
ПЕРСОНАЛИИ

PERSONALIA

Интеллектуальное наследие, оставленное Владимиром Makeем

The intellectual legacy left by Vladimir Makei

FOREWORD

Vladimir Makei has been the longest serving Minister of foreign affairs of an independent Belarus. It is true that in 2012 he inherited the country's foreign service that had already been well-established, robust and effective. Nevertheless, V. Makei did his utmost to strengthen the Belarusian diplomacy so that it became even more vigorous and agile both in advancing the country's national interests as well as in promoting a number of topics on the global scene that served to bring all countries of the world together in an effort to address common challenges.

The purpose of this essay is to take stock of the latter dimension, which may be called a unifying agenda, because it is here that V. Makei left his most significant intellectual footprint for his country's diplomats and for the world generally. Indeed, minister Makei was a well-read man who became an original thinker on international relations. So, he practiced and theorised in international relations alike. In this he was much like the 20th century's famous American diplomat G. Kennan.

The late minister was a prolific writer on international relations. He wrote more than a dozen large pieces that addressed such diverse topics as global politics, global order, human rights, identity politics, the United Nations, combatting trafficking in persons and trade in human organs.

The minister's ideas and thoughts provided a crucial direction for action to the Belarusian diplomats, primarily for those specialised in multilateral diplomacy. Some of these thoughts and ideas, especially those related to thematic areas like trafficking in persons were implemented whereas some others that deal with a broader issue of global politics continue to serve as

a useful guidance that may help make the world a better place.

With this in mind, I have kindly asked some senior colleagues in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic Belarus to share their personal impressions on working with minister Makei on certain issues. Specifically, I asked three senior officials to answer the question of what legacy V. Makei left in the three areas of international cooperation: global politics, human rights and combating trafficking in persons.

Why did I choose these three specific areas? The topic of global politics is the one where V. Makei most vividly demonstrated his original thinking that produced bold and far-reaching ideas, which will surely be discussed for many years to come. As for human rights, V. Makei's ministerial tenure coincided with ever-increasing politicisation of the topic. To his credit, the minister very early captured this negative trend, tried to explain it and provide win-win solutions. As far as the topic of human trafficking is concerned, since 2005 it has been a hallmark international initiative of Belarus. Building on the "edifice" that had already been erected by his predecessor, V. Makei generated new ideas that would result in important international anti-trafficking outcomes.

I hope that the findings of the following three short essays will tell us exactly what V. Makei will be remembered for both in Belarus and abroad. Likewise, I hope that these findings will inspire, first and foremost, the diplomats working in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic Belarus to be as creative in their thinking and as vigorous in the advancement of their own ideas as the late minister was.

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