

FORUM: Historical Security Council

QUESTION OF: The First Chechen War

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INTRODUCTION

The First Chechen War, was a conflict instigated by the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria's independence movement against the Russian Federation from December 1994 to August 1996. Though this conflict may look sudden, Chechnya had been struggling to gain independence from Russia since the early 1800s, during the Caucasian War. Ultimately, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, Chechnya's finally managed to secede from the Russian Federation, and consequently creating further friction in the two nations already hostile relationship.

The climax of this animosity arrived during December of 1994, when Russian military invaded the Chechen capital, and thus the battle of Grozny began, a battle that would go on for almost three months after it was officially declared as a victory for the Russians. Despite the fact that Russian forces had managed to take over the capital, Chechen resistance fighters continued to launch raids and attacks against Russian troops. For the Chechen people, the war only worsened discrimination and suffering that they had been facing from the Russian public for over a century prior, with communities facing not only physical destruction but also the erasure of their own cultural heritage



Image 1, Map of Chechnya

and identity. The relentless bombardments and sieges undermined their daily lives and historical legacy, leaving a lasting impact on their society.¹

On a global scale, the First Chechen War highlighted the challenges of balancing a state's sovereignty with the protection of human rights, while also exposing how international intervention can be limited in situations like these. This is an especially interesting topic in the context of this year's CGSMUN topic: "Ethos Versus Progress – Reassessing our values in a fragile world", where the First Chechen War serves as an example of the clash between our moral values and our political strategic goals. Although the international community's moral character demands the protection of human rights and the abolishment of public suffering during conflicts like these, most decisions that could lead to achieving that end up happening based on national interests. For this reason it is of the utmost importance that during this conference we explore this divide and discover how to implement compromise of those considerations effectively during debate.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Chechen Republic of Ichkeria

The Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, also known simply as Chechnya, was an unrecognised, self-declared state that exists in the North Caucasus region of Russia. The region first became prominent in the 18th century during Russia's imperial expansion into the Caucasus. It is predominantly inhabited by the Chechen people, an ethnic group with a long history of resistance against external domination, particularly by Russian and Soviet forces. The republic claimed independence from Russia and sought to establish itself as a sovereign nation in the tumultuous period following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in November 1991.²

Grozny

"Grozny, city and capital of the republic of Chechnya, Russia. It lies along the Sunzha River at the foot of the Sunzha Range of the Caucasus. Grozny became particularly significant during the First Chechen War, where it was a focal point of intense fighting between Russian forces and Chechen separatists."³

¹ Encyclopædia Britannica. Chechnya, www.britannica.com/place/Chechnya#/media/1/108244/181538 Accessed 31 Aug. 2024.

² "Chechnya | History, Location, Religion, & Facts | Britannica." Encyclopædia Britannica, 2024, www.britannica.com/place/Chechnya Accessed 8 Aug. 2024.

³ "Grozny | War, Map, Bombing, & History | Britannica." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2024, www.britannica.com/place/Grozny Accessed 30 July 2024.

Jihadism

“Jihadism primarily refers to the human struggle to promote what is right and to prevent what is wrong. In modern times, the term is frequently associated with extremist and militant groups, particularly those that justify violence in the name of Islam.”⁴

De facto State

“De facto states are regarded as political authorities functioning within a certain territory without international legal recognition. However, de facto states aim to gain the recognition of other states in order to be considered legitimate actors in the international system.”⁵

Self-Determination

Self-determination denotes the legal right of people to decide their own destiny in the international order. Self-determination is a core principle of international law, arising from customary international law, but also recognized as a general principle of law, and enshrined in a number of international treaties.⁶

Secession

“The act of becoming independent and no longer part of a country, area or organisation. The process of secession may involve legal negotiations, political manoeuvres, or, in some cases, conflict and violence, as the seceding entity strives to achieve full recognition as an independent and self-governing state or entity on the international stage.”⁷

Coup D’Etat

“The sudden, violent overthrow of an existing government by a small group. This group, often composed of military personnel, political factions, or a coalition of both, seizes control of key government institutions and resources, such as the executive office, military headquarters, communication networks, and vital infrastructure. The objective of a coup d’état is to depose the current leadership and establish a new regime, often without the consent or support of the general population.”

