

## DONALD TRUMP'S PUBLIC POSITION ON RUSSIA AND UKRAINE IN FEBRUARY 2014-NOVEMBER 2016

**Abstract.** *The paper studies D.Trump's public position on Russia and Ukraine from February 2014, when Russia's aggression against Ukraine has started, to November 2016 U.S. presidential election.*

*We argue that D.Trump's presidential campaign was featured with a pronounced Russian-friendly rhetoric and his high assessments of V.Putin. Only in March 2014, he defined Russia as the U.S.' geopolitical foe, condemned its policies, and suggested imposing sanction on it. However, in April 2014, D.Trump's position radically changed. Since then, he did not define Russia's actions in Ukraine as "incursion", and talked about "Ukraine problem", which he considered a result of Barack Obama's weak foreign policy. He believed that addressing the problem was Germany and other European nations' responsibility, and tried to consider it separately from relations with Russia. Since June 2015, improving relations with Russia and "getting along with Putin", first of all, to defeat ISIS, were the major themes of his campaign. In response to strong public criticism of his pro-Russia's rhetoric, in 2016, D.Trump emphasized approach to negotiations with Russia from a position of strength. We do not believe that D.Trump's position has changed. It leaves a lot of space for bargaining with Russia at the expense of Ukraine.*

**Key words:** *Donald Trump, the United States, Russia, Ukraine, 2016 presidential campaign*

On July 16, 2018, "historic" bilateral negotiations between Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin took place in Helsinki. President D.Trump considered them successful. In his words, he and Putin "discussed many important subjects... We got along well... Big results will come!" [1]. In his words, "While the NATO summit in Brussels was an acknowledged triumph..., the meeting with Russia may prove to be, in the long run, an even greater success. Many positive things will come out of that meeting" [2].

The negotiations evoked anxiety in Ukraine and some other nations over a possibility of Russian-American bargaining at their expense. Indeed, during a joint press-conference after the negotiations, D. Trump refused to offer specific criticisms of Russia and Putin, and did not even mention Ukraine. Instead, he said that both countries were responsible for their poor relations [3]. The most importantly for American public, he failed to denounce Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. election in spite of the intelligence agencies' conclusion. Though later D. Trump admitted he misspoke, the damage had been done. His stance at the press conference drew sharp bipartisan condemnation.

According to the Brookings Institute expert Alina Poliakova, if Trump's goal was to warm the U.S. relationship with Russia, "the deference to Vladimir Putin" he showed might lead to the opposite results [4]. Russia's analytic, the chief editor of "Russia in

Global Affairs” Journal Fiodor Lukianov shares the assessment. In his opinion, though Russia’s leader looked better, more confident than D.Trump at the press conference, it was not the kind of victory Russia wanted, because it could not be used. More likely, Trump’s “big mistake” at the press conference will lead to further deterioration of American-Russian relations. The similar situation was in July 2017, when D.Trump and V.Putin met for the first time on the outskirts of G-20 in Hamburg. Though they started a conversation and reached some preliminary agreements, after a negative reaction in the U.S., Trump declined them. The relations had even worsened as a compensation for intentions to make them better [5].

Despite the political storm in Washington, D.Trump believes that the problems of “proliferation, cyber attacks, trade, Ukraine, Middle East peace, North Korea and more... can ALL be solved!” as a result of American-Russian rapprochement [6]. He invited V.Putin to Washington to continue the dialog.

Though D. Trump is known for his unpredictability, so far, he has kept all his presidential campaign promises: the U.S. exited 2015 Paris Climate and Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreements, launched NAFTA re-negotiation and raised trade tariffs with China and some other nations, cancelled a nuclear deal with Iran, the administration has focused on illegal immigration, et cetera. In this regard, D. Trump’s attitudes to Russia and Ukraine during his presidential campaign will help us understand his current and future politics better.

The paper studies D.Trump’s public position on Russia and Ukraine from February 2014, when Russia’s aggression against Ukraine has started, to November 2016 U.S. presidential election. We focus on his assessment of Russia’s actions in Ukraine, and seek to reveal any changes in his position during the period. The research methodology is based on a study of primary sources (D.Trump’s public statements, speeches, interviews, tweets) and media reports, a retrospective approach and a comparative analyzes of his attitude to Russia and Ukraine before his participation in the presidential campaign (February 2014-June 2015), and at its different stages in June 2015-November 2016.

