



The Debate on the Principle of Territorial Integrity in Europe: The Russian Perspective

A qualitative content analysis of how Russia positions
itself in the cases of Kosovo and Crimea

Diego Annys

Abstract

A central tenet of international law is the right to territorial integrity, a right for which states may have their reasons to interpret differently. This thesis sets out to give insights to how Russia approaches breaches to said right to territorial integrity depending on their own national interests, and how they frame said interests in the European cases of Kosovo and Crimea. This thesis uses realist, neoliberalist and constructivist lenses to shed light on this question, employing key concepts from these theories through a qualitative content analysis on documents from the United Nations Security Council as well as the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs that display Russia's position in above mentioned cases. This study reveals a change of the Russian perspective between both cases, as well as determining that Russia frames their reactions in a way that serves its own interests best.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Research puzzle

“President Putin’s ‘new model Russia’ is that of an independent Great Power resuming its geopolitical position on its own terms. This reflects a deep sense of insecurity and a fear that Russia’s interests would be threatened if it lost control of its neighbourhood.”
(Giles, 2015: vi)

The above quote shows an insight in the long-term and present-day issue of Russian problematic involvement in its region of the world that is researched in International Relations and encountered by politicians and people on the ground alike. Where the West views European states as fully sovereign countries and possessing the right to determine their own destiny, Putin is determined to re-establish Russian primacy in Eastern Europe (Giles, 2015: vii), as much of the identity of Russia is built upon its view of itself as a great power, meaning the possession of a sphere of influence in Europe. Attaining this identity is however accompanied by an inconsistent Russian stance on the principle of territorial integrity in Europe (Radeljic, 2017:277), as gaining the desired international recognition may not be achieved through routine and predictability, but contrastingly by a shifting disposition based upon national benefit.

Emerging from the controversies regarding territorial integrity in the European continent and in specific the continued Russian involvement, this thesis aims to answer the following research question: *What is the position of Russia in relation to the breach of territorial integrity in the cases of Kosovo and Crimea – how are changes in its reactions framed depending on national interests?*

Since the conception of territorial integrity in the United Nations Charter in 1945, the term has experienced significant changes in how it has been understood by some states compared to others and how it has been implemented by the international community at large. Along with the recent breaches in territorial integrity in Europe, whether it is due to people’s desire for self-determination, intervention by other countries, or a combination of both, this has generated increasing concern on how the notion of territorial integrity is being perceived and treated in and by Europe (Altman, 2017; Kalpakian, 2019; Massetti, 2021; Radeljic, 2017).

During World War II, it became clear that when the conflict ended, a new world order would have to be established. Countries came together in 1945 in the American city of San Francisco, and discussed the set-up of a new international organisation, named the United Nations

Organisation. The members of this society were sovereign states, and together they created the Charter of the United Nations, an important document of international law. In an attempt to build a stable world, the Charter includes securities to the territorial integrity of its member states:

All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations. (U.N. Charter art. 2(4))

Since the conception of article 2(4), territorial integrity has been going through enormous challenges. Demands for self-determination massively increased. States have broken up. Foreign nations have invaded other states, putting doubts on their territorial sovereignty, sometimes under the guise of humanitarian intervention but in reality for the sake of accomplishing their own objectives. Often these situations have led to war (El Ouali, 2012: xiii). Also in post-Cold War Europe we have seen breaches and ambiguity when it comes to the principle of territorial integrity, with examples such as Kosovo in 1999, Georgia in 2008, Crimea in 2014, and Donbas in 2022.

In all of these cases there has been some type of Russian connection, if not straight out Russian instigation. Yet for a state so involved with breaches of territorial integrity in Europe, cases have been met by differing conclusions by the Russian Federation when it comes to what is a breach of, or what is a suitable reaction to the breaching of the principle of territorial integrity, and it is not always possible to see a common thread in the policy of the country between different cases. Why is the reaction of Russia so divergent to a principle that is seen as a cornerstone of international law? How do the national interests and identity of Russia in the cases of Kosovo and Crimea cause the state to differ in its perception of the concept of territorial integrity in Europe?

1.2. Structure of the Thesis

This introduction chapter will be succeeded by the literature review, which will outline the scholarly debate connected to the issue of territorial integrity and the place of this thesis within International Relations research will be established. It will employ existing research to illustrate the current state of the norm of territorial integrity in International Relations as well as in real-world politics. Furthermore, it will sketch other approaches utilised to analyse Russian identity politics and create an understanding of the formation of Russian identity and interests. After the literature review this thesis continues with the theoretical framework used in this paper, which

will examine relevant concepts that are used in the analysis. Three theories of International Relations are used in this thesis, in a comparative manner: realism, neoliberalism and constructivism. These serve as the theoretical approaches from which variables are drawn, used in the analysis.

The theoretical framework is followed by and expanded upon in the methodology section of this thesis, which describes the chosen method, qualitative content analysis. It continues with explaining how said method will be applied, namely through the created protocol and data coding. After clarifying the thought behind the data selection, the limitations and shortcomings of the research are acknowledged.

In the background chapter the prehistory of the two selected cases is delved deeper into, as well as the relationship between Russia on one side and Serbia and Ukraine on the other, as the countries from which the cases declared independence. This is necessary to be able to answer the research question as well as to understand the position of Russia.

The analysis uses the earlier set out theoretical lenses and method to investigate the research question. An overall conclusion will be provided at the end of the thesis.

2. Literature Review

This next section intends to add to this work the required knowledge and relevant debates from earlier conducted research, necessary to collect and comprehend the upcoming analysis and conclusion connected to the research question about cases of breaches to territorial integrity in Europe and the Russian reaction to these.

The literature review will be centred on the following themes: debates on territorial integrity on a European and global level, and the identity politics of Russia. At this point the chapter will explore the construction of Russian identity and interests have been examined. Guided by these findings, the literature review will then outline key concepts necessary for the analysis of this work and for reaching a conclusion to the research question. The goal of this chapter is to see what other research has been done, help to create an understanding of the topic, and aid towards the construction of a research method to answer the research question.

2.1. Debates on Territorial Integrity

It is common for scholars to write about territorial integrity when it does not function as designed in international law, both on a more overarching level as well as looking at the European plane of the phenomenon.

2.1.1. Territorial Integrity Debates on a Global Level

To progress in the IR literature regarding territorial integrity, this first subchapter starts on a global level. Kalpakian for example (2019) looks at the decline of the norm of territorial integrity from 1947 till 2018 across the globe, a very overarching approach suitable, making it suitable as the first paper looked into. The main argument of Kalpakian (2019:10) is that the norm has lost its power as a rule in international law due to the inconsistency in its application, now being used as a means to achieve personal national gains instead. The paper begins by looking at the evolution and erosion of the norm on a world-wide scale over a course of seventy-three years. This is done by looking at language, through the emergence of terms such as humanitarian intervention, the responsibility to protect, and if the term precedent can hold up in international law (Kalpakian, 2019:13-18). It then continues on to use data, categorising all violations to the norm since 1947, assembling a list of forty-three cases. This data however remains largely unused, as it goes into an attempt to vaguely categorise the cases into groups such as instances that happened in the Middle-East, conflicts that were regional, and the influence of a country being a democracy (Kalpakian, 2019:18-21). Kalpakian (2019:21-24) then goes on to a case study of Kosovo and Crimea, explaining the situation and the US and Russian perspectives. The paper finished by concluding that no matter how long a principle of international law has survived, eventually power trumps principles.

Altman (2017) also looks at territorial integrity on a worldwide scale, but goes more specifically into cases where territory was taken from one state by another without the approval of the affected nation. The claim (2017:881) is that this happens successfully more often through *fait accompli* instead of coercion, despite coercion receiving more attention in academics. This claim can have interesting consequences to the conclusion of this thesis, as *fait accompli* and coercion may relate to different theoretical variables used in the coming analysis. The paper (Altman, 2017:882-884) starts with explaining the term *fait accompli*, and its significance to the theme of territorial acquisitions, and goes deeper into the topic, connecting it with the concept of bargaining in war. Altman (2017:884-889) continues by using data, assembling a list of all land grabs through *fait accompli* and a list of all territorial cessions through coercion from 1918 till 2014, respectively 112 and thirteen cases. First it is explained in a descriptive manner why exactly these cases fit the criteria, then the data is analysed. The reached conclusion agrees with the earlier mentioned claim. The actual conclusion chapter (Altman, 2017:889-890) offers no final summary or verdict, and instead aims to motivate the academic world to devote future research to certain topics by asking six questions, such as why

a state may have contrasting reactions to similar cases of territorial integrity breaching, a central aspect of the research question of this paper.

Van der Maat (2011) tackles a similar issue and delves into why the USA, as the hegemonic power in the world, decides to intervene or not intervene in cases of territorial integrity transgressions. It is a comparative study of six cases of such breaches in Asia and the MENA region between 1949 and 1989. The setup is that the international community has a dual standard when it comes to upholding norms such as the territorial integrity one – in certain cases massive military interventions were set up, while in other cases the breach passed by quietly (van der Maat, 2011:201). One can apply this to a Russian perspective, and change the question to when breaches are accepted and even encouraged, and when not. After a literature review, the paper (2011:201-206) explains the methodology and case selection: first three categories are fashioned to explain non-intervention. These are domestic factors, costs and benefits, and economic interconnection. These categories are then connected to three theories in the field of International Relations: domestic level theories, realism, and neoliberalism. Out of these theoretical approaches, ten variables are taken and explained, approximately three per theory. These variables are then used to discern patterns in the behaviour of states when it comes to non-intervention. Due to fundamental changes in the selected conflicts due to the longevity of them, the six cases become eleven. The analysis of the cases (van der Maat, 2011:206-212) is built upon two parts: a narrative analysis followed by a fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis. The paper concludes with summarising how the presence, strength, and combination of which variables in the conflict leads to what type of intervention or non-intervention. A separate conclusion is which theory explains the actions of the hegemon best (van der Maat, 2011:212-214). Van der Maat his approach is of large interest to the research question of this thesis, which aims to explain the actions of Russia. This could be done in a similar way as van der Maat, through variables taken from different theories of International Relations. A similar outcome would be anticipated, namely finding out how the presence of which variables related to Russia's national interests lead to changes in the framing of its reactions, which is the goal of this thesis research question.

Kontorovich (2008) seeks to answer the question what the expected international reaction is to territorial conquest, focussing mostly on legal sanctions. The paper (Kontorovich, 2008:438-439) claims there are only a small number of such conquests done after WWII, twelve to eighteen cases, which goes against the lists made by Altman and Kalpakian. The paper its criteria for what constitutes as territorial conquest are delved into, yet it however remains unclear as to why a smaller number of cases are deemed to conform, as when using the same

criteria Kalpakian would have 23 occurrences. The cases researched remain unlisted and as such unknown. Similarly to van der Maat, three categories are thought of to classify the conquests into groups. These are condemnation, approval, and acquiescence. In order to determine which cases fit which category, an analysis is executed by examining documents such as UN Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, and individual states' reactions (Kontorovich 2008:439-440).

While Kalpakian has an interesting case study on Kosovo and Crimea from the US and Russian perspectives to aid him in reaching a conclusion, the papers above ultimately look at territorial integrity on a global scale, and fall short of explaining breaches to territorial integrity in a more in-depth European perspective. Another matter these papers do not discuss is the reasoning behind the creation of new independent states that become dependent or allied with one country or alliance of countries. Again Kalpakian makes an attempt, but does not reach any distinct conclusion. The theoretical and methodological approach of van der Maat is however highly applicable to the research question of this thesis, and will be delved into and applied further in this thesis.

