

# THE EFFECTS OF INADEQUATE COMMUNICATION PRACTICED BY LEADERS ON INDIVIDUALS AND HUMAN COMMUNITIES

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## Abstract

When leader's emotions defeated their rational thinking, their behavior generated war of words and even real wars for too many times, unfortunately. Overestimated ego is among the worst way of thinking and behaving for human beings. Leaders having this negative character's feature marked mankind history with a lot of bloody events. Given tremendous facilities of information technology paparazzi and sensationalist journalists shape and feed some people's appetite for chatting despite of law's provisions that protect people's rights for private life and image. Drunk by their power some community leaders disobeyed any law and committed or instigated their followers to commit the worst crimes against other human beings like rapes, murders, mass crimes and genocides. Prominent leaders use undiplomatic language quite often among themselves and this behavior stimulates many ordinary people to behave accordingly.

**Keywords:** *inadequate communication, undiplomatic language, war of words, leaders' worst behavior, leaders' arrogance, sensational journalism.*

People, even those with good intentions, sometimes jump to conclusions and fail to make a multidimensional and multi-criteria analysis of the effects of their actions. Driven by their own interests and / or even emotional experiences, us, the human individuals, forget or neglect to count to one hundred, to take a deep breath and then react to the inappropriate behavior of our fellow citizens.

History provides many examples where the words demolished instead of building bridges between people and communities. In ancient times it was for the first set forth the saying "verba volant scripta manent." Its author expresses a truth valid at that time and for many years afterwards: the words "fly" that is their meaning can be lost if those words are not written. The oral reproduction and transmission of someone's words was made, usually with distortions because few people can remember "mot a mot" everything they hear. Currently,

however the words, especially of leaders, are registered and, depending on the interest that recorded person may be transmitted in the air to chosen recipients chosen, or to whoever wants to listen. In this way, *verba volant* in the air can have a faster and higher impact than the written letter in dispatches or publications that are read by fewer people. In addition, between the issuer (the author of the speech or of the position taking person) and the receiver (recipient) the author of the article (transcript) may intervene and thus distort the message.

Taking advantage of the facilities outstanding offered by the audio-video equipment and the present day computer networks - for recording, playing back and transmission of data and images - paparazzi, "the citizen journalists" and even some professional journalists who chose to practice their profession in tabloid or row publications are looking for the sensational in the daily actions of their peers, especially those with a certain notoriety. They make use of any means and opportunity to feed the hunger for gossip of a significant segment of the population in violation of the right to privacy and self-image of anyone. On the other hand, there are some people with notoriety who do not pay enough attention, do not lead a balanced life, who are not and level-headed in their actions and blunder or "get carried away" forgetting about the manners and the rules of social coexistence, becoming the subject of "bomb-news" and more than once influencing the international relations. Thus were born "slander arias," the polemics, "the war of words,"<sup>1</sup> the language and the insults between diplomats or between top politicians and even between leaders of states,<sup>2</sup> etc.

Paolo Coelho wrote that in every human being "there is an angel and a devil"<sup>3</sup> but

choosing the way to follow and our becoming belongs to us. This truth applies not only ordinary to people but also to leaders. Through their words, attitudes and actions some leaders have channeled the energies of the human communities that they led to the achievement of some lofty goals. Among the most notable cases include the *New Deal* program of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt who pulled the country out of the *Great Depression* of 1929-1933.<sup>4</sup> A large notoriety enjoyed the initiative of another American, the Afro-American minister Martin Luther King, who under the slogan *I have a Dream* initially magnetized hundreds of thousands of Afro-Americans, and later other American citizens to advocate for the elimination of racial discrimination in the USA.<sup>5</sup> His dream became reality even if for this objective he paid with his life.

Unfortunately there were enough leaders who perpetrated and instigated members of the communities led by them to commit abominations - from individual assassinations, rapes and mass tortures to murder, genocide, ethnic cleansing, deportation and imprisonment of entire communities.

