

Russian annexation of Crimea - March 2014

Why?

Is it justifiable?

Should we care?

What is Crimea?

- Peninsula in Black Sea with a beautiful coast lined with beaches. One of two major resort areas of USSR.
- Most of area is steppe, inadequate water resources, no significant natural resources.
- Strategically important for control of Black Sea as well as access to Mediterranean Sea. Sevastopol is Russian navel port.

Chronology of the annexation

- Nov. 2013 - Feb, 2014 massive demonstrations in Kiev demanding removal of president.
- Feb 20, 2014 60+ demonstrators were killed by snipers.
- Feb 23, 2014 Pro-Russian demonstrations instigated in Sevastopol.
- Feb 27, 2014 Parliament of Crimea taken over by masked Russian troops without insignia.
- March 17, 2014 Crimean Referendum, declaration of independence.
- March 18, 2014 Incorporation into Russian Federation.

Military Medal of the Russian Federation

Medal of the Russian Federation's ministry of defense with inscription "*For the return of Crimea 20.02.14 - 03.18.14.*"



"Annexation of Crimea was not even considered until polls were carried out indicating the Crimean population's desire to be annexed." Putin.

Reasons for annexation

- Prevent Ukraine from joining EU and NATO
- Maintain Sevastopol as Russian Black Sea Fleet homeport.
- Detract Russians from rising against its government and unite them against external enemy.
- Establish Russia friendly government and present Russia's actions as liberation.

Excuses for annexation

- Crimea is mostly comprised of ethnic Russians.
- Crimea was always part of Russia.
- 1954 transfer was illegal.
- There is no such ethnicity as Ukrainians

Map of Russia



Map of Ukraine



Chronological Map of Ukraine



Statistics

	Area, Sq. mi	Population, millions	Population density per/sq. mi
Russia	6,612,073*	146	22
Ukraine	233,000	43	185
Crimea	11,000 **	2.5 ***	220

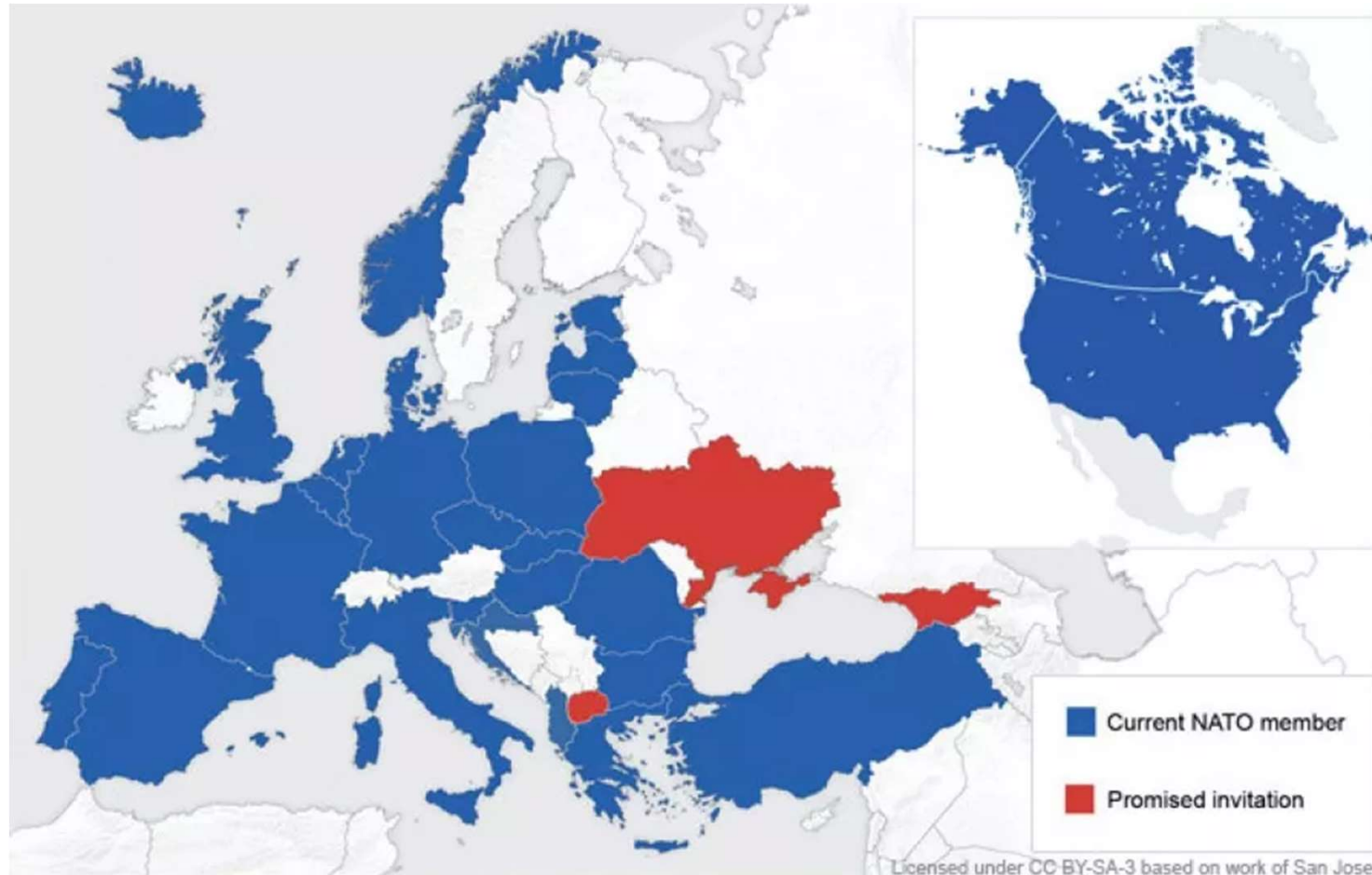
*(USA is 3,794,100 sq. mi.)