⁴ “Jihad | Meaning, Examples, & Use in the Quran | Britannica.” Encyclopædia Britannica, 2024, www.britannica.com/topic/jihad Accessed 30 July 2024.

⁵ Özpek, Burak Bilgehan. “The Role of Democracy in the Recognition of de Facto States: An Empirical Assessment on JSTOR.” Jstor.org, 2014, www.jstor.org/stable/24526326 Accessed 30 July 2024.

⁶ “Self Determination (International Law).” LII / Legal Information Institute, 2024, [www.law.cornell.edu/wex/self_determination_\(international_law\)#:~:text=Self%2Ddetermination%20denotes%20the%20legal,a%20number%20of%20international%20treaties](http://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/self_determination_(international_law)#:~:text=Self%2Ddetermination%20denotes%20the%20legal,a%20number%20of%20international%20treaties) Accessed 30 July 2024.

⁷ Cambridge Dictionary. “Secession.” @CambridgeWords, dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/secession Accessed 30 July 2024.

Insurgency

“A violent attempt to oppose and/or overthrow a country's government carried out by citizens of that country.”⁸

Counterinsurgency

“Counterinsurgency is the use of all elements of a nation's power—including not only combined-arms operations but also psychological, political, economic, intelligence, and diplomatic operations—to defeat an insurgency.”⁹

Sovereignty

“The right of a nation or group of people to be self-governing.”¹⁰

Guerrilla Warfare

“Guerrilla Warfare is defined as operations carried on by small independent forces, generally in the rear of the enemy, with the objective of harassing, delaying, and disrupting military operations of the enemy rather than confronting them in open battle. Guerrilla fighters rely on their intimate knowledge of the local terrain, as well as the support of sympathetic local populations, to conduct operations that erode the enemy's resources, morale, and ability to maintain control.”¹¹

Indigenisation

“Indigenization is the process by which Indigenous ways of knowing, being, doing and relating are incorporated into educational, organisational, cultural and social structures of the institution.”¹²

War Crimes

“Violations of the laws or customs of war, including: atrocities or offences against persons or property, constituting violations of the laws or customs of war. murder, ill treatment or deportation to slave labour or for any other purpose of the civilian population in occupied territory.”¹³

⁸ “Definition of Insurgency.” Collinsdictionary.com, HarperCollins Publishers Ltd, 2019, www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/insurgency Accessed 30 July 2024.

⁹ “Counterinsurgency.” Army.mil, 2018, www.moore.army.mil/mssp/Counterinsurgency/ Accessed 30 July 2024.

¹⁰ “Sovereignty | Milwaukee Public Museum.” Mpm.edu, 2022, www.mpm.edu/educators/wirp/nations/sovereignty Accessed 30 July 2024.

¹¹ “Home: Guerrilla Warfare: Home.” Libguides.com, 2024, carlcgsc.libguides.com/guerrillawarfare#:~:text=Guerilla%20Warfare%20is%20defined%20as,military%20operations%20of%20the%20enemy Accessed 30 July 2024.

¹² “Indigenization.” Camosun College, 2024, camosun.ca/about/dr-lloyd-morin-centre-excellence-teaching-and-learning/indigenization#:~:text=Indigenization%20is%20the%20process%20by,social%20structures%20of%20the%20institution Accessed 30 July 2024.

¹³ What Is a War Crime? | Metropolitan Police, www.met.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/war-crimes/what-is-a-war-crime/ Accessed 30 July 2024.

Ethnic Cleansing

“The attempt to create ethnically homogeneous geographic areas through the deportation or forcible displacement of persons belonging to particular ethnic groups. Ethnic cleansing sometimes involves the removal of all physical vestiges of the targeted group through the destruction of monuments, cemeteries, and houses of worship.”¹⁴

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Caucasian War (1817-1864)