The first D.Trump’s reaction on Crimea crisis was his sarcastic tweet on February 28, the next day after Russia’s Special Forces blocked key administrative buildings in Crimea: “The U.S. has appealed ro (to) Russia not to intervene in Ukraine – Russia tells U.S. they will not become involved, and then laughs loudly” [7]. During the preparation stage of his presidential campaign, till June 2015, D.Trump expressed his views mostly through Tweeter. Especially in March-June 2014, he posted numerous tweets, concerning Russia’s (i.e., V.Putin’s) actions in Ukraine. All of them represented President Barack Obama as a weak leader, who was disrespected and beaten by V.Putin, including the following: “I believe Putin will continue to re-build the Russian Empire. He has zero respect for Obama or the U.S.!” [8]; “Because of President Obama’s failed leadership, we have put Vladimir Putin & Russia back on the world stage! – No reason for this” [9]; “Russia is on the move in the Ukraine, Iran is nuking up & Libya is run by Al Qaeda, yet Obama is busy issuing ‘climate change’ warnings” [10]. All the comments were focused on B. Obama’s weak leadership. D. Trump considered the Russia’s incursion in Ukraine a consequence of America’s diminishing international influence and a manifestation of Russia’s disrespect for the United States. For the reason, he made the President B. Obama responsible for it.

D. Trump revealed his understanding of events in Ukraine in his speech at 2014 Conservative Political Action Conference, on March 6. The main theme of his speech was a weakness of Barack Obama’s leadership, both in domestic and foreign policies,

and a need of America in “right leaders” to make it strong and great again. In his words, due to B. Obama’s foreign policy, China, Russia and other countries “have no respect for our leader” and “do not have respect any longer for our great country”. Events in Ukraine, in his opinion, were a good argument to prove the idea. “What he (Putin) is doing with President Obama?” he asked. In his opinion, he was “toying with him”. Besides Ukraine, Putin was very friendly with Iran, which was causing U.S. “tremendous problems” [11]. In Syria, the “whole deal” was coming to an end “because Russia’s taken over”[12]. In spite of the assessments, he called Putin’s actions in Ukraine “very smart”.

In his March 6 speech, D.Trump took a very pessimistic view on Ukraine’s future. He mistakenly called Crimea its “heart and soul”, “area of the wealth”, where most of Ukraine’s wealth and money came from. For him, that meant, that “the rest of Ukraine will fall...fairly quickly”. Falling of Ukraine, in his opinion, was “just a question of time” [11].

During his appearance on NBC’s “Today” program on March 14, D.Trump stated that if he were the President, “the incursion should have never happened”, and suggested imposing sanctions on Russia to hurt it economically. “We should definitely do sanctions... And we have to show some strength” [13].

In a series of interviews in March of 2014, Donald Trump called Russia the United States’ “biggest problem” and “greatest geopolitical foe”. He supported Mitt Romney’s assessment during the 2012 presidential campaign debates with Barack Obama on Russia, and agreed he “was 100% correct” [12, 14]. In the “Fox and Friends” interview on March 24, 2014, D.Trump said: “Look at what Russia's doing with Iran, how they controlled the situation, and Syria, and virtually every other place ... We were thrown out of every place...”, and suggested again to use sanctions to harm Russia [12]. On April 28, 2014, he tweeted: “Putin has shown the world what happens when America has weak leaders. Peace through Strength!” [15].

However, in April-May 2014, D.Trump radically changed his position and began to praise V. Putin, including his invasion in Ukraine. In his interview to “Fox Business” on April 12, 2014, he said: “So smart. When you see the riots in a country because they’re hurting the Russians... ‘We’ll go and take it over’.” The same day, at a New Hampshire, he said that Putin was “absolutely having a great time... people in the Ukraine... they’re marching in favor of joining Russia” [16]. In a speech at the Freedom Summit in April, Trump argued that the pro-Russia movement in Crimea was “real”. He made the similar remarks in his speech to the National Press Club in May. “They love Russia... They want to form with Russia. How the hell are we involved?” [16].

Based on this type of understanding events in Ukraine, D.Trump doubted expediency of economic sanctions against Russia. On December 16, 2014, he told “Fox News” that due to the Obama administration’s actions, Russia was really hurt and Putin was “wounded”. “Wounded people and wounded animals can do lots of strange things, and we’d better be a little bit careful” [17].

