Asymmetric Operations Working Group

Ambiguous Threats and External Influences in the Baltic States and Poland

Phase 1: Understanding the Threat

October 2014

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Introduction

Russia's annexation of Crimea in March 2014 represents an extraordinary change in the security dynamic in Europe. It demonstrated a revived threat to Europe from its largest neighbor and it illustrated a set of tactics the United States, the European Union (EU), and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) are arguably ill prepared to confront. In recent years concerns focused on threats from non-state entities, whether radical individuals or terrorist groups, and NATO has spent the last ten years engaged in expeditionary missions outside of Europe. Furthermore, the methods for addressing those concerns assume relatively clear divisions between military and nonmilitary measures. Now, the United States, EU, and NATO must address the threat posed by a resurgent nation that sees itself as a superpower alternative to the transatlantic alliance. They must also consider how to respond to a nation that employs tactics that blend military and nonmilitary domains of national power in an approach this document will refer to as hybrid warfare.

This document seeks to study and understand the threat that Russia's perceived strategic aims and recently demonstrated tactics pose beyond Crimea's annexation, in particular to the Baltic states and Poland. It focuses on the conditions and events in both Ukraine and Russia that contributed to the occupation and annexation. The kinetic operations in Crimea occurred extremely quickly after years of stealthy nonmilitary measures and accomplished their objective without using overwhelming force. The speed of operations left Ukrainian law enforcement and military leadership with insufficient time to respond effectively. Furthermore, the lack of force used during the operations stalled decision making. Finally, these efforts were supported and assisted by significant numbers of the local population. The result is an ambiguous, slow-building but fast-acting threat to the territorial integrity of any nation with a population and geography vulnerable to the undue influence of Russia.

If the operations executed in Ukraine do in fact constitute Russia's new modus operandi, then it is worthwhile to study them in order to abstract the tactics employed and the enabling conditions that facilitated those tactics, including domestic political and social trends as well as foreign relations. By doing so it may be possible to identify future targets of Russian asymmetric warfare and to develop effective countermeasures and responses. For instance, the Baltic nations appear to already share some of the enabling conditions that existed in Crimea prior to its annexation, including

- status as a former Soviet Socialist Republic;
- a sizable Russian compatriot population, including ethnic Russians and Russian speakers;
- being within reach of Russian media, including television, print, and radio;
- sharing a border with few geographic obstacles;
- dependence on Russian energy resources and infrastructure;
- political and legal measures unfavorable to Russian identity, such as language status and citizenship policies; and
- membership (or potential membership, in the case of Ukraine) in the EU and NATO, two Westernaligned institutions that Putin has identified as a threat to Russia's aspirations.

Each target of Russian influence will present its own environment and conditions, and Russian operations will vary accordingly. In other words, what occurred in Crimea is unlikely to be repeated verbatim, but it is likely to be recycled.

For this study, the Asymmetric Operations Working Group intends to employ an iterative analytical approach aimed at enhancing understanding by engaging with subject matter experts and stakeholders to investigate an existing instance of a threat, extrapolate its lessons, and apply those lessons to possible future targets. The first iteration consists of this document, a white paper focused on answering well-defined analytical questions with the assistance of subject matter experts in order to understand the contours of the problem. This document is intended to drive a collaborative analysis event that will bring together stakeholders and experts to critically analyze the implications of this revived threat and identify gaps in understanding and knowledge. The results of that event will be captured and used to develop and lead a tabletop competitive influence exercise. That exercise will test plausible scenarios to identify methods of addressing this threat and to highlight gaps in capability to respond to this threat. The results of that exercise will be captured in a final document that will lay out recommendations for addressing this problem.

The first main section of this document analyzes Russia's strategic motivations to gain insight on why Russia would make so daring a move as to annex a neighbor's territory. The second section assesses the operational and tactical approaches Russia uses in this hybrid warfare, in hopes of helping decision makers move closer to developing effective counter approaches. The second section ends with a graphical timeline of events. The third section discusses why the Baltic states and Poland should take notice of what occurred in Crimea and outlines how those countries may be vulnerable to a similar hybrid warfare. The fourth section addresses the implications this new—or perhaps more accurately, revived—security dynamic has for NATO. The final section considers the role of international law as a component in Russia's whole-of-domains approach to projecting power in its near abroad. For those readers who are unfamiliar with Ukraine, Appendix A features a brief primer on the country's history, politics, economy, military, infrastructure, and society.

Executive Summary

- **Russia employs a modality more than a strategic plan.** It is unlikely that Russia occupied and annexed Crimea as part of a long-term, well-defined plan. Instead, it is more likely Russia instituted a policy of increasing its influence in the region and seized an opportunity to cement that influence. Furthermore, it must be recognized that Russia sees itself as responding to an existential threat posed by the United States, the EU, and NATO manifested in creeping EU and NATO membership and so-called color revolutions.

- **Russia's motivating factors were not limited to external relations with Ukraine, NATO, and the EU.** They also included domestic political, economic, and demographic issues face by Putin and his regime, such as falling popularity, an economy in decline, and a quickly increasing Muslim population in a country whose government is reenergizing its connection to Orthodox Christianity.

- **Warning signs of future hybrid warfare operations include domestic tensions in Russia and advancement by Western entities into Russia's perceived sphere of influence.**

- **Successful hybrid warfare depends on enabling conditions in the target environment.** Accordingly, future targets of Russian hybrid warfare will exhibit political, social, economic, and demographic conditions and tensions that Russia can manipulate and leverage.

- **Russia employed its latest model of hybrid warfare in Crimea.** This model combines military and nonmilitary activities along a threat spectrum. As the threat increases, the corresponding military and nonmilitary measures evolve, but information warfare is constant. This model comes out of Russian military thinking that considers populist color revolutions, such as in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, direct threats.

- **Russia supports its hybrid operations with special operations forces, cyber operations, large-scale conventional military exercises near the border, and extensive military modernization.** The presence of a Russian military base or installation significantly enhances these hybrid operations by providing an infrastructure for rapid troop deployment. Communications systems and media outlets are

targeted early in operations and either neutralized or replaced by Russian entities. In line with that tactic, members of the press are threatened and forced to deliver the official story devised by the Kremlin.

- **The Baltic nations and Poland currently exhibit internal and external conditions that could prompt and facilitate Russian hybrid warfare.** The ethnic Russian populations in Estonia and Latvia are 24 and 27 percent, respectively, while Lithuania has a considerably lower percentage. All three countries, however, exhibit dense clusters of Russian speakers. Citizenship policies regarding Russians living in Estonia and Latvia have been contentious since those countries regained independent statehood. Baltic media outlets have far fewer resources than Russian-backed media outlets. Finally, the Baltic nations and Russia are interdependent in the energy sector.

- **The Baltic nations and Poland are already part of NATO.** Many point to this fact as a deterrent to Russian action within the territory of NATO members, but Russia seeks to prove itself a viable alternative to NATO and the EU and to reestablish itself as a superpower. Recall also that President Putin has declared the collapse of the Soviet Union to be the greatest catastrophe of the twentieth century. If Putin meant it, and it holds true that Russia seeks to undermine NATO, then conducting hybrid warfare within the territory of NATO members would accomplish that goal by trivializing NATO and its commitment to defending its members in the event of armed attack (Article 5).

- **NATO expanded significantly after the Cold War, but its recent focus has been on expeditionary missions and its members have not met their funding commitments.** The alliance has taken numerous measures to reassure its Baltic members of its support. Yet, the distraction by wars and operations in Afghanistan, Mali, and Libya and the unmet military spending commitments make NATO capability unguaranteed.

- **Russia employed tactics that purposefully avoided state responsibility under international law.** The use of non-insignia-bearing troops (sometimes referred to as the "little green men") and the lack of traditional military siege and seizure methods placed Russia's actions in a gray area in international law. Additionally, Russia created conditions and narratives that supported the application of various international legal doctrines on their face, ostensibly justifying its actions.

- **Russia's tactics pose a significant challenge to NATO and its members because they occupy the spaces between traditional categories of military, law enforcement, and diplomacy.** It is unclear whether Russia's actions in Crimea would have triggered Article 5 of the NATO Charter, which requires an armed attack. It is unclear whether the responsibility for responding to the so-called little green men falls on local law enforcement or national military. And it is unclear how far Russia will go until it is satisfied that NATO does not pose a threat.

Strategic Analysis: Motivations Driving Russia

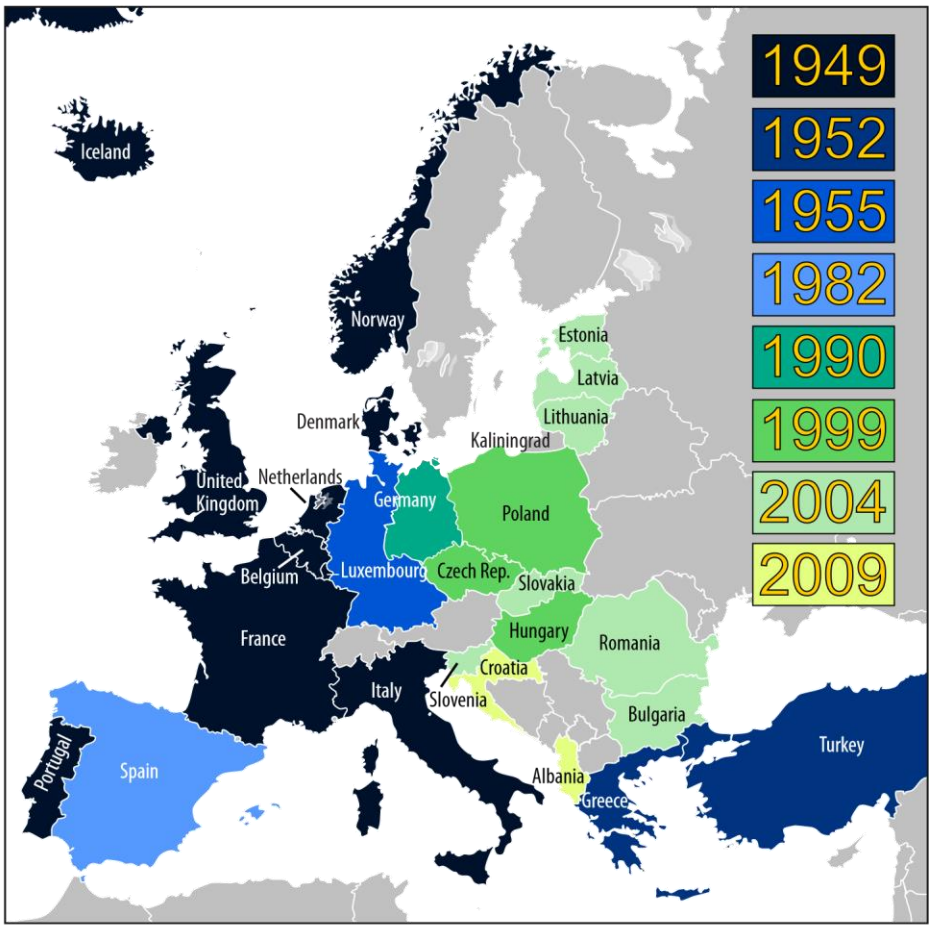
NATO Commander General Philip Breedlove stated in April 2013 that Russia was an "aspirational superpower" but that "mounting internal stressors—politico-economic, socio-cultural, and demographic" would challenge its aspirations.[1] Putin's goal to restore the greatness of the Russian state has long been entwined with domestic economic and political concerns that threaten to derail broader foreign policy objectives.[2] Debate continues over whether Russia executes a longterm strategy or capitalizes on opportunities. This document takes the view that those characterizations of Russian foreign policy need not be mutually exclusive. Instead, Russia seems to possess a modality that combines both approaches: when opportunity arises, "probe with a bayonet: if you meet steel, stop; if you meet mush, then push."[3] This section posits a group of factors that likely motivated Russia to seize the opportunity to probe. These factors are presented without weighting them or defining their relationship. The weight and relationship between these motivations cannot be known without a look inside the Kremlin's decision-making process, and even then, truly understanding the motivations of modern Russia requires understanding President Putin's calculus.

This section considers the factors that led to Russia's decision to annex Crimea at the strategic level in an attempt to answer the question of why Russia annexed Crimea. Those factors include geopolitical concerns, economic costs, societal issues, domestic political pressures, and historical factors. It concludes with a summary of findings and operational considerations for senior decision makers concerning the risk of future Russian incursions into peripheral states.

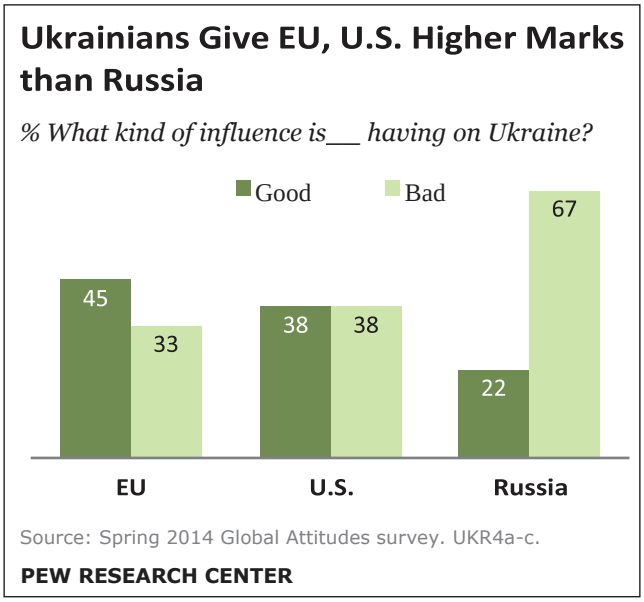
Geopolitical Factors

Strategic Concerns Over Western Alignment and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

Popular movements in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan in 2004–2005 coincided with eastward expansion by the European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The westward movement of Central and Eastern Europe represents in part a rejection of Putin's new Russia and the Eurasian and Russian systems and values that form it.[4] In President Putin's words, EU and NATO expansion represent an aggressive and forceful progression eastward of "the infrastructure of a military bloc . . . toward [Russia's] borders." Putin stated in April 2014 that Russia's "decision on Crimea was partly due to . . . considerations that if we do nothing, then at some point, guided by the same principles, NATO will drag Ukraine in and they will say: 'It doesn't have anything to do with you.' "[5] Statements by then-President Dmitry Medvedev to the Federal Security Service (FSB) in 2009 concerning Georgia and Ukraine expressed similar concerns and motivations.[6] Additionally, the acceptance of Western institutions and values in Russia's near abroad may encourage antiregime popular political movements within Russia and embolden insurgent resistance in the North Caucasus.[7] Popular movements in its near abroad and EU/NATO expansion are perceived by Russia as threats to Putin's regime, the Eurasian values it is built on, and the resurgence of Russia and its regional influence.[8] Recent additions to or the outer edges of the EU or NATO may therefore present the next targets



NATO expansion



for Russia's hybrid warfare as it seeks to push back against their expansion and influence.

The Crimean Peninsula and the Black Sea

Crimea is the focal point of Russia's maritime and security interests in the Black Sea. The peninsula opened significant maritime trade routes and repeatedly served as a bulwark against invasion. Today, the Black Sea is essential to Russia's status as a great power, providing the nation with not only the means to address regional security threats but also an opportunity to project power into the Mediterranean, Indian Ocean, and beyond.[9]

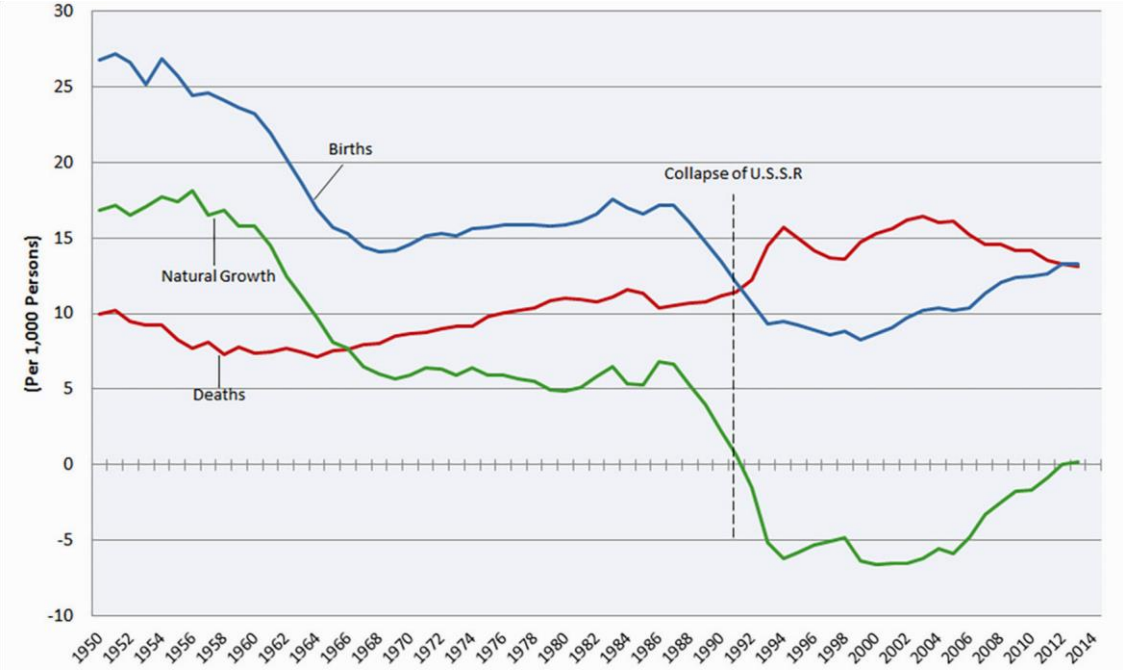
The majority of Russian trade is conducted via the Black Sea, and three-quarters of tanker traffic in the Bosporus heads either toward or away from Russia. Russia's Black Sea Fleet is the most formidable military presence in the region.[10] In April 2013, Russia conducted snap drills to demonstrate the fleet's readiness and the ability to invade Ukraine or Georgia without warning.[11] As the largest economic player in Crimea, the fleet also supports Russia's nonmilitary influence. It owns more than eighteen thousand hectares of land (only three thousand of it in Sevastopol), and it is deeply integrated into the region's shadow economy. The fleet and its affiliates own a number of high-value assets, many of which operated outside Ukrainian tax regimes and significantly below market rates. These nonmilitary activities inserted the Black Sea Fleet and its affiliates into regional politics, business, and crime.[12]

Moscow's actions continue to indicate the importance Russia places on naval dominance in the Black Sea.[13] Expansions to the naval base in Novorossiysk, initiated to ensure Russian naval presence in the Black Sea if the lease with Ukraine were not renewed,[14] are expected to continue despite the annexation of Crimea.[15] Thus, Russia has demonstrated that when its major military installations are in jeopardy, it will take decisive measures to protect them.

Economic Factors

The annexation of Crimea presented Russia with a number of gains, but it was not lucrative. Russia must now balance the benefit of obtaining Crimea's resources with the responsibility of providing services and maintaining infrastructure. The most significant economic advantage for Russia is control of any natural gas and oil reserves in the territorial waters off Crimea.[16] However, the extensive development required to access these energy resources and the investment disincentive of regional unrest means that Russia may not be able to exploit these reserves for a significant amount of time.[17] The annexation also brought Russia an estimated $10.8 billion in other Crimean natural resources and facilities, $1.7 billion worth of Ukrainian military equipment, and nationalized assets that include 131 agro-industrial enterprises, 130 pieces of tourism infrastructure, and seven ports. Lastly, the move ended Russia's "gas-forbase" agreement with Ukraine, which would have cost Russia roughly $4 billion a year in discounted gas to Ukraine.[18]

However, Crimea brings Russia far more economic burden than reward. Initial integration efforts ran almost $1.5 billion. This figure does not include the annual costs associated with increasing pensions and public sector salaries to match Russian levels, $2 billion and $840 million, respectively. The region requires more than $6 billion in new infrastructure, including roads, bridges, power stations, and a new gas pipeline. These mounting costs, combined with U.S. and EU sanctions and a sharp decline in direct foreign investment, will likely contribute to the continued stagnation and/or decline of the Russian economy.[19] These economic stressors may prompt drastic Russian actions in the near term because tensions inside Russia have been shown to be indicators of aggressive Russian foreign policy.



Natural population growth of Russia

Societal Factors

Russia's Population Decline and Demographic Shift

Russia faces significant demographic challenges, as a low birth rate and high death rate continue to keep the population growth rate near zero (–0.03 percent).[20] Furthermore, the ethnic Russian population inside Russia is shrinking as its Muslim populations continue to grow, suggesting the demographic landscape could change to majority Muslim by 2050. In 2012, Putin campaigned on a strategy to increase Russia's population from 142.5 million to 154 million in an attempt to combat this shift.[21] This, combined with widely held pan-Russian nationalism that decries the division of ethnically Russian populations into former Soviet republics, made the prospect of adding 1.45 million ethnic Russians by annexing Crimea attractive.

Russian Identity and Shared Culture in Crimea

Russian and Ukrainian colonization of Crimea in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries increased the percentage of Russians and Ukrainians on the peninsula, leaving Crimean Tatars with only a slight plurality. Under the Stalinist Terror, the mass execution and deportation of Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars created a Russian majority in Crimea, which has remained a reality despite the return of many Crimean Tatars after the fall of the Soviet Union.[22] As of 2013, 82 percent of the Crimean population—previously 77 percent in 2001—spoke primarily Russian in their everyday lives despite a decline in the rest of the country.[23] The persistence of a dominant Russian identity in Crimea led to the rejection of social policies set in Kiev. Further, multiple economic crises and relative poverty in Crimea led much of the population to view independence from Russia as a mistake: 23 to 33 percent of Crimean residents desired reunification with Russia as of 2013.[24] The following table shows the results of a survey of Crimean residents who were asked the question, "In your opinion, what should the status of Crimea be?" in 2011 and 2013.

Response	***October 2011***	***May 2013***
Autonomy in Ukraine (as today)	49	53
Crimean Tatar autonomy within Ukraine	2	12
Common oblast of Ukraine	6	2
Crimea should be separated and given to Russia	33	23
DK (don't know)/NA	8	10
IRI, USAID, Baltic Surveys/The Gallup Organization, Rating Group Ukraine, *Crimea Residents Survey*, May 2013		

Political Factors

Russian Politics

War furnishes the best opportunities to distract domestic public opinion and destroy the remnants

> *of the political and intellectual opposition within Russia itself. An undemocratic regime worried about the prospect of domestic economic social and political crises—such as those that now haunt Russia amid recession and falling oil prices—is likely to be pondering further acts of aggression.*[25]
>
> —Andrei Illarionov (former economic advisor to Vladimir Putin)

The decisions to annex Crimea and destabilize eastern Ukraine have also served to stifle domestic political threats to the Putin regime. The deterioration of domestic economic and sociopolitical life from 2009 to 2012 sparked backlash from Russia's urban middle class. During demonstrations in 2011 and 2012, protesters demanded freedoms and decried corruption. Opposition leaders became icons, and Putin's approval ratings began to decline. This sparked a strategic shift to the political right to garner support from the "other Russia,"[26] to which Putin represented an exemplar of traditional Russian values. Losing influence in Ukraine and Crimea would have threatened Putin's political appeal to the other Russia.[27] The tidal shift against Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych and the Russian dominance of Ukrainian politics damaged Putin's image as a defender against Western influence.[28] As stated by Lilia Shevtsova, "if domestic appeal of the regime starts to wane, it will desire all the more to compensate for its internal weakness through a more assertive statist and neo-imperialist policy abroad."[29] In this way the annexation of Crimea helped Putin respond to a domestic crisis of legitimacy.[30] The move not only satisfied Putin supporters who decry Western encroachment but also appealed to many Putin opponents who support the reunification of Russian expatriates in peripheral states. Rallying public support and satisfying power brokers allowed Putin to defuse domestic political threats and divide the opposition.[31] Lastly, Russian actions in Crimea served to warn those in Russia who may be inspired to imitate Euromaidan or spark uprisings in the North Caucasus.[32]

Ukrainian Politics

The paradigm shift in domestic Ukrainian politics brought about by the Euromaidan movement played a significant role in Russian calculations to intervene and annex Crimea.[33] As the movement escalated against what it saw as aggressive Russian interference in Ukrainian foreign and economic policy, the tenuous political balance in Ukraine shifted away from the moderately pro-Russian Party of Regions and toward a government that would more strongly resist Russian influence. This new political reality would remove Russia's decisive influence, potentially threaten the extended Black Sea Fleet lease at the port in Sevastopol, risk the extensive Russian-owned assets in Ukraine, and constitute a far-reaching extension of Western economic and political influence. These risk factors created an imperative for Moscow to act quickly to secure its vital interests in Crimea.

