

CURRENT TRENDS IN DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICY OF LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN STATES: IMPLICATIONS FOR UKRAINE

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Latin America, like any other region, plays an important role on the world stage and has its direct impact on international relations. Economic potential, including rich natural resources, and significant political authority in international organizations and the international community give these countries global importance. For Ukraine, which is currently actively resisting Russian aggression not only on the battlefield but also in the international arena, cooperation with Latin America countries and support from it are extremely valuable. However, it is worth noting the secondary importance of Ukraine's establishing connections with this region in the recent past, which is also one of the reasons for the lack of a unified position on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Latin America and the Caribbean face urgent socio-economic problems, including poverty, corruption and organized crime, as well as high levels of debt and dependence on resource prices. The foreign policy of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) focuses on key states such as the United States and China, which polarizes the countries of the region. At the present stage, the main trends are deepening cooperation with China, unstable relations with the United States, decreasing influence of Russia, and restoration of active cooperation with the EU.

Domestic Policy of Latin American and Caribbean Countries

Latin America and the Caribbean is a unique region where rich history, diverse culture blending characteristics of many ethnicities and races, and significant economic resources are intertwined. The domestic policy of LAC countries has always been complex and multifaceted, reflecting the unique challenges and opportunities of each country. In recent years, it has undergone significant changes under the influence of socio-economic, political, and environmental factors.

The main characteristic of LAC domestic policy is the spread of the second "pink" tide, characterized by the rise to power of left-leaning governments in most countries. For example, the election of Gabriel Boric as president in Chile, Gustavo Petro in Colombia, or Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) in Mexico demonstrates the development of this trend, starting from 2018 and intensifying in post-COVID period.

The main drivers of Latin America's "left turn" are the unresolved urgent socio-economic issues, which only deepened during the pandemic, such as poverty, social inequality and societal stratification, corruption, lack of jobs, high debt, migration problems, crime and drug trafficking, resource-oriented economy and dependence on world prices for these resources, activation of environmental, feminist and indigenous ethnic movements, etc. Crisis times, which coincided with the "blue" tide and the failures of COVID policies in some countries, such as Brazil, also played a role, as did the political crisis and the population's desire for fundamental changes in politics and economics, resulting in voting against the right-wing parties then in power in favor of left-wing movements often with "new faces". Their policies focused on increasing government spending on social programs to combat poverty, on environmental protection and ecological policy, human rights protection and social justice, nationalization of the most important enterprises, fighting corruption and reforming state institutions, etc.

However, the 2023 elections put an end to the "left turn", which had entered an active phase after the election of Gustavo Petro in Colombia and the return of Lula da Silva in Brazil. On the contrary, they confirmed a trend not so much of sympathy for left-wing orientation, but of voting against the current government and a desire for radical fundamental reforms, thus instead facilitating the rise to power in 2023 of right-wing personalities such as Daniel Noboa in Ecuador, Javier Milei in Argentina, and Santiago Peña in Paraguay.

In the context of addressing major domestic issues in the region, politicians who are ready to tackle socio-political and economic challenges in a tough and radical manner enjoy significant popularity. For instance, Luis Abinader in the Dominican Republic was elected based on an anti-corruption campaign and a firm response to immigration from Haiti. Obrador significantly increased social spending on lower classes, while Nayib Bukele from El Salvador implemented an ultra-repressive policy against organized crime, which raised many questions about human rights but proved quite effective and won the sympathy of the population. Although the term of office for these presidents ended in 2024, almost all of them were re-elected for a second term, and in Mexico, Claudia Sheinbaum became the first woman president with the support of the then-incumbent president Obrador. However, most states cannot implement such ambitious strict reforms as they must coordinate their policies with other internal authorities due to the lack of a majority in parliaments.

Another focus is the security situation in the Andean region, particularly in Ecuador and Colombia. Ecuador, a long-standing symbol of stability in the region, experienced an

explosion of violence caused by international drug gangs. For Colombia, 2024 will be crucial regarding president Gustavo Petro's "total peace" plan.

Significant attention will be paid to how Argentina – the third-largest economy in Latin America and a G-20 member – develops under the leadership of new right-wing president Javier Milei. The main question is whether Argentines will accept radical austerity reforms, or if these and hyperinflation will push the country towards mass demonstrations and political turmoil.

