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1NC- Influence

Russia is focused on expanding into Latin America – part of its grand strategy to increase international credibility

Sudarev 2012

(Vladimir Sudarev, Doctor of Political Science, Professor of the European and American Countries' History and Politics Department of the MGIMO University, "" Is Russia returning to Latin America?"" February 20, 2012, http://russiancouncil.ru/en/inner/?id_4=252#top)

Latin American region has recently been often mentioned among new priority dimensions of Russian foreign policy. Despite the difficulties of both objective and subjective nature, the comeback of Russia to Latin America can provide it with new reliable partners and strengthen its position in a nascent multi-polar world.

The nineties can be regarded as lost years for Russian policy in Latin America. In fact, Russia didn't pursue any policy there. Traditionally, as in the Soviet times, this region stood low on the national foreign policy agenda. Of course, there have been undertaken some successful actions – for example, in 1996-1997 Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov paid visits to the region during which the whole package of agreements on cooperation with Mexico, Cuba, Venezuela, Argentina, Colombia, and, most importantly, with Brazil (about strategic partnership in the 21 century and creation of a greater Russia-Brazil committee) were signed. But these actions were only sporadic, and the signed agreements turned out to be suspended. What is more, it was in the early 1990-s after Russia's withdrawal from Cuba, with abandoning the construction of about 500 major facilities and decreasing 30-fold trade turnover with this country [1], when West-oriented Russia started to be perceived in Latin America as an unreliable partner. The U-turn in Russian foreign policy after 9/11 contributed to it greatly. Having declared about the readiness of Russia to join the US-sponsored anti-terrorist coalition, President Putin on October 17, 2001 announced the withdrawal of the country from the only overseas strategic site - surveillance radar station in Lurdes on the outskirts of Havana – without prior notification of the Cuban side [2]. Make-or-break moment in the relationships with Latin America region countries occurred in the wake of the Yeltzin era. Latin American countries themselves seem to have contributed a lot to it. Already in 1999 the Rio Group uniting the region's leading states turned out to be, actually, the only grouping in the world which condemned the bombing of Yugoslavia and pointed out in its declaration specific articles of the UN Charter violated by the NATO member- states [3]. In February 2003 Mexico and Chili as non-permanent UN SC members, in fact, vetoed the second Anglo-American resolution authorizing Iraq intervention, despite their economic dependence on the USA. These actions seem to have made the Kremlin look at the perspectives of cooperation with Latin American countries at a new angle. Thus, in March 2003 President Putin received in Kremlin the delegation of the Rio Group and held official talks with them. Both sides agreed not to confine themselves to regular contacts (launched in 1995) within the framework of the UN General Assembly, but also conduct meetings in Russia and countries of the Group member-states. By mid-decade the exchange of high level delegations between the sides had intensified. Only one example, in November 2008 President Medvedev visited four countries during his tour of the region - Peru, Brazil, Venezuela and Cuba.

Commenting on his visit, President **Medvedev remarked**: "...we visited the states which previous Russian leaders had never been to... It means only that **we failed to pay due attention to these countries before, and, to a certain extent, it is only now that we are starting a full-fledged and I hope mutually beneficial cooperation with the heads of these states and between our economies.** он отметил: **We mustn't be shy and timid and be afraid of competition.** We must boldly engage in the battle". **In order to display its interest to the presence in the region Russia resorted to a number of un-common and spectacular actions. In November 2008 a warship squadron with the fleet nuclear-powered cruiser "Peter the Great" of the Russian Navy as a flagship entered the territorial waters of US-hostile Venezuela to participate in joint naval exercises of the North Fleet of the Russian Federation Navy.** Simultaneously, **within the framework of the resumed patrolling of the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans two Russian long-range strategic bombers landed at a Venezuelan naval base. The so-called comeback of Russia to Latin America was to a great extent preconditioned by the "leftist drift" in the region which resulted in the emergence of the group of states that viewed the expanding relations with Russia as an important lever for strengthening their position in conflict relations with the USA.** Many of these countries perceived Russia as the successor of the former USSR might and influence, with the vision of a new world order of both sides being practically identical – it should be multilateral, not individually tailored to the interests of a single superpower. This position was set out in numerous joint documents signed at the summits – practically all the leaders of the most prominent Latin American countries paid official visits to Moscow during the first decade of the 21st century. **The breakthrough happened also in the military and technical field. Starting from 2004 Venezuela has begun purchases of scale of the Russian arms to the amount of over \$4bln.** Russia established military and technical cooperation with other countries of the region apart from Venezuela: Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Bolivia also procured Russian military hardware. **Russia tried to establish closer economic ties with its major partners in the region. At the end of the decade Russia's oil and gas producing companies LUKOIL and GASPROM were already operating in Venezuela. RUSAL made heavy investments in bauxite industry of Guyana. ROSNEFT got**

its chunk for oil exploration in Cuban shelf of the Mexican Gulf. Trade between Russia and the countries of the region has been roaring

recently – over the last decade trade turnover has tripled and amounted to \$15bln [4]. However, despite the qualitative changes in the structure of Russian export – the share of machinery and equipment has a little increased – it still leaves much to be desired. Take Brazil, for example: mineral fertilizers have made up 90% of Russian export, while Brazil has been exporting to Russia mostly meat and tropical goods. Largely, Brazil has always been the weakest link of Russia's regional policy despite its participation in the BRIC group. At any rate, the role of Brazil in Russia's foreign policy is much smaller than those of China and India. It should be recognized that Russia has failed so far to establish strategic partnership with Brazil, which had been planned for as early as 1997. It can be largely attributed to the fact that Russian leadership has no priority system in interacting with this country. The latter, from our perspective, is explained by poor understanding of how much inter-complimentary could be the interests of the two resource-rich countries in the decades to come. Unfortunately, China, and lately India have been much more economically active in the region than Russia, filling the niches in the market that could have been well filled by Russia. Another question is why Brazilian dimension of Russian foreign policy is much weaker than the Chinese one? Why do we transfer to China, the relationships with which in the 20th century were abundant with conflicts including the armed ones, unique military aircraft building technologies, while denying this to Brazil with which we have never had conflicts or clashes on the international arena? Perhaps, it is the residual principle inherent of the USSR leadership and successfully inherited in 1990-s by the Russian leadership that is applied to this region. But, while the USSR used to have Cuba as a strategic partner, the Russian Federation, having curtailed the ties with the Island of Freedom, didn't bother to start looking for new partners and paid as little attention to the relations with Brazil as with any other Latin American country. If Russia is really interested in serious and politically influential partners, then it is the Brazil dimension that should be prioritized as the major vector of Russian policy in the region. It means establishing a special system of partnership which will include an overhaul of the current system of trade and economic relations, an introduction of a new system of preferential terms of advanced know-how transfer and exchange, particularly in aerospace field. For that sake it's necessary to maximally intensify the relations with Brazil's leadership and take them to a higher level, with the head of state or the government taking control of it. However, the growing understanding of the Russian upper echelons of power of the necessity to shift the focus of economic cooperation with the countries of the region on to scientific and technical sphere arouses certain optimism. It is in the field of advanced technologies where Russia is most competitive, and no wonder that **the main emphasis during the April 2010 visit of President Medvedev to the countries of the region was laid on this very issue. Low competitiveness of Russia vis-à-vis other countries undertaking huge efforts with a view to building up their political and economic position in this region continues to persist.** Besides, our investment capability is also much lower than that of USA, China, EU and even India. Nonetheless, in spite of the difficulties, both objective and subjective, **the trend of Russia's presence expansion in the region may gain further momentum in the forthcoming decades, provided adequate efforts are taken. In this case Latin American dimension of Russian foreign policy has all chances to make it a separate independent direction which can win Russia new beneficial partners and enhance its position in a nascent multi-polar world.**

Russian expansion key to US-Russian relations – perception of equality is vital Doyle 2012

(Michael, Cambridge, "America and the World: Foreign Policy, Post Apogee", January 14, 2012, <http://www.internationalpolicydigest.org/2012/01/14/america-and-the-world-foreign-policy-post-apogee>)

Even though the long-term prospects of **Russia** bode poorly, the nation **will remain a power to be reckoned with for some time. Russia has a sizable nuclear arsenal, a formidable military, and a seat on the UN Security Council. It is the largest country in the world by land area and is the world's largest energy exporter. Russia also shares the Eurasian continent with China, a power that the United States hopes to abridge to some extent.** As a consequence, **there are a lot of reasons why the US should try to build bridges with Russia. Indeed, many factors point to a rapprochement with Russia in the decade ahead. Russia's economy is expected to slow** over the coming decade. **This weaker** economic position should make it less haughty and **confrontational**. The rise of China will also cause Russia to reevaluate its geo-political positions. **Although Russia and China currently get along amicably, that could prove less true in the future. The Russian people have no desire to be drawn into the Chinese orbit and may look for partners that will assure an independent Russian sphere of influence in Eurasia.** Another reason that there may be an improvement in Russian relations is because of the reorientation of US policy. **The US is not pursuing NATO expansion and the Obama's administration's reset has been partially successful. Furthermore, the shift of US military orientation away from Europe should allay some of Russia's concerns. US policy towards Russia should center on three goals.** The US should endeavor to keep Russia proud, independent, and unafraid. **The US should keep Russia proud by ensuring that**

Russia is treated as the great power it is. There is a lot of post-Soviet nostalgia still present in the country, and many Russians feel slighted at not being treated with the respect that used to be accorded to them. The US and others generated a lot of Russian hostility by treating the country as if it was a second rate power. **Simply according Russia the status it feels it deserves, is an easy way to improve relations with the country.** Secondly, the US should recognize that **Russia wants to be an independent power, with a separate sphere of influence** in Central Asia. **It neither wants to be drawn into the Western orbit nor the Chinese orbit. If the US can accommodate this, it will find that an independent Russia can serve as a bulwark against a rising China.** Thirdly, the US should attempt to keep Russia unafraid. This means that the US will have to make NATO look less threatening and mollify Russian concerns over a missile shield.

US-Russia relations solve multiple scenarios for nuclear conflict

Pifer 2012

(Steven, director of the Brookings Arms Control Initiative and a senior fellow with the Center for 21st Century Security and Intelligence and the Center on the United States and Europe in the Foreign Policy program at Brookings, "The Future Course of the U.S.-Russia Relationship", <http://www.brookings.edu/research/testimony/2012/03/21-arms-control-pifer>)

Looking forward, **a positive relationship with Russia can advance U.S. interests, even if Washington and Moscow differ on some issues** and if the United States is frustrated about corruption and the democracy and human rights situation in Russia. **Russian support remains critical to achieving key Washington policy goals such as sustaining pressure on the nuclear rogue states and supporting coalition military operations in Afghanistan.** There are a number of issues on which Moscow can play a spoiler role if it believes the United States is not paying due regard to Russian interests. Improving U.S.-Russian relations further may prove more difficult than it has been in the past three years, as the easier questions have been settled. Nevertheless, Washington should seek to work with Russia on a number of issues. First, **Washington should engage Moscow on a further bilateral round of nuclear arms reductions**, this time including strategic and non-strategic nuclear weapons, whether deployed or non-deployed, under a common ceiling in a follow-on agreement to New START. A sublimit on deployed strategic warheads could restrict those nuclear weapons of greatest concern. While Moscow currently shows little enthusiasm for further nuclear cuts, it may have incentives to deal. **Such an agreement would promote a more stable balance at lower levels of nuclear weapons. It would respond to the concern expressed by the Senate in its resolution of ratification for New START that non-strategic nuclear weapons be addressed. And it could produce cost savings, freeing up defense resources to fund operations that the U.S. military is far more likely to engage in than nuclear war.** Second, Washington and NATO should continue to pursue a cooperative missile defense arrangement with Russia. That prospect is currently stalled by Moscow's demand for a legal guarantee that U.S. missile defenses in Europe not be directed against Russian strategic missile forces. While it is reasonable for the Russians to be concerned that missile defenses could affect the offense-defense relationship, that is a concern for the future. It is very difficult to see the U.S. plan for missile defenses in Europe over the next decade posing any serious threat to Russian strategic missiles. NATO should leave the door open for cooperation and provide transparency about its missile defense capabilities and plans. **A cooperative missile defense arrangement would be a significant achievement. It would remove one of the thornier issues from the U.S.-Russia and NATO-Russia agendas; provide for a better defense of Europe than just a NATO system alone; and give the Russian military greater transparency about U.S. and NATO missile defense capabilities. Such transparency could help assure Moscow that those missile defense capabilities pose no threat.** Such cooperation, moreover, could prove a "game-changer" in attitudes by making NATO and Russia genuine partners in defending Europe against ballistic missile attack. Third, **Washington should seek to work closely with Russia in the Six Party process on North Korea** and the UNSC Five-plus-One talks with Iran. **Russia** may have only marginal influence in the Six Party talks, but it **has absolutely no interest in a nuclear-armed North Korea. The Russians have been helpful in the Six Party process in the past.** Iran presents a more complex question. **The Russians do not want to see Iran with nuclear weapons**, but the level of urgency about this question in Moscow is less than it is in Washington. For the United States, a nuclear-armed Iran is a nightmare scenario. Russia, on the other hand, has had a more normal relationship with Tehran over the past 35 years. **For the Russians, an Iran with nuclear weapons would be a very negative development, to be sure, but they believe—correctly or not—that they could cope with** it, much as the United States has sought to deal since 1998 with an openly nuclear Pakistan. **Moscow probably will not go as far as Washington would like in further pressuring**

the Iranian government, but that does not diminish the fact that the Russians have come a long way in supporting mandatory UN sanctions. The West would not want to see Moscow ease up on the measures it has adopted to date.

Fourth, **continued cooperation on Afghanistan remains very much in the U.S. interest.** The United States and NATO need Moscow's assistance for continued ease in moving equipment and personnel to—and, as NATO begins to draw down, from—

Afghanistan. **Even in the best of circumstances, Afghanistan is likely to remain an unsettled and fragile state after 2014. The Russians are concerned that instability there could spill over into Central Asia. It would make sense for Washington to intensify consultations with Moscow on steps that might be taken to bolster the stability of the Central Asian states** that border Afghanistan.