During the Russian Empire’s expansion in the 19th century, the then Russian emperor, Alexander II, had turned his attention to the North Caucasus as the next step in increasing his empire’s influence. Its location held great strategic advantages, as it resided between the Black and Caspian Seas and was in close proximity to the Ottoman Empire and Middle East. The first phase of the Russians’ plan for the Caucasus took place in 1818, when Russian General Alexander Yermolov built three forts along the Sunja River, including Fort Grozny, that was established as a base of operations for the Russian military. (Grozny would also much later become the capital of Chechnya). After its construction had been complete, Yermolov sent expeditions to try and ethnically cleanse the local population, namely the Chechens and the Circassians, so that they could take over the areas they inhabited. In 1834, after becoming the third imam of the state (political-religious leader), and in an attempt to avenge his people, Imam Shamil, led an estimated 40.000 Islamic warriors to revolt against the Russian occupation of Chechnya¹⁵. Throughout the conflict, Chechnya lost almost half of its population and as well as devastated its economy. Being left with no other choice, Imam Shamil was ultimately forced to surrender to Russian forces in 1859 and Chechnya was incorporated into the Russian Empire.¹⁶

¹⁴ “Ethnic Cleansing | War Crimes & Genocide Prevention | Britannica.” Encyclopædia Britannica, 2024, www.britannica.com/topic/ethnic-cleansing Accessed 30 July 2024.

¹⁵ cofresi, diana. “Explore Chechnya’s Turbulent Past ~ 1817-1964: The Caucasian Wars | Wide Angle | PBS.” Wide Angle, 25 July 2002, www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/uncategorized/explore-chechnyas-turbulent-past-1817-1964-the-caucasian-wars/3307/ Accessed 8 Aug. 2024.

¹⁶ “The Russian Conquest of the Caucasus : Baddeley, John F. (John Frederick), 1854-1940 : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive.” *Internet Archive*, 2014, archive.org/details/cu31924028754616/page/106/mode/2up Accessed 30 July 2024.

“Explore Chechnya’s Turbulent Past ~ 1817-1964: The Caucasian Wars | Wide Angle | PBS.” *Wide Angle*, 25 July 2002, www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/uncategorized/explore-chechnyas-turbulent-past-1817-1964-the-caucasian-wars/3307/ Accessed 30 July 2024.

Pre-War Developments

Establishment of the USSR (1922)

As the Russian Empire entered the early twentieth century, it faced serious internal challenges, which culminated in the October Revolution on November 7, 1917, that was led by the Bolshevik Party of Vladimir Lenin. As a result of the revolution, the Tsarist government fell and the Bolsheviks, who aimed to create a socialist state to replace the old empire, rose to power and eventually formed the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) on December 30, 1922.¹⁷

The Soviet administration implemented an indigenisation program, in order to handle the complexity of its multiethnic population. As a part of this approach, the Soviet authorities established autonomous districts inside the larger Soviet republics, therefore establishing the Chechen autonomous region. Later in 1934, the Soviet government “merged” the Chechens and the Ingush, (another ethnic group that inhabited the Northeast Caucasus and that shared a lot of common history and a big part of their culture with the Chechens), into one political-administrative entity, thus forming the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.¹⁸

Deportation of Chechens by Stalin and the Dissolution of the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (ASSR) (1944)

During the 1940s, the Chechens continued to strongly oppose the Soviets, a situation that would only intensify during the Second World War. Despite this, the Chechens significantly contributed to the war effort, with much of the local population resisting German occupation in the North-West of the Republic. Many Chechen men also served in the Red Army, the military force of the Soviet Union. Regardless of this, the Soviets were not convinced of the Chechens’ contributions, especially because of the fact that some Chechens had attempted to



Image 2, Chechens being deported under the orders of Stalin

communicate with the Germans to find help with gaining independence from the USSR (although those conversations were quickly cut off). Because of this lack of trust, on February 23 1944, the People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD), would invite all Chechen and Ingush men to a “Red

¹⁷ “Soviet Union | History, Leaders, Flag, Map, & Anthem | Britannica.” Encyclopædia Britannica, 2024, www.britannica.com/place/Soviet-Union Accessed 2 Sept. 2024.

¹⁸ “The Massive Deportation of the Chechen People: How and Why Chechens Were Deported | Sciences Po Violence de Masse et Résistance - Réseau de Recherche.” Sciencespo.fr, 29 Apr. 2019, [www.sciencespo.fr/mass-violence-war-massacre-resistance/fr/document/massive-deportation-chechen-people-how-and-why-chechens-were-deported.html#:~:text=In%201934%2C%20the%20Soviet%20government,Republic%20\(ASSR\)%20in%201936](https://www.sciencespo.fr/mass-violence-war-massacre-resistance/fr/document/massive-deportation-chechen-people-how-and-why-chechens-were-deported.html#:~:text=In%201934%2C%20the%20Soviet%20government,Republic%20(ASSR)%20in%201936) Accessed 1 Aug. 2024.

