

*Reacting to the Aggressive Behavior of
the Russian Federation towards its
Neighboring Countries*

Committee Guide

North Atlantic Treaty Organization





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1. Personal Introduction

Dear delegates,

my name is Alex Siekmann and I am excited to be your chair at this year's OLMUN at the first ever NATO committee at OLMUN. I am 18 years old and currently doing my Abitur at the Gymnasium Eversten here in Oldenburg. After graduating in summer, I hope to go on to university and study biology. This is my fourth consecutive year at OLMUN and my first time as a chair and I look forward to experiencing the debates from a different perspective than in the past.

When I am not busy with OLMUN I love to read, I go horseback riding and I play flute. Also, I spend too much time watching Netflix, but who doesn't...

Anyways, I welcome all of you to this year's NATO and look forward to a week of fruitful debates with this year's topic. Since most of you come from Europe, the behavior of Russia in external politics is an important issue that affects all of our country's foreign politics. Therefore, I am happy to be chairing this committee at OLMUN.

Ahead of the conference I would like to encourage all of you to actively participate in the debates and to not shy away from giving speeches, even if you do not have as much experience as others in your committee. At OLMUN we always work to create a friendly and productive atmosphere that encourages everyone to participate and step out of their comfort zones. But while you do that, do not forget to have fun and make lots of new friends!

I look forward to meeting all of you soon and to a great week of debates and fun!

Alex Siekmann

Hello everyone,

my name is Christopher, I'm half German, half British and I'm doing my master's in Physics and Computer Science in Münster, Germany. In my spare time I enjoy mind sports such as Go and Chess. Furthermore, I'm studying Chinese and I dance a lot, mainly Salsa. Overall, I'm quite a geek – you can get me hooked with everything science.

I love travelling to new places and meeting new people. I love the feeling of understanding the world a little better each time.

I'm very keen on politics (Surprise!). With a bit more (scientific) reason and compassion we can make the world a better place. "From each according to their ability, to each according to their needs."

I'm a big fan of MUNs. I was introduced to MUNs in my time at the Herbart Gymnasium Oldenburg. After a long break, I restarted my MUN "career" last year and I'm very glad that I did. MUNs in general and OLMUN in particular have had a great effect on my development, thus I'm very happy to be back for what will maybe be the last time. I look forward to meeting you all soon!

All the best!

Christopher Lieberum



2. Word from the Chairs

Dear Delegates,

we are excited to be your Chairs at this year's OLMUN conference in the NATO committee and we welcome all delegates to Oldenburg.

For our conference to be productive and also a lot of fun it is important for all of you to start preparing ahead of time. After all, it is hard to debate on a topic you have no idea of...

If you have any questions concerning the structure of OLMUN, the debates or the rules of procedure check out the website of OLMUN or contact us (nato@olmun.org)!

That is why we have prepared this committee guide. We have brought together some general information about the NATO, as well as information about this year's topic, actions that have already been taken and possible solutions. While this guide is supposed to help you get started on your research, make sure to dig a little deeper into the topic and research the stand of your country on the topic. It can be helpful to research the past and present culture of your country, as well as political structures to help you understanding their policy. Additionally, it may help the debate if you also research the policy of other countries, so you can find possible allies and supporters of your ideas.

Also, please note that it is possible that your personal opinion differs from the official policy of your country. If that is the case, remember to stick to your countries' opinion for the sake of the debate.

Ahead of the conference we ask you to write a Policy statement and a Draft resolution and send them to us by **June 8th**. If you have trouble formulating these, check out the OLMUN Handbook which includes detailed information on both.

See you in June!

Alex and Christopher

3. Introduction to the NATO

Founded in 1943 by 13 of its current members, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is a military alliance of collective defense that was motivated primarily by the threat of an attack by the Soviet Union.

However, the first military operation of NATO did not come until 1990, after the end of the Cold War.

While the initial thought of NATO, the defense cooperation, is still an integral part of NATO today, especially after the suspension of the INF treaty between the USA and Russia, other aspects have also gained importance.

Over the last years, NATO has worked to promote democratic values, towards the avoidance of conflicts in the long-term future and, when necessary, has carried out crisis-management operations. Current missions include military-led operations in Afghanistan and the African Union, training missions in Iraq and disaster relief operations.

