

War in Ukraine: A Crisis between NATO and RUSSIA

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ABSTRACT

War in Ukraine, when it broke up was between the Government and the separatist. This due to the fact that Yanukovich, the then President of Ukraine refuse to endorse the close relationship between Ukraine and European Union (EU). Russia annexed Crimea and also accused of instigating the pro Russian separatist in Donbas region. Cause of the war is said to be NATO and Russia an agreement in Berlin Germany before unification of Germany that NATO should not expand to the Eastern Europe but NATO citing that there were no written document to confirm that. Russia became furious and to retaliate it had to do what it did. The war became not between pro-Russian separatists versus Government but became proxy between Russia and NATO. The war that is going on made to Russia banks on EU and NATO close that to become a member of these organizations you must be clear of boundary dispute. Then Russia was hit with damaging economic sanctions by the West. For most of its existence, Ukraine has been a part of Russia, separating itself as an independent nation only in 1991, when the Soviet Union disintegrated. One thing for sure, Russia is the dominant power in Eastern Europe, and no solution to the current crisis can realistically emerge unless Russia and Ukraine work out an acceptable modus Vivendi between them.

I. INTRODUCTION

Crisis in Ukraine began on 21 November 2013, when then-president Viktor Yanukovich suspended preparations for the implementation of an association agreement with the European Union. This decision resulted in mass protests by its opponents, known as the “Euro-maidan”. After months of such protests, Yanukovich was ousted by the protesters on 22 February 2014, when he fled the Ukrainian capital city of Kiev. Following his ousting, unrest enveloped the largely Russian speakers of eastern and southern regions of Ukraine, from where he had drawn most of his support. An invasion and annexation of autonomous region of Crimea by Russia in Ukrainian on 18 March, subsequently, unrest in Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine evolved into a war between the post-revolutionary Ukrainian government and pro-Russian insurgents.

The Ukraine republic was a sovereign Soviet socialist state and one of the fifteen constituent republics of the Soviet Union from its inception in 1922 to its breakup in 1991. Throughout its 72-year history, the republic's borders changed many times, with a significant portion of what is now Western Ukraine being annexed by Soviet forces in 1939 from the Polish republic, and the addition of formerly Russian Crimea is given to Ukraine Soviet Republic in 1954 from Russia. However, in 1934, the seat of government was subsequently moved to the city of Kiev, from Kharikov, which remained the capital of newly independent Ukraine.

Geographically, Ukraine situated in Eastern Europe to the north of the Black Sea, bordered by the Soviet republics of Moldova, Belorussia, and Russia. The Soviet Ukraine's border with Czechoslovakia formed the Soviet Union's western-most border point. Throughout the Soviet Ukraine's history, other national subdivisions were established in the republic, before finally being reorganized into their present structure as regions.



The territory of modern Ukraine has been inhabited since 32,000 BC. During the Middle Ages, the area was a key centre of East Slavic culture, with the powerful state of Kievan Rus forming the basis of Ukrainian identity. Two brief periods of independence occurred during the 20th century, once near the end of world war I and another during World War II, but both occasions would ultimately see Ukraine's territories conquered and consolidated into a Soviet Republic, a situation that persisted until 1991.

Following independence, Ukraine declared itself a neutral state, but nonetheless formed a limited military partnership with the Russian Federation, and other Commonwealth of Independent States countries (CIS) and a partnership with NATO since 1994 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ukraine-NATO_relations). In the 2000s, the government began leaning towards NATO, and a deeper cooperation with the alliance was set by the NATO-Ukraine Action Plan signed in 2002. It was later agreed that the question of joining NATO should be answered by a national referendum at some point in the future. Deposed President Viktor Yanukovich considered the current level of co-operation between Ukraine and NATO sufficient, and was against Ukraine joining NATO.

II. HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Ukraine was part of the Soviet Union until 1991 and before that it had no independence of its own, was part of the Soviet Union and since then has been a less than perfect democracy with a very weak economy and foreign policy that was divided between the pro-Russian in the east and pro-European in the west. First and foremost Ukrainians wanted to join the European Union to ease their economic burdens. This all began as an internal Ukrainian crisis in November 2013, when President Viktor Yanukovich rejected the deal for greater integration with the European Union, sparking mass protest, which Yanukovich attempted to put down violently. Russia backed Yanukovich in the crisis, while the US and Europe supported the protesters.

