Russian Attempted Influence on Global Conflict and Violence, 2019-2020

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines how the various bureaucratic agents of the Russian Federation use diplomatic language, propaganda, and military signalling in the information age to spin favourable narratives around conflict and violence in real-time. With about 3,000 total recorded diplomatic statements and political-military actions to consider, these two years offer plenty of data to evaluate. By examining the frequency, intended message, and target of these statements over 2019 and 2020, this paper identifies trends in how Russia verbally interposes itself into global events, correlating this practice with Russia's operational capability to intervene militarily. Though diplomatic activity and military signalling as state activities long predate the information age, this paper assesses how these tools are used in the modern environment. Understanding how Russia will attempt to interfere in or stymie outside response to political and military crises around the world is critical as political restrictions are likely to remain the most significant constraint upon military decisions in the information age, especially for militaries of democracies such as the members of NATO.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

To reverse-engineer color revolutions, Russian statecraft increasingly exploits social fissures and violence beyond its borders to weaken its rivals and aggrandize its pretenses as a great power. This paper investigates how Russian state propaganda uses instances of violence abroad to advance this agenda using a database of Russian rhetoric over 2019-2020; it then compares this rhetoric to contemporary Russian military actions and modernization to assess if the propaganda campaign correlates with Russian operational capabilities. This allows a comparison of Russian words and deeds regarding instances of violence around the world.

Rather than investigate the specific motives behind Russian information warfare policy in each instance of violence, this paper confines itself to analyzing Russian foreign and military policies' expression. By examining the frequency of propaganda and action across geography regardless of cause, this paper cuts through the deliberately obfuscatory nature of Russian information warfare and evinces certain quantifiable patterns.

This paper finds evidence that Russia singles out Europe to intimidate both through propaganda and military demonstrations of force. If one excludes the outlier case of Ukraine, the global distribution of Russian propaganda and military demonstration by both region and alliance affiliation correlate fairly strongly. Similarly, Russian ire appears reserved primarily for NATO member-states compared to major non-NATO allies (MNNA) of the United States, Russia's allies, or non-aligned states. Nevertheless, this correlation is less pronounced when disaggregated to the level of individual NATO member-states excepting the United States itself.

2.0 DATA SOURCES AND ANALYTICAL METHOD

This paper relies exclusively upon Russian sources, primarily official Russian government websites but also several pro-Kremlin newspapers and newswires, a full list of which can be found in Appendix A. This

approach gives an unabridged account of the world as the government of the Russian Federation wants both its citizens and foreigners to see it. It also allows considerable insight into the distribution of attention the Russian government assigns each country. All data considered were gathered from open sources.

Nevertheless, this approach has several drawbacks. By only recording what Moscow wanted the world to know, it omits covert activities. Attempting to include those actions with complementary non-Russian or anti-Kremlin sources is possible but jeopardizes the objectivity in reflecting how the Kremlin manages its time as some case studies are considerably more studied than others. Additionally, external allegations of Russian covert activities frequently earn rebuttals from Moscow, meaning that they ultimately are recorded in the dataset if only as a denial. This still produces some curious gaps, the Ukraine outlier case study being the critical example addressed in greater detail below.

For the purposes of this paper, the "violence" considered is limited to physical violence ranging from terrorist attacks to assassination attempts to military operations. It does not include denunciations of unfriendly policies or military provocations that not resulting in casualties. For example, messaging surrounding the poisoning of Sergei Skripal is considered violence for the purposes of this paper but messaging around the HMS Defender military incident of 23 June 2021 off the coast of Crimea is not as the former resulted in multiple casualties while the latter did not.

Furthermore, this paper only considered Russian rhetoric using the event of violence to spread propaganda, express opposition, or make threats. On other occasions, the Russian Federation expresses sympathy or condolences, especially following terrorist attacks. This paper does not analyze these conciliatory events.

Demonstrations of force, the action or deeds evaluated in this paper, are defined as conventional military actions directed against another country as described in Russian media. This includes instances of Russian military aircraft being escorted by other countries' aircraft or vice versa as well as provocations at sea. Again as an example, the HMS Defender incident of 23 June 2021 would be included in this data but the poisoning of Sergei Skripal would not.

These two data sources are below assessed through disaggregation as well as tests for correlation. These are relatively simple methodologies for examining a relationship, but the novelty of the datasets suggests a relatively simple first examination.

