

# THE PHILOSOPHY OF NATIONAL INTERESTS IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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***Abstract:*** *This scientific article analyzes new trends in international relations. The philosophical laws, components and principles of international relations have been scientifically studied. The available literature and sources have been critically studied and scientific and practical conclusions have been drawn.*

***Keywords:*** *international relations, foreign political philosophy, national interests, states, international law, cooperation.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION AND RELEVANCE**

It is known that the concept of national interest has long been manifested as a category used by political leaders to unite citizens towards achieving socio-economic development and prevention any threat from the very first stage of the formation of a sovereign state. The objective needs of the subject or social unit, arising from the economic, social, political and other circumstances in which they live, lies on the basis of any national interest. Knowing social needs is a process of conceptualizing people's interests. Thus, an interest is an objective and subjective category. The notion of national interest is now widely discussed by researchers, political leaders, journalists, and military principals. The concept is given a special attention in the foreign policy of the state, to determine the interaction of external and internal factors, to study the problems of international relations, etc. The identification of major threats to sovereignty and territorial integrity, defining key aspects of foreign policy, the establishment of defense strategy as a key factor of economic development certainly relies on the national interests in the context of national security concepts and military doctrines of the state,. However, there are controversial aspects regarding this notion.

## **2. RESEARCH METHODS**

The article uses methods widely used in modern philosophy and social and political disciplines; postmodernism, poststructuralism and constructivism, as well as the comparative method and the method of empirical observation.

## **3. RESEARCH RESULTS**

The importance of the concept of national interest, as an analytical device and a tool of political action, remains the subject of controversy and debate. Therefore, the fact that the concept of national interest is widely used by the representatives of theoretical and practical directions is noteworthy. The national interest is a sign of objective existence, which is based on the specific geographical location of the state, economic, political and cultural development, as well as some other particular features of human nature. Thus, the "national interest" is manifested in practice as a result of the solid foundation of the state's international

policy and the sense of responsibility by the state leaders. It follows that a transparent policy is one that is based on an appropriate understanding of the national interest. The quality that distinguishes international politics from internal one is the understanding of the fact that it is a struggle for power[1].

The national interest is radically different from the social interest. If the first is the protection of the country's interests in the international arena, the second is related to the system of laws governing the domestic policy. In other words, in contrast to the public interest, the concept of "national interest" refers to the foreign policy of the state. The concept of social interest is used to enhance and protect humanism against internal conflicts. For the foregoing reasons, goals that belong to different individuals and groups within a state do not create a certain force that is equally affected by diversity and do not allow the criterion of the national interest to be assessed as ideal for the leader. The foreign policy of a government is reflected in the actions of its leader, who has a certain degree of freedom in setting goals. The ideology, temperament and other qualities of leaders play an important role in this circumstance. However, a conditional aspect of the activities of the governor is that all his/her actions are founded on the national interest. One can see the objective and subjective features of such interests since it is important to determine the objectivity or subjectivity of the interests.

According to scholars, when studying the objective interests, it is risky to go down the path of optional determination of interests to explain the behavior of people and social units. Therefore, the issue of objectivity of interest is complicated. According to J.B. Durozel, a French expert in the sphere of international relations, "It would be good if there was an opportunity to identify the objective of national interest," "in that case it would be easier enough to study the way in which international relations are compared to the objective national interests proposed by leaders." However, any conception about the objective national interest is subjective. For example, as to A. Wolfers, the national interest can mean a different concept for different people, and it is even able to provide with an «attractive appearance» to politics.

Advocates of the liberal idea question the legitimacy of using the concept of national interest as a criterion of domestic or foreign policy because from this point of view, it is impossible to define the concept of national interest. Finally, researchers suggest that the behavior of participants in international relations should be seen as national equality rather than a motivating tool of interests[2]. Conversing about national equality, language and religion are implied on the basis of national unity, cultural-historical values and national-historical memories. Liberal idea theorists and their supporters are ready to join the existence of national interests only if moral criteria and modern global problems are recognized in the context of interests. The defence of sovereignty and the pursuit of power are increasingly losing their relevance. It is not difficult to notice that the protection of values and responses to global threats go far beyond national borders. Therefore, the main task facing a democratic state today is to protect not only national interests but also moral principles and human rights.

