

наше море

"Nashe more" – "Our Sea".

Russian and NATO posturing in the Black Sea
and Eastern Mediterranean.



The Current Situation¹

President Vladimir Putin's Kremlin has sought to reverse the post-Cold War era transformations during which Russia lost its satellites, withdrew militarily from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), forfeited its regional predominance, and curtailed its international power projection. Moscow's primary strategic objective under the Putin presidency is to create a Eurasian bloc of states under predominant Russian influence that will necessitate containing, undermining and reversing NATO influence throughout eastern Europe. Even where it cannot pressure or entice its neighbours to integrate in the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Kremlin attempts to neutralize nearby capitals by preventing them from moving into Western institutions, particularly NATO and the European Union (EU).

In this strategic context, Russia's supremacy in the Black Sea becomes critical for restoring its east European and Eurasian dominion, as well as projecting power toward the Mediterranean and Middle East. Its offensives in and around the Black Sea are part of a larger anti-NATO strategy in which naval forces play a significant and growing role. Russia is using the Black Sea as a more advantageous method of revisionism than extensive land conquests. Control of ports and sea lanes delivers several benefits: it prevents NATO from projecting sufficient security for its Black Sea members; deters the intervention of littoral states on behalf of vulnerable neighbours; threatens to choke the trade and energy routes of states not in compliance with Russia's national ambitions; and gives Moscow an enhanced ability to exploit fossil fuels in maritime locations.

Significance of the Black Sea

The Black Sea region forms an important crossroads and a strategic intersection of east-west and south-north corridors. Access to and from the Black Sea is vital for all littoral states and nearby neighbours, and a substantial military presence contributes to projecting power into several adjacent regions. Whoever controls or predominates in the Black Sea can project power toward mainland Europe, especially the Balkans and Central Europe, as well as the Eastern Mediterranean, the South Caucasus and the northern Middle East.

In assessing Russia's challenge to the post-1989 status quo in Europe, the Western analytical community has recently focused a great deal of attention on the situation in the Baltic Sea, where U.S. allies face pressure in both the "hybrid" and conventional warfare spaces. Often overlooked in these assessments is the "southern" dimension in Russian strategy and, in particular, the role of the Black Sea as a contested zone in regional geopolitics. The Black Sea is a key component of Russia's revisionist enterprise and its attempts to reverse NATO's gains during the past two decades. For the first time since the Cold War, it is no longer unthinkable to consider the possibility of Moscow extending its future control along the northern coast of the Black Sea. This would position Russia to exert greater pressure on NATO members Romania and Bulgaria, including the mouth of the Danube and, among other targets, the maritime energy fields of Romania's exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

Moscow's current strategy in the Black Sea is therefore important as a case study both for its methods and for its implications. Control of ports and sea lanes delivers several benefits: it threatens to choke the trade and energy routes of wayward states, prevents NATO from projecting sufficient security for Black Sea members and gives Moscow a larger stake in exploiting fossil fuels in maritime locations. The Black Sea strategy could also disrupt or challenge energy supplies through pipeline connections between the Caspian Basin and Europe and set back EU attempts to pursue energy diversity. This would further curtail U.S. and European connections with Central Asia and undermine prospects for future natural gas deliveries from Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan to Europe.

What was old is new again in the Black Sea region. This maritime space was virtually a Soviet lake during the Cold War when Moscow controlled its communist European satellites. Western influences subsequently expanded during the 2000s as Romania and Bulgaria acceded to NATO while Ukraine and Georgia asserted their sovereignty and pro-

¹ Center for European Policy Analysis, February 2016.

Western orientations in order to deter Russia's unwelcome interventions. More recently, Moscow's revived attempts to control the Black Sea not only undermine the independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia; they also directly challenge the security of Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey. As a contested geostrategic zone, the remilitarization of the Black Sea is seen by Moscow as a necessary policy to prevent Russia's containment and any limitation of its powers around its western borders.

Control over the Black Sea is one of the most important strategic objectives that Russia has along its borders with both NATO and the EU. It is the fulcrum of Moscow's revisionist enterprise to restore Russia's international power and to limit NATO's presence both as the mainstream of deterrence to Russia's assertiveness and as a source of attraction for Russia's neighbours. In addition, the installation of elements of a NATO missile defence system, the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA), in several Central European states, including Romania, has prompted Moscow to further develop its own missile systems, including within its Black Sea Fleet, claiming that the EPAA constitutes a threat to Russia's ballistic missile arsenal.

The Black Sea region also has enormous economic importance and future potential as a transit corridor for goods and resources and with a continental shelf that possesses abundant natural resources, including natural gas deposits. With a growing naval presence, Moscow could disrupt energy supplies through pipeline connections between the Caspian Basin and Europe and thereby set back EU attempts to pursue energy diversity outside Moscow's orbit. This would also curtail U.S. and European economic connections with Central Asia and undermine prospects for future natural gas deliveries from Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and other Caspian Basin states to Europe.

Given the increased international competition for influence in the Middle East, the Black Sea has also been transformed in the main logistical platform supporting Russia's naval operations in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Aden Gulf area. Moscow currently maintains 10 ships in the Eastern Mediterranean, several of them transported from its Black Sea Fleet.

The Black Sea is also an important arena for the West and forms a zone of vulnerability for the eastern flank of the Alliance. The region contains significant ethnic and religious diversity, a factor of potential discord that enables Russia to inject itself in neighbours' affairs and exert pressure on several governments to return within Moscow's orbit. NATO cannot allow any of its littoral member states (Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey) to be seriously threatened by an ambitious adversary or it could lose its credibility as a security organization. The West also has a keen economic interest in diversifying energy sources and upholding routes from the Caspian Basin, in which the Black Sea forms a hub and network for energy deliveries and pipelines to Europe outside of Russia's control.

