

Международные отношения:
Россия, Латинская Америка и конфликт в Украине

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Introduction

Within the past eight years, Russian foreign policy has become increasingly more aggressive around the world since its near-failed state status during the “Lost Decade” of the 1990s, when the country was in economic and political free-fall. In August of 2008, Russia flexed its military muscle by responding to an attack by the Georgian military in the form of an invasion to protect Russians and their allies in the breakaway Georgian republics of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Again in 2014, the outbreak of civil conflict in Ukraine over its national interests drew Russia in to support the separatist Donbass region in the East. This ultimately led to the annexation of the Crimean peninsula by the Russian Federation to protect Russian speakers and minorities; the port of the Russian Black Sea Fleet; and traditional Russian influence, which had been setback once more Ukrainians demanded a Eurocentric alignment. Finally, in 2015, the Russian Air Force and Special Forces defended Russian ally Bashar al-Assad, president of Syria, against militant rebels and terrorist organizations (namely ISIS and the al-Nusra Front) in an attempt to stabilize a country where there is a Russian naval base operating. Russia has increased its foreign policy activities with (former) membership in the G-8 economic summit, leadership of the Eurasian Economic Union, and by brokering deals with the Iranian and Syrian governments to end the use or production of harmful weapons of mass destruction.

Current Russian involvement in the Ukraine Conflict demonstrates how its foreign policy in one region of the world – Eastern Europe – has a profound impact on Russian foreign policy in another part of the world – Latin America. In March 2014, the United Nations General Assembly voted on whether to accept a Russian-backed referendum held earlier that month in Crimea determining if it would remain part of Ukraine or enter the Russian Federation. The referendum showed that, “96.77 percent of the Crimean population has voted ‘for’ integration of

the region into the Russian Federation” of the 83.1% of voter turnout – the result of which was vehemently criticized and debated by the West and the UN ("Crimea Declares Independence, Seeks UN Recognition").

Interestingly, the UN vote exposed a very divided Latin America – one that did not uniformly vote to invalidate the Crimea Referendum regarding its annexation, as would be expected for a region of the world under US hegemony for decades. Rather, major regional powers and core allies of Russia voted to recognize or abstain (not taking a decisive stance against Russia) from validating the annexation of Crimea. This, when viewed together with the past 10 years of increased trade, political support, and cultural exchanges between Russia and Latin American countries confirms that Russia is entering a new age of renewed and expanded collaboration with Latin America, while exposing the decline of US hegemony in the region. In this paper, I will argue that while Russia has been involved economically, politically, or culturally over the past 200 years with various Latin American countries, there has never been a point like today, where the tools of power Russia have been used so effectively to influence Latin America across multiple spheres (trade agreements, military exercises, political dialogue on mutually-beneficial issues, etc.). Indeed, the Russian approach to Latin America has moved into a new phase of regional development due to the implications of the history of the Ukrainian Conflict, the UN vote, the decisions made by Latin American countries in that vote, and how all of these factors might influence the future of Russian-Latin American relations in a way that could significantly (and from an American perspective, negatively) undermine existing international norms – namely US hegemonic power across Latin America.

To understand the possible future of Russian-Latin American relations in the international system, one must understand the historical ties that serve as a foundation upon

which Russia is building its policies. Below I will now summarize that relationship in Russian, based off of research conducted at the Dickinson-in-Moscow program during the 2014-2015 academic years.

Дипломатическая история России и Латинской Америки до 2008

Международные отношения между Россией и Латинской Америкой уже существуют 200 лет. Даже когда этот регион был колонией Испанской империи, Российское правительство торговало с этими территориями в Латинской Америке. Конечно потому что эти колонии не были независимые, встречи между ними были не очень серьёзные в дипломатической или культурной сферах (с 1525 по 1828). Когда страны в этом регионе выиграли войны независимости, отношения стали сильнее. Эти первые шаги между Россией и Латинской Америки имеют последствия сегодня, когда кто-то отмечает интернациональные тенденции между ними.

Первая страна, которая открыла отношения с Русской империей была Бразилия. Это очень интересно, потому что теперь Бразилия одна из самых важных стран, с которыми Россия хочет создать сильное партнёрство в международном сообществе. 200 лет истории между ними были очень важными, чтобы создать доверие, хорошие отношения и сильные связи. «В 1828 Бразилия стала первой из них, с кем Россия установила дипломатические отношения» и это важно, потому что отношения с другими странами и развитию между регионами могли расширить (Давыдов 138, *Латинская Америка – Россия: история и современный этап отношений*). После 1825 г. Россия тоже начала дипломатические и экономические дискуссии с другими странами. Например, Колумбия, Венесуэла, Аргентина и т.д. Бразилия не была единственной страной, с

которой Россия развивала отношения, и это было не только в успех экономического развития.

В XIX веке идеи, люди и информации обменивались между Россией и Латинской Америкой. Кинематографы, писатели, дипломаты, геологи, ботаники и художники разделяли научные и культурные традиции. Поэты и писатели, как Хосе Марти из Кубы читал русскую литературу, которая имела сильное его работу. Х.П. Капабланка (тоже из Кубы) получил навыки для игр шахматы от шахматистов из России. Другие обмены включали экологические экспедиция в Латинскую Америку (страны дали разрешение делать экспедиции, которые требуют хорошие отношения между ними).

Без сомнения, одним из самых важных обменов была эмиграция. «В поисках лучшей жизни, свободных земель, избавления от нищеты за океан...» русские люди эмигрировали в Бразилию и Аргентину, когда «в начале XX в. выходцы из России занимали в Аргентине по численному составу четвертое место» (Ларин 389, *История Латинской Америки*). Эти движения между людьми в этих регионах показывают, насколько они были близки. Эмиграция хороший стандарт, который показывает силу отношения, потому что это значит, что у людей (и стран) есть подлинные традиции и интересы. Этот связь не существует между Латинской Америкой и другими странами, как США или Китай. Поэтому они не будут близки к России, даже несмотря на то, что они используют экономическую политику, похожую на русскую.

В то время также была доктрина «Драго»,». Эта доктрина значил что ни американская ни европейская власть может быть использована против Латинской Америки для сбора задолженности. Эта политика и экономические договоры «показали, что у России и латиноамериканских государств имелись не только общие или близкие

позиции по некоторым вопросам, но и определенные возможности для развития взаимовыгодных двусторонних отношений в целом» (Ларин 386).

В начале Первой мировой войны в 1914 году много стран в Латинской Америке присоединились к России в Антанте. Когда правительства в Латинской Америке поддержали Русскую империю, организации работников (тоже в этих странах) были сформированы, как в России. Они (очень сильное) поддержали революцию в России против Царя. Когда большевики укрепили контроль над Россией, страны в регионе постепенно нормализовали отношения. Здесь Россия начала поддерживать Аргентину по вопросу Фолькланда (остров близ Аргентины находящийся под контролем Англии). На самом деле, контакт с Латинскими странами был легче, благодаря Лиге Наций. «В этой международной организации СССР не только имел контакты с участие в разрешении ряда вопросов, касавшихся этого региона, особенно боливийского-парагвайского конфликта» (Калмыков 436, История Латинской Америки). Интеллигенция в Латинской Америке стала ближе и ближе к интеллигенции СССР, потому что обе протестовали против агрессию Италии в Абиссинии и тоже поддерживали республиканскую Испанию, во время гражданской войны (с 1936 до 1939).

