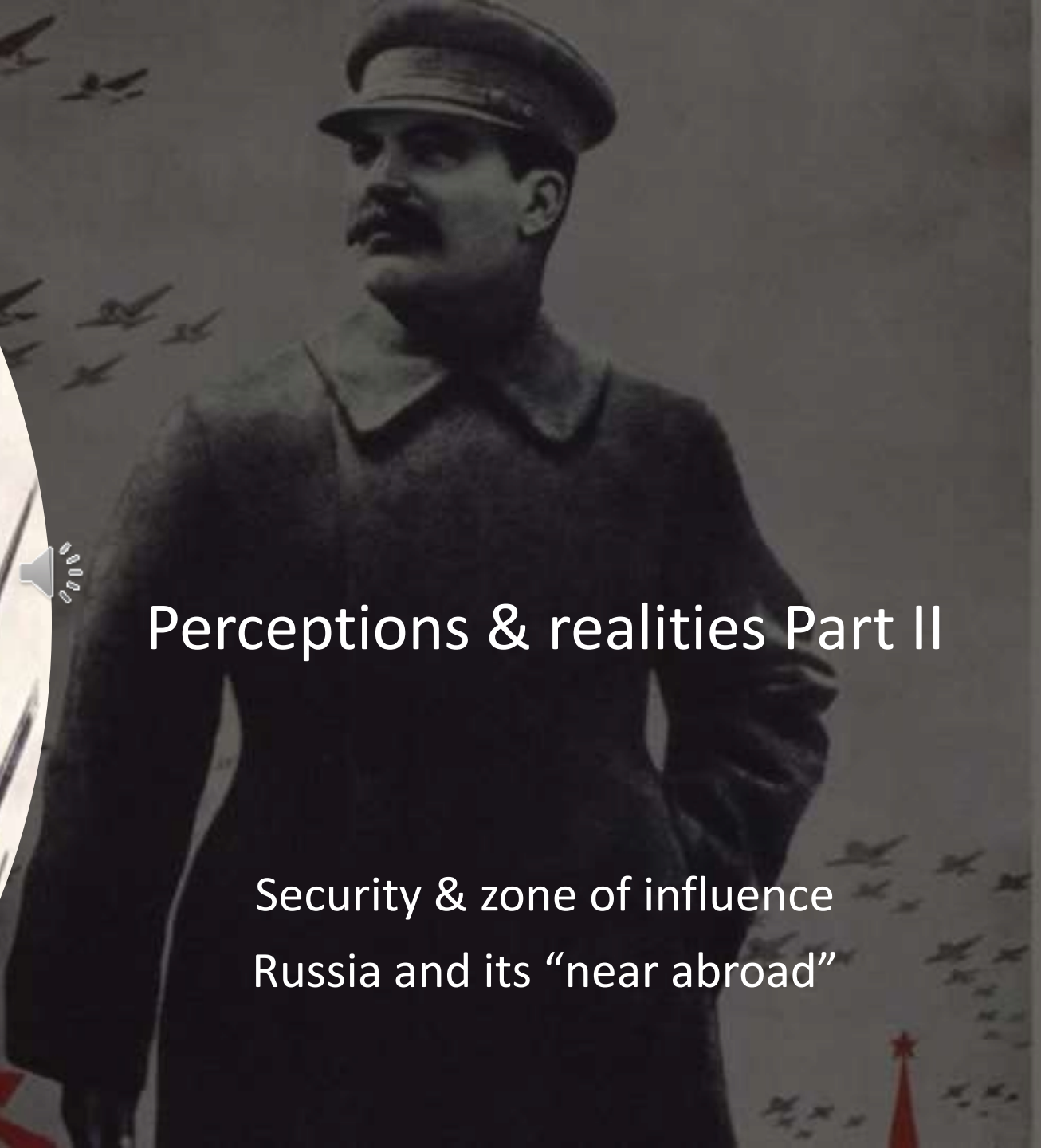


РОДИНА-МА
ЗОВЕТ!



Perceptions & realities Part II

Security & zone of influence
Russia and its “near abroad”

Agenda

The obsession with security: a Russian tradition

Russia and its “near abroad”

Central Asia: Russia vs. China

The war in Ukraine: Russia’s limited options

The **October Revolution**:
when the Bolsheviks seized
power



March 1918: treaty of Brest-Litovsk

Russia's separate peace with Germany



The “*treason*” of Brest-Litovsk
Hostility towards Bolshevik Russia



Renewed strategy of containment

The erection of a “*cordon sanitaire*” (bulwark) – A ring of anti-communist states to isolate Bolshevik Russia

Russia (Soviet Union) once again
a “barbaric” state

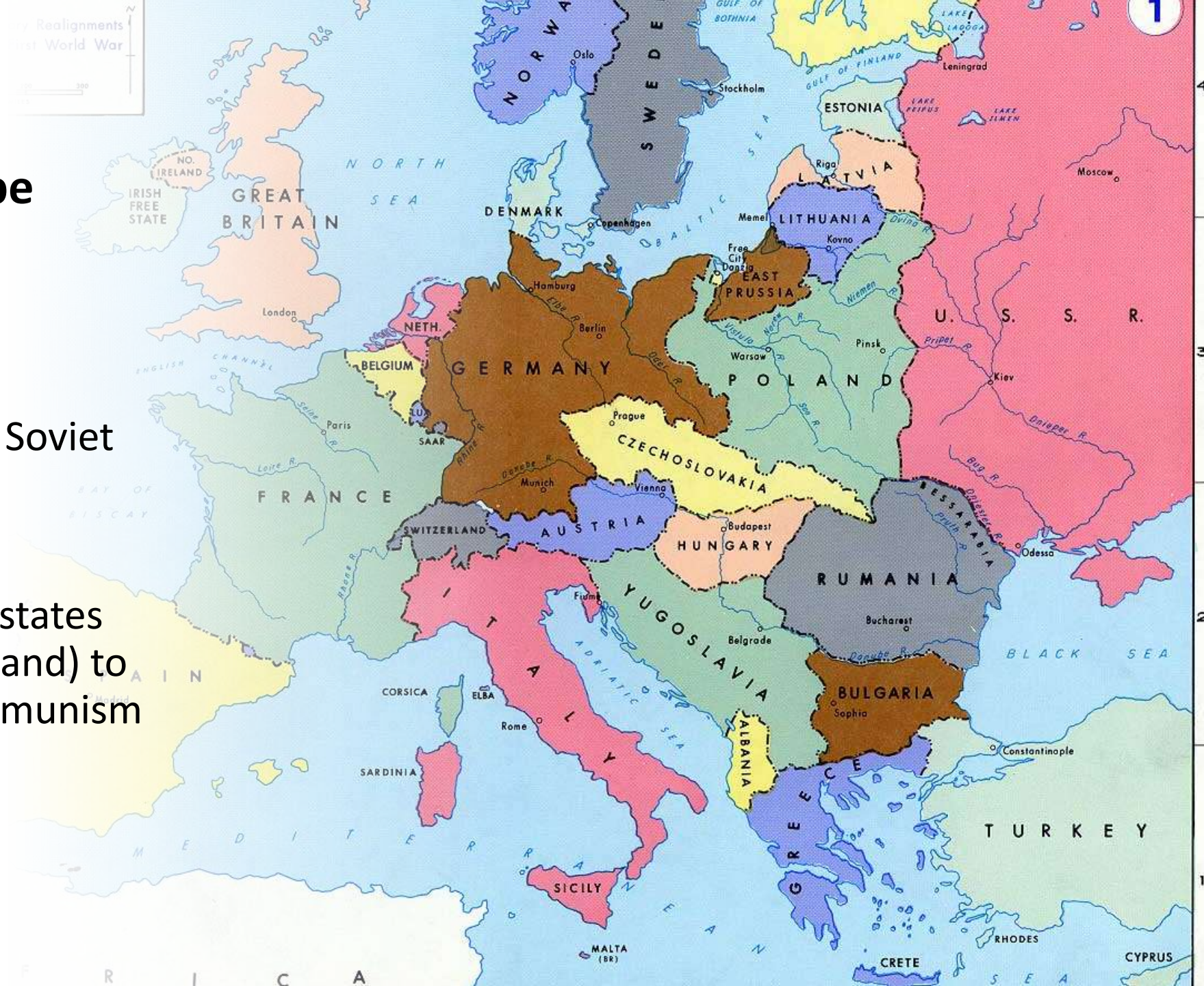
The return of ancient fears and
prejudices



