

## Crimea after the Georgian Crisis

Following the Georgian Crisis, there was frequent speculation in the international media about the Ukrainian peninsula of Crimea as the next likely target of Russian military intervention. Logic suggests that Crimea, the only region in Ukraine with an ethnic Russian majority, with its historical links to Russia and contested affiliation to Ukraine, and with its Hero City Sevastopol (the base of the Russian Black Sea Fleet), would be an easy target for the Kremlin's neo-imperialist policy.

This report aims to compare the situation around Crimea with that regarding South Ossetia and Abkhazia, which led to the Georgian Crisis. The main objective is to identify similarities and differences concerning both the situation on the ground and Russia's policy towards the regions, in order to determine whether a military scenario for Crimea is impossible, possible or even likely.

For a study (in Swedish) on the Georgian Crisis and its consequences, see **Larsson, Robert L., et al.** *Det kaukasiska lackmustestet: Konsekvenser och lärdomar av det rysk-georgiska kriget i augusti 2008*, FOI-R--2563--SE, september 2008.

Front cover photo: The chief of the Russian Black Sea Fleet and the Chief of the Ukrainian Marine jointly celebrate the 60th Anniversary of Victory Day, 9 May 2005, © Jakob Hedenskog (2005)



## Crimea After the Georgian Crisis

JAKOB HEDENSKOG

Crimea after the Georgian Crisis  
Jakob Hedenskog



FOI, Swedish Defence Research Agency, is a mainly assignment-funded agency under the Ministry of Defence. The core activities are research, method and technology development, as well as studies conducted in the interests of Swedish defence and the safety and security of society. The organisation employs approximately 1000 personnel of whom about 800 are scientists. This makes FOI Sweden's largest research institute. FOI gives its customers access to leading-edge expertise in a large number of fields such as security policy studies, defence and security related analyses, the assessment of various types of threat, systems for control and management of crises, protection against and management of hazardous substances, IT security and the potential offered by new sensors.



FOI  
Swedish Defence Research Agency  
Defence Analysis  
SE-164 90 Stockholm

Phone: +46 8 55 50 30 00  
Fax: +46 8 55 50 31 00

[www.foi.se](http://www.foi.se)

FOI-R--2587--SE  
ISSN 1650-1942

User report  
November 2008

**Defence Analysis**

Jakob Hedenskog

# Crimea

After the Georgian Crisis

Titel	Krim efter Georgienkrisen
Title	Crimea after the Georgian Crisis
Rapportnr/Report no	FOI-R--2587--SE
Rapporttyp Report Type	Användarrapport User report
Månad/Month	November
Utgivningsår/Year	2008
Antal sidor/Pages	71 p
ISSN	ISSN 1650-1942
Kund/Customer	Utrikesdepartementet/Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Forskningsområde Programme area	1. Analys av säkerhet och sårbarhet 1. Security, safety and vulnerability analysis
Delområde Subcategory	11 Forskning för regeringens behov 11 Policy Support to the Government
Projektnr/Project no	B 12503
Godkänd av/Approved by	Eva Mittermaier
FOI, Totalförsvarets Forskningsinstitut Avdelningen för Försvarsanalys	FOI, Swedish Defence Research Agency Division of Defence Analysis
164 90 Stockholm	SE-164 90 Stockholm

## Sammanfattning

Rysslands krig mot Georgien utgjorde en bitter påminnelse för dem som hade glömt att militära medel fortfarande existerar som verktyg i Rysslands utrikespolitik. Medan Krim inte för egen del löper någon stor risk att utgöra nästa måltavla, vilket det spekulerades om i internationell media omedelbart efter Georgienkrisen, finns det emellertid flera allvarliga problem där:

För det första är Rysslands inflytande över Krim redan mycket högt beroende på den ryska Svartahavsmarinens närvaro, den ryska dominansen i media och det utbredda stödet för den ryska politiken bland de etniska ryssarna som utgör majoriteten på Krim.

För det andra finns det en allvarlig potential för en etnisk konflikt mellan ryska extrema nationalisterna och desillusionerade krimtatariska unga män. Även om konfliktpotentialen inte i sig är tillräckligt stark för att kunna tända en allvarlig etnisk konflikt, utgör den ändå en svaghet som kan exploateras av Ryssland.

För det tredje saknar Kiev vilja eller de rätta verktygen för att få sin politik utförd på Krim och att motverka de växande ryska inflytandet där.

Nyckelord: Krim, Ukraina, Ryssland, Georgien, Georgienkrisen, Svarta havet, Turkiet, Svartahavsflottan, EU, NATO, Sydossetien, Abchazien, krimtatarer

## Summary

Russia's war in Georgia was a bitter lesson for those who might have forgotten that military means still exists as a tool in Russian foreign policy. While Crimea may not face a risk itself of being the next target, as speculated in international media immediately after the Georgian Crisis, it nevertheless has some serious problems:

First, Russia's influence in Crimea is very high due to the presence of the Black Sea Fleet, the dominance of the Russian media, and the general support for Russian policy from the ethnic Russian majority population in Crimea.

Second, there is serious potential for ethnic conflict in Crimea between Russian extreme nationalists and disillusioned young Crimean Tatar men. Although the potential for conflict might not be strong enough by itself to spark a serious ethnic clash, it constitutes a weakness that can be further exploited by Russia.

Third, Kyiv lacks the will or the appropriate leverage to get its policies implemented in Crimea and to resist the growing Russian influence there.

Keywords: Crimea, Ukraine, Russia, Georgia, Georgian Crisis, Black Sea, Turkey, Black Sea Fleet, EU, NATO, South Ossetia, Abkhazia, Crimean Tatars

## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>CRIMEA - SOUTH OSSETIA - ABKHAZIA.....</b>	<b>10</b>
2.1	CONCLUSIONS .....	14
<b>3</b>	<b>RUSSIAN FACTORS OF DESTABILISATION IN CRIMEA .....</b>	<b>15</b>
3.1	THE RUSSIAN INFORMATION CAMPAIGN IN CRIMEA .....	15
3.2	THE BLACK SEA FLEET .....	19
3.3	SUBVERSION.....	23
3.3.1	<i>Pro-Russian organisations.....</i>	<i>26</i>
3.3.2	<i>The Crimean Tatars.....</i>	<i>28</i>
3.4	PASSPORTISATION? .....	34
3.5	CONCLUSIONS .....	35
<b>4</b>	<b>THE WAR SCENARIO.....</b>	<b>36</b>
4.1	THE ‘MUNICH ANALOGY’ .....	37
4.2	SCENARIOS .....	39
4.3	THE TUZLA LITMUS TEST IN PERSPECTIVE .....	42
4.4	CONCLUSIONS .....	43
<b>5</b>	<b>CRIMEA AND NATO.....</b>	<b>44</b>
5.1	THE MAP QUESTION .....	45
5.2	CONCLUSIONS .....	49
<b>6</b>	<b>SECURITY INTERESTS AROUND THE BLACK SEA .....</b>	<b>50</b>
6.1	UKRAINE .....	50
6.2	RUSSIA .....	51
6.3	TURKEY.....	53
6.4	WESTERN INTERESTS IN THE BLACK SEA REGION .....	55
6.5	CONCLUSIONS .....	57
<b>7</b>	<b>CONCLUDING ANALYSIS: THE CRIMEAN BALANCE.....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>SOURCES.....</b>	<b>61</b>

## List of Abbreviations

AR	<i>Avtonomna respublika</i> (Autonomous Republic)
ARK	<i>Avtonomna Respublika Krym</i> (Autonomous Republic of Crimea)
ASSR	<i>Avtonomnaia Sovetskaia Sotsialisticheskaia Respublika</i> (Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic)
BSEC	Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation
BSF	Black Sea Fleet
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CPCFPU	Center for Peace, Conversion and Foreign Policy of Ukraine
EU	European Union
GRU	<i>Glavnoe Razveditelnoe Upravlenie</i> (Military Intelligence of Russia)
GUAM	Georgia-Ukraine-Azerbaijan-Moldova (regional organisation)
JCC	Joint Control Commission
KPU	<i>Kommunistychna Partiiia Ukraiyiny</i> (Communist Party of Ukraine)
MAP	Membership Action Plan
MID	<i>Ministerstvo Innostrannykh Del</i> (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia)
MVS	<i>Ministerstvo Vnutrykh Sprav</i> (Ministry of Interior of Ukraine)
MZS	<i>Ministerstvo Zakordonnykh Sprav</i> (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OSCE	Organisation for the Security and Cooperation in Europe
PfP	Partnership for Peace
PRU	<i>Partiia Rehioniv Ukrayiny</i> (Party of Regions of Ukraine)
RAND	Research and Development (RAND Corporation)
ROK	<i>Ruskaia Obshchina Kryma</i> (Russian Community of Crimea)
RSFSR	<i>Rossiiskaia Sovetskaia Federativnaia Sotsialisticheskaia Respublika</i> (Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic)
SBU	<i>Sluzhba Bezpeky Ukrayiny</i> (Security Service of Ukraine)
SFSR	<i>Sovetskaia Federativnaia Sotsialisticheskaia Respublika</i> (Soviet Federative Socialist Republic)
SSR	<i>Sovetskaia Sotsialisticheskaia Respublika</i> (Soviet Socialist Republic)
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNOMIG	United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia
UPA	<i>Ukrayinska Povstanska Armiia</i> (Ukrainian Insurgent Army)
USA	United States of America
USSR	<i>Soiuz Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik</i> (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)

# 1 Introduction

The Georgia-Russia conflict over South Ossetia in August 2008 raised several questions regarding Russia's future foreign policy with respect to the former Soviet republics. One question was whether the Russian intervention and subsequent occupation of internationally recognised Georgian territories was a singular event or a decisive shift in Russia's national priorities. Would Russia now use military tools more frequently within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in order to neutralise obstinate neighbours? Or was the Georgian Crisis, containing its two 'frozen' conflicts of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, a unique case that cannot be used as indicator of Russia's further intentions in its 'Near Abroad'?

Following the Georgian Crisis, there was frequent speculation in the international media about the Ukrainian peninsula of Crimea as the next likely target of Russian military intervention. Logic suggests that Crimea, the only region in Ukraine with an ethnic Russian majority (in addition largely pro-Russian and anti-Western), with its historical links to Russia and contested affiliation to Ukraine, and with its Hero City Sevastopol (the base of the Russian Black Sea Fleet), would be an easy target for the Kremlin's neo-imperialist policy. Other conceivable targets such as Estonia and Latvia – both with substantial Russian minorities – are now members of NATO, which increases the risk for the Kremlin. However Ukraine is still left on its own, without reliable security guarantees from the West.

This report, prepared during a brief two-month period, aims to compare the situation around Crimea with that regarding South Ossetia and Abkhazia, which led to the Georgian Crisis. The main objective is to identify similarities and differences concerning both the situation on the ground and Russia's policy towards the regions, in order to determine whether a military scenario for Crimea is impossible, possible or even likely.

The report also examines the question of whether the Georgian Crisis has affected Ukraine's possibility of getting a NATO Membership Action Plan (MAP) and, in the long run, membership in the alliance. In a final chapter, the Crimean theme is widened to a discussion about different security interests in the Black Sea Region – particularly those of Ukraine, Russia, Turkey and the Western Powers.



Finally, some words on transliteration: The transliteration from Ukrainian uses a slightly modified version of the official Ukrainian-English transliteration system adopted by the Ukrainian Legal Terminology Commission (Decision N 9).<sup>1</sup> The letter ‘Є’ is spelled ‘Ye’ at the beginning of words but ‘ie’ in other positions. The same rule applies to ‘Ю’ (‘Yu’ and ‘iu’) and ‘Я’ (‘Ya’ and ‘ia’). ‘Й’ is spelled ‘Y’ at the beginning of words, but ‘i’ in other positions. ‘І’ is spelled ‘yi’ in all positions and ‘ІІ’ is spelled ‘shch’ (as in ‘Yushchenko’). Individual choices of spelling have been respected.

The transliteration system from Russian follows more or less the same principles, where ‘Ю/ю’ become ‘Yu/iu’, ‘Я/я’ become ‘Ya/ia’, and ‘Е/е’ become ‘Ye/e’. In both Ukrainian and Russian, the soft sign ‘ь’ is omitted throughout the report.



Map over Crimea

<sup>1</sup> 'Ukrainian-English Transliteration Table', (1996), *Ukrainian Legal Terminology Commission*, Internet: <http://www.rada.gov.ua/translit.htm>.

**Fact box: Crimea**

**Official name:** The Autonomous Republic of Crimea (*Avtonomna Respublika Krym*, ARK)

**Area:** 26,100 km<sup>2</sup>

**Population:** 1,973,185 (2007, estimates), 2,033,700 (2001, census)

**Ethnic groups:** 58.5% Russians, 24.4% Ukrainians, 12.1% Crimean Tatars and others (2001).

**Capital:** Simferopol (340,600 inhabitants, 2006)

**Language situation:** Ukrainian is the only official language in Ukraine. But according to the 1998 Constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Russian is the language of interethnic communication. Since government duties within the ARK are fulfilled mainly in Russian, hence it is *de facto* the official language. Crimean Tatar is also used, as well as other minority languages.

**Government:** Prime Minister Viktor Plakida, Speaker of Parliament Anatoliy Hrytsenko

**History of autonomy:** Established as an Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR) within the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) in 1921. The autonomous status was abolished in 1945 and Crimea became an ordinary *oblast* within the RSFSR until 1954 when it was transferred to the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic (SSR). It remained an oblast within the Ukrainian SSR until 1991 when a popularly supported referendum returned its status to an Autonomous Republic (AR). The autonomy was officially restored on 12 February 1992, now within the independent Ukraine.

**Sevastopol:** Administratively, the city of Sevastopol and its vicinity (in total 379,500 inhabitants, 2001 census) is a municipality excluded from the surrounding ARK. The ethnic groups of Sevastopol include Russians (71.6%), Ukrainians (22.4%), Belarusians (1.6%), Tatars (0.7%), Crimean Tatars (0.5%) and others. Head of the Sevastopol City Administration is Serhii Kunitsyn and Head of the City Council is Valerii Saratov.

Source: Wikipedia – the Free Encyclopedia, [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)

## 2 Crimea - South Ossetia - Abkhazia

Crimea, South Ossetia and Abkhazia are rather different in terms of geography and demographics. In geographical area, Crimea is three times larger than Abkhazia and more than six times larger than South Ossetia. In terms of population, the differences are even larger: The Crimean population of 2 millions is more than eight times the population of Abkhazia and more than 28 times the population of South Ossetia. The ethnic composition of these populations displays one particularly interesting difference. While the Russians constitute rather small groups in Abkhazia and South Ossetia, they make up the absolute majority (58%) in Crimea.<sup>2</sup>

As regards history, there are some similarities between Crimea on the one hand and South Ossetia and Abkhazia on the other. One such similarity is of course their shared Russian and Soviet past. Crimea was conquered by Russia in 1783 and South Ossetia and Abkhazia were annexed by the Russian Empire in 1801. After the chaos caused by the First World War and the Russian Civil War (where both Crimea and the Caucasus were strongholds of the Whites), they were formally included in the Soviet Union in 1922 – Crimea within the Russian SFSR and South Ossetia and Abkhazia within the Georgian SSR (which in 1922-1936 existed within the Trans-Caucasian SFSR). In 1954, Crimea was transferred to the Ukrainian SSR.

In the late Soviet period, nationalism and separatism grew in both Crimea and the Caucasus, but here the similarities between them end. While separatism led to bloody wars in South Ossetia (1990-1992) and Abkhazia (1992-1994) between local secessionists and the Georgian army, Crimea never exploded into bloodshed. This naturally led to some major differences, the most important being that at the time of the Georgian Crisis in August 2008, both South Ossetia and Abkhazia had in fact been war zones for many years. The Caucasian conflicts are purely ethnic conflicts and the level of enmity – or even hatred – between Georgians on the one side, and Ossetians and Abkhazians on the other, is something quite different from the relatively calm co-

---

<sup>2</sup> South Ossetia: Area: 3 900 km<sup>2</sup>, Population: 70 000 inhabitants (estimation), Ethnic composition: 65.2% Ossetians, 2.1% Russians (1989 census). Abkhazia: Area: 8 600 km<sup>2</sup>, Population: 215 000 (among them 43.8% Abkhazians, 10.8% Russians, 2003, census). The figures do not take into account changes in population in connection with the war in August 2008. All data: [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org).

existence between Russians and Ukrainians in Crimea, which did not share a similar experience of war in the 1990s.