Historical Factors and Justifications

Crimean History

The cultural and historical significance of Crimea to the greater Slavic people dates back to the Kievan Rus under Vladimir the Great. Vladimir seized the coastal city of Chersonesus from the Byzantine Empire in 988 and converted the Slavic peoples to Orthodox Christianity. The cultural significance of this persists in today's Russia.[34] Crimea was conquered by the Russian Empire under Catherine the Great and independently aligned with Russia in 1774 by treaty before being annexed by Russia in 1783. Crimea later served as a bulwark against the allied forces of Great Britain, France, Sardinia, and Turkey in the Crimean War (1853–1856). In World War II, resilience in Sevastopol against the Nazi invasion became a symbol for Russian strength and earned Sevastopol the title of "Hero City." These confrontations shaped a Russian view of Crimea as a critical buffer against foreign influence and led Russian leadership to equate losing Crimea with forfeiting Russia's role as a great power.[35] Putin has stated that the collapse of the Soviet Union was the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the twentieth century, and losing Crimea to independent Ukraine was part of that. The loss of Russia's significant influence in Ukraine would have irremediably removed Crimea from Russia's grasp.

Ukrainian Nationalism and Cultural Politics

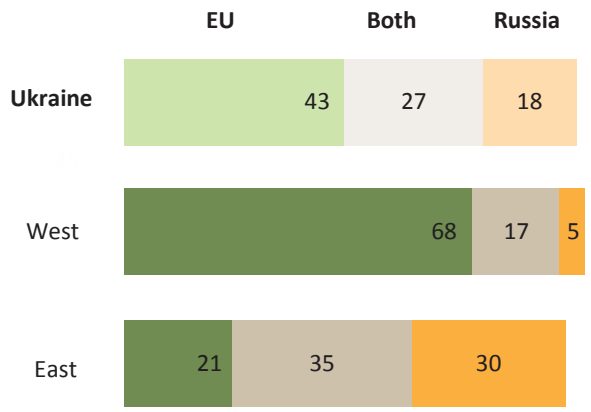
Both the Euromaidan and Russian information operations utilized cultural memory and narrative contentions between eastern and western Ukrainians, characterized by the selective remembrance of regional tragedies, historical revisionism, and the omission of atrocities committed by revered figures or groups.[36] In the west and northwest, the dominant narrative holds that Ukrainian people are culturally distinct from surrounding countries, and frames regional history as a constant struggle for Ukrainian independence from external rule. Within this narrative, Russian occupation and Soviet atrocities are at the forefront, and the leaders of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) are heroes who resisted both the Red Army and Nazi

forces. However, this narrative ignores the early cooperation with the Germans and ethnic cleansing against Polish peasants in the northwest.[37] Post-Soviet Ukrainian academics have revived earlier studies that further promote a unique Ukrainian cultural identify.[38]

Large portions of the population in the east and southeast oppose this narrative and, instead, identify as Russians, see Ukraine as a part of Russia, and push for closer alignment with Russia instead of the West.[39] The Russian population of Ukraine largely sees the UPA as fascists, Nazi collaborators, and murderers. Eastern Ukrainians also speak and write Russian instead of Ukrainian[40] and have long lobbied for Russian to be

Ukrainians Desire Strong Ties with EU

% more important for Ukraine to have strong ties with...



Note: Question not asked in Crimea.

Source: Spring 2014 Global Attitudes survey. UKR6.

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an official language. In 2012, President Yanukovych passed a law allowing cities and oblasts to pass legislation on regional official language status for minority languages.[41] A wave of legislation swept the east and south of Ukraine within weeks, and the law was met with strong protest in western Ukraine.[42] The fall of the Yanukovych government posed a cultural threat to eastern Ukraine and by extension Russia.

Ukrainian Confidence in Putin Plummets

Confidence		No Confidence	Don't know
Merkel	%	%	%
2014	50	40	9
2011	49	20	30
2007	41	27	32
Obama			
2014	44	48	8
2011	37	42	21
Putin			
2014	23	73	5
2007	56	33	10

Source: Spring 2014 Global Attitudes survey. Q41a-c.

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There are several takeaways from the strategic considerations that contributed to Russia's decision to annex the Crimean peninsula. First, the Russian leadership views the eastward expansion of Western institutions like the EU and NATO as both an encroachment on and rejection of traditional Eurasian institutions and values. Second, the warm water port in Sevastopol is critical for Russia's naval power, for regional and national trade, and as a real and symbolic buffer against the West. Third, Russia is willing to endure the short-term pain of economic losses and sanctions in pursuit of broader strategic and geopolitical objectives. Fourth, the sociopolitical, demographic, and linguistic makeup of Crimea was a key component in Russian operations to suppress dissent and minimize resistance. Finally, the domestic political climate in Russia is a significant factor in Russian foreign policy deliberations. The historical and cultural significance of Crimea maximized the domestic political capital gained by Putin in its annexation, whereas similar assertive maneuvers against countries and regions with less significance to the Russian identity would likely be more divisive among the Russian population.

Conclusion

Notes

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Russia's Evolving Hybrid Warfare Doctrine

The Kremlin's narrative for Russia's annexation of Crimea paints the picture of a divided people reunited and the correction of a historical folly that forced kin to live on opposite sides of an artificial border. Many residents of Crimea identified ethnically as Russian and spoke Russian as their primary language. And a significant segment of the population welcomed the arrival of Russian forces and supported the referendum on secession. Moscow's official narrative minimized the nature and degree of Russian involvement and control of events leading to the March 16 referendum and March 21 annexation. Moscow denied its military buildup on the peninsula and attributed the seizure of Ukrainian military bases and other key infrastructure to populist, pro-Russian militia.[1] Russia later acknowledged its military presence but characterized its troops as peacekeepers present to protect Russian compatriots. Moscow then claimed it had no involvement in the referendum vote.[2] Although Crimea and Russia had long-standing cultural, linguistic, and ethnic ties, the Kremlin actively and comprehensively pursued Crimea as strategically critical territory. The annexation represented not a populist reunification phenomenon but a deliberate military campaign. Moscow's rhetoric aimed to mask

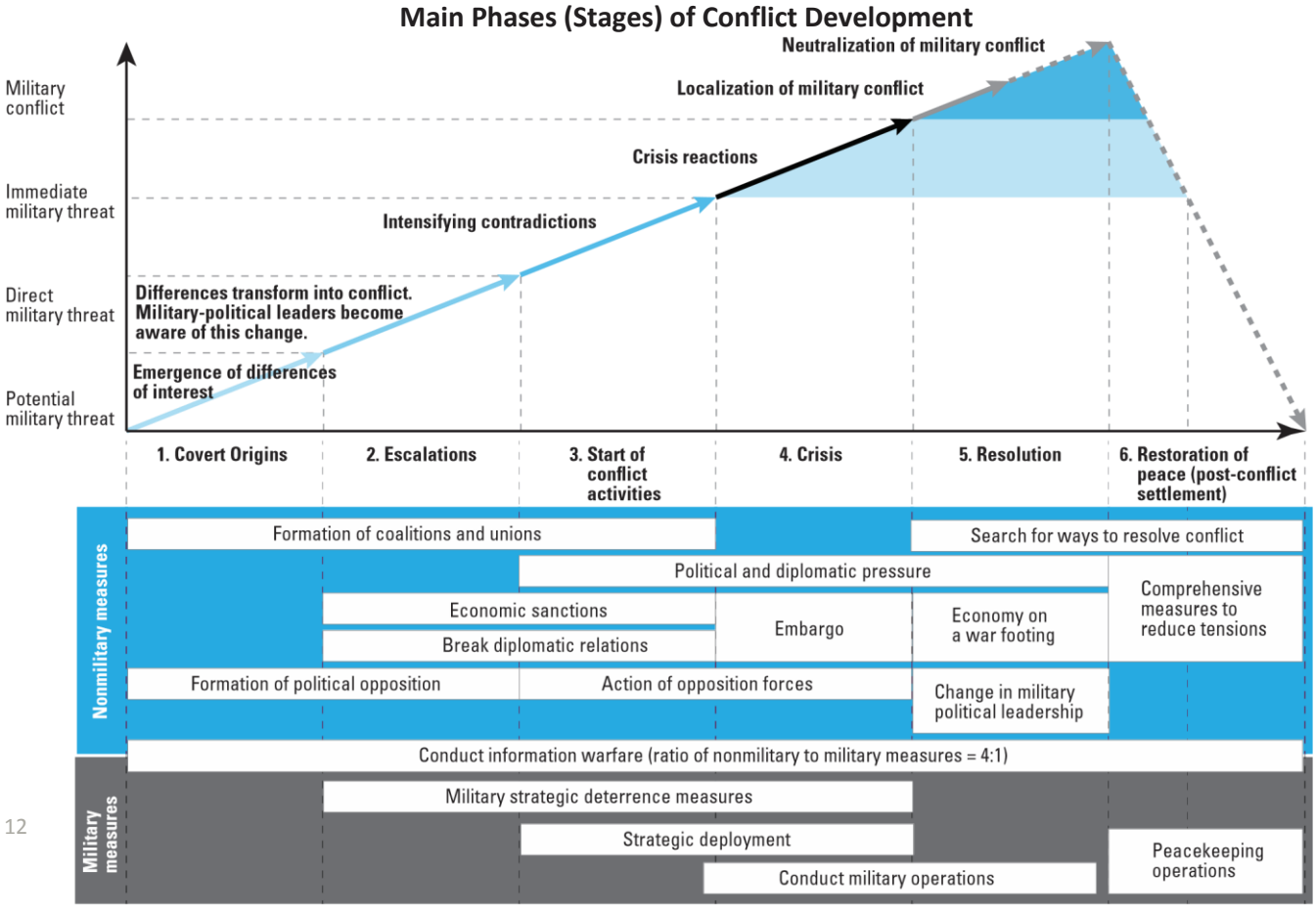
Russia's deliberate, intrusive role, but the annexation represented the latest and most successful execution of Russia's hybrid warfare doctrine. Retired admiral and former commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and U.S. European Command, James Stavridis, remarked that the annexation was "a significant shift in how Russian ground forces approach a problem" and that "[the Russians] have played their hand of cards with finesse."[3]

The following describes the tactics, techniques, and procedures used by Russia as best as can be gleaned from unclassified, open sources. Primarily based on news accounts and subject matter experts' independent analyses, this section analyzes these tactics, techniques, and procedures according to a hybrid warfare model discussed by General Valery Vasilevich Gerasimov in a speech to the Russian Academy of Military Sciences. This model was chosen not as a definitive representation of Russian military doctrine but as representative of forward Russian military thinking. Additionally, this section seeks to avoid the error of analyzing Russia's thinking in Western terms and constructs. Considering the authors' lack of access to the Kremlin's plans for operations in Crimea, General Gerasimov's model offers the best available insight into Russian military thinking.

In January 2013, General Gerasimov, chief of the general staff of the Russian Armed Forces, gave a speech to the Russian Academy of Military Sciences in which he described a blurring of lines between wartime and peacetime actions in twenty-first-century conflicts. General Gerasimov called for a new perspective on warfare that recognized the increasing role of nonmilitary means in the outcome of conflicts. He cited the Arab Spring as an example of how such means are often more effective than force in achieving political and strategic objectives. In particular, the general emphasized the use of political, economic, information, and humanitarian tactics to harvest the "protest potential" of a population. He noted that nonmilitary means should be complemented by the use of special operations forces and widespread information warfare. In the later stages of such a conflict, conventional troops should be deployed ostensibly as peacekeepers. Furthermore, technology has greatly reduced the space-time gap between military and government actions.[4] General Gerasimov observed that traditional force-on-force conflict has given way to a blend of military/nonmilitary conflict that uses all domains of national power to secure a desired outcome. Gerasimov presented his remarks as a challenge to Russian scholars of military science. He urged them to devise new ways to incorporate hybrid warfare into doctrine, specifically focusing on the use of nonmilitary means and interagency cooperation among the defense establishment, other government ministries, and academic institutions. He concluded by warning against the complacency and orthodoxy often associated with the Russian defense establishment.[5] The figure on the following page is a translation of the graphic Gerasimov used to illustrate this concept of hybrid warfare.[6]

This diagram depicts a series of military and nonmilitary actions along two scales. The vertical scale identifies the level of threat or risk to Russia. Notice that it begins with potential military threat, proceeds to direct military threat, and then moves to immediate military threat, and the apex is military conflict. It does not explain the criteria for a potential military threat or the distinction between potential, direct, and immediate military threats, much less what constitutes a military conflict. However, mapping the diagram onto events in Crimea sheds some light on those categories. The horizontal scale identifies classes of activities in response to the level of threat along the vertical axis. The result is a pairing of threats and classes of response activities: covert origin activities respond to potential military threats, escalation and start of conflict activities respond to direct military threats, crisis activities respond to immediate military threats, resolution activities respond to military conflict, and restoration of peace activities take place as the threat subsides. The diagram does give guidance on what those classes of activities include. Below the graph sits a series of boxes representing nonmilitary and military measures. The beginning and ending of each box correspond to a class of activities that in turn correspond to a level of threat. Thus, the formation of coalitions, unions, and political opposition constitute nonmilitary measures that begin as part of covert origin activities and proceed through escalation activities. At that point the formation of coalitions and unions proceeds into the start of conflict activities while the formation of political opposition nominally ends before the start of conflict activities. For military measures, military strategic deterrence measures begin during covert origin activities meant to respond to a potential military threat, and they persist through escalation, the start of conflict activities, and crisis actions to address direct and immediate military threats. Important to note is that the nonmilitary and military measures occur simultaneously, thus creating a hybrid approach to countering perceived threats. Also critical to understand is that this diagram is a clean and clear-cut representation of a fluid and dynamic process, so the relationships among its elements should not be interpreted as strictly as the orderliness of the diagram suggests.[8]

The intent of this analysis is to identify the key components of Russia's hybrid warfare campaign in Crimea. In any conflict, the use of a particular component may span multiple stages and may serve different, even contradictory purposes, depending on the stage. For example, information warfare is present throughout the entirety of a hybrid warfare campaign. It may serve to escalate tensions in the early stages of conflict, whereas in the later stages it may work to bring about a resolution and restoration of peace. However, for clarity's sake, all components are organized under the stage of conflict in which their use first became apparent. Additionally, the key components of Russian



The role of nonmilitary methods in interstate conflict resolution[7]

hybrid warfare discussed below were gathered from unclassified, open-source material. Accordingly, this analysis does not claim to be comprehensive because of the inherent limits of unclassified research.

Covert Origins

These activities extend the reach of Russian agents, whether clandestine, covert, or overt forces, in and among elements of the population in order to foster the local population's receptivity to Russia's influence in its domestic affairs. This phase can span decades of careful cultivation and calculated escalations of internal instability in those countries, and it aims to set the stage for the effective execution of unconventional conflict activities.[9] These efforts focus on leveraging the cultural and political friction points of a population to influence political outcomes, shape domestic and international opinion, and facilitate freedom of movement for both surrogate and unilateral forces, should the threat escalate along the continuum.

Formation of Coalitions and Unions/ Political Opposition

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the chaos of the Yeltsin era, political elites under Vladimir Putin reached a consensus to undertake a foreign policy that would reestablish Russia as a "great power." President Putin's outlook on the West hardened after the Orange Revolution in Ukraine (2004–2005) and the Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan (2005). These popular movements coincided with eastward expansion by the European Union (EU) and NATO, and together they were perceived as a U.S.-led conspiracy to further the reach of Western economic and security alliances eastward to undermine President Putin's regime and Russia's regional influence.[10] This constituted a potential military threat requiring a response. According to the diagram, that response consists of covert origins activities.

In response to this perceived potential military threat, Russia employed both military and nonmilitary means to wield influence in Crimean politics. The Partition Treaty of 1997, which granted basing rights to Russia's Black Sea Fleet, permitted ten intelligence and counterintelligence detachments subordinate to the Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff and the Federal Security Service. Those assets were reportedly "linked to the financing of sympathetic politicians, separatist activities and anti-NATO propaganda and protests."[11] Furthermore, reporting indicates the Black Sea Fleet provided logistical support to pro-Russian nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and Kremlin-backed nationalist youth groups from Russia.[12]

Conduct Information Warfare

President Putin's regime has employed information warfare within Russia by consolidating control of most domestic media outlets to effectively make them mouthpieces of the Kremlin.[13] The Russian government extended that strategy abroad years before annexing Crimea. Russia engaged in an information warfare campaign to influence the peninsula's population. This effort escalated significantly during and after the Orange Revolution.[14] Moscow based its propaganda effort in the press center of the Black Sea Fleet[15] and covertly proliferated messages via NGOs that targeted the Russian community.[16]

When the Russian invasion of Crimea began, Russia seized control of media outlets in Crimea. In late February and early March 2014, Russian soldiers positioned themselves at television transmitters in Simferopol and several days later turned over their posts to pro-Russian militia. Shortly thereafter, technicians disconnected Ukrainian networks and replaced them with state-controlled channels from Russia.[17] Other reports indicated that "unidentified people" had taken control of telecommunications hubs, disrupting telephone and Internet connectivity between Crimea and the rest of Ukraine.[18] Until the annexation was complete, journalists reporting for Russian outlets were banned from describing the situation as an occupation.[19] Instead, they echoed the words of Russian officials, including defense minister Sergei Shoigu, who continued to deny mounting evidence of a Russian troop buildup, insisting that actions on the ground were those of a "Crimean popular army made up of locals and former Ukrainian armed forces."[20] There was also evidence of intimidation of foreign and local journalists, including physical threats and the confiscation of their electronic media.[21]

These tactics were part of Russia's "unrelenting media campaign to reinforce its narrative that a Russianabetted intervention had been needed to rescue the Russian-speaking population from right-wing extremists and chaos."[22] Since the annexation, Crimea's "media have been subdued and integrated into the repressive Russian information campaign. The relative media pluralism Crimeans had enjoyed previously is gone, replaced by a Russian standard that effectively limits alternative viewpoints."[23] Russia understands the power of controlling information and it used that power through tactics aimed at controlling both the physical infrastructure that delivers

information and the content of those messages. In Ukraine this tactic disconnected the Ukrainian military's command and control lines in order to isolate units in Crimea. This created a scenario in which Russia could play the hero instead of the aggressor within the local population. The Baltic nations are already experiencing information warfare. Russian state media outlets, for instance, are better funded than most Baltic media outlets and can reach more audiences with higher-quality programming. Additionally, those state media outlets have been propagating a narrative that depicts Russia as a protector. This begs the question whether Russia has identified a potential military threat in the Baltics, where no color revolution has taken place but perhaps Baltic membership in NATO causes sufficient concern in Moscow. Increased Russian media presence should, however, serve as an indicator that Russia perceives a potential threat and is already taking action to address it.

Military Strategic Deterrence Measures

The presence of the Black Sea Fleet served as a major strategic deterrent to Ukrainian armed forces and allies. The fleet includes a patrol submarine with anti-submarine warfare capabilities, thirteen principal surface combatants (two guided-missile cruisers, three guided missile destroyers, and eight frigates/ corvettes), ten patrol ships, seven mine warfare and countermeasure platforms, and seven amphibious platforms.[24] Simply put, the fleet is the most formidable military presence in the region and a strategic military benefit to Russia that was evident during and after the 2008 war with Georgia.[25]

There is, perhaps, one additional manner in which Russia used a strategic military deterrent. Russia's military has undergone a modernization effort in recent years. Before this change, Russia had relied on lightly manned skeleton regiments that would receive an influx of conscripts in the event of mobilization. The army of that era was widely associated with poor discipline, supply, and training. These shortcomings were evident even during the 2008 war with Georgia. The Russian soldiers who participated in the Crimean action were quite different. Journalists noted "a force in the midst of an upgrade—encrypted tactical radios in the hands of low-level troops, new or specialized firearms, and state-of-the-art electronic jamming equipment being transported along the Crimean roads."[26] A compelling observation was that the "presence of these radios potentially gives Russian enlisted soldiers more influence and tactical agility than they traditionally had, and could suggest that Russia's military overhaul has a doctrinal as well as a logistical and social component."[27] These troops likely belonged to specialized units and may represent a better-trained and -equipped element of the overall Russian force. The results of Russia's modernization efforts may not be comprehensive or stretch throughout the entire Russian military.[28] Nonetheless, the deterrent factor

of a newly modernized, more capable force is likely to be strong throughout Russia's near abroad. It can now accomplish similar goals with a slimmer force and without the traditional Russian tactic of overwhelming the opponent with numbers.

The military exercises Russia undertook on the border with Ukraine undoubtedly served as a deterrent measure. However, these will be addressed under the subheading of *Strategic Deployment* because they involved the mobilization of troops as opposed to the stationing of troops.

Escalations

Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Due to decades of forced migrations within the Soviet Union, many ethnic Russians now live outside the borders of contemporary Russia in other former Soviet republics. Russian policy clearly states that Russian forces hold the inherent right to protect their citizens "beyond the borders of the Russian Federation."[29] However, there is a history of Russia assigning citizenship to individuals in its near abroad to justify greater Russian influence in former Soviet republics. In Ossetia in 2008, Russian entities (either peacekeeping forces from the military or pro-Russian NGOs) provided passports to citizens otherwise categorized as Georgian to legitimize their intervention as being on behalf of Russian citizens. Reports also circulated later that same year of unidentified Russian entities distributing passports in the port of Sevastopol as part of their escalation efforts and to present an ethnically defensible rationale for Russian intervention in the future.[30] In April 2013, Russia simplified passport and visa processes for expatriates and compatriots.[31] The term *compatriot* (*sootechestvenniki*) includes a larger population, as it does not require Russian ethnicity. On March 1, 2014, the upper house of the Russian parliament approved Putin's request to permit the use of Russian armed forces to protect not only ethnic Russians and Russian citizens but also all other Russian speakers.[32] These measures greatly enlarged the number of those eligible for Russian "protection." In doing so, President Putin established a mechanism to legitimize to domestic and international audiences intervention throughout all of Russia's near abroad.[33] Similar citizenship, passport, and

visa programs should cause concern if they appear in Baltic states

or other former Soviet republics, such as Kazakhstan and Moldova.

