

# Advancing a Constructive Agenda for U.S. - Russia Relations

*September 8 - 9, 2014  
Moscow, Russia*

The current state of U.S. - Russia relations is coming to resemble the confrontational Cold War era. This is extremely harmful to both nations and underscores the urgency for a more proactive diplomacy to reestablish mutual security through political, commercial, scientific, educational, and cultural cooperation.

The Forum will be held at the President Arbat Hotel and Moscow State University. The agenda will feature many insightful panels with the leading American and Russian experts.

In addition to the Forum and its abundant networking opportunities, the participants will have ample time and a great starting point to sightseeing and exploring the cultural riches of Moscow.

For additional information and registration please visit

[www.RussiaHouse.org/wrf.php](http://www.RussiaHouse.org/wrf.php)



# Why Would Putin Shoot Down a Plane?

With Russia and Ukraine blaming each other for shooting down a commercial airliner in eastern Ukraine Professor Stephen F Cohen spoke with Newsweek about the unfolding crisis:

## **On motives:**

“I always ask who had a motive. The Russians didn’t have a motive, because it’s a catastrophe for Putin. Pro-Russian rebels on the ground—it’s not clear that they had the capacity. The Ukrainian government—they have the toys. The Ukrainian government has quite a few of those “Bucs”. The fact that it’s Russian-made isn’t evidence that Russia is behind the crash. Lots of former Soviet republics have Russian-made stuff... So Ukraine had the capacity. Say it was playing with its new toys and made a big mistake... That’s what happened in 2001 when Ukraine mistakenly shot down a civilian airliner with a surface-to-air missile during a military exercise, killing all 78 passengers who were flying from Tel Aviv to Novosibirsk...

## **On the Ukrainian military:**

“Ukrainian soldiers are completely inept. They are incompetent and are selling things to the pro-Russian rebels.”

## **On why a commercial airliner was flying over a known political hot zone:**

“This has been an air war zone since at least July 1... it’s outrageous that anybody would fly over Ukraine. If a pilot told me, we’re going over eastern Ukraine, I’d say, I want off.”

## **On the scores of pro-Russian Ukrainian civilians fleeing Ukrainian armed forces:**

“The U.S. media has not covered or discussed what the Ukrainian government is doing to the eastern cities. Not one major media organization has been reporting regularly from those cities, and what’s happening there is horrible. You have about 300,000 refugees who have crossed into Russia. Donetsk, Sloviansk, Kramatorsk [cities in pro-Russia eastern Ukraine] have been leveled or destroyed. When you attack a city, you kill kids and women. The casualties are far greater than those from the Malaysian crash.”

*By Lynnley Browning - Newsweek*

Gentlemen who require sanctions against Russia! Please answer why Ukraine did not provide records of negotiations with the crew dispatchers Malaysian Boeing 777? Where are the launching shots that the U.S. has? Why all the accusations against Russia based on these social networks and YouTube?  
- *Comments on Forbes.com*



Employees and experts from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Danish and Australian aviation experts working at the crash site of the Malaysian Airlines Boeing 777, outside the village of Grabovo, near Shakhtyorsk, Donetsk Region. Photo by Mikhail Voskresenskiy

## Moral Terror: How Critics of Western MH17 Coverage Are Bullied Into Silence

By Dmitry Babich

The hasty attempts by president Barak Obama, prime minister David Cameron and some of the leaders of the EU member countries to declare Russia guilty of the crash of the flight MH-17 (with anti-Poroshenko insurgents in Eastern Ukraine presented as mere “pawns of Kremlin”) was obvious. In fact, the verdict (with Obama making undocumented accusations and the American representative at the UN calling the insurgents “armed thugs” and “criminals”) was passed by the US and the UK not only before trial, but even before the evidence was collected. All the doubting voices (former US presidential candidate Ron Paul, NYU Professor Stephen Cohen, journalists Robert Parry and Daniel McAdams, etc.) were subjected in the mainstream media of the West to scathing critique, which looks more and more like moral terror now...

...In a civilized court, a suspect does not carry any “burdens”, the “burden” of proving the guilt of a suspect is on the accusing side. It is strange that lawyers Obama and Kerry do not understand it. Ron Paul in his article on the website of his institute simply asked that simple question – can’t Obama and Kerry wait with their verdicts until the investigation is concluded?

...the almost indecent pause which followed the initial array of accusations against Russia when the black boxes were finally obtained – this pause leaves many questions unanswered. Who will bear the responsibility for the gross calumny, if the accusations of, say, British tabloids running headlines about “Putin’s missile” are not confirmed?

“This is not the first case,” Marcus Papadopoulos of Politics First cautions. “We all remember stories in the mainstream press about 500.000 Kosovo Albanians purportedly slaughtered by Serbs in 1999, about thousands of Libyans allegedly killed by Qaddafi’s forces in 2011, etc. None of these stories revealed itself to be true. But no one took the trouble to find and punish the initial liars. There is complete impunity in the Western propaganda machine called the free media.”