Interwar Europe

A security nightmare for Soviet military experts

The proximity of hostile states (Poland, Baltic States, Finland) to prevent the spread of communism in Europe





Non-Aggression Pact (August 1939)

Publicly-announced stipulations:
Germany and Soviet Union not to wage
war on one another

Arbitration to deal with tensions or
conflicts

Neutrality clause

Increased trade



A secret protocol

Agreement on “spheres of influence” in Eastern Europe

Poland to be dismembered

Stalin’s objective: to get all the territories lost in 1918 back (Treaty of Brest-Litovsk)



1918 – Map illustrating the land given up by Russian delegation in signing the Brest-Litovsk treaty.



Planned division of Central Europe according to Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact



- Soviet Union
- Germany
- Other countries and territories
- EP East Prussia

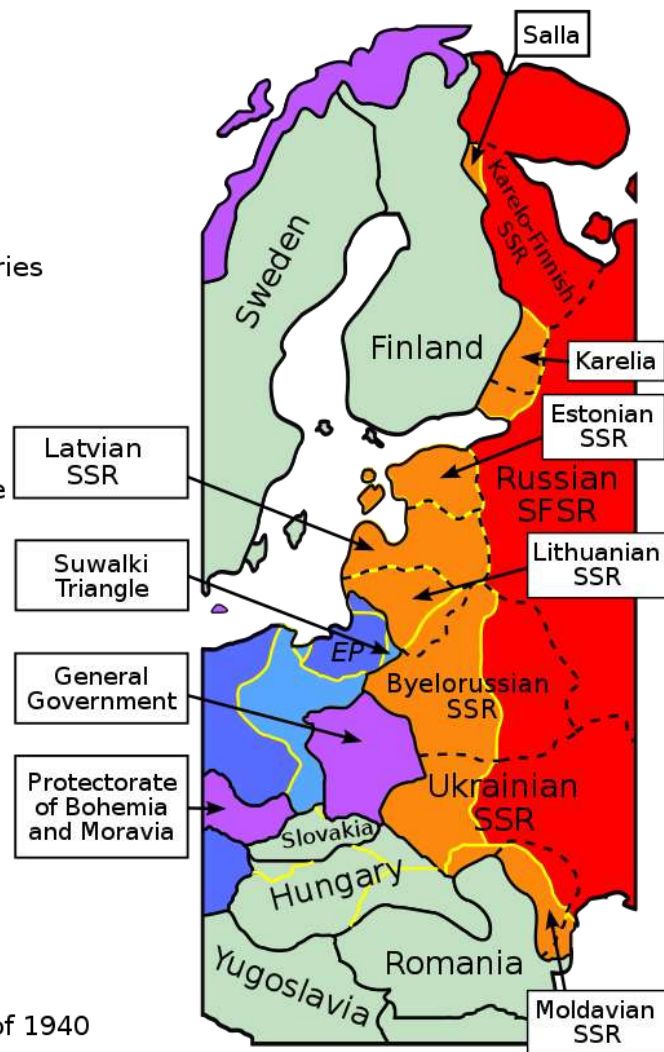
1939 ◀◀

- Soviet sphere of influence
- German sphere of influence
- National borders as of 1939
- Planned Borders
- Soviet republic borders as of 1939

1940 ▶▶

- Annexed by the Soviet Union
- Annexed by Germany
- Occupied by Germany
- National borders as of 1940
- National borders as of 1938
- Soviet republic borders as of 1940

Actual territorial changes 1939-1940







COLD WAR

- EASTERN BLOC
- WESTERN BLOC
- IRON CURTAIN





The “West” and its influence
perceived as a threat

From the mid 19th century to Ukraine
2014 “Maidan Revolution”

Freedom and political opposition came
from the western peripheries of the
Russian empire



The Polish uprisings of 1830 & 1863-1864

Violent repression

The Czars concerned over
Polish influence



Ukraine split between **Austria-Hungary** (Pro-European West) & **Russian Empire** (East)



Pro-European West

The emergence of the first
Ukrainian nationalist movements
(Lemberg – Lviv & Czernowitz)

Ukrainian culture & language
protected and encouraged within
Austrian-Hungarian empire

Imperial Russia: fear of Polish and
Western Ukrainian influence



The October Revolution: the Bolsheviks in power





Interwar period: fear of capitalism

The collectivization of agriculture
110 million peasants

Majority of Ukrainian peasants strongly
opposed to collectivization

Stalin: Ukrainian peasants manipulated
by counter-revolutionaries



Ukrainian peasantry to
be punished

110 000 Ukrainian peasants
deported to Siberia

Creation of the **Gulag** (labor
camp)



Holodomor

Ukrainian term to define the organized
extermination of millions of Ukrainians
through hunger

Golod ("hunger") + *mor* from *moryty*
(verb meaning "to kill by starvation")

4 million dead






Soviet satellites' uprisings

1956, 1968, 1980

Baltic States, Western Ukraine,
Moldova, Georgia and Armenia
most receptive to calls for
freedom & emancipation from
Soviet Union



Ukrainian (*Maidan*) Revolution of 2014: the turning point

Pro-Russian president forcefully removed
from office

*“Russia reserves the right to use every
available options, including military force”
(Putin)*



RUSSIA

UKRAINE

KIEV

LUHANSK

DONETSK

**CRIMEA
PENINSULA**

**BLACK
SEA**



Putin's gamble

An easy “*special military operation*” (2-3 days) to decapitate the Ukrainian government

To replace the Ukrainian government by a pro-Russian government



Precedents

Budapest uprising (1956), Prague Spring (1968), Invasion of Afghanistan (1979)



Control over Ukraine's political future
once again: a security matter





What does Putin want?

Annexation of Eastern Ukraine

Control over the access of the
Black Sea

The partition of Ukraine?

A portrait of Vladimir Putin, the President of Russia, looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. He is wearing a dark blue suit, a white shirt, and a dark tie with a small white pattern. The background is a blurred mix of blue and brown.

