

In the shadow of power: negotiating Russian bases

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"You realize that a Russian Presidents decree is not enough to establish a base in a foreign country."

Russian President Dmitri Medvedev, Nov. 25, 2010 ¹

Introduction

Why do states that have obtained independence decide to contact away their sovereignty and give up control over parts of their territory and important sovereign functions to external actors? How do they balance economic and security interests when deciding how much their sovereignty is worth? Why is surrendering sovereignty a palatable decision for some but not others? This paper investigates the issue by looking at the negotiations between Russia and newly independent states (NIS) over military basing rights in 1991-2012.

When the Soviet Union collapsed, geopolitical defeat and domestic problems forced Russia to decrease military presence abroad. Today, when the US has 662 military installations abroad and another 88 in non-continental territories,² Russia maintains only 25, all located in its immediate periphery. In 1991, most of Moscow's military objects were suddenly located in foreign states, and their presence had to be renegotiated. The terms of Russia's basing agreements with the NIS turned out remarkably diverse. Some states categorically rejected bases while others accepted Russian military presence demanding little in return. Some were preoccupied with the security ramifications of basing, and for others economic aspects of the relationship eclipsed all other concerns. The prices states have been (un)willing to accept and the degree of domestic contestation of basing have varied across countries and over time. The paper aims to explain this variation.

My research project views basing agreements as contracts "in which a base host legally cedes part of its sovereignty when it accepts a foreign military presence on its territory" (Cooley 2012, p. 10). I draw on

¹Russia considers more foreign military bases Medvedev, *RT*, Nov. 25, 2010.

²US Department of Defense 2010, Base Structure Report, www.acq.osd.mil/ie/download/bsr/BSR2010Baseline.pdf. Accessed Aug. 15, 2011.

Krasner's (1999) distinction between four types of sovereignty - international legal, Westphalian, domestic, and interdependence sovereignty - to explain the outcomes of basing negotiations and point out the trade-offs between autonomy and prosperity made by each state leader. I argue that the post-Soviet leaders signed basing agreement that violated Westphalian sovereignty only if they could legitimize the transgression of sovereignty to domestic audience. Their legitimation strategies were constrained by history, preferences of domestic constituents, and the leaders' own insitutional positions. Legitimation was invoked to gain an advantage over political opponents, to build ties between coalitions, and to exploit the mobilization power of symbolism and memory. In the process of legitimation, certain types of sovereignty were substituted for other types: the high mobilization potential of sovereignty was conducive to its instrumentalization for political ends.

Importantly, the post-Soviet space is an ideal universe to explore conceptualization of sovereignty, as the entire region consists of "states under construction" (Foucher, 1991) - engaged in nation- and state building and busy with the re-interpretation of history. Independence was a unique experience for most republics, and decision-makers had few precedents to follow. In order to consolidate their power in states populated by Soviet citizens and differentiate their countries from Russia, the legal successor of the URRS, post-Soviet leaders sought for the key periods of common history with neighboring countries or regions to legitimate their foreign policy decisions on a broad range of issues. This was a time when each post-Soviet republic "has sought to capitalize on the collapse of the Soviet Union and Russian weakness to create bona fide state actors, sovereign in both domestic and international legal sense" (Blacker and Rice 2001, p. 236). sovereignty came to many unawares and triggered inter-political struggles over conceptions of sovereignty, opening opportunities for the instrumental use of sovereignty by political actors.

The project also explores the role of domestic institutions in negotiation and conclusion of international agreements. In fact, nationalist forces in all states rejected Russian bases and protested any transfer of sovereignty to Moscow. However, only in some NIS did the opposition to basing prevent extending leases with Russia. The influence of domestic opposition varies across regime types because domestic institutions determine whose preferences matter. As a rule, democratic institutions require agreement from a wider range of actors (e.g., Lipson 2003; Martin 2000) but also give democracies an advantage in bargaining (Schelling 1960, Putnam 1988).

The empirical examples considered in the paper are likely to gain prominence in the future as more NIS turn westward and as the US presence in the region grows. Admittedly, some of the questions are too big to be answered by looking at the available number of cases. However, the analysis provides interesting insights.

The paper is organized as follows. First, I discuss the meaning of sovereignty and outline my theoretical argument on legitimation of sovereignty. Second, I explore alternative theories on the basing outcomes by tabulating all basing agreements concluded in the post-Soviet space since 1991 and use the medium-N study to select cases for deeper analysis. Finally, I conduct four case studies (Belarus, Ukraine, Latvia, and Georgia) to explain trade-offs between different types of sovereignty and leaders' strategies for sovereignty legitimation. Finally, I summarize my findings and consider their implications.

Conceptualizing sovereignty

Most scholars define sovereignty as an exercise of supreme authority over a geographically bounded territory. However, sovereignty is not absolute. Alexander Cooley and Hendrik Spruyt argue that states frequently divide and cede their sovereignty to other states (2009), and David A. Lake (1996) suggests that hierarchy is a prevalent ordering principle of international relations. Other authors contend that sovereignty may be not only a matter degree but also of kind (Krasner 1999).

My starting point is Krasner's theoretical distinction between four types of sovereignty (1999) - international legal, Westphalian, domestic, and interdependence and his insight that few states possess all four types of sovereignty and that sovereignty is ultimately subject to the national power and interests of states. In this project, I explore how these four types of sovereignty covary in the post-Soviet region and what strategies leaders use to legitimate compromising one type of sovereignty for another.

International legal sovereignty refers to the recognition of a state as an actor in the international system of states. International legal sovereignty permits to sign treaties, to establish diplomatic immunity, and to be exempt from legal actions taken in other states. It opens access to external normative and material resources that leaders of recognized sovereign states can use to increase their domestic position (Krasner 1999). In the post-Soviet space, international legal sovereignty came unexpectedly in 1991-92. Two post-Soviet states that had been full UN members, albeit subject to Soviet influence had to solicit international recognition all over again by renouncing nuclear arsenals. It is the arrival of international legal sovereignty that forced Russia to renegotiate and sign agreements on its military presence in these states instead of simply continuing the Soviet practice.

Many states that possess international legal sovereignty do not have *Westphalian sovereignty*, which entails the exclusion of external authority from the states internal affairs. A military basing agreement that allows one state to station its troops or military installations on the territory of another state or one

states attempts to influence domestic politics or trigger regime change in another state violate Westphalian sovereignty. From this perspective, Russian meddling in Georgian elections, Western democratic conditionality, the establishment of the CSTO or the Russia-Belarus Customs Union are all transgressions of Westphalian sovereignty some more welcome than others. A loss of Westphalian sovereignty by entering in a close military alliance with Russia may eventually endanger Belarus' international legal sovereignty.

Domestic sovereignty refers to the effective exercise of authority within a given territory. States might, or might not, be able to maintain order, collect taxes, or control crime. Georgia and Tajikistan in the 1990s are prime examples of weak domestic sovereignty. Weak domestic sovereignty has rarely been a ground for non-recognition of a states international legal sovereignty, but a complete loss of domestic sovereignty may force the international community to intervene, thus deprive the state of both Westphalian and international legal sovereignty.

Finally, *interdependence sovereignty* relates to the states ability to regulate movement across borders and is increasingly undermined by globalization. A loss of interdependence sovereignty might lead states to compromise Westphalian sovereignty by entering organizations like the EU or the CSTO (Krasner 1999, p. 13-14).

The salience of each type of sovereignty varies with external circumstances, and objective changes can alter identities and reorder priorities. As the environment changes, international legal sovereignty may dominate other concerns or the need to maintain domestic sovereignty may force the decision maker into alliances that undermine Westphalian sovereignty.

A good example of the changing primacy of one type of sovereignty over another is the turnaround on nuclear issues in Belarus and Ukraine in the 1990s. Before formal independence was achieved, the opposition in both countries denied nuclear weapons as symbols of Russian oppression and Chernobyl tragedy. First of all, the slightest hint that a satellite was considering retaining nuclear arsenal before 1991 would have alarmed Russia forcing it to step in thus jeopardizing achievement of domestic, Westphalian, and international legal sovereignty. Second, anti-nuclear protests were an efficient way to win a national audience and dissent without openly challenging Moscow (Marples 1996). Third, the non-nuclear status distinguished the newly independent states from the Soviet Union.³ Most importantly, denuclearization was the best strategy to obtain Western assistance and recognition of international legal sovereignty by the international community. However, once atomic power “no longer represented Moscows dominance but Ukraines potential to sustain itself as an independent and self-sufficient country,” moratorium on its use was overturned by the Ukrainian

³For example, foreign minister Zlenko asserted, “Ukraine never played any role in the decision-making process which led to the creation of the third largest nuclear force in the world on its territory” in *Sovetskaya Belorusia*, Feb. 16, 1993

Rada.⁴ After the international legal sovereignty was achieved, the practical problems of securing Westphalian and domestic sovereignty in the midst of economic crisis and Russia's claims on Crimea and the Black Sea Fleet, and western refusal to provide security guarantees higher than those offered by the NPT⁵ became the top priority.

Sovereignty is especially relevant for understanding the politics of military basing. In the IR literature, military bases are typically seen as indicators of alliance preferences (e.g., Yost 1991, Fumagalli 2007). The presence of foreign troops is believed to deter aggressors and allow hosts to spend less on national security (Lake 2007). Not surprisingly, no NATO member states host Russian bases. This perspective suggests that hosting a foreign military base may actually protect a state's international legal or domestic sovereignty in the long run, even as it undermines its Westphalian sovereignty in the short run. But the story is more complicated: the presence of Russian base in Sevastopol did not decrease Ukraine's defense expenditures, and the Russian base in Latvia in 1991-1999 was anything but a sign of Latvia's alliance preferences. Importantly, hosting a base can be profitable. In addition to paying rent, sending states reward base hosts with aid and loans, lift trade barriers, and conclude customs unions. Puzzled at deducing Kyrgyzstan's alliance preferences from the presence of both Russian and US bases, one should look at the Kyrgyz budget, eight percent of which came from basing income in 2005.⁶ This implies that some states willingly trade Westphalian sovereignty for benefits of hosting military bases. The base benefits to host regimes include security against external threat, security against internal threat (i.e. guarantee that the host regime survives internal challenges); economic aid and assistance packages, and intangible benefits such as prestige, legitimacy, association with a powerful state (Cooley 2012).

Legitimizing sovereignty

As hinted above, securing one type of sovereignty often entails violating another. How did post-Soviet leaders evaluate these sovereignty trade-offs when negotiating basing agreements with Russia? Why are some types of sovereignty violated but not others?

These trade-offs are made by leaders of states who seek to advance their preferences as well as the preferences of their constituents and try to ensure that the agreement is ratified. Following Krasner (1999), I assume that the leaders want, first and foremost, to stay in power and, secondly, to advance the prosperity and

⁴Dawson, Jane I. *Eco-nationalism : anti-nuclear activism and national identity in Russia, Lithuania, and Ukraine*. Durham : Duke University Press, 1996, 81.

