

Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances

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The **Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances** is a political agreement signed in [Budapest, Hungary](#) on 5 December 1994, providing security assurances by its signatories relating to [Ukraine's](#) accession to the [Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons](#). The Memorandum was originally signed by three nuclear powers, the [Russian Federation](#), the [United States of America](#), and the [United Kingdom](#). [China](#) and [France](#) gave somewhat weaker individual assurances in separate documents.^[1]

The memorandum included security assurances against threats or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of [Ukraine](#) as well as those of [Belarus](#) and [Kazakhstan](#). As a result Ukraine gave up the world's [third largest nuclear weapons stockpile](#) between 1994 and 1996.^{[2][3]}

Following the [2014 Crimean crisis](#), the U.S.,^{[4][5]} Canada^[6] and the U.K.^[7] all separately stated that Russian involvement is in breach of its obligations to Ukraine under the Budapest Memorandum, and in clear violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity. However, Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs argued that the Budapest memorandum does not apply to the [2014 Crimean crisis](#) because separation of Crimea was driven by an internal political and social-economic crisis. Russia was never under obligation to force any part of Ukraine's civilian population to stay in Ukraine against its will.^[8]

According to the memorandum, Russia, the U.S., and the UK confirmed, in recognition of Ukraine becoming party to the [Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons](#) and in effect abandoning its nuclear arsenal to Russia, that they would:

1. Respect Ukrainian independence and sovereignty within its existing borders.
2. Refrain from the threat or use of force against Ukraine.
3. Refrain from using economic pressure on Ukraine in order to influence its politics.
4. Seek [United Nations Security Council](#) action if nuclear weapons are used against Ukraine.
5. Refrain from the use of nuclear arms against Ukraine.
6. Consult with one another if questions arise regarding these commitments.^[9]

Analysis: Under the political agreement, the signatories offered Ukraine "security assurances" in exchange for its adherence to the [Treaty on the Non-](#)

[Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons](#). The memorandum bundled together a set of assurances that Ukraine already held from the [Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe](#) (CSCE) Final Act, [United Nations Charter](#) and [Non-Proliferation Treaty](#).^[1] The Ukrainian government nevertheless found it politically valuable to have these assurances in a Ukraine-specific document.^{[10][11]}

The Budapest Memorandum was negotiated as a political agreement. It refers to assurances, not defined, but less than a military guarantee of intervention.^{[11][2][11]} According to Stephen MacFarlane, a professor of international relations "It gives signatories justification if they take action, but it does not force anyone to act in Ukraine."^[10] In the U.S. neither the [George H. W. Bush administration](#) nor the [Clinton administration](#) was prepared to give a military commitment to Ukraine, nor did they believe the [U.S. Senate](#) would ratify an [international treaty](#), so the memorandum was agreed as a political agreement.^[11]

China and France gave security assurances for Ukraine in separate documents. China's governmental statement of 4 December 1994 did not call for mandatory consultations if questions arose, just calling for "fair consultations". France's declaration of 5 December 1994 did not mention consultations.^[11]

Issues:1994 Crimean crisis^[edit] see also: [Yuriy Meshkov](#) and [President of Crimea](#)

In 1990, Meshkov was elected as a deputy to the [Supreme Council of Crimea](#) (the republic's parliament). There he became the co-founder of the RDK Party (Republican movement of Crimea). In 1994, he stood at the helm of the electoral bloc "Rossiya" for the republican presidential elections, where he easily defeated in the second round of elections [Mykola Bahrov](#) who ran as an independent. At that time, Bahrov was the head of the Supreme Council of Crimea. During the second round of the [1994 Crimean presidential elections](#), Meshkov won with 72.9 percent of the vote, and was elected as the republic's only president.^{[12][13]}

Meshkov's main political platform was to facilitate much closer relationships with the [Russian Federation](#) up to the possible annexation of [Crimea](#) by [Russia](#).^[citation needed] He tried to initiate a military-political union with Russia and completely disregarded opinions of the [Ukrainian government](#).^[citation needed] He also tried to force the circulation of the [Russian currency](#),^[clarification needed] issue foreign passports to the [Ukrainian](#) population, and even transfer Crimea to the same [time zone](#) as [Moscow](#). Due to the unforeseen resistance of the local opposition, Meshkov only managed to put his autonomous republic into [Moscow's time zone](#). He also appointed the [Russian](#) economist [Yevgeny Saburov](#) as vice prime-minister; Saburov virtually became the head of the government.^[citation needed] Other government officials^[who?] disputed the appointment, arguing that Saburov could not hold the position because he

did not have a Ukrainian passport.^[*citation needed*] Saburov was forced to resign. After that he^[*who?*] managed to paralyze the work of the Supreme Council of Crimea.^[*citation needed*]

