Despite the active efforts of the White House, by various dirty machinations and the failed attempt at a “diplomatic boycott,” to belittle the significance of the Beijing Winter Olympic Games, these Games themselves, as well as the contacts held against their background by the Chinese authorities with the leaders of a number of foreign states, have become the focus of attention of the international community and numerous foreign media.

Naturally, in the first place in this sense was the reaction to the February 4 talks between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping, which caused a lively discussion not only in China and Russia, but also in the West, for which Russian-Chinese cooperation is a painful topic. The international community has paid particular attention to the unprecedented nature of Russian-Chinese cooperation, as well as the provisions of the joint statement following this meeting, where China officially supported Russia’s position on the further non-expansion of NATO and the indivisible security space. The Washington Post even wrote that during negotiations China and Russia expressed their discontent at the current world order headed by the USA, and the subtext of the Olympic meeting was “the renewal of the division of the world into two main camps: China and Russia vs the USA and its allies.”

After the results of the meeting between Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin, perhaps the second place in the interest shown in the latest international events against the backdrop of the opening of the Olympics was the meeting of the…
Chinese leader on February 6 with Argentine President Alberto Fernandez, who also arrived in Beijing to participate in the opening ceremony of the 2022 Winter Games.

Active development by Beijing of the relations with Latin American countries began following the end of the Cold War, when several state leaders, including those of Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela, Cuba, Ecuador, Uruguay and Bolivia, became increasingly critical of the dominance of Washington across the region. Under these conditions, exacerbated by the financial crisis flaring up, the countries of the region turned their attention to China, hoping to protect themselves with the help of Chinese money. When prices for gas and other commodities fell in 2011 and several countries of the region suddenly found themselves in highly unstable positions, China once again came to the rescue, making deals that would further solidify its role as a central player in Latin America for many decades to come. In subsequent years, despite the internal political struggle and the “reconsideration” by a number of states of their political course, the leaders of the new generation adapted their political ambitions to suit their Chinese partners, which allowed Beijing to calmly implement its far-reaching plans in Latin America. As a result of China’s cooperation with states of the region, mutual trade has noticeably increased and Beijing has rendered help to governments of many Latin American countries, implemented a whole range of large infrastructure projects, strengthened the military-technical partnership and concentrated such financial, political and human resources in the region that the fate of several Latin American countries is now closely connected with China. According to data from Boston University, in 2021 trade turnover between China, Latin American countries and the Caribbean basin reached $451,59 billion and Chinese exports to the region - $229,9 billion, plus 52% compared to the previous year. Since 2015 China has been the main trade partner of South America, ahead of the United States. While the United States is doing its best to “topple” the shaky government of yet another “Third World” state, China is making every effort to save this government. This was exactly the case with Venezuela and Brazil where China actively and generously supported state companies in crisis.

This applies to a large extent to China’s relations with Argentina, which was closed for many years to international credit markets due to a default on bonds amounting to approximately $100 billion. Under these conditions, China extended a helping hand to the then President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner, after which, in particular, a large-scale construction of a new space station in Patagonia began, a $50 million project involving the deployment, in the “backyard” of the United States, of a completely isolated base whose main tasks were to monitor outer space and control Chinese orbital satellites. In March of 2018 the station became part of a project with the Chinese Space Administration on exploration of the far side of the moon.

Therefore, it is not surprising that the leaders of the People’s Republic of China and Argentina, at the opening of the Beijing Olympics, had quite a warm and frank meeting, which ended with a joint statement. In this statement, the Argentine President Alberto Fernandez announced that he fully supports the “One China” policy, according to which Taiwan is recognized as a part of the PRC, and further that the Latin American republic fully joins the Chinese initiative Belt and Road Initiative. The participation in this megaproject allows Argentina “to earn” additional funds to its budget - Beijing will allocate more than $23 billion to the country in order to implement various projects. Besides, the countries signed 13 documents on the partnership in such areas as green technology, digital economy, space and atomic spheres, technology and innovation, education, agriculture and media.

However, this meeting attracted particular attention not because Argentina, like many African and Latin American countries that accept Chinese investments, assures Beijing of friendship and good neighborliness. More significant were the words of Xi Jinping, which threw many world politicians who share the “Anglo-Saxon world order” into frustration.

The Chinese leader announced support for Argentina’s claim to the Falkland Islands, ceded to Britain as a result of hostilities in 1982.

Back then, these islands, located 400 km from the coast of Argentina and 12,400 km from Britain, became the subject of a clash of two states with a powerful navy and strong air forces, not to mention that British ships could potentially use nuclear weapons against Argentina. Ultimately, Britain took possession of the islands by force and continues to maintain control over them at the present time. According to the AP agency, 649 Argentine and 255 British soldiers died during this operation. The British use the islands as a staging post on their way from the Atlantic to Pacific Ocean that allows them to control the southern Atlantic. Oil reserves on the shelves near the islands have intensified the territorial dispute between London and Buenos Aires.

The British Foreign Office immediately reacted to Xi Jinping’s statement with indignation, calling on China to respect the sovereignty of the Falklands on its Twitter. It cannot be ruled out that against this background, London,
following the Sinophobic instructions of Washington, will want to once again demonstrate its imperial ambitions to Beijing and, as six months ago, will send a British aircraft carrier group led by ‘Queen Elisabeth’ to the coast of China to “show the flag” in the South China Sea. Still, it is highly doubtful that this “ship” will be able to once again reach far away shores, especially considering the leak discovered after a major overhaul. According to the conclusion of analysts from China, circulated earlier in the Chinese publication Sohu, this aircraft carrier no longer fits the definition of “pride of the British fleet”, is in a deplorable state and can hardly have any impact on the operational situation in the oceans.

In the meantime, British Foreign Minister Liz Truss, quite hastily, went to Moscow, obviously to find out what the presidents of Russia and Argentina, Vladimir Putin and Alberto Fernandez, talked about on February 4...

At the same time, some media outlets have reported that Britain began the deployment on the disputed Malvinas (Falkland) Islands of the Sky Saber anti-aircraft system, a new generation ground-based air defense system with a long range. On the islands, the local Defense Forces are conducting military drills with members of the army, navy and the Royal Air Force of Britain, which are part of the British forces in the South Atlantic. In this context, on February 5 the Argentine MFA expressed protest as the strength of militarization of the islands and English military presence on the disputed territory goes against a number of UN resolutions.

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