Since then, several big things had happened. In February, 2014 anti-government protests toppled the government and ran Yanukovich out of the country. Russia, trying to salvage the situation in Ukraine, invaded and annexed Crimea March the same year. In April, pro-Russia separatist rebels began seizing territory in eastern Ukraine. This has all brought the relationship between Russia and the West to its lowest point since the Cold War. A lot of

this situation comes down to Ukraine's centuries-long history of Russian domination. The country has been divided more or less evenly between Ukrainians who see Ukraine as part of Europe and those who see it as intrinsically linked to Russia. Russia has constantly accused the West of political meddling in Ukraine. At first Moscow was keeping a keen low profile as far as its neighbor is concerned but it is clearly was pulling strings undergroundly. An internal political crisis over that disagreement may have been inevitable.

It was a history that created fault lines. Eastern Ukraine fell under Russian imperial rule by the late 17th century, much earlier than western Ukraine. This helps to explain why, after the fall of the Soviet Union, people in the east have generally supported more Russian leaning politicians while the Western Ukraine spent centuries under the shifting control of European powers like Poland and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, to some degree, this helps explain why people in the west have tended to support more Western-leaning politicians.

After the communist revolution of 1917, Ukraine was one of the many countries to suffer a brutal civil war before becoming a Soviet Republic in 1920s. In the early 1930s, forced peasants to join collective farms, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin orchestrated a famine that resulted in the starvation and death of millions of Ukrainians. Afterward, Stalin imported large numbers of Russians and other Soviet citizens many with no ability to speak Ukrainian and with few ties to the region to help repopulate the east. This, was said by former US Ambassador to Ukraine Steven Pifer, is just one of the historic reasons that helps explain why "the sense of Ukrainian nationalism is not as deep in the east as it is in west.

III. CRIMEA IS ANNEXED BY RUSSIA

International reactions to the early 2014 to the Russia annexation of Crimea have always been condemnatory to Russia's decision to intervene in Ukraine (International Business Times, 2014) instead of supporting Ukraine sovereignty and territorial integrity. The United States and the European Union (EU) threatened and later enacted sanction against Russia for its role in the crisis, and urged Russia to withdraw (Shimun, 2014). Russia has accused the United States and the EU of funding and directing the revolution (Press TV, 2014) and retaliated to the sanctions by imposing its own. European Union On 1 March, High Representative of The Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton stated that the E.U. "deplores" what it called Russia's decision to use military action in Ukraine, describing it, as an "unwarranted escalation of tensions." She called on "all sides to decrease the tensions immediately through dialogue, in full respect of Ukrainian and international law." She added that: "The unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine must be respected at all times and by all sides. Any violation of these principles is unacceptable. More than ever, restraint and sense of responsibility are needed." (The citizen, 20th Feb, 2014)

On the 2nd March 2014, Secretary General of NATO, Anders Fogh Rasmussen convened the North Atlantic Council due to what it called Russia's military action and President Vladimir Putin's alleged threats against Ukraine. The North Atlantic Council condemned what it called Russia's military escalation in Crimea and called it a breach of international law. It also called on Russia to respect its obligations under the UN, the Budapest Memorandum of 1994, the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between Russia and Ukraine of 1997 and the legal framework regulating the presence of the Russian Black Sea Fleet.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has accused Western powers of trying to dominate and impose their ideology on the rest of world, while the United States and European delegations slammed Moscow for supporting rebels in eastern Ukraine. Without accusing specific countries, Russian Foreign Minister, complained about what he said was rampant violation of key principles of the UN Charter, specifically the "independence and sovereign equality of states, the non-interference in their internal affairs", he cited Western interventions in Syria, Libya and Iraq. All of this is a result of attempts to dominate global affairs, to rule over all, everywhere" (Reuters, Feb 24th 2015). Russia's top diplomat also complained about unilateral sanctions not approved by the Security Council, such as those imposed on Moscow by the United States and Europe over its actions in Ukraine. Russia denies Western allegations that it is supporting and directing Ukraine's pro-Russian rebels.

The Autonomous Republic of Crimea was part of Ukraine only from 1954, formerly it was part of Russian territory, when for some administrative purposes the then General Secretary of Communist Party of the Soviet Union decided to give it to Ukraine. Regardless of ethnic Russians who constitute the two third majority of population of that area. Furthermore, the Sevastopol the capital of that Peninsular where the Russian Black Sea fleet is stationed, a few days ago before annexation Crimea to Russia, the non-government organization Sevastopol Coordination Committee published a declaration that Crimea might secede from Ukraine, were

there to be what they consider to be a coup in Kiev.