⁵Elaine Sciolino, "U.S. Offering to Mediate Russian-Ukrainian Disputes on Security," *The New York Times*, Dec. 4, 1993.

⁶*Kommersant*, No 93, p.10, May 25, 2005.

security of their states or constituents. When faced with an agreement that violates Westphalian sovereignty, a leader will sign it only if it maximizes his utility and if he can legitimize the transgression of sovereignty to domestic audience. For instance, if the leader is most likely to be evaluated based on the economic situation in the country, he may seek a military base agreement in return for economic benefits from Russia, but he faces the burden of rationalizing his decision in a way that is acceptable to the constituency and draft an agreement that will be ratified. This is why Krasner (1999) considers the principle of sovereignty to be “organized hypocrisy”.

Like Krasner, bargaining theorists tend to view sovereignty norms as epiphenomenal and legitimation of sovereignty as “cheap talk” (the “logic of consequences” argument). At the other extreme, constructivists, take sovereignty norms as having an independent effect (the “logic of appropriateness” argument). In this paper, I take the middle ground, by arguing that sovereignty is constructed but creates lock-in effects, constraining further actions - the logic of appropriateness and the logic of consequences both matter. Snyder, for instance, argues that rationalizations have a blowback effect and leaders often come to believe their own constructed arguments (1991). Fearon and Elster show that in democracies argumentation increases audience costs, punishing actors that defect from a position (Elster 1995; Fearon 1994).

The scope for instrumentalization of sovereignty norms is limited. A claim that sovereignty is violated has high mobilization potential, partly because sovereignty is still largely perceived to be indivisible. To be sure, such indivisibility is constructed and is not rooted in inherent properties of sovereignty: Lake (1996), Cooley and Spruyt (2009) are correct - sovereignty can and has been divided. However, the prevalent social construction of national sovereignty as indivisible greatly limits the leaders’ scope for compromising sovereignty in exchange for economic or security benefits or in exchange for accommodating other types of sovereignty. Therefore, decisions involving transgressions of sovereignty almost always go beyond straightforward utility calculations especially in the newly independent states like the post-Soviet republics. In many instances, giving up sovereignty is contentious and the costs of legitimation are prohibitively high.

In short, sovereignty is a constructed phenomenon, and to what extent a Russian military presence on another state’s territory undermines sovereignty is an open question. State leaders therefore engage in the strategic legitimation of their preferred basing outcomes. In this political process, certain aspects of sovereignty are constructed as divisible or as indivisible. Below I draw on Stacy Goddard’s legitimation theory developed to understand claims to indivisibility in territorial conflicts to theorize legitimation of Russian basing (Goddard 2006). Legitimation is strategic: leaders hope to gain an advantage over their political opponents, to build ties between coalitions, to gain support of the maximum number of constituents,

to exploit the mobilization power of symbolism and memory. As far as sovereignty is concerned, actors may bring up history of independent existence, ethnic distinctiveness, experiences of wars with a particular country, or instances of unscrupulous violations of sovereignty in the past to support their preferred position.

The context of legitimation determines the power of the argumentation as much as the substance. First, an actor's position within a set of social and cultural institutions contributes to the power of his/her legitimation strategies. In the post-Soviet context, the claims on benefits of Russian basing by former Communist party functionaries may be viewed differently than claims by the representatives of the nationalist opposition. The military may have more influence than industries. As Goddard argues, "legitimacy is positional: whether or not actors can make a claim depends on how they are embedded in surrounding social and cultural institutions" (2006, p. 40). Second, history and culture substantially narrow the range of legitimation strategies (Goddard 2006, p. 40). Even though subject to manipulation in the long run, historical memories such as the shooting of Polish officers at Katyn restrict the types of arguments for Polish-Russian military cooperation in the short run. Despite the low strategic value of the Black Sea Fleet, giving up the base in Sevastopol is seen as unacceptable by most actors due to cultural and historic factors, and it may take decades for legitimation of withdrawal to succeed. In short, historical context and existing social and cultural institutions explain why some types of sovereignty are easier to manipulate than others.

The legitimation effort is also likely to depend on executive autonomy and the extent of domestic agreement on the issue. First, leaders with high executive autonomy will exert much less effort at legitimation as they are relatively free to conclude the preferred agreements. Executive autonomy is larger in autocratic states where leaders are unconstrained by term limits and constituents wishes (though autocratic leaders may have a very different conception of national/personal interest than realist scholars do). The variation in executive autonomy across NIS and over time allows to imagine them on a continuum with highly centralized personalistic regimes at one extreme (e.g., Turkmenistan) and regimes with an active legislature and lower executive autonomy at another (e.g., Lithuania) (Hadenius and Teorell 2005a, 2005b). States with ineffective weak legislatures (e.g., Georgia in the 1990s) fall in the middle of the continuum. The more democratic a state is, the more channels of influence do the opponents and advocates of bases have at their disposal (Li, Resnick, 181). Autocratic leaders have a lot more leeway when drafting agreements because they do not need to accommodate diverse opinions, but even they are constrained (Geddes 2003, Svoboda 2009).

Second, disagreement on sovereignty and national interest allows contestation of any attempt at legitimation of a particular approach to sovereignty - this presents both risks and opportunities for leaders negotiating a basing agreement. If domestic actors disagree on whether Russia is a threat to Westphalian, foreign policy

decisions will be sometimes swayed by economic benefits derived from cooperation with Russia and will vary over time, precluding consistent behavior. If there is unity on the agreement undermining Westphalian or domestic sovereignty, attempts at legitimation of the opposite view can change little. The extent of agreement is often related to executive autonomy: the executive has more freedom in policy making in the conditions of legislative-executive policy preference unity (Martin 2000). To summarize, high executive autonomy simplifies the task of legitimating transgressions of sovereignty while the extent of domestic agreement on the issue constrains the extent to which legitimation of a given construction of sovereignty can succeed.

This paper will illustrate how sovereignty transgressions have been legitimated in four states that accepted Russian basing and why certain types of sovereignty were substituted for other types while concluding basing agreements.

Research Design and Case Selection

I begin with tabulating the basing agreements concluded between 1991-2011. This permits to draw some general insights on the importance of executive autonomy, reject alternative explanations, and justify case study selections (see Table 1).⁷

To measure executive autonomy, I rely on the index developed by Jagers and Gurr (1995). The index combines measures of the competitiveness and openness of elections of chief executive, the extent of institutional constraints on the executive, the competitiveness of political participation, and the degree to which participation is rule-based into 11-point indices of each state's democratic and autocratic characteristics. The difference between these indices ranges from negative 10 for a highly autocratic state to 10 for a highly democratic country. Freedom House scores are also included for comparison.

We see that 7 out of 23 agreements were concluded by autocracies. Only relatively democratic states (with POLITY scores of 5 and higher) demanded withdrawal. With the exception of Armenia, states with lowest polity score have agreed to longest leases (49 years). Additionally, scores of some states changed over the duration of negotiation period indicating a different institutional environment. For example, during the six years of the Black Sea Fleet negotiations, Ukraine's POLITY score dropped from 6 to 5 in 1994 but then rose to 7 by 1996. In Georgia, the POLITY score moved from four (1990-1995) to five (1996-2004) to seven (2005-2008) and then down to six. This is significant because a change of at least two POLITY points is considered a change in domestic political institutions (Marshall and Jagers 2002). Whether these changes

⁷I include Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in this table, but not in further analysis because these states did not have big Russian bases at the time of the Soviet collapse and cannot be easily compared to states that already had the bases and faced the decision.

had impact on the negotiating style or the benefits sought by the Ukrainian and Georgian governments will be explored in the case studies.

The table also includes variables suggested by main rationalist theories on alliances and international cooperation as most work on military basing was developed by neorealist⁸ or neoliberal scholars⁹.

The similarity of alliance portfolios is important for accessing states' perceptions of Russia: states that are wary of Moscow are more likely to join or aspire to join NATO or participate in GUAM, an alliance that aims to "strengthen the independence and sovereignty".¹⁰ While neither GUAM (inactive in the 2000s) nor CSTO are strong and close alliances, they indicate the leanings of members with considerable accuracy. For example, it is telling that Uzbekistan signed an agreement on the potential Russian base only after becoming a full CSTO participant (January 2006), ending six-year GUAM membership (1999-2005), and evicting the US from its base. Table 1 shows that Russia secured base presence in all CSTO members and that the states that (later) joined NATO insisted on withdrawal. The evidence is ambiguous with regard to GUAM

⁸Neorealists typically view states as subordinating economic interests to military security. They acknowledge the importance of economic factors only to the extent that these factors affect military capabilities and the resulting security environment (Mearscheimer 1992). Neorealists also view economic interdependence as increasing vulnerability and conflict. They argue that states consider security externalities when choosing trading partners (Gowa 1994) and give economic aid to allies to advance their security interests, which, in turn, allows other states to use strategic value of alliances to demand economic benefits (Mansfield and Bronson 1997). The greater the military threat faced, the more will a state pay for maintaining alliances, and the costs of alliance will be distributed based on the relative security needs of participating states (Snyder 1994, 472). In this view, tradeoffs are possible only in one direction toward greater military security at the expense of economic capacity. In the post-Soviet context the realist argument suggests that states that view Russia as enhancing their security would accept bases and not allow economic considerations delay basing agreements whereas states concerned about Russia would not accept bases irrespective of economic benefits. In particular, Russia should face lower obstacles to basing in the CSTO member states, as these states see eye to eye with Moscow on many issues, and higher obstacles in states in balancing alliances (GUAM, NATO). If security dominates, issues such as troop numbers, length of the lease, the size of the facility, should be salient in negotiations. While most realist models are concerned with systemic variables, the argument also applies to internal security, including terrorist threat (e.g., Tajikistan) and separatism (e.g., Georgia, Moldova). States' views on Russia's basing should depend on whether they see Russia as alleviating or exacerbating their internal security problems. Furthermore, David's (1991) argument that in weak and unstable states leaders choose alliances by finding an outside power that is most likely to keep them in office is fitting: regimes and leaders that view Russia as enhancing their stability should accept bases. One of the objectives of this paper is to determine which aspects of security mattered in basing negotiations most.

⁹Liberal scholars generally agree that economic interests shape security policies and that economic interdependence reduces conflict. Liberal models disaggregate states (unitary actors in realist models) into domestic actors with various preferences and show that international security outcomes depend on domestic structures (Peterson 1996, Auerwald 2000). Ideational liberalism emphasizes collective values and identities; economic liberalism stresses the role of domestic actors with stakes in the economic issues; republican liberalism focuses on the aggregation of domestic preferences (Moravcsik 1997: 52533). Most important for this study, liberalism explains how security-economics tradeoffs become possible. According to the liberal perspective, security concerns can be sidestepped when failure to conclude agreement presents an economic threat to an important constituency (Davis 2009, p. 175). States that are most dependent on Russia economically should be more likely to keep the bases. Economic conditions and the availability of Russia's subsidies and loans tied to the resolution of basing issues should be more important for democracies, especially when the executive's constituency base includes the affected business interests and when the legislature is actively involved. Issues like trade status, investment, debt restructuring, opening markets, etc. should dominate basing negotiations in such states. Additionally, democracies with active legislatures are more likely to be among the NIS that keep Russian bases despite staying outside Russia-oriented alliances - because they are more sensitive to the economic interests of their voters and have to accommodate a wider range of interests. Domestic contestation provides opportunities for issue linkage and economic-security tradeoffs. When some but not all actors are opposed to basing, economic benefits that come with basing agreements could secure domestic support: not by persuading those opposed on security grounds but by activating additional support from the previously neutral domestic actors. In such cases, Putnam's "synergistic linkage" works - "not by changing the preferences of any domestic constituents, but rather by creating a policy option (such as faster export growth) that was previously beyond domestic control" (Putnam, p. 447).