It is contrary to the nature of interests for each head of the state to act and react differently in his/her political activities, relying on national interests. In addition, everyone involved in political activity should first understand what his/her views are. We believe that in the foreign policy of any country, the governor in the field of international relations should have a perfect political thinking and a clear knowledge of the priorities of national interests. That is why, since the declaration of state independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan on August 31, 1991, our country has ample opportunities to pursue a foreign policy, develop bilateral or multilateral relations, implement an independent foreign policy based on national interests.

It is noted that the foreign policy of the Republic of Uzbekistan is based on the requirements of the current Constitution and the Law[3] "On Basic Principles of Foreign Policy of Uzbekistan" adopted by the Oliy Majlis on December 26, 1996.

Article 17 of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan states that "the Republic of Uzbekistan is a full-fledged subject of international relations. Its foreign policy is based on the principles of sovereign equality of states, non-use of force or threat of force, inviolability of borders, peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference in the internal affairs of other states and other universally recognized rules and norms of international law. The republic may form alliances, join and leave the Commonwealth and other interstate structures in order to ensure the highest interests, welfare and security of the government and the people[4].

The main directions of Uzbekistan's foreign policy:

First, national interests are the priority of Uzbekistan's foreign policy;

Second, the priority of universal values and the rules of international documents in interstate relations;

Third, the priority of equality and mutual interest in foreign policy;

Fourth, to implement the principle of transparency in foreign policy, regardless of ideological views;

Fifth, the predominance of international law over domestic law;

Sixth, the establishment and development of bilateral and multilateral external relations.

In the process of achieving these goals, national mechanisms of foreign policy have been created to establish relations with the world community. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, founded in 1944 was radically reformed. In 1992, the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations, and on September 7, 1991, the National Bank for Foreign Economic Activity were established[5]. In order to provide the sphere of foreign relations with qualified national personnel, the University of World Economy and Diplomacy was founded in 1992 by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Laws "On Foreign Investments" (1998), "On Foreign Economic Activity of Uzbekistan" (2000), "On International Agreements of the Republic of Uzbekistan" (1995), as well as Documents on the Consular Charter, the Military Doctrine and the National Security Conception of the Republic of Uzbekistan (1997) were adopted[6]. Under the above conditions, the Republic of Uzbekistan started to integrate into the world community.

Today, the concept of national interests has not lost its political and analytical significance. According to the one of the founders of the political realism theory G. Morgenthau, the concept of national interests is becoming a basic category at all states. It is very risky to ignore it or take a misleading point. It is the national interest that embodies the interests of all citizens and covers an objective socio-economic and a number of other factors. Therefore, all the economic processes in the world, the policies of governments and other factors cause national interests to change.

The debate over national interests is now intensifying. According to the representatives of liberalism, we are sharply increasing the role of national interests, however, less attention is paid to its psychological factors. In their view, in an authoritarian and totalitarian society, the interests of the state take precedence over the interests of the individual, and in a democratic society characterized by the principle of statehood, "national interests are formed as the sum of the interests of citizens." Some researchers try to unite ethnic and state groups and promote the term "national state interests". There are also researchers who understand the nations as a political subject, supporting the idea that nationality which is primarily related to ethnicity should be abandoned.