*This full text of the article was originally published on RIA Novosti website <http://en.ria.ru/>*

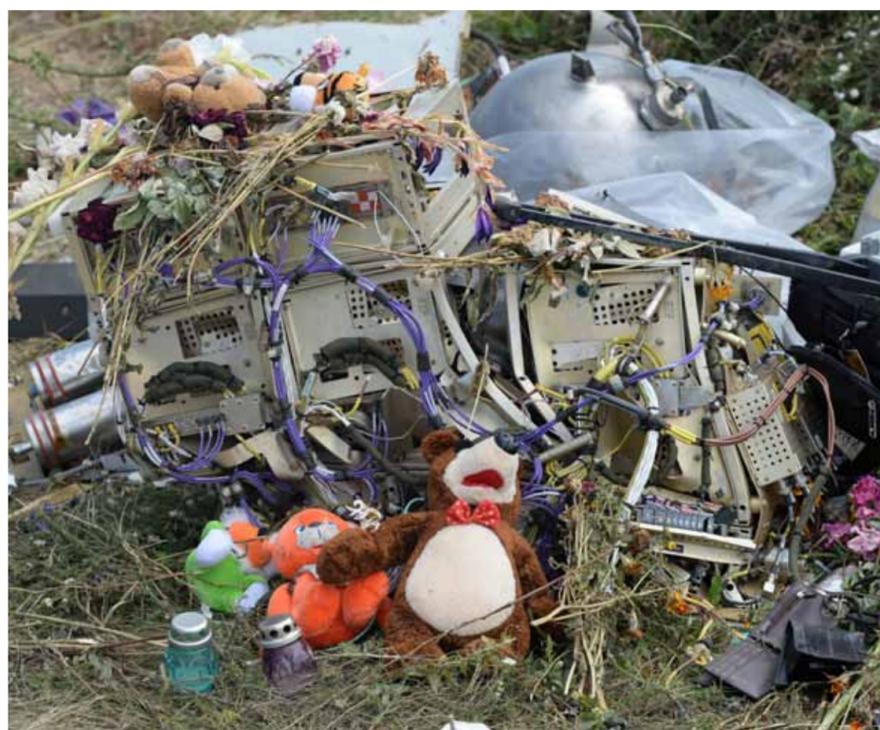


Vehicles carrying employees and experts from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Danish and Australian aviation experts working at the crash site of the Malaysian Airlines Boeing 777, outside the village of Grabovo, near Shakhtyorsk, Donetsk Region. Photo by Mikhail Voskresenskiy



Employees and experts from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Danish and Australian aviation experts working at the crash site of the Malaysian Airlines Boeing 777, outside the village of Grabovo, near Shakhtyorsk, Donetsk Region. Photo by Mikhail Voskresenskiy

## Road Map to WWII: Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Ukraine. Blame it all on Putin



Flowers, lamps and soft toys on the wreckage site of the nose section of Malaysia Airlines Boeing 777 which crashed near Rassypnoye village near Shakhtyorsk in the Donetsk Region. Photo by Mikhail Voskresenskiy

How can Putin allow the West to influence Ukraine, or Crimea, when he has seen what Western actions, and NATO, “accomplished” in Iraq, Libya, Egypt, totally destabilizing the area, destroying the countries, knocking the population back into the dark ages, making them homeless, countryless, refugees, and murdering, or destroying their sovereign leaders. Putin sees the radical Muslim influx in his surrounding area, and the threat of Western/NATO destabilization in neighboring Ukraine, and Crimea, one of Russia’s main naval ports, and he is trying to create buffers, and the ability to act, and curtail any influences, before they spread to mainland Russia. What exactly are we trying to accomplish in his hemisphere? - *Comments on Forbes.com*

The chances for accommodation between Russia and the United States now seem more remote than ever since February 22. Secretary John Kerry and Minister Sergey Lavrov may talk the talk, but they will not walk the walk. Europe will not be able, or willing, to play a mediating role. The Kremlin sees the U.S. goal as being not so much stopping the Russian support for the Donbass rebels, or even getting Moscow to withdraw from Crimea, but as the toppling of the Putin regime by means of economic pain and popular discontent wrought by the sanctions. Even if no pro-Western leader replaces a Putin in the Kremlin as a result, the narrative goes, Russia will succumb to another period of turmoil, making it to focus on itself, rather than creating problems for Washington.

That said, expecting Putin to back off, or for his close friends to persuade him to change tack, or else for the “oligarchs” to pressure the Kremlin into beating a retreat betrays a lack of understanding of the gravity of the situation. It is no longer the struggle for Ukraine, but a battle for Russia. If Vladimir Putin manages to keep the Russian people on his side, he will win it. If not, another geopolitical catastrophe might follow.

*Dmitry Trenin - Carnegie Moscow Center*



Representatives of the Donetsk People's Republic and Malaysian experts during ceremony of transferring flight recorders of B-777 airliner that has crashed in Ukraine. Photo by Mikhail Voskresenskiy