¹⁰GUAM, "The GUAM: History and Principles", Nov. 2000, <http://www.guam.org/general/browse.html> Accessed Aug. 25, 2011. In 2005, GUAM was renamed into the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development.

Country	Date	Base, function	Duration	Negotiations	Conditions
Ukraine	1997	Sevastopol: harbors, logistical facilities for the Black Sea Fleet, early warning radar	20 years	conflictual, very long	\$97.5 mil. per year in rent, Russia ratifies Friendship treaty
Ukraine	2010	Sevastopol: harbors and logistical facilities for the Black Sea Fleet	20 years	conflictual, quick	\$100 mil. per year in rent; significant gas discount
Kazakhstan	1994	Baikonur cosmodrome	20 years	consensual	\$115 million per year in rent
Kazakhstan	1996	Emba/Saryshagan: missile testing sites	10	consensual, ratified only in 2000	\$27.5 mil. per year in rent, \$24.3 million of which will be in-kind payments in the form of military training and supplies
Belarus	1995	Volga early warning radar, Vileika communications hub	25 years	consensual, quick	forgave debts
Armenia	1994	Gyumri: 102nd military base (3,000 troops)	25 years	consensual, quick	free of charge, training and equipping Armenian army, Armenia is contributing to maintaining the base
Armenia	2010	Gyumri: 102nd military base	49 years	consensual, quick	free, Armenia is funding some expenses
Abkhazia	2009	Sukhumi: TBD	49	consensual, quick	free
South Ossetia	2010	Tskhinvali: TBD	49	consensual, quick	free
Latvia	1995	Skrunda: early warning radar	leave, 4 y.	conflictual	dismantlement by Feb. 2000, \$5 million per year in rent
Estonia	1994	Paldiski nuclear submarine base	leave, 1	conflictual	submarines dismantled, reactor compartments put in sarcophagi
Moldova	1994	14th Army	leave, 3 y.	conflictual	withdrawal within three years, pending political solution to the conflict
Moldova	1999	14th Army	leave, 3 y.	conflictual	withdrawal within three years, unrelated to political settlement of the conflict
Georgia	1995	Bases in Batumi, Akhalkalaki, Vaziani, Gudauta	20 years	consensual	no rent, training and equipping Georgian army, not ratified.
Georgia	1999	Gudauta and Vaziani bases	leave, 2 y.	consensual	OSCE: liquidating two bases by 2001
Georgia	2005	Akhalkalaki and Batumi bases	leave, 3 y.	conflictual	withdrawing by 2005, no rent, Georgia promises not to join other alliances
Tajikistan	1994	201st Motorized Rifle Division	49 years	consensual	support for the Rahmonov government, patrol of borders.
Tajikistan	2004	201st Motorized Rifle Division	10 years	conflictual, delayed	Russia pays all costs, no rent; cancellation of \$240 mil. in debt, pledge to invest \$2 bil.
Tajikistan	2011	201st Motorized Rifle Division: 7000 Russian troops	49 years	conflictual, eviction threat	equipping Tajik army with weapons. Tajikistan was initially asking for \$308 mil. in rent
Kyrgyzstan	1993	Kant airbase	n/a	n/a	first nothing, later \$4.5 million annually.
Kyrgyzstan	2003	Kant airbase	15 years	consensual, quick	expenses shared; military-technical assistance; cancellation of \$40 mil. debt
Kyrgyzstan	2010	Kant airbase	49 years	consensual	weapons from Russia \$2 bil. loan; possibility of second base
Turkmenistan	-	no base	n/a	n/a	n/a
Uzbekistan	-	some talk about base in 2007	n/a	n/a	n/a
Lithuania	-	no base, troops withdrawn in 1993	n/a	n/a	n/a

members: Georgia and Moldova insisted on base withdrawal, Ukraine and Azerbaijan both accepted Russian bases after long conflictual negotiations.

The table also shows that some states faced substantial challenges to their domestic sovereignty while negotiating basing. Moldova was in a conflict with Transnistria, and Armenia fought a war with Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh (1988-1994). In the 1990s, Ukraine was battling separatist sentiments in the Crimea, and Georgia was mired in an ethnic conflict and fought a civil war. In 2008, Georgia fought a war with Russia leading to the secession of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

At least 11 of 23 agreements were negotiated with conflict and contestation; all agreements mandating withdrawal were conflictual. The longest negotiations lasted six years (Ukraine's 1997 agreement); five years (Tajikistan's agreement on the presence of 201 base); three years (Georgia's 2005 agreement). In contrast, other agreements were signed after weeks of discussion (Belarus, Armenia).

To assess states' economic situations, I include GDP growth in the year preceding agreement, the extent of trade reliance on Russia, and whether the NIS was energy-rich. Trade reliance was calculated using formula: $Trade\ ties\ to\ Russia = (Export\ to\ Russia + Import\ from\ Russia) / (Total\ Export + Total\ Import) * 100\%$. The data suggest that economics alone did not play a decisive role in basing decisions. Energy-poor states with substantial trade ties to Russia - Moldova (45.9%) and Latvia (43.3%) - demanded withdrawal, risking Russia's economic retaliation. However, basing conditions in many NIS include debt forgiveness or restructuring - considerable economic benefits of basing.

I also conducted a simple crisp set QCA analysis to explore different combinations of potential causes based on the characteristics that distinguish positive cases (states that accepted Russian military presence) from negative cases (states that demanded withdrawal).¹¹ Results are presented in Table 2 (1 indicates yes, 0 indicates no).

The analysis shows that the presence of Russian bases correlates with being in an alliance with Russia, which lends support to the studies that view bases as indicators of alliance preferences and security interests. We also see that the states that stayed out of CSTO but still hosted bases were all autocratic. This makes intuitive sense, although the causal mechanism is unclear: either states that enjoy Russian subsidies and basing income have less pressure to reform and liberalize, or the authoritarian states tend to favor additional income from accommodating Russia because it goes directly to a small circle of insiders. The most interesting cases (group 2) are states reluctant to join pro-Russian alliances yet still agreeing to Russian bases: Georgia

¹¹In determining positive cases I focus on the original intent of the parties. For example, Georgia's 1995 agreement accepting Russian bases for 20 years never came into force because the Georgian Parliament refused to ratify it. However, I count it as a positive case because the government in essence agreed to host the base by signing the agreement. Moldova signed several agreements mandating withdrawal, and I count this as a negative case even though the Russian military never left.

and Ukraine. Both are explored in more detailed case studies.¹²

Do democratic states with active legislatures have bargaining advantages? In Table 4, I compare Russia's agreements on relatively similar types of bases concluded around the same time between states with the 8- and 10-point differences in POLITY scores. The bases in Ukraine and Tajikistan are comparable as the first (maximum 12,500 troops) and second (maximum 7,000) largest Russian bases in the NIS. Agreements with Latvia and Belarus cover an essentially same type of military object - a radar station, - and were both signed in 1995. The station in Belarus took over the mission of the station in Latvia. We see that the more democratic state in each of the three pairs secured more favorable agreement terms. This is despite the fact that in 2004-2010 Tajikistan was courted by the US (as mentioned above) and that Belarus base was essential for Russia's security giving Latvia's insistence on closing Skrunda.

Unfortunately, this analysis does not allow determining whether autocratic states seek different types of benefits than democratic states. It is possible that basing income goes to a small circle of supporters in autocratic states and that agreements with autocrats contain secret clauses and unspoken understandings of political support. In fact, Moscow has helped both Tajik and Belarusian Presidents with political opponents.¹³ Russia also tried to persuade Tajik President Emomali Rakhmon that the US wanted to overthrow him to create "a string of anti-Russia military bases from Baghram to Manas".¹⁴

Selecting states for case studies

Base on the tabulations and QCA, to demonstrate a range of attitudes toward Russia, the four NIS were selected as representative of three distinct groups of states: those closely allying with Moscow (Belarus), those seeing Moscow as a threat (Latvia and post-2003 Georgia), and those in-between (Ukraine, pre-2003 Georgia). Examining whether these states' negotiating positions varied with the change of leadership (in Ukraine under pro-Russian Kuchma and Yanukovich versus pro-West Kravchuk and Yushchenko; in Georgia under Shevardnadze¹⁵ versus pro-West Saakashvili; in Belarus prior and after the election of Lukashenka)

¹²The QCA results should be treated with caution as the analysis over-represents the number of independent observations: the repeated instances of signing basing agreements within same countries are not entirely independent. However, basing outcomes sometimes vary over time within countries; additionally, deleting repeated country observations does not change the results. Moreover, as a robustness check, I conducted QCA using additional variables: trade dependence on Russia, the presence of civil conflict, and GDP growth. The results did not change substantially although using GDP growth (positive (1) or negative (0)) resulted in a less meaningful aggregation.

¹³For example, in December 2004, Russia arrested and extradited leader of the Tajik opposition Democratic Party Makhmadruzi Iskandarov was arrested in Moscow and extradited.

¹⁴Cable 05DUSHANBE1702 on Oct 20, 2005, 9:42 UTC from Embassy Dushanbe (Tajikistan), <http://www.cablegatesearch.net/cable.php?id=05DUSHANBE1702>.

¹⁵It would be too simplistic to call Shevardnadze pro-Russian as he experienced ups and downs in his relationship with Russia and had a certain reputation as Mikhail Gorbachev's foreign minister. However, his views about Russia were much more moderate than those of his successor Saakashvili.

allows exploring additional variation.

Each of these states is asymmetrically dependent on Russia. However, Ukraine and Latvia decreased their economic ties with Russia over the 1990s while Belarus increased them. Importantly these four states also vary on power and economic indices. In the 1990s, Ukraine was most capable of severing ties with Russia and surviving of all NIS. Additionally, Ukraine and Belarus both possessed nuclear arsenals in the early 1990s - a useful bargaining chip. In contrast, Georgia was a weak state tormented by the civil war. Latvia was stable but very weak, with a population of 2.6 million and an army of six thousand. These states also vary in their political institutions (see Figure 1). Initially liberal, Belarus grew increasingly authoritarian since the election of President Lukashenka in 1994. Latvia has been a relatively democratic state all along. Both Ukraine and Georgia have experienced democratic transitions, and some argue Kiev is undergoing an authoritarian setback. Additionally, in Ukraine and Latvia the legislature has played an important role in negotiating and ratifying international agreements.