## **1. WHEN AN OVERSIZED EGO OBSCURES THE LEADERS' MIND**

It is said that power corrupts more than anything else. To prevent the manifestation of the drunkenness of power Pythagoras advised his contemporaries not to let "the statesmen time to get used to power and honors."<sup>6</sup> Related to this idea Henry Kissinger wrote that "the power is the most powerful aphrodisiac."<sup>7</sup> The notion of corruption, must be understood as an undesirable mental transformation and multilateral of the people who got in important positions and that manifests itself in attitudes and behavior, morally and even legally vindicatory. These people, be they royalty, heads of state or government or heads (principals, inspectors, rulers) of all levels, particularly at high levels of the hierarchy, forget or disregard knowingly the rules of social conduct and the laws for they count that they are above their peers. In ancient and medieval times the sovereigns and princes of many state entities

were considered "God's anointed"<sup>8</sup> or even that they had divine origin to enhance their authority over those they lead.

There were situations where the sovereigns were also the "church leaders."<sup>9</sup> It is possible that the accumulation of so many dignities on behalf of a single person contributed to the overgrowth of self-esteem but certainly, the moral flaws of those people had an important role in the oversize of their ego and in the possible duplication of their personality.

The exacerbated pride of some political and religious leaders led to arrogate themselves the "right" to be counted above the law, to dispose discretionary of the lives of those that led, to assume positions of life leaders of some states self-declared democratic.

Like many dictators detached from reality they encouraged, explicitly or tacitly, the cult of personality, expressed not only by bombastic titles like father of peoples,<sup>10</sup> the great leader, the great helmsman, the fuhrer, the king of kings,<sup>11</sup> the providential man,<sup>12</sup> the savior of the nation,<sup>13</sup> etc., but also through regular scale events where the obedience, the flattery and the daily adulation practiced by politicians, journalists and ordinary citizens alike, amplified to unimaginable size. Those events were organized under the pretext of celebrating important events in the history of the country or of the unique party, but most of them consisted of praise, thanks and the evocation merits assigned to the beloved leader.

A simple word or gesture of these dictators was enough to set on the hordes of opportunists and officials on those who become undesirable and labeled as "enemies of the people." To show their devotion towards the "the esteemed and beloved leader," the torturers vied in discovering new methods of torture of the detainees to convince them to self - denounce and "to recognize" the guilt invented by those who arrested them.<sup>14</sup> Often the detainees had no other guilt than to have dared to demand their rights or to be "chosen" to complete the number of those who had to be sacrificed in order to frighten the other members of communities and to prevent them from uprising.<sup>15</sup>

«Le roi c'est moi» is probably the most famous phrase that symbolizes the monarchical

absolutism, embodied by Louis XIV of France, nicknamed the "Sun King." His exacerbated ego materialized, among others, in the order to be engraved the inscription "et pluribus unum" on the guns of his army. Many autocratic rulers considered themselves "enlightened" and claimed that all their work is dedicated to the good of those they lead. Among them was Friedrich II the Great, king of Prussia. He claimed, whenever he had the opportunity, that he was the "first servant of the state," but he will get hell, the one who did not agree with him!

Knowing that "righteousness of the strongest is always the best,"<sup>16</sup> that is the powerful can afford almost anything, leaders like Vladimir Putin, Russia's president reacted harshly to the repeated requests of his counterparts in Europe and on other meridians to return the Crimea Peninsula to Ukraine stating that if need be he would even use nuclear weapons to defend Crimea.<sup>17</sup> He also, in an informal conversation with the former EU president Jose Manuel Barroso in the context of the meeting in Minsk, aimed at stopping the hostilities in eastern Ukraine and signing a ceasefire, said that if wanted he could occupy Kiev in two weeks.<sup>18</sup> The the statements and the declarations of the Russian president strained the relations with Ukraine with NATO and the EU and contributed to the imposition of sanctions to his country, including removing it from the G8 and the cease of military cooperation between NATO and Russia, measures that remind of the Cold War, prompting many more politico-military experts and journalists to say that we are back to the years of the infamous Iron Curtain.<sup>19</sup>