Uniqueness

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Russia gaining influence in Latin America now

Ben-Ami 5-3

(Shlomo, a former Israeli foreign minister who now serves as Vice President of the Toledo International Center for Peace, "Is the US Losing Latin America?", <http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/the-new-nature-of-us-influence-in-latin-america-by-shlomo-ben-ami>)

MADRID – It is a mantra increasingly heard around the world: **US power is in decline. And nowhere does this seem truer than in Latin America. No longer is the region regarded as America's "backyard";** on the contrary, the continent has arguably never been so united and independent. But this view fails to capture the true nature of US influence in Latin America – and elsewhere as well. This illustration is by Paul Lachine and comes from [NewsArt.com](http://www.newsart.com), and is the property of the NewsArt organization and of its artist. Reproducing this image is a violation of copyright law. Illustration by Paul Lachine
CommentsView/Create comment on this paragraphIt is true that US attention to Latin America has waned in recent years. President George W. Bush was more focused on his "global war on terror." His successor, Barack Obama, seemed to give the region little thought as well, at least in his first term. CommentsView/Create comment on this paragraphIndeed, at the Summit of the Americas in Cartagena in April 2012, **Latin American leaders felt sufficiently confident and united to challenge US priorities in the region. They urged the US to lift its embargo on Cuba, claiming that it had damaged relations with the rest of the continent, and to do more to combat drug use on its own turf, through education and social work, rather than supplying arms to fight the drug lords in Latin America** – a battle that all acknowledged has been an utter failure. **It is also true that Latin American countries have pursued a massive expansion of economic ties beyond America's sway.** China is now Latin America's second-largest trading partner and rapidly closing the gap with the US. India is showing keen interest in the region's energy industry, and has signed export agreements in the defense sector. Iran has strengthened its economic and military ties, especially in Venezuela. CommentsView/Create comment on this paragraphSimilarly, in 2008, **Russia's then-President Dmitri Medvedev identified the US war on terror as an opportunity to create strategic partnerships with rising powers such as Brazil, and with the Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas (ALBA), a Venezuelan-inspired bloc opposed to US designs in the region.** The energy giant Gazprom and the country's military industries have spearheaded the Kremlin's effort to demonstrate Russia's ability to influence America's neighborhood – a direct response to perceived American meddling in Russia's own "near abroad," particularly Georgia and Ukraine.

US continuing to lose influence in Latin America

Hakim 2013

(Peter, president emeritus and senior fellow of the Inter-American Dialogue, March 27, 2013, "Post Chavez: Can U.S. rebuild Latin American ties?", <http://blogs.reuters.com/great-debate/2013/03/27/post-chavez-can-u-s-rebuild-latin-american-ties/>)

The **funeral of** Venezuelan President Hugo **Chavez** earlier this month was a massive celebration of a vitriolic foe of the United States. This tribute **should make Washington take a fresh look** not only **at** its relations with Venezuela but also with **all of Latin America**. Virtually **every Latin American country sent a high-level delegation to show its esteem for Chavez, who,** during his 14 years in office, **regularly vilified the United States,** disparaged its leaders **and campaigned tirelessly to end the U.S. role in the region.** The presidents of Latin America's six largest nations — including the closest U.S. regional allies, Mexico, Colombia and Chile — traveled to Caracas for the burial ceremonies. Never in Latin America, as many commentators noted, has a deceased leader been given a grander memorial — not even Argentina's adored Juan Domingo Peron back in 1974. This extraordinary acclaim for Washington's most virulent adversary in the Americas was probably not intended as a deliberate snub. There were other reasons that so many of Washington's friends ended up applauding a committed antagonist of the United States. Some leaders, concerned with politics back home, were seeking to appeal to constituencies on the left, who idolized Chavez. Some who have benefited from the financial largesse distributed by the president of oil rich-Venezuela are eager for his successor to continue that support. Still others were reluctant to stand apart or isolate themselves from their neighbors — so they became part of the crowd. Yet **the fanfare accompanying Chavez's funeral suggests a troubling degree of indifference to the United States in Latin America — as if Washington no longer counted**.

US losing influence – should accede power to Russia

Doyle 2012

(Michael Doyle, "America and the World: Foreign Policy, Post Apogee", January 14, 2012, <http://www.internationalpolicydigest.org/2012/01/14/america-and-the-world-foreign-policy-post-apogee/>)

However, **the geo-politics of Latin America are changing**. Over the coming years, **two centers of gravity will emerge in the region**. In the North, **the countries bordering the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea, with the exception of Cuba and Venezuela, will tend to gravitate towards the US** and Mexico. Unlike the rest of the world, the US will still hold strong sway over the nations of this region. Conversely, many South American countries will witness a decline of US influence and look increasingly towards Brazil and the Mercosur trading bloc. In both Northern and **Southern Latin America**, ultra-leftist Latin American leaders, such as Hugo Chavez, Evo Morales, and the Castro brothers, **have challenged the influence of the U_{nited} S_{tates}**.

Russia, in many ways, **still sees the U_{nited} S_{tates} through the lens of the Cold War**. Relations between the two countries were particularly poor during the first decade of the 20th century. Expansion of NATO, the foray into Iraq, and US plans to construct a missile shield only made Russia more suspicious of American intentions. For their part, many American pundits rolled their eyes at Russian criticisms. In their view, Russia is a bellicose nation in terminal decline. With an economy smaller than that of Canada, many of these pundits question whether Russia rates to be a great power. Even though the long-term prospects of Russia bode poorly, the nation will remain a power to be reckoned with for some time. Russia has a sizable nuclear arsenal, a formidable military, and a seat on the UN Security Council. It is the largest country in the world by land area and is the world's largest energy exporter. Russia also shares the Eurasian continent with China, a power that the United States hopes to abridge to some extent. As a consequence, **there are a lot of reasons why the US should try to build bridges with Russia**. Indeed, many factors point to a rapprochement with Russia in the decade ahead. Russia's economy is expected to slow over the coming decade. This weaker economic position should make it less haughty and confrontational. The rise of China will also cause Russia to reevaluate its geo-political positions. Although Russia and China currently get along amicably, that could prove less true in the future. **The Russian people** have no desire to be drawn into the Chinese orbit and **may look for partners that will assure an independent Russian sphere of influence in Eurasia**. Another reason that there may be an improvement in Russian relations is because of the reorientation of US policy. The US is not pursuing NATO expansion and the Obama's administration's reset has been partially successful. Furthermore, the shift of US military orientation away from Europe should allay some of Russia's concerns. US policy towards Russia should center on three goals. **The US should endeavor to keep Russia proud, independent, and unafraid**. The US should keep Russia proud by ensuring that Russia is treated as the great power it is. There is a lot of post-Soviet nostalgia still present in the country, and many Russians feel slighted at not being treated with the respect that used to be accorded to them. The US and others generated a lot of Russian hostility by treating the country as if it was a second rate power. **Simply according Russia the status it feels it deserves, is an easy way to improve relations with the country**.

Regional Influence Now

Russia engaging Latin America – expanding economic and political ties

Nechepurenko 5-30

(Ivan, The Moscow Times, "Russia Seeks to Restore Influence in Latin America", <http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/russia-seeks-to-restore-influence-in-latin-america/480827.html>)

Russia has demonstrated its increasing leverage in Latin America with Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov meeting representatives of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States in Moscow on Wednesday. The foreign ministers of Cuba, Costa Rica and Haiti and the deputy foreign minister of Chile discussed trade, political dialogue and a visa-free regime with Lavrov, with everyone in agreement that Russia's relations with the region are ripe enough to establish "a permanent mechanism for political dialogue and cooperation in a Russia-CELAC format,"

a statement from Russia's Foreign Ministry said. CELAC was founded in 2010 as a counterweight to the U.S.-led Organization of American States. It consists of 33 states representing almost 600 million people and producing 7 trillion dollars in annual GDP. **"This is a serious attempt by Latin**

American states to counter U.S. economic and political influence in the region," said Mikhail Belyat, an independent Latin American expert and lecturer at the Russian State University for the Humanities.

In the aftermath of the Cuban Revolution, the Soviet Union rapidly increased its economic and military influence in Latin America only to see that influence subside with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Apart from Latin America, Russia has recently reinvigorated its efforts to project its influence around the world, especially in other areas where its influence has declined. To that end, Russia has been actively promoting the concept of a multi-polar world, playing an active role in such organizations as the BRICS and the Eurasian Economic Space, which is planned to be transformed into a full-fledged Eurasian Union in 2015. "Our friends have expressed their desire to make permanent contacts between the CELAC and BRICS. Particularly on the sidelines of various meetings. We believe this is a very attractive suggestion and we will definitely discuss it with other states that are members of this association," Lavrov said at the news conference that followed negotiations. BRICS consists of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, representing large, fast-growing economies with an increasing influence on global affairs. Just like BRICS, CELAC countries have enjoyed strong economic growth of 4.5 percent on average over the last three years, which in turn drives these states to look to distant markets. **"Like Russia, these countries want to diversify their economies and export**

markets so that their goals complement each other," Belyat said. Trade between Russia and Latin

America reached 16 billion dollars in 2012 alone. In order to complement the exchange of goods with the exchange of people, the sides have agreed to put their efforts into establishing a visa-free regime between CELAC countries and Russia. Although Russians already enjoy visa-free travel to most countries of Latin America, including Brazil, Argentina and Chile, Costa Rica and Panama still require Russian citizens to apply for entry clearance in advance. Russia has been negotiating visa-free entry for its citizens for some time now, with the most well-known process taking place with the EU. Russia has noted that the EU already grants visa-free access to such countries as Brazil, Mexico and Venezuela - countries which enjoy a similar level of economic prosperity as Russia. As the bureaucratic process in the EU drags out visa-free negotiations, Moscow is looking to other regions to expand its influence. "We used to have hectares full of Lada cars along the Panama Canal, while our tractors were plowing Mexican lands," Belyat said. **"So I predict Russia will become more prominent in Latin America, and we will see more Latin American goods in our stores."**

Cuba Influence Now

Russia-Cuba ties high – history and economic cooperation

Ningzhu 2013

(Zhu. Associate Professor of Finance Graduate School of Management University of California¶ "Cuban Parliament Leader Says Ties with Russia under Full Expansion." - Xinhua. Xinhua, 18 Mar, Nexis)

The relations between Cuba and Russia are under full expansion, Esteban Lazo, president of Cuban parliament, said on Friday.¶ Lazo made the remarks after signing an agreement with the visiting leader of Russian Senate, Valentina Matviyenko, to boost the parliamentary cooperation between the two countries.¶ **The delegation of the Russian Senate arrived Thursday in Havana, headed by Matviyenko.¶ Lazo said the visit would boost the "excellent" historical ties between both the governments and the peoples.¶ He also called on Russia to increase the investments to the island country.**¶ Lazo stressed the importance of the current Russian investments in Cuba's oil sector and expressed the interest of the **Cuban government in extending the cooperation to other areas, such as nickel production, tourism and agriculture.**¶ **Cuba is not only a strategic partner for Russia, but also a friend for whom the Russian feel special affection, due to historical connections**, Matviyenko said.¶ Havana and Moscow were close allies during the Cold War era, but after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the relations cooled off. Since 2005, the **bilateral relations have began to improve with the resumption of mutual high-level visits.**¶ Currently, Russia is Cuba's ninth largest trade partner, with a trade volume of 224 million U.S. dollars in 2011, according to official figures.

Mexico Influence Now

Russia and Mexico building bilateral relations now

The News 5-13

(Comprehensive news reporting agency dealing specifically with Mexico, "Mexico reaches out to Russia, Denmark", May 13, <http://thenews.com.mx/index.php/home-articulos/9371-mexico-reaches-out-to-russia-denmark>)

Mexico City – In separate meetings on Sunday, **leading Mexican officials looked to strengthen ties with Russia** and Denmark **on economic and environmental issues,** respectively.¶ **At a bilateral meeting between Russia and Mexico** in St. Petersburg yesterday, **Foreign Relations (SRE) Undersecretary Carlos de Icaza talked with his Russian counterpart, Sergei A. Ryabkov, about the need to build a strategic relationship between the two nations.**¶ **In an effort to improve trade ties, the officials discussed Russia's recent ban of imported Mexican meat and anti-dumping measures that Mexico imposed on Russian steel.**¶ **Both Icaza and Ryabkov promised to help modify current law on the use of nuclear energy, shipping and extradition.**¶ The two nations also discussed the Middle East, focusing on Syria and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.¶ In Mexico City on Sunday, Environment Secretary Juan José Guerra Abud sat down with Denmark's Foreign Affairs Minister Villy Sovndal to discuss a €5 million (\$6.49 million) investment in climate change prevention and clean energy in Mexico.¶ Guerra Abud thanked the Danish government for their help in tackling climate change and said that the investment would be spread over three years. Sovndal said that he was keen to explore bilateral relations between cities in both countries and to share ideas on sustainable water use and waste management.¶ He also invited Guerra Abud to take part in the first Regional Forum on Green Growth in Latin America and the Caribbean, which will take place in Bogotá, Colombia in June.

Venezuela Influence Now

Venezuela- Russian cooperation high post-Chavez – Maduro engagement proves Pearson 7-2

(Tamara, "Venezuela's Maduro Attends Gas Exporting Countries Forum, Signs Agreements with Russia" Tamara Pearson, July 2, 2013, venezuelanalysis.com)

While in Russia Maduro also met with Putin in order to ratify the continuity of their countries' strategic alliances. The two countries currently cooperate in the areas of **energy**, defence, agriculture, housing and technology.¶
"Russia can count on the homeland of Simon Bolivar...we have come to ratify our desire to strengthen this strategic alliance and the close relationship of cooperation between both nations," **Maduro told press** after the meeting.¶ **Putin expressed similar sentiments** and announced that an important street in Moscow will be named after the late Hugo Chavez "so that he remains in the Russian people's memory".¶ The street was inaugurated today with a ceremony attended by Maduro and the head of Russia's state owned company, Rosneft, Igor Sechin. It is located in the north east of Moscow, is 170 metres long, and surrounded by parks and a small square.¶ In further comments on the meeting with Putin, **Maduro said**, "We've held an extensive work meeting with President Putin... **we want to continue to tighten the relationship between both countries.. Russia and Venezuela are progressing in the energy, petroleum, and gas sectors**, as well as with military cooperation and the development of a relationship in the financial, education, and cultural sectors".¶ **The two countries signed five new agreements, for a total of 240 ongoing agreements, which fall into 14 strategic areas.**
One new agreement involves creating a joint venture for natural gas production between Venezuela's PDVSA and Rosneft. The two presidents also discussed opening up a direct flight between Moscow and Caracas, in order to facilitate tourism and trade.

A2 US Influence High

US continuing to lose influence in Latin America

Hakim 2013

(Peter, president emeritus and senior fellow of the Inter-American Dialogue, March 27, 2013, "Post Chavez: Can U.S. rebuild Latin American ties?", <http://blogs.reuters.com/great-debate/2013/03/27/post-chavez-can-u-s-rebuild-latin-american-ties/>)

The **funeral of** Venezuelan President Hugo **Chavez** earlier this month was a massive celebration of a vitriolic foe of the United States. This tribute **should make Washington take a fresh look** not only **at** its relations with Venezuela but also with **all of Latin America**. Virtually **every Latin American country sent a high-level delegation to show its esteem for Chavez, who**, during his 14 years in office, **regularly vilified the United States**, disparaged its leaders **and campaigned tirelessly to end the U.S. role in the region**. The presidents of Latin America's six largest nations — including the closest U.S. regional allies, Mexico, Colombia and Chile — traveled to Caracas for the burial ceremonies. Never in Latin America, as many commentators noted, has a deceased leader been given a grander memorial — not even Argentina's adored Juan Domingo Peron back in 1974. This extraordinary acclaim for Washington's most virulent adversary in the Americas was probably not intended as a deliberate snub. There were other reasons that so many of Washington's friends ended up applauding a committed antagonist of the United States. Some leaders, concerned with politics back home, were seeking to appeal to constituencies on the left, who idolized Chavez. Some who have benefited from the financial largesse distributed by the president of oil rich-Venezuela are eager for his successor to continue that support. Still others were reluctant to stand apart or isolate themselves from their neighbors — so they became part of the crowd. Yet **the fanfare accompanying Chavez's funeral suggests a troubling degree of indifference to the United States in Latin America — as if Washington no longer counted**.

