

Russian Delegation Position Paper

Introduction:

The Russian Federation looks forward to the discussions to come over the next few days. The current social, political, and financial struggles throughout Eastern Europe reflect a shift in relations in the region. The Russian Federation looks forward to cementing friendships built over decades and fostering fresh discussions on terrorism, economics, and energy. Finally, the Russian Federation hopes that all delegations elect to rise above sensationalist accusations. Finger-pointing is the bane of genuine efforts to problem solve.

Key Points:

- 1) Terror and Social Upheaval in Border Regions
- 2) Preserving Economic Integrity when Faced with Sanctions
- 3) Production and Distribution of Energy in Eastern Europe and Beyond
- 4) Violent Rebellion and Threats to Social Order
- 5) Illegal Immigration and the Proliferation of Migrant Labor
- 6) Fortifying Spiritual and Family Values
- 7) Drafting Policies to Ensure a Better Fiscal Future for the Russian Population

Background:

Russia is diverse in every sense of the word. The Eurasian nation is a compilation of countless ethnic and religious groups. It is a nation plagued by a deep (and ever growing) socioeconomic divide between the urban core and sprawling rural communities. Unsurprisingly, the relationship between these contrasting sectors of the population is frequently quite fractious. Thus, the Kremlin has in place a very efficient (read: violent and unforgiving) security apparatus in place to keep the country in balance.

The Armed Forces of the Russian Federation directly employs roughly a million persons and indirectly supports millions more. As Americans know quite well, the Russians have nuclear capacities. The Russians have the third largest budget for military expenditures in the world,

trailing only the Americans and the Chinese. The Armed Forces are in many ways the backbone of the vast nation; the annual Victory Parade through downtown Moscow showcases the might of the country's security detail to a global audience. The entrenched hierarchy of powers within the military mirrors that of the nation: the few at the top have limitless authority while the majority at the bottom are foot soldiers executing another man's dream.

In 1991, Russia officially left the Soviet Union. In an effort to cement this dissociation, the Russian Federation assumed the Soviet Union's role on the United Nations Security Council in 1992. However, peace was a fleeting notion in the post-USSR ecosystem; a series of internal wars began in scale in 1993. Russia moved from the rule of the Soviet Union to the Yeltsin era. At the turn of the century, Vladimir Putin staked his claim as ruler of Russia. In 2002, Russia began a role in NATO's 19 country council against terrorism and other global security threats. In 2002, Russia worked with President Bush on an agreement to create a quota ceiling of nuclear arsenals. In the 2000s, the number of terrorist activity in Russia escalated sharply. Chechnya became an especially turbulent region. In the mid to late 2000s, Putin began to change Russia's policy agenda, breaking strict NATO rules and creating secret police forces to spy on nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in the country perceived to pose a potential threat to the Kremlin. In another move away from an earlier attempt at geopolitical peace, Russia began rebuilding its missile defenses in May of 2007. Although Putin directed much of Russia's development after Yeltsin's rule, he wasn't officially elected president until 2012. During his tenure, numerous opposition parties have staged protests and Russian has been embroiled in multiple international controversies.

Recent estimates conclude that the Russian Federation has a population of approximately 143.5 million people. The majority of these 143.5 million people speak Russian as their first and only language. Other minority languages spoken in Russia include, but are not limited to, Bashir, Chuvash, Ukrainian, and Chechen.

Russians are very proud of their motherland. Russian Folk Dance, and ballet are two very famous exports of the Russian cultural landscape. Many young women in Russia participate in ballet, but tough competition and high standards mean that very few make the professional cut.

Russians also maintain a great interest in sports. Their national basketball and ice hockey teams have both triumphed and won gold medals in the Olympics.

Russia has numerous patriotic songs and poems that praise their country. One explanation for Russians' fierce nationalistic pride is that no other population would be able to thrive in the midst of such a harsh, expansive, and perilous landscape. Russians are very friendly with each other; a light, joyful atmosphere is very common among the people.