The strategic value of the Russian naval base in the Crimea is the equivalent of Pearl Harbor and the Panama Canal combined. The simple fact is that since Russian ejection of the Ottoman Turks from the Crimean Peninsula by Catherine the Great in 1783, the region has always been part of the Great Russian concept of the motherland and Russian language through Czarist times and including the first thirty-five years of incorporation in the USSR when it was NOT an administrative unit of the Ukraine. It was transferred by administrative order in 1954 by Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev, which was an act of cosmetic political farce designed purely to favor the Ukrainians by giving a generous help that would erase long memories of the terrible famines of the 1930s (largely caused by Stalin's policies) and the large degree of collaboration with the German invaders in World War II, thereby solidifying the "brotherhood" of the two peoples.

Russian President, on 18th March 2014 speech announcing the annexation of Crimea, arguing that Russia was forced to annex Crimea to forestall the possibility of Ukraine joining NATO, Putin asserted that the West "had lied to us many times. This happened with NATO's expansion to the East. Also NATO remains a military alliance. Putin reiterated that "I do not want to be welcomed in Sevastopol by NATO sailors"(en.kremlin.ru/presidents/news/20603). What does Putin mean when he asserts that NATO expansion broke a promise to Russia? With Ukraine's delicate cease-fire hanging in the balance, it is imperative that Western leaders understand the historical context that has driven Moscow's decision-making during the crisis.

Going back to Khrushchev incident, he was of mixed Russian and Ukrainian ancestry and was detested in the Ukraine as serving his Russian masters. His generosity was designed to pacify Ukrainian pride and promote his own image, his 1954 maneuver was even more of a total repudiation of the concept of respecting territorial integrity and self-determination than attempted by any Czar and loudly proclaimed today as "inviolable principles of international law." At that time, ethnic Russians were the majority of the population and had expressed no wish whatsoever to become part of the Soviet Ukraine. Almost nothing changed on the ground as a result of this move and Russian rather than Ukrainian continued for many years to be the major official language of the Crimea.

In the run up to the Ukrainian Crisis, the United Kingdom and the European Union catastrophically misread the situation in the region. When the EU politicians launched talks with Kiev on signing the key association deal with Brussels they actually failed to assess the depth of Russia's opposition to the plan. The lack of robust analytical capacity, in both UK and EU, effectively led to the catastrophically misreading of the mood in the run up to the crisis (The Citizens on Saturday 21st Feb. 2015)

In 1991 with the imminent collapse of the Soviet Union, it was widely expected that President Boris Yeltsin, the new president of the Russian Federation, would restore Crimea to Russia but Yeltsin didn't bring it up during negotiations with Ukraine. Had he insisted on retaining the Crimea then or making it subject to a referendum, it would have been very unlikely to become the source on international tension. Russia's annexation of Crimea has set the world in an uproar, but the issue was extremely complicated to begin with, and is constantly made even more so by provisions in several international treaties. What is clear however is that Russia has a vested interest in eastern and southern Ukraine and possibly beyond.

The tactics used here should not be news to anyone, since they are the same employed by the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in South America between the 1960s and the 1980s. Subversive activities continue in countries with socialist sympathies, and this is the well-defined role of the CIA. The FSB (Federal Bureau of Security) has similar attributions in Russia, but engages in numerous other types of activities as well. It seems, Russia will not shy away from facing NATO, the United States, or the European Union on the Crimean and Ukrainian issues. Russia will never allow NATO presence on its doorsteps. It is equally stupid of NATO forces to believe that Russia will ever allow itself to be cornered. An important thing to keep in mind is that Crimea has a very important strategic position for Russia. At the same time, it is widely considered to be one of cradles of the Russian people, so it's passing to Ukraine a few decades ago did not sit well with many Russians, and still doesn't sit well today. Former chief of the British intelligence service M16, John Sawers, has issued a warning against a buildup of pressure on the Russian President in connection with development in Ukraine (The Citizens, 18 Feb. 2015)

The Crimean Peninsula is tied to Ukraine via a land bridge. This is important because Russia now has the region,

but cannot access it without having to pass through southern Ukraine. A plan has already been announced in Moscow to build a large bridge at the narrowest point between Russia and Crimea. One of the reasons why Russia is interested access to Crimea at any time, one of them it could be to reduce Ukraine's influence in the Black Sea basin.