СССР и Латинская Америка создали вместе общество «Южамторг» - торговую организацию, через которую они могли заниматься торговлей (экспортировать нефть, лесоматериалы, шерсть, кожсырье и т.д.). В это время в отношениях между Россией и Латинской Америкой «были сделаны важные шаги в области дипломатии, торговли, культуры; на пути к утверждению и становлению этих отношений была доказана не только возможность и реальность существования, но и дальнейшего развития в интересах обеих сторон» (Калмыков 487-488).

Когда научилась Вторая мировая война, люди и правительства в Латинской Америке поддержали СССР против фашизма – в этом регионе, сильное политическое движение – очень популярное, потому что латиноамериканцы думали, что они были жертвами империализма (от Америки). Благодаря этому СССР начинал отношения с большинством стран в регионе, что привело к «развития торгово-экономического, культурного, и научного сотрудничества... для упрочения дружбы между их народами» в 40-х (Калмыков 489). Но после войны, отношения между ними ещё раз были прекращены из-за влияния США, которые начали «Холодную Войну» против коммунизма и Советского союза. Только Куба после революции в 1959 поддерживала отношения с СССР (Никарагуа и Чили также поддерживали отношение с Союзом на короткое время, когда у них были социалистические правительства). Этот «разрыв» отношений продолжали до 70-х, потому что «они были связаны с крайне небольшим объемом и эпизодическим характером их взаимной торговли, многолетней нестабильностью внутренней обстановки в латиноамериканских республиках, что оказывало, в свою очередь негативное воздействие на их международные связи» (Ларин 382). Только к концу Холодной войны ситуация стала другим и новые отношения между этими регионами были установлены.

Но уникальным развитием между СССР и Латинской Америкой стало открытие новых школ и университет, как РУДН в Москве или Санкт-Петербурге. В этих местах, студенты из стран в Латинской Америки могли учить и применить навыки, которые они изучали в своих странах, чтобы способствовать развитию и хорошим отношений с СССР в то же время. Эта эпоха конечно закончилась, когда был распад СССР, «в результате значительно сократился объем политических контактов, торговли, культ. и науч. связей»

до начала нового этапа отношений, который будет сильнее, чем раньше (Давыдов 139). Кроме этого, можно сказать, что до 1991, отношения между Россией и Латинской Америкой сильно влияли на будущие отношения и создали атмосферу партнерства, благодаря активной истории движения людей, торговли и политических-идеологических связей.

Новая эра отношения между Россией и Латинской Америкой была начата в 90-х, после распада Советского Союза. «Отказ от конфронтации с Западом в конце 80-х и в начале 1990-х гг. ещё больше сократил интерес России к странам Латинской Америки» (Мартынов 387, *История международных отношений стран Латинской Америки*). Российская Федерация начала торговлю и договоры со странами в Латинской Америке, потому что экономика РФ нужна была поддержка из-за катастрофа переход от коммунизма до капитализма. На самом деле, русские экономисты знали потенциал на рынке Латинской Америки, «Ее товарооборот в 1992 году составил 208 миллиардов долларов (экспорт - 99 миллиардов долларов, импорт - 109 миллиардов), а объем валового внутреннего продукта почти достиг триллиона долларов». Они рекомендовали бизнесменам и государствам сотрудничать с этими странами (*Внешняя торговля РФ со странами южной Америки*).

Когда Владимир Путин стал президентом России в 1999 году, и когда нефть и газ создал огромные богатства в русской экономике, правительство РФ могло серьёзно начинать программы в социальных и политических сферах в Латинской Америке. Когда Путин путешествовал много раз по Латинской Америке и встречался с разными руководителями, он демонстрировал обязательство в улучшении с отношений Латинской

Америкой. Эта политика называется «геополитика» и эта очень важная часть политики России в регионе, которая сейчас характеризует новые отношения.

History of the Ukraine Conflict and the Crimea Referendum

The context and current situation of the Ukraine Conflict is pertinent to better understand the UN vote to accept or reject the Russian-backed Crimea Referendum in 2014,. The divide between Eastern and Western Ukraine goes back to the mid 1600s up until the final conquest of the Crimean Khanate by the Russian Empire in 1783. Until that point, Russia, the Ottoman Empire, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and Cossacks fought each other for control of the strategic and arable land of Ukraine (including Crimea) (Conant, "How History, Geography Help Explain Ukraine's Political Crisis"). Russia not only saw Ukraine as another addition to its territorial empire, but also as a vast farmland to feed the growing Russian population, as well as a buffer state between Russia proper and any European invasions from the West. By the conclusion of hostilities, Ukraine was divided first between Poland and Russia, and then between Russia and Austria – where each empire would split the country in two – between east and west. In that environment, Eastern Ukraine developed with Russian immigrants, hierarchical Russian laws and customs, a strong Orthodox Church, and the Russian language, whereas Catholic empires developed Western Ukraine using Enlightenment-based government and a decidedly European orientation. Crimea was a separate territory from the rest of Ukraine (since Muslim Turkic peoples – the Tatars, inhabited it). During the reign of Catherine, “the decision was taken in November, 1776, that Russia should begin the invasion of the Crimea” which was conquered to gain access to the Black Sea, outlining its strategic importance for centuries (Fisher, *The Russian Annexation of the Crimea, 1772-1783*, pg. 75).

Centuries later, the ramifications of the split history of Ukraine was pushed further when in 1954, Nikita Khrushchev allowed the Crimean territory to be ceded to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic as a “a gift of the ‘elder brother [Russian Communist Party]’ to the ‘younger brother [Ukrainian Communist Party]’ on the occasion of the tricentennial of the unification of Russia and Ukraine” (“Transfer of the Crimea to the Ukraine”). Khrushchev took the action without popular consent of Russians, Crimeans, or Ukrainians. Khrushchev’s actions had long-lasting consequences; as the Federation Council (the upper house of the Russian Duma) passed a bill “declaring Crimea’s transfer...in 1954...to be illegal,” covertly support the pro-Russian separatists in the region in 2014 – leading to the annexation of Crimea on March 18, 2014 (“Federation Council to Pass Bill Proclaiming Crimea's Transfer to Ukraine in 1954 Illegal”). Before this occurred, tension had been building over the course of Ukrainian history. Each region, given its unique history, developed with differing views on political orientation, language, religion, and ethnicity – setting the stage for a buildup of tension leading to the Ukraine Conflict in 2014. Indeed, before the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukraine as it exists today had never successfully gained independence as a self-governing country. The buildup of tension between Eastern and Western Ukraine was thus exacerbated over the two decades in which Ukraine was independent, coming to a head in 2014.

