

## Some Selected Solutions for Ukraine

Sergei V. Jargin\*

Peoples' Friendship University of Russia

### Abstract

The aim of this report, based on observations in some areas of local conflicts, has been the search for workable solutions. It should be pointed out that military activities, battles, victims and dangers for civilians tend to be exaggerated by military and civil personnel involved in the conflicts in the former Soviet Union as well as by mass media and other publications. Such gossip damages tourism, trade, health care and, consequently, the international understanding and trust, which, in its turn, contributes to further escalation of the conflicts. One of the motives of the exaggeration is related to the officially supported high social status of war veterans, who acquire considerable privileges over fellow-citizens in health care and everyday life in some ex-Soviet countries. There are misgivings that the veteran status has been sometimes awarded gratuitously. Militaristic rhetoric is distracting people from shortages of public health and assistance. Several proposals for the conflict solution around Ukraine are given here based on the linguistic realities that are rarely discussed in the literature and mass media.

**Keywords:** Ukraine; Russia; Regional conflict

### Introduction

The humankind needs unification to face the challenges of global overpopulation and gender shifts in a most humane way [1]. Great projects can be planned and accomplished only if people trust each other. Ukraine can become a testing ground for international trust and cooperation. Accordingly, the following solutions for the current conflict can be proposed. For the Crimea: international administration under the guidance of the USA and the UK, in view of their constructive and humane action in Iraq [2,3]. Note that on the contrary to Grozny there was almost no destruction of residential buildings in Baghdad (observations May-July 2003), although military operations both in Iraq and Chechnya were, in the author's opinion, unavoidable. Five years later, a referendum would be held in the Crimea, where three possibilities would be proposed to the citizens: unification with Russia or Ukraine, or independence with optional membership in the British Commonwealth. For Lugansk and Donetsk: Russo-Ukrainian condominium with an obligatory cooperation between both administrations in the interests of the residents, on the basis of the principles of mutual trust and benevolence.

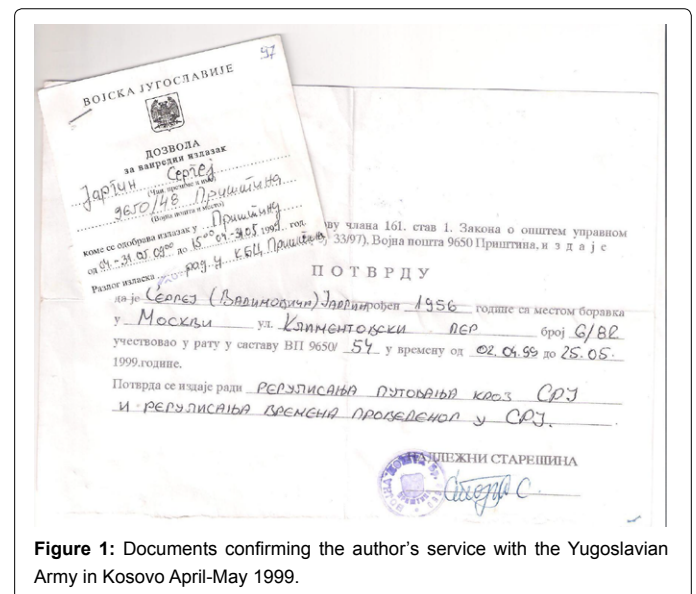
### Materials and Methods

This letter is based on the author's observations, which are modest and included no fighting, but provided material for certain conclusions: two years' service with the Soviet Army 1975-77, April-May 1999 with Yugoslavian Army in Kosovo (Figure 1). May-July 1999 with an NGO and volunteering as a doctor at a hospital (Figure 2), than again one month at a hospital in Iraq 2013, visiting of almost all larger cities in Iraq including Kurdistan 2003; Nasiriyah, Baghdad and Kirkuk in 2013. Late 1990s-2000s several trips to Chechnya, Ingushetia (Figure 3), North and South Ossetia (Grozny, Gudermes, Shatoy, Vedeno, Itum-Kale, Targim, Georgian Military Road), and repeatedly to Abkhazia. Sommer 2014: a trip to Lugansk and Donetsk, several days with the United Armed Forces of Novorossia; repeated visits to Ukraine (images online in [4]), last in April 2015.

