

Crimea issue is not closed

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This was stated by the President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky during the Crimean Platform summit.

The first Crimean Platform summit was held in Kiev last week. The event was held at the initiative of Ukraine. It was attended by 44 representatives.

The main outcome of the summit was a joint declaration calling for the restoration of the territorial integrity of Ukraine by returning the Crimean Peninsula to it. The delegates stated that "Russia will not be able to legitimize the temporary occupation of Crimea and Sevastopol."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said that "the Crimea issue is not closed." Russia made a diametrically opposite statement. The Kremlin did not send its representatives to the event, and did not recognize the legitimacy of the summit and its results. Russia's position is unchanged: the issue of Crimea's ownership is closed and is not a subject for discussions.

Which of the two versions is more realistic? Following the summit, the Verkhovna Rada prepared a draft resolution on an appeal to Ukraine's international partners with an appeal to the European Union, NATO, PACE and OSCE to join efforts to counter Russia and jointly develop mechanisms for the de-occupation of Crimea.

The main result of the "Crimean Platform" should be an international unification around the Ukrainian vision of the problem of ownership of the peninsula. And not only in words. Results will appear only if a united front is formed, which is ready not in words, but in deeds to seek the de-occupation of Crimea.

It is known that the majority always adhere to the opinion of the strongest. Therefore, first of all, it is necessary to look at the reaction of the USA, Great Britain, France and Germany. Angela Merkel and Emmanuel Macron outlined their priorities, preferring participation in the gas negotiations to the summit. A representative of the energy sector just arrived from America – Energy Secretary Jennifer Grenholm. This confirms the US interest in the energy aspect of the summit more than in the ownership of Crimea.

In addition, the absence at the summit of two, probably the most influential politicians in Europe, may send a signal to the others that the presence is optional and the event is of little importance and implies non-binding declarations. This is indirectly confirmed by the poor coverage of the event in the international media.

With regard to practical actions. The Baltic states are likely to keep their promises and initiate new sanctions against Russia. Most of the participants are likely to take seriously the warnings of the Russian leadership about the unfriendly nature of the Crimean Platform and possible negative consequences for the participants.

It should be noted that, unlike the conflict in Donbass, the issue of Crimea is not often raised on the agenda of world diplomacy.

The political situation shows that, despite nearly seven years of sanctions, the Kremlin does not intend to abandon the peninsula and is firmly insisting on the results of the 2014 referendum on Crimea's joining Russia. And is not going to give it to Ukraine. And neither the United States nor NATO will get involved in an open armed confrontation with Russia for the sake of Ukraine.

At the result of the summit, representatives of Russia reiterated: "The issue of Crimea is closed". And unfortunately

there is nothing to oppose to this. Only words.

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