Research Report

Leiden Model United Nations 2015
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Forum: *European Council*
Issue: *The question of sanctions against Russia*

Position: *Deputy Chair*

Introduction
Viktor Yanukovych was the Ukrainian president from 25 February 2010 until 22 February 2014. In November 2013, Yanukovych rejected a long term integration and trade deal with the European Union, instead choosing a Russian loan bailout and pursuing stronger diplomatic bonds with the Russian Federation. As a result of this, young pro-European Ukrainians occupied the Independence Square in Kiev and started protesting his decision. These protests became more and more violent as did the reaction of the Berkut, a special Ukrainian police force. This eventually lead to many lethal clashes between Ukrainian citizens and the police. On 21 February, Viktor Yanukovych claimed he had reached an agreement with the opposition, but he fled later that day to the Crimea and eventually to Russia. On 22 February 2014 Viktor Yanukovych got removed from his position as president on the grounds that he was unable to fulfil his duties. The presidential removal was recognised internationally.

On March 16, a referendum was held in Crimea. In this referendum the citizens of Crimea were asked whether they wanted to join Russia as a federal subject or if it wanted to stay a part of Ukraine as the autonomous republic of Crimea. The conclusion of the referendum was clear, 95% of the votes were in favour of the option to join the Russian Federation. The Referendum was declared invalid by the UN General Assembly with 100 votes in favour, 11 against and 58 abstentions. After the referendum was held, Vladimir Putin, the Russian president singed a degree officially recognising the validation of the Referendum. This degree was the start of the annexation of the Crimea. In March 2014 Russian forces took over the Crimea and placed soldiers at strategic places on the Peninsula. Ukraine withdrew its forces and Russia currently claims the Crimea as its own territory.

Definition of Key Terms

Crimea
The Crimean Peninsula (also known as Crimea) is a peninsula in the south of Ukraine, it is situated between the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. The Crimea is part of the Ukrainian region of Kherson and is connected to the Russian region Kuban by the Isthmus of

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Perekop. The Strait of Kerch separates Crimea from mainland Russia.

The peninsula has long been an item of dispute between Russia and Ukraine. The Crimea was a part of the Soviet Union before 1991 when it became the autonomous republic of Crimea, within the newly independent country of Ukraine. It retained an own administration within Ukraine, although the Russian Federation always maintained a military base in the coastal city of Sevastopol. The situation escalated in March 2014, when Russian forces from the base at Sevastopol took over the peninsula. Russia now claims the Crimea as its territory although this is not recognized by Ukraine and a big deal of the international community.

Sanctions
Sanctions are restrictions placed by countries or international organizations upon a country for diplomatic, military or political reasons. There are multiple types of sanctions such as economic sanctions, diplomatic sanctions, military sanctions, sport sanctions and trade bans. Sanctions are imposed for multiple reasons, but usually in an attempt to force a country to follow the international law or to show disapproval of one country's actions. Sanctions can also be used in order to maintain peace in specific geological areas.

The Budapest memorandum on security assurances
The Budapest memorandum on security assurances is a political agreement signed in 1994 in Budapest. The agreement assures the territorial integrity of Ukraine and guarantees its political independence. Ukraine gave up its nuclear weapon stockpile (left on its territory after the collapse of the Soviet Union), at that time ranked as the third largest in the world, in exchange of the memorandum. The agreement was signed by the USA, China, England, France and the Russian federation. The annexation of Crimea by Russia is seen by many countries as a violation of the Budapest memorandum on security assurances. The G8 believed the annexation of the Crimea to be a violation of the Budapest memorandum on security assurances and have thus suspended Russia from the G8.

General Overview
As a response to the annexation of the Crimea and as an attempt to stop the violence in Eastern Ukraine, the USA, the EU and many other countries imposed sanctions onto Russia.
The sanctions have been introduced in three rounds and they have been expanded and worsened over time. During the first round (March/April 2014) the USA, the EU, Canada, Japan and Australia introduced their sanctions, aimed at politicians and individuals with a high position in the Russian society. These sanctions consisted of the freezing of their foreign assets. These sanctions

were meant to put an end to the violence in Eastern Ukraine. In early April, countries such as Albania, Iceland, Montenegro, Moldova and Ukraine followed the example set by the EU and its partners and also placed sanctions on Russia.