Players and Order of Play

1. The USA.
2. Turkey.
3. Russia.
4. Ukraine.
5. Cyprus.
6. Great Britain.

Turn Length

The turns should be "between 2 to 4 weeks". Arguments about actions should conform to this time period.

What are Matrix Games?

Matrix games are different to normal Wargames. In most of those games you will probably compare lists of statistics and peer at complicated books of rules containing someone else's idea about what things are important, before making a decision, checking that it is covered by the rules and rolling dice to see if you succeed. It can take a long time, look really complicated and can be very difficult to explain to a newcomer. Instead, in a Matrix Game you simply use words to describe why something should happen, the Facilitator or the players (or both) decide how likely it is, and you might roll a dice to see if it happens (but equally, in the face of a compelling argument, you might not need to). If you can say "This happens, for the following reasons..." you can play a Matrix Game.

The games themselves are not intended to be fiercely competitive, with obvious winners and losers. Instead they operate with the players working to generate a credible narrative. It is from examination of this narrative after the game that the players gain insights into the situation being portrayed. The player roles have objectives that will probably place them in conflict with other players, but it is perfectly possible for all of the players to achieve at least some of their objectives by the end of the game.

Where did they come from?

The Chris Engle Matrix Game was created in the USA by Chris Engle, and published in 1992. Chris wanted to create a system by which it was possible for a player to "role-play" anything from a single person to an entire country. Chris felt that previous numbers-ridden game designs essentially missed the point (and anyway were too complicated and boring). What he wanted was a system that could take into account anything the players thought was relevant, including intangible elements such as culture, beliefs, and perceptions of themselves. Taking as his starting point the work of the philosopher Emmanuel Kant, Chris began to develop a "matrix" of cue words that would form the framework for his "model". To this he added Georg Hegel's idea that argument and counter-argument (thesis and antithesis) lead to a synthesis or consensus of ideas.

Thus, the basic idea of the Matrix Game was formed. Over the years the actual "matrix" of cue words has been dropped, but the name has stuck. Like all good ideas, the Matrix Game is very simple in concept, but has huge potential in that it can be adapted to fit any game setting. Matrix Games have been used by the UK MOD with the Unmanned Underwater Vehicle capability, education of Consultants in UK MOD Procurement systems and in the preparation by HQ ARRC for the deployment into Bosnia. They have even been used by the US DOD, McGill University in Canada, the UK Air Warfare Centre and the Defence Academy of the UK, as well as numerous other organisations all over the world.

How to Play a Matrix Game

In a Matrix Game, actions are resolved by a structured sequence of logical "arguments". Each player takes turns to make an argument, with successful arguments advancing the game, and the player's position. There are a number of ways you can do this, depending on the size of the game and the purpose (each has their own strengths and weaknesses), but the one recommended for this game is:

The "Pros and Cons" System

In this system, each argument is broken down into:

- The active Player states: Something That Happens and a Number of Reasons Why it Might Happen (Pros).
- The other Players then state: A Number of Reasons Why it Might NOT Happen (if they can think of any) (Cons).

The game needs a Facilitator to adjudicate the arguments, but if you have a limited number of players, you can take it in turns to be the Facilitator –this works out much better than you might imagine and helps reinforce the idea that

your role in the game might be in conflict with others, but you are all working together to generate a credible narrative.

The advantage of this system is that you formalise the Pros and Cons of an argument and the role of the Facilitator becomes that of ensuring that the Pros and Cons carry equal weight - perhaps making compelling reasons worth two Pros and two or three weaker reasons against only worth one Con. You need to ensure you don't end up with a laundry list of trivial reasons, or the player re-stating a reason already accepted in a slightly different way in a desperate attempt to gain points.

One very useful benefit of the "Pros and Cons" system is that it provides reasons for failure should the dice roll not succeed. You can also more easily run the game with very knowledgeable players.

Notes about arguments

The important thing to remember in a Matrix game is that arguments can be made about anything that is relevant to the scenario. You can argue about your own troops or about the enemy, the existence of people, places, things or events, the weather, plague, disease or public opinion. This can seem a little odd to some players – "how can he argue about my troops?" – It is true, he can't give them orders, but he could argue that their morale and motivation are low because they haven't been paid in months. The only criteria for judgement is the likelihood of the event taking place. With a bit of imagination, common sense and rational thinking, it is possible to present persuasive arguments as to what should happen in any scenario -from traditional military campaigns to the strange world of defence procurement.

A common error in Matrix games is for a player to argue about another player being influenced by something or them agreeing to a course of action. The player is present and can simply be asked –so that a little time between turns to allow the players to negotiate with each other (in secret if necessary) makes for a better game. It might be that a player wants to argue that all parties come to negotiations –in which case, let them state their case, then ask the other players if they want to come along. If they agree then the argument is an automatic success. Arguments are for actions –if the players want to negotiate with each other, they can do that in between turns.

Sometimes players get carried away with their arguments and try to do several different things. This isn't allowed in a Matrix game –you only get to do one action a turn because part of the insight comes from deciding what the highest priority is. The action itself could be large (like a general mobilisation of the Militia), but it must be a single action, so mobilising the Militia and providing the Police with heavy weapons would be two separate actions –which one do you want to do first?

If two arguments are in direct opposition ("This happens" -"No it doesn't") they represent a Logical Inconsistency since they cannot both be true. The earlier argument has already happened, so it is impossible for it not to have happened. The later player may argue that the event is reversed, but this tends to make for a poor narrative in the game and should be discouraged (see Playing Tips below).

Reasonable Assumptions and Established Facts

It is important that the Facilitator understands the difference between "reasonable assumptions" in the game, such as the proposition that well trained and equipped Special Forces soldiers are going to be much more effective in combat than untrained protestors; and "established facts" which are facts that have been specifically mentioned in the game briefings or have become established during play as the result of successful arguments.