Putin deeply affected by the disintegration of
the Soviet Union

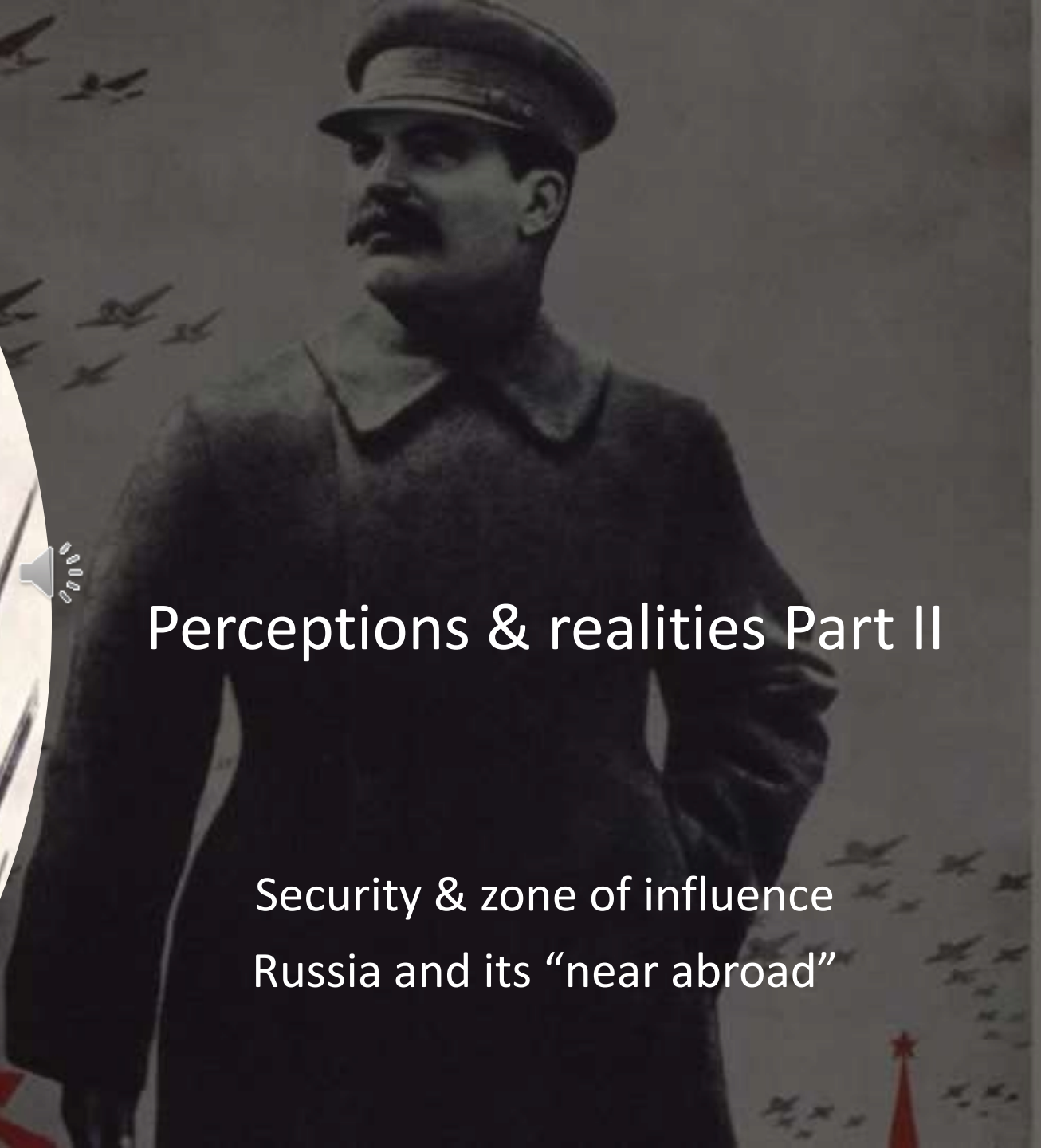
***“The collapse of the Soviet Union was the
greatest geo-political catastrophe of the
century.”***

(Vladimir Putin, 2005)

Russia being perceived as a declining power:
Putin's obsession

The enraged dictator who is not getting what
he wants

РОДИНА-МА
ЗОВЕТ!



Perceptions & realities Part II

Security & zone of influence
Russia and its “near abroad”



Russia and its *"near abroad"*

RUSSIA

The "besieged fortress"

Former Soviet Republics: Russia's
sphere of influence

KAZAKHSTAN

UZBEKISTAN

KYRGYZSTAN

TAJIKISTAN

TURKMENISTAN

GEORGIA

ARMENIA

AZERBAIJAN

MOLDOVA

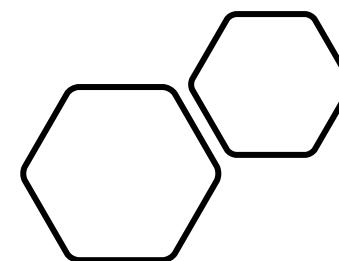
UKRAINE

BELARUS

LITHUANIA

LATVIA

ESTONIA



25 December 1991

15 former Soviet republics
already independent

8 December 1991: Russia, Ukraine
& Belarus formed the
**Commonwealth of Independent
States**

The principle of **equality**

21 December: 8 other former
Soviet republics joined the CIS
The Baltic States declined to join





1993 Constitution

46 regions + 22 “republics”

Some political autonomy

Putin’s priority (**step 1**): to put an end to regional autonomy

Governors no longer elected

Centralization

Step 2: Russia's "*near abroad*"



RUSSIA

Baltic states, Ukraine and Georgia:
closer relations with the West





RUSSIA

UKRAINE

 **KIEV**

LUHANSK

DONETSK

**CRIMEA
PENINSULA**

**BLACK
SEA**

What of the CIS?

Ukraine & Georgia called it quit





**Summer 2020: trouble
in Belarus**

Political demonstrations & protests

The fraudulent re-election of Alexander Lukashenko (in power since 1994)