Russia has a fairly advanced educational system. The country prides itself on a 99.7% literacy rate, which is high compared to many other countries. They have an eleven year educational program, excluding pre-school, kindergarten, and tertiary education (vocational and university education). The eleven year program is divided into elementary, middle, and senior classes. Less than 1% of all children attend a private secondary school. In the middle and senior systems, there is no choice of classes like there is in many Western countries. Russia has been relatively late to the standardized testing game, having established the Unified State Examination (USE) in 2003, which is an equivalent to the American SAT. The USE is offered in many subjects, but only the Russian language and mathematics portions are required to receive a

diploma. Russia has the highest tertiary education rate in the world: 54% of all Russians have attended university or vocational school. Surprisingly, Russia spends less than most countries on education. According to a 2008 statistic, 4.1% of the Russian Federation's GDP goes toward education each year. In comparison, the latest round of published statistics placed U.S. spending on education as 5.4% of GDP. In spite of this, Russia maintains a high academic standing in the global community. According to the Pearson/ Economist Intelligence Unit, Russian education is the 13th best in the world.

Russia has a long rap sheet of human rights abuses. Many archaic laws persist as a means to appease hardline religious factions and keep ultra-nationalist rabble-rousers in check. As a communist state, Russia systematically killed thousands and banned all free speech. Under Stalin, dissenters and Jews faced violent persecution.

Though Russia has left the most brutal injustices to the past, a legacy of terror and suppression remains palpable. Russia has instituted prejudicial policies against many minorities living in the nation. Russia has minimized the sovereignty of neighboring countries, and maintained firm rule over its population.

Russia is the second-largest producer of dry natural gas and the third-largest liquid fuels producer in the world. The country is also a major exporter and importer of oil and natural gasses. The Russian economy is highly dependent on energy exports and the EU buys a third of its gas from Russia, about half of which arrives through pipelines running across Ukraine.

Issues:

Committee on Sovereignty:

Following Russia's annexation of Crimea, many have wondered about Russia's stance on the sovereignty of post-Soviet states. Nations such as Latvia and Estonia fear Russian

encroachment on their sovereign territory. Specifically, they worry about their border zones with Russia. Several countries in Eastern Europe have already increased military funding to prepare for and hopefully ward off an invasion by the Russian Federation. Currently, it appears that Russia views sovereignty as guaranteed to its own borders, but not necessarily guaranteed to those of neighboring nations. It is disturbingly unclear how the borders of the post-Soviet states will be affected in the future.

The “shared history and pride” of Crimea and Russia was one of Putin’s main reasons for invading Crimea. In press conferences, he touted the fact that sixty percent of Crimea’s population is of Russian descent. The Russian President argues that the invasion of Crimea sought to protect the interests of these ethnic Russians. After weighing his options, Putin intervened in Ukraine’s affairs in part to prevent perceived abuses or crimes by the new Kiev government. The Ukrainian revolution coincided with an increased Western animosity of Russian involvement in the region. The fragile new government overthrew Viktor Yanukovich’s pro-Russian government, and is engaged in violent battle with pro-Russian anti-government rebels.

Russia is a federation, which is a form of government in which states reserve some sovereignty and rights under the national government. About 65.25% of Russians voted in the last presidential election, making their voter turnout relatively normal compared to Western standards. The results of these votes are highly contested. There are many reports that indicate unjust government intervention in these elections. By supposedly altering and influencing outcomes, the Kremlin has skewed results in their favor. The political engagement in the country is hindered by Russia’s immense lack of freedom. While there are organizations that act on behalf of human rights, the environment, labor, and anti-corruption, these organizations struggle

day in, day out to make an impact. Activists face intimidation, regular inspections, and countless other obstacles designed to lower the impact that they have on the actions of their government. The Russian government has even dissolved select non-governmental organizations, such as the prominent US-backed election-monitoring group Golos.

The situation in Ukraine has placed immense scrutiny on Russia, yet the Kremlin continues to exert control (direct and indirect) over their own population and those of bordering territories. Countries surrounding Ukraine continue to feel threatened thanks to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. It is hard to tell who will be the next target of Russian aggression. Russia retains its imperial view of sovereignty, making it unclear what changes to borders will come in the future.