In April 2014, the scope of the sanctions was broadened by the USA and the EU. More Russian individuals and companies became affected. These sanction were aimed at specific targets and attempted to minimise the negative consequences for the civilian population.

During the third round (May 2014 - present) the sanctions, first mainly aimed at individuals and their foreign assets, now also took the form of trade bans. The sanctions have been expanded to Russia's financial, energy and defense sectors.

In reaction to the sanctions, Russia started to impose sanctions of its own. Several individuals and multiple European politicians are banned from entering the country. They also placed a total ban on food imports from the EU and numerous other countries.

Since 2014, the Russian Federation has suffered an economic crisis which has been caused by the collapse of the Russian Ruble. The crash of the Ruble has been caused by two major issues. Russia's main export products are oil and gas. Due to low oil demand, caused by the global economic recession, oil prices have dropped rapidly. This causes a lot of trouble for the Russian economy. The other issue is caused by the multiple sanctions, mainly focused on Russia's economic, energy and defense sectors, imposed by the USA, the EU and many other countries. These sanctions are the result of the ongoing situation between Russia and Ukraine.

However, the Russian Federation is not the only country that has been damaged by the effects of the sanctions. The sanctions affected the global economy in a negative way and thus damaged the economy of numerous countries mostly in Europe due to the loss of jobs and the loss of trade contacts with Russia.
The Crimea is also suffering because of the dispute on its territory. Most of its income came from tourism, which has now almost completely collapsed due to the possibly dangerous situation and because of the sanctions imposed on the Crimea by the European Union.

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Timeline of Events

6 March 2014	The USA declared a national emergency and ordered sanctions, including travel bands and the freezing of US assets, against not yet specified individuals
16 March 2014	The referendum on the future of Crimea takes place.
17 March 2014	The USA, the EU and Canada present their first round of sanctions against specifically targeted individuals and companies
17 March 2014	Vladimir Putin sings a degree that starts the annexation of Crimea,
18 March 2014	Annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation
16 December 2015	the value of the Rubble dropped 20% in 24 hours

Previous attempts to solve the issue

Because of the fact that the sanctions imposed on Russia are one the most important means to solve the Crimean Crisis, the problem of the sanctions cannot be solved until the Crimean Crisis is solved. In attempts to solve the problem of the situation in Ukraine, the UN General Assembly has debated several times about this problem and they have come up with multiple resolutions on this issue. They have, for instance, discussed the validation of the Crimean referendum. There have been peace talks between Russian and Western diplomats. Several western political leaders, for instance Angela

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Merkel (Germany) and Francois Hollande (France) have visited Ukraine and discussed the situation with the Ukrainian political leaders. There has also been a lot of communication between the Russian government and western political leaders on these matters.

Possible Solutions
In order to solve the problem of the sanctions against Russia, the problem of the situation on the Crimea should be solved. A delicate situation such as the dispute over the Crimea can only be solved by diplomatic negotiations with all the countries involved.

Useful documents
- http://www.unrussia.ru/en
- http://www.un.org.ua/
- http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/ukraine/

Appendix/Appendices
- https://www.ingcb.com/insights/research/the-economic-effects-of-russian-sanctions
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crimea#2014_Russian_annexation_and_aftermath
- http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26672800
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_sanctions_during_the_Ukrainian_crisis
- http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/apr/11/ukraine-russia-crimea-sanctions-us-eu-guide-explainer
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A2nklduvThs
- http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26672800
- http://www.unrussia.ru/en
- http://www.un.org.ua/
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_sanctions_during_the_Ukrainian_crisis \
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Annexation_of_Crimea_by_the_Russian_Federation#Euromaidan_and_the_Ukrainian_revolution
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_sanctions
- http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-17839672

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