Another difference is that due to the wars in the 1990s, the level of Russian leverage in South Ossetia and Abkhazia is much higher than in Crimea. First, the wars gave Russia the opportunity to intervene to the benefit of the separatists, which led to a situation where the separatists owed a debt of gratitude to the Russians.

Second, the peacekeeping arrangements, which were set up as a result of the cease-fires in South Ossetia in 1992 and Abkhazia in 1994, both came under the control of Russia. In South Ossetia, a trilateral peacekeeping operation consisted of Russian, Georgian and South Ossetian troops. A Joint Control Commission (JCC), consisting of Russia, South Ossetia, North Ossetia (a Russian region) and Georgia, under the supervision of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), oversaw the security situation and pursued negotiations on the conflict settlements.

After the Abkhazian war, a Russian-led peacekeeping operation under the mandate of the CIS and under the supervision of the UN Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) came to monitor the situation.<sup>3</sup> Thus in both settlement mechanisms, Russia had the upper hand. In the case of South Ossetia, Russia controlled the majority of the settlement mechanism (through the South Ossetians and North Ossetians) and was supervised by the OSCE (where Russia has a veto). In the case of Abkhazia, the peacekeeping operation was in fact purely Russian, under the supervision of a UN Mission (as is well known Russia has a veto in the UN Security Council).

In the following years, Russia acted not so much as mediator in the conflict settlement, equally distant from the positions of both sides, but as an actor in the negotiations with its own interests. By maintaining the *status quo* in the peace negotiations, Russia managed to retain the loyalty of the separatists while at the same time using the conflicts as a lever in its relations with Georgia. Russia also gave the secessionist authorities other forms of support and recognition, including political,

---

<sup>3</sup> Popescu, Nicu (2006), 'Outsourcing' *de facto* Statehood: Russia and the Secessionist Entities in Georgia and Moldova', Published: October 2008, Internet: <http://www.policy.hu/npopescu/publications/06.07.20%20CEPS%20Policy%20Brief%20109%20Outsourcing%20de%20facto%20statehood%20109.pdf>, p. 2; Larsson, Robert L. (2006), *Konfliktlösning i Kaukasien: en säkerhetspolitisk lägesuppdatering 2006* Stockholm: Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), December 2006, FOI-R--2108-SE, 19-61 passim.

diplomatic and economic.<sup>4</sup> The term ‘frozen’ applied to these conflicts refers to the stalled peace negotiation process associated with the conflicts rather than to the level of conflict itself.

As mentioned, unlike South Ossetia and Abkhazia, the situation in Crimea did not lead to a war in the early 1990s. A partial explanation for this is that in contrast to the overall situation in Georgia, public support for Ukraine’s territorial integrity has always been high throughout the country, regardless of linguistic affiliation, inherited political culture or political beliefs. In the 1 December 1991 referendum of independence, even Russian-speaking regions such as Crimea and Donbas (Donetsk and Luhansk regions) voted in favour of Ukrainian independence – although Crimea had the narrowest margin (54%).

Among the Ukrainian political parties, there is strong consensus on the territorial unity of the country. Even the once powerful but now marginal Communist Party of Ukraine (KPU), a Russophile and Sovietophile party, has always been a staunch defender of Ukraine’s territorial integrity. The KPU wants all of Ukraine to join a revived USSR, not individual regions such as Crimea or Donbas. Furthermore, the communists consider Crimea and Sevastopol to be inalienable parts of Ukraine.<sup>5</sup>

Nevertheless, in the early 1990s Crimea stood on the brink of conflict and nearly became a hotspot similar to the Caucasian regions. Two peaks of crisis occurred in relations between Ukraine and Crimea; one in May 1992, when the peninsula declared sovereignty and adopted a secessionist constitution, and one during the first half of 1994, when Yurii Meshkov, a Russian nationalist leader, was elected Crimean President and Russian nationalists came to power in the Crimean parliament.<sup>6</sup> Some Russian nationalists even sought to repeat the Trans-Dniester and Abkhaz scenarios in Crimea. Attempts at smuggling weapons into Crimea were undertaken from the Trans-Dniestr through Odesa. Weapons were very easy to purchase in Crimea and Russian Cossack troops in Russia and its ‘Near Abroad’ who were

---

<sup>4</sup> Popescu 'Outsourcing' *de facto* Statehood: Russia and the Secessionist Entities in Georgia and Moldova', Published:

<sup>5</sup> Kuzio, Taras (2007), *Ukraine - Crimea - Russia: Triangle of Conflict*, (Stuttgart: ibidem), p 34.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 36.

active in Trans-Dniestr came in small numbers to Crimea to support Meshkov.<sup>7</sup>

However, the secessionist movement in Crimea in the 1990s was rather split, as it constituted a compromise of two tendencies. One of these stood for a 'sovereign democratic (Crimean) state' in union with Ukraine, Belarus and Russia within the CIS. The second, more radical, strand called for unification of Crimea with Russia. This strand was too radical for most Crimeans and never received support from official Russia (unlike the previous covert support for separatist movements in South Ossetia, Abkhazia and the Trans-Dniestr Republic). Russia at that time was occupied by the first Chechen war and dared not support a separatist movement in Ukraine, which would have been difficult for Moscow to control.<sup>8</sup>

The secessionist movement in Crimea collapsed in 1994-1995 due to internal quarrels, lack of substantial Russian support and Ukrainian economic, political and military pressure. The Crimean presidential institution was abolished by presidential decree in March 1995.<sup>9</sup> Apart from this brief period, during the first half of the 1990s there has been little support for separatism throughout Ukraine.

A factor that explains the absence of ethnic violence in Crimea, in contrast to the Caucasus, was the reluctance of the Ukrainian authorities to use force when suppressing the separatist movement in Crimea in the mid-1990s. Experiences from other post-Soviet states were behind this restraint. Attempts at suppressing secessionist rebellions in other post-Soviet states had ended disastrously, as in Moldova, Georgia and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. If the Ukrainian security forces had stormed the Crimean parliament, in the manner of the Georgian National Guard in Abkhazia's capital Sukhumi, Russia would have inevitably been drawn into the conflict, either officially or through the use of surrogate forces such as Cossacks and the Black Sea Fleet.<sup>10</sup> Ukraine would then, most probably, have found itself in the same position as Georgia and Moldova, with a 'frozen' conflict like that of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, effectively influenced and exploited by Russia as a lever on Ukraine and with the risk of the conflict re-commencing at any time.

---

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp 203-204.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 162.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 106.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 197.

## 2.1 Conclusions

- Crimea, South Ossetia and Abkhazia show great differences as to geography, demographics, interethnic relations and conflict potential.
- As the separatist movement in the 1990s failed in Crimea, unlike in the Caucasian regions, the fundamental conditions for a conflict on the South Ossetian scenario in Crimea are missing.

### 3 Russian Factors of Destabilisation in Crimea

The Russian support for its compatriots abroad increased during Vladimir Putin's presidency. According to the new Foreign Policy Concept of 12 July 2008, one of the chief objectives of Russian foreign policy is 'to provide comprehensive protection of rights and legitimate interests of Russian citizens and compatriots abroad'.<sup>11</sup> While it is clear that the concern for compatriots abroad is a perfectly legal activity and makes the list of important national interests in many countries, concern for fellow countrymen can also be used to conceal other goals of practical foreign policy.<sup>12</sup> In Georgia, the Russian government argued that its military operations were conducted for humanitarian reasons as Georgia's actions against the population of South Ossetia, the majority of whom hold Russian passports, were described as 'genocide'. After the Georgian Crisis, fears have been raised in Ukraine that Russia could use the often fiercely criticised 'Ukrainisation' policy of Ukraine as a pretext for military intervention.

#### 3.1 The Russian Information Campaign in Crimea

Russian-language media totally controls the information space in Crimea.<sup>13</sup> Russia's information campaign in Crimea, which has been particularly intense in 2006-2008, is proficient and systematic. Statesmen and officials, political parties, civic organisations, youth movements, Cossacks, the Orthodox Church and the universities – all these pro-Russian entities have become instruments in Russia's propaganda campaign.<sup>14</sup>

One of the most important features of the Russian information campaign is the continuing question of the status of Crimea. This is

---

<sup>11</sup> 'Konseptsia vneshnei politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii' (2008), Internet: <http://www.kremlin.ru/text/docs/2008/07/204108.shtml>.

<sup>12</sup> Lopata, Raimundas (2006), 'Repatriation: Outlines of the Russian Model', *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review*, Vol. Vol. 2007/1,

<sup>13</sup> Goriunova, E.A. (2007), *Krym v kontekste natsionalnoi bezopastnosti Ukrainy*, CIRS Policy Recommendation Initiative, No 7, p 5.

<sup>14</sup> Maigre, Merle (2008), *Crimea - The Achilles' Heel of Ukraine*, International Centre for Defence Studies, November 2008, pp 8-9.



one of the themes often raised in the Russian and Crimean media and it is regularly raised by Russian politicians visiting Crimea. The purpose of this appears to be to question Ukraine's sovereignty in Sevastopol and Crimea in order to create a bilateral or international debate about the issue. By achieving that, Moscow probably hopes that Ukrainian territorial integrity can again form part of a deal on the extension of the lease on the Black Sea Fleet (BSF) station in Sevastopol.

The status of Crimea is unique because the peninsula was handed over in 1954 to the Ukrainian SSR under the era of the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev – a Russian born in Ukraine who had formerly been leader of the Ukrainian Communist Party. Although the decision to transfer Crimea to Ukraine was made by a decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet and later affirmed by a law passed unanimously by the USSR Supreme Soviet, Khrushchev is usually personally blamed for this tragedy of Russia. A fact very seldom mentioned is that the territory of the Russian SFSR also expanded during the Khrushchev era, when the Karelian SSR was dissolved in 1956 and incorporated into the Russian SFSR. From the standpoint of Soviet constitutional norms, this was probably more controversial than transferring Crimea from one Soviet republic to another.<sup>15</sup>

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, both Ukraine and Russia claimed supremacy over Crimea. In 1992, the Russian Supreme Soviet passed a resolution declaring the 1954 document transferring Crimea to be unlawful. Since then, the status of Crimea and Sevastopol has repeatedly been questioned not only by Nationalist and Communist politicians, but also by politicians with more mainstream or democratic credentials, such as Grigorii Yavlinsky, Boris Nemtsov and Vladimir Lukin.<sup>16</sup>

The Russian politician who over the years has most persistently questioned Ukraine's superiority over Crimea and Sevastopol is probably Moscow Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov. In May 2008, Luzhkov was declared *persona non grata* in Ukraine in the wake of statements where he called for the 'return' of Sevastopol to Russia and when he questioned whether Sevastopol had ever been handed over to Ukraine (in fact, two rather contradictory statements!). He officially asked 'the leadership of Russia, the State Duma and the Federation Council to

---

<sup>15</sup> Kagarlitsky, Boris (2008), 'Russians take themselves too seriously', *Moscow Times*, 29 May 2008.

<sup>16</sup> Kuzio *Ukraine - Crimea - Russia: Triangle of Conflict*, p 111.

raise the issue of Sevastopol again', this time apparently in retaliation for Ukraine's request for a MAP at the NATO top meeting in Bucharest a few weeks previously. Luzhkov also called on Russia to not extend the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership Agreement, which expires in 2009.<sup>17</sup>

Russian politicians often cite Sevastopol's status bestowed in 1948 as an administrative entity distinct from the rest of Crimea and directly subordinate (as was the rest of Crimea for a period of time) to the central authorities in Moscow. According to this argument, Sevastopol's status of direct subordination to Moscow did not change when the USSR government transferred Crimea to the Ukrainian SSR in 1954. The revisionist arguments ignore the legal situation that has existed since 1991 with international recognition of Ukraine's sovereignty in Crimea and Sevastopol and the fact that Russia itself recognised Ukraine's sovereignty in the 1997 interstate treaty, the 1997 treaty on stationing of the fleet and the 2004 Russia-Ukraine treaty on the mutual border.<sup>18</sup>

Furthermore, in the 1978 Russian SFSR constitution only Moscow and Leningrad were given all-republican status and in the Ukrainian SSR constitution of the same year Sevastopol and Kyiv were placed under all-Ukrainian jurisdiction. Sevastopol was only included within the annual Russian SFSR budget until 1953; thereafter it was funded by the Ukrainian SSR budget. Sevastopol was also included in Crimean election districts.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> Socor, Vladimir (2008a), 'Moscow mayor, Russian defense minister question Russia-Ukraine agreement on Sevastopol', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 5, No. 91.

<sup>18</sup> Socor, Vladimir (2008b), 'Moscow questions territorial status quo in the Crimea', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 5 No. 92

<sup>19</sup> Kuzio *Ukraine - Crimea - Russia: Triangle of Conflict*, pp 103-104.

**Fact box: The ‘Big Treaty’**

The ‘Big Treaty’ refers to the two agreements between Ukraine and Russia – one on the division of the former Soviet Black Sea Fleet (BSF) and one on Friendship, Co-operation and Partnership – signed on 28 May respectively 31 May 1997. The signing of these, at that time, two long-awaited treaties was considered a landmark in the normalisation of the two former Soviet republics.

Pursuant to the agreements Russia acknowledged the territorial integrity of Ukraine, in return to a guarantee that friendly relations between Ukraine and Russia would further be developed and Russian interests would be respected in Crimea. The two sides also signed a series of economic and cultural cooperation agreements. The Russian parliament’s two houses did not ratify the Friendship, Co-operation and Partnership agreement until 1998-99. The parliamentary ratification was conditioned on Crimea’s adoption of a constitution which took place on 21 October 1998 and that came into force after its ratification by the Ukrainian parliament in December the same year.

Briefly the accords on the fleet were that:

- The two nations would divide the BSF 50-50, with Russia being given the opportunity to buy back some of the more modern ships for cash (ending up with 81.7% of the ships going to Russia and 18.3% to Ukraine).
- Russia would lease the ports in and around Sevastopol for 20 years at USD 97.95 million per year (with a possible extension for a further five years subject to agreement of both parties). The payment would go towards reducing Ukraine’s USD 3 billion debt to Russia (most of which was owed to Gazprom).
- Crimea and the city of Sevastopol were declared territorially sovereign parts of Ukraine.

Source: Hedenskog, Jakob and Larsson, Robert L. (2007), *Russian Leverage on the CIS and Baltic States*, FOI-R-2280—SE, June 2007, p 93.

### 3.2 The Black Sea Fleet

Relating to the issue of the status of Crimea is the question of the Black Sea Fleet being based in Sevastopol. During the Georgian Crisis of August 2008, Russia's Black Sea Fleet for the first time since the Soviet era undertook an offensive operation, landing Russian ground forces in Abkhazia. By launching that operation, the Russian Fleet, mainly based in Sevastopol, misused Ukraine's territory and abused Ukraine's neutrality.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, any such move in the future could potentially put Ukraine under the threat of retaliation, since the battleships are stationed on Ukrainian territory. Therefore, the operation led the Ukrainian president to sign two decrees restricting movements of the Fleet, according to which the 'battleships and aircraft of the Black Sea Fleet may cross the Ukrainian border only after submitting a notice to the Ukrainian military chief of staff, but no later than 72 hours before anticipated crossing of the border'. The notice should also contain 'the number of personnel on the battleship or aircraft, as well as information about the weapons, munitions, explosives and other property'. The immediate Russian reaction to these decrees was angry, with the MID calling the move 'a serious new anti-Russian step', but later on Russia, anyway, seemed to have acted in compliance with the new rules.<sup>21</sup>

Renewed tensions over the stationing of the Black Sea Fleet started to escalate back in 2005-2006, under the pro-Western government following the Orange Revolution. After Moscow decided to double the price of natural gas for Ukraine, Kyiv responded by demanding to increase the rent Russia pays for using naval facilities in Sevastopol, by taking over Crimea's lighthouses from the Russian navy and launching inventory checks into property rented out to the Black Sea Fleet.<sup>22</sup> The tensions further increased because of the Orange government's pro-NATO policy and its intentions to convert the

---

<sup>20</sup> Socor, Vladimir (2008c), 'Moscow seeks more excuses for prolonging naval presence in Sevastopol', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 5, No. 203.

<sup>21</sup> 'Yushchenko decrees restrict Russian fleet', (2008), *Ukrainian Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 148, p 1; 'Russia cooperating on fleet Crimea access', (2008), *Ukrainian Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 152, p 1.