D. Trump announced his decision to participate in running for President on March 18, 2015. Despite a focus on the U.S. domestic problems during his presidential campaign, in the telephone interview to British “Daily Mail” this day, he said, if the 2016 presidential election was “a referendum on America's future foreign policy”, he was ready. He also commented his “relationship” with V.Putin, which, in his words, was “great, and it would be great if I had the position I should have” [18].

D.Trump’s presidential campaign was officially launched at the meeting with his supporters in New York on June 16, 2015. During the campaign, he often talked about

Russia and his “relationship” with Putin. His rhetoric was radically different from March 2014.

On July 30, 2015, at a press conference in Scotland during «British Open» golf tournament, he said: “I think I would ... get along very well with Vladimir Putin”. Since then, it was his major idea in dealing with Russia. Simultaneously, he attacked President Obama and the former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton for destruction relations with Russia that drove it to China. He suggested that Russia-China’s rapprochement was the worst scenario for world peace. On the contrary, he was going to make the world a safer place, and to build bridges, including improvement relations with Russia [19]. Another major idea of D.Trump’s campaign was making the U.S. military so strong that nobody would “mess around with the United States” [19]. It meant that he was going to “get along well” with Russia from the position of strength.

D.Trump discussed the ideas repeatedly, including the press conference in Hampton, New Hampshire, on August 14, 2015 [20]. In his words, improving relations with Russia was not unconditional. When asked, whether he would roll back sanctions against Russia, D.Trump said: “It depends... They have to behave also” [21]. He had to talk about Ukraine at the conference, because the statement about his potentially “great relationship with Putin and Russia” caused a question: “What about what Putin has done in Ukraine?” In his reply, he recognized: “Ukraine is a big problem” and the U.S. should help it. Simultaneously, he suggested that the U.S. should not lead “all of these fights”, because it has enough domestic problems. Instead, European countries, first of all, Germany, should be more involved, and “to straighten out Ukraine” [20].

In two days, in the wide-ranging interview with NBC, D.Trump responded a question about his attitude to Ukraine’s possible membership in NATO “with blunt indifference”: “I wouldn’t care. If [Ukraine] goes in, great. If it doesn’t go in, great” [21]. Then, he repeated his arguments about Europe’s responsibility on addressing the problem. “I don’t like what’s happening with Ukraine. But that’s really a problem that affects Europe a lot more than it affects us. And they should be leading some of this charge”. Especially Germany, in his words, was “sitting back” and “accepting all the oil and gas that they can get from Russia” while the United States was “leading Ukraine” [21]. He exploited the idea constantly. For example, in his “Face the Nation” interview on October 11, 2015, he said that Europe, not the U.S., should lead “pushback on Russia over Ukraine”. “I’m all for helping the Ukrainians, but we shouldn’t be the lead... Why is it always us? What do we have to do with Ukraine?” [22].

These statements demonstrated D.Trump’s “America first” foreign policy approach, and his intentions to limit the U.S. role as “the policeman of the world” and to share the global responsibilities with other countries (in the case of Ukraine, with Germany and other European nations). Instead, he was going to focus on domestic problems, especially, as the U.S. debt reached \$19 trillion.

Once, on September 11, 2015, D. Trump essentially changed his rhetoric on Ukraine to more positive. This day, he talked with Kyiv through a video from New York during 12<sup>th</sup> Yalta European Strategy Annual Meeting. Unlike his previous statements, he said that he cared a lot about Ukraine. It did not have proper respect and assistance from Europe and the United States; however, it had proved that deserved them. European nations should help it more, as well as the United States. The Obama administration supported Ukraine more by words, than deeds, because the president was not strong enough. Putin’s disrespect to American president was one of the reasons of Ukraine’s problems with Russia. He also promised to provide Ukraine with a real assistance, which

it did not get during Barack Obama's presidency [23]. However, in five days, during the Second Republican Primary Debate, D.Trump again talked about his ability to get along and cooperate with Putin to create a more stable world together [24]. D.Trumps' different rethoric on Ukraine on September 11 was explained in April 2018, when "The New York Times" published information about Ukrainian oligarch Viktor Pinchuk's \$150,000 payment to D.Trump for his appearance at the conference by video [25].

Since June 2014, when terrorists of ISIS captured Mosul in Iraq and then established control over large territories of the state and Syria, D.Trump began to use the events in the Middle East to demonstrate B.Obama and his former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's weak foreign policy. At the end of September 2015, when it leaked out that Russian military directly participated in the Syrian war at the President Bashar Assad's side, D.Trump backed Russia's intervention in Syria. "... Russia wants to get ISIS...? We want to get ISIS. Russia is in Syria... Let them do it" [26].