Links

Latin America

The plan uniquely triggers blowback from Russia and Latin America --- Russian influence is seen as peaceful

Nazemroaya 2013

(Mahdi Darius, Sociologist and Research Associate at the Centre for Research on Globalization Strategic Culture Foundation, March 31, 2013, "Post-Chavez Latin America Will Continue to Drift Away from the United States", <http://www.globalresearch.ca/post-chavez-latin-america-will-continue-to-drift-away-from-the-united-states/5329402>)

Many questions are arising about what direction the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Latin America will take now that Hugo Chavez has died of cancer.

The answer seems to be that the trend towards **regional autonomy and populism** in what academics would call a question of, either imagined or real, multi-dimensionality and agency **will continue**. This is more than just about the so-called "pink tide." **It is about anti-hegemonic alliances that have brought different groups together in Latin America.** The work of Antonio Gramsci, the Italian activist and the leader of the Factory Councils in Turin, can help us conceptualize this process. Not only did Gramsci inspire Chavez, but his ideas can be used to explain these alliances. Despite alienating much of what can be called the Venezuelan middle class, Hugo Chavez campaigned to form united fronts, domestically and internationally, during his presidency. From the start, he burst into Venezuela's political scene with a mixed coalition of activists, a spectrum of leftists, career soldiers, and small capital. He tried to bring the mosaic of different peoples that represented Venezuelan society together formatively. Even when the middle class was being distanced from his Bolivarianism as it radicalized, Chavez admitted that it was of high importance to align with them. As part of a larger cultural project, this included communicating with them through a politics of what the sociologist Stuart Hall would call "articulation." Bolivarian Historic Bloc Building In the context of class hegemony, the coalition Chavez built is what Antonio Gramsci would describe as a process of "historical bloc building." This bloc building process is part of a continuous war of maneuver and continuous war of position for hegemony. In June 2007, Chavez would even refer to his Bolivarian Revolution in Gramscian terms as a bloc building process during a speech he delivered to his supporters. He would tell his supporters that they were witnessing the formation of a new historical bloc and that a historic crisis was unfolding with the dying of the old, capitalist society of the Republic of Venezuela (or the Venezuelan Fourth Republic) and the formation of the new, socialist society of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Bloc formation has not only been important for Chavez's Bolivarian project. If not all of them, historic bloc formation has been an important part of the vast spectrum of social movements; this is why the scholar Peter Thomas refers to Gramsci's work on historical blocs as leading to a "theory of social power" for various social movements. In "Some Aspects of the Southern Question," Gramsci emphasises that the factory workers movement in Northern Italy could not position itself for the leadership of the Italian state without the creation of a historic bloc with the peasants of Southern Italy. This alliance was the real "magic formula" for taking over the state according to Gramsci and not a division of land and estates for the peasantry as the socialists claimed. In Venezuela's past, after it declared independence, on July 4, 1811, it was defeated by Spanish royalists who convinced the slaves and poorest strata of Venezuelan society to align with them against Simon Bolivar's republican patriots. After the defeat of what is called the Venezuelan First Republic, a Venezuelan Second Republic would be established in 1814. This too would be defeated, because the poor and slaves would oppose the republicans. Bolivar would realize that slavery had to be abolished and that he needed to form a historic bloc with the slaves and lower strata to become successful. In the case of Chavez and other socialists in Latin America this has also included sectors of local capital. Bolivarian Historic Bloc Building in Neo-Gramscian Terms The political shift in Venezuela can also be analyzed in terms of an organic, Gramscian historical crisis unfolding in Latin America. This includes an indigenization of and a localization of political decision making in Latin America. To a degree, the transformations in Venezuelan society can be viewed in microcosm as the transformations in Latin America. Behind this transformation is a populist drive aimed at establishing regional autonomy for both socialist movements and local capital, which also explains the strange alliances of Latin American governments that support neo-liberalism, like Argentina and Brazil, with Venezuela.

In the context of hegemony at an international relations level, neo-Gramscians would also use a term like bloc building to describe the alliances that Latin America has formed with countries like Russia and Iran. **This united front concept has led to pragmatic**

alliances. An example is the Honduran President Jose Manuel Zelaya's alliance with Venezuela and ALBA, even though Zelaya was relatively right-wing. This again is tied to the common platform of regional autonomy that is serving to unit left-wing and right-wing governments in Latin America. **Chavez made Venezuela pursue a regional agenda as an anti-hegemonic force working to reduce the regional influence of the United States.** Just as Simon Bolivar realized, while in exile in Jamaica in 1815, that Venezuela's freedom could only be attained through a hemispheric pan-Latin American project, so did Chavez. This is why both adopted historic bloc building agendas regionally and internationally. Both realized that a broader struggle or broader struggles were being reflected locally and that networking with others struggling against the same enemy was important. This is what got Bolivar to get the British to be neutral and what has led to Venezuela's modern alliances with China, Belarus, Iran, and Russia.

Russia engaging Latin America is used as leverage for international credibility

Ellis 2011

(Evan, assistant professor with the Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies (CHDS). His research focus is on Latin America's relationship with external actors, including China, Russia, and Iran, "Emerging Multi-Power Competitions in Latin America", http://www.airpower.au.af.mil/apjinternational/apj-s/2011/2011-1/2011_1_03_ellis_eng_s.pdf)

Coinciding Cleavages on Geopolitical Issues. **Traditional geopolitical issues will still tend to divide external actors in Latin America into two camps, although the lineup of actors will change according to the issue. On issues of democratization and human rights, the US and Europe are likely to be generally aligned in advancing an agenda that respects traditional Western norms, while Iran and the PRC, and often Russia, will emphasize the right of each state in the region to determine its own internal politics.** India, depending on the specific issue, may or may not press for respect for such norms. Within this broad alignment, of course, differences will still exist, with Europe emphasizing human rights issues in select countries, such as Colombia, where the US does not, or overlooking human rights issues in others, such as Cuba, where the US places emphasis. The pursuit of commercial goals by some actors may motivate them to avoid positions on geopolitical issues that would separate them from potential business partners. **The second major cleavage dividing external actors in Latin America is the question of the developed world (North) versus the developing world (South).** Particularly with left-of-center regimes in Latin America, countries such as China, India and Iran emphasize their common

“South-South” ties as countries in development, generally in political meetings indirectly pursuing commercial deals for their companies. **Russia often fits uneasily into this coalition, seeking to define itself, in its relations with populist countries such as Venezuela, as an up and coming power** (eg. Part of the “BRIC” nations), or as alternative to the status quo powers (the US and Europe), even though it has not been traditionally categorized as a “developing” nation. Within the political space created by such coinciding cleavages, Latin America also serves as a target for important, but differing internal and international agendas pursued by each actor. For the PRC, Latin America’s principal tie to domestic politics is Taiwan. 12 of the 23 nations in the world which continue to recognize the Republic of China (ROC) as the legitimate Chinese government are found in Latin America. Externally, the PRC also seeks to participate in the region’s institutions, such as the IADB and OAS, and prevent another power such as the US from dominating those institutions, or other regional structures, in such a way that could shut it out of the region and jeopardize its strategic commercial goals. **None of other external actors in the region explicitly oppose these goals, but rather, each pursues its own goals in parallel.** This include Iran, for which support from Latin America reinforces the international stature of its leadership in the Iranian regime’s messianic efforts to advance its brand of radical Islam with Iran at its center. In a more pragmatic sense, Latin American ties, including financial institutions such as the International Development Bank in Venezuela, direct airline flights, factories in remote areas, and technology collaboration, help Iran to circumvent international sanctions to develop a nuclear capabilities, and possibly fund and create a logistics base for terrorist operations that could reach the United States, in the event that Iran wishes to wage such a conflict in the future. **For Russia, in a manner similar to Iran, Latin American ties help the current regime to demonstrate to a domestic audience that Russia is once again playing a significant international role, harkening back to its height of Cold War power as the heart of the Soviet Union. Latin America also provides the platform for Russia to generate counter-pressures to US activities in Eastern Europe, the Caspian sea, and Central Asia, which Russia regards as its sphere of influence,** such as November 2008, when Russia sent supersonic Tu-160 bombers and a squadron of ships to Venezuela for maneuvers in the Caribbean, as a counterpoint to the US projection of power in the Black Sea during the succession crisis in South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

Russia is taking advantage of US ignorance of Latin America – expanding influence Blank 2009

(Stephen, Professor of Russian National Security Studies at the Strategic Studies Institute of the US Army War College in Pennsylvania, “Russia in Latin America: Geopolitical Games in the US’s Neighborhood”, www.ifri.org/downloads/ifriblankrussiaandlatinamericaengapril09.pdf)

In analyzing the nature of Russia’s relations with Latin America, a few conclusions can be drawn. First, **Moscow’s main motives in Latin America are clearly geopolitical and tied to its self-presentation as a global superpower and rival of the US.** Second, its capabilities for achieving decisive strategic influence are limited to a few struggling, leftist Latin American states. Third, the current economic crisis has constricted those capabilities still further. Fourth, **most Latin American states will not follow Russian policies against their own interests simply to improve trade or let Russia hijack them for its purposes—unless the Obama Administration utterly neglects or disregards them,** which is unlikely. Even Russian commentators and some military officers recognize and publicly admit that the posturing seen in exercises in Venezuela and the Caribbean is just that, a display with little or no strategic benefit.⁸⁸ The only way in which Russian policy truly threatens the US and Latin America is its military and intelligence support for Chavez and similar leaders. This support is passed on to insurgents and narco-traffickers in order to destabilize pro-American regimes while strengthening Chavez and his allies. Adequate responses to such threats are inherently economic and political, and only military as a last resort. **Washington can do much to facilitate security in Latin America: regenerating its own economy; simultaneously opening up trade markets and eliminating barriers to Latin American exports; enhancing multilateralism and interoperability among defense forces as requested by Latin American militaries; and beginning the normalization of Cuba.** Havana is no longer the threat it was, Venezuela has claimed that dubious honor. Rehabilitating Cuba, given that Castro’s days are clearly numbered, would take the air out of Chavez’s balloon; **it is quite clear that Havana would probably welcome a path towards better relations with the US, especially the economic benefits they would inevitably bring.** A policy with a more symbolically important impact upon Latin America is currently difficult to imagine. Nonetheless, **there should be no illusion that the security problems that plague this region are easily overcome,** quite the opposite. **But that is all the more reason why the US cannot ignore the area and let it drift to Moscow,** Tehran, and Beijing for want of a better alternative. That outcome would only confirm once again that in world politics, there is no such thing as benign neglect. **Instead neglect is malign and engenders negative results for the negligent state along with those neglected. The policies of the Bush administration allowed Russia to gain a foothold in Latin American politics, a**

result of Washington's negligence: under President Obama, the US should reverse those outcomes and demonstrate what liberal democracy in action can truly accomplish.

Russia is trying to engage in Latin America to regain international influence

Gee 2008

(Alastair Gee, writer for U.S. News & World Report, "How Russia Is Trying to Regain Influence in Latin America", U.S. News & World Report, an American news magazine published from Washington, D.C., 10/14/08, <http://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2008/10/14/how-russia-is-trying-to-regain-influence-in-latin-america>)

MOSCOW—Somewhere in the North Atlantic, a squadron of Russian warships is steering toward the Caribbean. Led by the nuclear-powered missile cruiser Peter the Great, the ships are on their way to joint naval exercises with Venezuela. U.S. officials say they'll be watching when the vessels finally arrive in a few weeks. ¶ **Russia has beefed up its presence in Latin America in recent months, inking military and business deals amid a drive to reassert its status as a major world power.** "Russia is adopting the course that any superpower should have," says Boris Martynov, deputy director of Moscow's Institute of Latin America. ¶ Latin America seems an obvious partner. Russia's relations with the West are strained following the Georgia conflict, while some left-leaning governments in the region, such as Venezuela and Bolivia, are looking for allies after clashing with the United States. ¶ But it's up for debate what Russia truly wants in the region and whether it has the capacity to become a major player there. ¶ This is not the first time Russians have sought close links with Latin America. In 1962, the stationing of Soviet missiles in Cuba nearly precipitated nuclear war with the United States. The Soviets also funded regional communist parties and invited students from the region to study in Soviet universities. But after the 1991 Soviet collapse, Russia broke off most of its ties. ¶ The recent developments are one more sign of its oil-fueled resurgence, which has only recently been slowed by the global credit crunch. ¶ The upcoming naval exercises will be the first time since the end of the Cold War that Russia has had a major military presence in the Caribbean. They follow a training visit to Venezuela by two Russian bombers in September. Russia will also provide Venezuela with a \$1 billion military loan, and **President Hugo Chávez, who has visited Russia twice since June, has said Russian and Venezuelan oil and gas producers will form a global energy "colossus."** ¶ Meanwhile, a top Russian minister close to Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, Igor Sechin, traveled to Latin America to bolster links with Cuba, where Russia has said it will build a space center, and Nicaragua. Nicaragua is the only country apart from Russia to have recognized the independence from Georgia of the breakaway republics of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. ¶ In the energy sphere, state-owned gas firm Gazprom announced in September that it plans to invest \$4.5 billion in a Bolivian natural gas project along with French firm Total. It also intends to participate in the Venezuelan and Brazilian sections of a pipeline that will cross the South American continent. ¶ Still, **it's not yet clear whether Russia's involvement in Latin America is more about furthering its own global ambitions or about sending a message to the United States**, which Russia considers to have interfered in its sphere of interest during the August conflict with Georgia. ¶ Russia is partly motivated by a desire to regain the global influence it lost after the Soviet collapse. In this vein, it has also been fostering ties with Iran, resumed the long-range air patrols over the Pacific and Atlantic oceans that ended with the Soviet Union, and even dispatched a warship to Somalia after a Ukrainian boat carrying 33 tanks was seized by pirates there in September. ¶ **Links with Latin America may also help further Russia's aim of becoming a counterweight to the United States on the international stage. Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and Prime Minister Putin have criticized the United States for causing the financial crisis and fostering global instability, particularly as a result of the Iraq war.** Additional sore points are U.S. involvement in the Georgia conflict and the missile defense system it plans for eastern Europe. ¶ And, like the United States and China, Russia hopes to benefit from Latin America's raw materials and energy deposits. ¶ All of this plays into the hands of the left-leaning Latin American nations that are looking to pull out of the United States' orbit. U.S.-Venezuelan tensions have ratcheted up since Chávez came to power, and in September, Bolivia expelled the U.S. ambassador after accusing the United States of fomenting unrest in the country. ¶ Even among friendlier nations, the United States has lost much of its influence, says Peter Hakim, head of the Inter-American Dialogue, a think tank in Washington that specializes in the Americas. **"The financial turmoil greatly reduces our credibility. Economic management was the area that Latin American most looked to us: They wanted U.S. trade; they wanted U.S. investment."** ¶ This could be good for Russia—assuming it continues to seek close ties with the region. But Russia may simply be looking to Latin America now to make a point about Georgia, says Gregory Weeks, a Latin America expert at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte. **"It's a signal to the United States about U.S. involvement in what Russia considers its own sphere of influence,"** he says. **"I don't see this as something that Russia intends to continue with or expand. Rather, they're saying to us, 'You've been pushing us too far, and we can push back.'"** ¶ At any rate, it may be premature to worry about Russian domination of the region, considering the long-established influence of countries like the United States and China. China is Brazil's third-largest trading partner after the United States and Argentina, and Brazil exported \$11 billion of goods there last year. "The Chinese engagement in Latin America is clearly going to be with us for a long time," says Hakim. "It's not clear to me what Russia's interest is." ¶ And Russia has been hit hard by the credit crunch—its two main stock exchanges, the Micex and the RTS Index, plunged around 70 percent between May and October. So, for now, global expansion may take second place to resolving the financial crisis.