** (0.16% of Russian territory)

*** Including 0.5 million in Sevastopol

Demographics: 65% Russians, 15% Ukrainians, 11% Crimean Tatars

Putin's "Monroe Doctrine"



Pre-Annexation events

- April 3, 2008, NATO Summit welcomes Ukraine's and Georgia's aspirations for membership
- August 2008. The Russo-Georgian War
- Nov. 2013. Ukraine refuses to join EU and offered \$15 B loan and cheaper gas.
- Nov. 2013 - Feb. 2014 The Revolution of Dignity to oust Yanukovich.
- Feb. 2014 Annexation of Crimea.

Putin's position

- Is Putin really concerned about NATO?
- 2004, Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania join NATO
- June 2021 - Putin writes:

“Ukraine was dragged into a dangerous geopolitical game aimed at turning Ukraine into a barrier between Europe and Russia, a springboard against Russia,” There was a need for the ‘anti-Russia’ concept which we will never accept. Russians and Ukrainians were really a “single people and Ukraine and Ukrainians “are part of a larger ‘historical Russia’”. He denies Ukraine’s history and sovereignty.
- 2021. Ukraine may remain independent, as long as it accepts becoming a partner with Russia — albeit a subservient one

Reasons and excuses for 1954 transfer

- 1920 - 1954 Crimea is part of Russian republic of USSR
- Feb. 27, 1954. Crimea transferred from Russian Republic of USSR to Ukrainian Republic
- Official explanation:
 - **Integral character of the economy, the territorial proximity and close economic ties.**
- Unofficial explanations:
 - Political maneuvering by Khrushchev to consolidate power.
 - Generous gift of Russians to Ukrainian brothers to honor 300 years of unification
 - Avoid paying back bonds owned to US.
- The most probable reasons:
 - Intentional infecting ethnic enclaves to ensure Russian domination/control

District of Kaliningrad

Why was not Kaliningrad (Konigsberg) transferred to Lithuania, Belorussia or Poland?