### Main Results

In Chechnya and Abkhazia, considerable destructions of residential and other civil buildings were observed: apparently, more than a half of all buildings in some of the above-named towns. In Baghdad, no

destruction of residential buildings was seen, only a few governmental edifices were damaged in 2003. More destruction and damage in Iraq was caused by local plunderers [2]. Only singular buildings were damaged in Basra. No destructions were seen by the author in other Iraqi towns. According to witnesses in Chechnya, some mass media reports created exaggerated impression about civil victims: inhabitants were usually notified about subsequent shelling and left their houses. The towns and villages have been newly rebuilt; and residents received monetary compensations. For the Caucasus in general, widespread corruption is typical, which involved also the distribution of compensations. Other



**Figure 1:** Documents confirming the author's service with the Yugoslavian Army in Kosovo April-May 1999.

\*Corresponding author: Dr. Jargin, Clementovski per 6-82; 115184 Moscow, Russia; E-mail: [sjargin@mail.ru](mailto:sjargin@mail.ru)

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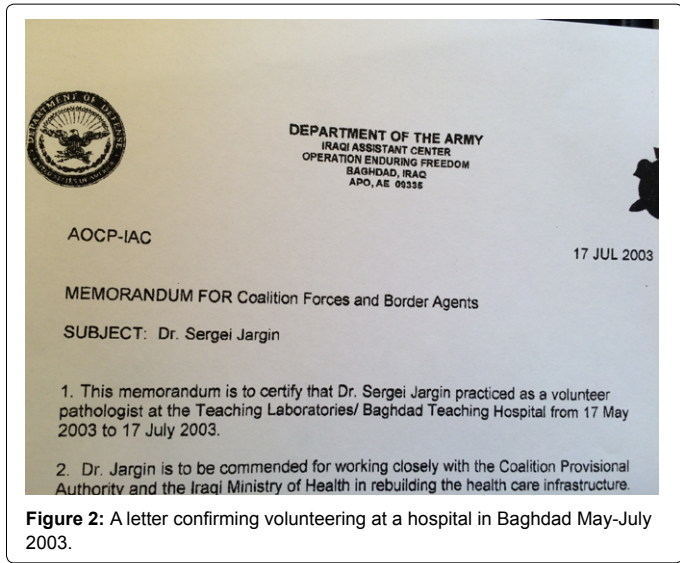


Figure 2: A letter confirming volunteering at a hospital in Baghdad May-July 2003.

corruption at frontier crossings and custom houses have been damaging for the tourism, economy, trade [5], health care and, consequently, for the international understanding and trust, which, in its turn, contributes to further escalation of the conflicts. One of the motives of the exaggeration is the artificially maintained high social status of war veterans, who acquire considerable privileges over fellow-citizens in health care and everyday life in some countries of the former Soviet Union. Militaristic and intimidating rhetoric are distracting people from shortages of public health and assistance. Another example: in the late 1990s, poor-quality alcohol was massively brought to Russia from Georgia [6]. A miles-long line of tank-lorries was observed queuing at the border. Private traffic through the Georgian Military Road from Georgia to North Ossetia (a part of Russian Federation) was impeded at that time by gossip about robbery, threats and extortion by the Georgian and, to a lesser extent, Russian authority members. North Ossetia has been generally known as a source of cheap alcoholic beverages in Russia.

### Discussion and Conclusions

Ukraine in today's borders was created as a result of Bolshevik voluntarism, disregarding ethnic and linguistic realities. Most of the residents in the southern and eastern parts of Ukraine are Russian-speaking. According to the referendums and known facts, a majority of inhabitants in these areas prefer to be Russian citizens. Many residents of Donetsk and Lugansk were disappointed that these provinces had not become parts of Russian Federation [7]. In this connection, double standards should be pointed out: in Kosovo, the political decision was made in consideration of the Albanian majority, which had come about due to the higher birth rate in this ethnic group. Accordingly, an alternative solution could be a division of the territory of today's Ukraine between the European Union and Russia after referendums held separately in each province (oblast). The names Ukraine or Galicia would be used for those provinces, where citizens prefer it. The optimal solution, however, would be widening of the European Union to Pacific, incorporating both Russia and Ukraine. It would make possible large construction projects, offering employment to many people, who are currently participating in the conflict.

