



U.S. Department of State

Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs

The Russian Federation Ambassador

From the Desk of the Honorable Corrick Norton

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Historical Background:

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Russian Federation has undergone significant political and economic changes. Boris Yeltsin was elected as the first president of the Russian Federation. In the early 1990s, Russia faced significant economic and political turmoil, as it transitioned from a centrally planned economy to a market-oriented one.

In 1991, Russia faced a constitutional crisis, when Yeltsin dissolved the parliament and attempted to increase his power. This led to clashes between the parliament and the president, including a violent confrontation in 1993, which resulted in the parliament being disbanded.

Throughout the 1990s, Yeltsin implemented economic reforms, privatized state-owned enterprises, and liberalized the economy. However, these policies also resulted in widespread corruption and economic inequality.

In 1999, Yeltsin resigned, and Vladimir Putin became the acting president. Putin was elected as president in 2000 and has remained in power since. During his presidency, Putin has implemented policies aimed at stabilizing the economy and increasing state control over key industries.

In 2008, Russia went to war with Georgia, a former Soviet republic. This conflict further strained relations between Russia and the West.

One of Russia's objectives has been to reabsorb territory that is ultimately part of Russia despite the West's rhetoric, involvement and in some cases occupation. In 2014, Russia reclaimed Crimea. In 2022, Russia launched a special military operation into Ukraine in an attempt to demilitarize and denazify the region, as well as intervene in the persecution of the Russian ethnic-minority by the neo-Nazi run government.

Political System: Federal Republic and multi-party representative democracy

Economic System and Standing: Market-based economy with a high level of state involvement
World's 11th largest economy with a GDP of 1.779 Trillion USD. Considered an energy superpower with the world's largest natural gas reserves, second largest coal reserves and eighth largest oil reserves. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation values Russia's natural resources at 60% of its overall GDP.

Military Strength & Foreign Military Bases: The Russian Armed Forces are the world's 5th largest military in terms of active duty personnel with 1.15 million and 2 million reserve personnel. In 2021 the military budget was \$65.9 billion (USD). Russian maintains the world's largest stockpile of nuclear weapons, has the world's second largest fleet of ballistic missile submarines and are one of the three nations who operate strategic bombers. Current foreign Russian military bases exist in Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Syria, Tajikistan and Ukraine.

Geographic Location: Northern Asia, bordering the Arctic Ocean, between Eastern Europe and the North Pacific Ocean (the Russian portion west of the Urals belongs to Europe).

Internal Strength: The Russian people are in support of the Russian government and President Putin. The nationalism and refusal to surrender to the West's objectives and perspectives that characterizes the Russian government is the main aspect that keeps the Russian people encouraged and passionate. The recent conflict in Ukraine has resulted in many Russian lives lost, sanctions that have impacted the economy and overall quality of life as well as an overwhelming negative stigma of Russia internationally, which has affected citizens morale.

Allies: Russia's allies consist of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, all of whom are members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). One of our strongest diplomatic relationships is with China.

Foreign Policy Objectives:

1. To protect the constitutional system, sovereignty, independence, state and territorial integrity of the Russian Federation against any destructive internal influence
2. To maintain strategic stability, strengthen international peace and security
3. To strengthen the legal foundations of international relations
4. To protect the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of Russian citizens and to protect Russian entities against foreign illegal encroachment
5. To develop a safe information space, protect Russian society against destructive informational and psychological influence