Official results (landslide victory) rejected



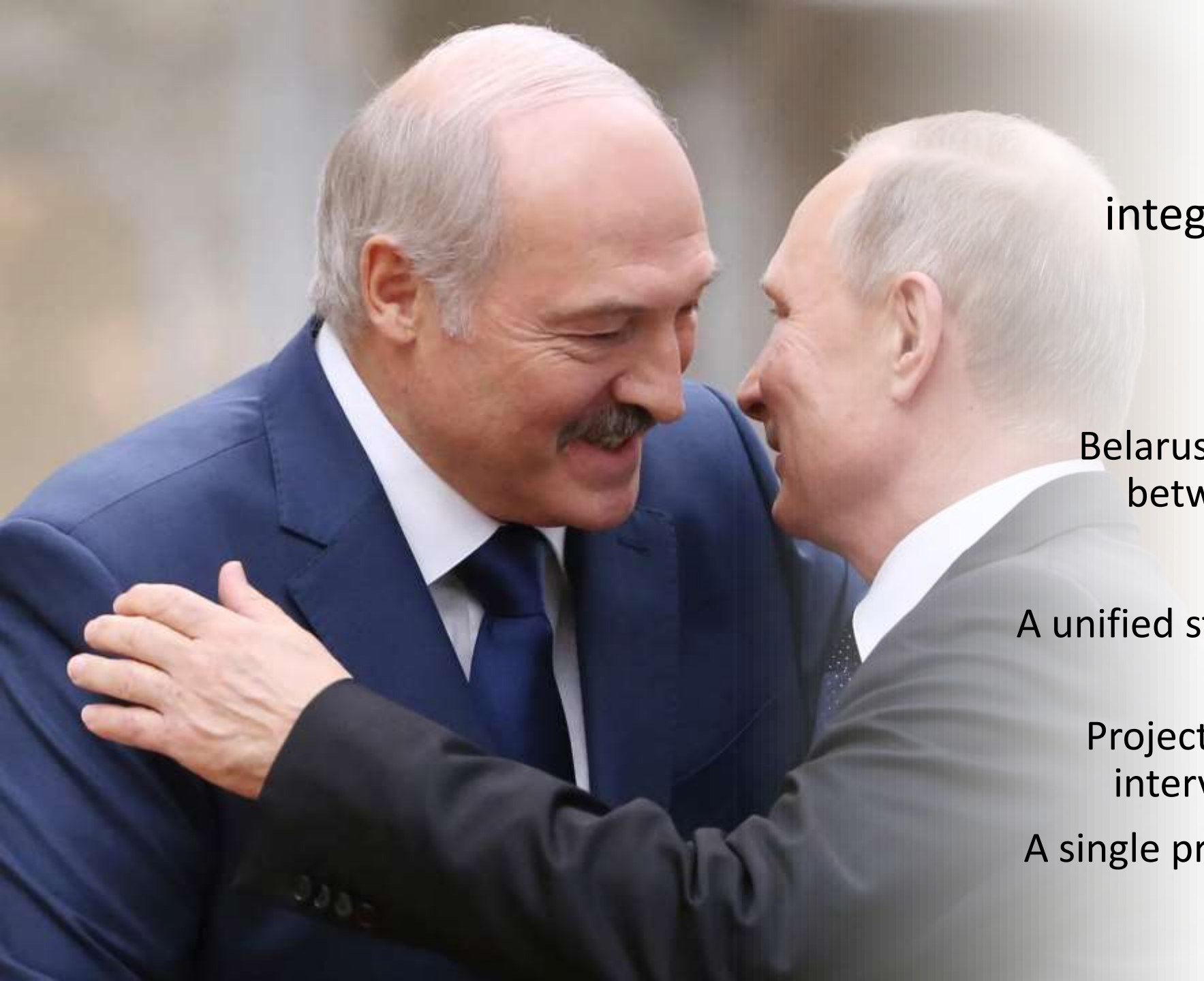


Belarus: *“a country
that does not exist”*

*“This nation is very close to us and perhaps the closest,
both in terms of ethnic proximity, the language, the
culture, the spiritual as well as other aspects.”*

Interview with Rossiya TV Channel, 20 August 2020

<http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/63951>



Plans for more
integration with Belarus

Belarus viewed as a buffer zone
between Russia and NATO

A unified state (closer military-political
ties)

Project initiated in **1999** (NATO
intervention in the Balkans)

A single president, national anthem &
currency



Plans for more integration with Belarus

Plan rejected repeatedly by Lukashenko

Belarus: another irritant for Putin

Lukashenko: no to a Russian military base

Visit of U.S. Secretary of State (Mike
Pompeo) in February 2020

Russia accused of meddling (elections)



Violent repression

Putin's congratulatory message: *"I hope your state activity will facilitate mutually beneficial Russian-Belarusian relations in all areas, deepen cooperation within the **Union State**"*

Lukashenko cornered: no choice but to turn to Russia

“The real collapse of the USSR is only taking place today”

Superficial nature of the Soviet disintegration (1991)

Post-Soviet space (except the Baltic states) remained a single entity (economic ties, culture, political elites in power...)

Gradual distancing of former Soviet republics from Russia





Moldova

27 August 1991: declaration of independence



Transnistria breaks away

The most industrialized region of
Moldova

Large proportion of Russophones

Independent Soviet republic
proclaimed

Civil war leading to an “autonomous”
enclave under the “protection” of
Russian troops

A “frozen conflict”



November 2020

The election of pro-European
Maia Sandu as president

Fight against corruption

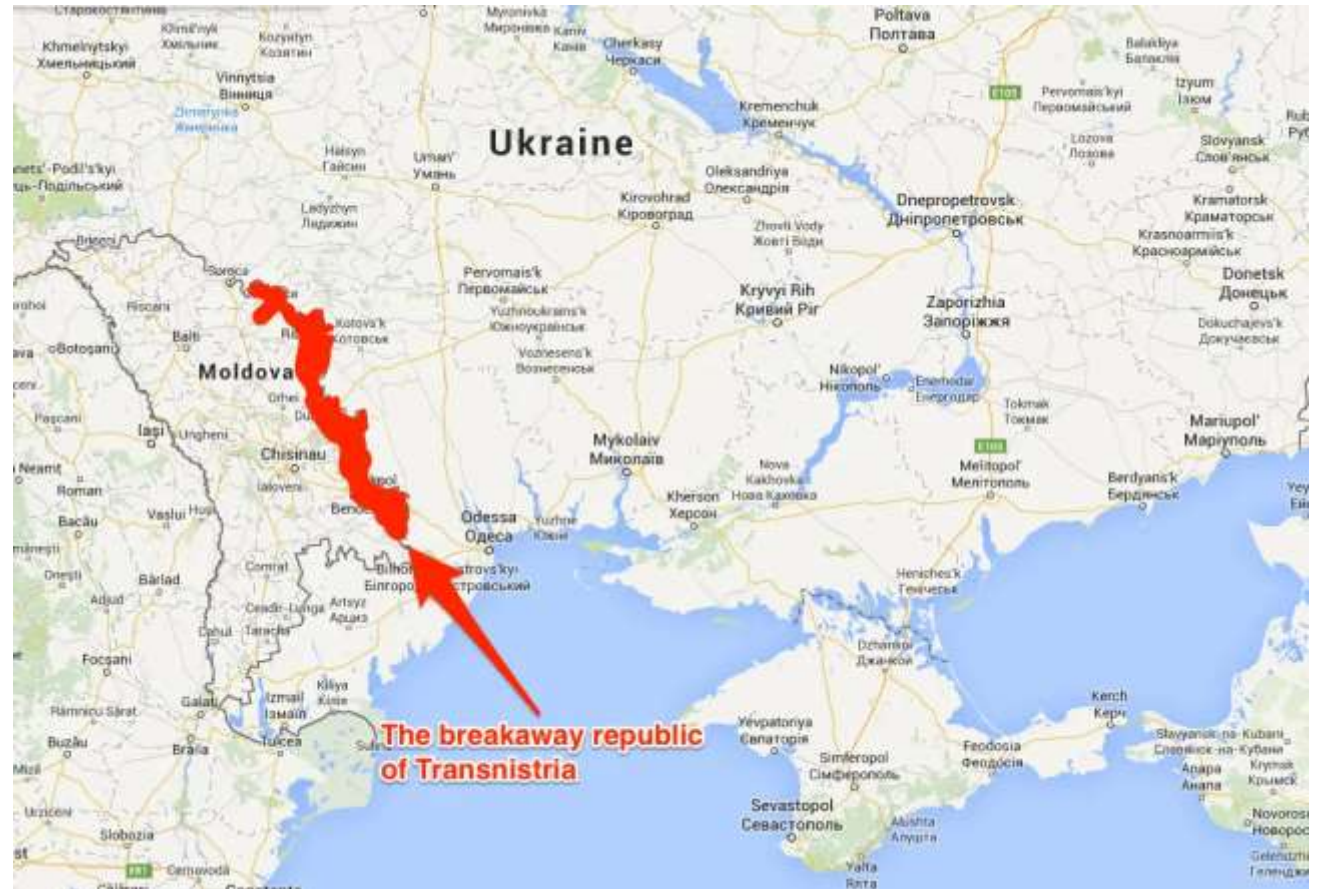
A major irritant for Putin

Remember Putin's goals

To control the Donbass entirely

**To advance all the way to
Transnistria: to deny Ukraine an
access to the Black Sea**

Overall objective: to neutralize and
weaken Ukraine (Ukraine no longer
able to export its grains)