In particular, the transfer of Crimea to Ukrainian Soviet Republic in 1954, extracting it from Russian territory, was Nikita Khrushchev's voluntarism, disregarding the fact that the overwhelming majority of Crimean population is Russian-speaking. For Russian-speakers, the Ukrainian language is a local dialect. Not many of them would voluntarily learn it and teach children. Considering the forthcoming globalization, the only alternative to the Russian-speaking Crimea could be English-speaking Crimea. It can be reasonably assumed that the whole Ukraine except Galicia (West Ukraine), would vote for unification with Russia: because of economical and linguistic reasons. The main thing is to avoid a new East-West conflict. Both sides would be losers, as it was 100 years ago; while the winners would be those who stay outside. What is needed is mutual trust. There are, however, reasons why the power should not be displaced to the East: inability of Russian authorities to eradicate corruption, to properly organize health and social care [5,8,9]. However, the conditions in Ukraine seem to be not better. An example: according to the information obtained in Donetsk in July 2014, all patients of the Donetsk regional oncologic center pay for the diagnostics and treatment, while some payments are under-the-counter or equivalent to bribes. Other drawbacks of medical practice and research in Ukraine we reported earlier: use of invasive methods without sufficient clinical indications [10], which was mentioned in the open letter to the President of Ukraine (Figure 4).

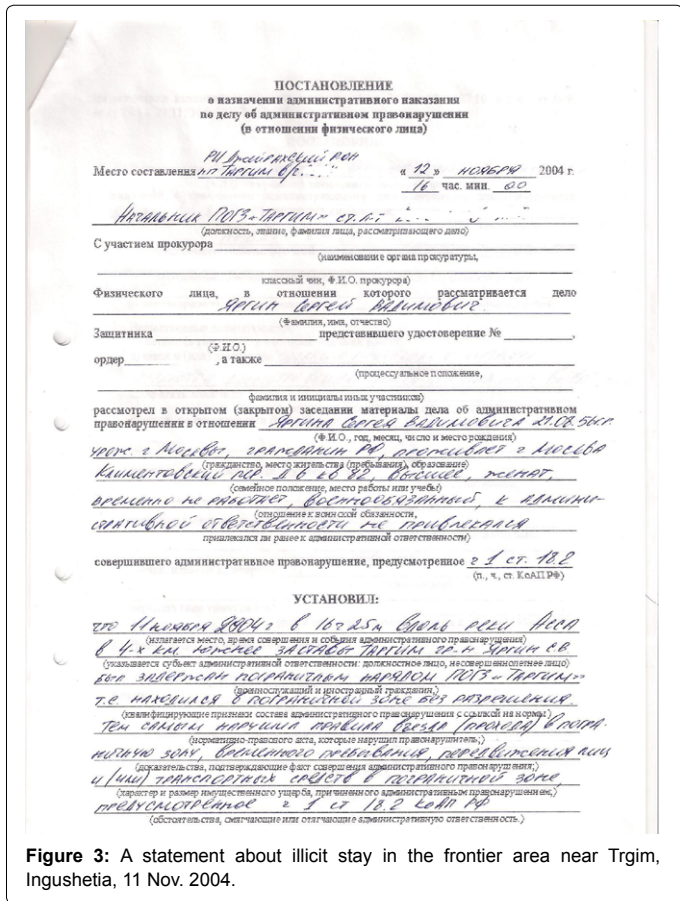
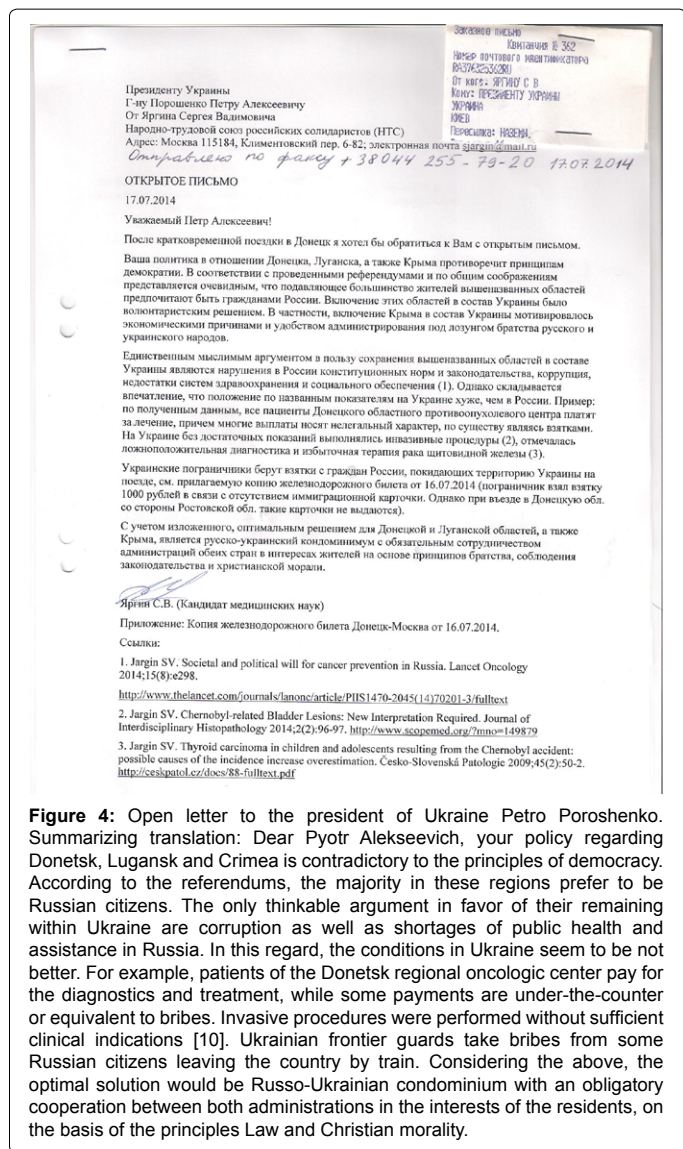