Other leaders of the Russian Federation too or of some of its institutions have a similar behaviour and approach. Among them stands out Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin with shock-statements and direct threats such as the one to Romania, in a message posted on Twitter, because it forbade flying over the Romanian airspace "Next time I will fly aboard a Tu-160" and continued: "Well, gentlemen from Romania, we'll explain shortly to you - who you are and what we think of you"<sup>20</sup> These attitudes have received appropriate reactions from those to whom they were addressed in the form of political, diplomatic, economic and financial

sanctions and the interruption of the military cooperation between NATO and the EU, on the one hand and the Russian Federation, on the other hand. Added to the disagreements between the same international actors in the conflict in Syria, these nonviolent clashes were labeled by some politicians, analysts politico-military and journalists as "a new Cold War."<sup>21</sup> The situation does not seem to return to normal anytime soon because the actions of one party receives similar retorts that seem to be subordinated to the law of retaliation ("an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth."<sup>22</sup>).

## 2. WHEN THE EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCES PREVENT US FROM JUDGING AND TO BEHAVING ACCORDING TO THE MORAL AND LEGAL NORMS

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Thucydides said that the greatest evils in the human history happened because the leaders of the communities reacted emotionally, not rationally in special situations.<sup>23</sup> In other words, those leaders had forgotten or neglected to put beyond their emotional experiences the interests of the communities they represented / lead.

The out of control emotional experiences were the source of some actions and deeds that had evil consequences on international security. From the war of Troy,<sup>24</sup> which is said to have been triggered by the kidnapping of the wife of the Greek King Menelaus by Paris, son of the Trojan King Priam, history has recorded many tense situations and even armed conflicts between states because of taking decisions under the influence of emotions.

Nicolae Iorga stated that the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871 would have been triggered by the request of King Napoleon III, through his emissary, the Prime Minister Emille Olivier addressed to his Prussian counterpart to give up, in writing, to his claims to the Spanish throne. The initiative of Napoleon III was driven by the fear for France not to have two great powers as potential hostile neighbors on its borders, led by German sovereigns. The request was a breach of diplomatic usance and was considered by Chancellor Bismark "a humiliation that no nation

can suffer"<sup>25</sup>. Consequently, the tensions between the two countries grew sharply and reached the military confrontation which was won by the Prussian army.

World War I too had an important emotional connotation from its onset - generated by the murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Habsburg, on June 28, 1914, in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina - until the signing of the armistice and peace treaty. Being in the victorious camp, the French imposed, together with the consent of Great Britain and the United States, the signing of the armistice with Germany on the same date, time and place when the Franco-German armistice of 1871 was signed - on November 11 at 11.00 in the same railroad wagon in the forest of Compiègne. Contrary to the diplomatic usages the representatives of Germany were not called at the peace conferences in Paris but only at the signing of the peace treaty. The content of the peace treaty was not negotiated but it was imposed on Germany, for this reason, some of the contemporaries considered the situation a revenge of France for the defeat in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-1871. The winning Alliance, *Antanta*, was accused by Germany that they imposed excessive peace terms by reducing its territory and the establishment of remedial payments of 132 billion gold-marks.<sup>26</sup>

There were voices in the camp of the victors too who criticized the Germany's treatment during the peace conferences and the content of the treaty. One of them - Marshal Ferdinand Foch, commander of the allied troops in the last months of the war and who signed the Armistice Convention,<sup>27</sup> estimated that the peace treaty was nothing else but a "truce of 20 years."<sup>28</sup> His appreciation was based on the failure through the treaty, of the proposed truce of the US President Woodrow Wilson who promised a just peace both for losers and the winners. The British Maynard Keynes, a member of the British delegation at the peace conference resigned and returned to London accusing the injustice that was done to Germany and forecasting that the peace treaty will be the cause of the outbreak of a new world conflict. The prediction was fulfilled by the coming to power of Hitler in Germany who said it would tear into pieces the Diktat of Versailles and would render the Germans the

pride and honor.<sup>29</sup> Following his declared objective in the campaign, Hitler decided not to respect the peace treaty, to rearm Germany, restore its great power status and ultimately caused the Second World War by attacking Poland on September 1, 1939.