Another challenge for the region is countering the establishment of authoritarian regimes and promoting the development of stable democracy. Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua remain under the leadership of undemocratic leaders, which has led to the isolation of these countries both in the international arena and within LAC, the imposition of sanctions on key economic sectors by developed countries, the spread of adverse factors such as organized crime, drug trafficking, poverty, inequality, migration problems, and the development of negative trends in society based on these, which can be expressed in crises of power structures and social protests.

A vivid example is the crisis in Venezuela, where due to the falsification of presidential election results by the current leader Nicolas Maduro, the democratic opposition, supported by Western countries, tried to resist the autocratic regime but failed. This caused mass unrest and protests, the imposition of sanctions by the international community, particularly on the oil industry, and undermined the country's authority in the region, causing its own isolation. However, at the moment, proposals for Venezuela's reintegration and lifting of sanctions are being voiced more frequently, so in the future perspective, the crisis that has been ongoing since 2019 may come to its logical conclusion, given that Maduro managed to stay in power during turbulent times, and the chance to overthrow his regime has already been lost.

The economy of Latin America also has many promising directions for development. The LAC region is an important source of resources necessary for the new energy economy. It contains some of the world's largest copper reserves, 35-40% of lithium reserves, and significant deposits of nickel, cobalt, and other important minerals. Chile is already the world's second-largest lithium producer, and international investors are interested in broader development of these mineral resources. Sectors related to infrastructure development and green energy are also actively developing. Important industries include agriculture, extractive industry, and tourism. However, Latin American economies also face challenges such as income inequality, corruption, and political instability.

Regarding the economic prospects of Latin America, forecasts do not predict any significant leaps in 2024. Overall, LAC countries are expected to remain on a path of low growth rates. This slowdown is explained by several factors that particularly affect the region's exports. First of all, the fall in commodity prices after their rise in 2022, associated with Russia's

invasion of Ukraine, has harmed Latin American countries, although the increase in energy prices since April 2023 has allowed some countries to mitigate the consequences.

Inflation and monetary policy tightening in developed economies hinder consumption in these countries and, consequently, demand for products exported from Latin American countries. In a region that remains very vulnerable to the international situation and external shocks, many countries are recording lower growth rates than expected. Nevertheless, Brazil and Mexico (and Costa Rica to a lesser extent) stand out with higher-than-expected development rates.

China's growth slowdown will be a determining factor that could strongly impact Latin America's economy, as the Asian giant has become the region's second-largest trading partner over the past twenty years. Countries that export metals and agricultural products to China are expected to be the most affected: Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Peru.

This and other factors should push Latin American countries to review their economic models and promote internal dynamics. The region remains attractive in key sectors such as healthcare, agribusiness, ecotourism, and renewable energy. To attract more capital, Latin American countries should focus on three main pillars: improving the business climate, promoting strategic sectors, and developing infrastructure. Better targeting of social expenditures can also contribute to increasing formal employment and tax revenues.

When assessing future development trends, it is essential to pay attention to the contentious issues that exist between countries regarding various problems, which may further affect not only their relations at the regional level but also have global significance. Below is a brief description of the main potential contradictions that may arise in Latin American states:

1. **Territorial disputes.** Historically, many countries have territorial claims against their neighbors, which in the past were often resolved through wars. In the modern world, most of them respect state borders and adhere to the principles of international law, but sometimes territorial issues can reappear on the agenda. The most resonant recently was Venezuela's claim to the oil region of Essequibo in Guyana. Also, from time to time, the Falkland Islands or Bolivia's long-standing disputes with Chile and Peru, which are still a stumbling block in relations between them, particularly due to Bolivia's once-lost access to the World Ocean, may come into focus. In addition, there is the problem of insufficient protection of Brazil's borders in the Amazon, and so on.
2. **Political confrontations.** The most obvious of these is the struggle between right-wing and left-wing parties in the region. Competition for influence among the largest actors, claiming primacy in Latin America also affects the geopolitical situation. Problems of democracies and the transition to autocratization, which can be accompanied by coups and the military coming to power – a historical problem that causes tension in LAC, etc.

3. **Economic contradictions.** One of the most obvious is Brazil's struggle against Argentina for economic leadership in the region. The emergence of trade wars between states due to disagreements over the establishment of tariffs and duties hinders economic cooperation between states. Central America faces the problem of economic dependence on the United States, which can complicate bilateral relations between them, etc.