Figure 3: A statement about illicit stay in the frontier area near Trgim, Ingushetia, 11 Nov. 2004.

problems of the Caucasus are high birth rate and unemployment. Corruption is regarded by many residents as a norm of life.

Not denying the fact of the warfare, it should be stressed that military activities, battles, victims, and potential dangers also for civilians have been exaggerated by military and civil personnel, involved in the conflicts in the former Soviet Union, as well as by mass media and other publications. The gossips about dangers together with





**Figure 4:** Open letter to the president of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko. Summarizing translation: Dear Pyotr Alekseevich, your policy regarding Donetsk, Lugansk and Crimea is contradictory to the principles of democracy. According to the referendums, the majority in these regions prefer to be Russian citizens. The only thinkable argument in favor of their remaining within Ukraine are corruption as well as shortages of public health and assistance in Russia. In this regard, the conditions in Ukraine seem to be not better. For example, patients of the Donetsk regional oncologic center pay for the diagnostics and treatment, while some payments are under-the-counter or equivalent to bribes. Invasive procedures were performed without sufficient clinical indications [10]. Ukrainian frontier guards take bribes from some Russian citizens leaving the country by train. Considering the above, the optimal solution would be Russo-Ukrainian condominium with an obligatory cooperation between both administrations in the interests of the residents, on the basis of the principles Law and Christian morality.

Similar phenomena were reported also from Russia [8].

As discussed above, the Ukrainian Soviet Republic was created from different parts, some of them almost totally Russian-speaking, other-bilingual. Except for West Ukraine-East Galicia, everybody speaks Russian well. Compulsory introduction of the Ukrainian language in administration and health care is unconstructive. Many Ukrainian terms are hardly understandable even for Russian-speakers, which results in difficulties reading documents, professional literature etc. In accordance with the ethnic and linguistic realities, there are numerous Russia-sympathizers in Ukraine, who would pursue their own but also Russian interests. As a result, the bulk of the foreign help will flow into the corruption channels, which will indirectly contribute to economical development of the region but not to the military effort. The whole hustle with foreign participation contributes to development and modernization of the region. The military activities are obviously combined with farce in East Ukraine these days, with shooting wide and different kinds of propaganda around it [10-12], in the internet and press, exaggerating battles and numbers of victims. Note that Russians and Ukrainians are brethren, which are not mere words; they

would not willingly fight against each other. The conflict serves also the interests of ruling spheres, distracting people from internal problems, facilitating screw-tightening, neglecting public health and assistance, the latter remaining in a rudimentary state compared to other developed countries. The ongoing inflation, favored by the conflict, is depriving many people of their savings. On the background of the militaristic rhetoric, an elevation of the retirement age is discussed by the government. The relatively low life expectancy in Russia especially among men (about 20 year difference compared to some developed nations) is a strategic advantage: less health care investments, fewer pensions to be paid, etc. Accordingly, middle-aged and elderly men are sometimes visibly unwelcome in governmental polyclinics, if they are not war veterans. There are misgivings, however, that the veteran status, providing considerable advantages in the everyday life and health care, has often been awarded gratuitously. All those participating (factually or on paper) in the current conflict will obtain the veteran status thus acquiring considerable privileges over fellow-citizens. This is another motive both to participate in the conflict and to exaggerate its dimensions. It should be pointed out in conclusion that the best means against militarism is making military conflicts impossible. It is difficult to say how to technically achieve it, but in any case the militarists and theater-makers should not be financed and taught.

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