2.1.2. Territorial Integrity Debates on a European Level

Papers that discuss independence and autonomy movements in Europe are large in number. They however often focus on cases within the European Union such as the Basque country, Catalonia, and Scotland, which shows that more research is needed regarding the Russian perspective on Europe, as this thesis will provide. One such paper that also goes more specifically into the principle of territorial integrity in the EU is by Massetti (2021). In contrast to the short policy brief of Avery on the approach of the European Union on independentism within its borders (2014), which remains fairly narrow and law-based, Massetti (2021:1-2) delves deeper into the reactions of EU institutions in the cases of Scotland and Catalonia, and what their position is motivated by. The paper focuses heavily on the influence the EU has on independence movements within its member states. It begins by giving a descriptive background to what has happened so far when it comes to regional independence movements in the EU in general, and more specifically the two selected cases (Massetti, 2021:3-6). Massetti (2021:6-9) continues on with constructing six working hypotheses to be used in the further analysis, through applying an inductive approach and several kinds of institutional theory to interpret the workings of European party politics and EU institutions. The actual analysis of the paper (Massetti, 2021:9-15) continues the inductive approach, and uses and presents empirical material in the form of press releases, official documents, and declarations and speeches of

heads and staff of EU institutions and members of the European Parliament. With this material, the six hypotheses are either confirmed or disproven.

Papers such as Massetti's however do not involve cases and reactions of states in Europe that happen outside of the EU. Radeljic (2017:277-289) does exactly this, and examines the Serbia/Kosovo territorial integrity violation case from a Russian perspective. While the premise of the paper is interesting – does Russia defend Serbian interests or rather its own influence in Europe, examined by looking at Russian rhetoric and its position when it comes to the case – it falls into a descriptive analysis without further approaches to break down the rhetoric it recites, encouraging this question to be taken up again in this thesis to provide a deeper understanding

Reflecting on the literature above, much research has been done debating the principle of territorial integrity, though these are all on a global level. Many European level studies focus on cases within the EU and often do not reference territorial integrity, or do not succeed in investigating the why of a nation's actions and the differences in the policy between countries.

As this thesis deals not only with territorial integrity, but also with the national interests and accompanying identity of Russia and how influencing breaches of territorial integrity in Europe aids Russia to achieve its interests, the literature review will now look into research done on the identity politics of Russia.

2.2. Identity politics of Russia

In an effort to reveal the ideas in IR literature on Russia's perception of its own identity and the national interests that emerge from this identity, this subchapter will delve into the identity politics of Russia. While it has to be recognised that how Russia constructs its identity is an enormous and complex field, and would require much more research to fully comprehend it, it is required for this thesis to introduce the topic. The reason why this has such importance is because of the connection between the construction of the identity of Russia and its reactions to breaches of territorial integrity in Europe. Since the contemporary identity politics of Russia to a certain degree can be understood through the expansion of NATO and the EU, the thought process of Russia on this development may be of large significance to the impact on how we understand Russia's national interests. Russia and its position in Europe has been a topic of a vast amount of research, displaying many facets of the subject. From the historic founding of the Kievan Rus' state to the Soviet Union and contemporary Russian Federation, any point in time can be discussed from the perspective of how Russia interacts and co-exists with its European neighbours, with vastly differing hypotheses going from Russia being viewed as an

aggressive and threatening neighbour to being seen as a trusted ally and a fundamental component of European security. Many facets have to be paid regard to, such as history, how the Russian people have been governed, and the relationship between the elites and the Russian population, to name some notable examples.

As this thesis deals with the position of Russia in relation to the breach of territorial integrity in Europe and how it frames its reactions depending on national interests, the logical starting point here will be to delve into studies which contribute to an understanding of Russia's identity as well as national interest creation.

When it comes to studying the construction of national interests and national identity, the Russia from after the breakdown of the Soviet Union is a particularly valuable and significant case to review, according to Clunan (2009:1). She claims that how Russia defines its national identity and interests and specifically its road towards constructing that identity will be of large significance for world politics and especially its neighbourhood in Europe (Clunan, 2009:1-2). The result of this process of finding itself was not a fixed conclusion. Whether Russia would be neighbourly and a companion to Europe or the opposite was challenging to foresee for politicians and scholars alike (ibid.: 2). Through aspirational constructivism, Clunan emphasises on how the people of the Russian state view themselves constructs their interests, and through such these shared held concepts of national identity form national interests (ibid.:3). Questioning what Russia is, demonstrates that any country's national interests are inseparable from its national identity (ibid.).

While constructivist thinker Alexander Wendt fixates on international structural forces, disregarding the part internal factors play in determining the identity of a country (ibid.: 6), Clunan instead pays attention to the internal workings of the Russian state and how its leaders outline the Federation's national interests and identities (ibid.: 7-8). Clunan instead argues that both a country's past and present, and political elites purposefully shaping it, is how state identity is formed. Russia's national identity was different in the past, and how the country identifies today is not necessarily connected to its past (2009:8). It are these elites that by seek to define, maintain, and enhance the national interests and identity, by spreading the national self-image they have developed. By doing this, certain national aspirations are created about what the purpose of the country should be politically and on the international plane. The "national identities reflect aspirations", and through these identities and aspirations the national interests are formed (ibid.: 10). As Clunan says, specifically about Russia: "National identities are the product of debates among political elites over what their state's appropriate international status and political purpose are" (ibid.: 20).

Clunan concludes that national identity formation is a constructivist process, creating a strategic culture and a diffusion of ideas (ibid.: 21).

Other research brings us towards another significant conclusion useful towards the further analysis of this work. According to Freire and Kanet the Russian public opinion approves of the Federation reinstating itself as a great power, including the invasion of neighbouring countries (2012:4). As Russian patriotism grows, the leaders of the Federation have progressively fed their people the idea that Russia is endangered by the West. The Kremlin sees an international political system which is not dominated by the West in general and the USA in specific, and believes that Russia is being pushed into a position of forced compliance as an effort by the West to maintain its global power. This strengthened the Russian belief that the global system with the USA as its super power cannot continue and must be changed. This leads to actions by Russia that go against the interests of the USA, NATO and the EU, exemplified by its invasion of Georgia (ibid.). The actions of the EU and the US, or more specifically their reactions to Russian military actions abroad, lead to tense relationships between them and Russia that have not been seen since the Cold War (ibid.: 5). They see that Russia puts an unmistakable importance on gaining influence in the former Soviet countries, displayed by how “NATO’s enlargement is identified as the primary external threat to Russia” (ibid.) and how the country actively attempts to restrict power of the US in the continent while simultaneously working towards increasing their own. This is especially clear in its activities relating to achieving a foothold on security decisions in Europe (ibid.: 5-6). Delcour agrees that Russia has recognized its near abroad as a region they specifically are keen to increase interests in (2018:6). In other cases, such as Georgia, an internal change of power that put the country on a more Western-aligned approach caused Russia to fear a loss of influence over its neighbouring country, especially Georgia’s ambition to join NATO. In turn, Russia resorted to destabilise the country not only by pressuring the Georgian government, but eventually also by aiding independence movements and military intervention (ibid.), not only in a way to turn Georgia away from the West, but to increase its own influence over the country (Serrano, 2007:94).

It is however not only an expansion of the military NATO that troubles Russia. A significant happening was the fierce Russian response in 2009 when the EU’s Eastern Partnership was created, a type of reaction that till then was only displayed towards NATO. This was considered surprising, since the EaP is only a smaller initiative, administrative in nature (Cadier, 2018:79). It is not due to any potential military reasons that Russia reacted in this manner, but because of societal and economic stakes in the area that caused Russia to see the EaP as a prospective risk, since Moscow understands that smaller contemporary initiatives may bring forward substantial

EU structural power in the future, and see the need to act before they turn into such. One of the ways Russia has acted is by setting up their own similar initiative, to integrate the economies of the former Soviet nations more (ibid.: 79-80). This shows how Russia has also started implementing normative arguments in its international policy, in an endeavour to display a relationship between itself and its European neighbours based on common values (Makarychev, 2008:4). These aim to be a counterweight to the normative power of the EU, while however continuing to depend on military might as well (Cadier, 2014:80), demonstrating how the Kremlin has steadily come to see foreign affairs as a way to rival international norms that are not their own (Thorun, 2009:79).

These conclusions compel this thesis to look into more layers of Russia's interests when it comes influencing other European countries besides military concerns, which will also prove useful for the analysis of this thesis. According to Dmitri Trenin, the sphere of interests of Russia can be differentiated to make three categories, namely: military, economic, and societal (2009:12-13). These types of interests can be seen in previous mentioned research, and return in the data coding of this thesis, as these three kinds of interests will be employed to analyse the data. These three categories also correlate to the three theories used in this work, which will be looked into in the next chapter.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1. Introduction

To be able to select and outline the key variables used in the data analysis, the International Relations theories of realism, neoliberalism and constructivism and their basic elements and roots are taken into examination, where the different theories represent different national interests. A sketch of these three theories is drawn, by means of going through the thinking of prominent and relevant researchers. Each of the outlined theories returns in the analysis of this thesis as concepts based on these views are adapted into the investigation in an attempt to answer the research question: *What is the position of Russia in relation to the breach of territorial integrity in the cases of Kosovo and Crimea – how are changes in its reactions framed depending on national interests?*

3.2. Realism

According to Morgenthau all politics is a struggle for power (1948:17-18). In the international political playing field, nations must help themselves, as it is a "brutal arena where states look

for opportunities to take advantage of each other” (Mearsheimer, 1994:5). If a nation aims to survive, it must have sufficient material capabilities and be allied with other states (Waltz, 1979:103–104). These statements promptly give an insight into the International Relations theory of realism. Realist theorists claim that ties between states are frail and quickly pushed aside by nations to seek unilateral benefits for themselves. As this occurs, constructs that once seemed trustworthy such as alliances or a power balance are likely to not only break down, but may even cause international war and conflict. Realists say that whenever international order exists and war is absent, though that situation may exist for some time, it will eventually perish as powerful states that want to increase their power even more cease to care about international customs and law (Lebow, 2013:60). These great powers, according to realists, may cause their own downfall as their strength generates a belief of themselves to be above the established international order. Such identity construction erases their self-control and may incite a hostile and self-destructive search to fulfil their foreign interests (ibid.). Such states may use the tactic of threatening to use hostile military and economic actions. Whether or not they will employ force is of no matter, as long as a large power in these areas is at their disposal to be potentially used (Morgenthau, 1948:31).

Realists believe that how states believe the international order should be constructs their identity and rhetoric in how they frame their country’s interests. To Morgenthau, when a state’s identity and rhetoric changes, it is frequently due to developments of a political, social or economic nature. In the realist mind, wars involving great powers are more usually a consequence of such changes, rather than a cause (Lebow, 2013:60-61).

States may adhere to norms such as the principle of territorial integrity, but as states are mainly concerned about increasing their power and security such norms will ultimately not guide their interests (van der Maat, 2011:201-202). This gain of power means that the state would expand and preserve its position of security compared to other nations. As such, a realist standpoint assumes that a state will only violate the principle of territorial integrity if it means a gain in its own relative security (ibid.: 202). Out of this we can draw the variables that display the state interests from a realist perspective, namely the goals of gaining and maintaining of power and relative security, both in a military and economic way. From this standpoint, if we assume that Russia acts as a rational actor aiming to maximize its security, if Russia believes the relative benefits outweigh the relative costs and it can achieve these goals by either supporting or opposing breaches to the principle of territorial integrity in Europe, this should manifest in the way they frame their reactions in the selected cases.

3.3. Neoliberalism

The main component of neoliberalism, also called neoliberal institutionalism, concerns the realisation of cooperation between actors involved in global politics, such as states. Such cooperation in the international system takes place when states adapt their actions to what is seen as or known to be the agreed policies in this system. The reason for doing this is because conforming to these norms is expected to aid the state into achieving their own goals (Keohane, 1984:51). According to neoliberalism institutions are required to serve as an arena in which guarantees that states work together (Keohane, 2012:126). As such, neoliberals understand that international institutions are necessary to improve people's lives and to create continuous cooperation (ibid.: 127).

Neoliberalism believes that reaching advantageous shared results is not only desirable but also an evident goal. Agreeing with realism, neoliberalism conveys that achieving such cooperation between states in a system characterised by anarchy and doubt has however been challenging (Sterling-Folker, 2013:114). As to alleviate this uncertainty some type of authority is needed, including a necessary shared recognition of its rule (Lake, 2009:18). Consequently states have agreed to create certain international organisations, international regimes, and international law, such as the United Nations and its Charter, in an effort to achieve these beneficial shared interests (Krasner, 1983:2). Although institutions such as the UN and the principle of territorial integrity have been willingly created by states, Keohane concurs with realists that if institutions are created by nations with power, they can be altered by nations through power (2012:135), which is especially true considering the principle of territorial integrity (Gunter, 1979:204). While focusing more on institutions, neoliberalism as in realism, sees countries as the unit of interest, and it sees states as rational actors that seek to extract maximal use out of possibilities. This means that states are entities that seek to obtain certain goals. In order to achieve these ambitions, states make self-interested rational choices (Sterling-Folker, 2013:115).