Committee on Security:

The name of the ruling political party reflects the mission of the internal security operations of the authorities: United Russia. Much of the turbulence Westerners see splashed on the news media is the result of an attempt to ensure the "welfare" of ethnic Russians. The epicenter of subversive activity has historically been the North Caucasus, but terrorist activity has plagued all corners of the nation. The proliferation of violence in Chechnya and Dagestan stands in deep opposition to the anti-regional "unique Russian civilization" that Putin and his cronies argue for. The highly publicized, but unsolved deaths of prominent opposition figures Alexander Litvinenko and Anna Politkovskaya convey the brazen nature of the Federal Security Service (FSB) and sympathetic organized crime syndicates. The imprisonments of environmental activist Yevgeny Vitishko and business tycoon Mikhail Khodorkovsky speak to the tendency of the Russian legal system to rule on the side of the government even when evidence of wrongdoing is sparse or nonexistent. In summary, a breakdown of domestic concerns is as

follows: security with respect to ideological differences between ethnicities, generations, religions, socioeconomic groups.

Russian security forces also have a large role in the international spectrum. Vitaly Churkin and the rest of the Russian delegation to the United Nations have stalled and prevented many efforts of the Security Council. In recent years, the Border Service of Russia has replaced much of their antiquated surveillance equipment with the latest in video and automotive design. This is in concordance with a popular campaign to regulate the use of immigrant labor. In more remote corners of the planet, the country's forces have worked to protect Russian business interests. In the energy sector, this recently took the form of the coastguard seizing the vessel of and incarcerating [anti-Gazprom Greenpeace activists](#) in what were allegedly international waters. However, the most contentious Russian security activity takes place in the ex-Soviet nations. More specifically, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs use all resources at its disposal to protect the interests of Russian-speakers in border states such as Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Belarus, Ukraine, Georgia, and Azerbaijan. The Russian government capitalizes on domestic tension in nearby nations to further its own agenda. Experts and academics argue that Russian spies infiltrate into the highest offices of these governments. Whether it be covert disappearances of Estonian agents in border towns or overt land-grabs in Georgia, the signs of Russian influence in the region are inescapable. Even though the Kremlin denies direct involvement in Western Ukraine, the rebel forces are indeed fighting with the same heavy machinery used by the Russian armed services. No matter the eventual outcome of the Ukrainian violence, Putin will spin the insurrection as a win¹. He can point to the successful annexation of Crimea last spring or the fact that the latest

¹ Western nations will point to the collapse of the ruble as an indication of the opposite

rounds of peace talks took place in his backyard in Minsk as signs that Eastern Europe dictates the terms and conditions rather than Western Europe.

In keeping with many fellow geopolitical powerhouses, the Russians deny official involvement in cyber activity. In other words, they don't claim responsibility for hacking activity. However, reports from Russian exiles and well-respected investigative journalists make a compelling argument that the Kremlin disseminates propaganda, engages in denial-of-service attacks, and provides financial support to hacking collectives like APT28.

Committee on Terrorism:

Russia is often considered a perpetrator of terrorism, not a victim of it. However, there is a huge domestic terror threat in this unstable Federation. According to the Maryland-based National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism's Global Terrorism Database, the number of terrorist acts in Russia has risen six-fold since 199². The terrorist acts have declined after a spike in 2010, but there is no indication that this downward trend will continue. Russia has seen similar short-term spikes and drops before, but in the long-term the upward trajectory persists. The majority of terrorist acts occur in Moscow or on the Russian border with Georgia and Azerbaijan. There has been a rise in the number of bombings and the use of firearms as a weapon since 2007. Many of these attacks have less than ten fatalities, but others have resulted in over one hundred deaths.

Often considered to be one of Russia's worst terrorist attacks, the Beslan school hostage crisis occurred in 2004 and involved the capture of 1,100 people as hostages including 777 children. The hostage-takers, Islamic separatist militants from Chechnya, killed at least 385

² pre-1991 data from the Soviet authorities is widely understood to be unreliable

hostages, making this the most deadly terrorist attack in Russia's recent history. Jihadist groups are one of the main sources of terrorism in Russia. Beyond Russia, these extremists have a vendetta against the governments of the United States, France, the United Kingdom, and Israel, to name a few. Most domestic terrorist attacks occur on Russia's border with Georgia and Azerbaijan since this is where these violent terror cells draw their greatest support. The First and Second Chechen Wars were fought to refute Islamic separatists' desire to separate Chechnya, a Russian republic, from Russia. Russia ultimately retained Chechnya, but many terrorist attacks continue to be committed there.