The events that occurred during World War I aroused and continues to arouse so much controversy among historians, between leaders and even ordinary people. One of them refers to the military repression of the Armenians by the Ottoman Empire, because some of them joined the army of the Tsarist Empire during the fightings from Sarikemish between the Russians and the Turks. The event is considered the Armenians as a genocide, a point of view endorsed by 20 other states,<sup>30</sup> but the Turks vehemently oppose this approach by saying that the human losses suffered by the Armenians on the territory of the Ottoman Empire are a result of fighting and not of massacres or of the reprisals Turkish military. From time to time, Turkish and Armenian officials accuse each other of falsifying the history and of influencing the world community to win it over its side.

After the French parliament approved, in 2011, the law recognizing the Turk genocide against the Armenians in World War I,<sup>31</sup> the Turkish government interrupted the military cooperation with France<sup>32</sup> and recalled its ambassador in Paris for consultations.<sup>33</sup>

The prime minister of Turkey at that time, Recep Tayyip Erdogan asked the French President Nicolas Sarkozy, not to play with history and to ask his father - Pal Istvan Erno Sarkozi of Nagy-Bocsa<sup>34</sup> - former fighter in the Foreign Legion about the French genocide in Algeria, for the period 1945-1962, when 15% of the population would be massacred.<sup>35</sup>

The Algerian counterpart of the Turkish prime minister reacted to his statements asking him to remember the help given by Turkey to France during the war in Algeria. Consequently, Prime Minister Erdogan should not use the history of decolonization of Algeria to gain political capital.<sup>36</sup>

In 2013, another event strained international relations, this time between Turkey and the EU. That year, the European Parliament approved the report on democracy and human rights in the

world. In the final part of the report, the European Parliament asked the Member States to recognize the Armenian genocide. Taking note of the content and request of the report, the spokesman for the Turkish Foreign Ministry, Tanju Bilgic, said the European Parliament demands are "illogical and illegal."<sup>37</sup>

Similarly with the attitude towards France the Turkish government manifested towards Sweden in 2010 and against the Vatican and Pope Francis, in 2015, when the parliament in Stockholm and the pontiff sovereign recognized the Armenian genocide.<sup>38</sup> After Pope Francis' statement, the Turkish Foreign Minister considered as **unacceptable** and unrelated to historical reality the use the term genocide.<sup>39</sup>

The Armenians and the Azeris have been in conflict for nearly 100 years for the "enclave" Nagorno-Karabakh inhabited overwhelmingly by Armenians but located in the territory of modern Azerbaijan. In 1918, after the Bolshevik revolution in the Tsarist Empire, the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh decided by referendum to declare it an independent state, but the Azeris leaders reinstated the Azerbaijani sovereignty over the region by force of arms. Since then until the present the Armenians and the Azeris confronted military several times, the most important clashes being in 1988 and 1992 to 1994. If in 1988 the Azeris were victorious, in the confrontation in 1992-1994, generated by a new declaration of independence of the region - on December 10, 1991<sup>40</sup> - on behalf of the Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh intervened both their compatriots in Armenia and Russians and struggles ended with a ceasefire agreement, on 12 May 1994.

The agreement was made possible by the involvement of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), represented by the Minsk Group - Russia, the USA and France.<sup>41</sup>

Since the ceasefire so far, the agreement has been violated several times by both sides and the tension persists, fed from time to time by the officials from the two countries who declare as ready for war and initiating an arming race. In the New Year message in 2015, the Azerbaijan defense minister declared that the military would use force to restore the territorial integrity of the

country<sup>42</sup> in tune with the President Ilhan Alyiev who referred to force too if the negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan would not progress.<sup>43</sup> On the other hand, the Armenian President Serzh Sarkisian warns the Azerbaijani that if they attack Nagorno-Karabakh his country will not stand idly by, in which case his opponents will have surprises.<sup>45</sup>

The permanent tension between the two countries has fueled hatred between the Azerbaijanis and the Armenians. The self-exiled Azeris and those expelled from Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia are preparing for war and their desire for revenge grows. They convey feelings of hostility to the younger generations, a fact that complicates enormously the situation and peace becomes increasingly difficult to obtain.<sup>46</sup> To the situation of Armenian-Azerbaijani border is added to reduce the credibility of the Minsk Group, determined the actions the US and Russia, which supplies most arms to the two countries.<sup>47</sup>

The tense situation in Ukraine of 2013, followed by the violent confrontations between the opposition and the security forces in 2014, the Crimean secession and the outbreak of armed confrontations between self-proclaimed republics Donetsk and Lugansk generated many actions and statements on a strong emotional background.