4. The Topic

4.1 Introduction

The term “aggressive behavior” has been used by the international community and NATO to describe the actions the Russian Federation has taken over the last years that defined the Russian relationships with their geographical neighbors and all countries that were part of the Soviet Union, the most prominent being the conflict with Ukraine in 2014 that resulted in the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula. Other actions from the Russian Federation that were described as aggressive include the invasion and the following Russo-Georgian War in 2008.

Since the decay of the Soviet Union, the relationships between the Russian Federation and post-Soviet states have been unstable. To better understand these relationships, Russia's motivations and goals in international politics need to be understood.

While Russia is striving towards keeping its interests in regional politics and stop the advancements of western politics that lead to more post-Soviet states joining NATO, several issues have preoccupied Russia over the last years to achieve this. First and foremost, Russia seeks to restore its dominant place in the post-Soviet space and does so by enhancing its political and economic position and therefore being able to offer security to other post-Soviet states. The economic position is especially aided by the export of oil and gas which Russia seeks to dominate. Politically, Russia is looking to dominate the regional politics to an extent that conflicts and security concerns such as terrorism are contained and dealt with on a post-Soviet level.

These are the primary motivations behind Russia's foreign politics, as they are estimated by foreign political experts, and have to be considered when talking about Russia's foreign politics.

Over the last years, the Russian Federation has been working hard to achieve their goal of dominance in regional politics. The military actions mentioned above are only a small part of these efforts. Other actions are directed directly to the people of other post-Soviet states. For example, in all countries that belonged to the Soviet Union, Russia has started a campaign “Home to Russia” where they offer jobs and apartments to members of the Russian minorities. While the campaign has not been very successful, the political meaning is very important. It is used to show the variety of ethnic identities in eastern Europe and to suggest to the Russian minorities that Russia will always be there for them.

Over the past years there has also been a reported rise of the issuing of Russian passports for Russian minorities in other countries.



4.2 Historical background - Measures taken by the international community

4.2.1 Georgia

Western political institutions like NATO or the European Union have reacted to these aggressions on Russia's part mainly by trying to mediate between the opposing forces.

The peace treaty between Russia and Georgia after the Russo-Georgian War was mediated by the European Council and after the end of the war, western states tried to attain the withdrawal of Russian troops from Georgia. The conflict also led to the discontinuation of NATO-Russian military contacts and on the side of NATO, the admittance of Georgia to NATO was started.

The reactions of states and NGOs to the war differed hugely. While some demanded respect for Georgia's borders and called for peace, others supported Russia's intervention.

4.2.2 Crimea

After the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula the international opinions did not differ in such a way. All G8 states except Russia, as well as the European Union, declared that they would not accept the referendum of the Crimean Peninsula since it would violate the Charter of the UN and contracts between Russia and the Ukraine from the 1990s.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe deployed military observers to investigate military activities of the Russian military in the Ukraine. Political sanctions from the European Union followed when Russia lost its voting rights, Russia was exempted from being part of observing missions and banned from the Bureau of the Assembly, the Presidential Committee and the Standing Committee.

4.3 Possible Actions

Concerned about future developments, NATO decided to keep observing the conflict region by deploying air reconnaissance planes over Poland and Romania.

While over the time all western states have reacted to aggressive behavior of the Russian Federation by releasing political statements condemning the action taken by the Russian Federation, these statements seldomly had political or economic consequences.

While western states have always reacted to the behavior of the Russian Federation by releasing statements, they shied away from drawing economic or political consequences. Since many countries in western Europe rely on oil and gas exportations of Russia, political leaders find it difficult to cut economic ties with Russia.

Future actions of western countries could therefore include economic sanctions or discontinuation of political relations in certain fields. However, if actions like this are to be carried out, it has to be ensured that the countries that inflict the sanctions do not suffer from them themselves.

5. Questions a Resolution Should Answer

- Which political measures should be taken towards Russia?
 - Concerning previous actions
 - Concerning possible future actions
- What kind of economic sanctions should be imposed?
 - Concerning previous actions
 - Concerning possible future actions
 - How shall affected NATO members be shielded from the consequences?
- How shall non-NATO members be assisted?
 - Under which conditions?
- What kind of trust building measures should be taken?
 - By Russia
 - By NATO members

6. Sources and Further Reading

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