During the process of analyzing the priority of national interests in domestic and foreign policy, we can see that geopolitical, cultural and economic factors underlie fundamental national interests. Therefore, we study the basic and non-basic, objective and subjective, real and false interests, as well as the corresponding falling and mutually exclusive, intersecting and non-intersecting interests. Based on abovementioned, the “interest” can be defined as outgoing conscious needs. Thus, the national interest is the application and reflection of the needs of the state in the activities of its leaders. This also applies to the states that are multi-ethnic and ethnically diverse: in fact, when we say national interest, we mean national-state interests. According to R. Aron, the decision of any state on its goals is consistent with the traditional realistic understanding of national interests. In R. Aron’s view, eternal goals can be both abstract and explicit in the form of expanding the space occupied by a particular political unit, enlarging the territory, increasing the number of people and capturing the human heart.

Justifying the legitimacy of using the concept of “national interest” as a conceptual framework and analytical tool for the foreign policy does not mean acknowledging that the leadership of a state is limited to key elements that seeks to articulate in its official documents. At the same time, the problem remains that even in the important aspirations of social cohesion, which are part of the field of international relations and have not been included in the official terminology, certain losses have been observed. The notion of “national spirit” or “national unity” is not in a position to express the hidden elements of national interest in direct external observation. That is why some authors try to confuse the term “involuntary factor” of national interest. It is in this context that V.V. Mejuev suggests reflecting the ease of applying the policy of national interest in the following factors. Although the author acknowledges that there is a replenishment between the factors in the observation process, however it cannot be said that there is complete compatibility in both cases. V. V. Mejuev emphasizes that it is unlikely to meet all of the above requirements in politics. The conformity of the political situation to the national interest is only considered ideal, which tends mainly to materialism. Hence V. Mejuev noted that the above-mentioned factors of national interest indicate that the level of analysis is general. The author gives a fair idea that not every factor is perfect and flawless: the socio-economic factor is not the same; the notions of national unity are contradictory.

The objective demand, the needs of the subject or social units arising from the economic, social, political and other circumstances lies in the essence of any interest. The process of realizing social needs is a process of shaping people’s interests. Therefore, the interest is both an objective and a subjective category. Furthermore, not only real but also misleading interests can be objective in their own right. That is why in the second half of the XX century one could observe the Western ideas that the former Soviet military threat and the growth of armaments would serve the fundamental interests of a democratic state in defense against an attack by a totalitarian regime.

Based on the above idea, the concept of ‘interest’ can be defined as the existence of a subject’s conscious needs arising from his/her circumstances. Thus, the national interest is the application and reflection of the needs of the state in the activities of its leaders. This also applies to the multi-national and multi-ethnic states: in fact, when we say national interest, we mean national-state interests. According to R. Aron, as mentioned above, the concept of national interest is overly ambiguous. It is therefore not sufficient to analyze the goals and objectives of international relations. Researchers B. Rassett and H. Starr of the United States have suggested that the idea of “considering the national interest as abstract” should be withdrawn. Researcher O.Holste from Finland, on the other hand, suggests using the national interest as a concept of ‘foreign policy objectives’. In this regard, R. Aron argued that any

country's decision on its perpetual goals is consistent with the traditional realistic understanding of national interests. In his view, the eternal goals can be manifested in the pursuit of security, power and authority, as well as in the expansion of space occupied by one or another political unit, enlargement of territory, increase in population and capture of the human heart.

In turn, the proposal to replace the main foreign policy tasks of the state with the level of "national interest" is consistent with the content of the category of national interest. Indeed, O.Holste defined foreign policy tasks as "a system of conditions in which people seek to support the behavior of other countries by using their cross-border influence through their perceptions of the future and the actions of government political leaders." He connects the main tasks with the preservation of the state, its sovereignty, territorial integrity and the well-being of its citizens. O. Holste introduces medium-term tasks in the field of interstate cooperation for economic development. He considers long-term tasks to be related to the rules of the formation of the international system and interaction of states[6].