It is important for Ukraine, when building effective relations with LAC states, to pay attention to their internal problems in order to develop a quality communication strategy with mutual benefits. Understanding the nature of the challenges facing Latin America, the Ukrainian side will be able to find common ground for reaching compromises in political and economic cooperation, develop its own position in the region and ensure its constant presence here, find potential allies to enlist their support in the international arena, which is especially important in the context of Russian aggression.

Thus, the domestic policy of LAC countries is dynamic and multidimensional, reflecting aspirations for social justice, economic development, political stability, and environmental sustainability. Understanding these trends is important for assessing the future development of the region and its role in world politics.

General Characteristics of the Region's Foreign Policy

Overall, the foreign policy position of Latin American and Caribbean countries can be characterized as follows: prevention of hegemony and domination by a single country, advocating for the rule of law while emphasizing the existing unequal international order and the necessity for peaceful dispute resolution, non-interference in the internal affairs of other states, emphasizing the special importance of human rights, pluralism, and the problems faced by developing countries.

The colonial past, times of active US dominance in the region, military coups and juntas in power, economic challenges of industrialization and globalization, historical-civilizational peculiarities, and internal cultural-ethnic issues – all these have led to the gradual establishment of similar narratives that influence Latin America's foreign policy and its perception of specific states and the world arena as a whole. Thus, due to the United States' quite long attempts to directly interfere in the internal affairs of states in the context of the Monroe Doctrine, an anti-American position and ambiguous perception of this state's policy developed in the region. Similar reasons related to anti-imperialism and the global dominance of Western countries in both economic and political aspects also influence the anti-Western position of certain countries in the region. However, despite such sentiments in society and the rhetoric of their leaders, the region as a whole, with some exceptions, actively cooperates with the European Union and maintains ties with it in many areas.

China and Russia, in turn, have a more positive image, but the countries of the region are cautious about cooperating with them in the context of the confrontation between hegemons. The turbulent times of constant military coups and brutal dictatorships put the issues of human rights and peace preservation on the agenda of these countries, which is reflected in particular in their attitude towards Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, their desire to help Ukrainians, and impose sanctions on the aggressor country.

Relations with the USA. Despite differences and ambiguities in relations between the region and the United States, the latter remains one of the key partners, particularly in Central America. This is reflected in both economic and international political aspects.

The Trump administration adhered to a tough policy, which resulted in the construction of a wall with Mexico, deterioration in relations with Venezuela and Cuba, attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of states, and rapprochement with right-wing and center-right regimes. This somewhat undermined the US position in the region, especially during the height of the pandemic.

The Biden administration, in turn, aimed to restore previous indicators, particularly in the sphere of economic cooperation, where China is increasing its influence in Latin American countries every year. Many hopes were placed on the development of equal partnership relations. However, not all expectations were met.

Firstly, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, confrontation with China, and domestic policy issues have become the basis of the US agenda, while Latin America and its problems have taken a back seat.

Secondly, the beginning of a new "pink wave", accompanied by the rise to power of left and center-left forces in Mexico, Peru, Chile, Bolivia, Honduras, Colombia, Brazil, etc., also did not contribute to improving cooperation. Of course, there were positive processes of rapprochement and unification with Latin American countries, expressed in holding summits and allocating funding for Latin American needs, but the migration crisis often overshadowed most achievements of American diplomacy.

Thirdly, there continues to be a certain distrust between partners, which hinders effective cooperation, and which is accompanied by a budget insufficient for the implementation of most transformational initiatives in the region against the background of significant attention to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. The tension in relations between the US and Latin America was more than obvious during the Summit of the Americas in 2022, when the United States refused to allow Cuba to participate, in response to which a significant number of states threatened to boycott it. A crisis is also observed with Mexico due to unresolved issues regarding migration, energy policy, trade, and drug trafficking; in Central and South America due to the imposition of sanctions on dictatorial regimes in Nicaragua and

Venezuela; with Brazil, where President Lula da Silva conducts controversial rhetoric on the Ukrainian issue and expresses loyalty to China.

For Ukraine, it is a positive signal that currently, the US considers the war unleashed by Russia a priority issue to such an extent that they are even ready to sacrifice their national interests in the region with which they had the longest and most consistent historical ties, and which was considered their sphere of influence. And the price for such a decision is significant: every vacuum of power that forms due to insufficient US involvement – whether financial or socio-economic – is immediately filled by China, which gives the latter a great opportunity to strengthen its advantage in the region not only in terms of economic presence but also political influence. Also, the Ukrainian issue often creates tension in relations with Latin American countries that adhere to neutrality, which equally harms the US position in the region. Therefore, it is important for Ukraine to increase the number of allies among LAC states and establish relations with them, conducting activities aimed at reducing the influence of Russia and China.

