# Russia's Hostile Measures

## Combating Russian Gray Zone Aggression Against NATO in the Contact, Blunt, and Surge Layers of Competition

## Appendix B: Detailed Case Studies of Russia's Use of Hostile Measures

STEPHANIE PEZARD, KATYA MIGACHEVA, BRENNA ALLEN

**Prepared for the United States Army**
**Approved for public release; distribution unlimited**

ARROYO CENTER

For more information on this publication, visit www.rand.org/t/RR2539

Published by the RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, Calif.
© Copyright 2020 RAND Corporation
RAND® is a registered trademark.

Limited Print and Electronic Distribution Rights

This document and trademark(s) contained herein are protected by law. This representation of RAND intellectual property is provided for noncommercial use only. Unauthorized posting of this publication online is prohibited. Permission is given to duplicate this document for personal use only, as long as it is unaltered and complete. Permission is required from RAND to reproduce, or reuse in another form, any of its research documents for commercial use. For information on reprint and linking permissions, please visit www.rand.org/pubs/permissions.

The RAND Corporation is a research organization that develops solutions to public policy challenges to help make communities throughout the world safer and more secure, healthier and more prosperous. RAND is nonprofit, nonpartisan, and committed to the public interest.

RAND's publications do not necessarily reflect the opinions of its research clients and sponsors.

Support RAND
Make a tax-deductible charitable contribution at
www.rand.org/giving/contribute

www.rand.org

# About This Appendix

This appendix accompanies the RAND report *Russia's Hostile Measures: Combating Russian Gray Zone Aggression Against NATO in the Contact, Blunt, and Surge Layers of Competition* and an additional appendix that presents a historical review of Soviet-era hostile measures. Both are available online at www.rand.org/t/RR2539. Here, we present findings from our analyses of the five gray zone case studies of Russian hostile measures that were briefly summarized in the report. Each case study includes a chronology of Russia's use of hostile measures, a review of their implementation and reactions at the local and international levels, and an analysis of their success. However, we begin with an overview of our case-study approach, including how we selected the cases and our use of process tracing and the limits of that approach.

## Case-Study Approach

These case studies offer comprehensive narratives that provide insights into how and why Russia used specific hostile measures, as well as how it combines or sequences these measures in situations of crisis to further its strategic and political objectives. To achieve a sufficient level of depth, we relied on a small-*n* case-study method, whose benefits were summarized by Stephen Biddle as follows:

> Small-*n* case method permits the depth of analysis needed to characterize variables . . . that have not heretofore been included in large-*n* datasets. It also allows detailed process tracing to help distinguish real causation from mere coincidence. This depth of detail, however, makes it impossible to consider more than a handful of cases.[1]

While the small-*n* approach does not offer significant opportunity for quantitative analyses, we combined this approach with process tracing to increase the value of our results and to lay the foundation for further empirical research.

### Case-Study Selection

The small-*n* case-study comparison makes case selection particularly difficult. The limited number of cases gives each considerable weight, and deciding to exclude one case or another could have important consequences for the observations made—as well as the conclusions

[1] Stephen Biddle, *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004, p. 10.

derived from them.[2] Cases must also be similar enough to allow for comparison but sufficiently different to provide varied observations and findings that are not self-evident. Ragin, Berg-Schlosser, and de Meur advised that "a maximum heterogeneity for a minimum number of cases should be achieved."[3] This insight guided our selection process.

We defined a *case study* as any instance of Russia using a combination of measures in or against a specific country to achieve geopolitical objectives without crossing the line into major conventional or nuclear confrontation.[4] Such measures may have been employed gradually over an extended period, representing a form of "hostile-measures steady state" for the target country, while others may have happened in response to a specific crisis. Recognizing, however, that our definition would encompass an inordinate number of potential cases, we scoped the universe of cases in the following ways:

- confined to post-Soviet Russia to help characterize contemporary behavior
- eliminated cases of Russian influence when risks of war were exceptionally limited.

We also gave preference to cases that could provide some variety with regard to the country on the receiving end of Russian hostile measures:

- *Geographic proximity to Russia:* Building from our historical analysis, we assumed a Russian focus on near states. Therefore, these states would offer the most intense application of hostile measures.
- *Presence of Russian minorities:* We assumed that this factor would affect Russia's ability to employ some hostile measures (e.g., political influence, cultural or religious influence).
- *North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) membership:* We assumed that this factor would influence Russia's cost-benefit calculations when it considered employing hostile measures. NATO membership makes Russia's use of hostile measures potentially more costly.
- *Frozen conflict:* A frozen conflict is one that has gone on for many years without resolution and without offering prospects for near-term resolution. We assumed that this factor would provide Russia with an automatic means of leverage in the afflicted country.
- *U.S. strategic interest:* We assumed that U.S. strategic interest in a particular country would influence Russia's cost and risk calculations when employing hostile measures: Perceptions of costs and risks would rise along with perceived U.S. strategic interest in the targeted state.

Table B.1 presents an overview of our case selection criteria. These various profiles reflect different opportunities for and constraints on Russian hostile measures and the approaches that the target country and its allies could use to counter them.

---

[2] Charles C. Ragin, Dirk Berg-Schlosser, and Gisèle de Meur, "Political Methodology: Qualitative Methods," in Robert E. Goodin and Hans-Dieter Klingemann, eds., *A New Handbook of Political Science*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 752.

[3] Ragin, Berg-Schlosser, and de Meur, 1996, p. 752.

[4] As defined by Ben Connable, Jason H. Campbell, and Dan Madden, *Stretching and Exploiting Thresholds for High-Order War: How Russia, China, and Iran Are Eroding American Influence Using Time-Tested Measures Short of War*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, RR-1003-A, 2016, p. 1.

**Table B.1**
**Selection of Cases**

| | Differences | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cases | Contiguous to Russia/Former Soviet Republic? | Presence of Russian Minority Population? | NATO Member? | Frozen Conflict? | High U.S. Strategic Interest? |
| Moldova (1992–2016) | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| Georgia (2004–2012) | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes |
| Estonia (2006–2007) | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes |
| Ukraine (2014–2016) | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Turkey (2015–2016) | No | No | Yes | No | Yes |

### Case-Study Structure

Researchers Alexander L. George and Timothy J. McKeown state that small-*n* case studies should follow a "structured-focused comparison" method, which requires "collecting data on the same variables across units."[5] Accordingly, our five case studies share a similar structure to facilitate comparison and to highlight variations in Russia's relative success—or lack thereof—in using similar hostile measures in different situations.

The case studies begin with a background section that outlines the situation that Russia was trying to change and its objectives in doing so. Each section follows a similar pattern: (1) a description of hostile measures and how they were implemented, (2) local and international responses to the hostile measures, and (3) Russia's success in using hostile measures identified (based on our understanding of what Russian intentions might have been). Each case study concludes with a timeline summarizing the hostile measures employed and the key events that triggered their use, as well as an assessment of Russia's *overall* success and the success of local and international countermeasures.

## Process Tracing: Its Use and Limitations

Ideally, the cases would have enough similarities to allow replicable findings on Russian hostile-measures tactics. To that end, we traced the emergence of Russian hostile measures in the context of the cases, tracked the duration of their use (from one instance to a period of months or years), and mapped these events in the individual case timelines. This mapping is one component of the method known as *process tracing*, which political scientist David Collier described as a "systematic examination of diagnostic evidence selected and analyzed in light of research questions and hypotheses posed by the investigator."[6] The limitations of a small-*n* study prevented us from deriving empirical findings from this tracing: Five cases are insufficient to show empirical evidence of a pattern or patterns. Instead, we discuss our findings as they apply to these five cases specifically. With this caveat, we argue that process tracing

[5] Quoted in Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994, p. 45.

[6] David Collier, "Understanding Process Tracing," *Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 44, No. 4, 2011, p. 823.

remains useful in highlighting potential patterns, informing analysis, and setting a baseline for future case studies. Analyses of a larger set of cases of Russian hostile measures using a similar approach would likely be able to adopt the process tracing method more completely.

## Assessing the Success and Failure of Russian Hostile Measures in the Five Cases

In Chapter Three of the accompanying report, we presented subject-matter expert ratings of Russia's relative tactical and strategic success or failure in each case. Like the ratings presented in the report, the conclusions about success or failure presented in this appendix draw on a Western perspective rather than a Russian perspective. Hence, it is possible that Russian leaders (or other Western analysts) would come to different conclusions about Russian motivations and levels of success in each of these cases.

After presenting the five case studies, we conclude this appendix with a summary of the findings and conclusions from the set of cases. A more holistic analysis, accompanied by findings drawn from the aggregate of our historical, case-specific, and contextual research, can be found in the accompanying main report, available at www.rand.org/t/RR2539.

# Contents

**About This Appendix** ..... iii
**Figures and Tables** ..... ix
**Abbreviations** ..... xi

**Moldova (1992–2016)** ..... 1
Military Pressure and Frozen Conflict ..... 2
Political Influence ..... 4
Media Influence ..... 7
Cultural and Religious Influence ..... 8
Economic Sanctions ..... 9
Pressures on Moldova's Labor Market ..... 13
Economic and Financial Control ..... 14
Leveraging Energy Supplies ..... 15
Use of the Compatriot Policy in Moldova ..... 16
Summary of the Moldova Case ..... 17
How Successful Were Russia's Hostile Measures in Moldova Overall? ..... 17
What Effective Responses (if Any) Were Designed to Counter Them? ..... 19

**Georgia (2004–2012)** ..... 21
Russia's Three Key Objectives in Its Policy Toward Georgia ..... 23
Energy Sanctions ..... 24
Trade Sanctions ..... 26
Diplomatic and Economic Measures After the Spying Row ..... 28
Passportization in the Lead-Up to the Russo-Georgian War ..... 31
Official Relations with Abkhazia and South Ossetia in the Lead-Up to the Russo-Georgian War ..... 33
Shootdown of a Georgian Surveillance Drone in the Lead-Up to the Russo-Georgian War ..... 34
Military Posturing During the Russo-Georgian War ..... 35
Cyberattacks During the Russo-Georgian War ..... 36
Media Campaigns During the Russo-Georgian War ..... 37
Official Recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia ..... 41
Summary of the Georgia Case ..... 42
How Successful Were Russia's Hostile Measures Overall? ..... 42
What Effective Responses (if Any) Were Designed to Counter Them? ..... 45

**Estonia (2006–2007)** ..... 47
Protests in Tallinn ..... 50
Public Information Campaign ..... 51
Russia's "Hidden Sanctions" ..... 52
Siege of the Estonian Embassy in Moscow ..... 53
Media Campaign ..... 54
Cyberattacks ..... 55
Summary of the Estonia Case ..... 56
How Successful Were Russia's Hostile Measures Overall? ..... 57
What Effective Responses (if Any) Were Designed to Counter Them? ..... 59

**Ukraine (2014–2016)** ..... 61
Historical Background ..... 62
The Spetsnaz and the Annexation of Crimea ..... 64
Russian Military Support to Separatists in Donbas ..... 66
Using Proxies in Crimea and Donbas ..... 69
Snap Exercises and Military Buildup ..... 71
Application and Exploitation of Compatriot Policy in Ukraine ..... 73
Information Warfare ..... 75
Legal Rhetoric and Actions ..... 79
Exploiting Ukraine's Energy Dependence ..... 80
Economic Coercion and Incentives ..... 82
Summary of the Ukraine Case ..... 83
How Successful Were Russia's Hostile Measures Overall? ..... 84
What Effective Responses (if Any) Were Designed to Counter Them? ..... 86

**Turkey (2015–2016)** ..... 89
Public Diplomacy Campaign ..... 92
Military Pressure ..... 93
Pressure on the Kurdish Issue ..... 94
Economic Sanctions ..... 96
Leveraging Turkey's Energy Dependence on Russia ..... 98
Diplomacy and Cultural Exchanges ..... 99
Summary of the Turkish Case ..... 100
How Successful Were Russia's Hostile Measures Overall? ..... 100

**Conclusions** ..... 103
Possible General Patterns of Hostile-Measures Use ..... 105
How Successful Have Hostile Measures Been for Russia? ..... 106
The Cost of Hostile Measures for Russia ..... 108
Effective Countermeasures to Russian Hostile Measures ..... 109

**References** ..... 111

# Figures and Tables

## Figures


B.1. Map of Moldova ..... 2
B.2. Timeline of Russian Hostile Measures in Moldova ..... 18
B.3. Map of Georgia ..... 23
B.4. Timeline of Russian Hostile Measures in Georgia ..... 43
B.5. Map of Estonia ..... 47
B.6. Timeline of Russian Hostile Measures in Estonia ..... 58
B.7. Map of Ukraine ..... 61
B.8. Timeline of Russian Hostile Measures in Ukraine ..... 85
B.9. Map of Turkey ..... 90
B.10. Timeline of Russian Hostile Measures in Turkey ..... 101


## Tables


B.1. Selection of Cases ..... v
B.2. Natural Gas Prices Charged to Russian Customers, 2005–2008 ..... 25
B.3. Hostile Measures Used by Russia in Moldova, Georgia, Estonia, Ukraine, and Turkey ..... 104

## Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| bcm | billion cubic meters |
| CIA | Central Intelligence Agency |
| CIS | Commonwealth of Independent States |
| DDoS | distributed denial of service |
| G8 | Group of Eight |
| GDP | gross domestic product |
| ISIS | Islamic State of Iraq and Syria |
| LNG | liquefied natural gas |
| NATO | North Atlantic Treaty Organization |
| OSCE | Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe |
| PCRM | Partidul Comuniştilor din Republica Moldova [Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova] |
| PKK | Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê [Kurdistan Workers' Party] |
| PSRM | Partidul Socialiştilor din Republica Moldova [Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova] |
| TAK | Teyrêbazên Azadiya Kurdistan [Kurdistan Freedom Falcons] |
| UN | United Nations |
| WTO | World Trade Organization |
| YPG | Yekîneyên Parastina Gel [People's Protection Units] |

# Moldova (1992–2016)

Moldova is a small, landlocked country wedged between Romania and Ukraine that has long occupied an important geostrategic position (see Figure B.1). The Russian Empire, which acquired the region from the Ottoman Empire in 1792, saw it as the defense line for its southwestern border and implemented a policy of Russification in Moldova that continued through the Soviet era.[1] Moldova's eastern region of Transnistria declared its independence in September 1990. The Moldovan leadership refused to recognize the claim, and the country declared its own independence a year later. Still, Russia's 14th Army, which had been stationed in Moldova, made no move to leave the country.[2]

Moldova's independence sparked a brief war in 1992 between Moldovan and separatist Transnistrian forces, with Russia intervening militarily on Transnistria's side. The conflict concluded with a ceasefire and the establishment of a "security zone" policed by a tripartite peacekeeping force of Russian, Transnistrian, and Moldovan personnel. As of 2016, the self-proclaimed Transnistrian Moldovan Republic functioned as a quasi-autonomous state with its own government, parliament, military, police, legislative body, currency, central bank, and postal system, albeit without international recognition.[3] The dispute is still widely considered a "frozen conflict," alongside other unresolved military and political stalemates in the region, such as South Ossetia and Abkhazia in Georgia and Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan.

Since the fall of the Soviet Union and Moldova's subsequent independence, Russia's objectives have been to maintain Russian influence and prevent the former Soviet republic from taking a pro–EU course and cooperating too closely with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Toward these ends, Russia has used a variety of hostile measures.[4] First and foremost, Russia's continued military presence in the frozen conflict over Transnistria allows it to threaten Moldova with internal destabilization and possibly permanent territorial fragmentation. Beyond Transnistria, Moscow can count on other sources of leverage because Moldova is highly dependent on Russia as an export market for its agricultural products, a

[1] Olga Savceac, "Transnistria-Moldova Conflict," Inventory of Conflict and Environment Case Study No. 182, Washington, D.C.: American University, May 2006.

[2] Savceac, 2006.

[3] Florent Parmentier, "Moldova," in David Cadier, ed., *The Geopolitics of Eurasian Economic Integration*, London School of Economics IDEAS Report, 2014, p. 50; Jens Malling, "The Value of a Frozen Conflict," *Le Monde Diplomatique*, March 2015.

[4] Jim Nichol, *Russian Political, Economic, and Security Issues and U.S. Interests*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, RL34618, March 31, 2014, p. 48.

**Figure B.1**
**Map of Moldova**

SOURCE: Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), "Moldova," *World Factbook*, last updated July 10, 2019b.

major source of foreign investment in Moldova, a job market for Moldovan workers, and a provider of energy—particularly gas, which is needed to operate Moldovan electricity plants.[5]

## Military Pressure and Frozen Conflict

### Content and Implementation

Russia maintains a force of approximately 2,000 personnel in Transnistria.[6] The 14th Army, which had been present since the Soviet era, was eventually replaced by the Operational Group of Russian Forces. Approximately 400–500 Russian peacekeepers have also been stationed in Transnistria since 1992. As a result, Transnistria has been described as a "Russian-garrisoned exclave."[7]

The Russian military presence in Transnistria remains open-ended. At the 1999 Istanbul Summit of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Russia agreed to withdraw its military forces by 2002, but Vladimir Putin, then prime minister, decided to

[5] Kamil Calus, "Russian Sanctions Against Moldova: Minor Effects, Major Potential," Warsaw, Poland: Center for Eastern Studies, November 6, 2014.

[6] Malling, 2015.

[7] Vladimir Socor, "Dmitry Rogozin Appointed Special Presidential Representative for Transnistria," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 9, No. 59, March 23, 2012.

make withdrawal contingent on the conflict's resolution.[8] Russia has, at times, also hinted at the possibility that its military involvement might increase rather than decrease.[9]

### Local and International Reactions

Moldova has repeatedly asked Russia to withdraw the Operational Group of Russian Forces from Transnistria, but to no avail. Russia's presence and interests in the region are, to some extent, recognized internationally because it plays a mediator role, along with Ukraine and the OSCE, in the "5+2" negotiation process on the status of Transnistria.[10]

### Level of Success

Russia's stationing of military forces in Transnistria has been a key tool in allowing it to maintain influence in Moldova. As a result of its military involvement, Russia helped Transnistria keep up its status as a breakaway region and maintain a low-level threat of internal destabilization and division in Moldova. In September 2013, for instance, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin warned Moldova that signing onto the Association Agreement with the European Union might lead it to lose Transnistria.[11] Paradoxically, however, Transnistria's independence or its absorption by Russia would cause Russia to lose this leverage in Moldova. As a result, Russia has not tried to annex Transnistria despite repeated appeals from the Transnistrian population.[12] Prolonging the status quo in Transnistria also prevents Moldova from joining NATO anytime soon, since existing members of the alliance might be wary of being dragged into a military confrontation with Russia if this frozen conflict happened to thaw.[13] One analyst compared the recent conflict in Ukraine's eastern region of Donbas to the Transnistrian situation: In both cases, Russia is promoting a federal structure that would give the regions under its control more influence on national decisions.[14] A federalization of Moldova would also give Transnistria de facto veto power on further rapprochement between Moldova and the EU and would leave open the possibility—not unpopular in the country—of moving instead toward the Eurasian Economic Union.[15]

---

[8] OSCE, *Istanbul Document 1999*, January 2000, p. 50; Nichol, 2014, p. 48; International Crisis Group, *Moldova's Uncertain Future*, Europe Report No. 175, August 17, 2006, p. 12.

[9] According to one 2012 report,

> Through what were probably calculated media leaks, Russia has . . . raised the possibility of deploying a radar station in Transnistria to counter the Romania-based US elements of the Anti-Ballistic Missile shield. And there have been reports that the Russian peacekeeping force could establish a military base in Transnistria. (Nicu Popescu and Leonid Litra, *Transnistria: A Bottom-Up Solution*, London: European Council on Foreign Relations, September 2012, p. 5)

[10] This process also involves Moldova and Transnistria as parties, as well as the United States and the European Union as observers.

[11] Rogozin was also Putin's special envoy on Transnistria and co-chairs the Russia-Moldova Inter-Governmental Economic Cooperation Commission on behalf of Russia (Vladimir Socor, "Rogozin Threatens Moldova with Sanctions Over Association Agreement with the European Union," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 10, No. 155, September 4, 2013).

[12] Neil Buckley, "Transnistria Shapes Up as Next Ukraine-Russia Flashpoint," *Financial Times*, June 3, 2015; Malling, 2015; Popescu and Litra, 2012, pp. 4–5.

[13] Malling, 2015.

[14] Sergiy Gerasymchuk, "Frozen Conflict in Moldova's Transnistria: A Fitting Analogy to Ukraine's Hybrid War?" Washington, D.C.: Atlantic Council, September 1, 2015.

[15] Transnistria's foreign policy has consistently promoted the Eurasian Union over the European Union (Parmentier, 2014, p. 51). Also see Anita Sobják, "Is Transnistria the Next Crimea?" *Polish Institute of International Affairs Bulletin*, No. 49, April 11, 2014.

Yet, there are limits on the extent to which Transnistria can be used as a means to pressure Moldova. While Moldova officially maintains that Transnistria is (and will remain) an integral part of the country, the general population is less sanguine on the matter. Polls show that the Moldovan population places greater priority on such issues as poverty and crime than resolution of the conflict.[16] Such a sentiment may also be present among Moldovan elites. According to journalist Vladimir Soloviev, "[I]n private conversations, Moldovan diplomats admit they would consider giving up Transnistria if the conflict hinders EU integration."[17]

## Political Influence

### Content and Implementation

In the early 2000s, Russia supported the Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova (PCRM), largely at the request of the PCRM itself.[18] The PCRM was in power from 2001 to 2009, making Moldova the only former Soviet Republic to have chosen communism again after the disintegration of the Soviet Union.[19] Although the PCRM's electoral platform and initial orientation after coming to power were definitely pro-Russia—Moldovan President Vladimir Voronin advocated closer relations with Russia, with the aim of solving the Transnistria issue, and membership in the Eurasian Economic Community—the PCRM gradually moved toward rapprochement with the West, at times straining its relations with Russia.[20]

It is unclear how much support, and of what type, other pro-Russia parties in Moldova have received from Russia. The Party of Socialists of the Republic of Moldova (PSRM) and Our Party, in particular, have come to take a more clearly pro-Russia stance than the PCRM. Both parties advocate a closer relationship between Moldova and Russia, and both support Moldova's membership in the Eurasian Union. PSRM adopted "Together with Russia" as its motto during the 2014 election campaign and prominently displayed images of its leader, Igor Dodon, with President Putin.[21] This strategy seemed to pay off, and the PSRM secured the largest share of the vote in the 2014 parliamentary elections. The Patria Party, headed by businessman Renato Usatii, who had spent the previous decade living in Russia, was disqualified

---

For more on the Eurasian Customs Union, see United Nations Committee for Development Policy, "Preferential Market Access: Russian Federation, Kazakhstan and Belarus (Eurasian Customs Union)," webpage, undated. A November 2015 CIVIS [Centru de Analiză şi Investigaţii Sociologice, Politologice şi Psihologice] survey of Moldovans asked, "If a referendum were to take place next Sunday on whether the Republic of Moldova should join the EU or the Customs Union with Russia-Belarus-Kazakhstan, would you vote in favor or against?" Forty-five percent responded that they would have voted in favor of EU membership for Moldova, and 48 percent responded that they would have voted in favor of membership in the Russia-Belarus-Kazakhstan Customs Union (Institutul de Politici Publice, *Barometrul Opiniei Publice* [*Barometer of Public Opinion*], CIVIS survey, Republic of Moldova, November 2015, p. 65).

[16] Popescu and Litra, September 2012, p. 3.

[17] Vladimir Soloviev, "Moscow's Next Victim," *Foreign Policy*, September 3, 2014.

[18] Lucan Way, *Pluralism by Default: Weak Autocrats and the Rise of Pluralism Politics*, Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015, p. 113.

[19] Mansur Mirovalev, "Moldova and the Russia-EU Tug-of-War," Al Jazeera, June 30, 2015.

[20] Paul Quinlan, "Back to the Future: An Overview of Moldova Under Voronin," *Demokratizatsiya*, Vol. 12, No. 4, October 2004, p. 494.

[21] Eugen Tomiuc, "Strange Bedfellows: Moldovan Protest Leaders Share Common Goal, Different Beliefs," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, January 28, 2016.

two days before the election after allegations that it received foreign funding. One article noted that "both Dodon and Usatii have been traveling extensively to Russia, and were seen together on a plane returning from Moscow on January 20 [2016], just hours before launching . . . protests outside Parliament."[22] Usatii eventually won a mayoral election on the Our Party ticket.[23]

### Local and International Reactions

Aside from the Moldovan government's banishing of the Patria Party in 2014, there were no particular governmental reactions to potential interference on the part of Russia. It would have been difficult for Moldovan authorities to intervene in the electoral debate to suppress pro-Russia voices without making the election a parody of democracy; there was little it could do besides prohibiting foreign financing. Even then, the OSCE, which monitored the 2014 election, criticized the banning of the Patria Party as undue political interference in the electoral process.[24]

### Level of Success

Russia's support to the PCRM did not yield consistent benefits over time. Initially, Moldova did get closer to Russia. President Voronin proclaimed that "'Russia has always been, is, and will be, a strategic partner' in all areas, including 'joint actions on the international stage.'"[25] In November 2001, Russia and Moldova signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation, which mentioned a "strategic partnership between two states" and the "Russian Federation participating as one of the mediators and guarantors" of a political settlement of the Transnistrian conflict.[26] The PCRM was also elected on a platform to integrate Moldova in the Russian-Belarusian Union but did not pursue that policy once in power.[27] Voronin's decision later in 2003 not to sign the Kozak Plan (named after first deputy chief of Russia's presidential administration, Dmitry Kozak), which would have federalized the country in a way that largely benefited Transnistria, created a rift between Russia and Moldova.[28] In 2005, Voronin entered an informal alliance with the nationalist, anti-Russia Christian Democratic People's Party, and, in 2006, he implemented a new customs regime on Moldova's border with Ukraine, a move that Russia perceived as detrimental to Transnistria. Russia imposed trade sanctions on Moldova that same year, suggesting that the PCRM has largely maintained independence vis-à-vis

---

[22] Tomiuc, 2016.

[23] Tomiuc, 2016.

[24] Richard Balmforth and Alexander Tanas, "Moldova Set to Press on with Pro-Europe Course After Election," Reuters, December 1, 2014; OSCE, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, *Republic of Moldova: Parliamentary Elections, 30 November 2014: OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report*, Warsaw, Poland, March 10, 2015, p. 2.

[25] Quoted in Bertil Nygren, *The Rebuilding of Greater Russia: Putin's Foreign Policy Towards the CIS Countries*, London and New York: Routledge, 2008, p. 84.

[26] Our translation of "Federația Rusă participă în calitate de unul dintre mediatori și garanți," in Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Moldova, *Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation Between the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation*, signed November 19, 2001, and published December 30, 2002, in *Tratate Internationale* [*International Treaties*], No. 29.

[27] "R.Moldova si Federația Rusă: Parteneriat Strategic Versus Parteneriat Realist, Previzibil și Viabil" ["Moldova and the Russian Federation: Strategic Partnership Versus Realistic, Predictable and Viable Partnership"], Timpul.md, April 3, 2012.

[28] International Crisis Group, 2006, p. 15.

Russia. The PCRM seems to have used Russia for its own ends, maintaining some level of independence from the West before balking at Russia's expectations regarding the Transnistria issue.[29]

It is also unclear whether Russia played a decisive role in the PSRM's 2014 electoral success. Pro-EU parties were generally unpopular at the time. The population perceived them as having failed to deliver on promises of economic progress and tainted by a corruption scandal that saw $1 billion (or one-eighth of Moldova's gross domestic product [GDP]) "disappear" from the Moldovan banking system.[30] Therefore, it is not surprising that the PSRM, which had never exercised power, would perform well in that election and that, more generally, anti-EU parties would benefit from the poor performance of pro-EU parties since 2009. Since the 2014 election, Moldova's political life has been marked by instability: Pavel Filip, who became prime minister in January 2016, was the sixth to occupy that position in a year against a background of popular protests, some of which turned violent.[31] It is difficult to discern whether Russia bears any responsibility for the country's political volatility or whether it was merely a result of what journalist Tony Barber described as Moldova's "corruption and atrocious governance."[32] The January 2016 protests were led by *both* pro-Russia and pro-EU parties, with the Dignity and Truth Party (favoring Moldova's EU membership) joining the pro-Russia PSRM and Our Nation in criticizing the government.[33]

The PSRM, in any case, failed to gain much benefit from its 2014 electoral victory. The PCRM refused to join it in a coalition, while the pro-EU parties, which proved more capable of uniting their forces, remained in power.[34] Another way of looking at it is that the most pro-Russia party could win the election but still fail to govern the country, which suggests that Russia does not have that much power over the internal workings of Moldovan politics.

---

[29] Way, 2015, p. 113.

[30] Mirovalev, 2015. A *Financial Times* article noted that, "officially, it remains unclear who made off with the money. But according to investigators for the Kroll consultancy, a chain of Russian entities and UK-based shell companies drained the funds out of Moldova. Somehow, the money then made its way to banks in Latvia" (Tony Barber, "A Moldovan Headache for Europe," *Financial Times*, January 22, 2016).

[31] Barber, 2016.

[32] Barber, 2016. According to the World Bank's governance indicators, Moldova's performance in 2014 was largely below average for European and Central Asian countries, as well as below that of its neighbor Romania, across all five indicators (voice and accountability, political stability and absence of violence/terrorism, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law, and control of corruption). With regard to control of corruption, Moldova ranked in the 21st percentile, barely above the Russian Federation (20th percentile). See World Bank, Worldwide Governance Indicators, database, undated(b).

[33] Tomiuc, 2016.

[34] "Moldova Election: Pro-EU Parties Edge Pro-Russian Rivals," 2014; Tomiuc, 2016.

## Media Influence

### Content and Implementation

The Russian media is very present in Moldova, as many Moldovans speak Russian, and it is even more so in Transnistria.[35] Half of all cable channels in Moldova originate in Russia.[36] Russia uses its media presence to promote its interests in the country and influence local perceptions on membership in the European Union versus the Eurasian Union.[37]

### Local and International Reactions

Moldovan authorities have taken a range of measures to limit Russian media influence in their country. In the run-up to the 2014 parliamentary elections, they suspended a number of Russian state television channels broadcasting in the country out of concern that they were actively trying to influence the population toward pro-Russia, anti-EU parties.[38] In September 2013, amid protests against the government in Chisinau, Moldovan authorities denied entrance to journalists from a video agency funded by Russia (RT's Ruptly) and a reportedly pro-Russia television channel (Lifenews).[39] Yet, these efforts seemed largely symbolic, considering the extent of Russian media coverage in Moldova—and potentially detrimental to freedom of expression in the country.

### Level of Success

Russian presence in the media is a potentially important source of influence, not simply because of its widespread presence but also because mass media is one of the few Moldovan institutions that the population trusts. A November 2013 survey showed that it ranked second after the Orthodox Church, with 52 percent of respondents having "some trust" or "very much trust" in mass media.[40] One study on Moldovan media found that the Russian media has been effective in shaping attitudes, including building Putin's popularity.[41]

---

[35] Liana Ganea, Oana Ganea, Ludmila Gamurari, and Cristian Ghinea, *Pluralismul Extern al Mass-Mediei din RM* [*External Pluralism of Mass Media in the Republic of Moldova*], Bucharest, Romania: Soros Foundation, 2014, pp. 36–37; Vladimir Tsesliuk, "Information Space in Transnistria: Ideological and Institutional Opportunities and Perspectives. Reasons for Kishinau's Defeats in Informational Wars with Tiraspol," Chisinau, Moldova: Institutul de Politici Publice, 2010; PROMO-LEX Association and Resource Center for Human Rights, *Research: The Media Market and Access to Media on the Left of Nistru*, Chisinau, Moldova, 2011. "

[36] Victoria Puiu, "Moldova: Examining the Russian Media Factor in Protests," Eurasianet, September 11, 2015b.

[37] Ganea et al., 2014, pp. 36–38.

[38] "Moldova Election: Will Voters Choose EU or Putin?" BBC News, November 29, 2014.

[39] Puiu, 2015b.

[40] Institutul de Politici Publice, *Barometrul Opiniei Publice* [*Barometer of Public Opinion*], CBS-AXA survey, Republic of Moldova, November 2013, p. 40.

[41] Ganea et al., 2014.

## Cultural and Religious Influence

### Content and Implementation

Russia also exerts some influence over the Transnistrian population through cultural, linguistic, and religious ties. In a country that has experienced high levels of political instability and corruption, the Moldovan Orthodox Church—a branch of the Russian Orthodox Church—is one of the few institutions that the population trusts. The 2013 survey showed that almost 52 percent of those surveyed had "very much trust" in the Moldovan Orthodox Church (in comparison, only 1 percent of respondents expressed "very much trust" in the government).[42]

The Orthodox Church and the PSRM share the same anti-EU agenda; the church has become closer to the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs under Putin and plays an important role in promoting a "greater Russia."[43] In addition to these institutional relationships, the commonality of views between the Russian power and the Russian Orthodox Church—with Putin often invoking religion as one of the bedrocks of Russian values—suggests that the church might be a vector of influence for Russian politics in Moldova.[44]

### Local and International Reactions

The positions of the culturally conservative Moldovan Orthodox Church have, at times, conflicted with Moldova's pro-EU orientation. In May 2012, Moldova passed a law prohibiting discrimination against sexual minorities in the labor market (the "law for equal chances"). The EU had requested that Moldova adopt antidiscrimination laws as part of negotiations on lifting the visa requirement for Moldovans traveling to the EU, but the church strongly opposed the new law and lobbied for it to be repealed.[45]

### Level of Success

On June 31, 2013, the Moldovan Orthodox Church denied all members of Prime Minister Iurie Leancă's government access to Holy Communion.[46] Yet, the church's influence has clear limits. Moldova did adopt laws prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation—the only member of the EU's Eastern Partnership to have done so at the time—

---

[42] Institutul de Politici Publice, 2013.

[43] Daniel P. Payne, "Spiritual Security, the Russian Orthodox Church, and the Russian Foreign Ministry: Collaboration or Cooptation?" *Journal of Church and State*, Vol. 52, No. 4, February 2010. On this issue, also see Nikita Lomagin, "Interest Groups in Russian Foreign Policy: The Invisible Hand of the Russian Orthodox Church," *International Politics*, Vol. 49, No. 4, July 2012.

[44] John Anderson, "Putin and the Russian Orthodox Church: Asymmetric Symphonia?" *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 61, No. 1, Fall–Winter 2007, p. 196; Paul Coyer, "(Un)Holy Alliance: Vladimir Putin, The Russian Orthodox Church and Russian Exceptionalism," *Forbes*, May 21, 2015.

[45] Valeria Vițu, "Chişinău: Mai Multe Drepturi Pentru Homosexuali" ["Chisinau: More Gay Rights"], RFI Romania, May 25, 2012; "Alianta intre Biserica si Comunisti, Impotriva, 'Islamizarii si Homosexualizarii'" Rep. Moldova" ["The Alliance Between the Church and the Communists Against 'Islamization and Homosexuality' in the Republic of Moldova"], Ziare.com, April 16, 2012; Lucia Diaconu and Mircea Ticudean, "Battle Over Moldovan Antidiscrimination Bill Reaches Fevered Pitch," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, April 8, 2012; Dan Peleschuk, "Gay Right: Moldova Struggles to Tackle Discrimination," Public Radio International, October 14, 2013.

[46] "Ministrii Moldoveni, Interzis la Impartasit—Biserica Contesta Legi Anticrestine" ["Moldovan Ministers Forbidden to Receive Communion—The Church Condemns Anti-Christian Laws"], *Ziare*, June 21, 2013.

and it did sign an association agreement with the EU, suggesting that political decisions move forward regardless of the opinions of the Moldovan Orthodox Church and its supporters.[47]

## Economic Sanctions

### Content and Implementation

Russia has repeatedly used economic sanctions against Moldova whenever the country's decisions were perceived as going against Russia's interests. In 2005, Russia banned imports of meat, fruit, and vegetables from Moldova; in March 2006, it added wine to the list of banned products. These sanctions were implemented as tensions between Moldova and Russia ramped up over several policy decisions on Moldova's part:

- Moldova refused to sign the Kozak Plan in 2003.
- In 2004, it integrated the EU's European Neighborhood Policy.
- In February 2005, it signed a three-year action plan with the EU on conflict resolution and domestic issues.
- In December 2005, it signed an agreement with Ukraine on new customs procedures meant to reduce the amount of smuggling of goods from Transnistria into Ukraine, a move that Russia criticized as hostile toward Transnistria.[48]

The likelihood of a direct link between the import bans and these various political developments is high. The wine ban, in particular, is generally seen as Russia's way to punish Moldova for its independent, pro-EU policy; Russia had hit Georgia with a similar wine ban only a year before, presumably for similar reasons.[49]

Russia repeated these measures in 2013–2014, when it successively banned imports of Moldovan alcoholic beverages (September 2013), processed pork (April 2014), and canned fruits and vegetables (July 2014) after Moldova signed an association agreement with the EU on June 27, 2014—announced as a first step to a candidacy for membership.[50] In September 2014, 19 categories of Moldovan goods became subject to Russian import duties.[51] Finally, in October 2014, Russia banned imports of Moldovan meat.[52] As in 2006, Russia's actions seem to have been prompted by Moldova's rapprochement with the EU. The sanctions also came a few months (and in the case of meat, just one month) ahead of Moldova's November 2014 parliamentary elections. Among Russia's objectives, therefore, may have been to stir social dis-

[47] Soloviev, 2014.

[48] Vladimir Socor, "Kozak Plan Resurfaces Under OSCE Colors," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 2, No. 136, July 14, 2005; Andrew Rettman, "Moldova Instability Could Get Worse," *EU Observer*, May 3, 2006; International Crisis Group, 2006, p. 3.

[49] Mark Baker, "Drinking Games," *Foreign Policy*, July 29, 2015; International Crisis Group, 2006, pp. 3, 15. International Crisis Group adds that Russia's reaction may have simply been "symptomatic of its newly assertive posture toward all the former Soviet republics."

[50] See European Commission, "Countries and Regions: Moldova," webpage, last updated April 16, 2018. Also see Calus, 2014.

[51] Calus, 2014.

[52] Calus, 2014.

content to lessen the pro-Europe coalition's chances of reelection and possibly to reverse the progress made in implementing the association agreement.[53]

### Local and International Reactions

In 2005–2006, Moldova found few responses to alleviate the economic impact of Russia's trade bans.[54] There was little international condemnation of Russia's actions, and the EU could not help Moldova redirect its products toward EU markets because the types of goods banned were not covered by the lower-tariff agreement between Moldova and the EU.[55] However, the United States came to the support of the Moldovan wine industry with its Competitiveness Enhancement and Enterprise Development program, which ended up spending more than $17 million over the course of ten years.[56] The program's efforts focused on making the Moldovan wine industry more modern, more competitive, and better suited for Western markets in order to reduce its reliance on exports to Russia.[57]

Moldova also tried to balance the effects of Russia's sanctions on its farmers by pledging to provide some compensation; help them reschedule bank loan payments; cover their energy bills; and buy some of their products for distribution in public institutions, such as schools and military installations.[58] Russia's import bans also forced Moldova to seek out other markets. Some of Moldova's wine production found its way to Russia through Georgia and, to a lesser extent, Belarus, where it was relabeled as—or mixed with—local products. Moldova's fruit production went mostly to Belarus, which resold it to Russia under Belarusian certificates of origin. Moldova also increased its fruit exports to the EU, particularly Germany and Italy.[59] The European Parliament responded to Russia's ban by adopting a proposal to import Moldova's wine duty-free. This proposal, which was adopted in December 2013 by a large majority (503-14, with 17 abstentions), was explicitly designed to help Moldova offset the economic losses caused by Russia's sanctions.[60] The EU, therefore, did in 2013 what it had not done in 2006: It included wine in the list of products for which Moldova had preferential tariffs.[61] Additionally, the European Investment Bank had opened a $100 million line of credit for Moldova in 2011 to support the country's wine industry until 2017.[62] Although the bank took this measure before the second set of sanctions hit Moldova, it likely helped the wine industry withstand the sanctions' consequences.

---

[53] Calus, 2014; the latter was "a plan openly put forward by Vladimir Putin during the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] summit in Minsk on 10 October 2014."

[54] International Crisis Group, 2006, p. 15.

[55] International Crisis Group, 2006, p. 15.

[56] Baker, 2015.

[57] Baker, 2015.

[58] Victoria Puiu, "Moldova: Can an Apple a Day Keep Russia at Bay?" Eurasianet, August 13, 2014a.

[59] Calus, 2014.

[60] European Parliament, "MEPs Back Freeing Wine Trade with Moldova to Offset Russian Trade Sanctions," press release, December 10, 2013.

[61] In 2006, the trade agreement was the Generalized System of Preferences; in 2013, it was the EU Regulation on Autonomous Trade Preferences. Duty-free quotas for apples, plums, and table grapes were also included in the revision of the latter agreement in 2013 and 2014 (European Commission, 2018a).

[62] Baker, 2015.

### Level of Success

The 2005–2006 economic sanctions put in place by Russia were damaging for the Moldovan economy. Moldova's wine industry, in particular, was severely hit: At the time, the country exported almost 80 percent of its wine production to Russia.[63] Moldova succeeded in selling more of its production to Europe, tallying a 14-percent increase in wine sales to Western Europe in 2014.[64] Yet Moldovan wine producers suffered losses estimated at $180 million—more than half the value of the Moldovan wine industry—over a period of eight months.[65] Moldova's annual GDP growth fell to 4.8 percent in 2006 (down from 7.5 percent in 2005), then fell further to 3.1 percent in 2007.[66]

For Russia, the sanctions may have had the desired impact: During a meeting with Putin in August 2006, President Voronin made concessions to Russia, including some related to Transnistria's autonomy.[67] In a subsequent meeting in November 2006, Voronin offered investment opportunities to Russian companies (including Gazprom), while Putin announced at the meeting that Russia would resume imports of Moldovan wine and was hopeful that energy sector talks with Moldova would be successful.[68] Russia lifted the ban on Moldovan wines and meat in late 2006, possibly in reaction to Moldova's support for Russia's membership in the WTO.[69] The sanctions, however, had made it clear to Moldova that an overreliance on the Russian market was dangerous. As one author noted about the U.S. Competitiveness Enhancement and Enterprise Development program that aimed to help Moldovan wine producers reorient their production toward Western markets, "Russia inadvertently gave the fledgling program its first big boost when it slammed the door on Moldovan wine imports in 2006."[70]

Again in 2013–2014, wine producers were the most affected by Russian sanctions; they lost close to one-third of their market, although some of these losses were offset by U.S. and EU actions to encourage imports of Moldovan wine.[71] Fruit producers fared better, finding other markets or alternative ways to reach the Russian market. Overall, Moldova's GDP growth, which had been strong (9.4 percent) in 2013 thanks to a record harvest, decelerated in 2014 to only 4.7 percent, partly because of the Russian import ban.[72] However, Russian sanctions did not prevent the overall value of Moldovan exports from increasing by 0.6 percent in 2014.[73] Moldova's rank on the United Nations (UN) Human Development Index remained extremely

---

63 International Crisis Group, 2006, p. 15.

64 Baker, 2015.

65 Baker, 2015.

66 World Bank, "Data: Moldova," webpage, undated(a).

67 Corneliu Rusnac, "Reacţii Politice la Vizita Preşedintelui Voronin la Moscova" ["Political Reactions to President Voronin's Visit to Moscow"], BBC Romanian, August 10, 2006.

68 "Va Avea Moldova de Plătit un Preţ pe Termen Lung Rusiei?" ["Will Moldova Pay a Long-Term Price to Russia?"], BBC Romanian, November 29, 2006; Vladimir Putin, "Press Statements Following Meeting with President of Moldova Vladimir Voronin," transcript, November 28, 2006.

69 "Russia to Lift Ban on Imports of Meat and Wine from Moldova," *International Herald Tribune*, October 28, 2006.

70 Baker, 2015.

71 Calus, 2014; Baker, 2015. As Baker noted, this represented an improvement compared with the losses incurred by wine producers in 2006, but it was still extremely painful economically.

72 World Bank, "The World Bank in Moldova," webpage, last updated October 11, 2018.

73 Calus, 2014.

low in comparison with its neighbors but steadily increased between 2013 and 2014, a trend that began in 2010.[74]

Politically, Russia's import bans in early 2013 appeared designed to pressure Moldova not to sign an association agreement with the EU. It did not succeed; Moldova signed the agreement in June 2014. While the EU was already Moldova's largest trading partner, the agreement further boosted Moldovan exports to the European Union: Between 2013 and 2014, EU imports from Moldova increased by 20 percent overall and by 30 percent for agricultural products.[75]

Yet, Russian sanctions did trigger social tensions between farmers and wine producers and the Moldovan government, adding to the general discontent with the pro-Europe coalition in power shortly before the November 2014 parliamentary elections that saw a PSRM victory.[76] One report noted that the PSRM performed particularly well in the north of Moldova, which is a key apple-farming region—a product that was hit hard by the sanctions.[77]

Another benefit for Russia was to further divide Moldova. In March 2014, Russia lifted its ban on alcoholic beverage imports from the autonomous region of Gagauzia in southern Moldova. The measure has been interpreted as a reward for a local referendum, held a month before, in which a majority of Gagauz asked Moldova to join the Eurasian Customs Union rather than the EU.[78] In that same referendum—which was supported by the Russian ambassador in Moldova, funded by a Russian businessman, and deemed illegal by Moldova—an overwhelming majority of Gagauzia's population favored having the right to secede from Moldova.[79] However, there are limits to what Russia can obtain from using Gagauzia as a source of leverage over Moldova, because the region's political power and influence at the national level remains limited.[80]

---

[74] United Nations Development Programme, "Table 2: Human Development Index Trends, 1990–2017," September 14, 2018b.

[75] European Commission, 2018a. Also see Popescu and Litra, 2012, p. 1.

[76] Victoria Puiu, "Moldova Fights Back Against Russia's Food Bans," Eurasianet, August 15, 2014b; "Parliamentary Elections in Moldova on November 30, 2014," *E-Democracy*, undated.

[77] Baker, 2015.

[78] Calus, 2014.

[79] Salome Samadashvili, "Gagauzia: A New Attack on the Eastern Partnership?" *EU Observer*, February 4, 2014; Parmentier, 2014, p. 50. An important motivation for the Gagauz vote was a fear that rapprochement with the EU might be a first step toward unification with Romania, a project supported by part of the Romanian political class but decried by Russia, Gagauzia, Transnistria, and a majority of Moldovans. On this issue, see Michael Bird, "A Union Between Moldova and Romania: On the Cards?" *EU Observer*, March 5, 2015, and Mirovalev, 2015.

[80] Parmentier, 2014, p. 50. Parmentier additionally noted that the Gagauz "are not very well represented in Parliament, since Moldova's constitution does not allow ethnically-based political parties and the electoral system is formed by one single electoral district."

## Pressures on Moldova's Labor Market

### Content and Implementation

A very large number of Moldovans historically emigrated in search of jobs, with approximately half (an estimated 300,000 to 500,000) finding work in Russia.[81] Between January 2013 and April 2014, some 22,000 Moldovan migrant workers were sent back to Moldova by Russia's Federal Migration Service.[82] Russia justified this policy on the grounds that the workers had violated their right to residency.[83] As for the import bans, the timing of this decision coincided with Moldova's association agreement negotiations with the EU.

### Local and International Reactions

The Moldovan government responded by allowing the estimated 700,000 Moldovan migrants living in Russia to cast votes in the 2014 Moldovan parliamentary elections in only five polling stations, despite the fact that the workers were dispersed throughout the country.[84] An OSCE report noted that "the lack of transparency with regard to the criteria for determining the number and location of polling stations abroad contributed to the perception of a number of stakeholders that the government sought to discourage voting in the Russian Federation while increasing the number of polling stations in other countries."[85] The PSRM attempted to appeal the government's decision on the number of polling stations abroad.[86]

### Level of Success

Moldova is one of the poorest countries in Europe and ranks lowest in the region in terms of human development, according to the UN.[87] In 2013, foreign remittances constituted 32 percent of Moldova's GDP, and 60 percent of these remittances came from Russia.[88] While it is difficult to assess the role that such discourse played in the fall of the Leancă government and the subsequent electoral success of the PSRM, Russia's pressure on the Moldovan labor market likely increased the economic and political fragility of a country where those indicators were not particularly high to begin with.

---

[81] Calus, 2014.

[82] Elena Baranov, "Șoc pe Piața Ocală a Muncii? Ce se Poate întâmpla Dacă se întorc Migranții Moldoveni din Rusia" ["Shock on the Local Labor Market? What Can Happen if Moldovan Migrants Return from Russia?"], Agora (Moldova), April 8, 2014.

[83] Simion Ciochina, "Moldovan Migrants Denied Re-Entry to Russia," *Deutsche Welle*, December 21, 2014.

[84] Alla Ceapai, "Câte Secții de Votare ar fi Trebuit să Fie Deschise în Rusia?" ["How Many Polling Stations Should Be Opened in Russia?"], Radio Europa Libera Moldova [Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty], October 21, 2014; "Partidul Socialistilor Intentioneaza sa Rezolve Problema Celor 35 de Mii de Moldoveni Care au Fost Deportati din Rusia" ["Socialist Party Intends to Solve the Problem of 35,000 Moldovans Who Were Deported to Russia"], Actualitati.md, November 19, 2014.

[85] OSCE, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, 2015, p. 7.

[86] OSCE, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, 2015, p. 7.

[87] Ranking 112th on the UN's Human Development Index, Moldova barely makes the cutoff to be classified in the "high human development" category. The second lowest-ranking European nation is Ukraine, far ahead at the 88th. Kosovo is not rated. See United Nations Development Programme, "Global Human Development Indicators," September 14, 2018a.

[88] David Saha and Ricardo Giucci, *Remittances from Russia: Macroeconomic Implications of Possible Negative Shocks*, Berlin: German Economic Team Moldova, May 2014.

## Economic and Financial Control

### Content and Implementation

Russia supports Transnistria economically through subsidies.[89] Russian gas provided to Transnistria is heavily subsidized, but this has not prevented Transnistria from running up a considerable gas debt—estimated at $3.8 billion in 2013—that Russia asked Moldova, rather than Transnistria, to pay.[90] Russia also pays for the pensions of elderly Russian citizens living in Transnistria and has a significant influence on the economy through the ownership of large businesses.[91] Russia also openly supports Transnistria's largest business conglomerate, Sheriff, which plays a political role through its sponsorship of the Renewal party.[92] Russia's financial aid to Transnistria has spiked at times, as in 2006, when Russia provided "humanitarian aid" to Transnistria to compensate for an expected loss of revenue in light of the customs agreement between Ukraine and Moldova.[93]

Russia also maintains direct or indirect control of large firms that operate in the rest of Moldova. For example, Gazprom owns a 50 percent of MoldovaGaz, which controls natural gas supply and distribution in Moldova.[94] Russia owns part of Moldova's banking sector, which has allowed it to speculate against the Moldovan currency and to divert funds deposited into Moldovan banks to Russia—providing it with a means of economic leverage in Moldova.[95]

### Local and International Reactions

A number of local actors, including the pro-Russia PSRM, Our Party, and Dignity and Truth, have protested against the political role played by Moldovan oligarch Vladimir Plahotniuc, whom they accuse of having been part of the massive fraud committed in 2015.[96]

### Level of Success

Russia's control over Moldova's economy should not be overstated. It does give Russia some leverage, particularly through the manipulation of Moldova's currency and in the energy sector, that can be used to influence or destabilize. Yet, Moldova's economy is also greatly affected by actors that do not depend on, or respond to, Russia. This was illustrated by the January 2016 protests organized in Moldova by several political parties—including the most pro-Russia ones.