As is only natural, Russia has taken steps to institute counterterrorism policies after these cruel attacks. These policies are largely regarded as harsh but necessary and include the military, intelligence, judicial, and law enforcement agencies of Russia. The Beslan school hostage crisis brought light to flaws in the Kremlin's counterterrorism policies and pushed the government to make changes. One major change was the institution of the National Anti-terrorism Committee (NAK) in 2006. The director of the FSB (Russia's equivalent to the FBI) said that the committee would deal not only with "fighting terrorism, but on preventing it, confronting it, and liquidating its consequences." Both the NAK and the FSB were successful in preventing terrorist attacks at the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics.

Committee on Human Rights:

The Russian government is responsible for many violations of human rights. While freedom of expression is generally protected, insulting religion or anti-Nazi organizations would incur legal consequences. Russia censures organizations that receive funding from international sources, and tolerates no criticism of its political power. Dissenters are often sentenced to long prison terms.

Russia is infamous for its poor treatment of sexual minorities, and gangs often beat and harass those whom they perceive to be part of those minorities. While the disabled have received governmental aid, those experiencing severe pain are denied relief due to restrictive laws.

The European Court of Human Rights has found the nation guilty of over 200 violations of human rights in Chechnya, and in its preparation for the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics, Russia failed to ensure full payment to migrant workers and evicted roughly 2,000 people from their homes.

To countless concerned onlookers, Russia does not sufficiently back international entities devoted to peace. With this in mind, it must be noted that the Russians supported Bashar al-Assad's Syrian government until its use of chemical weapons.

Human rights are consistently violated in Russia. A blind eye is often turned to horrible offenses; it is a nation largely without concern for any agenda but its own. Russia must be found liable for the injustices it has supported, and the world must continue to watch Russia for abuses of power.

Committee on Economics:

The Russian economy has changed drastically since the downfall of the Soviet Union, moving from a more isolated and secluded market to a widespread and international market. Russia's economy is mainly based on the production and distribution of energy. The Russian Federation is one of the lead producers of natural gas and oil in the world. It is also one of the main exporters of a myriad of metals. Partly due to this dependence on energy revenue, the Russian economy often exists in fragile equilibrium. Indeed, Russia's economy is extremely vulnerable due to the fact the main money flow comes from energy exports. In the late 2000's, specifically the years 2008-2009, oil prices plummeted causing many problems with

banks in Russia. Seeing these oil prices continue to drop, the government has lowered forecasts for economic growth.

The Ukraine crisis has brought with it many problems for the Russian economy. An endless tide of economic and trade sanctions has resulted from perceived Russian aggression throughout the Baltics and the rest of Eastern Europe. Recent devaluations in the ruble have the potential to further exacerbate tension and isolate the Russian federation from the outside world. Nevertheless, even in the face of these challenges, Russia knows that many Western European nations depend on Russian energy.

Committee on Energy:

Lately, a global drop in oil prices has been an unfortunate reality for Russia. Oil is widely accepted as the benchmark point of energy. If the price of oil drops then the price of natural gas will drop as these two products compete with each other. When this happens, the entire Russian economy is hurt because more than 50 percent of their economy relies on natural gas. The value of their currency has greatly decreased as their economy has faltered. Oil has slid from a high of \$110 a barrel during the first half of 2014 to below \$50 a barrel. Natural gas has fallen from slightly above \$6 to slightly below \$3 (dollars MMBtu) in last twelve months. Ultimately, this has caused real incomes to decline for the first time since Putin came to power in 2000. The Kremlin hopes to ride out the crisis. Fortunately, the government was able to stimulate demand by increasing public spending and saving indebted firms, however this is no longer an option. Russia's reserves are lower than they were four years ago and, according to some estimates, may last only for a year and a half at best.

Faced with capital outflows and falling oil prices and plagued by a lack of access to foreign markets and its own demographic problems, Russia is unlikely to come out of this crisis

fast. Its economy cannot be repaired by monetary or fiscal policy efforts. The problem is compounded by weak institutions meant to alleviate such financial stress. Russia's only way out now is to restructure its economy in order to restore the role of markets. Obviously, this is easier said than done.