On April 2, 2014, the former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich gave an interview to the *Associated Press* and *NTV* television in which admitted that he had made a mistake asking his Russian counterpart to intervene with military force to protect the people of Crimea. He said **he acted under the influence of emotions** and his action generated a tragedy for Ukraine, but that he hopes to find a solution for the peninsula to return to his country's membership.<sup>48</sup>

The military conflict in eastern Ukraine and the involvement of other states and of some foreign fighters in its evolution was responsible for the atrocities worthy of the Middle Ages - from beheading the opponents to the burning alive of the enemies. After the population of the Crimean Peninsula decided on March 16, 2014, by a vote of 97% of those present at the polls, the secession<sup>49</sup> from Ukraine on March 18, 2014, the ad interim leaders of the peninsula sought and obtained the approval of the State Duma of Russia to integrate

it in the composition of the Federation.<sup>50</sup> The same black day for his country, Yulia Tymoshenko - former Ukrainian prime minister - phoned the former Deputy President of the National Security Council and Defense of Ukraine Nestor Shufrych, saying that if she had prime minister the secession would not have taken place. Ruled by anger, Tymoshenko added that "it is time to take up arms and go to kill the Russians, along with their leader (... and expressing the hope that n.n.) that she will be able to convince the whole world to scorch the land of Russia."<sup>51</sup> There are records of the same former prime minister who said in a discussion with Arseniy Yatsenyuk, Ukrainian interim prime minister at the time, that all Russians in Ukraine should be killed with nuclear weapons.<sup>52</sup>

The Crimean events induced similar actions in other parts of Ukraine where Russian-speaking population has a significant share. In this context, in Odessa there were initiated demonstrations of the pro-Russian activists to support the exit of this entity from the composition of Ukraine. On May 2, 2014, violent clashes with police and regime supporters in Kiev led 42 pro-Russian activists to barricade a building. The supporters of the regime in Kiev set fire to the building and left to burn alive all those barricaded inside.<sup>53</sup>

### **3. BEHAVIOUR AND UNDIPLOMATIC LANGUAGE**

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The data, events and information avalanche that falls down on us in the audiovisual and written media mainly focused on the negative aspects, can outline the impression that today some important leaders of the world and some diplomats are too eccentric for the requirements that impose to certain people occupying these positions in the hierarchy of human communities. In the past too some heads of state and other persons who held important positions in the communities to which they belonged had behavior and language that violated moral and legal norms of conduct. A simple appeal to history reveals situations and attitudes of leaders who could be funny or grotesque if they had not had and continue to have significant negative effects on the international climate.

The gesture of the former Kremlin leader, Nikita Khrushchev, to cuff his fist on the rostrum of the UN General Assembly in 1960 and with the shoe on the tabletop where where he sat, to express his protest against the accusations of a Philippine diplomat towards the USSR that it engulfed the Eastern Europe and suppressed the human rights<sup>54</sup> were undiplomatic, rude even revealed not only the author's personality but also the imperial mentality imperial of the Soviets. To the many blunders of this kind of Khrushchev there can be added others that finally had an important contribution to the shaping of a negative personal image in the leadership in the Kremlin, and the deterioration of the image of the USSR in the global community. All these contributed to his landing from Soviet leadership, on October 14, 1964, and his placement under home arrest at a holiday house near Moscow.<sup>55</sup>

At the UN General Assembly session on September 26, 1960, the Cuban leader Fidel Castro delivered a speech of 4 hours and 29 minutes, the longest in the history of the organization, which resulted in an important part of participants at the meeting to leave the room as a sign of protest against the violation of diplomatic customs. In his speech, Castro praised the revolution in his country, the exit from the US colonial status and explained the need for closeness to USSR. He blamed the subversive actions against Cuba led by an American president "millionaire but ignorant and illiterate."<sup>56</sup> Castro's permanent defiant attitude towards the USA was decisive in imposing the American embargo on Cuba, raised gradually from 2015 to 2016, on the intervention of Pope Francis.