3.0   THE DATA AND ITS RESULTS

Over 2019 and 2020, the Russian Federation issued 3,327 rhetorical statements about other states or international organizations (henceforth "interlocutor") regarding international events including support, opposition, and disinformation. Of these, 772 (23%) pertained to this paper's definition of violence. This can be further divided into 723 statements using the instance of violence to denounce the other interlocutor and 49 of solidarity with the interlocutor against the perpetrator of violence. Of those 722 statements, 38 attack international organizations. The remaining 684 attacking other states comprise the first dataset of Russian threats and propaganda addressing global violence. A second dataset of the instances of Russian military demonstrations of force reported in the Russian media (e.g. violating airspace) includes 182 instances over the same period. This allows a differentiation between and comparison of Russian rhetoric and action. The first dataset is attached in Appendix B and the second in Appendix C.

3.1 Russian Rhetoric vs Action around the World

Tables 1 disaggregates this data according to region and Table 2 according to whether the interlocutor was a US ally, Russian ally, or neither. The middle column disaggregates the first dataset and the right column the second.

Table 1. Instances of Russian Influence on Violence by Region, 2019-2020		
	Rhetoric on Violence	*Demonstration of Force*
Former Soviet Republics*	299 (43.7%)	0 (0.0%)
Europe	137 (20.0%)	89 (48.9%)
Asia	12 (1.7%)	14 (7.7%)
Middle East	27 (3.9%)	1 (0.5%)
Africa**	18 (2.6%)	2 (1.1%)
North America	179 (26.2%)	76 (41.8%)
Latin America	7 (1.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Oceania	5 (0.7%)	0 (0.0%)
Total	**684**	**182**

*Excluding Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania

**All countries on the African continent excluding Egypt (included in the Middle East)

Source: Datasets compiled by the author from sources listed in Appendix A.

Table 2. Instances of Russian Influence on Violence by International Alliance, 2019-2020		
	Rhetoric on Violence	*Demonstrations of Force*
United States (Blue)	177 (25.9%)	76 (41.8%)
Non-US NATO Members (Blue)	125 (18.3%)	75 (41.2%)
MNNAs (Blue)*	25 (3.7%)	13 (7.1%)
Russian Allies (Red)**	17 (2.5%)	0 (0.0%)
Non-Aligned (Green)	340 (49.7%)	18 (9.9%)
Total	**684**	**182**

*Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Brazil, Egypt, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Morocco, New Zealand, Pakistan, Palau, Philippines, Thailand, Tunisia

**Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Syria, Tajikistan

Source: Datasets compiled by the author from sources listed in Appendix A.

This analysis of the complete datasets suggests a mismatch between the two. Russian threats and propaganda regarding violence disproportionately target former Soviet republics and non-aligned/green states whereas military demonstrations of force are principally reserved for NATO members both in Europe and North America. The correlational coefficient of Table 1 is 0.37 and that of Table 2 0.55,[1] suggesting a moderate-to-weak correlation.

However, this data misleads from the larger story due to Ukraine, a non-aligned/green former Soviet republic comprising the mode target of the rhetoric dataset. The Russian Federation routinely denounces Ukraine, highlighting virtually all violence in Donbas or arrests around the country as Kyiv's fault. However, Russian media avoids all references to insertions of Russian military assets into Donbas or other encounters along the border, resulting in Ukraine receiving an improbable zero instances of military demonstration. Rather than creating a separate standard for Ukraine, this paper instead considers Tables 3 and 4 which exclude Ukraine as an outlier, resulting in only 444 instances of rhetoric but still all 182 instances of action.

Table 3. Instances of Russian Influence on Violence by Region, 2019-2020 (excluding Ukraine)		
	Rhetoric on Violence	*Demonstration of Force*
Former Soviet Republics*	59 (13.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Europe	137 (30.9%)	89 (48.9%)
Asia	12 (2.7%)	14 (7.7%)
Middle East	27 (6.1%)	1 (0.5%)
Africa**	18 (4.1%)	2 (1.1%)
North America	179 (40.3%)	76 (41.8%)
Latin America	7 (1.6%)	0 (0.0%)
Oceania	5 (1.1%)	0 (0.0%)
Total	**444**	**182**

*Excluding Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania

**All countries on the African continent excluding Egypt (included in the Middle East)

Source: Datasets compiled by the author from sources listed in Appendix A.