Support of Russia's engagement in Syria to eradicate ISIS became one of the major themes of his campaign. For example, in his «Face the Nation» interview on October 11, 2015, with regard to Putin, he said: "...As far as him attacking ISIS, I'm all for it. If he wants to be bombing the hell out of ISIS, which he's starting to do... let him bomb them" [22]. At the same time, he took a cautious stance on Syrian opposition, supported by the United States. In his opinion, there was not enough information in Washington about who the rebels were and how they could behave [27].

On October 15, 2015, in «MSNBC» interview, D.Trump rejected to recognize Russia's responsibility for the «Malaysia Airlines» airplane knock down over Donbas on July 2014. According to his comment on Dutch investigation of the accident, he did not see any valid evidence of Russia and pro-Russia separatists' responsibility. Though they may be responsible, the U.S. should focus on its own problems and not intervene into conflicts in other countries [28].

During his campaign, Trump repeatedly praised Putin's toughness and strong leadership, opposite to his criticism of B.Obama. Russia's President also, at his annual year-end news conference in December 2015, called the Republican presidential candidate "a very bright and talented man", and welcomed D.Trump's readiness to move to another level of relations and closer cooperation with Russia in case of his victory [29]. D.Trump replied with the statement: "It is always a great honor to be so nicely complimented by a man so highly respected within his own country and beyond... I have always felt that Russia and the United States should be able to work well with each other towards defeating terrorism and restoring world peace, not to mention trade and all of the other benefits derived from mutual respect" [30]. These and other compliments provoked strong criticism in the U.S. press and society and aroused suspicion that D.Trump was somehow connected to Russia.

To summarize, the first stage of D.Trump's presidential campaign was featured with the following approach to Russia and Ukraine. First, he believed, the U.S. should support Ukraine, but the leadership should belong to European nations, first of all, Germany. Second, the U.S. should stop playing the role of "the world policemen", and, instead, focus on its domestic problems. Third, "Ukraine problem" should not prevent the U.S. from cooperation with Russia. D. Trump did not identify Russia's actions in Ukraine as "incursion" any more. It looked like he made Obama's administration and European nations, especially Germany, responsible for "Ukraine problem", not Russia. Fourth, Russia should share America's global responsibilities, specifically, in case of targeting terrorism in Syria. Fifth, D.Trump characterized V.Putin very positively, probably,

because of the major idea of his campaign – America needs a strong leader to make it great again.

Since February 1, 2016, Iowa caucuses launched the series of presidential primaries before National Conventions, which selected the parties' nominees for the President of the United States. At the next stage of the presidential campaign, D.Trump's rhetoric on V.Putin was slightly changed. He kept saying that improvement relations with Russia was beneficial for the U.S., first of all, because Russia helped the U.S. destroy ISIS and Islamic terrorism, which was the most dangerous security threat. Simultaneously, he began to provide an idea that his intentions to improve relations with Russia did not mean he would succeed.

In his «Fox News» interview on February 2, 2016, he said that he respected many people, not only V.Putin, but that did not mean he could “get along” with them [31]. On March 12, 2016, at a presidential rally in Vandalia, Ohio, and later, he explained that he did not “admire” Putin, as media falsely claimed. In his words, while calling V.Putin “a very strong leader”, he meant that he was much stronger than B.Obama. However, that did not mean he supported him. “Strong” did not mean “good” [32]. On May 18, D.Trump told “Reuters”: “I think I'll have a good relationship with Russia, and I may not... The fact that he's said good things about me doesn't mean... it's going to help him in a negotiation...” [33]. During presidential rally in Fresno, California, on May 27, 2016, he stated that he respected Russia's president, but he was not his friend, he did not know him and never met him [34].

In April 27, 2016, D.Trump gave a large, well-prepared foreign policy speech at the Center for National Interest. He started it with a statement that his administration would pursue a foreign policy, which would “always put the interests of the American people and American security above all else”. It would get rid of “the nation-building business” and focus on “creating stability in the world”. In his opinion, the major foreign policy goal of the United States and the world must be containing the spread of radical Islam. Therefore, his administration would work together with any nation that was threatened by the rise of radical Islam, including Russia. However, it was “a two-way street”. The nations “must also be good to us” [35].