---

89 Nichol, 2014, p. 48.

90 Malling, 2015; Popescu and Litra, 2012, pp. 2, 5.

91 Malling, 2015; Nichol, 2014, p. 48.

92 Popescu and Litra, 2012, p. 2.

93 International Crisis Group, 2006, pp. 3, 8.

94 Tomasz Dąborowski, "Third Energy Package in Wider Black Sea Area: A Panacea for Security Problems? Moldova Case Study," in *Energy in the Wider Black Sea Area—National and Allied Approaches*, proceedings of NATO workshop in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, November 10–13, 2011, Amsterdam: IOS Press, 2013, p. 85.

95 Calus, 2014.

96 Tomiuc, 2016; Anna Nemtsova, "The West Is About to Lose Moldova," *Foreign Policy*, February 19, 2016.

## Leveraging Energy Supplies

### Content and Implementation

Russia provides an overwhelming share of Moldova's energy, accounting for more than 90 percent of the country's energy imports.[97] This dependency has left Moldova vulnerable to Russian exploitation. First, there is the threat that Russia may cut off gas supplies to Moldova. In 2013, for instance, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Rogozin told Moldovans, "I hope you don't freeze" during the upcoming winter.[98] The threat was credible: Russia had cut gas supplies to Moldova twice already, in January 2006 and January 2009 (although not necessarily as a form of hostile measures against Moldova).[99]

A second means of leverage for Russia is gas prices. In the past, Russia has offered low prices to countries willing to join the Eurasian Union.[100] Conversely, it uses price increases as a means of coercion or punishment. The January 2006 gas cut was followed by a 100-percent increase in the price of Russian gas in Moldova.[101] Yet, overall, Moldova still generally pays below-average prices for Russian gas, a fact that Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak brought to the Moldovan government's attention when he asked it to denounce the protocol it had signed to enter the European Energy Community.[102] To give itself some flexibility in using this source of leverage, in 2011, Russia made its contract to supply gas to Moldova renewable every year, rather than letting it run for a longer period.[103]

Third, Moldova owes Russia a large debt for past energy imports. A large portion is the debt to Gazprom incurred by Transnistria, for which Russia holds Moldova accountable.[104]

Electric power is another source of leverage for Russia. Half of Moldova's power comes from the Cuciurgan station in Transnistria, which is run by a subsidiary of a Russian company.[105] In addition, two power plants accounting for 87 percent of Moldova's electric production are gas-powered, making electricity generation highly dependent on gas supplies.[106]

---

[97] Steven Woehrel, *Moldova: Background and U.S. Policy*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, RS21981, April 23, 2014, p. 5.

[98] Michael Birnbaum, "Russia Pressures Moldova and Ukraine Ahead of Signing of EU Association Agreement," *Washington Post*, June 26, 2014.

[99] International Crisis Group, 2006, p. 3; "Moldova: External Affairs," *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment*, last updated August 19, 2015. The 2006 cut was in response to Moldova's objection to Gazprom's attempt to double the going price (Woehrel, 2014, p. 5). The 2009 cut was not a hostile action from Russia directed at Moldova but, rather, an effect of a gas price disagreement between Russia and Ukraine. This dispute led Russia to cut its supplies to Ukraine and, as a consequence, to Moldova, whose gas supply runs through Ukraine (Dmitry Chubashenko, "Central Heating Fails in Moldova After Gas Cut," Reuters, January 9, 2009). For a detailed analysis, see Simon Pirani, Jonathan Stern, and Katja Yafimava, *The Russo-Ukrainian Gas Dispute of January 2009: A Comprehensive Assessment*, Oxford, UK: Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, University of Oxford, February 2009.

[100] Glenn Kates and Li Luo, "Russian Gas: How Much Is That?" Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, July 1, 2014.

[101] International Crisis Group, 2006, p. 3.

[102] Kates and Luo, 2014; "Russia to Moldova: Choose Cheap Gas or EU Integration," *EurActiv*, September 13, 2012.

[103] Sobják, 2014.

[104] Woehrel, 2014, p. 5.

[105] Sobják, 2014.

[106] Georg Zachmann and Alex Oprunenco, *Electricity Sector in Moldova: Evaluation of Strategic Options*, Berlin: German Economic Team in Moldova, September 2010.

### Local and International Reactions

Moldovan authorities have attempted to reduce their country's dependence on Russian energy. Beyond joining the European Energy Community in May 2010, Moldova has been building a pipeline connecting it to Romania. It should allow Moldova to obtain gas from European and international markets rather than relying on Russia as its sole supplier. Eventually, it should be capable of supplying almost twice as much gas as Moldova imports from Russia.[107]

### Level of Success

Depending on the evolution of global oil and gas prices, accumulated debt may be a more important source of leverage, from Russia, than pricing. Russia's bluff has also been called in a few instances, however. Russia extended Moldova's gas contract with Gazprom in 2014, despite threatening to block it until Moldova renounced its European Energy Community membership.[108] Ultimately, what will likely play the most crucial role in the stability of Moldova's gas supply is whether new suppliers can offer Moldova a lower price than what it can obtain from Gazprom.[109]

## Use of the Compatriot Policy in Moldova

Russia has also solidified its influence by providing passports to ethnic Russians living in Transnistria. As of 2015, an estimated 180,000–200,000 Transnistrians held a Russian passport, accounting for about 35 percent of the region's population.[110] Russia's policy to provide passports to large numbers of Transnistrians has created tensions with Romania, which has a similar policy. Since 1991, an estimated 400,000 Moldovans have received Romanian citizenship.[111]

Russia's policy is not limited to Transnistria; other Moldovans have also received Russian passports.[112] Russia has awarded citizenship to Russians in other neighboring countries as well (including Georgia and Ukraine), potentially providing it with justification to intervene in these countries to protect its citizens.[113]

---

[107] Petru Roşca and Silvia Scorţescu, "Transportarea şi Distribuirea Gazelor în Republica Moldova" ["The Transport and Distribution of Gas in the Republic of Moldova"], *Studii Economice: Revistă Ştiinţifică* [*Economic Studies: Scientific Journal*], Vol. 9, No. 1, 2015, p. 48.

[108] Calus, 2014; "After Ukraine, Is Moldova the Next Country in Russia's Sights?" *Debating Europe*, May 4, 2015.

[109] "Moldova Inaugurates Gas Pipeline from Romania," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, August 27, 2014.

[110] Malling, 2015. Ethnic Moldovans, Ukrainians, and Russians each constitute about 30 percent of Transnistria's population (Stefan Wolf, *The Transnistrian Issue: Moving Beyond the Status-Quo*, Brussels, Belgium: European Parliament, Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union, October 2012, p. 40).

[111] Sergiu Panainte, Victoria Nedelciuc, and Ovidiu Voicu, *Redobandirea Cetateniei Romane: O Politica ce Capata Viziune?* [*The Redevelopment of Romanian Citizenship: A Policy with Vision?*], Bucharest, Romania: Soros Foundation, 2013.

[112] See Agnia Grigas, "Russia's Passport Expansionism," *Project Syndicate*, May 7, 2019.

[113] Vincent M. Artman, "Annexation by Passport," Al Jazeera America, March 14, 2014.

## Summary of the Moldova Case

Russia's hostile measures in Moldova fell into two categories. First, there were long-term hostile measures, which Russia had employed since the early 1990s to maintain a form of political, economic, and social control over Moldova. These measures included control of Transnistria, influence over key Moldovan political parties, a strong media presence, cultural influence through the Orthodox Church, and involvement in the country's economic and banking sectors.

Second, over time, Russia imposed discrete measures in the hope of influencing specific developments in Moldova. Such measures included economic sanctions, expulsions of migrant workers, and threats over Moldova's energy security. It looked to these measures twice during times of crisis in Russian-Moldovan relations: in 2006, after Moldova signed an action plan with the EU and implemented a new customs regime with Ukraine, and in 2013–2014, when Moldova was negotiating an association agreement with the EU. These discrete hostile measures were not designed to influence outcomes over the long term; rather, they were meant to deter or punish Moldova and remind the country of the many ways in which it was vulnerable to Russian actions.

These two categories of hostile measures overlap to a large extent: Long-standing hostile measures give Russia the ability to "surge" other hostile measures at specific times or provide the terrain for more-aggressive discrete actions. For instance, Russia's involvement in Moldova's economy makes it easier for Russia to attack the value of Moldova's currency when needed; without Moldova's energy dependence on Russia, Russia could not use supply cuts or price surges as a means of coercion. Figure B.2 presents a timeline of both types of hostile measures since 1991.

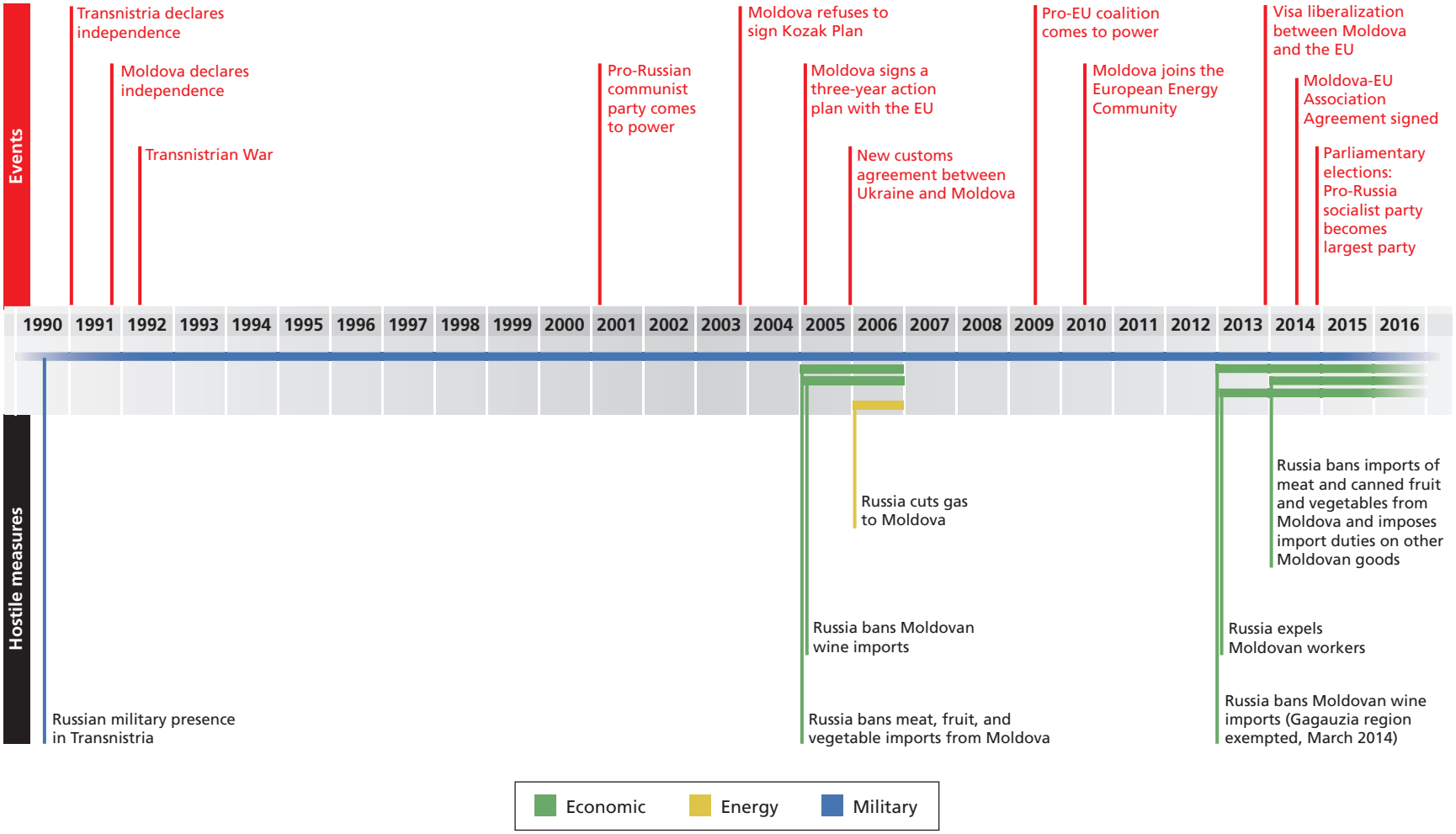
## How Successful Were Russia's Hostile Measures in Moldova Overall?

It is difficult to establish a clear causal link between the various hostile measures that Russia imposed and subsequent political developments in Moldova. The 2014 electoral success of the anti-EU PSRM must have come as good news to Russia, and it happened to occur after several months of economic sanctions and expulsions of migrant workers from Russia that undoubtedly made life difficult for the pro-EU governing coalition. Still, it is unclear to what extent Russia's actions in the period preceding the election accounted for the difficulties that the pro-Europe parties had, as they also fell victim to their own infighting and a widespread popular reputation for inefficiency and corruption.[114] More generally, it is likely that these parties suffered from an erosion of power because, after five years, they were not perceived as achieving markedly better outcomes for the country than the communist rule that had proceeded them.[115] Moldova continues to suffer from political instability. But, to some extent, this instability is not radically different from what the pro-EU coalition faced from 2009 to 2013, before Russia's 2013–2014 salvo of hostile measures.

[114] "Moldova Elections: Pro-EU Parties Edge Pro-Russian Rivals," 2014.

[115] William H. Hill, "Is Moldova Headed East?" Kennan Cable No. 8, Washington, D.C.: Kennan Institute, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, June 2015.

**Figure B.2**
**Timeline of Russian Hostile Measures in Moldova**



To some extent, Russia failed to achieve its key objective in Moldova, which was to prevent the country from getting closer to the EU. As of 2016, Moldova was still a member of the European Energy Community, and its association agreement with the EU remains in place. A key question is whether such progress can be reversed. Could a socialist government, in the future, denounce the agreement and revert to a more pro-Russia policy? The answer will probably depend largely on how quickly Moldova reaps benefits from its rapprochement with the EU. Quick and visible benefits for the population—both economically and in terms of governance—will ensure that the costs and risks of a switch to Russia's Eurasian Union are seen as too great for Moldova to change its current pro-EU course.

## What Effective Responses (if Any) Were Designed to Counter Them?

At the national level, Moldova's responses seem to have been sporadic and largely symbolic, as well as borderline controversial in some cases, such as banning a pro-Russia political party shortly before an election or limiting the voting ability of Russia-based workers who might have voted against the coalition in power. Moldova was more effective in getting around Russian trade sanctions by finding new markets and offering compensation to affected farmers. However, this did not offset the economic effects of the Russian sanctions, and the government still experienced protests and social discontent.

At the international level, the most useful response devised to counter Russian hostile measures was to provide Moldova with some of the benefits that Russia denied it—or threatened to deny it. Moldova's rapprochement with the EU helped lessen the impact of Russian trade sanctions. While the EU was Moldova's largest trading partner even before the sanctions, trade between the two has only increased since the association agreement's signing.[116] To some extent, Russia's hostile measures gave Moldova an opportunity to see how much it had to gain from closer ties to the EU. In that regard, they were not merely ineffective but *counterproductive* for Russia. This was also the case with regard to Moldova's efforts to reduce its energy dependence on Russia. The EU's financial investment in the pipeline between Romania and Moldova will eventually give Moldova access to other sources of gas—although it is another question whether prices will be attractive enough for Moldova to switch.

Other countermeasures taken by the international community, while not directly related to Moldova, ended up having an impact as well. The economic sanctions against Russia (renewed several times) by the EU's 28 members in response to Russia's aggression in Ukraine—combined with an economic recession in Russia—have limited Russia's ability to continue subsidizing Transnistria at previous levels. In 2015, Russia stopped paying pensions to elderly Russians in Transnistria, and there were reports (unconfirmed by the Kremlin) that Russia had denied a Transnistrian request for $100 million in funding.[117] Furthermore, Russia's economic recession is likely to limit the number and scope of hostile measures that it can employ to influence its near abroad, Moldova included.

---

[116] Popescu and Litra, 2012, p. 1.

[117] Victoria Puiu, "Can Russia Afford Transnistria?" Eurasianet, February 18, 2015a. Another observer noted that, "without the funds generated by reselling Russian gas to consumers, remittances from expatriate workers and direct financial aid from Russia, the state could face bankruptcy" (Malling, 2015).

Overall, the Moldovan case presented inherent difficulties for Russia. Russia tried to prevent Moldova from getting closer to the EU, but anything it did to coerce or punish resulted in the opposite effect, because the EU appeared to be Moldova's only recourse in offsetting the impact of Russia's actions. In other words, hostile measures, such as trade bans, burned the bridge that Russia was trying to maintain with Moldova. This suggests that long-term, "softer" hostile measures—such as maintaining a peacekeeping presence in Transnistria, involvement in the economy, or cultural influence—might have higher payoffs because they could delay Moldova's ability to become part of Western economic and military organizations. Russia's use of carrots (such as cheap gas) rather than sticks will also likely continue to work in its favor, at least until the West is able to match these benefits.

## Georgia (2004–2012)

Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the relationship between Russia and Georgia has been characterized by a tug of war between Georgia's desire to gain independence from Russia and its influence and Russia's drive to maintain its weight in Georgia and the South Caucasus. Some of the gravest points of disagreement have revolved around the status of the two separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, as well as Georgia's aspirations to one day join the European Union and, most disturbingly for Russia, NATO.[1] This section focuses on the crises that marred Russo-Georgian relations from 2004 to 2012, a period during which Georgia undertook some of its most significant efforts to escape Russia's grip and in which Russia employed a wide array of hostile measures to maintain it.

During his presidency (1995–2003), Eduard Shevardnadze was discontented with the lack of substantial support he received from Moscow to restore Georgian sovereignty over South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Shevardnadze sought alliances with the United States and NATO for the purpose of balancing Russian influence, which Georgian elites saw as the main reason for instability in the regions.[2] Tensions with Russia increased after Georgia's Rose Revolution in November 2003.[3] The revolution deposed Shevardnadze and ushered in Mikheil Saakashvili, a Western-educated politician who ran on a platform of economic reforms and anticorruption, closer ties with the EU and NATO, Georgian territorial integrity, and independence from Russia. Russia disapproved of how Saakashvili came to power (through a West-supported coup, according to Russia), his firm stance on bringing Abkhazia and South Ossetia back under Georgia's rule, and his efforts to gain political distance from Russia and seek alliance with the West. The final point has been a particularly sore one for the Russian government, which has viewed Georgia as a pawn in the West's (more specifically, the United States') strategy to contain Russia's great-power aspirations by expanding NATO to its borders.[4]

Russo-Georgian relations during Saakashvili's presidency were continuously volatile, reaching their peak over the course of several crises. The most notable were the early 2006

---

[1] Georgia and the majority of the international community do not recognize these states as independent, while Russia has actively supported their claims to independence.

[2] Yet, relations between Georgia and Russia were not free of tension during the Shevardnadze era (Jaba Devdariani, "Georgia and Russia: The Troubled Road to Accommodation," in Robert Legvold and Bruce Coppieters, eds., *Statehood and Security: Georgia After the Rose Revolution*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005).

[3] Most commonly known as the Rose Revolution in the West, it involved a series of widespread protests over disputed and allegedly fraudulent parliamentary elections; as a result of these protests, Shevardnadze was forced to resign and Saakashvili was elected president in January 2004.

[4] Ronald Gregor Suny, "The Pawn of Great Powers: The East-West Competition for Caucasia," *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1, January 2010.

energy shortages and trade sanctions, the Georgia-Russia "spying row" in September–October 2006, and the five-day war between the two countries in August 2008.[5] The year 2006 began with bombings of gas and electricity lines, which led to blackouts and a heating crisis in the midst of a cold winter. Georgia blamed the attacks on Russia. Soon after, Russia imposed trade sanctions on Georgia, banning imports of Georgian fruit, wine, and mineral water. A rapidly deteriorating relationship between Russia and Georgia culminated in Georgia's detention of four Russian officers on spying charges in late September 2006.[6]

The 2008 five-day war was a result of many years of built-up animosity and tensions and saw Georgian and Russian forces confront each other in South Ossetia. An independent investigation commissioned by the EU (the "Tagliavini Report," named after Swiss diplomat Heidi Tagliavini, who led the investigation) concluded that open hostilities began on the night of August 7, 2008, with Georgia shelling Tskhinvali, the capital of South Ossetia.[7] Russian troops entered South Ossetia and executed a massive counterattack, routing the Georgian forces. However, the same investigation notes that Russia may have led Georgia into war in the preceding days: South Ossetian separatists began attacking Georgian villages in early August 2008 to force Georgia to respond militarily, thereby giving a pretext for a preplanned Russian invasion.[8] The fighting ceased on August 12 after French President Nicolas Sarkozy negotiated a ceasefire between Moscow and Tbilisi.[9]

The war came only a few months after Georgia applied to the NATO membership action plan at the Bucharest NATO summit in early April 2008. Shortly before the summit, Putin and U.S. President George W. Bush met in Sochi, where Putin warned that accepting Georgia into NATO would cross Russia's red line.[10] Georgia's request was turned down at the summit, but—at U.S. insistence—NATO promised Georgia that its request for inclusion in the membership action plan would be reconsidered later that year.[11]

Despite the worsening relationship with Russia, Saakashvili pushed his agenda, moving firmly away from Russia and enjoying a great deal of international support in the process.[12] As a result, the Kremlin used a variety of hostile measures to weaken Saakashvili's authority and preserve Russia's interests in the South Caucasus.

---

5 Mikhail Barabanov, "The August War Between Russia and Georgia," *Moscow Defence Brief*, No. 13, 2008.

6 "Four Russian Officers Arrested, Charged with Espionage," *Civil Georgia*, September 27, 2006.

7 Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia, *Report*, Vol. 1, September 2009, p. 29.

8 Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia, 2009.

9 Anders Åslund and Andrew Kuchins, *The Russia Balance Shee*t, Washington, D.C.: Peterson Institute for International Economics and Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2009. France held the EU presidency at the time of the crisis.

10 Ian Traynor, "Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili Blamed for Starting Russian War," *The Guardian*, September 30, 2009.

11 Kakha Gogolashvili, Tengiz Pkhaladze, Nikolay Silaev, Tornike Sharashendize, Ivan Sukhov, Vladimer Papava, Boris Frumkin, George Tarkhan-Mouravi, Andrei Zagorski, Ivlian Haindrava, and Alexander Skakov, *Russia and Georgia: Searching for the Way Out*, Tbilisi, Georgia: Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies, 2011.

12 Helene Cooper, C. J. Chivers, and Clifford J. Levy, "U.S. Watched as a Squabble Turned into a Showdown," *New York Times*, August 17, 2008.

## Russia's Three Key Objectives in Its Policy Toward Georgia

### Keep Georgia Within Russia's Sphere of Influence and Stop NATO Expansion

NATO expansion has been one of Moscow's primary foreign policy concerns since the 1990s.[13] In addition, Georgia's geographic location between the Russian North Caucasus and the Middle East (see Figure B.3) has made it a region of particular geopolitical importance to Russia. As a result, Russia has viewed Georgia's overtures toward NATO and the European Union as threatening to its security and strategic interests.[14] Even before Saakashvili came to power, Georgia was one of the first former Soviet republics to choose rapprochement with the West. Saakashvili reinforced this orientation, as evidenced by, for example, Georgia's generous contribution of troops to Iraq and Afghanistan—a development that the Kremlin watched with concern.[15]

One important means for Russia to retain some influence in Georgia was by maintaining control over South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Russia was frustrated by its limited access to warm seas after the fall of the Soviet Union and before the annexation of Crimea, so Abkhazia's Black Sea coastline (see Figure B.3) was particularly important.[16] Furthermore, keeping Abkhazia and South Ossetia in a state of ongoing or "frozen" ethno-territorial conflict with little chance for successful resolution ensured that NATO members would be reluctant to accept Georgia into the alliance. Thus, these conflicts have been important levers for Russia to keep NATO out of the region, limit any form of regional cooperation, and exert political and military pres-

**Figure B.3**
**Map of Georgia**

SOURCE: CIA, "Georgia," *World Factbook*, last updated July 16, 2019e.

[13] George J. Church, Sally Donnelly, and Ann Simmons, "Next, a Cold Peace?" *Time*, December 19, 1994.

[14] Svante E. Cornell, *Small Nations and Great Powers: A Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict in the Caucasus*, London: Curzon Press, 2001.

[15] Koba Liklikadze, "Iraq: As Third-Largest Contingent, Georgia Hopes to Show Its Worth," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, September 10, 2007; Randall E. Newnham, "Georgia on My Mind? Russian Sanctions and the End of the 'Rose Revolution,'" *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 2, July 2015.

[16] Roy Allison, "Russia Resurgent? Moscow's Campaign to 'Coerce Georgia to Peace,'" *International Affairs*, Vol. 84, No. 6, November 2008.

sure on Georgia.[17] Russia has not only maintained a military presence in these two regions, but it has also gradually expanded the borders of these regions farther into Georgia.[18]

#### Force Georgia's Western Partners to Reassess the Southern Corridor Energy Strategy

The Nabucco pipeline, proposed in 2002 as a part of the EU's Southern Corridor energy strategy with the objective to carry Caspian and Middle East gas into Europe, would have reduced Europe's dependence on Russian gas.[19] The project's goal was to ensure that Europe imported enough gas to satisfy its growing consumption needs; according to the European Commission's calculations, Europe's gas consumption was expected to increase from 502 bcm in 2005 to 815 bcm in 2030, and Russia alone would not be able to meet the demand.[20] Both the United States and the EU backed the project and considered it to be of great strategic importance.[21] The eastern section of the pipeline would run from Azerbaijan across Georgia and Turkey to the Bulgarian border.[22] Thus, the Southern Corridor energy strategy in general—and the Nabucco pipeline specifically—went against Russia's interest in maintaining its status as Europe's main energy supplier, as well as its economic, political, and strategic interests.

#### Dispel the Appeal of Georgia's Pivot to the West for Russian and Other CIS Audiences

The dissolution of the Soviet Union and the identity struggles it precipitated have made the choice between "Western" and "Eastern" development trajectories an ongoing dilemma for many post-Soviet states, including Russia. Georgia's pivot to the West, if perceived as successful by Russian and CIS observers, threatened the Kremlin's credibility within Russia and Russian influence in post-Soviet states. With Saakashvili's heavy-handed reforms viewed as both inspired by the West and mostly effective, the Kremlin sought to undermine Georgia's success and ensure Saakashvili's failure to keep both CIS and domestic Russian audiences from attempting to follow a similar path.[23]

### Energy Sanctions

#### Content and Implementation

Georgia frequently accused Russia of using gas as a tool of political pressure. Between 2004 and 2006, after Saakashvili's election, Georgia experienced a nearly 500-percent increase in gas

---

[17] Kavus Abushov, "Policing the Near Abroad: Russian Foreign Policy in the South Caucasus," *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 63, No. 2, June 2009, p. 206; Thomas de Waal, *The Caucasus: An Introduction*, Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2010. Also see Brian J. Ellison, "Russian Grand Strategy in the South Ossetia War," *Democratizatsiya*, Vol. 19, No. 4, Fall 2011.

[18] See, for example, Paul Salopek, "Vladimir Putin's Mysterious Moving Border," *Politico*, April 5, 2016.

[19] See, for example, Stefan Nicola, "Analysis: Europe's Pipeline War," United Press International, February 5, 2008.

[20] For more, see Leslie Palti-Guzman, "Don't Cry for the Nabucco Pipeline," Reuters, May 1, 2014.

[21] See Jozias van Aartsen, *Activity Report September 2007–February 2009*, Brussels, Belgium: European Commission, Project of European Interest NG 3 (national gas route 3, Nabucco project), February 4, 2009.

[22] Charles Recknagel, "Nabucco Pipeline Suffers Setback as Rival Expected to Get Azeri Gas," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, June 27, 2013.

[23] For an assessment of Saakashvili's reforms, see Huseyn Aliyev, "The Effects of the Saakashvili Era Reforms on Informal Practices in the Republic of Georgia," *Studies of Transition States and Societies*, Vol. 6, No. 1, June 2014, p. 214.

prices.[24] Moscow explained it as a regular increase, aimed to bring prices charged to Georgia in line those charged to Moscow's Western European customers. But other post-Soviet states with friendlier policies were allowed to pay substantially less (see Table B.2).[25]

Georgia had few alternatives for providing its citizens with heat and electricity, so it had to pay the higher rates. To avoid political upheaval, it did so from government funds, without increasing prices paid by consumers. At the peak of Georgia's energy dependence in 2007, it paid Gazprom about 10 percent of its entire state budget.[26] On January 22, 2006, just days after Russia stopped gas supplies to Georgia over a pricing dispute, Russia announced that Chechen separatists had bombed both the main gas lines to Georgia.[27] Although no definitive proof emerged, many believed that the lines were cut by Moscow to further undermine Saakashvili's government.[28] As a result of this disruption, Georgia experienced several days of closed schools, factories, and cold houses until gas service was restored.[29]

Further suspicions of Russian sabotage arose when Russia announced that the main electrical connection between Russia and Georgia was also blown up—at the same time as the two gas lines, although the electrical lines were far from the gas pipes.[30] The result was widespread blackouts. Saakashvili accused Russia of being responsible for the gas and power line blasts, saying none of the militant groups operating in the region had any motives to target Georgia.

**Table B.2**
**Natural Gas Prices Charged to Russian Customers, 2005–2008**

| | Price per Thousand Cubic Meters ($) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Customer** | **2005** | **2006** | **2007** | **2008** |
| Armenia | 56 | 110 | 110 | 110 |
| Belarus | 46 | 46 | 110 | 125 |
| Georgia | 53 | 110 | 235 | 235 |
| Moldova | 80 | 110 | 170 | 190 |
| Ukraine | 50 | 95 | 130 | 160 |

SOURCE: Newnham, 2011, Table 1. Used with permission.

[24] Andrew Osborn, "Moscow Accused of Using Gas Prices to Bully Georgia," *The Independent*, November 3, 2006; Randall E. Newnham. "Oil, Carrots, and Sticks: Russia's Energy Resources as a Foreign Policy Tool," *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 2, July 2011. Also see Olga Oliker, Keith Crane, Lowell H. Schwartz, and Catherine Yusupov, *Russian Foreign Policy: Sources and Implications*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MG-768-AF, 2009.

[25] Newnham, 2015.

[26] Newnham, 2015.

[27] "Blasts Cut Georgia Gas, Electricity Supplies," CNN, January 22, 2006.

[28] "Russia Blamed for 'Gas Sabotage,'" BBC News, January 22, 2006.

[29] C. J. Chivers, "Georgia Reopens Old Gas Line to Ease Post-Blast Shortage," *New York Times*, January 24, 2006.

[30] "Blasts Cut Georgia Gas, Electricity Supplies," 2006.

### Local and International Reactions

On January 19, 2006, Saakashvili made a commitment that, by 2009, the country would no longer be reliant on Russia for its energy supplies.[31] Since the electrical interruptions in 2006, Georgia has focused on developing its hydroelectric power industry. To further offset its energy dependence on Russia, Georgia started buying gas from Azerbaijan and helping to transport gas supplies from Azerbaijan to European buyers, which greatly helped both states and cut Russia out of the process.[32]

Despite Saakashvili's warnings about how dangerous Russia's energy manipulations have been for Eastern European countries that wish to integrate with Europe, Western reactions were rather subdued at the time. While many foreign officials, including U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney, condemned Russia's use of energy as a lever of influence, Western powers took no specific actions to deter Russia from manipulating Georgia's energy supplies or to help Georgia withstand Russia's influence.

### Level of Success

Russia's energy sanctions imposed significant costs on Georgia: The direct cost of the price increases, the opportunity costs of lost production from the electric and gas cutoffs, and the costs of setting up alternative energy supplies.[33] The incident also once again highlighted Moscow's dominance over its energy-dependent CIS neighbors. The crisis in Georgia came less than a month after Gazprom temporarily shut off gas supplies to Ukraine when Kyiv refused to accept a fourfold price hike. While Saakashvili's popularity within Georgia and abroad was not immediately affected by the sanctions, the longer-term economic strain likely contributed to a decline in his domestic approval and the demise of his party in the 2012 elections.

On the other hand, energy cutoffs gave Georgia a new impetus to become more independent from Russian supplies. The agreement with Azerbaijan reduced Georgia's energy costs by more than half, and they have persisted at relatively low levels since then. Georgia has also enjoyed generous fees paid by Azerbaijan to have its gas transit through the country en route to Western purchasers.[34]

## Trade Sanctions

### Content and Implementation

The "division of labor" across the Soviet republics left Georgia gravely dependent on trade with Russia after the fall of the Soviet Union. Georgia was the Soviet Union's (and particularly Russia's) main supplier of wine, mineral water, and fruit, and few other countries knew of or were interested in these products in the post-Soviet era. Thus, as virtually the sole importer of these goods, Moscow was in a strong position to damage the Georgian economy by banning its principal exports.

---

[31] Daisy Sindelar, "Georgia: Tbilisi Accuses Moscow of Energy Sabotage," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, January 23, 2006.

[32] Chivers, 2006.

[33] Newnham, 2015.

[34] See Newnham, 2011, and 2015, p. 165.

When tensions rose with the new Saakashvili government, and with Georgia opposing Russia's admittance to the WTO, Russia pulled the trade lever. Especially long customs inspections of Georgian fruit shipments on the Russian border were followed by Russia's ban of Georgian wine in March 2006, allegedly because they contained a high level of pesticides.[35] Soon after, in May 2006, two major brands of Georgian mineral water were also banned from the Russian market for failing to meet purity standards.[36] The Kremlin may have also supported an unofficial campaign by various Russian entities to boycott Georgian goods.[37] Georgian wine was allowed back into Russia soon after Georgia elected a new, more Russia-friendly president in 2013.

### Local and International Reactions

The Georgian government stated that wine and water bans were part of a political campaign to punish the country for its pro-Western policies.[38] To compensate for these losses, Georgia made efforts to expand exports to new markets, including Ukraine, Canada, Spain, Lebanon, and Cyprus.[39]

### Level of Success

The Russian import restrictions affected Georgia's overall trade balance, which was already negative, with imports accounting for twice as much of Georgia's trade with Russia as exports. The sanctions also targeted sectors that were almost entirely dependent on the Russian market. Replacing that huge market proved impossible. Before the ban, wine products constituted 10 percent of all Georgian exports, and 80–90 percent of these products went to Russia.[40] The ban was strongly felt by Georgian workers, many of whom lost their livelihoods. While some wine exports were redirected toward Ukraine and other countries, the overall volume of wine exported in 2012 stood at only a third of pre-embargo levels.[41] A significant portion of Georgia's population still lived below the poverty line, and growing incomes were offset by rising inflation and radical economic reforms, along with a crackdown on the black market, which left thousands unemployed. As a result, the hopes of restored trade relations with Russia may have affected Georgians' decision to vote for more Russia-friendly parties and presidential candidates in 2012 and 2013.[42]

---

[35] Mamuka Tsereteli, "Banned in Russia: The Politics of Georgian Wine," *Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*, April 19, 2006. Also see Zaal Anjaparidze, "Russia Continues to Press Georgian Wine Industry," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 3, No. 77, April 20, 2006.

[36] "Russia Bans Georgia Mineral Water," BBC News, May 5, 2006.

[37] Newnham, 2015.

[38] Vladimir Socor, "Vilnius Conference on Europe's Completion in the East," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 3, No. 88, May 5, 2006.

[39] Trading Economics, "Georgia Exports 1995–2016," webpage, undated.

[40] Glenn Kates, "Something Old, Something New: Georgian Wines Adapt to Changing Market," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, April 17, 2013.

[41] Kym Anderson, "Is Georgia the Next 'New' Wine-Exporting Country?" *Journal of Wine Economics*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 2013.

[42] Newnham, 2015.

## Diplomatic and Economic Measures After the Spying Row

### Content and Implementation

On September 28, 2006, the day after Georgian authorities arrested four Russian officers (an incident that became known as the spying row), Russia recalled its ambassador and began a partial evacuation of its diplomatic staff from the country. In addition, Moscow ceased all military communications with Tbilisi, except on the issue of the withdrawal of Russian military bases from Georgia; any prospects of military cooperation were no longer discussed.

At the height of the 2006 spying row, Russia completely severed postal and transport links with Georgia for several weeks.[43] Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said the sanctions were aimed at "cutting off illegal flows of money which were transferred from Russia to Georgia in large amounts."[44] According to Lavrov, Georgia's rapid militarization was at least partly funded by this "criminal money."[45] Only in March 2008, 18 months after it was suspended by Moscow, did direct Georgia-Russia air service resume, followed by the restoration of sea and postal links the following month.

Finally, during the spying row crisis, the Russian Duma threatened to shut down money transfers to Georgia.[46] At the time, Georgians living in Russia sent home an estimated $1.5–2 billion annually, so the ban on transfers would have served the Georgian economy a tremendous blow.[47] However, a remittance ban is difficult to enforce, and partial or complete failure of that measure could have backfired for Russia.[48]

Russia found another way to economically harm Georgia through its dependence on remittances: deporting some of the Georgian workers in Russia who sent them. According to Human Rights Watch,

> Russian courts issued expulsion decisions against more than 4,600 Georgians, and the authorities forcibly expelled 2,300 Georgians, including some residing legally in Russia. At least 2,000 Georgians left Russia by their own means because they had been issued expulsion decisions. The authorities denied basic rights to many of the detained, including access to a lawyer or consular representation or the possibility of appealing the expulsion decision taken against them. Most were given hearings lasting only a few minutes, and that were conducted in groups.[49]

---

[43] "Georgians Deported as Row Deepens," BBC News, October 6, 2006.

[44] "Лавров: Москву тревожит милитаризация Грузии" ["Lavrov: Moscow Is Concerned by Georgia's Militarization"], Grani.ru, October 3, 2006.

[45] Misha Dzhindzhikhashvili, "Russia Cuts Travel Links with Georgia," Associated Press (*Washington Post*), October 3, 2006.

[46] Steven Lee Myers, "Russian Officials Pledge More Sanctions to Cut Off Cash to Georgia," *New York Time*s, October 4, 2006a.

[47] Oleg Gladunov, "Деньги мигрантов останутся в России" ["Migrants' Money Will Stay in Russia"], *Rossyiskaya Gazeta*, October 5, 2006

[48] Sergi Kapanadze, *Georgia's Vulnerability to Russia's Pressure Points*, London: European Council on Foreign Relations, June 2014.

[49] Human Rights Watch, "The Campaign Against Georgians," in *Singled Out: Russia's Detection and Expulsion of Georgians*, October 2007, p. 30.

The report continued, "Many Georgian detainees were held in appalling conditions of detention and many were subjected to threats and other ill-treatment. Two Georgians died in custody awaiting expulsion."[50] In the days preceding the deportations (but after the spying row began), Putin called for new regulations for migrant workers, and Russian immigration officials cited legal violations of the immigration code as a reason for the raids against Georgian migrants. While Russia's prosecutor general, Yuri Chaika, claimed that "everything that is taking place today is exclusively within the framework of the law,"[51] the Russian government was clearly targeting Georgian workers, and Russian officials vowed to not provide work visas to Georgians in the future.[52]

The actions of the authorities, statements of the politicians, and media reports painted a picture of Georgians as a source of instability and criminality in Russia. Authorities raided a Georgian-owned casino, a hotel, and several Georgian restaurants in Moscow. Mikhail Tyurkin, deputy director of Russia's Federal Migration Service, announced that "Georgian migrants are 10 times more likely than citizens of other CIS countries to violate Russian laws," and mainstream TV channels and newspaper reports portrayed Georgian migrants as particularly prone to criminal activity.[53] According to Human Rights Watch,

> Private actors also took action against Georgians. For example, the web server "GarantHost.ru" cut ties with 16 web pages and one web design studio run by Georgians. On October 21, unknown individuals attacked the Marat Gelman gallery in Moscow, which was showing the work of the Georgian artist Aleksandr Jikia.[54]

Authorities also opened a criminal investigation into the publisher of the Russian novelist with Georgian roots Grigory Chkhartishvili, writing under the pseudonym of Boris Akunin, for tax evasion.[55]

### Local and International Reactions

On October 3, 2006, after Russia suspended all transport and postal links to Georgia and stopped issuing entry visas to Georgian citizens, the OSCE, UN, and United States called on Russia to decrease tension by reestablishing transport and communication links with Georgia.[56] In a firm statement, the EU expressed "deep concern" about Russia's actions against Georgia and the possible economic, political, and humanitarian consequences.[57] Javier Solana, the EU's high representative for common foreign and security policy, called Georgia an impor-

---

[50] Human Rights Watch, 2007, p. 30.

[51] "Чайка благословил 'грузинские чистки'" ["Chaika Blessed 'Georgian Cleansings'"], *Izvestia*, October 6, 2006.

[52] Irina Romancheva, "Нелегалов будут сажать на 8 лет" ["Illegals Will Be Sent to Jail for 8 Years"], vz.ru, October 5, 2006.

[53] Romancheva, 2006.

[54] Human Rights Watch, 2007, p. 39, footnote 131, citing "Conclusions of the Ad Hoc Commission of the Parliament of Georgia to Study Acts committed by the Russian Federation Towards Citizens of Georgia," February 22, 2007.

[55] Human Rights Watch, 2007, p. 38.

[56] "Russia Should Restore Transport Links with Georgia-OSCE," Reuters, October 2, 2006; "Russia Suspends All Georgia Transport," *Washington Times*, October 3, 2006.

[57] Council of the European Union, "2756th Council Meeting, General Affairs and External Relations, External Relations, Luxembourg, October 16–17, 2006," press release, October 22, 2015.

tant partner for the EU. The OSCE urged Russia to respond to its officers' release by restoring transport and postal links.[58] Georgia threatened to block Russia's bid to join the WTO.[59] The foreign ministers of European countries and international human rights organizations (including human rights entities within Russia) called for Russian authorities to stop activities directed against Georgians in Russia.[60] Georgia filed a legal suit with the European Court for Human Rights. After years of litigation, the European Court ruled in July 2014 that the deportations had violated human rights norms and ordered Moscow to pay compensation.[61]

In late 2006, various EU officials also called for the Georgian government to avoid any actions that would increase tensions with Russia.[62] Finnish Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja, whose country held the EU presidency at the time, said both sides had overreacted and warned against any "more acute measures." EU Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner refrained from assigning blame in the row to either side and urged both Tbilisi and Moscow to display restraint and restore dialogue.[63] The U.S. Department of State stated that it encouraged Russia and Georgia to take steps to deescalate tensions.[64]

### Level of Success

Russia's reactions to the spying row exposed an array of Georgian vulnerabilities to its neighbor, facilitated the release of the Russian officers, and warned Georgia against such arrests in the future. The transportation ban, expulsions, and possibility that money transfers could be cut off frightened Georgians and made them question the wisdom of Georgian authorities. On the other hand, sanctions imposed on Georgia during the spying row angered Georgians and fueled growing resentment toward Russia, helping to bolster Saakashvili's argument that Georgia needed protection from Russia and that this protection could come from the West.[65] An early presidential election and double referendum on January 5, 2008—in which voters decided whether to have early parliamentary elections in spring 2008 and whether Georgia should pursue NATO membership—proved a success for Saakashvili. Georgia's pro-NATO orientation suggests that Russia was not effective in swaying Georgian public opinion away from rapprochement with the West.[66]

---

[58] "Russia Should Restore Transport Links with Georgia-OSCE," 2006.

[59] "Georgia Threatens to Block Russian WTO Bid," UPI, October 7, 2006.

[60] "The Campaign Against Georgians," 2007.

[61] Sopho Bukia, "Georgia Wins Against Moscow at European Court," Caucasus Reporting Service, No. 743, July 7, 2014; Steven Lee Myers, "Russia Deports Georgians and Increases Pressures on Businesses and Students," *New York Times*, October 7, 2006b.

[62] "Тбилиси: Россия нарушает гуманитарные нормы" ["Tbilisi: Russia Violates Human Rights Norms"], BBC Russian, October 18, 2006.

[63] "Georgia: EU Commissioner Urges Dialogue with Moscow," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, October 2, 2006.

[64] Tom Casey, Deputy Spokesman, U.S. Department of State, "Georgia: Turnover of Russians to OSCE," press statement, October 2, 2006.

[65] See various articles in Matthias Neumann, Robert Orttung, Jeronim Perović, Heiko Pleines, and Hans-Henning Schröder, eds., *Russian Analytical Digest*, No. 13, January 16, 2007.

[66] Saakashvili received 53 percent of the vote and entered his second term as the president of Georgia, while more than 75 percent of voters supported the referendum initiatives.

## Passportization in the Lead-Up to the Russo-Georgian War

### Content and Implementation

Visas and passports have been a tool of both public diplomacy and public pressure in Russia's conflicted relationship with Georgia. In December 2000, Russia unilaterally introduced a visa regime for Georgia but exempted Abkhazia and South Ossetia.[67] The European Parliament called these measures "a challenge to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia" and a "de facto annexation of these indisputably Georgian territories."[68] Russian policymakers framed the policy as an extension of Russia's "humanitarian outreach" toward its compatriots abroad, driven by concern for the rights of the Russian diaspora abroad.[69]

Extensive passportization efforts in South Ossetia and Abkhazia began in June 2002 after Russia introduced the citizenship law, which significantly reduced eligibility criteria and drastically simplified previously cumbersome naturalization procedures for former citizens of the Soviet Union.[70] Populations in breakaway regions were particularly susceptible to Russia's outreach, as Russian citizenship offered the only means to travel abroad, given their internationally unrecognized status. Starting on June 1, 2002, the nongovernmental organization Congress of Russian Communities of Abkhazia began collecting old Soviet passports from those who wished to receive Russian citizenship. These documents were sent to the neighboring Russian city of Sochi for processing, and Russian citizenship was granted. Russia promoted the campaign by offering incentives, such as social security and higher pension payments, as well as easier travel and education opportunities. By the end of June 2002, 150,000 Abkhazians had accepted Russian citizenship; together with the 50,000 who accepted Russian passports earlier, this constituted 70 percent of the republic's population.[71] Residents of South Ossetia also needed to exert little effort to apply for a Russian passport, and up to 90 percent of South Ossetia's population of fewer than 100,000 received Russian citizenship at the time.[72] According to most estimates, virtually all non-ethnic Georgian residents of Abkhazia and South Ossetia have taken up Russian citizenship as a result of passportization efforts.[73]

While the biggest push for Russian passports in South Ossetia and Abkhazia occurred in 2002, it continued in subsequent years and was reinvigorated after various crises in Russo-

---

[67] Iskra Kirova, *Public Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution: Russia, Georgia, and the EU in Abkhazia, Georgia, and South Ossetia*, Los Angeles, Calif.: University of Southern California, Center on Public Diplomacy, Paper No. 7, 2012.

[68] European Parliament, "Resolution on the Visa Regime Imposed by the Russian Federation on Georgia," January 18, 2001.

[69] Igor Zevelev, "Russia's Policy Toward Compatriots in the Former Soviet Union," *Russia in Global Affairs*, March 2, 2008.

[70] Russian Federation, federal law on citizenship of the Russian Federation, No. 182-FZ, November 12, 2002; Peter Roudik, *Russian Federation: Legal Aspects of War in Georgia*, Washington, D.C.: Law Library of Congress, 2008, p. 11.

[71] Khashig, Inal, "Абхазы в погоне за российскими паспортами" ["The Abkhazians Are Chasing Russian Passports"], Caucasus Reporting Service, No. 135, June 27, 2002. These numbers should be interpreted with caution, since demographic data on Abkhazia and South Ossetia are often unreliable.

[72] "Vasili Istratov: 'Russian Passports Were Issued to South Ossetian Residents Based on Russian Legislation,'" *Today.Az*, August 13, 2008.

[73] According to the International Crisis Group, essentially the entire population of South Ossetia except residents of the predominantly ethnic Georgian border region had Russian passports (International Crisis Group, *South Ossetia: The Burden of Recognition*, Europe and Central Asia Report No. 205, June 7, 2010, p. 13; also see John O'Loughlin, Vladimir Kolossov, and Gerard Toal, "Inside Abkhazia: Survey of Attitudes in a *De Facto* State," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, Vol. 27, No. 1, 2011).

Georgian relations. For example, the campaign gained new momentum after the five-day war in August 2008, most notably in the forced passportization of ethnic Georgians residing in the Russian-occupied Akhalgori district (now in South Ossetia) and Gali district (Abkhazia).[74] Georgians living in these districts received an ultimatum to either accept Russian citizenship (and therefore renounce their Georgian citizenship) or leave the area.[75]

### Local and International Reactions

Georgia denounced passportization as "creeping annexation."[76] The Tagliavini report of the EU-commissioned fact-finding mission on the 2008 conflict in South Ossetia concluded,

> The mass conferral of Russian citizenship to Georgian nationals and the provision of passports on a massive scale on Georgian territory, including its breakaway provinces, without the consent of the Georgian Government runs against the principles of good neighbourliness and constitutes an open challenge to Georgian sovereignty and an interference in the internal affairs of Georgia.[77]

In an apparent attempt not to antagonize Russia, the EU emphasized the report's independence and did not endorse it.[78]

### Level of Success

The process of passportization had effectively undermined Tbilisi's sovereignty long before the war began by transforming South Ossetia and Abkhazia into Russian areas and creating overlapping sovereignties: The land legally belonged to Georgia, but the people who lived on it were Russian citizens. By the time the war began in 2008, 90 percent of the populations of Abkhazia and South Ossetia had become Russian citizens.[79] Thus, Vitaly Churkin, Russia's permanent representative to the UN, argued that Georgian forces were conducting ethnic cleansing against Russian civilians and that Russia, therefore, had no choice but to violate Georgia's territorial integrity to stop the violence against Russian citizens.[80]

Because of this legal maneuver, while the international community broadly condemned Russia's actions during the war, its condemnation largely concentrated on the proportionality of Russia's response. As Kristopher Natoli put it, "lost in the discussions of proportionality and 'the responsibility to protect' was a question more fundamental to the legitimacy of Russia's action: how did 90% of South Ossetia's citizens come to hold Russian passports and

---

[74] Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia, 2009.

[75] Damien McElroy, "South Ossetian Police Tell Georgians to Take a Russian Passport, or Leave Their Homes," *The Telegraph*, August 30, 2008.

[76] "Georgian Concern Over Russia's 'Creeping Annexation' of Abkhazia," confidential U.S. diplomatic cable, April 10, 2008, released August 30, 2011.

[77] Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia, 2009, p. 18.

[78] "Tagliavini Report and the (Lack of) EU Response," *ISCIP Analyst*, Vol. 16, No. 2, October 8, 2009.

[79] Artman, 2014.

[80] United Nations Security Council, "Security Council Hears Conflicting Russian, Georgian Views of Worsening Crisis as Members Seek End to Violence in Day's Second Meeting on South Ossetia," press release, August 8, 2008b.

citizenship?"[81] In the end, as a result of passportization, Georgia's borders have been effectively redrawn, and thousands of Russian citizens (over whom Moscow enjoys great influence) now reside inside Georgia's internationally recognized borders.

## Official Relations with Abkhazia and South Ossetia in the Lead-Up to the Russo-Georgian War

### Content and Implementation

In March 2008, Russia unilaterally withdrew from the CIS sanctions on Abkhazia, which opened the possibility for Russia to provide direct military assistance to the region (although the Russian government offered assurances that it would continue to adhere to military sanctions). A few days after the April 2008 NATO summit in Bucharest, Putin signed a decree authorizing direct official relations between Russian government bodies and the secessionist authorities in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The decree also treated the secessionist authorities' legislation in the respective territories as valid.[82]

### Local and International Reactions

The UN Security Council, which convened on April 23 at Georgia's request, unanimously passed a resolution that reaffirmed

> the commitment of all Member States to the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognized borders and [support for] all efforts by the United Nations and the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General, which are guided by their determination to promote a settlement of the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict only by peaceful means and within the framework of the Security Council resolutions.[83]

The United States, United Kingdom, France, and Germany issued a statement calling on the Russian Federation to revoke or not implement its decision. A number of other reactions came from the United States, which was in the middle of an election year. Senator John McCain, whose campaign's foreign policy adviser, Randy Scheunemann, had represented Georgia as a lobbyist, was the first to blast Russia, offer Saakashvili support, and proclaim that the United States and the world should be firm in preventing Russia from exercising a free hand in undermining Georgian sovereignty.[84] Then-Senator Barack Obama also said he was deeply troubled by Russia's move.[85]

---

[81] Kristopher Natoli, "Weaponizing Nationality: An Analysis of Russia's Passport Policy in Georgia," *Boston University International Law Journal*, Vol. 28, No. 2, Summer 2010.