Georgia

Armed conflicts (1992)





Armenia

Independence in September 1991

First Nagorno-Karabakh War (1992-1994)

Ethnic and territorial dispute
between Armenia and Azerbaijan
over enclave populated by a
majority of Armenians

Nagorno-Karabakh: integrated to
the republic of Azerbaijan during
Soviet era



Administrative map of Caucasus in the USSR, 1957-1991



Conflict reactivated
(September 2020)

Turkey's support of Azerbaijan

Russia's involvement: the role of
mediator for Putin

Moscow imposed the
deployment of 2 000 Russian
soldiers in the area

Strategic positioning

Strategic area (close to the border
between Turkey and Iran)





Central Asia

RUSSIA

ESTONIA
LATVIA
LITHUANIA

BELARUS

UKRAINE

MOLDOVA

GEORGIA

ARMENIA

AZERBAIJAN

KAZAKHSTAN

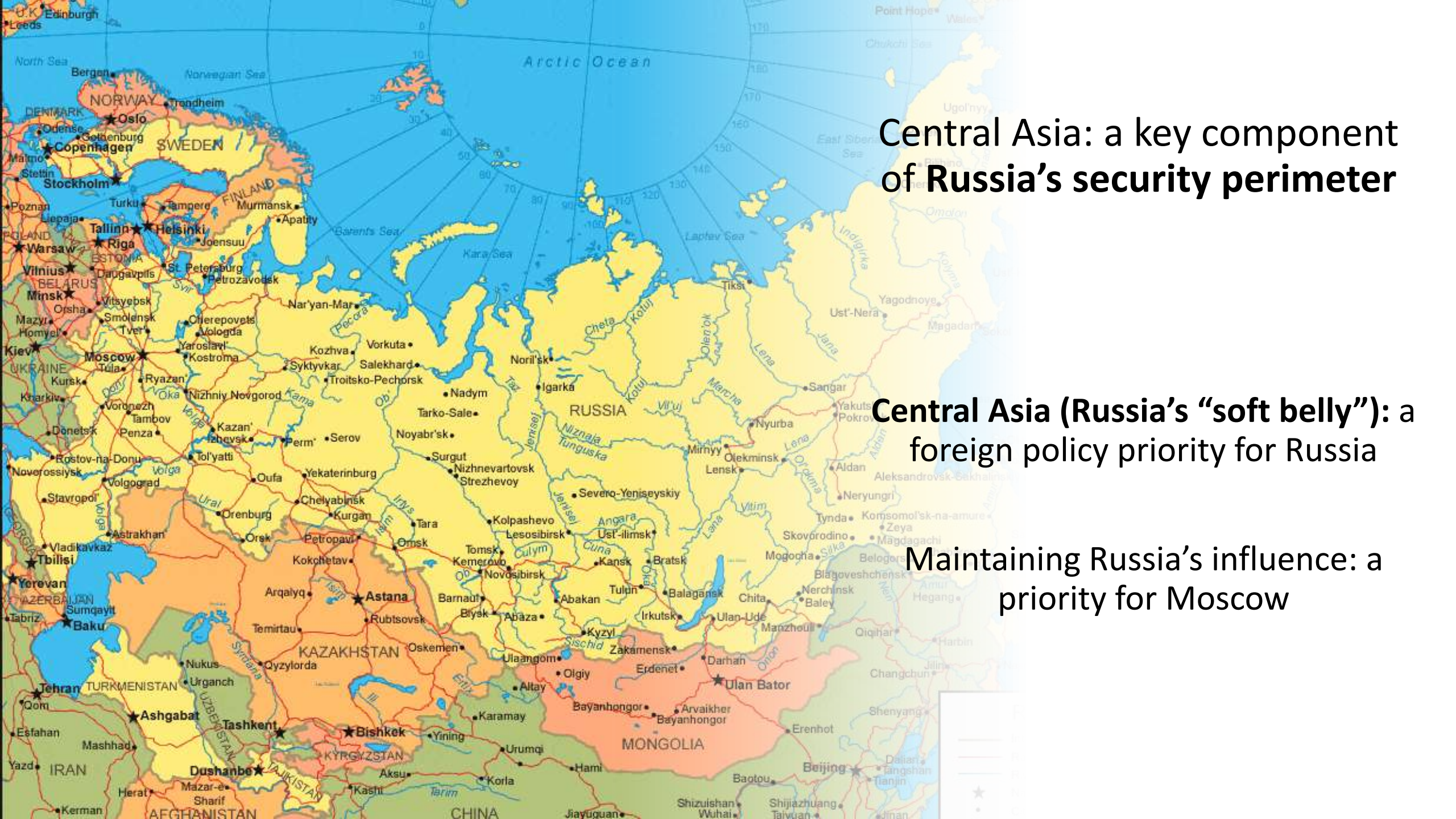
UZBEKISTAN

TURKMENISTAN

KYRGYZSTAN

TAJIKISTAN

**Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan,
Uzbekistan & Turkmenistan: 5
former Soviet Republics
independent since 1991**



Central Asia: a key component
of **Russia's security perimeter**

Central Asia (Russia's "soft belly"): a
foreign policy priority for Russia

Maintaining Russia's influence: a
priority for Moscow



Any change of government
closely monitored by Moscow

“Pro-European” vs. “Pro-Russian”