Start of Conflict Activities/Crisis

> *For its intervention in Crimea, the Russians used a so-called snap military exercise to distract attention and hide their preparations. Then specially trained troops, without identifying patches, moved quickly to secure key installations. Once the operation was underway, the Russian force cut telephone cables, jammed communications and used cyberwarfare to cut off the Ukrainian military forces on the peninsula.*[34]
>
> —Michael Gordon, chief military correspondent for *The New York Times*

In early March 2014, many outside of Crimea predicted a conventional military invasion and waited for Moscow to dispatch additional ships and soldiers to seize the peninsula. What these observers failed to realize was that, by this time, the invasion had already taken place.[35] The period between Yanukovych's ouster on February 22 and the establishment of de facto Russian control of the peninsula lasted only days.[36] Pro-Russian forces seized the Crimean parliament on February 27 and the referendum to rejoin Russia occurred on March 16.[37]

Strategic Deployment

Russian leaders did not rely on the presence of the Black Sea Fleet to preempt Ukrainian military intervention. Nor did Russia employ heavy mechanized forces as it had done in its 2008 war with Georgia. On the contrary, the Crimean intervention featured fewer than ten thousand assault troops lined up against sixteen thousand Ukrainian military personnel. The heaviest fighting vehicle the Russians used against the Ukrainians was the wheeled BTR-80 armored personnel carrier.[38] As tensions in Ukraine amplified, Russia deployed its forces to the border. This buildup on the border displayed Russian willingness to safeguard Russian speakers, created a credible threat to dissuade third-party intervention, provided logistical support to special operations groups and surrogate paramilitary groups, and created a distraction for clandestine activities to take place unnoticed. The presence of tens of thousands of Russian troops and repeated violations of Ukrainian airspace ensured that the lightly armed Russian forces and their indigenous allies could operate inside Ukraine with much greater influence. That presence likely tempered Ukraine's military response and forced it to look both inward at Crimea and outward to the Russian border.[39]

Actions of Opposition Forces/ Conduct Military Operations

Since its military experiences in Chechnya in the 1990s and early 2000s, Russia has sought to transform its military into a more nimble force in an effort to better project power in the country's near abroad. These changes focused on "special forces, airborne and naval infantry—'rapid reaction' abilities that were 'road tested' in Crimea."[40] The Russian military's "real strength lay in covert action combined with sound intelligence concerning the weakness of the Kiev government and their will to respond militarily."[41] Moscow sent small teams into Ukraine "to seize government buildings that could be turned over to sympathizers and local militias" with a particular focus on "police stations and Interior Ministry buildings, which stored arms that could be turned over to local supporters."[42] Similar scenes played out across Crimea as small, unidentified groups of armed, masked men surrounded and seized key military and government installations. Gunmen positioned themselves at Simferopol's international airport but allowed air traffic to continue. Within a day, however, all flights to Kiev were canceled.[43] At military facilities, some Ukrainian personnel put up cursory resistance and refused to vacate their bases, but in every instance the troops ultimately yielded to the demands of the armed men.[44] Elements of Russia's Black Sea Fleet supported this effort by blockading the Southern Naval Base on Donuzlav Bay. On March 6, Russia scuttled a decommissioned ship in the strait, effectively cutting off the troops at the base and blocking the Ukrainian navy.[45] NATO Commander General Philip

Breedlove remarked that this series of base seizures "disconnected the Ukrainian forces in Crimea from their command and control."[46]

Unlike in conventional operations, local support enabled small teams of Russian military to continue moving forward instead of maintaining their positions to secure and hold the areas and facilities they had seized.[47] In many instances, there were two discernible groups of armed men. The first consisted of "tightlipped soldiers presumed to be Russian special forces, without identifying insignia and carrying large automatic weapons."[48] The others, "self-proclaimed defense militias, in plainclothes but wearing red or black and orange armbands, stood in a line, creating a barrier in

front of the soldiers."[49] Some of the Crimean militiamen were organized under the pro-Russian political party, Russian Bloc. These individuals established checkpoints on the highway between Simferopol and Sevastopol, emplacing warning signs that read, "Those who approach with a sword will die by the sword."[50] Others belonged to pro-Russian motorcycle gangs, who also took part in manning roadblocks. In one instance, the bikers flew a banner that read, "Russia has always been the graveyard of evil ideas. You cannot win over a graveyard, you can only stay in it forever."[51] Alexander Zaldostanov, Putin ally and leader of the Russian motorcycle gang Night Wolves, arrived in Crimea in late February and made public appearances at pro-Russian rallies.[52] There are also reports of pro-Russian Cossacks arriving in buses to blockade Ukrainian government buildings.[53]

Russia insists that United National (UN) Security Council approval is necessary for one nation to take military action against another.[54] However, Russia exploited weak legal standards "for the attribution of actions by non-state actors to a government that supports them."[55] Russia realized it would be "extremely difficult, if not impossible, to prove that these unidentified militias were under his effective control, and that . . . they were funded and directed by Russia."[56] This enabled Moscow to conduct its military takeover of Crimea "without incurring international legal responsibility"[57] by sponsoring local self-defense forces and removing insignia from Russian troops present on the peninsula.

Resolution/Restoration of Peace

Russia's seizure and annexation of Crimea represented a more decisive end than is the case in many unconventional conflicts. The widespread popular support in Crimea for annexation and Russia's overwhelming military superiority precluded any need for disarming initiatives, treaty negotiations, and the like. Despite the fact that the majority of the international community has refused to recognize the annexation, the peninsula is under de facto Russian control and according to Russian law is now a republic within Russia.[58] As such, some of the components of General Gerasimov's model for these two stages do not apply. Nonetheless, Russia's actions to incorporate the peninsula into the broader federation are instructive. Russia appointed the former head of the Ukrainian Navy, Denis Berezovsky, to serve as the deputy commander of the Black Sea Fleet.[59] Co-opting Ukrainian forces continued at Sevastopol's Nakhimov Naval Academy where "cadets were simply told . . . they now attend a Russian school."[60]

However, the more extensive integration measures are nonmilitary. The Russian parliament approved billions of dollars to begin the process of incorporating Crimea. This includes doubling pensions in order to raise them from Ukrainian to Russian levels and dramatically increasing the salaries of public sector employees for the same purpose. "Russia has also promised to spend generously on upgrading public infrastructure in Crimea such as schools, hospitals, roads, airports, the water supply system and a new university."[61] The Crimean economy includes "up to $2.5 billion dollars annually from tourism, with 70 percent of those tourists coming from Ukraine."[62] With the annexation, it became unclear what percentage of these travelers could or would continue to visit Crimea. In an attempt to address this, Russia began subsidizing vacations to Crimea for Russian state employees, school children, and retirees.[63] Russia also started promoting Crimea abroad, specifically in China and Germany, at tourism conventions and other public events.[64] In these ways Russia is actively taking steps to incorporate Crimea into Russia and thereby make it more difficult to argue that Crimea should remain part of Ukraine.

Conclusion

Earlier sections of this paper recounted Russia's centuries-old relationship with Crimea and affirmed Russia's established role as a principal stakeholder on the peninsula. As such, it would be disingenuous to characterize all Russian influence in Crimea as existing within the scope of a hybrid warfare effort. Hence, this section examines those elements of Russian power, military and nonmilitary, that helped secure Russia's victory in Crimea. Of all the locations in Russia's near abroad, Crimea likely presented Russia with the most advantageous conditions in which to wage a successful unconventional war. The histories of Russia and Crimea have been interwoven for centuries and the peoples of the two lands are ethnic, linguistic, and political brethren. Furthermore, the geographic proximity across the Kerch Strait and the Black Sea, and especially the presence on the peninsula of Russia's Black Sea Fleet, greatly reduced time and space constraints on Russia to stage a campaign. Within days of Yanukovych's expulsion from Kiev, Russian and pro-Russian forces had seized the Crimean parliament and other government buildings, as well as key ports, airports, and military bases. Within a few weeks, the peninsula declared its independence, held a referendum on secession, and became incorporated into Russia. However, such a swift and conclusive victory was not simply the result of history, demographics, and proximity. Russia employed its evolving hybrid warfare

doctrine to ensure that Crimea did not remain in the grip of a Westward-leaning Kiev, which it perceived to be a military threat.

If it holds true that Russia perceives expanding Western institutions and so-called color revolutions as potential military threats, then it is highly likely that it will engage in future hybrid warfare campaigns. Those future campaigns, however, are unlikely to look exactly like the one in Crimea because each target country or region will present its own domestic conditions to enable or obstruct Russian tactics. Overall, Russia's perspective on twenty-first-century warfare characterizes conflict as a hybrid of military and nonmilitary actions in which traditional distinctions between the levels of war are obscured. A vigorous information warfare campaign and the use of small teams of special operations forces in conjunction with local pro-Russian groups stand out as integral tools in this varied arsenal, and, crucially, they are used to amplify the potential of indigenous opposition groups and militia. Hybrid warfare requires active participants among a local populace, and ethnic Russians are the most likely candidates for this role in Russia's near abroad. It is important to note the presence and popularity of revanchist sentiments among those whose futures seemed, and perhaps were, more secure during Soviet times. Similarly, there are pragmatic individuals for whom closer ties with Russia would offer better opportunities for employment, education, travel, and trade. It must be noted, though, that a hybrid warfare effort also benefits from an acquiescent populace. Russia's border regions are home to many communities where greater Russian influence would not meet with opposition.

Yet, by examining open-source data from the viewpoint of General Gerasimov's model, indicators of those future campaigns can be identified. In the section "Why the Baltic States and Poland Should Take Notice," we look at how a similar campaign might already be underway in the Balkans.

Timeline of Events

The following timeline provides a means to visualize the sequence of events surrounding the annexation of Crimea as an example that illuminates the patterns in Russian hybrid warfare operations. A more in-depth study of this now historical instance of Russian operations could yield valuable predictive indicators of future Russian operations. Across the top are milestone events that occurred during the annexation of Crimea and the later stages of Euromaidan. The colored boxes across the bottom represent actions taken by Russia that can be interpreted to be part of its hybrid warfare operations. Researchers collected those actions from news services using three criteria: (1) the location must have been Crimea or the Russian Southern Military District; (2) the actor must have been Russian or the actor's connection to Russia must have been demonstrated; and (3) the result of the action must have been to foster favorable pro-Russian sentiment or directly support Russian operations. The actions were then categorized into one of four domains: diplomatic, information, military, and economic. The domain of each action is represented on the timeline by the color of the box. The actions were further categorized into a class of activities found on General Gerasimov's diagram and identified by initials within the colored boxes. The actions represented by each box are provided in an appendix. Along the timeline gray and white zones indicate the stages of General Gerasimov's diagram.

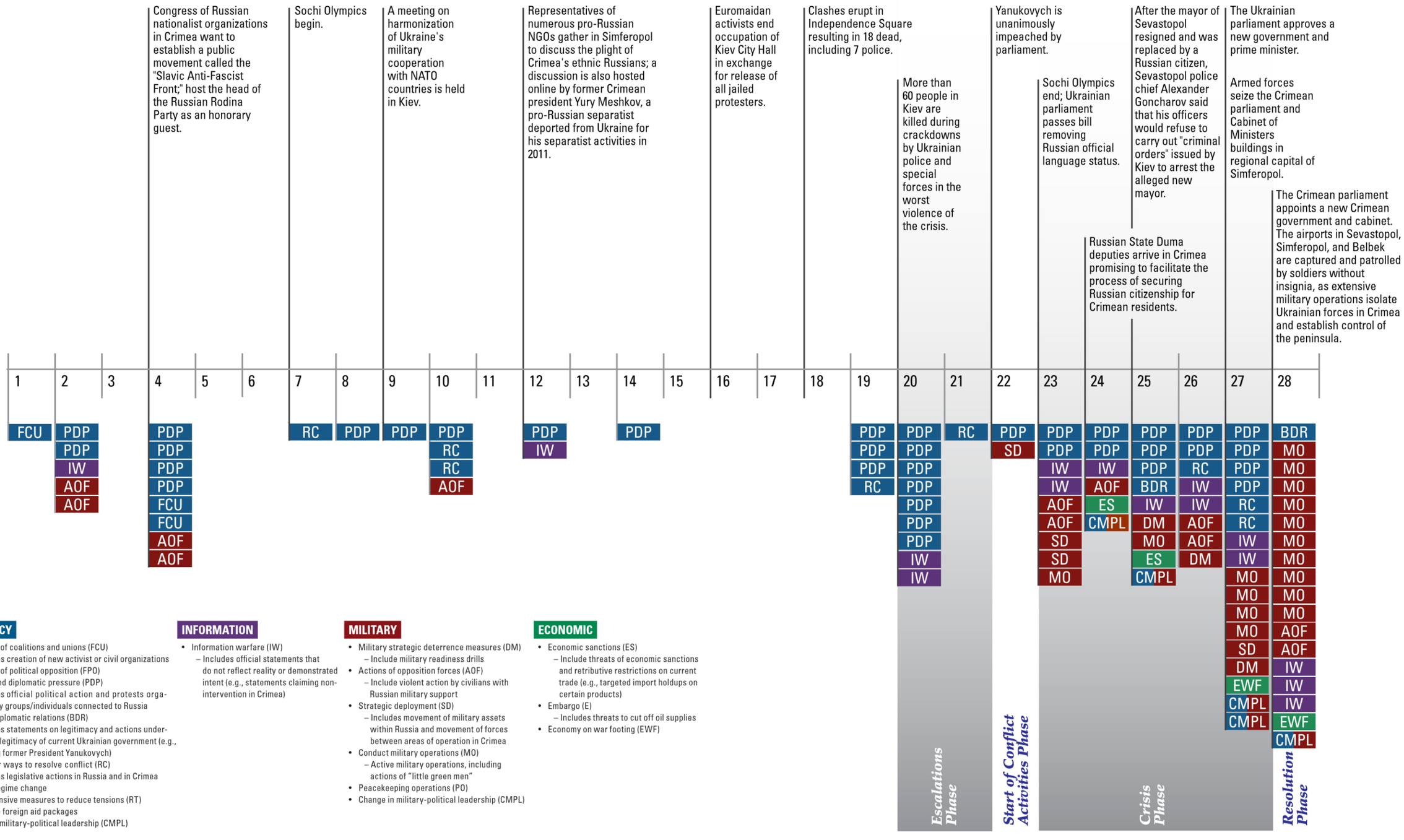
Some initial potential patterns present themselves, but further analysis with a larger data set is warranted. February 27 represents the linchpin on this timeline. That date saw the introduction of the so-called "little green men," the non-insignia-bearing armed forces that penetrated and occupied Crimean military and government facilities. Before February 27, diplomatic actions significantly outnumbered military actions, except for a brief spike in military activities five days before the arrival of the non-insignia-bearing forces. That spike itself deserves deeper investigation, as its component activities may represent indicators of Russian hybrid warfare operations. After February 27, military activities consistently outnumbered diplomatic activities until March 22. During that period from February 27 to March 22, spikes in diplomatic activity occasionally outnumbered military activities, but military activities dramatically outnumbered diplomatic activities, which is the reverse of the trend before February 27. This indicates a shift of emphasis from nonmilitary to military measures, in keeping with Gerasimov's recommended ratio of 4:1. It also indicates the continued importance of coordinating nonmilitary/diplomatic measures with military measures. Information activities were consistently present throughout both periods but increased immediately before and after February 27. Economic activities appeared much less frequently and only around the initial incursion in late February.

These data cannot support any conclusions of causality, but they may shed some correlative light on the events of February and March 2014. For instance, the ratio of diplomatic to military events before and after the initial incursion on February 27 indicates that Russian hybrid warfare depends heavily on extensive diplomatic activities

to shape the environment in preparation for military activities. Accordingly, increased diplomatic activity by Russia may indicate preparation for hybrid warfare operations as opposed to well-intentioned diplomacy. Similarly, in these data information warfare spiked before the initial incursion. This might suggest that sudden surges of Russian media into a region in Russia's near abroad are a prelude to a Russian incursion. It will be important, however, to distinguish between an increase in Russian media presence for the sake of diplomacy and a surge in Russian media that indicates aggressive actions will follow. That distinction may reside in the quantity of media or the content, and it will also depend on what represents the baseline of Russian media levels in the target region. Finally, the character of military activities that Russia took in the days before its incursion could be telling. Similar actions, such as military exercises, reinforcing Russian military installations in its near abroad, or Russian-supported civilian violence and resistance in countries on Russia's border, could indicate an imminent incursion.

Although these limited data do not provide clear indicators of causality, they do offer a starting point for shedding light on correlations between types of actions by Russia in its hybrid warfare operations. With additional data and a more detailed analysis, a model might be created that could help countries prepare for, identify, and possibly prevent or preempt Russian hybrid warfare.

February 2014



DIPLOMACY

- Formation of coalitions and unions (FCU)
  - Includes creation of new activist or civil organizations
- Formation of political opposition (FPO)
- Political and diplomatic pressure (PDP)
  - Includes official political action and protests organized by groups/individuals connected to Russia
- Break in diplomatic relations (BDR)
  - Includes statements on legitimacy and actions undermining legitimacy of current Ukrainian government (e.g., hosting former President Yanukovych)
- Search for ways to resolve conflict (RC)
  - Includes legislative actions in Russia and in Crimea after regime change
- Comprehensive measures to reduce tensions (RT)
  - Include foreign aid packages
- Change in military-political leadership (CMPL)

INFORMATION

- Information warfare (IW)
  - Includes official statements that do not reflect reality or demonstrated intent (e.g., statements claiming non-intervention in Crimea)

MILITARY

- Military strategic deterrence measures (DM)
  - Include military readiness drills
- Actions of opposition forces (AOF)
  - Include violent action by civilians with Russian military support
- Strategic deployment (SD)
  - Includes movement of military assets within Russia and movement of forces between areas of operation in Crimea
- Conduct military operations (MO)
  - Active military operations, including actions of "little green men"
- Peacekeeping operations (PO)
- Change in military-political leadership (CMPL)

ECONOMIC

- Economic sanctions (ES)
  - Include threats of economic sanctions and retributive restrictions on current trade (e.g., targeted import holdups on certain products)
- Embargo (E)
  - Includes threats to cut off oil supplies
- Economy on war footing (EWF)

UNCLASSIFIED

March 2014

Russia's parliament approves Vladimir Putin's request to use force in Ukraine to protect Russian interests, alongside increased pro-Russian demonstrations in Crimea.

Russian forces take control of strategic and military locations and issue Ukraine's army and navy in Crimea an ultimatum: pledge allegiance to the region's new pro-Russian leadership or be forced to submit. Pro-Russian activists begin to storm government buildings in E. Ukraine.

Russian forces seize or block Ukrainian airbases, air defense missile batteries, and garrisons throughout Crimea and block mobile telephone services in some areas.

Russia's state gas company Gazprom warns Kiev that its gas supply might be cut off.

Russian troops backed by local militias siege military airports in Novofyodorovka and Saki, the last Ukrainian-controlled airstrips in Crimea. Russian forces also surround anti-aircraft units and capture border posts. Mine fields are set up across the narrow strip of land connecting Crimea to Ukraine.

Crimea declares itself independent from Ukraine.

Russia's Defense Ministry announces that military exercises involving thousands of troops in regions bordering Ukraine will continue through the end of March.

Moscow vetoes a draft UN resolution criticizing Crimea's referendum on secession. The new Crimean prime minister assumes sole control over interior ministry, armed forces, fleet and border guards "on a temporary basis," demanding all commanders obey only his orders and that "all those who refuse to do so" resign.

Referendum on seceding from Ukraine is held in Crimea.

Ukraine announces the withdrawal of troops from Crimea.

Ukraine and the EU sign Association Agreement, while President Putin signs law formally admitting Crimea into the Russian Federation.

Russian troops seize a Ukrainian naval base at Feodosia in Crimea and arrest officers. Ukrainian troops leave Crimea.

Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev visits Crimea and promises socioeconomic development.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
PDP	PDP	IW	PDP		PDP	PDP	SD	PDP	MO	PDP	IW	DM		PDP	RC	PDP	PDP	BDR		PDP	PDP	PDP	MO					PDP		RT
PDP	RC	IW	IW		RC	PDP		PDP	SD	RC				PDP		PDP	RC	BDR		RC	DM	SD	CMPL					IW		RT
IW	IW	IW	IW			PDP		PDP		IW				AOF		RC		MO			MO	MO								
AOF	SD	MO	AOF			RC		RC						MO		RC		AOF			MO	MO								
	MO	MO	MO			IW		AOF						ES				CMPL			AOF	IW								
		MO	MO			MO		AOF						CMPL							AOF									
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		AOF	ES					MO																						
		AOF						MO																						

Resolution Phase

Restoration of Peace (post-conflict settlement) Phase

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Why the Baltic States and Poland Should Take Notice[a]

Russia's recent aggressive efforts to annex territory and expand its influence in former Soviet territories have reverberated throughout the region, particularly among the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies of the Baltic states and Poland. When the Baltic states gained NATO and European Union (EU) membership ten years ago, the dual accession was believed to have resolved the security dilemma of the Baltic states vis-á-vis their regional hegemon, Russia. Before Russia's annexation of Crimea in March 2014, a territorial assault on the Baltic states seemed implausible despite Moscow's efforts to maintain political and economic influence in the Baltic region. Nevertheless, all three states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are of strategic importance to Russia.

The first reason Poland and the Baltic states should take notice is that they serve as a buffer zone for Moscow between its territories and those of Western Europe. Second, like Crimea, which serves as the base of Russia's Black Sea Fleet and a pathway to the Mediterranean, Poland and the Baltic states possess ice-free ports and a window to the West.[1] Third, the Baltic states have sizable populations of Russian minorities, which serve both as a motive and pretext for Moscow to support potential separatists or protect compatriots there.

As Russian armies surrounded the eastern and southern borders of Ukraine, where separatist sentiment was stirring, various commentators[2] debated whether the Baltic states have reason for concern. On one hand, as NATO members, the Baltic states have the security of Article 5 not afforded to Ukraine. On the other hand, Moscow's ability to conduct a shadow war in Ukraine, the increasing Russian military activity in the Baltic Sea region, Putin's insistence on protecting Russian "compatriots" abroad, the high level of dependence on Russian energy resources, and cybersecurity are all legitimate red flags for the Balts and their allies.

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a AWG thanks Dr. Agnia Grigas for her significant contribution in writing this section.

Concerns over Russian aggression have also been voiced in nearby Poland. The country's relationship with Russia deteriorated after Warsaw firmly aligned with the West after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Several factors insulate Poland from overt Russian aggression. Poland's level of integration with the EU and NATO and close security ties

with the United States serve as an important psychological red line

Russians are unlikely to cross overtly. Unlike the Baltic states, Poland also has no appreciable Russian minority population on which Moscow can rely for a proxy force. However, tensions over Poland's missile defense systems have the potential to prompt Russian military action to destabilize the country or neutralize its missile defense assets.

Russia's Military Policies

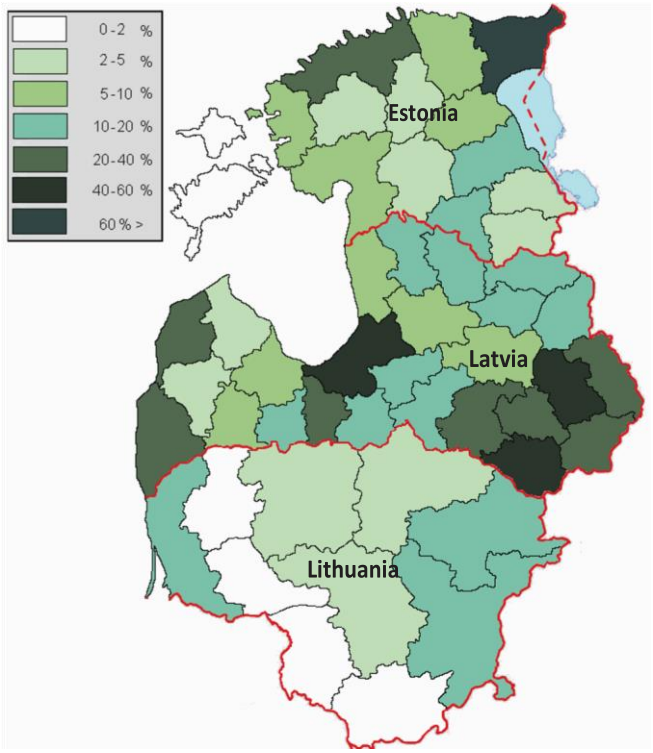
The Baltic states have faced repeated Russian military exercises as well as violations of their airspace, even after becoming members of NATO. Most recently, in March 2014 the Russian Baltic Fleet conducted unexpected tactical exercises along the Baltic coast.[3] As a result, NATO deployed six warplanes and six hundred troops to the Baltic states and Poland to reassure them that the alliance is taking its security commitments seriously.[4] In June, support was again demonstrated with NATO military exercises in the Baltic states, including 4,700 troops and eight hundred military vehicles. Russia responded by deploying twenty-four warships and bombers to Kaliningrad, a Russian territory sandwiched between Poland and Lithuania on the Baltic Sea.[5]

More troubling, and potentially with more consequences than Russia's military display, is Putin's policy of protecting Russian "compatriots." The Kremlin justified Crimea's annexation as a means to protect the local Russian population and reinforced the view that Russia's compatriot policy is a means to justify Moscow's land grab.[6]

Russia's compatriot policies, meant to protect ethnic Russians living in nearby countries, call for the political, economic, and, implicitly, military protection of the rights and interests of Russian citizens and ethnic Russians living abroad. Furthermore, Article 61 of the Russian Constitution states that "the Russian Federation shall guarantee its citizens defense and patronage beyond its boundaries." In other words, Russia will protect Russian citizens outside of Russia's territory.[7] In practice, Russian policies include not only Russian citizens but also ethnic Russians and Russian speakers. Russia's compatriot policy can also be seen as a means to facilitate territorial gains in the former Soviet republics, particularly where there is a receptive, concentrated, and significant population of Russian speakers and when territories where Russian speakers reside are adjacent to the Russian border.[8]

Russia's Compatriots in the Baltic States

The Baltic states possess large, concentrated populations of Russian speakers that reside on Russia's border, facilitating Russia's policy of compatriot protection. Estonia and Latvia have particularly large ethnic Russian minorities, with about 24 percent and 27 percent of the general population, respectively, while Lithuania's Russian population falls to just under 6 percent. Percentages of Russian speakers are even higher, at approximately 30, 34, and 15 percent for Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, respectively.[9] Although Russian speakers include other ethnic minorities who may not identify as ethnically Russian, they matter greatly in the post-Soviet context, as they often rely on Russian media and are thus more receptive to the Kremlin's viewpoints.