Whereas realism argues states are seeking for economic and mostly military relative gains, neoliberalism believes in absolute gains and focuses more on economic payoffs. This happens by cooperating with other states, often through institutions (Keohane, 1982:327). From this the variables relating to neoliberalism that will be used in this work its analysis can be obtained, those being economic cooperation, interdependence and common membership of international institutions which may include adherence to international laws, and international regimes including norms and principles. As neoliberalism assumes that a state its economy is of utmost

importance to it and that economic absolute gains can be made through cooperation with other states, it can be expected that Russia sees it as a national interest and may frame its reactions to the breaches of territorial integrity in the selected cases accordingly. A larger or smaller interdependence of Russia with other involved actors may also cause the country to shift its national interests, as neoliberalism contends that the more that countries are interdependent the less likely they will go into conflict with one another as this would harm their interests (van der Maat, 2011:203-204). This may also include conforming to the rules and laws of international institutions, and the norms and principles of international regimes, as breaking these may cause a loss in absolute gains and international influence for the Russian Federation.

3.4. Constructivism

A central aspect of constructivism is the formation and reformation of identities and interests. This complex process is unrealisable within the limits of realism, a theory which claims that the anarchic world system causes indifference in changes to state identities and interests (Wendt, 1992:394), while neoliberalism is missing an understanding regarding to how identities and interests transform (ibid.: 393). Constructivism on the other hand does focus on describing the formation of interests and identities, claiming that international regimes and institutions have the ability to do so (ibid.: 393-394). While realism and liberalism focus a lot on relative and absolute gains, a central component of constructivism is discursive power and the construction of national interests and identity (ibid.: 394).

An important concept in constructivism is national identity, which is also a variable used in the analysis. According to Wendt, interests are formed due to holding a certain identity. Interests are not simply held by states out of nowhere, they establish their interests based on what happens around them. Some circumstances states end up in are unique, meaning there is not yet any identity the state has within said situation. That means the state and its people has to create said identity, and as such also its corresponding interests. Generally however, a state role has already been acquired, and the state can act according to its usual interests (Wendt, 1992:398). Such identities are defined by the state being a part of the international community, that community being a social construct. Every state will have several identities, such as buffer state and protectorate, or great power and protector of its region. A state may put more importance to one identity over the other, but all are held by the country itself and/or other countries in the socially constructed global community (ibid.: 397). This community can be seen as an international regime, even creating international institutions, and will be fairly constant structures of interests and identities. This structure may possess official rules or

informal norms, but they all only have power as long as the states in the structure bestow said power onto the structures. The structures have no meaning separate from the states' interpretation of them (ibid.: 399). As such, new meanings may be created, in turn producing new state identities and interests.

Another variable related to constructivism is the image the domestic society has of the state or other relevant factors relating to the selected cases, which relates back to national identity formation by elites in chapter 2.2. of this thesis. A relevant notion made by Wendt is that before a country brings their identity and its interrelated interests into the international community, said identity is created by the general public of that state (1992:402). The public image may be influenced through what the population gets to see in the media, which shapes the beliefs and wishes of the people. While Clunan focuses on how the Russian elites spread the national self-image they created (2009:10), van der Maat argues that how much focus is given to international events in media is affected by aspects such as how nearby the case is or how connected the affected nation or people are culturally and historically to Russia (2011:204). These two ways of spreading the image of the cases do not oppose each other, but may instead strengthen one another. The more attention an international events gets, the more likely it will be that the people and the state will sympathise with the affected people or state, increasing the inclination of the state to support the side of the conflict the media tells them is right (ibid.).

The third constructivist concept that will be used in the analysis are transnational and cultural relations. These type of connections exist between two states, and relate to how the people bond rather than the leadership of the states. Examples may include language, religion, history, diasporas, and more (van der Maat, 2011:204). According to constructivism, interaction causes certain types of reaction (Wendt, 1992:403), and the more people interact, the more their identity will be alike, which however does not guarantee peaceful relations (ibid.: 404). Such connections strongly impact how one people sees another, which influences how a country leadership handles international ordeals as the government will be urged by its population to make certain choices (Fearon, 1994:577). Once alliances and networks with other countries are established, Wendt believes that states wish to keep that part of their identity stable. This is due to the interest in keeping uncertainties and potential costs to a minimum, embodied by the state favouring and hanging on to its existing identity and commitments. These state identities can however change, depending on how committed the country is to its role. When an international institution pushes a state to change its identity within the world, the state may feel threatened and resist said change (Wendt, 1992:411). Here the thesis hypothesises that the stronger the

domestic bonds are between countries or peoples, the more likely it is that the states will support each other or the other people, even if it breaks existing international principles.

All three above described theories will be used to analyse the empirical data. How this will be done is explained further in the methodology.

4. Methodology

The research puzzle of this thesis is based on the findings of prior research that a large part of Russia's identity is based upon its status as a great power and its interests based upon influence over its European sphere of influence, yet pursuing these goals ultimately results in a conflicting Russian standpoint on distinct breaches to the principle of territorial integrity in Europe. From that comes a motive to investigate how this conflicting behaviour is explained and what changes in Russian behaviour can be observed depending on what case is examined. As illustrated in the literature review, breaches to the principle of territorial integrity, as well as Russian identity politics and interest formation has been the focus of International Relations researchers before. To expand on this with the goal of creating new knowledge relevant to the topic, the research question in this thesis becomes: *What is the position of Russia in relation to the breach of territorial integrity in the cases of Kosovo and Crimea – how are changes in its reactions framed depending on national interests?*

In this part of the thesis the methodology will be presented, which will be employed in the there-after analysis, and will clarify how data has been selected and codified, as well as going into the limitations and shortcomings of the research.

4.1. Qualitative Content Analysis

The method that will be used in this thesis is named qualitative content analysis, a method which categorises communication such as text and speeches, but also other types of publications such as video and photographs (Lamont, 2015:77). In this paper, qualitative content analysis will aim to draw meaning out of text, by applying a certain type of data coding to it, identifying certain types of words and groups of words within the texts, and the frequency and density of these. While content analysis can be quantitative through counting occurrences (ibid.), the method used in this thesis is qualitative in nature, since much attention is given to interpreting the texts and the language in them, in an attempt to comprehend the communicated meaning and context of the writings.

It is a method that permits investigation to be done on public personalities, in this case people such as ambassadors, ministers and presidents, which are otherwise unapproachable to most. The

reason why this is possible within qualitative content analysis is because of its attributes, namely that it permits analysis to be done by means of establishing a systematic system that can deduct interpretations from written words (Weber, 1990:19), using texts that are publically available and as such do not need the approval of the person or people in question, nor require active cooperation (Hermann, 2008:151). If one wants to extract meaning out of communication and how people use said communication to spread their ideas, content analysis is well fit in order to do so (Moyster & Wagstaffe, 1987:20). While quantitative content analysis is very attentive to maintaining objectivity in its research and aims to provide a way to create reproducible results when another researcher would employ the same data coding (Hermann, 2008:158), one of the strengths of qualitative content analysis, as compared to its quantitative variant, is that it enables research to equally methodical but allows for more reflective meaning extraction. While qualitative content analysis indeed enables for a deeper understanding of the meaning of speeches and texts, the interpretation depends to some extent on the observer, meaning bias may occur and language barriers can exist. Such limitations however does not mean that qualitative content analysis is unable to deliver reliable and sound research. The credibility of this thesis is essential, and this work intends to produce a valid conclusion. Much of this depends on the reproducibility of the method, in which if the research was recreated by another person using the same method, a similar conclusion would be reached. Although the possibility of attaching different meanings to text may happen when utilising qualitative methods, which can result in a varying conclusion, it remains so that the research continues to be valid since a precise and transparent procedure is used that can be replicated to generate a replica of this study.

4.1.1. Method of Analysis

The analysis of the thesis needs to be able to answer the question how Russia changes its reactions to breaches to the principle of territorial integrity in Europe depending on its national interests. Due to the small-N study and the nature of the research question, quantitative data cannot be relied on. Instead a deductive qualitative research methodology is developed.

Adopting a comparable method of analysis to van der Maat, who employs a narrative analysis based on categories and variables, three categories will be created as to explain the way Russia frames its reactions, which relate to three International Relations theories: realism, neoliberalism and constructivism (van der Maat, 2011: 202-203). Out of these three theories, variables are extracted which are applied to the material in the qualitative content analysis to

give insights into why Russia frames itself as it does. Out of this analysis a conclusion will be drawn.

4.1.2. Data Protocol and Code

When one aims to carry out a textual analysis, it is necessary to be able to adequately use the collected data. For this, a coding protocol needs to be created, in order to identify “the target variables and categories”. Such a protocol enables research to be done in a consistent manner. A decision has to be made how broad the data and variables can be (Halperin & Heath, 2020:379). The data at hand has to pertain to Kosovo, Crimea, Russia and their respective breaches of territorial integrity. While the variables have been pre-set in the theoretical framework, this thesis allows for any potential addition of variables that may be seen as relevant as the texts are being analysed. This thesis also does not focus on or counts distinct words, but instead permits for so called “agreeing words” to be recorded, as this method is of a qualitative nature. This guarantees that all pertinent data is collected (ibid.).

When the protocol has been created, a code can also be made in order to more systematically approach the analysis of the data at hand. In this thesis the coding happens according to the three chosen theoretical approaches, being realism, neoliberalism, and constructivism. Every theoretical category has a certain set of variables that correlate to the theories. The next step is coding the data, where one finds words or groups of words that correlate to the decided upon variables, and subsequently these words are catalogued into tables, where there will be one table for each case and type of analysed document, resulting in four tables. These tables are presented in the Appendix of this thesis. Table I displays an example of how the analysis of a document could look like, with the right column being imagined coded data from the texts.

Table I. Examined variables

Theoretical approach	Variables	Data analysis (example)
Realism	Gaining of or maintaining power, militarily and economically	<i>NATO; threat; safety; peace; aggression; armed forces; ceasefire; self-defence; aggressor; military base; ...</i>
Neoliberalism	Economic cooperation, Interdependence, Institutions; International law; International regimes	<i>Multilateral; international agreement; trade; cooperative; labour; energy; ...</i>
Constructivism	National identity, Public image, Transnational and cultural relations	<i>People; domestic; values; tradition; language; minorities; ...</i>

4.2. Data Selection

For this paper data was collected from verbatim transcription of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) meetings regarding the situations in Kosovo and Crimea, without regards to whether a resolution was voted on or not. These documents are the full accounts of the meetings, providing word by word what the attendants have said. These transcripts are publically available and are downloaded from Security Council Report, an organisation with the goal to improve the transparency of the UNSC. They are also accessible through the official UN documents website.

This thesis also uses documents from the official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. The search for documents from the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs happened by using the search bar of the website, and finding the words ‘Kosovo’ and ‘Crimea’. Only documents expressing the words from the Russian President and the Russian Foreign Affairs Minister, and statements on behalf of the Ministry are considered. This is to ensure a to-the-point analysis, utilising only the most relevant actors, whose words should display the most accurate Russian standpoint.

It is vital for the aim of this thesis to utilise primary sources. This however comes with the natural supposition that the person speaking does not convey all of the policy and intentions that guides them. However, because it is not possible to gain access to such unobtainable information, the data at hand is nevertheless the most dependable. This is due to the chosen actors being the highest representatives of Russia concerning the country’s foreign policy. As such, it can be trusted that they convey the official standpoint of the Federation and express the Russian position precisely and completely, which is what this thesis requires.

While all data was provided in English, the individuals have continuously spoken in the Russian language. The spoken language by the Russian representative is clearly specified in the UN documents, and may be highly presumed in the case of the documents of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The used documents are the official translations to English. While original versions in Russian are also available on their respective websites, due to the author's inability to read Russian, this thesis will always employ the documents in English.

A more in depth explanation as to the time period analysed for each case is provided below.