By November of 2013, Viktor Yanukovich had served as president of Ukraine for three years since being elected in 2010 in a hotly contested election between himself and his Party of Regions against Yulia Tymoshenko and her Fatherland Party (“Election Resources on the Internet: Presidential and Parliamentary Elections in Ukraine - Results Lookup”). Charges of voting fraud were raised as well as Russian intervention during the election, with then-President, Dmitri Medvedev, raised public concern with the drifting of Ukraine towards pro-European and

Western policies – namely the Ukraine-European Union Association Agreement, which would have facilitated economic and political discourse between the EU and Ukraine (*EU-Ukraine Association Agreement – the Complete Texts*). Yanukovich’s refusal to sign the treaty widened the divide between the European-oriented Western Ukraine, and the Russian-oriented Eastern Ukraine.

By the end of the year in 2013, the historic “Maidan protests” began in the capital of Kiev, with thousands of pro-Western Ukrainians demanding the signing of the treaty with the EU and an end to “decades of poor governance characterized by systematic corruption” as well as Russian influence over diplomatic decisions (Düvell and Lapshyna. "The EuroMaidan Protests, Corruption, and War in Ukraine: Migration Trends and Ambitions"). Once protests became violent between President Yanukovich’s police force and the protestors, the process of a general conflict began in earnest. Eventually protestors overcame security forces in Kiev and forced Yanukovich to flee to Russia, effectively toppling the democratically elected, pro-Russian elements of the Ukrainian government, and installing a Western Ukrainian-backed government that was pro-EU under current president Petro Poroshenko. In the eastern regions of the country, particularly in Crimea where Russian-speakers and those who identified as Russian live, there were counter-protest movements declaring the post-Maidan government illegitimate (Cartalucci, "Ukraine: The Anti-Maidan Begins"). In February and March of 2014, separatist movements began taking action against the post-Maidan government by setting up “People’s Republics” centered on the cities of Donetsk and Luhansk in Eastern Ukraine. Seizing the opportunity of a nationalist-driven mandate, President Vladimir Putin of Russia began sending military and economic support to the separatists, as well as “little green men” (Russian soldiers with unmarked uniforms not designating a country of origin) to wrest control of the Crimean

peninsula from the Ukrainian government forces in a relatively bloodless transfer of power (Shevchenko, ““Little Green Men" or "Russian Invaders"?"). The use of Russian troops to assist separatist elements in Eastern Ukraine was an aggressive gesture by Russia to assert its influence over events in the country, and violated a 1994 Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances, where Russia (along with Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Belarus, the US and the UK) signed an agreement not to use hostile threats or force against the territorial integrity of the other signatories (*Memorandum on Security Assurances in Connection with Ukraine's Accession to the Treaty on the NPT*). However, the bold actions taken by the Russian military following the outbreak of serious internal strife in Ukraine remained militarily unanswered by the signatories.

Following the successful annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation, far-reaching consequences continued to press Russia – namely Western-imposed economic sanctions and political isolation. Beginning soon after the UN vote, the United States and European allies condemned Russian action as a violation of international law, and began seeking support in the freezing of Russian financial assets. Key members of the Putin Administration and Russian oligarchy were targeted, as well as sectors of the Russian economy. For example, the natural gas and oil Russia sold to Europe was reduced as part of sanctions, along with other imports and exports between the EU and Russia, including foodstuffs ("EU Sanctions against Russia over Ukraine Crisis - Newsroom - European Commission"). The West removed Russia from the G-8 summit in a symbolic gesture of disapproval. In retaliation, Russia stopped importing products from the West and even began destroying products already inside Russia rather than sell them to its own population. At one point, “some 9 million tons of European cheeses steamrolled and bulldozed before being buried at a landfill.” (Chappell, "We Will Bury You: Russia Bulldozes Tons Of European Cheese, Other Banned Food").

Even military measures were taken by NATO forces that began exercises and an increase in patrols and number of troops in the Baltic States and Eastern Europe, to signal “to Russia that there are no divisions within NATO that it can exploit” and where the fear of Russian-backed uprisings might start (McNamara, "Securing the Nordic-Baltic Region"). These combative economic, military, and political actions taken by the West, while focused on the deterrence of further Russian aggression, did nothing to ease the diplomatic crisis between the West and Russia – and only created a higher resolve for the Putin Administration with which to push Russians further into supporting policies abroad. The West mirrored the fear of encirclement and invasion by Russia in the fear of unmet, geopolitical aggression. While Russia looked at a history of nearly 800 years of European invasion and destruction, most recently at the hands of Nazi Germany in World War II, the West looked towards the Cold War and current Russian foreign policy since 2008 – when the Putin Administration demonstrated its willingness to use force against Western allies in pursuit of its own regional interests, such as Georgia during the Russian-Georgian War of 2008. The heightened tension not seen since during the Cold War existed because of the annexation of Crimea and the general conflict in Ukraine.

The implications of Russian support for the breakaway Donbass region of eastern Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea have brought very detrimental economic consequences to Russia. Coupled with oil prices of \$44.37 per barrel, economic sanctions from Western countries have caused Russia to suffer a “GDP growth of -2.2% in the first quarter of 2015” ("Commodities: Latest Crude Oil Price & Chart"), (Christie, "Sanctions after Crimea: Have They Worked?"). Because Western nations have stopped exporting certain products to the Russian market, such as cheese from the Netherlands, Russia has seen increased shortages of food, along with the symbolic gestures of destroying Western food products rather than selling them in

Russia (Chappell). While Western sanctions have forced Russia to become more self-sufficient and has forced Russian citizens to create a Russian-product only cuisine, the country is unable to meet the full needs of its people. By 2015, the ruble had dipped to the new lows since the crisis of the late 1990s (around 70-80 rubles per US dollar) within the past decade (“XE Currency Charts”). Instead, compensation for economic losses had to be explored; such as a new oil pipeline stretching from Eastern Russia to China, where the demand for energy is high to meet the needs of its large population.

However, the Asian market did not resolve the loss of food imports and general trade (China is still an export-driven economy), which is when the UN vote on Crimea became particularly significant. In an effort to benefit from sanctions, Latin American countries, many of which are still heavily agricultural economically (Brazil, Argentina, Chile, etc.) “have indicated their desire to increase exports to Russia in order to boost their own economies” so that both Russia and Latin America gain mutually from the trade vacuum in the Russian economy (Meacham, "What Does the Russian Food Import Ban Mean for Latin America?").

The United Nations and the Vote

The UN General Assembly was one of six major organs formed in 1945 as the “principal organ” of the United Nations – the main legislative body. In this body, each member state has an equal voice and equal vote to determine questions of global importance, related mostly to security, budget, recommendations on international issues, etc. Resolutions, or official decisions reached by the Assembly must be decided by a 2/3-majority vote of present countries to pass (“Chapter IV | United Nations”).

On March 27, 2014, the United Nations General Assembly had come to a conclusion on the “Territorial Integrity of Ukraine” in response to the annexation of Crimea by the Russian

Federation, and inspired by the fear of further incursions. The non-binding resolution enacted by the international body showed that the General Assembly was in support of the pre-2014 Referendum borders of Ukraine, and encouraged members “not to recognize any change in the status of Crimea...and refrain from actions or dealings that might be interpreted as such” (*UN News Center*, "General Assembly Adopts Resolution Calling upon States Not to Recognize Changes in Status of Crimea Region"). This all occurred after the Security Council of the UN was unable to reach a conclusion on its own due to continued Russian vetoes. Of the present voting nations, 100 votes asserted the territorial integrity of Ukraine, 58 abstained from a decision, and 11 were opposed to condemning the Russian annexation (*UN News Center*).