The former can be deployed as supporting reasons (Pros and Cons), but the latter need to have been argued successfully in order for them to be included. Many inexperienced players will make vast all-encompassing arguments full of assumptions that are not reasonable. For example: It is not a reasonable assumption that an unarmed Protestor counter could fight off trained Police. It is reasonable to assume that the Police are trained;

armed, equipped and quite capable of dealing with a group of protestors (after all, that is their job). It would be necessary to argue for large number of Protestors, argue that they had weapons of some sort or argue that they were especially devoted or fanatical about their cause, for them to have a reasonable chance of beating the Police.

Of course, you might argue that your Protesters undergo special training, get access to firearms, or are simply fired up with enthusiasm by the powerful and impassioned speech from their leader, so they get a bonus. In this case, you should mark the counter with a +1 or something similar (depending on the strength of the argument) to show their improved status.

Turn Length

Another important element to the game is working out how long each turn is supposed to represent. In this game, it is "two to four weeks" (a variable length of time from a fortnight to a month), so arguments need to be made about things that could take place over that time.

End of Turn "Consequence Management"

At the end of each game turn (a cycle of player arguments) the Facilitator should go over those successful and failed arguments that have generated new "established facts" in the game. They should also review situations that are on-going, such as the generation of refugees from fighting or the arrival of new recruits to a popular cause. If these have not been countered during the turn by a successful argument, the Facilitator should make them continue until someone does make an argument to stop them.

It might also be that some of the arguments, when considered as a whole, will have additional or even unintended consequences that are reasonable to expect to arise. It is therefore worth taking time to consider the consequences of the players' arguments beyond their immediate results. Invite the players to consider the events of the turn, suggest possible consequences and then agree on the most likely that should be taken forward to the next turn.

In some games, it is worthwhile having an individual (if you have one to spare) who is particularly experienced about the sort of subject that the matrix game is focussed on, make "the law of unintended consequences" arguments at the end of a turn. This can help to formalise the process and provide good examples to widen the players' understanding of the consequences of their actions.

Inter-Turn Negotiations

As we have already said, the actual "arguments" of the Matrix Game are about actions that take place in the course of the game. In most cases, the actors represented by the players may well want to engage in face to face negotiation with each other in an effort to strike a deal. Players attempting to make Arguments saying that they want to "influence the Prime Minister" are essentially pointless if the Prime Minister is represented by another player. If they want to strike a deal, then they had better head off to a quiet corner of the room and try a little influence in real life. Of course, if a player wants to make an argument about a position or group not represented by another player, they are welcome to do so in the normal way.

In analytical games, it is important to record the essential elements of these discussions. What was suggested? Was agreement reached and why? If no agreement was reached what were the private and public reasons why the negotiations were unsuccessful? Analysis of these "off-table" negotiations and the reasons the players felt why they were successful or failures can provide important insights.

Secret arguments

There will be some cases where you want to hide from the other players the thing you want to argue about. It could be that you have booby trapped a piece of equipment you think your opponent will use, or that you have swapped

the vital blueprints for a set of fake ones in case the safe is broken into. In this case, you simply write down your argument on a piece of paper, and present it to the Facilitator announcing to the other players that you are making a secret argument. The Facilitator will make a judgment and you will roll the dice normally, but the other players have no idea what it is about.

You should be careful, however, that the players don't make too many secret arguments. This can ruin the game's atmosphere and reduce the focus, so that the game drags on unnecessarily. They also depend on the judgement of the Facilitator as to their success or failure, rather than being decided on a consensual basis from the participants. They must only be permitted when they refer to quite specific things or events. An argument about gathering information from a spy, in most games, will be quite a generic argument and should be argued openly. Similarly Arguing about the placement of an IED to catch forces moving down a route should be made openly as the results will take effect the same turn. It is only really for secret things you need to establish several turns in advance.

Measures of Success

In many arguments success or failure may not be a simple "Yes" or "No" proposition. There might well be a sliding scale of success or failure in terms of numbers or the quality of the outcome, which is usually represented by the score on the dice. If you needed a 7+ to succeed and rolled a double-six (12), this can indicate an especially notable success. Conversely, a roll of a double-one, it could represent a disastrous failure.

Levels of Protection and Hidden Things

At the start of a game there are certain things that are not readily accessible to some of the player characters. For example, in a Cyber-Security Game the secret plans for a new submarine would be heavily protected.

Things that are hidden or secret require a successful argument merely to find them. Things that are protected will require successful arguments to overcome the different levels of protection. A secret government base may declared by the Facilitator to have 3 levels of protection: Its hidden location, its boundary fence, and the security guards, all of which must be overcome by successful arguments before the base can be penetrated.

As a rule of thumb, nothing should have more than 3 levels of protection as it will simply take too long and dominate the game to the exclusion of everything else.

Big Projects

Depending on the level of the game, some actions and events represent such a large investment in time and effort that they require multiple arguments in order to bring them to fruition. As a rule of thumb, a Big Project should also take no more than 3 successful arguments (like protected and hidden things above); otherwise the game is focussed too much on this single thing.

Number of Players

Matrix Games are best played with an even number of players as it is the action and counter-action running through the game that generates the insights. If you have an odd number, the extra person should be the facilitator. The game works best with 6-8 players and a facilitator.

More information

More information and examples of recreational Matrix Games can be found at:

<http://www.mapsyms.com/wdmatrix.html>.

The original Chris Engle Matrix Game site is here: <http://hamsterpress.net/>.

A very good website that has developed the Pros and Cons system: "The Open Ended Machine" is here:

<http://theopenendedmachine.blogspot.co.uk/>.