Army Day” celebration. This would later prove to be a scheme conducted by the NKVD to conclusively exile all inhabitants of the Chechen and Ingush villages. In the end, it is estimated that a total of 350.000-400.000 Chechens were deported¹⁹. The ASSR was officially dismantled and the existence of the Chechen people was visibly erased from the Republic, as Russian historians kept any mention of Chechnya out of historical records and the government ensured that they were excluded from population censuses. Throughout their exile, the Chechen population lived in truly harsh living conditions, with no access to health care, food or clothing, while there was also a ban on Chechen culture, with deportees being forbidden from using their mother tongue or practising their own religions and customs.²⁰

Rehabilitation of Chechens and Ingush and the Re-establishment of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR (1957)

On January 9th 1957, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev as a part of his de-stalinization strategy, restored the Chechen-Ingush ASSR.²¹ Repatriated Chechen and Ingush families were provided with financial support, including tax exemptions and assistance in rebuilding. However, the resettlement was poorly and inconsiderately organised, and as a result those returning to the Caucasus faced many challenges, such as poor travel conditions and poor conditions in the new settlements, along with much resistance coming from Russian forces during their return.²²

Steps towards Independence

First Chechen National Congress (1990)

On May 1st 1990, Dzhokhar Dudayev founded the First Chechen National Congress. This was a pivotal moment in Chechnya’s push for independence from the Soviet Union and would mark the first steps of the Chechen independence movement.²³ The Congress’s primary goal was to achieve sovereignty within the Soviet Union, though this objective would shift after the disintegration of the USSR in 1991.

¹⁹ “The Massive Deportation of the Chechen People: How and Why Chechens Were Deported | Sciences Po Violence de Masse et Résistance - Réseau de Recherche.” Sciencespo.fr, 29 Apr. 2019, [www.sciencespo.fr/mass-violence-war-massacre-resistance/fr/document/massive-deportation-chechen-people-how-and-why-chechens-were-deported.html#:~:text=In%201934%2C%20the%20Soviet%20government,Republic%20\(ASSR\)%20in%201936](http://www.sciencespo.fr/mass-violence-war-massacre-resistance/fr/document/massive-deportation-chechen-people-how-and-why-chechens-were-deported.html#:~:text=In%201934%2C%20the%20Soviet%20government,Republic%20(ASSR)%20in%201936) Accessed 2 Sept. 2024.

²⁰ The Jamestown Foundation. Chechens Being Deported under the Orders of Stalin, jamestown.org/program/decades-on-stalins-deportation-of-the-chechens-still-casts-a-malevolent-shadow/ Accessed 2 Sept. 2024.

²¹ News, BBC. “Chechnya Profile - Timeline.” BBC News, BBC News, 24 May 2012, www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-18190473 Accessed 2 Sept. 2024.

²² Shnirelman, Victor. A Revolt of Social Memory: The Chechens and Ingush against the Soviet Historians History and Social Memory.

²³ “The Russia’s Chechen War - Irénées.” Www.irenees.net, www.irenees.net/bdf_fiche-documentation-535_en.html Accessed 4 Aug. 2024.

The collapse of the USSR and the declaration independence of the Chechen Republic (1991)

On August 19, 1991, a failed coup d'etat attempt was led by members of the Communist Party who were against the then president, Mikhail Gorbachev. Even though the coup was quickly thwarted, it had managed to weaken the Soviet government and accelerated independence movements within the republic. By the end of December of that year, Ukraine, Belarus and Russia had declared that the Soviet Union no longer existed and declared their independence from it.²⁴

On November 1, 1991, Chechnya had also declared independence from Russia and elections for the President and Parliament of Chechnya were held on 27 October, 1991, despite not being officially recognised by any country at that time. Later on, on March 12th, 1992, the Chechen parliament formed the state's first constitution and further affirmed their independence from the USSR. The Soviet Union was finally officially dissolved on the 26th of December, 1991.²⁵

Outbreak of the War

Russian troops enter Chechnya (1994)