Russia renegotiated basing rights with two of these states, under different political circumstances. Georgia's signed three different agreements with Russia: in 1995 (to keep the bases), in 1999 (to withdraw two bases out of four), and in 2005 (to withdraw the remaining bases). Ukraine drafted 7-10 versions of the agreement, and the fate of the Sevastopol base was finalized twice in 1997 and 2010. The time frame (1991-2011) allows examining the impact of changes in external and internal security environment and of the variation in economic conditions and domestic institutions within countries. For instance, the case study on Georgia will look at the variation of Georgia's negotiating power over the following periods: civil war (1992-1994), stable authoritarian rule by Shevardnadze (1995-2003), reformist democratic rule by Saakashvili (2003-2008), which ended in a brief war with Russia, and the post-2008 period with Abkhazia and South Ossetia declaring independence from Georgia and concluding separate agreements with Russia.

Within each country-case, I will rely on process tracing to examine the causal mechanisms at work.

Belarus: "voluntary abdication of sovereignty"?

Belarus houses two Russian military objects: a modern early warning radar near Baranovichi completed in 2002 ("Volga") and a communications hub for Baltic sea submarine activity in Vileika. According to the agreement signed on Jan. 6, 1995. The immovable property belongs to Belarus, and Russia finances and uses the objects rent-free for 25 years. At the time of the agreement, Russia forgave Belarus \$1.2 million in debt. According to Mikhail Chigir, Prime Minister of Belarus who participated in the negotiations and

signed the agreement, this “was in fact payment [for using the military objects]”.¹⁶ The serving staff at Vileika was not to exceed 250 and at Volga 1200. Belarus receives the information obtained from the Volga radar and is allowed to use Russian military training grounds.¹⁷ Deyermond (2008) called the agreement “the voluntary abdication of sovereignty over military policy” by Belarus (127). Whom did this “abdication of sovereignty” benefit and how was it legitimated?

In 1995, like most of the NIS, Belarus was in severe economic crisis. Belarusian leadership hoped that a union with Russia would alleviate economic problems and praised themselves for realizing this before other post-Soviet republics.¹⁸ The people agreed: in May 14, 1995 referendum, 83.3% voted for economic integration with Russia. The people were also extremely passive: due to low turnout, it took several rounds to elect deputies to 1990 and 1995 legislatures and many seats were left unfilled.¹⁹ According to Chigir, “the military objects issues were secondary to Belarus at the time and had a meaning for Belarus only in relation to its debt”.²⁰ Out of the seven documents signed on January 5, 1995, only the agreements on the Customs Union and the military objects were subject to immediate ratification, and the customs union treaty stole the limelight.²¹ In fact, the economic union with Russia diminished both Westphalian and domestic sovereignty even more dramatically than the basing agreement.

Belarus had a choice between surrendering Westphalian sovereignty to the West (accepting the IMF conditions would certainly subject Belarusian domestic institutions to external influence) or to Russia (which would mean simply maintaining the status quo and not destroying the ties between the republics formed during the Soviet coexistence). The president unequivocally embraced the latter option - not surprising given he had no nationalist credentials and won election due to his populist appeal and promises to end corruption. Therefore, Lukashenka’s background as an outsider of the system influenced his choice of legitimation strategies and his subsequent row with the West locked them in place for years to come. Alyaksandr Lukashenka’s ultimate political ambition was becoming president of a Russian-Belarusian union, and transgressing Belarus’ Westphalian sovereignty was a necessary step toward this goal. How did he legitimate this position? Lukashenka, increasingly anti-Western, argued international financial organizations and the West were “destroying the economics of Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia”.²² Only the Belarus National Front

¹⁶ Author’s Interview with Mikhail Nikolaevich Chigir, Prime Minister of Belarus from July 1994 until November 1996, Aug. 18, 2011.

¹⁷ Agreement, Jan. 6, 1995.

¹⁸ Iryna Garanina, My ne mozham strachvac’ rasiiski rynak, *Narodnaia Gazeta*, May 24, 1995, No. 95.

¹⁹ According to the electoral law, elections are invalid if voter turnout is less than 50%.

²⁰ Authors Interview with Chigir.

²¹ Mecheslav Grib, “Interview with Viacheslav Zenkovich”, *Narodnaia Gazeta*, Feb. 17, 1995, No. 1051. Also see *Narodnaia Gazeta*, December 10, 1995, No. 1023.

²² “Lukashenka predosteregaet Zapad ot neuvazhenia Vostoka”, *Narodnaia Gazeta*, December 2-4, 1995, No. 247-248.

disapproved of economic and military dependence on Moscow. Somewhat cautious about the economic side of the issue was also the Belarusian left (22% of seats in 1995 elections) because the Russia of the 1990s was professing ambitious market reforms.²³ All of the above ensured the avoidance of framing of the issue as a transgression of Belarusian sovereignty and opened the door to a quick agreement with Russia.

In fact, the decision to retain Russian military objects was argued to actually strengthen Belarusian sovereignty. According to Chigir, “everybody understood that if the objects are destroyed or moved to Russia, Belarus’ position as a sovereign state will weaken”.²⁴ His statement is in sharp contrast with the views of most Ukrainian and Latvian policymakers but in tune with President Lukashenka’s enthusiasm in 1994: “Who are we to ensure our security with? My answer is Russia. Our economy and our army are most closely linked with Russia.”²⁵ Similarly, Belarusian political forces did not hesitate about entering the CIS and CSO (later CSTO) and were concerned about NATO instead²⁶. Strategically, the military objects were officially not considered international military bases, which diminished the potential mobilization potential around the symbolism of foreign military presence.

Only the nationalist forces represented by Belarus People’s Front (BPF) attempted to link the military objects to security and rejected Russian military presence as undermining Belarusian sovereignty.²⁷ For them, no economic reward was high enough. In 1995, the “shadow Cabinet of Ministers” argued that a neutral country could not have military objects of other states on its territory and advocated liquidating them.²⁸ They claimed Russia waged an “economic war” against Belarus and opposed entering the CSO.²⁹ The Belarusian opposition campaigns against the bases to this day.³⁰ However, their views were in the minority in the 1990s. In the two rounds of elections to the Supreme Soviet - on March 4, 1990 and April 22, 1990 - the BPF took 27 seats, or less than 10 percent of the total number. In 1995, not a single BPF candidate was elected.

The passivity of the electorate also explains Belarus’ behavior in 1991, when the country’s leadership was reluctantly “pushed into independence” when their counterparts in other countries “struggled for it”.

²³Arkady Moshes, “Rossia-Belarus: ne vremia pochivat na lavrah”, *Narodnaia Gazeta*, Sep. 8, 1995, No. 176.

²⁴Author’s interview with Chigir.

²⁵“President Pins Hopes for Security on Russia”, ITAR-TASS, Aug. 10 1994 in Brzezinski (1997), p. 304.

²⁶Aliaksandr Lukashenka: “Nam, Iak I uziamu svetu, iadzernaia zbroia ne patrebna”, *Zviazda*, Dec. 7, 1994, No. 252. In January 1995, when the Volga and Vileika agreements were signed, Lukashenka emphasized that Russian and Belarusian views on NATO coincided. Leonid Maltsev, “Vstrecha Ministrov Oborony RB i RF”, *Sovetskaia Belarus*, Dec. 12, 1995, no. 234-35.

²⁷“Accusations of ‘Overhauling’ Statehood for Moscow”, Moscow Interfax, Feb. 10, 1995.

²⁸*Narodnaia Gazeta*, Jan. 26, 1995. No. 1035.

²⁹Valer Kalinouski, “US President Welcomes Independent and Nuclear-Free Belarus”, *Zviazda*, Jan. 18, 1994, No. 10; “Kalektyynaia Biaspeka”: gulni praciagvaiucca, *Zviazda*, Nov. 9, 1994. No. 227.

³⁰For example, in 2003 the Belarusian National Front held mass protests against the bases informing the population about their ecological and political damage. Ol’ga Mazaeva, Demokratiei’ - po radiolokatsii. Belorusskie natsionalisty agitiruiut naselenie podniat’ vosstanie protiv rossii’skikh voennykh baz”, *Nezavisimaa gazeta*, No. 174, Aug. 21, 2003.

Belarus has no prominent myths of struggle against the Russian empire and no previous experience as an independent political actor. In constructing national myths is forced to turn to the history of Grand Duchy of Lithuania - the political unit with symbolism already claimed by Belarus' Lithuanian neighbors. Several scholars have blamed this on the poorly developed sense of national identity and historical uniqueness. At the same time, given the tragic history of Belarus - Napoleonic Wars, the highest death toll in WWII - it is surprising that Westphalian sovereignty was not higher on the list of Belarus' priorities.

The non-opposition forces were willing to grant basing rights in return for economic benefits and envisioned a deal as rewarding as Russia's agreement with Kazakhstan.³¹ That Belarus could earn substantial amounts of money was never disputed. Some specialists estimated that building radar similar to Volga in Russia would cost more than \$3,2 billion and expected Belarus to earn no less in rent.³² According to another estimate, the environmental damage would amount to \$340 million and the troops presence on the Belarusian territory to \$114 million, so it was Russia who was indebted in 1995, not Belarus.³³ Much later, in October 2003, Lukashenka himself estimated Russia's costs for providing for its security without Belarus at \$21-25 billion.³⁴

The dire economic situation in 1995 and the precedents of Latvia and Kazakhstan did not lead to Belarusian politicians' fighting for economic concessions, however. The final version represented the view of the Belarusian president, who enjoyed high autonomy and a docile cabinet and hoped to develop a close relationship with Russia. Lukashenka's official explanation for the free lease was that the base was only 70% finished.³⁵ According to Chigir, who participated in negotiations, Belarusian negotiators simply "didn't see another way to pay its [gas] debt to Russia". The Russian side warned that if Belarus asked for too much, the objects would be simply moved to the Russian territory.³⁶ In contrast to Latvia or some Central Asian states that enjoy US attention, Minsk has had no external support in dealings with Moscow and could not hope to have its preferences accommodated. The main reason for the unfavorable terms of the agreement, however, is the lack of domestic contestation and the institutional context.

The negotiations were brief and largely beyond media scrutiny. The legislature played little role in the negotiating process. According to the Freedom House, the Belarusian parliament in 1995 was weak and easily manipulated by the Council of Ministers. Furthermore, the Belarusian Constitution provided for substantial

³¹Some politicians were also reluctant to sign a 25-year treaty, preferring a shorter period. Valiancin Zhdanko, "Energosobity pa lgotnyh cenah uzamen biasplatnyh tranzitau i vaennyh ab'ektau na nashai teritoryi", *Zviazda*, Jan. 5, 1995, No. 5

³²*Kommersant Daily*, Aug. 26, 1994.

³³Siarhei Barkou, "Hto kamu vinavaty", *Nasha Niva*, Mar. 14, 1996, no. 2 (40), p. 3.

³⁴Igor' Plugatarev, Ol'ga Mazaeva, "Lukashenko grozit ustroit' Putinu defolt..", *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, No. 56, Mar. 22, 2004.