Matrix Game Methodology Support to V2010 Olympic Marine Security Planners by Antony Zegers at:

<http://www.professionalwargaming.co.uk/MatrixGameOlympics.pdf>. This is a report by DRDC CORA dated 2011 about the use of Matrix Games.

International C2 Journal at: <http://www.professionalwargaming.co.uk/MatrixGameC2Journal.pdf>. Composing Effective Environments for Concept Exploration in a Multi-Agency Context by Helen Mitchard and Simon Ng (Defence Science and Technology Organisation, AUS). This is another report on the use of Matrix Game techniques

There has been quite a lot of discussion about Matrix games on the "PAXsims" Blog that is worth reading:

<https://paxsims.wordpress.com/?s=Matrix+Game>

Professor Rex Brynen was also interviewed by the GrogHeads "GrogCast" Podcast, a copy of what he said about Matrix Games is here: <http://grogheads.com/?podcast=grogcast-season-2-episode-12> with the discussion about Matrix Games starting at the 31 minute mark.



Russia

The main objective of Moscow's foreign policy is to restore Russia as a major "pole of power" in a multipolar world — in effect, the leading superpower in Eurasia. Following the return of Vladimir Putin to Russia's presidency in May 2012, the Kremlin reinvigorated its ambitions and regional assertiveness. It also made more explicit its goal of reversing the growing influences of the United States within Central and Eastern Europe and the wider Eurasian zone. If left to run its course, the practical outcome of the strategy will result in the restoration of the Yalta-Potsdam post-World War II order, in which Moscow dominated Eurasia and half of Europe.

The creation of a Eurasian pole of power necessitates containing, undermining and even reversing NATO influence throughout Europe's east. Even where it cannot pressure or entice its neighbours to comply with its mechanisms of economic and security integration, including the Eurasian Economic Union and the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Kremlin attempts to neutralize nearby capitals by preventing them from moving into two key Western institutions — NATO and the EU. In several cases, Moscow also seeks to influence countries that are already NATO and EU members so that they either support or do not block Russia's objectives in multinational institutions or within the wider region.

In reaction to the growth of NATO exercises in the Black Sea, such as BREEZE 2016, with more than 25 ships and 1,700 sailors from Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Turkey and Spain; and SEA BREEZE 2016, with U.S., Ukraine, Turkey, and Romania; Vladimir Putin said that NATO's actions were aimed at undermining parity, but that Russia will not yield to warmongering.

"NATO's anti-Russian thrust is being deliberately emphasized these days. Whenever Russia does something NATO looks for a confirmation of legitimacy and feasibility of its existence, but at the same time it takes real confrontational steps towards us," he said. "We are being accused of carrying out some military activity. Where? In our own territory," Putin said. "In the meantime the ongoing NATO events near our borders are regarded as something normal." "All this is aimed at undermining military parity that took decades to establish," Putin said.

In response Russia has announced the deployment of more advanced air defence systems to Crimea, a move to protect the region from what one official called NATO's "air hooligans."

18th anti-aircraft missile regiment of the 31st Air Defence Division, based in Feodosia, will be equipped with Russia's top-of-the-line S-400 Triumf air defence system. It has also deployed nuclear-capable weapons to the Black Sea area and is apparently building a similar network of anti-access area denial (A2/AD) capabilities against NATO in both the eastern Mediterranean around Syria and in the Caucasus.

It's yet a further build-up of Russia's defences along its southwestern border against a hostile western military threat in the Black Sea. This would complement Russia's system of land-based anti-ship missile defences along the Black Sea, which already effectively let Russia control the surface of the sea.

Moscow has also successfully obtained agreement from the Bulgarian government to the degree that it publicly refused to join any kind of regional cooperative security organization and naval agreement, a decision that severely undermines any realistic chance for effective NATO led regional naval coordination in the Black Sea.

Russia has successfully signed an agreement with Cyprus to give Russian navy ships access to Cypriot ports. President Vladimir Putin agreed the deal after talks with Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades. President Putin said that other countries should not be concerned and that the port's main use would be for counter-terrorism and anti-piracy.

Tensions remain high between Russia and other European countries but the Russian leader was not concerned that the deal could be misconstrued. "Our friendly ties aren't aimed against anyone," President Putin said. "I don't think it should cause worries anywhere."

Ukraine

The war in east Ukraine rarely makes the headlines two years on, but every day brings new casualties. The situation is at its most tense since the end of large-scale fighting in February 2015. Russian claims to have foiled a “terror plot” in Crimea earlier this year, followed by strong rhetoric from the president, Vladimir Putin, led many in Kiev and the west to worry that a major new Russian-backed offensive could be imminent.

Up to now, Russia has used a mixture of loosely directed volunteers, military advisers and occasional injections of regular troops at key moments, while denying it has ever had a major military presence in east Ukraine. But with Ukraine’s army improving over the past two years, a push for further territory would probably require a full-scale, overt Russian invasion that would irrevocably damage relations with the west.

Moscow is keen for a settlement that would see much of the separatist infrastructure legalised, giving it de facto control over part of Ukraine without having to fund it. In Kiev, attitudes have hardened against any compromise with the “terrorists” in the east. Amid the deadlock, many in Kiev still worry about the possibility of Russia opting for full-scale war. “It doesn’t seem logical but then the things they do often don’t,” said a Ukrainian official.

Ukraine feels its reform efforts have been vindicated by the International Monetary Fund's decision to give it another \$1 billion in aid, but the country still faces a struggle to speed economic growth and achieve lasting change. After waiting for nearly a year for Kiev to accelerate reforms, the IMF announced the release of more aid which is part of a \$17.5 billion bailout aimed at shoring up an economy brought low by a pro-Russian separatist war in the east.