[82] Vladimir Socor, "Russia Moves Toward Open Annexation of Abkhazia, South Ossetia," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 5, No. 74, April 18, 2008.

[83] United Nations Security Council, "Security Council Extends Mandate of Georgia Observer Mission Until 15 October, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 1808 (2018)," press release, April 15, 2008a.

[84] Matthew Mosk and Jeffrey H. Birnbaum, "While Aide Advised McCain, His Firm Lobbied for Georgia," *Washington Post*, August 13, 2008.

[85] "Barack Obama," *On the Issues*, undated.

### Level of Success

In authorizing official ties with Georgia's breakaway territories, Russia likely pursued several goals: to express dismay at the recent international decision to recognize Kosovo, in which Russia's strong objections were overruled; to further block Georgia's path toward NATO membership; and to build a legal framework for establishing military relationships with the territories in preparation for open hostilities. If these were indeed Russia's objectives, they were largely successfully attained. Russia's decision gave credence to the argument that Kosovo's independence opened a Pandora's box for other regions seeking independence to demand recognition. It also made clear that a peaceful settlement of the ethno-political conflict in Georgian territory would be unlikely in the near future, postponing any prospect for NATO membership. Finally, recognizing Abkhazia and South Ossetia would allow their leaders to officially ask Russia for military support in case of military aggression against them.

## Shootdown of a Georgian Surveillance Drone in the Lead-Up to the Russo-Georgian War

### Content and Implementation

On April 20, 2008, a Russian jet shot down a Georgian reconnaissance drone flying over Abkhazia. Russia denied responsibility for the incident, and Abkhazia claimed that an "L-39 aircraft of the Abkhaz Air Force" shot down the drone.[86] However, a UN observer mission in Georgia concluded that the jet belonged to the Russian Air Force.[87]

### Local and International Reactions

Saakashvili initially denied that the downed drone belonged to Georgia but later called for attention to Russia's actions:

> I want to say that recent actions by the Russian Federation are source of concern. We urge the European Union to formally investigate . . . [the] incident involving incursion of the Russian jet into the Georgian airspace, which conducted military action.[88]

At the same time, while the Kremlin denied involvement and insisted that the plane belonged to the Abkhazian air force, Putin questioned the legality of Georgia's drone flying over the disputed territory.[89]

In a statement on April 23, the U.S. Department of State supported the Georgian version of events and reiterated unwavering support for Georgian sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as concern about Russia's behavior.[90] On May 6, through the White House spokesperson, the United States directly accused Russia of the downing and called it a provocative

---

[86] "Russia 'Shot Down Georgia Drone,'" BBC News, April 21, 2008, quoting Abkhazia's deputy defense minister.

[87] The same fact-finding mission determined that the spy plane's overflights constituted a violation of the 1994 Moscow agreement outlining security procedures in the wake of a ceasefire between Georgian and Abkhazian forces ("UN Probe Says Russian Jet Downed Georgian Drone," *Civil Georgia*, May 26, 2008).

[88] "Saakashvili's Remarks with Five EU Foreign Ministers," transcript, *Civil Georgia*, May 12, 2008.

[89] "Putin Speaks on Georgia in Newspaper Interview," *Civil Georgia*, May 31, 2008.

[90] "U.S.: Georgian Drone Downed 'Presumably' by Russian MIG-29," *Civil Georgia*, April 4, 2008.

step.[91] A week later, the OSCE's Forum for Security Co-operation discussed the April 20 shootdown at its meeting in Vienna. Its chair-in-office, Finnish Minister of Foreign Affairs Alexander Stubb, said that the events in question had "increased tensions" and called for a UN-led investigation.[92]

### Level of Success

In addition to achieving the immediate objective of eliminating a Georgian reconnaissance drone, the event helped Russia demonstrate its commitment to Abkhazia and its willingness to support the separatists militarily. It also forced Georgia to reveal the existence of its military instruments in the conflict region. Although Russia's initial refusal to admit that its aircraft was to blame may have created doubt about Russia's involvement among international observers, it could no longer deny its military presence in Abkhazia after an investigation by the UN observer mission. This sent Georgia and the rest of the world a signal that an attack by Georgia against the breakaway territories may be deflected with the help of the Russian forces.

## Military Posturing During the Russo-Georgian War

Russia increased its peacekeeping force in Abkhazia to 2,542 in early May 2008, although it kept its troop levels just under 3,000 to avoid exceeding the maximum number permitted under a 1994 ceasefire agreement signed by CIS heads of state.[93] Georgia produced video footage captured by a drone, aiming to prove that Russian troops constituted a fighting force, rather than a peacekeeping one, in Abkhazia.[94] Russia denied the accusations and insisted that the troops were there solely to deter "a planned Georgia military offensive."[95]

On May 31, Russia sent troops (unarmed, according to the Russian Ministry of Defence) to repair a rail line in Abkhazia. The repaired track was used to transport military equipment by at least a portion of the 9,000 Russian personnel who entered Georgia from Abkhazia during the war.[96]

On July 8, four Russian Air Force jets flew over South Ossetia. A scheduled visit to Georgia by U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice the next day nearly coincided with the timing of the flight. It was the first time in a decade that Russia had admitted to an overflight of Georgian territory.[97]

On July 15, as the United States and Georgia began Immediate Response 2008, a large-scale combined military exercise, Russia began its own military exercises on the border with

---

[91] "Russia Takes 'Provocative Steps' with Georgia—U.S.," *Civil Georgia*, May 7, 2008.

[92] "OSCE Concerned Over Increased Tensions," *Civil Georgia*, May 1, 2008.

[93] "Russian Military Threatens to Boost Georgia Force," Reuters, May 8, 2008.

[94] "Georgia Condemns Russian Actions," BBC News, May 18, 2008.

[95] "Russia Says UN Abkhazian Refugee Resolution Counterproductive," *Sputnik*, May 16, 2008.

[96] Svante E. Cornell, Johanna Popjanevski, and Niklas Nilsson, *Russia's War in Georgia: Causes and Implications for Georgia and the World*, Washington, D.C.: Central Asia–Caucasus Institute and Silk Road Studies Program, August 2008.

[97] "Russia Admits Georgia Overflights," BBC News, July 10, 2008; "Overflights Question Russia's Georgia Role: NATO," Reuters, July 15, 2008.

South Ossetia.[98] The Russian exercise was named Caucasus 2008, and units from the Russia's North Caucasus Military District participated.[99] The district commander, Colonel-General Sergey Makarov, said that Russia was ready to provide assistance to Russian peacekeepers in Abkhazia and South Ossetia if needed, in the form of provisions for peacekeeping troops and humanitarian aid to the local populations. Makarov claimed that Russia was "working out actions" through the military exercise, should such action be required.[100] During Russia's Caucasus 2008 exercises, a leaflet titled "Soldier! Know Your Probable Enemy!" (which referred to Georgia's armed forces) was circulated among Russian participants.[101] Russia denied that its military exercises were intentionally timed to coincide with Immediate Response 2008. Nonetheless, Russian troops remained near the Georgian border after the end of their exercise instead of returning to their bases.[102]

## Cyberattacks During the Russo-Georgian War

On July 19, 2008, an internet security firm reported a distributed denial of service (DDoS) cyberattack against websites in Georgia.[103] These attacks had many targets, but it appeared that they were intended to disrupt communications, thereby stifling the overall flow of information inside Georgia.[104] Hackers targeted and overloaded Saakashvili's official presidential website, rendering it inaccessible for 24 hours.[105] As Russian forces prepared to invade South Ossetia, cyberattacks increased in number and sophistication and included the websites of Georgia's parliament, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Internal Affairs, along with several news agencies and banks. Among the first websites targeted were Georgian hacker forums; these attacks were not particularly successful but might have been designed as a preemptive strike against possible retaliation.[106]

On August 8, just as Russian troops were moving into South Ossetia, security experts observed an even more substantial round of DDoS attacks against Georgian websites. Sites such as stopgeorgia.ru recommended sites to attack and provided instructions on how to con-

---

[98] Immediate Response 2008 also included service members from Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Ukraine. More than 1,600 personnel, including 1,000 U.S. troops, took part in the exercise, which concluded on July 31 ("U.S. Troops Start Training Exercise in Georgia," Reuters, July 15, 2008).

[99] "Russian Paratroopers Arrive in North Caucasus for Combat Drills," RIA Novosti (*Sputnik*), July 16, 2008.

[100] GlobalSecurity.org, "Georgia 2008 Path to War," webpage, last updated April 18, 2016.

[101] Svante E. Cornell and S. Frederick Starr, eds., *The Guns of August 2008: Russia's War in Georgia*, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2009, p. 71.

[102] Charles W. Blandy, *Provocation, Deception, Entrapment: The Russo-Georgian Five Day War*, Swindon, UK: Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, Conflict Studies Research Centre, 2009.

[103] John Markoff, "Before the Gunfire, Cyberattacks," *New York Times*, August 12, 2008.

[104] David Hollis, "Cyberwar Case Study: Georgia 2008," *Small Wars Journal*, January 6, 2011. Also see John Bumgarner and Scott Borg, *Overview by the US-CCU of the Cyber Campaign Against Georgia in August of 2008*, U.S. Cyber Consequences Unit, August 2009.

[105] Dancho Danchev, "Georgia President's Web Site Under DDoS Attack from Russian Hackers," *ZD Net*, July 22, 2008a.

[106] Gregg Keizer, "Russian Hacker 'Militia' Mobilizes to Attack Georgia," *Computerworld*, August 12, 2008.

duct cyberattacks. By August 10, the DDoS attacks had rendered most Georgian governmental websites inoperable.[107]

Attackers also defaced several Georgian political, governmental, and financial websites. For instance, hackers posted caricatures of Saakashvili as Adolf Hitler, procured lists of public email addresses to spread propaganda, combed government networks for potentially valuable information, and tried to manipulate public opinion polls on sites such as CNN.com in an attempt to sway initial international opinion of the conflict.[108]

According to David Smith, then U.S. ambassador to Georgia, the events of August 2008 constituted the first ever combined kinetic and cyberattack campaign.[109] He further pointed out,

> When one considers the forensic evidence, geopolitical situation, timing, and the relationship between the [Russian] government and the youth and criminal groups [responsible for the cyberattacks], it is not difficult to conclude that the Kremlin was behind it all.[110]

## Media Campaigns During the Russo-Georgian War

### Content and Implementation

The media coverage during the war produced cardinally different narratives. Here, we focus only on Russia's approach to information control during that time.

The Russian military attempted a few new steps to support an information campaign. For the first time, Russian journalists accompanied the troops, which were supposedly sent to protect Russian citizens in South Ossetia. These media reports were broadcast to the local population in the breakaway regions. The Russian government also assigned a military spokesperson who was to inform the public on the progress of the campaign.[111]

In its media and political messaging, Russia echoed NATO's 1999 justification for intervening in Kosovo and argued that Georgia conducted ethnic cleansing and genocide in South Ossetia. Russian and South Ossetia government officials claimed that South Ossetian civilian deaths ranged from 1,400 to more than 2,000; Russia used the urgency of preventing further ethnic cleansing as one of its main justifications for intervention.[112] For instance, Russian

---

[107] Stephen W. Korns and Joshua E. Kastenberg, "Georgia's Cyber Left Hook," *Parameters*, Winter 2008–2009; David J. Smith, "Russian Cyber Strategy and the War Against Georgia," *Infocus Quarterly* (Atlantic Council), January 17, 2014.

[108] Hollis, 2011; Joseph Menn, "Expert: Cyber-Attacks on Georgia Websites Tied to Mob, Russian Government," *Los Angeles Times*, August 13, 2008; Eneken Tikk, Kadri Kaska, Kristel Rünnimeri, Mari Kert, Anna-Maria Talihärm, and Liis Vihul, *Cyber Attacks Against Georgia: Legal Lessons Identified*, Tallinn, Estonia: Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence, November 2008.

[109] D. Smith, 2014.

[110] D. Smith, 2014.

[111] George T. Donovan, Jr., *Russian Operational Art in the Russo-Georgian War of 2008*, thesis, Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: U.S. Army War College, 2009.

[112] Human Rights Watch, *Up in Flames: Humanitarian Law Violations and Civilian Victims in the Conflict Over South Ossetia*, New York, January 23, 2009, pp. 74–78. Also see Russian Ministry of Defence, "Жертвами грузинского нападения на Южную Осетию стали более 2 тыс. Человек" ["More Than 2000 People Became Victims of Georgian Aggression"], August 10, 2008; "Лавров: никакого доверия к грузинскому руководству не осталось" ["Lavrov: No Trust Left for Georgian Government"], *Vesti*, August 12, 2008; and Human Rights Watch, 2009, pp. 70–73.

President Dmitry Medvedev stated that "the form this aggression took is nothing less than genocide because Georgia committed heaviest crimes—civilians were torched, sawed to pieces and rolled over by tanks."[113] On August 9, 2008, the Russian ambassador to Georgia called the Georgian actions "the truest form of vandalism," adding, "The city of Tskhinvali doesn't exist anymore. It simply doesn't. It was destroyed by the Georgian military."[114]

Russian media repeated the claims of Georgia's genocidal acts against South Ossetians. For example, between August 8 and 10, 2008, Russia Today (now RT) aired multiple news reports about the war in Georgia that started with a huge caption reading, "GENOCIDE." At the same time, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin accused foreign media outlets of pro-Georgian bias in their conflict coverage, calling their account of events "a politically motivated version."[115]

### Local and International Reactions

The European Parliament adopted a resolution condemning Russia's decision to deploy troops to repair railway links in Abkhazia. The resolution stated that the peacekeeping structure must be changed because Russia was no longer an unbiased player.[116] Georgia stated that the move was an "aggressive" act.[117]

After Russia admitted that its military jets had flown into Georgia's airspace to "let hot heads in Tbilisi cool down," Georgia recalled its ambassador to Russia.[118] Saakashvili slammed the EU's timid reaction to Russia's admission in July 2008. During Russia-Georgia hostilities, U.S. officials found that they had little leverage to affect Moscow's behavior.[119] The United States contemplated military action to aid Georgia but ultimately chose not to intervene directly. However, it supported Georgia in other ways, such as sending ships to the Black Sea, airlifting Georgian troops from Iraq to help with the fighting in Georgia, and sending humanitarian supplies to Tbilisi. The United States also imposed some penalties on Russia by freezing a U.S.-Russian civil nuclear cooperation agreement and ending support for Moscow's bid to join the WTO.[120]

European countries initially joined the United States in promising sanctions against Russia and considered various responses, including suspending Russia's relationship with the EU and boycotting the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi. However, as more facts about the conflict continued to surface, EU member states grew increasingly divided over which side should bear the blame for the hostilities.[121] Ultimately, EU officials welcomed Moscow's willingness to

---

[113] "Medvedev, Putin Accuse Georgia of Genocide," *The Hindu*, August 11, 2008.

[114] "Посол РФ в Грузии: в Цхинвали погибли как минимум две тысячи человек" ["Russian Ambassador to Georgia: At Least 2,000 People Were Killed in Tskhinvali"], Interfax, August 9, 2008.

[115] "Russia Points to Media Bias in Coverage of S.Ossetia Conflict," RIA Novosti (*Sputnik*), August 10, 2008.

[116] European Parliament, "Resolution of 5 June 2008 on the Situation in Georgia," June 5, 2008.

[117] "Russia Pulls Some Troops Out of Abkhazia," Agence France-Presse, July 30, 2008.

[118] Mikheil Svanidze, "Russia Says It Sent Warplanes Over South Ossetia to 'Prevent Bloodshed,'" *The Messenger* (Georgia), July 11, 2008.

[119] Steven Pifer, "George W. Bush Was Tough on Russia? Give Me a Break," blog post, Brookings Institution, March 24, 2014.

[120] Pifer, 2014. Also see "Russia Says No Reason to Delay WTO Membership Bid," Reuters, August 14, 2008.

[121] Charles King, "Five Day War: Managing Moscow after the Georgia Crisis," *Foreign Affairs*, November–December 2008.

agree to the EU-negotiated ceasefire and its rapid withdrawal from the region, which allowed a possibility of maintaining the status quo in the EU-Russian relationship. "We are convinced that it is in Russia's own interest not to isolate itself from Europe," read the final communiqué from a summit of EU leaders held in September 2008.[122]

In response to Russia's media campaign, the Georgian government stopped broadcasting Russian TV channels and blocked access to Russian websites during the war and in its immediate aftermath. At the same time, Georgia launched its own public relations campaign and managed to create an image of a small democratic country forced into a war by a grand imperialistic, totalitarian neighbor. Within hours of the Russian intervention, the Georgian government began sending hourly email updates to foreign journalists and maintained this connection throughout the war. The English-speaking, Western-educated Saakashvili was particularly effective in appealing to Western audiences.[123]

Many in the international community condemned Russia's cyberaggression and offered to host Georgia's defaced websites. The Polish President Lech Kaczyński said that Russia was blocking Georgian "internet portals" to supplement its military aggression and offered his own website to Georgia to aid in the "dissemination of information."[124] Estonia offered to host Georgian government websites and cyber-defense advisers. Georgia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and several other official entities set up temporary blogs on Google's Blogger service.[125] The Georgian president's site was moved to U.S. servers.[126] Then–U.S. presidential candidate Barack Obama demanded that Russia halt the cyberattacks and comply with a ceasefire on the ground.[127] Reporters Without Borders condemned the violations of online freedom of information since the outbreak of hostilities between Georgia and Russia.[128]

### Level of Success

Russia's cyberattacks were effective in disrupting the online communication of the Georgian government and crucial institutions during the five-day war and in creating a sense of confusion and uncertainty. Yet, their impact was limited by the fact that the percentage of Georgian internet users was rather small at the time. Nonetheless, it was the first time that cyber and kinetic warfare were used in combination, and the world was awakened to Russian cyber capabilities and willingness to use them as a tool of confrontation in combination with military force.

Russian information efforts during the war in Georgia were effective in influencing Russian domestic audiences and audiences in some post-Soviet states.[129] Russian media messaging

---

[122]Ian Traynor, Lee Glendinning, and Mark Tran, "Relations with Russia Have Reached Crossroads, EU Leaders Say," *The Guardian*, September 1, 2008.

[123]King, 2008.

[124]Asher Moses, "Georgian Websites Forced Offline in 'Cyber War,'" *Sydney Morning Herald*, August 12, 2008.

[125]Noah Sachtman, "Estonia, Google Help 'Cyberlocked' Georgia (Updated)," *Wired*, August 11, 2008.

[126]Dancho Danchev, "Coordinated Russia vs Georgia Cyber Attack in Progress," *ZD Net*, August 11, 2008b; Moses, 2008.

[127]Jon Swaine, "Georgia: Russia 'Conducting Cyber War,'" *The Telegraph*, August 11, 2008.

[128]Reporters Without Borders, "War Still Having Serious Impact on Freedom of Expression," original publication September 10, 2008.

[129]For example, according to the independent Russian research firm Levada Center, 75 percent of Russians held negative attitudes toward Georgians in September 2008 (Xenia Solyansky, "West Fell into Disfavor," *Gazeta.ru*, September 25, 2008). Also see King, 2008.

also reached South Ossetians. According to Human Rights Watch, some Ossetian civilians said in interviews that they approved of the burning and looting of Georgian villages because of the "thousands of civilian casualties in South Ossetia" reported by Russian television.[130] Yet, at the international level, Russia is widely considered to have lost the information war during the Georgia campaign.[131] Russia's inability to effectively communicate its version of events to the international community was allegedly what spurred its decision to expand its information efforts abroad and, eventually, to rebrand Kremlin's main international propaganda channel Russia Today to make it more appealing to Western audiences.[132]

Russia's military and nonmilitary efforts contributed to the halt on Georgia's NATO bid. After the war ended on August 12, Secretary of State Rice told reporters that the United States "would not push for Georgia to be allowed into NATO."[133] Later that year, Rice confirmed that, due to opposition from European allies, the United States was no longer willing to fast-track Georgian and Ukrainian membership in NATO.[134] In 2011, Medvedev emphasized the importance of Russian *military* action in Georgia to achieve this result, stating that if Russia had not invaded Georgia in 2008, NATO would have already expanded to include Georgia as a member.[135]

Thus, through a series of gray zone and conventional hostile measures, Moscow demonstrated that Georgia's Western allies would be unlikely or unable to help, and, therefore, their guarantees had little value. This message was meant not only for Georgians but also for the Ukrainians, who were also considering closer ties with the West and NATO. The message was clear: Cooperation with NATO and the United States increases your risks, not your security.

Another Russian success during the war was in solidifying the popularity of then–Prime Minister Putin's "firm fist" approach, viewed as necessary by domestic Russian audiences in the face of NATO encroachment and ungrateful former Soviet states.

If deposing of Saakashvili was one of Russia's goals in this offensive, as some argue, then Russia failed in this objective, at least in the short run.[136] Saakashvili remained in power until the next presidential election, although it is highly likely that the devastation brought by the war contributed to the demise of his popularity at home and made many international actors question his ability to handle Moscow.

---

[130] Human Rights Watch, 2009.

[131] Timothy L. Thomas, "Russian Information Warfare Theory: The Consequences of August 2008," in Stephen J. Blank and Richard Weitz, eds., *The Russian Military Today and Tomorrow: Essays in Memory of Mary Fitzgerald*, Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, July 2010.

[132] Julia Ioffe, "What Is Russia Today? Kremlin's Propaganda Outlet Has an Identity Crisis," *Columbia Journalism Review*, September–October 2010.

[133] Cooper, Helene, "U.S. Won't Push NATO to Admit Georgia," *New York Times*, August 18, 2008.

[134] Ian Traynor, "Nato Allies Divided Over Ukraine and Georgia," *The Guardian*, December 1, 2008.

[135] "Медведев: Война в Грузии предотвратила расширение НАТО" ["Medvedev: War in Georgia Prevented NATO Expansion"], Grani.ru, November 29, 2011.

[136] Jim Nichol, *Russia-Georgia Conflict in August 2008: Context and Implications for U.S. Interests*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, RL34618, March 3, 2009.

## Official Recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia

### Content and Implementation

On August 25, 2008, the Russian Federation Council, the upper house of the Russian Federal Assembly, unanimously voted to recognize Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states.[137] The next day, President Medvedev signed the decree that officially recognized the two entities and stated that this step was the only way to "save human lives."[138] He added that, after Western countries' recognition of Kosovo's independence, it would be impossible to argue that Abkhazians and Ossetians did not deserve the same treatment.[139] Prime Minister Putin noted that the Georgian aggression against South Ossetia demanded international condemnation and recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia's independence from Georgia.[140]

### Local and International Reactions

The United States, France, the secretary-general of the Council of Europe, the president of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the OSCE chair, NATO, and the G7 condemned Russia's recognition of the regions, claiming that it violated Georgia's territorial integrity, UN Security Council resolutions, and the ceasefire agreement.[141] Russia sought but failed to obtain support from its fellow Shanghai Cooperation Organisation member states because of concerns about separatist regions in their own territories (especially China).[142] Even Belarus, Russia's usually unwavering partner at the time, did not express support for Russia's actions.

At the UN Security Council, the United States was deeply critical of Russian support for the secessionist governments, accusing Russia of violating Georgia's territorial integrity. In response, Vitaly Churkin, Russia's permanent representative to the UN, questioned the U.S. claim of a moral high ground by recalling its invasion of Iraq in 2003.[143] The United States came under fire again for its support and recognition of Kosovo's independence—a move that some claimed had violated Serbian territorial integrity.[144]

Saakashvili considered Russia's unilateral move to recognize the breakaway states an attempt to alter the borders of Europe by force and compared Russia's actions with those perpetrated by the regimes of Stalin and Hitler. On August 28, the Georgian Parliament passed a resolution declaring Abkhazia and South Ossetia "Russian-occupied territories" and instructed the government to annul all previous treaties on Russian peacekeeping.[145] The following day,

---

[137] "Russian MPs Back Georgia's Rebels," BBC News, August 25, 2008.

[138] "Russia Recognizes Abkhazia, South Ossetia," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, August 26, 2008.

[139] Dmitry Medvedev, "Why I Had to Recognize Georgia's Breakaway Regions," *Financial Times*, August 26, 2008.

[140] "Transcript: CNN Interview with Vladimir Putin," CNN, August 28, 2008.

[141] "West Condemns Russia Over Georgia," BBC News, August 26, 2008; "COE, PACE Chairs Condemn Russia's Move," *Civil Georgia*, August 26, 2008; OSCE, "OSCE Chairman Condemns Russia's Recognition of South Ossetia, Abkhazia Independence," August 26, 2008.

[142] Niklas Swanström, "Georgia: The Split That Split the SCO," *Central Asia–Caucasus Institute Analyst*, September 3, 2008.

[143] United Nations Security Council, verbatim report on the situation in Georgia, S/PV/5969, August 28, 2008c, p. 16; "Russia: UN Hypocritical Over Abkhazia and South Ossetia Independence," RT, August 29, 2008.

[144] Andrew Reding, "That Caucasus Hypocrisy," *Globe and Mail*, August 28, 2008; Herbert P. Bix, "The Russo-Georgia War and the Challenge to American Global Dominance," *Asia-Pacific Journal*, Vol. 6, No. 10, October 3, 2008.

[145] "Abkhazia, S.Ossetia Formally Declared Occupied Territory," *Civil Georgia*, August 28, 2008.

the government announced that it was severing diplomatic ties with Russia, and the Georgian embassy in Moscow and the Russian embassy in Tbilisi closed as a result. Georgia recalled its ambassador from Russia and ordered all Russian diplomats to leave Georgia, allowing only for consular relations.[146] Georgia prohibited economic activity in the regions without Georgian government permission and threatened to prosecute anyone caught violating the ban. Georgian naval forces blockaded the coast of Abkhazia and seized 23 cargo ships that were trying to deliver supplies (primarily fuel). Because Abkhazia is dependent on fuel imports, it faced a serious shortage as a result.

#### Level of Success

None of these measures led Russia to abandon its decision to officially recognize the breakaway states. Russia's role ensured that the conflict between Georgia and those regions would have little hope for peaceful resolution—making Georgia's path to NATO extremely difficult, if not impossible. Russia could also use the occupied regions to hinder Georgia's accession to the EU by directly threatening annexation, as well as by using the regions to destabilize adjacent areas.[147]

## Summary of the Georgia Case

Figure B.4 presents the timeline for the Georgia case. Note that several Russian measures were ongoing at the end of the case-study period, and some continued (with varying degrees of intensity) later on.

## How Successful Were Russia's Hostile Measures Overall?

The variety of hostile measures that Russia employed against Georgia, together with the actual war, allowed Russia to make progress toward the three objectives highlighted at the beginning of this case study; however, they also prompted some reactions that were counterproductive.

First, while Russia did not completely keep Georgia within its sphere of influence, it was at least successful in precluding Georgia's membership in NATO and halting NATO's further expansion to the east. The "frozen" ethno-territorial conflicts of Abkhazia and South Ossetia have made NATO reluctant to accept Georgia into the alliance.[148] Although Georgia still wants to join NATO, it is not yet a part of a membership action plan and is pursuing this path more cautiously, possibly to avoid further retaliation from Moscow. Yet, it is also important to note that, somewhat counter to Russia's best interests, Russia's excursion into Georgia revitalized NATO, which has since become more aware of Russia's willingness to engage with its neighbors militarily.

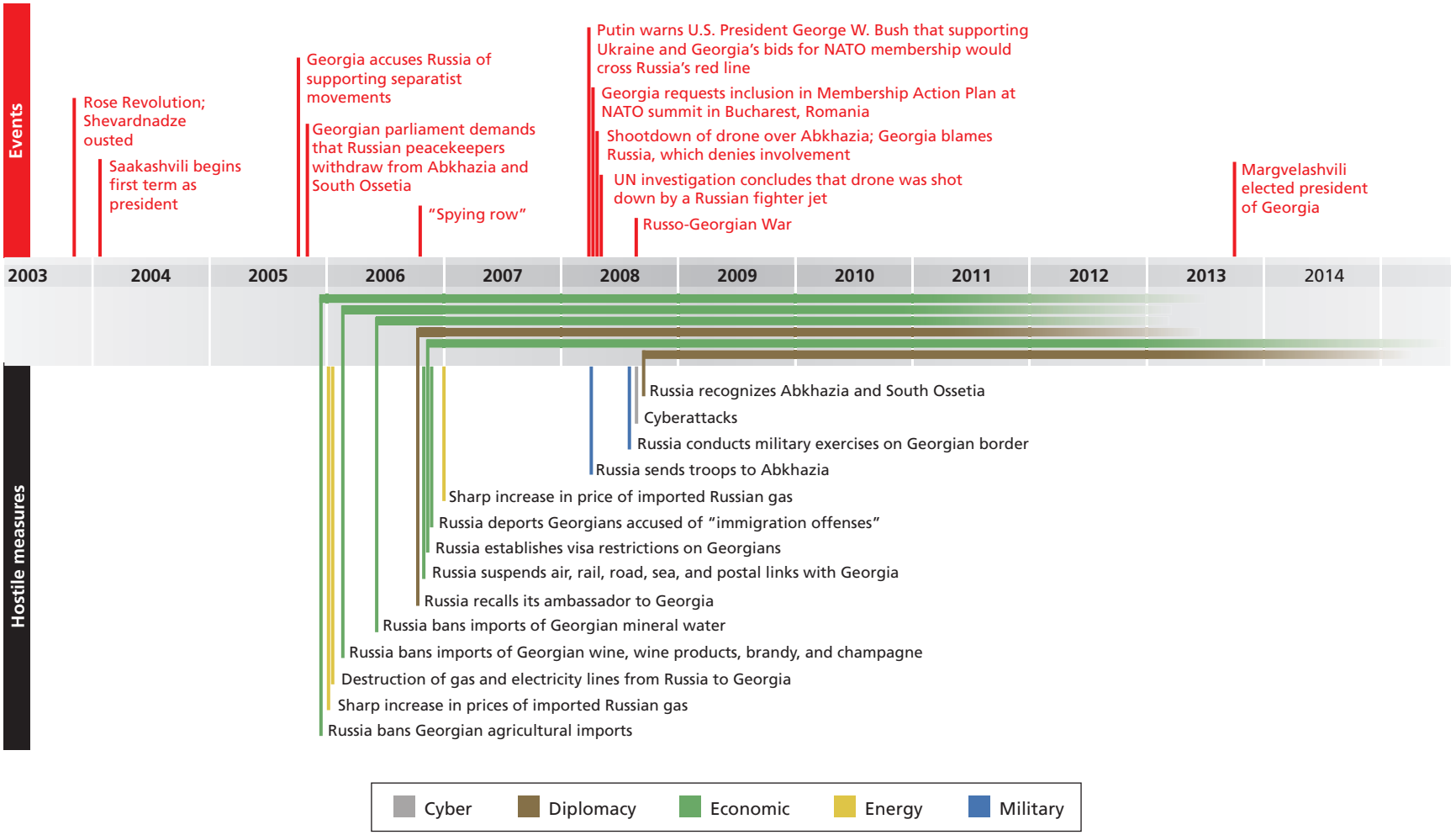
Russia also successfully forced Georgia's EU partners to reassess the Southern Corridor energy strategy. Russia proved that it could incite instability in the South Caucasus—a fact

[146] "Georgia Breaks Ties with Russia," BBC News, August 29, 2008.

[147] Kapanadze, 2014.

[148] Abushov, 2009; Ellison, 2011.

**Figure B.4**
**Timeline of Russian Hostile Measures in Georgia**



that may have contributed to the decision to abandon plans for the Nabucco pipeline.[149] This was certainly a success for Russia, as the goal of the pipeline was to significantly limit Europe's dependence on Russian energy supplies. Wary of Russia's "energy wars," however, Georgia collaborated with Azerbaijan to escape its dependence on Russian gas and has harnessed its own hydroelectric potential to ensure its electricity supply.

Third, to some extent, Russia did dispel the appeal of Georgia's pivot to the West among Russian and other CSIS audiences. Russian opinion polls after the 2008 war have consistently shown that these populations perceive Georgia as one of the countries hostile to Russia and Russians—a change from the prewar era. Furthermore, portraying Saakashvili as the initiator of genocide in South Ossetia ensured that any success he achieved in reforming Georgia would be dampened by his reputation in Russia as a war criminal and staunch enemy. Despite this, Saakashvili's anticorruption and police reform efforts have often been touted in Russian public discourse, and he remains a popular figure for many in Russia's political opposition movement. Although Russia sent a strong message to other CIS countries that choosing a Westward trajectory may come with dire consequences, this seems to have made some of these countries, such as Ukraine and Moldova, only more wary of Russia's influence and willing to get closer to the West for protection.

More broadly, Russian hostile measures succeeded in making things more difficult for Saakashvili's government. The Georgian people did not oust Saakashvili before the end of his term as the Russian government might have hoped, but Russia was still pleased when Saakashvili's United National Movement party lost parliamentary elections in October 2012 to the more Russia-friendly Georgian Dream coalition. Although Saakashvili remained president for another year, his influence was significantly curtailed. Limited by a two-term restriction, he could not run for reelection in 2013, and the candidate from his party received only 22 percent of the vote. Georgian Dream candidate Giorgi Margvelashvili won the presidency.

It is difficult to pinpoint a causal link between any one Russian action against Georgia and the events that followed the war. Russia certainly added to the country's economic hardship and may have played an important role in Saakashvili's demise. Russia's sanctions likely contributed to the downturn in the Georgian economy between 2006 and 2011. Georgia's official unemployment rate in late 2011 was about 15 percent, much higher than when Saakashvili first assumed office.[150] Sectors targeted by Russian sanctions were hit particularly hard; one report estimated that Russian sanctions cost Georgian economy about $635 million in the first year alone—a large amount for a country with a gross national product of $15 billion.[151] Due to the stark asymmetry in the sizes of the Russian and Georgian economies, Georgia was particularly vulnerable to economic sanctions: Russia could impose such measures with little harm to itself and great harm to Georgia.[152] Russia is Georgia's largest and strongest neighbor, and even Turkey—Georgia's most prominent trade partner—could buy only a fraction of what

[149] Mamuka Tsereteli, *The Impact of the Russia-Georgia War on the South Caucasus Transportation Corridor*, Washington, D.C.: Jamestown Foundation, 2009.

[150] The unofficial rate was much higher. According to one survey, 31 percent of Georgians claimed to be unemployed or underemployed (Newnham, 2015). Also see "Georgia: Tbilisi Turns Unemployment Issue into a Reality Show," Eurasianet, December 1, 2011.

[151] Eric Livny, Mack Ott, and Karine Torosyan, *Impact of Russian Sanctions on the Georgian Economy*, Tbilisi, Georgia: International School of Economics at Tbilisi State University, 2007; CIA, 2019a.

[152] Newnham, 2015.

Russia would. For these and related reasons, the Kremlin was able to use a variety of sanctions, including on energy and trade, as important levers of influence.

Although the Georgian economy grew overall during Saakashvili's years in office, many Georgians did not see growth in their own lives, and high rates of unemployment and income inequality became a losing issue for him and his party in the parliamentary and presidential elections of 2012–2013; repairing relations with Russia was seen as an important way to improve economic conditions.[153] The leader of the Georgian Dream opposition party, Bidzina Ivanishvili, who became prime minister in 2012, suggested that he would take "a more conciliatory line [toward Moscow] and Russian markets would reopen to Georgian produce, wine, and mineral water, providing an economic lift."[154]

Overall, Russia's success in applying hostile measures in Georgia is likely a short-term one. Even though Georgia is working on repairing its relationship with Russia (e.g., trade is back on, Russia loosened the visa regime as of December 2015, and there are even negotiations on a new pipeline), the Georgian population is wary of again becoming dependent on Russia and remains firm in supporting Georgia's accession to the EU and NATO.[155]

## What Effective Responses (if Any) Were Designed to Counter Them?

It is difficult to assess which international responses were effective in deterring Russia. Georgia benefited from the consistent backing of the United States—through political actions, as well as economic and military assistance. This support may have deterred Russia from pursuing an even more aggressive policy toward Georgia. Relatively stable Western support, at least in rhetoric, likely helped Saakashvili stay in power for two presidential terms, despite constant Russian pressure. Still, the increased U.S. financial support to Georgia after the war was not enough to help offset the economic burden created by the fighting or the country's strained relationship with Russia.

Responses from Georgia and the international community in their efforts to prevent Russia from achieving its three broad objectives had mixed results. Russia was largely successful in destroying Georgia's chances of NATO membership, but NATO members were divided on the issue to begin with. The debate on enlargement within NATO exists independently of Russia's hostile measures, and Russia's actions only strengthened the argument of NATO members that prefer a smaller, easier-to-defend alliance. The abandonment of the Nabucco pipeline plans—a project backed and financed by the European Union and the United States—may have deprived Georgia of an opportunity to further solidify its role in the global arena and diminished its chances to cut its dependence on Russian energy once and for all. Azerbaijan's cooperation with Georgia was another way in which an international partner supported

[153] Between 2006 and 2012, gross national product growth averaged almost 5 percent annually (except for a dip in 2008 and 2009 because of the expenses of the Russian-Georgian war). See National Statistics Office of Georgia, homepage, undated. Also see Thomas de Waal, "A Crucial Election in Georgia," Brussels, Belgium: Carnegie Europe, September 11, 2012.

[154] Ellen Barry, "Georgia's President Concedes Defeat in Parliamentary Election," *New York Times*, October 2, 2012.

[155] Regarding 2016 protests in Georgia in response to renewed negotiations with Gazprom, see Misha Dzhindzhikhashvili, "Thousands of Georgians Have Formed a Human Chain Stretching for About 7 Kilometers (4 Miles) Through the Capital to Protest Negotiations Between Their Government and the Russian Natural Gas Monopoly, Gazprom," Associated Press (*U.S. News and World Report*), March 6, 2016.

Georgia's response to Russian hostile measures. Finally, the most effective response to Russia's warnings to domestic and CIS audiences against a Westward trajectory was in maintaining liberal democracies as an attractive model—a broad and long-term effort that goes well beyond Georgia.

## Estonia (2006–2007)

The Republic of Estonia is the northernmost Baltic state, located on the eastern side of the Baltic Sea, south of the Gulf of Finland, north of Latvia, and directly connected to Russia along its eastern border. Estonia became part of the Soviet Union after World War II, but it has been an independent country since 1991. In 2004, it was granted NATO membership. Estonia has a sizable Russian population in its capital city, Tallinn, and to its east in Narva, on the Russian border. Figure B.5 shows Estonia and its central—and precarious—location on NATO's eastern flank and next to Russia's Western Military District.

Russia has a long and difficult history with Estonia. In the 18th century, the area became part of the Russian Empire after Sweden's military defeat in the Great Northern War.[1] Estonia gained independence after 1918 but was invaded by the Soviet Union in 1940. Forcible occupation at the end of World War II included mass imprisonment, killings, and deportations. Despite Estonia's independence, Russian leaders have continued to view it and the other Baltic states as situated within Russia's long-standing sphere of influence.

**Figure B.5**
**Map of Estonia**

SOURCE: CIA, "Estonia," *World Factbook*, last updated July 10, 2019a.

[1] For a summary of Russia's involvement in Estonia, see Timothy C. Dowling, ed., *Russia at War: From the Mongol Conquest to Afghanistan, Chechnya, and Beyond, Volume 1: A-M*, Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2015.

Russia has sought to maintain influence in the former Soviet republics through a variety of means, including its compatriot policy toward Russians abroad; pro-Russia foundations, such as Russkiy Mir; cultural exchange programs; overt and covert support for local political parties; and support for nongovernmental organizations that promote Russian values, culture, and language. Such efforts have been particularly prevalent in Estonia, which is home to a large ethnic Russian population (more than 25 percent) and represents an important transport route for energy resources from Russia to Western Europe.[2] Estonian domestic matters are also important to Russia because of how they might resonate with Russia's population, due to Estonia's large Russian minority and the two countries' common Soviet history. Finally, Estonia is also valuable to Russia because of its status as a NATO and EU member, which potentially provides Russia with an indirect means of influencing these organizations, both of which require unanimity to take action on critical matters.

This case focuses on what became known as the "Bronze Soldier" incident of April 2007. The Bronze Soldier is a monument to a Soviet Red Army soldier, located in the Estonian capital of Tallinn and originally built to commemorate Estonia's liberation from the Nazis by Soviet forces. In the years after Estonian independence, it served mainly as a Victory Day (May 9) gathering place for Red Army veterans, most of whom are ethnic Russians. On May 9, 2006, Estonian nationalists held a protest at the monument, which they considered a tribute to the Soviet occupation of Estonia. They were briefly detained by the police but returned to the memorial a week later, demanding its removal and dismantling. In response, young ethnic Russians gathered at the site the following day, determined to guard the monument and prevent its removal.

Fearing escalation, the Estonian interior minister responded by banning congregation at the monument and instituting 24-hour police patrols in the area.[3] The decision about the memorial's future was then taken up at the highest levels of the Estonian government. Prime Minister Andrus Ansip, who had sought support among the nationalistic contingent for his Reform Party in Estonia's parliamentary elections in March 2007, led the charge for the monument's removal. In opposition stood Edgar Savisaar, whose left-leaning Centre Party counted on ethnic Russians for a significant portion of its support. The statue's relocation sparked three nights of rioting, followed by a series of cyberattacks on Estonian government websites. Russian youth groups besieged the Estonian embassy in Moscow, and Estonian products and transportation services suffered losses due to boycotts by Russian businesses. Estonian government officials accused the Russian government of instigating these events. For instance, Estonian Foreign Minister Urmas Paet suggested that Moscow was trying to instill a siege mentality among the Russian population in Estonia and sought to destabilize the country.[4]

The incident represented one of the most heated points in Russian-Estonian relations since the dissolution of the Soviet Union.[5] An official Russian fact-finding delegation, led by a former Russian Federal Security Service official, Nikolay Kovalev, traveled to Estonia to defuse

---

[2] On Estonia's ethnic Russian population, see Statistics Estonia, "Population by Ethnic Nationality, 1 January, Years," June 9, 2017.

[3] Vello Pettai, "Estonia," *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol. 47, No. 8, 2008.

[4] Mathias Roth, *Bilateral Disputes Between EU Member States and Russia*, Brussels, Belgium: Centre for European Policy Studies Working Document No. 319, August 2009.

[5] "Estonia Seals Off Russian Memorial," BBC News, 2007.

diplomatic tensions but appeared to only escalate matters. Kovalev's delegation called for the resignation of the Estonian government and, after visiting the Bronze Soldier's new location, claimed that it had been cut into pieces and reassembled.[6] After these developments, Paet canceled a meeting with the group: "I will not meet with a delegation that spreads only lies regarding events in Estonia and whose objective is not the accurate portrayal of the situation, but rather election campaigning."[7]

To understand why the Bronze Soldier's removal could spur such strong reactions, it is worth recalling that the monument was at the center of a long-standing and particularly sensitive controversy between Estonia and Russia regarding their respective interpretations of history. Estonia considers itself to have been occupied by the Soviet Union from 1944 to 1991, whereas Russia views itself as having liberated Estonia from the Nazis, with Estonia subsequently joining the Soviet Union by its own will. The Bronze Soldier memorial represented a Russian narrative that was disputed by Estonians who saw the statue as an offensive symbol of Soviet occupation and oppression.[8]

For Russia, as the successor to the Soviet Union, the view of the Soviet troops as occupiers presented a challenge to the positive image it tried to promote both domestically and internationally, highlighting its role in liberating Europe from fascism during World War II. As a result, Russia perceived Estonia's negative portrayal of the Soviet Union's historical contributions as a rejection of Russia's modern-day legitimacy.[9] There was also a risk that this alternative account could open the door for Estonia to demand reparations from Russia for the years of occupation and for the forced displacement of the Estonian population.[10] Russia therefore had every interest in defending its narrative of what the Bronze Soldier represented.

Furthermore, a strong reaction to the monument's relocation could help Russia portray Estonia as a state prone to domestic civil discord, potentially stirring doubts among Estonia's fellow NATO and EU members as to whether accepting the country was a wise decision. Portraying Estonia as a state ungrateful to those who liberated it from fascism—and even as a state *supporting* fascism—would further undermine Estonia's image in the international community. Importantly, highlighting troubles within Estonia—a state that showed great promise for socioeconomic advancement after joining the EU—could help Russia make an example of Estonia for domestic and CIS audiences.

Finally, the memorial's removal may have facilitated electoral goals in both Russia and Estonia, as the events took place a few months before Russia's December 2007 parliamentary elections and less than a year before Russia's presidential elections. Furthermore, the debate

---

[6] Martin Mutov, "Riigiduuma Esindajate Hinnangul on Pronkssõdurit Tükkideks Lõigatud" ["According to Duma Representatives, the Bronze Soldier Has Been Cut into Pieces"], *Postimees*, May 1, 2007. Estonia's Ministry of Defence denied the claims, explaining that the lines on the statue were a result of how statues were made at the time: created in pieces and assembled into one.

[7] Jari Tanner, "Estonia Cancels Russia Talks Over Statue," Associated Press, May 2, 2007.

[8] Pettai, 2008.

[9] Russia claims that Estonia is a newly independent state that came into being in 1991 with the consent of Russia and the Soviet Union. Estonia views itself as having restored its prewar statehood and its independence as a continuation of former independence that was temporarily forcibly suspended by annexation by the Soviet Union. This question, seemingly a legal technicality, actually has significant legislative implications for Estonia in terms of citizenship, language use, property rights, and, formerly, even territory. See Graham Smith, "The Ethnic Democracy Thesis and the Citizenship Question in Estonia and Latvia," *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. 24, No. 2, 1996.

[10] "Still Feuding: Icy Relations Between Russia and Estonia," *The Economist*, May 1, 2007.

around the relocation started in 2006, in the run-up to the March 2007 parliamentary elections in Estonia. In Russia, this offered an opportunity for parliamentary factions and aspiring presidential candidates to make strong statements, score nationalist points, and rouse public support. In Estonia, heated discussions around the Bronze Soldier were used to galvanize support among the Russian-speaking population for the Russia-leaning political parties.[11]

It is unclear which of these events, if any, were truly orchestrated by Russia. It appears that the siege of the Estonian embassy in Moscow was likely supported by Russian authorities, but other hostile measures employed against Estonia during the crisis were initiated by independent pro-Russia actors who may or may not have received support or encouragement from Russian authorities. Consequently, this case study differs from the others in this appendix. Here, we focus on the various measures that aimed to destabilize the Estonian government in the aftermath of the monument's relocation, but we assess their success on the basis of advantages reaped by Russia in the absence of an assumption that it was Russia that employed the measures.

## Protests in Tallinn

The monument's relocation triggered protests by Russian speakers in Tallinn and escalated into three nights of rioting, vandalism, and looting. In the face of growing discontent and violence, and upon the advice of the Estonian Security Council, relocation work was accelerated, and the monument was removed on April 27. Three days later, it was reerected at the military cemetery in Tallinn. The protests by young members of the Russophone community and a forceful response from the Estonian police left one dead; 153 people were injured, and more than 1,000 were detained as a result of the protests.[12]

Estonian politicians, security services, and some think tanks have accused Russia of instigating the riots in response to the monument's removal.[13] At the core of these suspicions were alleged connections between representatives from the Russian embassy in Estonia and the leaders of the Night Watch, an activist "antifascist" organization created in 2006 specifically to defend the Bronze Soldier monument from Estonian nationalists.[14] Involvement in the protests by members of the Nashi organization—a youth movement created and openly funded by the

---

[11] According to the Estonian Internal Security Service, one of Russia's primary goals in Estonia in 2007 was to gain representation for the Constitution Party in the Riigikogu, the Estonian parliament. The party is a minor political organization run from Moscow. See Kärt Anvelt, "Aastaraamat: Vene Luure Tegi Mullu Eestis Usinalt Tööd" ["Security Report: Russian Intelligence Worked Hard Last Year"], Delfi News Service, June 20, 2008.

[12] Most of the protesters were 30 years old or younger. Police responded with tear gas and rubber bullets and were later accused of excessive force and brutality. See Heather A. Conley and Theodore P. Gerber, *Russian Soft Power in the 21st Century: An Examination of Russian Compatriot Policy in Estonia*, Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, September 6, 2011. Also see "Estonia Seals Off Russian Memorial," 2007.

[13] Kaitsepolitseiamet [Estonian Internal Security Service], *Annual Review*, 2007, p. 16; International Centre for Defence and Security, "Russia's Involvement in the Tallinn Disturbances," Tallinn, Estonia, May 11, 2007.

[14] Night Watch, which refers to itself as an antifascist movement, was created in response to Estonia's threats to remove the Bronze Soldier and for "defense of equal rights for all in Estonia, regardless of the color of their passports; for promotion of the Russian language and culture in all areas of cultural and societal space; making Russian an official language; justice and truth" and against "Estonian neo-Nazism and anti-Russian foreign policy" (Ночной Дозор в Таллине. Антифашисты против дискриминационных властей Эстонии [Night Watch in Tallinn: Anti-Fascists Against Discriminatory Government of Estonia], homepage, undated).

Kremlin—further solidified perceptions that Russia played a role in the unrest, although there is no definitive evidence to back up this claim.[15]

## Public Information Campaign

Russia engaged in an intense public information campaign—targeting both domestic and international audiences—to condemn Estonia's actions. In January 2007, the Duma, the lower house of the Russian Federal Assembly, unanimously passed a resolution accusing the Riigikogu, Estonia's parliament, of "glorifying fascism." The lawmakers urged President Putin to impose sanctions against Estonia in response to the Riigikogu's passage of the War Graves Protection Act, which effectively allowed the Estonian government to relocate the Bronze Soldier.[16] Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov called out the Estonian government for its "blasphemous attitude towards the memory of those who struggled against fascism."[17] Sergey Mironov, speaker of the Russian Federation Council, the Federal Assembly's upper house, denounced the law allowing for the monument's removal as "the first step towards legalisation of neo-Nazism in that country."[18]

In April 2007, shortly before removal began, Lavrov called the events in Estonia "disgusting" and noted that they would have "serious consequences for Russia's relationship with Estonia."[19] The Russian Federation Council called for severing diplomatic ties with Estonia.[20] On April 28, Putin expressed his concern about the situation in Tallinn during a meeting with German Prime Minister Angela Merkel, and, on May 3, Russia demanded an investigation into alleged human rights violations in Estonia during the protests. Russian civic leaders also took a public stand against Estonia. Patriarch Alexy II of the Russian Orthodox Church called "the Estonian government's struggle against the memory of soldiers who fell in battle against fascism" indecent, adding, "Fighting against the dead, against the soldiers who have always been honored by all nations, is the most unworthy deed. It is immoral to profane the memory of the dead."[21]

---

[15] *Nashi* means *ours* or *our own*. "Кремль готовит новый молодежный проект на замену 'Идущим вместе'" ["The Kremlin Is Preparing a New Youth Project to Substitute for 'Walking Together'"], NEWSru, February 21, 2005.

[16] Evgeniy Rojkov, "Русский ответ Эстонии" ["Russian Response to Estonia"], Vesti.ru, January 17, 2007; Riigikogu [Estonian Parliament], The War Graves Protection Act (1001 SE), January 10, 2007; Joel Alas, "Coalition Split Over Bronze Soldier," *Baltic Times*, January 17, 2007.

