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It's Time to Synchronize Our Watches

Introductory word

Anyone who is not with Me is against Me,
and anyone who does not gather with Me scatters
The Gospel of Matthew. Mt. 12:30

Dear readers!

The events of 2022, developing with the participation of Russia and around Russia, proved once again the global role of our country and its key influence on world processes. The world is divided into supporters and opponents of Russia, into allies, partners and enemies of Russia; those who, together with Russia, strive for a new world order and those who cling to old, obsolete models. The world is Russian-centric. Russia is being voted on in the UN, Russia is being talked about in NATO, Russia is being discussed at all international venues. The world is splitting into those who want to "cancel Russia", those who want to stand next to Russia and be with Russia, and even those who want to cancel canceling Russia. The special military operation carried out by Russia in Ukraine exposed the true interests and vital principles of the countries and split the world even more. Against the backdrop of such a split, the positions of our neighbors acquire special significance.

There are different methods of international relations analyzing, but an analysis of the communication regimes formed in different countries allows a deeper and more subtle understanding of the attitude towards Russia and towards Russians, because communications arise not only at the state level, they are regulated not only by laws, but also by historically established practices. The subjects of communication regimes are not only political elites, but also citizens of each country. The rating of friendliness of communication modes eloquently shows the true face of each country, and the monitoring results give a true picture of the attitude towards Russia and Russians, and also allow predicting their development.

The friendliness rating is a landmark both for Russia and for other countries. For Russia, this is an opportunity to evaluate and reconsider the prospects, system and directions of relations with its neighbors. For neighbors - a reason to think, decide on priorities and to synchronize our watches.

Time cannot be turned back. What you do today will not only resonate in the future, but will determine it. Russia has been and remains the system - forming state of the Eurasian space and the main subject of global processes. Right now Russia with its allies and partners is laying the foundations for future relations and a new world order. And for each country it is important what place it will take in the new coordinate system.

Historically, Russia's relations with its partners were built as paternalistic systems, while European countries and the United States built colonial systems. Surprisingly, both models are reproduced in modern conditions. There is an opinion that Russia needs to get rid of paternalism and build relations with its neighbors on more rational principles, since "children have grown up" and become independent. But we still live as one family in the neighborhood, although in different houses. And problems in one house cannot leave the whole family indifferent. This becomes clear when countries turn to Russia for assistance in resolving both internal and external conflicts (Kazakhstan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan). Russia also turns to its neighbors in difficult times, so today it is very important to understand what system countries want to be in. Right now the foundations of the future are being laid, and it makes sense for everyone to think not about their situational role, but about their strategic place in the new world order.

Despite the unprecedented efforts of the "collective West" to create an aggressive environment around Russia, we see an increase in friendliness among strategically significant partners. These partners are not focused on the situational factor; they evaluate past experience and competently build dialogue and cooperation with Russia. The countries of Central Asia and the South Caucasus have not forgotten the Soviet projects that gave rise to the progressive development of their territories and peoples. Our neighbors have not forgotten Russia's help during the formation of their statehood and gaining international subjectivity. Russia generously shared its technologies and innovations, its resources, providing them on unprecedented favorable terms and leaving its industrial, scientific and technical production and energy systems on the territories of the new states. Russia has supported national education systems by investing resources in the training of personnel and the development of universities and schools. These countries still see their economic and political prospects in relations with Russia, building up trade, economic and investment cooperation and strengthening their international competitiveness. Belarus remains faithful to Union relations, maintaining independence in decisions and in determining national priorities. Partially recognized states understand that their statehood is possible only with the support of Russia.

Russia also helped European countries. It is well known that it was precisely at the expense of Russian energy resources and Russian metals that Germany created its technological and industrial superiority, Italy created its automotive industry, and France developed nuclear energy at the expense of Russian uranium.

Our allies from far abroad, the countries of Africa and Latin America, have not forgotten the support of the USSR during the years of the anti-colonial struggle and remember well the sad history and real face of their colonial "partnership" with European countries and the USA. But today they speak to the world on an equal footing. China, India, Iran, Arab and other countries, together with Russia, are building a new multipolar world based on the principles of equality and justice.

Why is Russia so attractive? Russia has always been attractive for its spirituality, culture, and desire to help and create a just world. Material values were not the main goal of the Russians. Nor did Russia think in terms of cultural superiority, hegemonism, and colonialism. We did not have slaves and did not humiliate peoples. Russia contributed to the development of the political and economic dignity of other countries. And today Russia offers a model of world order where there are no privileged and outcast, where there is no first, second and third worlds, where dialogue is possible on an equal footing, where countries make decisions based on the interests of their people, and not under fear of sanctions, poverty and international isolation.

Against this background, it is sad to look at small countries with large complexes hostile to Russia. They jump into the last car of the outgoing train, which is rolling towards a cliff. Some of them voluntarily, others under pressure joined the aggressive, anti-Russian, Russophobic environment. But it is not the governments that determine the prospective relations, but the peoples. Monitoring of communication regimes shows that the peoples and elites of these countries are not unanimous in their opinion, and imposing the opinion of political elites on their people causes internal resistance. Most of the inhabitants of the Baltic countries, despite the hostility of their elites, continue to treat Russia and Russians with warmth. They are not afraid to take part in protests against "decommunization", which involves the destruction of everything Russian in the memory of generations and the denigration of the achievements of their own people in previous historical periods.

The elites, which the "collective West" uses for its own purposes, are interested in inciting hostility between peoples. But when this "collective West" again builds business relations with Russia (and this will inevitably happen), then the used resource of enmity will turn out to be unnecessary. This will lead to the international political marginalization of small hostile countries. What about the Baltic countries, which are members of the EU system, this will happen even earlier. The EU members themselves no longer trust each other and have less and less confidence in the effectiveness of their multilateral integration, having begun to strengthen their positions with bilateral agreements. In 2019, Germany and France signed a cooperation and integration agreement. In 2021, France and Italy signed an agreement on enhanced bilateral cooperation, Spain and Portugal signed a new friendship and cooperation agreement. In 2022, Italy and Spain began work on an enhanced cooperation agreement. In January 2023, Spain and France signed a friendship treaty. However, with Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia such an agreement among the leaders of the EU is not observed.

In conclusion, I would like to note that the Friendliness Rating makes it possible for each country to see its place in the international system, analyze its positions, draw conclusions and decide whether to focus on the outgoing leaders or stand next to Russia and those who will determine the contours of the new world order on principles of justice, good neighborliness and equality for everyone.