The money will go to increasing Ukraine's foreign exchange reserves, which in turn should help stabilize the hryvnia currency and give the central bank space to further loosen restrictions on foreign exchange trade. There are, however, major concerns about corruption. Transparency International ranks the Ukraine worse than Russia on its corruption perception index and President Petro Poroshenko will need to address this to ensure additional aid.

On May 17th, 2016, news agencies reported the quite interesting news that Kiev and Ankara have become official military partners. The Implementation Plan of Military Cooperation has been signed between the armed forces of Turkey and Ukraine which defines the direction and scope of cooperation until 2020.

Kiev has stressed that cooperation with Turkish military is a step in the direction of “NATO integration.” Experts say that this is not so much about Ukraine preparing to join the alliance as it is about NATO’s “supervision” of Ukraine’s armed forces through the medium of the Turkish military. In addition to the conventional “Sea Breeze” exercises in a “Ukraine-NATO” format (held in the Odessa and Nikolaev regions), Ukrainian-Turkish naval manoeuvres will be organized in the Black Sea after which both countries plan to switch to joint patrols along their coastal zones.

Ukraine’s naval forces formally consist of 17 combat ships, but, judging by media reports, only the “Hetman Sadaydachny” frigate and a few boats are fully combat-capable. Ukraine’s naval aviation is essentially represented by a few obsolete planes and helicopters based near Kherson. The only real force of the Ukrainian navy is the marines and Special Forces. There is a brigade of marines from Nikolaev actually serving in Mariupol, and there’s the 73rd marine centre for special operations of the Ukrainian navy (in the city of Ochakov) and the 801st separate detachment for combatting underwater saboteur forces (based in Nikolaev).

Ukraine has one naval base in Odessa and two anchor points in Nikolaev and Ochakov. But even the existing, modest fleet can’t really make it anywhere. All readily accessible ports in the waters of Odessa are occupied by commercial projects while Nikolaev and Ochakov are on the Dneprobursky estuary from which it is a long and difficult process for ships to disembark which, moreover, if so desired, could be easily blocked.

Turkey

When Turkey shot down a Russian military jet last November, business ties between the two countries hit rocky terrain, with Russia slapping trade sanctions on Turkey.

However, it seems all is now forgiven as Presidents Tayyip Erdogan and Vladimir Putin met in St Petersburg to revive business relations - something both countries are keen to do as they both face unique sets of economic challenges and slowdowns. Sanctions on Turkey's tourism, construction and food export industries are now set to be gradually phased out, Russian package tours will no longer face suspension and two major joint energy projects will be unfrozen as part of the renewed relationship.

Where Turkey is concerned, a 41 percent drop in international arrivals - prior to the attempted coup - has proven detrimental to the tourism industry. Assurances were made to foreign investors following the attempted coup, legislation to create a sovereign wealth fund has been proposed and younger Turks are now being forced to pay into a private pension to improve on their savings, all in a bid to rescue Turkey's troubled economy.

Turkey is hooked on foreign capital, but how will foreign investors feel about deals with a country that has seen countless bombings and ongoing political unrest? Travel and tourism revenues have already seen a decline as a result of the recent bombings, with the future of the industry at a real risk. This comes at a time when the country's current budget deficit - for example the difference between cost of imports and exports - sits at 4.5 percent and the annual growth of the Turkish economy has slowed down to 3.5 percent only this year. Further to that, the Turkish Lira hit an all-time low in exchange for the US dollar, and US global rating agency Standard & Poor's changed the country's outlook to negative as a result of the coup. Add to this the demographic stress of nearly 3 million Syrian refugees in Turkey's southern provinces, and the scope of economic and security difficulties become even more formidable.

However, in spite of the shake-up, Turkish Deputy Prime Minister and former Minister of Finance Mehmet Simsek says the market economy model will not change and that there is confidence in the Turkish economy withstanding the current storm - as it has done in the past.

The economic crises in Greece, Spain, Poland, and Italy, the economic slowdown in China, and the enormous business uncertainty posed by Britain's vote to leave the EU all mitigate the relative severity of Turkey's security problems. Turkey's general credit rating is still higher than that of Brazil, Croatia, Portugal, Cyprus, and Serbia. Despite its political risks, Turkey climbed two spots in 2015 to become the world's 20th most popular destination for foreign direct investment.

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan pledged to overhaul the army in response to the failed military coup, a sign that a newly imposed state of emergency would be used to press on with a purge that has alarmed the West. In a sign of Turkey's dismissal of outside criticism over how it has responded to the coup, the justice minister said Turkey would not bow to pressure from the European Union to rule out restoring the death penalty to execute the plotters.

Despite the failed coup, the Turkish army remains effective and Syrian Sunni rebels backed by Turkey were poised to begin an assault to try to drive Islamic State from the Syrian city of al-Bab, a battle that could also prompt new fighting with Kurdish groups that are competing for the area. Al-Bab is fast becoming a major fault line in the war in northern Syria, bringing Free Syrian Army rebels backed by Turkish armour closer than ever to frontlines held by the Syrian government and its Iranian and Russian allies in nearby Aleppo.

Great Britain

Following the High Court ruling that the Prime Minister will require parliamentary approval to trigger Britain's exit from the EU, there have been calls for a snap election. Under the Fixed-term Parliamentary Act this could only happen following a vote of no confidence or a vote by MPs with a two-thirds majority, so there are considerable political difficulties. The election of Donald Trump to the Presidency of the USA has only added to the uncertainty and confusion in Whitehall.

The media has commented that Britain's Armed Forces are short of more than 5,000 regular troops, according to latest government figures². Tory-led defence cuts have led to a shortfall in soldiers, sailors and airmen against an increasing terror risk from Islamic State and Cold War threats from Russia. New Armed Forces figures show how the number of regular trained troops ready to defend the UK is now 141,260 - against a required number of 147,130.

