

Results of the PACE summer session: debut in the chess game with the Council of Europe remained with Russia

– К итогам летней сессии ПАСЕ: дебют в шахматной партии с Советом Европы остался за Россией

In 2017-2019 Moscow deliberately went to aggravate relations with the Council of Europe and the European Union in charge of it. Rates were raised very high. In order to force the Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE to lift the sanctions imposed on the delegation of the Federal Assembly, to make their introduction impossible in principle and to invite the delegation to resume its participation in its work on an equal and non-discriminatory basis, it stopped multi-million payments to the Organization's budget. Financial blackmail plunged the CE into a severe financial crisis. At the same time, it put Brussels in front of a choice.

It had to decide: either the PACE would surrender and make concessions to the “hated authoritarian regime”, or the relations between Moscow and Strasbourg would be broken with far-reaching geopolitical consequences. These consequences were easy to calculate. The collective West was set to lose one of the last channels of influence on Moscow. The degree of confrontation in Europe would have gone further up. Russia's was expected to drift towards Asia and foster the rapprochement with China, so frightening the EU and NATO. On the legal economic and humanitarian space from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, even hypothetically, it was possible to put a cross.

The EU has opted for the first option. At the meeting of the European ministers in Helsinki in the format of the meeting of the Committee of Ministers of the CoE they recognized that all states should have the opportunity to participate in the work of all the governing bodies of the CoE, including the Assembly, on an equal and non-discriminatory basis. PACE obeyed. On the night of June 24-25, despite the fierce resistance of the delegations of Ukraine, Poland, Georgia, the UK and the Baltic countries, it voted to make the necessary changes to the rules of procedure and invited the delegation of the Federal Assembly to resume participation in it without any restrictions. Then, on June 26, it confirmed the contested powers of the Russian deputies.

Thus, having conducted a brilliant parliamentary-diplomatic operation, Moscow, as it seemed to it, was able to solve several extremely important strategic and geopolitical tasks at once. It broke the chain of sanctions. It managed to insist on its own, without making concessions on any of the international, foreign policy and domestic political files. It proved to the whole world that it was right and can defend its interests even under the most difficult conditions.

However, for any victories won, you have to pay. The price of this victory, if not to take proactive measures, may be too high. Our Western partners also know how to calculate their moves and play multi-move combinations. They figured that by “surrendering” PACE, they lose absolutely nothing - the absence of the Russian delegation only made its activities meaningless. But get a lot. In monetary terms - under the 100 million euro that Russia owes the CE. In political terms - the opportunity to again put pressure on Russia along the parliamentary line, criticize it for nothing,

insist, demand, and threaten.

These are deputies from Ukraine and the entire anti-Russian coalition hysterically denounced the “rest” for the treachery of Kiev, the connivance of the “aggressor”, and the outrage upon European values. The “others” calmly argued: stupid, of course, we all need Russian parliamentarians to be with us - only then can we hold them accountable and present all our complaints to them. They will be able neither to escape nor get out anymore because we have agreed with all their demands.

This position has been unequivocally reflected in the PACE resolution on the recognition of powers. It includes an order for Moscow to accept all fact-finding missions, representatives of the Commission on Monitoring the implementation of commitments and rapporteurs for individual files. It lists all the violations committed by Moscow, for which it was proposed that it take immediate action. The main thing - it fixes that not later than next April a synthesis report will be prepared on all that Moscow is charged with.

In fact, the EU, through the PACE’s hands, outwardly making concessions and accepting all the demands of the Russian side, actually prepared the prerequisites for launching a new campaign to discredit Moscow, exerting systemic pressure on it in all directions, knocking out concessions from it, and thus increasing confrontation. Such a threat is quite real. The idea is an open secret. To verify this, it is enough to read the text of the resolution and listen to the recording of debates. Such a development must be prevented.

Required countermeasures: — to all members of the delegation of the Federal Assembly - imbued with the importance of the moment and devote all their time and energy to work in PACE, explaining, conquering, dragging over to their side;

— to the government - allocate no less funds to support the activities of Russia in the Council of Europe than is paid to the Organization’s budget;

— to supporters of the normalization of relations in Europe - create a Society for the support of CoE capable of proposing a new CoE and PACE agenda;

— to Presidential Administration - ensure control over the harmonization of the legal system with the standards of the Council of Europe and the formation of Moscow’s negotiating position on their revision: **it’s high time for Russia to abandon catching up legal development by initiating through the Council of Europe the creation of a legal framework for the formation of a Comprehensive Greater Eurasian Partnership meeting the interests of all peoples of the continent.**

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