<sup>22</sup> Abdullaev, Nabi (2006), 'Russia To shift Black Sea Fleet Out of Ukraine', *Defense News*, Published: 28 March 2007, Internet: <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?F=1636012&C=navwar>.

Ukrainian Navy to NATO standards. As a prospective NATO member, the escalating demands of the Ukrainian Orange government for Russian withdrawal of the Black Sea Fleet was also driven by NATO's ban on non-NATO member states having bases on NATO territory.



Mine Sweeper Nataya (left), Sevastopol. Photo: © Jakob Hedenskog (2008)

As the time approaches 28 May 2017, the end of the agreed period for stationing the Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol, the uncertainties over Russia's move are increasing. Although Russia has pledged to build a new navy base in Novorossiisk in the Russian Krasnodar region, construction is going slowly and funding to date has been insufficient.<sup>23</sup> In March 2005, Sergei Ivanov, then Russian Minister of Defence, declared that 'the command and the core of the Black Sea Fleet will stay in Sevastopol'. He also said that Russia is planning to

---

<sup>23</sup> Hedenskog, Jakob; Larsson, Robert (2007), *Russian Leverage on the CIS and Baltic States*, FOI, p 94.

launch talks with Ukraine by 2013 on prolonging the Sevastopol lease.<sup>24</sup>

In February 2006, Ivanov repeated that 'our main base has been, is and will continue to be in Sevastopol'. He further claimed that Novorossiisk would only provide base facilities for those ships that had moved to the Krasnodar region since 1991.<sup>25</sup> On 22 October 2008, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergei Lavrov announced that Russia would request Ukraine to prolong the stationing of the Fleet beyond 2017.<sup>26</sup> The message that Sevastopol will remain the main base for the Russian Black Sea Fleet after 2017 is also often repeated by retired Navy officers, Duma members and Russian nationalist politicians.

In late October 2008, however, Russia toned down the rhetoric on Crimea and Sevastopol, probably because of desire of the Kremlin to improve its international image after the Georgian Crisis and to avoid having an anti-Russian mood imbue the pre-term election campaign in Ukraine. Therefore, Sergei Ivanov, now vice-Premier with responsibility for the Military-Industrial Complex, said that he could easily imagine Russia moving the BSF base from Sevastopol in 2017 'if the Ukrainian government of that time does not prolong the lease'. He also gave a reassurance that Russia is not planning to solve the problem of Crimea and Sevastopol by military means.<sup>27</sup>

In Ukraine, in principle, all political forces agree that the Russian Black Sea Fleet should leave Sevastopol in accordance with the 1997 agreement. On 20 May 2008, President Yushchenko issued a decree whereby he committed the Government to draw up the draft law on the removal of the Black Sea Fleet in 2017.<sup>28</sup> In July 2008, the president

---

<sup>24</sup> 'Defense Minister Says Russia will not Withdraw its Navy from Sevastopol', (2005), *RFE/RL Newsline*, Published: 28 March 2007, Last accessed: 43, Internet: <http://www.rferl.org/newsline/2005/03/1-RUS/rus-070305.asp>.

<sup>25</sup> 'Vladimir Kuroyedov has announced two new Black Sea Fleet bases will be built in Novorossiisk area on the Black sea coast', (2006), *The Russian Newsroom*, Published: 28 March 2007, Internet: [http://www.russiannewsroom.com/content.aspx?id=2970\\_Politics&date=2006-2-18](http://www.russiannewsroom.com/content.aspx?id=2970_Politics&date=2006-2-18).

<sup>26</sup> Socor 'Moscow seeks more excuses for prolonging naval presence in Sevastopol', .

<sup>27</sup> Myasnikov, Viktor (2008), 'Ivanov ne derzhitsia za Sevastopol', *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 20 October 2008, [http://www.ng.ru/politics/2008-10-20/1\\_Sevastopol.html](http://www.ng.ru/politics/2008-10-20/1_Sevastopol.html).

<sup>28</sup> 'Inform: Newsletter for the international community providing views and analysts from the Bloc of Yulia Tymoshenko (BYuT)', (2008), Last accessed: 17 November 2008, Internet: [http://www.ibyut.com/informd\\_files/Issue%2072.pdf](http://www.ibyut.com/informd_files/Issue%2072.pdf).

even declared that ‘the start of negotiations on the removal of the Russian Black Sea Fleet from Ukrainian territory should be included in the agenda of our relations’.<sup>29</sup> Thus, it is clear that at least the current government in Kyiv does not intend to prolong the BSF lease in Sevastopol beyond 2017.



Guided Missile Destroyer Kashin, Sevastopol. Photo: © Jakob Hedenskog (2008)

One statement that marked an unusual exception from the official line was when then Prime Minister Yanukovich in October 2006 suggested that Russia may be able to continue to use the naval base in Sevastopol beyond 2017.<sup>30</sup> He also said he believed that the location of the base of Russia’s Fleet in the Crimea benefits Ukraine, since it has a positive effect on bilateral Ukraine-Russia relations and generates revenues into Ukraine’s state budget.<sup>31</sup> According to the Commander-in-Chief of the

---

<sup>29</sup> Kupchinsky, Roman (2008), ‘Sub-rosa warfare in the Crimea’, *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 5, No. 142.

<sup>30</sup> ‘Russia may stay station Black Sea Fleet in Crimea after 2017, says PM’, (2006), Internet: <http://www.ukrainianjournal.com/index.php?w=article&id=3452..>

<sup>31</sup> Yanukovich: Bazuvannia ChF Rossiyi v Krymu vyhidne’, (2008), *Ukrainian News Agency*, Internet: <http://www.ukranews.com/ukr/article/157468.html>.

Russian Navy, Admiral Vladimir Vysotskii, the Russian naval presence in Ukraine generated, in addition to the rent, USD 4 million in special subsidies to the cities of Sevastopol, Feodosiia and Gvardeiskii from the Russian federal budget, and indirect contributions to local budgets, since the fleet provides about 25,000 jobs.<sup>32</sup>

Nevertheless, former Chief of Presidential Secretariat and Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine Oleh Rybachuk is convinced that Russia already has a Plan A and Plan B for the stationing of its BSF. Plan A is to remain in Sevastopol and hope for another president of Ukraine to prolong the lease for the indefinite future. Plan B is to leave, and according to Rybachuk that movement will have to start well before 2017, because Ukraine will not extend the lease and will only discuss exit strategies: 'No respectable politician as president of Ukraine would see any benefits of having such a potential destabilisation factor in Ukraine'.<sup>33</sup>

If Russia is not able to extend its lease in Sevastopol or to create a new base in Novorossiisk, which is susceptible to storms from the north-east, Russian strategists will have to find an alternative option. Already today, Ochamchira in Russian-controlled Abkhazia, Tartus in Syria or the creation of a new base in Lybia are being mentioned as alternatives.<sup>34</sup>

### 3.3 Subversion

Fears by the Ukrainian authorities of Russian subversive tactics in supporting separatism among ethnic Russians in Crimea have increased after the Georgian Crisis. According to a recent study, there is now reason to speak of the threat of pro-Russian separatism in Crimea again. Despite the fact that the majority of the organisations supported by Russia are still rather small and that their actions and demonstrations rarely gather more than a couple of hundred activists, the activities of these organisations attract large coverage in the mass

---

<sup>32</sup> 'Russia wants Black Sea Fleet in Ukraine after 2017 - Navy chief', (2008), *RIA Novosti*, Internet: <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20080725/114915065.html>.

<sup>33</sup> Speech by Oleh Rybachuk, at the Swedish Institute for International Affairs, Stockholm, 14 November 2008.

<sup>34</sup> Isauskas, Ceslovas (2008), 'Sevastopol: the Russian fleet will have to clear out', Internet: <http://www.geopolitika.lt/?artc=2731>.



media and are supported at a high political level in Russia.<sup>35</sup> These pro-Russian organisations generally concentrate their agitation on a few questions: Opposition to NATO/US, opposition to ‘Ukrainisation’, support for the Russian Black Sea Fleet and support for the Russian language in Ukraine. Anti-Tatar and Islamophobic elements are also common.

According to a local expert, Russia is in fact acting to increase the intensity on the peninsula, trying to incite political and economic organisations loyal to it and to increase conflict in ethnic relations, in order to ultimately have the possibility to interfere to defend Russians in Crimea.<sup>36</sup>

Back in October 2006, Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko ordered the Security Service of Ukraine (*Sluzhba Bespeky Ukrayiny*, SBU) to upgrade its operational activities in Crimea. The SBU was to ‘look into the efficiency of intelligence, counter-intelligence and operative measures in order to identify, prevent and halt intelligence, subversive and other illegal activities in Crimea by foreign secret services and non-governmental organisations’. The SBU was also ordered to develop a plan of action to neutralise activities in Crimea ‘which harm Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, pose security threats and incite ethnic, racial and religious tensions’.

According to the Presidential Secretariat, pro-Russian NGOs in Crimea have been given logistical support by the BSF and nationalist youth groups from Russia who are dedicated to the Kremlin, such as the youth organisation Ours (*Nashi*). Through the BSF and the Russian Military Intelligence Service (GRU), Russia has supplied intelligence on the location and plans for military exercises, and has provided personnel to increase attendance at rallies and demonstrations. During the June 2006 rallies in Crimea against the ‘Sea Breeze’ military exercise, many of the leading organisers were spouses of serving BSF officers. These demonstrations, which led to the cancellation of the military exercise held within the Partnership for Peace (PfP)

---

<sup>35</sup> Kapustin, Mykhailo (2008), 'Diiialnist rosiiskykh hromadskykh ta hromadsko-politychnykh orhanizatsii i rukhiv v AR Krym', in: Tyshchenko (Ed.) *Suspilno-Politychni protsesy v AR Krym: osnovni tendentsii*, (Kyiv: Ukrainyskyi Nezalezhnyi tsentre politychnykh doslidzhen), p 54.

<sup>36</sup> Goriunova *Krym v kontekste...*, p. 4.

Programme, were largely covered in the Russian-speaking media, both of Ukrainian and Russian origin.<sup>37</sup>

One of the parties in the ruling coalition in Crimea, the Russian Bloc (*Russkii Blok*), labelled as ‘local agents of Russia’, by an expert, is reportedly financed by Moscow Mayor Luzhkov through the Moskva-Krym Foundation and various expatriate funds.<sup>38</sup>

Kyiv’s ability to launch counter-measures has often been hampered by two factors, both of which were clearly apparent during the well-organised anti-US and anti-NATO demonstrations in Crimea. First, there is a lack of political will to tackle the separatist threat from President Yushchenko and from within the Presidential Secretariat and the National Security and Defence Council (NSDC) – the President’s last important remaining levers of influence following the 2006 constitutional reform that transferred many of the presidential powers to the parliament. Second, there are divided loyalties between Kyiv and Moscow within the SBU and the Ministry of the Interior (*Ministerstvo Vnutrykh Sprav*, MVS), the local branches of which remain highly sceptical of Yushchenko. In addition, the Crimean parliament, dominated by the Party of Regions of Ukraine (*Partiia Rehioniv Ukrayiny*, PRU), has often disregarded Yushchenko’s directives.<sup>39</sup> For instance, on 17 September 2008 the Crimean Verkhovna Rada passed a resolution supporting the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, backing Russia’s action in the regions and urging Ukraine to ‘accept’ the independence of these states.<sup>40</sup>

According to Oleh Rybachuk, the SBU’s work in targeting Russian subversion activities in Crimea has improved during the last couple of years. He also cited reports of money-laundering and Russian FDI personal investments linked to BSF areas in Crimea, such as the building of elite houses, tourism infrastructure, construction of beaches, etc.<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> Kuzio, Taras (2006), ‘Russian subversion in Crimea’, *Jane’s Intelligence Digest*, No. 10 November

<sup>38</sup> Author’s interview with local journalist, Simferopol, 15 October 2008.

<sup>39</sup> Kuzio ‘Russian subversion in Crimea’, *Jane’s Intelligence Digest*, No 10, November 2006.

<sup>40</sup> ‘Parlament Kryma podderzhal nezavisimost Yuzhnoy Osetii i Abkhazii’, (2008), *Novosti Kryma*, Internet: <http://news.allcrimea.net/print/1221640220/>.

<sup>41</sup> Author’s interview with Oleh Rybachuk, Stockholm, 14 November 2008.

### 3.3.1 Pro-Russian organisations

The most influential of the pro-Russian organisations in Crimea is the Russian Community of Crimea (*Russkaia Obshchina Kryma, ROK*). It has 25 regional organisations operating in all cities and regions in Crimea and a membership of approximately 15,000 people. The leader Sergei Tsekov is the First Deputy Speaker of the Crimean Verkhovna Rada.<sup>42</sup> Since the mid-1990s, ROK has been financed by Moscow Mayor Luzhkov and his then advisor and now member of the Russian Duma Konstantin Zatulin, and by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Presidential Administration.<sup>43</sup>

Two other pro-Russian organisations with practically identical names are the People's Front 'Sevastopol-Crimea-Russia' (*Narodnii Front 'Sevastopol-Krym-Rossia'*) and the National Front 'Sevastopol-Crimea-Russia' (*Natsionalnii Front 'Sevastopol-Krym-Rossia'*), both founded in 2005-2006. The radical character of the methods used by these organisations led the SBU in 2008 to open criminal charges against one of them – the People's Front – regarding agitation to dismember the territorial integrity of Ukraine. According to some local experts, the purpose of these organisations is to create a radical background for some more serious pro-Russian organisations in Crimea in order to help them to maintain the 'status of respective politicians'.<sup>44</sup>

The pro-Russian youth organisation Breakthrough (*Proryv*), which also has branches in the unrecognised republics of Trans-Dniestr, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, is active in Crimea and in other regions of Ukraine. The Crimean branch of the Pan-Slavic extremist organisation Eurasian Youth Union (*Evraziiskii Soiuz Molodezhi*) is a subdivision of the International Eurasian Movement founded by Aleksandr Dugin, a political scientist and one of the most influential ideologists of Russian expansionism and nationalism, with close ties to the Kremlin.<sup>45</sup>

Moscow House, located in Nakhimov Square in central Sevastopol, is a cultural and business centre for Russians. It frequently hosts round tables and conferences for Russian nationalists, such as Dugin, Zatulin,

---

<sup>42</sup> Kapustin 'Dialnist rosiiskykh...', p 55.

<sup>43</sup> Maigre *Crimea - The Achilles'...* p 11.

<sup>44</sup> Kapustin 'Dialnist rosiiskykh...', p 63.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 71-72.

Luzhkov and Dmitrii Rogozin, Russia's representative to NATO, who travel to Crimea to fly the flag and support the Crimean pro-Russian movements. Since 2006, Moscow House also houses the Institute of the CIS States, a Moscow-based think tank led by Zatulin with the main goal of promoting Russian interests in the former Soviet Union. The Crimean office of the Institute is led by a former head of the Intelligence Division of the Black Sea Fleet.<sup>46</sup>



Celebration of the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Victory day, 9 May 2005 in Sevastopol.

Photo: © Jakob Hedenskog (2005)

The Russian interests in Crimea are also secured with the help of Cossacks – pro-Russian paramilitary organisations officially registered as NGOs. The Crimean Cossacks cooperate closely with Russian Cossacks, holding joint military training sessions in Crimea. Cossacks holding military rank are allowed to carry firearms, whips and swords as part of their uniform. They are devout members of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate) and are considered to be Christian radicals. They have taken part in all ethnic and religious conflicts in Crimea. The media in Crimea report that local authorities

---

<sup>46</sup> Maigre *Crimea - The Achilles'...* p. 13.

and Russian businessmen hire Cossacks to guard their property from Crimean Tatars. The number of Cossacks in Crimea amounts to a few thousands.<sup>47</sup>

### 3.3.2 The Crimean Tatars

Fears of Russian manipulation among the population in Crimea do not relate only to the ethnic Russians, but also to the Crimean Tatars and attempts to incite inter-ethnic strife in Crimea by fomenting clashes between Crimean Tatars (see special fact box below) and Russians. Experts on the situation say that Russia is highly interested in radicalising Crimean Tatar Muslims and has even started to finance various Islamic movements operating in Crimea.<sup>48</sup>

The talk is basically about *Hizb ut-Tahrir-al Islam*, an Islamic liberation party that was founded in 1953, with its centre in London. The stated aim of Hizb-ut-Tahrir is to unite all Muslim nations in a unitary caliphate. It publicly states that neither the parliamentary way (the Western model of democracy is rejected outright) nor violent acts – revolts or acts of terrorism – are acceptable for reaching its main aim. Its only method is persuasion, in other words – *Jihad* of the word. The intention is to create a worldwide caliphate, starting with creation of a true Islamic state in one country and then spreading to other countries in which the Muslim population is prevalent.