The region Pre-transfer situation

- Late 1940s and early 1950s Western Ukrainian independence movement was very strong.
- Russification of Ukraine similar to other ethnic enclaves (Nagorno-Karabakh, Kuban, Ossetia, Baltic region). In 1922 Stalin was concerned about local communists taking independence too seriously.
- In 1954, Crimea had more “Russian” (75%) than it had been for centuries.
- On 19 February 1954 at the session authorizing the transfer, formal head of the USSR, Kliment Voroshilov stated “**enemies of Russia” tried to take the Crimea from Russia and use it to steal and ravage Russian lands.**”

Brief History of Crimea:

- 13th –16th centuries Crimean Khanate, descendants of Golden Horde is one of the strongest powers in Eastern Europe, Russia is paying taxes to Crimea.
- 1783 - Russia takes control of Crimea from Ottoman Empire, ousts many Tatars.
- 1917 - 1920 Crimea attempts to create an independent state.
- 1920 - Bolsheviks incorporate Crimea into Russian Republic.
- 1944 - Stalin deported 300,000 Crimean Tatars, some Armenians, Bulgarians, and Greeks
- 1954 - Crimea got transferred from Russia to Ukraine (within USSR)

Brief history of Russia and Ukraine.

10th century. Kievan Rus includes present-day Ukraine, Russia, Poland and Belarus.

13th century the Kievan kingdom was conquered by the Mongols.

15 -16 centuries. Russia & Ukraine develop into two different ethnicities, languages and cultures.

1654 Ukraine signs a military and political treaty with Russia against Poland.

1657–1686. 30-year war amongst Russia, Poland, the [Crimean Khanate](#), the [Ottoman Empire](#), and [Cossacks](#) for control of Ukraine. Ukraine is divided.

1783. Russia takes control of large part of Ukraine. Promised autonomy not given.

1939. USSR invades Poland and absorbs Western Ukraine.

Crimean California.

- 1920s - 1930s American Joint invests \$30 M into Crimea to create Autonomous Jewish Republic.
- May 4, 1938. The USSR branch of JOINT abolished by the decision of the Politburo.
- 1943. US “Crimea interests us not only as Jews, but as Americans, because Crimea – is the Black sea, the Balkans and Turkey”. \$10 billion was offered to continue with the project.
- February 1944. Molotov received a letter from JAFC offering to *create a Jewish Soviet Socialist Republic*.
- 1945 - 1948 USSR actively supports the establishment of Israel on the territory of Palestine, not Crimea.
- 1945 "***Coexistence of Soviet Fleet and the Crimean Jewish Republic, open for free entry of Jews from all over the world is not feasible.*** Roosevelt

Post-annexation situation

- Russia has relocated more than 200,000 Russian nationals to the occupied region
- Russia has deployed more than 30,000 armed personnel to Crimea
- UN documented “multiple and grave” human rights violations. Crimean Tatars are particularly targeted.
- 10,000+ combatant deaths; 3,400 civilian fatalities; 1.5 million displaced.
- Russia is ready for another "referendum".

Established facts.

- Crimea was part of Ukraine for the last 60 years.
- Legality of the 1954 transfer can be debated.
- 1991. Russia has no claims on Crimea.
- 1994. Budapest Memorandum. Russia, US and UK agree “to respect the independence and sovereignty and the **existing borders of Ukraine**,” and refrain from the threat or use of force”. Ukraine gives out its nuclear arsenal
- Russian Fleet could remain in Sevastopol until 2042 with 2047 extention.

Summary.

- Russia conducts an asymmetrical war in Ukraine and presents it as liberation.
- Russians replaced thousands of pro-Ukrainian Crimeans with pro-Russians to ensure results of any referendum.
- UN and most of the world condemn the annexation.
- US was a guarantor of the Ukrainian sovereignty.
- Putin's view of the essential unity between the two nationalities echoes Adolf Hitler's opinion that Austria and Germany belonged together, and that the German-speaking Sudetenland area of Czechoslovakia should be under German rule as well.