Percentage of ethnic Russians in the Baltic states

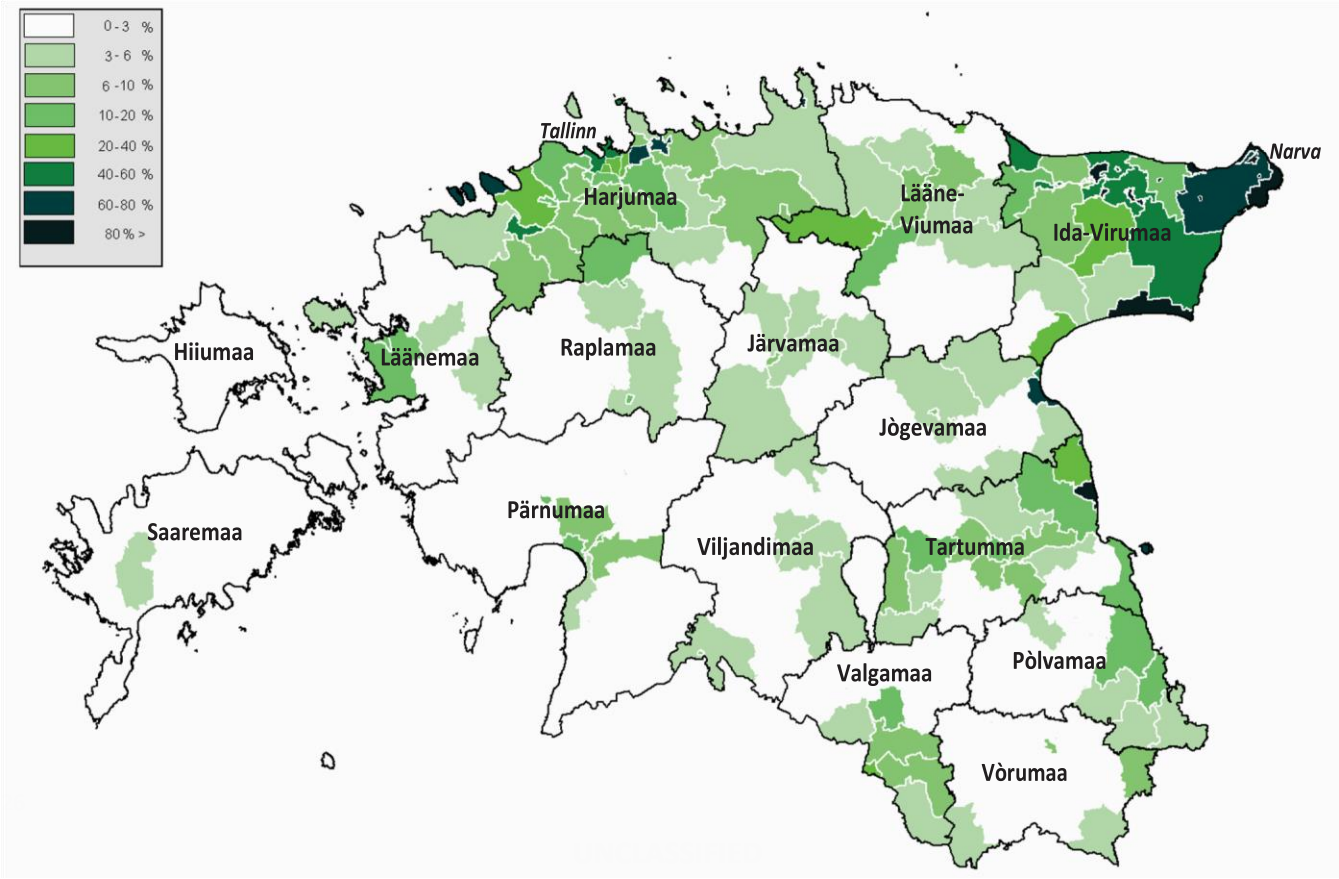
Over the past few decades, Russia has expended great efforts to maintain political, economic, and social ties with the Baltic Russians and Russian speakers. Numerous organizations, associations, communities, unions, funds, and centers in the Baltic states are oriented to local ethnic Russians and Russian speakers.[10] The Russian government also promotes educational opportunities for Russian speakers.[11] Moscow has critiqued Baltic minority policies, particularly the decision in the early 1990s by Tallinn and Riga not to grant automatic citizenship to Soviet-era Russian immigrants in Estonia and Latvia. Estonian and Latvian citizenship policy has been a source of tension with Russia in the past.[12] Today it matters once again as a

condition creating a vacuum that will draw in Russian influence and facilitate Moscow's policy of handing out Russian citizenships.

Estonia

Estonia's Russian minorities are concentrated in two geographic locations. The capital of Tallinn has a Russian population that numbers more than 150,000 and makes up about 37 percent of the capital's population.[13] Tallinn's Russian speakers are an even larger group, totaling 46 percent of the population.[14] As such, political parties favored by Russian minorities have long dominated Tallinn's local politics. Since 2005 the Centre Party, which counts 75 percent of ethnic non-Estonians as its supporters, has controlled the city government of Tallinn.[15] The current mayor was investigated in 2011 for being "Moscow's agent of influence" and allegedly receiving 1.5 million euros in party funding from the head of Russian Railways. Tallinn has experienced notable ethnic tensions and was rocked by riots of Russian speakers in 2007 over a decision to relocate a Soviet war memorial. Moscow was accused of manipulating the Russian language press and organizing the riots, while activists from Russia were brought in to join in the violence.[16]

The second location of concentrated Russians is Ida-Viru County, which is the location of large deposits of shale oil. The county is located near the border with Russia, and Russians account for 73 percent of its population, or about 123,000.[17] The region's largest city of Narva, Estonia's third largest city, is 82 percent Russian.[18] Even more significant is the



Distribution of the Russian language in Estonia according to data from the 2000 Estonian census

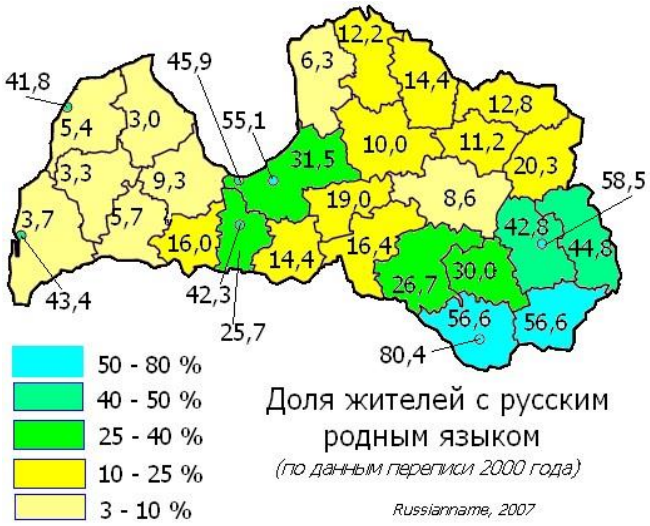
fact that 36 percent of the city's population, or about twenty-three thousand people, are Russian citizens.[19] This is in part the result of Russia's program of giving out citizenships to ethnic Russians who remained stateless after Estonia's independence.[20] The sizable population of Russian citizens is a security concern for Estonia because Moscow's policy on protecting Russian citizens is even more explicit than protecting ethnic Russians or simply Russian speakers.

Estonian government officials and commentators generally hold the view that Estonia's Russian minority is not receptive to the Kremlin's protectionism. Narva's population enjoys a higher standard of living than that of neighboring Russian cities, causing many to prefer living in Estonia. The view that the Crimean scenario cannot be replicated in Ida-Viru was well received by the Narva people.[21] Still it is important not to forget that in 1993 the Narva city council voted, unsuccessfully, for autonomy.[22] Furthermore, even if the vast majority of Estonia's Russian population is well integrated into Estonia it is still possible that a minority of Estonia's Russian population, particularly those with Russian citizenship, might be exploited by Moscow in times of political tensions.

Latvia

In Latvia the situation concerning the Russian minorities is similar to that in Estonia. The Russian population is even more numerous and is also concentrated in two primary locations. In the capital of Riga ethnic Russians make up 40 percent of the population, or 281,000,[23] whereas Russian speakers total nearly 50 percent, or 352,000.[24] Riga's local politics have been dominated by Russophone parties since 2009, when a Russian minority party won the capital's mayoral race. Riga has not experienced riots or substantial ethnic tensions. In 2014 a small group protested against reforms requiring that 60 percent of courses be taught in the Latvian language in Latvia's Russian minority schools,[25] although the issue had clearly lost salience since 2004 when the same issue galvanized thousands of Russian protestors.[26]

In addition to Riga, the region of Latgale also has a high concentration of Russians and Russian speakers. Latgale borders Russia and includes more than 100,000 ethnic Russians, who make up nearly 39 percent of the region's population.[27] Russian speakers are even more numerous, tallying 55 percent of the population.[28] The



Distribution of the Russian language in Latvia according to data from the 2000 Latvian census

region's largest city, Daugavpils, has an even larger concentration of Russians, totaling 54 percent of the population,[29] with Russian speakers accounting for 79 percent of the city inhabitants, or nearly 82,000.[30] The numbers of Russian citizens in Latgale and Daugavpils are small, at 2 and 4 percent, respectively.[31] Although a small rally in April at the Latvian embassy in Russia called for Latgale to become part of Russia, this sentiment can be viewed as an exception rather than the norm among Latvia's Russian minority.[32]

Polls show that 36 percent of Latvia's Russian speakers believe that Russia's interference in the internal affairs of Ukraine is not justifiable, whereas 44 percent supported Russia's actions.[33] Despite this, the success of Russian minorities in local politics, the low numbers of Russian citizenship holders, and the seeming integration into Latvian society suggest that Russian minorities would not be highly receptive to Russia's protectionism and compatriot policies. Nonetheless the large and concentrated numbers of Russian speakers in Latvia's eastern regions that border Russia do suggest that Riga may have reasons for concern if Moscow galvanized and organized even a portion of the Russian minorities.

Lithuania

Lithuania has considerably lower overall percentages of ethnic Russians and Russian speakers than Latvia and Estonia, but there are three regions with sizable populations. Like Tallinn and Riga, Lithuania's capital also has a higher proportion of Russian speakers than the rest of the country. The population of Vilnius is 12 percent Russian,[34] and nearly 27 percent are Russian speakers, totaling nearly 67,000 and 150,000, respectively.[35]

The port city of Klaipeda (the base of a planned Liquid Natural Gas [LNG] terminal), located close to the Russian territory of Kaliningrad, also has a higher concentration of Russian minorities than the Lithuanian average. Here Russians make up nearly 20 percent of the population,[36] and Russian speakers total 28 percent, representing 36,000 and 50,000, respectively.[37] In March 2014 an online petition was launched for Klaipeda to join Russia. Although the petition gathered only one hundred signatures, it reflects a position that Putin insinuated in 2005 and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev voiced before Lithuania's independence.[38]

Lithuania's third concentration of Russian speakers is found in the eastern city of Visaginas (the location of a future nuclear power plant), with more than 50 percent ethnic Russians[39] and 77 percent Russian speakers of a total population of approximately 20,000.[40] Nonetheless, Lithuania's recent media reports suggest that there is no receptiveness to the Crimean model among the Visaginas population.[41]

Only 5 percent of Lithuanian Russians report being completely dissatisfied with living in Lithuania and could thus be receptive to Moscow's policies.[42] Similar to results demonstrated in Latvia, the majority of Russians in Lithuania consider their homeland to be Lithuania, or the city where they were born, rather than Russia or the Soviet Union.[43]

Lithuania's Polish minority, which totals nearly 7 percent, is also important in this context because it is often Russified, follows Russian media, supports Moscow's policies, and aligns politically with the Russian minority. Polish minority leader Valdemar Tomashevski recently embarked on a pro-Russian state policy (he openly supports Russia in the Crimea question and was spotted wearing a Russian symbolic St. George's Ribbon). In the May 2014 presidential elections, he collected 8.2 percent of the vote, gaining the support of the Russian minority.

It is unlikely that Lithuania's Russian or Polish minorities pose an immediate concern for the Lithuanian state. However, this generally positive situation may change if the Russian government embarks on policies to stir up and politicize ethnic tensions.

Russian Minority Education in the Baltics

Integration of minority populations in the Baltics has been problematic because of the Soviet legacy of separate schools and different languages of instruction for titular nations and minorities. Only Lithuania's minority schools were reformed into bilingual schools immediately after Lithuania gained independence.[44] On the other hand, separate Russian-language schools persisted in Latvia and Estonia until the 2000s. After that time, gradual educational reforms led to the creation of bilingual schools. Today, 60 percent of the subjects in secondary schools in Latvia and Estonia are taught in the titular language. However, the two decades of separate educational systems have contributed to the isolation of Russian speakers. Teachers and administrators of Russian-language schools have been hostile to educational reforms, viewing the reforms as forced assimilation.[45] The separate school systems have helped to create a rift between majority and minority populations, which is reflected in different viewpoints on current affairs and Russia's foreign policy in the Baltic states.

Kaliningrad

The Russian exclave of Kaliningrad is situated between Lithuania and Poland on the Baltic Sea. Geographically separated from the rest of Russia, the Kaliningrad oblast is home to around 940,000 Russians. The relationship between Russia, Lithuania, and Poland regarding Kaliningrad is generally stable but not without its tensions. The Russia-Lithuania Cooperation Council, established in 2000, governs the relationship between Lithuania and Kaliningrad. The council addresses transportation, environmental, cultural, and agricultural issues, among others.[46] Russian energy, military, and citizen transit occurs on a regular basis across Lithuanian territory to Kaliningrad. The exclave is also highly militarized. Ground military transit, airspace transit, and Russian military training exercises and facilities in Kaliningrad are at times a source of tension between the three states. Tensions also exist between Russian passengers traveling on trains to Kaliningrad and Lithuanian officials and staff monitoring the transit.

The risk that tensions on transit trains could become a

Map of Kaliningrad

source of provocation and escalate to violence is in the realm of possibility.

Poland

Since the fall of Poland's communist government in 1989, Poland has sought to align itself more closely with the West. Poland's decision to join NATO and the EU, alongside its close diplomatic and security relationship with the United States, has created tensions between Warsaw and Moscow. Poland's support for democratization in Eastern Europe has further strained the relationship.[47] The largest issue of contention between the two states is Poland's support for missile defense, both Poland's own national missile defense system and Poland's cooperation with the United States on missile defense. Like the Baltic states, Poland is also dependent on Russia for its energy resources. However, Poland does not have an ethnic Russian population, which prevents Russia from using local Russians as proxy forces as they have in Ukraine.

Russia justified its support for activities in Crimea as defense of Russian compatriots in Ukraine. As Poland is a homogeneous country, there are fewer minorities available for Russia to use as proxy forces there were in Crimea. Around 97 percent of the population are ethnic Poles.[48] As a result, the Russian strategy of mobilizing ethnic minorities to conduct unconventional warfare with the assistance and support of Russian forces is unlikely to be successful in Poland, which may lead Russia to use different tactics in the country.

The most contentious issue between Russia and Poland is the latter's support for missile defense systems. Poland is working with the United States to deploy a missile defense system based in Poland and Romania capable of defending Europe, and possibly also the United States, from ballistic missile attack. The U.S.-backed missile defense system is designed to intercept Iranian missiles. Although the United States claims the system is incapable of intercepting Russian nuclear missiles, Russia nonetheless sees the program as a threat to the nuclear balance between the United States and Russia.[49] Poland is also developing its own missile defense capabilities in response to the nuclear threat posed by Russia and its increasingly aggressive foreign policies. Moscow is currently spending more than the United States on missile and air defense, modernizing its nuclear force, and developing new missile systems.[50] Russia's possible development of new intermediate-range missiles, which would increase the nuclear threat to Europe, is also prompting interest in missile defense. However, Russia has denied U.S. allegations that Moscow is developing the missiles, which are illegal under the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty.[51]

After Russian activities in Ukraine, Poland has ramped up its defensive plans. The state has increased its military spending by 2 percent to pay for its missile defense plans, which are now on an accelerated timeline. Poland has also purchased helicopters, unmanned aircraft, and possibly new fighter aircraft.[52] The United States has also considered accelerating the deployment of interceptors.[53] These actions all indicate an increased concern regarding possible Russian aggression against Poland.

Russia has not remained quiescent in light of Poland's invigorated defensive plans. Moscow has warned Warsaw that agreeing to provide a base for U.S. missile defense facilities would make Poland a legitimate target for a nuclear strike and has threatened to deploy short-range, nuclear-capable Iskander missiles to the Kaliningrad exclave if Polish missile defense plans go forward.[54] If Poland, the United States, and NATO are unable to come to an agreement with Russia regarding plans for missile defense, the possibility exists that Russia could take military action against Poland, either to destroy missile defense facilities or to destabilize Poland and thereby coerce it to withdraw from missile defense plans. The issue of missile defense could ultimately either lead Poland into conflict with Russia or could serve to demonstrate to Moscow that the United States and its allies are serious about ensuring the

collective defense of NATO, deterring Russia from interfering in NATO countries, including Poland.[55]

Like the Baltic states, Poland is also heavily dependent on Russian energy resources. Russia supplies 95 percent of Poland's oil and two-thirds of its gas.
Poland is currently trying to reduce its dependence. Warsaw has urged the EU to adopt a unified stance toward Russia with respect to energy imports and to reduce the EU's overall reliance on Russian gas. In the past, Poland has been a vocal opponent of Russia's energy projects, such as the Nord Stream pipeline, which the Poles controversially compared to the Soviet-Nazi Molotov-Ribbentrop pact.

Russian–Baltic Energy Relations

Energy cannot be overstated as a factor in Russian– Baltic economic, political, and security relations. Although Russia has steadily declined in importance as a trade import and export partner (particularly for Estonia and Latvia), it remains the main source of gas and oil for the Baltic states. The Baltic states are nearly 100 percent dependent on Russian gas and roughly 90 percent dependent on Russian oil, as well as dependent on the Russian pipeline system for the delivery of these resources. The energy vulnerability is exponentially increased by the fact that Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are virtually isolated from the energy infrastructure of the rest of Europe, making them energy islands. The susceptibility of Balkan economies to disturbances in Russian energy supplies makes this an increasingly important issue for NATO, prompting the September 2013 opening of the Energy Security Centre of Excellence in Vilnius in Lithuania.

The Baltic energy sector is also of strategic importance for Russia. Until the 2000s, when Russia heavily built up own ports, terminals, and pipeline systems, it relied on Baltic ice-free ports for export of energy products to Western European markets. Although today Russia favors using Russian rather than Baltic ports, this incurs heavier costs due to the need for ice-breakers in the winter months. Russia's gas company, Gazprom,

is an indirect part owner (as a shareholder of Latvia's national gas company) of the gas storage facility, Incukalns, which serves the Baltic states and Russia's northern territories. Another strategic consideration for Moscow is the dependence of the Russian territory of Kaliningrad on the Lithuanian gas supply, because an offshoot of the pipeline supplying Lithuania continues onward to Kaliningrad. Russia has worked hard to mitigate this dependence on Lithuania by building gas storage facilities in Kaliningrad[56] and by talking about building an offshoot to Kaliningrad from the Nord Stream gas pipeline and a LNG terminal. Lastly, in terms of strategic resources, Estonia is rich in oil shale, which produces 90 percent of the country's electricity,[57] and all three Baltic countries potentially lie in a shale gas basin, threatening Russian energy dominance.[58]

The strategic implications of the Baltic states and their energy dependence on Russia have political consequences. The Baltic states have faced alleged political gas pricing from Gazprom—a charge the European Commission has been investigating since September 2012.[59] Most recently, Gazprom boosted its price to Lithuania to one of the highest in Europe when Vilnius showed its intent to implement the EU's anti-monopoly regulation, which forces gas supply companies such as Gazprom to divest from their ownership of pipeline systems. That rule, enforced by Lithuania, will force Gazprom to sell its 37 percent stake in the Lithuanian national gas company and pipeline operator—a process currently being finalized. Russia's pipeline company Transneft has halted oil to the Baltic states during times of political or commercial tension. The Russian oil pipeline Druzhba stopped supplying Latvia's port facility at Ventspils and Lithuania's Mazeikiu Nafta refinery in 2003 and 2006, respectively, when Russian investors failed to acquire shares of these companies. Estonia similarly experienced a temporary halt, followed by a notable reduction, in its supplies of oil products in 2007 after political tensions.[60]

Recently, EU support, financing, and regulation have driven some positive developments in the Baltic energy sector and mitigated the weaknesses of Baltic domestic conditions that prevented energy diversification (entrenched energy interests groups, weak institutions, poor regulatory framework, and lack of political will).[61] Accomplishments include electricity cables connecting Estonia and Finland (Estlink in 2007 and Estlink2 in 2014), an enhanced gas interconnector between Latvia and Lithuania in 2013, and Lithuania's floating Klaipeda LNG terminal and Balticconnector, an offshore pipeline connecting Finland and Estonia, both due to launch in late 2014. Other future Baltic energy projects include a regional land-based LNG terminal;[62] European Commission-supported electricity links Nordbalt (Sweden-Lithuania-Latvia),[63] LitPol Link (Lithuania-Poland),[64] and a LatvianEstonian 3rd interconnection;[65] a Lithuania-Poland gas interconnection;[66] and the Visaginas Nuclear Power Plant project.[67] Although some of these projects have been in discussion for decades, renewed concern of the Balts and their allies regarding Russia's resurgence and particularly EU support could give these projects an impetus to be implemented as planned. If

so, the Baltic energy predicament and, most importantly, its national security would be significantly improved.

Russian "Soft" Power

According to American political scientist Joseph Nye, soft power is the ability to attract based on a state's culture, political values, and foreign policy, which must be perceived as legitimate and having moral authority.[68] Russia complements its use of soft power in the Baltic states with coercion, corruption, propaganda, and the co-opting of business and political elites. The Baltic states' small and vulnerable economies, combined with the region's relatively new and weaker political institutions, makes them an easy target for Russia's influence in domestic politics and economic systems.

