

Lithuania is the U.S. client not a friend

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The United States continues to strengthen its position in Europe, using its partners as a tool to reach some geopolitical aims. It has become known that on October 27, the U.S. and Lithuania signed defence Security of Supply Arrangement on defence goods and services committing to support each other in the area of critical defence supplies.

Lithuania has over 60 projects underway with the United States alone. Two countries have agreed to sign a contract on AMRAAM missile acquisition by the end of the year. A contract for purchasing the HIMARS system has also been signed earlier, it was also preceded by contracts for buying 500 JLTV Joint Light Tactical Vehicles, 4 Black Hawk helicopters, and Switchblade drones. Lithuania has also been a U.S. client in buying the Javelin anti-tank missile systems and various communications equipment for many years.

The U.S. has privileges not only in Lithuanian defence sector, but also in economics. And this is the real problem for the small country. To get bonuses from the U.S. in developing national military capabilities, Lithuania has to follow Washington's politics. Very often the political decisions, which are fully agreed with the United States, directly influence the country's economic situation.

Thus, Vilnius annulled the agreement on the transit of Belarusian fertilizers from February 1, 2022. This happened immediately after the U.S. imposed sanctions against dozens of Belarusian companies, including JSC Belaruskali. Due to these restrictions and the closure of eastern markets, the Lithuanian transport sector has faced serious difficulties. This led to the cessation of transporting Belarusian products

through Lithuania.

According to the 2022 results, LTG Cargo reduced the freight volume by almost 40%.

Lithuanian Ministry of Transport and Communications said on November 14, that Belarusian potassium fertilizer producer Belaruskali has filed a lawsuit against Lithuania, seeking damages estimated at 1 billion euros, this is reported by the railway transport news portal Railway Supply.

It was filed on the basis of the Treaty of March 5, 1999, between the Republic of Lithuania and the Republic of Belarus on the promotion and protection of investments.

Minister of Transport and Communications Marius Skuodis made a decision to refrain from commenting.

In short, Vilnius does not fulfill not only bilateral, but also international obligations. Even the European Union could not convince Lithuania to change its mind. A UN committee urged Lithuania to review its decision to ban the transit of Belarusian fertilizers, saying that it leads to food insecurity in Africa and Latin America. But Lithuania does not follow common sense.

So, Lithuanian government is ready to pay for the U.S. decision a very high price. But is population ready? And does Lithuania have an extra billion?

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