4.2.1. Actors and Cases

The research settles on Russia as the actor it will investigate. This is due to the nation having differing policies when it comes to the upkeep of territorial integrity, exemplified by the examples of Kosovo and Crimea. In order to see the differences in Russia's reaction, there have to be differences, and the existence of these are deemed as proven through the upcoming background chapter, as Russia disapproves of the independence Kosovo, but in a later and similar case, supports Crimean independence.

This also guides the selection of the cases that constitute a breach of territorial integrity in Europe. While Altman (2017), Kalpakian (2019), and Kontorovich (2008) simply take all cases in timespans after the First and Second World War till now, a case selection of that size is unfeasible for this thesis. A small-N comparison, such as van der Maat (2011) uses, seems advised. In accordance with this guiding principle, the cases of Kosovo and Crimea are selected. While this thesis is written during the highly relevant Russian invasion of Ukraine, the case of Ukraine in general and the Donbas in particular will not be considered, as the situation in said case may change rapidly.

4.2.2. Empirical material

As the actor and cases have been decided upon, the next step is an analysis of empirical material. The selected material the study will be executed on are UNSC verbatim transcripts from highly relevant time periods where the Security Council discusses the cases, as well as official documents published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. The material has to be in relation to Russia expressing its position regarding the cases. This means that only documents, and the parts in the selected documents, that speak about Russian views regarding Kosovo and Crimea will be examined.

4.2.3. Time frame

To be able to delineate the research and provide focus and efficiency, restrictions relating to the time frame of the publication of the analysed documents are created. The documents were

obtained from timespans where the activity building up to the breach of territorial integrity relating to the two cases reached their climax.

There have been five United Nations Security Council resolutions on Kosovo, which were adopted between the 31st of March 1998 and the 10th of June 1999. All Security Council verbatim meeting records from this timeframe, a total of nine documents, will be part of the data analysed in this thesis. In the case of Crimea, the study could not rely on outlining a time frame based on resolutions, as there has only been one draft resolution, which was voted on the 15th of March 2014, and there have been no passed resolutions. As such, the time frame starts on the 24th of February 2014, when the first UNSC meeting on the topic was held, and goes till the 19th of March 2014, which is 8 days after Crimea declared independence and one day before the area was annexed by Russia. After this date, the UNSC focus on Ukraine shifts towards the military actions in the Donbas region.

As the oldest publically available document from the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs relating to Kosovo is from September 2001, two years after the last UNSC resolution on Kosovo, the analysed time period here is instead placed around the Kosovo declaration of independence of the 17th of February 2008. The five documents before and after this date as well as the Russian statement on this day, while following the earlier outlined data selection method, are taken for analysis, resulting in a time period between the 29th of January and the 26th of February 2008. Regarding Crimea, the same time frame as delineated for the selection of UNSC documents will be used, with addition of the 20th of March, the date the Crimea was annexed by Russia. As this resulted in twenty-two documents, a too large amount to analyse, every other document was withheld, creating an unbiased selection and resulting in eleven documents.

Through this way of data collection, altogether thirty-four documents were collected to be used for analysis towards answering the research question.

Table II. Examined Data

Case	Document source: time frame	Amount
Kosovo	UNSC verbatim transcripts: 30/03/1998 – 26/03/1999	6
	Russian Foreign Ministry: 29/01/2008 – 26/02/2008	11
Crimea	UNSC verbatim transcripts: 24/02/2014 – 19/03/2014	6
	Russian Foreign Ministry: 24/02/2014 – 20/03/2014	11

4.3. Limitations and Shortcomings

While the method is designed to provide an adequate answer to the research question, shortcoming and limitations may be present. Addressing and understanding these is of importance in understanding the reliability and validity of the research.

Employing a content analysis for the research was deemed to be the most fitting method, seeing how the actors whose words this thesis analyses are not approachable, nor are the UNSC meetings public. Consequently, by applying a content analysis empirical material remained accessible (Halperin & Heath, 2017:347). The selected material was delimited by design, such as implementing a timeframe and an unbiased selection of Russian Foreign Ministry documents within the period. This narrowing down makes the study more feasible.

Other biases may also occur when employing content analysis. The writer's personal prejudices will always exist, and the earlier outlined method aims to be a means to remove those. However other limitations may occur within content analysis, such as cultural differences and an unawareness of them. This is particularly relevant in the situation where a different language is used, and in the original versions of the selected material English is not used by design. There is no capability within this thesis to utilise the Russian-language versions of the material, and it has to depend on the official translations from either the United Nations or the Russian Foreign Ministry, keeping in consideration that translations will never fully relay the same message as the original data. Rather than getting stuck on this, this thesis trusts that the respective translation offices have qualified standards, and understands the language barrier is a limit that must be accepted. There may be some inevitable changes of meaning, however this thesis presumes that these will be sufficiently small for the meaning of the transcripts to remain.

Nevertheless no matter what language is employed, as the documents are transcripts of spoken words, the full truth may potentially not be revealed by the speaker. As mentioned earlier in 3.3, only freely accessible texts are used, and certain opinions and backroom discussions may be omitted on purpose. As no possibility exists of gaining access to that data, this paper must recognise that certain motives may remain unobtainable.

5. Background to the cases

In order for this thesis to be able to be understood as well as possible, a background chapter is necessary. Here the work goes into certain important aspects of what has historically happened in the cases of Kosovo and Crimea. This will comprise not only out of a short history of the selected instances, but some of the empirical reactions, such as military missions, of certain international actors involved in the cases. We will also delve a little deeper into the relationship between Russia and the countries from which the cases declared independence, in order to prove or disprove the hypothesis that Russia behaves in ways that benefits itself, whether or not these actions are within international law. Knowing this information is of vital importance to answer the research question at hand.

5.1. Kosovo

Kosovo holds a special place in the minds of many Serbians. One of the reasons this is the case is due to a myth, which is seen as a keystone to the national and cultural identity of Serbia (Subotić, 2016: 618). This is the story of the Battle of Kosovo in the 14th century, and the Serbian sacrifices made at this conflict. The Serbian troops, mostly Christians, battled against the Ottoman forces, and lost. This defeat led to Serbia losing its independence, and caused five centuries of Turkish rule, a rule that is seen as an oppression by the Serbians (Kočan, 2019:201). This event is an intrinsic part of Serbian national identity (Djokić, 2009:6) Over time the Serbian presence in the area declined, which was labelled as ethnic cleansing (Morozzo della Rocca, 2014:44), while the Albanian Kosovars accused Serbia of the same (ibid.: 47). Over the 1990's, armed resistance was organised into the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) (Perritt, 2008:62).

It was this KLA that instituted a rebellion in Kosovo in 1998 against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia was the internationally recognized nation, but the KLA had the support of NATO. Yugoslavia retorted and pushed the Albanian Kosovar inhabitants from Kosovo into Albania, and set up violent military operation. This in turn drew out a response from NATO that in 1999 bombed Yugoslavia, producing the withdrawal of Yugoslav forces from Kosovo and enabling Albanian Kosovar refugees to come back. That it was ultimately NATO that caused the creation of the state of Kosovo is not disputed, nor that these actions were in violation with the Charter of the United Nations (Kalpakian, 2019:21). The UN Security Council adopted a resolution that founded an autonomous government in Kosovo, under UN mandate. The actual statement from Kosovo declaring itself an independent nation happened only in 2008. As Kosovan independence breaks the territorial integrity of the Serbian state, its

existence can be seen as in violation of international law (Urrutia, 2012:110-111). The member-states of the United Nations are divided over if Kosovo should be a part of the organisation or not. Over a hundred states recognise its independence, but this does not include Russia. As long as Serbia does not agree with Kosovan independence, it appears unlikely Kosovo will join the UN or the EU (Kalpakian: 2019:22).

5.1.1. Russia-Serbia relationship

The ceremonial founding of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was attended by a Russian delegation, showing a stark contrast with the attendance from the European Community side, which was only represented by Greece. Russia's desire regarding their relationship with the new country was presented in an official statement, namely "to strengthen the traditional links of friendship and cooperation" (Radeljic, 2017:274). This displayed ties between the Russians and the Serbs through Slavic ancestry and Orthodox Christianity, and even more so how any show of not supporting Serbia may lead to consequences for Russian politicians (Williams, 1994). As such, the Russian government has typically privileged the Serbian perspective, though not only due to its historical ties with Serbia but for its own benefit (Radeljic, 2017:273). That NATO was undoubtedly attracted to the nations formerly part of the Warsaw Pact added to a growth of bitterness between Russia and NATO (ibid.: 274). Consequently, Russia saw the need to protest the military actions of NATO and the Western point of view (ibid.: 273).

5.2. Crimea

It is clear that Russia and Ukraine share a long common history, dating back to the 10th century, finding a common founding in the Kievan Rus' state, centred on the city of Kyiv (Plokhy, 2006:10), the contemporary Ukrainian capital. The rise of Belarusian and Ukrainian national historical writings in the 1900s led to the separation of the shared Russian history into distinct Ukrainian, Belarusian and Russian accounts (Plokhy, 16), with Kievan Rus' being the ancestor of all three (Franklin, 2004:12). In 1991, after having been part of the Soviet Union for almost seven decades, Ukraine achieved independence.

A revolution in 2014, supported by the United States, ousted the legitimately elected president, who was pro-Russian (Kalpakian, 2019:22). This caused the country to land in a rivalry between its internal loyalties towards the West on one side and Russia on the other. While initially the US, the EU and Russia came to a compromise of how the country would return to a peaceful setting, the US subsequently withdrew support and instead pursued the removal of the Ukrainian president. A Russian reaction ensued, in which the Russian armed forces in Crimea, who had already been present there and also existed out of Ukrainian troops

that defected, took control of the region. Soon after, Crimea declared independence, naming the precedent of Kosovo to justify the unilateral action. Russia annexed the area not much later (ibid.).

5.2.1. Russia-Ukraine relationship

A large part of the Russian identity and the search for its identity is centred on the tale of the Kievan Rus', a historic state that existed a thousand years ago and roughly covered, among other, areas of contemporary Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia. As the capital of this state was Kiev, currently in Ukraine, both Russia and Ukraine have had debates which of the two has the larger right to identify itself as the successor of the historic state. In Ukraine, this manifested itself in aspects of everyday life such as images on the currency, and through national symbols, such as the coat of arms (Plokyh, 2006:10).

As the Cold War ended and the Soviet Union fell apart, with Russia and Ukraine becoming separate states, new tensions arose in the area (D'Anieri, 2019:1), as Russia was determined to preserve its status as a world power, and its influence over the former Soviet states. There was no other place where Russian national interests were contested as they were in Ukraine, which strove for democracy and independence, deemed irreconcilable with Russia's own intended position of influence over a potential EU influence (ibid.: 2). Ukraine saw a need to increase its security, in a response to Russia's so called peacekeeping activities in other former Soviet states. This coincided with the NATO will to extend eastwards. While it was not the search for democracy that Russia clashed with, it did with the former Soviet states' action of becoming part of NATO and the EU, a practise that developed without end, and to Russian national interests and identity, Ukraine was the most important of all (D'Anieri, 2019:2).

5.3. Conclusion to the Prehistories

While the cases of Kosovo and Crimea are different in many ways, the core of the issue is shared between the two, namely that they sought independence from a sovereign state which did not agree with losing that part of its territory, and as such constituted a breach of the principle of territorial integrity. Russia embraces entirely contrasting standpoints on both cases, coming down to displaying unfriendly behaviour towards the principle in cases where it is beneficial to do so, exposing a self-concerned position. While that is a conclusion that Kalpakian (2019:22-23) takes, the research question of this thesis is yet to be answered. It will be further investigated in the next chapter of this thesis, the analysis.

6. Analysis

In an effort to answer the research question, *What is the position of Russia in relation to the breach of territorial integrity in the cases of Kosovo and Crimea – how are changes in its reactions framed depending on national interests?*, this thesis has been working towards this analysis by going through previous relevant research, reviewing the history of the cases, and constructing a theoretical framework and matching methodology.

This analysis employs a qualitative content analysis, applied to the earlier discussed data according to the constructed theoretical framework. It will be split into two parts that correlate to the selected cases, each part consisting out of an analysis according to the selected theories and their accompanying variables. Dividing the analysis as such will allow for a clear comparison between the two cases and the three theoretical approaches, with the purpose of constructing an adequate conclusion to the research question. A deliberation of these findings wraps up the analysis.