Cuba

Close Cuba-Russia collaboration now – key to Russia’s containment strategy

Blank 2009

(Stephen, Professor of Russian National Security Studies at the Strategic Studies Institute of the US Army War College in Pennsylvania, “Russia in Latin America: Geopolitical Games in the US’s Neighborhood”, www.ifri.org/downloads/ifriblankrussiaandlatinamericaengapril09.pdf)

In a similar vein, **Moscow has not forgotten about its military partnership with Cuba. Russia has pledged to continue military technological cooperation (arms sales) with Cuba.**⁸⁰ Russian officials continue to say **Cuba holds a key role in Russian foreign policy and that Russia considers it a permanent partner in Latin America.**⁸¹ Neither has Moscow neglected its attempts to gain lasting positions of economic influence in Latin America and ties of mutual or at least professed mutual economic advantage. **Many of these discussions and agreements to date revolve around either exploring for oil and/or gas in and around Cuba** and Venezuela, or constructing Chavez’s Pan-American pipeline from Venezuela to Argentina. Russia and Venezuela are also discussing participation in a gas cartel, another cherished Russian project. Russia will also mine bauxite and produce aluminum in Venezuela. These states are also creating or discussing the creation of a binational bank. **Venezuela and Cuba are also discussing space projects with Russia.**⁸² However, the economic crisis will undoubtedly make itself felt here too. Cuba may want restoration of former economic cooperation with Russia, but today’s Russia cannot afford it. Nor is large-scale Russian investment in Venezuela possible. Accordingly projects like the plan to carry gas from Venezuela to Argentina across the Amazon basin which was under-financed to begin with, and economically questionable as well, will probably not proceed.⁸³ In fact few projects have actually been signed or carried out, or will be. Medvedev sidestepped Chavez’s call for a real alliance and no major agreements were signed during his trip.⁸⁴ Indeed, **Cuba may be turning back to Moscow because it cannot depend any longer on Venezuela’s energy supplies due to the crisis.**⁸⁵ Similarly although Nicaragua seeks larger trade links between Russia, China, and Latin American members of ALBA, the difficulties are immense. While Ortega acknowledges the presence of a crisis, it is unlikely that Moscow and Beijing will create an ALBA monetary zone based on a regional currency as he wishes.⁸⁶ For the same reason the agreement between Moscow and Caracas to trade in their national currencies may not go far.⁸⁷

Russia increasing military and economic influence in Cuba

Lulko 2012

(Lyuba Lulko, August 1, 2012, “Russia to revive army bases in three oceans”, http://english.pravda.ru/russia/politics/01-08-2012/121804-russia_army_base-0/)

The Russian government intends to restore the military-technical support of their ships at the former military base in Cam Ranh (Vietnam), Lourdes (**Cuba**) and the Seychelles. So far, this is not about plans for a military presence, but rather the restoration of the crew resources. However, a solid contractual basis should be developed for these plans. The intentions were announced on July 27 by the Russian Navy Commander Vice Admiral Viktor Chirkov. “At the international level, the creation of logistics points in Cuba, the Seychelles and Vietnam is being worked out,” Chirkov was quoted by the media. The issue was specifically discussed at the meeting with the leaders of all countries. President of Vietnam Truong Tan Sang has recently held talks with Prime Minister Dmitri Medvedev in Moscow and President Putin in Sochi. Cuban leader Raul Castro met with Putin in Moscow earlier this month. A little earlier the President of the Republic of Seychelles, James Michel made an unequivocal statement. “We will give Russia the benefits in Cam Ranh, including the development of military cooperation,” the President of Vietnam told the media. **Cuba that has an American military base in Guantanamo Bay and is protesting against the deployment of new U.S. bases in Colombia, of course,**

wants to acquire an ally in Russia to be able to **contain the** United States. Seychelles in the Indian Ocean has always been in the zone of Soviet influence. In 1981, the Soviet Navy helped the government to prevent the military coup and before the collapse of the USSR the Soviets had a constant presence in the area. In June of 2012, at the opening of an Orthodox church in the capital city of Victoria, James Michel spoke of Russia’s role in combating piracy and supported the Russian idea to build a pier in the port of Victoria, designed for the reception of the Navy warships of Russian Federation. Following the statement by Vice-Admiral, Russian Foreign Ministry and Defense Ministry made it clear that they were talking about rest and replenishment of the crews after the campaign in the area and not military bases. It is clear, however, that Russian warships could do both without special arrangements, given the good attitudes of the leaders of these countries toward Russia. It can be assumed that the Russian Admiral unwittingly gave away far-reaching plans of the Russian leadership. That would be great, because from the time of Peter the Great, Russia had a strong fleet and army. In addition, it is worth mentioning Putin’s statement at the G20 meeting in June. After the meeting with U.S. President Barack Obama, **Putin made a sudden harsh statement** to the press. “In 2001 I, as the President of the Russian Federation and the supreme commander, deemed it advantageous to withdraw the radio-electronic center Lourdes from Cuba. In exchange for this, George Bush, the then U.S. president, has assured me that this decision would become the final confirmation that the Cold War was over and both of our states, getting rid of the relics of the Cold War, will start building a new relationship based on cooperation and transparency. In particular, Bush has convinced me that the U.S. missile defense system will never be deployed in Eastern Europe. The Russian Federation has fulfilled all terms of the agreement. And even more. I shut down not only the Cuban Lourdes but also Kamran in Vietnam. I shut them down because I gave my word of honor. I, like a man, has kept my word. What have the Americans done? **The Americans are not responsible for their own words.** It is no secret that in recent years, the U.S. created a buffer zone around Russia, involving in this process not only the countries of Central Europe, but also the Baltic states, Ukraine and the Caucasus. **The only**

response to this could be an asymmetric expansion of the Russian military presence abroad, particularly in Cuba. In Cuba, there are convenient bays for our reconnaissance and warships, a network of the so-called "jump airfields." With the full consent of the Cuban leadership, on May 11 of this year, our country has not only resumed work in the electronic center of Lourdes, but also placed the latest mobile strategic nuclear missiles "Oak" on the island. They did not want to do it the amicable way, now let them deal with this," Putin said. It is obvious **that Russia will not stop simply at "resting"**

their sailors in the area. Now back to the statement of Chirkov. Americans have not officially resented it. For example, the Pentagon spokesman George Little said that Russia had the right to enter into military agreements and relationships with other countries, as does the United States, according to France Press Agency. The reason is simple: American analysts believe that Russia now cannot afford to create its own military bases. The Americans talk about Russia's lack of influence, money and the actual fleet. Western media quoted an "independent expert on the defense" in Moscow Paul Fengelgauer. He said that Russia does not have the necessary naval resources to provide constant presence outside its territorial waters, as it has only 30 major warships that serve five fleets. Therefore, the possibility of placing an additional station does not mean the expansion of sea power in Russia. This is largely an objective assessment. But since the crisis in the West in 2008, Russia began to recover part of its navy. The loss was not that great - about a quarter of the Soviet reserve. Another thing is that we should talk about the modernization of the fleet. There is much to maintain. On Thursday, Chirkov said that this year Russia's naval forces can be replenished with another 10-15

warships, including destroyers and nuclear submarines. **As for the influence, judging by the words of the Russian President, Russia is also actively growing in this regard, although work in this direction has only begun.** As we can see,

Pacific, Atlantic and Indian Oceans are involved. **This is due not only to geopolitical reasons, but the growing economic**

presence of Russia in the regions. For example, "Gazprom" is actively working on offshore Vietnam. In the Caribbean, it also participates in the construction of Meso-American pipeline and field development in Venezuela. An ammunition plant is under construction in Cuba.

Cuba- Embargo

The embargo gives Russia credibility to expand into Latin America – they paint themselves as the alternative to western imperialism Valkulenko 2012

(Darya, Research Associate at Council on Hemispheric Affairs, "RUSSIA VS. USA: ECONOMIC COLD WAR", <http://www.coha.org/russia-vs-usa-economic-cold-war/comment-page-1/>)

The current **economic competition between the Russian Federation and the United States** in the Western Hemisphere bears striking similarity to the political antagonism prevalent during the Cold War. This deep seated rivalry **still influences world affairs**, as the United Nations Security Council cannot enact any major decision without an agreement between those two powers. However, **a pragmatic view of the world economy plays a greater role now in the determination of Russia's priorities and strategies as it begins to catch up with the U.S. in its exposure to Latin American economic interests.** As of late, **the Russian Federation has gained economic ground over the United States in various parts of the Latin American region.** For example, **Washington's embargo on Cuba gives Russia the opportunity to fill in the economic hollows left by the "imperialist neighbor."** While **Washington engages in very limited trade with its ancient foe, Russia-Cuban links have been growing stronger with each passing year.** Recently, **the Russian oil company Zarubezhneft announced its plan to invest \$100 million USD in Cuba by 2025.** Considering that deposits of Cuban oil are estimated to reach 20 billion barrels, **the Russians' investment plan appears as if it will bring considerable profits in the near future to both sides.** [1] The recent activity in Ecuador presents another aspect of Russia's growing economic attraction to Latin America. At the end of July 2012, the Ecuadorian government signed the "memorandum of understanding" with Gazprom, Russia's largest oil and gas company. The memorandum will launch the exploration of the natural-gas field in the southern coastal areas of Ecuador. [2] This "Bolivarian country" (in reference to the state's left-leaning state ideology) will gain ample royalties in conjunction with the development of its energy sector, while Russia will secure market access into Ecuador via their already impressive natural gas reserves. Notably, Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa continues to advocate continental leadership independent of U.S. influence, thereby welcoming Russian influence. Gazprom, together with another oil company, Rosneft, are clearly linked to Russian foreign policy. The Russian government owns 50.002 percent of shares in Gazprom and 75 percent in Rosneft thus President of Russia, Putin, oversees strategies of both companies. [3] Gazprom is the world's largest producer of natural gas and the second largest producer of oil in the world with 9.7 million barrels per day, just behind Saudi Aramco. Rosneft is the world's 15th largest oil and gas producer. [4] **The wielding of such economic weight serves as a powerful foreign relations force as Russia looks to enter new global markets, firming up the already inextricable relationship between politics and economics. The Cuban and Ecuadorian examples demonstrate how the United States' continuing ideologically-based economic ties with Latin America could invite other large world players to represent investment portfolios to the region. The United States clearly does not take full advantage of its geographical proximity to Latin America, even as Russia pushes for greater markets throughout that region.** At the time of the Cold War, bipolarity was intensified by a constant ideological race to include as many Third World countries under either Soviet Union or the U.S. umbrella. **Today the two compete over markets and trade partners throughout Latin America. In this battle Russia is clearly winning, because of its firm economic pragmatism.** One observes the phenomenon of increasing Russian influence in Latin America in the development a solid relationship between ALBA (Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas) and Moscow. Although Russia is not technically allied with ALBA—which is known for its left-wing ideology—Moscow is not wasting the opportunity to support anti-Western declarations espoused by the Bolivarian states. Former Russian President, **Medvedev, has declared significant perspectives for cooperation, especially in economic development, highlighting the pragmatic nature that Russian economic policy has adopted over the last 20 years.** [5] **Possible future nationalization of Russian assets by Latin American governments and political disagreements within the region have yet to deter Russia from vigorously embracing the emerging market. The Russian Federation has proven capable of negotiating with various leftist governments and has worked around the U.S. embargo against Cuba. The country appears to prioritize potential returns on its investments over ideology and public opinion** by investing in controversial industries including arms and pipelines. The economic potential of some countries could have a lasting impact on how we view the world politically. The words investment, profit and trade have been added to the everyday vocabulary of politicians. However, Russian politicians are ready to apply those words in Spanish more often than other counterparts.

Mexico

Mexico is in Russia's economic crosshairs --- trade

RIA 2011

(RIA Novosti, December 14, 2011, "Russia becomes main trade partner for Mexico in Europe – minister", <http://en.rian.ru/business/20111214/170226382.html?id=>)

Russia became a main trade partner for Mexico in Europe over the recent years, Mexican Economy Secretary Bruno Ferrari said. "Mexican export to Russia in 2011 increased by 45 percent, **which is twice as higher** **comparing to an average trade growth with other Mexican trade partners**," Ferrari said at a session of the Russian and Mexican intergovernmental commission in Mexico. He **added that an average growth in trade between Russia and Mexico over the past 10 years totaled 17.2 percent annually.** **According to the Mexican Foreign Ministry, the trade between Russia and Mexico in 2010 totaled \$1.1 billion, which is a 115 percent increase against 2009.**

Venezuela

Russia's increasing relations with Venezuela to capture Latin America

Del Cid 2013

(Ana Teresa Gutiérrez Del Cid, Professor, Department of Culture and Politics, Metropolitan Autonomous University, January 25, 2013, "Russian Factor in Latin America", http://valdaiclub.com/latin_america/54180.html)

Geopolitical trends in Latin America and the Caribbean took a sharp turn at the beginning of XXI century. **Many Latin American leaders have created a new foreign policy aimed at building a multipolar dynamics of global international relations, in an environment that counteracts American unilateralism.** With the moratorium in Argentina and its huge economic crisis, **most Latin American states** **disenchanted with the economic policies of the Washington Consensus**, **prevalent since the nineties.** The end of regimes in Argentina, Venezuela, Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador were accompanied by corruption scandals of unprecedented scale, leading to popular

uprisings. **This meant that in South America a new generation of politicians who opposed to the application of the orthodox policies of the Washington Consensus rose to power.** Unless Mexico, Colombia and Honduras, this new generation of politicians believes that Latin America should not be limited to free trade agreements with the United States, should reconsider the type of orthodox monetarist policies and should seek diversification of economic and trade policy. They also opposed the U.S. backed Free Trade Agreement of the Americas and U.S. policy interference in the region through Plan Colombia. President Hugo Chávez of Venezuela is the most extreme example of this new generation of Latin American leaders, who also exercises influence on the Andean countries like Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador. His vision is more radical than that of Da Silva in Brazil and Cristina Kirchner in Argentina, who, however, confronts the International Monetary Fund because this country couldn't carry out the restructuring of the economy, and declared to this international organization that they can't pay the debt. Since President Putin's visit to Brazil in 2004, trade relations and policies in the region were strengthened. For Russia's strategy, strengthening ties with Brazil is just one step in the development of Russian interests in South America.