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[1] Aggregating the three categories of the United States and its allies into one blue category receiving 44.4% of the propaganda and 83.4% of the military demonstrations.

Table 4. Instances of Russian Influence on Violence by International Alliance, 2019-2020 (excl. Ukraine)		
	Rhetoric on Violence	*Demonstrations of Force*
United States (Blue)	177 (40.0%)	76 (41.8%)
Non-US NATO Members (Blue)	125 (28.1%)	75 (41.2%)
MNNAs (Blue)*	25 (5.6%)	13 (7.1%)
Russian Allies (Red)**	17 (3.8%)	0 (0.0%)
Non-Aligned (Green)	100 (22.5%)	18 (9.9%)
Total	**444**	**182**

*Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Brazil, Egypt, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Morocco, New Zealand, Pakistan, Palau, Philippines, Thailand, Tunisia

**Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Syria, Tajikistan

Source: Datasets compiled by the author from sources listed in Appendix A.

This distribution suggests a clear Russian focus of both rhetoric and action against Europe and North America and specifically against NATO members relative to the outside world. The correlational coefficient of Table 3 jumps to 0.92 and that of Table 4 to 0.99,[2] indicating significantly reduced mismatch of Russian rhetoric and action and very strong correlation.

This disaggregation shows that Russian policies of intimidation both by rhetoric and action are unique to its relations with NATO member states. Indeed, of the 38 rhetorical attacks on international organizations, 33 (87%) are directed against the European Union,[3] G7, and NATO itself. Though other factors also contribute to the degree of Russian antipathy to current Ukrainian policy, Kyiv's aspirations for NATO membership almost certainly contribute to its disproportionate share of rhetorical targeting as this data suggests.

Cumulatively, this suggests a Russian state propaganda campaign to emphasize violence perpetrated by and in NATO member states or else dissemble Russian violence as potentially NATO members' fault. The relative absence of this rhetorical policy in other regions of the world highlights how the Russian Federation perceives relations with the West to be dysfunctional. Whereas with other states, Russia generally ignores instances of violence or addresses them once, it amplifies messaging around violence among NATO member states and to a lesser extent former Soviet republics.

The remaining deviation from correlation in Table 4 derives primarily from Russian disposition to rhetoric on violence in non-aligned states more than toward non-US NATO members while applying more military demonstrations against non-US NATO members than against those non-aligned states. This can partially be explained by the fact that rhetoric toward non-aligned states excepting Ukraine is principally directed toward Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kosovo, and Sweden. Of those, only Sweden was routinely targeted by military

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[2] Again merging the three blue country rows. Disaggregated, the correlational coefficient is 0.89, i.e. still a strong coefficient but not an almost-perfect 0.99. Further disaggregation is undertaken below.

[3] 21 of the European Union's 27 members (78%) are also NATO members.

demonstrations. Moscow's longstanding strategic quarrels with Georgia and Kosovo incentivized Russian diplomats to opportunistically opine on any event that could be construed as a sign of instability. The rhetoric toward Azerbaijan primarily pertained toward calls for restraint during the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh clashes and subsequent war; the 3.8% of Russian rhetoric directed against Russian allies was almost entirely dedicated to similar cajoling of Armenia. Nevertheless, another key finding of this disaggregation is that Russian rhetoric on violence is somewhat milder toward non-US NATO member states relative to the United States even as they are targeted by an almost equal number of punitive military demonstrations.

3.2 Russian Rhetoric vs Action within the NATO Alliance

As suggested by the almost equal number of Russian military demonstrations targeting the United States as all other NATO member states, the distribution of Russian rhetoric on violence and action is not evenly distributed within the Alliance. Table 5 breaks down the instances for each NATO member-state by decreasing quantity of rhetorical statements with the United States included at the end.