In his words, the U.S. desires “to live peacefully and in friendship with Russia and China”. Because of serious differences with these two nations, they must be regarded “with open eyes”, however, they were not bound to be “adversaries”. They should seek common ground, based on shared interests. He believed that easing of tensions and improved relations with Russia was possible, but “from a position of strength only”. Negotiations with Russia had to end “this horrible cycle of hostility”. However, if his administration could not make a great deal with Russia, it would “quickly walk from the table”. The most important task for D.Trump was to “make America strong again, because “the world is most peaceful and most prosperous when America is strongest” [35].

When Russia SU-27 conducted a barrel roll over a U.S. aircraft in the Baltic Sea, on April 27, 2016, the second such maneuver in the past month, Trump's commented that the U.S. should start with diplomacy, and start quickly with the President's phone call to Putin; if diplomacy didn't work, the U.S. should open fire [36].

Thus, at the stage of primaries, D.Trump tried to get rid of the image of “Putin's friend”, and emphasized that his position on Russia corresponds completely with American interests. He was ready to talk with Russia from a position of strength, and presented himself as a better negotiator than his competitors.

Concerning Ukraine, during primaries, D.Trump kept providing the idea that European nations-NATO members, most of all Germany, would deal with “Ukrainian problem”, not the U.S. First, because the issue affected American interests the least. Second, American leadership in the issue could provoke the Third World War [37].

At the end of March, in a large telephone interview to «The New York Times» on foreign policy issues, he did not answer the question about his views on resurgence of Russia and a return to Cold War, and focused on a criticism of NATO, instead. He believed it was terror, not Russia that was “the big threat”. NATO was “obsolete”, because it did not deal with terror. He also did not answer the question whether in the end Russia was going to end up dominating the Ukraine. “Now I’m all for Ukraine”, he said, but then repeated his previous position that nobody, except the U.S. cared “when the Ukrainian problem arose”, though they were “the least affected” by what happened with Ukraine because they were “the farthest away”. “Why is it always the United States that gets right in the middle of things..?” In D.Trump’s words, actually everything was about economics, because the U.S. had been taking care of so many people in so many different forms that they did not have money anymore [38].

On July 19, 2016, at a Republican National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio, D. Trump was chosen the party nominee for the President of the United States. The presidential campaign entered its final stage. Before the Convention, under the pressure of Trump’s supporters, the Republican Party Platform (GOP) on Ukraine was softened, and its part, which called for provision of lethal weapons to Ukraine, was withdrawn [39].

On July 27, at a wide-ranging news conference in Florida, when asked about his stance on Crimea and Russia, D.Trump said he would consider recognizing Crimea as Russian territory and lifting the sanctions against the country, if elected [40]. The remarks were widely discussed and aroused strong criticism.

In several days, in the «ABC News» with George Stephanopoulos, D.Trump had to comment withdrawal of provision about lethal weapons for Ukraine from GOP. While doing so, he said: “He (Putin) is not going to go into Ukraine”. “Well, he's already there, isn't he?” asked the host. “OK, well, he's there in a certain way... he's going where -- he takes...Crimea”. Then D.Trump supported Russia’s annexation, as he did in April-May 2014: “You know, the people of Crimea, from what I've heard, would rather be with Russia than where they were” [41].

The statements revealed D.Trump’s poor understanding of what was going in Ukraine that was widely noticed. The next day D.Trump tried to explain his mistake in Twitter [42] and his speech in Ohio. Commenting his previous remarks, he said that World War III would break out if the United States intervenes to take back Crimea from Russia on behalf of Ukraine [43]. He also emphasized that Russia is a strong nuclear power [44]. The argument was aimed against his main competitor, Democratic Party nominee Hillary Clinton, who promoted tough politics on Russia. It also served D.Trump’s goals to strengthen American military.

In September 2016, during Ukraine’s President Petro Poroshenko visit to New York for the United Nations General Assembly, he met Hillary Clinton, and was going to meet Donald Trump. However, the Republican Party candidate did not reply to his request. It was another evidence of D.Trump’s uncertain attitude to Ukraine [45].