January 2022: Russian military intervention in **Kazakhstan**



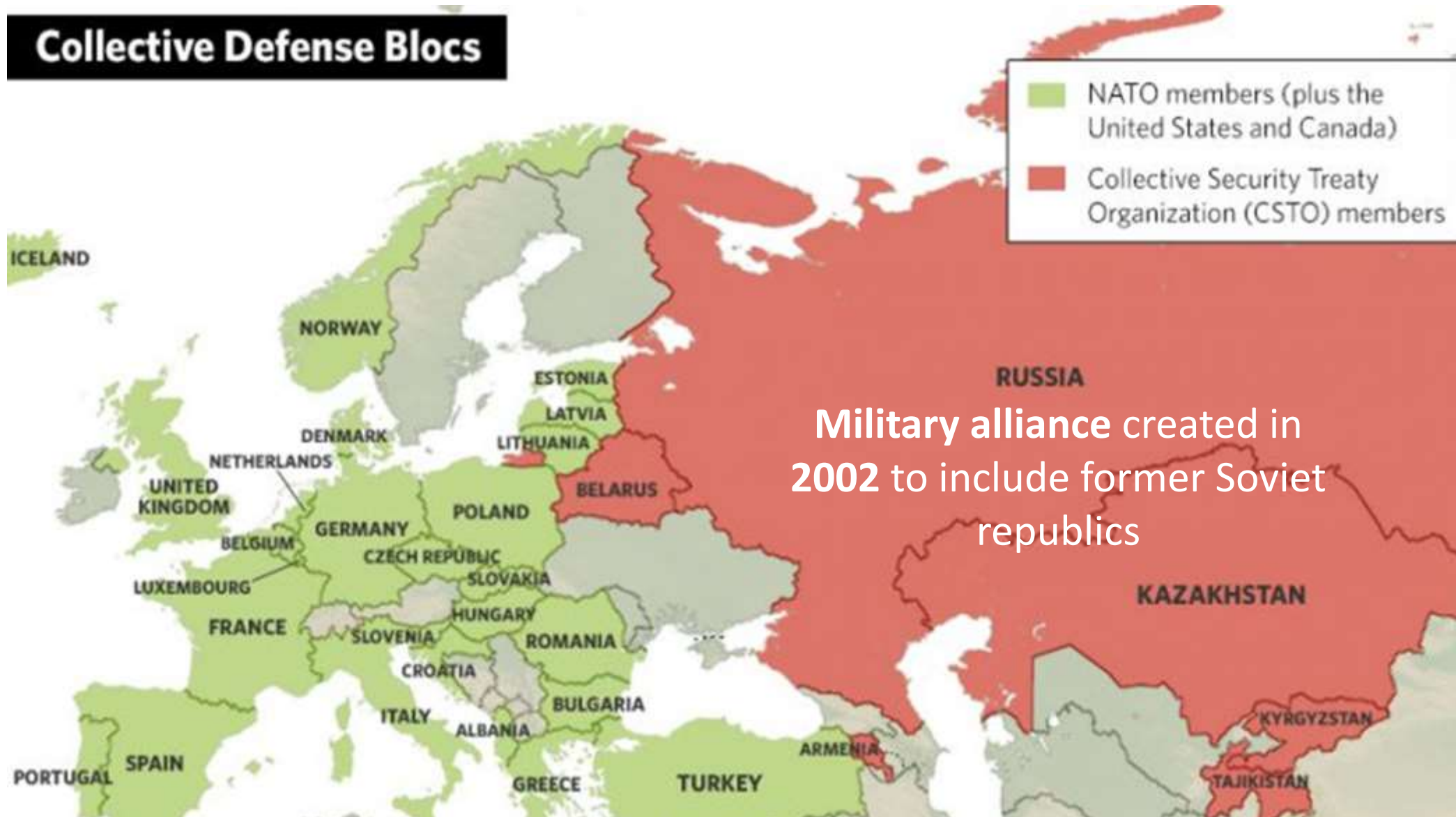


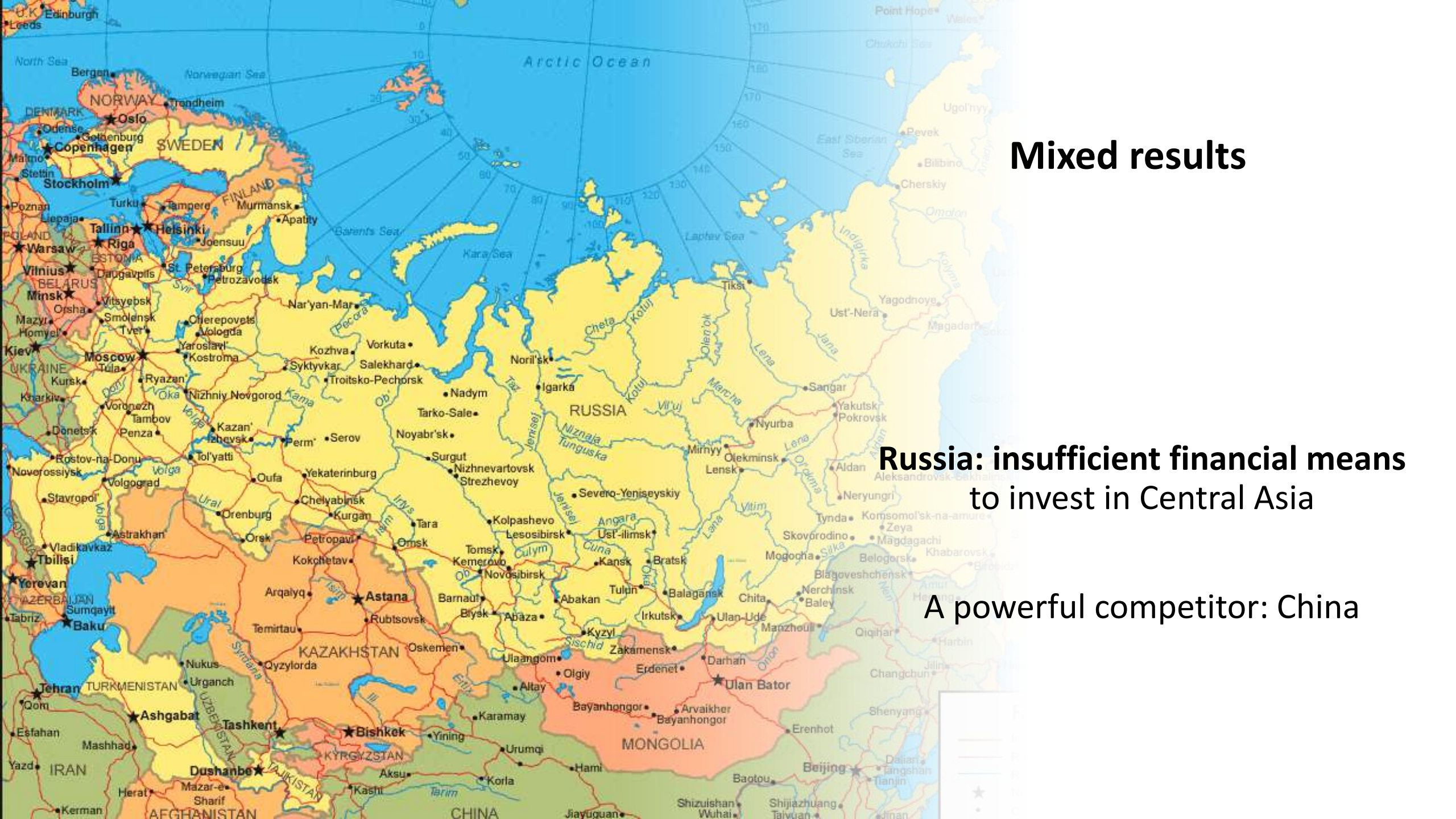
Promoting **economic integration**
between Russia & Central Asia

**2015: the creation of the Eurasian
Economic Union (EEU)**



Collective Defense Blocs





Mixed results

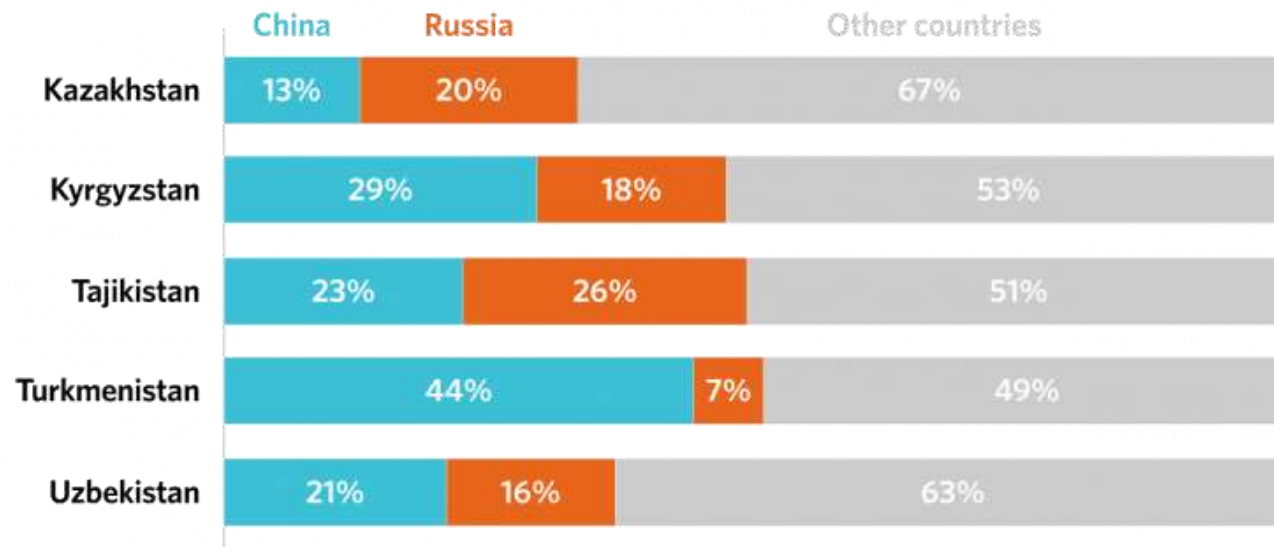
Russia: insufficient financial means
to invest in Central Asia