Table 5. Instances of Russian Influence on Violence in NATO Members, 2019-2020		
	Rhetoric on Violence	*Demonstration of Force*
Germany	34 (27.0%)	7 (9.3%)
France	20 (15.9%)	3 (4.0%)
Netherlands	19 (15.1%)	0 (0.0%)
United Kingdom	14 (11.1%)	19 (25.3%)
Turkey	13 (10.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Albania	4 (3.2%)	0 (0.0%)
Estonia	3 (2.4%)	4 (5.3%)
Poland	3 (2.4%)	2 (2.7%)
Spain	3 (2.4%)	2 (2.7%)
Canada	2 (1.6%)	0 (0.0%)
Czech Republic	2 (1.6%)	0 (0.0%)
Latvia	2 (1.6%)	1 (1.3%)
Lithuania	2 (1.6%)	1 (1.3%)
Belgium	1 (0.8%)	3 (4.0%)
Denmark	1 (0.8%)	8 (10.7%)
Italy	1 (0.8%)	1 (1.3%)

Montenegro	1 (0.8%)	0 (0.0%)
Norway	1 (0.8%)	22 (29.3%)
Bulgaria	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Croatia	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Greece	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Hungary	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Iceland	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.3%)
Luxembourg	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
North Macedonia	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Portugal	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Romania	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.3%)
Slovakia	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Slovenia	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Total without USA	**126**	**75**
United States	177 (58.4% if included)	76 (50.3% if included)
Source: Datasets compiled by the author from sources listed in Appendix A.		

Table 5 shows that Russia's rhetoric primarily targets NATO's five most populous members – the United States, Turkey, Germany, France, and the United Kingdom – as well as the Netherlands. The four most populous non-US members collectively account for 64.3% of Russia's rhetoric against non-US NATO members. However, these four states account for only 38.6% of the military demonstrations of force against non-US NATO members. Less populous states like Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, and Norway account for far more of the military demonstrations than the amount of rhetoric about their supposed complicity in violence would suggest. Whereas the Netherlands and Turkey are rhetorically castigated, no military demonstrations were recorded against them during the time considered.

Several broad trends do explain some of the particularly focuses of rhetoric. Germany earned considerable ire for what Russia claimed to be its fabrication of evidence of violence against Russian opposition figure Alexei Navalny. France and Germany are accused of facilitating supposedly unprovoked Ukrainian violence in Donbas in contravention to the 2015 Minsk Agreements. The Netherlands supposedly is politicizing the investigation of the MH-17 disaster, many of the victims of which were Dutch. Allegations against Turkey primarily pertain to complaints about conditions on the ground in Syria where both Russia and Turkey have a military presence.

In contrast to these disparate causes for rhetorical denunciation, the Russian demonstrations of military force are heavily concentrated in the Baltic, North Sea, and Arctic regions (together accounting for 79% of the

incidents recorded). Whereas the Russian Federation has dedicated considerable overt attention to bolstering its military capabilities in the Arctic, it has typically preferred to accuse NATO and its members of militarizing the Baltic region. Though it is tempting to conclude that these figures definitively disprove that Russian claim – and at minimum these figures suggest that Russia is at best contributing to the perceived militarization – some other operational and political constraints offer competing plausible explanations.

3.3   Analyzing the Impact of Russian Operational Capabilities versus Politics on its Rhetoric and Action against NATO Members

Though Russia targets the third-most negative rhetoric on violence against France among NATO member-states, it subjects it to far fewer military provocations than it does Norway. This seems to have less to do with a hidden Russian agenda to destabilize Norway than it does to Russian operational constraints making it easier to fly military aircraft or sail warships near neighboring Norway than more distant France. As each instance of Russian Long Range Aviation long-range patrols out of Russia via the Arctic are escorted by Norwegian aircraft, the Russian media portrays this as a demonstration of military force against Norway.

Nevertheless, over the five years of 2016-2020, the Russian Ministry of Defense (MOD) reported only 24 occasions of new equipment or ships being delivered to the Northern Fleet with its bases near the Norwegian border. By contrast, the MOD reported 58 such occasions on the Crimean Peninsula in the Black Sea.[4] However, the NATO member-states bordering the Black Sea[5] together account for only 1 of the 75 military demonstrations of force in 2019-2020. This suggests that operational capabilities and military modernization alone cannot account for aggressive Russian military signaling choices against NATO member-states.

Somewhat complicating these observations are that some of these demonstrations of force are responses to NATO patrols over international waters off Russian and Crimean coasts. For example, all three instances of demonstration of force against France involved Russian fighters in Crimea intercepting French aircraft patrolling over the Black Sea. Well over 75% of Russian demonstrations of force against the United States involved escorting, buzzing, or otherwise responding to US aircraft and ships deployed away from North America – most often in or over seas on Russia's borders but sometimes further afield such as in the Mediterranean Sea (4 instances) or Indian Ocean (1). Arranging the instances of military demonstrations of force specifically involving interception or buzzing of foreign forces (109 of the 182 total in the dataset) by geography gives us Table 6.