Many people have not heard of Transnistria (Prednystrovie) for sometimes. The heard about Transnistria during the war in Moldova, this is a breakaway state/territory located on the northeastern border of the Republic of Moldova. The latter borders Romania to the West, and Ukraine on all other sides. Transnistria broke away from Moldova in 1990. The reason why this is important around 1,200 troops of the former Soviet 14th Guards Army are still there. Russia made a commitment at the OSCE Summit held in Istanbul in 1999 to withdraw its troops from Transnistria. These soldiers played a pivotal role in the Moldovan-Transnistrian war of 1992, heavily tipping the balance in favor of the latter, and allowing the region to break away from Moldova. This enabled Russian presidents to use this area as leverage in their negotiations with the European Union. One of the most important conditions that a candidate country must adhere to in order to be allowed as a Member State of the EU is to have secured, well-defined and stable borders, since Transnistria is recognized as a state by exactly no one except Russia, its mere existence precludes the admission of both Moldova and Ukraine into the EU. The stake here is that Russia, and the Soviet Union before it, has traditionally held so-called buffer zones between its territory and that of NATO countries. Until the ousting of the former Ukrainian pro-Russian President, Viktor Yanukovich, this role was fulfilled by Ukraine and Belarus.

However, the former was contemplating entering talks with the EU, for signing various cooperation agreements that would have set the stage for the country's admission into the Union. This did not sit well at Moscow, since this would have been the very first step towards the neighboring state's admission into NATO. This was unacceptable to Russia, and everyone knew that. In a sense, Putin's annexation of Crimea was a warning issued to the West, a preemptive action of the same type the United States undertook to start wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Russian president essentially told the world that there will never be NATO vessels moored in Crimea. Land-locking Ukraine would prevent these potential ships from docking in any other port in the region. While the justification of keeping Russian ethnics safe works for the eastern parts of the country, the western provinces in Ukraine are mostly pro-West, and would never vote for unification with Russia in a referendum.

Therefore, in addition to keeping the EU from advancing eastwards through Moldova, Transnistria also keeps Ukraine in checks, and provides additional justifications for a Russian intervention in southern Ukraine (www.summer.harvard.edu/blog-news-events). What wants is Putin really interested in establishing a direct land corridor through this area, which would span parallel to the shores of the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea, all the way to Transnistria. An added effect of such a cut-off would be the separation of the Odessa region (or province) in two. The area is already heavily segmented by the eastern tip of the Republic of Moldova, and parts of Transnistria, but in the event of annexation of the latter, its southern half would be separated from the rest of Ukraine, and most likely taken by Russia. Ukrainian President, Petro Poroshenko has already announced his desire to secure a "special status" for Ukraine vis-a-vis NATO. But neither NATO membership nor any other privileged association with the alliance should be an option for Ukraine.

During 1990 in a number of meetings in Moscow, U.S, Soviet and West German leaders established the terms for German unification and the future of NATO. In conversations with Mikhail Gorbachev in Moscow on 9th Feb.1990, U.S. Secretary of State James Baker told the Soviet leader that if Germany joined NATO, "there would be no extension of NATO's jurisdiction one inch to the East." Gorbachev, according to his memoirs, replied that any expansion of the "zone of NATO" was not acceptable to the Soviets, a statement to which Gorbachev asserts that Baker agreed and stated that, "we agree with that all". German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher told Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze that "one thing is certain: NATO will not expand to the East".

Lastly there are a few things to consider in this "fight for democracy" and other market economy slogans:-

1. Ukraine will continue to depend on Russia for energy supplies so there's no way, currently, to be truly independent as both the current (East-friend) and previous (West-friend) governments have nearly bankrupted the country
2. EU agreement resembles the Economic Hitman-esque trade pact where country has to remove all barriers to multinational corporations taking over vital industries and resources.

3. People are naive if they think this agreement will allow Ukraine to prosper as an equal partner in the EU. It is sad situation and a struggle between two corrupt fractions in the country, nothing more. It seems, whichever way they go, the people of Ukraine will suffer.

IV. SANCTION AGAINST RUSSIA

For annexing Crimea the United States has declared its list of sanctions against Russia, adding the country's biggest bank Sberbank, and energy companies, some of them privately owned. The energy companies are Gazprom, Lukoil, Surgutneftegas, and Transneft, The Russian oil giant, Rosneft and the independent gas producer Novatek are also in the list the Treasury department said in a statement.

