar has come to be regarded as one of the leading regional partners of the Global Peace Operation Initiative to support peacekeeping operations, and US-Mongolian cooperation is being built up through UN peacekeeping in Africa and NATO in Afghanistan.

Within the framework of the American State Partnership Program, the engineering and technical staff intensified cooperation between the Alaska Guard and the armed forces of Mongolia, in particular, at the international exercises "In Search of Khan" and "Gobi Wolf" held annually in Mongolia.

Washington's increased attention to Mongolia and its relations with its two natural neighbors, Russia and China, demonstrates what happened in January this year: expansion of the staff of the US Embassy in Ulaanbaatar by 12 diplomats at once, 4 of whom are specialists in Russia and China. Two more USAID employees arrived in Mongolia last summer.

Therefore, the residents of Mongolia should not relax in the coming months, especially on the eve of the upcoming presidential elections in the country in the summer, in which the United States has already begun to actively prepare for intervention, and not only through the already tested option of using controlled NGOs and the media.

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