Table 6. Russian Demonstrations of Force against Foreign Troops by Geography, 2019-2020	
Black Sea	42 (38.5%)
Baltic Sea	32 (29.4%)
Barents Sea	20 (18.3%)
Mediterranean Sea	4 (3.7%)
Bering Sea	4 (3.7%)
Sea of Okhotsk	3 (2.8%)

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[4] Instances gathered from press releases of the Russian Ministry of Defense, www.function.mil.ru.

[5] Bulgaria, Romania, and Turkey

Indian Ocean	1 (0.9%)
Sea of Japan	1 (0.9%)
Chukchi Sea	1 (0.9%)
Ukrainian Border[6]	1 (0.9%)
Source: Dataset compiled by the author from sources listed in Appendix A.	

Table 6 again demonstrates the centrality of Europe to Russian demonstrations of force just as Europe is central to Russian rhetoric concerning violence. However, it suggests that Russian coercion is considerably more confined to its immediate borders than Table 5 would initially suggest. Fully 104 of the 109 incidents (95%) occurred in regions directly bordering the Russian Federation. If judged against all Russian military demonstrations of force over 2019-2020, these 104 incidents represent 57% of all events covered by the Russian media in these years. Table 7 further breaks down Russian military demonstrations of force against foreign territory.

Table 7. Russian Demonstrations of Force against Foreign Territory by Country, 2019-2020	
United States	13 (11.9%)
United Kingdom	9 (8.3%)
Japan	8 (7.3%)
Norway	8 (7.3%)
Denmark	6 (5.5%)
Sweden	5 (4.6%)
Estonia	4 (3.7%)
South Korea	4 (3.7%)
Finland	3 (2.8%)
Poland	2 (1.8%)
Belgium	1 (0.9%)
Iceland	1 (0.9%)
Latvia	1 (0.9%)

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[6] This instance involved Russian fighters intercepting US B-52 bombers operating over Ukraine on 14 September 2020 rather than intercepting Ukrainian forces.

Lithuania	1 (0.9%)
Romania	1 (0.9%)
Spain	1 (0.9%)
Source: Dataset compiled by the author from sources listed in Appendix A.	

NATO member states represent 48 of these 68 instances (71%) but countries with land borders Russia comprise only 19 (28%). Including countries with which Russia has no land border but to which Russia can fly in a straight line over water without crossing another country's territory[7] increases this figure to 56 (82%). This again suggests that though demonstrations of force approaching foreign countries' territory projects the Russian military farther than most of its military encounters, operational constraints still play some role even in these decisions.

Isolating the degree to which Russian rhetoric and military demonstrations relates to politics or operational capabilities and constraints is difficult with any degree of certainty, but certain trends do emerge from the data above. Among all NATO member states, the frequency of Russian rhetorical interference in violence and military demonstrates of force has a correlational coefficient of 0.92, or very high correlation. However, the magnitude of the United States within this dataset relative to other NATO members distorts this result; among non-US NATO member states, the correlational coefficient of Russian rhetoric and actions is only 0.25, or fairly weak correlation. This suggests that provocative Russian military action against NATO member states has relatively little to do with Russian political rhetoric on violence.

4.0 TIMING OF INTERVENTION IN VIOLENCE

Of the 723 statements on violence, 606 (84%) addressed events at the time they occurred. Of those 606, 139 (23%) were withheld until Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Maria Zakharova's weekly press conference but the other 467 statements were issued even closer to the time of occurrence.

The 117 statements delivered about past events concentrated on several recurring themes broadly divisible into two groups: denials of controversies other countries raised against Russia and reminders of events Russia wished to emphasize. In the first group, denials of Russian involvement in the 2014 MH-17 disaster (15 incidents) and the 2019 attempted assassination of Alexey Navalny (43 incidents) loomed largest. In the latter group, chastisement of NATO over the wars in Yugoslavia (4 incidents) and Libya (6 incidents) were the most frequent with plenty of other isolated historical case studies, especially about Soviet occupations following World War II.