A powerful competitor: China

China fast becoming Central Asian countries' main trade partner

Trade With China and Russia

Trade with China and Russia accounts for a large percentage of Central Asian trade with the world



Source: Trademap

Copyright Stratfor

Exports: manufactured goods

Imports: natural resources (oil & natural gas)

Energy cooperation: central to China's economic policy in Central Asia

Exploitation of oil fields

2013: the acquisition by the **China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC)** of 8% of the Kashagan oil field



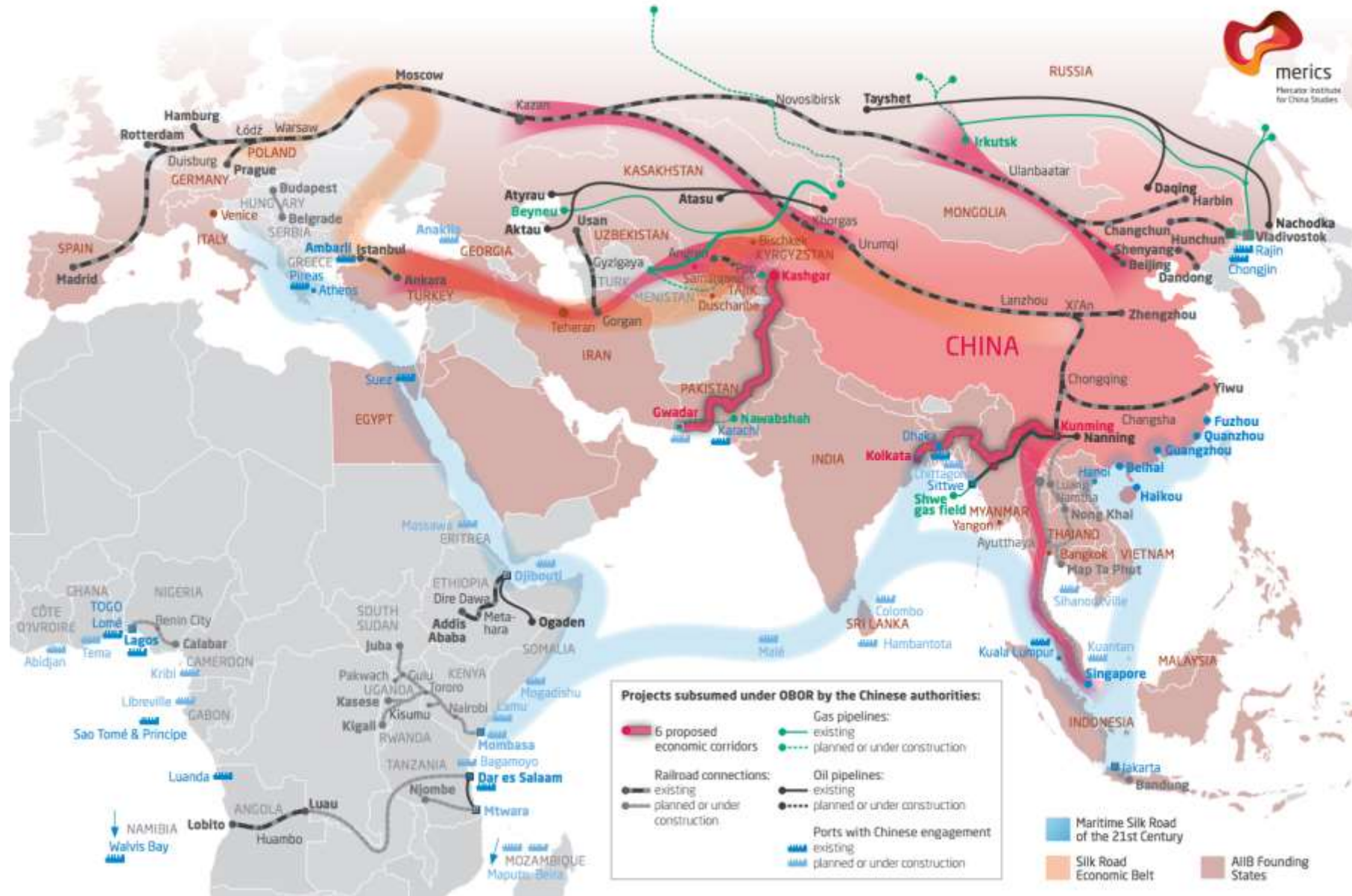


Development of **Galkynysh** gas field
(second largest in the world)

The “New Silk Roads”: an ever evolving project

Introduced officially in 2013 by Chinese president Xi Jinping in Kazakhstan







Increased polarization

The war in Ukraine: the acceleration of an existing trend

A global confrontation of **two opposing political systems**

Authoritarian governments vs. democracies



China's "circle of friends"

The world divided in **two main groups**

"Western countries" (the U.S., the EU, Canada, Australia and Japan)