The anti-Russian votes, spearheaded by Western countries such as the US and the UK, maintained that Russia had violated international norms and treaties (the 1994 Budapest Agreement), by taking military action in Eastern Ukraine, while disregarding the security and integrity of Ukrainian civilians and the Ukrainian government. Latin American countries closely tied politically or economically to the US – such as Mexico (which is a member of NAFTA), or Colombia, Chile, and Peru – the strongest liberal democratic allies of the US in Latin America, fell into line with the US position offered by Samantha Powers, the US representative to the UN.

While it was clear that the 11 countries that voted in favor of Russia would do so (core allies – Venezuela, Nicaragua, Cuba, etc.), the uniqueness of the vote was found in the 58 countries that had abstained. Several of these votes were made by prominent Latin American countries such as Argentina and Brazil, which illustrated a unique shift in the Latin American trend of backing Russian initiatives where only two decades ago Latin America was almost entirely within the American sphere of influence during the Cold War. In part this shift may have been related to the growing Latin American autonomy found in its governments – Luis

Ignacio Lula da Silva and Dilma Rousseff were Marxist guerrillas in the 1980s in Brazil – guided by Soviet doctrine; and the Kirchners had become more skeptical of the US sphere in Argentina. But because several Latin American countries did not explicitly vote against Russian efforts of annexation, and seen in the very diplomatic language used later on, one can see how an abstention is simply a passive method of approving an action – in this case, territorial annexation. In a way, the abstention vote is related to the international relations theory of appeasement – or placating a country or government when it takes assertive actions. While the Munich Conference of 1938 is usually cited as an illustration of appeasement, the case of Russia and Ukraine should not be looked at with the same negative connotations. Appeasement in this case, through abstention, is simply a support by lack of rejection of Russian action and the possible reasons as to why countries such as Brazil and Argentina did so (even with large ancestrally Ukrainian populations).

The reason for abstentions may be the successful Russian diplomatic maneuvers of the past decade in regard to the composition of the UN Security Council (the decision-making entity made up permanently of Russia, China, France, the UK, and the US). For example, Russia is one of the leading Security Council countries in favor of changing the makeup of the Council. Russian officials have specifically Brazil as a potential new, permanent member, as Brazil is the most populous, economically potent, and regionally powerful country in a region of the world where diplomatic and economic power will shift within the next 50 years ("Russia to Support Brazilian Bid for Permanent Membership in UNSC"). The implications of changing the current Security Council can be easily imagined as the decisions of the body would change dramatically to match the interests of the new members. What is interesting about this potential shift is the politics behind it. Brazil of course finds membership mutually beneficial, and can use the fact

that a P-5 member supporting its own membership is a significant step towards the change of the make-up of the Council. It has also created a working foundation that allows Russia and Brazil to come together on other issues and improve relations in general.

Russia and Latin America Today

The current Russian policy towards Latin America is perhaps the most significant aspect of foreign policy analysis now as it explains the UN vote, the current diplomatic situation, and the future of Russian involvement in Latin America. Indeed, the interactions the Russian government employs with most states within the pro-Russia camp and the abstention camp are core elements of Russia policy in the region. These core elements can be broken into economic, military, and political sectors, all of which overlap in certain cases. Since 2008, political overtures have been the centerpiece of the new policy initiative for Russia – beginning with diplomatic visits by high-level officials of the Russian government. From 2000-2015, President Putin, President Medvedev, Foreign Minister Lavrov, and Defense Minister Shoigu have all traveled on tours throughout Latin America to gather support for new economic and political relationships between Russia and the region from arms and energy trade to joint military exercises. According to Jan Burlyai, a Deputy Director of the Latin American Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry, “Russian-Latin American ties have become much more active lately” with visits made by President Putin to Cuba in 2000, Mexico, Brazil, and Chile in 2004; and by foreign ministers to Venezuela, Argentina, Brazil, and Chile in 2003, Cuba in 2004, and Mexico in 2005 (Burlyai, “Russia’s Latin American Tango” pg. 51). Several visits have been made in 2010, and 2015 focused on military and political relations regarding Crimea, mustering support for visa-travel, which most Latin American countries have with Russia, and trade.

This travel by the highest officials of government has not been restricted to only diplomats, however. In fact, recently Russia and Latin American states have come to travel agreements allowing the easier flow of people between both regions based on visa-free travel zones, which is not only in effect in core allies of Russia such as Cuba, Venezuela, or Nicaragua, but also in countries like Argentina, Colombia, and Brazil – countries not as aligned historically or politically in the past (*MercoPress*, "Latam Divided on UN Crimea Vote; Mercosur, except for Venezuela Abstains"). As of 2016, only Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, and Mexico (with electronic visas), did not permit visa-free travel with Russia. A lack of travel restrictions between countries is generally a good indicator of the level of trust and positive relations one government has with another, suggesting that even right-wing, pro-American governments have come to see Russia not as an ideological enemy, but as a political partner in many regards.

Another way this cooperative spirit has manifested itself is in Russian membership in Latin American transnational organizations such as MERCOSUR and ALBA – the two largest trade blocs in Latin America. “We intend to pursue our line for further contacts with other sub-regional integration alliances: the Andean Community (AC), the Central American Integration System, the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM),” Deputy Director Burlyai listed a few more organizations along with the major trade blocs where Russia has increased its presence (Burlyai, 52). In these and many other organizations, Russia has obtained membership as an “observer state” which allows it to give input and participate as an almost-equal member. These often economic institutions not only provide Russia with more outlets to expand trade opportunities – something it must do now more than ever due to Western sanctions, but over time it has created trust and as a foundation for political, cultural, and military exchanges on which to create stronger policies today. Therefore,

one could observe that economic relations are the basis for deeper and broader relations in the future, which Russia has proven. By participating in Latin American institutions and demonstrating a care for the region that countries like the US or China have not offered, Russia has made economic inroads in arms deals and in trade in general. “In the past decade, according to Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), there has been a surge of Latin American countries purchasing military equipment and arms from state-owned Russian Technologies (Rostec) or receiving Russian military aid.” Even discussions about new military installations and activity, possibly in response to NATO, have begun between Russian and Latin American officials (*Americas Quarterly*, "Russo-Latin American Arms Sales").

A report given by the Russian government suggests, “In 2004-2012 mutual trade turnover increased almost three-fold – from \$5.8 billion to \$16.4 billion” across all sectors – creating a stronger dependency on one another (Yakovlev, "Россия и Латинская Америка на траектории взаимного сближения"). The reason countries like China, which also use economic policy to develop future general policy in developing regions of the world, do not work is because there is not a historical basis on which to build, and not a cooperative sense of mutual benefit in trade. Recently, in 2015, “Argentina’s coast guard says it sank a Chinese fishing vessel that was fishing in a restricted area off the South American country’s coast” after having repeatedly asking for identification and demands to leave Argentine territory in Spanish and English (Laje, "Argentina Sinks Chinese Vessel, Cites Illegal Fishing").