[17] Adrian Blomfield, "War of Words Over the Bronze Soldier," *The Telegraph*, February 5, 2007.

[18] Blomfield, 2007; also see "Bronze Meddling: Russian Hypocrisy and Heavy-Handedness Toward a Former Colony," *The Economist*, May 3, 2007.

[19] Russian Federation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "О ноте МИД России внешнеполитическому ведомству Эстонии" ["On the Note from the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Estonian Foreign Office"], press release, Moscow, April 23, 2007.

[20] Rojkov, 2007.

[21] "Alexy II: Estonian Government Disrespect for Soldier Monument Immoral," Interfax, May 2, 2007.

## Russia's "Hidden Sanctions"

Russian politicians and officials responded to Estonia's decision to move the monument with more than public statements.[22] In urging Putin to consider imposing economic sanctions on Estonia, members of the Duma's Committee on Foreign Affairs proposed that Russia use Estonia's energy dependence as a lever of influence.

Russia did not adopt any official sanctions against Estonia, but Russian companies followed government rhetoric by effectively sanctioning Estonia, although they generally justified their actions in other ways. In May 2007, the state-owned rail company RZD—which enjoys a monopoly on Russian rail trade—stopped oil deliveries to Estonia for several weeks after the incident, claiming a need for urgent repairs. Estonia claimed that its national freight volume decreased by 35 percent between 2006 and 2007.[23] Many other Russian companies refused to buy Estonian products or invest in projects in the country.[24] Authorities in the St. Petersburg region severely limited truck deliveries of oil, coal, and petroleum through the Narva river bridge connecting Russia and Estonia.[25] In an effort that was more symbolic than disruptive, Nashi activists also blocked 20 trucks on the Estonian-Russian border, close to Ivangorod.[26]

Most measures proved temporary—lasting a few weeks at most—but the crisis facilitated the decline of Russian transit trade and cut Estonian GDP growth for 2007 by as much as 1.5 percent.[27] Tourism suffered as well: Both Russian and Estonian operators were wary of sending people to a potentially hostile destination. The Russian Travel Industry Union announced that many Russian tourists canceled trips to Estonia due to the riots there. On multiple occasions, Estonian border guards turned back Russians who tried to enter on tourist visas, concerned that they intended to provoke further instability.[28] Two years later, Lavrov would justify Russia's economic response by observing that the Russian public reacted with

---

[22] Steven Lee Myers, "Russia Rebukes Estonia for Moving Soviet Statue," *New York Times*, April 27, 2007.

[23] "Ссора с Россией обернулась для Эстонии огромными потерями" ["Quarrel with Russia Has Caused Estonia Great Losses"], Zagolovki.ru, November 17, 2007.

[24] For example, Estonia's Kalev chocolate factory was subject to a boycott. See "Конфликт России и Эстонии стал приобретать черты экономического противостояния и признаки историко-этнического диссонанса" ["Conflict Between Russia and Estonia Has Acquired Characteristics of the Economic Confrontation and Signs of Historic-Ethnic Dissonance"]," *Psikhologia*, May 5, 2007.

[25] Rojkov, 2007. Similarly, a member of United Russia's committee responsible for working with displaced persons and compatriots abroad proclaimed that "boycotting Estonian products . . . is the least of measures that Russia should take in relation to Estonia." See "Бойкотирование эстонских товаров—малая часть того, что российской стороне необходимо предпринять в отношении руководителей этой страны,—Любомир Тян" ["Boycotting Estonian Products Is a Small Part of What the Russian Side Needs to Do in Relation to the Leaders of This Country'—Lubomir Tyan"], *Nizhny Novgorod*, May 3, 2007.

[26] Ruslan Kadermyatov, "Временное помешательство отношений: Политические акции против Эстонии не нашли поддержки на Западе" ["Temporary Sundown in the Relationships: Political Action Against Estonia Did Not Find Support in the West"], Lenta.ru, May 3, 2007. Members of the Nashi movement were prohibited from entering Estonia for five years after the events.

[27] Robert Anderson, "Estonia Pays Price of Defying Russia," *bne IntelliNews*, June 24, 2008.

[28] R. Anderson, 2008.

outrage to the plan to move the memorial and that "most of our compatriots understood and supported these actions."[29]

## Siege of the Estonian Embassy in Moscow

After the Bronze Soldier's removal, the Estonian embassy in Moscow was subject to a weeklong blockade by the youth movements Nashi, Molodaya Gvardiya (Young Guard), Molodaya Rossiya (Young Russia), and Mestniyye (Locals).[30] On a daily basis, between 50 and 200 people were camped out in tents in the streets surrounding the embassy. In addition to blasting Soviet marches and songs around the clock and yelling mottos in support of Russia and in denigration of Estonia, they took down the Estonian flag, prevented journalists from entering the embassy to get visas to go to Estonia, attempted to disrupt a press conference by the Estonian ambassador, and blockaded the car of the head of Estonia's diplomatic mission, screaming, "Fascist Estonia." In violation of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, Russian police forces did not stop the picketers from tearing down the Estonian flag, restricting the movement of embassy staff, or blocking access by visitors.[31] On May 3, protestors threw stones at members of Estonia's diplomatic mission, and Spetsnaz were allegedly unable to stop them. Russian officials promised to contain the protests around the embassy but at the same time stated that the events in Moscow were a natural expression of the Russian population's outrage at the actions of the Estonian government.[32] The protest's organizers also announced plans to collect 1 million signatures in support of demolishing the building housing the Estonian embassy and relocating its staff to the outskirts of Moscow.

Nashi leaders ended the protests on May 3, claiming that the Estonian ambassador's departure from Russia proved that the action had been successful.[33] Representatives of the youth block of the Russian nationalist People's Union and Officers' Union movements briefly replaced other departing protesters. With an official permission from the government to picket, they waved the flags of their movements and the Soviet Armed Forces. The protesters' banners called for an end to fascism in Estonia and condemned the Estonian government's actions in relation to the Bronze Soldier and other Soviet monuments.

It appears highly likely that the embassy siege happened with the support, approval, and possibly even initiative of the Russian government. The youth organizations that took part in the protests were either founded (and funded) by the Russian government and led by political appointees or otherwise supported through government programs.[34] Furthermore, the organization of the siege—which included color-coordinated tents, modern water dispensers, profes-

---

[29] "Лавров: российские бизнесмены были вправе сократить транзит через Эстонию после демонтажа Бронзового солдата" ["Lavrov: Russian Businessmen Had a Right to Reduce Transit Through Estonia After the Demolition of the Bronze Soldier"], Interfax, April 2003, 2009.

[30] Kadermyatov, 2007.

[31] M. Roth, 2009.

[32] René Värk, "The Siege of the Estonian Embassy in Moscow: Protection of a Diplomatic Mission and Its Staff in the Receiving State," *Juridica International*, No. 25, 2008.

[33] "'Наши' сняли осаду с эстонского посольства" ["'Nashi' Ended the Siege of the Estonian Embassy"], Lenta.ru, May 3, 2007.

[34] Värk, 2008.

sional audio equipment, organized busing of activists from far regions of the country, and regular meal distribution to participants—indicated strong financial and organizational support that likely went far beyond the organic capabilities of these movements.[35] Finally, the fact that the Russian government authorized the groups to picket the embassy, and that the military was seemingly unable to stop the attack, suggests some measure of official complicity.

## Media Campaign

At the time of the events, Russian speakers in Estonia primarily consumed either rebroadcasted Russian media content or Russian-language programming that was created specifically for Russian audiences in Estonia. Popular television outlets include PBK, a subsidiary of the Russian-owned BMA media conglomerate, which rebroadcasts Russian media in the Baltics; the state-owned RTR-Planeta, which broadcasts globally; NTV, which is owned by Gazprom; and the Russian government–controlled RT, formerly Russia Today, whose multilingual broadcasting has been the target of propaganda accusations in several countries, including the United States.[36]

The majority of Russian media in both Russia and Estonia has toed the Russian government's official line arguing that Estonia misrepresented history in service of its goals, was experiencing a fascist revival, and put Russian speakers in Estonia at risk of persecution, repression, and discrimination. Some of the headlines and word choices that captured the events surrounding the Bronze Night were particularly telling:

- "The Monument to the Warrior-Liberator Has Been Cut Up and Moved in Parts; One Russian Speaker Killed [or murdered] in Riots"
- "Bronze Soldier Attacked at Dawn"
- "Regular Fascism"
- "Final Solution of the Soviet Question."[37]

---

[35] International Centre for Defence and Security, 2007.

[36] Aija Krutaine and Andrius Syta, "Battle of the Airwaves: Baltics Compete with Russia for Hearts and Minds," Reuters, February 13, 2015; also see Baltic Center for Investigative Journalism, "Russkiy Mir," *re:Baltica*, April 11, 2012; Jill Dougherty and Riina Kaljurand, *Estonia's "Virtual Russian World": The Influence of Russian Media on Estonia's Russian Speakers*, Tallinn, Estonia: International Centre for Defence and Security, October 2015. Also see Urmas Loit, "Estonia: Media Landscapes," Maastricht, Netherlands: European Journalism Centre, 2009, and P. Vihalemm, "Current Trends of Media Use in Estonia," *Informacijos Mokslai*, Vol. 47, 2008.

Gazprom is a Russian public stock energy development company. More than 50 percent of Gazprom stock belongs to the Russian government.

In 2017, after accusations that Russia interfered with the previous year's presidential election, the U.S. government ordered RT to register as a foreign agent and disclose its financing under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (Josh Gerstein, "DOJ Told RT to Register as Foreign Agent Partly Because of Alleged 2016 Election Interference," *Politico*, December 21, 2017).

[37] "В Таллине разрезан и вывезен по частям памятник Воину-освободителю. В беспорядках убит русскоязычный житель" ["Monument to the Warrior-Liberator Has Been Cut Up and Moved in Parts; One Russian Speaker Killed in Riots"], NEWSru, April 27, 2007; Galina Sapozhnikova, "Бронзового Солдата атаковали на рассвете: Эстонские власти оцепили монумент" ["Bronze Soldier Attacked at Dawn: Estonian Authorities Cordon Off Monument"], *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, April 27, 2007; Valentin Zvegintsev, "Обыкновенный фашизм: шиЭстонии начались раскопки асБронзового солдата" ["Regular Fascism: Estonia Began Excavations at the Bronze Soldier"], *Moskovskiy Komsomolets*,

Russian's main state news agency, RIA Novosti, falsely stated that the monument was cut up before relocation.[38] The Russian media in general tended to portray the protesters in Estonia as peaceful and specifically emphasized the brutality of the police response.[39] From April 26 to May 1, RT repeatedly broadcast an interview with Night Watch leader Dmitri Linter in which he threatened Estonia with civil war and promised, among other things, that the Estonian military would no longer be taking orders from "this government."[40]

Estonian authorities formulated a public response to Russia's accusations, but it was not particularly successful. The Estonian Internal Security Service condemned Russian TV media for "painting a picture of post-Soviet Estonia as an economically, socially, and culturally degenerate country on Europe's periphery, where neo-Nazism has taken ground and the Russian-speaking population is glaringly discriminated against."[41] Specifically in relation to the events of the Bronze Night, officials accused journalists from RTR of "disseminating hatred and propaganda" and helping the Night Watch and Nashi instigate riots.[42]

## Cyberattacks

Three waves of cyberattacks disabled the websites of the Estonian presidency, parliament, government ministries, political parties, news organizations, and banks.[43] The first (April 27–May 3) immediately followed the riots; the second round of attacks (May 8–9) occurred as Russia celebrated Victory Day over Nazi Germany and when President Putin delivered an accusatory speech against Estonia. The third came on the eve of the EU-Russia Summit on May 17–18, 2007.[44] Rather primitive at first, the attacks grew in sophistication and intensity: A large botnet of approximately 85,000 computers was used to conduct DDoS attacks, official websites (including that of the Reform Party) were hacked and defaced, and domain name system servers were corrupted, temporarily disrupting internet service in parts of the country.[45] Electronic banking services for two banks that controlled between 75 and 80 percent of the Estonian market were shut down for hours on two occasions.[46] Potentially exacerbating

April 27, 2007; "Окончательное решение советского вопроса. Эстония готовится к переносу памятников" ["Final Solution of the Soviet Question; Estonia Prepares to Move the Monument"], Channel One (Russia), November 26, 2006.

38 "Estonian Government Cuts Up WWII Memorial," RIA Novosti (Sputnik), April 27, 2007.

39 "Укор совести. Не допустить демонтаж памятника Воину-освободителю в Таллине" ["Pangs of Conscience: Do Not Allow Demolition of the Memorial to the Warrior-Liberator in Tallinn"], Channel One (Russia), January 27, 2007.

40 International Centre for Defence and Security, 2007.

41 Kaitsepolitseiamet, 2010, p. 10.

42 Kaitsepolitseiamet, 2007, p. 15.

43 Ian Traynor, "Russia Accused of Unleashing Cyberwar to Disable Estonia," *The Guardian*, May 16, 2007.

44 Traynor, 2007.

45 The initial attack apparently began when instructions for executing ping commands were posted on various Russian-language websites. One paper explains, "As a generalisation, though, the initial attacks on April 27 and 28 were simple, ineptly coordinated and easily mitigated" (Eneken Tikk, Kadri Kaska, and Liis Vihul, *International Cyber Incidents: Legal Considerations*, Tallinn, Estonia: Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence, 2010, p. 18).

46 Tikk, Kaska, and Vihul, 2010, pp. 20–22.

the damage, Russian-language websites offered instructions on how to attack Estonian sites.[47] Although the "size of the cyber attacks was certainly significant to the Estonian Government," one U.S. analyst observed, "from a technical standpoint [it] is not something we would consider significant in scale."[48]

Foreign Minister Paet openly accused Russia of being behind the cyberattacks, claiming that experts had tracked them to the official IP addresses of Russian authorities.[49] Russia denied involvement and refused to cooperate with Estonian law enforcement agencies as they attempted to investigate the attacks' origins, thus eliminating chances that any perpetrators under Russian jurisdiction would be brought to trial.

The investigation, carried out by the Estonian Ministry of Defence, did not yield substantial evidence of official Russian involvement; international experts also failed to come to consensus on whether Russian authorities were behind the attacks. Yet, the timing of the attacks and the decision by the authorities not to pursue suspects based in Russia (despite a treaty obligation to do so) led many to conclude that the Russian government played a role in either directing or encouraging the attacks.[50]

## Summary of the Estonia Case

In the case of the Estonian crisis, the timeline of Russian hostile measures (see Figure B.6) is difficult to plot with precision because it is unclear which measures can be directly attributed to Moscow. Although many in Estonia and beyond see the hand of the Russian government behind the Bronze Night crisis (since Russia had both the motivation and the tools to foment instability in Estonia), there is little or no direct evidence that Russia indeed orchestrated the various events.[51] What is certain, however, is that Russia's relationship with Estonia—including its compatriot policy, its glorification of World War II, efforts to solidify Estonia's energy dependence on Russia, links to and support for Estonian political parties and nongovernmental entities and movements, the dominance of Russian television as an information source for ethnic Russians living in Estonia, and propaganda promoting Russia's view of history—set the stage for the crisis without necessarily creating it.[52]

Even if the Russian government supported the protests in Estonia, the fact that the unrest spread so rapidly and involved so many people makes it unlikely that it was the result of an organized effort. Claims of Russian government involvement highlight Russia's links to lead-

---

[47] David. J. Smith, "How Russia Harnesses Cyberwarfare," *Defense Dossier* (American Foreign Policy Council), No. 4, August 2012.

[48] Quoted in Roland Heickerö, *"Emerging Cyber Threats" and Russian Views on Information Warfare and Information Operations*, Stockholm, Sweden: Swedish Defense Research Agency, 2010, p. 42.

[49] Arthur Bright, "Estonia Accuses Russia of Cyberattack," *Christian Science Monitor*, May 17, 2007; D. Smith, 2012.

[50] Richard A. Clarke and Robert K. Knake, *Cyber War: The Next Threat to National Security and What to Do About It*, New York: HarperCollins, 2010.

[51] Republic of Estonia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Declaration of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia," Tallinn, May 1, 2007.

[52] Since Putin's ascent to power, the Russian government has made particular use of the Great Patriotic War to strengthen Russian pride within and beyond the country's borders, as the victory over Nazi Germany in World War II is the one event that can unite Russians. This also applies to Russians living in Estonia.

ers of the Night Watch; however, the Night Watch leaders who were charged with instigating the protests were found not guilty in 2009 by the Estonian district court in Harjumaa.[53] Furthermore, no experts have been able to link the Russian government directly to the cyberattacks, and some even contend that the attacks were too unsophisticated to bear the mark of the Russian government.[54] Partly because of Russia's refusal to assist in the investigation and partly because of the lack of evidence, Estonian authorities were unable to implicate Russia.[55] The involvement or support of the Russian government seems obvious only in the Estonian embassy siege in Moscow, based on how well the picketing was organized and the fact that it ended abruptly after the Estonian ambassador's departure from Moscow.[56]

Overall, it seems likely that Russia set the stage for the reaction to the Bronze Soldier's removal among Russian speakers in Estonia through its long-term policies and ongoing involvement in the country in the post-Soviet era. It is also likely that Russia took advantage of the evolving situation to further foment a crisis by encouraging and supporting a variety of disruptive activities.

## How Successful Were Russia's Hostile Measures Overall?

Whether Russian officials sanctioned the reaction to the monument's removal or whether the reaction evolved spontaneously, the protests, political threats, embassy siege, cyberattacks, and economic sanctions were unsuccessful in preventing Estonia from relocating the monument. However, these actions were more successful in achieving other potential Russian objectives: punishing Estonia for its actions; reminding Estonia that, despite its independence, it is not free from Russia's influence; and tarnishing Estonia's image among its fellow EU and NATO members, or at least among the Russian and CIS publics. The "hidden" economic sanctions imposed by Russian businesses were particularly effective in hurting Estonia's economy, although most Estonian politicians rejected this notion.[57]

The Bronze Night events exposed the polarization within Estonian society and the failure of Estonia's policies to integrate the country's Russian population. Additionally, Russia's ability to foment domestic instability clearly demonstrated to Estonia and other Baltic states that, while they may have gained acceptance into the Western "club," Russia's interests were not to be overlooked. It appears that this message was effective in Estonia: After the events in 2007, 80 percent of Estonians polled reported a "fear that Russia may occupy Estonia again."[58]

---

[53] "Estonia Trial of Russia Activists," BBC News, January 14, 2008.

[54] Michael Lesk, "The New Front Line: Estonia Under Cyberassault," *IEEE Security and Privacy*, Vol. 5, No. 4, July–August 2007.

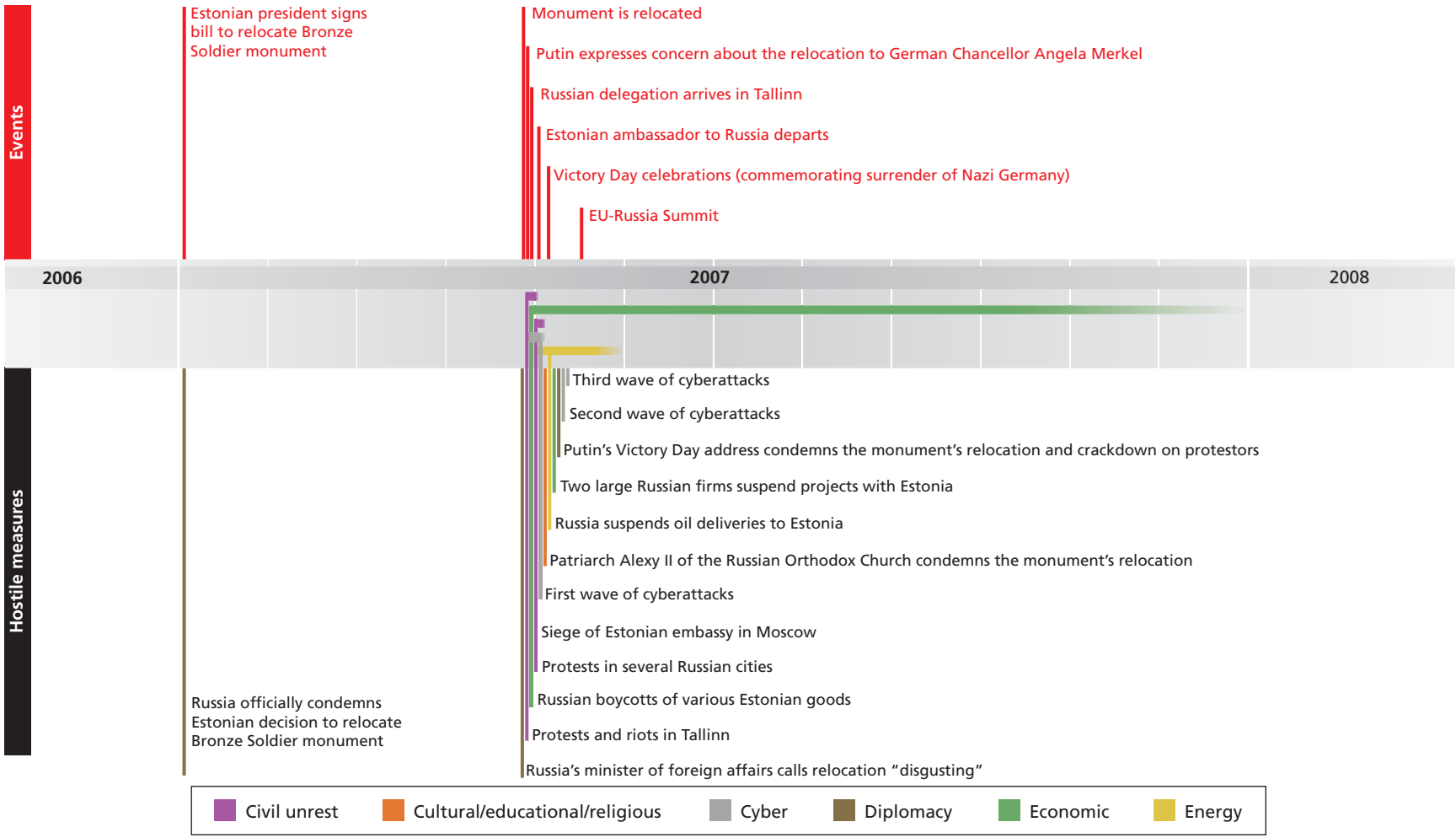
[55] Cyrus Farivar, "A Brief Examination of Media Coverage of Cyberattacks (2007–Present)," in Christian Czosseck and Kenneth Geers, eds., *The Virtual Battlefield: Perspective on Cyber Warfare*, Washington, D.C.: IOS Press, 2009.

[56] Ekaterina Savina, "Russia Can't Stand Estonian Embassy Siege Anymore," *Kommersant*, May 4, 2007; H. Wetzel, N. Kreimeier, and G. Parker, "Russen Beenden Botschaftsbelagerung" ["Russians End Embassy Siege"], *Financial Times Deutschland*, May 4, 2007.

[57] See Edgar Savisaar's statement on Estonian economic losses caused by the relocation of the statue in "История Конфликта Эстонии и России: Перенос 'Бронзового Солдата'" ["The Story of the Conflict Between Estonia and Russia: Transfer of the 'Bronze Soldier'"], Zagolovki.ru, December 29, 2007.

[58] "В тени Бронзового солдата: Эстония оглядывается на апрель 2007-го" ["In the Shadow of the Bronze Soldier: Estonia Looks Back on April 2007"], *Deutsche Welle*, April 28, 2008.

**Figure B.6**
**Timeline of Russian Hostile Measures in Estonia**



The Russian public also became more hostile to Estonia after the Bronze Night events. According to a 2007 poll by the independent Russian research firm Levada Center, 60 percent of Russians considered Estonia to be Russia's principal enemy.[59] Thus, if one of Russia's goals was to dispel Estonia's allure to Russian audiences, it definitely achieved it.

However, Russia's reaction to the Bronze Soldier's removal appears to have further distanced it from the European Union. It is, to a large extent, Russia's failure (or reluctance) to protect the Estonian embassy in Moscow that prompted EU members to stand behind Estonia. Furthermore, Russia's response to the crisis and suspicion that it had sanctioned the cyberattacks against Estonia made it clear in the EU and elsewhere that crises between Russia and its neighbors may pose a threat to European stability.[60]

## What Effective Responses (if Any) Were Designed to Counter Them?

Estonia tried to counter Russia's threats and the strong reaction to the Bronze Night events in several ways. Among these was a refusal to continue negotiations on the Nord Stream natural gas pipeline project, which would have carried Russian gas to Europe through the Estonian part of the Baltic Sea.[61] Later, Tallinn rejected Nord Stream's request to carry out surveys in its exclusive economic zones and, eventually, refused to participate in the project altogether. While this response interfered with Russian plans, it did not deter Russia from recruiting other partners (Denmark, Finland, and Sweden) and ultimately bringing the project to fruition. Because of this, some argue that Estonia's choice not to participate in Nord Stream was a mistake, costing it a seat at a negotiation table with Russia and, thus, any ability to exert influence.[62]

In addition, the Estonian government confiscated visas from known Nashi activists in Estonia, deported several of them for visa violations, and banned others from entering the country from Russia. As one consequence, these activists lost their ability to enter other Schengen countries.[63] It is not clear whether these sanctions had a broader effect on Russian activists' desire to participate in protests in Estonia or other countries, however.

International involvement was not extensive prior to the escalation of the crisis. In fact, representatives of various EU countries questioned the wisdom of Estonia's move to relocate the monument and resented being dragged into a dispute with Russia.[64] Initially hesitant to call on international support, Estonia exhausted its own ability to contain the crisis. On May 1, amid the siege of the Estonian embassy in Moscow, Estonian Foreign Minister Paet requested that the upcoming EU-Russia Summit be canceled and suggested that the EU consider the

---

[59] "В тени Бронзового солдата: Эстония оглядывается на апрель 2007-го" ["In the Shadow of the Bronze Soldier: Estonia Looks Back on April 2007"], 2008.

[60] Tatiana Stanovaya, "Е Россия: Ценностный Разрыв" ["EU-Russia: Value Discord"], Politcom.ru, May 21, 2007.

[61] "Дави на газ: В ответ на действия российских компаний Эстония блокировала переговоры по газопроводу Nord Stream" ["Push on the Gas: In Response to the Actions of Russian Companies, Estonia Blocks Negotiations on the Nord Stream Gas Line"], Lenta.ru, May 7, 2007.

[62] For a relevant discussion, see Jeroen Bult, "Nord Stream: Estonia's Lost Battle," No. 80, Tallinn, Estonia: International Centre for Defence and Security, April 2010.

[63] Estonia became a party to the Schengen Agreement in December 2007.

[64] M. Roth, 2009.

attack against Estonia to be an attack against the EU as a whole.[65] Seemingly in response to these pleas, the EU issued a Common Foreign and Security Policy statement on May 2, strongly urging Russia to comply with its obligations under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations.[66] EU High Representative Javier Solana engaged in telephone diplomacy, and the Moscow delegation of the European Commission called on Russian companies to honor their contracts with Estonia. Eventually, in conversations with the German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Russia agreed to facilitate an end to the blockade under the condition that the Estonian ambassador leave Moscow.[67] At the EU-Russia Summit later that month, talks revolved around the embassy siege, Russia's economic sanctions, and the cyberattacks. European Commission President José Manuel Barroso emphasized the EU's solidarity with Tallinn. The United States and NATO both issued official declarations of support of Estonia in the crisis with Russia.[68]

Overall, the international response did play a role in imposing some restraint on Russia's actions—most notably, it was Steinmeier's mediation that broke the siege of the Estonian embassy. In publicly supporting Estonia, the EU and NATO may have demonstrated to Russia that there was widespread Western opposition to its actions. The events also reinforced Estonia's argument to the international community that Russia aims to expand its influence in the former Soviet bloc and that relations between Russia and the former Soviet states will likely remain problematic.[69] This international response may also have prompted Russia to alter its behavior somewhat to avoid losing more "friends" in the European Union, knowing that completely severing relationships with Estonia could harm Russia's interests in the EU energy sector.[70]

---

[65] Urmas Paet, "Statement by the Foreign Minister Urmas Paet," Delfi News Service, May 1, 2007.

[66] Council of the European Union, statement on the situation in front of the Estonian Embassy in Moscow, May 2, 2007.

[67] Wetzel, Kreimeier, and Parker, 2007.

[68] U.S. Senate, Resolution 187, Condemning Violence in Estonia and Attacks on Estonia's Embassies in 2007, and Expressing Solidarity with the Government and the People of Estonia, 110th Congress, May 3, 2007; "Справка: Хроника конфликта вокруг 'Бронзового солдата'" ["Reference: Chronology of the Conflict Around the 'Bronze Soldier'"], *Deutsche Welle*, May 3, 2007; M. Roth, 2009.

[69] Stanovaya, 2007.

[70] "Facing a Cold Wind: Russia Looms Large in the Baltic States," *The Economist*, June 28, 2007.

## Ukraine (2014–2016)

European security was not on the national security agendas of Western policymakers in late 2013 when the Ukraine crisis erupted. Security priorities at the time focused on winding down NATO operations in Afghanistan, containing the fallout from the Arab Spring, and monitoring China's military rise in Asia. In terms of European security, the United States was scaling back spending for U.S. European Command, and European countries were cutting their defense budgets. Then, protests in Kyiv became violent, and Russian special forces suddenly appeared on the streets of Crimea. In March 2014, the crisis took an unexpected turn, with Russia annexing Crimea in a move that shocked the international community. Soon after, pro-Russia militias began seizing government buildings in the Donbas region in eastern Ukraine, civil war broke out, and Ukrainian forces came face to face with separatists supported by the Russian military. Security on the European continent once again became an issue. Figure B.7 depicts Ukraine and surrounding states.

We provide some background of this conflict before delving into the hostile measures that Russia employed at various times and with varying degrees of success throughout the Ukraine crisis. Russia likely has several objectives in relation to Ukraine: restore Russia's position as a global power, prevent NATO and the EU from inching closer to Russia's border, create a viable Eurasian Union that includes Ukraine, and, ultimately, weaken NATO. These are ambitious goals, and this case study concludes that hostile measures enabled Moscow to close in on a few

**Figure B.7**
**Map of Ukraine**

SOURCE: CIA, "Ukraine," *World Factbook*, last updated July 10, 2019d.
NOTE: Ukraine's Donbas region is on its southeastern land border with Russia and includes the cities of Donetsk and Mariupol.

of them, such as enhancing Russia's international stature. However, applying hostile measures to exacerbate Ukraine's domestic political crisis undermined other objectives, such as keeping Ukraine in Russia's sphere of influence.

## Historical Background

The Ukraine case has been studied elsewhere in significant detail. Because it is central to NATO strategy vis-à-vis the Russian hostile-measures threat, we briefly recap this history here.

From Russia's perspective, Ukraine is geopolitically unique. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Moscow has seen its influence over Ukraine as pivotal to maintaining control over security policy in CIS states.[1] Past invasions—by Napoleonic France, Imperial Germany, and Nazi Germany—have shaped Moscow's policy of maintaining a ring of buffer states that can act as a barrier to an invading force from the West.[2] Consequently, Moscow perceives a Ukraine with ties to the EU through an association agreement as an unacceptable strategic vulnerability.[3]

Crimea and its strategically important port city, Sevastopol, also are uniquely important to Russia for security reasons. In both the Crimean War (1853–1856) and World War II, the Crimean Peninsula provided a buffer against invasion from the West.[4] In the mid-19th century, the decline of the Ottoman Empire enabled Russia to expand its influence in Eastern Europe and the Black Sea region. But this face-off between diminishing and rising empires threatened Western interests, and the United Kingdom and France declared war on Russia.[5] Forces clashed on the Crimean Peninsula, and Russia pushed back the invaders from the west. During World War II, Crimea again became a battlefield as Nazi Germany invaded and occupied the peninsula to protect its gains and resources in southeastern Europe, such as the oil fields in Romania that were crucial to the German war effort.[6] Once again, Crimea was the stage where West met East—and where East eventually triumphed. Today, Russia sees the Black Sea as important in addressing maritime security threats to its coast, securing energy transportation infrastructure, and projecting power into the Mediterranean Sea, Indian Ocean, and other international waters. Russia needs access to Crimea's port facilities to maintain its fleet's presence in the Black Sea and access the Mediterranean Sea.[7] Preventing Ukraine from falling under Western influence safeguards that access, which, in turn, is important to Russia's global power ambitions.

---

1 Roy Allison, "Russian 'Deniable' Intervention in Ukraine: How and Why Russia Broke the Rules," *International Affairs*, Vol. 90, No. 6, November 2014, p. 1269.

2 U.S. Army Special Operations Command, *'Little Green Men': A Primer on Modern Russian Unconventional Warfare, Ukraine 2013–2014*, Fort Bragg, N.C., 2015 p. 39; John J. Mearsheimer, "Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault," Foreign Affairs, September–October 2014.

3 Allison, 2014, p. 1269.

4 U.S. Army Special Operations Command, 2015, p. 38.

5 "The Economist Explains: What the Original Crimean War Was All About," *The Economist*, March 18, 2014.

6 Jacob Kipp, "A Look Back at the WWII Crimean Campaign," book review, *War on the Rocks*, December 8, 2014.

7 Fyodor Lukyanov, "Putin Has Stumbled in Ukraine," *Moscow Times*, August 10, 2014; Edward Delman, "The Link Between Putin's Military Campaigns in Syria and Ukraine," *The Atlantic*, October 2, 2015.

Russia's perception of Ukraine also factored into Russia's decision to interfere politically in Kyiv in 2013 and to intervene more aggressively in Crimea in 2014. Russia feels a historical connection to Ukraine that dates back as far as the 9th century, and parts of modern-day Ukraine were once part of Imperial Russia.[8] Since at least the 19th century, Russia has viewed Ukrainians as "little Russians" and considered Ukrainians, Belarusians, and ethnic Russians living in their countries as one Russian people.[9] Russia lost control of Ukraine after the Russian Revolution; Ukraine declared independence in 1918, only to succumb to internal divisions and occupation by Germany and Austria.[10] Defeat in World War I forced the Central Powers to abandon their claims to Ukraine, and, in 1919, Ukraine's warring parties formed a united government. The country enjoyed independence for only three years before becoming one of the original Soviet republics in 1922. It remained a part of the Soviet Union for almost 70 years, until it regained independence in 1991.

In addition to its long, shared history with Russia, events in Ukraine—as in other former Soviet republics—have influenced contemporary Russian domestic politics. The mass demonstrations of the 2003 Rose Revolution in Georgia and the 2004 Orange Revolution in Ukraine led to the ouster of pro-Russia regimes and their replacement by governments that were more Western-oriented. Russian President Vladimir Putin began to fear that similar "color" revolutions could spread to Russia or the North Caucasus, causing the collapse of the regime.[11] He compensated by taking a more authoritarian approach to domestic politics, which included cracking down on nongovernmental organizations that received funding from abroad.

A final important element of the 2014 crisis was Russia's effort, borne out of the political and economic hardship of the 1990s, to regain its former prominence and assert an alternative to Western institutions and influence.[12] The EU's Eastern Partnership initiative was established at the 2009 Prague Summit and includes Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. Russia views this partnership as the EU's attempt to undermine its plans to reintegrate CIS countries and to expand Europe's influence in Russia's near abroad. In 2010, Russia sought to create a rival to the EU and the Eastern Partnership Initiative, forming the Eurasian Customs Union with Belarus, Kazakhstan, and (in 2013) Armenia.[13] The Eurasian Union, which was officially established in 2015, aims to integrate the economies, legal systems, customs, and military capabilities of member nations into a multinational power that can compete with the EU, the United States, and China.

If the Eurasian Union were to become a viable rival, it was crucial that Ukraine, a former Soviet industrial and agricultural center, join the organization.[14] At the November 2013 Eastern

---

[8] Serhy Yekelchyk, "The Ukrainian Crisis: In Russia's Long Shadow," *Origins: Current Events in Historical Perspective*, Vol. 7, No. 9, June 2014.

[9] Igor Zevelev, *NATO's Enlargement and Russian Perceptions of Eurasian Politics Frontiers*, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany: George Marshall European Center for Security Studies, 2001.

[10] History Channel, "This Day in History: Ukraine Declares Its Independence (January 26, 1918)," webpage, last updated August 21, 2018.

[11] Freedman, "Ukraine and the Art of Crisis Management," *Survival*, Vol. 56, No. 3, 2014a, p. 16.

[12] U.S. Army Special Operations Command, 2015.

[13] Iana Dreyer and Nicu Popescu, *The Eurasian Customs Union: The Economics and the Politics*, Issue Brief No. 11, Paris: European Union Institute for Security Studies, March 2014; Lawrence Freedman, 2014a, p. 15.

[14] U.S. Army Special Operations Command, 2015, pp. 39–40.

Partnership Summit, the EU invited Ukraine—along with Armenia and Moldova—to sign an association agreement, the terms of which prohibited these nations from joining the Eurasian Union.[15] The prospect that Ukraine might become economically closer to the EU pressured Moscow to act to preserve the Eurasian Union's chances of success. When it became clear that Kyiv was considering signing the association agreement with the EU, Moscow sent a high-level envoy to Ukraine to convey Russia's concerns and possible responses.[16] Putin and Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych met twice in fall 2013. Yanukovych ultimately refused to sign the association agreement, and, a month later, Putin announced the extension of a $15 billion loan to Kyiv and a decrease in the price of natural gas sold to Ukraine.[17] These announcements ignited a domestic political crisis in Kyiv that quickly escalated.

## The Spetsnaz and the Annexation of Crimea

### Content and Implementation

Ukraine's domestic political crisis came to a head on February 22, 2014, with the departure of President Yanukovych. That same day, Russian special forces were allegedly put on alert and mobilized.[18] Over the next several days, they reportedly deployed to Ukraine with the intention of creating "popular uprisings" and motivating Crimea's ethnic Russian population to support annexation, sometimes through bribery.[19] These well-armed and highly mobile forces did not wear insignia, allowing the Kremlin to deny Russia's military presence in Crimea.[20] The Spetsnaz were very cordial in dealing with the population. (In fact, although Western observers would refer to the anonymous troops as "little green men," Crimeans called them "polite people.")[21] The deployment was effective in encouraging Ukrainian military personnel stationed in Crimea to defect, thereby paving the way for a relatively bloodless takeover of the peninsula. On February 27, Spetsnaz began conducting tactical operations to seize key government buildings.[22] The next day, they began surrounding and blockading Ukrainian

---

[15] Freedman, 2014a, p. 19.

[16] Christiane Hoffmann, Marc Hujer, Ralf Neukirch, Matthias Schepp, Gregor Peter Schmitz, and Christoph Schult, "Summit of Failure: How the EU Lost Russia Over Ukraine," *Der Spiegel*, November 24, 2014.

[17] Freedman, 2014a, p. 19; also see U.S. Army Special Operations Command, 2015, p. 29.

[18] Bret Perry, "Non-Linear Warfare in Ukraine: The Critical Role of Information Operations and Special Operations," *Small Wars Journal*, August 14, 2015.

[19] U.S. Army Special Operations Command, 2015, p. 54.

[20] Perry, 2015.

[21] Russian Spetsnaz are often discussed in terms similar to those used to describe U.S. special forces, but this does not accurately capture the role that the Spetsnaz play in the Russian military and intelligence agencies. *Spetsnaz* means *special task forces* and can be used to describe units with a narrow specialization or the special importance of the tasks that forces are asked to execute. The Spetsnaz have evolved significantly since the end of World War II. Today's Spetsnaz are composed of about 50,000 mostly volunteer soldiers (though some are conscripts) who take orders from Russia's military district commands and not solely from the Main Intelligence Directorate, as is commonly believed. For more information on the evolution and current structure of the Spetsnaz, see Aleksey Nikolsky, "Russian 'Spetsnaz' Forces—From Saboteurs to Court Bailiffs," *Moscow Defense Brief*, 2014.

[22] Charles K. Bartles and Roger N. McDermott, "Russia's Military Operation in Crimea," Problems of Post-Communism, Vol. 61, No. 6, 2015, p. 54; also see Oscar Jonsson and Robert Seely, "Russian Full-Spectrum Conflict: An Appraisal After Ukraine," *Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 1, 2015, p. 10.

military bases, and, by March 1, about 60 percent of Ukraine's air defense units in the peninsula had been captured by Russian troops.[23] These military actions facilitated the political process underway in the Crimean and Russian parliaments, which culminated in the signing of a reunification agreement on March 17 under which Russia effectively annexed Crimea.

### Local and International Reactions

The Ukrainian government and the international community failed to mount a timely response and were ultimately unsuccessful in preventing Moscow from taking control of the peninsula. Part of the reason was uncertainty as to what was truly happening and whether it was driven by Moscow.[24] When the Spetsnaz began military operations on February 27, their lack of insignia and Russia's denial that its troops were present in Crimea created doubt about its involvement, thereby undermining the ability of Kyiv and NATO to formulate an effective response. This confusion and uncertainty allowed Russia to secure control over Crimea without facing significant resistance. It was only in April that Putin admitted, "Russia created conditions—with the help of special armed groups and the Armed Forces . . . for the expression of the will of the people living in Crimea and Sevastopol."[25]

Other factors hindered the Ukrainian government and the international community's ability to respond to Russia's action in Crimea. First, Kyiv was in the midst of political turmoil following the disintegration of Yanukovych's government, and Ukraine's interim government was divided on whether to react militarily.[26] The international community did not support a Ukrainian military intervention. According to a transcript from a February 28, 2014, meeting of Ukraine's National Security and Defense Council, concern that Russia could launch Georgia-like operations in Ukraine was the primary reason for the international community's objection to a military response to the annexation. At the meeting, the head of Ukraine's Security Service stated,

> The information provided by our channels fully confirmed Russia's readiness to send troops, which are concentrated along our border. Both the Americans and the Germans all in one voice are asking us not to start any active action, because, according to their research, Putin uses it to initiate a large-scale land invasion.[27]

Also of concern was the ability of Ukraine's armed forces to successfully confront the Russian Spetsnaz; with no international military assistance forthcoming, operations to recapture Crimea had the potential to fail. Moreover, any Ukrainian military operation that resulted in the deaths of Russian-speaking civilians would strengthen Putin's narrative that Ukraine threatened the safety of Russian compatriots. The United States and several European governments encouraged Ukraine to stand down, and it did.[28]

---

[23] Bartles and McDermott, 2015, p. 55.

[24] Mark Galeotti, "'Hybrid War' and 'Little Green Men': How It Works, and How It Doesn't," excerpt from *Ukraine and Russia: People, Politics, Propaganda and Perspectives*, E-International Relations, April 16, 2015.

[25] Allison, 2014, p. 1257.

[26] Josh Rogin and Eli Lake, "U.S. Told Ukraine to Stand Down as Putin Invaded," *Bloomberg Opinion*, August 21, 2015.

[27] "US and Germany Asked Ukraine Not to Take Any Actions in 2014 in Response to Russia's Takeover of Crimea," transcript, *Ukraine Today*, February 22, 2016.

[28] Rogin and Lake, 2015.

What response the international community did have to the events in Ukraine was primarily diplomatic and economic. On March 3, the EU and Group of Eight (G8) member countries decided to suspend preparations for the G8 Summit that had been planned to take place in Sochi, Russia, in June.[29] On March 6, the EU announced that it would prepare to impose asset freezes and travel bans on specific Russians; that same day, President Barack Obama signed an executive order sanctioning individuals and organizations involved in violating Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.[30] On March 17, the EU agreed on its first sanctions against Russia, and President Obama signed another executive order stating that Russia's actions undermined Ukraine's democratic processes and institutions. More sanctions from the EU and the United States followed on March 20 and 21. As we discuss throughout this case study, sanctions became the West's main response to Russia's use of hostile measures in Ukraine.

#### Level of Success

The deployment of Spetsnaz to Crimea was the most important measure that enabled Russia to take over the peninsula. The speed and professionalism with which the Spetsnaz conducted their operations amid uncertainty about the level of Russia's involvement in these events paralyzed decisionmaking in Kyiv, Western capitals, and the UN. The success of the Spetsnaz in overrunning Crimea's parliament building and supreme court effectively blocked local political authority, which facilitated the legal process that led to annexation.[31] Developments in Crimea unfolded quickly and suddenly: About a week after Yanukovych fled, Russia controlled much of the peninsula, and within another two to three weeks, the annexation was official. The Spetsnaz presence in Crimea had facilitated the entire process, making it a very successful hostile measure.

## Russian Military Support to Separatists in Donbas

#### Content and Implementation

After consolidating control of Crimea, Russian Spetsnaz allegedly deployed in April 2014 to Ukraine's Donbas region, where they worked with indigenous forces to seize government buildings in Donetsk and Luhansk.[32] Despite some initial success, covert and proxy operations in Donbas ultimately failed. Separatist groups lacked cohesiveness, strong leadership, and coordination, and they were reckless with the weapons provided to them.[33] The success of Ukrainian efforts to recover territory throughout the spring and summer of 2014 is thought to have prompted Russia's regular military to become more deeply involved in the region, particularly through the transfer of arms. Moscow began sending more-advanced equipment to eastern

---

[29] European Council and Council of the European Union, "Timeline—EU Restrictive Measures in Response to the Crisis in Ukraine," last updated March 15, 2019.

[30] European Council and Council of the European Union, 2019.

[31] András Rácz, *Russia's Hybrid War in Ukraine: Breaking the Enemy's Ability to Resist*, Helsinki, Finland: Finnish Institute of International Affairs, Report 43, June 16, 2015, pp. 60, 62.

[32] Lawrence Freedman, "Ukraine and the Art of Limited War," *War on the Rocks*, October 8, 2014b.

[33] Lawrence Freedman, "Ukraine and the Art of Limited War," *Survival*, Vol. 56, No. 6, 2015.

Ukraine; one source estimated that, by late August, Russia had sent 100 main battle tanks, 100 artillery pieces, 80 armored personnel carriers, and 500 antitank weapons across the border.[34] In late August, a convoy allegedly carrying humanitarian supplies to war-torn parts of Ukraine illegally crossed the border from Russia, sparking debate about the nature of Russia's support to the separatists. By that time, 3,000 to 6,500 Russian troops were operating in Ukraine.[35]

Artillery launched from within Russia bombarded Ukrainian forces, helping to shift the advantage back to the separatists.[36] Casualties continued to mount, topping 3,500 by mid-September as ground that had been recaptured by the Ukrainian military changed hands again.[37] Particularly devastating for Ukraine was the Battle of Ilovaisk, in which at least 1,000 people were killed after the Ukrainian military left a largely volunteer force to face Russia-supported separatists on their own.[38] Until the Minsk Agreement in September, Russia retained the initiative by seizing the border town of Novoazovsk and threating Ukraine's control over Mariupol. Russian forces and separatists continued to seize territory even after the September ceasefire.[39]

### Local and International Reactions

Unlike in Crimea, where the Ukrainian government did little to stop Russian forces from taking control, Kyiv's response to Russian aggression in eastern Ukraine was more assertive and definitive. In mid-March, the interim government called up reserve personnel to increase the military's manpower.[40] On April 16, Ukraine's interim President Olexandr Turchynov announced that the military had begun "anti-terror" operations to reclaim territory and government buildings seized by separatists in approximately ten cities in Donbas.[41] On May 6, another wave of reserve personnel was called up, and, shortly thereafter, Ukraine reinstated conscription.[42] Nonetheless, Ukraine's early military efforts failed to reclaim separatist strongholds in Donbas.

The population in Donbas was largely opposed to the government in Kyiv, and Russian business and intelligence networks infiltrated the region.[43] Russia and Donbas share linguistic, historical, and cultural ties, and the porous border between the two gave Russia a nearly

---

[34] Jonsson and Seely, 2015, p. 10.

[35] Igor Sutyagin, *Russian Forces in Ukraine*, London: Royal United Services Institute, March 2015.

[36] Ben Barry, "Could Russia Repeat the East Ukraine Playbook in Syria?" *IISS Voices* (International Institute for Strategic Studies), September 22, 2015.

[37] Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Report on the Human Rights Situation in Ukraine*, September 16, 2014.

[38] Alec Luhn, "Anatomy of a Bloodbath," *Foreign Policy*, September 6, 2014b.

[39] Steven Pifer, Brookings Institution, "The Growing Russian Military Threat in Europe; Assessing and Addressing the Challenge: The Case of Ukraine," testimony before the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, May 17, 2017.

[40] Maksym Bugriy, "The Southeast Unrest and the Ukrainian Military," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 11, No. 91, May 15, 2014b.

[41] "Ukraine Says Donetsk 'Anti-Terror Operation' Under Way," BBC News, April 16, 2014.

[42] Bugriy, 2014b.

[43] In one poll conducted by the Kiev International Institute of Sociology, more than 70 percent of Donetsk and Luhansk's residents regarded the Ukrainian government as "illegal." See Samuel Charap, "The Ghost of Hybrid War," *Survival*, Vol. 57, No. 6, December 2015, p. 54.

unlimited number of access points to the battlefield. Ukraine was unable to compete with Russia's extensive knowledge of the region. Moreover, Ukraine's efforts to beef up its military suffered setbacks. In September 2014, the Ukrainian military reported that nearly 86,000 people called to service in 13 regions across the country did not report to their draft office.[44] Almost 10,000 were found to be illegally avoiding service.[45] These problems continued to plague the Ukrainian military effort. As of October 2015, about a year and a half after the conflict began, approximately 16,000 troops had reportedly deserted.[46] And about 27,000 people failed to report for duty in the sixth wave of mobilization, which occurred in fall 2015.[47]

Ukraine's military began to make headway after Petro Poroshenko assumed the presidency in June 2014, using helicopters and aircraft to recapture the Donetsk airport. This momentum did not last, however, as separatist setbacks in June and July prompted Russia to become more involved in operations in Donbas. Separatist leaders of Russian origin were replaced with local Ukrainians, militias became better organized, equipment flooded into Ukraine, and Russia began providing artillery support.[48] The Ukrainian military lost ground, and 65 percent of its equipment was destroyed or lost. The Minsk Agreement in September finally brought about a ceasefire.

While Ukraine fought Russia militarily, the international community responded with further sanctions. Citing Russia's military actions in Donbas, the United States expanded sanctions throughout April and again in June and July.[49] The EU strengthened existing sanctions and introduced new ones in spring, including a June ban on imports originating from Crimea and Sevastopol.[50] The United States and EU announced another round of sanctions in the summer, but these steps were more a response to the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 by separatists who were reportedly equipped with Russian missiles than it was a reaction to Russia's ground operations in eastern Ukraine. Several countries provided nonlethal military assistance to Ukrainian forces. According to one Ukrainian source, 18 countries contributed $164.1 million in aid between January 2014 and January 2015.[51] Supplementing this international support, some countries, including the United Kingdom, deployed military training teams to Ukraine.[52]

### Level of Success

In some respects, Russia was successful in Donbas: Its support for the separatists prevented Kyiv from reestablishing its authority over the breakaway provinces of Luhansk and Donetsk.[53]

---

[44] Alec Luhn, "The Draft Dodgers of Ukraine," *Foreign Policy*, February 18, 2015.

[45] Luhn, 2015.

[46] Christopher Harress, "Ukraine War Deserters: 16,000 Troops Abandoned Military Since Conflict Began, Kiev Official Says," *International Business Times*, October 5, 2015.

[47] Harress, 2015.

[48] Freedman, 2015; also see Charap, 2015, p. 55.

[49] U.S. Department of State, "Ukraine and Russia Sanctions," webpage, last updated March 15, 2019.

[50] European Council and Council of the European Union, 2019.

[51] Paul A. Goble, "Friends in Need: 18 Countries Who Gave Ukraine Non-Lethal Military Aid," *Euromaidan Press*, August 5, 2016.

[52] Claire Mills, *UK Military Assistance to Ukraine*, UK House of Commons Briefing Paper, May 20, 2015, p. 3.

[53] Charap, 2015, pp. 53–54.