³⁵*Narodnaia Gazeta*, Jan. 13, 1995, No. 1026.

³⁶Author's Interview with Chigir.

presidential powers (Article 100) and the president effectively ruled by decrees.³⁷ This was accompanied by the erosion of media freedom. In December 1994, when the agreements were negotiated, newspapers went to press with blank spots due to censorship.³⁸ On the day the agreement was signed, Presidential Decree No. 8 moved the Belarusian information agency under the jurisdiction of Presidential Administration.

In the end, the terms of the agreement were informal and provisional: for example, debt forgiveness was discussed and but the actual amount of debt was not put into a formal agreement until 1996. Later chairman of the Supreme Soviet Mecheslav Grib regretted that the government “rushed” to sign the lease.³⁹ Objections were raised only post factum. For example, Minister of Foreign Affairs Uladzimir Sianko said that if Belarus planned to receive energy subsidies, this should have been explicitly mentioned in the agreement. Stanislau Shushkevich, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet in 1991-1994, said the government failed to take the money Belarus deserved.⁴⁰ Lipson (1991) argues that the need to reach agreements quickly (for instance in economic crisis situation) as well as the ability to renegotiate or modify as circumstances change are some of the reasons for choosing informal agreements or opting not to spell out all the details (501). This seemed to have been the case in Belarus where the general agreement on the absence of Russian threat, weak institutions, and a state of urgency due to the economic crisis made an informal agreement possible.

The nature of the agreement allows the Belarusian leadership to seek additional tangible and intangible benefits from Russia’s rent-free use of the military objects. Minsk uses the bases to remind Russia of its value as an ally and to warn of the consequences of raising energy prices. When the gas wars started, Lukashenka asked the Ministry of defense to come up with a few ways of charging rent for the use of Volga.⁴¹ At the beginning of the 2003 gas war, Minsk warned to turn off electricity to the station.⁴² The military objects were also brought up by Minsk at the height of the Russia-Belarus Gas war in February 2004⁴³ and when Moscow warned of limiting oil flows to Belarus in January 2006.⁴⁴

Lukashenka has also increasingly linked the rent-free basing rights to his own political career. Already in 1999, speaking in front of the Russian Duma on the benefits of the Russia-Belarus Union, he painted himself

³⁷“Belarus”, Freedom House, 1994-1995.

³⁸They were prohibited from publishing a corruption report by Sergey Antonchik. This also led to decrees dismissing the editors-in-chief of *Sovyetskaya Byelorussiya*, *Narodnaya Gazeta*, *Znamya Yunosti* and to the closing the “8th Independent Channel” (Presidential Decree No. 269 on December 23, 1994; Decree No. 113 on March 17, 1995; Decrees No. 157 and No. 158 on April 20, 1995).

³⁹“Mecheslav Grib, interview with Viacheslav Zenkovich”, *Narodnaia Gazeta*, Feb. 17, 1995, No. 1051.

⁴⁰*Zviazda*, Jan. 13, 1995, No. 8.

⁴¹E. Alekperov. “Fakty: Belarus smotrit na Gabalinskuiu RLS”, *Ekho*, Mar. 13, 2004, 2004-03-13 EHO-No. 048.

⁴²Igor’ Plugatarev, Ol’ga Mazaeva, “Lukashenko grozit ustroit’ Putinu defolt. Stolknuvshis’ s nekhvatkoi’ gaza, Belorussiiia vspomnila pro ‘dolg’ Rossii v 25 milliardov dollarov,” *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, No. 56, Mar. 22, 2004.

⁴³Pavel Bykovski, “Nezamenimyh Net. No poka Rossiiu Interesuet lish kontrol nad ekonomicheskim prostranstvom zapadnogo sosed’a”, *Belorusskii Rynok*, Feb. 23, 2004.

⁴⁴Ivan Maksimov, “A Belorussia hochet opravit nashih voinov po domam”, *Nevskoe vremia*, Nov. 2006, 2006-11-01 NVS-No. 199.

as the initiator of completing the construction of Volga station and emphasized that instead of blowing up the objects like Latvia, Belarus sponsored their faster completion.⁴⁵ Lukashenka clearly played up to Russian constituencies hoping to one day become the head of the Union state. A decade later, accommodating Russia on the basing issue became linked to balancing against domestic threats: Minsk chose to reassure Russia of the rent-free use of the bases after Russia's Central Election Commission approved the outcome of Belarus' disputed 2010 presidential election.⁴⁶

Latvia: US support and strong anti-Russian sentiment

After the collapse of the Soviet Union Latvia was left with a Russian early warning radar at Skrunda. Latvia's history substantially narrowed the range of legitimation strategies for keeping the base: the memories of the forced inclusion into the Soviet Union, which started with Moscow forcing Latvia to accept its military bases in 1939, were still fresh (Jubulis 1996). The negotiations between Moscow and Riga focused on the length of dismantlement and the amount of compensation for the remaining years of operation. According to the agreement reached on April 30, 1994, Moscow would continue to use the station, with 500 military and 200 civilian personnel, for four years paying \$5 million annual rent (for comparison, Belarus's debt forgiven by Russia for the 25-year rent-free use of the identical station was \$1.2 million). Station would be dismantled by 29 February 2000.

Both states compromised. Russia argued that Skrunda was essential for its security and initially asked for at least five years of operation with only \$2 million in rent. Later, Moscow requested extending the lease for at least two years, until it would complete the radar station in Belarus. Latvia did not agree to either of these requests. In the end, the agreement that worked was proposed by the US officials who separately approached Russian and Latvian representatives and offered to link Skrunda's dismantlement to the withdrawal of Russian troops (about 50,000-80,000 in 1991).⁴⁷ Moscow would agree to withdraw all troops from Latvia by August 31, 1994 if Latvia allowed Russia to continue using the Skrunda radar for four years.⁴⁸ Therefore, we see that the agreement on extending the lease has actually contributed to strengthening Latvia's Westphalian sovereignty as it precipitated the removal of the Russian troops. Troops

⁴⁵Vystuplenie Prezidenta Belarusi Aleksandra Lukashenko v Gosdume RF, October 27, 1999.

⁴⁶Dmitry Babich, "A new honeymoon for Russian-Belarusian relations", RIA Novosti, Jan. 27, 2011, <http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20110127/162335444.html> Accessed Aug. 17, 2011.

⁴⁷Russia dragged its feet on the issue, and in October 1992 Yeltsin halted the withdrawal, causing Latvia to seek support from Germany, the US, and Nordic Countries. The estimate of troops' size was provided by Sergei Zotov, head of Russia's delegation in negotiations with Latvia. See *Diena*, Mar. 10, 1992. Cited in Muinieks (2006).

⁴⁸The US was weary of shutting down Skrunda because it provided early warning to Russia allowing keeping nuclear forces off trigger alert. See Goldgeier and McFaul (2003), p. 173.

left before the base was closed and very shortly after the ratification of the agreement, thus boosting electoral chances of the actors involved in drafting the agreement.

To be sure, to put up with a Russian base even for a few years was a big concession in the view of the Latvian policymakers, and initially cooperation with Moscow was considered impossible.⁴⁹ Riga viewed Russia as a security threat, and its main foreign policy goal was to join NATO and the European Community, as emphasized by the Parliament in 1995 and as stated in the National Security concept in 1997. According to the National Security Concept, the most likely threat to Latvia was in efforts by “neighboring states” to destabilize Latvia’s domestic situation - an unambiguous reference to Russia (Chapter 3: 2).

The agreement was signed by President Guntis Ulmanis. While the position of the president is mostly symbolic in Latvia, Ulmanis played an important role in drafting the agreement and contributing to its ratification. His position within a set of social and cultural institutions of Latvia was ideal for the agreement that substituted one transgression of Westphalian sovereignty (continuing presence of Skrunda) for another (immediate troop withdrawal). Guntis Ulmanis is related to Karlis Ulmanis, the President and Prime Minister of independent Latvia in 1918-1940, whose family was repressed and exiled. Guntis Ulmanis [then Guntis Rumpītis] himself was fired from the position in Riga Executive Committee when his past was discovered and quit the Communist Party in 1989 returning his original surname - Ulmanis. The withdrawal of Russian troops was considered one of the main accomplishments of his career and helped his reelection in July 1996.

Both the president of Latvia and most Latvian political parties distrusted Russia. Just as in Belarus and Ukraine, the Popular Front and the national radicals in the parliament (including National Independence Movement) were especially strongly opposed to leasing Skrunda and held public protests.⁵⁰ These parties had a strong position in the parliament. In the 1990 elections the Popular Front won 131 out of 201 votes. In the 1993 Saeima election, the Popular Front obtained no seats, but the party it founded - Alliance “Latvian Way” was the most popular. In the 1990s, even the Latvian Communists endorsed independence. The anti-Russian sentiment of main political parties was accompanied by the “weakness of Russian ethnic mobilization” in Latvia.⁵¹ Despite the presence of a potentially large constituency (more than 20% of the electorate), the Russia-sympathetic parties such as the Equal Rights Movement and the Socialist party became “pariahs in

⁴⁹As was officially acknowledged on 02 September 1994 by the Latvian prime minister, Valdis Birkavš.

⁵⁰For instance, on 12 March 1994 about 1,000 people participated in a Riga rally organized by the Popular Front of Latvia and the Homeland and Freedom Association protesting Russias desire to retain Skrunda.

⁵¹Complete election results are as follows: 36 seats for LC - Alliance “Latvian Way” (Savienība Latvijas ceļš); 15 seats for Latvian National Independence Movement; 13 seats for Harmony for Latvia Revival for the Economy; 12 seats for Latvian Farmers Union; 7 seats for Equal Rights Movement; 6 seats for TB - For Homeland and Freedom; 6 seats for Latvian Christian Democratic Union; 5 seats for Democratic Centre Party. See *Latvia - Election Results - National Level* University of Essex. Nov. 17, 2008, http://www2.essex.ac.uk/elect/electer/latvia_e_r_n_l.htm. Accessed Aug.28, 2011.

Latvian politics”.⁵² In short, the consensus was that the base should go and the sooner the better.

The views of the Latvian legislators mattered, and to appease the deputies and facilitate ratification, US president Bill Clinton invited some of them to Washington and promised Latvia \$7 million in assistance.⁵³

All of the above should not be interpreted as diminishing the significance of economic benefits of cooperation with Russia. Opinion surveys indicated that already in 1993 socio-economic problems eclipsed the pro-independence struggle for the Latvian voters.⁵⁴ But paths to financial benefits of basing were many, and Latvia chose the one leading to dismantlement of Skrunda. Prime Minister Valdis Birkavs, at a press conference in Moscow at the conclusion of the talks, said the chief benefit of the “civil withdrawal” of Skrunda agreements was that Latvia and Russia would grant most-favored-nation status to each other in the area of trade, helping Latvia become the primary transit state between Russia and the West.⁵⁵

After the agreement was signed, the international community oversaw Skrunda dismantlement, which facilitated implementation. The OSCE held periodic and challenge inspections.⁵⁶ Before Russia fully gave over territory of the Skrunda radar station to Latvia in October 1999, it attempted to stay longer by claiming that Latvia’s nondiscriminatory trade status depended on extending the lease. Latvia refused to negotiate, clearly favoring security above economics.⁵⁷

In sum, the US diplomacy ensured that agreeing to Skrunda’s functioning secured rather than undermined Latvia’s Westphalian sovereignty. Outside involvement explains why the outcome was favorable for Latvia in both economic and security terms: Russia promised to withdraw troops, abandon Skrunda, and pay high rent for the remaining years. Latvia’s size and power make this outcome a true victory.