At another session of the UN General Assembly, in 1975, there was approved the Resolution 3370 which condemned the Zionism policy led by Israel, considered "as a form of racism and racial discrimination." The Israeli Ambassador to the UN, Chaim Herzog, later President of the country, opposed the decision and tore the paper in protest.<sup>57</sup> His gesture strained Israel's relations with the world organization which currently are not still too cordial.

Another nonconformist ambassador to the UN, that of the USA - Joh Bolton - was criticizing the UN in 1884, saying the organization "works when the USA wants it to work."<sup>58</sup> Remarks of

this kind of the US ambassador eroded the image of his country in the world organization .

At the UN General Assembly session in 2006, President Hugo Chavez accused the US President George Bush Jr. that was a devil who left the smell of sulfur in the courtroom, an odor that persisted, even if there had been a day since his taking the floor to the rostrum of the General Assembly.

On September 23, 2009 the Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi took the floor of the UN General Assembly for the first time in the 40 years since he had been installed in power. In his one hour and 36 minutes speech Gaddafi accused the organization that it failed to prevent a dozen of wars where mass crimes were committed and that their perpetrators should be tried. Finally he said that he did not recognize the authority of the UN Charter and tore to pieces a copy of it in front of the audience who had not left the meeting room in protest against the content and duration of the speech.<sup>60</sup>

US President Barack Obama had a non-compliant reception, inconsistent with his status and the diplomatic usage on his landing on the Chinese soil at the G20 summit on September 3, 2016. The local and central authorities did not provide the sliding stairway necessary for the President and his delegation to get off the plane on the international airport Hangzhou Xiaoshan in Zhejiang province. Moreover, part of the American delegation was not allowed to enter the meeting room of the summit, although it had been accredited. <sup>61</sup>Barack Obama said that there will be consequences to the Chinese gesture, without mentioning them.

The Philippine president Rodrigo Tagalog Duterte "praises" with the name "son of a whore" all those who criticize his methods of governance, how he leads the war against drugs, the quality of infrastructure, the road traffic in the country etc. The best known people who have "benefited" from the Philippine president's attention, only 2016, are Pope Francis, President Obama and the US ambassador to Manila. Taking note of his Philippine counterpart Barack Obama canceled a scheduled visit to that country and said that there would be other consequences.<sup>62</sup>

The almost permanent conflict between Iran and Israel, initiated after the Islamic revolution

in Iran is conducted both directly in the politico-diplomatic, economic and psychological plans but especially through a subversive plan through the work of the intelligence and special operations services. In the political and diplomatic terms the leaders of both countries address their threats whenever they can.

The Ayatollahs and the Iranian presidents consider Israel "an insult to humanity,"<sup>63</sup> threaten the Hebrew State with "wiping it from the map"<sup>64</sup> and promise support to anyone who fights against it.<sup>65</sup> The Israel's destruction was threatened with too by the Major General Mohammad Ali Jafari, commander of the Islamic Republican Guard of Iran, when the American and French leaders announced the decision to attack the government forces of Syria to punish the use of chemical weapons, the West laying the blame on the Bashar al Assad regime.

In their turn, the Israeli leaders ask for the support of the international community to stop Iran's nuclear ambitions<sup>67</sup> and threatening to act against on their own if the UN fails to take action accordingly.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

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Lately the domestic and international crisis but also the electoral events in the important states of the world seem to have stimulated some leading political actors to use the personal attack and to launch the " -warning-arrows" to their counterparts of the nations with whom they are in conflict and not only.

History is not written by leaders but certainly it is influenced by their attitude and behavior. An inappropriate language and an undiplomatic behavior of community leaders may generate tensions that can develop into political, diplomatic, economic, financial sanctions and of other nature, or even into armed confrontation.

Warlike attitudes like the one of the American General MacArthur who said in an interview that, after defeating the North Korea, the UN forces should attack China, with the nuclear weapons included to free it from the communists<sup>68</sup> or of the Russian president Putin that he would make use of nuclear weapons too, if necessary, to defend the Crimean Peninsula, were and are

generated by an exacerbated ego of some political and military leaders.

Tensions and even international conflicts have been and certainly will be caused by decisions made under the influence of emotions by leaders insufficiently trained in the art of leadership and diplomacy.

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