The sign of the deepest trust and partnership however, is the military agreements between Russia and Latin American countries. Other than increased arms deals, Defense Minister Shoigu began discussions regarding the expansion of Russian naval and military bases in various parts of the world – at the very least “for the use of Nicaraguan military bases, ports, and airports to

refuel Russian planes” (*Americas Quarterly*). Like the US, which maintains military installations across the globe, Russia has been seeking to expand its military capacities, generally as a response to increased NATO drills and activities close to the Russian border in Eastern Europe. Joint military exercises with Nicaragua, Cuba, Venezuela, and Costa Rica demonstrated Russia’s military prowess, reach, and capability in the “backyard of the US” – one with multiple, nuclear-capable Tu-160 bombers flying to Venezuela, and another with a naval flotilla dispatched to the Caribbean for naval exercises in 2014 (Ellis, "Russian Engagement in Latin America and the Caribbean: Return to the "Strategic Game" in a Complex-Interdependent Post-Cold War World?" pg. 16). Military exercises are both expensive and require a certain degree of coordination and cooperation between two countries. The fact that Russia has successfully done this twice in the Caribbean, which has not gained much attention from the US, exposes the lack of attention or care of US policy in the region. That lack of attention has not gone unnoticed by Latin American countries.

Over the course of the near 300-year history of Latin American-US relations, an anti-American sentiment has been building due to perceived (often real) injustices seen by Latin America. Unilateral interventions in places like Mexico, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, and more from the early 1900s to the installation and backing of right-wing dictators like Fulgencio Batista in Cuba, Augusto Pinochet in Chile, Rafael Trujillo in the Dominican Republic, the Somoza family in Nicaragua and more have made the US seem like an imperialist power determined to extract as much benefit – political or economic from Latin America since the Monroe Doctrine of 1823. Latin Americans have generally felt themselves treated as a lesser partner in a hegemonic relationship with the US, which in the 1990s and 2000s caused revisionist, populist leaders like Hugo Chavez, Rafael Correa, Evo Morales, and Daniel Ortega

to come to power across Latin America, often on platforms of anti-Americanism. Interestingly, a Pew Research Center poll conducted in 2014 across Latin America saw Argentina as the country most opposed to current US foreign policy, with a 36% favorability rating in 2014, down from 41% in 2013 ("Chapter 1: The American Brand"). This is noteworthy because the country was Argentina rather than a "usual enemy" of the US like Cuba or Venezuela.

The vote demonstrated that there was a rising potential in another area of the world where Russia had had an historical relationship – Latin America. In that region, core allies of Russia – Venezuela, Cuba, Bolivia, and Nicaragua voted against invalidating the Crimea Referendum. Even more interesting were the abstentions – made by Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, El Salvador, Ecuador, Guyana, and Suriname. Many of these countries, which had been during the Cold War opposed to Soviet policy and expansion, indirectly voiced support for Russian actions taken in Eastern Europe, seemingly validating them due to the lack of rancor against the aggressive actions which traditional Western allies in the region took (Mexico, Colombia, Chile, Peru, etc.).

The Pro-Russian Vote

There was no surprise when the core allies of Russia voted in favor of the annexation of Crimea by Russia, and who offered their positions on the situation. It did however reaffirm the strongest allies of Russia in the region and the successful work Russia had already completed – the models to which the Russian government was attempting to move more Latin American countries. Their views are nonetheless an important aspect to put into perspective the extent Russia has already solidified inroads made in the region based off of the aforementioned historical and ideological ties that united Russia with these core allies.

Relations between the governments in Havana and Moscow have been strong ever since the Cuban Revolution in 1959. This is due to the ideological alliance in the Marxist-inspired revolutions in both countries, as well as the development of educational exchanges in Latin American schools in Moscow (РУДН), support during the Cuban Missile Crisis, and economic funding throughout the Cold War. For approximately 50 years (save for the “Lost Decade” of the 90s in Russia), a relationship was built between the two countries, “providing not only billions of dollars in arms, loans, and aid...but also hosting tens of thousands of Cubans to travel to Russia for education in universities (Ellis, 38). As perhaps Russia’s oldest and staunchest ally in Latin America, Cuba has been the ideal model for what Russia seeks to accomplish across the entire region – an alliance founded on trust with ties across all facets of life: economic, cultural, political, etc. Therefore, during the statements and explanations process in the UN, the representative from Cuba, Rodolfo Reyes Rodríguez voiced the Cuba’s support of the annexation of Crimea. In his statement, Rodríguez cited the “hypocrisy, the double standards, and the aggression” shown by Washington and NATO in matters of self-determination, territorial integrity, and international law (*UN News Center*). He went on to state that the expansion of NATO further east would destabilize a previously peaceful region and that the current Ukrainian government did not reflect the rights of Crimea given the fact it violently overthrew the democratically elected Yanukovich government.

Bolivia

The second and newer ally of Russia in the region is Bolivia – where the populist, socialist-inspired rhetoric of Evo Morales has won him the presidency in that country, with a great deal of support from and for the Russian government. That mutual support was evident when Representative Sacha Sergio Llorentty Solíz offered a similar statement to his Cuban

counterpart, mentioning that Bolivia was a pacifist country not intent on picking a side regarding the referendum, but voting against it to voice its discontent with the hypocrisy and double standards of the West and the Security Council, which he believed needs to be reformed to reflect the current international environment (*UN News Center*). The Morales Administration embodies the anti-American sentiment and revolutionary change in leaders in Latin America that see an alliance with Russia as the alternative to traditional US hegemony. He has solidified this alliance through increased arms deals and energy-based economic negotiations between the two countries (Ellis, 64-67).

Nicaragua

One of the more active allies of Russia in Latin America – Nicaragua, led by Daniel Ortega (a former left-wing revolutionary), offered its support for Russian policy in Crimea on March 22, 2014, and later that week on March 27, believing the annexation was just and valid (*UN News Center*). Interestingly, Russian assistance brought Ortega to power during the Cold War, and aided the government in combating the contra rebellion. To solidify the alliance, “Ortega’s government became the first in Latin America to recognize diplomatically the pro-Russian breakaway republics of South Ossetia and Abkhazia” (Ellis, 25). Like Bolivia, Nicaragua has become a strong ally of Russia by increasing joint military exercises, hosting Russian officials, and increasing arms deals to revitalize the Nicaraguan Armed Forces while also constructing a new counternarcotic training center in Managua (Ellis 27). With such significant military and strategic actions initiated by both governments, it is clear that the alliance between the two is a strong one.