Though the Russian Federation does not hesitate to use a varyingly politicized historical memory to harangue its diplomatic interlocutors, the vast majority of its rhetorical energy is spent on responding to current events. Of interest, however, is the absence of connection of threats the Russian Federation occasionally makes to the military actions it ultimately takes. This suggests that though official Russian rhetoric may be indicative of Russian favor or disfavor toward a particular interlocutor, it cannot be used as a leading indicator for instances of specific military actions.

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[7] Denmark, Japan, South Korea, Romania, Sweden, and the United States

5.0 IMPLICATIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND POTENTIAL FURTHER RESEARCH

At least so far as the issue of violence as defined by this paper is concerned, there seems only a relatively limited link between Russian rhetoric and its demonstrated willingness to use its military for punishment either as a signal or operationally for 2019-2020. The fact that 128 of 182 (70%) instances of Russian uses of force as a punishment reported by the Russian media over this period occurred around seas and foreign countries directly bordering the Russian Federation also suggests that Russia is largely constrained – voluntarily or involuntarily – to demonstrations of force in its immediate neighborhood. Were it not for the disproportionate position of the United States in Russian rhetoric and violence, little correlation could be established between Russian words and deeds regarding its politicization of global violence. The other outlier of the data – Ukraine – would have further confirmed this finding given the absence of Russian media reporting on military actions against the country.

Nevertheless, several further potential courses of research may yet prove useful for understanding how the Russian Federation currently evaluates the potential use of force in political disputes. First, a larger analysis of the full spectrum of Russian diplomatic rhetoric (i.e. all 3,327 instances of rhetoric referenced at the start of section 3) may yield further lessons when analyzed alongside Russian military actions. Second, analysis of years further in the past may show whether this trend of disconnection is strengthening or weakening over time due to qualitative shifts in Russian military capabilities over the past two decades. Third, the Ukraine outlier might be better explored using an alternative methodology for quantifying the military demonstrations against the country such as by using Kyiv's daily reported number of violations of the ceasefire regime.

Similarly, the mismatch of Russian rhetoric with reports of Russian reports of conventional military provocations also suggests that a broader evaluation of undeclared activities being undertaken against the rhetorically targeted states. Whereas this paper's use of exclusively Russian open sources enables considerably greater geographical breadth of analysis, case study analysis of individual countries – especially Ukraine – might unveil other metrics for measuring Russian punitive action against its perceived antagonists.

Just because the datasets do not suggest anything more than a weak linkage between Russian rhetoric about violence and conventional military action does not mean NATO has little to fear. The fact that NATO member states dominate Russian rhetoric about violence in a time of considerable violence elsewhere in the world indicates that Russia is far more interested in exacerbating potential conflicts in Europe and North America than elsewhere. Russian condolences after terrorist attacks and other violence both against NATO member states and the broader world are vastly outnumbered by rhetorical spats targeting the Alliance.

Similarly, the preponderance of Russian conventional military activities directed against other states reported by the Russian press target NATO member-states. Even excluding the United States, 41% of Russian activities worldwide are directed against European NATO and as discussed above a sizeable portion of Russian military encounters with the United States occur in Europe rather than North America or the Pacific. Though this distribution of attention does not necessarily indicate a Russian desire to start a conventional or even unconventional fight with NATO, it does show a Russian fixation with Europe and the broader NATO space as a theater of conflict.

APPENDIX A. LISTS OF SOURCES

To gather the data on Russian rhetoric on violence and conventional military demonstrations of force, the author consulted the following sources:

- Official Russian Sources:
    - Presidency, www.kremlin.ru
    - Government, www.government.ru
    - Security Council, www.scrf.gov.ru
    - Foreign Intelligence Service, www.svr.gov.ru
    - Federal Security Service, www.fsb.ru
    - Ministry of the Interior, www.мвд.рф
    - Ministry of Trade and Industry, www.minpromtorg.gov.ru
    - Ministry of Economic Development, www.economy.gov.ru
    - Ministry of Finance, www.minfin.ru
    - Ministry of Energy, www.minenergo.gov.ru
    - Ministry of Foreign Affairs, www.mid.ru
    - Ministry of Defense, www.function.mil.ru
    - Russian National Guard, www.rosgvard.ru
    - Ministry of Emergency Situations, www.mchs.gov.ru
    - Krasnaya Zvezda, www.redstar.ru
- Unofficial Russian Sources:
    - Izvestiya, www.iz.ru
    - TASS, www.tass.ru
    - RIA, www.ria.ru