Hizb-ut-Tahrir, which is believed to receive sponsorship from Saudi Arabia, appeared in Crimea in 2003. Today the party, which is banned in Russia as a terrorist extremist organisation, exists half-legally in Ukraine. There have been reports of growing numbers of supporters among the Crimean Tatar youth during recent years. In addition, the organisation is beginning to become legalised – not as a political organisation but as a religious one. Its status does not conflict with current legislature, but Crimean Tatar leadership and the *Mufiyat* have

---

<sup>47</sup> Hedenskog, Jakob; Larsson, Robert L. (2007), *Russian Leverage on the CIS and the Baltic States*, FOI-R--2280--SE, pp. 37-41.

<sup>48</sup> Author's interview with Yulia Tyshchenko, Ukrainian Center for Independent Political Research, Kyiv, 13 October 2008; Author's interview with Aleksandr Shevchuk, National Institute for Strategic Studies, Simferopol, 16 October 2008.

expressed concerns.<sup>49</sup> Mustafa Jemilev, Chairman of the Mejlis, said that the efforts of the Crimean Tatar's leaders 'are directed to that these radical ideologies, imported from outside Crimea, would get opportune and dignified critic from the Muslim community and would not be allowed to be used in the political struggle against the Crimean Tatar people.<sup>50</sup>

One recent example of Hizb-ut-Tahrir's public activities was the first ever Women's Conference of the Sisters of Hizb-ut-Tahrir Ukraine, held on 19 October 2008 in the Crimean capital of Simferopol. The conference 'Women under the protection of Allah's religion' was attended by 835 participants. This was the first Muslim women's conference of its kind not only in Ukraine, but in the whole post-Soviet area.<sup>51</sup>

Ilmi Umerov, himself a Crimean Tatar and Mayor of Bakhchisarai, one of the towns in Crimea with the highest concentration of Crimean Tatars (around 20%), estimated the number of followers of Hizb-ut-Tahrir in Crimea to be between 5,000-6,000, and the number of followers of the *wahhabis*, another Islamic cult of Arab origin, to be between 500-2,000. He added that these groups are not illegal in Ukraine and that they mainly attract youngsters, often those of an intellectual nature.<sup>52</sup> Wahhabis mainly concentrate its activities inside the clergy, while Hizb-ut-Tahrir is more focused on promoting its views and ideas among Muslims and Crimean Tatars in general.<sup>53</sup>

The Russian interest in the Crimean Tatars has arisen for a number of reasons. If Crimean Tatars become radical Muslims they will lose the

<sup>49</sup> Samar, Valentyna (2008), 'Sprava pro "Dzhikhad slova"', *Dzerkalo Tyzhnya*, Vol. 13, No. 692, <http://www.dt.ua/1000/1550/62620/>.

<sup>50</sup> Author's interview with Mustafa Jemilev, Simferopol, 15 October 2008.

<sup>51</sup> 'Hizb ut-Tahrir Ukraine: Muslim Womens' Conference', (2008), *Hizb-ut-Tahrir*, Internet: <http://www.hizb.org.uk/hizb/who-is-hizb-global-party/hizb-ut-tahrir-ukraine-muslim-womens-conference.html>.; One web site labelled the organizer of this conference as Muslim Association "Davet", see Qirim-Vilayeti (2008), 'Pervaia Vsekrymskaia zhenskaia islamskaia konferentsiia "Zhenishchina pod seniu religii Allakha"', Internet: [http://qirim-vilayeti.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=645&Itemid=170](http://qirim-vilayeti.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=645&Itemid=170). Another web site state that "Davet" is a branch within the non-registered in Ukraine Hizb-ut-Tahrir, see aq.Media (2008), "'Sobytiia": Hizb-ut-Tahrir vykhodit iz podolia', Internet: <http://www.aq-media.info/taxonomy/term/6051%2C5952%2C6222/all>.

<sup>52</sup> Author's interview with Ilmi Umerov, Bakhchisarai, 21 October 2008.

<sup>53</sup> Maigre *Crimea - The Achilles'...* p 18.

support of Turkey, their biggest aid donor. Besides weakening the Crimean Tatars, the move would also diminish Turkey's influence in the Black Sea region and improve Russia's political stand there. The radicalisation of Crimean Tatars would also prevent them from establishing an ethnic autonomy in Crimea under the guidance of a secular government, the Mejlis. Crimean Tatars could altogether be redirected into supporting Russia's interests in Crimea and not, as today, Ukrainian interests. According to a local expert, the contacts between the Crimean Tatars and Tatars in the Republic of Tatarstan, Russia, have developed and more Crimean Tatars have seen how the economy and living standard have improved in Russia during the last years. This has led many Crimean Tatars to the conclusion that it was wrong to support Kyiv, and that the Crimean Tatars should have supported Moscow instead to improve their situation.<sup>54</sup>

Furthermore, if Crimean Tatars become radicalised, Russia could claim that they threaten the Russian Black Sea Fleet, the presence of which in Crimea could be justified by the need to protect Russian citizens from possible attacks by Islamic extremists. Finally, Russia hopes to gain Muslim allies in its conflict with the West. Some radical Islamic Russian websites, such as Islam.ru, have started publishing appeals to their Muslim brothers living in Crimea, urging Crimean Tatars to support Russia since only Russia would allow them to build an Islamic state in Crimea. Russian Muslim leaders have proposed setting up a network of Muslim centres in Crimea and have even suggested that a number of families of true Islamic followers be settled in Crimea to set an example of faith to Crimean Tatars.<sup>55</sup>

According to a local expert, the Crimean Tatar community today is demoralised and disoriented. The influence of the Mejlis is decreasing and the disappointment concerning President Yushchenko and the Orange governments are wide-spread among the people. According to the expert, President Yushchenko has rather recently become more active in the Crimean Tatar question, but the constant political crisis in Ukraine makes him incapable to do much.<sup>56</sup>

---

<sup>54</sup> Author's interview with Oleg Smirnov, NGO "Integration and Development", Simferopol, 17 October 2008.

<sup>55</sup> Hedenskog and Larsson (2007), *Russian Leverage on the CIS and the Baltic States*, p. 40.

<sup>56</sup> Author's interview with local journalist, Simferopol, 15 October 2008.



The Cuma Cami Mosque in Yevpatoriia, photo: © Jakob Hedenskog (2008)

A sign of possible Russian subversion in Crimea with the aim of splitting the Crimean Tatar community was the letter sent in September 2008 by the marginal Crimean Tatar organisation the National Party (*Milli Firka*) to Russian President Medvedev, Prime Minister Putin and Tatarstan's President Shaimiiev 'on behalf of the Russian Federation' to protect Crimean Tatars and other ethnic groups from 'constant genocide by the nationalist authorities of Ukraine'.<sup>57</sup> The claim was strongly refuted by at least 14 mainstream Crimean Tatar groups, which pointed out that it was Russia that had eliminated the Crimean Tatar state in 1783, committed genocide of the Crimean Tatars in 1944 and deported the people to special settlements in Central Asia, later preventing their return to their historical homeland. The groups also claimed that through the initiative of Milli Firka, a 'motive' is being created to justify possible Russian intervention in Ukrainian affairs.

---

<sup>57</sup>'Little-known Tatar group seeks Russian protection, drawing rebukes', (2008), *Ukrainian Journal*, 17 September 2008, p. 1.



Also President Yushchenko accused Russia of trying to destabilise Ukraine by encouraging separatists in Crimea, but said that Ukraine was too strong to face a Georgia-like invasion.<sup>58</sup> Although there have been clashes between Crimean Tatars and Russians nationalists (skinheads and Cossacks), for example around the market place in Bakhchisarai, built on the site of an ancient Tatar cemetery, the situation seems not to be out of control.<sup>59</sup> There is the potential for serious ethnic conflict in Crimea, but it seems to be too weak to ignite on its own, without intervention from a third party.

---

<sup>58</sup>Yushchenko accuses Russians of trying to foment Crimean separatism', (2008), *Ukrainian Journal*, 18 September 2008, p. 1.

<sup>59</sup> Varfolomeyev, Oleg (2006), 'Yanukovich distances himself from Crimea's radical slavs', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 3, No. 159.

**Fact box: Crimean Tatars**

The Crimean Tatars are a Turkic people who inhabited the Crimean peninsula for over seven centuries. They established their own Khanate in the 1440s and remained an important power in Eastern Europe until 1783, when Crimea was annexed to Russia. During the following centuries hundreds of thousands of Tatars fled or disappeared.

During the Second World War, the entire Tatar population in Crimea fell victim to Stalin's oppressive policies. In 1944 they were unjustly accused of being Nazi collaborators and deported en masse to Central Asia. Many died of diseases and malnutrition on the road. Although a 1967 Soviet decree removed the charges against Crimean Tatars, the Soviet government did nothing to facilitate their resettlement in Crimea or to make reparations for lost lives and confiscated property.

Only from 1989 and onwards the Crimean Tatars were allowed to return to their homeland. They are now struggling to re-establish their lives and reclaim their national and cultural rights against many social and economic obstacles, such as unemployment and land conflicts. The Crimean Tatars have created its own Parliament, *Kurultai*, to act as a representative body. There is also a 33-member executive body or Cabinet, *Mejlis*, the Chairman of which since 1991 has been the former Soviet dissident Mustafa Jemilev.

Today, more than 250,000 Crimean Tatars are living in Crimea and another 150,000 are still in exile in Central Asia, mainly Uzbekistan. There is also a substantial section of population of Crimean Tatar origin living in Turkey, descendants of those who emigrated in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Source: Crimean Tatar Homepage, *Kirim Tatarlarnin Evi*, [www.euronet.nl/users/sota/krimtatar.html](http://www.euronet.nl/users/sota/krimtatar.html)

### 3.4 Passportisation?

Russian forces cited the need to defend its citizens in the unrecognised republic as probably the main reason for starting military operations in South Ossetia. The distribution of Russian passports to South Ossetians began in 2002, after introduction of the new law on Citizenship of the Russian Federation. This law gave former citizens of the USSR who were left without citizenship the right to exchange their Soviet passports for Russian passports.<sup>60</sup> By 2006, some 90 per cent of the residents of South Ossetia and Abkhazia were said to have Russian passports. The number was considerably smaller in the third 'frozen' conflict, the Trans-Dniestr Republic in Moldova, where some 15 per cent of the population was estimated to hold Russian passports.<sup>61</sup>

After the Georgian Crisis, Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs Volodymyr Ohryzko accused Russia of organising mass distribution of Russian passports in Crimea. This led to a protest from the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which assessed these accusations as a provocation.<sup>62</sup> Dual citizenship is banned under Ukrainian law.

This was not the first time that Kyiv had accused Russia of distributing passports in Crimea. When dismantling Crimean separatism in the mid-1990s, Kyiv demanded that Russia close its Crimean Consulate in Simferopol, which it accused of having illegally granted Russian citizenship to residents of Ukraine. The consulate was allowed to re-open again in 1999.<sup>63</sup>

Despite official announcements that the SBU, the Prosecutor's Office, the MVS and MZS were all to investigate the alleged distribution of Russian passports in Crimea, no concrete data on the number of passports distributed in Crimea have appeared. Estimates of the current number of Russian passport-holders in Crimea range from a low 6,000 to 100,000.<sup>64</sup>

---

<sup>60</sup> Soloviov, Vladimir (2008), 'Tretii Krym', *Kommersant Vlast*, Vol. 38, No. 791, p. 13.

<sup>61</sup> Popescu 'Outsourcing' *de facto* Statehood: Russia and the Secessionist Entities in Georgia and Moldova', Published: , p 5.

<sup>62</sup> Tymchuk, Dmitrii (2008), 'Plius pasportizatsiia chukhoyi krayiny', *Ukrayinska Pravda*, <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2008/9/9/80965.htm>.

<sup>63</sup> Kuzio *Ukraine - Crimea - Russia: Triangle of Conflict*, p 143-144.

<sup>64</sup> Kuzio, Taras (2008a), 'Russian passports as Moscow's geopolitical tool', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 5, No. 176.

A local expert in Sevastopol has estimated the number of Russian passports in Crimea to be 40,000, most of which were distributed a long time ago to pensioners of the BSF, who had registered in Russia to get a higher pension.<sup>65</sup>

### 3.5 Conclusions

- The main Russian factors of destabilisation in Crimea are the information campaign, the presence of the Russian Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol and subversive operations.
- Russian subversion is using both pro-Russian nationalist organisations in Crimea and the Crimean Tatars.
- There is a serious ethnic conflict potential in Crimea, but it seems not strong enough to detonate on its own, without intervention from a third party.
- There is no reliable evidence of a mass-spreading of Russian passports among Russians in Crimea in the way it was done in South Ossetia and Abkhazia after 2002.

---

<sup>65</sup> Author's interview with Sergiy Kulyk, NOMOS Centre, Sevastopol, 20 October 2008.

## 4 The War Scenario

After the Georgian Crisis, speculation intensified in the international media on the risk of Russian aggression towards Ukraine and particularly Crimea.<sup>66</sup> This risk was even mentioned in the US presidential election campaign, when the republican candidate, Senator John McCain, urged viewers to 'watch Ukraine'.<sup>67</sup> McCain's vice-presidential nominee, the Governor of Alaska Sarah Palin, warned more explicitly that if Barack Obama were to be elected, 'Russia could invade Ukraine'.<sup>68</sup>

Russia's Prime Minister Vladimir Putin has stated that there will not be any South Ossetian or Abkhazian scenario for Crimea: 'Crimea is not disputed territory. Russia long ago acknowledged the borders of today's Ukraine'.<sup>69</sup> Even without assurances from Putin, it must be emphasised that there are important factors making a Russian attack on Crimea or Ukraine very unlikely.

First, Ukraine is not Georgia. The Ukrainian armed forces are much stronger than the Georgian ones. Also, the conflict in Georgia had a low risk of spreading to neighbouring countries. But a Russian military operation in Ukraine could possibly risk spark a large war with unforeseen consequences and could eventually drag in Ukraine's Western neighbours – particularly Poland and Romania – both members of NATO.

Second, the threshold for Russia to go to war against Ukraine – a sister nation – is most likely higher than against Georgia. Third, the immediate reaction from the West would probably be more serious and the effects more long-lasting than after the Georgian Crisis and Russia

---

<sup>66</sup> Larrabee, Stephen F. (2008b), 'The next crisis could take place in Ukraine', *Japan Times*, 8 September; Wilson, Andrew (2008), 'Is Ukraine next?' *The Guardian*, 5 September 2008; Krushelnycky, Askold (2008), 'Ukraine fears being next on Russia's hit list', *The Sunday Times*, 24 August 2008; Sushko, Oleksandr (2008), 'Nastupna - Ukrayina?' *Ukrayinska Pravda*, Last accessed: 12 October 2008, Internet: <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2008/8/12/79803.htm..>

<sup>67</sup> Politics.com, CNN (2008), 'Transcript of first presidential debate', *CNN*, Internet: <http://edition.cnn.com/2008/POLITICS/09/26/debate.mississippi.transcript/>.

<sup>68</sup> Tregubov, Viktor (2008), 'Ukraina na konu', *Gazeta24*, 23 October 2008; Zolotukhina, Inna (2008), "'Esli vyigraet Obama, Rossiia mozhet napast na Ukrainu'", *Komsomolskaia Pravda v Ukraine*, 23 October 2008.

<sup>69</sup> Tribushnaya, Elena (2008), 'Putin: U nas net pretenziy na Krym. Eto vse provokatsii', *Segodnya*, 1 September 2008.

cannot financially afford long-lasting isolation from the West, especially not in the middle of a global economic crisis.

Fourth, Russia does not need a war. Crimea is already pro-Russian and its economy is increasingly in Russian hands. A war in Crimea would probably destroy years of Russian investments in tourism and infrastructure in Crimea. If the situation there turned to war the BSF base would itself be a hotspot – and Russia is unlikely to provoke a conflict that might harm such an important installation.<sup>70</sup>

Fifth, Crimea is, nevertheless, also very much linked to Kyiv and the Ukrainian infrastructure. For instance, the peninsula receives all its drinking-water supply from Ukraine. That means, in case of an armed conflict with Russia, Crimea would be very sensitive to an economic blockade from Kyiv – like in the mid 1990s period of separatism.