This created a frozen conflict that could prevent Ukraine from joining the EU or NATO in the future.[54] That said, Russia was unable to achieve this objective without providing cross-border artillery support, devoting regular Russian forces to the fight on the ground, and transferring weapons to the separatists. And despite this increased support in the form of Russian troops and equipment, security and stability in the region were largely unattainable. As the conflict progressed, Putin's denials of Russian involvement became less and less plausible and therefore less effective. As the scope of Russian involvement became clearer, such denials may have served to galvanize the international community's response. Indications of Russian involvement became increasingly evident in other areas as well. In late August, ten Russian paratroopers were captured by Ukrainian forces; on August 27, the Stavropol Committee of Soldiers' Mothers, a human rights organization, published a list of 400 Russian soldiers who were either killed or wounded in Ukraine; and journalists who visited the graves of fallen Russian troops were threatened.[55]

Ultimately, the success of these hostile measures was mixed. Russia prevented the Donbas region from falling back under Kyiv's control, but it also, itself, failed to maintain control over the territory. Yet, Russia succeeded in dragging the Ukrainian government into a costly war and made the point that Ukraine was a potentially unstable country that NATO might want to keep at arm's length. Russia also made gains in eastern Ukraine, but these achievements required a larger investment of conventional military resources and assets than Russia was initially willing to provide.[56]

## Using Proxies in Crimea and Donbas

### Content and Implementation

While the Spetsnaz were quickly and quietly taking control of the Crimean Peninsula, local police forces (specifically, the Berkut riot police) and Russian-organized self-defense units were coordinating with the Spetsnaz to move on Ukrainian military facilities in Sevastopol.[57] These Russian-supported groups took control of Crimea's roads, borders, communication infrastructure, and government buildings, further undermining Kyiv's authority on the peninsula.[58] These forces were diverse and included Crimean civilians, Ukrainian riot police, Russian veterans, Cossacks (an ethnic militia group from Russia whose members see themselves as defenders of Russia's borders), and members of pro-Russia motorcycle gangs.[59] The conglom-

---

[54] Michael Kofman, "Putin's Strategy Is Far Better Than You Think," *War on the Rocks*, September 7, 2015.

[55] Jonsson and Seely, 2015, p. 11.

[56] Charap, 2015, pp. 53–54.

[57] Mark Galeotti, "Hybrid, Ambiguous, and Non-Linear? How New Is Russia's 'New Way of War'?" *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, Vol. 27, No. 2, 2016, p. 283. Also see Johan Norberg, ed., Fredrik Westerlund, and Ulrik Franke, "The Crimea Operation: Implications for Future Russian Military Interventions," in Niklas Granholm, Johannes Malminen, and Gudrun Persson, eds., *A Rude Awakening: Ramifications of Russian Aggression Towards Ukraine*, Stockholm, Sweden: Swedish Defence Research Agency, June 2014, p. 41, and Mark Galeotti, "The Rising Influence of Russian Special Forces," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, 2014.

[58] Manu Brabo, "In Pictures: Crimea's Self-Defence Force," Al Jazeera, April 9, 2014.

[59] Thomas Barrabi, "Who Are the Cossack Fighters Who Spearheaded Rebels' Capture of Debaltseve in Eastern Ukraine?" *International Business Times*, February 19, 2015. Also see Damon Tabor, "Putin's Angels: Inside Russia's Most Infamous

erate of self-defense units blended into the population, complemented Russian forces, and—perhaps most importantly—were involved in securing Crimea until heavier infantry from Russia could be brought in.[60] Until April 2014, Putin denied that Russia was providing support to these units.[61] Standing proxy groups, separate from the self-defense units, were also active in facilitating the secession and annexation of Crimea. For example, Cossack paramilitaries with financial support from Moscow defended Sevastopol and blockaded and intimidated Ukrainian troops stationed in Crimea.[62]

Russian proxies played an even larger role in operations in Donbas. With the assistance of Russia's Main Intelligence Directorate and, possibly, the Spetsnaz, Ukrainian separatists began seizing government buildings in Donetsk and Luhansk in April 2014.[63] Many of the separatist groups that emerged in eastern Ukraine were reportedly led by Russian nationals. One force operating in Donetsk was the Russian Orthodox Army, a group trained in reconnaissance and storming buildings, that was motivated by the Russian Orthodox Church, Russian nationalism, and anger over NATO and EU enlargement.[64] The group's leader was the defense minister of the Donetsk People's Republic, Igor Girkin (also known as Strelkov), a former Russian agent who fought in Chechnya, Serbia, and Transnistria.[65] Aleksandr Borodai, a Russian who fought in Transnistria, Chechnya, and Tajikistan in support of ethnic Russians in the 1990s, was the prime minister of Donetsk before returning to his job as a public relations consultant in Moscow. Marat Bashirov, a Russian government relations consultant, is the former prime minister of Luhansk. Former Russian generals also served as commanders in the Luhansk People's Militia and in the first army corps of the separatist armed forces in Donetsk.[66]

### Local and International Reactions

There is little evidence to suggest that Russia's support of proxies in Crimea or eastern Ukraine elicited a unique response from Ukraine and the international community; rather, the overall response appeared to take into account the collective events in Crimea and Donbas. Many Russians who had been active in the separatist groups were sanctioned by the United States and the EU along with other prominent Russian officials. The Ukrainian security services also collected information about Russian generals who had led separatists to show that the government in Kyiv was succeeding in uncovering Russian saboteurs.[67] No evidence suggests that the

---

Motorcycle Club," *Rolling Stone*, October 8, 2015, and Maksym Bugriy, "The Crimean Operation: Russian Force and Tactics," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 11, No. 61, April 1, 2014a.

[60] Norberg, Westerlund, and Franke, 2014, pp. 41, 45.

[61] Allison, 2014, p. 1257.

[62] U.S. Army Special Operations Command, 2015, p. 44.

[63] Galeotti, 2016, p. 286. Also see Andrew Higgins, Michael R. Gordon, and Andrew E. Kramer, "Photos Link Masked Men in East Ukraine to Russia," *New York Times*, April 20, 2014.

[64] U.S. Army Special Operations Command, 2015, p. 44.

[65] U.S. Army Special Operations Command, 2015, p. 44; Andrew Roth, "Former Russian Rebels Trade War in Ukraine for Posh Life in Moscow," *Washington Post*, September 15, 2015a. Also see "Ukraine Crisis: Key Players in Eastern Unrest," BBC News, August 28, 2014.

[66] Eli Lake and Josh Rogin, "Ukraine Says Russian Generals Lead Separatists," *Bloomberg Opinion*, July 2, 2015.

[67] Mohammed Al-Saiegh, "Ukraine Crisis: See Full Sanctions List," *CNN Money*, May 13, 2014. Also see Lake and Rogin, 2015.

presence and actions of these groups affected how Ukraine conducted operations or the level of international support for the Ukrainian government.

### Level of Success

Using proxies to carry out operations in Donbas was not ultimately successful for Russia. Although pro-Russia militants experienced some initial success when facing off against Ukraine's weak military, they were unable to garner popular support, and efforts to hold referenda on secession in Donetsk and Luhansk failed.[68] The leaders of the proxy groups eventually became a liability for Moscow. Many of the Russians who led the separatist militias and governments began acting like warlords and were either unwilling or unable to restore security in Donbas.[69] After the crash of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 and Ukraine's increased success on the battlefield in summer 2014, Moscow removed these henchmen and replaced them with local Ukrainian leaders.[70] For example, Volodymyr Kononov, a former judo instructor from Luhansk, replaced Igor Strelkov.[71] Aleksandr Borodai was replaced by Oleksandr Zakharchenko, an alleged smuggler who was previously the leader of a Donetsk police-advocacy group that provided support to separatists. These replacements suggest that Moscow did not view its insertion of Russians to lead proxy groups as successful. It is worth noting, however, that the use of proxy forces did achieve a few of Moscow's objectives. It forced the Ukrainian government to spend precious resources on a difficult fight, and it showed Ukraine's vulnerability to infiltration and internal turmoil, diminishing the prospect of NATO membership.

## Snap Exercises and Military Buildup

### Content and Implementation

Throughout the Ukraine crisis, Russia mobilized forces and conducted snap exercises as a way to intimidate and deter Ukraine, to ensure that Kyiv could not cut off access to the arms and supplies flowing from Russia to the separatist groups, and to provide cover for covert military operations.[72] The first major exercise took place days after Yanukovych fled the country. On February 26, 2014, Russia's military began a major readiness exercise in its Western and Central Military Districts that involved 150,000 troops—enough for an invasion force.[73] At 4:00 p.m. the following day, Putin ordered an exercise to be conducted in the Black Sea that involved 36 ships and 7,000 troops; within an hour of this order, 30–35 Spetsnaz seized control of Crimean government buildings, including parliament.[74] The use of snap exercises in tandem

---

[68] Freedman, 2014b.

[69] Alec Luhn, "Fight Club, Donetsk," *Foreign Policy*, June 16, 2014.

[70] Freedman, 2014b.

[71] Glenn Kates, "Separatist Shuffle: Who's In, Who's Out Among Donbas Rebels," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, August 15, 2014.

[72] Jonsson and Seely, 2015, p. 10. Snap exercises are conducted without notice.

[73] Norberg, Westerlund, and Franke, 2014, p. 41.

[74] Martin Hunt, "Lessons to Learn from Crimea: Does Estonia's National Defence Model Meet Our Needs?" Tallinn, Estonia: International Centre for Defence and Security, June 3, 2014.

with covert activity was meant to divert the attention of Ukrainian military officials away from events in Crimea.

Russian military exercises happened to coincide with important developments in the conflict. On April 24, as operations in Donbas heated up, with Ukrainian forces attacking the separatist stronghold of Sloviansk, Russia conducted military exercises along its border with Ukraine.[75] In mid-June, before Ukraine signed the association agreement with the EU and while President Poroshenko attempted to convince Putin to encourage the separatists to join a ceasefire, NATO revealed that Russia was building up its military forces along the border.[76]

### Local and International Reactions

The military exercises and buildups along the border with Ukraine concerned the international community. In June 2014, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen said, "I consider this a very regrettable step backwards and it seems that Russia keeps the option to intervene further."[77] Despite requests that Russia cease its snap exercises, Moscow continued to use this military practice as a way to demonstrate its capabilities. A massive exercise in March 2015, involving more than 80,000 Russian troops, appeared to simulate how Russia would defend itself against a NATO invasion.[78]

### Level of Success

By keeping troops along the border and continuing to exercise its military capabilities over the protests of the international community, Russia ensured that tensions remained high and communicated to Western leaders that the prospect of further Russian aggression could never be completely ruled out. Moreover, Russia's military presence on the border supported nonmilitary efforts in Ukraine by posing the imminent threat of a large conventional attack.[79] Overall, these hostile measures were successful in demonstrating how Russia would use its capabilities against NATO and Ukraine and in ensuring these entities would never fully disregard Russia's military power.

From a deterrence standpoint, the use of snap exercises had mixed results. Kyiv did little in response to Russia's covert actions in Crimea, but whether the exercises on February 27 played a role in dissuading the government from responding is unclear. Russia's snap exercises and buildups along the border during ongoing hostilities in Donbas did not deter the Ukrainian government from acting militarily against Russian-backed separatists, however. Whether the use of exercises played a role in the international community's decision not to become more militarily involved in the conflict is unknown.

---

[75] "Russia Orders Exercises After Ukraine Moves on Separatists," BBC News, April 24, 2014.

[76] Laura Smith-Spark and Joe Sterling, "Putin, Ukraine Leader Talk Peace in Phone Call," CNN, June 19, 2014.

[77] Smith-Spark and Sterling, 2014.

[78] Michael Birnbaum, "3 Maps That Show How Russia and NATO Might Accidentally Escalate into War," *Washington Post*, August 12, 2015.

[79] Rácz, 2015, pp. 61–62.

## Application and Exploitation of Compatriot Policy in Ukraine

### Content and Implementation

Russia's policy of supporting and defending ethnic Russian populations living outside the Russian Federation has received increased attention since the Crimean annexation. Moscow identifies compatriots as ethnic Russians and Russian speakers, their families, and people with cultural or other ties to the federation who do not live in Russian territory.[80] Russia first identified this population as a priority after 1991, out of concern that the breakup of the Soviet Union into many independent states had divided the Russian people. Putin reiterated this commitment in March 2014:

> Millions of people went to bed in one country and awoke in different ones, overnight becoming ethnic minorities in former Union republics, while the Russian nation became one of the biggest, if not the biggest ethnic group in the world to be divided by borders.[81]

But Russia's support for compatriots is more than a domestic political issue, as the sizable Russian diaspora allows Russia to maintain soft power in former Soviet states and to intervene in their affairs when doing so suits its interests. Ukraine is highly vulnerable to Russia's use of its compatriot policy for political gain. The 7.5 million ethnic Russians living in Ukraine make up 17.3 percent of the country's population, and 12 percent of non-Russian Ukrainians speak Russian as their primary language.[82]

Although pro-Western ideals began to take hold in western Ukraine and Kyiv after the end of the Cold War, these sentiments were never fully embraced in the eastern part of the country or in Crimea, where the Russian-speaking population dominates.[83] Moscow began founding compatriot organizations and opening cultural centers in Ukraine in around 2000, and many of them received legal, financial, logistical, and organizational support from the Kremlin.[84] After the 2004 Orange Revolution, Russian citizens in Ukraine began organizing illicit and semi-legal groups that received paramilitary training, which would ultimately prepare them for the 2014 conflict. For example, Donetskaya Respublika, a pro-Russia separatist group founded in Donetsk in 2006, began military training in early 2009.[85]

Russia has also sought to strengthen ties with ethnic Russians by providing passports to compatriots in Ukraine through the Russian consulates in Sevastopol and Simferopol.[86] This policy dates back approximately two decades, when Russia began granting citizenship and passports to ethnic Russians living in Crimea despite Ukraine's ban on dual citizenship.[87] The Ukrainian Security Service reported that the number of Russian passports distributed in

---

[80] Vera Zakum, Paul Saunders, and Daniel Antoun, *Mobilizing Compatriots: Russia's Strategy, Tactics, and Influence in the Former Soviet Union*, Arlington, Va.: CNA, November 2015.

[81] Vladimir Putin, "Address by President of the Russian Federation," transcript, Moscow: Kremlin, March 18, 2014.

[82] Zakum, Saunders, and Antoun, 2015, pp. 9, 24.

[83] Serhy Yekelchyk, 2014.

[84] Agnia Grigas, "How Soft Power Works: Russian Passportization and Compatriot Policies Paved Way for Crimean Annexation and War in Donbas," Atlantic Council, February 22, 2016.

[85] Grigas, 2016.

[86] Allison, 2014, p. 1270.

[87] Grigas, 2016.

Crimea ranged from 10,000 to 100,000 by 2008.[88] Other estimates were more specific, claiming that around 60,000 residents of Crimea held Russian passports and that approximately 1,600 Russian Navy personnel stationed in the Black Sea illegally gained Ukrainian citizenship without renouncing their Russian citizenship.[89]

Russia used the compatriot policy to justify its intervention early on in the Ukraine crisis. On March 1, 2014, shortly after Yanukovych fled Kyiv and within days of the launch of Spetsnaz tactical operations in Crimea, Russian lawmakers approved Putin's request to send conventional military forces to Ukraine. Putin claimed the need for troops "in connection with the extraordinary situation in Ukraine and the threat to the lives of Russian citizens."[90] At the end of March, after the annexation of Crimea was official, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov claimed Russia was willing to protect "the rights of Russians and Russian-speaking people in Ukraine, using all available political, diplomatic and legal means."[91] In late June, as Poroshenko called a ceasefire, Putin claimed that any dialogue or negotiations must include reforms to protect the rights of Ukrainians in the southeastern portion of the country (which is dominated by Russian speakers) and that these rights must be guaranteed by Ukraine's constitution.[92]

### Local and International Reactions

Ukraine's efforts to suppress the impact of Russia's compatriot policy were not significant. On the issue of passports, legislation was proposed to impose stricter punishments for violating Ukraine's ban on dual citizenship, but it was never made into law.[93] It was not until nearly a year after the annexation of Crimea that Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that sanctions would be imposed on residents with dual citizenship.

Although the Ukrainian government and the international community reacted minimally to the use of the compatriot policy to justify Russia's intervention, the Ukrainian public seems to have responded with vehement opposition. The popularity of adult Ukrainian language instruction has mushroomed, with increased enrollment in language classes beginning after the emergence of the Maidan protests and the outbreak of war in eastern Ukraine.[94] The use of the Ukrainian language on social media is also increasing, and many Ukrainians have begun to shift away from using Russian social media platforms. Some primarily Russian speakers also have made pledges on social media to speak Ukrainian with their children to ensure that the next generation of their families is more fluent in their nation's official language. A joke has circulated among primarily Russian speakers: "I'm afraid of speaking Russian now, because Putin might want to protect me."[95] These trends suggest that the Ukrainian

---

88 Taras Kuzio, *The Crimea: Europe's Next Flashpoint?* Washington, D.C.: Jamestown Foundation, November 2010, p. 34.

89 Grigas, 2016.

90 Quoted in "Russian Parliament Approves Troop Deployment in Ukraine," BBC News, March 1, 2014.

91 Quoted in "Ukraine Crisis: Russia Vows No Invasion," BBC News, March 29, 2014.

92 Vladimir Putin, "Response to a Journalist's Question About the Peace Plan in Ukraine," June 22, 2014.

93 Grigas, 2016.

94 Ievgen Vorobiov, "Why Ukrainians Are Speaking More Ukrainian," *Foreign Policy*, June 26, 2015.

95 Vorobiov, 2015.

population, not the government in Kyiv, has taken the lead in undermining Russia's ability to employ its compatriot policy for political gain.

### Level of Success

Russia's compatriot policy was effective in enabling Moscow to maintain influence in Ukraine. The connection many Ukrainians felt toward Russia facilitated Moscow's ability to successfully insert Spetsnaz personnel into Crimea and provide support to pro-Russia separatists in Donbas. Interestingly, Russia's success in implementing hostile measures related to its compatriot policy likely dooms these same measures to failure in Ukraine going forward. More than 90 percent of residents in Sevastopol and more than 75 percent of Crimea's population identify as ethnic Russians or are primarily Russian speakers, which is why Russia's pro-compatriot message resonated in this region.[96] In the Crimean Peninsula, more people could identify with Russia than in any other area of Ukraine, followed by the oblasts of Donetsk and Luhansk. Now that these regions have been either annexed or are in revolt, the political power of the pro-Russia bloc in Kyiv has diminished. Consequently, Russia may be less able to dictate the course of political events in Ukraine through the use of pro-Russia political parties.

Finally, Russia's ability to play the compatriot card could diminish in a wider sense. As time goes on, ethnic Russians tend to lose their connection to the Russian Federation—as can be seen in the Baltics, where Russian populations increasingly identify with their host nations and not with Moscow.[97] Russia's ability to successfully exploit a country's ethnic Russian population seems to be decreasing, suggesting that these hostile measures may not be as successful elsewhere in the future as they were in the lead-up to the conflict in Ukraine.

## Information Warfare

### Content and Implementation

Russia engaged in various types of information operations throughout the Ukraine crisis. Propaganda and disinformation targeting Russian audiences, Ukrainian audiences, and the international community were particularly prevalent. Russia strives to control local and international media, which it does through the ownership of numerous media outlets, with the goal of promoting a pro-Kremlin worldview. Since coming to power, Putin has worked to consolidate the state's control over Russian media, a process that accelerated during the Ukraine crisis as many of Russia's last remaining independent media outlets had their content pulled or their leadership replaced.[98] The media was then used to promote anti-Western messages. For example, a common theme found in Russian reporting is the idea that the division of the Russian people among multiple countries after the collapse of the Soviet Union was a Western conspiracy meant to weaken Russia's security and power.[99] In December 2013, Dmitry Kiselyov, head of the Kremlin-owned international news agency Rossiya Segodnya, claimed that

[96] "Ukrainians Who Identify as Ethnic Russians or Say Russian Is Their First Language," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, undated.

[97] Mike Winnerstig, ed., *Tools of Destabilization: Russian Soft Power and Non-Military in the Baltic States*, Stockholm, Sweden: Swedish Defence Research Agency, December 2014, p. 4.

[98] Jonsson and Seely, 2015, p. 12.

[99] U.S. Army Special Operations Command, 2015, p. 49.

Sweden's prime minister was a former CIA agent driven by his desire to avenge Sweden's loss to Russia in the 1709 Battle of Poltava.[100]

Russia also promoted a distinctly anti-Ukraine message, claiming that Ukrainian political messages distancing Kyiv from Moscow were pro-fascist and anti-Russia.[101] On March 18, 2014, Putin himself emphasized this message, claiming that the interim government's leaders in Kyiv were "ideological heirs of Bandera, Hitler's accomplice during World War II."[102] Another theme of Russian propaganda was the notion that parts of Ukraine should belong to Russia. For example, Putin proclaimed that areas in Donbas should not have been allowed to join the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic in 1922 and likewise that Ukraine should not have been given administrative authority over Sevastopol and the rest of Crimea in 1956.[103]

Another important source of disinformation during the Ukraine crisis was Russia's persistent denials of involvement. Despite propaganda images showing Russian soldiers helping civilians in Crimea, Putin denied the presence of Russian regular forces on the peninsula until April 17, 2014.[104] He did the same regarding the Russian presence in Donbas, claiming in early summer 2014 that Russian mercenaries and not regular troops had joined separatist operations.[105] These denials created confusion about Russia's level of involvement in Ukraine, which undermined the ability of the Ukrainian government and the international community to mount a response.

Russia also used social media in its information campaign, for the first time enlisting trolls on a widespread basis to post inflammatory and disruptive pro-Russia messages on the internet and, in particular, to denounce content critical of Moscow. Russia also hired online commentators and bloggers to post pro-Russia content on websites and in online forums.[106] Reports have indicated that Russia's Internet Research Agency paid 600 such individuals $19 million to comment on news articles and manage pro-Russia Facebook and Twitter accounts. Russia also used cyber operations against its own population. The Federal Security Service ordered VKontakte, a Russian social media network, to turn over information on pro-Ukrainian groups and eventually ordered it to shut these groups down.[107]

Finally, telephone lines, the internet, and cell phone services were cut during military operations in Crimea; in Donbas, telecommunication infrastructure was captured and shut down, only to be restarted later with pro-Russia content.[108] Journalists also suffered from intimidation and threats throughout the crisis. For example, Russia-backed separatists detained ten journal-

---

[100] Jonsson and Seely, 2015, p. 12.

[101] Jonsson and Seely, 2015, p. 13.

[102] Jonsson and Seely, 2015, p. 13–14. Stepan Bandera was an influential Ukrainian nationalist who sought to create an independent Ukraine at a time when the country was divided between the Soviet Union and Poland. Bandera was also a Nazi collaborator and therefore remains a controversial figure in modern-day Ukraine. See Anthony Faiola, "A Ghost of World War II History Haunts Ukraine's Standoff with Russia," *Washington Post*, March 25, 2014.

[103] Freedman, 2014b.

[104] Jonsson and Seely, 2015, p. 10.

[105] Allison, 2014, p. 1257.

[106] Jonsson and Seely, 2015, p. 15.

[107] Norberg, Westerlund, and Franke, 2014, p. 43.

[108] U.S. Army Special Operations Command, 2015, p. 46; also see Roy Greenslade, "Journalists Covering the Ukraine Crisis Suffer Intimidation," *The Guardian*, July 23, 2014.

ists on July 20, 2014, outside the Donetsk morgue for attempting to report on the Malaysian Airlines Flight 17 crash.[109] By controlling communication infrastructure and coercing journalists, Russia was able to control the information being disseminated about its involvement in Ukraine. Russia also reportedly executed cyber operations at various times during the Ukraine crisis, including more than 100 low-tech attacks on Ukrainian government and nongovernmental organization websites.[110] For example, in August 2014, computers in the office of Ukraine's prime minister were attacked by a group linked to Russia.[111] Ten embassies in Kyiv were also targeted. And in December 2015, cyberattacks thought to have been perpetrated by Moscow left parts of Ukraine without electricity.[112]

### Local and International Reactions

In December 2014, Ukraine's parliament responded to Russia's information warfare by voting to establish the Ministry of Information Policy, which was tasked with coordinating internal communications, combating Russian information warfare, and defending Ukraine from cyberattacks.[113] The new ministry received immediate criticism from people concerned that it would stifle free speech. In an effort to combat Russian propaganda and messaging, the ministry announced that it would create a global television channel called Ukraine Tomorrow as a direct counter to Russia Today (now RT), Russia's multilingual, multinational television broadcaster.[114] The new channel had the ambitious goal of discrediting Russian propaganda, but the entire Ministry of Information Policy operated with a mere $180,000 annual budget, and resources were insufficient to support Ukraine Tomorrow.[115] The idea was also unpopular, leaving journalists and the public suspicious of the government's intentions and "the ministry's use of propaganda to fight propaganda."[116] The minister of information policy, Yurii Stets, who was controversial for his ties to Poroshenko, announced his resignation in December 2015, suggesting that the new ministry was not on solid footing.[117]

International actors took a variety of measures in response to the challenge posed by Russian information operations. In March 2015, the EU established the East StratCom Task Force, a team of strategic communication specialists charged with supporting the EU's efforts to address Russian disinformation campaigns in Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine). In June, the task force issued an action plan calling for the promotion of EU policies and values in Eastern Europe and for efforts to

[109] Greenslade, 2014.

[110] Zakum, Saunders, and Antoun, 2015, p. 43.

[111] Sam Jones, "Russia-Linked Cyber Attack on Ukraine PM's Office," Financial Times (CNBC), August 8, 2014.

[112] Pavel Polityuk, "Ukraine to Probe Suspected Russian Cyber Attack on Grid," Reuters, December 31, 2015.

[113] Maksim Vikhrov, "Ukraine Forms 'Ministry of Truth' to Regulate the Media," *The Guardian*, December 19, 2014.

[114] Oleksandr Gavrylyuk, "Ukraine's Ineffectual Information Ministry: Underfunded or Misconceived?" *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 12, No. 75, April 22, 2015.

[115] Gavrylyuk, 2015.

[116] Samuel Ramani, "Ukraine's Ministry of Truth—A Flop of Epic Proportions," *Slate*, August 3, 2015.

[117] Ministry of Information Policy of Ukraine, "Ministry of Information Policy of Ukraine Yurii Stets Has Reported to Journalists, Public on the Year of Activity and Publicly Announced About His Resignation," December 8, 2015.

increase awareness of disinformation campaigns.[118] The task force monitors Russian-language media and exposes disinformation and propaganda, publishing a weekly "Disinformation Review" that cites examples to raise awareness about the extent of Russia's propaganda efforts. Meanwhile, NATO's Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence in Riga, Latvia, began playing an increasing role in enhancing the strategic communication capabilities of NATO member states.[119] The U.S. Department of State's Global Engagement Center was established in April with a similar mission—to lead "the U.S. government's efforts to counter propaganda and disinformation from international terrorist organizations and foreign countries."[120]

### Level of Success

The level of success of Russian information operations relative to the Ukraine case was mixed. Moscow's efforts seem to have been highly effective in influencing populations inside the Russian Federation. Television was the only source of news for nearly half of the country's population, and TV Channel One, a state-controlled outlet, reached 82 percent of households.[121] The government silenced opposition outlets, and the few still operating were left with smaller audiences than the state-run media. Russians also expressed a high level of faith in the veracity of the media's coverage.[122] Given these trends, it is not surprising that 83 percent of Russians blamed Ukraine and the West for the Ukraine crisis.[123]

The impact of Russia's messages beyond its borders was mixed. The prevalence of Russian-language news content in Latvia may explain why twice as many ethnic Russians in that country expressed support for Russian operations in Ukraine than did the ethnic Latvian population.[124] Lithuania, Moldova, and Ukraine block Russian TV channels when possible. Globally, Moscow's efforts to use media outlets, such as RT, do not seem to have improved the world's perception of Russia. A 2015 poll conducted by the Pew Research Center found that people in 26 countries were far more likely to view Russia unfavorably than favorably.[125] Yet, Russia's objective went beyond converting the foreign public to Russian views. It also aimed to divide, agitate, and undermine the legitimacy of institutions and elected political leaders—with a degree of success that is more difficult to assess.

Other forms of information operations achieved varying levels of success. Putin's denials of Russia's involvement may have been useful in delaying Ukrainian and Western responses to military actions in Crimea. But by spring 2014—and certainly by the time the Minsk Agreement was signed in September—Russia's involvement in operations in Donbas was clear. Moreover, Russia's intimidation of journalists and use of online trolls did not quiet online

---

[118] Naja Bentzen and Martin Russell, *Russia's Disinformation on Ukraine and the EU's Response*, European Parliamentary Research Service, November 2015, p. 3.

[119] NATO StratCom Centre of Excellence, "About Us," undated. The organization predates the Ukraine crisis; it became operational in January 2014.

[120] U.S. Department of State, "Global Engagement Center," undated.

[121] Bentzen and Russell, 2015, p. 3.

[122] Bentzen and Russell, 2015, p. 4.

[123] Bentzen and Russell, 2015, p. 4.

[124] Bentzen and Russell, 2015, p. 4.

[125] Bruce Stokes, *Russia, Putin Held in Low Regard Around the World: Russia's Image Trails U.S. Across All Regions*, Washington, D.C.: Pew Research Center, August 5, 2015.

criticism against the Kremlin. The cyberattacks against the Ukrainian government, foreign embassies and consulates in Kyiv, and the electrical system in parts of Ukraine had a limited impact on the course of the conflict. Overall, information operations were a very visible form of Russia's hostile measures during the conflict, but they were not central to Russia's successes in Ukraine.

## Legal Rhetoric and Actions

### Content and Implementation

During the crisis, Russian leaders routinely invoked legal rhetoric or precedence to justify Moscow's behavior. Russian lawmakers passed legislation to allow Crimea and Sevastopol to become part of Russia, and Russia's constitutional court ruled that the annexation was constitutional on March 19, just two days after Russia and Crimea signed a reunification agreement.[126] These actions enabled Russia to claim that it followed a legitimate process with regard to Crimea, thereby clouding perceptions about the annexation's legality. Putin linked the referendum in Crimea to the right to self-determination, also noting that if Ukraine could secede from the Soviet Union and Kosovo could become independent, then Crimea should be allowed to decide its fate as well.[127]

Putin also invoked legal language to undermine the credibility of Ukraine's post-Yanukovych government, calling it "an anti-constitutional takeover and armed seizure of power."[128] On the basis that Ukraine's democratically elected president was ousted in a coup, Putin claimed Poroshenko's administration lacked legitimacy.[129]

### Local and International Reactions

Neither Ukraine nor the international community had a strong reaction to Russia's use of legal rhetoric or precedents. It is difficult to identify responses to these hostile measures specifically from Kyiv's and the West's overall reactions to the Ukraine crisis.

### Level of Success

The use of legal rhetoric as a hostile measure was not intended to convince other states that Russia's actions were legal.[130] Rather, it aimed to create uncertainty and divide the international community while limiting the West's ability to punish Russia for its misconduct. It was also intended to create the impression of hypocrisy, calling out Western countries that supported Kosovo's secession from Russia's ally, Serbia, but refused to accord ethnic Russians in Crimea the same self-determination. From a domestic policy standpoint, this approach succeeded in convincing Russians that the annexation of Crimea was legitimate. As such, the use of legal rhetoric and precedence complemented Russia's use of information warfare. Claiming

---

[126]Allison, 2014, p. 1260. Also see "Constitutional Court Approves Russia-Crimea Treaty," *Moscow Times*, March 20, 2014.

[127]Putin, 2014; Freedman, 2014a, p. 21.

[128]"Putin: Ouster of Ukrainian President Was an 'Unconstitutional Coup,'" *Deutsche Welle*, March 4, 2014.

[129]Allison, 2014, p. 1261.

[130]Allison, 2014, p. 1259.

that Moscow's actions were legal is a type of propaganda, but it was not a pivotal feature of Russia's information campaign.

## Exploiting Ukraine's Energy Dependence

### Content and Implementation

The manipulation of the price of natural gas exports to Ukraine was another form of hostile measures that Russia used to punish or pressure Kyiv. Moscow often charges higher prices to pro-Western governments that import Russian energy, and this has been evident in Moscow's dealings with Ukraine since the end of the Cold War.[131] Ukraine is both a former Soviet republic and a key transit route for Russian gas pipelines to Europe and was thus able to negotiate a discounted rate of $50 per 1,000 cubic meters on Russian natural gas for domestic consumption. However, Gazprom claimed that the rate was no longer sustainable and that Ukraine was not paying its gas debts. It also accused Naftogaz, Ukraine's national gas company, of diverting gas meant for European customers. Negotiations to arrive at a new price for Ukraine and new transit tariff rates for Gazprom reached a stalemate, and, in January 2006, Gazprom reduced the amount of gas running through Ukraine. The result was a midwinter natural gas shortage in Europe. The crisis brought Naftogaz and Gazprom back to the table, and Ukraine agreed to pay an increased price of $230 per 1,000 cubic meters, the international market price for natural gas at the time. Gazprom agreed to an increased transit tariff rate, which offset some of this cost for Ukraine.[132] Ukraine and Russia have conflicting narratives as to the cause of the crisis, with Moscow claiming Ukraine tried to blackmail Gazprom and Kyiv claiming that Russia was punishing Ukraine for the Orange Revolution.[133]

Another gas crisis occurred in 2009, when Russia again attempted to cut exports to Ukraine while Ukraine siphoned off gas heading to other consumers. Russia eventually stopped all gas exports through Ukrainian pipelines. Disputes over Ukraine's unpaid gas debts and the price Russia charged continued until 2010, when the newly elected Yanukovych agreed to lease bases in Crimea to Russia, and Moscow, in turn, agreed to lower the price of natural gas exported to Ukraine.[134] Russia thus used its control over gas prices to extract critical political and military concessions from the Ukrainian government.

In 2013, Russia again used natural gas prices to achieve political aims by agreeing to reduce the price by a third after Yanukovych refused to sign an association agreement with the EU. Days after Yanukovych fled the country amid domestic unrest in February 2014, Gazprom threatened to stop selling gas to Ukraine at a discount, noting that Ukraine owed $1.55 billion to Russia for unpaid exports.[135] After Russia annexed Crimea and Ukrainian-Russian relations broke down, the price of Russian natural gas increased to $480 per 1,000 cubic meters. In June 2014, Russia halted exports to Ukraine entirely, citing unpaid debts and

---

[131] Jonsson and Seely, 2015, pp. 16–17.

[132] Rawi Abdelal, "The Profits of Power: Commerce and Realpolitik in Eurasia," *Review of International Political Economy*, Vol. 20, No. 3, June 2013, pp. 431–432.

[133] Abdelal, 2013, p. 432.

[134] Jonsson and Seely, 2015, p. 17.

[135] Jeffrey Tayler, "Russia Raises Natural Gas Threat Against Ukraine," *National Geographic*, March 3, 2014.

disagreements over gas prices. It resumed shipments in December 2014 only after Ukraine provided a $378 million prepayment to Gazprom.[136] Negotiations over gas exports broke down again in July 2015.[137]

### Local and International Reactions

With EU support and encouragement, Ukraine has worked to reduce its dependence on Russian natural gas, which may make these hostile measures less useful to Russia in the future. In early 2014, using a move known as *reverse supplies*, Slovakia resold unused Russian natural gas to Kyiv that was initially transported through the pipeline in Ukraine.[138] Gazprom unsuccessfully tried to ban the resale and, later that year, attempted to reduce exports to Europe in an effort to stop reverse supplies. Doing so cost Gazprom $5.5 billion in revenue, and it lost another $400 million in discounts for breaking contractual obligations. Ultimately, the move proved too costly for Gazprom, and exports were restarted in March 2015.[139] In April 2015, the European Commission released a statement that Gazprom had violated European antitrust laws going back several years, including banning reverse supplies, and that it had abused its power over gas markets in Central and Eastern Europe.[140] During that time, Ukraine doubled its imports of European gas in 2015, and ended up importing 50 percent more gas from Europe than from Russia.[141] Ukraine also passed legislation requiring Kyiv to align its natural gas market with the EU's Third Energy Package, which should introduce more competition into the market and thereby diminish Russia's ability to use the price of natural gas as political leverage over Kyiv.[142]

### Level of Success

Traditionally, the exploitation of energy exports has been a useful form of hostile measures for Russia, and the increase and decrease in the price of natural gas sold to Kyiv followed developments in the Ukraine crisis. In December 2013, a few weeks after Yanukovych decided not to sign the association agreement, Moscow announced reduced gas prices for Ukraine. In early March, after Yanukovych's government collapsed, Gazprom announced it would suspend gas shipments to the country, claiming this was due to Kyiv's failure to pay for February shipments.[143]

Yet, the effectiveness of these measures for Russia may decrease in the future. Ukraine is trying to diversify its energy imports and wean itself off Russian gas, a trend that is appar-

---

[136] "Ukraine Says Russia Has Resumed Gas Flow," Reuters, December 9, 2014.

[137] "Russia Halts Gas Supplies to Ukraine After Talks Breakdown," BBC News, July 1, 2015.

[138] Leonid Bershidsky, "How Ukraine Weaned Itself Off Russian Gas," *Bloomberg Opinion*, January 12, 2016.

[139] Bershidsky, 2016.

[140] European Commission, "Antitrust: Commission Sends Statement of Objections to Gazprom for Alleged Abuse of Dominance on Central and Eastern European Gas Supply Markets," press release, April 22, 2015.

[141] Bershidsky, 2016.

[142] "Ukraine Adopts Law to Align Gas Market with EU Third Energy Package," Natural Gas World, April 9, 2015. Also see Nataliya Katser-Buchkovska, "Reform of Ukraine's Gas Market: A Chance to Move Forward," *Financial Times*, December 22, 2015.

[143] Andrey Ostroukh, "Gazprom Threatens Ukraine Supplies Over Late Payment," *Wall Street Journal*, March 7, 2014.

ent elsewhere in Europe as well (e.g., Lithuania, Poland).[144] As a result, Russia's ability to use energy for political leverage over Europe will likely diminish.

## Economic Coercion and Incentives

### Content and Implementation

In the Ukraine case Russia used economic coercion as a form of hostile measures to achieve its political objectives. For example, it did so in relation to Ukraine's interest in signing an association agreement with the EU as early as July 2013, when it banned imports of Ukrainian chocolate.[145] A few months later, when it seemed that Ukraine would sign the agreement, Moscow reportedly sent an envoy to Kyiv to express its dissatisfaction and threatened to punish Ukraine economically if it signed the agreement, including starting a trade war.[146] Putin allegedly promised to extend subsidies and other economic benefits to Ukraine in the amount of $12 billion annually, including a reduction in gas prices, if Yanukovych backed away from the agreement.[147] On November 21, Yanukovych instructed his government to stop negotiations on the association agreement. In December 2013, after the announcement that Ukraine would not sign the agreement, Russia lifted the chocolate ban. On December 17, Russia also announced that it would loan Ukraine $15 billion as part of a broader economic agreement.[148]

Later in the Ukraine conflict, Russia used additional economic hostile measures to punish Ukraine for strengthening ties with the EU. In November 2015, it announced it would ban Ukrainian food imports beginning January 1, 2016, the day the association agreement that Ukraine ultimately signed with the EU—which required Ukraine to adopt EU sanctions against Russia—went into effect.[149] Russia's Economic Development Minister Alexey Ulyukaev directly linked these hostile measures to Ukraine's support of EU policies, stating, "Since Ukraine joined economic and financial sanctions against the Russian Federation, we have decided to introduce protective measures by imposing a food embargo."[150] A few weeks later, on December 22, 2015, Russia's parliament voted to suspend its free-trade zone with Ukraine, also beginning January 1, 2016.[151]

### Local and International Reactions

The timing of high-level meetings between Ukrainian and Russian officials and Yanukovych's decision to end negotiations on the association agreement suggests that the threat of economic

---

[144] European Council on Foreign Relations, "Russia: Diversification of Gas-Supply Route to Europe," *European Foreign Policy Scorecard 2015*, London: European Council on Foreign Relations, 2015; Bershidsky, 2016. Also see Marek Strzelecki, "Poland Opens LNG Terminal, Pledges to End Russian Dependence," Bloomberg, October 12, 2015.

[145] Jonsson and Seely, 2015, p. 16.

[146] Hoffmann et al., 2014.

[147] Hoffmann et al., 2014.

[148] "Russia Makes $15 Billion, Gas Discount Commitments to Ukraine," *Deutsche Welle*, December 17, 2013.

[149] "Russia Bans Food Imports from Ukraine," RT, November 19, 2015.

[150] "Russia Bans Food Imports from Ukraine," 2015.

[151] Jack Farchy and Roman Olearchyk, "Moscow Votes to Suspend Free-Trade Zone with Ukraine," *Financial Times*, December 22, 2015.

sanctions influenced Yanukovych in November 2013 and that the prospect of lower gas prices influenced Kyiv's decision to make a trade deal with Russia the following month. Under Poroshenko, Ukraine engaged in a tit-for-tat economic battle with Russia. For example, Ukraine announced in late September 2015 that Russian airlines were banned from flying to Ukraine; shortly thereafter, Russia announced that Ukrainian planes could not enter its airspace.[152] Ukraine's ban on Russian beef, tobacco, chocolate, and alcohol was announced on January 3, just days after Russia's food ban against Ukraine went into effect.[153] When Ukrainian activists prevented some Russian trucks from crossing the border in February 2016, Russia announced that Ukrainian trucks were prohibited from entering Russia, prompting Kyiv to announce a similar ban on Russian trucks.[154]

#### Level of Success

The success of Russia's use of economic coercion and incentives was mixed. In 2013, Kyiv seemed vulnerable to economic pressure, as seen in Yanukovych's decision to stop negotiations on the association agreement with the EU and steer Ukraine toward the Eurasian Union. Later in the conflict, Kyiv seemed more resilient. There could be several reasons for this difference. Perhaps Yanukovych, a pro-Russia leader, was more inclined to succumb to Russian coercion because he favored ties to Moscow. Perhaps Poroshenko, a pro-Western leader, was more willing to tolerate economic hardship if it enabled Ukraine to further align itself with the EU. Another possible explanation is that, by 2015, Russia was viewed more like an enemy of Kyiv than it was in 2013, prior to the annexation of Crimea and subsequent war in Donbas. Exactly why these hostile measures were successful at times and not at others is unclear and very likely dependent on the context in which the hostile measures were applied.

## Summary of the Ukraine Case

There are many ways to categorize the hostile measures that Russia used during the Ukraine crisis (see Figure B.8). For example, there were hostile measures implemented by Russia's military and intelligence agencies that tended to be kinetic in nature, such as the use of special forces, support to separatists, the use of proxies, and the use of snap exercises and military buildups. This differs from the nonkinetic hostile measures that targeted Ukraine's society and economy, such as the exploitation of the compatriot policy, information warfare, the use of legal rhetoric to justify Russian action, the exploitation of Ukraine's energy dependence, and economic sanctions and incentives. It is much easier to discern the success of military- and intelligence-related hostile measures and reactions to their use, whereas in only a few cases did Russia's nonkinetic hostile measures elicit strong and specific reactions. Many of these hostile measures are also complementary. For example, Russia's compatriot policy facilitated Moscow's propaganda dissemination.

Distinguishing between the targets of hostile measures is another way to look at Russia's approach in the Ukraine crisis. Support for operations in Donbas and the use of proxies pri-

[152] Lydia Tomkiw, "Russia and Ukraine Conflict Takes to the Skies: Airlines Sanctions Are Latest High-Flying Economic Battle," *International Business Times*, October 1, 2015.

[153] Roland Oliphant, "Ukraine Bans Russian Foods as Trade War Escalates," *The Telegraph*, January 3, 2016.

[154] "Ukraine Bans Russian Cargo Trucks in Tit-for-Tat Move," Reuters, February 15, 2016.

marily targeted the Ukrainian government, and Ukraine encountered these hostile measures directly. The use of Spetsnaz and military exercises, particularly large-scale ones, also signaled Russian strength and resolve to the Ukrainian government and the international community. Using forces that lacked insignia and easily blended into the population enabled Russia to mask its intentions in Crimea, creating confusion that delayed Ukraine and the West's ability to respond effectively. The use of military exercises also sent messages to Kyiv and the international community. Exercises along the border signaled that Russia was militarily stronger and therefore Ukraine would be unwise to disregard its wishes. An example of this was the February 26, 2014, exercise in which Russia amassed 150,000 troops—enough for an invasion—on its border with Ukraine.[155] An exercise of this magnitude conducted at a time of political vulnerability and instability following the collapse of Yanukovych's regime sent a clear signal that Russia had the ability to impose its will on Ukraine if Kyiv did not do as Russia wanted. For the international community, exercises signaled that Moscow saw the West as a threat and was ready and willing to defend Russian territory from NATO aggression. This was particularly true for the large-scale exercise conducted in March 2015, in which 80,000 troops practiced defensive tactics near European border zones.[156]

## How Successful Were Russia's Hostile Measures Overall?

Russia's hostile measures throughout the crisis both hindered and aided its ability to achieve its ambitious goals: restoring Russia's position as a global power, preventing NATO and the EU from inching closer to Russia's border, creating a viable Eurasian Union that included Ukraine, and ultimately weakening NATO. For example, although Russia still lacks great-power status, Moscow has regained some influence in the global arena. Europe again has reason to fear Russia, and this notoriety gives Russia power even if Moscow is viewed negatively. Moreover, Russia's actions have slowed the eastward spread of NATO and the EU: Ukraine is now mired in an ongoing conflict, which makes it difficult for Kyiv to become a full-fledged EU or NATO member.[157] Russia seems to have succeeded in making Ukraine a buffer state after all.

Despite these successes, Russia failed to keep Ukraine in its sphere of influence. In fact, by annexing Crimea and supporting separatists in Donbas, Russia ensured that the most pro-Russia parts of Ukraine no longer have representation in Kyiv, which diminishes Russia's ability to influence Ukraine's internal politics. With less Russian influence, Kyiv was able to sign an association agreement with the EU that prohibits it from joining the Eurasian Union and makes it less likely that Ukraine will succumb to Russian influence and control. Moreover, by annexing Ukrainian territory and supporting a civil war in eastern Ukraine, Putin solidified anti-Russia sentiment in Ukraine. In 2013, 43 percent of Ukrainians expressed a positive opinion of Russian leaders; in 2014, that rating had fallen to 5 percent.[158] So, although Russian hostile measures and conventional military actions peeled away a significant amount of territory

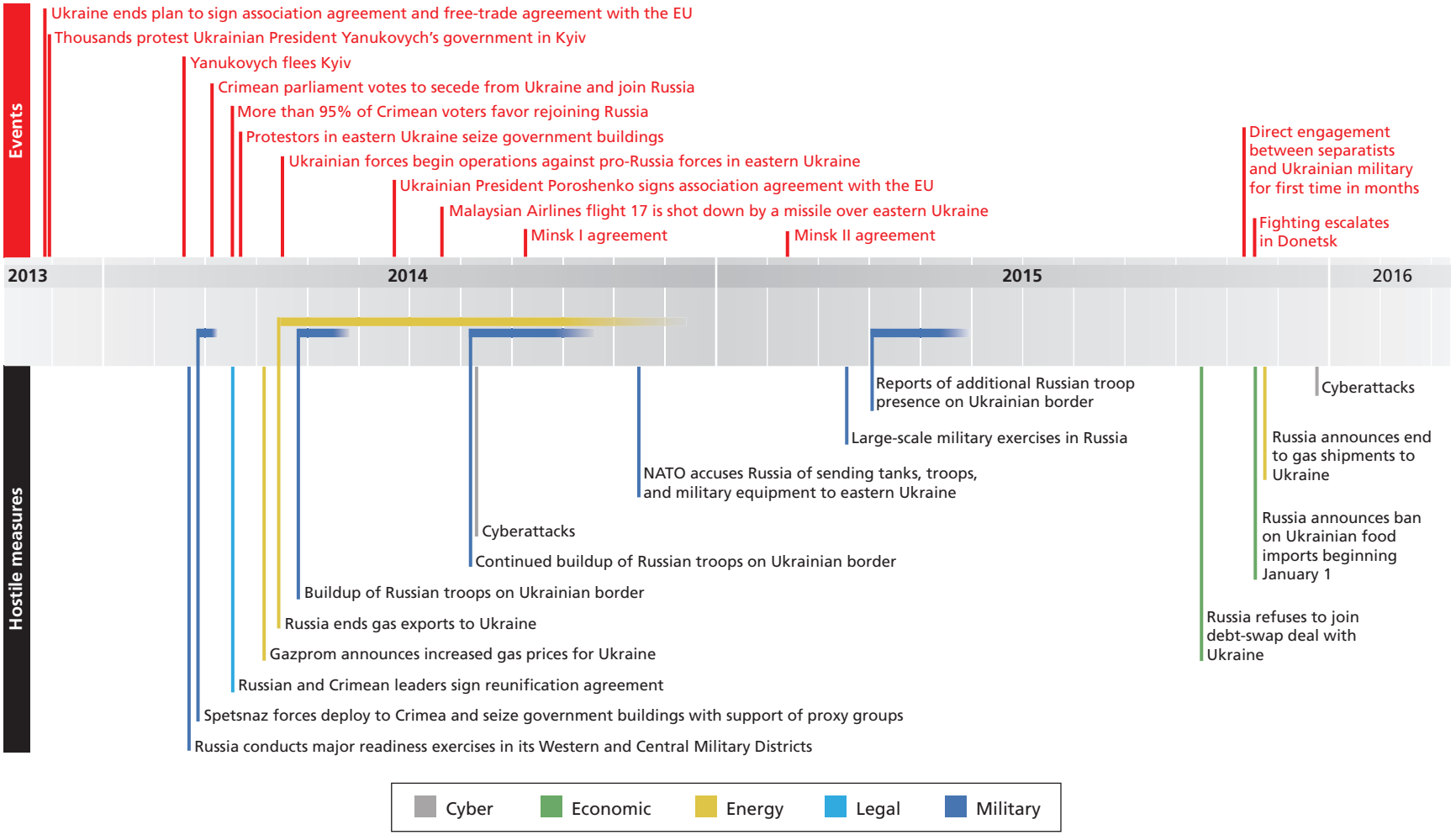
[155] Norberg, Westerlund, and Franke, 2014, p. 41.

[156] Birnbaum, 2015.

[157] Kofman, 2015.

[158] Julie Ray and Neli Esipova, "Ukrainian Approval of Russia's Leadership Dives Almost 90%," Gallup, December 15, 2015.

**Figure B.8**
**Timeline of Russian Hostile Measures in Ukraine**



from Ukrainian sovereignty, Russian actions also ensured that the government in Kyiv—and the still-substantial amount of territory it controls—became firmly pro-Europe and hostile to Moscow.

Russia also failed to achieve its goal of weakening NATO. The Ukraine crisis seems to have had the opposite effect: NATO is refocusing on European security. In July 2015, Latvia and Lithuania announced plans to increase defense spending to 2 percent of GDP, and other NATO countries have pledged to do the same.[159] In October 2015, NATO conducted its largest military exercise in a decade.[160] In February 2016, President Barack Obama announced that the United States would quadruple its budget for defense spending in Europe, increasing the total from $786 million to $3.4 billion, and that a U.S. combat brigade would be deployed somewhere in Europe on a rotating basis at all times.[161] This represented a dramatic shift from the situation before the crisis, when NATO seemed to lack a purpose after the drawdown in Afghanistan and several European countries were lowering their defense budgets. That said, there are still critics who claim that NATO's response to the Ukraine crisis has been lackluster and that NATO is unable to deter Russia's expansionist ambitions.[162]

## What Effective Responses (if Any) Were Designed to Counter Them?

Crimea remains part of the Russian Federation, and Donbas has not been brought back under Kyiv's control. Ukraine is caught in a stalemate that prevents it from moving forward in its effort to join the West. Despite this bleak outlook, Ukraine has also proven to Moscow that hostile measures are not enough to defeat it and that Russia will have to sacrifice and risk much more to achieve its goals.