Five state-owned defense and high-tech corporations were included in the sanctions. Among other measures, Russia banned exports of services and equipment for Russian energy companies. Finance Minister Anton Siluanov told journalists. "We agreed that we can additionally reconsider the structure of the investments and redistribute some of the money within the 60 percent share to major companies that have lost foreign borrowing markets. This concerns primarily Rosneft and Novatek," he said. Both companies appealed to the government for financial support to compensate for the foreign sources of financing. Further, NATO members are also part of the overall economic and political response, including the EU, which includes the imposition of economic sanctions against Russia.

V. EUROPE WHOLE, FREE AND AT PEACE

NATO rapidly did two other things. It convened a meeting of its NATO-Ukraine Council, set up in 1997 when NATO took in its first new members after the end of the Cold War (Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic) but knew it could not take in Ukraine, for two reasons: the mixed-up nature of its society and the fact that Ukrainian membership in NATO, at least then, would have been a major poke in the Russian's eye at the very time when there was a desire to try moving Russia into the modern, post-Cold War age, with participation in Western practices and institutions. Thus, under provisions of the NATO-Ukraine Distinctive Partnership, allied and Ukrainian representatives met at NATO headquarters early in the crisis.

Wisely, NATO also convened, with Russian concurrence, another special arrangement, the NATO-Russia Council, first set up in 1997 (as the Permanent Joint Council) under the NATO-Russia Founding Act and later augmented. This provides for 19 or so areas in which NATO and Russia should try to work together; and it also provides for meetings at which all 29 countries (Russia plus the 28 NATO allies) can consult together as equals. The said meeting didn't make any progress, but at least the Russian ambassador showed up, which seemed to indicate, at least, that Russia is not closing all doors.

But what more can NATO do? Not much, other than for the allies to hold together, politically, and show that they can't be picked apart by Russia. But there are some things it should not do. One idea has been to move rapidly to bring Ukraine into NATO. That would just make matters worse and would only be appropriate and maybe not even then – if everyone later concludes that Cold War II and a return to major East-West confrontation is inevitable which as of now it clearly is not and should be avoided if at all possible.

It doesn't matter that Crimea is properly Russian, but was presented by Nikita Khrushchev to his native Ukraine in 1954. The most important ones were agreed upon in the 1975 Helsinki Final Act and in the so-called Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances of December 1994, under which Ukraine agreed to send to Russia the masses of nuclear weapons that just happened to be on Ukrainian soil when the Soviet Union broke up.

One element of a solution to the current crisis is of course to repair to the various documents that have already been agreed by the US, Russia, Ukraine, NATO, and other Europeans. Another they were premised on President George H.W. Bush's concept of trying to build a post-Cold War "Europe whole and free" and at peace. The concept had many elements, including taking Central

VI. NATO EXPANSION ON THE EAST IS IT NECESSARY?

NATO took in many countries beyond those the three Baltic States that truly needed reassurance. And the West took some other steps that predictably pushed Russia away. The West created a separate state in Kosovo after the defeat of Serbia's ethnic cleansing there – a step very much like what Putin is trying to do in Crimea, a point the Russians regularly make. The United States has been seeking to put missile defences in Central Europe even

though they would not be needed for years, if ever, and they are seen in Moscow as the West's demonstrating that Russia is powerless to prevent it. (The United States government has never been prepared to take Moscow's concerns seriously).

So NATO and particular the United States have also not had "clean hands". It is time, therefore, for all to take a deep breath, step back, depressurize, stop the hyperbolic rhetoric, tell all parties in Ukraine to stop the pull to the West by one group and the pull to the East by another, pump money from both the EU and Russia into Ukraine as a whole, and renew the old NATO and EU efforts to build a Europe whole and free and at peace.

The Cold War is over since 1991 is it necessary to have alliances? there was a debate in NATO about continued expansion eastward. Dispute arise that there was a deal between the West and Russia that NATO will not expand even an inch to the east. Western official denied that it was an implication but no written deal that NATO will not expand to the east. In 1999, Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic joined the organization, amid much debate within the organization and Russian opposition. Another expansion came with the accession of seven Central and Eastern European, countries: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Bulgaria, and Romania, which joined NATO on 29 March 2004. Then Albania and Croatia joined on 1 April 2009.