Traditional bilateral and trilateral interstate relations are enriched with new ones in various fields (transport, economy, finance, information and culture, science and education). It is on this basis that new international organizations and institutions are emerging, the state is giving them the appropriate part of its power. Moreover, they are expressing their own interests and goals as a subject of international relations. As the power and number of transnational corporations increase, the overall picture becomes more complex. Their uniqueness is becoming more noticeable and inseparable in international relations, primarily due to their financial interests and goals related to economic development. Meanwhile, the interests of transnational corporations are related to the stability of the country in which they are located (economic, political, military), as well as general security, cooperation, and other issues on a global scale.

In such circumstances, the national interest cannot be ensured without a number of conditions for the existence of the state, in particular, not only military-strategic but also environmental security, a decent foreign policy environment, attention and prestige in the international arena. It should also be borne in mind that the provision of national interests is ensured only as a product of conditions balance, which represents an open system of interrelated and complementary elements. A full supply of each of them can only be ideal. In real practice, however, it is observed that the absence of any element or condition is offset by the intensive development of another element. Guaranteeing such a balance is the essence and art of international politics. There is another part of the national interest called the unconscious element, the content of which requires special consideration.

Basing the legitimacy of using the concept of "national interest" as a conceptual basis and analytical tool of foreign policy does not mean being limited to the basic elements that the leadership of any state seeks to articulate in its official documents. Meantime, the problem remains that even in the important aspirations of social cohesion, which are not included in the official and scientific terminology of the field of international relations; certain losses have been observed. The notion of national spirit or national unity is not in a position to express the hidden elements of national interest in direct external observation. That is why some authors try to confuse the term "involuntary factor" of national interest. According to V.V.Mejuev, the convenience of the policy of national interest implies:

- reflecting the public opinion on the role of political and economic elites in the country;
- responding to the cultural traditions of the country, which gives an idea of its place in world history in political, religious and other forms;
- improving the military strategic position of the state;
- seeking for enhancing its socio-economic position.

Although the author acknowledges that there is a replenishment between the first and second (ideal) and third and fourth (material) factors, there is no complete agreement in either case. V.V.Mejuev emphasizes that it is very unlikely that all of the above requirements will be faced in politics. The conformity of the political situation to the national interest is only considered ideal, and tends mainly to materialism. V.V.Mejuev noted that the above-mentioned factors of national interest indicate that the level of analysis is very superficial. The author gives a fair idea that not every factor is perfect and flawless: the socio-economic factor is not the same; perceptions of national identity are at odds with each other, and the media with its significant influence on public opinion. At the same time, the conceptual analysis of the national interest reduces the likelihood of applying clear thinking entrusted to the artificial formation of public opinion and the transformation of national unity. The main feature and necessity of the proposed approach reflects the deep traditional political culture of the country and determines the cultural direction in a timely manner.

It is obvious that national interest is always a conscious demand. May a conscious object contain an element of unconsciousness? It turns out that this problem can be tackled by redefining the concept of "national interest", for example, by showing its difference from economic interest (i.e. it does not only include conscious demands but also hides the direct recognition of the subject ). In this regard, S.S.Mitrokhin states: "Here the concept of "interest" is a phrase, and it is not only about consciousness but also about the unconscious possibilities of self-defense and restoration of the people or the government. In all likelihood, the national interest encompasses perpetual values. Indeed, if we put it into analytical circulation, it remains "irrational" for the carrier, while for the researcher or political leader, from the professional viewpoint are consciously different from others (should be guided). V.Larin (from the practical viewpoint) and D. Sanders (from the theoretical viewpoint) focus on another aspect of the national interest issue. It is a question of the relationship between national interests and transnational, subnational and national interests, and in a broader sense, the preservation of national interests in the age of globalization.

International policy is accompanied by the expansion of interstate trade, a significant increase in the number and volume of cross-border financial flows. The expansion of interstate trade is accompanied by a significant increase in the number and volume of cross-border financial flows. It is becoming increasingly clear that the world economy is becoming a common ground. Crossing national borders and transforming state sovereignty will lead to an emerging financial system and a single information gap, transnational manufacturing and global trade networks[7].