Russia's good relations with Venezuela and Brazil **mean that Russia's influence in** these two important countries of **the region is growing and also that bilateral trade and economic exchange are improving. This process will give Moscow a greater presence** in both countries, which are most important **in terms of geopolitical dynamics of the region.** Therefore, the military balance of power might begin to change dramatically in South America in the coming years. As recognized by the Stratfor intelligence source, **the growing economic, military ties, development cooperation in the nuclear and space technology between Russia and Brazil and Venezuela would alter the geopolitical correlation in the Southern**

American Cone. Russia, in this regard, has come to terms with the Brazilian government to develop its nuclear industry. Vladimir Putin during his 2004 visit said that Russian companies were interested to help Brazil in the development of a third nuclear plant at Angra do Reis Complex in the state of Rio de Janeiro. Nuclear technology sales to Brazil, combined with the growing Russian-Brazilian cooperation in other areas, are intended to generate foreign exchange and boost high-tech exports to Russia. The nearby Russian-Brazilian ties also expand Moscow's geopolitical influence in Latin America. A strong domestic nuclear industry would also be strategically advantageous to the external influence of Brazil, as a dominant regional power in Latin America. The creation of a strong and economically successful high-tech industry is a goal of the Brazilian government to increase its geopolitical profile and its international influence. Even if Brazil does not have any intention of building nuclear weapons, a strong potential nuclear industry to produce such weapons would force the powers to conduct its relations with this country more carefully. Strengthening its strategic partnership with Russia in space technology, Brazil wants, with the help of China and Ukraine, to create a launching rocket center in

Alcantara. **Through increasing the level of its cooperation with Brazil and other Latin American countries Russia and China are trying to strengthen their geopolitical influence and presence in this region at a time when the U.S. position in this region has been neglected** because of the war against terrorism in Afghanistan, Iraq and in general because of the U.S. position to focus its activities in the Middle East. The U.S. position in Latin American region focuses mainly in Colombia and specifically in the Plan Colombia.

Impacts

2NC Relations – Warming

Russian co-op is key to solve warming and the environment

Rojansky and Collins 10

(Matthew, Deputy Director @ Russia and Eurasia Program @ Carnegie, and James, Director @ Russia and Eurasia Program @ Carnegie, "Why Russia Matters," 8/18, <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=41409>)

4. **Russia's environment matters.** As the catastrophic fires across Western Russia have dramatically illustrated, **Russia is** both a victim of global climate change and **a steward of natural resources -- including many of the forests now badly burned -- needed to reverse the global warming** trend. **With more than one-tenth of the world's** total **landmass**, vast freshwater and ocean resources, plus deposits of nearly every element on the periodic table, **Russia is an indispensable** partner **in the responsible stewardship of the global environment.** On climate change, there is work to be done, but progress is evident. Russia today is the world's fourth-largest carbon emitter, but as a signatory to the Copenhagen Accord, it has pledged to reduce emissions to 20 to 25 percent below 1990 levels. Another black spot is **Russia's use of "flaring"** -- a technique that **burns natural gas into the open atmosphere** during oil extraction, but Medvedev agreed to capture 95 percent of the gas currently released through flaring. Last year he also signed Russia's first law on energy efficiency, which takes such steps as requiring goods to be marked according to their energy efficiency and banning incandescent light bulbs after 2014. True, most of **Russia's other commitments are short on deadlines and concrete deliverables. But** like China's cleanup for the Beijing Olympics, **Moscow could transform resolve into reality with surprising speed, given the right amount of international engagement.** And in the meantime, Russia's natural climate-cleaning properties are vast; the Siberian provinces alone contain more clean oxygen-producing forests and reserves of freshwater than continental Europe.

2NC Relations- Econ

Cooperation is key to global economic recovery

Hamilton 2003

(Lee, Director of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and Former Chairman of the House Committee on International Relations, The International Economy, June 22)

While it has proven premature to speak of a positive transformation in U.S.-Russian relations, **the breadth of our common interests suggests that partnership is preferable to confrontation. The United States and Russia each have an interest in strengthening Russia's economy.** The United States should forgive some Soviet-era Russian debt, repeal the outdated Jackson-Vanik amendment, and support Russian accession into the World Trade Organization, in return for greater transparency and market reform within Russia. **A Russian economy tied more to the West would strengthen the global economic recovery, reduce Russia's interest in dealing in nuclear technology with countries like Iran, and enable the full development of Russia's oil and gas reserves. The United States and Russia also have overlapping security concerns.** While we should speak out vigorously against Russian human rights violations in Chechnya, **the United States must continue working with Russia in the war on terror and the stabilization of Central Asia. We should also bring Russia closer to NATO, as cooperation reduces the likelihood of a return to Russian expansionism.**

2NC Relations- Prolif/Terror

US-Russian relations key to solve prolif and terrorism

Rumer and Sokolsky 2002

(Eugene and Nikolai, Institute for National Strategic Studies senior research fellows, <https://www.ciaonet.org/wps/rue02/rue02.pdf>)

Even a cursory examination of the alternatives should make clear why investing in a stable and positive relationship with Russia is in the national interest. We must not take Russia's pragmatism and ability to act in its self-interest for granted. We need to look no further than the record of Russia adrift throughout the 1990s for proof. Russia may have achieved a substantial degree of stability since the nadir of 1998 when its currency collapsed and its leadership became mired in a succession of crises and corruption scandals. However, this achievement and Russia's constructive stance in the international arena should not be considered irreversible. **Russia's ability to act in its self-interest will not always translate into compliance with U.S. interests.** **But** dealing with a responsible and coherent leadership presiding over **a stable and secure Russia is preferable to coping with an erratic Russia.** In the short and medium term, **U.S. efforts to combat proliferation and terrorism would face much tougher odds without Russian cooperation.** Despite Russia's diminished stature in the international arena, **its cooperative approach to U.S.-Russian relations** since September 11 **has had a positive, soothing impact on trans-Atlantic relations, making it possible for the United States** in turn **to focus its diplomatic and political energies where they have been needed most.** **The** record of the **1990s offers an important lesson: a weak Russia is in the interest of no one.** The ability of Russia to put its own house in order—from securing its nuclear weapons to pumping oil and gas to global markets—is an important element of U.S. national and international security. **The danger to U.S. interests is** not from a potential challenger to President Putin, who might shy away from a good personal relationship with his American counterpart, but from **Russia failing to consolidate its political and economic accomplishments** of the last few years. In the long run, U.S. interests would be well served by a cooperative relationship with Russia, as envisioned by President Bush. Russia is by no measure likely to regain its global superpower status. However, as a regional power, it could be a useful collaborator with the United States—from helping to balance **China to supplying energy to key markets to exercising restraint in critical areas of** conventional and **WMD proliferation.** Thus, **shaping positive** and collaborative long-term **Russian attitudes is an important U.S. objective.**

A2 Red Spread

No we're mis-representing them

TSYGANKOV 2011

(Andrei P. is professor of international relations/political science at San Francisco State University, April, "Preserving Influence In A Changing World: Russia's Grand Strategy", <http://www.russiaotherpointsofview.com/2011/05/preserving-influence-in-a-changing-world-russias-grand-strategy.html>)

The problem with **the Alarmist position** is that it **misrepresents Russia's essentially defensive posture and fails to understand the roots of the Kremlin's international assertiveness.** Contrary to the claims about the anti-Western and imperialist nature of Russia's foreign policy, **the Kremlin's objectives are mainly driven by domestic considerations. These objectives include securing geographic borders, improving political and economic conditions, and gaining international recognition** as a power with an important voice in international affairs. **The Kremlin seeks to be guided by a vision that is suitable to Russia and not unacceptable to the West.** Although **Russia's foreign policy** is not controlled by liberals, it **is also far from being shaped by anti-Western hard-liners.** Security elites have indeed gained a greater presence in commercial companies, especially those energy-related, and now are in a more prominent position to influence Russia's foreign policy. However, the **security elites do not constitute a homogenous group and have diverse preferences vis-à-vis the West,** which helps to understand why the insufficiently consolidated state did not become a hostage to influences. Overall, **the majority of the country's political class** has come to **think about international realities in terms of adjustment and stabilization** and not confrontation. **Most Russians also have no illusions either about balancing the West's global power or restoring the Soviet-like empire** in Eurasia. Polls indicate that the general public predominantly connects the great power status with economic development, rather than military buildup or revision of existing territorial boundaries.

Their argument is just alarmist Cold War rhetoric

Walle 2012

(Walter. Research Associate at the Council on Hemispheric Affairs¶ "Russia Turns to the South for Military and Economic Alliances." Council on Hemispheric Affairs. N.p., May 08)

Without a doubt, Russia's alliances in Latin America are part of a greater geopolitical game. Yet, it should not be forgotten why there is so much resentment within the region against the U.S. Perhaps, the displeasure is the consequence of decades of U.S. intervention in Latin American affairs in order to maintain strategic interests. **Russia has been accused by numerous editorial writers of possessing too much leverage over Latin American; it is understandable, if not forgivable, that Washington perceives Russian-Latin American relations as incursions into the U.S.' vicinity of interest,** no matter how archaic such thinking may be. Inarguably, **Russia has "bought" the interest of Latin American governments that are not totally committed to Washington's policies; it has furnished the region with investments** in energy infrastructure, strengthened military capabilities, and provided means to combat drug trafficking.¶ **However, it is important to observe that Russia is not the only country that is vying to extend its influence over the region. The European Union, China, Taiwan and Iran have all demonstrated an interest in economic and political opportunities and partnerships,** as well as diplomatic alliances gestating in the region. But **Cold War rhetoric will still continue to resonate; both with Russia's influence in Latin America and the U.S.' presence in the Caucasus.** Under this dogmatic hangover, **Washington will always be suspicious of its longtime rival's actions, in Latin America or elsewhere; even if Russia's intentions in engaging Latin American governments are wholeheartedly innocent.** By archaically viewing this region as America's backyard, à la the Monroe Doctrine, **the U.S. fails to properly conceptualize the depth of Russian involvement in Latin America, mis-characterizing it as a strategic threat, while in reality this may not be the case.**

A2 Relations Resilient

Relations are vulnerable – US infringement in Russian sphere ends them.

Suslov and Karaganov 2011

(Sergei Karaganov, Dean of the School of the World Economy and International Affairs at the National Research University—Higher School of Economics (NRU-HSE); Chairman of the Presidium, the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy (CFDP); Chairman of the Editorial Board, Russia in Global Affairs journal AND Dmitry Suslov, Deputy Director of the Center for Comprehensive European and International Studies, NRU-HSE; Assistant Dean for Research, the School of the World Economy and International Affairs, NRUHSE; Deputy Director of Research Programs at CFDP The U.S.—Russia Relations after the «Reset»: Building a New Agenda. A View from Russia Report by the Russian Participants of the Working Group on the Future of the Russian—U.S. Relations, March, http://vid-1.rian.ru/ig/valdai/US-Russia%20relations_eng.pdf)

3.2.6. Russia and the U.S. have not overcome their obsolete **geopolitical controversies**. The solution of many of them has been postponed or they have become latent. For example, the U.S. has not changed its basically negative stance on Russia's strengthening its positions in the post-Soviet space and on the development of the Russia-led integration project. **Today this stance has less tactical influence on the practical agenda of the U.S.—Russian relations than before.** The accumulation by Russia of a «critical mass» of successes in the postSoviet space or the emergence of new instability in the Caucasus or Central Asia may again put the parties' rivalry in the region on the top of the agenda of their relations. **On the part of Russia, the logic of geopolitical confrontation with the U.S. is manifested in its policy towards some anti-American states (Iran, Venezuela and Syria), which Russia has been pursuing largely in revenge for Washington's support of anti-Russian regimes** and groups in the post-Soviet space. 3.2.6.1. Meanwhile, even a limited success of integration projects in the former Soviet Union will not turn Russia and its potential allies in these projects into a challenge to the United States, especially into a military-political challenge. **No less senseless and even counterproductive is Russia's symbolic counteraction to the U.S. where the latter has already lost or is losing its dominance due to objective circumstances.** Indeed, Washington will never be able to return to the Monroe Doctrine, while Russia will not dominate Eurasia, which geopolitics of the past century feared so much. 3.2.7. Both parties, and especially the U.S., while declaring the objective to build a Whole Europe with an indivisible security space, in actual fact contribute to its persisting split. Guided by the old geopolitical conceptions, the U.S. is still apprehensive of a whole Europe with a strong Russia, and therefore stands for the strengthening of the NATO-centric order there, to which Moscow might be «fastened» as a junior partner, at best. In Russia, the majority of the ruling elite call for creating a bipolar Euro-Atlantic space represented by NATO and the EU on the one part, and the CSTO and the CIS, on the other, with both parties being equal. This kind of order would mean a revival of bipolar Europe and appear as a farce after the Cold War tragedy. It must be noted though that Russia's idea of a new European Security Treaty still aims at building a whole Europe. Our idea of creating an Alliance of Europe also has the same aim. 3.2.8. **Therefore, despite the past two years of improvements, the U.S.- Russian relations remain fragile and unstable in the face of international political and especially domestic political risks. The relations may worsen if Russia and the U.S. again change the priorities in their foreign-policy interests and downgrade the significance of those of them that have ensured their political will to cooperate** and minimize the negative impact of their disagreements. **It may occur as a result of a sharp aggravation of one or several contradictions between Russia and the U.S.** (i.e. escalation of violence in the Caucasus), changes in domestic policies in one or both countries, or a failure of the current U.S. «Big Strategy» and a change to the «new-old» foreign-policy course.

Russia is willing to blow up relations to protect its sphere of interest – Georgia proves. Lyman 2011

(John Lyman [not from 'The West Wing'] is the Administrative Editor of Foreign Policy Digest, The Evolving Western and Russian Power Dynamic, Foreign Policy Digest, 1-1, <http://www.foreignpolicydigest.org/2011/01/01/the-evolving-western-and-russian-power-dynamic/>)

Russia has also displayed an effective use of soft power in its management of a relatively small number of states in its sphere of influence. It has provided Belarus with supplies of cheap oil and natural gas. This policy has allowed Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko to stay in power, over protests by American and European diplomats. **Russia has also pressured the government of Kyrgyzstan to end America's military presence at the Manas air base, an episode that sheds light on Moscow's efforts to limit any U.S. presence in Russia's perceived sphere of influence. Moscow's antagonisms may increasingly erupt in flashpoint issues, as illustrated by the 2008 war with Georgia, over U.S. and European objections. The brief conflict over a contentious province illustrates that Russia is not necessarily concerned about confronting an ally of the United States.** The war also accomplished a goal for Russia, which was to have Georgian and Ukrainian NATO bids terminated. The war with Georgia also highlights

Russian attempts to control a narrative for Eastern Europe and the Balkans. The U.S. and British led NATO military actions against Serbia in the 1990s relegated Russia to the sidelines where it had to watch an ally eventually surrender to the wishes of the international community. In 2008, a much more assertive and influential Russia could do little to dissuade the United States from acknowledging an independent Kosovo. 22 EU member states now recognize an independent Kosovo along with 69 UN member states.