There have also been highly critical articles on the £3.5 Billion project to acquire the Ajax fighting vehicle. A former senior defence official told the Times that Ajax "is fine if you are operating against incompetent enemies, but if you are up against a peer enemy this thing is useless, it's a death trap." There were also concerns that the vehicle's high weight meant that it would need to have some of its armour removed in order to permit it to be transported by air, which is worrying for a vehicle supposed to serve as the mainstay of a rapid-reaction force.³

In the midst of major government concerns, Greek Cyprus' offer to allow Russia the use of air and navy bases on its territory has triggered a feud with Britain, which is concerned over Russian military activities amid the Ukraine crisis. The top British envoy to the island made a series of warnings to Greek Cyprus regarding the gas crisis in the eastern Mediterranean and the use of military bases by Russia during an interview with Greek daily Kathimerini, sparking reaction from Greek Cypriot leader Nicos Anastasiades.

Greek Cyprus had announced the country is ready to host Russia at its aviation and naval bases, marking a split with its fellow EU members, which are in a deep conflict with Moscow over the Russian intervention in Ukraine, which led to a violent insurgency within the country. Britain already has the use of the Akrotiri airbase and the Dhekelia naval base on the island.



² <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/tory-cuts-leave-britains-armed-7353112>

³ <https://www.rt.com/uk/364933-ajax-tank-military-faults/>

The USA

Donald Trump has said that he wants to improve U.S.-Russian relations and in particular that he wants a closer relationship with Vladimir Putin. In 2009, Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton came into office as president and secretary of state, and they too wanted to improve relations with Russia. Is there any reason to suppose that this new reset will fare any better than the previous one? One reason it might is Trump's apparent interest in reducing traditional American commitments abroad, particularly to the United States' NATO allies. Trump has often questioned the continuing value of NATO and characterized some allies as free riders who do not necessarily deserve to be defended. Putin's foreign policy is animated by a desire to restore Russian power and influence. If the United States were to step back from the European arena, Putin would be happy to step in. However, such a development, which might seem to improve U.S.-Russian relations, would be heavily criticized in the U.S., not to mention in Europe, as a surrender to Russian ambitions and a selling out of American national interests.



USS Porter (DDG-78) was the first U.S. surface ship to cross the Bosphorus Strait this year as part of the ongoing Operational Atlantic Resolve. The operation stood up shortly after Russia seized the Crimean peninsula in 2014 and has been marked by a revolving cast of NATO ships conducting semi-regular presence operations and exercises in the region. The USS Porter is an Arleigh Burke class guided missile destroyer (DDG), the United States Navy's first class of destroyer built around the Aegis Combat System and the SPY-1D multifunction passive electronically scanned array radar. While the presence for the U.S. has been higher in the last year and a half than it has in decades, alliance leaders have complained NATO has not done enough to curtail Russian expansion.

Exercise SEA BREEZE 2016, was a multinational exercise on land and sea, that took place in July 2016 co-hosted by the U.S. and Ukraine Navies. In addition many NATO allies and partners participated. Approximately 2,300 personnel from the 13 nations: Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Lithuania, Italy, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Sweden, Ukraine, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The exercise was roundly condemned as escalatory by Russia.

Incirlik Air Base is located in the the city of Adana, Turkey, within an urban area of 1.7 million people, 10 km east of the city core, and 32 km inland from the Mediterranean Sea. The United States Air Force and the Turkish Air Force are the primary users of the air base, although it is also used by the Royal Air Force and by Royal Saudi Air Force. The Base is the home of the 10th Air Wing of the 2nd Air Force Command of the Turkish Air Force and has a U.S. Air Force complement of about five thousand airmen, with several hundred airmen from the Royal Air Force and Turkish Air Force also present. The primary unit stationed at Incirlik Air Base is the 39th Air Base Wing of the U.S. Air Force. The Base has one 3,048 m long runway, with about 57 hardened aircraft shelters. Tactical nuclear weapons are stored at the base.

In the recent coup it was surrounded by thousands of Turkish security forces as a "precaution" and "safety inspection" which resulted in major power cuts to the base, but no additional incidents.

Cyprus

The 2012–13 Cypriot financial crisis, part of the wider European debt crisis, dominated the country's economic affairs in recent times. In March 2013, the Cypriot government reached an agreement with its eurozone partners to split the country's second biggest bank, the Cyprus Popular Bank (also known as Laiki Bank), into a "bad" bank which would be wound down over time and a "good" bank which would be absorbed by the larger Bank of Cyprus. In return for a €10 billion bailout from the European Commission, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund, the Cypriot government would be required to impose a significant haircut on uninsured deposits. Insured deposits of €100,000 or less would not be affected. After a three-and-a-half-year recession, Cyprus returned to growth in the first quarter of 2015.

The Cypriot authorities cancelled their financial arrangement with the IMF, which was set to expire in mid-May, after having turned around the economy. While congratulating Cyprus for its impressive policy achievements over the last three years, the IMF pointed to pending tasks that were still outstanding: tackling non-performing loans, reducing public debt, and completing growth-enhancing reforms.

A Cypriot Orthodox human rights centre petitioned the republic's President Nicos Anastasiades to consider establishing a Russian military base on the island, according to media reports. Marius Fotiu, head of the organization, pointed out that Cyprus is the closest EU member-state to Syria so the probability of terrorist attacks in the country is extremely high. Activists asked Anastasiades to "invite units of Russian Aerospace Forces and Navy to Cyprus territory," according to Izvestia newspaper. The activists believe that NATO's attempts to combat terrorism have not yielded any tangible results while Russia time and again has upheld the principles of peacekeeping, justice and freedom in Europe, Izvestia adds.