Ukraine: borders for basing

When the Soviet Union dissolved, Russia and Ukraine became embroiled in a dispute over the Black Sea Fleet (BSF). The rusting Fleet, with the newest ships 20-21 years old in 1997, was important because of the

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Vitaly Portnikov, “Russia and Latvia: Yeltsin and Ulmanis Reach Agreement, There Will Be No Military Base in Skrunda”, *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, May 5, 1994 p. 3; Juris Tihonovs, “Agreements Signed on U.S. Financial Support for Dismantling Skrunda Radar Station”, *Riga DIENA*, Aug. 13, 1994, p 1.

⁵⁴Smith-Silverstone.

⁵⁵See Portnikov. Even so, Latvia embarked on a policy of decreasing economic dependence from Russia. If in 1991, 96.8% and 87.2% of Latvi’s export and import went with the former Soviet Union, in 1992, Russia’s share of the Latvian trade balance decreased to 26% and 28%, respectively, and kept going down steadily. See *Latvijas Statistikas Gadagramata 1991* (Riga: Avots, 1992), 49; Latvian Ministry of Economy, Central Statistical Bureau.

⁵⁶Cf. Jrgen Hbschen, *The Skrunda Agreement and the OSCEs Involvement An Ex- ample of Conflict Prevention and Confidence-Building*, in: Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy at the University of Hamburg/IFSH (ed.), *OSCE Yearbook 1999*, Baden-Baden 2000, pp. 179-184.

⁵⁷“Moscow Tests Latvian Resolve on Skrunda Radar”, *Monitor*, Vol. 4, No. 153, Aug. 10, 1998.

basing rights that came with it.⁵⁸ Only after five years of acrimonious negotiations, in May 1997, did the two countries reach an agreement. The bitter exchange recurred in 2010 when the lease was extended. Here I review the developments that contributed to the 1997 and 2010 agreements.

Thorny Path to 1997 agreement

The 1997 agreement centered around sovereignty and territorial integrity. Ukraine set out to negotiate demanding that the “Fleet must be Ukrainian.”⁵⁹ The Russian side reacted by refusing to recognize Ukrainian borders.⁶⁰ The first treaty, signed in January 1992, granted Ukraine ownership of 30% of the fleet, but failed to address territorial rights.⁶¹ A flurry of presidential decrees, each claiming rights to all of the Fleet, followed.⁶² In April 1992, Kravchuk and Yeltsin agreed to revoke their claims, but the next attempt at negotiations, on April 29-30, failed.⁶³ Kiev was not pressed for time; Moscow was unwilling to offer much. Progress was achieved only at Dargomys in June 1992 when Russia acknowledged the Ukrainian concerns and proposed developing “a full-scale political treaty that would reflect the new quality of relations between Russia and Ukraine.”⁶⁴ This widened Ukraine’s winset making an agreement possible. In June 1993, 50-50 division of the fleet was proposed and Ukraine for the first time considered leasing Sevastopol to Russia. The next agreement, reached on 15 April 1994, specified the “stepwise” resolution to the problem and mentioned that Ukraine would retain 15-20% of the fleet and that the Russian and Ukrainian fleets would be based separately. This was not the final solution, however.

If Belarus resolved all the details regarding two bases in one session, in Ukraine every detail was a subject of months of arguing. There was no way of obscuring the effects of the agreement on Ukraine’s Westphalian sovereignty. Ethnic posturing by the nationalist factions on both sides complicated negotiations an example of negative reverberation (Putnam 1988). The Russian Duma suspended the BSF division in 1993 and revoked the 1954 agreement granting Crimea to Ukraine in 1994. Deyermond (2008) described the process as “a repetitive, cyclical [] with frequent, official-level meetings to discuss the negotiating framework, followed by regular presidential bilateral meetings, leading to the annual signing of apparently definitive agreements, which were then either revoked by ministers or not ratified (or ratified with significant amendments) by the

⁵⁸Radio Moscow, 12 May 1994, FBIS-SOV-94-094, p. 42.

⁵⁹Yuri Dubinin, “Historical Struggle for the Black Sea Fleet”, *Russia in Global Affairs*, No.1, Jan. - Mar. 2007.

⁶⁰*Komsomolskaya Pravda*, January 22, 1992.

⁶¹*Pravda Ukrainy*, 14 January 1992.

⁶²On April 5, 1992, Kravchuk signed a decree entitled, On Urgent Measures to Build the Armed Forces of Ukraine, placing the BSF under Kiev’s jurisdiction and ordered that a Ukrainian Navy be immediately built on the basis of the Fleets forces. Two days later, Yeltsin issued a decree that placed the Black Sea Fleet under Russia’s jurisdiction. (See Dubinin).

⁶³Nikolai Savchenko, *Anatomia Neobyavlenoy Voyny*, (Kyiv: Ukrainska Perspektiva 1997), pp. 44-71.

⁶⁴Dubinin.

national parliaments.” At the same time, ”the defense ministries and the fleet command were engaged in a process of assets seizure and low-level, aggressive maneuvers. [compounded by] the repeated intervention by politicians outside the state governments” (p. 106).

The final accords on the BSF was signed in May 1997 and comprised three parts: Russia compensated Ukraine for the ships for \$526.509 million; the annual lease amounted to \$97.75 million; Ukraine’s debt to Russia was reduced by \$200 million. The number of Russian troops was limited to 25,000. The negotiated lease was for 20 years far less than 99 asked by Moscow and far more than Ukraine was willing to accept initially. Russia stopped asking for the recognition of dual citizenship for Sevastopol residents (which would have clearly undermined Ukraine’s domestic sovereignty) and agreed to pay a much higher rent than it was willing to consider at the beginning.⁶⁵In effect, Russia accepted most of the conditions it had rejected in October 1996. However, the agreement materialized not only because of the economic perks but because Russia conceded on the political treaty Kiev so badly wanted - the *Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership Between the Russian Federation and Ukraine*. The treaty enshrined Ukraine’s existing borders and its legal title to the Crimea, allaying Ukraine’s worst security fears connected to the Russian military presence and strengthening its Westphalian and domestic sovereignty.

The Ukrainian Rada ratified the Friendship treaty almost immediately (January 1998) by an overwhelming majority of votes (317 to 27 in favor) and with standing ovation, but avoided dealing with the BSF accords. Even with the Friendship treaty signed, National Deputy Yurii Orobets, a member of the Reforms faction in the Verkhovna Rada demanded “a criminal investigation against persons who took part directly in the process of preparing this Black Sea Fleet agreement”.*Pavlo Politiuk, “Verkhovna Rada ratifies treaty with Russia, setting the stage for a new relationship”, The Ukrainian Weekly, Jan.18, 1998, No. 3, Vol. LXVI.* A year later, Russia’s Federation Council, which intentionally dragged its feet on approving the Friendship treaty, stated that recognizing Ukrainian borders would go into force only after Ukraine ratified the BSF accords. The Rada ratified the BSF agreement on March 24, 1999. The vote was 250 to 63 in favor (only 24 more votes than necessary); 450 deputies were either absent or abstained from voting.⁶⁶

Economic issues clearly played a secondary role in the negotiations, even though Ukraine was undergoing a severe economic crisis. In 1997 Ukraine did not hesitate to support Georgia’s claims on the Fleet, though it could have diminished its own winnings, and even gave some boats to Georgia for free.⁶⁷ While sensitive to the amount of rent, the Ukrainian negotiators were primarily concerned about the status of Sevastopol, the

⁶⁵James Sherr, “Russia-Ukraine Rapprochement?: The Black Sea Accords,” *Survival*, vol. 39, no. 3. (Autumn 1997), p. 33.

⁶⁶“Ukrainian Parliament Ratifies Black Sea Fleet Agreements”, *Monitor*, Vol.5, no. 59, Mar. 25, 1999.

⁶⁷Boris Vinogradov, ”Chernomorskii flot razdeliat na troih”. *Izvestia*, Oct. 18, 1997. 10-18-97(IZV-No.199)

citizenship of Sevastopol residents, the size of Russian troops, and the length of Russian presence - all issues related to sovereignty. Distrustful of Russia, they explicitly called for U.S. intervention and offered utilizing a trilateral diplomatic framework used for nuclear weapons negotiations.⁶⁸ The Ukrainian delegation also fought to ensure that not the city of Sevastopol but only the Sevastopol base became the basing location as it was concerned about its domestic sovereignty.⁶⁹ Ukrainian negotiators, as their Latvian counterparts, was mindful of the number of troops on the base, which reflected its concern about Westphalian. It was Russia, not Ukraine, who first linked economy to the problem, employing energy blackmail and unilaterally announcing that it would take ownership of the BSF for a reduction of Ukraine's gas debt. But in contrast to Belarus, which was interested in exchanging debts for basing, in June 1995 Ukraine preferred to sit down to negotiate having paid off its two-month gas debt.⁷⁰ In 1997, the Rada several times refused to ratify the Government-signed document in which Ukraine ceded its portion of the Soviet debt and assets to Russia. Abdelal explains, "Russia failed in its attempts to exploit the coercive power inherent in its asymmetric economic relationship with Ukraine because Ukraine perceived (and continues to perceive) Russia as a security threat" (p. 153). Until signing the accords came to mean securing the borders and territorial integrity, Kiev refused to compromise and even toyed with the idea of offering the base to the US.⁷¹

Security issues dominated negotiations because the majority of Ukrainian actors, including not only Rukh, but also President Kravchuk (somewhat more moderate than Rukh yet still nationalistic) and the pro-independence left parties, feared the consequences of the loss of Westphalian and domestic sovereignty to Russia.⁷² Kravchuk's leadership coincided with the 1990 Rada, in which the Ukrainian Rukh, categorically opposed to ratifying any agreement with Russia, controlled key committees and secured seats.⁷³ Rukh's Dymytri Pavlychko, the Chairman of the Rada's Foreign Affairs Committee, called Russia's military presence in Sevastopol "a hammer ready to strike at any moment [Ukrainian] independence."⁷⁴ Rukh's sensitivity about Russia was reflected in adoption of the Concept Paper on National Security - the first of its kind in Ukraine.⁷⁵ Other parties in the Rada were less radical, but also wary about Russia. In 1990, the Communists won 331 out

⁶⁸John Buntin, "The Decision to Denuclearize: How Ukraine Became a Non-Nuclear-Weapons State," Kennedy School of Government Case Program, (1997). The idea of U.S. intervention was also floated before the 1995 summit between Kuchma and Clinton. Matthew Kaminski, "Ukraine Seeks U.S. Mediation in Talks," *The Financial Times*, (London), (5/8/95), p. 2.