6.1. Findings regarding Kosovo

6.1.1. Realist Variables

There are two main issues depicted by Russia when it comes to the case of Kosovo that can be described realist features, namely the actions and presence of NATO in the Serbia-Kosovo conflict, and the armament of Kosovo rebels.

Russia is not closely affected on a military level when it comes to the case of Serbia and Kosovo, as the Russian Federation does not border these territories. Serbia is however an ally to Russia, and one has to keep in mind that Serbia is not part of the European Union, nor NATO. From a realist perspective, is it in Russia's interest to keep it that way, and maintain Serbia as a close personal ally, reliant on Moscow. Depicting NATO as the enemy is a natural culmination of this, and Russian authorities do so repeatedly. Russia disagrees with any NATO presence in the area, but it is only when the threat of force by NATO on Serbian lands and against Serbia becomes a factor that they strengthen their rhetoric. After such military actions have indeed been taken by NATO, the Russian speech transforms into much stronger words, using terminology such as how Russia “vehemently demands the immediate cessation of this illegal military action against [Serbia]” (appendix A.4) and being “profoundly outraged at the use by [NATO] of military force” (appendix A.4). They even go as far as to say that Russia itself may use military force to protect European security, a statement not made more than once. This common European security becomes a reoccurring theme, which can be interpreted as Russia believing there is a need for them to counterbalance NATO militarily in Europe. Such a

perspective can also be seen in Russia's opposition to NATO stating that "Russia will never agree to [NATO being] the world's policeman" (appendix A.4) that threatens international peace and security.

A second notion that can be observed is the attention given by Russia regarding the presence of weapons within the conflict, both used by Serbia and the Kosovo Albanian rebels. A clear partiality of Russia towards Serbia can be noticed here. The goal of Moscow is to achieve "demilitarization of the [...] Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and other armed Kosovo Albanian groups" (appendix A.6), focusing on military embargos, sanctions, and their disarmament. However when it comes to Belgrade, the framing of Russia is reconstructed completely. For this party to the conflict, Russia believes that the use of force needs to remain possible, and cannot be sanctioned. They seek for the arms embargo to not apply to Serbia, since such equipment is needed for the carrying out of peace agreements.

It is interesting to point out that Russia does not make any notice of elements it conflicts with on an economic level. While realism does not only deal with power on a military level but also economically, this realist component is completely non-existent from Russia's framing of its reactions. Furthermore, the only time Russia mentions its own power besides when it speaks of potential Russian military actions after the NATO bombings on Serbia, is when it claims it will not, and most of all cannot punish any countries that recognise Kosovan independence, as they say "Russia does not have among its political instruments any measures for punishing anyone" (appendix B.4).

6.1.2. Neoliberalist Variables

A great amount of the Russian rhetoric regarding Kosovo centres on institutional cooperation and international law. The amount of times Russia mentions the territorial integrity of Yugoslavia and international law are abundant. They put their hopes and trust in, and reference many international organisations, going from the UN and its Charter, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), to the Contact Group, the G8, and even organisations neither Russia nor Yugoslavia are part of. There are however a few negative mentionings of international organisations by Russia. One clear example is NATO and NATO's Partnership for Peace programme, stating they will "suspend [their] participation in the Partnership for Peace programme" (appendix A.4), while another is when Moscow delivers critique to the functioning of the OSCE which was however due to Russian belief that said organisation was not upholding international principles.

There is strong language from Russia on the so-called ‘unique’ case that Kosovo is when it comes to the right of statehood and self-determination. The Kremlin makes it clear that it does not believe in such an anomaly to international law, and the consequences of recognizing Kosovo as independent “are fraught with dangerous consequences for the system of international relations” (appendix B.9).

Equally interesting is the Russian notion on the “multi-polar system of international relations” (appendix A.4), displaying their conviction or desire of being a pole in such a system.

6.1.3. Constructivist Variables

As was mentioned earlier in this thesis when discussing the Russia-Serbia relationship, both countries have a common bond through Orthodox Christianity and Slavic ancestry, ties Russia does not have with the Kosovo Albanians. This is clear when comparing the tone of Moscow towards Serbia in contrast to Kosovar rebels, where we can see that the Kosovo Albanians are kept to higher standards by Russia than Serbia. For example, Russia condemns Serbian police for violence, yet ‘strongly’ condemns Kosovar Albanians for the same feat, and speaks about “securing the rights of the non-Albanian population” (appendix B.10) but makes no note to protecting Albanians. What is also interesting is what is not being said. While the USA expresses grave concern about “Belgrade’s brutal persecution of Kosovar Albanians” and Serbia’s “excessive and indiscriminate use of force” (appendix A.4), Russia makes no mention of any such notions, displaying a bias towards Serbia.

Furthermore, Russia makes efforts to show they have been playing an active role in the diplomacy surrounding the war, and “will continue to make an active and concrete contribution” (appendix A.6).

6.2. Findings regarding Crimea

6.2.1. Realist Variables

Russia’s military and economic stake in Ukraine can be considered much larger than in Serbia. As such, there is a lot more framing coming from Russia that fits realist variables. While Moscow repeats the notion made about Kosovo Albanians that Ukrainian rebels should be disarmed and mentions the danger of Ukrainian armed militants to Crimea, a much larger portion of the Russian concerns have been about regarding other military matters. A reoccurring topic are the Russian military presence and interests in Crimea. They claim that no military actions by Russia in Crimea have been unlawful. While Russian Armed Forces were present in Crimea, they say that “Russia's Armed Forces never entered Crimea; they were there already in

line with an international agreement” (appendix D.9), which can also be seen as a neoliberal argument. This agreement pertains to the Russian Black Sea fleet, which has its home base in Crimea, which gives the presence of the forces a constructivist perspective as well. It is clear from the terminology used by Moscow how important said fleet is to Russia, not only militarily but also to the Russian identity. The so-called “persons in uniform” that were present in Crimea were denied to being Russian, as since Crimean authorities did ask “for assistance in pacification of the situation” (appendix D.2), Russia claims it never sent such forces to the area.

Mentions of NATO are fairly few, and are only present in documents from the Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry. The Kremlin sees potential NATO presence in Crimea as a threat to southern Russia, and rejoices that such a development has been avoided. Russia is vehemently against having NATO in its “backyard”, and states that “no country should guarantee its own security at the expense of others” (appendix D.11).

There are also economic displays of power coming from Russia, such as urging Ukraine to accept Russian help regarding the lowering of Russian fuel prices to stabilise the Ukrainian economy, and predicting catastrophic economic consequences for Ukraine should they sign an economic agreement with the EU. When Ukraine threatened Russian economic interests in their country, Moscow responded by “reserv[ing] the right to take adequate and commensurate counter-measures” (appendix D.10), however Russian rhetoric quickly returned to a more neoliberalist display by calling said Ukrainian actions a violation of international law and agreements between both nations.

6.2.2. Neoliberalist Variables

To Russia, framing their rhetoric in way that shows conformity with international law and international institutions seems to be highly important. Two main neoliberalist concepts can be seen repeatedly in Russia’s statements regarding Crimea. The first is a repeated critique towards international institutions and questioning their usefulness. While Russia does not categorically refuse cooperation, and at times makes an effort to show goodwill, the trust of the Kremlin in institutions such as the UN, OSCE and international agreements is low. They claim that “key international institutions are not getting any stronger; on the contrary, in many cases, they are sadly degrading” (appendix D.9), and are being manipulated by, or alternatively ignored by, the West. When asked about the possibility of new international cooperation regarding Ukraine, such as an OSCE mission or the establishment of a Contact Group, Russia ignores the topic or even claims such structures are not needed.

The second neoliberalist concept employed by Russia is a continuous reference to Russia and Crimea's actions being in conformity with international agreements. Moscow makes many remarks to how the independence of Crimea is "in strict compliance with international law" (appendix C.6) and the principles of territorial integrity and the right to self-determination, as written in the UN Charter and other international legal documents. Russia does not acknowledge even a possibility that the independence referendum and subsequent independence and annexation of Crimea may be illegal according to international law. Contrastingly, criticism is given to others for being in "gross violation of international law and the principle of state sovereignty" (appendix D.10).

6.2.3. Constructivist Variables

The cultural relationship between Ukraine and Russia can be considered to be very strong, yet a dispute was started by Moscow with Kiev over Russian minorities in Ukraine. When viewing the Russian speech, one sees that while Ukraine is indeed being seen as Russia's "brotherly neighbour" (appendix C.3), united through a common history, the Russian-speaking minority is described as being part of the Russian nation itself.

Before the Crimean referendum, heavy emphasis is placed on protecting the rights of the Russian minority and their language in eastern and south-eastern Ukraine, while vilifying the Ukrainian forces. Russia also aims to protect of all sorts of cultural bonds in Ukraine, such as traditional values, Orthodox shrines and Soviet war memorials. As the Crimean referendum comes closer, mentionings of the connection between Russia and Crimea become heavily emphasised. Putin goes as far as to frame the reunification of both as being of historic significance to all Russians, claiming that Russia was plundered when Crimea became part of Ukraine, and making notes to Western countries that "everybody understands what Crimea means for Russia" (appendix D.9).

6.3. Deliberation of the Findings

With the aim of providing a deeper reflection towards answering the research question, the findings will be taken into a compiled discussion. As can be seen in the previous part of this chapter and will be further outlined below, the findings of the two cases and the three theories are often interconnected.

A central notion within realism is the balance of power. Russia's adherence to this principle can be seen in several ways, and within both cases. One representation of this is the Russian diplomatic endeavour to keep military equipment out of the hands of the respective rebels in both cases, and to only be held by the government or international mission. This enables the

power balance to favour the Russian-supported side of the conflict. This can also be seen when Russia references NATO, as presence and expansion of the military organisation is deemed as undesired, and spoken of as “a real threat to international peace and security” (appendix A.5) and to Russia in various remarks.

On an economic level, Russian realist rhetoric is rather weak at first, but evolves to stronger terminology. While in Kosovo Russia claims that it does not have the tools to enforce economic sanctions as a punishment on anyone, the tone towards Ukraine consists of imposing potential economic measures.

The largest Russian desire on a realist level can be seen in how it speaks in both the Kosovo and Crimea cases about the current world system of international relations, marking it as a long-term desire of the Kremlin. To Moscow the NATO actions in Kosovo highlight “the urgent need to form a truly multi-polar world order based on the Charter of the United Nations” (appendix A.6), while the instability of Ukraine is due to “the dissolution of bipolarity on the planet” (appendix D.9). Russia sees itself as a world power, possessing a sphere of influence. NATO being present in said sphere in essence means American presence, and can be seen by Russia as a conflict between world powers.

Certain changes to Russia’s phrasing on a neoliberal level can be observed as well, where Moscow went from believing greatly in international organisations in the case of Kosovo, to on many occasions making it clear how they do not trust and believe they cannot rely on international institutions regarding Ukraine and Crimea. Even when NATO executed a military operation in Serbia, Russia maintained to speak mostly in terms of international law. This changed drastically apropos Crimea, where the Kremlin explicitly declares that the relevant international institutions are weakening.

Russia however does not completely give up on the neoliberalist notion of international law after the Kosovo declaration of independence, on the contrary, international law is used in their framing of the legality of Crimean independence. Moscow regards that “the right balance between the principles of territorial integrity and the right to self-determination” (appendix C.4) has to be found. More concise, Russia believes that after such a balance was made in the case of Kosovo, the same must be possible for Crimea. They find it unacceptable that said principles and norms of international law are manipulated on a case to case basis by the West, and that Kosovar independence cannot be considered a precedent, making Crimean independence legal as well.

While there are fairly few mentionings by Russia of the constructivist variables of transnational and cultural bonds with Serbia, comments to such connections are plenty when

referencing not only Crimea, but also Ukraine. It is evident that Russia holds their kinship with Ukraine dearly, but that they wish to express their connection with Russian-speaking Ukrainians and the history they share with Crimea even more clearly. The importance Russia puts in their ties with Crimea can be detected when Russia displays it is willing to accept an economic loss of power in order to annex Crimea, since President Putin displays knowledge of the West “hoping to put us in a worsening social and economic situation” (appendix D.9) due to sanctions, and claims “that the absolute majority of our people clearly do support what is happening” (ibid.). By doing such Putin is putting a constructivist element above a realist one, though the annexation of Crimea also holds realist military benefits.