Russia has successfully signed an agreement with Cyprus to give Russian navy ships access to Cypriot ports. President Vladimir Putin agreed the deal after talks with Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades. President Putin said that other countries should not be concerned and that the port's main use would be for counter-terrorism and anti-piracy.

The Sovereign Base Areas of Akrotiri and Dhekelia, form a British Overseas Territory on the island of Cyprus. The areas, which include British military bases and installations, as well as other land, were retained by the British under the 1960 treaty of independence, signed by the United Kingdom, Greece, Turkey and representatives from the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities, which granted independence to the Crown colony of Cyprus. The territory serves an important role as a station for signals intelligence and provides a vital strategic part of the United Kingdom communications gathering and monitoring network in the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

The election of left-wing Demetris Christofias as Cypriot president in February 2008 prompted concern in the United Kingdom. Christofias pledged to remove all foreign military forces from the island as part of a future settlement of the Cyprus dispute, calling the British presence on the island a "colonial bloodstain".

During the Syrian civil war, some Cypriot and British media sources speculated that long-range ballistic missiles, fired from Syria in retaliation for proposed British involvement in military intervention against the Syrian government of Bashar al-Assad, could hit Cyprus, and could potentially deliver chemical weapons. In some Cypriot media it was stated that the proposed interdiction of the Syrian civil war, utilising Akrotiri and Dhekelia, could recklessly endanger the Cypriot populations near to those bases.

The reunification talks on the future of Cyprus encouraged by outgoing United Nations secretary general Ban Ki Moon have sparked optimism that his successor Antonio Guterres might be the first to be free of the headache that is the "Cyprus problem". The talks have been progressing well and are supported by Turkey, so there is genuine optimism that agreement is possible and ultimately that it could be put to the people of Cyprus in a referendum that recognises the rights and aspirations of the two communities. There is speculation that this might also include the status of the British Sovereign Base areas.

Montreux Convention Regarding the Regime of the Straits⁴

The Montreux Convention Regarding the Regime of the Straits is a 1936 agreement that gives Turkey control over the Bosphorus Straits and the Dardanelles and regulates the transit of naval warships. The Convention gives Turkey full control over the Straits and guarantees the free passage of civilian vessels in peacetime. It restricts the passage of naval ships not belonging to Black Sea states. The terms of the convention have been the source of controversy over the years, most notably concerning the Soviet Union's military access to the Mediterranean Sea.

Signed on 20 July 1936 at the Montreux Palace in Switzerland, it permitted Turkey to remilitarise the Straits. It went into effect on 9 November 1936 and was registered in League of Nations Treaty Series on 11 December 1936. It is still in force today, with some amendments.

Turkey was authorised to close the Straits to all foreign warships in wartime or when it was threatened by aggression; additionally, it was authorised to refuse transit from merchant ships belonging to countries at war with Turkey.

A number of highly specific restrictions were imposed on what types of warships are allowed passage. Non-Black Sea state warships in the Straits must be less than 15,000 tons. No more than nine non-Black Sea state warships, with a total aggregate tonnage of no more than 30,000 tons, may pass at any one time, and they are permitted to stay in the Black Sea for no longer than twenty-one days. Black Sea states may transit capital ships of any tonnage, escorted by no more than two destroyers.

Black Sea states are also allowed to send submarines through the Straits, with prior notice, as long as the vessels have been constructed, purchased or sent for repair outside the Black Sea. The less restrictive rules applicable to Black Sea states were agreed as, effectively, a concession to the Soviet Union, the only Black Sea state other than Turkey with any significant number of capital ships or submarines. The passage of civil aircraft between the Mediterranean and Black Seas is permitted, but only along routes authorised by the Turkish government.

Although the Montreux Convention is cited by the Turkish government as prohibiting aircraft carriers in the straits, the treaty actually contains no explicit prohibition on aircraft carriers. However, modern aircraft carriers are heavier than the 15,000 ton limit, making it impossible for non-Black Sea powers to transit modern aircraft carriers through the Straits.

Black Sea states are permitted to transit capital ships of any tonnage through the straits, but Annex II specifically excludes aircraft carriers from the definition of capital ship. In 1936, it was common for battleships to carry observation aircraft. Therefore, aircraft carriers were defined as ships that were "designed or adapted primarily for the purpose of carrying and operating aircraft at sea." The inclusion of aircraft on any other ship does not classify it as an aircraft carrier.

To take advantage of this exception, the Soviet Union designated its Kiev-class and Kuznetsov-class aircraft carriers as "aircraft carrying cruisers." The aircraft carriers were armed with P-500 and P-700 cruise missiles, which were also found on the Slava-class cruiser and the Kirov-class battlecruiser. The result of this is that the Soviet Navy could send its aircraft cruisers through the Straits in compliance with the Convention, while at the same time the Convention denied access to NATO aircraft carriers, which exceeded the 15,000 ton limit.

Turkey chose to accept the designation of the Soviet aircraft carriers as aircraft cruisers. Any revision of the Montreux Convention could leave Turkey with less control over the Turkish Straits. The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea had already established more liberal passage through other straits. By allowing the Soviet aircraft cruisers to transit the Straits, Turkey could leave the more restrictive Montreux Convention in place.

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Montreux_Convention_Regarding_the_Regime_of_the_Straits

The safety of vessels passing through the Bosphorus has become a major concern in recent years as the volume of traffic has increased greatly since the Convention was signed – from 4,500 in 1934 to 49,304 by 1998. As well as obvious environmental concerns, the Straits bisect the city of Istanbul with over 14 million people living on its shores; maritime incidents in the Straits therefore pose a considerable risk to public safety. The Convention does not, however, make any provision for the regulation of shipping for the purposes of safety and environmental protection.