In the near future, it is difficult to predict exactly how US relations with the region will develop, as this is influenced by both internal factors and problems, as well as the external geopolitical situation, which can both contribute to establishing cooperation and a common point of view on contentious issues, and make the gap between countries even bigger, deepening the already existing crisis. However, the United States is still aimed at solving urgent problems to ensure both its national interests and establishing common coexistence, well-being, and effective cooperation to unlock and realize the full potential of the Latin American region.

Cooperation with the EU. Recently, EU-LAC relations have been experiencing positive changes, manifested in the relaunch of regional cooperation, stimulation of trade to counter China's growing influence, improvement of conditions for investment and lending, implementation of environmental initiatives, etc. For the EU, cooperation with the countries of the region is of great importance, especially in the context of rich reserves of both critically important energy resources necessary for diversification in the energy sector and reducing Europe's dependence on Russia, as well as lithium – a key component for the development of innovative and environmental projects in Europe and Latin America.

At the EU-CELAC (Community of Latin American and Caribbean States) summit in 2023, after a long break in relations, particularly due to misunderstandings with key regional leaders, including Brazil and its ambiguous domestic and foreign policy and attitude towards environmental issues by former President Jair Bolsonaro, the Union sought to deepen trade, promote investment in the region, counter climate change and form a "green" economy, increase the number of jobs and digitalization, which is equally beneficial for the sustainable development of LAC economies.

However, there are certain obstacles, such as the conclusion of the EU-MERCOSUR agreement on the abolition of tariffs and duties between the countries of the regions, trade liberalization and the creation of a huge integrated market, which, although extremely promising for strengthening cooperation, has significant barriers to its signing, expressed in stricter requirements and standards for goods from LAC and fears of local farmers about competition from cheap Latin American agricultural products.

For Ukraine, it is important that the Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine barely figured at the summit, and the slightest mentions of Russia's aggression provoked negative reactions among pro-Russian states. The deepening of cooperation between the EU and LAC has a positive significance for our state, as it gives significant advantages to the Union, of which Ukraine intends to become a part, and contributes to the consolidation of Latin American countries both economically and in terms of political position. This could become another potential channel of communication with LAC for spreading the truth about the war and countering Russian narratives and disinformation.

Overall, the prospects for further cooperation between the EU and Latin America can be positively assessed, as both sides show great interest in this and are aimed at resolving contentious issues.

Relations with China. Active cooperation between China and the states of Latin America and the Caribbean began at the start of the 21st century after a major tour of the continent by the Chinese leader. Since then, China has significantly increased trade with the region, started investing and building various infrastructure projects, particularly within the "Belt and Road Initiative", providing credit loans, stimulating the expansion of Chinese business presence, and actively participating in regional organizations and associations to ensure its leadership on the world stage.

In general, relations with the region are built on several factors: 1) cooperation between countries of the Global South, 2) ideological proximity of communist China with left-wing movements in LAC countries, 3) attempts by Latin American states to find an alternative to American financing and reduce dependence on the USA.

China primarily considers gaining advantages from importing valuable natural resources and minerals from LAC to meet domestic needs, expanding the market for its goods, and using strategic positions, including the Panama Canal. In turn, countries of the Latin American region gain a major trading partner, investor in regional infrastructure projects, and a creditor with more favorable loan conditions.

However, there is also a downside to such cooperation: exploitation of natural resources and environmental pollution in LAC countries, reduced competitiveness of local productions due to the general availability of cheaper Chinese goods, increased trade imbalance, and increased debt burden. Currently, China continues to increase trade volumes with the region and expand

areas of cooperation that go beyond purely economic and political interactions and include the use of "soft power", particularly in education and cultural space integration. In turn, LAC countries attach great importance to China as one of the key partners of the region and an alternative to the United States, which contributes to the development of closer ties between states.

However, there is also no unified position of the entire region regarding cooperation with China, as there is a prevailing belief in preventing the emergence of a hegemon in the region and the spread of imperialist ambitions. Therefore, undemocratic regimes of the region that are under US sanctions, such as Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua, as well as countries with left-wing forces in power, like Brazil, usually lean towards cooperation with China.