Sixth, Russia has a greater selection of levers in order to influence Ukraine than Georgia, not least economically. The Ukrainian economy is more linked to Russia's than the Georgian economy and Ukraine is more dependent on Russian energy supplies. Lastly, Russia has greater opportunities to stimulate internal political chaos in Ukraine in order to delay or indefinitely postpone Ukraine's NATO membership.

#### **4.1 The 'Munich Analogy'**

Some Western media commentaries have nevertheless compared Russia's perceived attempts to restore the Great Russian Empire with Nazi Germany's aggressive policy that led to the Second World War.<sup>71</sup> In an article in *The New Republic*, Joshua A. Tucker, associate professor of politics at New York University, called this phenomenon the 'Munich Analogy'. In reference to Russia's invasion into Georgia, this 'Munich Analogy' assumed that, like Germany in the 1930s, Russia is in the initial stages of attempting to expand (or in this case to re-establish) its empire by invading, dismembering and eventually annexing territory from its neighbours. If the invasion of Georgia was the first step in this regard, then it is logical to ask what the next step will be.

According to Professor Tucker, Crimea has three characteristics that make it a particularly attractive option as the next step for Russian

---

<sup>70</sup> Author's interview with Michael M. Gonchar, NOMOS centre, Kyiv, 14 October 2008.

<sup>71</sup> Kuhner 'Will Russia-Ukraine be Europe's next war?' *The Washington Post*, 12 October 2008.

aggression. First, the Russian Black Sea Fleet is still located in the Crimean city of Sevastopol, based on a lease that currently runs through to May 2017. Second, ethnic Russians make up the majority of the population of Crimea. Finally, and somewhat ominously, there are rumours that Russia has been increasing the rate at which it is issuing Russian passports to ethnic Russians in Crimea, a tactic that was employed previously in the Georgian case.

These points notwithstanding, Tucker argues that an invasion of Ukraine by Russia remains very unlikely in the near future for several reasons. First and foremost, an armed conflict between Russia and Ukraine would most likely be a different affair from that between Russia and Georgia by several orders of magnitude, since the Ukrainian armed forces are much stronger than their Georgian counterparts.

Second, Russia has plenty of troubles of its own to deal with at the moment in the wake of the global financial crisis. This particular factor will be greatly exacerbated if the price of oil – which has provided a great deal of the backbone for Russia's newly aggressive foreign policy tactics – continues to fall.

Third, Russia paid a heavy price for its invasion of Georgia, including international condemnation, the flight of capital from Russian markets, and even encouragement of separatists within its borders. Finally, Russia still hopes to extend the lease for the Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol beyond 2017, and any armed conflict with Ukraine that did not result in complete annexation of Crimea would essentially end that possibility.

Moreover, according to Tucker, the 'Munich Analogy' is not the only way to interpret the Russian-Georgian conflict. Another way to view the Russian incursion into Georgia was as an attempt to send the signal to both its neighbours and the West that there would be serious consequences for countries that Russia considers to be within its sphere of influence should they continue to pursue pro-Western policies and, more seriously, NATO membership.

It is probably too early to say whether the Georgian invasion *per se* accomplished such a possible goal of Russian foreign policy or whether it forms part of a broader policy of territorial expansion fuelled by military conflict. Therefore it is also too early to say whether the 'Munich Analogy' is correct. However, if one accepts this

kind of signalling perspective as a good explanation for the Russian-Georgian conflict, then the logical conclusion must be that extending NATO membership to Ukraine would probably have the effect of making a potential Russian-Ukrainian conflict more likely instead of less likely.<sup>72</sup> NATO membership for Ukraine would then not increase security in the region, but decrease it.

## 4.2 Scenarios

In the Wall Street Journal, the Russia expert Leon Aron speculated on two scenarios that could lead to a military conflict in Crimea. The first concerns Sevastopol: Aron argues that with more than 70 per cent of Sevastopol's 340,000 residents ethnically Russian and 14,000 Russian navy personnel already 'on the inside', an early morning operation in which Ukrainian officials in the city are deposed and arrested and the Russian flag hoisted over the city should not be especially hard to accomplish. Once established, Russian sovereignty over Sevastopol would be impossible to reverse without a large-scale war, which Ukraine would be most reluctant to initiate and its Western supporters would strongly discourage.

A potentially bolder (and likely bloodier) scenario, according to Aron, might involve provocation by Moscow-funded, and perhaps armed, Russian nationalists (or Russian special-forces, *spetsnaz*, posing as irredentists). They would declare Russian sovereignty over a smaller city or a stretch of inland territory. In response, the Ukrainian forces based in Crimea outside Sevastopol would likely counterattack. The ensuing bloodshed would provide Moscow with the interventionist excuse of protecting its compatriots – this time ethnic Russians, unlike in South Ossetia – against 'genocide'.<sup>73</sup>

In August, the Ukrainian think tank Centre for Peace, Conversion and Foreign Policy of Ukraine (CPCFPU) presented some likely scenarios on the future of Ukrainian-Russian relations after the Georgian Crisis. These included a scenario of military conflict in Crimea, since although according to the CPCFPU military scenarios are less likely as

---

<sup>72</sup> Tucker, Joshua A. (2008), 'Next stop, Ukraine? What McCain's interests in Crimea Suggests about his Worldview', Internet: <http://www.tnr.com/politics/story.html?id=e92aa343-26f9-4433-9692-c9482d8a5296>.

<sup>73</sup> Aron, Leon (2008), 'Russia's next target could be Ukraine', *The Wall Street Journal*, 10 September 2008.



Russia has other means of influence on Ukraine, they cannot be completely excluded in the long run. The goal of such a policy would be to counterbalance the Ukrainian state powers, keep control over the stationing of the BSF in Sevastopol even after 2017, motivate territorial pretensions in Crimea and, on the basis of the general instability, prevent Ukraine entering NATO.

To achieve these goals Russia does not need a huge military conflict with Ukraine, but only to destabilise the situation in Crimea. To achieve this, they only need strike operations, prepared and executed by *spetsnaz* security forces and special units of the BSF, with maximum use of the potential of the pro-Russian population in Crimea.

In the first phase of the conflict there would be actions leading to strained relations between BSF personnel and the representatives of the local Ukrainian authorities. A pretext for a conflict might be a planned provocative attack on BSF property or harassment of BSF personnel. As a consequence, the local pro-Russian population would come to the defence of the military servicemen, and regular clashes would occur between them and the Ukrainian law enforcement authorities.

This would lead both countries to strengthen their military presence in and around Crimea – Ukraine in the framework of defending its territorial integrity, Russia in the framework of defending its citizens in Crimea or Sevastopol, whose representatives would plead with Moscow for help. Moscow would also intensify the question of Crimea's legal position in Ukraine. In response, Ukraine would initiate contacts with the West and the international community, probably experiencing the same fate as with the Tuzla Crisis in 2003, when Russian started to construct a dam linking its Krasnodar Krai to the Ukrainian island of Tuzla. At that that time, despite the administrative border between Krasnodar Krai and the then Crimean oblast being agreed in the 1970s and marked on maps, Russia nevertheless insisted, and continues to insist, on counting the Kerch Straits and the Sea of Azov as internal waters of the two states. The Western response to Ukraine at that time was to solve the dispute with Russia on its own.<sup>74</sup>

According to another more extended scenario, published for instance in the respected Russian military newspaper *Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozreniie*, Russia would annex Sevastopol and occupy Tuzla by

---

<sup>74</sup> 'Rossiisko-Gruzinskii konflikt. Vyvody dlia Ukrainy', (2008), *Defense Express*, Internet: <http://www.defense-ua.com/rus/hotnews/?id=26289&prn=yes>.

securing control of the Kerch Straits, which would allow the Russian army to invade Ukraine from Kuban. Paratroopers could then move towards Crimea from Novorossiisk, while the Russian fleet from Sevastopol would support the landing paratroopers. Sevastopol could easily be occupied due to the prevailing pro-Russian mood of the local population.

The Ukrainian army – the mechanised Kerch brigade and Simferopol artillery brigade – would block the coast at the potential attack points of the Russian paratroops. Mobile air brigades would be redeployed in Crimea from Dnipropetrovsk and Mykolayiv, maritime and land special forces from Kirovohrad and Ochakov. Crimean Tatar military resistance troops would be established in the peninsula. The consequence of such a conflict would be that Ukraine would lose and apply to the West for help.

In this case the scenario is exhaustive, but it must be added that Ukraine would be on the verge of civil war, since volunteers supporting different fighting sides would start actions in the east and west of the country. Objectively, the defeat of Ukraine is very likely, and it would apply for assistance to Europe and the United States.<sup>75</sup>

According to a study by the RAND Corporation, which in 1998 presented a similar model, in such a case Germany would be reluctant to interfere in the war and would suggest accepting the fact of Ukrainian division. The German government would blame Ukraine for starting the confrontation; privately, it would regard partition of Ukraine as essentially a *fait accompli* that the West must accept and manage. Its position would be supported by the majority of the EU and NATO countries.

Only the United States, Great Britain and Turkey would be in favour of helping Ukraine. Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary (who were not yet members of NATO and the EU at the time of scenario writing) would also call for a strong Western response to defend Ukraine against Russian aggression. However, Warsaw in particular would make it clear that its support is contingent upon broad alliance support involving Germany and other European allies, as well as the United

---

<sup>75</sup>Ivanov, Vladimir (2008), 'Napisan stsenarii novoi bitvy za Sevastopol', *Nezavisimoe voennoe obozreniie*, No. 22; Volovoj, Vadim (2008), "'Esli zavtra voina", ili Chto budet, esli Rossiia reshit otobrat Krym u Ukrainy?' *Geopolitika*, Published: 30 June 2008, Internet: <http://www.geopolitika.lt/index.php?artc=2268>.

States: Poland would not want to stand alone as a forward US base in a Russo-American war.<sup>76</sup> One important question in such a case would be whether the United States would really be ready to defend the sovereignty of Ukraine alone by applying military methods. Without the active involvement of the US, the UK would also not interfere in the conflict, whereas Turkey might limit its actions to military technical support.<sup>77</sup>

To sum up, all these scenarios come to more or less the same conclusion, namely that provocation by pro-Russian activists or actions by Russian special-forces in Crimea or from Russia could spur a military scenario either as a local conflict in Sevastopol or Crimea or as a large-scale war between Ukraine and Russia. They also come to the conclusion that Ukraine could not count on Western help against Russian aggression in either case.

### 4.3 The Tuzla Litmus Test in perspective

The Tuzla Crisis in 2003 serves as an important litmus test in two respects here – for Ukraine perhaps more important than the Georgian Crisis itself.

Litmus Test 1: In response to Russian provocation, Ukraine proved its readiness to defend its territory, first by diplomatic means and then by military means. A border guard unit was hastily deployed on Tuzla Island immediately after construction of the dam began and it was backed up by Interior Ministry special-forces with naval units on standby. An air defence exercise was also held in the Kerch Strait.<sup>78</sup>

Litmus Test no 2: Like the scenarios described above, the Tuzla Crisis proved that in the event of a conflict with Russia, Ukraine cannot count on Western support.

A third important lesson from the Tuzla Crisis was that it occurred within a long period of strengthening the pro-Russian vector in Ukrainian foreign policy, as then Ukrainian President Kuchma

---

<sup>76</sup> Shlapak, David; Kahlizad, Zalmay; Lesser, Ian O. (1998), 'Sources of Conflict in the 21st century: regional Futures and the U.S. Strategy', *RAND Corporation*, Internet: [http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph\\_reports/MR897/](http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR897/), pp. 328-329.

<sup>77</sup> Volovoj "'Esli zavtra voina", ili Chto budet, esli Rossiia reshhit otobrat Krym u Ukrainy?' Published: <http://www.geopolitika.lt/index.php?artc=2268>; Ivanov 'Napisan stsenarii novoi bitvy za Sevastopol', *Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozreniie* (2008), no 22.

<sup>78</sup> Kuzio *Ukraine - Crimea - Russia: Triangle of Conflict*, pp79-81.

desperately needed Russia's support in the 2004 presidential elections in order to ensure that a suitable successor was elected.<sup>79</sup> Therefore, for those who argue that Ukraine does not need Western security assurances and that it should abandon its NATO ambitions and instead improve its relationship with Russia in order to increase its own security, the Tuzla Crisis was a serious warning.

#### 4.4 Conclusions

- A military scenario for Crimea or Ukraine as a whole based on the Russia-Georgia war in South Ossetia is very unlikely.
- Circumstances that work against a military scenario are among others: Ukraine's military capability, which is much stronger than Georgia's was; the risk of spreading of the war to other countries including those of NATO; the risk of a far-reaching isolation of Russia by the international community; and, the opportunity Russia has to use other levers to influence Ukraine than military ones.

---

<sup>79</sup> Hedenskog, Jakob (2004), *The Ukrainian Dilemma: Relations with Russia and the West in the Context of the 2004 Presidential Elections*, Stockholm: The Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), FOI-R--1199--SE, pp. 14-20, 55-56, passim.

## 5 Crimea and NATO

Nowhere else in Ukraine is the question of NATO membership so controversial as in Crimea and Sevastopol. There are two reasons for this. First, Crimea, and Sevastopol in particular, are the two Ukrainian regions where anti-NATO opinion is strongest. The overwhelming majority of the inhabitants on the peninsula – who are Russians and who include a high percentage of retired BSF officers and former Communist Party functionaries – are categorically against Kyiv's ambition to join NATO. In a disputed unofficial referendum held in Crimea in December 2006 on the question of Ukraine's attempts to join NATO, 98 per cent voted 'no',<sup>80</sup> while in an opinion poll in March 2007, 99 per cent of the inhabitants of Sevastopol declared themselves against Ukraine's entering the alliance. Following anti-NATO protests in Feodosiia in 2006, several towns and cities around Crimea declared themselves 'NATO-free territories, an action later declared illegal by the Ukrainian authorities.<sup>81</sup> Responses obtained in a 2006 survey of Sevastopol, Crimea and Ukraine as a whole are summarised in this Table.

**Table<sup>82</sup>: Responses to the question 'Do you support the process of Ukraine's integration in NATO, which in prospect presumes assertion to the alliance?'**

Regions	Support	Most likely support	Most likely do not support	Do not support	Hard to say
AR Crimea	1.8%	2.7%	13.8%	76.1%	5.6%
Sevastopol	1.2%	2.2%	15.7%	78.7%	2.2%
Total Ukraine	9.4%	7.5%	14.4%	53.8%	14.9%

Second, uncertainties regarding Russia's compliance with the bilateral agreement on the BSF and on leaving Sevastopol by May 2017 at the latest make some NATO members hesitant to integrate Ukraine into

<sup>80</sup> 'Crimea says 'no' to NATO', (2006), Internet: <http://www.russiatoday.com/news/news/1080..>

<sup>81</sup> Ivanov 'Napisan stsenarii novoi bitvy za Sevastopol', 4-10 July 2008, p. 7.

<sup>82</sup> Bychenko, Andriy (2006), 'Public opinion on NATO and Ukraine's accession to it', *National security and defence*, Vol. 9, p. 38. During the Study, conducted by the Sociological Service of the Razumkov Centre on 20 April – 12 May 2006, 11 216 of respondents over 18 were polled in all regions of Ukraine. Theoretical error – 1%.

NATO in order not to provoke Russia. NATO formally bans non-member bases on its territory.

## 5.1 The MAP question

Due to lack of consensus over Ukraine's and Georgia's MAP status, no decision was taken at the NATO meeting in Bucharest in April 2008. The decision was instead postponed until the NATO foreign ministers' meeting in December. Even if the Bucharest meeting did not agree on the MAP question, the Summit Declaration welcomed 'Ukraine's and Georgia's Euro-Atlantic aspirations for membership in NATO' and mentioned that the alliance had agreed 'that these countries will become members of NATO'.<sup>83</sup> Although no time limit was mentioned, NATO in fact promised Ukraine and Georgia future membership.

Therefore, immediately after the Bucharest summit, advocates of Ukraine's NATO membership were optimistic about the outcome of the foreign ministers' meeting. If the answer were to be still negative in December, at least in 2009, when the alliance will celebrate its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Ukraine will be invited, according to the NATO optimists, because by ignoring Ukraine's membership ambitions the alliance would practically give Russia a veto.