To join the European Union (EU), a state needs to fulfill economic and political conditions called the Copenhagen criteria after the summit in June 1993, which require a stable democratic government that respects the rule of law, and its corresponding freedoms and institutions. According to the Maastricht Treaty, each current member state and the European Parliament must agree to any enlargement.

"Russian President by the Dmitry Medvedev has accused the West of breaking promises made after the fall of the Iron Curtain, saying that NATO's expansion into Eastern Europe violated commitments made during the negotiations over German reunification. Newly discovered documents from Western archives support the Russian position (Spiegel November 2012).

In an interview with at his residence outside Moscow in early November 2012, President Dmitry Medvedev complained that when the Berlin Wall came down, it had "not been possible to redefine Russia's place in Europe." What did Russia get? "None of the things that we were assured, namely that NATO would not expand endlessly eastwards and our interests would be continuously taken into consideration". According to the prevailing wisdom in the West, the Ukraine crisis can be blamed almost entirely on Russian aggression. Russian President Vladimir Putin, the argument goes, annexed Crimea out of a long-standing desire to resuscitate the Soviet empire, and he may eventually go after the rest of Ukraine, as well as other countries in eastern Europe. In this view, the ouster of Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich in February 2014 merely provided a pretext for Putin's decision to order Russian forces to seize part of Ukraine.

But the United States and its European allies share most of the responsibility for the crisis. The taproot of the trouble is NATO expansion, the central element of a larger strategy to move Ukraine out of Russia's orbit and integrate it into the West. At the same time, the EU's expansion eastward and the West's backing of the pro-democracy movement in Ukraine -- beginning with the Orange Revolution in 2004 were critical elements, too. Since the mid-1990s, Russian leaders have adamantly opposed NATO expansion, and in recent years, they have made it clear that they would not stand by while their strategically important neighbor turned into a Western bastion. For Putin, the illegal overthrow of Ukraine's democratically elected and pro-Russian president which he rightly labeled a "coup" was the final straw. He responded by taking Crimea, a peninsula he feared would host a NATO naval base, and working to destabilize Ukraine until it abandoned its efforts to join the West.

Putin's pushback should have come as no surprise. After all, the West had been moving into Russia's backyard and threatening its core strategic interests, a point Putin made emphatically and repeatedly. Elites in the United States and Europe have been blindsided by events only because they subscribe to a *flawed view of international politics*. They tend to believe that the logic of realism holds little relevance in the twenty-first century and that Europe can be kept whole and free on the basis of such liberal principles as the rule of law, economic interdependence, and democracy.

VII. WHY NO MILITARY INTERVENTION

The interim prime minister of Ukraine was in Washington, and according to the *New York Times*, he was asking just one thing of U.S. leaders, he said as a signatory to a 1994 treaty guaranteeing the security of Ukraine, America "must defend our independent, sovereign state." Some members of Congress sound like they agree,

especially Republicans who are using Washington's slow response to Russian occupation of the Crimea as the latest evidence that President Obama is weak when it comes to dealing with America's enemies. If Obama looks weak, it is mainly because he sees the danger of decisive action in a place that matters far more to Russia than America. Over the last two decades, the United States has gotten used to fighting enemies with modest military capabilities and crackpot leaders, but Russia is a much more imposing player. If Washington somehow stumbled into a military confrontation with Moscow, the U.S. would probably lose and in the process run huge risks to its larger interests. Most Americans seem to understand this a CNN poll this week found three-quarters of respondents opposed to even giving military aid to Kiev, with far fewer backing use of U.S. forces. Nonetheless, some hardliners seem to think America's military might play a role in forcing Russian leader Vladimir Putin to back away from what they see as a return to the expansionist foreign policies of the Cold War era.

One thing for sure, Russia has reiterated not to seek for the lift of sanctions with told EU. Russian envoy Vladimir Chizov, TASS (Russian News Agency) that, "Russia has not conducted with EU talks over lifting of sanction and it has no intention of doing so. The European Union has created this problem on its own and it is up to them to resolve it (The Citizen, 24th Feb. 2015).

In his memoir "After Kremlin" released by the Russian Publishing house "Ves Mir" in 2014 Mikhail Gorbachev's in it, the former Soviet leader says most modern problems in international politics, in particular the Ukrainian crisis, are rooted in the hasty and thoughtless breakup of the USSR. He also wrote that a peaceful outcome could only be reached if Russia and the US resume dialogue (Gorbachev, 2014).

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