



I have already seen this in my country, now I see it in Ukraine, who will be next?

Tato Makhashvili / 30.4.2022

When Georgia started talking loudly about joining the North Atlantic Alliance in 2008, threats immediately came from the Russian authorities, which made several European countries hesitate and reject Georgia's participation in the NATO Membership Action Plan at the Bucharest Summit in April, to avoid provoking Russia. However, this did not stop Russia from invading Georgia on August 7.

Back then, those of us who knew about the web and IT got together and created a special platform, which was the only way to counter Russian propaganda.... We fought for a long time, but we lost the information war. Europe could not understand what really happened in Gori, Tamarasheni, Nikozi and Akhagori (towns and villages near the conflict zone), and unfortunately it was not less than what we see today in Bucha and Irpen.

But Europe was told (and believed) that Georgia had attacked an enclave inhabited by ethnic minorities and tried to subjugate it by military force, while "peace-loving" Russia intervened and stopped the hot-headed Georgians....

What happened in 2008 made me think. There were increasing signs that Russia was trying to restore its old empire. It was clear to me that these wars would inevitably continue, first in the post-Soviet countries and then in the former Warsaw Bloc countries....

Unfortunately, I was right: in 2014 the same thing happened in Ukraine, enclaves were established there as well, which were then "protected" by Russian peacekeepers who "reclaimed the historical land – Crimea" and established a new order in the neighborhood.

What enabled Putin's ambition and arrogance? Europe's fossil fuel trade with Russia proved to be a key factor. Russia was getting richer and richer with money from Europe. It was not difficult to see that Putin would definitely use this money for his imperial plans....

The result is 2022. While people are thinking about colonizing Mars, the obsolete empire is trying to demonstrate its power with obsolete tanks and cruelty...

What enabled Putin's ambition and arrogance? Europe's fossil fuel trade with Russia proved to be a key factor. The result is 2022.

It is good that Europe is slowly waking up and realizing who it is dealing with, even if most Europeans still have no idea what Putin can do to achieve his goals. He will kill half of Russia and still conquer Ukraine.

Many may think that the Russian people will not let this happen and that domestic politics will force the regime to stop it, but in reality there is no politics in Russia – there is only Putin, a few dozen oligarchs, and violence....

The only thing that will stop them is money. More precisely – the lack of money when they can no longer afford to buy bullets, build missiles, hire mercenaries and the like.

If they don't run out of money, they won't stop, despite the casualties and losses, and will eventually achieve their goal (they haven't used nuclear or chemical weapons yet, but they will if Putin doesn't see enough progress in his war).

Then the question arises: who will be next? - Georgia, Moldova, Azerbaijan, the Baltic states, Poland, Finland? This list is not exhaustive. More countries are likely to be added unless Russia runs out of money and resources.

What needs to be done? – Europe must stop importing oil and gas from Russia, not at the end of the year, not in two or three years, but now.

Otherwise, we will definitely have World War III by the end of the decade.

And we are talking about this while we have the 21st century on the calendar and people are already thinking about colonizing Mars.

Europe must stop importing oil and gas from Russia, not at the end of the year, not in two or three years, but now. Otherwise, we will definitely have World War III by the end of the decade.

**Shalva (Tato) Makhashvili** holds a Master's degree in journalism. He is a manager and web-designer at Solostudio in Tbilisi, Georgia.