The Georgian Crisis provided fuel for both advocates and opponents of MAP for Ukraine. The advocates claimed that Russia's heavy-handed invasion – condemned by Western leaders for its disproportionate use of force and the subsequent occupation of large chunks of Georgian land – vindicated those who 'see pro-Western Ukraine as an indispensable bulwark against neo-imperial Russia'.<sup>84</sup> Some thought that if Georgia had been given a MAP in Bucharest, Russia would never have attacked it (despite that the MAP does not give the applicant the possibility to invoke Article 5 of the Washington agreement, under which an attack against one is an attack against all members of NATO).

---

<sup>83</sup> NATO (2008), 'Bucharest Summit Declaration. Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Bucharest on 3 April 2008', Internet: <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2008/p08-049e.html>.

<sup>84</sup> Druker, Jeremy (2008), 'Ukraine's NATO hopes dashed', Internet: <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Current-Affairs/Security-Watch/Detail/?lng=en&id=92919>.; Trenin, Dmitri (2008), 'Russian roulette in Kiev', *Newsweek*, Published: 6 September 2008, Internet: <http://www.newsweek.com/id/157509>.

Others, however, took Russia's act of violence as an argument for further restraint in the MAP question, as they feared Russia's reaction would be to further strengthen its position in the CIS by use of military means. As the Georgian Crisis showed, NATO has made no preparations to defend either Georgia or Ukraine militarily in the near future. NATO has even still not created any contingency plans – i.e. full defence strategies crafted for each member – for the three Baltic States, despite that they have been members since 2004.<sup>85</sup> Giving MAPs to Ukraine and Georgia would then only be an empty gesture, which would risk provoking Russia.

Within NATO, the supporters of Ukraine (mainly the US and the Central and Eastern European countries) on the one hand, and the 'Ukraine-sceptics' (Germany, France and Italy) on the other are still holding to their original positions from the Bucharest summit.<sup>86</sup> But on an official visit by President Yushchenko to Turkey, the Turkish President Abdullah Gül unexpectedly declared that his country supported NATO offering membership to Ukraine.<sup>87</sup> The rift between the two camps within NATO on the MAP question has possibly widened as a consequence of the Georgian Crisis.

Since NATO operates on the basis of consensus, any member nation can effectively block any candidate from membership. During her visit to St. Petersburg in October 2008, German Chancellor Angela Merkel made it clear that Germany would continue to oppose NATO membership for both Ukraine and Georgia and that it would even oppose placing the countries on the path to membership. This statement effectively set aside other statements made immediately after the Georgian Crisis in August, when Merkel seemed to take a more positive attitude to Ukraine's and Georgia's membership aspirations.

The German position is partly based on the country's dependence on Russian natural gas. If the supply were cut off, Germany's situation would be desperate, and risking that for Ukrainian or Georgian membership in NATO is not something that the German Chancellor is

---

<sup>85</sup> Cassata, Peter (2008), 'NATO commander requests full defense plans for Baltics', *Atlantic Council of the United States*, Internet: [http://www.acus.org/atlantic\\_update/nato-commander-requests-full-defense-plans-baltics](http://www.acus.org/atlantic_update/nato-commander-requests-full-defense-plans-baltics).

<sup>86</sup> Hedenskog, Jakob (2006), *Ukraine and NATO: Deadlock or Re-start?*, Stockholm: Swedish Defence Research Agency, FOI-R--2165--SE, pp. 59-63.

<sup>87</sup> Daly, John C. K. (2008b), 'Turkey pursues its own foreign policy line', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 5, No. 207.

prepared to do. However, Merkel's move is not just about natural gas – Germany views NATO enlargement as simply not being in Germany's interests. First, according to the German perception, expanding NATO guarantees to Ukraine and Georgia is meaningless. NATO and the United States do not have the military means to protect Ukraine and Georgia, and incorporating them into the alliance would not increase European security. From a military standpoint, NATO membership for the two former Soviet republics is an empty gesture, while from a political standpoint, Berlin sees it as designed to annoy the Russians for no clear purpose.

Second, if NATO were prepared to protect Ukraine and Georgia, all NATO countries including Germany would be forced to increase defence expenditure substantially. This is also not something that Germany and the rest of NATO want to do.

Finally, and most importantly, Germany does not intend to be drawn into a situation as in 1945-1990, when its territory was the potential prime battleground for a war between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Since the early 1990s this has not been the situation, and Germany does not want to return to conditions similar to the Cold War under any circumstances.<sup>88</sup>

Obviously, Ukraine will not be invited into NATO MAP at the 2-3 2008 December NATO meeting in Brussels, and most probably not at the alliance's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary summit in April 2009. The reason is not the negative attitude from certain members of the alliance to Ukraine or the fear of provoking Russia, nor is it the changing of the guards in Washington, which might prevent the outgoing Bush administration from futile pushing for this controversial decision since it will not be able to deal with the future consequences. Instead, the fact that MAP will fail to appear in December is due to the low level of support among Ukrainian citizens for NATO and the almost permanent political chaos in the country.

The Georgian Crisis has led to further polarisation in Ukrainian politics, cementing already serious divisions between the leading political personalities – President Yushchenko, Prime Minister Tymoshenko and opposition leader Yanukovych. When the latter, the leader of the largest faction in the Parliament, criticised the President

---

<sup>88</sup> Friedman, George (2008), 'The German Question', *Stratfor*, Published: 6 October 2008, Internet: [http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/20081006\\_german\\_question](http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/20081006_german_question).



for his unreserved support for the Georgian side, which he argued had devastated Ukraine's sensitive relations with Russia, the President in turn went on to attack the Prime Minister for her silence on Georgia. The Presidential Secretariat even accused her of treason and of being paid by the Kremlin. The Parliamentary Coalition fell and as a new coalition did not emerge, the President dissolved parliament and called for new elections.<sup>89</sup> However, as the Verkhovna Rada failed to unite on the bill that provides financing for the elections and under increasing pressure from the effects of the global financial crisis, Yushchenko suspended the decree on an election – presumably temporarily.

Ukraine's path to NATO is now *de facto* on hold until after the January 2010 presidential elections. In the second half of 2009, the intensive phase of the presidential election campaign will start making the candidates who are traditionally supporters of NATO membership remain silent on NATO because of its unpopularity among Ukrainian voters.<sup>90</sup> As both the current main candidates for presidency – Tymoshenko and Yanukovich – are less enthusiastic about NATO than the current president, the NATO question could be substantially downgraded from the political agenda after the elections. However, as the former Presidential Chief of Staff and Deputy Prime Minister for European integration Oleh Rybachuk said, the next president will be pro-European for sure. Even if the PRU in opposition holds a rather NATO-sceptic attitude, to say the least, in the role of Prime Minister, Yanukovich has always implemented the NATO and EU integration plans, often better than the Orange camp.<sup>91</sup>

---

<sup>89</sup> Larsson, Robert (Ed.) (2008), *Det kaukasiska lackmustestet: Konsekvenser och lärdomar av det rysk-georgiska kriget i augusti 2008*, FOI-R—2563—SE, p. 97.

<sup>90</sup> Kuzio, Taras (2008b), 'Ukraine's Security Vacuum', *Ukraine Analyst*, Vol. 1, No. 3

<sup>91</sup> Author's interview with Oleh Rybachuk, Stockholm, 14 November 2008.

## 5.2 Conclusions

- The anti-NATO opinion in Crimea is extremely high due to the Russian ethnic majority (as Russia strongly opposes NATO membership for Ukraine) and the sensitive issue of the Black Sea Fleet's basing in Sevastopol.
- Ukraine's NATO MAP expectations are on the hold due to the low level of support for NATO, the political disorder within the country, and the lack of consensus within NATO for Ukraine. The Georgian Crisis did not affect the MAP prospects in either direction for Ukraine.

## 6 Security Interests around the Black Sea

The Black Sea region is one of the most strategically important regions in Europe, providing, in particular, a major trade link and transit routes for Caspian energy supplies. It forms the core of the vast area that extends from Europe to Central Asia and the Middle East and it is close to the unstable Balkans, Caucasus and Caspian regions, which are characterised by common risks and challenges, in particular the so called ‘frozen’ conflicts and international terrorism.<sup>92</sup>

Six countries are littoral states of the Black Sea (Ukraine, Russia, Georgia, Turkey, Bulgaria and Romania) and several others (particularly Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Greece) are located in its absolute vicinity – the Wider Black Sea region. Added to that, a palette of security- and integration-promoting organisations and institutions, often with overlapping memberships and areas of expertise, such as the EU, CIS, NATO, OSCE and the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), play important roles in addressing the region’s challenges.

### 6.1 Ukraine

The Black Sea region epitomises for Ukraine a complex centre of vital interests in the sphere of geopolitics, economy and defence, particularly as Ukraine is still in the post-Soviet geopolitical area, not yet sufficiently anchored in the Euro-Atlantic security community. Caught between the West and Russia, Ukraine has tried to concentrate great efforts on furthering interests in the southern bearings – the Black Sea region.

The Black Sea region presents Ukraine with a medium-term perspective for achieving several strategically important objectives regarding its geopolitical interests. First of all, by strengthening cooperation and partnership with countries of the Black Sea region, Ukraine asserts its own independence and sovereignty. Transferring Ukrainian activity to the Black Sea region will weaken Russia’s

---

<sup>92</sup> Alexandrova-Arbatova, Nadia (2008), *Regional cooperation in the Black Sea area in the context of EU-Russia relations*, Athens: Centre for Black Sea studies, No 5, p. 9.

geopolitical dominance from above. The Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) offers Ukraine the chance to defend its national interests while developing bilateral and multilateral cooperation within the framework of the organisation. Unlike in the CIS, where Russia holds a dominant political role, in the BSEC Ukraine can follow a model of equal partner relations with Russia, which can be used in other dimensions of Ukrainian-Russian relations.

The absorption of Ukraine's south-eastern neighbour Romania into the EU also strengthened sub-regional cooperation with the Black Sea region and matched Ukraine's aspiration to future integration. The BSEC in that sense became one of the most important mechanisms adding to Ukraine's process of European integration.

Ukraine's economic interests in the Black Sea region are closely related to its geopolitical interests, in particular in the case of transportation and communication routes, which clearly include both strategic and economic features. Economically, cooperation in the Black Sea region can therefore be an alternative way for Ukraine to solve many of the problems it faces within the post-Soviet space, such as diversification of energy supply sources, development of its potential as an energy transit route (North-South, Europe-Russia, Europe-Asia).<sup>93</sup>

## 6.2 Russia

Russia remains one of the key players in the region. Half the Black Sea countries emerged out of the former USSR and they have 'troubled' relations with Russia (Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova and Azerbaijan) or between themselves (Armenia, Azerbaijan). Russia's influence in the region can be either positive or negative depending on the evolution of its relations with the EU and the West at large.<sup>94</sup>

Russia's interests in the region can be defined as follows:

First, Russia wants to retain its position in the region as one of the main actors (if not the main actor!), given the emergence of new strong regional (Turkey) and external actors (US/NATO) liable to exploit a

---

<sup>93</sup> Perepelytsia, Grigoriy (2007), 'The policy of Ukraine towards the BSEC and the Black Sea region' *Harvard Black Sea security program 2007*, pp 65-66.

<sup>94</sup> Alexandrova-Arbatova *Regional cooperation in the Black Sea area in the context of EU-Russia relations*, Athens: Centre for Black Sea studies., p 9.

historic opportunity, with the collapse of the USSR, to increase their influence in the region.

Second, Russia is interested in countering and suppressing extremism, separatism and terrorism. Evolving problems in the North Caucasus (Chechnya, Ingushetia, Karachay-Cherkessia, etc.) and the growing religious pressure (from *Wahhabis*, among other groups) makes this area perhaps even more important to Russia than the CIS in terms of interests and stability.

Third, Russia wants to ensure uninterrupted and secure energy, trade, civil and military communications within and throughout the Black Sea and the Straits. Ankara's threats in the 1990s to reduce the volume of Russia's oil-tanker traffic via the Straits as well as the competition for pipeline routes out of the oil-rich Caspian Sea basin have been seen by Moscow as a challenge to its interests in the region.

Fourth, Russia wants to prevent new dividing lines in the region and the expansion of military coalitions that exclude Russia as a full member. The absence of strategic goals in Russia's relations with NATO and the EU, given their policy of eastward enlargement, inevitably strengthened, and continues to strengthen, the 'great power' sentiments of the Russian political elite, as well as fears of a supposed Western strategy to 'encircle' Moscow. The enlargement of the EU is increasingly seen by many in Russia as a source of new challenges, not only in connection with the problem of Kaliningrad (territorial integrity of Russia, passenger and cargo transit, etc.), but also in connection with rivalries in the post-Soviet space.<sup>95</sup>

To a large degree, however, Russia's interests in the Black Sea region correlate with the interests of the NATO member and EU applicant Turkey. Both Moscow and Ankara regard the Black Sea region as their exclusive zone of national interests, in which they would rather not let the positions of the United States and the EU be strengthened. Moscow also has support from Ankara in its suspicion of GUAM (Georgia, Azerbaijan, Ukraine, Moldova), which they regard as an anti-Russian and pro-American organisation.

---

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., pp. 25-27.

### 6.3 Turkey

Crimea is a strategic region in the plans of Turkey, which pursues an active economic and cultural policy towards the peninsula, especially targeting the Crimean Tatars, who lean more towards Ankara than Kyiv.<sup>96</sup> In the 1990s, Turkish and Ukrainian apprehensions about Russian neo-imperialism propelled them into becoming strategic allies,<sup>97</sup> but relations did not subsequently develop in the direction of strategic partnership but mostly continued to be based on trade, with Ankara usually being sensitive to Russia's interests in Ukraine.

Endowed with the largest shoreline of all the littoral states, Turkey has long sought to assume leadership in the Black Sea region – although the country's policy towards that end has generally not been consistent or coherent. Nonetheless, with the end of the Cold War, Turkey took the lead in strengthening economic, political and cultural cooperation in the region. Specifically, it proposed and co-founded the BSEC in June 1992. The organisation was modelled after the European Economic Community and, as such, aimed to strengthen economic relations. Over time, BSEC has extended its 'soft' security agenda, for instance to the prevention of crime in the region.

BSEC has also proven to be a resilient and influential vehicle for increasing peace and security in the wider Black Sea region. Not only is it one of the few organisations in which Turkey and Armenia both participate, but it also serves to bring long-time rivals Turkey and Greece closer together.

Building on the success of the BSEC, Turkey took the lead in crafting a formal regional security framework. Entitled the Black Sea Naval Cooperation (BLACKSEAFOR), this organisation – unlike BSEC – is limited to the six littoral states of the Black Sea. Its primary activities are humanitarian aid, search and rescue operations, and environmental protection. Turkey has sought to supplement BLACKSEAFOR with a joint naval operation modelled after the NATO-led Operation Active Endeavour in the Mediterranean. The Turkish government has officially invited the other five littoral states to participate in Operation Black Sea Harmony, which is an effort to increase the ability and interoperability of the member states to respond to changing security

---

<sup>96</sup> Goriunova *Krym v kontekste...*, p. 3.

<sup>97</sup> Kuzio, Taras (2002), 'Turkish-Ukrainian Relations given a boost', *RFE/RL Newslines*, 3 July 2002.

threats. So far, Ukraine and Russia have joined, and Bulgaria, Romania and Georgia have all expressed an interest in becoming members.<sup>98</sup>

The conviction of Turkey that the issue of maritime security in the Black Sea region should remain in the sole purview of the littoral states has led to some tensions between Turkey and NATO, which is seeking to expand its scope of activities in the Black Sea. Although BLAKSEAFOR and Operation Black Sea Harmony cooperate with NATO's Operation Active Endeavour, Turkey is strongly opposed to any permanent NATO exercise or outpost in the Black Sea, an opinion not shared by all littoral states. Both Bulgaria and Romania have demonstrated their willingness to potentially provide a permanent base for NATO or the US in the Black Sea.