In assessing which of Ukraine's responses were most effective in countering Russian hostile measures, Ukraine's military efforts in Donbas stand out. Unlike in Crimea, where the government mounted a minimal military response, Kyiv's commitment to confronting aggression in Donbas was apparent early in the conflict. By raising the military price for Russia in Donbas, Ukraine denied Moscow the same fait accompli it achieved in Crimea and instead forced Moscow to devote more resources to the conflict. Russia was unable to achieve a clear military victory in eastern Ukraine at the political price it was willing to pay.

Ukraine's response to Russia's application of energy-related hostile measures also seems to have been effective. Pursuing European energy imports, combined with Europe's efforts to wean itself off Russian gas, has turned the tables on Moscow to some extent. Russia increasingly needs Europe as a customer; Europe decreasingly needs Russia as a vendor. Russia's attempt to use energy as a source of leverage against Ukraine not only did not achieve its objectives, but, if current trends in Ukrainian and European energy policy continue, it will also limit Russia's ability to use this tool in the future.

Ukraine's other responses to hostile measures did not have an obvious impact on Russia's behavior. Moscow continues its propaganda and disinformation campaign against Ukraine

---

[159] Jaroslaw Adamowski, "Latvia, Lithuania to Raise Defense Spending," *Defense News*, July 30, 2015.

[160] Robin Emmott, "As Russia Reasserts Itself, NATO Opens Biggest Exercises in Years," Reuters, October 19, 2015.

[161] Rick Lyman, "Eastern Europe Cautiously Welcomes Larger U.S. Military Presence," *New York Times*, February 2, 2016.

[162] Judy Dempsey, "Judy Asks: Is NATO Doing Enough in Europe?" Brussels, Belgium: Carnegie Europe, March 23, 2016.

despite the creation of a Ministry of Information Policy, and a tit-for-tat trade war is underway. Ukraine's response to the annexation of Crimea was lacking; Kyiv essentially did nothing. For many of the hostile measures addressed in this case study, Ukraine never developed an effective response.

The international community also failed to implement effective responses to Russia's use of hostile measures in Ukraine. Economic sanctions, the main defense attempted, have not enticed Moscow to change its behavior. Russia continues to endure economic hardship, and NATO, particularly the United States, has found itself forced to reconsider how to militarily deter Russia from acting aggressively in Europe. Overall, no international response to Russian hostile measures was effective in the Ukraine crisis.

# Turkey (2015–2016)

On November 24, 2015, the Turkish Air Force shot down a Russian Su-24 bomber that was flying in the Turkish-Syria border area. According to Turkish authorities, at the time of the shootdown, the Russian plane had been overflying Turkish territory unauthorized for 17 seconds, with the pilot not responding to several warnings issued by Turkish authorities regarding that incursion and several previous airspace violations. Russia denies that the Su-24 was ever over Turkish territory.[1] This was not the first time that Russian aircraft were observed or suspected to be violating Turkey's airspace. Turkey had complained twice in October 2015 that Russian aircraft strayed over its territory, and even summoned the Russian ambassador for an explanation. A Russian delegation traveled to Ankara to discuss the violations and to offer more coordination on the issue.[2] After the downing of the Russian aircraft, Russia employed a series of hostile measures against Turkey that ranged from economic sanctions to a war by proxy in Syria. This case study examines the crisis in Russian-Turkish relations that followed the downing of the Russian bomber in November 2015. Russia unleashed a series of retaliatory measures against Turkey, and the crisis came to an end only when Putin accepted Turkey's apologies in June 2016. Putin's support to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan after a coup attempt in July 2016 marked a return to a much more cooperative relationship between the two countries.[3]

Although Russia and Turkey (a NATO member since 1952) have long been regional adversaries, particularly in the Caucasus, the two countries enjoyed a diplomatic rapprochement in the 1990s. In 1992, they signed a cooperation treaty described by Turkey as "the foundation of the new era of Turkish-Russian relations" that outlined a number of key principles, including respect for the other's territorial integrity and noninterference in internal affairs.[4] Bilateral trade grew dramatically in the 2000s, with Turkish imports from Russia increasing ninefold between 2001 and 2008 and its exports to Russia increasing sevenfold over the

[1] Neil McFarquhar and Steven Erlanger, "NATO-Russia Tensions Rise After Turkey Downs Jet," *New York Times*, November 24, 2015.

[2] Gareth Jennings, "Turkey Protests Second Russian Incursion in as Many Days," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, October 6, 2015; Hasan Selim Özertem, *Russia's Shifting Strategy in Syria and Its Implications for Turkish Foreign Policy*, Doha, Qatar: Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, December 2015.

[3] See, for example, Pavel K. Baev and Kemal Kirişci, *An Ambiguous Partnership: The Serpentine Trajectory of Turkish-Russian Relations in the Era of Erdoğan and Putin*, Turkish Policy Project Paper No. 13, Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, September 2017, p. 1.

[4] Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Turkey's Political Relations with Russian Federation," webpage, undated.

**Figure B.9**
**Map of Turkey**

SOURCE: CIA, "Turkey," *World Factbook*, last updated July 10, 2019c.

same period.[5] The rapprochement between Turkey and Russia increased as Turkey's prospects of joining the European Union grew more elusive and reached its apex under the presidency of Dmitry Medvedev.[6] In 2010, visa requirements were lifted between the two countries, and they signed a "strategic partnership" designed to enhance cooperation in the economic, political, cultural, and security domains.[7] In 2012, Turkey officially became a dialogue partner with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization—largely led by China and Russia—and is seeking full membership.[8] In 2012, Turkey and Russia announced that they would triple their bilateral trade by 2020.[9] At the time the crisis hit, the two countries were working on two important energy-related projects: construction of the TurkStream gas pipeline, which would connect Russia to Turkey through the Black Sea, and a $20 billion nuclear power plant in Turkey to be built by Russia's Rosatom.[10]

The rapprochement between Turkey and Russia has nonetheless remained marred by persistent disagreements, including over the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan that has drawn in Russia and Turkey—the two key regional players—over the years. Additionally, Turkey has promoted Georgia and Azerbaijan's closer relations with the West, including by buying Caspian oil and gas transiting via these two countries and by sup-

[5] Figures for all commodities from International Trade Center, "International Trade Statistics 2001–2018," webpage, undated.

[6] John B. Alterman, Carolyn Barnett, Andrew C. Kuchins, and Jeffrey Mankoff, *The Turkey, Russia, Iran Nexus: Evolving Power Dynamics in the Middle East, the Caucasus, and Central Asia*, Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, November 2013, p. 35.

[7] Stephen J. Flanagan, "The Turkey-Russia-Iran Nexus: Eurasian Power Dynamics," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 36, No. 1, Winter 2013.

[8] Sman Erol, "China Welcomes Turkish Bid for SCO Membership," *European Dialogue*, February 11, 2013.

[9] Alterman et al., 2013, p. 7.

[10] "5 Ways Russian Sanctions Can Hurt Turkey's Economy," Agence France-Presse (*Kyiv Post*), November 30, 2015.

porting the construction of new pipelines despite Russia's opposition.[11] In 2011, Turkey further angered Russia by agreeing to host the third site for the installation of a radar that would become part of NATO's missile defense architecture.[12]

The war in Syria introduced further strains in the relationship. Russia supports Syrian President Bashar al Assad, whom Turkey wants removed from power, as well as Syrian Kurdish fighters, whom Turkey considers a threat to its territorial integrity and does not want to see prevail in any future political settlement in Syria. In July 2015, Turkey began airstrikes over Syria and opened its airspace and bases to other coalition allies.[13] With the beginning of Russian airstrikes in Syria two months later, tensions rose between the two countries, particularly because Russia targeted Turkmen populations, whom Turkey supports, and provided fire support to the Kurdish militias that Turkey wants to eliminate.[14]

The various hostile measures that Russia employed against Turkey between November 2015 and early 2016 suggest four main goals, discussed here in no particular order. First, Russia wanted to *punish* Turkey by showing it what it costs to shoot down one of its planes. Its intention was to inflict as much pain as possible (short of war) and give Turkey a lesson, knowing that the rest of NATO was watching. This was significant because Russia has also violated the airspace (and possibly the maritime space) of numerous countries since 2014, including Sweden, Finland, Denmark, and Estonia since 2014.[15] Punishing Turkey was therefore a way to deter NATO by showing very clearly that Russia would strike back if and when attacked, even if the attacking party had a right to do so.

Second, Russia was trying to *deter* Turkey from engaging in further action against its planes and, more generally, its interests—including intervening on the ground in Syria, a move favored by Erdoğan.

Third, Russia was attempting to *divide* Turkey—a NATO member since 1952—from its allies, particularly the United States. The Kurdish issue is a contentious one between Turkey and the United States, and provoking an incident with Turkey would further test NATO's support for its ally.[16]

Finally, Russia was also largely *posturing* for its domestic audience. Putin's policy, since his return to the presidency in 2008, centered on Russia regaining a central role on the international stage. In this context, Russia perceived Turkish actions as a slap in the face, prompt-

---

[11] The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and South Caucasus gas pipelines.

[12] Alterman et al., 2013, p. 6.

[13] Kathleen J. McInnis, "Coalition Contributions to Countering the Islamic State," Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service Report, R44135, August 24, 2016, p. 6.

[14] McFarquhar and Erlanger, 2015.

[15] This list is not exhaustive. For a summary of incidents that took place between March and November 2014, see Dearden, 2014. In terms of notable maritime incursions, a Russian submarine was suspected of entering Swedish territorial waters in October 2014 (Peter Walker, "Sweden Searches for Suspected Russian Submarine off Stockholm," *The Guardian*, October 19, 2014). An earlier incident, in April 2014, involved two Russian vessels entering Lithuania's exclusive economic zone (Lizzie Dearden, "Full List of Incidents Involving Russian Military and NATO Since March 2014," *The Independent*, November 10, 2014).

[16] "Tensions Between Russia and Turkey Reach New Peak," *Financial Times*, February 15, 2016.

ing Putin's demands for an official apology, prosecution of those responsible, and payment of compensation to Russia.[17]

Russia employed six types of hostile measures from November 2015 to April 2016: (1) a public diplomacy campaign, (2) military pressure, (3) manipulation of the Kurdish issue, (4) economic sanctions, (5) coercion in the energy sector, and (6) symbolic measures to convey Russia's disapproval of Turkey's actions. This case study focuses exclusively on hostile measures that could be clearly linked to the downing of the Su-24. It does not address Russian measures that were seemingly hostile to Turkey but originated before the November 2015 crisis, such as the expansion of its military base in Armenia close to the Turkish border, which had been underway for several months before the Su-24 went down,[18] or the $200 million credit that Russia granted to Armenia in February 2016 to buy Russian weapons, which was negotiated earlier that year.[19]

## Public Diplomacy Campaign

### Content and Implementation

Following the downing of the Su-24, Putin described Turkey's action as a "stab in the back" committed by "accomplices of terrorists," a reference to the cordial relations he had previously enjoyed with Erdoğan. Russia also engaged in a public campaign to discredit Turkey through a series of accusations aimed at presenting Turkey as duplicitous—particularly in relation to the war in Syria—and guilty of several violations of international law. Among other accusations, Russian government officials claimed that Turkey had purchased oil from the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), violated Iraq's sovereignty by sending military personnel to northern Iraq, served as a transit point for Islamist fighters to enter and exit Syria, and even obstructed freedom of navigation in the Bosporus.[20]

### Local and International Reactions

Erdoğan did not respond to Russia's request for apologies or compensation for more than six months after the incident. He announced early on that he was "saddened" by the downing of the Russian aircraft but that the pilots had followed orders and their behavior did not warrant

---

[17] "Russian Ambassador to Turkey Sets 3 Conditions to Overcome Tensions Between Countries," *Moscow Times*, December 15, 2015.

[18] Emil Sanamyan, "Russian Military Expands in Armenia Amid Tensions with Turkey," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, January 18, 2016. Sanamyan noted that "Russian-Turkish tensions since November give the Armenia base added significance, as it is the only place where the two countries' ground forces face each other directly."

[19] Sanamyan, 2016. Russian officials publicly acknowledged the deal with Armenia after the Su-24 was shot down, representing a break with the tradition of secrecy in such deals and, seemingly, sending a message to Turkey. See Joshua Kucera, "Russia, with Turkey in Mind, Announces Big Weapons Deal with Armenia," *Moscow Times*, February 24, 2016.

[20] Garrett I. Campbell, "An Eye for an Eye: Will Russia Retaliate Against Turkey?" *Order from Chaos Blog*, Brookings Institution, December 22, 2015; "Tensions Between Russia and Turkey Reach New Peak," 2016; Campbell, 2015.

Here, we use *ISIS* to refer to that organization. Its name transliterates from Arabic as *al-Dawlah al-Islamiyah fi al-'Iraq wa al-Sham* (abbreviated as Da'ish or Daesh). In the West, it is commonly referred to as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) or the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), or simply as the Islamic State. Arguments abound as to which is the most accurate.

an apology.[21] Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu offered "sorrow and condolences" on behalf of his country, but this was deemed insufficient by Putin.[22] It was not until June 2016 that Erdoğan came forward with an apology and assured Putin that Turkish authorities were investigating the incident.[23]

In the immediate aftermath of the incident, NATO members announced that they stood "in solidarity with Turkey and support the territorial integrity of our NATO ally."[24] The alliance concurred with Turkey's version of events but largely treated the situation as a bilateral issue to be resolved between Russia and Turkey.

### Level of Success

Russia's various accusations did not seem to affect Turkey's diplomatic position. The accusation that Turkey bought oil from ISIS predated the downing of the Su-24 and had been initially propagated by Kurdish groups before Russia endorsed it. While various outlets suggested that the accusation might be founded, the lack of hard evidence meant that Turkey was unlikely to suffer a diplomatic downfall related to the accusation.[25] Erdoğan was confident enough on this point to state that he would resign if evidence could be produced.[26] Regarding the presence of Turkish troops near Mosul—which Turkey claimed were deployed to protect its trainers—the Iraqi government officially protested and called for their withdrawal. Under additional pressure from the United States, Erdoğan started pulling out some Turkish military personnel in December 2015.[27] It is unclear whether Russia's public accusations played a role in Iraq's reaction to the deployment and subsequent withdrawal.

## Military Pressure

### Content and Implementation

Russia suspended military cooperation with Turkey after the shootdown incident, including a hotline between the two countries that had been used to share information about ongoing operations, prompting concern that future skirmishes might easily escalate.[28] In Syria, Russia hardened its land- and sea-based air defenses, announcing the deployment of advanced air-defense systems (specifically, the S-400 surface-to-air missile [SAM] system) and the *Slava-*

---

[21] Andrew Roth, "Putin Signs Sweeping Economic Sanctions Against Turkey," *Washington Post*, November 28, 2015b.

[22] "Russian Ambassador to Turkey Sets 3 Conditions," 2015.

[23] Alec Luhn and Ian Black, "Erdoğan Has Apologised for Downing of Russian Jet, Kremlin Says," *The Guardian*, June 27, 2016.

[24] NATO, "Statement by the NATO Secretary General After the Extraordinary NAC Meeting," press release, November 24, 2015.

[25] See, for example, Martin Chulov, "Turkey Sends in Jets as Syria's Agony Spills Over Every Border," *The Guardian*, July 25, 2015, and McFarquhar and Erlanger, 2015. For a more detailed analysis of this issue, see David Butter, "Does Turkey Really Get Its Oil from Islamic State?" BBC News, December 1, 2015.

[26] "Russian-Turkish Politics: Tsar v Sultan," *The Economist*, December 5, 2015. Erdoğan subsequently referred to the alleged evidence presented by Russia as "slander."

[27] "Turkish Troops Move Out of Northern Iraq After Obama Appeal for Calm," Agence France-Presse (*The Guardian*), December 19, 2015.

[28] Shaun Walker, "Russia Imposed Sanctions on Turkey Over Downed Plane," *The Guardian*, November 26, 2015.

class guided missile cruiser *Moskva* off the coast of Latakia.[29] Russia also engaged in several shows of force, such as firing on a Turkish vessel on a collision course with the Russian destroyer *Smetlivy* near Greece on December 13, 2015, and allegedly violating Turkey's airspace on January 29, 2016.[30]

### Local and International Reactions

There were no clear local or international reactions to this Russian action. Military relations between Russia and Turkey gradually normalized in the years since the crisis, starting with Erdoğan's June 2016 apology to Putin for the Su-24's downing, although the conflict in Syria remained a potential touchpoint.

### Level of Success

Russia's show of force and use of military pressure appeared to have paid off to some extent. Turkey—likely wary of Russian retaliation against its aircraft—suspended its air operations over Syria after the downing of the Russian Su-24.[31] Airstrikes by other coalition members continued, however.[32] On March 14, 2016, Russia announced that it would pull out "the main part" of its forces in Syria, but its air defense systems remained on the ground and operational.[33]

## Pressure on the Kurdish Issue

### Content and Implementation

Russia became directly involved in the war in Syria in September 2015, and Turkey stepped up its own engagement in early 2016 with artillery strikes on Kurdish positions behind its border, particularly after a January 12 suicide bombing in Istanbul and a February 17 bombing in Ankara.[34] Turkey's allies have been concerned that the two countries may end up facing each

---

[29] Nicholas de Larrinaga, "Russia Responds to Turkish Su-24 Shootdown," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, November 25, 2015. Although it seems likely that these measures were meant to signal that any attempt to attack Russian aircraft would be met by force and came in response to the downing of the Su-24, we cannot exclude that such measures could have been taken in response to threats to Russia in the Syrian theater.

[30] Katya Golubkova, "Russia Warns Turkey Over Aegean Warship Incident," Reuters, December 13, 2015; "Turkey Says Russia Violated Its Airspace Near Syria Border," BBC News, January 30, 2016.

[31] "Turkey Attacks ISIS in Iraq and Syria in Response to Istanbul Bombing," Reuters (Newsweek), January 14, 2016.

[32] Jonathan Marcus, "Russia S-400 Syria Missile Deployment Sends Robust Signal," BBC News, December 1, 2015. Marcus noted, "Since the S-400's deployment the number of coalition strikes in Syria appears to have gone down, with more of them carried out by drones. However it is hard to say if this reflects concern about the new threat or simply a response to the ebb and flow of the campaign."

[33] Denis Dyomkin and Suleiman Al-Khalidi, "Putin Says Russians to Start Withdrawing from Syria, as Peace Talks Resume," Reuters, March 15, 2016.

[34] Markus Becker, Matthias Gebauer, Konstantin von Hammerstein, Christiane Hoffmann, Peter Müller, Ralf Neukirch, René Pfister, Matthias Schepp, and Christoph Schult, "NATO Concerned Over Possible Russia-Turkey Hostilities," *Der Spiegel*, February 19, 2016.

The January 2016 attack was attributed to ISIS; the February 2016 attack was claimed by a small Kurdish group formerly linked to the Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê, or Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), the Teyrêbazên Azadiya Kurdistan, or Kurdistan Freedom Falcons (TAK). See Ece Toksabay, Gulsen Solaker, and David Dolan, "Kurdish Militant Group TAK Claims Responsibility for Ankara Bombing," Reuters, February 19, 2016, and Ceyland Yeginsu and Victor Homola, "Istanbul Bomber Entered as Refugee, Turks Say," *New York Times*, January 13, 2016.

other directly in the Syrian theater.[35] Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty—which states that an armed attack on one NATO member shall be considered an attack on them all—could oblige Turkey's NATO allies to come to its aid in case of a conflict with Russia, thus raising the specter of a Russia-NATO armed conflict. Turkey also wants to further its involvement by sending ground troops—with the support of its allies—into Syria to prevent Kurdish militias from establishing a durable presence along its border.

Meanwhile, Russian airstrikes helped these same Kurdish militias seize territory along the Turkey-Syria border.[36] Although such operations started before the downing of the Su-24, they picked up pace dramatically after that. Specifically, Russia supports the Kurdish Democratic Union (Partiya Yekîtiya Demokrat, or PYD), which Ankara claims is related to the PKK.[37] Turkey has accused Russia of allowing a PYD militia, the People's Protection Units (Yekîneyên Parastina Gel, or YPG), to create a corridor along the Turkish border to potentially destabilize Turkey.[38]

### Local and International Reactions

The Kurdish issue represents a source of disagreement between Turkey and its allies as well, particularly the United States. Turkey sees the YPG as its adversary, yet the YPG is backed not only by Russia but also by the United States, due to its perceived effectiveness on the ground against ISIS.[39] While Turkey accuses the PYD of being a terrorist organization in line with the PKK, a U.S. Department of State spokesperson declared in February 2016 that "we don't . . . recognize the PYD as a terrorist organization." He added, "Even the best of friends aren't going to agree on everything."[40]

### Level of Success

Russia's actions seem to have achieved at least parts of its objective to create a rift between Turkey and the rest of NATO. Russia's active support to Kurdish militia provoked Turkey to make a stronger push for ground troops—a request that remained unanswered by Turkey's allies, exposing the coalition's divisions and the unwillingness of most of its members to embark on a risky course of action that would primarily serve Turkey's interests.[41] While it is unclear to what extent Russia's stepped-up involvement in the Syria war was to blame for NATO's reluctance to deploy ground troops—such deployment was never popular in most NATO countries to begin with—Russia's actions did raise the ante for Turkey, which considers a strong Kurdish presence along its border an existential threat.

---

[35] "Tensions Between Russia and Turkey Reach New Peak," 2016; Tulay Karadeniz, Ece Toksabay, and Humeyra Pamuk, "Turkey Seeks Allies' Support for Group Operation as Syria War Nears Border," Reuters, February 16, 2016; Becker et al., 2016.

[36] Karadeniz, Toksabay, and Pamuk, 2016.

[37] The PKK has been engaged in an armed confrontation with the Turkish state since 1984 with the goal of gaining self-determination for the Kurdish population in Turkey. The group has been listed as a terrorist organization by the U.S. Department of State since 1997 (U.S. Department of State, "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," webpage, last updated September 6, 2018).

[38] Karadeniz, Toksabay, and Pamuk, 2016.

[39] Becker et al., 2016; "Tensions Between Russia and Turkey Reach New Peak," 2016.

[40] U.S. Department of State, daily press briefing (John Kirby, spokesperson), Washington, D.C., February 8, 2016.

[41] Becker et al., 2016.

Russia did not succeed in dividing Turkey and its allies on nonmilitary issues, however. While there was concern that Erdoğan might use the migrant crisis resulting from the conflict in Syria as leverage to get the support of its allies, he nevertheless did sign an agreement with the EU in March 2016 that made it more difficult for migrants to travel from Turkey to Greece in exchange for substantial financial aid, as well as permission for Turks to travel to the Schengen area visa-free.[42] Russia's economic sanctions may have even provided additional motivation for Turkey to accept the deal, as it may have looked to the EU's support to help offset some of the financial losses incurred during the crisis with Russia.

## Economic Sanctions

### Content and Implementation

On December 1, 2015, Russia banned imports of Turkish fruit, vegetables, poultry, and salt effective January 1, 2016.[43] At the same time, Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev announced a ban on charter flights to Turkey.[44] However, Russian tour operators had already stopped selling tours and arranging travel to Turkey.

Russia also threatened to retaliate against joint investment projects—including the TurkStream gas pipeline and the Akkuyu nuclear power plant—and to ban several Turkish corporate entities from working in Russia, many of them in the construction sector.[45] In late November 2015, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov announced that new contracts with Turkish companies would need to be approved by the government.[46] That month, Russia also banned Turkish citizens from working for some Russian companies.[47]

Russia introduced new limitations on freedom of circulation, principally by revoking the 2010 agreement with Turkey that allowed their respective citizens to travel between the two countries visa-free. Starting in January 2016, Turkish citizens who traveled to Russia once again needed a visa.[48]

### Local and International Reactions

At the time Russia was imposing sanctions on Turkey, it was facing its own sanctions as a result of its annexation of Crimea. Nonetheless, its reaction to the Su-24 incident was swift and sweeping. The international community's response was muted on the topic of economic sanctions, as NATO again perceived the situation as a bilateral dispute to be resolved by Russia and Turkey.

---

[42] European Commission, "EU-Turkey Agreement: Questions and Answers," fact sheet, March 19, 2016.

[43] "Russia Approves Detailed Sanctions Against Turkey Over Downed Plane," Reuters, December 1, 2015.

[44] "Russia Approves Detailed Sanctions Against Turkey Over Downed Plane," 2015.

[45] "5 Ways Russian Sanctions Can Hurt Turkey's Economy," 2015; Andrew Roth and Karla Adam, "Moscow Is Ready to Coordinate with the West Over Strikes on Syria," *Washington Post*, November 26, 2015.

[46] "5 Ways Russian Sanctions Can Hurt Turkey's Economy," 2015.

[47] A. Roth, 2015; Selin Girit, "Turkey Faces Big Losses as Russia Sanctions Bite," BBC News, January 2, 2016.

[48] "Turkey Won't Introduce Visa Requirements for Russians—Embassy," *Moscow Times*, December 4, 2015.

### Level of Success

Russia and Turkey had a strong trade relationship before the crisis. In 2014, Russia was Turkey's second-largest trading partner and second-largest source of imports (in trade value) after the European Union. Russia was less significant for Turkey in terms of exports, with only 1.9 percent of Turkish exports going to Russia.[49] In 2015, fruits and vegetables were Turkey's highest-value exports to Russia, for a total value of $937 million, but some key products—lemons, for instance—were excluded from the sanctions list.[50] Still, the Turkish agriculture minister estimated a loss of about $764 million in his sector.[51] Russian sanctions added to a downward trend in Turkish exports to Russia that had started before the downing of the Su-24 and could be attributed to the fall in the value of the ruble.[52]

Turkey's tourism industry took a serious hit: Turkey was the second-most-popular destination for Russian tourists in 2014, with 3.3 million Russian visitors that year. Russia claimed that Turkey's loss of Russian tourists would cost the country $10 billion, while one economist put that figure at only $3.5 billion.[53] Turkish resorts that catered primarily to Russian tourists, such as in Antalya and Alanya on the Mediterranean, were expected to be most affected.[54] One parliamentarian from Antalya drew a particularly dire picture of the situation, expecting a nationwide shortfall of $20 billion as a result of the loss of tourists and the loss of contracts for work by Turkish contractors in Russia.[55] Turkey did not respond in kind to Russia's imposition of a new visa regime on Turkish citizens traveling to Russia, and Russians traveling to Turkey can still do so without a visa.[56]

Erdoğan's enduring popularity was built, in large part, on Turkey's economic growth since he came to power in 2002. The economy grew even during the 2008 global financial crisis; given that the country has not weathered a significant economic downturn during his presidency, it is possible that such a hit could have political repercussions for Erdoğan.[57] It is difficult to assess the economic and political impact that Russian sanctions may have on Turkey in the long term. The predicted $10 billion loss in business was not far off from Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Mehmet Şimşek's estimate of $9 billion.[58] Meanwhile, there was speculation that Russia would be affected negatively by its sanctions against Turkey, which were expected to bring a 1- to 1.5-percent increase in inflation.[59]

---

[49] European Commission, "Countries and Regions: Turkey," webpage, last updated February 15, 2019a; Observatory of Economic Complexity, "Turkey: Trade Balance," data as of 2017.

[50] "Russian-Turkish Politics: Tsar v Sultan," 2015; "Russia Approves Detailed Sanctions Against Turkey Over Downed Plane," 2015.

[51] Girit, 2016.

[52] Girit, 2016.

[53] S. Walker, 2015; Girit, 2016.

[54] "5 Ways Russian Sanctions Can Hurt Turkey's Economy," 2015.

[55] Mehmet Cetingulec, "Will Russia's Economic Restrictions on Turkey Backfire?" *Al-Monitor*, December 13, 2015.

[56] "Turkey Won't Introduce Visa Requirements for Russians—Embassy," 2015.

[57] Soner Cagaptay, "Why Recep Tayyip Erdogan Will Be Turkey's First Directly Elected President," *Los Angeles Times*, August 7, 2014; Jonathan Head, "Turkey Election: Erdogan's Economic Trump Card," BBC News, June 10, 2011.

[58] Cetingulec, 2015.

[59] "Russian-Turkish Politics: Tsar v Sultan," 2015.

## Leveraging Turkey's Energy Dependence on Russia

### Content and Implementation

In December 2015, Russian state-owned Rosatom stopped work on a nuclear power plant that Turkey had commissioned in 2013. Rosatom did not terminate the contract, however—possibly because of the heavy penalties it would have to pay to Turkey.[60] Russia also suspended talks on the TurkStream natural gas pipeline project, which would connect Russia to Turkey via the Black Sea. That same month, Turkey announced that it was suspending the whole project.[61]

Even though Russia did not restrict its supply of energy to Turkey, such measures remain a powerful threat because Turkey is heavily dependent on Russia for gas. Two-thirds of the 41.1 bcm of natural gas it imported by pipeline for its consumption in 2014 came from Russia, with the rest divided between Azerbaijan and Iran. In 2015, Turkey relied on Russia for close to 56 percent of its gas supplies.[62] This made Turkey Gazprom's second-largest foreign customer after Germany.[63] Dependence has traditionally been much lower for oil, with Iran and Iraq being the main sources of Turkey's imports.[64]

### Local and International Reactions

Shortly after the downing of the Su-24, Erdoğan visited Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan, two important energy suppliers. Both countries may have been wary of harming their relations with Russia by helping Turkey diversify, and Kazakhstan was clear that it would not do so.[65] However, in December 2015, Turkey signed an LNG deal with Qatar and discussed with Azerbaijan ways to speed up construction of the now-completed Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline that would supply Turkey with gas from Azerbaijan via Georgia. Future extensions would connect the network to markets as far west as Italy—potentially turning Turkey into a regional energy hub. Turkey also considered increasing its gas imports from Iran, in addition to Azerbaijan.[66]

### Level of Success

Overall, tensions with Russia did not affect Turkey's gas supply situation.[67] Threatening to disrupt gas supplies to Turkey might have been a rather weak hostile measure for Russia in a context of declining oil prices and an economic recession. Several experts have noted that Russian firms and the country's overall economy would have suffered from a disruption in gas sales

---

[60] Orhan Coskun and Humeyra Pamuk, "Russia Halts Work in Turkey's First Nuclear Power Plant After Spat—Officials," Reuters, December 9, 2015.

[61] Girit, 2016; "Turkey Has Shelved Turkish Stream Gas Pipeline Project, Says President Erdoğan," *Hurriyet Daily News*, December 5, 2015.

[62] Liquified natural gas (LNG) is included in the total. See BP, *BP Statistical Review of World Energy*, June 2015, p. 28. A small share (about 15 percent) of Turkey's gas consumption came in the form of LNG from (in decreasing order of share of the total LNG supply to Turkey): Algeria, Nigeria, Qatar, Norway, other European countries, and Trinidad and Tobago.

[63] Dorian Jones and Durna Safarova, "Turkey Hunts for Alternatives to Russian Energy," Eurasianet, January 27, 2016.

[64] Russia's share of Turkey's oil imports decreased over time to 3 percent of Turkey's crude oil supply mix in 2014 (U.S. Energy Information Administration, "Turkey," webpage, last updated February 2, 2017.

[65] Jones and Safarova, 2016.

[66] Cetingulec, 2015.

[67] "Russian-Turkish Politics: Tsar v Sultan," 2015.

to Turkey, which absorbed 14 percent of Russian gas exports in 2014.[68] Similarly, suspending work on TurkStream hurt Russia as much as it hurt Turkey, because one purpose of the new pipeline was to increase Russian gas exports to Turkey.[69] Partnering with Turkey was also a way for Russia to pursue the project despite EU opposition.[70]

In any case, Turkey was already seeking to reduce its dependence on Russian energy, further diminishing the effectiveness of future Russian hostile measures targeting the energy sector. Turkey's negotiations with neighboring countries and its agreement with Qatar may mean an irreversible loss of the Turkish market—or at least a substantial share of it—for Russia.

## Diplomacy and Cultural Exchanges

### Content and Implementation

Finally, Russia took a series of measures pertaining to diplomacy and cultural exchanges that, while unlikely to have an important political or economic impact on Turkey, publicly conveyed Russia's displeasure. It is difficult to measure their level of success.

The first set of measures consisted of either canceling high-level meetings or refusing to meet with Turkish officials. For example, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov canceled a planned visit to Turkey.[71] Putin refused to take several phone calls from Erdoğan and rebuffed his request to meet in December 2015, when both heads of state were in Paris for the UN Climate Change Conference.[72]

Russia also put in place a series of symbolic measures directly targeting Turkey, including cutting exchanges between Russian and Turkish universities and calling back Russian students already in Turkey, imposing administrative hurdles on Turks in Russia and on Turkish trucks that tried to enter Russia, closing a Russian-Turkish cultural center in Moscow, and even banning Russian soccer clubs from hiring Turkish players.[73] A Russian political party, Just Russia, also submitted a proposal to criminalize denial of the 1915 Armenian genocide.[74]

### Local and International Reactions

Turkish students who were already studying in Russia were not expelled from the country, and Turkey did not require their return. Russia's decision to ban Turkish players from its soccer clubs generated numerous headlines in the sportswriting community, but it did not face official condemnation from FIFA, which oversees international soccer.[75]

---

[68] Keir Giles, "Few Will Believe Russia's 'Proof' That Its Jet Was in Syrian Airspace," *The Guardian*, November 24, 2015; Jones and Safarova, 2016; BP, 2015.

[69] Girit, 2016.

[70] A. Roth, 2015b.

[71] McFarquhar and Erlanger, 2015.

[72] A. Roth, 2015b; Raziye Akkoc, "Vladimir Putin Refuses to Meet Turkish President in Paris During Climate Change Talks," *The Telegraph*, November 30, 2015.

[73] "Russian-Turkish Politics: Tsar v Sultan," 2015; "Moscow's Russian-Turkish Cultural Center Closes Its Doors," *Moscow Times*, December 1, 2015; "Russian Clubs Banned from Signing Turkish Players," BBC News, November 29, 2015.

[74] Jack Stubbs and Maria Kiselyova, "Russian Deputies Seek Accountability for Armenia Genocide Denial," Reuters, November 25, 2015.

[75] "FIFA to Monitor Russian Ban on Turkish Footballers," Anadolu Agency (*Hurriyet Daily*), December 3, 2015.

### Level of Success

Because the measures were short-lived and largely symbolic, it is difficult to determine their success. For example, there were reportedly fewer than 100 Russian exchange students in Turkey, and Turkish students were allowed to continue their programs of study in Russia, so recalling the Russian students likely had a limited impact on the overall level of cultural exchange between the two countries.[76] In the case of the ban on Turkish soccer players, Russia allowed those who were currently playing to remain on Russian teams. It is clear that the move was meant to convey Russian disapproval rather than exert political pressure on Turkey. Similarly, the Turkish cultural center in Moscow denied that its closure was entirely related to Russia's dispute with Turkey, citing "Turkey's failure to pay for the center's operations" as a secondary factor.[77]

## Summary of the Turkish Case

Russia deployed an array of hostile measures against Turkey (see Figure B.10), starting with an immediate public diplomacy campaign and following with measures in Syria and a series of economic sanctions. Russia's active support to Kurdish militias in Syria represents its most consequential measure against Turkey. Allowing these militias to consolidate their presence along the Turkish border touched a very sensitive point for Turkey, which views these groups as a potential source of destabilization and an almost existential threat.

The timeline of Russian hostile measures against Turkey is remarkably short. All measures were taken within roughly a month after the downing of the Su-24.

Responses from the international community to the dispute between Russia and Turkey were limited, with the exception of NATO's public avowal of support to Turkey in the aftermath of the Su-24 incident. Turkey's regional partners stepped forward with assistance in seeking out alternative energy supplies and transport routes during the period of elevated tensions with Russia. Overall, the international community appears to have taken an extremely cautious stance, waiting for the spat between the two countries to end and not taking any steps that might escalate the situation.

## How Successful Were Russia's Hostile Measures Overall?

The first objective of Russia's hostile measures was to punish Turkey and deter NATO by showing that attacking Russian assets comes at a price. It succeeded to some extent—by imposing economic costs on Turkey, paralyzing its action in Syria, and (in manipulating the Kurdish issue) showing that it could play a destabilizing role if it chose to do so.

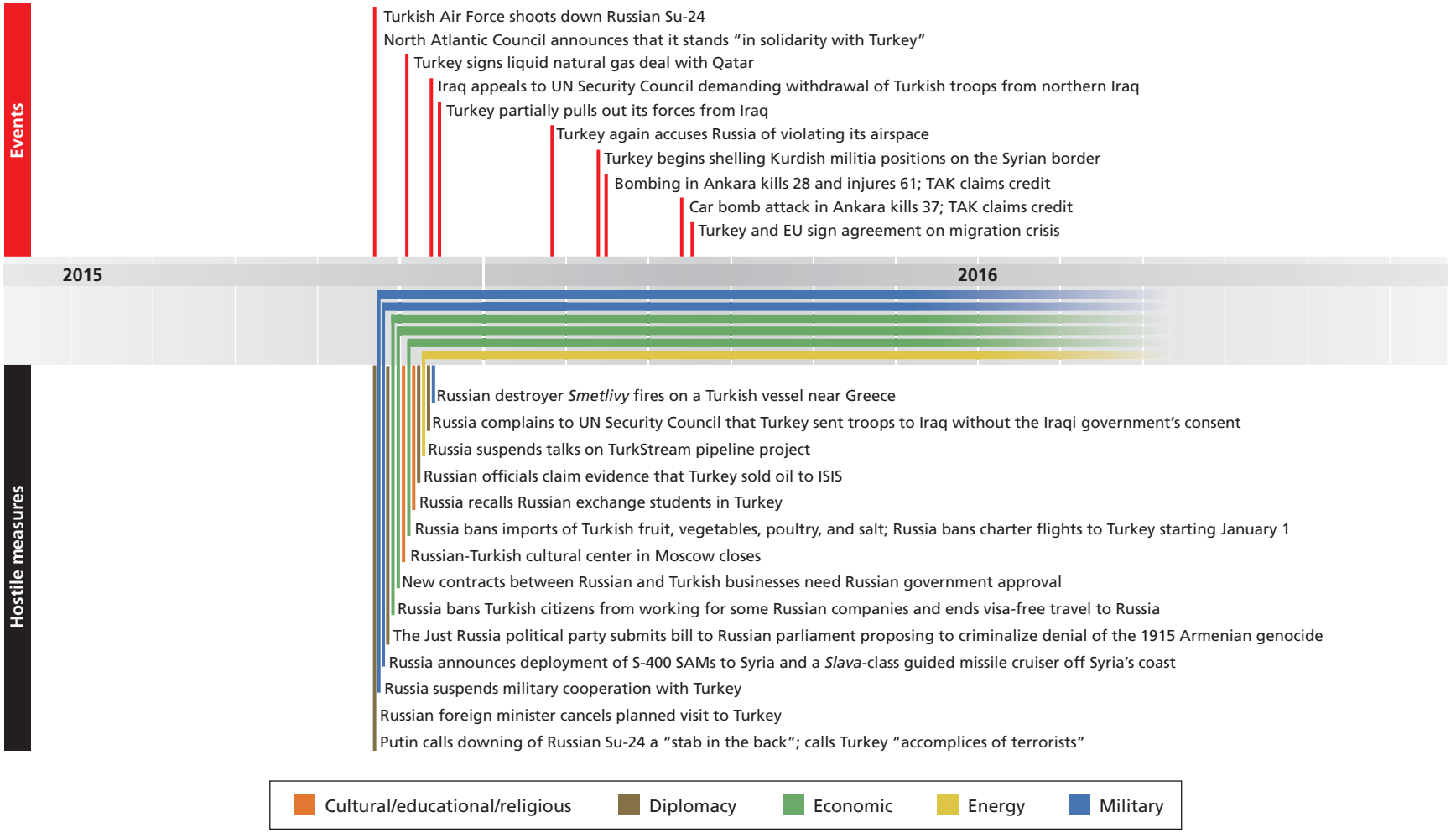
Russia's second objective was to prevent Turkey from threatening its military assets and interfering with Russian interests more generally. It clearly succeeded in this respect. When a Russian aircraft violated Turkey's airspace on January 29, 2016, Turkey did not respond with force as it had done in November 2015.

---

[76] Dolgov, 2015. This is not to disregard the potential impact of delays and disruptions on the students' trajectories of study.

[77] Anna Dolgov, "Russian Exchange Students in Turkey Will Return Home," *Moscow Times*, December 2, 2015.

**Figure B.10**
**Timeline of Russian Hostile Measures in Turkey**



Russia's third objective was to divide Turkey from the rest of NATO—particularly the United States. It is important to note that there was already some friction prior to the November 2015 incident. In 2013, NATO allies had stationed Patriot missile batteries on Turkish soil, at Turkey's request, to defend against possible incursions of Russian aircraft and missiles involved in operations in Syria. Even though Russia violated Turkey's airspace several times before the Su-24's downing, the United States, Germany, and the Netherlands proceeded with plans to remove the Patriots in accordance with the mission's two-year mandate. On October 8, 2015, Turkey unsuccessfully appealed to its fellow NATO members to retain the missiles for the purpose of responding to potential missile threats from Russia.[78]

Turkey's focus on bombing the very same Kurdish groups that the United States viewed as the most effective force on the ground against ISIS had already created tensions between the two countries.[79] The United States had also become increasingly critical of the Erdoğan regime, with U.S. Vice President Joe Biden publicly lamenting restrictions on freedom of expression in Turkey.[80] Finally, Turkey was isolated in its push for a ground war in Syria. Yet, following the downing of the Russian plane, NATO has stood behind Turkey at least in principle, reaffirming that the organization's members "stand in solidarity with Turkey and support the territorial integrity of our NATO ally."[81] Overall, the crisis itself did not fundamentally alter relations between Turkey and its allies.

Russia's fourth objective—showing its domestic audience that Russia was the dominant player in the region and would not accept Turkey's actions—seems to have been more successful. According to a December 2015 poll, 31 percent of Russians surveyed called for even tougher sanctions against Turkey than had been put in place.[82] Two months later, another poll conducted in Russia showed that 78 percent of respondents rejected a compromise with Ankara as long as Turkey did not apologize for the incident. A majority (54 percent) thought that Turkey had been hit harder by the tensions between the two countries than Russia, limiting the incentive for Moscow to ease these restrictions.[83]

Yet, these measures also had some adverse effects for Russia. For example, they showed Russia's isolation at the time. No other country backed up Russia's various accusations or seconded the sanctions against Turkey.[84] Only long-standing allies, such as Armenia, publicly supported Russia's stance.[85] Russia was also not able to renounce the gas revenue it received from Turkey, depriving it of an important source of leverage—and the possibility of Russia's use of such measures may have pushed Turkey to diversify its partnerships in the energy sector.

---

[78] Burak Ege Bekdil, "US Begins Removing Patriot Missiles from Turkey," *Defense News*, October 11, 2015.

[79] McFarquhar and Erlanger, 2015.

[80] David Dolan, "Vice President Biden Chides Turkey Over Freedom of Expression," Reuters, January 22, 2016.

[81] NATO, 2015.

[82] The state-run Russian Public Opinion Research Centre (VTsIOM) polled 1,600 Russian residents on December 4–5, 2016 ("1 in 3 Russians Wants Tougher Measures Against Turkey—Poll," *Moscow Times*, December 17, 2015).

[83] VTsIOM polled 1,600 Russian residents on February 6–7, 2016 ("Russians Not Ready to Forgive Turkey for Downed Plane—Poll," *Moscow Times*, February 29, 2016).

[84] Campbell, 2015.

[85] Giorgi Lomsadze, "Turkey-Russia Conflict Divides South Caucasus," Eurasianet, December 2, 2015.

# Conclusions

These case studies illustrated the variety of hostile measures that Russia has used over the past two decades to influence countries within and beyond the former borders of the Soviet Union (see Table B.3). These measures spanned a broad range of domains—from economic and legal to diplomatic. And the diversity of measures employed within these domains showed how adept Russia has been at integrating tools from all its instruments of national power. Across the five case studies, we identified a total of 32 different hostile measures, suggesting that the cases provide a fairly extensive view of Russia's "toolbox" for influencing, coercing, and deterring target countries.

While some means of influence—such as trade sanctions or the targeting of energy supplies—are seemingly perennial, others are more recent. For example, Russia's involvement in frozen conflicts is a post-Soviet phenomenon that was triggered by the collapse of the Soviet Union and the various wars that followed in Transnistria (Moldova) and South Ossetia and Abkhazia (Georgia). By maintaining some military presence in these frozen conflicts and participating in their respective negotiation processes, Russia ensured that it was both part of the problem and part of the solution. It has historically used these types of conflicts at will to destabilize or threaten to destabilize the countries where they have occurred.

Cyberattacks are another recent form of hostile measures and have become increasingly common. Cyberattacks often play the same role as classic hostile measures but merely leverage new technologies. Defacing websites is a strategic communication measure, hacking websites to steal information is akin to intelligence gathering, and DDoS attacks create the type of disruption that would have previously been achieved by cutting postal or transportation routes.[1] However, cyberattacks provide Russia with a higher level of plausible deniability. It is difficult to trace such attacks to a specific perpetrator or to prove that the perpetrator was state-sponsored. In the case of the cyberattacks in Estonia in spring 2007, for instance, experts were unable to establish a clear connection to the Russian government.

Other hostile measures can be equally difficult to trace back to their initiator, particularly when they employ many actors, some of them seemingly autonomous. Again, in the Estonia case, the only event that could be linked with a fair amount of confidence to the Russian government—the siege of the Estonian embassy in Moscow—was a minor event in the overall crisis, and it took place on Russian soil, not in Estonia. Boycotts of Estonian products, meanwhile, proved more painful for Estonia, but they mainly came from private actors, such

[1] This does not imply that cyberattacks have replaced these traditional means of disruption. For example, in the Georgia case, Russia both employed cyberattacks and disrupted other means of communications, such as postal services and rail.

**Table B.3**
**Hostile Measures Used by Russia in Moldova, Georgia, Estonia, Ukraine, and Turkey**

| Hostile Measure Type | Description | Moldova | Georgia | Estonia | Ukraine | Turkey |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Civil unrest | Instigating protests, riots | | | X | | |
| Communication[a] | Information campaign in Russian media | X | X | X | X | |
| | Manipulation of media | | X | | X | |
| | Disruption of communications | | X | | X | |
| Cultural/ education/ religious | Invocation of World War II history | | | X | X | |
| | Shared Soviet history | X | | | | |
| | Cultural/educational exchanges | X | | | | X |
| | Influence of Orthodox Church | X | | X | | |
| | "Passportization" | X | X | | X | |
| Cyber | Disruption of cyber/internet capabilities | | X | X | X | |
| Diplomacy | Negotiations | X | X | | X | |
| | Breakdown in diplomatic relations | | X | X | X | X |
| | International alliances | | | | | X |
| | State recognition | X | X | | X | |
| | Public diplomacy campaign | | X | X | X | X |
| Economic | Financial pressure | X | | X | X | X |
| | Trade limitations | X | X | X | X | X |
| | Pressure on foreign individuals and businesses in Russia | X | X | | | X |
| | Limitation of freedom of circulation | | X | X | | X |
| Energy | Manipulation of energy prices | X | X | | X | |
| | Disruption of energy supplies | X | X | X | X | |
| Legal | Manipulation of democratic processes | | | | X | |
| Military | | | | | | |
| Covert military | Covert kinetic action | | | | X | |
| Overt military | Military intimidation | | | | X | X |
| | Military presence | X | X | | X | |
| Use of proxies | Military personnel assistance to proxy forces | | | | X | |
| | Provision of combat enablers to proxy forces | | | | X | X |
| | Military materiel assistance to proxy forces | | | | X | |
| | Nonmilitary assistance to proxy forces | | | | X | |
| Political influence[a] | Support to political leaders | | | | X | |
| | Support to political parties | X | | | | |
| | Penetration/subversion | | X | | | |

[a] Communication campaigns and efforts to exert political influence were typically ongoing to various degrees over the course of a given case. Although examples are discussed in the case narratives, it was often difficult to identify discrete measures or determine when such measures began being applied or ceased to be applied. For these reasons, these categories do not appear in the case-study timelines.

as distributors and retailers. Assessing to what extent these action were shaped by the Kremlin's propaganda and the boycotts were an action of Moscow is challenging.

Another difficulty, when examining the use and impact of hostile measures, is establishing whether particular hostile measures were responsible for subsequent developments in respective crises profiled here. In Moldova, for instance, the ruling, pro-EU coalition lost the 2014 elections—a result that no doubt pleased Moscow. But did Moscow play a significant role in that defeat, or was it a natural consequence of the disarray in Moldovan politics? Similarly, in Georgia, did Russian actions play a critical role in President Mikheil Saakashvili's decline in popularity and eventual loss of power, or were other factors more decisive? Although there is little doubt that some Russian actions (such as trade sanctions in Georgia) created the conditions for a political outcome that was more favorable to the Kremlin, it is unclear whether these actions were ultimately game-changers or whether they were second or third to more decisive factors.

## Possible General Patterns of Hostile-Measures Use

Timelines for the five case studies show that Russia rarely uses hostile measures in isolation. Rather, it combines them—whether simultaneously or as part of a quick sequence of measures. In other words, hostile measures tend to come in clusters. These clusters of hostile measures fulfill several purposes, such as sending a strong signal to the targeted country (and anyone else watching) and showing that measures of coercion and retaliation can hit on several fronts at once. As a result, some timelines were remarkably short. In the case of Turkey, for instance, all of Russia's hostile measures were employed within roughly one month after the downing of the Su-24.

An examination of the different types of Russian hostile measures suggests that they can be separated in two categories:

- long-term hostile measures that aim to establish durable sources of influence over a country, such as control of political parties, media and cultural influence, passportization, or participation in the economic sector
- immediate measures in response to specific crises, such as economic sanctions, expulsions of migrant workers, or energy cuts.

Some hostile measures belong to both categories, with long-term hostile measures facilitating Russia's use of hostile measures in the immediate term. This is the case with media influence, for example. Media campaigns can shape public opinion over the long term, but they can also be used in times of crisis to disseminate specific messages to a population. Energy dependence is another example: When countries are reliant on Russia for their energy supplies, this provides Russia with both long-term influence and an ability to threaten supplies or drastically modify prices to cause temporary crises.

Russian hostile measures in the cases also varied in terms of duration—some were events, while others were processes that unfolded over time. While the small number of case studies did not allow us to develop definitive conclusions about whether these types were used for different purposes, a comparison between Russian hostile measures against Estonia and Turkey suggests that short-duration hostile measures, such as those used in Estonia (e.g., protests,

cyberattacks) may be used more often to convey disapproval. That is, Russia did not expect the Estonian government to reverse its decision to relocate the monument, but it could not let the monument be removed without a vehement protest. Russia opted for this approach rather than coercing the target country, as it did in Turkey. Russia wanted to deter further Turkish actions—particularly any offensive action against its military aircraft—and thus resorted to several long-term measures, such as economic sanctions and the suspension of visa-free travel between the two countries.

The five case studies show very different patterns of hostile-measures use by Russia. To some extent, the choice of measures in each case was dictated by the circumstances. The cases of Estonia and Turkey differ from the other three in their relative simplicity: One key event irritated Russia, which responded with an array of hostile measures in almost all domains, from diplomacy to trade. Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine were longer crises, and various developments prompted additional hostile measures as the cases unfolded. In the case of these longer crises, it can be difficult to pinpoint which event triggered which hostile measures. For example, Russia introduced several trade- and energy-related hostile measures against Georgia in early 2006, before the spying row between the two countries. These measures likely followed the deterioration in the relations between Russia and Georgia in late 2005, but no specific event explains why Russia used these measures when it did rather than a few months earlier or later.