Western countries perceived as critical of-hostile to China

Not natural partners



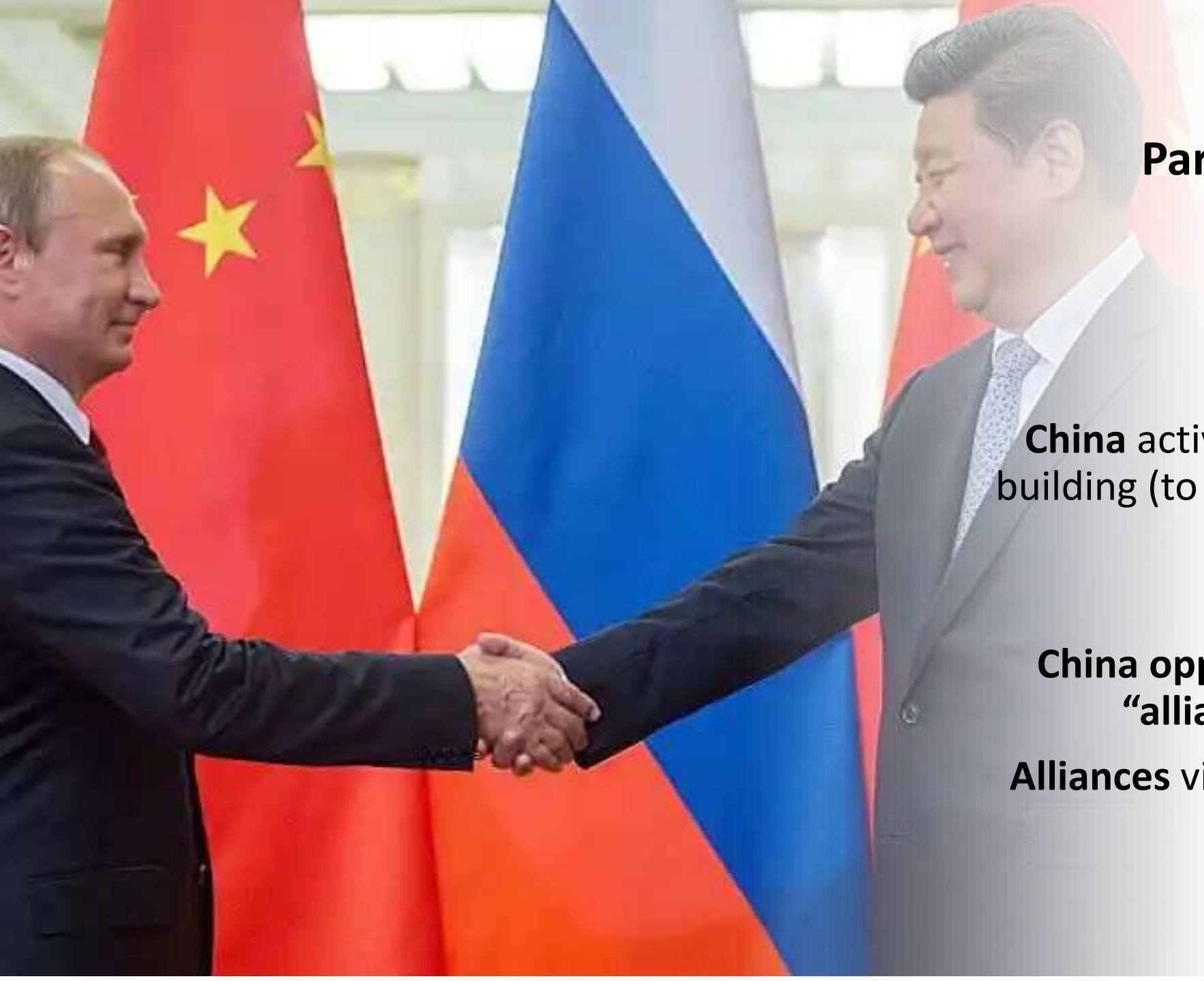
China's "circle of friends"

The world divided in **two main groups**

The rest: developing and emerging countries

The "foundation" of China's network of friends

Russia at the core of the network



Partnerships but not alliances

China actively engaged in coalition building (to “build a global network of partners”)

China opposed to the concept of “alliances” (since 1949)

Alliances viewed as too constraining



Renewed friendship: the work of Xi Jinping

Russia: Xi Jinping's **first foreign trip** (one week following his election – 2013)

Teaming up with Russia diplomatically to contain the influence of the U.S. and its NATO allies

A “*strategic partnership*” between Russia and China



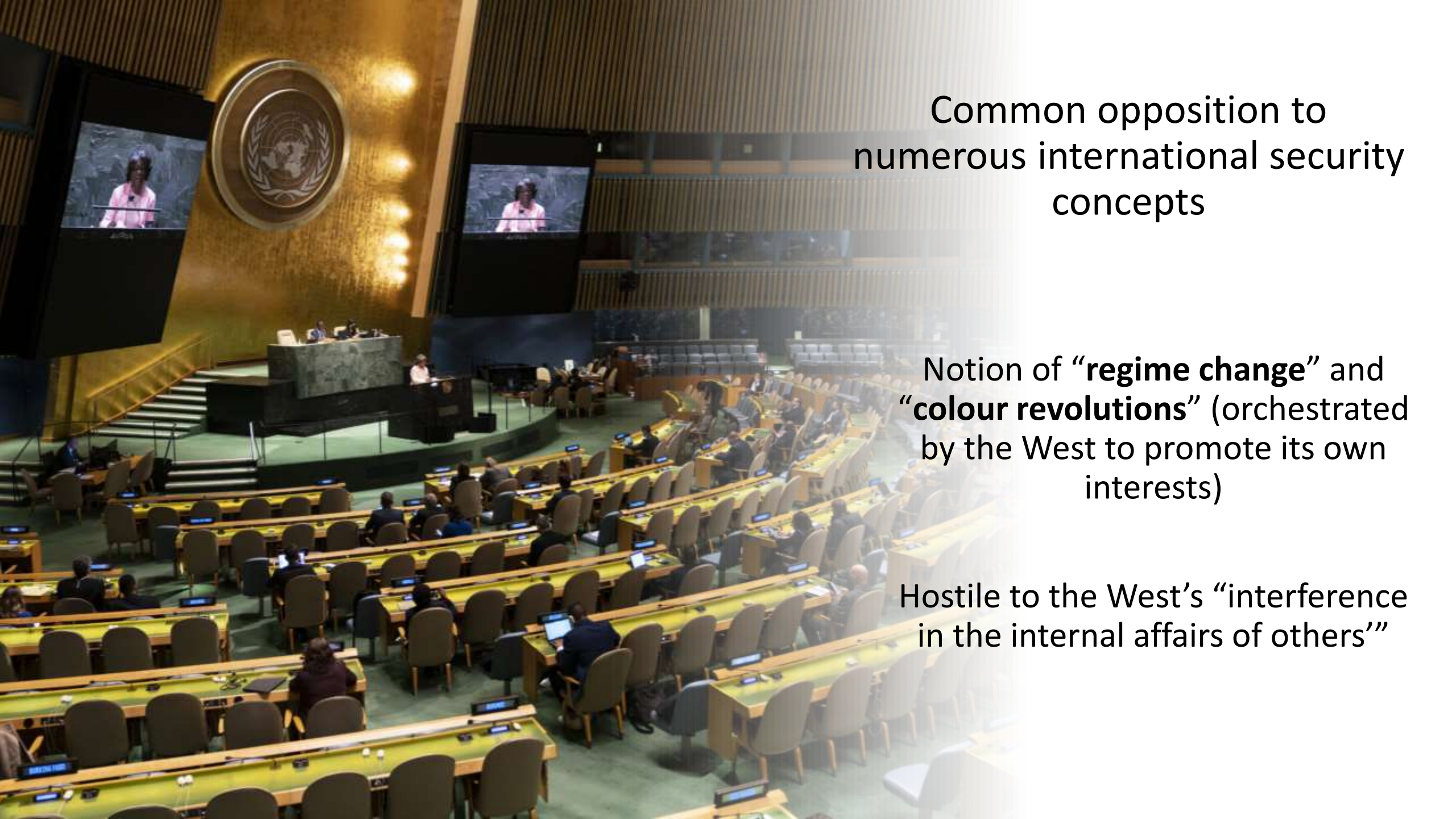
The war in Ukraine

Enhanced China-Russia partnership

China's ongoing support to Russia (China's
"Chief strategic partner")

*"The friendship between the two peoples is
ironclad"* (Wang Li, 7 March)

Not necessarily advantageous to Russia in
the long term?



Common opposition to numerous international security concepts

Notion of “**regime change**” and “**colour revolutions**” (orchestrated by the West to promote its own interests)

Hostile to the West’s “interference in the internal affairs of others”

Takeaways

30 years after the fall of the Soviet Union:

1. The post-Soviet world still faces territorial disputes, problems associated with political governance and corruption

Takeaways

2. Moscow will stop at nothing to maintain the former Soviet republics (excepted Baltic states) within its zone of influence

Takeaways

3. Regional organizations under Moscow's leadership (EEU & CSTO) to integrate countries like **Syria**, Iran or Venezuela, its allies of the "distant abroad"