Russia's use of soft and hard power in the Baltics is best exemplified by the creation, maintenance, and support of Kremlin-friendly networks of influence in the cultural, economic, and political sectors. A number of owners, managers, and other stakeholders in the Baltic energy sector are former Soviet elites who remain loyal to the Kremlin out of economic interest. For example, local Baltic gas distribution companies are often led by ethnic Russians or in some cases former KGB officers who profit from their relationships with Russian energy companies by purchasing gas below market prices or at lower prices than those paid by the national gas companies. These profits are in turn used to lobby and finance (both transparently and often not transparently) Baltic political parties and governments.[69] In Baltic politics, there have been efforts to co-opt local political actors including the mayor of Tallinn in 2011,[70] a formerly impeached Lithuanian president, and other politicians.[71] Often, allegations of links between Baltic politicians and Moscow are not substantiated or are difficult to prove, but the examples that come to light or are investigated by the national security apparatus demonstrate the significant influence of Russia's not-so-soft power.

Outside of political and economic elites, Russian influence is bolstered by its compatriot and propaganda policies and facilitated by the Soviet legacy of Russian minorities and the prevalence of the Russian language. Russian television channels (which are controlled by the Russian state) such as First Baltic, RTR Planeta, and NTV Mir are broadcast in the Baltic states and reach a broader audience beyond Russian minorities. Russian and locally produced Russian-language newspapers, Internet news portals, and radio stations are other important tools for disseminating information that often has a Kremlin-influenced bias on historical and current events. These biased reports include the denial of Soviet occupation of the Baltic states, distortion of Baltic independence movements, and misrepresentation of the treatment of Russian minorities in the Baltic states. Propaganda campaigns can be used to incite violence, as occurred in Estonia in 2007 when Russianlanguage media falsely reported that the Soviet Bronze Soldier monument had been destroyed by the Estonian authorities, fueling Russian speakers to riot.

With Russia's recent resurgence and growing tension with the West, the information warfare has intensified. In March 2014 the Vilnius district administrative court decided to suspend broadcasting the Russian NTV Mir Lithuanian channel for three months because of a misleading historical documentary.[72] In April 2014 Lithuania suspended the broadcasting of another Russian TV channel, RTR Planeta, for spreading false information on the events in Ukraine and Crimea.[73] In another earlier case, in October 2013 the Lithuanian State Security Department warned that before the 2014 presidential elections Russian secret agencies would attempt to misinform Lithuanian society and the media regarding high-level politicians, including incumbent president Dalia Grybauskaite, by releasing discreditable information.[74] Today when examining how Russia has effectively coupled its information war and troops on the ground in Crimea and Ukraine, these Russian propaganda tactics deserve notice. In April at his annual call-in show, Putin stated that "neo-Nazism is on the rise" in Ukraine.[75] During their coverage of the events in Ukraine and Crimea, Russian state broadcasters Channel 1, Rossiya 1, and Rossiya 24 discussed the "bandits, fascists, and neo-Nazis" who had "illegally seized power" in Kiev.[76]

Cybersecurity in the Baltics

Cyberwarfare remains the only form of warfare waged on the Baltics since they joined NATO. It is not surprising, then, that NATO located its Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence in Estonia. The origins of the centre lie in events of April 2007 after Estonians decided to relocate a Soviet-era monument from the capital's central square to a military cemetery.[77] The controversial move was highly opposed by Moscow and the Russian minorities in Estonia, particularly because the relocation was days before the Russian national holiday of May 9 celebrating Soviet victory in the Second World War. As a result, on April 27 the lower house of the Russian parliament called for Putin to sever its diplomatic relations and restrict energy supplies to Estonia. Simultaneously, there was a series of cyberattacks against Estonian websites of the parliament, the president's office, the

police, the foreign ministry, banks, newspapers, and broadcasters. Although Moscow denied involvement in the attacks, it was widely believed in Estonia that Russia contributed to their organization and support. Many in Estonia also believed that Russia had a hand in ensuing riots involving some 1,500 local Russians and Russian citizens that had traveled to Estonia.

As a technologically savvy society that relied on electronic voting and e-commerce, Estonia was rattled by the cyberattacks. Establishment of the NATO center has arguably made Estonia more secure. Today Estonia relies on e-voting, e-tax, e-customs, e-healthcare, e-banking, and e-schools all through a digital identification (ID) for citizens.[78] There are even plans to provide foreigners, including investors, business people, and scientists among others, with digital Estonian IDs.[79]

All three Baltic states are advanced adopters of technology, with Lithuania having the fastest broadband connections in the world and Latvia having the fourth fastest connections.[80] The Baltic economies benefit from numerous technology start-ups and technology companies such as Estonia's Skype and Lithuania's Vinted and GetJar,[81] and Lithuania is home to engineering centers and support facilities for multinational companies such as Barclays Bank, Western Union, and IBM. With the NATO center, the three Baltic states are not only benefiting from increased know-how on cybersecurity, but they are also advancing the alliance's capacities. Still, cybersecurity is a new risk that is here to stay and one that these highly digital societies will need to continue to consider.

Conclusion

The Russian government's recent annexation of Crimea and efforts to destabilize the eastern and southern regions of Ukraine, under the pretext of protecting Russia's compatriots, have rightly raised concerns among the Baltic states, Poland, and their allies. All three Baltic states have Russian and Russian-speaking minorities, which tend to be concentrated close to Russia's borders. During times of peace, members of the Baltic Russian population appear to be reasonably integrated into their local societies and at least on the surface do not appear to be receptive to Russia's protectionist policies. When considering the issue of the Baltic Russian population, the greatest and most evident concern today stems from the sizable numbers of Russian citizens among Estonia's Narva population. NATO membership, the recent military support demonstrated by NATO countries, and the United States' billion-dollar European Reassurance Initiative appear to assuage immediate fears. Still, the Kremlin's compatriot policies should be carefully watched. As the unrest in Eastern Ukraine has demonstrated, Russia no longer relies on traditional military fighting power but instead also wages shadow war using proxy military groups. The resulting military conflict can thus be made to resemble civil war or separatist efforts by the local Russian population and thus not necessarily invoke Article 5. The Kremlin's tactics do not require enlisting the local majority but often require only the minority to support its separatist aims. Furthermore, during times of political tension, Baltic Russian minorities have demonstrated solidarity with Moscow rather than the Baltic states.

All eyes should not be solely on the policies of the Russian government. The Baltic states should also assess their policies toward their Russian minorities. The recent political success of Estonia's and Latvia's Russian minority parties is not an issue of concern.

On the contrary, the active and especially *transparent* participation of Baltic Russians in political life will make the Baltic societies more cohesive and less vulnerable to opaque influence from Moscow. If the Baltic states are unable to fully integrate their Russianspeaking populations or lose the soft power war with Russia for their loyalty, these territories could become a target of Russia's pressure and influence. Modern military, security, and political policies increasingly prioritize "winning the hearts and minds" of populations, and this focus should be prioritized in the Baltic states as they consider their Russian-speaking minorities. Likewise, NATO allies should not ignore the soft power toolkit. Moscow wages a powerful and consistent propaganda war directed not only at Russian minorities but also at the entire populations of the Baltic states, Poland, and NATO member states, spreading an anti-American and anti-NATO message.

The threat of Russian aggression is less pronounced for Poland than it is for the Baltic states. Unlike the three countries in the region, Poland has a homogeneous population made up almost exclusively of ethnic Poles. As a result, there are no sizable minority groups in the country available for Russia to use as proxy forces as it did in Ukraine. Nevertheless, Poland's close ties with NATO and its allies in Washington have aggravated the country's relationship with Russia. Poland's recent efforts to establish national and U.S.-backed missile defense systems have resulted in increased tension between the two countries. The issue of missile defense is the most likely catalyst for any Russian military activity in the country. Conversely, the missile defense issue could also act as a

powerful signal of NATO's commitment to the protection of its members.

Notes

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Implications for NATO

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was first formed in 1949 to protect Europe from the threat posed by the Soviet Union. Since that time, NATO has been the bedrock in cementing transatlantic relations and securing a whole, secure, and free Europe. With a few exceptions, the relationship has proven mutually beneficial for security and economic development on both sides of the Atlantic. In the wake of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, however, the future of the alliance was hotly debated. Among the most problematic of the issues discussed was the future of NATO's relationship with the Soviet successor state, Russia. Not surprisingly, Russia's security sensitivities figured prominently in discussions about NATO expansion. Early cooperative efforts aimed at fostering a productive partnership between NATO and Russia do not appear to have translated to Russian acceptance of NATO in its strategic space. Russia's annexation of Crimea, and its support for separatists in Eastern Ukraine, has led to pronounced insecurity in the nearby Baltic states and Poland, all NATO members. NATO has undertaken numerous measures to reaffirm its commitment to the collective defense of its member states.

NATO Expansion and Russian Response

The enlargement of NATO was not a foregone fact after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and fall of communism in Central and Eastern Europe. Intense debates occurred within Western governments over the fate of the alliance. The biggest proponent of expansion was the Clinton administration. Clinton advocated for NATO expansion to further Europe's security umbrella and consolidate democratic gains in former Soviet and Warsaw Pact countries. Critics in the Pentagon, however, argued that the United States should draw down its commitment to European states after the Soviet threat disappeared. Within Europe, dissenting voices in London thought expansion could dilute the alliance. France, meanwhile, sought a solution posed by integration through European institutions, not the U.S.-led NATO. Regardless, by 1994 Clinton had declared that NATO expansion was not an "if" but a "when."[1]

Critics of NATO expansion have long cited a concern that expansion could be a self-fulfilling prophecy, leading to a neo-imperialist Russia. Well aware of Russia's potential to perceive the expansion as "encirclement," the proponents and architects of NATO expansion in the 1990s did adopt mechanisms to take Russia's security interests into account. One of the intellectual architects of the expansion, Ronald Asmus, noted that "NATO needs to remain sensitive to Russia's security interests and the delicate balance of power in Moscow. As it transforms and expands relations with Central and Eastern Europe, the West should not give Russia the feeling that a new iron curtain is being erected along its Western border."[2]

The mechanisms intended to mitigate tensions were both informal and formal. Reportedly, the American and Russian presidents, Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin, had regular amicable dialogues regarding NATO expansion. NATO also instituted more formal mechanisms. In 1994 NATO initiated a program, the Partnership for Peace, designed to encourage trust and cooperation between NATO members and partner countries, particularly Russia. Other programs included the Founding Act in 1997 and the

Russia-NATO council, all constructed to increase transparency, cooperation, and trust.

Despite these efforts to solidify a cooperative relationship between NATO and Russia, political realities have hindered the development of a productive partnership. The "soft" approach to enlargement was intended to signal to Russia that NATO expansion was more about the integration of Central and Eastern European states than containing a possible Russian threat. During the expansion in the 1990s, Russia perceived NATO's military intervention in Kosovo as an attempt to marginalize the country's position on the United Nations Security Council. NATO's missile defense system, described in more detail in the section "Why the Baltic States and Poland Should Take Notice," has also proved a point of contention. Ostensibly, the missile defense shield is a defensive measure for limited-range missiles, particularly those coming from Iran. However, Russia has maintained that updating the technology to defend against intercontinental ballistic missiles is a likely next step. Within the Kremlin, NATO's possession of both the nuclear sword *and* shield is an unacceptable shift in the balance of power in favor of the West, seriously impeding Russia's second-strike capabilities.[3] Furthermore, the velvet revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine also brought to power elites who sought greater connections with the West.

In part, the tensions between NATO and Russia can be traced to the ambiguity of the alliance itself. During the Cold War, NATO's mandate was relatively clear and unquestionable. It was a collective security mechanism calculated to contain the threat the Soviet Union posed to Europe. After the fall of the Soviet Union, however, it was unclear whether and how NATO would adapt to the realities of the new international system. In 1993, Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN) gave a seminal speech defining NATO's new mandate. He said that NATO should go "out of the area or go out of business," meaning that to remain viable, NATO needed to address threats outside its traditional geographic and threat scope.

Since that time, NATO's mandate has evolved to address asymmetric, out-of-area threats, notwithstanding, of course, that its first combat operation in history was on the European continent in the former Yugoslavia. However, NATO operations have taken place far afield in Afghanistan, Somalia, and Libya, addressing diverse threats as terrorist organizations, piracy, and tyrannical regimes. Indeed, since its founding, NATO has activated Article 5 only once, after the events of September 11, 2001, in the United States.

The shift in its mandate has led to shifts in structure as well. NATO began replacing some of its cumbersome infantry units with mobile rapid reaction forces. In 2002 at its Prague Summit, NATO announced its Response Force initiative to form a rapid-reaction force capable of quickly deploying to address non-Article 5 crises across the globe. The resulting Response Force reached operational capability in 2006. NATO touts that its Response Force is "a highly ready and technologically advanced multinational force made up of land, air, maritime and Special Operations Forces components that the Alliance can deploy quickly, wherever needed."[4] In reality, since 2006, the Response Force has not realized full operational capacity. NATO member states have failed to muster sufficient resources for sustaining the high cost of the Response Force rotation on standby because of a lack of political will but also because of the low possibility of deployment of the force.[5]

Perhaps Moscow would not be justified in being nonplussed by the expanded scope to out-of-area operations if it were not accompanied by another ambiguous shift in NATO's raison d'être in the debate after the dissolution of the USSR. Early proponents of NATO's expansion shifted the alliance from a security mechanism to a vehicle for the integration of former Soviet republics and Warsaw Pact countries with Europe. The security component remained, but it was oddly muted in the back and forth over NATO enlargement. In 1995, for instance, Richard Holbrooke stated that while NATO's core purpose of defense remained, it needed to expand to include "new goals and progress." Its expansion was a "natural consequence" of the end of the Cold War and "the need to widen European unity based on shared democratic values."[6] Since the USSR dissolved, NATO's mandate has been a "work in progress" from a focus on European defense to a "three-dimensional engagement in global issues like terrorism, human rights abuses, military partnerships with fledgling democracies, energy security, nuclear proliferation and outbreaks of chaos."[7]

While the European Union (EU) could potentially have served this integrative function, its application standards were too demanding, and too long, for most countries. As a result, application to NATO, with less exacting standards, was used as a stepping stone to the EU. Every former communist country that went on to join the EU first joined NATO.[8] NATO's first expansion occurred in 1999 when Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary joined the alliance. The most recently added members include Albania and Croatia, joining in 2009.

The evolution of NATO's mandate from wholly security based to the more ambiguous European integration and democratic consolidation left room for misunderstandings of NATO's transformed purpose. Despite the mechanisms established by NATO to dialogue with Russia, when combined with the political realities described above, the idea of a benevolent, benign NATO never gained a great deal of traction in Moscow, nor is it likely to in the future.[9]

NATO's "Broken Promises"

In a recent speech to the Russian parliament, Putin trotted out a well-worn adage, NATO's "broken promises," justifying Russia's annexation of Crimea. According to this narrative, the West promised then-President Mikhail Gorbachev that it would not expand NATO in the aftermath of the Cold War. Despite this supposed oath, NATO did expand in 1999 to include member states formerly part of the Warsaw Pact. This alleged treachery, symptomatic of the West's chronic duplicity, has become "part and parcel of Russia's post-Soviet identity."[10]

However, there is no evidence to suggest that the West made any legally binding commitment to forgo NATO expansion. The only negotiations that took place between the Western allies and the Soviet Union were in regard to German reunification in 1990. During that time, the Soviet Union was still a viable state. The idea that it would dissolve, leaving the Warsaw Pact countries with the option to join NATO, was simply unimaginable at that time. As a result, the likelihood that discussions regarding NATO expansion occurred during the negotiations is very unlikely. The West did make a commitment to Soviet Union to not position NATO troops in the former East Germany.[11] NATO was also clear that no nuclear weapons would be moved to new member states. As part of the dialogue regarding expansion, in 1997 NATO also agreed that it would not station substantial numbers of NATO troops in new member states.

NATO Expansion to the Baltic States

The Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia joined NATO in 2004. Historically, the Baltic states have endured numerous occupations by their voracious neighbors. These circumstances helped to forge strong national identities in the region. The Balts have preferred a Western, as opposed to Eastern, identity, viewing themselves as a part of Europe, separated only by historic events.

The geopolitical realities of the region prompted its component states to desire greater security while acknowledging the need to foster cooperative and friendly relations with Russia. Not surprisingly, the Baltic states viewed NATO, and the West, as the region's best bet for accomplishing those goals. Early on, the states pressed for NATO membership. Initially, there was little political will to support the Baltic states' entrance into the alliance. What support did exist was primarily from the United States. Few European countries, outside of Denmark, supported the states' membership. The reluctance stemmed from Russia's sensitivities regarding its interests in the Baltics, currently discussed in the wake of the annexation of Crimea. The large Russian minority populations, access to Kaliningrad, and Russia's access to warm-water naval ports were all important issues debated leading up to the Baltic states' ascension to NATO membership.[12] With robust support from the United States, the Baltic states joined NATO in 2004.

Events in the early 2000s slowly assuaged Russia's initial reluctance to accept Baltic membership. In July 2000, Russia developed its Foreign Policy Concept, which included setting the stage for amicable relations with the Baltic states on the basis of the condition that they respect Russian interests and the rights of Russian minorities in Baltic territories. Relations between Russia and Lithuania perceptibly warmed during a visit by then Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus

to Moscow in 2001. Although some Russian military officials continued to sound alarm bells over Baltic membership in NATO, Putin appeared to have acquiesced, deciding against expending political capital on what seemed to be a foregone conclusion. By 2002, at the NATO Prague Summit during which possible membership was discussed, Russia voiced little concern, claiming it was an "internal matter" for the alliance. Initially, Baltic membership seemed to have *improved* the relationship between NATO and Russia.[13]

Currently, NATO figures heavily in the defense planning of the Baltic state governments.[14] After the fall of the Soviet Union, the Baltics had no national militaries. Although the governments have made strides in improving their territorial defense capabilities, significant gaps remain. None of the states have an air force. In 2004, NATO implemented the Baltic Air Policing Mission, protecting Baltic airspace with rotations of member aircraft.[15]

NATO's Reassurance Measures in the Baltic States and Poland

Russia's recent annexation of Crimea and its support for separatists in Eastern Ukraine have raised grave security concerns among the Baltic states and Poland. NATO members in Central and Eastern Europe have long warned Europe and the United States of Putin's revanchist ambitions. Moscow's actions in Ukraine have confirmed regional fears of a resurgent Russian threat. NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen stated the events represented a "wake-up" call for NATO and the "biggest threat to European security" since the end of the Cold War. The alliance's shift to out-of-area operations, and the emphasis on European consolidation, was based on the assumption that Europe would not need to defend against a Russian threat on its eastern borders. Some have clamored for a return to NATO's roots as a collective defense alliance to protect Europe from a Russian threat. Others are concerned that a reinvigoration of this historical mandate would only further escalate tensions between NATO and Russia.

NATO has initiated several measures to reassure its members in the Baltics and Poland of its commitment to collective security. The measures have augmented air and surveillance, maritime deployments, and military exercises. NATO recently increased the

Air Policing Mission in the Baltics from four to sixteen fighter jets. Two maritime groups were deployed by NATO members to patrol the Baltic and Mediterranean Seas. Lastly, NATO recently conducted several military exercises in Central and Eastern Europe, including Estonia. A large-scale exercise, Rapid Trident 2014, took place in mid-September in western Ukraine. In addition, NATO ceased "practical" civilian and military cooperation with Russia as part of the NATO-Russia Council framework, although political dialogue will continue.[16] Finally, General Philip Breedlove, NATO's supreme allied commander Europe, recently indicated that NATO is prepared to conduct a military intervention in the event that Russia sends military forces into the Baltic states and Poland.[17]

Conclusion

Russia's recent activities in Ukraine have reinvigorated the debate about the role and purpose of NATO. After the end of the Cold War, NATO's mandate and structure shifted considerably to enable the deployment of forces far from Europe and Eurasia. In 2012, a *Foreign Policy* survey on the future of NATO asked experts around the world about what they regarded as the primary purpose of the alliance. Quite tellingly, of the fifty-seven experts asked, none responded that it was keeping Russia in check.[18] If the same survey were taken today, more would probably select Russia as a key threat confronting NATO, at least in the short term. The shifting geopolitical context has occurred against a backdrop of economic and defense stagnation among most NATO member states. The Baltic states and Poland have expressed concern that NATO's transformation came at the expense of its ability to uphold its Article 5 commitments.

Since the end of the Cold War, the defense spending of NATO member states has declined. The treaty has a provision requiring each member to spend 2 percent of its gross domestic product. With several notable exceptions, including Estonia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, NATO member states fall short of that benchmark. In 2013, several member states slashed defense spending—in the case of Italy, Hungary, and Spain, to the tune of more than 10 percent.[19] The trends in decreased spending correlate with a decrease in military capabilities, "including strategic air- and sealift; aerial refueling; and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance."[20] In a recent report, the British Defence Committee expressed concern that NATO would not be able to adequately confront a Russian threat, whether conventional or asymmetric. The cited deficiencies include shortcomings in its command-and-control structure, ability to foresee early warnings of an attack, and the public's readiness to uphold Article 5 commitments.[21]

During the Cold War, NATO was not deployed for any combat operations. It was not until 1994 that NATO undertook a military intervention. As a result, inequalities and differences in member states' military capabilities and problems with battlefield cohesion were not readily apparent. Speaking in regard to NATO's intervention in Libya, one U.S. Air Force planner commented that "it was like Snow White and the 27 dwarfs, all standing up to her knees," with, of course, the United States cast in the leading role of Snow White.[22] A rash of statistics illustrates the disproportionate part the Americans played there. Most of the gasoline, logistics, and operation orders were provided by the U.S. military. Since NATO began combat operations, analysts have noted that NATO formed a "two-tier" alliance. Some member states, such as the United States, Britain, and the Netherlands, have taken the brunt of combat roles, while other member states, such as Germany, have engaged in civilian and humanitarian operations. In the event of Russian incursions in the Baltic states or Poland, it

is not clear whether this two-tier alliance is fully prepared to defend its members.

NATO was formed in a very different international system than it confronts today. In the era after World War II, the most pressing threat came from conventional armies in interstate warfare. Today, states rarely go directly to war with one another. Yet, NATO's provision for collective defense of its members, enshrined in Article 5, was written when the largest threat to transatlantic security came from the threat of a foreign invasion. As witnessed in many regions today, not just the Baltics and Poland, contemporary threats to a state's national security can take much more insidious, and ambiguous, turns. In Estonia, for instance, the country's cyber infrastructure was crippled by a Russian attack. Likewise, Russia's tactics in Ukraine hearkened more closely to Lenin's Bolsheviks than to the later conventional threat posed by the Soviet Union. Similar asymmetric incursions

in the Baltics and Poland may not legally trigger the threshold of Article 5, leaving it unclear how NATO can adequately respond to threats in its member states.

Notes

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The Role of International Law

Critics of international law often refer to it as irrelevant. That criticism is undermined by the amount of effort Russia invested in making a legal case for its actions in Crimea. Lawyers in the Kremlin produced four separate arguments to justify Russia's actions under international law. Were the rule of international law irrelevant, Russia would not have bothered to produce numerous and thorough arguments to support its actions. Nor would it have engaged in operations that were meant to keep it below the threshold of violating international law. Russia's tactics do highlight a weakness, however, in the international legal system. There remains ambiguity about what precisely constitutes a use of force under the United Nations (UN) Charter, and scholars are far from consensus on what constitutes an armed attack under Article 5 of the Charter of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Without more clear guidance on these questions, operations like those by Russia in Ukraine can persist without decisive responses. It is clear that insufficient guidance on these questions remains an obstacle to effective responses to hybrid warfare.

Jus Ad Bellum Considerations

Russia's actions in Crimea test fundamental doctrines of international law in the UN era, including the prohibition on the use of force, self-determination, and humanitarian intervention. Despite commentators' criticism that

international law is weak because it failed to stop Russia from annexing Crimea, it must be remembered that Russia has taken pains to fit its operations within the confines of international law, both rhetorically and in practice, as well as to justify its actions under the rubric of the UN Charter. Ultimately, Russia's legal arguments fail, but it is worthwhile to consider them in turn and identify why they fail.