Finally, even when they appear to be triggered by a specific event, the hostile measures that Russia employs often bear little connection to that event. For example, the military confrontation in eastern Ukraine flared in late 2015, coinciding with Russia's announcement of trade and energy restrictions on Ukraine, rather than military-focused hostile measures.

Russia employs a diverse arsenal of hostile measures with which it can respond to almost any event it deems important enough, using all means of pressure at hand—often with little relevance to the event that prompted the response in the first place.

## How Successful Have Hostile Measures Been for Russia?

Assessing the success of individual hostile measures can prove challenging for two primary reasons. First, as noted, Russia rarely uses hostile measures in isolation. When a quick sequence of hostile measures seems to succeed in achieving a specific objective (e.g., liberating Russians accused of spying in Georgia), it can be difficult to evaluate the relative weight of individual hostile measures on the outcome. Second, some hostile measures seem to have no impact at all and are merely "scene setters" for other hostile measures. Yet, these measures can serve a function by increasing the chances that other hostile measures will achieve their intended results. Strategic communication and cyberattacks are two types of hostile measures that often fall into this category. These activities rarely achieve a specific end in themselves (even when large Russian-speaking populations are present in the target country), but they prepare the terrain for other hostile measures—perhaps civil unrest or legal action—and amplify their effects.

In the five case studies examined here, several individual hostile measures appear to have been successful for Russia, but only under certain circumstances:

- *Military-type hostile measures*, such as proxy wars, covert military operations, or military buildups along the border—even when short of war—were particularly powerful

in influencing target countries. For example, Russia's military buildup influenced the Ukrainian government's decision to not respond to Russian aggression in Crimea. Turkey suspended its operations in Syria after Russia deployed air-defense systems that could have targeted its aircraft.

- *Economic sanctions* were successful only when the target country depended heavily on trade with Russia and could not find alternative markets to alleviate the effects of sanctions. Georgia was one such case, and the economic consequences of Russia's various agricultural products bans weighed heavily on the 2013 presidential campaign and likely contributed to the defeat of the incumbent president's party.
- *Communication (i.e., action through the media) and cultural, educational, and religious hostile measures* rarely achieved any specific objective, but they did shape how other hostile measures were perceived—for instance, by convincing parts of the population that Russia's actions were legitimate.
- *Civil unrest and cyberattacks*, likewise, were not effective on their own in achieving any broad objective, but they signaled to the target country that Russia had the means to disrupt and destabilize.

Russian hostile measures had mixed results when it came to fulfilling Russia's most-immediate objectives. They failed to prevent the relocation of the Bronze Soldier in Estonia. Russia's use of various hostile measures did not coerce Turkey into issuing the formal apology that Moscow requested in the immediate aftermath of Su-24's downing. But Russia's vehement reaction to the destruction of its jet likely deterred Turkey from responding with force again when Russian aircraft violated Turkey's airspace on January 29, 2016. And, in Georgia, hostile measures appear to have facilitated the release of Russians accused of espionage during the spying row episode.

Hostile measures have been more consistently effective in achieving broader, longer-lasting effects that directly benefit Russia, including (1) keeping countries in its near abroad from joining Western institutions, (2) deterring target countries from threatening Russian interests too directly or too forcefully, (3) signaling Russia's resolve and capabilities to its neighbors and to the broader international community, and (4) shaping perceptions among Russia's domestic audience.

First, one of the most definitive successes of Russian hostile measures has been to highlight the internal and external weaknesses of target countries, thereby making them less desirable partners for the West. One such internal weakness is a lack of internal cohesion. The Bronze Night brought to the surface the polarization within Estonian society and Estonia's failure to integrate its Russian population. External weaknesses include vulnerabilities to Russian influence or leverage, which may deter Western organizations from partnering with or integrating these countries in the future. Russia's actions have made it more difficult than ever for Ukraine and Georgia to join NATO or the EU, thereby slowing the eastward expansion of these two institutions. More generally, Russia's hostile measures have been successful in showing the West—and the EU in particular—that crises between Russia and its neighbors may become a durable threat to European stability.

Frozen conflicts play an important role in this regard, deterring Western institutions from welcoming candidates because they represent a source of potential instability—and Russia plays an appeasing or inflammatory role at will. This is but one explanation for why Georgia and Moldova are not yet part of the EU or NATO (with other reasons ranging from

poor governance, in the case of Moldova, to "enlargement fatigue" on the part of the West). Frozen conflicts remain a key obstacle to Western integration for these countries. Ukraine is now experiencing a similar effect, as it effectively has become a frozen conflict as well—suggesting that Russia did succeed, after all, in keeping Ukraine as a buffer state between NATO members and its own borders.

Second, Russian hostile measures have been relatively successful in deterring nations from threatening Russian interests too directly or too forcefully—or at least in signaling that there is a cost (sometimes severe) in doing so. Hostile measures not only signal that Russia will not let a perceived offense go unpunished, but they also suggest that more-severe measures may be yet to come. For example, Russia's reaction to the Bronze Soldier's removal reminded Estonia that, despite its independence, it was not free from Russia's influence. Concerns over a full-fledged Russian offensive prevented the Ukrainian government from responding militarily to Russia's incursion into Crimea.

Third, whether they aim to coerce or deter, hostile measures are almost always intended to send a message to a broader audience, particularly any of Russia's neighbors with the same vulnerabilities as the primary target country (e.g., large Russian minority, energy dependence on Russia).

Finally, Russia's hostile measures—particularly public diplomacy and information operations—are also aimed at the Russian domestic audience. They unify the country against a common enemy. For example, polls conducted during the crisis with Turkey showed a great deal of popular support in Russia for the sanctions policy against Ankara. The Kremlin's effort to undermine the reputation of a target country pays domestic dividends when that country happens to be leaning toward the EU, NATO, or simply internal reform. For Russian audiences, the Bronze Soldier crisis effectively turned Estonia from a potential model to follow into an enemy.

## The Cost of Hostile Measures for Russia

Even when they are successful, hostile measures often come at a financial cost for Russia. In some cases, the cost could easily be anticipated, and Russia simply chose to bear it on the assumption that the measures would prove even more costly for the target country. Russia chose to expel thousands of migrant workers from Moldova in 2013–2014, despite the need for these workers in construction and other sectors, because it expected (correctly) that it would be less affected by this measure than Moldova, whose economy relies heavily on remittances.[2] In some cases, such strategies proved too costly to sustain, as when Gazprom lost close to $6 billion by trying to cut gas exports to Ukraine.[3]

These costs are an important factor that may limit Russia's use of hostile measures to those it can afford. Russia's mediocre economic performance, for instance, has limited its ability to continue subsidizing Transnistria at previous levels, and low energy prices have made Russia's threats to disrupt or suspend supplies less credible.

---

[2] Migration Policy Centre, *MPC Migration Profile: Moldova*, Florence, Italy: Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, June 2013, p. 1.

[3] Bershidsky, 2016.

Russia's hostile measures have also been costly in the sense that they have, at times, prompted adverse reactions from the international community. The offensive against Georgia in 2008 revitalized NATO, clarifying Russia's willingness to engage with its neighbors militarily. The Ukraine crisis, too, accelerated NATO's efforts to reform and improve its operational capabilities and decisionmaking processes.

Hostile measures have also come at a diplomatic cost for Russia by spurring the partners of target countries to show their support and, in some cases, reaffirm these partnerships in the face of a common Russian threat. NATO immediately spoke out in support of Turkey after the downing of the Russian Su-24. Meanwhile, Russia's own collective security alliance, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, remained mostly quiet. Hostile measures exposed Russia's international isolation and the weakness of its own security alliance.

Similarly, several hostile measures appear to have backfired for Russia. Not only did they not fulfill their intended objectives, but they also undermined Russia's long-term goals. Russia's hostile measures against Moldova, Ukraine, and Georgia had the effect of pushing these countries closer to European institutions, which they saw as their only recourse against Russia's influence and meddling in their internal affairs—the exact opposite of the objective Russia was trying to achieve. Trade and energy sanctions, in particular, only created greater incentives for target countries to deepen their relationships with the EU. This does not mean that these countries will be integrated into Western institutions, but they can engage with them in many ways short of membership and, ultimately, drift away from Russia's sphere of influence. This counterproductive effect of hostile measures was particularly strong in Ukraine, where Russian actions ensured that the government in Kyiv became firmly pro-Europe and hostile to Moscow, with opinion polls showing a much higher anti-Russia sentiment among the population than before the crisis. This effect likely extends beyond the countries targeted by Russian hostile measures, signaling that although rapprochement with Western institutions may come with dire consequences, it may also provide some form of protection from an overbearing Russia.

## Effective Countermeasures to Russian Hostile Measures

The case studies in this appendix suggest that attempting to symmetrically counter Russian hostile measures is not particularly effective. Moldova's countermeasures, which included banning a political party and journalists seen as too pro-Russia shortly before an election, as well as limiting Russia-based workers' ability to vote, proved both controversial and ineffective. Estonia broke off negotiations with Russia on the Nord Stream project as a means of reprisal, but Russia found other partners and carried out the project nonetheless. If anything, Estonia lost its chance to be part of a project where it could have had some power of negotiation over Russia. Ukraine's Ministry of Information Policy, established to counter Moscow's disinformation campaigns, has had limited effects. The same is true of direct measures taken by the international community, such as economic sanctions. While the sanctions adopted in the Ukraine crisis hurt Russia's economy, they have not resulted in a change of behavior, and Moscow so far has shown a willingness to endure the economic hardship. One noticeable exception to the general ineffectiveness of direct responses to Russian hostile measures was the use of military force, which proved successful in the case of Ukraine. Kyiv's commitment to confronting

aggression in Donbas left Russia unable to achieve a clear military victory in eastern Ukraine at a political price it was willing to pay.

Efforts to circumvent Russian hostile measures have been more successful. Examples include Moldova and Georgia's attempts to defeat Russian trade sanctions by finding new markets. Yet, neither country could fully offset the economic effects of Russian sanctions. A stronger response on the part of the international community may be needed to further mitigate the effects of these types of hostile measures on targeted countries. The EU played that role for Moldova in 2013 by opening European markets for its wine exports to make up for the loss of Russian buyers. In Georgia, Western support likely helped Saakashvili stay in power for two presidential terms. Overall, the most useful response devised by the international community to counter Russian hostile measures has been to provide target countries with some of the benefits that Russia denied or threatened to deny them. Actions from the international community to help lessen dependence on Russia were useful as well. The EU's financial investment in the pipeline between Romania and Moldova, for instance, will eventually give Moldova access to other sources of gas—provided prices are attractive enough for Moldova to switch.

Collectively, the components of this wide-ranging study of Russian hostile measures, the history of their use, and specific applications led us to the conclusion that Russia presents a dangerous but manageable threat. The case studies collected in this appendix highlight patterns in Russia's use of hostile measures, as well as insights into the context for these uses and Russia's motivations for using hostile measures or choosing particular measures over others. A better understanding of these patterns and trends can help decisionmakers forecast Russian reactions to perceived threats and inform future efforts to deter and counter its use of hostile measures.

# References


"1 in 3 Russians Wants Tougher Measures Against Turkey—Poll," *Moscow Times*, December 17, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/12/17/1-in-3-russians-wants-tougher-measures-against-turkey-poll-a51270

"5 Ways Russian Sanctions Can Hurt Turkey's Economy," Agence France-Presse (*Kyiv Post*), November 30, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.kyivpost.com/article/content/russia/agence-france-presse-five-ways-russian-sanctions-can-hurt-turkey-economy-403179.html

Abdelal, Rawi, "The Profits of Power: Commerce and Realpolitik in Eurasia," *Review of International Political Economy*, Vol. 20, No. 3, June 2013, pp. 421–456.

"Abkhazia, S. Ossetia Formally Declared Occupied Territory," *Civil Georgia*, August 28, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
https://civil.ge/archives/117298

Abushov, Kavus, "Policing the Near Abroad: Russian Foreign Policy in the South Caucasus," *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 63, No. 2, June 2009, pp. 187–212.

Adamowski, Jaroslaw, "Latvia, Lithuania to Raise Defense Spending," *Defense News*, July 30, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/international/europe/2015/07/29/latvia-lithuania-raise-defense-spending/30843863

"After Ukraine, Is Moldova the Next Country in Russia's Sights?" *Debating Europe*, May 4, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.debatingeurope.eu/2015/05/04/will-moldova-first-country-falls-back-russia-communism

Akkoc, Raziye, "Vladimir Putin Refuses to Meet Turkish President in Paris During Climate Change Talks," *The Telegraph*, November 30, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/vladimir-putin/12024705/Vladimir-Putin-refuses-to-meet-Turkish-president-in-Paris-during-climate-change-talks.html

Alas, Joel, "Coalition Split Over Bronze Soldier," *Baltic Times*, January 17, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.baltictimes.com/news/articles/17143

"Alexy II: Estonian Government Disrespect for Soldier Monument Immoral," Interfax, May 2, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.interfax-religion.com/?act=news&div=2982

"Alianta intre Biserica si Comunisti, Impotriva, 'Islamizarii si Homosexualizarii'" Rep. Moldova" ["The Alliance Between the Church and the Communists Against 'Islamization and Homosexuality' in the Republic of Moldova"], Ziare.com, April 16, 2012. As of February 26, 2018:
http://www.ziare.com/europa/moldova/alianta-intre-biserica-si-comunisti-impotriva-islamizarii-si-homosexualizarii-rep-moldova-1161507

Aliyev, Huseyn, "The Effects of the Saakashvili Era Reforms on Informal Practices in the Republic of Georgia," *Studies of Transition States and Societies*, Vol. 6, No. 1, June 2014, pp. 19–33.

Allison, Roy, "Russia Resurgent? Moscow's Campaign to 'Coerce Georgia to Peace,'" *International Affairs*, Vol. 84, No. 6, November 2008, pp. 1145–1171.

———, "Russian 'Deniable' Intervention in Ukraine: How and Why Russia Broke the Rules," *International Affairs*, Vol. 90, No. 6, November 2014, pp. 1255–1297.

Al-Saiegh, Mohammed, "Ukraine Crisis: See Full Sanctions List," *CNN Money*, May 13, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://money.cnn.com/2014/04/29/news/russia-sanctions-list

Alterman, John B., Carolyn Barnett, Andrew C. Kuchins, and Jeffrey Mankoff, *The Turkey, Russia, Iran Nexus: Evolving Power Dynamics in the Middle East, the Caucasus, and Central Asia*, Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, November 2013.

Anderson, John, "Putin and the Russian Orthodox Church: Asymmetric Symphonia?" *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 61, No. 1, Fall–Winter 2007, pp. 185–201.

Anderson, Kym, "Is Georgia the Next 'New' Wine-Exporting Country?" *Journal of Wine Economics*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 2013, pp. 1–28.

Anderson, Robert, "Estonia Pays Price of Defying Russia," *bne IntelliNews*, June 19, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.intellinews.com/estonia-pays-price-of-defying-russia-500014180/?archive=bne

Anjaparidze, Zaal, "Russia Continues to Press Georgian Wine Industry," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 3, No. 77, April 20, 2006. As of February 26, 2019:
https://jamestown.org/program/russia-continues-to-press-georgian-wine-industry

Anvelt, Kärt, "Kaitsepolitsei Aastaraamat: Vene Luure Tegi Mullu Eestis Usinalt Tööd" ["Security Report: Russian Intelligence Worked Hard Last Year"], Delfi News Service, June 20, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
http://epl.delfi.ee/news/eesti/kaitsepolitsei-aastaraamat-vene-luure-tegi-mullu-eestis-usinalt-tood?id=51133812

Artman, Vincent M., "Annexation by Passport," Al Jazeera America, March 14, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://america.aljazeera.com/opinions/2014/3/ukraine-russia-crimeapassportizationcitizenship.html

Åslund, Anders, and Andrew Kuchins, *The Russia Balance Sheet*, Washington, D.C.: Peterson Institute for International Economics and Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2009.

Baev, Pavel K., and Kemal Kirişci, *An Ambiguous Partnership: The Serpentine Trajectory of Turkish-Russian Relations in the Era of Erdoğan and Putin*, Turkish Policy Project Paper No. 13, Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, September 2017. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.brookings.edu/research/an-ambiguous-partnership-the-serpentine-trajectory-of-turkish-russian-relations-in-the-era-of-erdogan-and-putin/

Baker, Mark, "Drinking Games," *Foreign Policy*, July 29, 2015.

Balmforth, Richard, and Alexander Tanas, "Moldova Set to Press on with Pro-Europe Course After Election," Reuters, December 1, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-moldova-election-idUSKCN0JE0WD20141201

Baltic Center for Investigative Journalism, "Russkiy Mir," *re:Baltica*, April 11, 2012. As of February 26, 2019:
https://en.rebaltica.lv/2012/04/russkiy-mir/

Barabanov, Mikhail, "The August War Between Russia and Georgia," *Moscow Defence Brief*, No. 13, 2008.

"Barack Obama," On the Issues, undated. As of February 2016:
http://www.ontheissues.org/Barack_Obama.htm

Baranov, Elena, "Șoc pe Piața Ocală a Muncii? Ce se Poate întâmpla Dacă se întorc Migranții Moldoveni din Rusia" ["Shock on the Local Labor Market? What Can Happen if Moldovan Migrants Return from Russia?"], *Agora* (Moldova), April 8, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://agora.md/stiri/691/Soc-pe-piata-locala-a-muncii-ce-se-poate-intampla-daca-se-intorc-migrantii-moldoveni-din-rusia

Barber, Tony, "A Moldovan Headache for Europe," *Financial Times*, January 22, 2016.

Barrabi, Thomas, "Who Are the Cossack Fighters Who Spearheaded Rebels' Capture of Debaltseve in Eastern Ukraine?" *International Business Times*, February 19, 2015. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.ibtimes.com/who-are-cossack-fighters-who-spearheaded-rebels-capture-debaltseve-eastern-ukraine-1821514

Barry, Ben, "Could Russia Repeat the East Ukraine Playbook in Syria?" *IISS Voices* (International Institute for Strategic Studies), September 22, 2015.

Barry, Ellen, "Georgia's President Concedes Defeat in Parliamentary Election," *New York Times*, October 2, 2012.

Bartles, Charles K., and Roger N. McDermott, "Russia's Military Operation in Crimea," *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol. 61, No. 6, 2015, pp. 46–63.

Becker, Markus, Matthias Gebauer, Konstantin von Hammerstein, Christiane Hoffmann, Peter Müller, Ralf Neukirch, René Pfister, Matthias Schepp, and Christoph Schult, "NATO Concerned Over Possible Russia-Turkey Hostilities," *Der Spiegel*, February 19, 2016. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/nato-worried-about-possible-turkey-russia-hostilities-a-1078349.html

Bekdil, Burak Ege, "US Begins Removing Patriot Missiles from Turkey," *Defense News*, October 11, 2015. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/2015/10/11/us-begins-removing-patriot-missiles-from-turkey/73787688

Bentzen, Naja, and Martin Russell, *Russia's Disinformation on Ukraine and the EU's Response*, European Parliamentary Research Service, November 2015. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2015/571339/EPRS_BRI(2015)571339_EN.pdf

Bershidsky, Leonid, "How Ukraine Weaned Itself Off Russian Gas," *Bloomberg Opinion*, January 12, 2016. As of February 26, 2019: https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2016-01-12/how-ukraine-weaned-itself-off-russian-gas

Biddle, Stephen, *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004.

Bird, Michael, "A Union Between Moldova and Romania: On the Cards?" *EU Observer*, March 5, 2015. As of February 26, 2019: https://euobserver.com/beyond-brussels/127824

Birnbaum, Michael, "Russia Pressures Moldova and Ukraine Ahead of Signing of EU Association Agreement," *Washington Post*, June 26, 2014.

———, "3 Maps That Show How Russia and NATO Might Accidentally Escalate into War," *Washington Post*, August 12, 2015.

Bix, Herbert P., "The Russo-Georgia War and the Challenge to American Global Dominance," *Asia-Pacific Journal*, Vol. 6, No. 10, October 3, 2008. As of February 26, 2019: http://apjjf.org/-Herbert-P.-Bix/2919/article.html

Blandy, Charles W., *Provocation, Deception, Entrapment: The Russo-Georgian Five Day War*, Swindon, UK: Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, Conflict Studies Research Centre, 2009.

"Blasts Cut Georgia Gas, Electricity Supplies," CNN, January 22, 2006. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.cnn.com/2006/WORLD/europe/01/22/russia.gas

Blomfield, Adrian, "War of Words Over the Bronze Soldier," *The Telegraph*, February 5, 2007. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/1541641/War-of-words-over-bronze-soldier.html

"'Бойкотирование эстонских товаров—малая часть того, что российской стороне необходимо предпринять в отношении руководителей этой страны,'—Любомир Тян" ["'Boycotting Estonian Products Is a Small Part of What the Russian Side Needs to Do in Relation to the Leaders of This Country'—Lubomir Tyan"], *Nizhny Novgorod*, May 3, 2007. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.niann.ru/?id=315506

BP, *BP Statistical Review of World Energy*, June 2015.

Brabo, Manu, "In Pictures: Crimea's Self-Defence Force," Al Jazeera, April 9, 2014. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/inpictures/2014/04/pictures-crimea-self-defence-forc-2014471556562314.html

Bright, Arthur, "Estonia Accuses Russia of 'Cyberattack,'" *Christian Science Monitor*, May 17, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.csmonitor.com/2007/0517/p99s01-duts.html

"Bronze Meddling: Russian Hypocrisy and Heavy-Handedness Towards a Former Colony," *The Economist*, May 3, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.economist.com/node/9122766?zid=307&ah=5e80419d1bc9821ebe173f4f0f060a07

Buckley, Neil, "Transnistria Shapes Up as Next Ukraine-Russia Flashpoint," *Financial Times*, June 3, 2015.

Bukia, Sopho, "Georgia Wins Against Moscow at European Court," Caucasus Reporting Service, No. 743, July 7, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
https://iwpr.net/global-voices/georgia-wins-against-moscow-european-court

Bugriy, Maksym, "The Crimean Operation: Russian Force and Tactics," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 11, No. 61, April 1, 2014a. As of February 26, 2019:
https://jamestown.org/program/the-crimean-operation-russian-force-and-tactics/

———, "The Southeast Unrest and the Ukrainian Military," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 11, No. 91, May 15, 2014b. As of February 26, 2019:
https://jamestown.org/program/the-southeast-unrest-and-the-ukrainian-military

Bult, Jeroen, "Nord Stream: Estonia's Lost Battle," No. 80, Tallinn, Estonia: International Centre for Defence and Security, April 2010.

Bumgarner, John, and Scott Borg, *Overview by the US-CCU of the Cyber Campaign Against Georgia in August of 2008*, U.S. Cyber Consequences Unit, August 2009.

Butter, David, "Does Turkey Really Get Its Oil from Islamic State?" BBC News, December 1, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34973181

Cagaptay, Soner, "Why Recep Tayyip Erdogan Will Be Turkey's First Directly Elected President," *Los Angeles Times*, August 7, 2014.

Calus, Kamil, "Russian Sanctions Against Moldova: Minor Effects, Major Potential," Warsaw, Poland: Center for Eastern Studies, November 6, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-commentary/2014-11-06/russian-sanctions-against-moldova-minor-effects-major

Campbell, Garrett I., "An Eye for an Eye: Will Russia Retaliate Against Turkey?" *Order from Chaos Blog*, Brookings Institution, December 22, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2015/12/22/an-eye-for-an-eye-will-russia-retaliate-against-turkey

Casey, Tom, Deputy Spokesman, U.S. Department of State, "Georgia: Turnover of Russians to OSCE," press statement, October 2, 2006. As of February 26, 2019:
http://2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2006/73448.htm

Ceapai, Alla, "Câte Secții de Votare ar fi Trebuit să Fie Deschise în Rusia?" ["How Many Polling Stations Should Be Opened in Russia?"], Radio Europa Libera Moldova [Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty], October 21, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.europalibera.org/content/article/26648465.html

Central Intelligence Agency, "Estonia," *World Factbook*, last updated July 10, 2019a. As of July 10, 2019:
https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/en.html

———, "Moldova," *World Factbook*, last updated July 10, 2019b. As of July 10, 2019:
https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/md.html

———, "Turkey," *World Factbook*, last updated July 10, 2019c. As of July 10, 2019:
https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/tu.html

———, "Ukraine," *World Factbook*, last updated July 10, 2019d. As of July 10, 2019:
https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/up.html

———, "Georgia," *World Factbook*, last updated July 16, 2019e. As of July 16, 2019:
https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gg.html

Cetingulec, Mehmet, "Will Russia's Economic Restrictions on Turkey Backfire?" *Al-Monitor*, December 13, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/12/turkey-russia-steep-costs-of-downing-of-russian-jet.html

"Чайка благословил 'грузинские чистки,'" ["Chaika Blessed 'Georgian Cleansings'"], *Izvestia*, October 6, 2006. As of February 26, 2019:
http://izvestia.ru/news/385909

Charap, Samuel, "The Ghost of Hybrid War," *Survival*, Vol. 57, No. 6, December 2015, pp. 51–58.

Chivers, C. J., "Georgia Reopens Old Gas Line to Ease Post-Blast Shortage," *New York Times*, January 24, 2006.

Chubashenko, Dmitry, "Central Heating Fails in Moldova After Gas Cut," Reuters, January 9, 2009. As of February 26, 2019:
http://uk.reuters.com/article/russia-ukraine-gas-moldova-idUKL96060720090109

Chulov, Martin, "Turkey Sends in Jets as Syria's Agony Spills Over Every Border," *The Guardian*, July 25, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jul/26/isis-syria-turkey-us

Church, George J., Sally Donnelly, and Ann Simmons, "Next, a Cold Peace?" *Time*, December 19, 1994.

CIA—*See* Central Intelligence Agency.

Ciochina, Simion, "Moldovan Migrants Denied Re-Entry to Russia," *Deutsche Welle*, December 21, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.dw.com/en/moldovan-migrants-denied-re-entry-to-russia/a-18144394

Clarke, Richard A., and Robert K. Knake, *Cyber War: The Next Threat to National Security and What to Do About It*, New York: HarperCollins, 2010.

"COE, PACE Chairs Condemn Russia's Move," *Civil Georgia*, August 26, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
https://old.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=19300

Collier, David, "Understanding Process Tracing," *Political Science and Politics*, Vol. 44, No. 4, 2011, pp. 823–830.

"Конфликт России и Эстонии стал приобретать черты экономического противостояния и признаки историко-этнического диссонанса" ["Conflict Between Russia and Estonia Has Acquired Characteristics of the Economic Confrontation and Signs of Historic-Ethnic Dissonance"], *Psikhologia*, May 5, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
http://psy.rin.ru/cgi-bin/news.pl?id=124331

Conley, Heather A., and Theodore P. Gerber, *Russian Soft Power in the 21st Century: An Examination of Russian Compatriot Policy in Estonia*, Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, August 2011. As of February 26, 2019:
http://csis.org/files/publication/110826_Conley_RussianSoftPower_Web.pdf

Connable, Ben, Jason H. Campbell, and Dan Madden, *Stretching and Exploiting Thresholds for High Order War: How Russia, China, and Iran Are Eroding American Influence Using Time-Tested Measures Short of War*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, RR-1003-A, 2016. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1003.html

"Constitutional Court Approves Russia-Crimea Treaty," *Moscow Times*, March 20, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2014/03/19/constitutional-court-approves-russia-crimea-treaty-a33133

Cooper, Helene, "U.S. Won't Push NATO to Admit Georgia," *New York Times*, August 18, 2008.

Cooper, Helene, C. J. Chivers, and Clifford J. Levy, "U.S. Watched as a Squabble Turned into a Showdown," *New York Times*, August 17, 2008.

Cornell, Svante E., *Small Nations and Great Powers: A Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict in the Caucasus*, London: Curzon Press, 2001.

Cornell, Svante E., Johanna Popjanevski, and Niklas Nilsson, *Russia's War in Georgia: Causes and Implications for Georgia and the World*, Washington, D.C.: Central Asia–Caucasus Institute and Silk Road Studies Program, August 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
https://silkroadstudies.org/resources/pdf/SilkRoadPapers/2008_08_PP_CornellPopjanevskiNillson_Russia-Georgia.pdf

Cornell, Svante E., and S. Frederick Starr, eds., *The Guns of August 2008: Russia's War in Georgia*, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2009.

Coskun, Orhan, and Humeyra Pamuk, "Russia Halts Work in Turkey's First Nuclear Power Plant After Spat—Officials," Reuters, December 9, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.reuters.com/article/mideast-crisis-turkey-russia-nuclear-idUSL8N13Y2WB20151209

Council of the European Union, statement on the situation in front of the Estonian Embassy in Moscow, May 2, 2007.

———, "2756th Council Meeting, General Affairs and External Relations, External Relations, Luxembourg, October 16–17, 2006," press release, October 22, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_PRES-06-265_en.htm

Coyer, Paul, "(Un)Holy Alliance: Vladimir Putin, The Russian Orthodox Church and Russian Exceptionalism," *Forbes*, May 21, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.forbes.com/sites/paulcoyer/2015/05/21/unholy-alliance-vladimir-putin-and-the-russian-orthodox-church

Dąborowski, Tomasz, "Third Energy Package in Wider Black Sea Area: A Panacea for Security Problems? Moldova Case Study," in *Energy in the Wider Black Sea Area—National and Allied Approaches*, proceedings of NATO workshop in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, November 10–13, 2011, Amsterdam: IOS Press, 2013, pp. 83–89.

Danchev, Dancho, "Georgia President's Web Site Under DDoS Attack from Russian Hackers," *ZD Net*, July 22, 2008a. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.zdnet.com/blog/security/georgia-presidents-web-site-under-ddos-attack-from-russian-hackers/1533

———, "Coordinated Russia vs Georgia Cyber Attack in Progress," *ZD Net*, August 11, 2008b. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.zdnet.com/article/coordinated-russia-vs-georgia-cyber-attack-in-progress

Dearden, Lizzie, "Full List of Incidents Involving Russian Military and NATO Since March 2014," *The Independent*, November 10, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/full-list-of-incidents-involving-russian-military-and-nato-since-march-2014-9851309.html

Delman, Edward, "The Link Between Putin's Military Campaigns in Syria and Ukraine," *The Atlantic*, October 2, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/10/navy-base-syria-crimea-putin/408694

de Larrinaga, Nicholas, "Russia Responds to Turkish Su-24 Shootdown," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, November 25, 2015.

Dempsey, Judy, "Judy Asks: Is NATO Doing Enough in Europe?" Brussels, Belgium: Carnegie Europe, March 23, 2016. As of February 26, 2019:
http://carnegieeurope.eu/strategiceurope/?fa=63093

Devdariani, Jaba, "Georgia and Russia: The Troubled Road to Accommodation," in Robert Legvold and Bruce Coppieters, eds., *Statehood and Security: Georgia After the Rose Revolution*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005, pp. 153–204.

de Waal, Thomas, *The Caucasus: An Introduction*, Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2010.

———, "A Crucial Election in Georgia," Brussels, Belgium: Carnegie Europe, September 11, 2012. As of February 26, 2019:
http://carnegieeurope.eu/publications/?fa=49281

Diaconu, Lucia, and Mircea Ticudean, "Battle Over Moldovan Antidiscrimination Bill Reaches Fevered Pitch," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, April 8, 2012. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.rferl.org/content/moldova_gay_antidiscrimination_law_opposition/24541486.html

Dolan, David, "Vice President Biden Chides Turkey Over Freedom of Expression," Reuters, January 22, 2016. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-turkey-biden-idUSKCN0V01PC

Dolgov, Anna, "Russian Exchange Students in Turkey Will Return Home," *Moscow Times*, December 2, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/12/02/russian-exchange-students-in-turkey-will-return-home-a51021

Donovan, George T., Jr., *Russian Operational Art in the Russo-Georgian War of 2008*, thesis, Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: U.S. Army War College, 2009.

Dougherty, Jill, and Riina Kaljurand, *Estonia's "Virtual Russian World": The Influence of Russian Media on Estonia's Russian Speakers*, Tallinn, Estonia: International Centre for Defence and Security, October 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
https://icds.ee/wp-content/uploads/2014/
Jill_Dougherty__Riina_Kaljurand_-_Estonia_s__Virtual_Russian_World_.pdf

Dowling, Timothy C., ed., *Russia at War: From the Mongol Conquest to Afghanistan, Chechnya, and Beyond, Volume 1: A–M*, Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2015.

Dreyer, Iana, and Nicu Popescu, *The Eurasian Customs Union: The Economics and the Politics*, Issue Brief No. 11, Paris: European Union Institute for Security Studies, March 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.iss.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUISSFiles/Brief_11_Eurasian_Union.pdf

Dyomkin, Denis, and Suleiman Al-Khalidi, "Putin Says Russians to Start Withdrawing from Syria, as Peace Talks Resume," Reuters, March 15, 2016. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-russia-pullout-idUSKCN0WG23C

Dzhindzhikhashvili, Misha, "Russia Cuts Travel Links with Georgia," Associated Press (*Washington Post*), October 3, 2006.

———, "Thousands of Georgians Have Formed a Human Chain Stretching for About 7 Kilometers (4 Miles) Through the Capital to Protest Negotiations Between Their Government and the Russian Natural Gas Monopoly, Gazprom," Associated Press (*U.S. News and World Report*), March 6, 2016. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.usnews.com/news/business/articles/2016-03-06/
georgians-form-human-chain-to-protest-talks-with-gazprom

"The Economist Explains: What the Original Crimean War Was All About," *The Economist*, March 18, 2014.

Ellison, Brian J., "Russian Grand Strategy in the South Ossetia War," *Democratizatsiya*, Vol. 19, No. 4, Fall 2011, pp. 343–366.

Emmott, Robin, "As Russia Reasserts Itself, NATO Opens Biggest Exercises in Years," Reuters, October 19, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-nato-exercises-idUSKCN0SD1F920151019

Erol, Sman, "China Welcomes Turkish Bid for SCO Membership," *European Dialogue*, February 11, 2013. As of February 26, 2019:
http://eurodialogue.org/China-welcomes-Turkish-bid-for-SCO-membership

"Estonia Seals Off Russian Memorial," BBC News, April 26, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6597497.stm

"Estonia Trial of Russia Activists," BBC News, January 14, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7187437.stm

"Estonian Government Cuts Up WWII Memorial," RIA Novosti (*Sputnik*), April 27, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
http://sputniknews.com/world/20070427/64546318.html

European Commission, "Antitrust: Commission Sends Statement of Objections to Gazprom for Alleged Abuse of Dominance on Central and Eastern European Gas Supply Markets," press release, April 22, 2015. As of June 6, 2019:
http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-4828_en.htm

———, "EU-Turkey Agreement: Questions and Answers," fact sheet, March 19, 2016. As of February 26, 2019:
http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-16-963_en.htm

———, "Countries and Regions: Moldova," webpage, last updated April 16, 2018. As of February 26, 2019:
http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/countries/moldova

———, "Countries and Regions: Turkey," webpage, last updated February 15, 2019a. As of February 26, 2019:
http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/countries/turkey

European Council and Council of the European Union, "Timeline—EU Restrictive Measures in Response to the Crisis in Ukraine," last updated March 15, 2019. As of March 15, 2019:
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/sanctions/ukraine-crisis/history-ukraine-crisis

European Council on Foreign Relations, "Russia: Diversification of Gas-Supply Route to Europe," European Foreign Policy Scorecard 2015, London, 2015. As of March 15, 2016:
http://www.ecfr.eu/scorecard/2015/russia/8

European Parliament, "Resolution on the Visa Regime Imposed by the Russian Federation on Georgia," January 18, 2001.

———, "Resolution of 5 June 2008 on the Situation in Georgia," June 5, 2008.

———, "MEPs Back Freeing Wine Trade with Moldova to Offset Russian Trade Sanctions," press release, December 10, 2013. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/20131206IPR30026/
MEPs-back-freeing-wine-trade-with-Moldova-to-offset-Russian-trade-sanctions

"Facing a Cold Wind: Russia Looms Large in the Baltic States," *The Economist*, June 28, 2007.

Faiola, Anthony, "A Ghost of World War II History Haunts Ukraine's Standoff with Russia," *Washington Post*, March 25, 2014.

Farchy, Jack, and Roman Olearchyk, "Moscow Votes to Suspend Free-Trade Zone with Ukraine," *Financial Times*, December 22, 2015.

Farivar, Cyrus, "A Brief Examination of Media Coverage of Cyberattacks (2007–Present)," in Christian Czosseck and Kenneth Geers, eds., *The Virtual Battlefield: Perspective on Cyber Warfare*, Washington, D.C.: IOS Press, 2009, pp. 182–189.

"FIFA to Monitor Russian Ban on Turkish Footballers," Anadolu Agency (*Hurriyet Daily*), December 3, 2015. As of July 15, 2019:
http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/fifa-to-monitor-russian-ban-on-turkish-footballers-----92019

Окончательное решение советского вопроса. Эстония готовится к переносу памятников" ["Final Solution of the Soviet Question; Estonia Prepares to Move the Monument"], Channel One (Russia), November 26, 2006. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.1tv.ru/news/world/61791

Flanagan, Stephen J., "The Turkey-Russia-Iran Nexus: Eurasian Power Dynamics," *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 36, No. 1, Winter 2013, pp. 163–178.

"Four Russian Officers Arrested, Charged with Espionage," *Civil Georgia*, September 27, 2006. As of February 26, 2019:
https://old.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=13658

Freedman, Lawrence, "Ukraine and the Art of Crisis Management," *Survival*, Vol. 56, No. 3, 2014a, pp. 7–42.

———, "Ukraine and the Art of Limited War," *War on the Rocks*, October 8, 2014b. As of February 26, 2019: http://warontherocks.com/2014/10/ukraine-and-the-art-of-limited-war

———, "Ukraine and the Art of Limited War," *Survival*, Vol. 56, No. 6, 2015, pp. 7–38.

Galeotti, Mark, "The Rising Influence of Russian Special Forces," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, 2014.

———, "'Hybrid War' and 'Little Green Men': How It Works, and How It Doesn't," excerpt from *Ukraine and Russia: People, Politics, Propaganda and Perspectives*, E-International Relations, April 16, 2015. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.e-ir.info/2015/04/16/hybrid-war-and-little-green-men-how-it-works-and-how-it-doesnt

———, "Hybrid, Ambiguous, and Non-Linear? How New Is Russia's 'New Way of War'?" *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, Vol. 27, No. 2, 2016, pp. 282–301.

Ganea, Liana, Oana Ganea, Ludmila Gamurari, and Cristian Ghinea, *Pluralismul Extern al Mass-Mediei din RM* [*External Pluralism of Mass Media in the Republic of Moldova*], Bucharest, Romania: Soros Foundation, 2014. As of January 2016: http://www.soros.md/files/publications/documents/Pluralismul%20extern%20al%20mass-mediei%20din%20RM.pdf

Gavrylyuk, Oleksandr, "Ukraine's Ineffectual Information Ministry: Underfunded or Misconceived?" *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 12, No. 75, April 22, 2015. As of February 26, 2019: https://jamestown.org/program/ukraines-ineffectual-information-ministry-underfunded-or-misconceived

"Georgia Breaks Ties with Russia," BBC News, August 29, 2008. As of February 26, 2019: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7588428.stm

"Georgia Condemns Russian Actions," BBC News, May 18, 2008.

"Georgia: EU Commissioner Urges Dialogue with Moscow," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, October 2, 2006. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1071746.html

"Georgia: Tbilisi Turns Unemployment Issue into a Reality Show," Eurasianet, December 1, 2011. As of February 26, 2019: https://eurasianet.org/georgia-tbilisi-turns-unemployment-issue-into-a-reality-show

"Georgia Threatens to Block Russian WTO Bid," UPI, October 7, 2006. As of February 26, 2019: https://www.upi.com/Georgia-threatens-to-block-Russian-WTO-bid/36571160226183

"Georgian Concern Over Russia's 'Creeping Annexation' of Abkhazia," confidential U.S. diplomatic cable, April 10, 2008, released August 30, 2011.

"Georgians Deported as Row Deepens," BBC News, October 6, 2006. As of February 26, 2019: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/5412672.stm

Gerasymchuk, Sergiy, "Frozen Conflict in Moldova's Transnistria: A Fitting Analogy to Ukraine's Hybrid War?" Washington, D.C.: Atlantic Council, September 1, 2015. As of February 26, 2019: https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/frozen-conflict-in-moldova-s-transnistria-a-fitting-analogy-to-ukraine-s-hybrid-war

Gerstein, Josh, "DOJ Told RT to Register as Foreign Agent Partly Because of Alleged 2016 Election Interference," *Politico*, December 21, 2017. As of June 6, 2019: https://www.politico.com/story/2017/12/21/russia-today-justice-department-foreign-agent-election-interference-312211

Giles, Keir, "Few Will Believe Russia's 'Proof' That Its Jet Was in Syrian Airspace," *The Guardian*, November 24, 2015. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/nov/24/russia-proof-jet-syrian-airspace-turkey

Girit, Selin, "Turkey Faces Big Losses as Russia Sanctions Bite," BBC News, January 2, 2016. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35209987

Gladunov, Oleg, "Деньги мигрантов останутся в России" ["Migrants' Money Will Stay in Russia"], *Rossyiskaya Gazeta*, October 5, 2006. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.rg.ru/2006/10/05/finansy.html

GlobalSecurity.org, "Georgia 2008 Path to War," webpage, last updated April 18, 2016. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/georgia-2008-1.htm

Goble, Paul A., "Friends in Need: 18 Countries Who Gave Ukraine Non-Lethal Military Aid," *Euromaidan Press*, August 5, 2016. As of February 26, 2019:
http://euromaidanpress.com/2016/08/05/friends-in-need-18-country-who-supplied-ukraine-with-non-lethal-weapons/

Gogolashvili, Kakha, Tengiz Pkhaladze, Nikolay Silaev, Tornike Sharashendize, Ivan Sukhov, Vladimer Papava, Boris Frumkin, George Tarkhan-Mouravi, Andrei Zagorski, Ivlian Haindrava, and Alexander Skakov, *Russia and Georgia: Searching for the Way Out*, Tbilisi, Georgia: Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies, 2011. As of February 26, 2019:
https://carnegieendowment.org/2011/12/31/russia-and-georgia-searching-way-out-pub-47179

Golubkova, Katya, "Russia Warns Turkey Over Aegean Warship Incident," Reuters, December 13, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-russia-turkey-idUSKBN0TW0EU20151213

Greenslade, Roy, "Journalists Covering the Ukraine Crisis Suffer Intimidation," *The Guardian*, July 23, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.theguardian.com/media/greenslade/2014/jul/23/journalist-safety-ukraine

Grigas, Agnia, "How Soft Power Works: Russian Passportization and Compatriot Policies Paved Way for Crimean Annexation and War in Donbas," Atlantic Council, February 22, 2016. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/how-soft-power-works-russian-passportization-and-compatriot-policies-paved-way-for-crimean-annexation-and-war-in-donbas

———, "Russia's Passport Expansionism," *Project Syndicate*, May 7, 2019. As of June 6, 2019:
https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/russia-eastern-ukraine-passportization-citizenship-by-agnia-grigas-2019-05

Harress, Christopher, "Ukraine War Deserters: 16,000 Troops Abandoned Military Since Conflict Began, Kiev Official Says," *International Business Times*, October 5, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.ibtimes.com/
ukraine-war-deserters-16000-troops-abandoned-military-conflict-began-kiev-official-2127502

Head, Jonathan, "Turkey Election: Erdogan's Economic Trump Card," BBC News, June 10, 2011. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-13731381

Heickerö, Roland, *Emerging Cyber Threats and Russian Views on Information Warfare and Information Operations*, Stockholm, Sweden: Swedish Defense Research Agency, 2010.

Higgins, Andrew, Michael R. Gordon, and Andrew E. Kramer, "Photos Link Masked Men in East Ukraine to Russia," *New York Times*, April 20, 2014.

Hill, William H., *Is Moldova Headed East?* Kennan Cable No. 8, Washington, D.C.: Kennan Institute, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, June 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/8-KENNAN%20CABLE-HILL.PDF

History Channel, "This Day in History: Ukraine Declares Its Independence (January 26, 1918)," webpage, last updated August 21, 2018. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/ukraine-declares-its-independence

Hoffmann, Christiane, Marc Hujer, Ralf Neukirch, Matthias Schepp, Gregor Peter Schmitz, and Christoph Schult, "Summit of Failure: How the EU Lost Russia Over Ukraine," *Der Spiegel*, November 24, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/
war-in-ukraine-a-result-of-misunderstandings-between-europe-and-russia-a-1004706-2.html

Hollis, David, "Cyberwar Case Study: Georgia 2008," *Small Wars Journal*, January 6, 2011. As of February 26, 2019:
https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/cyberwar-case-study-georgia-2008

Human Rights Watch, "The Campaign Against Georgians," in *Singled Out: Russia's Detection and Expulsion of Georgians*, New York, October 2007, pp. 30–65. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.hrw.org/reports/2007/russia1007/russia1007web.pdf

———, *Up in Flames: Humanitarian Law Violations and Civilian Victims in the Conflict Over South Ossetia*, New York, January 23, 2009. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/georgia0109web.pdf

Hunt, Martin, "Lessons to Learn from Crimea: Does Estonia's National Defence Model Meet Our Needs?" Tallinn, Estonia: International Centre for Defence and Security, June 3, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
https://icds.ee/lessons-to-learn-from-crimea-does-estonias-national-defence-model-meet-our-needs

Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Conflict in Georgia, *Report*, Vol. 1, September 2009. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.mpil.de/files/pdf4/IIFFMCG_Volume_I2.pdf

Institutul de Politici Publice, *Barometrul Opiniei Publice* [*Barometer of Public Opinion*], CBS-AXA survey, Republic of Moldova, November 2013. As of September 27, 2019:
http://ipp.md/old/public/files/Barometru/BOP_11.2013_prima_parte_finale.pdf

———, *Barometrul Opiniei Publice* [*Barometer of Public Opinion*], CIVIS survey, Republic of Moldova, November 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://bop.ipp.md/en

International Centre for Defence and Security, "Russia's Involvement in the Tallinn Disturbances," Tallinn, Estonia, May 11, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
https://icds.ee/russias-involvement-in-the-tallinn-disturbances

International Crisis Group, *Moldova's Uncertain Future*, Europe Report No. 175, August 17, 2006. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/eastern-europe/moldova/moldova-s-uncertain-future

———, *South Ossetia: The Burden of Recognition*, Europe and Central Asia Report No. 205, June 7, 2010.
https://www.crisisgroup.org/europe-central-asia/caucasus/south-ossetia-burden-recognition

International Trade Center, "International Trade Statistics 2001–2018," webpage, undated. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.intracen.org/itc/market-info-tools/trade-statistics

"В тени Бронзового солдата: Эстония оглядывается на апрель 2007-го" ["In the Shadow of the Bronze Soldier: Estonia Looks Back on April 2007"], *Deutsche Welle*, April 28, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.dw.com/ru/в-тени-бронзового-солдата-эстония-оглядывается-на-апрель-2007-го/a-3298767

Ioffe, Julia, "What Is Russia Today? Kremlin's Propaganda Outlet Has an Identity Crisis," *Columbia Journalism Review*, September–October 2010. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.cjr.org/feature/what_is_russia_today.php

Jennings, Gareth, "Turkey Protests Second Russian Incursion in as Many Days," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, October 6, 2015.

Jones, Dorian, and Durna Safarova, "Turkey Hunts for Alternatives to Russian Energy," Eurasianet, January 27, 2016. As of February 26, 2019:
https://eurasianet.org/turkey-hunts-for-alternatives-to-russian-energy

Jones, Sam, "Russia-Linked Cyber Attack on Ukraine PM's Office," *Financial Times* (CNBC), August 8, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.cnbc.com/2014/08/08/russia-linked-cyber-attack-on-ukraine-pms-office.html

Jonsson, Oscar, and Robert Seely, "Russian Full-Spectrum Conflict: An Appraisal After Ukraine," *Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 1, 2015, pp. 1–22.

Kadermyatov, Ruslan, "Временное помешательство отношений: Политические акции против Эстонии не нашли поддержки на Западе" ["Temporary Sundown in the Relationships: Political Action Against Estonia Did Not Find Support in the West"], Lenta.ru, May 3, 2007. As of February 26, 2019: https://lenta.ru/articles/2007/05/03/answer

Kaitsepolitseiamet [Estonian Internal Security Service], *Annual Review*, 2007. As of February 26, 2019: https://www.kapo.ee/en/content/annual-reviews.html

Kapanadze, Sergi, *Georgia's Vulnerability to Russia's Pressure Points*, London: European Council on Foreign Relations, June 2014. As of February 26, 2019: https://www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/georgias_vulnerability_to_russian_pressure_points312

Karadeniz, Tulay, Ece Toksabay, and Humeyra Pamuk, "Turkey Seeks Allies' Support for Group Operation as Syria War Nears Border," Reuters, February 16, 2016. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-turkey-idUSKCN0VP0WO

Kates, Glenn, "Something Old, Something New: Georgian Wines Adapt to Changing Market," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, April 17, 2013. As of February 26, 2019: https://www.rferl.org/a/georgia-wine-exports/24960600.html

———, "Separatist Shuffle: Who's In, Who's Out Among Donbas Rebels," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, August 15, 2014. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.rferl.org/content/separatist-shuffle-whos-in-whos-out/26532512.html

Kates, Glenn, and Li Luo, "Russian Gas: How Much Is That?" Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, July 1, 2014. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.rferl.org/content/russian-gas-how-much-gazprom/25442003.html

Katser-Buchkovska, Nataliya, "Reform of Ukraine's Gas Market: A Chance to Move Forward," *Financial Times*, December 22, 2015.

Keizer, Gregg, "Russian Hacker 'Militia' Mobilizes to Attack Georgia," *Computerworld*, August 12, 2008. As of February 26, 2019: https://www.computerworld.com/article/2532365/russian-hacker--militia--mobilizes-to-attack-georgia.html

Khashig, Inal, "Абхазы в погоне за российскими паспортами" ["The Abkhazians Are Chasing Russian Passports"], Caucasus Reporting Service, No. 135, June 27, 2002. As of February 26, 2019: https://iwpr.net/ru/global-voices/абхазы-в-погоне-за-российскими-паспортами

King, Charles, "Five Day War: Managing Moscow after the Georgia Crisis," *Foreign Affairs*, November–December, 2008.

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994.

Kipp, Jacob, "A Look Back at the WWII Crimean Campaign," book review, *War on the Rocks*, December 8, 2014. As of February 26, 2019: http://warontherocks.com/2014/12/a-look-back-at-the-wwii-crimean-campaign

Kirişci, Kemal, "New Year, New Leaf? What to Watch in Turkey in 2016," *Order from Chaos Blog*, Brookings Institution, January 4, 2016. As of February 26, 2019: https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2016/01/04/new-year-new-leaf-what-to-watch-in-turkey-in-2016

Kirova, Iskra, *Public Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution: Russia, Georgia and the EU in Abkhazia, Georgia, and South Ossetia*, Los Angeles, Calif.: University of Southern California Center on Public Diplomacy, Paper No. 7, 2012. As of February 26, 2019: https://www.uscpublicdiplomacy.org/sites/uscpublicdiplomacy.org/files/useruploads/u35361/2012%20Paper%207.pdf

Kofman, Michael, "Putin's Strategy Is Far Better Than You Think," *War on the Rocks*, September 7, 2015. As of February 26, 2019: http://warontherocks.com/2015/09/putin-is-a-far-better-strategist-than-you-think/

Korns, Stephen W., and Joshua E. Kastenberg, "Georgia's Cyber Left Hook," *Parameters*, Winter 2008–2009, pp. 60–76.