After three years of being on the brink of conflict, Chechnya was invaded by Russian soldiers on December 11, 1994, with their goal being to "reestablish constitutional order in Chechnya and to preserve the territorial integrity of Russia"²⁶. The Russian airborne forces captured the military airstrip near Grozny on December 29 and defeated a Chechen counter-attack in the Battle of Khankala, with the city itself being the next target.²⁷

Battle of Grozny (1994)

During the Russian siege of the Chechen capital, numerous civilians perished due to continuous air raids and artillery bombardments over the course of a week. The first attack on December 31st 1994 led to a major Russian loss, causing numerous casualties. However, the Russians forces were soon able to conquer Grozny, despite having suffered multiple casualties and having lost early on to the Chechens. On January 19, Russian forces took control of the Chechen presidential palace after heavy fighting and casualties, following a three-week battle where Chechen forces were forced to retreat.²⁸ The fighting persisted until the formal conclusion of the battle on March 6, 1995.

²⁴ "1991 Soviet Coup Attempt | Facts, Results, & Significance | Britannica." Encyclopædia Britannica, 2024, www.britannica.com/topic/1991-Soviet-coup-attempt Accessed 2 Sept. 2024.

²⁵ "KGB - Soviet Security, Intelligence, Espionage | Britannica." Encyclopædia Britannica, 2024, www.britannica.com/topic/KGB/Creation-and-role-of-the-KGB Accessed 4 Aug. 2024.

²⁶ "Russia, Constitutionality of Decrees on Chechnya | How Does Law Protect in War? - Online Casebook." Icrc.org, 2024, casebook.icrc.org/case-study/russia-constitutionality-decrees-chechnya Accessed 13 Aug. 2024.

²⁷ "The Battle of Grozny and the First Chechen War." RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty, 4 Jan. 2020, www.rferl.org/a/russia-grozny-battle-chechen-war-1994-1995/30359837.html Accessed 6 Aug. 2024.

²⁸ Roblin, Sebastien. "Grozny 1994: The Battle That Changed Post-Soviet Russia Forever." The National Interest, 31 Mar. 2021, nationalinterest.org/blog/reboot/grozny-1994-battle-changed-post-soviet-russia-forever-181529 Accessed 2 Sept. 2024.

In the end, there were around 50,000 civilians killed during the war, which made up about 5 percent of the Chechen population.²⁹

Budyonnovsk Hostage Crisis (1995)

On June 14, 1995, a group of Chechen militants took over a hospital in Budyonnovsk, Russia and kept 1,500 people hostage in an attempt to convince Russia to withdraw its troops from Chechnya. With 129 people dead and 415 wounded³⁰, the Human Rights Watch described it as “the most heinous humanitarian law violation known to have been committed by Chechen forces”.³¹

Human Rights Violations

The First Chechen War has concluded in significant suffering for the civilian population, with victims on both sides of the conflict. At the end, Grozny was left in ruins, with over 14.000 civilians killed and 30.000 wounded throughout the conflict.³² The conflict also saw widespread human rights abuses from both parties, with Russian forces torturing and generally mistreating POWs’, creating “filtration camps”³³ all throughout the region and that aimed to torture and “cleanse” the Chechen population. On the other side, Chechens were allegedly found using civilians as human shields, while also being responsible for kidnapping Russian civilians and holding them for ransom.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan aided the Chechen resistance by letting fighters pass through its land and helping with weapon supplies. They were motivated by its ongoing dispute with Armenia in the Nagorno-Karabakh region, as Russia held a lot of influence over the area, and the Azerbaijanis thought that by supporting Chechnya they would be undermining Russia. Despite supporting Chechnya throughout the conflict, they did not recognise them.

Georgia

Georgia played a significant role in supporting the Chechen resistance. The Georgian government, under President Eduard Shevardnadze, provided covert assistance by allowing Chechen

²⁹ “RUSSIA / CHECHNYA.” Hrw.org, 2024, www.hrw.org/reports/1997/russia2/Russia-01.htm Accessed 13 Aug. 2024

³⁰ “Remembering Budyonnovsk.” OpenDemocracy, 2015, www.opendemocracy.net/en/odr/remembering-budyonnovsk/. Accessed 2 Sept. 2024.