One primary reason for Turkey's opposition to a NATO presence is a concern that allowing a greater role for NATO would form the prelude to Ankara losing control of the Turkish Straits<sup>99</sup>, which it controls since the signing of the 1936 Montreux Convention. The Convention guarantees Turkey's sovereignty of the Straits and limits the military presence of non-littoral states in the Black Sea. In the aftermath of the Georgian Crisis in 2008, Moscow confronted the US for breaking the Convention's tonnage restrictions and for attempting to deliver humanitarian aid to Georgia on naval warships.<sup>100</sup>

Maintaining control of the Turkish Straits is a key aspect of Turkish Black Sea policy. Ankara considers any modification to the Montreux Convention to be akin to opening Pandora's box: it could revive the historical enmity between the Turks and the Russians, who have always dreamed of controlling the Straits in order to secure access to a year-round warm water port.<sup>101</sup> For Turkey, the control of the Straits gives Ankara the key to three seas: The Black Sea, The Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean Sea.

---

<sup>98</sup> Baran, Zeyno (2008), 'Turkey and the Wider Black Sea Region', in: Hamilton (Ed.) *The Wider Black Sea Region in the 21st Century: Strategic, Economic and Energy Perspectives*, (Vienna: Center for Transatlantic Relations, The John Hopkins University/Austrian Institute for International Affairs), pp. 88-89.

<sup>99</sup> The Turkish Straits in the West usually go under their Greek names of "the Bosphorus" and "the Dardanelles".

<sup>100</sup> Daly, John C. K. (2008a), 'Montreux convention hampers humanitarian aid to Georgia', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 5, No. 168.

<sup>101</sup> Baran 'Turkey and the Wider...', p. 90.

## 6.4 Western Interests in the Black Sea region

Western involvement in the Black Sea region was minimal during the 1990s. The United States' interest in the area started to increase with the start of the war on terror, when the US found itself in need of a larger military presence in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. When Romania and Bulgaria joined NATO in 2004, the US obtained the possibility of influencing the region through military support to these littoral states.<sup>102</sup> Romania's and Bulgaria's membership in 2007 also marked a turning point for the EU, as it highlighted the importance of the Black Sea region for the European Neighbourhood Programme (ENP) and raised the question of the EU's sub-regional approach to the Black Sea.<sup>103</sup>

When entering the process of enlargement into the Black Sea region, the EU and NATO faced similar, though in many ways more difficult, challenges than was the case during their enlargement to Central Europe.

First, Russia is stronger now and has greater leverage in the Black Sea region than in Central Europe, particularly in the economic realm. Second, the qualifications of aspirants for membership are much weaker than were the qualifications of the aspirants from Central Europe. Third, 'identity' issues play a much more important role in the enlargement debate today than they did a decade ago. Many members of the Euro-Atlantic community are not entirely convinced that Georgia, Ukraine and Turkey are really part of Europe, whether on geographical, cultural or religious grounds.

Fourth, NATO's role in particular is less certain today than it was a decade ago. Then, NATO was regarded as the pre-eminent Western security organisation. Today, European attention is increasingly focused on the EU. NATO's problems in stabilising Afghanistan have raised serious questions about the alliance's vitality and ability to meet the emerging security challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Finally – related to this – the strategic focus of the United States has changed. In the 1990s, the attention of the US was still heavily focused on Europe.

---

<sup>102</sup> Cornell, Svante; Jonsson, Anna; Nilsson, Niklas; Häggström, Per (2006), *The wider Black Sea region: An emerging hub in European security*, (Uppsala: Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program), p.65.

<sup>103</sup> Alexandrova-Arbatova *Regional cooperation in the Black Sea area in the context of EU-Russia relations*, p. 25.



Today, US strategic attention is concentrated on areas beyond Europe's borders – Iraq, China, North Korea, etc.<sup>104</sup>

Furthermore, during previous enlargement rounds there was a strong link between NATO and EU enlargement. Both were considered part of the same process of expanding security and stability eastwards. As a result, the NATO and EU enlargement processes were closely coordinated. However, in the future the close links that have existed are likely to be eroded. Some aspirants may become members of NATO but not members of the EU – or at least not have the prospect of EU membership for a long time. Moreover, erosion of the links between the two enlargement processes is likely to be accelerated if NATO becomes a more 'global' alliance.<sup>105</sup>

The primary goal of the US in the Black Sea-Caspian Sea region is to prevent unification of the three geopolitical rivals to the US in Eurasia – Russia, China and Iran – into a single block. In solving this task, Washington is striving to enlist as its strategic partners Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Georgia – through whose territory the transport corridor with Caspian energy runs in the Western direction.

Although the US and the EU are strategic partners, the policy of Brussels in the Black Sea-Caspian Sea region is to focus much more on using its soft power. If the policy of the US is basically about geopolitical domination and limiting the influence of Russia in the region, for the EU the most vital goal is to gain access to the energy resources from the Caspian region.<sup>106</sup> The level of concurrence between Russia and the EU is less dramatic than between Russia and the US in the region, despite enlargement of the EU to the shores of the Black Sea having given it more justification for its presence than the US.

With the accession of two Black Sea states, Bulgaria and Romania, to the EU, the security and stability of this area have become an immediate concern for the EU. As a result, on 11 April 2007 the

---

<sup>104</sup> Larrabee, Stephen F. (2008a), 'NATO and the Black Sea security', in: Hamilton (Ed.) *The Wider Black Sea region in the 21st century: Strategic, economic and energy perspectives*, (Vienna: Center for Transatlantic Relations; John Hopkins University/Austrian Institute for International Affairs), pp. 278-279.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., pp 291-292.

<sup>106</sup> Volovich, Olexiy (2008), 'Polityka Rossiyi, Turechyny, SShA i YeS v Chornomorsko-Kaspiiskomu rehioni: vzaiemodiia i supernytstvo', *Chornomorska bezpeka*, Vol. 1, No. 7, pp. 12-13.

European Commission launched the Black Sea Synergy, a new EU cooperation initiative for the Black Sea region under the framework of the ENP. The Black Sea Synergy complements the EU's already substantial efforts to promote stability and reforms in the countries surrounding the Black Sea and completes the network of regional cooperation frameworks in the EU's neighbourhood by adding another region to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and the Northern Dimension.<sup>107</sup>

## 6.5 Conclusions

- In the post-Cold War period, the Black Sea region has emerged as one of the most strategically important regions in Europe.
- Ukraine uses its engagement in the Black Sea region to strengthen cooperation and partnership, thus asserting its own independence and by that weaken Russia's dominance.
- Both Russia and Turkey regard the Black Sea region as their exclusive zone of national interests and they unite in their efforts to limit NATO presence in there.
- Western involvement in the Black Sea region is rapidly increasing due to enlargements of EU and NATO to Bulgaria and Romania. As for further enlargement into the region, serious challenges loom ahead.

---

<sup>107</sup> 'Black Sea synergy - a new regional cooperation initiative', (2007), Internet: [http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/com07\\_160\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/com07_160_en.pdf); Pop, Adrian (2007), 'The EU migration strategy at its new Eastern border' *Harvard Black Sea security program 2007*, p 78.

## 7 Concluding analysis: The Crimean Balance

Russia's war in Georgia was a bitter lesson for those who might have forgotten that military means still exist as a tool in Russian foreign policy. While Crimea may not face a risk of being the next target, as speculated in international media immediately after the Georgian Crisis, it nevertheless has some serious problems:

- 1) Russia's influence in Crimea is very high due to the presence of the Black Sea Fleet, the dominance of the Russian media, and the general support for Russian policy from the ethnic Russian majority population in Crimea.
- 2) There is serious potential for ethnic conflict in Crimea between Russian extreme nationalists and disillusioned young Crimean Tatar men. Although the potential for conflict might not be strong enough by itself to spark a serious ethnic clash, it constitutes a weakness that can be further exploited by Russia.
- 3) Kyiv lacks the will or the appropriate leverage to get its policies implemented in Crimea and to resist the growing Russian influence there.

For the moment, Russia seems to be satisfied with the existing balance in Crimea under the 'Big Treaty' from 1997, in which Russia officially accepted the territorial integrity of Ukraine in return for the temporary stationing of the Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol. However, if Ukraine starts to shift this balance by changing the rules concerning the stationing of the Fleet, or insisting on pre-term termination of the leasing agreement, it may provoke Russia to take retaliatory measures, for instance not extending the inter-state agreement. This could lead Russia to intensify the questioning of Crimea's status as part of Ukraine, or to step up its subversive activities in Crimea. Russian acceptance of Ukraine's territorial integrity would then be considered temporary and the stationing of the Black Sea Fleet would risk becoming permanent instead.

There is also, of course, a balancing act in Kyiv in the Ukrainian-Russian relations. If another president will come to power in the next presidential elections, which today seems likely – even if it is too early today to leave out the incumbent president from the race, although his

rating is currently extremely low (5-6%) – the new president will most likely strive to conduct a more benevolent policy vis-a-vis Russia. NATO integration will be down-graded and the EU integration – which has a longer perspective and does not upset Russia to the same extent as the question of NATO membership does – will come into focus. Furthermore, neither Tymoshenko nor Yanukovich, nor any other imaginable candidate feel the same fascination for the ‘National project’ as Yushchenko does. This means that the ‘Ukrainisation’, questions regarding *Holodomor*<sup>108</sup> or the UPA<sup>109</sup> veterans, or the creation of one single National Orthodox Church of Ukraine – which are all sensitive issues for Russia – will not interfere in the Ukrainian-Russian relations to the same level as they have done under Yushchenko.

But here it is also important to remember two things: a) the next president will not be ‘pro-Russian’ but work for Ukraine’s interests in mutual understanding with Russia. Moscow understands the difference and has long ago given most of its hope of getting a pro-Russian president in Ukraine; b) this will not mean that Russia will completely end with its policy to tie Ukraine closer to itself; to cease opposing Ukraine’s striving to the West, or even to cease using pro-Russian forces in Crimea. It is important to remember that the Tuzla Crisis was initiated during a period when the Russian vector in Kyiv’s foreign policy was exceptionally strong. Thus, Russia will continue not to see Ukraine as an equal partner.

Furthermore, some might think that the global financial crisis, which has created a drastic fall in energy prices, will make Russia less aggressive in its foreign policy towards its neighbours. Often, the exceptional rise in energy prices has been explained as the main factor behind Russia’s new assertive foreign policy since Putin’s presidency (compare p. 38). But a Ukrainian energy expert considers this to be an exclusively Western perception of Russia’s foreign policy. According to him, instead, the fall in energy prices might force Russia to a greater extent to use other means of leverage against its neighbours in the Near Abroad – among them also military ones.<sup>110</sup> Russia’s policy towards

---

<sup>108</sup> The man-made famine in Soviet Ukraine in 1932-33, which is estimated to have caused the deaths of millions of people.

<sup>109</sup> The Ukrainian Insurgent Army, which fought a guerrilla war during and after the Second World War against the Soviet, Polish and Nazi-German armies.

<sup>110</sup> Author’s interview with Michael M. Gonchar, NOMOS centre, Kyiv 14 October 2008.

Ukraine, and particularly Crimea, thus, will continue to be an important litmus test for Russia's foreign policy also in the future.

## 8 Sources

### Interviews

Michael M. Gonchar, NOMOS centre, Kyiv, 14 October 2008

Mustafa Jemilev, Chairman of the Crimean Tatar Mejlis, Simferopol, 15 October 2008

Sergiy Kulyk, NOMOS centre, Sevastopol, 20 October 2008

Oleh Rybachuk, Sospilnist Foundation, former Chief of Presidential Secretariat and Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine, Stockholm, 14 November 2008

Aleksandr Shevchuk, National Institute for Strategic Studies, Simferopol, 16 October 2008

Oleg Smirnov, NGO "Integration and Development", Simferopol, 17 October 2008

Yulia Tyshchenko, Ukrainian Center for Independent Political Research, Kyiv, 13 October 2008

Ilmi Umerov, Mayor of Bakhchisarai, Bakhchisarai, 21 October 2008

### Articles, books, newspapers, Internet

Abdullaev, Nabi (2006), 'Russia To shift Black Sea Fleet Out of Ukraine', *Defense News*, 28 March 2007, Internet: <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?F=1636012&C=navwar>.

Alexandrova-Arbatova, Nadia (2008), *Regional cooperation in the Black Sea area in the context of EU-Russia relations*, Athens: Centre for Black Sea studies, No 5.

aq.Media (2008), "'Sobytiia": Hizb-ut-Tahrir vykhodit iz podolia', Published: Internet: <http://www.aq-media.info/taxonomy/term/6051%2C5952%2C6222/all>.

- Aron, Leon (2008), 'Russia's next target could be Ukraine', *The Wall Street Journal*, 10 September 2008.
- Baran, Zeyno (2008), 'Turkey and the Wider Black Sea Region', in: Hamilton, Daniel; Mangott, Gerhard (Ed.) *The Wider Black Sea Region in the 21st Century: Strategic, Economic and Energy Perspectives*, (Vienna: Center for Transatlantic Relations, The John Hopkins University/Austrian Institute for International Affairs).
- 'Black Sea synergy - a new regional cooperation initiative', (2007), Published: 11 April 2007, Internet: [http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/com07\\_160\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/com07_160_en.pdf).
- Bychenko, Andriy (2006), 'Public opinion on NATO and Ukraine's accession to it', *National security and defence*, Vol. 9.
- Cassata, Peter (2008), 'NATO commander requests full defense plans for Baltics', *Atlantic Council of the United States*, Published: Internet: [http://www.acus.org/atlantic\\_update/nato-commander-requests-full-defense-plans-baltics](http://www.acus.org/atlantic_update/nato-commander-requests-full-defense-plans-baltics).
- Cornell, Svante; Jonsson, Anna; Nilsson, Niklas; Häggström, Per (2006), *The wider Black Sea region: An emerging hub in European security*, (Uppsala: Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program).
- 'Crimea says 'no' to NATO', (2006), Internet: <http://www.russiatoday.com/news/news/1080>.
- Daly, John C. K. (2008a), 'Montreux convention hampers humanitarian aid to Georgia', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 5, No. 168.
- Daly, John C. K. (2008b), 'Turkey pursues its own foreign policy line', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 5, No. 207.
- 'Defense Minister Says Russia will not Withdraw its Navy from Sevastopol', (2005), *RFE/RL Newslines*, 28 March 2007, Internet: <http://www.rferl.org/newslines/2005/03/1-RUS/rus-070305.asp>.
- Druker, Jeremy (2008), 'Ukraine's NATO hopes dashed', Internet: <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Current-Affairs/Security-Watch/Detail/?lng=en&id=92919>.
- Friedman, George (2008), 'The German Question', *Stratfor*, 6 October 2008, Internet: [http://www.stratfor.com/weekly-/20081006\\_german\\_question](http://www.stratfor.com/weekly-/20081006_german_question).
- Goriunova, E.A. (2007), *Krym v kontekste natsionalnoi bezopastnosti Ukrainy*, CIRS Policy Recommendation Initiative, No 7.
- Hedenskog, Jakob (2004), *The Ukrainian Dilemma: Relations with Russia and the West in the Context of the 2004 Presidential Elections*, Stockholm: The Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), FOI-R--1199--SE.

- Hedenskog, Jakob (2006), *Ukraine and NATO: Deadlock or Re-start?*, Stockholm: Swedish Defence Research Agency, FOI-R--2165--SE.
- Hedenskog, Jakob; Larsson, Robert L. (2007), *Russian Leverage on the CIS and the Baltic States*, FOI-R--2280--SE.
- 'Hizb ut-Tahrir Ukraine: Muslim Womens' Conference ', (2008), *Hizb-ut-Tahrir*, Internet: <http://www.hizb.org.uk/hizb/who-is-ht/a-global-party/hizb-ut-tahrir-ukraine-muslim-womens-conference.html>.
- 'Inform: Newsletter for the international community providing views and analysts from the Bloc of Yulia Tymoshenko (BYuT)', (2008), Internet: [http://www.ibyut.com/informd\\_files/Issue%2072.pdf](http://www.ibyut.com/informd_files/Issue%2072.pdf).
- Isauskas, Ceslovas (2008), 'Sevastopol: the Russian fleet will have to clear out', Internet: <http://www.geopolitika.lt/?artc=2731>.
- Ivanov, Vladimir (2008), 'Napisan stsenarii novoi bitvy za Sevastopol', *Nezavisimoe voennoe obozreniie*, No. 22, pp. 1, 7.
- Kagarlitsky, Boris (2008), 'Russians take themselves too seriously', *Moscow Times*, 29 May 2008.
- Kapustin, Mykhailo (2008), 'Diialnist rosiiskykh hromadskykh ta hromadsko-politychnykh orhanizatsii i rukhiv v AR Krym', in: Tyshchenko, Yulia (Ed.) *Suspilno-Politychni protsesy v AR Krym: osnovni tendentsii*, (Kyiv: Ukrainyskyi Nezalezhnyi tsentre politychnykh doslidzhen).
- 'Konseptsiiia vneshnei politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii', (2008), Internet: <http://www.kremlin.ru/text/docs/2008/07/204108.shtml>.
- Krushelnycky, Askold (2008), 'Ukraine fears being next on Russia's hit list', *The Sunday Times*, 24 August.
- Kuhner, Jeffrey T. (2008), 'Will Russia-Ukraine be Europe's next war?' *The Washington Post*, 12 October 2008.
- Kupchinsky, Roman (2008), 'Sub-rosa warfare in the Crimea', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 5, No. 142.
- Kuzio, Taras (2002), 'Turkish-Ukrainian Relations given a boost', *RFE/RL Newslines*, 3 July 2002.
- Kuzio, Taras (2006), 'Russian subversion in Crimea', *Jane's Intelligence Digest*, No. 10 November 2006.
- Kuzio, Taras (2007), *Ukraine - Crimea - Russia: Triangle of Conflict*, (Stuttgart: ibidem).
- Kuzio, Taras (2008a), 'Russian passports as Moscow's geopolitical tool', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 5, No. 176.
- Kuzio, Taras (2008b), 'Ukraine's Security Vacuum', *Ukraine Analyst*, Vol. 1, No. 3.