Russia needs to reverse the recession to keep its budget in balance. They also need to diversify their economy. By exporting goods and services other than gas, maybe steel, they will be able to generate more revenue, but investing more in the steel industry may be extremely difficult. The quality and cost may not be able to compete with China and the United States of America. Also, due to economic sanctions, imports into Europe and the US would meet high tariffs. For Russia to create long-term financial stability, Putin also needs to discourage the large amount of corruption in its economy and encourage a free market system. This will create entrepreneurs who will help Russia diversify its economy in new areas to become more competitive globally. Again, this is a solution fraught with highly entrenched obstacles.

Another suggestion for Russia right now is to start exchanging more with China. There are no sanctions between the two countries and they are still friendly, China has not joined with the west. China is also the largest population in the world and partly borders the Eastern fringes of the Russian federation.

Russia wants to continue to be seen as a world power and thus wants to protect its influence over the Ukraine. The Ukraine political process has historically been influenced by the country's relations with Russia. Putin has used energy as a source of coercion to gain control over Ukraine. Putin has cut off Russian gas for Ukraine unless the country pays in advance for all its supplies. In the process, Putin to reap financial returns and fragment Ukraine's

government. Russia is extremely concerned that the Ukraine will follow the path of fellow ex-Soviet nations and join the EU. If the Ukraine were to join the EU, Russia's mission to maintain control over that region would be dealt a great (potentially fatal) blow

Also, for other strategic reasons, Russia needs to maintain access to Black Sea from its ports near Crimea. This is a strategic southern access point for their navy and provides sea access for exporting goods to Europe and Africa. This is one of the principal reasons why Russia annexed Crimea and fueled unrest in Eastern Ukraine. No other water access is as strategically important to them at this point in time. The Baltic Sea in the north is very important, but access to that sea is not threatened. Russia also maintains access to the Caspian Sea and the Arctic Sea, but these are *currently* less useful economically although they have military significance. The Arctic Sea borders northern Russia but freezes six months out of the year, thus not being an attractive point for exports. In the context of our discussion, the Caspian Sea is less useful for Russia because it provides access to the Middle East, a region already rich in oil and gas. At its eastern border, Russia has full access to the Pacific Ocean. Yet, the country's economy is largely located in Western Russia. Thus, moving goods in that direction is both difficult and inefficient since it would require crossing Siberia. This shipping is mostly done by rail or by air. For these reasons, annexing Crimea and maintaining access to the Black Sea was a strategic move made by Putin that often gets lost in the media's coverage of events.

Russia is a country with internal and external problems. Their one main natural resource, gas, is one of the few exports keeping their country afloat financially. Many countries depend on Russia for their natural resources. Russia's desire to maintain global political strength is causing it to take actions that are hurting its financial well-being. Once it recognizes that it must

diversify and compete in the market economy, it will commit to a path to long-term financial stability.

Committee on Ukraine:

It is evident that Russia's seizure of Crimea has shaken up the diplomatic world. Not only has the Ukraine and the West claimed that Russia's actions are illegal, but Putin has continued to believe that the fight he is orchestrating rightly protects ethnic Russians living in Ukraine.

Former USSR satellite countries, such as Lithuania and its Baltic neighbors, fear that they will become the next Crimea.

Vladimir Putin believes that his actions towards Eastern Ukraine and Crimea are justified because Russia has a right to protect Russian populations. However, the debate over who is technically an "ethnic Russian" is increasingly ambiguous. One primary reason it is up for debate stems from the recent acceptance of intermarriage between ethnic groups, making classification difficult.

Crimea was a part of Russia until 1954 when Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev "gave" Ukraine the territory. While Crimea has its own parliament and government, its legislation is Ukrainian. It is also a well-established fact that Crimea is geographically located on a pivotal plot of land on the Baltic Sea. Russia most definitely views Crimea as an optimal naval position. As sanctions pile up against Russia and a second ceasefire is attempted with Ukraine, Russia hopes to cement its dominance in the region and perhaps capitalize on more territory.

Five Issues:

- 1) Restoring the Russian Economy in the Face of Western Aggression
- 2) Acknowledging the Will of Warring Factions in the Drafting of Peace Measures in the Ukraine
- 3) Evolving Practices in the Energy Industry in the Midst of Falling Oil Prices
- 4) Recognizing and Protecting Russia Against the Risks Posed by Corruption and Domestic Terror
- 5) Border Security and Strengthening Alliances in Surrounding Region