Use of Force

Article 2(4) of the UN Charter prohibits states from threatening or using force against other states. The contours of what constitutes a use of force are not concrete, but it is likely that Russia's actions in Crimea cross that threshold.[1] Deploying Russian troops into Crimea, seizing key installations such as airports and highways, surrounding Ukrainian military units and installations, and issuing ultimatums to the Ukrainian military to leave the peninsula collectively constitute armed intervention. Those actions removed the lawful Ukrainian public authorities and allowed pro-Russian entities lacking legitimate authority to take their place.[2] Russia could assert the following counterarguments, each of which fails.

First, Ukraine agreed in a 1997 basing agreement to allow up to twenty-five thousand troops on Ukrainian territory at naval bases and support facilities. However, under the agreement large increases of Russian troops require consultation with and consent of Ukrainian authorities. The influx of thousands of Russian troops into these bases and facilities violates the basing agreement. Additionally, movement of Russian troops beyond the agreed-to bases and facilities without consultation and consent by Ukraine also breaches the agreement. Finally, a fundamental change in the purpose of the Russian troops stationed at the bases and facilities also breaches the agreement by exceeding its scope.[3]

Second, the argument may be made that these actions do not constitute use of force because no shots were fired, meaning no force was used. Rather, can the use of force be committed without discharging weapons or using physically coercive means to achieve the desired outcome? The answer is not altogether clear. A UN definition of aggression includes the use of armed forces on foreign soil in violation of the agreement governing their presence, and that definition is meant to guide the Security Council in its responses to uses of force by states.[4] Logically, the guidance from the UN is that such acts of aggression constitute use of force. Yet, guidance from the UN does not necessarily constitute law, so the case must be made that the UN definition of aggression is in fact law and that such aggression constitutes use of force under international law. Alternatively, the scope of the prohibition on the use of force can be strongly argued to also include a ban on organizing, instigating, assisting, or participating in civil strife or terrorist acts in another states, as well as the encouragement or formation of armed bands for incursion into another state's territory.[5] Russia's actions fall squarely within this definition and therefore contravene the prohibition on the use of force.

Even if it is found that Russia's actions constitute use of force, it is not clear that they meet the standard for armed attack, which is slightly higher.[6] A strange consequence of this argument is that Ukraine may have suffered a use of force but cannot invoke the right to self-defense because such a right hinges on the occurrence of an armed attack. The wisdom of the disparity in the standards that cause this seemingly illogical result lies beyond the scope of this document. Suffice it to say, Georgia's experience in 2008 demonstrates why countries in Ukraine's position need to be cautious about using their militaries to reassert control over volatile areas. Georgia did precisely that and enabled Russia to invoke self-defense in response and occupy South Ossetia and Abkhazia.[7]

Finally, the argument has been made that it was not Russian troops who committed these actions in Crimea. Instead, they were self-defense forces. That the actors perpetrating these events did not wear insignia provides Russia with plausible deniability that its armed forces were responsible. There are two responses to this argument, both of which find Russia internationally responsible for wrongful acts. First, it is only a matter of time before the plausibility of Russia's denial wears away as more facts come to light and hopefully a fact-finding investigation by an international body occurs. President Putin has acknowledged that Russian troops were involved in these actions in Crimea. Second, under the law of state responsibility a state incurs responsibility for the conduct of non-state persons or groups of persons that was undertaken at the instructions of or under the direction or control of that state.[8] Accordingly, even if insufficient evidence is found to implicate the so-called "little green men" as Russian military, Russia's actions remain unlawful and incur state responsibility.

Assuming that Russia committed a use of force against Ukraine, the subsequent issue is whether that use of force can be excused or justified under international law. Russia has offered three theories to justify or excuse its use of force: consent, protection of nationals abroad and humanitarian intervention, and self-determination.

Consent

Russia has asserted that its actions in Crimea were in response to a request by former President Viktor Yanukovych for military assistance. Russia's argument that Yanukovych had the authority to invite foreign armed forces into Ukraine and did so is undermined by the fact that Yanukovych had essentially abdicated by fleeing the country, had been denounced by the people's representatives and replaced, and had lost effective control of the country. These facts made dubious the claim that Yanukovych represented any kind of government in exile.[9] However, the argument that Yanukovych had no authority to invite Russian military into Ukraine is undermined by the fact that the Ukrainian parliament failed to impeach Yanukovych according to the rules under the constitution. The vote lacked the required three-quarters majority; the reason for impeachment was not death, incapacity, or resignation (although fleeing the country might be argued to constitute resignation); and the Constitutional Court did not receive opportunity to review the case.[10] Yet, because the impeachment of Yanukovych took place shortly after the agreement to reinstitute the 2004 constitution was reached, it is unclear which impeachment procedures were supposed to be followed. Additionally, the sudden disappearance of Yanukovych raises the question of whether the parliament was thereby empowered to take actions not prescribed in the constitution in order to replace him. These issues remain unanswered, but regardless of they are resolved, Russia's argument is insufficient. If it is found that Yanukovych no longer has authority to invite foreign armed forces into Ukraine at the time the alleged letter doing so was written, then clearly Russia did not have consent of the territorial state. If it is found that Yanukovych did possess authority to invite foreign military into Ukraine, it is highly unlikely he would have had authority to do so unilaterally. An invitation or request to another state to send its armed forces into Ukraine requires approval by parliament.[11, b] Accordingly, regardless of whether Yanukovych was still president of Ukraine, he lacked authority to unilaterally invite the Russian military into Ukraine.

Protection of Nationals Abroad and Humanitarian Intervention

International law recognizes a defense or protection of nationals concept, which provides that a state may enter the territory of another state without consent to protect is nationals against an imminent threat. Usually, the condition is attached that the territorial state must be unable or unwilling to protect those nationals itself.[12] Russia faces at least three problems with this argument. First, the publicly available evidence does not demonstrate an imminent threat to Russian speakers or ethnic Russians. Second, Russia's practice of issuing passports to large numbers of people with the purpose of supporting a defense of nationals argument has been found unlawful.[13] The European Union (EU) Commission of Inquiry into the

b This was confirmed by a partner in the Kiev office of an international law firm.

use of force against Georgia plainly found such practice to be a misuse of the protection of nationals concept in contravention of international law. Finally, this concept permits states only to protect, defend, or rescue their nationals in another state, not to occupy the host state or to coerce a portion of it to secede and incorporate.

Equally suspect is any claim by Russia that it conducted humanitarian intervention. It points to the NATO intervention in the Balkans and the no-fly zone over Libya, among others, to support that its actions in Crimea are lawful. Russia's argument falls apart, however, when one examines and compares the facts of each historical event. Populations in both the Balkans and Libya faced grave and imminent threats that were not seen in Crimea. Indeed, in the Balkans and Libya the UN Security Council had confirmed the presence of a humanitarian emergency, whereas no such finding was made in regard to Crimea. Further, the interventions in the Balkans and Libya were limited to humanitarian objectives, whereas Russia effectively occupied Crimea and coerced it into incorporating into Russia.[14]

Both these arguments fail for lack of evidence, but even if sufficient evidence somehow comes to light, Russia's actions exceed the scope of permissible actions under these doctrines and thereby both incur responsibility for those impermissible actions and delegitimize the events that followed, most notably the referendum.

Self-Determination

Russia holds that the referendum of March 16, 2014, demonstrates that Crimea's separation from Ukraine and subsequent incorporation into Russia was an expression of the will of Crimea's population. And proponents of Russia's position point to

the International Court of Justice (ICJ) advisory opinion on Kosovo's declaration of independence as supporting a right under international law to secede unilaterally. This support is crucial because the Ukrainian constitution provides that referenda on such questions must be national instead of regional or local. However, aside from the referendum's defective status under Ukrainian constitutional law, it also fails under international law.

The right of self-determination and secession exists for colonial territories, as seen in Africa, and where a federal state dissolves, as seen in the cases of the USSR and Yugoslavia. Some also argue that it exists within states where populations suffer severe repression, lack of representation in political bodies, or grave discrimination.[15] Crimea's unilateral referendum and secession suffers from three fatal flaws.

First, that the referendum was unilateral and did not include the rest of Ukraine makes it defective both under Ukrainian constitutional law and, according to the Canadian Supreme Court in its consideration of the self-determination claims of Quebec, under international law as well. Second, if the secessionist population is able to participate in governance and cannot show severe repression or discrimination, then secession is unlawful. Sufficient evidence of repression, discrimination, or inability to participate in governance for the people of Crimea has yet to be produced. Finally, it is important that the justifying repression, discrimination, or inability to participate in governance be of a prolonged nature. Any right to external self-determination hinges on unsuccessful attempts at internal self-determination, meaning the inability to remedy the problem by using the state's domestic law or international legal commitments. Of critical importance is that independence results from an extensive process of attempting alternative solutions. That did not occur in Crimea, where political participation was not impinged and autonomy from mainland Ukraine was enjoyed.[16]

Implications for the Future

The reactions to Russia's actions in Crimea and any subsequent legal fallout, such as fact-finding investigations or legal inquiries, will play a crucial role in the future. If its actions are permitted to stand without any pronouncements by competent bodies on their illegality and impermissibility, then they stand as evidence[17] to support the legality of similar events in the future. One question that remains is whether an act of aggression based on nonviolent actions by weapons-carrying actors of unidentified origin constitutes a use of force, and further, whether such use of force rises to the level of an armed attack. NATO countries currently border Russia and NATO is likely to expand further. Article 5 of the NATO Charter commits its members to common defense in the event of an "armed attack." Consequently, the tactics observed in Crimea pose a beguiling question for NATO countries and their legal counsel. If armed actors without insignia show up in a NATO country, encircle key military and civilian installations, and seek to occupy the territory but do not fire their weapons, what is that country permitted to do in response? And are NATO members required to come to the territorial state's aid?

"Armed Attack"

As mentioned earlier, actions that constitute a use of force do not necessarily meet the standard of an armed attack. An armed attack can be viewed as a particular type of force that justifies a state's invocation of the right of self-defense (i.e., the lawful use of force in response to the attack). While Article 2(4) of the UN Charter prohibits states from threatening or using force against other states, Article 51 acknowledges the right of states to use force in response to an armed attack: "Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs."[18] Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty (popularly known as the Washington Treaty) acknowledges Article 51's right of collective self-defense and asserts "that an armed attack against one or more of [the Parties] in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all" and would justify actions including the use of armed force.[19]

The relevant question is whether Russia's actions in Crimea constitute an armed attack, because it exists as a prerequisite for any NATO actions under Article 5. What constitutes an armed attack has not been clearly articulated and is a topic of debate among scholars,[20] although international case law provides a basis for analysis.[21] In general, an armed attack is one that involves the use of any armed force. Other forms of force such as economic coercion do not meet the definition of armed attack. However, case law suggests

that violence must surpass a certain threshold of intensity before it becomes an armed attack, and the line between use of force and armed attack can be narrow.

In *Nicaragua v. United States*, the ICJ held that assistance in the form of provision of weapons and logistical support to rebels did not amount to an armed attack but may amount to a use of force. The court also noted that the use of irregular forces or mercenaries can constitute an armed attack if the scale and effect is the same as if it had been carried out by conventional forces.[22] In a separate case, the ICJ acknowledged that a single incident (the mining of a warship) might trigger self-defense, meaning the act in certain circumstances could (but would not necessarily) constitute an armed attack.[23] Both cases use an analysis of the principles of necessity and proportionality in the context self-defense.

Russia has put forth three arguments to justify its actions: consent, protection of nationals, and self-determination. These arguments fail for the reasons cited above. Although Russia's activities likely violate the prohibition on the use of force, it is a harder to assert that the activities constitute an armed attack. If separatist groups were carrying out acts of violence at the behest of or with the assistance of Russia, it is unlikely the activities constitute armed attacks. Instead, as they are frequently described in news outlets, they are "acts of aggression" that are attributed to Russia but not directly. It is generally accepted that an armed attack must come from the outside into a territory of a state. Internal separatist activities therefore would not meet this criterion. In accordance with *Nicaragua*, separatists acting with the support of Russian officials would not constitute an armed attack by Russia.

However, with regard to the so-called "little green men," Russia will incur responsibility for their conduct if Russia issued direction or control over their activities. It does not matter if they are not conventional forces (although facts may reveal they are). Nonetheless, in the absence of acts of violence, their presence as armed patrols is not an armed attack. Even though it can be argued that as armed patrols they have the capability to attack, they must also have the intention to attack and there must be an actual threat of such attack.

Most recently, Ukraine has accused Russia of attacking its military. The allegation stems from attacks by pro-Russian rebels. The link between the rebels and the state of Russia remains tenuous enough to make a finding of an armed attack by Russia difficult to support. However, in the spring of 2014, it was alleged that Russian soldiers killed a Ukrainian soldier at a military base in Crimea. A singular incident may be insufficient to constitute an armed attack, but this would be highly context dependent (i.e., was the killing related to a military confrontation and military activities, or was it a run-in more akin to a criminal act?). More than one such act, if related to tensions based on the Russian occupation in Crimea, make a more compelling case for a finding of an armed attack. A critical question that remains to be addressed by the law and current analysis is whether, taken together, the invasion, occupation, and annexation of Crimea can be considered an armed attack on the basis of its effect on the population and the force used against Ukrainian military bases in Crimea. Precedent provides little support for this idea, but it should be explored against the backdrop of Russia's activities, given that such events so skillfully hide Russian sponsorship (and potentially, responsibility) and could expand to other territories.

Perhaps one of the biggest implications is that if Russian action does not constitute an armed attack, then Ukraine is unable to lawfully use force against Russian troops to protect territory that is clearly part of Ukraine. Given Russian activities to date, there is something unsatisfying

about this notion: that in the absence of violence of a certain intensity, Ukraine cannot lawfully counter a hostile takeover of its territory despite an invasion and occupation. Without a bombing or some other classic example of an attack, Ukraine cannot invoke self-defense. If it can be argued that Russia's use of surrogates has been so effective as to equal an invasion by a conventional force, evidence of which accumulates as the days pass, then Ukraine can more likely argue it is under armed attack. Under these circumstances, it may be worth revisiting the general idea that an armed attack must come from outside of the territory, to account for states that so effectively use surrogates that their actions are nearly the same as if they acted conventionally, and with the same outcome. Another implication of the current understanding of an armed attack is that it does not account for actions taken together that may surpass the threshold of an armed attack (e.g., selective force against certain military installations, together with invasion of the territory and threats to civilians). At a minimum, consideration should be given to whether actions that alone do not constitute an armed attack can be considered together to meet the threshold.

Notes

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16. It should also be noted that Crimea's autonomy did not displace Ukraine's sovereignty such that Crimean leaders had authority to invite Russia into the territory. Only the national government of Ukraine held authority to invite foreign armed forces onto its territory, including Crimea.
17. It is important to recall that international law does not use the concept of precedence. Instead, history constitutes evidence of differing degrees of persuasiveness.
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Appendix A: Background on Ukraine's Recent Circumstances

Historical Narrative

The makeup of Ukraine's population shifted dramatically after World War II as millions of Russians moved into the country to rebuild and industrialize Eastern Ukraine and make the region an industrial and agricultural engine of the USSR. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians were exiled as USSR propaganda stressed the unity of Ukraine and Russia, even gifting the Russian-majority Crimean peninsula to the Ukrainian SSR as it grew politically influential among the Soviet republics.[1]

Anti-Soviet and Ukrainian nationalist activism continued despite Russification[2] efforts. Ukrainian nationalist activism escalated after lies surrounding the Chernobyl nuclear accident until Ukrainians overwhelmingly voted for independence from the USSR on December 1, 1991. After achieving independence, Ukraine fell into a period of pervasive corruption under President Leonid Kuchma (1994–2005). Close relationships among competing factions of wealthy oligarchs, public officials, and organized crime led to a decade of scandals, political murders, and election irregularities.[3] As the Ukrainian leadership and business interests sought to maintain cordial relations with Russia while expanding economic ties and integration with Western Europe, Russia sought to compel membership in the Eurasian Economic Union through recurring trade and energy disputes. Disputes over the city of Sevastopol continued through the 1990s, and intense negotiations between Ukraine and Russia were resolved by partitioning the Black Sea Fleet and leasing of naval bases in Sevastopol to the Russian Navy until 2017.

In the bitterly contested 2004 presidential election between former prime ministers Viktor Yanukovych and Viktor Yushchenko, the compounded impact of corruption scandals, allegations that President Kuchma was involved in the 2000 murder of journalist Georgiy Gongadze, the poisoning of opposition candidate Yushchenko, and evidence of significant voter fraud in the November 21 runoff election that claimed Yanukovych victor were met with the outbreak of the Orange Revolution. Characterized by mass demonstrations, civil disobedience, and protests against the election results, the pro-Western and opposition-led popular uprising succeeded in its call for a new election by order of the Ukrainian Supreme Court on December 26, and Yushchenko won the presidency.[4]

The new administration, led by Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, brought hopes of political and economic reform, but while socioeconomic factors improved, no major structural changes were implemented and political corruption and dirty tactics remained mainstays of Ukrainian politics.[5] Moves toward closer alignment with or membership in the European Union (EU), the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) led to controversies that deepened the population's divide concerning national alignment with Western Europe or Russia, giving rise to several violent protests.[6] Trade and gas disputes with Russia also escalated during the Yushchenko presidency, combining with the 2008–2009 financial crisis and other persistent factors to deteriorate public opinion. Cultural relations with Russia also deteriorated as President Yushchenko enacted symbolic measures that many in Russia and Russian speakers in Ukraine considered "anti-Russian," including recognition of the Holodomor[c] as genocide and official hero status for Ukrainian nationalists who fought the Red Army during World War II.[7]

Viktor Yanukovych was elected president of Ukraine in February 2010 in a narrow victory over Yulia Tymoshenko and shaped a majority government composed largely of ethnic Russian parties with power bases in eastern Ukraine. The Yanukovych administration reversed several cultural policies from the previous administration, formally abandoned aspirations for NATO membership, and improved relations with Russia. The lease on the port in Sevastopol was extended twenty-five years after a contentious political battle and protests. Yanukovych consolidated power through the politically motivated criminal prosecution of opponents and improved his public image by prosecuting unpopular predecessors, including former President Kuchma and opposition leader Yulia Tymoshenko. Constitutional reforms that limited executive

c The Holodomor was a 1932 and 1933 famine that resulted in the deaths of several million Ukrainians. In recent years the catastrophe has been recognized by Ukraine and many other countries, including the United States, as a genocide of the Ukrainian people at the hands of Stalin's Soviet Union.

authorities were soon thrown out by the Ukrainian Supreme Court, further empowering the Yanukovych administration.[8] Laws allowing for the localized official recognition of Russian and other languages were aggressively protested by Ukrainian nationalists in the west of the country. These policy reversals away from Western Europe and toward Russia stoked deep-seated controversy, as western Ukrainians characterized the measures as a continuation of foreign rule akin to the Russian Empire or Soviet Union that undermined Ukrainian sovereignty and national identity.[9]

Leading up to the late 2013 EU Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius and the anticipated signing of a Ukrainian Association Agreement,[10] retaliatory Russian trade actions and threats to increase natural gas prices escalated. Diplomatic progress toward economic integration with Western Europe was further complicated by a European Court of Human Rights ruling against the imprisonment of Tymoshenko, whose release was among the political prerequisites for the Association Agreement.[11] On November 21, preparations to sign the Association Agreement were abruptly dropped by parliament and the Yanukovych administration. Prime Minister Azarov stated that the decision was made to "ensure the national security of Ukraine" because of the impacts on trade with Russia if it were signed.[12] The government immediately pivoted toward further alignment with Russia in the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU). The move was immediately met with an outcry from the opposition and pro-EU demonstrations in Kiev's Independence Square. Protests were initially nonviolent and largely apolitical, with protesters blocking opposition political parties from capitalizing on the outrage to advance their agendas. Over the following weeks and months, however, in response to violent government crackdowns on protesters, the protests surged to the hundreds of thousands of people in Kiev and spread throughout the country.[13]

Presidents Yanukovych and Putin signed the Ukrainian-Russian Action Plan treaty, which discounted Ukraine's natural gas purchases by a third and agreed that Russia would buy $15 billion in Ukrainian government bonds to bail out the country while deepening strategic and economic ties.[14] The treaty was met with a blockade of demonstrators hoping to prevent its ratification.[15] The number of demonstrators dwindled after New Year's Eve during the Orthodox Christmas season, but protests reignited on January 12 after an opposition leader was injured by police while protesting the conviction of several Ukrainian nationalists.[16] Court and legislative actions banning protests continued to escalate the crisis, giving rise to riots and protests with participants numbering in the hundreds of thousands, demanding that Yanukovych resign.[17] Leading up to the anti-protest laws taking effect, the interior minister authorized police forces to use physical force, special devices, and firearms to quell rioters; this was immediately followed by a violent police crackdown that caused hundreds of injuries and several deaths.[18]

The violence in Kiev caused demonstrations to spread across the country in early February. Protesters occupied regional government buildings and the Justice Ministry in defiance of the anti-protest laws, further spurring violent confrontations.[19] President Yanukovych began to offer concessions and negotiate with the opposition in attempts to defuse the crisis, including the repeal of the most controversial elements of the anti-protest laws, the resignation of Prime Minister Azarov, offers of amnesty for arrested protesters, and the formation of a constitutional committee to present revisions to decentralize presidential powers.[20] Negotiations between the administration and opposition through February broke down, and violence erupted in clashes between demonstrators and police (who were accused of using sniper rifles against protesters), resulting in at least sixty-seven deaths between February 18 and 20.[21] The parliament voted to remove President Yanukovych from office (who then fled to eastern Ukraine before exile in Russia) and release Yulia Tymoshenko from prison on February 22.[22]

Political Characteristics

Ukraine is a post-Soviet republic with a legal system based on civil law and judicial review of legislative acts. The head of state is the president, who is elected by direct popular vote and can serve for two five-year terms. The head of government is the prime minister. Cabinet ministers are appointed by the president and approved by the legislature.[23] The Cabinet of Ministers under Prime Minister Azarov was composed almost exclusively of Party of Regions and nonopposition officials.[24] President Yanukovych was afforded expanded executive authority as he tightened control over parliament and sought to build his own independent oligarchic power base.[25]

The parliament (Verkhovna Rada, or Supreme Council) is Ukraine's 450-member unicameral legislature with 225 seats allocated on a proportional basis to parties that garner at least 5 percent of the national vote and the remaining 225 seats elected by popular vote. Deputies in the parliament serve fouryear terms.[26] Before the conclusion of Euromaidan and the crisis in Kiev, the parliament was divided between a governing majority led by Yanukovych's Party of Regions (aligned with the Communist Party of Ukraine and several nonaffiliated

deputies) with at least 236 seats and the minority opposition with at least 169 seats.[27] Brawls and demonstrations are a regular occurrence in the parliament, usually initiated by controversies surrounding appointments, foreign relations with Russia, or merely to disrupt regular business.[28]

Under a unitary state system, the ability of regional and local governments to provide services to the population is constrained by their lack of autonomy in policy making and funding. Subnational governments are divided into three tiers: oblasts (regions; 24), raions (districts; 490), and councils (city, town, or village; more than 12,000). Confusion concerning local competencies, inequitable funding from the government in Kiev, and pervasive bureaucratic corruption hinder local governance and the ability to provide accessible or quality public services outside major cities. Oblast, raion, and council governments are dependent on the central government for 90 percent of their budgets on average. Institutional gaps and ineffective oversight allow no avenue for local participation on the national policy level and fail to ensure consistent nationwide policy implementation.[29] Oblast executive power rests in local governors appointed by the president after the formation of the Cabinet of Ministers.[30]

The Autonomous Republic of Crimea (ARC), while equivalent in scale to oblasts, functioned as an autonomous republic within Ukraine. Although a presidential representative served a gubernatorial role, executive power in the ARC resided in the Council of Ministers, whose chairman was appointed by the Verkhovna Rada of Crimea, with the consent of the president. The Crimean parliament did not have the right of legislative initiative, and the Ukrainian government maintained sovereignty over the ARC, but the ARC was governed under both the Ukrainian and ARC constitutions.[31] The Crimean parliament has repeatedly sought greater autonomy and proposed constitutional amendments that would grant the ARC legislative initiative and ownership of government property in Crimea and also clarify delegations of authority.[32] Cultural, political, and legal controversies surrounding official language status for Russian and Crimean Tatar were a consistent point of friction between the ARC and the central government.[33]

National and regional politics remain deeply influenced by the Ukrainian oligarchs, extremely wealthy business owners who acquired their fortunes through connections with government officials during Ukraine's haphazard privatization of state assets after the fall of the USSR. The power structure in the country is undergirded by a system of close links between the business and political classes. This structure allows the oligarchs to almost completely finance political parties and direct government policy to suit their individual economic interests, facilitating a massive accumulation of wealth by a small number of individuals (by 2008, the assets of the fifty wealthiest Ukrainian oligarchs accounted for 85 percent of the country's gross domestic product [GDP]).[34] Oligarchic clans of shared interests, once organized according to geographic region, compete for dominance.