We can see all three theoretical perspectives present in the way Russia frames their reactions. All three may even be intertwined on certain topics, for example NATO, where Russia is “not opposed to cooperation with NATO”, a neoliberal view, does not want said military alliance in their backyard, a realist view, nor to have it in their historic territory, a constructivist view (appendix D.9).

The words ‘national interests’ are only mentioned four times in the researched data, and were spoken by the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergey Lavrov, and the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, in some of the most recent documents. Lavrov, while addressing Russian civil servants, speaks about their task being the “advancement of Russian national interests” (appendix D.11). Putin claims that after the collapse of the USSR in 1991, Russia “was incapable of protecting its interests”, but now asks if Russia is “ready to consistently defend our national interests, or will we forever give in” (appendix D.9). When talking about the reuniting of Crimea and Russia, Putin expressed that:

Today, it is [time] to accept the obvious fact: Russia is an independent, active participant in international affairs; like other countries, it has its own national interests that need to be taken into account and respected. (Vladimir Putin, 2014:10, appendix D.9)

Whether said statement from 2014 still holds up today can be discussed, as from then till now, Russia has been marginalised and became a fairly lonely ‘active’ participant in international affairs, banned from international political to international sports organisations alike. It can be claimed that every step taken by Putin retake the Russian position in a multi-polar world, instead pushes Russia back one step more.

7. Conclusion

This thesis has looked at the puzzle of how one state, Russia, can have differing perspectives in seemingly comparable cases in Europe where the right to territorial integrity has encountered a breach, as it is assumed that similar cases must receive similar treatment. The statements made by Russia have at times been very intense, making it more straightforward for this thesis to see *what the position of Russia is in relation to the breach of territorial integrity in the cases of Kosovo and Crimea, and how changes in its reactions are framed depending on national interests*. This has also been the research question of this thesis, which was intensively investigated with the aim to try and answer said issue. For the purpose of doing so, three theoretical lenses were used, namely realism, neoliberalism, and constructivism, and previous research was turned to. This study made clear that all three theoretical perspectives have been used to frame Russia's national interests, yet in different intensities and with clear shifts happening between both cases.

Despite Russia employing all three outlooks in how they frame themselves concerning national interests, a development from one case to the next can be seen. This alteration in rhetoric is apparent in several places, such as when comparing the realist and neoliberalist framing of Russian interests regarding Kosovo, and the speech used apropos the same theories in the Crimea case. Through the analysis, it can be concluded that Russia is a rational actor that does indeed alter their framing of reactions over time depending on national interests. The position of the Kremlin regarding the cases changes depending on what Russia believes will serve their goals best, and is subsequently framed to reflect those beliefs. Another observation made is to how Moscow frames itself will also alter to reflect what aspects are of larger importance to the Russian national identity.

This thesis takes place within the field of International Relations, in the subfields concerning the right to territorial integrity and the principle to self-determination, and state identity and interests, as such bridging a gap between these two themes. The research employed several theoretical lenses, using their concepts in a qualitative content analysis to answer the research question. While this research can only see what happens in diplomatic circles, and some Russian actions and pursuits may be invisible due to this, the data selection served the thesis well, which could however have improved if more statements by the President of Russia were included. There has also been a clear time frame and case selection, and further developments of the Russian framing of interests would have been interesting to investigate. As such, further research regarding the topic this thesis provides can be done, for instance studying the Russian perspective on more recent cases such as the Donbas situation, or researching the standpoint of

other states on the here used cases compared to Russia's views. More research is also possible on what specific elements of a conflict cause Russia to respond more strongly in certain ways, creating a way to predict Russian behaviour depending on what interests are at stake or what countries are involved in the conflict, both friend and foe.

8. Bibliography

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9. Appendix

9.1. Data Selection and Coding

All UNSC verbatim transcripts were found online on www.securitycouncilreport.org, alternatively on <https://documents.un.org/prod/ods.nsf/home.xsp>.

All documents from The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation were found online on www.mid.ru/en.

9.1.1. UNSC Verbatim Transcripts Kosovo

- (A.1) United Nations Security Council S/PV.3868 (31 March 1998), Available at: <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/kos%20SPV3868.pdf> (Last accessed 29 March 2022).
- (A.2) United Nations Security Council S/PV.3930 (23 September 1998), Available at: <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/Kos%20SPV%203930.pdf> (Last accessed 29 March 2022).
- (A.3) United Nations Security Council S/PV.3937 (24 October 1998), Available at: <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/kos%20SPV%203937.pdf> (Last accessed 29 March 2022).
- (A.4) United Nations Security Council S/PV.3988 (24 March 1999), Available at: <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/kos%20SPV3988.pdf> (Last accessed 29 March 2022).
- (A.5) United Nations Security Council S/PV.3989 (26 March 1999), Available at: <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/kos%20SPV3989.pdf> (Last accessed 29 March 2022).
- (A.6) United Nations Security Council S/PV.4011 (10 June 1999), Available at: <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/kos%20SPV4011.pdf> (Last accessed 29 March 2022).

Theoretical approach	Variables	Data analysis
Realism	Gaining of or maintaining power, militarily and economically	<p>(A.1) <i>military embargo; military sanctions; levels of armaments</i></p> <p>(A.2) <i>material and financial support from abroad continues to be provided to Kosovo extremists</i></p> <p>(A.3) <i>no provisions [...] that would [...] sanction the [...] use of force; In violation of the arms embargo [...] illegal weapons continue to reach Kosovo; the [arms] embargo shall not apply to equipment for missions established in accordance with the Belgrade agreement; the immediate rescission of the NATO decision on the possible use of force</i></p>

		<p><i>(A.4) [Russia] is profoundly outraged at the use by [NATO] of military force against [...] Yugoslavia; NATO [is] not entitled to decide the fate of other sovereign and independent States; common European security; we shall draw the appropriate conclusions in our relations and contacts with [NATO]; [Russia] vehemently demands the immediate cessation of this illegal military action against [...] Yugoslavia; Russia will never agree to [NATO being] the world's policeman; Russia reserves the right to take [...] military measures, to ensure its own and common European security</i></p> <p><i>(A.5) The aggressive military action unleashed by NATO against a sovereign State [...] is a real threat to international peace and security</i></p> <p><i>(A.6) demilitarization of [...] Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and other armed Kosovo Albanian groups</i></p>
<p>Neo-liberalism</p>	<p>Economic cooperation, Inter-dependence, Institutions; International law; International regimes</p>	<p><i>(A.1) Unswerving compliance with the principle of the territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; legal framework; international Contact Group; coordinated international effort; mandate of the United Nations; full participation in international institutions; task of the international community</i></p> <p><i>(A.2) In violation of Security Council resolution; international efforts; reaffirms the sovereignty and territorial integrity of [...] Yugoslavia; Charter of the United Nations; strict respect for the territorial integrity of [...] Yugoslavia; central role of the United Nations</i></p> <p><i>(A.3) Contact Group; accept a mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; territorial integrity of [...] Yugoslavia;</i></p> <p><i>(A.4) use of force in contravention of decisions of the Security Council; the stability of the [...] multi-polar system of international relations; violation of the Charter of the [UN]; norms of international law; NATO [is] not entitled to decide the fate of other sovereign and independent States; absolute priority [of the UN Charter]; generally recognized rules of international law; No consideration of whatever nature, [...], may serve as a justification for aggression; the solid basis of the law; [international law's] basic norms and principles; the potential of political and diplomatic methods; NATO's illegal actions; suspend our participation in the Partnership for Peace programme</i></p> <p><i>(A.5) the absolute need for [...] compliance by all States with international law; situation of lawlessness; meeting of [...] the Contact Group; a gross violation of the [UN] Charter and other basic norms of international law; all Members of the [UN] to refrain from the threat or use of</i></p>

		<p><i>force in their international relations, including against the territorial integrity [...] of any State; The illegal use of force by NATO; a gross violation of the principle of the exclusive sovereignty of a State over the airspace above its territory; reaffirming the commitment [...] to the basic principles and values of the [UN] Charter; the Rio Group, demands [...] made by [...] the Commonwealth of Independent States and members of the Non-Aligned Movement</i></p> <p><i>(A.6) prepared by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the G-8; the central role of the United Nations; Russia has strongly condemned the NATO aggression against a <u>sovereign State</u>; the [...] system of international relations based on [...] international law; It is essential to fight for [...] norms of international humanitarian law, but solely through political and legal methods on the firm basis of the [UN] Charter and [...] multilateral instruments; there is no alternative to respecting the Charter</i></p>
<p>Construc- tivism</p>	<p>National identity, Public image, Transnational and cultural relations</p>	<p><i>(A.1) condemn [...] the Serbian police, [...] <u>strongly</u> condemn [...] the Kosovar Albanians; not about punishing anyone, Belgrade in particular; encourage Belgrade to intensify these positive efforts; agreements reached by the Presidents of Russia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia;</i></p> <p><i>(A.2) /</i></p> <p><i>(A.3) Serbian region of Kosovo; Russia has been playing an active role; visit to Belgrade of the Russian Minister; we intend to play a most active role; positive shifts [by Belgrade]; a large number of Russian representatives will be working in the OSCE mission; possible danger [...] as a result of actions by the Kosovar Albanians; recent positive changes with respect to Belgrade; Russia will continue to make an active and concrete contribution</i></p> <p><i>(A.4) multi-polar system of international relations</i></p> <p><i>(A.5) The [...] use of force by NATO [...] destabilizes significantly the situation in the Balkans and in Europe as a whole</i></p> <p><i>(A.6) the Yugoslav province of Kosovo; the irreparable harm done to the social and economic development of all Balkan States [...] is enormous; The KLA <u>must scrupulously comply</u> with all demands [...] Yugoslavia <u>should, of course, comply fully</u>; Russia [...] is taking an active part in efforts to find a comprehensive approach to the social and economic reconstruction, stabilization and development of the Balkan region; the urgent need to form a truly multi-polar world order based on the Charter of the [UN]</i></p>

9.1.2. Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry Documents Kosovo

- (B.1) Russian MFA Spokesman Mikhail Kamynin Answers a Media Question Regarding Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili's Interview with EuroNews (29 January 2008), Available at: https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1729515/ (Last accessed 30 March 2022).
- (B.2) Transcript of Remarks by Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov at the Myrdal Lecture, Geneva, February 12, 2008 (12 February 2008), Available at: https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1632166/ (Last accessed 30 March 2022).
- (B.3) Transcript of Press Conference by Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, Geneva, February 12, 2008 (13 February 2008), Available at: https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1633045/ (Last accessed 30 March 2022).
- (B.4) Remarks and Replies to Media Questions by Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov at Joint Press Conference After Meeting with the EU's Foreign Policy Troika (with the participation of Dimitrij Rupel, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, Javier Solana, European Union Council Secretary General and High Representative for the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighborhood Policy, Mrs. Benita Ferrero-Waldner), Brdo, February 13, 2008 (14 February 2008), Available at: https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1644254/ (Last accessed 30 March 2022).
- (B.5) Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov Meets Presidents Sergey Bagapsh of Abkhazia and Eduard Kokoity of South Ossetia (15 February 2008), Available at: https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1645911/ (Last accessed 30 March 2022).
- (B.6) Statement by Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Kosovo (17 February 2008), Available at: https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1649512/ (Last accessed 30 March 2022).
- (B.7) Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov Speaks to US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice by Telephone (19 February 2008), Available at: https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1651931/ (Last accessed 30 March 2022).
- (B.8) Transcript of Remarks and Replies to Media Questions by Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov at Joint Press Conference with Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Ali Babajan, Moscow, February 20, 2008 (20 February 2008), Available at: https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1655395/ (Last accessed 30 March 2022).
- (B.9) Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov Speaks by Telephone to Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Vuk Jeremic (22 February 2008), Available at: https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1658034/ (Last accessed 30 March 2022).
- (B.10) Russian MFA Information and Press Department Commentary Regarding a Media Question Concerning Remarks of US Under Secretary of State Nicholas Burns on Kosovo (24 February 2008), Available at: https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1659357/ (Last accessed 30 March 2022).
- (B.11) Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov Speaks to Javier Solana, European Union Council Secretary General and High Representative for the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy, by Telephone (26 February 2008), Available at: https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1659918/ (Last accessed 30 March 2022).