Other researchers, on the other hand, converse the disintegration of the national interest structure, claiming that new subjects of world politics are moving towards a nation-state change. Accordingly, they state that "globalization replaces national interests with the interests of world civil society. A key element of these interests is to ensure the rights and freedoms of the individual in most authoritarian political regimes. At the same time, some representatives of this view argue that the state and national interests should be abandoned at the expense of the national interest. They argue that "the policy of preserving sovereignty and territorial integrity leaves no room for long-term prospects." But the truth is even more complicated. Under the influence of globalization, the structure of the state, like traditional social institutions, can decline significantly. There will be pressure on the state "from above", "from below", "from outside". "From above" - State sovereignty is undermined by primary national organizations and institutions, often interfering with the scope of state power. "From below" - state sovereignty is eroded by internal state structures and civil society structures. In developed countries, this direction in the political sphere, as to the Canadian expert Pierre Soldatas is paradiplomacy, i.e. parallel diplomacy.

## CONCLUSION

In the sphere of foreign policy, the collapse of national influence occurs. This happens mainly in functional order, not at a constitutional level. The state seeks to strengthen harmonization in order to redistribute its role in this area. To this end, the federal state will strengthen its horizontal and vertical control and bring it to the national level. Not only the regions but also the ministries of the republics within the federation can pursue their own foreign policy. The state agrees with some decisions of the territories and provinces, in the framework of maintaining peace in foreign policy. However, the country is not limited to not alienating its interests in the foreign policy of this or that region[8]. On the contrary, it masters the scope of such tasks. P.Soldatos points to five reasons for such behavior:

The first reason is pragmatic - the demands of the interior go beyond the borders, the second reason - the transnational supporters, as well as their inequality of status and interests, the third reason - the imperfection of constitutional rights, that is the center oppresses regional policy, the fourth reason – being not financially interested of transnational supporters. Finally, the fifth reason is the decentralization of administrative governance, which is inevitable in the context of globalization. The objective reasons for the weakening of sovereignty from below are that the state is a very small object relative to the global economy. However, the economy of those regions is a very heavy burden for private enterprises and firms. This type is almost incompatible with high politics, as the economy, culture, and technology sectors have a lot to say about it.

Second, we must not forget the tendency to repeat global problems: that is, the preservation of traditional geopolitical factors in world politics as a result of solving these problems can serve as an example. Although such trends are secondary, their place in national interests needs to be adequately assessed. In this way, the state-nation, its sovereignty, its interests as an analytical concept, and the dimensions of the state's prestige retain their meaning in the international arena. But this does not mean, of course, that globalization will make no difference to national interests. On the contrary, the national interest changes its composition and direction significantly. On the one hand, new priorities related to the need to take advantage of globalization through adaptation and emerging opportunities are emerging, and on the other hand, the fight against losses leading to national development can be observed.

The country's integration into the world economic development process will become an important priority of the national interest, because in the process of globalization it is almost an absolute law; no country can achieve a significant economic growth and welfare without joining the world economy. At the same time, in the structure of national interests, the pursuit of advanced technologies, providing the most modern means of information, communication and transport, will come to the fore. In the military factor and related strategies, the hierarchy of national interests interferes in the first but not the last point. Indeed, the survival of a nation-state today depends not on its ability to withstand traditional military threats, but on its ability to respond appropriately to new challenges of an economic, technological, environmental, demographic and informational nature. As mentioned, globalization evokes the idea of a “weak” or “inefficient state”. In the first place, it affects the weakly developed countries of the South, which have economies in transition and threaten the countries that are unstable in political relations, in particular, this applies to all states. Therefore, the strengthening of the state institutions plays a very important role in the structure of national interests of modern countries. Indeed, as we have seen, the interests of “national” and “state” are simultaneously mutually exclusive and complementary. The

discrimination of one of them will undoubtedly lead to the weakening of the other. The reason for the state's denial of its territorial integrity is its inevitable vulnerability.

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