⁶⁹Anatoliy Poliakov, "Chernomorskii flot: vsio zhe na dvoih?" *Krasnaia Zvezda*, Mar. 1, 1995. 03-01-95(KZV-No.047)

⁷⁰Vitaliy Strugovec, "Soglashenie mezhdru Rossiiskoi Federaciej i Ukrainoi po Chernomorskomu Floty", *Krasnaia Zvezda*, June 14, 1995. 06-14-95(KZV-No.131).

⁷¹"Sevastopol stanet bazoi 7-go flota SSHA?" *Izvestiia*, Feb. 21, 1997, 02-21-97(IZV-No.034)

⁷²As early as 1990, Kravchuk headed a national communist fraction within the Rada supporting a Ukrainian sovereignty and independence (Beissinger 2002,p. 196.)

⁷³Andrew Wilson, "The Ukrainian Left: In Transition to Social Democracy or Still in Thrall to the USSR?" *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 49, No. 7, (Nov., 1997), 1293-1316. Also Aleksandr Alf, Andrei Dneprov. "Ukraina predvybornogo perioda", *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, March 17, 1999, 03-17-99(NGA-No.047).

⁷⁴Bohdan Nahaylo, "The Massandra Summit and Ukraine," 4.

⁷⁵Peoples Movement of Ukraine (Rukh) <http://www.nru.org.ua/en/diverse/?id=1>;

of 450 seats, but by July 1990, 93 of them declared themselves Independents and the remaining 239 formed a majority group "For a Soviet Sovereign Ukraine" ("Group of 239"). The "Democratic Bloc" obtained 111 seats. Such a parliament would never ratify treaties seen as endangering sovereignty or succumbing to Russia's blackmail. Notably, by mid-1998 Ukraine signed only 130 and ratified only 30 out of 910 CIS documents.⁷⁶

Change of leadership in the mid-90s helped secure the agreement but it would be a mistake to conclude that Ukraine was swayed by the economic arguments for cooperation and forgot its security concerns when Kuchma took power. It is true that Kuchma was favored by the electorate in the east of Ukraine, the most industrialized and urbanized region which also included the Crimea and had the highest percentage of ethnic Russians. Kuchma claimed he was determined to change Ukraine's political course from "self-isolation" to "restoring all mutually beneficial economic, spiritual and cultural ties with the former Soviet republics, and first of all with Russia."⁷⁷ But already in 1995 he shifted to pro-American and pro-NATO position. Moreover, while Kuchma's support base did not see Russia as a military threat, their business interests were still "defensive vis-à-vis Russia" because their capital base was smaller, so, contrary to expectations, they were wary of Russia's influence.⁷⁸

Did the changed composition of the Ukrainian legislature under Kuchma matter? The Ukrainian executive enjoyed far less autonomy than his Belarusian counterpart. Frequently, the Rada did not ratify agreements signed by the President.⁷⁹ In 1996, the Parliament even "twice considered starting impeachment procedures".⁸⁰ Thus, the agreements with Russia indeed had to satisfy the Ukrainian constituency and enough Rada deputies to be ratified. The final treaty was signed under a parliament that was more favorably disposed toward Russia than the 1990 Rada. Rukh and other national-democratic parties took only 14% of seats in the 1994 election, and most of the 37% of seats won by the Left went to the Communist Party. Another 8% went to Centrists, and 40% was taken by independents (who mostly represented the Left).⁸¹ The Left controlled national security and foreign affairs committees. Even though the left and center parties felt strong about Ukraine's independence, they were less hostile to Russia and more sensitive to the economic effects of political tensions with the eastern neighbor. The parliament that actually ratified

⁷⁶"Interview with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Tarasiuk", Halos Ukraïny, Feb. 3, 1999. Cited in Taras Kuzio, "Geopolitical Pluralism in the CIS: The Emergence of GUUAM, *European Security*, Vol. 9, No.2 (Summer 2000), pp. 81-114.

⁷⁷Itar-Tass, Kiev, June 15, 1994.

⁷⁸Taras Kuzio explains, "Ukrainian process of capital accumulation began later than Russia's, and was far less advanced". Taras Kuzio, "Neither East Nor West: Ukraine's Security Policy Under Kuchma, http://www.taraskuzio.net/International%20Relations_files/international_kuchma_policy.pdf

⁷⁹Ianina Sokolovskaia. "Chernomorskii Flot Podelen, Peregovory Prodolzhaitsia", *Izvestia*, 06-14-95 (IZV-No.107).

⁸⁰"Ukraine", Freedom House, http://www.freedomhouse.eu/images/fdh_galleries/NIT97/ukraine.pdf

⁸¹Marko Bojuncun, "The Ukrainian Parliamentary Elections in March-April 1994", *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 2, (Mar., 1995), 229-249; BRAMA - Election Results in Ukraine <http://www.brama.com/ua-gov/el-94vrd.html>, May 9, 2008.

the BSF agreement was elected in 1998 under a new mixed majoritarian/ party representation list law, but was similar to the 1994 legislature. The national-democrats lost, falling from 27% of seats to 13.5%; the left maintained its share with about 37% of the seats, short of a majority; and the centre gained. The Communist party occupied 24.7% of the seats and Rukh - 9.4%.⁸² According to Kuzio, this was the parliament where oligarchs, whose interests now rested on close economic ties with Russia, appeared for the first time.⁸³

In sum, Russia succeeded in getting the lease on the base in 1997 because it successfully linked the basing issue to recognizing the borders and territorial integrity of Ukraine. Neither economic blackmail nor generous rent was enough to secure the agreement. The narrow winset precluded agreement in the first half of the 1990s and with the Russian decision to link the BSF agreement to the political treaty the winset was expanded just enough to secure ratification. The Rada's contentious involvement ensured that the final deal was economically profitable: had it not been for the loud opposition to any deal with Russia, the government would have signed a far more modest treaty early on.

Signing 2010 agreement

If domestic and Westphalian sovereignty issues dominated the first negotiations, economic arguments were used to legitimate basing 10 years later. This was not so much due to the change in the security environment as to the change of the Ukrainian leadership. In fact, many of the same problems plagued the country, including a severe economic crisis and the tensions in the Crimea, with Moscow's mayor Yuri M. Luzhkov calling for Russia to assume ownership of Sevastopol.⁸⁴ In August 2008, the Ukrainian leadership reacted to the Russian-Georgian war by insisting that Russia leave the Sevastopol base: just like in the 1990s, Russia was seen as an existential threat by the nationalist forces in Ukraine. In 2009, according to a US diplomatic cable, Ukraine turned to the US for "additional, legally binding security assurances [c]iting the Russian-Georgian conflict and the large ethnic Russian population in Ukraine" and raising "the issue of the Russian Black Sea Navy Base at Sevastopol."⁸⁵

However, the leadership that won in 2010 election did not fear Russia quite as much and was willing to compromise Westphalian sovereignty given sufficient compensation. President Victor Yanukovich, immediately after election, promised a "new page" in relations with Moscow and signalled that allowing the fleet to

⁸²Kubicek, 287.

⁸³Kuzio.

⁸⁴Michael Schwartz, "Russia and Ukraine Lock Horns Over Naval Base", *New York Times*, May 24, 2008.

⁸⁵Without knowing exactly the number of Russian soldiers at the base, Ukraine's leadership "believed Russia has exceeded its number of personnel allowed under the Navy Base lease." WikiLeaks Cable 09KYIV1942; Created: 2009-11-09 12:12 Released: 2010-12-06 21:09; Classification: SECRET, <http://ibnlive.in.com/news/wikileaks-cablegate-ukraine-ignores-us-objection-on-missile-technology-transfer-to-india/136752-53.html>.

stay after 2017 could “satisfy both Russia and Ukraine”. He also calmed Russia by announcing there was “no question of Ukraine joining NATO.”⁸⁶

Negotiations occurred outside of public scrutiny, which decreased the need for legitimation. Just two months after the change of leadership in Kiev, a deal was sealed. The agreement extended the lease for 25 years. Ukraine was promised not only \$100 million per year but also \$100/mcm off for gas priced above and \$30/mcm for gas priced below \$333/mcm. This discount may be worth tens of billions of dollars in the next 25 years. Russian Prime Minister Putin himself described the price as “exorbitant”, saying “there’s no military base in the world that costs this much money”.⁸⁷ The agreement emphasizes economic rather than security aspects of the basing issue, and Yanukovich claimed the treaty no less than allowed to preserve the Ukrainian economy. Such a profitable deal undoubtedly boosted his reelection chances.

It is notable that Russia hurried to obtain the deal with the pro-Russian forces in Kiev seven years before expiration, starting to pay immediately and not after the extension on the lease starts in 2017.⁸⁸ This is probably due to the differences in the views of Ukrainian political elite on the issue: Under Yushchenko’s leadership, Russian intervention was feared and security guarantees from the West sought. Under Yanukovich’s leadership, the security guarantees were provided by Russia. Yushchenko was open about his intention not to renew the lease in 2017.⁸⁹ Not surprisingly, the Rada broke into fighting when debating the agreement and ratified it with a narrow margin: only 236 votes out of a possible 450.⁹⁰ The composition of the Rada was favorable to the agreement, with Yanukovich’s Party of Regions having 192 seats, or 25 more than the parties staunchly opposed to the base - Yulia Tymoshenko Bloc (102) and Our Ukraine-People’s Self-Defense Bloc (65)- combined. The opposition promised to destroy the document when in power. Its chances of doing so will fall if the relationship with Russia continues to be profitable and if the proposed economic cooperation projects succeed in increasing an already large pro-Russian constituency.

Georgia

In 1991, Georgia was left with about 1,600 Russian bases and facilities. Tbilisi concluded several agreements with Russia: on keeping the bases for 25 years in 1995, on withdrawing two bases in 1999, and on withdrawing

⁸⁶“Ukraine’s Yanukovich signals shift over Russia fleet”, BBC News, Mar 5, 2010. His earlier statement dates back to Feb. 13, 2010, before the election results were fully confirmed, in RIA Novosti, <http://en.rian.ru/world/20100213/157869607.html> Accessed Aug. 15, 2011.

⁸⁷Anatoly Medetsky, “Eggs, Smoke Dominate Ukrainian Parliament Session”, *The Moscow Times*, Apr. 28, 2010.

⁸⁸Aleksandr Golts, “Russia gets duped again”, *The Moscow Times*, Apr. 27, 2010.

⁸⁹Clifford J. Levy, “Ukraine Woos Russia With Lease Deal”.

⁹⁰Nina Romanova, “Obmen gaza na bazu”, *Sovetskaiia Belorussiai*, No. 76, Apr. 28, 2010. Also see Clifford J. Levy, “Ukraine Passes Deal Under Hail of Eggs”, *New York Times*, Apr. 27, 2010.

the remaining two bases in 2005.