From the Ukrainian perspective, deepening cooperation between LAC and China is an unfavorable trend, given the latter's position on Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Significant economic dependence of Latin American states on China will gradually lead to the promotion of its necessary national interests and lobbying of its own narratives, which may conflict with Ukraine's main goals on the diplomatic front. That is why it is critically important to increase Ukrainian presence in these countries to counter the spread of propaganda and raise awareness about the Russian-Ukrainian war.

In the near future, China will continue to increase its influence in the region, which will cause even more concern in the US and Western countries about the threat to their strategic interests. Due to the temporary weakening of the US position and a more favorable political landscape, including direct interest in cooperation from Latin American states, China has gained a chance to expand ties with LAC in the context of achieving the goal of world leadership. A transition is also expected in China's perception of the region from a raw material appendage to a full-fledged and comprehensive partnership even with the smallest Caribbean states.

Relations with Russia. Russia, in turn, does not have significant economic advantages in LAC like the US and China, but it has maintained ties with the region for a long time, dating back to the Cold War period when the USSR was able to establish closer relations with ideologically close left-wing regimes, particularly Cuba. Modern Russia continues Soviet policy, demonstrating a desire for comprehensive partnership in the Union's strategic sphere of presence.

Here, parallels can also be drawn with the main aspects on which Russia's relations with Latin American countries are built, which define China's cooperation with LAC, as the state also emphasizes its alternative to American and Western dominance and primarily cooperates with anti-American states, namely Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua. Recently, it has been focusing on bilateral relations rather than promoting its interests through regional cooperation platforms, so in addition to establishing economic ties, Russia also finances regimes favorable to it, supplies them with weapons, and participates in various infrastructure projects, often in

the energy sector. Special attention should be paid to the extensive system of promoting Russian narratives, including the presence of propaganda channels such as Spanish-language versions of RT and Sputnik. Although there is currently a significant rapprochement between China and Russia on the international arena, the countries continue to remain competitors in the region, where the former has much better success in geoeconomic influence.

The issue of Russia's significant political, informational, and economic influence on LAC states is extremely acute for Ukraine, especially given that there is no clear position on the war in the region and there are regimes loyal to the former. This undermines our country's image and plays against us, which is clearly manifested during UN resolution votes on Ukraine. Russian propaganda, which is very firmly entrenched in the region, is now actively promoting an anti-Ukrainian position to satisfy its own interests, which negatively affects the willingness of these states to help the Ukrainian population.

In the future, Russia's influence on the region may significantly decrease, mainly due to China's growing geopolitical significance here and the negative consequences of waging an exhausting war. The priority will be the confrontation between the US and China in Latin America, while Russia will take a back seat. Also, supporting dictatorial regimes is not a guarantee of maintaining its positions in the region, so further cooperation will depend primarily on the geopolitical situation in the world and sufficient resources to continue financing projects and programs necessary for the country.

Relations with other international organizations. Latin America is an active global political actor; therefore, it invariably participates in many world organizations and has its own regional platforms for deepening interaction between countries.

LAC countries are active members of the UN, participate in numerous peacekeeping missions of this organization and support sustainable development initiatives, etc. Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina often become participants in various councils and committees, such as the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). These countries also actively advocate for increasing the presence of the Latin American region in key UN bodies, in particular for the reform and expansion of the number of permanent members of the Security Council, to restore the effectiveness of the body and strengthen its influence on the world agenda.

Latin American states also cooperate with representatives of the **G-7** ("Group of Seven") and directly participate in the **G-20** – an association of the world's twenty largest economies. Although none of the LAC countries is a member of the G-7, they cooperate with these countries through partnership programs, particularly in the areas of economic development and environmental initiatives. Leaders of countries in this region occasionally participate in their expanded meetings, where global challenges such as climate change, poverty reduction, and migration are discussed.

The last G-7 summit, held in June 2024, also touched on Latin American issues. In particular, it emphasized strengthening cooperation with the region as a counterbalance to China and addressing urgent problems related to the unfavorable humanitarian situation in Haiti and the dominance of organized crime there, the dictatorial regime in Nicaragua, and the Venezuelan political crisis, including significant concerns about the territorial dispute with Guyana.

However, cooperation between the region and the G-7 directly is quite limited. In contrast, Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico are members of the G-20, which gives them the opportunity to directly influence global economic policy. LAC countries actively promote development and economic stability issues within the G20, drawing attention to the problems of developing countries. In 2024, the summit will be held for the first time in Latin America, specifically in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. This opens up a huge number of opportunities for the summit host, including initiating and promoting their own proposals in various economic spheres, setting the working agenda, etc.