Last weeks before the Election Day, Russia’s cyber attacks on Democratic Party to influence the vote, became a priority issue of the presidential campaign. It was discussed during Trump-Clinton debates in September-October 2016 [46]. D.Trump rejected his

ties with Russia, and tried to persuade the audience in the opposite. Simultaneously, he kept arguing, that the U.S. and Russia had to improve relations to fight against ISIS together [47]. Before the third, final presidential debates, the results of official investigation concerning cyber attacks against Democratic Party and Russia's involvement were reported. D.Trump had to recognize and condemn Russia's interference [48].

D.Trumps' final statements on Russia in October 2016 included the following ideas. First, the U.S. should improve relations with Russia. Second, he does not love or hate President Putin, and he does not know if they can get along. Third, normalization of relations is possible only if Russia will respect the U.S. interests at the international arena [49]. Fourth, Hillary Clinton's actions in Syria, if elected, can end up in World War Three, because now the United States has to deal not with Syria only, but Syria, Iran and Russia, which is a nuclear power. Fifth, Hillary Clinton's "tough" attitude to Putin makes her impossible to negotiate with Russia [50], as for him, he was ready to meet Putin prior to the start of his administration [51].

In conclusion, D.Trump's presidential campaign was featured with a pronounced Russian-friendly rhetoric, despite Russia's aggression against Ukraine and its actions in Syria. Especially, he demonstrated his high assessments of V.Putin as a strong, smart and tough leader. It was only in March 2014, in the wake of Russia's invasion into Crimea and its annexation, when he condemned Russia's policies, defined it as the United States' geopolitical foe, and suggested imposing sanction on it. However, in April-May 2014, D.Trump's position radically changed. Since then, he did not identify Russia's actions in Ukraine as "incursion" any more, and talked about "Ukraine problem", which he considered a result of Barack Obama's weak foreign policy and Russia's disrespect for the United States. He believed that addressing the problem was Germany and other European nations' responsibility, and tried to consider it separately from relations with Russia.

Since the start of D.Trump's presidential campaign in June 2015, improving relations with Russia and "getting along with Putin" had become the major themes of his foreign policy agenda. In July 2016, he even announced his intentions to recognize Crimea as Russia's territory and to lift sanctions. The major argument for him was a need of American-Russian cooperation to defeat ISIS, which he considered the major threat to the U.S. and international security. In response to strong public criticism of his pro-Russia's rhetoric, in 2016, D.Trump emphasized approach to Russia from a position of strength and its respect for American interests.

We do not believe that D.Trump's position has fundamentally changed. It leaves a lot of space for bargaining with Russia at the expense of Ukraine. The most important reason why he has not implemented his vision, in our opinion, is a strong Congress' role in the shaping of foreign policy, and, a public outrage of Russia's interference into 2016 elections that undermines a foundation of American political system.

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#### **ПУБЛІЧНА ПОЗИЦІЯ ДОНАЛЬДА ТРАМПА ЩОДО РОСІЇ Й УКРАЇНИ У ЛЮТОМУ 2014 – ЛИСТОПАДІ 2016 РР.**

***Анотація.** У статті розкривається публічна позиція Д.Трампа щодо Росії і України від початку російської агресії проти України у лютому 2014 р. до президентських виборів 2016 р.*

*Показано, що президентська кампанія Д.Трампа характеризувалася дружньою риторикою стосовно Росії і її президента В.Путіна. Лише у березні 2014 р. він оцінював Росію як геополітичного противника США, засуджував її політику щодо України і пропонував запровадити щодо неї економічні санкції. Проте вже в квітні 2014 р. ця позиція кардинально змінилася. З того часу він більше не характеризував дії Росії в Україні як «вторгнення», натомість говорив про «українську проблему», яка була результатом слабкої зовнішньої політики Б.Обами і неповаги Росії до США. Він вважав, що вирішувати цю проблему мають Німеччина та інші європейські держави, і намагався розглядати її окремо від відносин з Росією.*

*Від початку президентської кампанії Д.Трампа у червні 2015 р. покращення відносин з Росією і порозуміння з В.Путіним були її центральними темами. Це, на його думку, обумовлювалося передусім потребою спільних дій для знищення «Ісламської держави» і протидії радикальному ісламу. Коли ж його проросійська риторика викликала сильну суспільну критику, Д.Трамп почав акцентувати на переговорах з Росією з позиції сили і визнання нею американських інтересів. На нашу думку, позиція Д.Трампа суттєво не змінилася. Вона залишає багато простору для домовленостей з Росією за рахунок України.*

***Ключові слова:** Дональд Трамп, США, Росія, Україна, президентська кампанія 2016р.*