Military Characteristics

The Ukraine Armed Forces are organized under three branches (Army, Air Force, and Navy), and the Ukrainian president serves as commander-in-chief and chairman of the National Security Council, a role allowing oversight of the Defense Ministry, Ministry of Internal Affairs, National Security Service, and both internal and border troops. By 2012, active duty personnel totaled 129,925 (Army, 70,753; Navy, 13,932; and Air Force, 45,240), with additional paramilitary personnel: Ministry of Internal Affairs, 39,900; Border Guard, 45,000 and Civil Defense Troops, 9,500+. Ambitious reform plans were crippled by inadequate funding, leaving the country with defense forces only capable of providing limited territorial security. The Ukraine Armed Forces regularly took part in national and multinational exercises, including with the United States, Poland, Belarus, Russia, and Germany, and it also provides personnel for United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations.[35]

As of 2013 Russia maintained a naval force of thirteen thousand in Sevastopol, as well as four coastal missile regiments, several air bases, and isolated communication towers. The naval force contained one naval infantry regiment (the 810 Naval Infantry Brigade, alongside some two hundred to three hundred naval special forces) and maintained 102 armored infantry fighting vehicles and armored personnel carriers, as well as artillery. The lease (set to expire in 2017) was extended by twenty-five years in April 2010 in exchange for a discount on Russian gas imports. The Black Sea Fleet included a guided-missile cruiser, an anti-submarine warfare cruiser, a destroyer, two frigates, landing ships, and a diesel attack submarine.[36]

Economic Characteristics

Ukraine sought to privatize assets and liberalize the market in the early 1990s, but corruption and resistance caused significant decline in its GDP, which fell 40 percent from 1991 to 1999. Annual growth exceeded 7 percent from 2006 to 2007, driven by high steel prices (Ukraine's top export) and market reforms, but drops in steel prices and the global

financial crisis in 2008 caused the Ukrainian economy to contract nearly 15 percent in 2009.[37]

Ukraine's GDP ($337.4 billion) and per-capita GDP ($7,500) are both low for a European country with such significant natural and industrial resources and are much lower than those of neighboring Russia, where per-capita GDP is $18,100. Ukraine runs a 7 percent trade deficit, as the agricultural sector (9.9 percent of GDP) stagnates against privatization and the industrial sector (29.6 percent of GDP) shrinks 5 percent annually. The international community has begun efforts to stabilize the Ukrainian economy since Euromaidan, including an International Monetary
Fund (IMF) assistance package of $14–18 billion, as Ukraine is under constant threat of gas and market sanctions by Russia.[38] Nearly a quarter of the population lives below the poverty line and unemployment has grown to 8 percent.[39] Past efforts for foreign direct investment in Ukraine have had mixed results because of corruption and political instability.[40] EU member states purchase 26.6 percent of all Ukrainian exports, but Russia remains the largest single recipient of Ukrainian goods and services, at 25.6 percent. Ukraine depends on Russia and post-Soviet republics to meet more than 70 percent of its national demand for gas, and Russia has also repeatedly used sanctions and regulative hindrances on imported Ukrainian goods to influence Ukrainian foreign policy.[41] Much of Ukraine's domestic economy functions within a "shadow economy." Among the largest in the world, this largely unregulated and untaxed market encompasses 30–40 percent of the Ukrainian economy and cripples government revenues.[42]

Social Characteristics

Ukraine's population of 44.29 million is in decline, falling from 52 million in the early 1990s.[43] The country's population is aged (median age of 40.6 years), the youth population is small (with 25.5 percent at ages 0–24 years), and Ukraine is showing a negative population growth rate driven by a low birth rate, the second highest death rate in the world, and a slightly negative net migration rate. The youth population is mostly male, and the elder population is largely female because of health issues and economically driven emigration, leading to a ratio of 0.85 males per female. The life expectancy of women is more than ten years greater than that of men, and Ukraine has a low infant mortality rate of 8.2 deaths per 1,000 live births.[44]

Cultural divides in Ukraine are deep and contentious between majorities in the east and west along ethnic, linguistic, religious, and political lines. The western and northwestern population is primarily composed of ethnic Ukrainians (77.8 percent of the national population) who speak Ukrainian (67 percent nationally) and identify to a large degree with Western Europe.[45] Religious affiliations in Western Ukraine are largely Ukrainian Orthodox under the Kiev Patriarchate (UOC-KP), Ukrainian Greek Catholic, and Roman Catholic. A significant portion of the eastern and southeastern population in Ukraine is composed of ethnic Russians (17.3 percent of national population) who primarily speak Russian (24 percent nationally) and largely do not identify themselves as Ukrainian in nationality.[46] Eastern Ukrainians are primarily Ukrainian Orthodox under the Moscow Patriarchate (UCP-MP) and the auspices of the Russian Orthodox
Church. Other important ethnic communities in Ukraine include Belarusian (0.6 percent), Moldovan (0.5 percent; south), Crimean Tatar (0.5 percent; Crimea), Bulgarian (0.4 percent; south), Hungarian (0.3 percent; west), Romanian (0.3 percent; southwest), Polish (0.3 percent; scattered), Jewish (0.2 percent), and others (1.8 percent).[47]

Both advocacy for Russian as the official language and objections to western Ukrainian historical narratives politically resonate in the east. Polish and Jewish communities also object to state remembrance and recognition of Ukrainian Nationalist figures from World War II, arguing that the groups committed war crimes and aided Nazi forces in the Holocaust. Alongside the issue of language, controversies surrounding the selective remembrance of national tragedies, historical revisionism, and the whitewashing of atrocities by elevated figures or groups are common sources of tension and protest throughout Ukraine.[48] It is important to note, however, that some of Ukraine's Russian-speaking population who express discomfort with the West Ukrainiandominated nationalist agenda are not necessarily pro-Russian. The Euromaidan protests featured many prominent activists who were moderate and Russian speaking yet strongly opposed Russian dominance of Ukraine.

Although Ukraine remains a transitional country with significant social challenges, human development[49] was considered high at 0.740 as of 2013 according to the United Nation's Human Development Index (HDI), improving on an upward trend.[50] Although Ukraine has made some significant progress on education and other issues, it still faces major obstacles in reducing poverty, improving gender equality, establishing effective environmental protection standards, protecting vulnerable populations (elderly, youth,

women, and rural populations as well as illegal immigrants), and addressing key health concerns, including a sharp decline in male life expectancy and the spread of HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis.[51]

Ukraine has one of the largest diaspora populations in the world, a plurality of which (around three million) lives in Russia on or near the Ukrainian border. Many Ukrainians abroad maintain cultural and economic links to Ukraine. Significant ethnic Ukrainian communities live in the United States (1.8 million), Canada (1.25 million), Moldova/Transnistria (600,000), and Kazakhstan (500,000), with roughly 400,000 living elsewhere around the world. Ukrainian emigration out of the country is largely driven by economic concerns (prospects of better employment, better living standards, or higher salaries elsewhere). Internal migration within the country can be driven by both economic concerns and cultural preference, further contributing to the geographic character of Ukrainian cultural divides.[52]

Infrastructure and Information Characteristics

Ukrainian road networks are in fair condition in urban areas but poor in rural regions and even on routes between major cities. Rail networks link most towns and cities, with direct lines from Kiev to other former Soviet republics, including Poland, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, and Germany. While Ukraine has one of the most extensive rail networks in Europe that handles much of the freight and passenger traffic through the region, replacement of deteriorating tracks is a pressing need for much of the infrastructure. Ukraine (including Crimea) has forty-five civilian airports, nineteen of which are international, although most international flights come into the Boryspil International Airport in Kiev, the largest in the country.[53] Before the annexation of Crimea, Ukraine had 2,782 km of coastline along the Black Sea, Sea of Azov, and two shipping rivers (Danube and Dnipro), used by eighteen maritime ports (five in Crimea). The largest Ukrainian port is the Odessa Sea Commercial Port, a historical hub for commerce between East and West.[54]

Ukrainian energy is primarily derived from fossil fuels (64.1 percent natural gas, coal, and oil), nuclear energy (25.2 percent), and hydroelectric plants (9.9 percent), with very little use of other renewable sources (0.1 percent). The country has extensive natural energy resources. Ukraine ranked thirteenth in the world in coal production in 2010 and has the twelfth largest natural gas reserves in the world (1.104 trillion cubic meters) and 395 million barrels of proven oil reserves. However, Ukraine remains highly dependent on oil and gas imports from Russia to meet national energy demands, despite a reduction in energy use since the early 1990s due to the decline of industrial production and a shift toward the services sector.[55] Ukraine is also a key transit state for natural gas exports from Russia and Belarus to Western Europe through the Soyuz, Brotherhood, Transgas, and other major pipelines.

Mounting energy debt and problems with regular payments have repeatedly been a source of tension between Ukraine and Russia, at times resulting in Russia cutting off gas exports to Ukraine and Western Europe, and have been a key aspect of Russian strategies for domestic political influence in Ukraine.[56]

Internet access in Ukraine has grown significantly in urban areas but has remained poorly developed in rural areas. By 2012, 38 percent of the Ukrainian population had access to the Internet, with affordable and reliable home and mobile service increasingly available, as well as Wi-Fi access in many public spaces. Mobile phones are widely used, with a reported 132.05 cellular subscriptions per one hundred people by 2012. The Ukrainian government does not restrict access to the Internet, but the National Security Service in the years before Euromaidan increased monitoring of government criticism on the Internet.[57]

Ukraine has a wide range of print and electronic news outlets, including hundreds of state and private television and radio stations, and is very diverse compared to many other former Soviet republics. Oligarchs with significant political interests dominate much of the national channels, and regional television stations are often dependent on business interests and government subsidies for funding. Ownership of media outlets is not always transparent, as the oligarchs often seek to hide their influence on news organizations. Because the media is so institutionally tied to politicians and progovernment oligarchs, the largest television stations in Ukraine avoid politically sensitive topics, including government corruption, President Yanukovych's opulent lifestyle supported by state funds, human rights abuses, persecution of political opposition, and the growing unemployment rate.[58] There is also a history of violence and threats against journalists in Ukraine.

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Appendix B: Detailed Timeline of Events

November 4, 2013

Beginning of Escalation Phase

Crimea: Hundreds rally in Sevastopol against Ukraine–EU integration. Head of the Russian Community of Crimea states Sevastopol should have a status similar to that of Gibraltar. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

November 18, 2013

Russia: Russia is alleged to have threatened Ukraine with painful trade sanctions and demands for payment on gas debt if it proceeds with the EU association agreement. **Type of Action:** Economic Sanctions

November 21, 2013

Beginning of Resolution Phase

Ukraine: President Yanukovych's cabinet abandons agreement on closer ties with EU. **Type of Action:** Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict

November 22, 2013

Protesters rally across Ukraine to protest government's move to delay association deal with EU.

November 24, 2013

One hundred thousand people protest in Kiev and clash with police.

November 26, 2013

Crimea: The Congress of Russian Community of Crimea gathers activists for a small anti-EU rally in Simferopol. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

November 27, 2013

The Crimean parliament announces support for the decision to stop preparations for signing the association agreement; all Crimean parliamentary factions except the Crimean Tatars support the resolution.

November 28, 2013

Crimean Tatars picket in support of Ukraine's EU integration in Simferopol.

Crimea: The public council under the Crimean government organizes a roundtable discussion on EU integration. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Crimea: The Crimean branch of the pro-Russian movement Ukrainian Choice meets in Simferopol and says that Ukraine should join the Russia-led Customs Union. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

December 1, 2013

A protest attracts about 300,000 people at Kiev's Independence Square; protesters try to storm the presidential palace and smash into Kiev's city hall.

December 2, 2013

Three western oblasts announce an "indefinite and peaceful" strike; several eastern oblasts hold

extraordinary sessions during which deputies express support for the president and urge stabilization.

Crimea: The Crimean parliament meets for an extraordinary session, urging President Viktor Yanukovych to declare a state of emergency and take all necessary measures to stop protests. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Crimea: The Russian Unity Party stages a rally in central Simferopol to support Ukraine's joining the Russia-led Customs Union. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

December 5, 2013

Pro-EU activists in Crimea meet in Simferopol to coordinate.

Ukraine's first deputy prime minister orders the creation of a governmental commission to prepare a road map for signing the EU Association Agreement in the coming months.

December 9, 2013

Crimea: One hundred fifty Crimean residents in Simferopol protest and burn an EU flag; a dozen protest outside Yanukovych's representative office in Crimea and demand an investigation into who finances "foreign institutions" in Ukraine. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

December 10, 2013

Russia: Russian New Democrats Party leadership plan a trip to Kiev to hold discussions with the opposition and local pro-Russian organizations defending Russian interests in Ukraine. **Type of Action:** Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict

December 11, 2013

Crimea: Crimean parliament calls on residents to defend autonomy amid rallies in Ukraine, claim that Crimeans will be deprived of rights to speak, write, and be educated in Russian. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

December 12, 2013

Cities in western Ukraine form self-defense groups and send people to Kiev to protest.

Supporters of EU integration stage a picket in Simferopol.

Crimea: A Party of Regions deputy in Crimea says hundreds joining "self-defense units" to "defend the constitution" and prevent "a coup" and would travel to Kiev. **Type of Action:** Actions of Opposition Forces

Crimea: The Crimean parliament's presidium urges
Crimean residents to "oppose anti-government forces." **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

Crimea: Crimean officials publish a paper with the same name as a newspaper critical of pro-Russian authorities and send it to subscribers in north Crimea. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

December 16, 2013

Beginning of Restoration of Peace Phase

President Yanukovych allegedly removes units of the regular army from Crimea.

Russia: A Svoboda deputy from the Ukrainian parliament claims Russian political leaders met with Yanukovych officials to discuss anti-Maidan and a referendum for Crimean independence. **Type of Action:** Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict

December 17, 2013

Crimea: A pro-government rally is staged in Simferopol. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Russia: Vladimir Putin agrees to buy $15 billion dollars' worth of Ukrainian debt and to reduce the price of Russian gas supplies by a third. **Type of Action:** Comprehensive Measures to Reduce Tensions

December 19, 2013

Russia: Putin rules out the possibility of sending Russian troops to Crimea. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

December 25, 2013

Crimea: Pro-Russian banners are put on display during a session of the Crimean parliament. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

January 12, 2014

Revert Back to Resolution Phase

Ukraine: Euromaidan protests in Kiev are revived in response to a violent confrontation between police and opposition demonstrators.

January 16, 2014

The Ukrainian parliament quickly passes controversial anti-protest laws.

Simferopol activists stage a picket outside the office of Yanukovych's permanent representative to protest against the anti-protest laws.

January 19, 2014

Supporters of the opposition clash with the riot police in central Kiev; more than one hundred people are reportedly injured.

January 20, 2014

Pro-EU and anti-government activists from IvanoFrankivsk, Lviv, and Odessa block internal troops from being sent to Kiev.

January 21, 2014

Ukraine: President Viktor Yanukovych holds talks with opposition leaders. **Type of Action:** Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict

Crimea: The Russian Unity Party announces the mobilization of Cossacks to Crimea to prevent large protests there. **Type of Action:** Actions of Opposition Forces

January 22, 2014

A rally in support of Yanukovych takes place in Donetsk.

Two protesters are killed in clashes with police in Kiev.

Crimea: The Crimean parliament issues a statement denouncing actions by "extremists and neo-Nazis" in Kiev and accuses opposition leaders of "provoking bloodshed," claiming that they are taking orders from foreign "masters." **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

Ukraine: In a joint statement, sixty-six nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) of the Donetsk region condemn the "anti-state" activities by "radical" protesters and call on the opposition to start dialogue with the authorities. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare, Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict

Crimea: Leader of the Russian Unity Party says the party supports Yanukovych and is ready to establish a people's guard unit in Crimea to help the police. **Type of Action:** Actions of Opposition Forces

January 24, 2014

Protesters seize regional offices across the country and more government buildings in Kiev.

Crimea: An anti-protest movement is formed in Simferopol. **Type of Action:** Formation of Coalitions and Unions

Crimea: Russian television proclaims that Crimea has announced its desire to break away from Ukraine, but Crimean officials describe the claims as false and provocative. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

January 26, 2014

Anti-government rallies spread across Ukraine after the opposition rejects President Yanukovych's offer of cabinet posts in return for a pledge to end protests.

A pro-Maidan rally outside the Berkut base in Simferopol warns against going to Kiev to suppress protests.

Crimea: The Sevastopol Coordination Council, made up of twelve pro-Russian organizations, calls for the separation of Sevastopol from Ukraine in case of a coup in Kiev and addresses regional, district, and municipal councils in the southeast and center of Ukraine regarding the formation of a Federal State of Malorossiya ("Little Russia"). **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Crimea: Two hundred people rally in Simferopol against Euromaidan. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

January 27, 2014

Opposition "people's councils" control most of western and central Ukraine, and at least three provinces have banned the Party of Regions and Communist Party.

Crimea: The Crimean parliament bans the Svoboda
Party in the peninsula. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Crimea: "Self-defense groups" reportedly form in Crimea with plans to deploy at "checkpoints" to be set up on Crimea's border with the rest of Ukraine. **Type of Action:** Actions of Opposition Forces

January 28, 2014

A wave of protests and counterprotests occur in Simferopol and Sevastopol.

Ukraine: Prime Minister Mykola Azarov and his government resign. **Type of Action:** Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict

Ukraine: The Ukrainian parliament repeals nine of the twelve anti-protest laws. **Type of Action:** Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict

Ukraine: People's guards are formed in several Ukrainian regions to protect administrative buildings from opposition attacks. **Type of Action:** Actions of Opposition Forces

January 29, 2014

Crimea: Several thousand pro-Yanukovych supporters from Crimea arrive in Kiev. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Crimea: A rally is held in support of the incumbent authorities in Sevastopol and Simferopol as Cossacks patrol the streets. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure, Actions of Opposition Forces

January 30, 2014

Russia: Russia hints at suspending bailout to Ukraine and imposes tough border checks on select Ukrainian imports. **Type of Action:** Economic Sanctions, Political and Diplomatic Pressure

January 31, 2014

Russia: An aid of President Putin on South Ossetia and Abkhazia meets with President Yanukovych. **Type of Action:** Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict

February 1, 2014

Ukraine: Pro-government authorities in Kharkiv set up the Ukrainian Front, a group consisting of the "fight-club" Oplot, Cossacks, Afghan vets, and Russian bikers. **Type of Action:** Formation of Coalitions and Unions

February 2, 2014

Crimea: A pro-Russian rally is held in Sevastopol. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Crimea: A member of the Crimean parliament says Crimea needs political independence. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Russia: Night Wolves bikers from Russia begin patrolling the streets and guarding government buildings in Sevastopol. **Type of Action:** Actions of Opposition Forces

Crimea: "People's self-defense units" patrol Sevastopol to prevent the opposition from storming government buildings. **Type of Action:** Actions of Opposition Forces

Crimea: Crimea creates a committee to counter "extremism." **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

February 4, 2014

Ukraine: Cossacks patrol the streets of Donetsk and Dnipropetrovsk alongside police, and residents of Kharkiv join self-defense groups to protect state buildings. **Type of Action:** Actions of Opposition Forces

Crimea: Cossacks stage patrols in Sevastopol. **Type of Action:** Actions of Opposition Forces

Crimea: Congress of Russian nationalist organizations in Crimea wants to establish a public movement called the "Slavic Anti-Fascist Front." **Type of Action:** Formation of Coalitions and Unions

Russia: The head of the Rodina Party in Russia becomes an honorary guest at a congress of Russian nationalist organizations in Crimea. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Russia: Russian Unity and Russian nationalist NGOs establish the Slav Antifascist Front to stop neo-Nazism and promote the Russia-led Customs Union. **Type of Action:** Formation of Coalitions and Unions

Crimea: Crimean members of parliament (MPs) initiate a region-wide survey regarding Crimea's status. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Crimea: Some members of the Crimean parliament suggest asking Russia for "support, help and protection." **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Crimea: An anti-Maidan rally is staged in Crimea. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

February 7, 2014

Sochi Olympics begin.

Crimea: Crimean officials plan on revising the regional constitution to make it easier to request protection from Russia. **Type of Action:** Search for
Ways to Resolve Conflict

February 8, 2014

Ukraine: Activists of NGOs Youth Unity, Popular
Alternative, Resistance, and others calling themselves "anti-fascists" hold a march called For Odessa!. The activists adopt an appeal to Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych demanding that he ensure order and stability in the country and not allow the seizure of administrative buildings. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

February 9, 2014

A meeting on harmonization of Ukraine's military cooperation with NATO countries is held in Kiev.

Ukraine: The leader of the Kharkiv-based "fight club" Oplot travels to St. Petersburg to ask for support from the "fraternal" Russian people. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

February 10, 2014

Ukraine: The Communist Party of Ukraine puts forward a proposal to change the Ukrainian unitary state system to a federation. The leadership of the Kharkiv region supports this move. **Type of Action:** Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict

Russia: Moscow distances itself from Yanukovych and advocates the federalization of Ukraine. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Russia: Allies of Aleksandr Zaldostanov, head of the Moscow motorcycle club Night Wolves, start guarding state institutions in Crimea. **Type of Action:** Actions of Opposition Forces

Crimea: The leadership of Crimea supports the move of the Communist Party of Crimea to endorse federalism for Ukraine. **Type of Action:** Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict

February 12, 2014

Crimea: Representatives of numerous pro-Russian
NGOs gather in Simferopol to discuss the plight of Crimea's ethnic Russians; discussion is also hosted online by former Crimean president by Yury Meshkov, a pro-Russian separatist deported from Ukraine for his separatist activities in 2011. **Type of Action:**
Political and Diplomatic Pressure, Information
Warfare

February 14, 2014

Russia: An aid of President Putin meets with Yanukovych and visits Crimea to meet with the chairman of the Crimean government, ostensibly to discuss a project to build a crossing over the Kerch Strait. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

February 16, 2014

Euromaidan activists end their occupation of Kiev City Hall in exchange for release of all jailed protesters.

February 18, 2014

Clashes erupt in Independence Square resulting in eighteen dead, including seven police.

February 19, 2014

Crimea: Members of the Crimean parliament speak of the need to appeal to Russia for the protection of autonomous status, and even to "return Crimea to Russia" if "the situation in Ukraine is not settled"; they arrange to hold referendum on the government in Ukraine and the status of Crimea. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Crimea: Mykola Kolisnychenko, a Crimean MP from the Party of Regions, speaks from the platform of the Supreme Council of Crimea of the need to "return Crimea to Russia" if "the situation in Ukraine is not settled." **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Crimea: The Crimean parliament holds referendum on Ukraine's government, and MP Vladimir Klychnikov calls for constitutional amendments and a poll on the status of Crimea. **Type of Action:** Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict

Crimea: MP Vladimir Klychnikov suggests an appeal to the president and the legislative assembly of the Russian Federation to be the guarantors of inviolability of the status of Crimean autonomy and rights and freedoms of Crimean residents. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

February 20, 2014

Beginning of Escalations Phase

More than sixty people in Kiev are killed during crackdowns by Ukrainian police and special forces armed with combat weapons in the worst violence of the crisis.