Brazil's presidency will positively affect the entire region, as issues concerning all LAC countries will be raised, such as high inflation and credit debt, rising poverty, lack of food security, environmental issues, etc. It is significant that Paraguay and Uruguay were also invited to the summit, which together with Brazil and Argentina will essentially represent the interests of MERCOSUR. For Brazil itself, opportunities will open up to become a "bridge" between the economies of the North and South and increase its role in the world, in particular through promoting negotiations on accession to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Thus, 2024 in the G-20 is the year of Latin America.

Another interesting case of regional representation in international organizations is the **BRICS** group of countries. Brazil is a member of this alliance, which promotes its cooperation with Russia, India, China, and South Africa in trade, investment, and political coordination. BRICS was founded as an alternative to international financial institutions to improve the representation of developing countries, so the group has the New Development Bank (NDB) for providing credit loans.

Currently, China plays a dominant role in the association, whose purpose of existence is gradually shifting from purely economic issues to the political opposition of Global South countries to Western states, particularly the G-7. Therefore, at the summit in South Africa in 2023, a number of countries were officially invited to join BRICS, including Argentina. However, given Brazil's policy of non-alignment, which contradicts China's ambitions to politicize the group, and Argentina's refusal to join, Latin America's role in this organization will gradually decrease unless other regimes loyal to Beijing and Moscow join the bloc, which is unlikely so far due to their weak economic positions.

Regional Cooperation. LAC states are actively seeking ways to strengthen regional integration and cooperation. Examples of such organizations are **MERCOSUR**, **CARICOM**, **OAS**, **CELAC**, etc.

The **Organization of American States (OAS)** includes all states of the Western Hemisphere under US leadership and is essentially the only organization where both Americas are present in full. However, due to significant differences between participants on fundamental issues and anti-American sentiments in some countries, the organization cannot effectively carry out its activities.

CELAC, in turn, is an association of purely Latin American and Caribbean states without the US and Canada. Both the EU and China cooperate with the region in this format, making it a rather productive alternative to the OAS.

MERCOSUR (Southern Common Market) includes Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela, whose membership has been suspended since 2017, and exists for the purpose of economic integration and free trade between them. The organization promotes increased intra-regional trade, attraction of foreign investments, and economic growth, but faces political and economic challenges such as different levels of economic development and political crises in some member countries. It is one of the most influential regional entities.

CARICOM or the Caribbean Community includes 15 member countries of the Caribbean basin, focusing its activities on economic integration, foreign policy coordination, and joint resolution of social and economic problems of its participants. Successful cooperation in agriculture, tourism, and sustainable development, as well as the implementation of a single market and economic space are the main achievements of this organization, but it also faces problems of small economies that are vulnerable to external shocks such as climate change and global economic crises.

For Ukraine, Latin America's presence in international organizations has a significant impact on resolving issues that directly concern it, particularly the war. Decisions and resolutions made by the UN regarding the full-scale war play an important role, where LAC states have an equal voice with others. Although most resolutions are declarative in nature, it is through them that one can realistically assess the mood of the international community and their attitude towards the Ukrainian issue, distinguishing potential allies from those who support the aggressor.

In the key UN security body, the election of non-permanent members is based on a geographical principle, meaning that 2 of its members, elected for a two-year period, must be representatives of the LAC region. The effectiveness of the body's work in discussing the situation in Ukraine and raising issues related to the war and initiating relevant resolutions depends on which countries get there. Thus, in the period 2022-2023, Mexico and Brazil, which have a more neutral position on these events, were present in the UN Security Council,

while in 2024-2025, these places are occupied by Ecuador, which will later be replaced by Panama, and Guyana, each of which more often expresses support for Ukraine.

Although the Council currently cannot make truly effective decisions regarding the war due to Russia's veto, non-permanent members have recently been playing an increasingly important role in reaching compromises, finding alternative solutions, initiating specific discussions and meetings within this body. Therefore, the presence of countries that support our state, respect international law, UN goals and principles, and adhere to them is in any case a positive signal for Ukraine.

LAC cooperation with the most developed states that are part of the G-7 favorably affects the search for a more or less common position of the region regarding support for the Ukrainian side in the war and potential deepening of economic, cultural, and social ties, while the relations of some states with BRICS only deepen the existing contradictions in these areas. Regional cooperation is a very promising platform for Ukraine to achieve effective communication with Latin American states, promote its national interests, find compromises, and reach consensus on controversial issues.