Table IV. Data Coding Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry Documents Kosovo

Theoretical approach	Variables	Data analysis
Realism	Gaining of or maintaining power, militarily and economically	<p>(B.1) /</p> <p>(B.2) /</p> <p>(B.3) /</p> <p>(B.4) <i>Russia does not have among its political instruments any measures for punishing anyone [EU countries that will recognize Kosovo]</i></p> <p>(B.5) /</p> <p>(B.6) /</p> <p>(B.7) /</p> <p>(B.8) /</p> <p>(B.9) /</p> <p>(B.10) /</p> <p>(B.11) /</p>
Neo-liberalism	Economic cooperation, Inter-dependence, Institutions; International law; International regimes	<p>(B.1) <i>there's no way Russia would recognize Georgian breakaway areas because of Kosovo [precedent creation]</i></p> <p>(B.2) <i>few OSCE people seem to care about the way the common values enshrined in the Helsinki Act have been refracted in the current situation around Kosovo; Kosovo is an international problem under the [UNSC's] jurisdiction; international rule of law placed in [European] foundation; [Russia is] not going to participate in undermining the legal foundations [...] the UN Charter</i></p> <p>(B.3) <i>the undermining of all the foundations of international law; the undermining of the principles on which the OSCE rests and of the principles set into the UN Charter; an absolutely double standard: Kosovo is a unique case, they say, and so it is possible in this case to simply trample upon international law and all the rest must agree to this. That won't work.</i></p> <p>(B.4) <i>principled issues of international law, issues that are connected with the observation by all states of the UN Charter and the principles of the Helsinki Final Act; it wouldn't be correct [...] not to turn to the main body responsible for international security in the world [the UNSC]; if everybody cherishes the fundamental principles of international law [...] I am certain that the talks can be resumed</i></p> <p>(B.5) <i>the recognition of Kosovo's independence [...] presupposes a revision of the generally recognized principles and norms of international law</i></p>

	<p><i>(B.6) Kosovo [...] declared a unilateral proclamation of independence [...] violating the sovereignty of [...] Serbia, the Charter of the [UN], UNSCR 1244, the principles of the Helsinki Final Act [...] and the high-level Contact Group accords; We expect the UN Mission in Kosovo and NATO-led Kosovo Force will take immediate action to fulfil their mandates as authorized by the [UNSC]; the international community should respond; supporting separatism [has] dangerous consequences [...] for world order, international stability and the authority of the [UNSC]</i></p> <p><i>(B.7) the principled [Russian] position on the unacceptability of the unilateral steps by Pristina for declaring the independence [...]. The danger [...] the move is likely to have for world order</i></p> <p><i>(B.8) the rule of law mission [...] being sent [to Kosovo is] in violation of international law; the [UNSC] reaffirmed its commitment to [...] preserving the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States within their internationally recognized borders; a gross violation of international law and of the [UNSC's] resolution; Russia's position [...] rests on international law</i></p> <p><i>(B.9) Pristina's self-proclamation of independence and its recognition by a number of states do not conform to existing international law, undermine stability and security in [...] the Balkan region and are fraught with dangerous consequences for the system of international relations</i></p> <p><i>(B.10) is the American thesis about Kosovo's case being unique really moral, as it implies that some are supposed to have the right to statehood while it must be denied to others; destructive consequences of encouraging separatism and [...] destroying world law and order</i></p> <p><i>(B.11) the problem of Kosovo's status ought to be resolved [...] in full conformity with the rules of international law, with the [UNSC] playing a leading role.</i></p>
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<p>Construc- tivism</p>	<p>National identity, Public image, Transnational and cultural relations</p>	<p><i>(B.1) /</i> <i>(B.2) /</i> <i>(B.3) /</i> <i>(B.4) we have supported the request of Serbia to convene the UN Security Council</i> <i>(B.5) /</i> <i>(B.6) Russia fully supports the reaction of the Serbian leadership to the events in Kosovo</i> <i>(B.7) /</i> <i>(B.8) /</i> <i>(B.9) A schedule of near-term contacts between [Russia and Serbia] was discussed.</i> <i>(B.10) the destinies of the one hundred thousand Serbs; securing the rights of the non-Albanian population</i> <i>(B.11) /</i></p>
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9.1.3. UNSC Verbatim Transcripts Crimea

- (C.1) United Nations Security Council S/PV.7117 (24 February 2014), Available at: https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9F9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_pv_7117.pdf (Last accessed 29 March 2022).
- (C.2) United Nations Security Council S/PV.7124 (1 March 2014), Available at: http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9F9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_pv_7124.pdf (Last accessed 29 March 2022).
- (C.3) United Nations Security Council S/PV.7125 (3 March 2014), Available at: https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9F9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_pv_7125.pdf (Last accessed 29 March 2022).
- (C.4) United Nations Security Council S/PV.7134 (13 March 2014), Available at: http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9F9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_pv_7134.pdf (Last accessed 29 March 2022).
- (C.5) United Nations Security Council S/PV.7138 (15 March 2014), Available at: http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9F9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_pv_7138.pdf (Last accessed 29 March 2022).
- (C.6) United Nations Security Council S/PV.7144 (19 March 2014), Available at: http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9F9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_pv_7144.pdf (Last accessed 29 March 2022).

Table V. Data Coding UNSC Verbatim Transcripts Crimea

Theoretical approach	Variables	Data analysis
Realism	Gaining of or maintaining power, militarily and economically	<p><i>(C.1) The rioting militants have not been disarmed</i></p> <p><i>(C.2) that [signing] this association agreement [by Ukraine with the EU] could have significant economic consequences for Ukraine; catastrophic economic consequences for [Ukraine] if [they had signed an association agreement with the EU]; the [opposition] were to surrender their weapons; the [...] action of [Crimean] self-defence groups prevented the [Ukrainian] attempt to overrun the [Crimean] Ministry; [the] Prime Minister of Crimea, went to the President of Russia with a request for assistance to restore peace in Crimea; the Autonomous Republic of Crimea [...] has requested the deployment of [Russian] armed forces on the territory of Ukraine</i></p> <p><i>(C3) [the opposition] have not surrendered their illegal weapons; popular self-defence brigades have been established</i></p>
		<p><i>[in Crimea]. They have [...] put down attempts to take over administrative buildings in Crimea by force and to funnel weapons and ammunition into the peninsula. We have information about the preparation of new provocations, including against the Russian Black Sea fleet in Ukraine; the legitimately elected authorities of the [Crimean] Republic have asked the President of Russia to help them to restore calm in Crimea; the threat posed to [...] the Black Sea fleet of the Russian Federation in Ukraine; The President of Russia [...] went before the Federation Council to request that the Russian armed forces be permitted to deploy in the territory of Ukraine</i></p> <p><i>(C.4) militants, well-trained and well-equipped by someone, [sent] into Kyiv; Why not [accept the help of Russia to] lower fuel prices to begin to stabilize the [Ukrainian] economic situation; The [Ukrainian] radicals have not laid down their weapons, [...] they are restocking their arsenals</i></p> <p><i>(C.5) continuing threat of violence and a continuing threat of it spreading to other regions of Ukraine. Yet the violence has not occurred in Crimea, due to measures taken there</i></p> <p><i>(C.6) One [...] cannot claim that there has been no politically motivated killing or mass torture [by nationalist Ukrainian radicals]</i></p>

<p>Neo-liberalism</p>	<p>Economic cooperation, Inter-dependence, Institutions; International law; International regimes</p>	<p><i>(C.1) We believe that the OSCE, bearing in mind the coordinating role of the [UN], can make a significant contribution to international efforts to ensure peace and security; it is still not clear how violent, non-constitutional regime change in [Ukraine] is consistent with OSCE principles, or indeed the rule of law; our Western partners</i></p> <p><i>(C.2) We [...] have [not] heard [...] from any of the many institutions that promote democracy; [Russian armed forces] deployed [in Crimea] in conformity with international agreement</i></p> <p><i>(C.3) Russia's actions are entirely appropriate and legitimate; the possible participation of international agencies</i></p> <p><i>(C.4) it is an issue of [...] the fundamental norms of international law; what is unacceptable is the manipulation of individual principles and norms of international law; one must seek the right balance between the principles of territorial integrity and the right to self-determination; A number of countries that have spoken out against the expression of the popular will of the Crimean people rushed to recognize the independence of Kosovo; the concept of a referendum is not new [...] Why should the people of Crimea be an exception</i></p> <p><i>(C.5) [opposing the Crimean referendum] runs counter to one of the basic principles of international law, the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, enshrined in [the UN Charter], confirmed in the 1970 Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among states, and in etc.; the right to self-determination involving separation from an existing State is an extraordinary measure, applied when further coexistence within a single State becomes impossible</i></p> <p><i>(C.6) In strict compliance with international law [...] the people of Crimea have fulfilled what is enshrined in the [UN] Charter and [...] fundamental international legal documents; Western partners; Russia stands ready to work in close cooperation with all international partners that are genuinely interested in normalizing the situation in Ukraine; observers of the [OSCE] and the Council of Europe are invited</i></p>
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<p>Construc- tivism</p>	<p>National identity, Public image, Transnational and cultural relations</p>	<p><i>(C.1) protecting the rights of national minorities, supporting traditional values; ensuring the rights of national, religious and language minorities, which [...] is a particularly serious problem in a number of European countries; protecting traditional values; [Russia] is seriously concerned by developments in Ukraine; for the success of that reform, all political forces in Ukraine from all regions of the country must take part, and its results should be put to a referendum [...] We believe in the need to fully reflect the concerns of [...] the eastern and southern parts of Ukraine, Crimea and Sevastopol; infringing on the humanitarian rights of Russian [...] minorities living in Ukraine. There have been calls for a virtual ban on the Russian language; threats being made against Orthodox shrines; vandalizing memorials to Soviet troops; a unilateral [Western] geopolitical agenda [for the fate of Ukraine]; a common Ukrainian consensus that is in the interest of national reconciliation</i></p> <p><i>(C.2) There was an remains our fraternal country of Ukraine, our neighbour; the first action of the [new] Ukrainian Parliament [was] to change the law on language which accorded Ukrainian minority communities [including Russian] the right to use their own languages; a very difficult situation has arisen in Crimea and the eastern part of Ukraine; a lot of concern, and in Crimea in particular; without the consent of the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, in violation of the norms of the Constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea; threats against the lives of Russians citizens [in Crimea], our compatriots; our ethnic or political opponents</i></p> <p><i>(C3) events in our brotherly neighbour Ukraine raise deep concerns for us; any internal crisis must be overcome through a dialogue held among all political forces and ethnic and denominational groups; in defence of [...] the rights of national minorities; crude attacks against churches; armed national radicals chanting extremist anti-Russian [...] slogans; Ukraine took a decision limiting the language rights of minorities; Demands have been made to limit or criminalize the use of the Russian language; All of this has alarmed the authorities of eastern and southern Ukraine and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, home to millions of Russians; legitimate interests of Russians and all Russian-speaking peoples [in Ukraine]; the legitimately elected authorities of the [Crimean] Republic have asked the President of Russia to help; he threat posed to Russian citizens, our compatriots; defending our citizens and compatriot; [Ukraine] is a brotherly country to which we are bound by many centuries of common history; the lives and security of the inhabitants of Crimea and south-eastern Ukraine are under genuine threat; the right-wing forces in</i></p>
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		<p><i>Ukraine[...] cannot stand Russian citizens or ethnic Russians</i></p> <p><i>(C.4) [the new Ukrainian authorities] have done their best [...] to antagonize the eastern and south-eastern regions of Ukraine. [...] they got rid of a law on languages that afforded official status to the Russian language, and [...] eliminated the Russian-language version of Government websites.</i></p> <p><i>(C.5) Kyiv [...] intimidating [...] its people and regions [...] with [...] banning the use of the Russian language; in the interests of all [...] people [in Ukraine], including those in the eastern and south-eastern regions</i></p> <p><i>(C.6) Reunification of Russia and Crimea, which our peoples have awaited for six decades; a historic injustice has been righted; over the years, many citizens [...] in Crimea have repeatedly [...] stated that Crimea is intrinsically Russian land; calls are sent out for violence against Russian-speaking Ukrainians and Russians in general, with all the sign of ethnic cleansing; normalizing the situation in Ukraine [...] with the participation of all regions; putting an end to the provocations [...] against the Russian-speaking population and our fellow countrymen in south-eastern [...] Ukraine</i></p>
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9.1.4. Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry Documents Crimea

- (D.1) Statement by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the events in Ukraine (24 February 2014), Available at: https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1670994/ (Last accessed 30 March 2022).
- (D.2) Speech by the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, during the high-level segment of the 25th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, Geneva, 3 March 2014 (3 March 2014), Available at: https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1676027/ (Last accessed 30 March 2022).
- (D.3) Comment by the Information and Press Department of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the question put by the mass media about the statement of the NATO Council on the situation in Ukraine (3 March 2014), Available at: https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1676577/ (Last accessed 30 March 2022).
- (D.4) Comment by the Information and Press Department of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the consultation session of the UN Security Council on the events in Ukraine (7 March 2014), Available at: https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1693877/ (Last accessed 30 March 2022).
- (D.5) Comment by the Information and Press Department of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the statement of the US Representative, Daniel B. Baer, to the OSCE (10 March 2014), Available at: https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1694879/ (Last accessed 30 March 2022).
- (D.6) Statement by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the adoption of the Declaration of Independence of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol (11

March 2014), Available at: https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1696564/ (Last accessed 30 March 2022).