"Кремль готовит новый молодежный проект на замену 'Идущим вместе'" ["The Kremlin Is Preparing a New Youth Project to Substitute for 'Walking Together'"], NEWSru, February 21, 2005. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.newsru.com/russia/21feb2005/kremlin.html

Krutaine, Aija, and Andrius Syta, "Battle of the Airwaves: Baltics Compete with Russia for Hearts and Minds," Reuters, February 13, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/02/13/us-baltic-russia-propaganda-idUSKBN0LH1OD20150213

Kucera, Joshua, "Russia, with Turkey in Mind, Announces Big Weapons Deal with Armenia," *Moscow Times*, February 24, 2016. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2016/02/24/
russia-with-turkey-in-mind-announces-big-weapons-deal-with-armenia-a51940

Kuzio, Taras, *The Crimea: Europe's Next Flashpoint?* Washington, D.C.: Jamestown Foundation, November 2010.

Lake, Eli, and Josh Rogin, "Ukraine Says Russian Generals Lead Separatists," *Bloomberg Opinion*, July 2, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2015-07-02/ukraine-says-russian-generals-lead-separatists

"Лавров: Москву тревожит милитаризация Грузии" ["Lavrov: Moscow Is Concerned by Georgia's Militarization"], Grani.ru, October 3, 2006. As of February 26, 2019:
http://graniru.org/Politics/Russia/m.112322.html

"Лавров: никакого доверия к грузинскому руководству не осталось" ["Lavrov: No Trust Left for Georgian Government"], *Vesti*, August 12, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=200375

"Лавров: российские бизнесмены были вправе сократить транзит через Эстонию после демонтажа Бронзового солдата" ["Lavrov: Russian Businessmen Had a Right to Reduce Transit Through Estonia After the Demolition of the Bronze Soldier"], Interfax, April 2003, 2009. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.interfax.ru/russia/75997

Lesk, Michael, "The New Front Line: Estonia Under Cyberassault," *IEEE Security and Privacy*, Vol. 5, No. 4, July–August 2007, pp. 76–79.

Liklikadze, Koba, "Iraq: As Third-Largest Contingent, Georgia Hopes to Show Its Worth," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, September 10, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.rferl.org/a/1078614.html

Livny, Eric, Mack Ott, and Karine Torosyan, *Impact of Russian Sanctions on the Georgian Economy*, Tbilisi, Georgia: International School of Economics at Tbilisi State University, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
http://georgica.tsu.edu.ge/files/02-Economy/Economy/Livny-d.u.pdf

Loit, Urmas, "Estonia: Media Landscapes," Maastricht, Netherlands: European Journalism Centre, 2009.

Lomagin, Nikita, "Interest Groups in Russian Foreign Policy: The Invisible Hand of the Russian Orthodox Church," *International Politics*, Vol. 49, No. 4, July 2012, pp. 498–516.

Lomsadze, Giorgi, "Turkey-Russia Conflict Divides South Caucasus," Eurasianet, December 2, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
https://eurasianet.org/turkey-russia-conflict-divides-south-caucasus

Luhn, Alec, "Fight Club, Donetsk," *Foreign Policy*, June 16, 2014a.

———, "Anatomy of a Bloodbath," *Foreign Policy*, September 6, 2014b.

———, "The Draft Dodgers of Ukraine," *Foreign Policy*, February 18, 2015.

Luhn, Alec, and Ian Black, "Erdoğan Has Apologised for Downing of Russian Jet, Kremlin Says," *The Guardian*, June 27, 2016. As of June 6, 2016:
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jun/27/kremlin-says-erdogan-apologises-russian-jet-turkish

Lukyanov, Fyodor, "Putin Has Stumbled in Ukraine," *Moscow Times*, August 10, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2014/08/10/putin-has-stumbled-in-ukraine-a38161

Lyman, Rick, "Eastern Europe Cautiously Welcomes Larger U.S. Military Presence," *New York Times*, February 2, 2016.

Malling, Jens, "The Value of a Frozen Conflict," *Le Monde Diplomatique*, March 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://mondediplo.com/2015/03/04transnistria

Marcus, Jonathan, "Russia S-400 Syria Missile Deployment Sends Robust Signal," BBC News, December 1, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34976537

Markoff, John, "Before the Gunfire, Cyberattacks," *New York Times*, August 12, 2008.

McElroy, Damien, "South Ossetian Police Tell Georgians to Take a Russian Passport, or Leave Their Homes," *The Telegraph*, August 30, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/georgia/2651836/South-Ossetian-police-tell-Georgians-to-take-a-Russian-passport-or-leave-their-homes.html

McFarquhar, Neil, and Steven Erlanger, "NATO-Russia Tensions Rise After Turkey Downs Jet," *New York Times*, November 24, 2015.

McInnis, Kathleen J., *Coalition Contributions to Countering the Islamic State*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, R44135, August 24, 2016.

Mearsheimer, John J., "Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault," *Foreign Affairs*, September–October 2014.

Medvedev, Dmitry, "Why I Had to Recognize Georgia's Breakaway Regions," Financial Times, August 26, 2008.

"Medvedev, Putin Accuse Georgia of Genocide," *The Hindu*, August 11, 2008.

"Медведев: Война в Грузии предотвратила расширение НАТО" ["Medvedev: War in Georgia Prevented NATO Expansion"], Grani.ru, November 29, 2011. As of February 26, 2019:
http://graniru.org/Politics/Russia/m.193273.html

Menn, Joseph, "Expert: Cyber-Attacks on Georgia Websites Tied to Mob, Russian Government," *Los Angeles Times*, August 13, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/technology/2008/08/experts-debate.html

Migration Policy Centre, *MPC Migration Profile: Moldova*, Florence, Italy: Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, June 2013. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.migrationpolicycentre.eu/docs/migration_profiles/Moldova.pdf

Mills, Claire, *UK Military Assistance to Ukraine*, UK House of Commons Briefing Paper, May 20, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN07135

"Ministrii Moldoveni, Interzis la Impartasit—Biserica Contesta Legi Anticrestine" ["Moldovan Ministers Forbidden to Receive Communion—The Church Condemns Anti-Christian Laws"], *Ziare*, June 21, 2013. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.ziare.com/europa/moldova/ministrii-moldoveni-interzis-la-impartasit-biserica-contesta-legi-anticrestine-1242303

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Moldova, *Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation*, signed November 19, 2001, and published December 30, 2002, in *Tratate Internationale* [*International Treaties*], No. 29. As of September 25, 2019:
http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=360055

Ministry of Information Policy of Ukraine, "Ministry of Information Policy of Ukraine Yurii Stets Has Reported to Journalists, Public on the Year of Activity and Publicly Announced About His Resignation," December 8, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://mip.gov.ua/en/news/836.html

"'Ministry of Truth' Sparks Controversy in Ukraine," BBC News, December 4, 2014.

Mirovalev, Mansur, "Moldova and the Russia-EU Tug-of-War," Al Jazeera, June 30, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2015/06/moldova-russia-eu-tug-war-150623090310129.html

"Moldova Election: Pro-EU Parties Edge Pro-Russian Rivals," BBC News, December 1, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-30265985

"Moldova Election: Will Voters Choose EU or Putin?" BBC News, November 29, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-30197671

"Moldova: External Affairs," *Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment*, last updated August 19, 2015.

"Moldova Inaugurates Gas Pipeline from Romania," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, August 27, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.rferl.org/content/moldova-gas-pipeline-romania/26552616.html

"В Таллине разрезан и вывезен по частям памятник Воину-освободителю. В беспорядках убит русскоязычный житель" ["Monument to the Warrior-Liberator Has Been Cut Up and Moved in Parts; One Russian Speaker Killed in Riots"], NEWSru, April 27, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.newsru.com/world/27apr2007/tallin.html

"Moscow's Russian-Turkish Cultural Center Closes Its Doors," *Moscow Times*, December 1, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/12/01/
moscows-russian-turkish-cultural-center-closes-its-doors-a51003

Moses, Asher, "Georgian Websites Forced Offline in 'Cyber War,'" *Sydney Morning Herald*, August 12, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.smh.com.au/technology/georgian-websites-forced-offline-in-cyber-war-20080812-gdsqac.html

Mosk, Matthew, and Jeffrey H. Birnbaum, "While Aide Advised McCain, His Firm Lobbied for Georgia," *Washington Post*, August 13, 2008.

Mutov, Martin, "Riigiduuma Esindajate Hinnangul on Pronkssõdurit Tükkideks Lõigatud" ["According to Duma Representatives, the Bronze Soldier Has Been Cut into Pieces"], *Postimees*, May 1, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.postimees.ee/1655931/riigiduuma-esindajate-hinnangul-on-pronkssodurit-tukkideks-loigatud

Myers, Steven Lee, "Russian Officials Pledge More Sanctions to Cut Off Cash to Georgia," *New York Times*, October 4, 2006a.

———, "Russia Deports Georgians and Increases Pressures on Businesses and Students," *New York Times*, October 7, 2006b.

———, "Russia Rebukes Estonia for Moving Soviet Statue," *New York Times*, April 27, 2007.

"'Наши' сняли осаду с эстонского посольства" ["'Nashi' Ended the Siege of the Estonian Embassy"], Lenta.ru, May 3, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
https://lenta.ru/news/2007/05/03/nashi

National Statistics Office of Georgia, homepage, undated. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.geostat.ge/index.php?action=0&lang=eng

NATO—*See* North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

NATO StratCom Centre of Excellence, "About Us," webpage, undated. As of February 25, 2019:
https://www.stratcomcoe.org/about-us

Natoli, Kristopher, "Weaponizing Nationality: An Analysis of Russia's Passport Policy in Georgia," *Boston University International Law Journal*, Vol. 28, No. 2, Summer 2010, pp. 389–417. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.bu.edu/law/journals-archive/international/documents/natoli_weaponizingnationality.pdf

Nemtsova, Anna, "The West Is About to Lose Moldova," *Foreign Policy*, February 19, 2016.

Neumann, Matthias, Robert Orttung, Jeronim Perović, Heiko Pleines, and Hans-Henning Schröder, eds., *Russian Analytical Digest*, No. 13, January 16, 2007. As of February 26, 2019: https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/27546/Russian_Analytical_Digest_13.pdf

Newnham, Randall E., "Oil, Carrots, and Sticks: Russia's Energy Resources as a Foreign Policy Tool," *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 2, July 2011, pp. 134–143.

———, "Georgia on My Mind? Russian Sanctions and the End of the 'Rose Revolution,'" *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 2, July 2015, pp. 161–170.

Nichol, Jim, *Russia-Georgia Conflict in August 2008: Context and Implications for U.S. Interests*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, RL34618, March 3, 2009.

———, *Russian Political, Economic, and Security Issues and U.S. Interests*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, RL33407, March 31, 2014.

Nicola, Stefan, "Analysis: Europe's Pipeline War," UPI, February 5, 2008.

Ночной Дозор в Таллине. Антифашисты против дискриминационных властей Эстонии [Night Watch in Tallinn: Anti-Fascists Against Discriminatory Government of Estonia], homepage, undated. As of February 26, 2019: http://dozor-ee.narod.ru

Nikolsky, Aleksey, "Russian 'Spetsnaz' Forces—From Saboteurs to Court Bailiffs," *Moscow Defense Brief*, 2014. As of April 6, 2016: http://mdb.cast.ru/mdb/1-2014/item4/article2

Norberg, Johan, ed., Fredrik Westerlund, and Ulrik Franke, "The Crimea Operation: Implications for Future Russian Military Interventions," in Niklas Granholm, Johannes Malminen, and Gudrun Persson, eds., *A Rude Awakening: Ramifications of Russian Aggression Towards Ukraine*, Stockholm, Sweden: Swedish Defence Research Agency, June 2014, pp. 41–49. As of February 26, 2019: https://www.stratcomcoe.org/niklas-granholm-johannes-malminen-gudrun-persson-eds-rude-awakening-ramifications-russian-aggression

North Atlantic Treaty Organization, "Statement by the NATO Secretary General After the Extraordinary NAC Meeting," press release, November 24, 2015. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_125052.htm

Nygren, Bertil, *The Rebuilding of Greater Russia: Putin's Foreign Policy Towards the CIS Countries*, London and New York: Routledge, 2008.

Observatory of Economic Complexity, "Turkey: Trade Balance," data as of 2017. As of June 6, 2019: https://oec.world/en/profile/country/tur/#Trade_Balance

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *Report on the Human Rights Situation in Ukraine*, September 16, 2014. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.un.org.ua/images/stories/OHCHR_sixth_report_on_Ukraine.pdf

Oliker, Olga, Keith Crane, Lowell H. Schwartz, and Catherine Yusupov, *Russian Foreign Policy: Sources and Implications*, Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, MG-768-AF, 2009. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG768.html

Oliphant, Roland, "Ukraine Bans Russian Foods as Trade War Escalates," *The Telegraph*, January 3, 2016. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/ukraine/12078921/Ukraine-bans-Russian-foods-as-trade-war-escalates.html

O'Loughlin, John, Vladimir Kolossov, and Gerard Toal, "Inside Abkhazia: Survey of Attitudes in a De Facto State," *Post-Soviet Affairs*, Vol. 27, No. 1, 2011, pp. 1–36.

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, *Istanbul Document 1999*, January 2000.

———, "OSCE Chairman Condemns Russia's Recognition of South Ossetia, Abkhazia Independence," August 26, 2008. As of February 26, 2019: https://www.osce.org/cio/50011

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, *Republic of Moldova Parliamentary Elections, 30 November 2014: OSCE/ODIHR Election Observation Mission Final Report*, Warsaw, Poland, March 10, 2015. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.osce.org/odihr/elections/moldova/144196

Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project, "Moldova: Controversial Politician Renato Usatii Released," October 26, 2015. As of June 6, 2019: https://www.occrp.org/en/27-ccwatch/cc-watch-briefs/4532-moldova-controversial-politician-renato-usatii-released

Osborn, Andrew, "Moscow Accused of Using Gas Prices to Bully Georgia," *The Independent*, November 3, 2006. As of February 26, 2019: https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/moscow-accused-of-using-gas-prices-to-bully-georgia-422764.html

OSCE—*See* Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

"OSCE Concerned Over Increased Tensions," *Civil Georgia*, May 1, 2008. As of February 26, 2019: https://civil.ge/archives/114888

Ostroukh, Andrey, "Gazprom Threatens Ukraine Supplies Over Late Payment," *Wall Street Journal*, March 7, 2014.

"Overflights Question Russia's Georgia Role: NATO," Reuters, July 15, 2008. As of February 26, 2019: https://www.reuters.com/article/us-georgia-nato/overflights-question-russias-georgia-role-nato-idUSL1558811120080715

Özertem, Hasan Selim, *Russia's Shifting Strategy in Syria and Its Implications for Turkish Foreign Policy*, Doha, Qatar: Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, December 2015. As of February 26, 2019: https://www.dohainstitute.org/en/lists/ACRPS-PDFDocumentLibrary/Russias_Shifting_Strategy_in_Syria_Implications_for_Turkish_Foreign_Policy.pdf

Paet, Urmas, "Statement by the Foreign Minister Urmas Paet," Delfi News Service, May 1, 2007. As of February 26, 2019: http://epl.delfi.ee/news/eesti/statement-by-the-foreign-minister-urmas-paet?id=51085399

Palti-Guzman, Leslie, "Don't Cry for the Nabucco Pipeline," Reuters, May 1, 2014. As of February 26, 2019: http://blogs.reuters.com/great-debate/2014/05/01/dont-cry-for-the-nabucco-pipeline/

Panainte, Sergiu, Victoria Nedelciuc, and Ovidiu Voicu, *Redobandirea Cetateniei Romane: O Politica ce Capata Viziune?* [*The Redevelopment of Romanian Citizenship: A Policy with Vision?*], Bucharest, Romania: Soros Foundation, 2013.

"Укор совести. Не допустить демонтаж памятника Воину-освободителю в Таллине" ["Pangs of Conscience: Do Not Allow Demolition of the Memorial to the Warrior-Liberator in Tallinn"], Channel One (Russia), January 27, 2007. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.1tv.ru/news/other/62806

"Parliamentary Elections in Moldova on November 30, 2014," *E-Democracy*, undated. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.e-democracy.md/en/elections/parliamentary/2014/

Parmentier, Florent, "Moldova," in David Cadier, ed., *The Geopolitics of Eurasian Economic Integration*, London School of Economics IDEAS report, 2014, pp. 46–53. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.lse.ac.uk/ideas/research/reports/eurasian

"Partidul Socialistilor Intentioneaza sa Rezolve Problema Celor 35 de Mii de Moldoveni Care au Fost Deportati din Rusia" ["Socialist Party Intends to Solve the Problem of 35,000 Moldovans Who Were Deported to Russia"], Actualitati.md, November 19, 2014. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.actualitati.md/md/societate/partidul-socialistilor-intentioneaza-sa-rezolve-problema-celor-35-de-mii-de-moldoveni-care

Payne, Daniel P., "Spiritual Security, the Russian Orthodox Church, and the Russian Foreign Ministry: Collaboration or Cooptation?" *Journal of Church and State*, Vol. 52, No. 4, February 2010, pp. 712–713.

Peleschuk, Dan, "Gay Rights: Moldova Struggles to Tackle Discrimination," Public Radio International, October 14, 2013. As of November 17, 2019:
https://www.pri.org/stories/2013-10-14/gay-rights-moldova-struggles-tackle-discrimination

Perry, Bret, "Non-Linear Warfare in Ukraine: The Critical Role of Information Operations and Special Operations," *Small Wars Journal*, August 14, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/
non-linear-warfare-in-ukraine-the-critical-role-of-information-operations-and-special-opera

Pettai, Vello, "Estonia," *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol. 47, No. 8, 2008, pp. 934–940.

Pifer, Steven, "George W. Bush Was Tough on Russia? Give Me a Break," blog post, Brookings Institution, March 24, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2014/03/24-bush-tough-on-putin-give-me-a-break-pifer

———, Brookings Institution, "The Growing Russian Military Threat in Europe; Assessing and Addressing the Challenge: The Case of Ukraine," testimony before the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, May 17, 2017. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.brookings.edu/testimonies/the-growing-russian-military-threat-in-europe

Pirani, Simon, Jonathan Stern, and Katja Yafimava, *The Russo-Ukrainian Gas Dispute of January 2009: A Comprehensive Assessment*, Oxford, UK: Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, University of Oxford, February 2009. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.oxfordenergy.org/publications/
the-russo-ukrainian-gas-dispute-of-january-2009-a-comprehensive-assessment

Polityuk, Pavel, "Ukraine to Probe Suspected Russian Cyber Attack on Grid," Reuters, December 31, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-crisis-malware/
ukraine-to-probe-suspected-russian-cyber-attack-on-grid-idUSKBN0UE0ZZ20151231

Popescu, Nicu, and Leonid Litra, *Transnistria: A Bottom-Up Solution*, London: European Council on Foreign Relations, September 2012. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.ecfr.eu/publications/summary/transnistria_a_bottom_up_solution

PROMO-LEX Association and Resource Center for Human Rights, *Research: The Media Market and Access to Media on the Left of Nistru*, Chisinau, Moldova, 2011. As of February 26, 2019:
https://promolex.md/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/eng_doc_1340371914-1.pdf

Puiu, Victoria, "Moldova: Can an Apple a Day Keep Russia at Bay?" Eurasianet, August 13, 2014a. As of February 26, 2019:
https://eurasianet.org/moldova-can-an-apple-a-day-keep-russia-at-bay

———, "Moldova Fights Back Against Russia's Food Bans," Eurasianet, August 15, 2014b. As of September 27, 2019:
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/15/moldova-fights-back-russia-food-bans

———, "Can Russia Afford Transnistria?" Eurasianet, February 18, 2015a. As of February 26, 2019:
https://eurasianet.org/can-russia-afford-transnistria

———, "Moldova: Examining the Russian Media Factor in Protests," Eurasianet, September 11, 2015b. As of February 26, 2019:
https://eurasianet.org/moldova-examining-the-russian-media-factor-in-protests

"Дави на газ: В ответ на действия российских компаний Эстония блокировала переговоры по газопроводу Nord Stream" ["Push on the Gas: In Response to the Actions of Russian Companies, Estonia Blocks Negotiations on the Nord Stream Gas Line"], Lenta.ru, May 7, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
http://m.lenta.ru/articles/2007/05/07/estonia

"Putin: Ouster of Ukrainian President Was an 'Unconstitutional Coup,'" *Deutsche Welle*, March 4, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.dw.com/en/putin-ouster-of-ukrainian-president-was-an-unconstitutional-coup/a-17472054

Putin, Vladimir, "Press Statements Following Meeting with President of Moldova Vladimir Voronin," transcript, November 28, 2006. As of November 17, 2019:
http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/23926

———, "Address by President of the Russian Federation," transcript, Moscow: Kremlin, March 18, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20603

———, "Response to a Journalist's Question About the Peace Plan in Ukraine," June 22, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/45955

"Putin Speaks on Georgia in Newspaper Interview," *Civil Georgia*, May 31, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
https://civil.ge/archives/116458

"Ссора с Россией обернулась для Эстонии огромными потерями" ["Quarrel with Russia Has Caused Estonia Great Losses"], Zagolovki.ru, November 17, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
http://zagolovki.ru/daytheme/estonia/17Nov2007

Quinlan, Paul, "Back to the Future: An Overview of Moldova Under Voronin," *Demokratizatsiya*, Vol. 12, No. 4, October 2004, pp. 485–504.

Rácz, András, *Russia's Hybrid War in Ukraine: Breaking the Enemy's Ability to Resist*, Helsinki, Finland: Finnish Institute of International Affairs, Report 43, June 16, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.fiia.fi/en/publication/russias-hybrid-war-in-ukraine

Ragin, Charles C., Dirk Berg-Schlosser, and Gisèle de Meur, "Political Methodology: Qualitative Methods," in Robert E. Goodin and Hans-Dieter Klingemann, eds., *A New Handbook of Political Science*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Ramani, Samuel, "Ukraine's Ministry of Truth—A Flop of Epic Proportions," *Slate*, August 3, 2015. As of June 6, 2019:
https://www.huffpost.com/entry/ukraines-ministry-of-trut_b_7918872

Ray, Julie, and Neli Esipova, "Ukrainian Approval of Russia's Leadership Dives Almost 90%," Gallup, December 15, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.gallup.com/poll/180110/ukrainian-approval-russia-leadership-dives-almost.aspx

Recknagel, Charles, "Nabucco Pipeline Suffers Setback as Rival Expected to Get Azeri Gas," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, June 27, 2013. As of June 6, 2019:
https://www.rferl.org/a/nabucco-gas-pipeline-rivals-future-in-doubt/25030223.html

Reding, Andrew, "That Caucasus Hypocrisy," *Globe and Mail*, August 28, 2008.

"Справка: Хроника конфликта вокруг 'Бронзового солдата'" ["Reference: Chronology of the Conflict Around the 'Bronze Soldier'"], *Deutsche Welle*, May 3, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.dw.com/ru/справка-хроника-конфликта-вокруг-бронзового-солдата/a-2467008

Reporters Without Borders, "War Still Having Serious Impact on Freedom of Expression," original publication September 10, 2008. As of June 6, 2019:
https://rsf.org/en/news/war-still-having-serious-impact-freedom-expression

Republic of Estonia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Declaration of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia," Tallinn, May 1, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.valitsus.ee/en/news/declaration-minister-foreign-affairs-republic-estonia

Republic of Turkey Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Turkey's Political Relations with Russian Federation," webpage, undated. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey_s-political-relations-with-russian-federation.en.mfa

Rettman, Andrew, "Moldova Instability Could Get Worse," *EU Observer*, May 3, 2006.

Riigikogu [Estonian Parliament], The War Graves Protection Act (1001 SE), January 10, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/513112013016/consolide

"R.Moldova si Federaţia Rusă: Parteneriat Strategic Versus Parteneriat Realist, Previzibil şi Viabil" ["Moldova and the Russian Federation: Strategic Partnership Versus Realistic, Predictable and Viable Partnership"], Timpul.md, April 3, 2012. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.timpul.md/articol/
r-moldova-i-federatia-rusa-parteneriat-strategic-versus-parteneriat-realist-previzibil-si-viabil-32858.html

Rogin, Josh, and Eli Lake, "U.S. Told Ukraine to Stand Down as Putin Invaded," *Bloomberg Opinion*, August 21, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2015-08-21/u-s-told-ukraine-to-stand-down-as-putin-invaded

Rojkov, Evgeniy, "Русский ответ Эстонии" ["Russian Response to Estonia"], Vesti.ru, January 17, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=114941&cid=5

Romancheva, Irina, "Нелегалов будут сажать на 8 лет" ["Illegals Will Be Sent to Jail for 8 Years"], vz.ru, October 5, 2006. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.vz.ru/society/2006/10/5/51641.html

Roper, Steven D., "Regionalism in Moldova: The Case of Transnistria and Gagauzia," *Regional and Federal Studies*, Vol. 11, No. 3, 2001, pp. 101–122.

Roşca, Petru, and Silvia Scorţescu, "Transportarea şi Distribuirea Gazelor în Republica Moldova" ["The Transport and Distribution of Gas in the Republic of Moldova"], *Studii Economice: Revistă Ştiinţifică* [*Economic Studies: Scientific Journal*], Vol. 9, No. 1, 2015, pp. 48–53. As of February 26, 2019:
https://fbculim.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/revista-nr_-1-an_-ix-20151.pdf

Roth, Andrew, "Former Russian Rebels Trade War in Ukraine for Posh Life in Moscow," *Washington Post*, September 15, 2015a.

———, "Putin Signs Sweeping Economic Sanctions Against Turkey," *Washington Post*, November 28, 2015b.

Roth, Andrew, and Karla Adam, "Moscow Is Ready to Coordinate with the West Over Strikes on Syria," *Washington Post*, November 26, 2015.

Roth, Mathias, *Bilateral Disputes Between EU Member States and Russia*, Brussels, Belgium: Centre for European Policy Studies, Working Document No. 319, August 2009.

Roudik, Peter, *Russian Federation: Legal Aspects of War in Georgia*, Washington, D.C.: Law Library of Congress, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.loc.gov/law/help/legal-aspects-of-war/russian-georgia-war.php

Rusnac, Corneliu, "Reacţii Politice la Vizita Preşedintelui Voronin la Moscova" ["Political Reactions to President Voronin's Visit to Moscow"], BBC Romanian, August 10, 2006. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/romanian/news/story/2006/08/060810_voronin_rusia_reactii_politice.shtml

"Russia Admits Georgia Overflights," BBC News, July 10, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7500584.stm

"Russia Approves Detailed Sanctions Against Turkey Over Downed Plane," Reuters, December 1, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-russia-turkey-sanction-idUSKBN0TK4SD20151201

"Russia Bans Food Imports from Ukraine," RT, November 19, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.rt.com/business/322679-russia-ukraine-food-embargo-ulyukaev

"Russia Bans Georgia Mineral Water," BBC News, May 5, 2006. As of February 26, 2019:
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4976304.stm

"Russia Blamed for 'Gas Sabotage,'" BBC News, January 22, 2006. As of February 26, 2019:
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4637034.stm

"Russia Halts Gas Supplies to Ukraine After Talks Breakdown," BBC News, July 1, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-33341322

"Russia Makes $15 Billion, Gas Discount Commitments to Ukraine," *Deutsche Welle*, December 17, 2013. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.dw.com/en/russia-makes-15-billion-gas-discount-commitments-to-ukraine/a-17303930

"Russia Orders Exercises After Ukraine Moves on Separatists," BBC News, April 24, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-27138300

"Russia Pulls Some Troops Out of Abkhazia," Agence France-Presse, July 30, 2008.

"Russia to Lift Ban on Imports of Meat and Wine from Moldova," *International Herald Tribune*, October 28, 2006.

"Russia to Moldova: Choose Cheap Gas or EU Integration," *EurActiv*, September 13, 2012. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.euractiv.com/europes-east/russia-moldova-chose-cheap-gas-e-news-514769

"Russia Points to Media Bias in Coverage of S.Ossetia Conflict," RIA Novosti (*Sputnik*), August 10, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
http://sputniknews.com/russia/20080810/115936076.html

"Russia Recognizes Abkhazia, South Ossetia," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, August 26, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.rferl.org/a/Russia_Recognizes_Abkhazia_South_Ossetia/1193932.html

Russia Says No Reason to Delay WTO Membership Bid," Reuters, August 14, 2008

"Russia Says UN Abkhazian Refugee Resolution Counterproductive," *Sputnik*, May 16, 2008.

"Russia 'Shot Down Georgia Drone,'" BBC News, April 21, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7358761.stm

"Russia Should Restore Transport Links with Georgia-OSCE," Reuters, October 2, 2006.

"Russia Suspends All Georgia Transport," *Washington Times*, October 3, 2006.

"Russia Takes 'Provocative Steps' with Georgia—U.S.," *Civil Georgia*, May 7, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
https://old.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=17780

"Russia: UN Hypocritical Over Abkhazia and South Ossetia Independence," RT, August 29, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.rt.com/news/russia-un-hypocritical-over-abkhazia-and-south-ossetia-independence

"Посол РФ в Грузии: в Цхинвали погибли как минимум две тысячи человек" ["Russian Ambassador to Georgia: At Least 2,000 People Were Killed in Tskhinvali"], Interfax, August 9, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.interfax.ru/russia/26124

"Russian Ambassador to Turkey Sets 3 Conditions to Overcome Tensions Between Countries," *Moscow Times*, December 15, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/12/15/
russian-ambassador-to-turkey-sets-3-conditions-to-overcome-tension-between-countries-a51221

"Russian Clubs Banned from Signing Turkish Players," BBC News, November 29, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.bbc.com/sport/football/34957802

Russian Federation, Federal law on the citizenship of the Russian Federation, No. 182-FZ, November 12, 2002. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.refworld.org/pdfid/51b871684.pdf

"Russian Military Threatens to Boost Georgia Force," Reuters, May 8, 2008.

Russian Ministry of Defence, "Жертвами грузинского нападения на Южную Осетию стали более 2 тыс. Человек" ["More Than 2,000 People Became Victims of Georgian Aggression"], August 10, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
http://web.archive.org/web/20080815070006/http://www.mil.ru/info/1069/details/index.shtml?Id=49353

Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "О ноте МИД России внешнеполитическому ведомству Эстонии" ["On the Note from the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Estonian Foreign Office"], press release, Moscow, April 23, 2007.

"Russian MPs Back Georgia's Rebels," BBC News, August 25, 2008. As of February 26, 2019: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7580386.stm

"Russian Paratroopers Arrive in North Caucasus for Combat Drills," RIA Novosti (*Sputnik*), July 16, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
https://sputniknews.com/russia/20080716114129465

"Russian Parliament Approves Troop Deployment in Ukraine," BBC News, March 1, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26400035

"Russian-Turkish Politics: Tsar v Sultan," *The Economist*, December 5, 2015.

"Russians Not Ready to Forgive Turkey for Downed Plane—Poll," *Moscow Times*, February 29, 2016. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2016/02/29/russians-not-ready-to-forgive-turkey-for-downed-plane-poll-a51993

"Saakashvili's Remarks with Five EU Foreign Ministers," transcript, *Civil Georgia*, May 12, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
https://civil.ge/archives/185621

Sachtman, Noah, "Estonia, Google Help 'Cyberlocked' Georgia (Updated)," *Wired*, August 11, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.wired.com/2008/08/civilge-the-geo

Saha, David, and Ricardo Giucci, *Remittances from Russia: Macroeconomic Implications of Possible Negative Shocks*, Berlin: German Economic Team Moldova, May 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://get-moldau.de/download/policypapers/2014/PP_03_2014_en.pdf

Salopek, Paul, "Vladimir Putin's Mysterious Moving Border," *Politico*, April 5, 2016. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.politico.eu/article/vladimir-putins-mysterious-moving-border

Samadashvili, Salome, "Gagauzia: A New Attack on the Eastern Partnership?" *EU Observer*, February 4, 2014.

Sanamyan, Emil, "Russian Military Expands in Armenia Amid Tensions with Turkey," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, January 18, 2016.

Sandford, Daniel, "Ukraine Crisis: Russia Vows No Invasion," BBC News, March 29, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26799326

Sapozhnikova, Galina, "Бронзового Солдата атаковали на рассвете: Эстонские власти оцепили монумент" ["Bronze Soldier Attacked at Dawn: Estonian Authorities Cordon Off Monument"], *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, April 27, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.kp.ru/daily/23894.4/66632

Savceac, Olga, *Transnistria-Moldova Conflict*, Inventory of Conflict and Environment Case Study No. 182, Washington, D.C.: American University, May 2006. As of February 26, 2019:
http://mandalaprojects.com/ice/ice-cases/moldova.htm

Savina, Ekaterina, "Russia Can't Stand Estonian Embassy Siege Anymore," *Kommersant*, May 4, 2007.

Sindelar, Daisy, "Georgia: Tbilisi Accuses Moscow of Energy Sabotage," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, January 23, 2006. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1064976.html

Smith, David J., "How Russia Harnesses Cyberwarfare," *Defense Dossier* (American Foreign Policy Council), No. 4, August 2012, pp. 7–11.

———, "Russian Cyber Strategy and the War Against Georgia," *Infocus Quarterly* (Atlantic Council), January 17, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/natosource/russian-cyber-policy-and-the-war-against-georgia

Smith, Graham, "The Ethnic Democracy Thesis and the Citizenship Question in Estonia and Latvia," *Nationalities Papers*, Vol. 24, No. 2, 1996, pp. 199–216.

Smith-Spark, Laura, and Joe Sterling, "Putin, Ukraine Leader Talk Peace in Phone Call," CNN, June 19, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.cnn.com/2014/06/19/world/europe/ukraine-crisis

Sobják, Anita, "Is Transnistria the Next Crimea?" *Polish Institute of International Affairs Bulletin*, No. 49, April 11, 2014.

Socor, Vladimir, "Kozak Plan Resurfaces Under OSCE Colors," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 2, No. 136, July 14, 2005. As of February 26, 2019:
https://jamestown.org/program/kozak-plan-resurfaces-under-osce-colors

———, "Vilnius Conference on Europe's Completion in the East," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 3, No. 88, May 5, 2006. As of February 26, 2019:
https://jamestown.org/program/vilnius-conference-on-europes-completion-in-the-east/

———, "Russia Moves Toward Open Annexation of Abkhazia, South Ossetia," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 5, No. 74, April 18, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
https://jamestown.org/program/russia-moves-toward-open-annexation-of-abkhazia-south-ossetia

———, "Dmitry Rogozin Appointed Special Presidential Representative for Transnistria," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 9, No. 59, March 23, 2012. As of February 26, 2019:
https://jamestown.org/program/dmitry-rogozin-appointed-special-presidential-representative-for-transnistria

———, "Rogozin Threatens Moldova with Sanctions Over Association Agreement with the European Union," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 10, No. 155, September 4, 2013. As of February 26, 2019:
https://jamestown.org/program/rogozin-threatens-moldova-with-sanctions-over-association-agreement-with-the-european-union/

Soloviev, Vladimir, "Moscow's Next Victim," *Foreign Policy*, September 3, 2014.

Solyansky, Xenia, "West Fell into Disfavor," Gazeta.ru, September 25, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.gazeta.ru/politics/2008/09/25_a_2842366.shtml

Stanovaya, Tatiana, "ЕС-Россия: Ценностный Разрыв" ["EU-Russia: Value Discord"], Politcom.ru, May 21, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
http://politcom.ru/4590.html

Statistics Estonia, "Population by Ethnic Nationality, 1 January, Years," June 9, 2017. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.stat.ee/34278

"Still Feuding: Icy Relations Between Russia and Estonia," *The Economist*, May 1, 2007.

Stokes, Bruce, *Russia, Putin Held in Low Regard Around the World: Russia's Image Trails U.S. Across All Regions*, Washington, D.C.: Pew Research Center, August 5, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.pewglobal.org/2015/08/05/russia-putin-held-in-low-regard-around-the-world/

"История Конфликта Эстонии и России: Перенос 'Бронзового Солдата'" ["The Story of the Conflict Between Estonia and Russia: Transfer of the 'Bronze Soldier'"], Zagolovki.ru, December 29, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.zagolovki.ru/daytheme/soldat/29Dec2007

Strzelecki, Marek, "Poland Opens LNG Terminal, Pledges to End Russian Dependence," Bloomberg, October 12, 2015.

Stubbs, Jack, and Maria Kiselyova, "Russian Deputies Seek Accountability for Armenia Genocide Denial," Reuters, November 25, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-armenia-russia-bill-idUSKBN0TE1WL20151125

Suny, Ronald Gregor, "The Pawn of Great Powers: The East-West Competition for Caucasia," *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1, January 2010, pp. 10–25.

Sutyagin, Igor, *Russian Forces in Ukraine*, London: Royal United Services Institute, March 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
https://rusi.org/sites/default/files/201503_bp_russian_forces_in_ukraine.pdf

Svanidze, Mikheil, "Russia Says It Sent Warplanes Over South Ossetia to 'Prevent Bloodshed,'" *The Messenger* (Georgia), July 11, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.messenger.com.ge/issues/1646_july_11_2008/1646_russia_overflights.html

Swaine, Jon, "Georgia: Russia 'Conducting Cyber War,'" *The Telegraph*, August 11, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/georgia/2539157/Georgia-Russia-conducting-cyber-war.html

Swanström, Niklas, "Georgia: The Split That Split the SCO," *Central Asia–Caucasus Institute Analyst*, September 3, 2008.

Tabor, Damon, "Putin's Angels: Inside Russia's Most Infamous Motorcycle Club," *Rolling Stone*, October 8, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-news/putins-angels-inside-russias-most-infamous-motorcycle-club-56360/

"Tagliavini Report and the (Lack of) EU Response," *ISCIP Analyst*, Vol. 16, No. 2, October 8, 2009.

Tanner, Jari, "Estonia Cancels Russia Talks Over Statue," Associated Press, May 2, 2007.

Tayler, Jeffrey, "Russia Raises Natural Gas Threat Against Ukraine," *National Geographic*, March 3, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/energy/2014/03/140303-russia-natural-gas-threat-against-ukraine

"Тбилиси: Россия нарушает гуманитарные нормы" ["Tbilisi: Russia Violates Human Rights Norms"], BBC Russian, October 18, 2006. As of February 26, 2019:
http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/russian/russia/newsid_6057000/6057798.stm

"Tensions Between Russia and Turkey Reach New Peak," *Financial Times*, February 15, 2016. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.ft.com/content/d36160f2-d3df-11e5-8887-98e7feb46f27

Thomas, Timothy L., "Russian Information Warfare Theory: The Consequences of August 2008," in Stephen J. Blank and Richard Weitz, eds., *The Russian Military Today and Tomorrow: Essays in Memory of Mary Fitzgerald*, Carlisle Barracks, Pa.: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, July 2010, pp. 265–299.

Tikk, Eneken, Kadri Kaska, Kristel Rünnimeri, Mari Kert, Anna-Maria Talihärm, and Liis Vihul, *Cyber Attacks Against Georgia: Legal Lessons Identified*, Tallinn, Estonia: Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence, November 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.ismlab.usf.edu/isec/files/Georgia-Cyber-Attack-NATO-Aug-2008.pdf

Tikk, Eneken, Kadri Kaska, and Liis Vihul, *International Cyber Incidents: Legal Considerations*, Tallinn, Estonia: Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence, 2010.

Toksabay, Ece, Gulsen Solaker, and David Dolan, "Kurdish Militant Group TAK Claims Responsibility for Ankara Bombing," Reuters, February 19, 2016. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-blast-kurds-idUSKCN0VS245

Tomiuc, Eugen, "Strange Bedfellows: Moldovan Protest Leaders Share Common Goal, Different Beliefs," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, January 28, 2016. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.rferl.org/content/moldova-protest-leaders-common-goal-different-beliefs/27517364.html

Tomkiw, Lydia, "Russia and Ukraine Conflict Takes to the Skies: Airlines Sanctions Are Latest High-Flying Economic Battle," *International Business Times*, October 1, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.ibtimes.com/russia-ukraine-conflict-takes-skies-airline-sanctions-are-latest-high-flying-economic-2121322

Trading Economics, "Georgia Exports 1995–2016," webpage, undated. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.tradingeconomics.com/georgia/exports

"Transcript: CNN Interview with Vladimir Putin," CNN, August 28, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.cnn.com/2008/WORLD/europe/08/29/putin.transcript

Traynor, Ian, "Russia Accused of Unleashing Cyberwar to Disable Estonia," *The Guardian*, May 16, 2007. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/may/17/topstories3.russia

———, "Nato Allies Divided Over Ukraine and Georgia," *The Guardian*, December 1, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/dec/02/ukraine-georgia

———, "Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili Blamed for Starting Russian War," *The Guardian*, September 30, 2009. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/sep/30/georgia-attacks-unjustifiable-eu

Traynor, Ian, Lee Glendinning, and Mark Tran, "Relations with Russia Have Reached Crossroads, EU Leaders Say," *The Guardian*, September 1, 2008. As of June 6, 2019:
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/sep/01/russia.georgia2

Tsereteli, Mamuka, "Banned in Russia: The Politics of Georgian Wine," *Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*, April 19, 2006. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.cacianalyst.org/publications/analytical-articles/item/10801-analytical-articles-caci-analyst-2006-4-19-art-10801.html

———, *The Impact of the Russia-Georgia War on the South Caucasus Transportation Corridor*, Washington, D.C.: Jamestown Foundation, 2009. As of February 26, 2019:
https://jamestown.org/report/the-impact-of-the-russia-georgia-war-on-the-south-caucasus-transportation-corridor

Tsesliuk, Vladimir, "Information Space in Transnistria: Ideological and Institutional Opportunities and Perspectives. Reasons for Kishinau's Defeats in Informational Wars with Tiraspol," Chisinau, Moldova: Institutul de Politici Publice, 2010. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.ipp.md/old/public/files/Proiecte/blacksee/eng/TesliukENG.pdf

"Turkey Attacks ISIS in Iraq and Syria in Response to Istanbul Bombing," Reuters (*Newsweek*), January 14, 2016. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.newsweek.com/turkey-attacks-isis-200-fighters-dead-iraq-syria-islamic-state-istanbul-415852

"Turkey Has Shelved Turkish Stream Gas Pipeline Project, Says President Erdoğan," *Hurriyet Daily*, December 5, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkey-has-shelved-turkish-stream-gas-pipeline-project-says-president-erdogan-92115

"Turkey Says Russia Violated Its Airspace Near Syria Border," BBC News, January 30, 2016. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35449152

"Turkey Won't Introduce Visa Requirements for Russians—Embassy," *Moscow Times*, December 4, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2015/12/04/turkey-wont-introduce-visa-requirements-for-russians-embassy-a51084

"Turkish Troops Move Out of Northern Iraq After Obama Appeal for Calm," Agence France-Presse (*The Guardian*), December 19, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/20/turkish-troops-move-out-of-northern-iraq-after-obama-appeal-for-calm

"Ukraine Adopts Law to Align Gas Market with EU Third Energy Package," *Natural Gas World*, April 9, 2015.

"Ukraine Bans Russian Cargo Trucks in Tit-for-Tat Move," Reuters, February 15, 2016. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-crisis-russia-idUSKCN0VO1C6

"Ukraine Crisis: Key Players in Eastern Unrest," BBC News, August 28, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-27211501

"Ukraine Says Donetsk 'Anti-Terror Operation' Under Way," BBC News, April 16, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-27035196

"Ukraine Says Russia Has Resumed Gas Flow," Reuters, December 9, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-ukraine-crisis-gas-idUKKBN0JN0HG20141209

"Ukrainians Who Identify as Ethnic Russians or Say Russian Is Their First Language," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, undated. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.rferl.org/a/map-ukraine-percentage-who-identify-as-ethnic-russians-or-say-russian-is-their-first-language-/25323841.html

United Nations Committee for Development Policy, "Preferential Market Access: Russian Federation, Kazakhstan and Belarus (Eurasian Customs Union)," webpage, undated. As of November 17, 2019:
https://www.un.org/ldcportal/preferential-market-access-russian-federation-kazakhstan-and-belarus-eurasian-customs-union

United Nations Development Programme, "Global Human Development Indicators," September 14, 2018a. As of February 26, 2019:
http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries

———, "Table 2: Human Development Index Trends, 1990–2017," September 14, 2018b. As of February 26, 2019:
http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/trends

United Nations Security Council, "Security Council Extends Mandate of Georgia Observer Mission Until 15 October, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 1808 (2018)," press release, April 15, 2008a. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.un.org/press/en/2008/sc9299.doc.htm

———, "Security Council Hears Conflicting Russian, Georgian Views of Worsening Crisis as Members Seek End to Violence in Day's Second Meeting on South Ossetia," press release, August 8, 2008b. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.un.org/press/en/2008/sc9418.doc.htm

———, verbatim report on the situation in Georgia, S/PV/5969, August 28, 2008c. As of February 26, 2019:
https://undocs.org/en/S/PV.5969

"UN Probe Says Russian Jet Downed Georgian Drone," *Civil Georgia*, May 26, 2008. As of June 6, 2019:
https://old.civil.ge/eng/article.php?id=18393

"US and Germany Asked Ukraine Not to Take Any Actions in 2014 in Response to Russia's Takeover of Crimea," transcript, *Ukraine Today*, February 22, 2016. As of June 6, 2019:
https://www.unian.info/politics/1272536-us-germany-asked-ukraine-not-to-start-active-military-operation-in-2014-nsdc-transcript.html

U.S. Army Special Operations Command, *'Little Green Men': A Primer on Modern Russian Unconventional Warfare*, Ukraine 2013–2014, Fort Bragg, N.C., 2015.

U.S. Department of State, Global Engagement Center," webpage, undated. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.state.gov/r/gec

———, daily press briefing (John Kirby, spokesperson), Washington, D.C., February 8, 2016. As of February 26, 2019:
https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2016/02/252263.htm

———, "Foreign Terrorist Organizations," webpage, last updated September 6, 2018. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/other/des/123085.htm

———, "Ukraine and Russia Sanctions," webpage, last updated March 15, 2019. As of March 16, 2019:
https://www.state.gov/ukraine-and-russia-sanctions/

U.S. Energy Information Administration, "Turkey," webpage, last updated February 2, 2017. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.eia.gov/beta/international/analysis.php?iso=TUR

"U.S.: Georgian Drone Downed 'Presumably' by Russian MIG-29," *Civil Georgia*, April 4, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
https://civil.ge/archives/114828

U.S. Senate, Resolution 187, Condemning Violence in Estonia and Attacks on Estonia's Embassies in 2007, and Expressing Solidarity with the Government and the People of Estonia, 110th Congress, May 3, 2007.

"U.S. Troops Start Training Exercise in Georgia," Reuters, July 15, 2008. As of June 6, 2019:
https://www.reuters.com/article/us-geor-gia-usa-exercises-idUSL1556589920080715

"Va Avea Moldova de Plătit un Preț pe Termen Lung Rusiei?" ["Will Moldova Pay a Long-Term Price to Russia?"], BBC Romanian, November 29, 2006. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/romanian/forum/story/2006/11/061129_moldova_rusia_embargo.shtml

van Aartsen, Jozias, *Activity Report, September 2007–February 2009*, Brussels, Belgium: European Commission, Project of European Interest NG 3 (national gas route 3, Nabucco project), February 4, 2009.

Värk, René, "The Siege of the Estonian Embassy in Moscow: Protection of a Diplomatic Mission and Its Staff in the Receiving State," *Juridica International*, No. 25, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.juridicainternational.eu/public/pdf/ji_2008_2_144.pdf

"Vasili Istratov: 'Russian Passports Were Issued to South Ossetian Residents Based on Russian Legislation,'" Today.Az, August 13, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.today.az/print/news/politics/46930.html

Vihalemm, P., "Current Trends of Media Use in Estonia," *Informacijos Mokslai*, Vol. 47, 2008, pp. 112–120.

Vikhrov, Maksim, "Ukraine Forms 'Ministry of Truth' to Regulate the Media," *The Guardian*, December 19, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/dec/19/
-sp-ukraine-new-ministry-truth-undermines-battle-for-democracy

Vițu, Valeria, "Chișinău: Mai Multe Drepturi Pentru Homosexuali" ["Chisinau: More Gay Rights"], RFI Romania, May 25, 2012. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.rfi.ro/articol/stiri/social/chisinau-mai-multe-drepturi-homosexuali

Vorobiov, Ievgen, "Why Ukrainians Are Speaking More Ukrainian," *Foreign Policy*, June 26, 2015.

Walker, Peter, "Sweden Searches for Suspected Russian Submarine off Stockholm," *The Guardian*, October 19, 2014. As of February 26, 2019:
https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/19/sweden-search-russian-submarine-stockholm

Walker, Shaun, "Russia Imposed Sanctions on Turkey Over Downed Plane," *The Guardian*, November 26, 2015. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/nov/26/
hollandes-anti-isis-talks-with-putin-complicated-by-downing-of-russian-jet

Way, Lucan, *Pluralism by Default: Weak Autocrats and the Rise of Pluralism Politics*, Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015.

"West Condemns Russia Over Georgia," BBC News, August 26, 2008. As of February 26, 2019:
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7583164.stm

Wetzel, H., N. Kreimeier, and G. Parker, "Russen Beenden Botschaftsbelagerung" ["Russians End Embassy Siege"], *Financial Times Deutschland*, May 4, 2007.

Winnerstig, Mike, ed., *Tools of Destabilization: Russian Soft Power and Non-Military in the Baltic States*, Stockholm, Sweden: Swedish Defence Research Agency, December 2014.

Woehrel, Steven, *Moldova: Background and U.S. Policy*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, RS21981, April 23, 2014.

Wolf, Stefan, *The Transnistrian Issue: Moving Beyond the Status-Quo*, Brussels, Belgium: European Parliament, Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union, October 2012. As of February 26, 2019:
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document.html?reference=EXPO-AFET_ET(2012)457135

World Bank, "Data: Moldova," webpage, undated(a). As of February 26, 2019: http://data.worldbank.org/country/moldova

———, Worldwide Governance Indicators, database, undated(b). As of February 23, 2016: http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.aspx

———, "The World Bank in Moldova," webpage, last updated October 11, 2018. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/moldova/overview

Yeginsu, Ceyland, and Victor Homola, "Istanbul Bomber Entered as Refugee, Turks Say," *New York Times*, January 13, 2016.

Yekelchyk, Serhy, "The Ukrainian Crisis: In Russia's Long Shadow," *Origins: Current Events in Historical Perspective*, Vol. 7, No. 9, June 2014. As of February 26, 2019: http://origins.osu.edu/article/ukrainian-crisis-russias-long-shadow

Zachmann, Georg, and Alex Oprunenco, *Electricity Sector in Moldova: Evaluation of Strategic Options*, Berlin: German Economic Team in Moldova, September 2010. As of February 26, 2019: http://zachmann.be/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/GET-Moldova_PP-01-2010_Electricity-Sector-in-Moldova-Evaluation-of-strategic-options_en.pdf

Zakum, Vera, Paul Saunders, and Daniel Antoun, *Mobilizing Compatriots: Russia's Strategy, Tactics, and Influence in the Former Soviet Union*, Arlington, Va.: CNA, November 2015. As of February 26, 2019: https://www.cna.org/CNA_files/PDF/DOP-2015-U-011689-1Rev.pdf

Zevelev, Igor, *NATO's Enlargement and Russian Perceptions of Eurasian Politics Frontiers*, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany: George Marshall European Center for Security Studies, 2001. As of February 26, 2019: http://www.nato.int/acad/fellow/98-00/zevelev.pdf

———, "Russia's Policy Toward Compatriots in the Former Soviet Union," *Russia in Global Affairs*, March 2, 2008. As of February 26, 2019: https://eng.globalaffairs.ru/number/n_10351

Zvegintsev, Valentin, "Обыкновенный фашизм: В Эстонии начались раскопки у Бронзового солдата" ["Regular Fascism: Estonia Began Excavations at the Bronze Soldier"], *Moskovskiy Komsomolets*, April 27, 2007.