Venezuela

Finally, and also unsurprisingly, the Venezuelan government under Nicolás Maduro voiced its strong support for the referendum held in Crimea. Represented by Samuel Moncada during the deliberation in the General Assembly, the Venezuelan statement was opposed to the undemocratic changes to the Ukrainian government preceding the conflict in Eastern Ukraine (*UN News Center*). Reflecting popular Russian sentiment propagated by state media, President Maduro and his officials stated that they believed terrorist organizations and extremist groups backed by Western powers had, since World War II been disrupting a stable world order and replacing popular governments with “Nazi-fascist” elements – something representative of how many Latin Americans might view US foreign policy after a history where such a statement could be validated. He not only cited these beliefs, but also events in Kosovo during the 90s where the situation was virtually flipped. At the time, the Russian government, with its traditional ally Serbia was fighting against what the West called a democratic self-determination movement by ethnic Albanians in the Kosovo province of Serbia after ethnic tensions caused violence. In the end, the West, backed by NATO quickly supported the Kosovars and the legitimacy of their movement and government for the same reasons the Russian government was supporting Crimean and Eastern Ukrainian separatist tendencies. Venezuela has long been an ally of Russia since Hugo Chavez –arguably the first revisionist leader of Latin America, came to power and immediately fostered positive relations with Russia against the United States. Even past his death, his efforts have continued, as the Venezuelan embassy in Moscow operates a cultural education program with other Latin American embassies to educate and disseminate Latin American news, culture, information, and more to establish strong ties with Russian citizens – an effective use of soft power (“Objetivos Específicos y Actividades”).

As mentioned before, the support for Russia and the Crimea Referendum from these core allies was not an issue Russia had to deal with in finding international support for its assertive policies in Eastern Europe. What was truly significant was the less expected support from major players in Latin America, demonstrating the effectiveness of Russian relation building in the region to this point.

The Abstention Vote

The sign of success for new Russian regional policy can be based on the fact that during the 2014 UN vote on Crimea, countries that were traditionally aligned with the US government during American hegemonic period (1823-2008), and particularly during the Cold War against communist revolutions, had broken from this order by abstaining rather than outright rejection of Russian actions in Ukraine. Recently, Russia has made serious attempts to work closer with right-wing governments – namely Colombia, Chile, Mexico, and Peru – which are generally considered to be the closest allies of the US in Latin America. Russia has started its economic-based interactions with these countries, hoping to build relationships it has or is currently building now in places like Argentina and Brazil. These two countries, “which have suffered massive protests, some of them spontaneous” may have seen a vote supporting the Western-backed Ukrainian government, as a validation of anti-government movements back home, causing cautious voting in the form of abstentions (*MercoPress*). As mentioned before, the action not to reject Russia’s claims outright – a form of appeasement, signifies recognition and possibly even support for Russian foreign policy. The consequences of ending a thus far beneficial relationship with Russia does not seem to be the goal of developing Latin American countries. And while not direct support, rhetoric between countries like Argentina and Russia,

and increasing economic dependency between Russia and Brazil (for food and military products) has nearly solidified a larger pro-Russian camp in Latin America.

Paraguay and Uruguay

Paraguay and Uruguay have both experienced increased and improved relations with Russia, being included in the visa-free travel, as well as increased trade. Due to both having access to agricultural and livestock resources such as beef, imports from these countries to Russia after Western sanctions has increased. In statements from both the Uruguayan and Paraguayan governments (made by Christina Carrion and Marcelo Eliseo Scappini Ricciardi respectively) voiced their belief in open and direct dialogue as the only appropriate way to end the conflict in question (*UN News Center*). Carrion went further citing the Uruguayan government's commitment to international law and democratic principles. She reminded her colleagues that Uruguay for the same reason was opposed to the unilateral referendums in Kosovo or the Malvinas (Falkland Islands), which undermined UN Charter principles, and which Uruguay would remain consistently opposed to. However, the fact that the governments did not immediately condemn the Russian government strongly implies that they do appreciate the position of the Crimeans and Russia on some level causing the lack of confidence to vote in favor of invalidating the referendum.

Argentina

One of the newest and most significant allies for Russia in Latin America is Argentina. After having made the connection that Crimea was the same as the Malvinas – where Argentine claims to the land caused a war between that country and England in the 1980s, resonated strongly with Argentines in how they viewed Russia's position in relation to Crimea. "Many of the major powers, which have secured the Falklands' people right to self-determination, do not

want to do the same in relation to Crimea now...There is zero logic in that.” (Sudarev, "Russia and Latin America in the Context of the Ukrainian Crisis"). Past that, the left-leaning, populist Peronist Party of the Kirchner family created common ground on which Russia could build an economic relationship with Argentina. For arms and energy products to develop the country, Argentina could send back food needed to maintain the Russian economy. These relations have continued to develop over history – with Argentina having the largest Russian community in the Western Hemisphere outside of Brazil and the United States. María Cristina Perceval, the Argentine representative to the UN stated that the government would not support a resolution with a “lack of coherence” and with room for interpretation of the UN Charter regarding territorial integrity on which the UN vote was being based (*UN News Center*). In separate statements, the President at the time Cristina Kirchner and the Argentine embassy stated that they could not support a resolution where double standards would exist due to the international community recognizing the right of Britain to maintain its claims on the Malvinas, while Russia was not allowed to do the same with Crimea. Here, the success of Russian policy in the region is demonstrated by the Foreign Ministry’s ability to find and latch onto a popular image or sentiment and to build an anti-Western relationship off of that sentiment for future, consolidated positions.

Brazil

However the investment in Argentina for its claims on the Malvinas was not the only policy success of Russia. Perhaps even greater was its success in keeping Brazil outside of support for the Western condemnation of the Crimea vote; in part due to the support Russia had given Brazil in becoming a permanent member of the UN, amongst other mutually beneficial developments. As the preeminent regional power in Latin America, Brazil has historically been

the country courted by foreign powers. Brazil is so significant due to its membership in BRICS, and because it possesses the largest population in South America (and the second largest Russian population), the largest economy and geographic area (which requires an up-to-date military and a strong, export-based economy – both of which Russia provides outlets for). In October of 2005, both countries signed the Strategic Alliance Agreement outlining cooperation and the desire to improve relations further – which joint membership in BRICS has accomplished (Ellis, 60). Outlining the significance of Brazil to Russian strategy in the region, trips by Medvedev and Putin have stopped in Brazil – with a focus on military and general economic agreements. Brazil not only provides Russia with the largest buyer of arms, but also makes up \$5.9 billion in bilateral trade as of 2013 – 94% of Brazilian exports are agricultural products (Ellis, 62). That Russia has been successful in creating a place for itself as a partner among Latin American countries is clear and since the 2014 vote, has begun to pay off.

The Future of Russian in Latin America

In Moscow, the relationship between Russia and Latin America seems to reflect the trend in which both regions of the world are moving – that increased cultural exposure and exchanges between people show a mutual appreciation and interest between the two peoples. The relatively large Latin American community there encounters an open Russian population with a genuine interest to travel, learn dance or language, and understand the culture of Latin American countries (based on interviews). When one goes abroad, representing the general principles of a host country becomes more evident, and in this case, Latin Americans in Russia often reflected the views of Russia that their governments had. From February to May of 2015, I successfully conducted 20-30 formal interviews of a diverse group of Latin Americans (mainly students and embassy employees from the ages of 20-60), with questions regarding their perceptions of Russia

and Russians, vice-versa, and the state of relations between their countries of origin and Russia, the reason why they lived there, the position the Latino community occupied in Russian society, and the possible implications.