2NC Russia War

US encroachment makes US-Russia war inevitable

Carpenter and Logan 2009

(Carpenter, Ted Galen, and Justin Logan. "Cato Handbook for Policymakers." Relations with China, India, and Russia. CATO, 2009. Web.MA)

Few people want to return to the animosity and tensions that marked relations between Washington and Moscow throughout the cold war.

But clumsy policies by both the United States and Russia now threaten to bring back those unhappy days. Washington continues to press for further expansion of NATO to Russia's border and is meddling in parochial disputes between Russia and its small neighbor Georgia. **For its part, the Medvedev-Putin regime shows signs of trying to cause headaches for the United States in the Caribbean.**

Both governments need to adopt more cautious policies. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice once famously dismissed the concept of spheres of influence as an obsolete notion, and that view has become all too common among America's foreign policy elite. **But that doctrine is very much alive, and U.S. and Russian leaders ignore that reality at their peril. If a new cold war emerges, Washington will have done much to invite it. But Russia has become**

needlessly provocative as well. The dark hints in summer 2008 that it might station bombers in Cuba were reckless. **For Americans, even the possibility that Moscow might deploy a nuclear capable weapon system in Cuba brings back memories of the most nightmarish episode of the cold war—the Cuban missile crisis. No American government would tolerate such a move—nor should it. Moscow's growing flirtation with Venezuela's Hugo**

Chávez, an obnoxious nemesis of the United States, is also creating gratuitous tensions.

Moscow's joint air and naval exercises with Venezuelan military forces in September 2008 especially did not improve relations with America. **Those moves likely reflect mounting Russian anger**

at U.S. policies that seem calculated to undermine Russia's influence in its own backyard and even humiliate Moscow.

Washington's "in your face" approach is not a recent development. U.S. officials took advantage of Russia's economic and military disarray during the 1990s to establish a dominant position in central and eastern Europe. Washington successfully engineered the admission of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to NATO in 1998—over the Yeltsin government's objections. That expansion of the alliance was nonprovocative, though, compared with the second round earlier this decade that incorporated Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania, entities that had been part of the Soviet Union.

The impact is extinction

Bostrom 2002

(Nick, Dir. Future of Humanity Institute and Prof. Philosophy – Oxford U., Journal of Evolution and Technology, "Analyzing Human Extinction Scenarios and Related Hazards", 9, March, <http://www.nickbostrom.com/existential/risks.html>)

The first manmade existential risk was the inaugural detonation of an atomic bomb. At the time, there was some concern that the explosion might start a runaway chain-reaction by "igniting" the atmosphere. **Although we now know that such an outcome was physically impossible, it qualifies as an existential risk that was present at the time.** For there to be a risk, given the knowledge and understanding available, **it suffices that there is some subjective probability of an adverse outcome, even if it later turns out that objectively there was no chance of something bad happening. If we don't know whether something is objectively risky or not, then it is risky in the subjective sense. The subjective sense is of course what we must base our decisions on.**[2]

At any given time we must use our best current subjective estimate of what the objective risk factors are.[3] **A much greater existential risk emerged with the build-up of nuclear arsenals in the US and the USSR. An all-out nuclear war was a possibility with both a substantial probability and with consequences that might have been persistent enough to qualify as global and terminal.** There was a real worry among those best acquainted with the information available at the time that **a nuclear Armageddon** would occur and that it **might annihilate our species** or permanently destroy human civilization.[4] **Russia and the US retain large nuclear arsenals that could be used in a future confrontation,** either accidentally or deliberately. There is also a risk that other states may one day build up large nuclear arsenals. Note however that **a smaller nuclear exchange, between India and Pakistan for instance, is not an existential risk, since it would not destroy or thwart humankind's potential permanently.** Such a war might however be a local terminal risk for the cities most likely to be targeted. Unfortunately, we shall see that nuclear Armageddon and comet or asteroid strikes are mere preludes to the existential risks that we will encounter in the 21st century.

2NC Brick Module

Russian influence key to credible BRIC rise --- solves proxy wars that escalate

Ellis 2011

(Evan, professor @ Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies and assistant professor with the Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies (CHDS). His research focus is on Latin America's relationship with external actors, including China, Russia, and Iran, "Emerging Multi-Power Competitions in Latin America", http://www.airpower.au.af.mil/apjinternational/apj-s/2011/2011-1/2011_1_03_ellis_eng_s.pdf)

Perhaps the lack of a US tradition for relating to the world in terms of multi- power politics is most strongly illustrated in Latin America, where the US has traditionally been the dominant power.

Historically, **where the US has focused on Latin America's relationships with extra-regional actors, it has**

been primarily to exclude them, as illustrated by the opposition to 19th century European adventurism in the region, enshrined in the famous Monroe Doctrine, or in the Cold War struggle to prevent the Soviet Union from establishing client states in the region. The end of the cold war and the increasing viability of intercontinental economic relationships in the 1990s **redefined Latin America's relationship with the US and the world, at the very moment in which the US and its approach to**

democracy and development seemed most dominant. Reduced costs associated with the containerization of shipping, new communication and computing technology, and truly global financial markets created opportunities and imperatives for Latin America to participate in commerce with other regions, not only exporting its products, and importing goods from around the world, but also participating in integrated global production chains, attracting foreign capital, and building new ties that began to undermine the historic pattern in which primarily US-dominated institutions invested in the region, purchased Latin American commodities, and sold Latin America US manufactured goods. In the 1990s, the principal extra-regional actors in Latin America were Europe and Japan, and to a lesser extent, South Korea. Because the new actors were not geopolitical adversaries of the US, and

because their ties were principally commercial, the strategic implications of the new dynamic received relatively little attention in the US. Since the early 2000s, however, **as Russia,**

Iran, China and India have **also made inroads in the region, US policymakers have registered** **growing concern.** ² The

emergence or re-emergence of external actors in Latin America such as Russia, China, India and Iran **represents a new paradigm for the US,** and for the region. On one hand, there has arguably not been a serious competition between multiple outside powers for influence in Latin America

since those between the US, Spanish, French, English, and Portuguese, largely ending in the 19th century. On the other hand, **the strategic imperatives and**

considerations of the new competition **are primarily economic** **in nature,** rather than ideological or military, as was the case

during the Cold War. The purpose of this article is to analyze the dynamics between the emerging new set of external actors in Latin America with an emphasis on identifying the characteristics and dynamics of those interactions, as well as possible opportunities and challenges arising from them. Emerging Multi-Power Competition in Latin America. Multi-power competition in Latin America in the context of globalization differs in many ways from the competition between states that characterized the 15th Century system of Italian City States that Machiavelli wrote about in The Prince, or the 16th -19th Century system of European states. In 21st Century Latin America, the goals of the actors are different, corresponding to changes in that which has strategic value in the contemporary international system: access to commodities, technology, markets for goods, and certain symbolic and ideological objectives which leaders hope will provide benefits with respect to internal audiences, or in a broader global struggles for position. Moreover, differences in what each external actor in Latin America is looking for and why, create the possibility for complex patterns of cooperation and competition. The interaction between the new actors is driven by two overarching dynamics: (1) On traditional geopolitical issues, a series of coinciding cleavages divide the actors into two camps, with a strategically important shifting middle, depending on the issue. (2) On commercial issues, such as access to markets, sources of supply, and technology, a multi-way competition prevails, with national governments supporting their companies, in pursuit of strategic objectives such as national development or simply regime survival. **The two dynamics are related in ways that depend on the initiative of each**

actor, since governments use alignment on geopolitical issues to secure commercial

objectives, and growing alignment on commercial interests may impact positions on geopolitical

issues. Although there will be various types of violence within, and perhaps between, states in Latin America, it is important to emphasize, that the focus of interaction between states of

the region and external actors will be primarily securing an advantage commerce and national development, rather than in war, with competitions for the signing of trade accords, and

technology sharing agreements, investment, the granting of privileged access to develop a nation's mineral and hydrocarbon resources, or who supports whom in multilateral institutions. **It**

is possible that external powers could **become involved in a proxy war,** in an attempt **to hold up** **a**

regime in which they have strategic **commercial interests**, but such prospects remain distant at the present time. Coinciding Cleavages on

Geopolitical Issues. Traditional geopolitical issues will still tend to divide external actors in Latin America into two camps, although the lineup of actors will change according to the issue. On issues of democratization and human rights, the US and Europe are likely to be generally aligned in advancing an agenda that respects traditional Western norms, while Iran and the PRC, and often Russia, will emphasize the right of each state in the region to determine its own internal politics. India, depending on the specific issue, may or may not press for respect for such norms. Within this broad alignment, of course, differences will still exist, with Europe emphasizing human rights issues in select countries, such as Colombia, where the US does not, or overlooking human rights issues in others, such as Cuba, where the US places emphasis. The pursuit of commercial goals by some actors may motivate them to avoid positions on geopolitical issues that

would separate them from potential business partners. **The** ^{second} **major cleavage** **dividing external actors in Latin America is the**

question of the developed world (North) versus the developing world (South). Particularly with left-of-center regimes in

Latin America, countries such as China, India and Iran emphasize their common "South-South" ties as countries in development, generally in political meetings indirectly pursuing commercial

deals for their companies. **Russia often fits** **uneasily** **into this coalition, seeking to define itself, in its relations**

with populist countries such as Venezuela, as an up and coming power (eg. Part of the "BRIC"

nations), **or as alternative to the status quo powers** (the US and Europe), even though it has not been traditionally categorized as a

"developing" nation. Within the political space created by such coinciding cleavages, Latin America also serves as a target for important, but differing internal and international agendas pursued by each actor. For the PRC, Latin America's principal tie to domestic politics is Taiwan. 12 of the 23 nations in the world which continue to recognize the Republic of China (ROC) as the legitimate Chinese government are found in Latin America. Externally, the PRC also seeks to participate in the region's institutions, such as the IADB and OAS, and prevent another power such as the US from dominating those institutions, or other regional structures, in such a way that could shut it out of the region and jeopardize its strategic commercial goals. None of other external actors in the region explicitly oppose these goals, but rather, each pursues its own goals in parallel. This include Iran, for which support from Latin America reinforces the international stature of its leadership in the Iranian regime's messianic efforts to advance its brand of radical Islam with Iran at its center. In a more pragmatic sense, Latin American ties, including financial institutions such as the International Development Bank in Venezuela, direct airline flights, factories in remote areas, and technology collaboration, help Iran to circumvent international sanctions to develop a nuclear capabilities, and possibly fund and create a logistics base for terrorist operations that could reach the United States, in the event that Iran wishes to wage such a conflict in the future. **For Russia**, in a manner similar to Iran, **Latin American ties help the current regime to demonstrate to a domestic audience that Russia is once again playing a significant international role, harkening back to its height of Cold War power as the heart of the Soviet Union. Latin America also provides the platform for Russia to generate counter-pressures to US activities** in Eastern Europe, the Caspian sea, and Central Asia, **which Russia regards as its sphere of influence**, such as November 2008, when Russia sent supersonic Tu-160 bombers and a squadron of ships to Venezuela for maneuvers in the Caribbean, as a counterpoint to the US projection of power in the Black Sea during the succession crisis in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. **Because of the shared "anti-western" focus and because the specific geopolitical agendas pursued by actors such as Russia, India and China in Latin America generally complement each other, these nations are not likely to come into conflict over their courtship** of populist regimes such as Venezuela, Ecuador, and Bolivia. The critical exception to this harmony, however, involves strategic commercial issues, such as which nation gets to develop the preponderance of Venezuela's petroleum in the Orinoco belt, or the significant deposits of iron and lithium, and perhaps uranium, in Bolivia. Commercial Competition. With respect to commerce, the goals of each external actor are defined by its position within the global economy and other elements of its national situation, as interpreted by its leadership. The PRC, because of its position as a global manufacturer, and because of its aggressive process of capital formation, looks to Latin America as a source of commodities, while its attitude toward markets focuses it on owning key parts of the production chain, or having strong contractual presence there where possible, as evidenced in interest by Chinese companies in Peruvian, Bolivian and Chilean mines, or Venezuelan and Ecuadorian oil fields. China's combination of a large population and limited agricultural land also drives an interest in Latin America as a source of foodstuffs, particularly in countries with large tracts of land usable for agriculture, such as Brazil and Argentina, which have become significant soy exporters for China. Neither Russia, Iran, nor India have export-led manufacturing sectors which generate a level of demand for commodities similar to that of China. Nonetheless, as the Indian economy continues to grow, its companies will increasingly come into contact with those of China in Latin America as part of their global search for commodities. In the case of **Russia** and Iran, both **have significant petroleum industries which them to participate in the petroleum sector of Latin America as part of larger global business strategies**. With respect to Latin American markets, China's position in the world economy as manufacturer makes its ability to sell its products abroad and move up the value added chain a strategically critical objective, particularly as growth in traditional markets for Chinese exports, such as the US, Europe, and Japan, has slowed. Moreover, the middle-income nature of Latin America's \$3 trillion, 500 million person market, and its sensitivity to price creates particular opportunities as the PRC seeks to gain experience in a range of strategically important sectors such as cars, aircraft, computers, telecommunications, military goods, and space. For similar reasons, Latin America is also an important market for India in select sectors, such as high-end manufactures and technology-intensive goods, laying the basis for an emerging competition in this area. **Russia** also **competes for select segments of the high-end manufacturing market in Latin America, such as military end items and nuclear technology**. Although Iran sells very few goods to Latin America, those purchases are important for its efforts to break free of the international isolation imposed on that country for its pursuit of a nuclear capability. Beyond specific competitions for resources and markets, there are also areas in which the commercial objectives of external actors in Latin America coincide, creating opportunities for future collaboration. All generally benefit, for example, from efficient infrastructure in the region, although they may differ on the focus, with India and China arguably benefitting more than Russia and Iran from improved ports, roads and rail networks oriented toward the Pacific ocean. All generally benefit from respect for contractual and property rights, and predictable legal, regulatory, and political environments in the countries with which they wish to do business, although new entrants, such as China, **Russia**, India, and Iran, also **tend to benefit initially from significant changes, since their commercial holdings in these countries have traditionally been eclipsed by US and European companies, and changes such as those brought about by Latin American populist movements tend to open up new opportunities**. On the other hand, such **change also opens up potentially destabilizing new competitions between these players to see who will benefit most from the new actors and new rules of the game**. Sectorial Competitions **The currently emerging competitions between external powers in key Latin American business and technology sectors are likely to intensify**, with the possibility for combinations of direct competition and cooperation as the situation dictates, and **with each country leveraging the weight of its government where possible**. The key players, their relative strengths, and their level of engagement will be different in each sector, reflecting the differing situation of each nation, and its companies, in the global economy. **Emerging competitions include those for (1) oil and gas resources, (2) mineral resources, (3) agricultural goods, (4) high-end manufactured goods, (5) military goods, (6) infrastructure projects, and (7) telecom and technology services**.