In January 1994 the Turkish government adopted new "Maritime Traffic Regulations for the Turkish Straits and the Marmara Region". This introduced a new regulatory regime "in order to ensure the safety of navigation, life and property and to protect the environment in the region" but without violating the Montreux principle of free passage. The new regulations provoked some controversy when Russia, Greece, Cyprus, Romania, Ukraine and Bulgaria raised objections. However, they were approved by the International Maritime Organisation on the grounds that they were not intended to prejudice "the rights of any ship using the Straits under international law".

Center For International Maritime Security @CIMSEC [CIMSEC](https://www.cimsec.org/) [CI Geography](https://www.cimsec.org/) [blogspot.com](https://www.cimsec.org/) @CI Geography

RUSSIAN BLACK SEA FLEET

Sources: IHS Jane's

Cruisers



Slava class



Kara class

Submarines



Kilo class

Destroyers



Kashin class

Corvettes/Missile boats



Matka class



Tarantul class

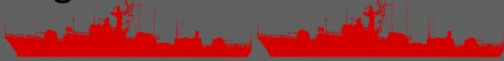


Dergach class



Nanuchka class

Frigates



Grisha class



Krivak class

Minesweepers



Natya class



Sonya class

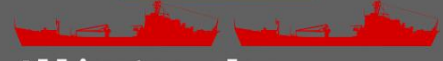


Gorya class

Amphibious



Ropucha class



Alligator class

UKRAINIAN NAVY

Frigates



Krivak class



Grisha class

Submarines



Foxtrot class

Minesweepers



Yevgenya class



Natya class



Sonya class

Corvettes/Missile boats



Tarantul class



Pauk class



Matka class

Amphibious



Ropucha class



Zubr class



Polnochny class

ISKANDER-M TACTICAL BALLISTIC MISSILE SYSTEM

ISKANDER-M'S ELEMENTS



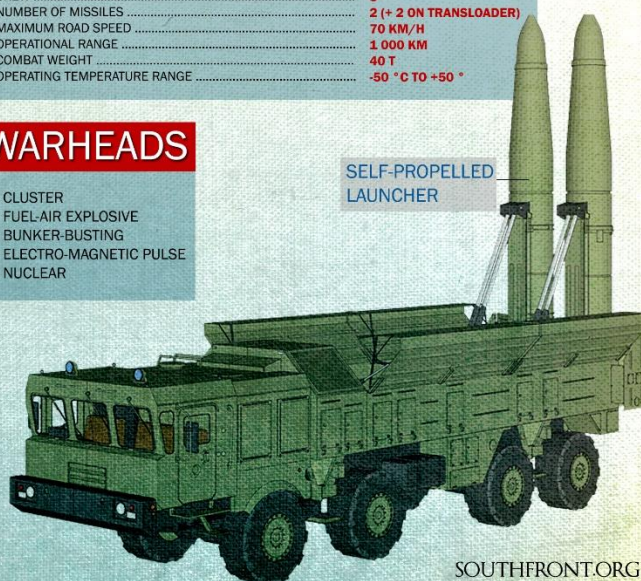
SELF-PROPELLED LAUNCHER

- CREW	3
- NUMBER OF MISSILES	2 (+ 2 ON TRANSLOADER)
- MAXIMUM ROAD SPEED	70 KM/H
- OPERATIONAL RANGE	1 000 KM
- COMBAT WEIGHT	40 T
- OPERATING TEMPERATURE RANGE	-50 °C TO +50 °

WARHEADS

- CLUSTER
- FUEL-AIR EXPLOSIVE
- BUNKER-BUSTING
- ELECTRO-MAGNETIC PULSE
- NUCLEAR

SELF-PROPELLED LAUNCHER



SOUTHFRONT.ORG

MISSILE SPECIFICATIONS

- LAUNCH RANGE	50 - 500 KM
- MISSILE WEIGHT	3,800 KG
- WARHEAD WEIGHT	480 - 700 KG
- SPEED	2,100 M/S (MACH 6.2)
- TIME TO LAUNCH	4 - 16 MIN
- INTERVAL BETWEEN LAUNCHES	UP TO 1 MIN



GUIDANCE SYSTEM - INERTIAL GUIDANCE, OPTICAL DSMAC, USE OF GPS / GLONASS IN ADDITION TO THE INERTIAL GUIDANCE SYSTEM

S-400 Triumf air defense missile system

Alphanumeric code

Russian Army: **S-400**
NATO reporting name
SA-21 Growler

Designation

A surface-to-air missile system designed to engage with all types of aerial targets (aircraft, UAVs, cruise missiles, etc.) with a range of **400 km (250 miles)** and an altitude of **30 km (10,000 feet)**

Specifications

Operational range:	
- for aerodynamic targets	3 km to 240 km
- for ballistic targets	5 km to 60 km
Altitude	of up to 30 km (10,000 feet)
Maximum target speed	of up to 4,800 m/s
Deployment time	of 5-10 min.
Missiles per system	up to 48 (384 in all)

Composition

- Command & Control System
 - Several different radar units
 - Up to 8 medium- and long-range surface-to-air missile systems (up to 12 missiles per system)
 - 48N6E, 48N6E2, 9M96E, 9M96E2 midrange guided missiles and a 40N6E long-range missile
- Technical specifications



Missile 9M96E2



Operational range of	120 km (75 miles)
Altitude of	up to 30 km (10,000 feet)
Reaction time of	no more than 8 seconds
Service life of	15 years
Weight of	420 kg

Features

- Twice as effective as previous generation systems
- The only system capable of selectively deploying one of five types of missiles
- All operations are completely automated, from target acquisition to assessment of results of engagement
- Considered a 4+ generation system by specifications and combat capabilities





