

Evaluate the role the United States should play in dealing with Russian foreign affairs in 2016.

- I. Previous interactions between the two countries have ended largely in disagreements, suggesting further interconnectedness between the nations will only result in discord.**
- A. Dissolution of Détente**
1. 1972: President Nixon signed the Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty (SALT) (Treaty between U.S. & SU that put controls and regulations on nuclear weapons) → Period of Détente, or relaxed relations, arises between the two nations
 2. Tensions began to rise again between the superpowers when NATO increased their nuclear weapons arsenal and President Carter put an emphasis on human rights in his foreign policy. Detente officially collapsed in Dec. 1979 when Soviet forces invaded Afghanistan to support a pro-Soviet government.
 - a) An agreement originally meant to mend relations w/ Russia ended disastrously → proving any form of relationship with Russia cannot have an amiable ending.
- B. Russian Relations Reset**
1. President Obama attempted to completely reset diplomatic relations with Russia by stopping the expansion of NATO, including Russia in NATO spying/intel, and keeping the Cold War in the past → Putin refused to reset relations, putting even more strain on the relationship between the two countries.
 - a) Very recent attempts to ameliorate relations failed w/ Putin as President, any more attempts to fix relations while Putin is president would be futile.
- II. Intervention in Russian affairs will drag the U.S. into a long war, disrupting U.S. focus on domestic affairs.**
- A. Russia- Ukraine Crisis**
1. During political turmoil in Ukraine, Russian military entered the nation to take back Crimea. After months of riots and military action, Russia officially annexed Crimea in March, 2014. The U.S. and many European nations condemned Russia's actions and imposed economic sanctions on Russia to vocalize their disapproval.
 - a) U.S. involvement in the Ukraine conflict would not be minute, military intervention would be required to get Russia to reverse the annexation of Crimea since the economic sanctions have had little effect on Russia's stance towards Ukraine.
 - b) Russia is the second strongest military in the world → Any military action against Russia would not be an easy win and would inevitably cost the US lots of lives, money, and time.
- B. Russian Actions Against ISIS**
1. Russia has intervened militarily in the Syrian Civil War by sending aid to pro-Assad forces to counter ISIS. (In 2014 evidence was found that Assad had used chemical weapons against his own people.)
 - a) Countering Russia would be extremely complicated bc Assad is anti- ISIS but the US is anti-ISIS & anti-Assad → US military involvement would drag US into another Middle eastern war except this time one of the enemies would be Russia, making the war even longer and deadlier.
- III. Whether amicable or hostile, any Russia- U.S. relation will cost the U.S. immense amounts of money and resources, causing political strife within U.S. borders.**
- A. Cooperative Threat Program**
1. 1991-2012: U.S. gave Russia \$8 billion to dismantle, dispose of, and/or safely store nuclear weapons. U.S. also donated \$1 billion to Russia's science and technology center.
 - a) Attempts to help Russia have cost the US billions of \$s, with high unemployment rates and many US citizens living below the poverty line many Americans believe US money needs to be spent on domestic issues and not foreign ones.
- B. Truman Doctrine**
1. March 1947: President Truman announced he will "support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure." Set precedent that the US will intervene in the countries attempting to spread communism. Implementation cost the US approximately \$400 million.
 - a) US actions against Russia will also cost the US lots of \$, leading many Americans to believe a non-intervention policy towards Russia would be better than an interventionist approach.

CONCLUSION: The high-tension relationship between Russia and the United States officially began with the Truman Doctrine in 1947 and has continued to the present day. While attempts to mend the relationship between the two superpowers temporarily worked, most interactions between the nations have predominantly ended in hostility. There is no simple way for the U.S. to involve itself in the military excursions of Russia and any attempt to do so would surely force the U.S. into yet another war. Actions taken against Russia or even for the benefit of Russia have cost the U.S. billions of dollars and any further investments in the nation will cause political controversy. The United States must abstain from involvement in Russian foreign affairs to preserve domestic tranquility and prevent further tensions from arising between the two nations.