BRIC is key to global multilateralism --- solves all impacts – food security, disease, peak oil and global warming

Biswas 2011

(Aparajita, Professor at the Centre for African Studies at the University of Mumbai, "Foreign Relations of India: BRICS and India, BRICS in Africa," International Affairs, January 6, en.rian.ru/international_affairs/20110601/164362547.html)

Recently, India's Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, was in Brazil to attend both the second Summit of **BRIC** and IBSA Summit, held in 2010. For India, these two groups are extremely important, considering that both aim to **collectively boost bargaining power and clout on global issues, and also strengthen economic and political ties among the member-countries on the lines of South-South co-operation.** In fact, India took the initiative to call for improving the importance of **BRIC** and IBSA as groups.⁽¹¹⁾ Dr. Manmohan Singh **called for closer co-operation in the fields of energy and food security, as well as tapping into the potential of other sectors such as trade and investment, science and technology, and infrastructure.** He added that **pooling together each other's experiences could lead to more inclusive growth.** "We are four large countries with abundant resources, large populations and diverse societies. We aspire for rapid growth for ourselves and for an external environment that is conducive to our development goals".⁽¹²⁾ **Co-operation on the economic front is one of the focus areas** of India's policy towards BRIC. It believes that **global challenges can only be addressed by co-operative effort, with the full and equal participation of major and emerging powers and economies.** For India, on the one hand, cooperation with other **BRIC member-states** provides an excellent opportunity to share its development experiences with them as well as learn from their experiences. This is more so since they share common challenges as developing countries and global challenges often affect them in a similar way. In addition to discussions about how to respond to the financial crisis, India **exchanged ideas and experiences on food security, agriculture, disease, foreign aid, energy and global warming.** **Sharing these experiences not only helps the BRIC member-states themselves, it also allows them to share experiences and "best practices" with the developing world and thereby expand South-South cooperation.**

2NC Nationalism Module

A loss of power emboldens Russian nationalists

Nodia 2009

(Ghia, Georgian political analyst who served as the Minister of Education and Science in the Cabinet of Georgia "THE WOUNDS OF LOST EMPIRE", Journal of Democracy, Vol. 20, Iss. 2; pg. 34, April, Proquest)

I believe that the crucial factor in explaining the peculiarity of the Russian case (or, to use the Churchillian words, **the "key" to the Russian "enigma") has to do with developments in Russian nationalism, or the Russian perception of the world and Russia's place in it.** The concept of nationalism mostly brings to mind small nations striving for independence from larger ones. But big-nation nationalism is no less important, even if many contemporary analysts of international relations fail to gauge its significance. Small-nation nationalism is typically about sovereignty, about being recognized as a player that can make its own choices. **But great-power nationalism is about participation in determining the world order, about having a voice in setting international norms. It is about the recognition not merely of sovereignty, but of greatness. Failure to attain such recognition leads to deep feelings of resentment: It is the note of resentment that makes this variety of nationalism the most powerful factor in international politics,** especially post-Cold War politics. **The syndrome is mostly characteristic of nations that once had, but have now lost, great-power status.** Russia is one of the most conspicuous cases of great-power resentment, though certainly not the only one. Such resentment expresses itself in various ways in the behavior of nations as different as France, Turkey, Iran, and China. The Mainspring of Policy **The most popular target of such resentment is the United States-not necessarily because it has done something wrong** (it may have done so, of course, but that is not at issue here) **but because it is the great power of the day.** The resentment may also take as its target a vaguer entity called "the West," because in the modern world, "the West" has acquired the collective moral power to set norms in politics and much more besides.

Resurgence of Russian nationalism triggers World War III

Israelyan 1998

(Victor Israelyan was a Soviet ambassador, diplomat, arms control negotiator, and leading political scientist. The Washington Quarterly 1998 Winter)

The first and by far most dangerous possibility is what I call the power scenario. Supporters of this option would, in the name of a "united and undivided Russia," radically change domestic and foreign policies. Many would seek to revive a dictatorship and take urgent military steps to mobilize the people against the outside "enemy." Such steps would include Russia's denunciation of the commitment to non-first-use of nuclear weapons; suspension of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) I and refusal to ratify both START II and the Chemical Weapons Convention; denunciation of the Biological Weapons Convention; and reinstatement of a full-scale armed force, including the acquisition of additional intercontinental ballistic missiles with multiple warheads, as well as medium- and short-range missiles such as the SS-20. Some of these measures will demand substantial financing, whereas others, such as the denunciation and refusal to ratify arms control treaties, would, according to proponents, save money by alleviating the obligations of those agreements. In this scenario, **Russia's military planners would shift Western countries from the category of strategic partners to the category of countries representing a threat to national security. This will revive the strategy of nuclear deterrence -- and indeed, realizing its unfavorable odds against the expanded NATO, Russia will place new emphasis on the first-use of nuclear weapons,** a trend that is underway already. **The power scenario envisages a hard-line policy toward the CIS countries,** and in such circumstances the problem of the Russian diaspora in those countries would be greatly magnified. Moscow would use all the means at its disposal, including economic sanctions and political ultimatums, to ensure the rights of ethnics Russians in CIS countries as well as to have an influence on other issues. Of those means, even **the use of direct military force in places like the Baltics cannot be ruled out. Some will object that this scenario is implausible because no potential dictator exists in Russia who could carry out this strategy. I am not so sure.** Some Duma members -- such as Victor Antipov, Sergei Baburin, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, and Albert Makashov, who are leading politicians in ultranationalistic parties and fractions in the parliament -- are ready to follow this path to save a "united Russia." Baburin's "Anti-NATO" deputy group boasts a membership of more than 240 Duma members. One cannot help but remember that when Weimar Germany was isolated, exhausted, and humiliated as a result of World War I and the Versailles Treaty, **Adolf Hitler took it upon himself to "save" his country. It**

took the former corporal only a few years to plunge the world into a second world war that cost humanity more than 50 million lives.

I do not believe that Russia has the economic strength to implement such a scenario successfully, but then again,

Germany's economic situation in the 1920s was hardly that strong either. Thus, I am afraid that **economics will not deter the power scenario's would-be authors from attempting it. Baburin, for example, warned that any political leader who would "dare to encroach upon Russia" would be decisively repulsed by the Russian Federation "by all measures on heaven and earth up to the use of nuclear weapons."**

ⁿ¹⁰ In autumn 1996 Oleg Grynevsky, Russian ambassador to

Sweden and former Soviet arms control negotiator, while saying that NATO expansion increases the risk of nuclear war, reminded his Western listeners that **Russia has enough missiles to destroy both the United States and Europe.**

ⁿ¹¹ Former Russian minister of defense Igor Rodionov warned several times that Russia's vast nuclear arsenal could become uncontrollable. In this context, one should keep in mind that, despite dramatically reduced nuclear arsenals -- and tensions -- Russia and the United States remain poised to launch their missiles in minutes. I cannot but agree with Anatol Lieven, who wrote, "It may be, therefore, that with all the new Russian order's many problems and weaknesses, it will for a long time be able to stumble on, until we all fall down together." ⁿ¹²

2NC Russian Econ Module

Russia expanding influence it's key to the economy

Goodrich 2011

(Lauren, 2011 "Russia's Evolving Leadership", STRATFOR, <http://politicom.moldova.org/news/russias-evolving-leadership-perceptions-of-putin-part-2-222643-eng.html>)

Putin's goal was to fix the country, which meant restoring state control (politically, socially and economically), strengthening the FSB and military and **re-establishing Russia's influence and international reputation** — especially in the former Soviet sphere of influence. To do so, Putin had to carry Russia through a complex evolution that involved shifting the country from accommodating to aggressive at specific moments. This led to a shift in global perceptions of Putin, with many beginning to see the former KGB agent as a hard-nosed autocrat set upon rekindling hostilities and renewing militarization. This perception of Putin is not quite correct. While an autocrat and KGB agent (we use the present tense, as Putin has said that no one is a former KGB or FSB agent), he hails from St. Petersburg, Russia's most pro-Western city, and during his Soviet-era KGB service he was tasked with stealing Western technology. **Putin fully understands the strength of the West and what Western expertise is needed to keep Russia relatively modern and strong.** At the same time, **his time with the KGB convinced him that Russia can never truly be integrated into the West and that it can be strong only with a consolidated government, economy and security service** and a single, autocratic leader. Putin's understanding of Russia's two great weaknesses informs this worldview. **The first weakness is that Russia was dealt a poor geographic hand. It is inherently vulnerable because it is surrounded by great powers from which it is not insulated by geographic barriers. The second is that its population is composed of numerous ethnic groups, not all of which are happy with centralized Kremlin rule. A strong hand is the only means to consolidate the country internally while repelling outsiders. Another major challenge is that Russia essentially lacks an economic base aside from energy. Its grossly underdeveloped transportation system hampers it from moving basic necessities between the country's widely dispersed economic centers. This has led Moscow to rely on revenue from one source, energy, while the rest of the country's economy has lagged decades behind in technology.**

Russian economic stability key to world economy

Cooper 2008

[William, Congressional Research Service Specialist in International Trade and Finance Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Trade Division, "Russia's Economic Performance and Policies and Their Implications for the United States," May 30, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34512.pdf>]

The **greater importance of Russia's economic policies and prospects** to the United States **lie in their indirect effect on the overall economic and political environment** in which the United States and Russia operate. From this perspective, **Russia's continuing economic stability and growth can be considered positive for the United States. Because financial markets are interrelated, chaos in even some of the smaller economies can cause uncertainty throughout the rest of the world. Such was the case during Russia's financial meltdown** in 1998. Promotion of economic stability in Russia has been a basis for U.S. support for Russia's membership in international economic organizations, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization (WTO). As a major oil producer and exporter, **Russia influences world oil prices that affect U.S. consumers.**

AFF Answers

Non-Unique

US Influence High

US influence in Latin America is high – their authors misunderstand international politics

Duddy and Mora 2013

(Patrick, U.S. ambassador to Venezuela from 2007 until 2010 and is currently visiting senior lecturer at Duke University, and Frank, incoming director of the Latin American and Caribbean Center, Florida International University, and former deputy assistant secretary of Defense, Western Hemisphere, "Latin America: Is U.S. influence waning?", May 1, <http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/05/01/3375160/latin-america-is-us-influence.html>)

Is U.S. influence in Latin America on the wane? It depends how you look at it. As President Obama travels to Mexico and Costa Rica, it's likely the pundits will once again underscore what some perceive to be the eroding influence of the United States in the Western Hemisphere. **Some will point to the decline in foreign aid or the absence of an overarching policy** with an inspiring moniker like "Alliance for Progress" or "Enterprise Area of the Americas" **as evidence that the United States is failing to embrace the opportunities of a region that is more important to this country than ever. The reality is a lot more complicated. Forty-two percent of all U.S. exports flow to the Western Hemisphere. In many ways, U.S. engagement in the Americas is more pervasive than ever**, even if more diffused. That is in part because **the peoples of the Western Hemisphere are not waiting for governments to choreograph their interactions**. A more-nuanced assessment inevitably will highlight the complex, multidimensional ties between the United States and the rest of the hemisphere. In fact, it may be that we need to change the way we think and talk about the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. **We also need to resist the temptation to embrace overly reductive yardsticks for judging our standing in the hemisphere**. As Moises Naim notes in his recent book, *The End of Power*, **there has been an important change in power distribution in the world away from states toward an expanding and increasingly mobile set of actors that are dramatically shaping the nature and scope of global relationships**. In Latin America, many of the most substantive and dynamic forms of engagement are occurring in a web of cross-national relationships involving small and large companies, people-to-people contact through student exchanges and social media, travel and migration. **Trade and investment remain the most enduring and measurable dimensions of U.S. relations with the region**. It is certainly the case that our economic interests alone would justify more U.S. attention to the region. Many **observers who worry about declining U.S. influence in this area point to the rise of trade with China and the presence of European companies and investors. While it is true that other countries are important to the economies of Latin America and the Caribbean, it is also still true that the United States is by far the largest and most important economic partner of the region and trade is growing even with those countries with which we do not have free trade agreements. An area of immense importance** to regional economies that we often overlook **is the exponential growth in travel, tourism and migration**. It is commonplace to note the enormous presence of foreign students in the United States but **in 2011**, according to the Institute of International Education, after Europe, **Latin America was the second most popular destination for U.S. university students**. Hundreds of thousands of U.S. tourists travel every year to Latin America and the Caribbean helping to support thousands of jobs. From 2006-2011 U.S. non-government organizations, such as churches, think tanks and universities increased the number of partnerships with their regional cohorts by a factor of four. **Remittances to Latin America and the Caribbean from the United States totaled \$64 billion in 2012**. Particularly for the smaller economies of Central America and the Caribbean these flows can sometimes constitute more than 10 percent of gross domestic product. Finally, **one should not underestimate the resiliency of U.S. soft power in the region**. The power of national reputation, popular culture, values and institutions continues to contribute to U.S. influence in ways that are difficult to measure and impossible to quantify. Example: **Despite 14 years of strident anti-American rhetoric during the Chávez government, tens of thousand of Venezuelans apply for U.S. nonimmigrant visas every year, including many thousands of Chávez loyalists**.