Based off of these interviews in Spanish, Russian, and English, I found that many Latin Americans currently traveling to Russia do so for work opportunities, higher education, and the relative ease at which Latin Americans may travel to Russia. “I came because in Colombia and other countries, receiving an education in Moscow is prestigious and a good opportunity” said Mary Rivera, a Colombian graduate student studying at PУДН. The older interviewees, such as Jesús Oliva or Gilberto Marquez from Honduras and El Salvador respectively, agreed that Latin Americans they knew, as well as in their home countries, generally supported the Russian claim to Crimea. While these residents of Russia may be more prone to support the government position, their conversations with other members of the community and their connections home suggest a real recognition and approval of Russian action, possibly borne out of a feeling of increased autonomy from US influence.

The conclusion of the research suggested that increased numbers of Russians (since early 1990s) also traveled to Latin America, with an increased level of national interest in the region – brought on by heightened levels of exposure from diplomatic programs such as the integration and educational centers in the Venezuelan embassy and vice-versa in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where there is a “Russia House” (“Casa De Rusia En Buenos Aires”). Based on the individual and cultural exchanges brought by increased travel and education, the research demonstrated what is occurring at the international level – that Russia’s influence in Latin America has grown over the past several years, that Latin Americans themselves find common ground on issues such as the Crimea referendum, and that the future of relations between these regions – be they

economic, political, or social, all point towards a new path of cooperation and the drawing in of Latin American countries to a revisionist, Russian-oriented sphere of influence.

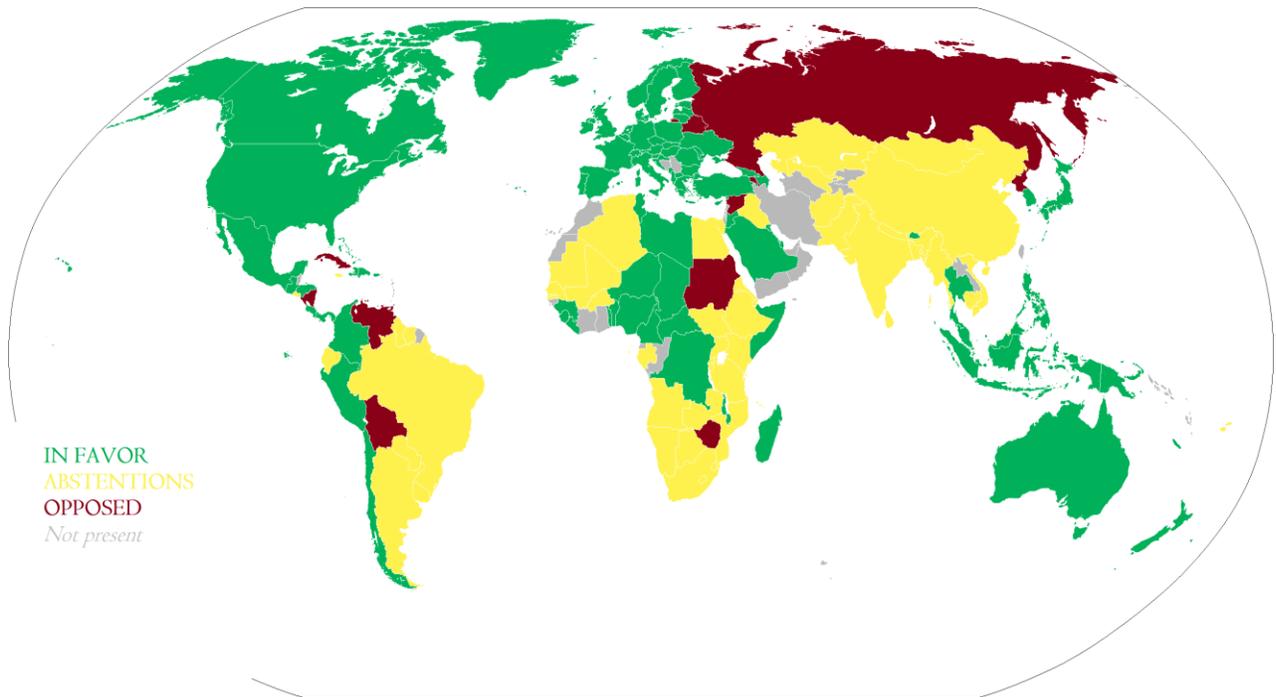
One of the more unique shifts in 21st century Russian-Latin American relations, which differs from historical interactions, is the extent and activism of Russian involvement across the whole region of Latin America, regardless of ideological tendencies. At no other point has Russian soft power (defined as persuasive tools of power used to achieve national policy goals – such as trade, cultural exchanges, media-sharing, etc.), or hard power (coercive military force) been present in such a territorially broad section of Latin America. What is potentially more surprising is the reciprocation and willingness to cooperate that Latin American countries in general show towards Russia. As mentioned before, the Crimea Referendum vote held by the UN signaled a change in attitude across Latin America – particularly in countries that have generally been apathetic to previous Russian attempts to advance foreign policy interests during the Soviet era or before. The significance only increased when one observes that Brazil and Argentina – the two economic and political powerhouses of Latin America, are amongst those countries that, rather than follow aggressive, anti-Russian, Western policies, have instead opened themselves up to take advantage of a mutually beneficial period of prosperity by increasing the rate of trade between Latin America and Russia, military access, and cultural development and understanding. This increased exchange is reflected in the movement of peoples between Russia and Latin America over the past decade as indicated by the Moscow Research Project. For example, I found that the younger Latin Americans (mainly from Peru, Colombia, and Bolivia) saw education in Russia as cost-effective and prestigious in their home countries; while elder Latin Americans remarked on their personal (and their home governments) support for the annexation of Crimea as a natural and understandable response (See Appendix D).

As for Russia, the time is opportune to fill the power-vacuum left by the lack of significant American presence in the region, which the Russian government is all too prepared to take advantage of. As has already been demonstrated, Russia has made economic, political, and military overtures to all Latin American countries – even those within the “American camp” with traditionally conservative, pro-American governments. This lack of media coverage or academic work in the United States following these trends exposes the lack of interest or activity of American policymakers in the region, which can only be explained by a perceived notion that the “backyard of the United States” is still safe from foreign intervention. This, however, is not the case. The foreign policy implications for the US depend upon future action taken to meet Russian inroads into Latin America. Assuming relations with the US remain stagnant or worsen, Russia has no incentive to either reduce activism in Latin America, or use that activism and relationship to create stability and a positive relationship between Latin America and its northern neighbor. Instead, Latin America will continue to act as a diplomatic and economic battleground where NATO activity in Eastern Europe causes Russian-Latin American joint military exercises in the Caribbean, and where Western-imposed sanctions result in Russian-led arms deals and increased trade programs. The anti-American sentiment that has been building in Latin America over the past history of 200 years will continue the trend seen today.

