

## Russian Propagandist: After Ukraine We Occupy Uzbekistan

### News:

The latest statement by the famous propagandist of the “Russian world”, writer and member of “Putin’s Team” Zakhar Prilepin about the invasion of Uzbekistan and its annexation to Russia, similar to the Ukrainian scenario, caused a wide resonance.

**“I sincerely stand for those territories from where labour migrants come to us, to join them and teach them the Russian language on the spot, so that not here, but in Uzbekistan. I'm not joking, I'm not playing the fool. This will allow us to say at any time: “Since two million of your citizens are on our territory, we claim your territory. Because the majority are already here, and they even voted for it.” Who will stop us from doing something like that on Eurasian territory after the parade in Kyiv?”,** - Prilepin said during a conference at the Russia Today press-center on December 20.

Let us remind you that Zakhar Prilepin is the co-chairman of the party **“A Just Russia - Patriots - For Truth”** and a member of the central headquarters of the **All-Russian Popular Front (ONF)** created by Putin’s initiative, and in August 2023 he received the rank of lieutenant colonel and the position of deputy commander for military-political work of the special-purpose regiment **“Oplot”** consisting of **Russian Guard**, consisting of veterans of combat operations in Syria and Ukraine.

### Comment:

The Kremlin, represented by Maria Zakharova, commented on Prilepin’s words very unclear, without condemning the propagandist for the provocative statement. **“The Russian side has repeatedly emphasized that attracting labor resources from abroad, primarily from friendly countries, meets the interests of both Russia and the states that export such services. <...> Prilepin’s statements are his personal opinion, which does not even remotely reflect the official position of the Russian Federation”,** - Zakharova said.

At the same time, the chairman of the party **“A Just Russia - Patriots - For Truth”** Sergei Mironov completely stood up for his fellow party member. **“This is not some kind of political program... not steps that, for example, our party is going to take... This is just an opinion... the opinion of a talented writer, a true patriot of our country, nothing more”,** - Mironov said.

Thus, not a single Russian politician condemned or disavowed Prilepin’s words, thereby indirectly approving the idea voiced in his statement.

Meanwhile, experts warned Uzbek authorities to take this kind of statements more than seriously. **“Zakhar Prilepin, who proposes and advocates an invasion of Uzbekistan, was once in the opposition. After the annexation of Crimea, his attitude towards Putin changed and became more positive. Before the Ukrainian war, Prilepin spoke many times with the slogans “Ukraine must be occupied!” . That is why it is under sanctions of the European Union. Today Prilepin, as a politician close to the Kremlin, promotes the idea that Central Asia and Uzbekistan must be conquered.**

**Prilepin is an official politician, the officially registered leader of the party and one of the leaders of the coalition formed together with A Just Russia. That is, there is a high probability that Prilepin’s statement is the view, the project, the mood of the Kremlin. Prilepin did not speak out of emotion. He thought, chose words and spoke. A serious signal for the state!”,** - wrote the famous Uzbek political scientist Kamoliddin Rabbimov on his Facebook page.

However, the Uzbek authorities reacted very restrainedly, still trying to demonstrate indignation to the domestic audience: on December 21, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to Uzbekistan Oleg Malginov was invited to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan. The text published on the website of the Uzbek department notes that the representative of the Russian Federation was **“in principle informed”** that the statement of the Russian writer about the annexation of Uzbekistan to Russia was received **“with a feeling of deep concern”**. **“Such thoughtless proposals from party leaders of a friendly country do not correspond to the spirit of a comprehensive strategic partnership and alliance between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation”,** - the Uzbek Foreign Ministry said.

Let us recall that with the coming to power of Shavkat Mirziyoyev in Uzbekistan, the country began to clearly lean towards Russia after many years of relative balance between the superpowers, which the previous President Karimov managed to maintain. Therefore, no statement can cancel the fact that Russian companies are gradually taking over the country’s economy, the entire population has long been “hooked” on Russian state television channels, and Uzbekistan has become one of the parallel import countries saving Russia from Western sanctions for the invasion of Ukraine.

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