Signing the 1995 agreement

The 1995 agreement allowed for Russian military presence in Georgia for 25 years. Georgia's condition for signing was Russia's help in restoring Georgia's jurisdiction over its territory (i.e. restoring domestic sovereignty). Russia also pledged assistance with training and supplying the Georgian military and promised not to participate in Georgia's internal conflicts.⁹¹ Concerned about internal security, Georgia transferred more than half of its CFE quotas to Russia in exchange for obtaining weapons for its national army.⁹² Economic problems took a back seat for Tbilisi at that time. No payment for the 25-year- long lease was discussed. Tellingly, the Free Trade agreement with Russia that was signed in 1994 was not ratified until 2000.

The basing treaty was precipitated by Georgia's defeat in the Abkhaz conflict. Initially, Tbilisi blamed Moscow for encouraging Abkhaz separatism, but after the military defeat in September 1993 had to ask for Russia's help in preserving Georgia as a single state (Kozhokin 1996; Zagorsky 1994). In December 1993 Georgia joined the CIS and accepted a Russian peacekeeping force in Abkhazia. In February 1994 it signed the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with Russia, which provided for political, military (including a joint air defense system and joint protection of the borders) and economic cooperation between the two states. For Georgia, this was an alliance out of need rather than preference. As Georgia's ambassador to Russia said in September 1994 in response to Russia's threat not to ratify the Friendship treaty, "Georgia's independence depends on a great extent on Russia's position, Georgia will be independent if Russia wants it [to be]" (cited in Brzezinski, 1997, p. 591). No outside options were available: the United States, UK, and France all refused to involve their troops in the UN peacekeeping force on the Georgian territory.⁹³

The Georgian parliament was far more resentful of cooperation with Moscow than the Georgian executive and never ratified the basing agreement. The dynamics between the Russian and Georgian legislatures resembled that between Russia and Ukraine, with inflammatory resolutions and provocations on both sides. Already in September 1993, a deputy argued that Georgia's membership in the CIS was illegal and meant joining Russia (Brzezinski 1997, p. 588). Georgia's Popular Front was one of the loudest critics suspecting

⁹¹Minorities at Risk Project, Chronology for Russians in Georgia, 2004, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/469f388d1e.html>. Accessed Aug. 5, 2011.

⁹²Irakly Kakheli, *Obshchaya gazeta*, No. 8, Feb. 29-March 6, 1996, p. 5. Also see Yury Golotyuk, *Sevodnya*, Aug. 1, 1996, p. 2.

⁹³Vladimir Abarinov, "Controversy: Russian Diplomats Believe Madeleine Albright is Misplacing the Blame," *Sevodnya*, Sep. 10, 1994, p. 2

that the Russian “spetznaz” was stationed at the bases.⁹⁴ The Georgians protested carrying placards like “Shevardnadze the Butcher of Georgian Independence.”⁹⁵ Not surprisingly, the parliament never ratified the 1995 treaty, even after the Shevardnadze-founded Citizens’ Union of Georgia gained the most seats in November-December 1995 elections, pointing out Russia’s failing to ratify the 1994 Friendship and Cooperation Treaty.⁹⁶ Thus, we see a case of failed legitimation: Shevardnadze’s approach to trade off an uncertain promiss of restoring domestic sovereignty for Westphalian sovereignty (by keeping the Russian bases) failed. However, the parliamentarians’ opposition did not matter much at the time. Fish and Kroenig (2009) assign a surprisingly high PPI score of .59 to the Georgian legislature in 1995 (above average for the post-Soviet states). However, According to the Freedom House, in 1992-1995 the Georgian parliament was “plagued by basic structural problems”.⁹⁷ One crisis followed another, and Shevardnadze often ruled by decree with the legislature’s consent. Moreover, a strong legislature may not be an asset in negotiations when coupled with a weak government. Throughout the 1990s, the Georgian government was exceptionally weak and corrupt and could do little on its own.⁹⁸ In the 1990s, Georgia lacked a consolidated state structure, its public revenues accounted for less than 20 percent of the GDP, and roughly 17% of its territory was outside of central government’s control (King, 2001). Georgia’s weakness and preoccupation with preserving territorial integrity explains why the bases continued to stay in the country, a though they were technically outside the law. For many years Russia kept hoping that Georgia would change its mind about the issue and Georgia kept hoping that Russia would be more helpful with the separatist regions.

The 1999 agreement: Withdrawal of Vaziani and Gudauta Bases

The 2005 Agreement: Withdrawal of Akhalkalaki and Batumi

Developments after the Russia-Georgia War

IN PROGRESS

⁹⁴E’teri Kakabadze, “Rossii’skim voennym v Gruzii prigrozili diversiiami”, *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, No. 3, Jan. 14, 2004.

⁹⁵Celestine Bohlen, “Russia and Georgia Sign Military Cooperation Treaty”, *The New York Times*, Feb. 4, 1994.

⁹⁶Vitaly Naumkin, “Rossiia I Zakavkaz’e”, *Kavkazskie Regional’nye Issledovania*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1997.

⁹⁷“Georgia 1994-95”, Freedom House, <http://www.freedomhouse.eu/images/fdhgalleries=NIT199495=georgia.pdf>

⁹⁸Georgia was one of the most corrupt states in the world in the 1990s, according to Transparency International

Conclusion

Tables and Figures

Table 1: Results of crisp set QCA.

* Consistency is percentage of cases displaying the same positive outcome.

** If Georgias case in '95 is removed, then consistency is 0.222222222

*** Cases: 1) Armenia 1994, 2011; 2) Ukraine 1997, 2010, Latvia 1995, Estonia 1994, Moldova 1994, 1999, Georgia 1995, 1999, 2005; 3) Azerbaijan 2002, 2012 4) Kyrgyzstan 1993, 2003, 2010; Tajikistan 1994, 2004, 2011; Kyrgyzstan 1993, 2003, 2010; Belarus 1995; South Ossetia 2010, Abkhazia 2009. 5) Kazakhstan 1994, 1994, 2004.

No.	Free	Energy-rich	CSTO	Accepted base	Rejected base	Consistency*
1	1	0	1	2	0	1
2	1	0	0	3	6	0.33**
3	0	1	0	2	0	1
4	0	0	1	9	0	1
5	0	1	1	3	0	1

Table 2: Russian bases in the NIS: tabulation by the Freedom scores and alliances.

* Uzbekistan agreed to a Russian air base in principle in 2007, but there is no Russian base there at the moment.

-	security	economics
withdraw, contentious	F, NATO (Latvia 1995) F, NATO (Estonia 1994) PF, GUAM (Georgia 1999, 2005) PF, GUAM (Moldova 1994, 1999)	— — — —
withdraw, peaceful	— —	— —
keep, contentious	PF, GUAM (Ukraine 1997) PF, GUAM (Georgia 1995)	PF, GUAM (Ukraine 2010) NF, CSTO (Tajikistan 2004, 2011)
keep, peaceful	PF, CSTO (Armenia 1994, 2010) PF, Russia (Abkhazia 2009) NF, Russia (South Osetia 2010) NF, CSTO (Tajikistan 1994)	PF, CSTO (Belarus 1995) NF, CSTO (Kazakhstan 1994, 1994, 2010) NF, CSTO (Kyrgyzstan 1993, 2003, 2010) NF, CSTO (Uzbekistan 2007)*

Table 3: Comparing negotiation outcomes in democratic and authoritarian states.

Ukraine 1997, 20 years, Polity +7	Tajikistan 2004, 10 years, Polity -1
\$526.509 million in compensation for the ships \$97.75 million in rent annually \$200 million debt reduced	\$2 billion in investment - did not materialize \$0.39 in rent annually (symbolic) \$242 million in debt reduced agreement on Tajik labor migrants to Russia
Ukraine 2010, 20 years, Polity +7	Tajikistan 2010, 49 years, Polity -3
\$100 million per year in rent \$100/mcm off for gas priced above & \$30/mcm for gas priced below \$333/mcm	Weapons and training** — ** Initially, Tajikistan asked for \$308 million in rent
Latvia 1995, 5-year withdrawal, Polity +8	Belarus 1995, 25 years, Polity 0
\$5 million in annual rent withdrawal of Russian troops	rent-free \$1.2 million in gas debt reduced

Table 1: Exploring variation of country-level characteristics

heightCountry, date		Poli	PPI	Alliance	Russ.	GDP	Trade	Energy	Security threat
	score	ty			minor	growth	ties	rich	
Ukraine '97	PF	7	.59	GUAM	22.1	-10%	29.4	no	terr. integrity (Crimea)
Ukraine '10	PF	7	-	GUAM	-	-15%	24	no	none
Kazakhstan '94	NF	-4	.31	CSTO	37.8	-9.2%	31.1	yes	none
Kazakhstan '96	NF	-4	.38	CSTO	-	-9.2%	31.1	yes	none
Kazakhstan '04	NF	-6	-	CSTO	-	9.3%	21.4	yes	none
Belarus '95	PF	0	.28	CSTO	13.2	-11.3%	49.7	no	none
Armenia '94	PF	7	.53	CSTO	1.5	-14.1%	16	no	Nagorno-Karabakh
Armenia '10	PF	5	-	CSTO	-	-14.5%	12.2	no	Nagorno-Karabakh
Abkhazia '09	PF	-	-	Russia	-	-	-	no	independence
South Ossetia '10	NF	-	-	Russia	-	-	-	no	independence
Azerbaijan '02	NF	-7	.44	GUAM	- 5.6	6.5%	7.2	yes	Nagorno-Karabakh
Azerbaijan '12	NF	-7	-	GUAM	-	2.8%	7.1	yes	terrorism
Latvia '95	F	8	.84	NATO	33.8	-11.4%	43.3	no	sovereignty
Estonia '94	F	6	.75	NATO	30.3	-1.6%	16.8	no	sovereignty
Moldova '94	PF	7	.72	GUAM	13.0	-1.2%	45.9	no	terr. integrity (Transnistria)
Moldova '99	PF	7	-	GUAM	-	-6.5%	25.6	no	Transnistria
Georgia '95	PF	5	.5	GUAM	7.4	2.6%	5.8	no	ethnic conflict, civil war
Georgia '99	PF	5	-	GUAM	-	2.9%	9.4	no	terr. integrity (Abkhazia)
Georgia '05	PF	7	-	GUAM	-	5.9%	9.4	no	terr. integrity
Tajikistan '94	NF	-6	.41	CSTO	7.6	-11.1%	11.6	no	civil war
Tajikistan '04	NF	-1	-	CSTO	-	10.2%	10.9	no	domestic instability
Tajikistan '11	NF	-3	-	CSTO	-	5.5%	10.9	no	domestic instability
Kyrgyzstan '93	PF	-3	.41	CSTO	21.5	-13.1%	17.3	no	instability
Kyrgyzstan '03	NF	-3	.47	CSTO	-	0.0%	17.2	no	instability
Kyrgyzstan '10	PF	1	-	CSTO	-	2.3%	17.2	no	instability

Figure 1:

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