In 1995, the [Ukrainian parliament](#) scrapped the Crimean Constitution and abolished the post of president on 17 March.^{[14][15]} After a couple of warnings in September and November 1994, on 17 March 1995 the [President of Ukraine](#), [Leonid Kuchma](#), signed the Law of Ukraine that scrapped the amended Crimean Constitution and some other Laws of AR Crimea, on the grounds that they contradicted the [Constitution of Ukraine](#) and endangered the sovereignty of Ukraine.^[*citation needed*]

2003 Tuzla Island dispute; ain article: [Tuzla Island](#)

In 2003, Russian construction efforts were seen as an attempt to annex [Tuzla Island](#) off the [Crimean](#) coast of Ukraine.^{[2][*dead link*]} The Russian threat to Tuzla led to the Ukrainian leadership appealing to NATO for consultations on security, as outlined in the 1997 [NATO-Ukraine Charter](#), without result.^[2] The dispute led to negotiations over delimitation of the maritime borders. In a 2012 preliminary agreement, Ukraine and Russia agreed that Tuzla Island would be considered Ukraine's territory.^{[16][*needs update*]} However, this agreement may now be safely considered [null and void](#) as of March 2014.^[*citation needed*]

2014 Crimean

crisis:[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry speaks with British Foreign Secretary William Hague and Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Deshchytsia.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:U.S._Secretary_of_State_John_Kerry_speaks_with_British_Foreign_Secretary_William_Hague_and_Ukrainian_Foreign_Minister_Andrii_Deshchytsia.jpg) **U.S. Secretary of State [John Kerry](#) speaks with British Foreign Secretary [William Hague](#) and Ukrainian Foreign Minister [Andrii Deshchytsia](#) after hosting the Budapest Memorandum Ministerial on the Ukraine crisis in Paris, France, on March 5, 2014. Main article: [2014 Crimean crisis](#)**

In February 2014, Russian forces seized or blockaded various airports, as well as other strategic sites throughout [Crimea](#).^[17] The troops are attached to the Russian [Black Sea Fleet](#) stationed in Crimea,^[18] likely placing Russia in violation of the Budapest Memorandum. The Russian Foreign Ministry has confirmed the movement of armoured units attached to the Black Sea Fleet in Crimea, but asserts that they are acting within the scope of the various agreements between the two countries. Other official Russian sources deny that the units in the area of [Sevastopol International Airport](#), specifically, are attached to the Black Sea Fleet.^[19] Russia responded by supporting a referendum on whether the Crimea should join the Russian Federation. Russia announced the referendum was being conducted by 'local forces'. On March 16, Russia annexed Crimea. Ukraine vigorously protested the action as a violation of Article 1 of the Budapest Memorandum.

In response to the crisis, the Ukrainian parliament has requested that the Memorandum's signatories reaffirm their commitment to the principles

enshrined in the political agreement, and further asked that they hold consultations with Ukraine to ease tensions.^[20]

On 24 March 2014, Canadian Prime Minister [Stephen Harper](#) led the rest of the [G8](#) partners at an ad-hoc meeting during the [Nuclear Security Summit](#) in [The Hague](#) to suspend Russian membership, partially, said Harper, because Russia had violated the Budapest Memorandum. He said that Ukraine had given up its nuclear weapons "on the basis of an explicit Russian guarantee of its territorial integrity. By breaching that guarantee, President Putin has provided a rationale for those elsewhere who needed little more than that already furnished by pride or grievance to arm themselves to the teeth." Harper also indicated support for Ukraine by saying he would work with the new Ukrainian government towards a free trade agreement. Ukrainian-Canadians make up roughly 3.3% of the population of Canada.^[21]

The government of Belarus said that American sanctions were in breach of the Memorandum; the United States government responded that, although not binding, the Memorandum is compatible with its work against human rights violations in eastern Europe.^[22]

See also: [Nuclear weapons and Ukraine](#)

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- ^{9.} [^] [Memorandum on Security Assurances](#)
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