While the success of Russian policy in different Latin American countries varies depending on the level of trade, political identity, and cultural exchange, the overall perception of Latin American states towards Russia following the UN Crimea Referendum vote moved the region closer to the top of Russian diplomatic priorities. Latin America is now seen as a new and viable partner entering a period in the international system where interdependent and

interconnected regions of the world can create a cohesive movement of change and power – something both Russia and Latin America seem to be striving for at the present moment.

Appendix A



Appendix B

Table 1. Trade turnover between Russia and Latin American countries, mn USD.

A country	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Latin America	157 02	103 81	121 64	171 69	163 51
including:					
Brazil	671 1	459 3	587 4	650 4	565 9
Venezuela	958	113	131	170 6	194 5
Mexico	123 1	623	769	141 5	158 7
Argentina	197 6	136 0	112 5	187 3	157 1
Ecuador	936	834	952	129 9	130 4
Paraguay	356	359	451	483	863
Uruguay	404	473	374	398	629
Chile	365	270	357	455	525
Colombia	213	174	253	313	463
Peru	328	181	326	726	462
Cuba	265	354	276	221	220

Source: Federal Customs Service of Russia for various years.

Table 2. Structure of the Russian exports to the Latin American countries (the share of individual commodity groups,%)

Trading group	2010	2011	2012
Total	100	100	100
including:			
fertilizers	37.6	48.1	36.5
Mineral fuels	22.7	22.9	10.3
Black metals	12.2	4.7	8.0
Rubber and articles thereof	3.1	3.2	2.8
VEHICLES	0.7	1.1	2.5
Aluminium and articles thereof	1.3	2.1	2.4
Reactors, boilers, parts thereof	1.0	0.9	2.1
Electrical machinery and	2.6	1.0	2.0

equipment			
Copper and articles thereof	1.3	2.5	2.0
Aircraft and parts thereof	2.4	0.7	1.1
Tools and machines	0.3	0.2	0.9
Paper and paperboard	1.2	0.7	0.7
Inorganic Chemistry	1.2	0.9	0.7
Plastics and articles thereof	0.3	0.3	0.5
Organic Chemistry Products	0.7	0.6	0.5
Metals and metal products	0.8	0.3	0.3

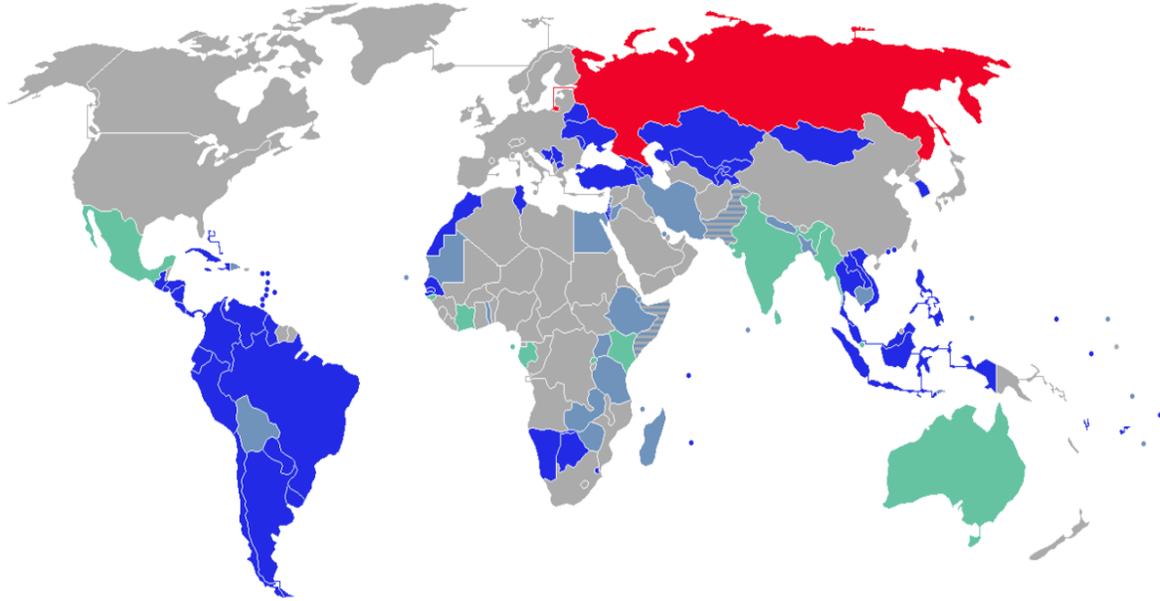
Source: Federal Customs Service of Russia for various years.

Table 3. Structure of Russian imports from Latin American countries (the share of individual commodity groups,%)

Trading group	2010	2011	2012
Total	100	100	100
including:			
Meat and meat by-products	39.2	33.1	37.2
Fruits, nuts	12.6	13.1	12.9
Sugar products from sugar	25.0	25.7	10.4
VEHICLES	2.7	3.7	4.6
Trees and plants	2.8	2.0	3.6
Tobacco and tobacco substitutes	1.9	2.8	3.5
Oil seeds and fruits	3.0	2.8	3.0
pharmaceutical products	0.2	0.2	2.5
Reactors, boilers and parts	0.5	1.4	2.1
Fish, shellfish, etc.	1.6	1.8	2.1
Waste of food industry, animal feed	0.5	1.0	2.1
Food products are different	1.6	1.8	2.1
Coffee, tea, mate, spices	1.3	2.2	1.8
Inorganic Chemistry	0.7	0.3	1.7
Cereals	0.1	0.2	1.6
Milk products	1.1	1.2	1.6
Alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages	0.9	1.0	1.5

Source: Federal Customs Service of Russia for various years.

Appendix C



- Blue – visa-free travel
- Green – e-visas or electronic registration
- Light Blue – visa granted on arrival
- Grey – visa required

Appendix D

Вопросы

1. Почему вы здесь в России? Какие причины?
2. Что вы делаете в Москве?
3. Есть ли большое русское сообщество в вашей стране? Где оно находится и почему существует?
4. Что вы думаете о жизни здесь в сравнении с жизнью в вашей стране?
5. Как Вы думаете, существует ли между Россией и Латинской Америкой больше культурных (или общих) сходств или различий?
6. Вы сохраняете ваши латиноамериканские традиции и обычаи (еда, религия, язык и т.д.) или воспринимаете обычаи России?
7. У Москвы есть большое или активное латиноамериканское общество (он приключен?)?
8. Что думают русские о латиноамериканцах и их культуре?
9. Каков образ русских и русской культуры в вашей стране?
10. Как Вы думаете, насколько тесные связи между Россией и вашей страной? Почему?
11. Что Вы думаете (или люди в вашей стране думают) о кризисе в Украине, и отношениях между Россией и Западом сейчас?
12. Как эта ситуация влияет на отношения между Россией и Латинской Америкой?
13. Думаете ли Вы, что сходства в культуре/экономике/истории и т.д. естественным образом связывают Россию и Латинскую Америку?

Интервью (не всё)

- Гилберто Маркез
- Хесус Олива
- Франко Пачес
- Хесус Парисе
- Лейди Рада
- Кеувин Рамирес
- Елиса Рейес
- Мери Ривера
- Индира Хернандес

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