Cooperation of Latin American and Caribbean countries with international and regional organizations in the future will continue to contribute to strengthening economic integration, political stability, and socio-economic development in the region. However, due to significant differences in views between countries both on their own internal issues and on global problems, regional cooperation is not sufficiently developed or effective to successfully represent the interests of the region as a whole. In the future, positive changes in this aspect remain desirable and can be achieved through new initiatives of the main regional players, such as Brazil, Argentina, or Mexico.

Recommendations

Having described the current trends in domestic and foreign policies of LAC countries and assessed the significance of these processes for Ukraine, we can highlight the main recommendations for state authorities to improve the country's position in the region and establish close political, economic, and socio-cultural ties:

- *Economic cooperation*

Latin America is a vast market for Ukrainian goods and services, which will contribute to the diversification of trade directions. Ukraine can offer the region supplies of agricultural goods, industrial products, exchange of technologies and innovations in the scientific field, provision of IT services, etc. LAC, in turn, can become a supplier of raw materials, energy resources, fertilizers, etc. This will help strengthen ties and create necessary levers of influence. The main means of achieving this are state programs and private initiatives that will encourage

trade between states, agreements that will help reduce tariffs and duties on certain categories of goods, increase mutual investments, and reduce bureaucratic obstacles for business.

- *Exchange of experience*

For effective cooperation between states, it is necessary to encourage contacts between them at all levels, including cultural and social. To achieve this, state bodies should promote the exchange of experience in all spheres of human life. Promoting cultural integration and educational tourism, introducing educational exchange programs for students and youth, providing information channels for easy and quick access to a truthful and reliable knowledge base about LAC countries and Ukraine, countering propaganda and fake news, raising awareness, exchanging technologies and scientific achievements, achievements in medicine and healthcare, offering mutual implementation of successful practices to solve common problems, introducing joint projects in the environmental field, etc. should be the main directions of activity to improve mutual trust and benefit from multi-level comprehensive cooperation. Also, analysis of political processes in countries will demonstrate useful examples for each side on solving internal socio-economic problems, and cooperation at the governmental level will open new opportunities for strengthening their own internal political systems and supporting democracy.

- *International cooperation*

Deepening diplomatic ties, expanding the network of embassies and consulates, facilitating meetings at all levels, establishing direct contacts between state leaders and initiating joint international projects, creating a favorable atmosphere for negotiations and concluding mutually beneficial agreements, finding compromises and peaceful resolution of disputes should be priority goals for establishing and deepening Ukraine's relations with Latin America. Cooperation within international organizations should contribute to improving Ukraine's international authority and expanding its diplomatic horizons. Work on consolidating LAC states that support the Ukrainian side in the war, and coordinating their efforts should become the basis for developing a position in the region favorable to Ukraine on this issue.

Conclusions

Latin America and the Caribbean is a diverse and multifaceted region with its own specifics and unique features. It is a significant geopolitical player and influences the international order. In domestic policy, Latin America and the Caribbean strives to address urgent socio-economic issues, which include problems of poverty, corruption, organized crime, drug trafficking, migration, etc. Ukraine has long not paid proper attention to developing relations with the region, so when Russian aggression caused a full-scale war, it turned out that Latin America had perhaps the largest number of states supporting Russia, and perceptions about our country differed greatly from reality. Due to lack of communication and close economic ties, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine is perceived as something distant that does not directly affect the life of the region. LAC does not have a unified position on Russian aggression, so it often serves as an intermediary for Russia to bypass sanctions. Therefore, since 2022, Ukraine has begun to actively establish ties with these states and make up for lost opportunities. Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba toured 11 Latin American states to gain their support and discuss events taking place in Ukraine. However, this is just a drop in the ocean compared to the influence Russia has and its propaganda spreading system. That is why the authorities of our state should make more efforts to achieve their necessary goals. Ukrainian authorities should promote economic cooperation, exchange of experience, and improvement of international relations with the region. The leadership of our state needs to make a huge amount of effort to achieve results and gather the first fruits of effective cooperation between Ukraine and LAC. The authorities have already drawn conclusions from past mistakes and chosen the right course to correct the situation. Only persistent work and a strong desire of both sides to deepen relations will truly benefit them in the future and ensure strong and long-lasting mutual ties.

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