US influence in Latin America inevitable; trade, cultural ties

Ben-Ami 2013

(Shlomo, a former Israeli foreign minister who now serves as Vice President of the Toledo International Center for Peace, "Is the US Losing Latin America?", <http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/the-new-nature-of-us-influence-in-latin-america-by-shlomo-ben-ami>)

Yet **it would be a mistake to regard Latin America's broadening international relations as marking the end of US preeminence.** Unlike in the bygone era of superpowers and captive nations, **American influence can no longer be defined by the ability to install and depose leaders from the US embassy. To believe otherwise is to ignore how international politics has changed over the last quarter-century.** A continent once afflicted by military takeovers has slowly but surely implanted stable democracies. **Responsible economic management, poverty-reduction programs, structural reforms, and greater openness to foreign investment have all helped to generate years of low-inflation growth. As a result, the region was able to withstand the ravages of the global financial crisis. The US not only encouraged these changes, but has benefited hugely from them.** More than 40% of US exports now go to Mexico and Central and South America, the US's fastest-growing export destination. Mexico is America's second-largest foreign market (valued at \$215 billion in 2012). US exports to Central America have risen by 94% over the past six years; imports from the region have risen by 87%. And **the US continues to be the largest foreign investor on the continent.** **American interests are evidently well served by having democratic, stable, and increasingly prosperous neighbors. This new reality also demands a different type of diplomacy** – one that recognizes the diverse interests of the continent. For example, an emerging power such as Brazil wants more respect on the world stage. Obama blundered when he dismissed a 2010 deal on Iran's nuclear program mediated by Brazil and Turkey (despite having earlier endorsed the talks). **Other countries might benefit from US efforts to promote democracy and socioeconomic ties, as Obama's recent trips to Mexico and Costa Rica show. Trade relations provide another all-important lever.** President Sebastian Piñera of Chile visited the White House earlier this week to discuss, among other things, the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), an ambitious trade agreement that might encompass New Zealand, Singapore, Australia, Mexico, Canada, and Japan. **President Ollanta Humala of Peru is expected in the White House next week, while Vice President Joe Biden is scheduled to visit Latin America soon after. Language and culture matter, too. Given the extraordinary growth of Latinos' influence in the US, it is almost inconceivable that America could lose its unique status in the region to China or Russia, let alone Iran.**

No Russia Expansion

Russia can't and won't expand into Latin America

Blank 2009

(Stephen, Professor of Russian National Security Studies @ US Army War College, "Russia in Latin America: Geopolitical Games in the US's Neighborhood", April 2009, <http://www.ifri.org/downloads/ifriblankrussiaandlatinamericaengapril09.pdf>)

Still, **while Russia will continue expanding ties with Latin America, its capacity for deep involvement is lower than it wants** as is the **ability of Latin American states** to support Russian goals. This is especially true for countries like Venezuela that depend on energy or commodities revenues, their capabilities have also declined due to the global economic crisis. Thus Russia will only partially meet Latin American expectations for support, even in stricken economies like Cuba. ⁷ For example, **Russia's upcoming loan of 20 million US dollars to Cuba** and a possible future credit of 335 million US dollars **will enable** it to buy Russian products, providing **only a minimal, short-term boost to Cuba's economy** ⁸ —export subsidies hardly offering mutual benefit. Likewise, **Russian companies charged with developing relations with Latin America recently acknowledged that little or no economic expansion will occur anytime soon**. For example, even though Russia and Venezuela ostentatiously agreed to establish oil and gas companies together, **Russian companies have no liquid assets to invest in Latin America**. Not surprisingly, even Venezuela displays skepticism about Russia's ability to transform its ties—which consist mainly of arms sales—into a relationship based on large-scale investment and diplomatic coordination. ⁹

Latin America doesn't want Russia

Blank 2009

(Stephen, Professor of Russian National Security Studies @ US Army War College, "Russia in Latin America: Geopolitical Games in the US's Neighborhood", April 2009, <http://www.ifri.org/downloads/ifriblankrussiaandlatinamericaengapril09.pdf>)

Thus the quest for great power status vis-à-vis Washington and for a multipolar world that constrains American ability to upset Moscow's concept of global and regional strategic stability drives Russian policy. To those ends Russia uses areas of comparative economic advantage (energy, arms sales, space launches, sales of nuclear reactors) to leverage political support for Russian positions against American interests. Russian interest in recovering or gaining positions in Latin America preceded the more recent notion that it will show the US that if it intervenes in the CIS Moscow can reciprocate in Latin America. That idea has only become possible by virtue of Russia's recovery in 2000-08 and the corresponding and coinciding decline of US power and prestige due to the Bush Administration's disastrous policies. **The current economic crisis plus new policies from the Obama Administration should lead to less public emphasis on that particular rationale for Russian policy in Latin America**. Instead Moscow may attempt to identify its foreign policy with the clear preference of Latin American security elites for the following principles: – Latin America should be impervious to challenges to security outside the region and should respect the principles of international law as established in the charters of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the United Nations (UN). – Any initiative for the employment of joint forces (with the US or other states) must comply with decisions of the UN. Integration initiatives must similarly be based on shared multilateral objectives, e.g. opposition to unilateral operations involving the use of force. ¹⁹ **While these points accord with Russian rhetoric, Latin American elites overwhelmingly prefer cooperation with the US based on its acceptance of their needs and interests, as well as genuine appreciation of their views. They do not want to be pawns in a new version of the cold war.** ²⁰ Indeed, **Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva recently expressed his hope that President Obama will implement a "preferential" relationship with Latin America.** ²¹

No Link

Not Zero Sum

Influence isn't zero sum and there's no risk of escalation – their disad is media hype Davydenko 2012

(Andrey, International Affairs, "J.F.Bertonha: US Hegemony Waning in South America?", May 16, <http://en.interaffairs.ru/experts/281-jfbertonha-us-hegemony-waning-in-south-america.html>)

The comeback staged by the recovering Russia across Latin America and Moscow's plans to get entrenched in the region are permanently grabbing the media headlines. The visits frequently paid to South America by key Russian officials are not the only indications of how high the region ranks on the Russian agenda - Bertonha also cites the maneuvers exercised by the Russian Navy in the Caribbean and the engagement Moscow obviously seeks with Nicaragua, Bolivia, Cuba, and especially Venezuela. Still, Bertonha's verdict is that at the moment **the influence Russia enjoys in South America is overstated.** That may change in a more distant future, but, if we can trust Bertonha's analysis, so far the **Russian presence in South America has been more symbolic than real and promises no shifts in the continent's internal strategic disposition.** **The Russian arms supplies may give Venezuela a shade of confidence vis-a-vis the US, but it is clear that Caracas will never use weaponry against its continental neighbors,** plus the Venezuelan oil export to the US continues regardless of Chavez's bombastic anti-Americanism. Bertonha discounts the Russian Navy's flag-waving in the Caribbean, stressing that **intervening will be off the table for Moscow if an armed conflict erupts in the region. The US faced a similar dilemma as it maintained a limited military presence in Georgia** when the country clashed with Russia: **under this type of circumstances, global geopolitical risks easily outweigh regional-scale sympathies.** Moreover, **Bertonha doubts Russia's ability to project its considerable military might onto parts of the world as remote as South America.**

Impact Defense

Relations Resilient

US-Russia relations are resilient

VOA News 2011

("Putin Presidency Unlikely to Derail US-Russia Relations" 10/7 <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/europe/Putin-Presidency-Unlikely-to-Derail-US-Russia-Relations-131345683.html>)

Many experts agree with Legvold that **there will not be any real change in U.S.-Russia relations with Vladimir Putin back as president.** Matthew **Rojansky at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, says Putin, as prime minister,** if not calling all the shots, at least **approved the key decisions related to U.S. relations.** "So for example, **I don't see New START [strategic arms agreement] being rolled back,**" said Rojansky. **"I don't see cooperation on Afghanistan being rolled back. The Libya [U.N.] resolution [imposing a no-fly zone] which Russia didn't block** was a difficult call and Putin certainly had reservations and you heard him expressing those reservations. But did he ultimately come to some kind of consensus with Medvedev? Clearly he did. I think the two of them operate as a unit." Rojansky believes that **while the substance of the U.S.-Russia relationship may not change, the tone might.** **"Obama has invested very heavily in his relationship with Medvedev,"** he said. "It made sense. It was relatively easy for him because he and Medvedev come from a similar kind of origin in the sense of both being lawyers, both being technology oriented, both being kind of globalists in their outlook. Putin just doesn't have that. **And I don't see Putin and Obama pushing the relationship to be very active by sheer force of personality and interest in one another.** I just don't think that's going to happen." **The analysts believe one thing is for sure: the U.S.-Russia relationship has grown over the years to such an extent that they say a return to the tension-filled Cold War days is virtually impossible.**

Relations Low Now

US missile defense system largest irritant to relations- causing Russia to consider attack

Huessy 2012

(Peter, Senior Defense Associate, National Defense Association Foundation, "Realizing a Global Layered Missile Defense System", June 28, <http://www.thecuttingedgenews.com/index.php?article=74538&pageid=13&pagename=Analysis>)

Russia is demanding the United States stop building missile defenses in Europe, just as it simultaneously assists Iran in building the very missiles that threaten NATO. In language reminiscent of the Cold War, Russian President Vladimir Putin is once again urging Washington to "better not to do this." Russian Chief of the **General Staff** Nikolai Makarov **warned, "Taking into account a missile-defense system's destabilizing nature, that is, the creation of an illusion that a disarming strike can be launched with impunity, a decision on pre-emptive use of the attack weapons available will be made when the situation worsens."** **In short, Makarov has warned that if the United States builds missile defenses, Russia will threaten to attack. This despite serial attempts by Washington to "reset" relations between the two former Cold War adversaries.**

Numerous barriers to relations- alt causes must be overcome before a reset on relations can happen

Minchev 2012

(Ognyan, Public Service Europe, "Putin relishes deteriorating US-Russia relations", June 28, <http://www.publicserviceeurope.com/article/2144/putin-relishes-deteriorating-us-russia-relations>)

The meeting of United States President Barack Obama and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin at the G20 summit in Mexico only underscored the **chill in relations between Moscow and Washington**. In fact, relations have deteriorated steadily since Putin replaced the ailing Boris Yeltsin in 1999, despite Obama's ambitious program to improve – or 'reset' – bilateral ties. Today the reset is over, and **the two leaders no longer disguise their differences on most important international issues.** For Obama, the interment of one of his administration's signature foreign policy efforts at the outset of a re-election campaign is an unwelcome realisation. With few triumphs in the international arena, Obama undoubtedly looked forward to citing improved relations with Russia as an unqualified asset. For their part, **Russian leaders have seemed contemptuous of American hopes for renewing their strained relationship. Under Putin, Moscow has steadfastly opposed western efforts to halt civilian casualties in Syria and international efforts to block Iran's nuclear program.** Most pointedly, **the new US ambassador to Russia** Michael McFaul – a key author of the reset strategy – **was publicly ostracized in a series of Russian media exposés.** Clearly, **Putin and his government welcome the rapidly deteriorating US-Russia relationship.** Some of the interests underlying Moscow's strategy appear obvious. For example, **Russia rejected the establishment of a North Atlantic Treaty Organisation anti-missile defence shield over Europe, perceiving it as a threat.** Western and **US policies meant to encourage the Arab spring revolutions struck Russian authorities as part of a conspiracy** aimed at – among other things – hampering Russian interests in places like Libya and Syria. **Moscow sees US-led efforts to curb Tehran's nuclear programme as an attempt to provoke western or Israeli military action,** with the aim of effecting regime change. **This could pave the way for the US** and its allies **to strategically and commercially penetrate post-Soviet central Asia.** The west's **direct access to central Asian energy resources could cripple Russia's strategy of monopolising energy supply corridors between Europe and the east.**

No US-Russia War

No chance of US-Russia war

Graham 2007

(Thomas Graham, senior advisor on Russia in the US National Security Council staff 2002-2007, September 2007, "Russia in Global Affairs" July - September 2007, The Dialectics of Strength and Weakness)

An astute historian of Russia, Martin Malia, wrote several years ago that "Russia has at different times been demonized or divinized by Western opinion less because of her real role in Europe than because of the fears and frustrations, or hopes and aspirations, generated within European society by its own domestic problems." Such is the case today. To be sure, mounting Western concerns about Russia are a consequence of Russian policies that appear to undermine Western interests, but they are also a reflection of declining confidence in our own abilities and the efficacy of our own policies. Ironically, this growing fear and distrust of Russia come at a time when Russia is arguably less threatening to the West, and the United States in particular, than it has been at any time since the end of the Second World War. Russia does not champion a totalitarian ideology intent on our destruction, its military poses no threat to sweep across Europe, its economic growth depends on constructive commercial relations with Europe, and its strategic arsenal – while still capable of annihilating the United States – is under more reliable control than it has been in the past fifteen years and the threat of a strategic strike approaches zero probability. Political gridlock in key Western countries, however, precludes the creativity, risk-taking, and subtlety needed to advance our interests on issues over which we are at odds with Russia while laying the basis for more constructive long-term relations with Russia.

Relations Don't Solve

US-Russia know the importance of relations but lack the trust to carry them out

Graham 2008

(Thomas, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Russian Affairs, a senior director at Kissinger Associates, senior director for Russia at the National Security Council (U.S.-Russia Relations, 7/8, http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/080717_graham_u.s.russia.pdf)

New administrations in Russia in 2008 and the United States in 2009 provide an opportunity for movement toward improved relations, but it is not clear it will be seized. In Russia, to be sure, the end of the electoral cycle has witnessed a ratcheting down of the vitriolic anti-U.S. rhetoric that marked the Duma and presidential campaigns. The **challenges now before Russia—infrastructure modernization and economic diversification—call for improved relations with Europe and the United States, since they are the main sources of the money, technology, and know-how Russia will need to succeed. The Russian leadership understands that confrontation with the United States will not make Russia more secure.** Nevertheless, there are **significant elements in the Russian elite that would benefit from continued tension with the United States, if only because that would improve their position internally** (against the more liberal forces around Dmitry Medvedev) in the inevitable jockeying for position that will take place as President Medvedev and Prime Minister Putin sort out their relations. In the United States, the new administration that will take office in January 2009 will engage in a review of Russia policy, as part of a broader review of foreign and security policy. So far, campaign rhetoric holds out little **promise of improved relations**—and it is too soon to say how the **responsibilities of governance might reshape thinking.** Senator John McCain's call for creating a League of Democracies (as a substitute for the United Nations) and for expelling Russia from the G-8 does not augur well for a more pragmatic approach should he be elected,¹¹ although recent remarks on **cooperation with Russia on nuclear matters offer a more constructive course.**¹² Senator Barak Obama has suggested he would take a more measured approach and work with Russia in a number of areas, although he has indicated continued criticism, in particular, of Russia's authoritarian tendencies.¹³ **Moreover, although there is a growing desire for less rancorous relations in both Russia and the United States, and a grudging recognition that on some matters the two countries have no choice but to work together,** there is little pressure for broader constructive relations and the more intense engagement those would entail. **Outside of the Russian and American business communities, there are no significant constituencies for dramatically better relations, and even within the business communities, companies are focused more on advancing their own commercial goals than on lobbying for better overall relations.** Finally, the attitudinal foundation for **far-reaching cooperation is lacking in Moscow and Washington. In Moscow, arrogance about Russia's growing strength fosters extreme positions and precludes compromises that would appear to legitimize the U.S. position** (as with missile defense or Kosovo, for example) or sharpens competition (as with energy matters or the former Soviet space). The thirst for vengeance for the humiliation of the 1990s leads to resistance to any cooperation that would appear to help the United States undo the damage of its own mismanaged policies (as with Iraq). In **Washington, continuing doubt about the sustainability of Russia's recovery and a focus on the formidable challenges of modernization before it lead to questions about the degree of effort that should be put into improving relations with a country that, in Washington's view, does not really matter that much long term.** It is far from **clear what would shock Moscow and Washington into thinking otherwise. Or what long-term developments would deflate Moscow's arrogance and sate its thirst for vengeance and persuade Washington that Russia matters in the long term.** But a Russian government that demonstrated a strong commitment to modernization, including a concerted campaign against rampant corruption, might precipitate rethinking in Washington, while a new American administration that appeared competent and restored the country's confidence might do the same in Moscow.