- Larrabee, Stephen F. (2008a), 'NATO and the Black Sea security', in: Hamilton, Daniel; Mangott, Gerhard (Ed.) *The Wider Black Sea region in the 21st century: Strategic, economic and energy perspectives*, (Vienna: Center for Transatlantic Relations; John Hopkins University/Austrian Institute for International Affairs).
- Larrabee, Stephen F. (2008b), 'The next crisis could take place in Ukraine', *Japan Times*, 8 September 2008.
- Larsson, Robert (Ed.) (2008), *Det kaukasiska lackmustestet: Konsekvenser och lärdomar av det rysk-georgiska kriget i augusti 2008*, FOI-R--2563--SE.
- Larsson, Robert L. (2006), *Konfliktlösning i Kaukasien: en säkerhetspolitisk lägesuppdatering 2006* Stockholm: Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), December 2006, FOI-R--2108-SE.
- 'Little-known Tatar group seeks Russian protection, drawing rebukes', (2008), *Ukrainian Journal*, 17 September 2008.
- Lopata, Raimundas (2006), 'Repatriation: Outlines of the Russian Model', *Lithuanian Foreign Policy Review*, Vol. Vol. 2007/1.
- Maigre, Merle (2008), *Crimea - The Achilles' Heel of Ukraine*, International Centre for Defence Studies, November 2008,
- Myasnikov, Viktor (2008), 'Ivanov ne derzhitsia za Sevastopol', *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 20 October 2008.
- NATO (2008), 'Bucharest Summit Declaration. Issued by the Heads of State and Government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in Bucharest on 3 April 2008', Published: 3 April 2008, Internet: <http://www.nato.int/docu/pr/2008/p08-049e.html>.
- 'Parlament Kryma podderzhal nezavisimost Yuzhnoy Osetii i Abkhazii', (2008), *Novosti Kryma*, Internet: <http://news.allcrimea.net/print/1221640220/>.
- Perepelytsia, Grigoriy (2007), 'The policy of Ukraine towards the BSEC and the Black Sea region' *Harvard Black Sea security program 2007*.
- Politics.com, CNN (2008), 'Transcript of first presidential debate', *CNN*, Internet: <http://edition.cnn.com/2008/-POLITICS/09/26/debate.mississippi.transcript/>.
- Pop, Adrian (2007), 'The EU migration strategy at its new Eastern border' *Harvard Black Sea security program 2007*.
- Popescu, Nicu (2006), 'Outsourcing' *de facto* Statehood: Russia and the Secessionist Entities in Georgia and Moldova', October 2008, Internet: <http://www.policy.hu/npopescu/publications/-06.07.20%20CEPS%20Policy%20Brief%20109%20Outsourcing%20de%20facto%20statehood%20109.pdf>.

- Qirim-Vilayeti (2008), 'Pervaia Vsekrymskaia zhenskaia islamskaia konferentsiia "Zhenishchina pod seniu religii Allakha"',  
Internet: [http://qirim-vilayeti.org/index.-php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=645&Itemid=170](http://qirim-vilayeti.org/index.-php?option=com_content&task=view&id=645&Itemid=170).
- 'Rossiisko-Gruzinskii konflikt. Vyvody dlia Ukrainy', (2008), *Defense Express*, Internet: <http://www.defense-ua.com/rus/hotnews/?id=26289&prn=yes>.
- 'Russia cooperating on fleet Crimea access', (2008), *Ukrainian Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 152.
- 'Russia may stay station Black Sea Fleet in Crimea after 2017, says PM', (2006), Published: 28 March 2007, Internet: <http://www.ukrainianjournal.com/index.php?w=article&id=3452>.
- 'Russia wants Black Sea Fleet in Ukraine after 2017 - Navy chief', (2008), *RIA Novosti*, Internet: <http://en.rian.ru/russia/20080725/114915065.html>.
- Samar, Valentyna (2008), 'Sprava pro "Dzhikhad slova"', *Dzerkalo Tyzhnya*, Vol. 13, No. 692.
- Shlapak, David; Kahlizad, Zalmay; Lesser, Ian O. (1998), 'Sources of Conflict in the 21st century: regional Futures and the U.S. Strategy', *RAND Corporation*, Internet: [http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph\\_reports/MR897/](http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR897/).
- Socor, Vladimir (2008a), 'Moscow mayor, Russian defense minister question Russia-Ukraine agreement on Sevastopol', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 5, No. 91.
- Socor, Vladimir (2008b), 'Moscow questions territorial status quo in the Crimea', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 5 No. 92.
- Socor, Vladimir (2008c), 'Moscow seeks more excuses for prolonging naval presence in Sevastopol ', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 5, No. 203.
- Soloviov, Vladimir (2008), 'Tretii Krym', *Kommersant Vlast*, Vol. 38, No. 791.
- Sushko, Oleksandr (2008), 'Nastupna - Ukrayina?' *Ukrayinska Pravda*, 12 August 2008, Internet: <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2008/8/12/79803.htm>.
- Tregubov, Viktor (2008), 'Ukraina na konu', *Gazeta24*, 23 October 2008.
- Trenin, Dmitri (2008), 'Russian roulette in Kiev', *Newsweek*, 6 September 2008, Internet: <http://www.newsweek.com/id/157509>.
- Tribushnaya, Elena (2008), 'Putin: U nas net pretenziy na Krym. Eto vse provokatsii', *Segodnya*, 1 September 2008.

- Tucker, Joshua A. (2008), 'Next stop, Ukraine? What McCain's interests in Crimea Suggests about his Worldview', Published: 13 October 2008, Internet: <http://www.tnr.com/politics/story.html?id=e92aa343-26f9-4433-9692-c9482d8a5296>.
- Tymchuk, Dmitrii (2008), 'Plius pasportizatsiia chukhoyi krayiny', *Ukrayinska Pravda*, 9 September 2008.
- 'Ukrainian-English Transliteration Table', (1996), *Ukrainian Legal Terminology Commission*, Internet: <http://www.rada.gov.ua/translit.htm>.
- Varfolomeyev, Oleg (2006), 'Yanukovych distances himself from Crimea's radical slavs', *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 3, No. 159.
- Wilson, Andrew (2008), 'Is Ukraine next?' *The Guardian*, 5 September 2008.
- 'Vladimir Kuroyedov has announced two new Black Sea Fleet bases will be built in Novorossiisk area on the Black sea coast', (2006), *The Russian Newsroom*, 28 March 2007, Internet: [http://www.russiannewsroom.com/content.aspx?id=2970\\_Politics&date=2006-2-18](http://www.russiannewsroom.com/content.aspx?id=2970_Politics&date=2006-2-18).
- Volovich, Olexiy (2008), 'Polityka Rossiyi, Turechyny, SShA i YeS v Chornomorsko-Kaspiiskomu rehioni: vzaiemodiia i supernytstvo', *Chornomorska bezpeka*, Vol. 1, No. 7.
- Volovoj, Vadim (2008), "'Esli zavtra voina", ili Chto budet, esli Rossiia reshit otobrat Krym u Ukrainy?' *Geopolitika*, 30 June 2008, Internet: <http://www.geopolitika.lt/index.php?artc=2268>.
- 'Yanukovych: Bazuvannia ChF Rossiyi v Krymu vyhidne ', (2008), *Ukrainian News Agency*, Internet: <http://www.ukranews.com/ukr/article/157468.html>.
- 'Yushchenko accuses Russians of trying to foment Crimean separatism', (2008), *Ukrainian Journal*, 18 September 2008.
- 'Yushchenko decrees restrict Russian fleet', (2008), *Ukrainian Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 148.
- Zolotukhina, Inna (2008), "'Esli vyigraet Obama, Rossiia mozhhet napast na Ukrainu'", *Komsomolskaia Pravda v Ukraine*, 23 October 2008.

## **Selected FOI reports on Russia and the CIS**

**Anderman, Karin; Hagström Frisell, Eva; Vendil Pallin, Carolina** (2007) *Russia-EU External Security Relations: Russian Policy and Perceptions*, FOI-R—2243—SE, February 2007.

**Arbman, Gunnar and Thornton, Charles** (2003) *Russia's Tactical Nuclear Weapons. Part I: Background and Policy Issues*, FOI-R—1057—SE, November 2003.

**Arbman, Gunnar and Thornton, Charles** (2005) *Russia's Tactical Nuclear Weapons. Part II: Technical Issues and Policy Recommendations*, FOI-R—1588—SE, February 2005.

**Bladel, Joris van** (2008) *The Dual Structure and Mentality of Vladimir Putin Power Coalition: A legacy for Medvedev*, FOI-R—2519—SE, May 2008.

**Hedenskog, Jakob** (2008) *Crimea after the Georgian Crisis*, FOI-R—2587—SE, November 2008.

**Hedenskog, Jakob and Larsson, Robert, L.** (2007) *Russian Leverage on the CIS and the Baltic States*, FOI-R—2280—SE, June 2007.

**Hedenskog, Jakob and Lavrenyuk, Viktor** (eds.) (2007) *Comparing the Baltic and Black Sea Regions: Regional Security, Energy Security and Euro-Atlantic Integration*, FOI-R—2281—SE, June 2007.

**Hedenskog, Jakob** (2006) *Ukraine and NATO: Deadlock or Re-start?* FOI-R—2165—SE, December 2006.

**Hedenskog, Jakob** (2004) *The Ukrainian Dilemma: Relations with Russia and the West in the Context of the 2004 Presidential Elections*. FOI-R--1199--SE, March 2004.

**Holmberg, Carl** (2008) *The Struggle for Bureaucratic and Economic Control in Russia*, FOI-R—2504—SE, April 2008.

**Holmberg, Carl** (2008) *Managing elections in Russia – Mechanisms and problems*, FOI-R—2474—SE, February 2008.

**Knoph, Jan T.** (2004) *Civilian Control of the Russian State forces: a challenge in theory and practice*, FOI-R—1175—SE, February 2004.

**Larsson, Robert L.** (2007) *Nord Stream, Sweden and the Baltic Sea Security*, FOI-R—2251—SE, March 2007.

**Larsson, Robert L.** (2006) *Russia's Energy Policy: Security Dimensions and Russia's Reliability as an Energy Supplier*, FOI-R-1932-SE, March 2006.

**Larsson, Robert L.** (ed.) (2005) *Whither Russia? Conference Proceedings*, Strategiskt forum, nr. 15, Stockholm, FOI, September 2004.

**Leijonhielm, Jan and Westerlund, Fredrik** (eds.) (2007) *Russian Power Structures – Present and Future Roles in Russian Politics*, FOI-R--2437—SE, December 2007.

**Leijonhielm, Jan and Larsson, Robert L.** (2004) *Russia's Strategic Commodities: Energy and Metals as Security Levers*, FOI-R--1346—SE, November 2004.

**Leijonhielm, Jan et al.** (2005) *Russian Military Capability in a Ten-Year Perspective: Problems and Trends 2005 – Summary and Conclusions from a Study for the Swedish Ministry of Defence*, Stockholm, FOI Memo 1369, June 2005.

**Mamlöf, Tomas** (2006) *The Russian population in Latvia – Puppets of Moscow?*, FOI-R—1975—SE, May 2006.

**Niklasson, Charlotte** (2008) *Russian Leverage in Central Asia*, FOI-R—2484—SE, April 2008.

**Oldberg, Ingmar** (2007) *The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation: Powerhouse or Paper tiger?*, FOI-R—2301—SE, June 2007.

**Oldberg, Ingmar** (2006) *The War on Terrorism in Russian Foreign Policy*, FOI-R—2155—SE, December 2006.

**Oldberg, Ingmar** (2004) *Membership or Partnership: The Relations of Russia and Its Neighbours with NATO and the EU in the Enlargement Context*, FOI-R—1364—SE, October 2004.

**Oldberg, Ingmar** (2003) *Reluctant Rapprochement: Russia and the Baltic States in the Context of NATO and EU Enlargements*, FOI-R--0808—SE, February 2003.

**Sandström, Emma** (2005) *Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Azerbaijan and Armenia – a Security and Political Assessment*, FOI-R—1351-SE, May 2005.

**Unge, Wilhelm et al.** (2006) *Polish-Russian Relations in an Eastern Dimension Context*, FOI-R—2008-SE, June 2006.

**Vendil Pallin, Carolina** (2005) *Russian Military Reform: A Failed Exercise in Defence Decision Making*, FOI-R-1777-SE, November 2005.

**FOI reports can be ordered by:**

**E-mail:** [chrber@foi.se](mailto:chrber@foi.se)

**Telephone:** 08-555 030 51

**Internet:** <http://www.foi.se>

## The Author

**Jakob Hedenskog** (b. 1970) holds a Master's degree in Slavonic languages and political sciences from Uppsala University. He has also studied at the universities of Stockholm and St. Petersburg, Russia. Employed by the FOI since 1998, he has published reports on Ukrainian, Russian and the CIS military and security related affairs.



Photo: © FOI

## A selection of publications

**Hedenskog, Jakob** (2008) *Crimea after the Georgian Crisis*, FOI-R—2587—SE, November 2008.

**Hedenskog, Jakob; Mytryayeva, Svitlana; Vorotin, Valeriy** (eds.), (2008) *The Carpathian Region and Its Role in Strengthening Security and Cooperation in Europe*, FOI/NISS, 2008.

**Hedenskog, Jakob and Lavrenyuk, Viktor** (eds.) (2007) *Yevropeíska bezpeka: Porivniannia dosvidu Baltiiskoho ta Chornomorskoho rehioniv*, FOI/CIRS, 2007.

**Hedenskog, Jakob and Larsson, Robert, L.** (2007) *Russian Leverage on the CIS and the Baltic States*, FOI-R—2280—SE, June 2007.

**Hedenskog, Jakob and Lavrenyuk, Viktor** (eds.) (2007) *Comparing the Baltic and Black Sea Regions: Regional Security, Energy Security and Euro-Atlantic Integration*, FOI-R—2281—SE, June 2007.

**Hedenskog, Jakob** (2006) *Ukraine and NATO: Deadlock or Re-start?* FOI-R—2165—SE, December 2006.

**Hedenskog, Jakob, et al.** (eds.) (2005) *Russia as a Great Power: Dimensions of Security under Putin* (London: Routledge, 2005)

**Hedenskog, Jakob** (2004) *The Ukrainian Dilemma: Relations with Russia and the West in the Context of the 2004 Presidential Elections.* FOI-R--1199--SE, March 2004.

**Hedenskog, Jakob** (2000) *Mellan Nordpolen och Moskva: Murmansk oblast och relationen till centralmakten*, FOA-R—00-01457-170—SE, mars 2000.

**Oldberg, Ingmar and Hedenskog, Jakob** (2000) *In Dire Straits: Russia's Western Regions between Moscow and the West*, FOA-R--01617-170--SE, October 2000.

**Hedenskog, Jakob** (1999) *Mellan självstyre och centralstyre: S:t Petersburg och dess förhållande till centralmakten under 1990-talet*, FOA-R—99-01184-180—SE, juli 1999.