The Crimean prime minister says that Crimea is an inalienable part of Ukraine.

Russia: Russian Duma speaker and speaker of the parliament in Crimea meet in Moscow and discuss the situation in Ukraine. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Russia: Russian and Crimean leaders label protests in Ukraine an "attempted coup" staged by "radicals" and "extremists" and say that secession is possible. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Crimea: After the Crimean parliament calls on President Yanukovych to take extraordinary measures to preserve the constitutional order and unity of Ukraine, Crimean MP Volodymyr Konstantinov states that Crimea may secede from Ukraine if tensions escalate further. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Crimea: Konstantinov urges Russia, "in the shape of the president and the Foreign Ministry," to release a "tough" statement to send a "clear and unambiguous signal to those planning and funding this anti-constitutional coup." **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Crimea: The Russian Community of Sevastopol writes to the Kremlin citing fear of "genocide" and NATO intervention "as happened in Yugoslavia." **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

Russia: Russian State Duma speaker Sergey Naryshkin and speaker of the parliament of Ukraine's Autonomous Republic of Crimea Volodymyr Konstantinov meet in Moscow and discuss the situation in Ukraine. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Russia: During talks with their counterpart from Crimea, Russian parliamentary leaders label Ukraine's protests an "attempted coup" staged by "radicals" and "extremists." **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Russia: Putin sends Vladimir Lukin to Kiev as a mediator. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Russia: An unidentified Russian official tells press that Russia is willing to fight a war over Crimea if Ukraine starts to disintegrate. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

February 21, 2014

Ukraine: President Yanukovych signs a compromise with opposition leaders but flees Kiev that night as other party members leave. **Type of Action:** Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict

February 22, 2014

Beginning of Conflict Activities Phase

The Ukrainian parliament votes unanimously (328 of 447 deputies, with no votes against) to impeach Yanukovych and set new elections for May 25.

Russia: The Tolyatti Main Intelligence Directorate's special-purpose brigade is sent to Crimea to ensure the security of key strategic facilities. **Type of Action:** Strategic Deployment

Russia: A congress of 3,700 deputies from all levels from southeastern Ukrainian regions, Crimea, and Simferopol is held in Kharkiv; the gathering is observed by leading Russian politicians. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

February 23, 2014

Beginning of Crisis Phase The Sochi Olympics end.

Ukrainian parliament passes a bill curtailing Russian language status.

Crimea: Thousands protest in Sevastopol and allegedly establish a parallel administration and self-defense squads, claiming 5,000 squad members in Simferopol and 200,000 in Sevastopol. **Type of Action:** Actions of Opposition Forces, Information Warfare

Russia: Russian military vehicles approach Crimea through the Russian city of Novorossiysk. **Type of Action:** Strategic Deployment

Crimea: The chairman of the Council of Ministers in Crimea announces the intention to implement the decisions of the new government in Kiev and "ensure stability in Crimea." **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Russia: A landing ship from the Russian Black Sea
Fleet heads to Sevastopol, and personnel of the Russian 45th Airborne Special Forces are airlifted from Kubinka and Pskov to Anapa on strategic airlifts.
Six Mi-8 helicopters are also airlifted to Anapa from
Sochi. **Type of Action:** Strategic Deployment

Crimea: Demonstrators claim to elect a new city leader who is a Russian citizen and who vows to defend Sevastopol. **Type of Action:** Actions of Opposition Forces

Russia: Russian legislators arrive in Crimea and say that Russia will support Crimean residents and facilitate Russian citizenship and passports; legislators meet with representatives of Crimea's cultural and political associations in Simferopol and declare "in the event of Crimean residents deciding in a referendum or of the Crimean Supreme Council asking to join Russia . . . Russia will consider this matter very quickly." **Type of Action:** Information Warfare, Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Russia: Russian armored vehicles block all entrances to Sevastopol after local authorities refuse to recognize the new government in Kiev. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

February 24, 2014

Ukraine's interim government issues a warrant for the arrest of Yanukovych.

Crimea: The Kiev-appointed mayor of Sevastopol resigns. **Type of Action:** Change in Military-Political Leadership

Russia: Russia announces it could limit food imports from Ukraine, citing food safety concerns. **Type of Action:** Economic Sanctions

Russia: Leaflets are distributed in Sevastopol calling for residents to sign up for pro-Russian militias. Leaflets say that "the blue, brown euro plague is knocking." **Type of Action:** Information Warfare, Actions of Opposition Forces

Russia: Communist Party leader Gennadiy Zyuganov says the latest events in Ukraine are a "slap in the face" and eastern Ukraine is not "foreign territory". He also says Russia should support forces in Ukraine that are opposing nationalist radicals. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Russia: A group of State Duma deputies arrives in Crimea promising to facilitate the process of securing Russian citizenship for Crimean residents. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

February 25, 2014

Russia: The Russian State Duma says it will help Crimean residents if they want to secede. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Russia: Russian armored vehicles appear in Sevastopol. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Crimea: Sevastopol police chief Alexander Goncharov says that his officers will refuse to carry out "criminal orders" issued by Kiev to arrest the alleged new mayor. **Type of Action:** Change in Military-Political Leadership

Russia: Viktor Yanukovych arrives in Moscow after requesting protection from Russia. **Type of Action:** Break in Diplomatic Relations

Russia: Moscow actively provides Ukrainians with Russian passports. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Russia: Russia denies issuing fast-track passports in Ukraine's Crimea. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

Russia: The Black Sea Fleet is put on alert because of political instability in Ukraine. **Type of Action:** Military Strategic Deterrence Measure

Russia: The head of the Motherland Party flies to Crimea to meet with a core group of Russian organizations. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Russia: Gazprom may raise prices on gas for Ukraine to four hundred dollars per each thousand cubic meter in the second quarter of 2014, in case political instability in Ukraine results in delayed payments and disruption in gas transit to Europe. **Type of Action:** Economic Sanctions

February 26, 2014

Russia: Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov reiterates position of "principled non-intervention" in Ukraine. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

Crimea: Thousands of Crimean Tatars demonstrate outside the Crimean parliament in Simferopol to protest potential separation from Ukraine. Several hundred Russian Unity protesters confront the demonstration. Police keep the groups separated. **Type of Action:** Actions of Opposition Forces

Russia: Putin orders large-scale snap military readiness exercises in western and central Russia. **Type of Action:** Military Strategic Deterrence Measure

Crimea: Individuals in Crimea erect barricades and checkpoints on roads leading to Sevastopol. **Type of Action:** Actions of Opposition Forces

Russia: Russian parliament proposes giving passports to Russian-speaking people in Ukraine. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure, Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict

Russia: Writing on Twitter, Aleksey Pushkov, chairman of the State Duma's International Affairs Committee, says: "The sentiments of the majority of the population of Crimea are totally unambiguous: people don't want to remain in the 'new' Banderainspired Ukrainian democracy." **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

Russia: A Russian Federation Council delegation visits southern Ukraine and Crimea to assess the situation and meet representatives of political groups and the Russian military to "understand what the strength of feelings [are] in the south of Ukraine." **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

February 27, 2014

Beginning of Resolution Phase

The Ukrainian parliament approves the new cabinet of ministers and appoints Arseniy Yatsenyuk as the new Ukrainian prime minister.

The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry summons Russia's charge d'affaires to present notes concerning movements of the Russian Black Sea Fleet units outside their base.

Russia: The Liberal Democratic Party of Russia recruits volunteers to go to Crimea and monitor the rights of Russians, claiming fifty people applied to participate. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

Crimea: A pro-Russian rally is held in Simferopol. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Crimea: The newly appointed pro-Russian prime minister of Ukraine's Crimea region, Serhiy Aksyonov, says that Crimea's Supreme Council (parliament) would be taking control of law-enforcement bodies in the region and that the Supreme Council is the highest legislative body in Crimea. **Type of Action:** Change in Military-Political Leadership

Russia: Armed men guard checkpoints at entrances to Crimea. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: President Putin instructs the government to continue contacts with Ukrainian partners to develop trade and economic ties and to deal with providing requested humanitarian assistance to Crimea. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure, Economy on a War Footing

Crimea: Armed forces seize the Crimean parliament and Cabinet of Ministers buildings in the regional capital of Simferopol. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Dozens of armored personnel carriers (APCs) without insignia are spotted approaching Simferopol. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Russian flags fly above administrative buildings. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

Crimea: The Crimean parliament votes to dissolve the regional government and appoints a new chairman who takes control of regional law enforcement bodies. **Type of Action:** Change in Military-Political Leadership

Crimea: The Crimean parliament approves a referendum for secession from Ukraine and requests financial assistance from Russia. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure, Search for Ways to Resolve the Conflict

Russia: Russian fighter jets are on standby in case of

combat. **Type of Action:** Military Strategic Deterrence Measures

Russia: Eight Russian helicopters carrying military personnel arrive in Sevastopol. **Type of Action:** Strategic Deployment

Russia: Ten Russian military trucks full of men drive from Sevastopol toward Simferopol. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Russian MPs promise to submit a bill making it easier for territories to join the Russian Federation. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure,
Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict

February 28, 2014

Ukraine: Russian Foreign Ministry delays response to the new Ukrainian government regarding request for consultations on the situation in Crimea. **Type of**
Action: Break in Diplomatic Relations

Crimea: The Crimean parliament appoints a new Crimean government and cabinet. **Type of Action:** Change in Military-Political Leadership

Russia: Armed men identified as Russian Black Sea Fleet troops and wearing military uniforms without insignia arrive in Russian trucks without plates and capture Simferopol International Airport in the morning. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Sevastopol International Airport is captured. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Russian military helicopters enter Ukrainian airspace over Crimea, flying in formation toward Sevastopol. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Ukrainian Border Guard and Coast Guard are blockaded in Sevastopol. Russian forces surround a Ukrainian Coast Guard base and blockade a Border Guard service unit in Sevastopol. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Law and order is maintained by "troopers," self-defense detachments, volunteers, and a people's militia in Simferopol and Sevastopol. **Type of Action:**
Actions of Opposition Forces, Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Black Sea Fleet troops occupy a border checkpoint in Sevastopol. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Armed men block access to the military airfield in Belbek. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: The Crimean prime minister states that Russia agreed to assist Crimea financially. **Type of Action:** Economy on a War Footing

Russia: Armed Black Sea Fleet troops occupy the state-run Crimea TV's editorial office. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

Russia: Roadblocks are set up on roads leading to Sevastopol. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: A Russian Black Sea Fleet missile boat blocks entrance to the Balaklava Bay in Sevastopol. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: A Russian aircraft lands with seven hundred special operations troops at Simferopol airport; ten APCs depart Sevastopol to meet the troops

in Simferopol. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Pro-Russian NGOs in Crimea state they are helping the people of Crimea to assemble volunteer militias and claim thousands have enlisted. **Type of Action:** Actions of Opposition Forces

Russia: The Russian Black Sea Fleet denies reports that servicemen are taking part in blocking the Belbek airfield. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

Russia: A Russian Federation Council delegation claims that a referendum on the status of Crimea does not imply that it will secede from Ukraine. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

March 1, 2014

Russia: Pro-Russian volunteers set up a roadblock and dig trenches for Russian troops on the Ukrainian–Crimean border. **Type of Action:** Actions of Opposition Forces

Crimea: Pro-Russian rallies are held in Crimean cities. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Russia: Russia's parliament approves Vladimir Putin's request to use force in Ukraine to protect Russian interests. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure, Information Warfare

March 2, 2014

Russia: Twelve military trucks carrying troops, two ambulances, and an infantry mobility vehicle armed with a machine gun travel from Sevastopol to Simferopol. **Type of Action:** Strategic Deployment

Russia: Armed Russian troops post guards at the gates of the Ukrainian army base in Perevalne. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Russian parliament begins debating a law that would oblige the government to seek to annex any predominantly Russian neighboring region that votes to join Russia. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure, Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict

Russia: President Putin tells President Obama that use of force on Russia's part would be a response to provocations from Ukraine. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

March 3, 2014

Russia: Russia's United Nations envoy claims President Yanukovych had asked President Putin in writing for use of force. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

Russia: Russia denies reports that Moscow had issued an ultimatum to Ukrainian troops to surrender. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

Russia: Russian forces issue Ukraine's army and navy in Crimea an ultimatum: pledge allegiance to the region's new pro-Russian leadership or be forced to submit. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: A Ukrainian naval command ship is confronted by four tugboats flying Russian colors and boxed in by a Russian minesweeper. Russian warships are anchored at the mouth of the harbor to block an escape to the sea. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Russian forces take a ferry terminal in Kerch, just across a strait from Russian territory, which could be used to deploy more troops into Crimea. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Representative of Russia's Black Sea Fleet call on Ukrainian airmen at a base in Belbek to denounce the Ukrainian government's authority and swear allegiance to the new Crimean government. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Armed Russian troops post guards at the gates of the Ukrainian naval station in Sevastopol. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Pro-Russian activists stand guard in front of Russian soldiers blocking access to a Ukrainian border guard base near Simferopol. **Type of Action:** Actions of Opposition Forces, Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Ten Russian combat helicopters and eight military cargo planes land in Crimea, while four Russian warships remain anchored in the port of Sevastopol. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Pro-Russian supporters take over government buildings in several eastern Ukrainian cities. **Type of Action:** Actions of Opposition Forces

Russia: President Putin claims to order forces involved in drills along Ukraine border back to base. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

March 4, 2014

Russia: President Putin condemns Ukraine's "unconstitutional coup" and claims the armed men besieging Ukrainian forces in Crimea are local self-defense forces. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare, Military Strategic Deterrence Measure

Ukraine: A pro-Russian protest camp occupies the central square in Kharkiv. **Type of Action:** Actions of Opposition Forces, Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Russia: Ukraine says Russia is moving more armored vehicles to its side of a narrow stretch of water near Crimea, while Russian forces take over the headquarters of the Ukrainian border control in Simferopol. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Russia's ambassador to the UN brandishes a photocopied letter claimed to be written by ousted President Yanukovych, telling reporters it is justification for his nation's occupation of Crimea. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

Russia: Russian forces block mobile telephone services in some areas. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

Russia: A ferry crossing that links Crimea with Russia is overtaken by Russian forces, which would allow a quick military buildup in Crimea if Russia chooses to do so. A narrow strip of land linking the peninsula with mainland Ukraine is also sealed by armed people. The Ukrainian military says Russia recently brought four navy ships from other seas to the Crimean port of Sevastopol. **Type of Action:** Strategic Deployment

Russia: The Russians demand that Ukrainian soldiers in Crimea lay down their weapons. Some have agreed and left or joined pro-Russian forces. **Type of Action:** Military Strategic Deterrence Measures

Russia: Russian forces seize or block Ukrainian air bases, air defense missile batteries, and garrisons throughout Crimea. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Gazprom says it will dramatically increase gas prices for Ukraine, effective as of April. **Type of Action:** Economic Sanctions

March 6, 2014

Crimea: The Crimean parliament votes to secede from Ukraine and join Russia. **Type of Action:** Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict, Political and Diplomatic Pressure

March 7, 2014

Russia: Pro-Russian soldiers try to take over a Ukrainian base in Sevastopol, resulting in a tense standoff that lasts for several hours. **Type of Action:** Military Strategic Deterrence Measures

Russia: Military ships unload around two hundred military vehicles in eastern Crimea after apparently having crossed the Straits of Kerch. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Russia says it will support Crimea if the region votes to leave Ukraine. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Russia: Gazprom warns Kiev that its gas supply might be cut off. **Type of Action:** Economic Sanctions

Russia: Rallies in the streets of Russia urge Crimea to become part of Russia. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Russia: A leader of Russia's parliament pledges to support a referendum—deemed illegal by the West— to break from Ukraine. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Crimea: A public ceremony held in Simferopol swears in the first unit of the "Military Forces of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea." **Type of Action:**
Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict, Information
Warfare, Change in Military-Political Leadership

March 8, 2014

Russia: A convoy of more than sixty military trucks heads from Feodosia to a military airfield at Gvardeiskoe north of Simferopol. **Type of Action:**
Strategic Deployment

March 9, 2014

Crimea: A crowd of more than four thousand people in Simferopol demonstrate to support unification with Russia. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Russia: Eighty armed personnel seal off a military airport in Saki, setting up machine gun posts along the landing strip with the help of civilians wielding sticks and clubs. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations, Actions by Opposition Forces

Russia: Russian troops backed by local militias siege the airport at Novofyodorovka, the last military airstrip in Crimea in the hands of Ukrainian forces. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations, Actions by Opposition Forces

Crimea: The new speaker of the Crimean parliament says Ukrainian troops in Crimea could either defect or leave after the referendum. **Type of Action:** Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict

Russia: Russian forces surround an anti-aircraft unit in Yevpatoria, ordering Ukrainian troops to surrender or face attack. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Russian forces cross into mainland Ukraine in the Kherson region, seizing a hotel in the town of Chongar and "setting up minefields across the narrow strip of land that connects Ukraine with Crimea." **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Crimea: Demonstrators loyal to Ukraine are attacked with whips, baseball bats, and clubs in Sevastopol. The assault by about one hundred Cossacks and pro-Russian militiamen is described as "very savage" by a BBC reporter. Russian troops are now in effective control of the region and are supported by militiamen in red armbands who patrol key sites. In recent days, they have been joined by hundreds of Cossack paramilitaries from Russia, many carrying whips and long knives. The violence comes after two hundred people—many of them women—took part in a rally in Sevastopol to commemorate the anniversary of the Ukrainian poet, Taras Shevchenko. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure, Actions of Opposition Forces

Russia: Russian special forces continue to capture border posts. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Crimea: Rival rallies remain peaceful in Simferopol. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

March 10, 2014

Russia: Armed forces seize a military hospital in Simferopol. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Reports emerge that Russia is sending in reinforcements to replace the troops already stationed at military barracks and installations around Crimea. **Type of Action:** Strategic Deployment

March 11, 2014

Crimea: The Crimean parliament declares Crimea independent from Ukraine. It also affirms that it will ask to join Russia if the population asks in the upcoming referendum. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure, Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict

Russia: The Russian Foreign Ministry cites the accession of Kosovo from Serbia as precedent for the "absolutely legitimate" vote in Crimea. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

March 12, 2014

Crimea: Local authorities cut off all Ukrainian television stations and replace them with Russian stations. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

March 13, 2014

Ukraine's parliament votes to create a sixty-thousandstrong National Guard.

Russia: Russia's Defense Ministry announces that military exercises involving thousands of troops in regions bordering Ukraine will continue through the end of March. **Type of Action:** Military Strategic Deterrence Measures

March 15, 2014

The Ukrainian parliament votes to dissolve the Crimean regional assembly, citing its efforts to organize the secessionist referendum and supporting union with Russia.

Ukraine: Pro-Kiev and pro-Russian protesters in Donetsk clash in violence that leaves one dead and at least another dozen injured. **Type of Action:** Actions of Opposition Forces, Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Russia: Moscow vetoes a draft UN resolution criticizing Crimea's referendum on secession. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Crimea: The new Crimean prime minister assumes sole control over interior ministry, armed forces, fleet and border guards "on a temporary basis," demanding all commanders obey only his orders and instructions and that "all those who refuse to do so" resign. **Type of Action:** Change in Military-Political Leadership **Russia:** Russian forces seize a gas distribution station outside Crimea. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations, Economic Sanctions

March 16, 2014

Crimea: Crimea votes to join Russia. **Type of Action:**
Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict

March 17, 2014

Crimea: Crimean officials issue a formal appeal to
Moscow "to accept the Republic of Crimea into the Russian Federation as a new subject with the status of a republic." **Type of Action:** Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict, Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Russia: Russia recognizes Crimea as a sovereign state.

Type of Action: Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict, Political and Diplomatic Pressure

March 18, 2014

Russia: Putin and Crimean leaders sign Initial Reunification Treaty. **Type of Action:** Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict, Political and Diplomatic Pressure

March 19, 2014

Ukraine tells its soldiers in Crimea to use their weapons to protect themselves, replacing previous orders to avoid violence.

Ukraine: Ukraine's prime minister sends the first deputy prime minister and defense minister to Crimea, but the trip is canceled after the Crimean prime minister stated that they "are not welcome." **Type of Action:** Break in Diplomatic Relations

Crimea: Pro-Russian protesters and Russian military storm Ukraine's naval headquarters in Sevastopol and arrest Ukraine's commander of the navy and capture a second navy base. **Type of Action:** Actions of Opposition Forces, Conduct Military Operations, Change in Military-Political Leadership

Ukraine: Ukraine announces troop withdrawal from Crimea and drops out of CIS. **Type of Action:** Break in Diplomatic Relations

March 21, 2014

Ukraine and the EU sign an Association Agreement.

Russia: Putin signs laws formally admitting Crimea into the Russian Federation. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure, Search for Ways to Resolve Conflict

March 22, 2014

Russia: Russian forces, aided by armed militia, seize the last military air base and arrest the Ukrainian air force commander to establish near total control of Crimea. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations, Actions of Opposition Forces, Change in MilitaryPolitical Leadership

Russia: At an air base in Belbek surrounded by protesters Russian forces issue an ultimatum to Ukrainian forces to surrender or be stormed. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations, Actions of Opposition Forces

Russia: Russian soldiers, tanks, APCs, helicopters, and planes mass on Ukraine's northeast borders. **Type of Action:** Strategic Deployment, Military Strategic Deterrence Measures

Russia: More than five thousand pro-Russian residents of Donetsk demonstrate in favor of holding a referendum on their region splitting off and following Crimea into Russia. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

March 23, 2014

Ukraine: Protests in eastern Ukraine intensify and extend from Donetsk to Kharkov, Lugansk, and Odessa. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

Russia: Russian forces systematically seize Ukrainian ships and military installations in Crimea, including a naval base near the eastern Crimean port of Feodosia, where two wounded servicemen are taken captive and as many as

eighty are detained on-site. With the storming of at least three military facilities over the past three days alone, it is not clear how many Ukrainian troops remain on the peninsula. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

Russia: Russia's defense ministry says that its flag is now flying over 189 Ukrainian military installations on the peninsula. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

Russia: Russia has amassed a large military force on Ukraine's eastern border and warns that Moldova's separatist Trans-Dniester region could be the Kremlin's next target. **Type of Action:** Strategic Deployment

Russia: Over the weekend the last Crimean airbase in Ukrainian hands falls to Russian forces after a dramatic onslaught. An APC bursts through the main gate of Belbek airbase near the administrative capital of Simferopol. Two more Russian APCs followed and gunmen fired weapons into the air and threw stun grenades. Russian troops capture the base commander, Yuri Mamchur. Ukraine's acting president Oleksandr Turchynov demands the release of Mamchur—the head of the Ukraine air force's 204th tactical aviation brigade. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations

March 24, 2014

Ukrainian troops leave Crimea.

Russia: Russian troops seize a Ukrainian naval base at Feodosia in Crimea and arrest officers. **Type of Action:** Conduct Military Operations, Change in Military-Political Leadership

March 29, 2014

Russia: Russian foreign minister claims Russia has no plans to invade Ukraine. **Type of Action:** Information Warfare

Russia: Russian diplomats threaten representatives of former Soviet states and others around the world with retaliatory measures ahead of a UN General Assembly vote on the legitimacy of the referendum in Crimea. **Type of Action:** Political and Diplomatic Pressure

March 31, 2014

Beginning of Restoration of Peace Phase

Russia: Putin orders a "partial withdrawal" of troops from the border with Ukraine. **Type of Action:** Comprehensive Measures to Reduce Tensions

Russia: Russia's prime minister visits Crimea to hold a government meeting on the socioeconomic development of the peninsula. **Type of Action:** Comprehensive Measures to Reduce Tensions