- (D.7) Introductory speech by the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, and his answers to questions from the mass media during the press conference summarising the results of negotiations with the US Secretary of State, John Kerry, London, dated 14th March 2014 (14 March 2014), Available at: https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1700052/ (Last accessed 30 March 2022).
- (D.8) Comment by the Information and Press Department of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the statements of the UN Assistant Secretary-General, Ivan Šimonović, during his visit to Ukraine (17 March 2014), Available at: https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1700614/ (Last accessed 30 March 2022).
- (D.9) Vladimir Putin addressed State Duma deputies, Federation Council members, heads of Russian regions and civil society representatives in the Kremlin (18 March 2014), Available at: https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1701446/ (Last accessed 30 March 2022).
- (D.10) Comment by the Information and Press Department of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the threat by the Ukraine to seize Russian property in Crimea (20 March 2014), Available at: https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1704412/ (Last accessed 30 March 2022).
- (D.11) Introductory speech by the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov, at the meeting with representatives of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the constituent entities of the Federation, 20 March 2014 (20 March 2014), Available at: https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1703722/ (Last accessed 30 March 2022).

Table VI. Data Coding Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry Documents Crimea

Theoretical approach	Variables	Data analysis
Realism	Gaining of or maintaining power, militarily and economically	<p><i>(D.1) Militants have not been unarmed</i></p> <p><i>(D.2) self-defence units were created by the [Crimean] people; prevent [...] the entry of weapons and ammunition into the peninsula; the legally elected authorities of [Crimea] turned to the President of Russia asking for assistance in pacification of the situation; the threat to [...] Russia's Black Sea Fleet in Ukraine; President of Russia addressed the Federation Council to allow the use of Russian Armed Forces in the territory of Ukraine</i></p> <p><i>(D.3) these units pursue the goal of ensuring the security of the [Russian Black Sea Fleet in Crimea]</i></p> <p><i>(D.4) /</i></p> <p><i>(D.5) the [dangerous] consequences of uncontrolled distribution of armaments stolen by [Ukrainian] militants</i></p> <p><i>(D.6) /</i></p> <p><i>(D.7) violation of provisions of the agreement of 21st February, such as the laying down of illegal weapons; Armed militants arrived in Donetsk from other [Ukrainian] regions and started to attack [peaceful anti-Kiev demonstrators]; [Russia] has no and can have no plans to invade the South-East region of Ukraine; [there have been] no serious violations of law in Crimea [due to the creation of] popular self-defence units</i></p> <p><i>(D.8) "persons in uniform"</i></p> <p><i>(D.9) Sevastopol [...] serves as the birthplace of Russia's Black Sea Fleet; everyone forgot about Crimea and Sevastopol – the main base of the Black Sea Fleet; Russia's Armed Forces never entered Crimea; they were there already in line with an international agreement; deployment of [NATO] military infrastructure at our border; we have already heard declarations [...] about Ukraine soon joining NATO. [...] It would have meant that NATO's navy would be right there in this city of Russia's military glory, and this would create [...] but a perfectly real threat to the whole of southern Russia; we are against having a military alliance making itself at home right in our backyard or in our historic territory; Russia will also have to make a difficult decision now, taking into account the various [economic] domestic and external considerations. [...] the absolute majority of our people [...] support what is happening.</i></p> <p><i>(D.10) violations towards Russian property by Ukrainian authorities; we reserve the right to take adequate and</i></p>

		<p><i>commensurate counter-measures; threats to certain Russian commercial companies, in particular Gazprom</i></p> <p><i>(D.11) foreign economic[...] international ties; since the bipolar system disappeared, our planet has not become more stable; Global competition in [...] economics; the formation of a new polycentric system of international relations [which] many western countries attempt to inhibit; ensure the principle of indivisibility of security[...] when no country should guarantee its own security at the expense of others</i></p>
<p>Neo-liberalism</p>	<p>Economic cooperation, Inter-dependence, Institutions; International law; International regimes</p>	<p><i>(D.1) agreement on settlement of the crisis in Ukraine [...] is not observed despite the fact that its signature was certified by Foreign Ministers of Germany, Poland and France, as well as the [US], the [EU] and other international bodies; our Western partners are not concerned about the fate of Ukraine; the Agreement [...] is used as a cover [by the West]</i></p> <p><i>(D.2) We need to ensure the implementation of [...] the Agreement; equal cooperation [and] trust between states; strict compliance with generally recognised norms and principles of international law, primarily the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, other fundamental documents adopted in the UN, the OSCE and the Council of Europe; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights envisages the possibility of restricting rights and liberties by law; the importance of the Human Rights Council resolution; important to reinforce and develop the legal framework in the area of human rights</i></p> <p><i>(D.3) [Russia disagrees with the accusation] of "military escalation in Crimea in violation of the principles of international law".</i></p> <p><i>(D.4) the statements [by mass media] that the UNSC considers the referendum about the status of Crimea to be illegitimate are not true</i></p> <p><i>(D.5) /</i></p> <p><i>(D.8) [UN Assistant Secretary-General] Ivan Šimonović grossly violated the [UN] principles [...] of neutrality, independence and fair practices [during his observation mission to Ukraine]</i></p> <p><i>(D.9) we hoped that Russian citizens and Russian speakers in Ukraine, [...] that [Ukraine] would protect their rights in line with the norms of international law; our colleagues in Western Europe and North America [...] say we are violating norms of international law; As [Crimea] declared independence and decided to hold a referendum, [they] referred to the [UN] Charter, which speaks of the right of nations to self-determination; the Crimean authorities referred to the well-known Kosovo precedent [...] the UN</i></p>

		<p><i>International Court agreed with this approach; “Declarations of independence may, and often do, violate domestic legislation. However, this does not make them violations of international law.”; the [USA] and Western Europe [say] that Kosovo is some special case. [...] The ruling of the International Court says nothing about this; After the dissolution of bipolarity on the planet, we no longer have stability; Key international institutions are not getting any stronger; on the contrary, in many cases, they are sadly degrading. Our western partners, led by the [USA], prefer not to be guided by international law in their practical policies; Was there a UN Security Council resolution on this matter, allowing for these actions? Nothing of the sort; Russia strived to engage in dialogue with our colleagues in the West; we are not opposed to cooperation with NATO; Russia will always defend [Russians and Russian-speaking people live in Ukraine] their interests using political, diplomatic and legal means</i></p> <p><i>(D.10) gross violation of international law and the principle of state sovereignty.</i></p> <p><i>(D.11) the referendum in Crimea, which was held [...] in full compliance with [...] norms of international legal documents; We firmly protect the need to respect the rule of international law, to build-up [...] dialogue in [...] the world community</i></p>
<p>Construc- tivism</p>	<p>National identity, Public image, Transnational and cultural relations</p>	<p><i>(D.1) to succeed all the Ukrainian political forces and all regions of the country must become its part; it is necessary to fully take into account concerns [...] of eastern and southern regions of Ukraine, the Crimea and Sevastopol; deprivation of humanitarian rights of Russians [...] living in Ukraine; prohibition the Russian language; threats to Orthodox sanctities; persons in [Europe] besmear memorials to Soviet warriors</i></p> <p><i>(D.2) [Ukrainian] decisions restricting the rights of language minorities; requests to restrict or punish the use of Russian; Eastern and southern regions of Ukraine, the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, where millions of Russians live, were outraged; [Ukrainian ultranationalists] endanger the life and legal interests of Russians and the entire Russian-speaking population; the threat to the lives of Russian nationals, our compatriots; ignoring the concerns of south and east Ukraine; [ultraliberals] requesting a revision of moral values, which are shared by all the world religions; our consistent support [...] of the cultural and historical peculiarities of different people; respect of traditional values</i></p> <p><i>(D.3) /</i></p> <p><i>(D.4) /</i></p> <p><i>(D.5) /</i></p>

	<p><i>(D.6) Crimea [...] will turn to the Russia[...] with the proposition to accept [...] Crimea [...] into the Russian Federation; [Russia] will fully respect the results of the free will of the Crimean people at the referendum</i></p> <p><i>(D.7) takes into account the interests of all Ukrainian regions; [Russia] will respect the will of the Crimean people during the forthcoming referendum; everybody understands what Crimea means for Russia and that it is much more important than what Comoros means for France or what the Falkland Islands mean for the [UK]</i></p> <p><i>(D.8) outrageous incidents [in Ukraine] with an explicit [...] anti-Russian [...] pretext; calls for reprisals against the Russian population of Ukraine and Russians in general (i.e. actions having all the signs of ethnic cleansing)</i></p> <p><i>(D.9) Representatives of the Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol are here among us, citizens of Russia, residents of Crimea and Sevastopol; an issue that is of vital, historic significance to all [Russians]; it is enough to know the history of Crimea and what Russia and Crimea have always meant for each other. Everything in Crimea speaks of our shared history and pride; His spiritual feat of adopting Orthodoxy predetermined the overall basis of the culture, civilisation and human values that unite the peoples of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. The graves of Russian soldiers whose bravery brought Crimea into the Russian empire are also in Crimea; symbolising Russian military glory and outstanding valour; in people's hearts and minds, Crimea has always been an inseparable part of Russia; when Crimea ended up as part of a different country [...] Russia realised that it was not simply robbed, it was plundered; the Russian nation became [...] the biggest ethnic group in the world to be divided by borders; Crimea is historically Russian land and Sevastopol is a Russian city. Yes, we all knew this in our hearts and minds; we hoped that Russian citizens and Russian speakers in Ukraine, especially its southeast and Crimea, would live in a [...] state that would protect their rights; attempts were made to deprive Russians of their historical memory, even of their language and to subject them to forced assimilation; Russophobes [...] executed this coup; revise the language policy, which was a direct infringement on the rights of ethnic minorities; he residents of Crimea and Sevastopol turned to Russia for help in defending their rights and lives; Standards were imposed on these nations that did not in any way correspond to their way of life, traditions, or these peoples' cultures; Crimea is our common historical legacy; our historic territory; [Ukrainians and Russians] are one people. Kiev is the mother of Russian cities. Ancient Rus is our common source and we cannot live without each other;</i></p>
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		<p><i>Millions of Russians and Russian-speaking people live in Ukraine and will continue to do so; Ukraine is one of our biggest partners after all. We have many joint projects</i></p> <p><i>(D.10) /</i></p> <p><i>(D.11) The line of the Russia [...] to protect the interests of Russians, compatriots, remains unchanged [...]. We will defend the interests of Russian nationals by political, diplomatic, legal methods and insist that the countries, where our nationals live, fully respect their rights and liberties.</i></p>
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