³¹ “RUSSIA / CHECHNYA.” Hrw.org, 2024, www.hrw.org/reports/1997/russia2/Russia-01.htm Accessed 13 Aug. 2024

³² “CASUALTY FIGURES.” Jamestown.org, 1970, jamestown.org/program/casualty-figures-2/ Accessed 2 Sept. 2024.

³³ “Chechnya: Report to the 1996 OSCE Review Conference | Refworld.” Refworld, 2023, www.refworld.org/reference/countryrep/hrw/1996/en/22299 Accessed 2 Sept. 2024.

fighters to use Georgian territory as a base for operations. This included providing logistical support and facilitating the movement of arms and supplies into Chechnya. Georgia also didn't recognise Chechnya despite their support.³⁴

Turkey

During the First Chechen War, Turkey provided refuge to numerous exiles, while also providing medical and humanitarian aid, and general support to Chechen guerrillas. However, they did not recognise Chechnya as they wanted to keep a cautious stance, balancing its support with its strategic interests to avoid direct confrontation with Russia. This approach demonstrated a mix of solidarity with the Chechen resistance and careful diplomatic manoeuvring.³⁵

United States of America (USA)

Despite expressing major concerns throughout the conflict and heavily criticising Russia's tactics within the region, and even holding diplomatic talks to discuss those concerns, the USA supported Russia for the duration of the war and offered billions of dollars in financial aid.³⁶ They generally opposed the secession of smaller republics from the Russian state, including Chechnya, due to their history with the American Civil War.³⁷

Amnesty International

During the First Chechen War, Amnesty International actively reported the extensive human rights violations occurring throughout the conflict, while also calling for the condemnation and addressing of these abuses by Russia. Despite their appeals to the UN Commission on Human Rights for an international investigation, their attempts were mostly unsuccessful.³⁸

European Union (EU)

The European Union was divided when it came to choosing its approach to helping resolve the war. While France and Nordic countries pushed for the condemnation of Russia's actions and the enforcement of sanctions, countries such as Germany continued to have strong diplomatic relations

³⁴ "Chechnya: 15 Years of War... - Georgia." ReliefWeb, 23 Dec. 2009, reliefweb.int/report/georgia/chechnya-15-years-war Accessed 7 Aug. 2024.

³⁵ "THE CHECHEN DIASPORA in TURKEY." *Jamestown.org*, 1970, jamestown.org/program/the-chechen-diaspora-in-turkey-2/#:~:text=During%20the%20first%20Chechen%20war,ar.support%20for%20the%20Chechen%20guerrillas Accessed 7 Aug. 2024.

³⁶ "United States Relations with Russia: After the Cold War." State.gov, 2024, 2001-2009.state.gov/r/pa/ho/pubs/fs/85962.htm#:~:text=July%201993%3A%20Additional%20Economic%20Assistance%20to%20Russia&text=The%20Summit's%20Economic%20Declaration%20called,and%20the%20former%20Soviet%20republics Accessed 13 Sept. 2024.

³⁷ Reuter. "U.S. COMPARES CHECHNYA REVOLT with AMERICAN CIVIL WAR PERIOD." Washington Post, The Washington Post, 4 Jan. 1995, www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1995/01/04/us-compares-chechnya-revolt-with-american-civil-war-period/26dd17ac-3ca8-4f88-a0ba-166dca280a7a/ Accessed 13 Sept. 2024.

³⁸ Chechnya: Six Years on --Crimes without Punishment. 2000.

and economic ties with Russia. Ultimately, despite its members' differing views, the EU continued to have relations with Russia, and never made any actual attempts to sanction or to directly stop Russia from furthering the conflict.

Regardless of this though, the EU spoke and tried to raise awareness about the countless human rights violations that had been taking place throughout the conflict. Additionally, the EU offered millions of dollars in financial aid to help manage the humanitarian crisis in the region, while also organising humanitarian relief missions in collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross. They also called on Russia and Chechnya to resolve their issues peacefully, by engaging in peace talks. The EU strongly believed that through this talks, the parties involved would become more open to negotiating a possible ceasefire, something that would finally bring an end to the long lasting brutality and war in the region.³⁹

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

Despite being denied access to areas of Chechnya, the ICRC played a significant role in the effort for humanitarian aid in Chechnya, by going into conflict zones to help heal the wounded, while also creating a hospital, which was extremely important as most villages in Chechnya did not have any trained doctors or surgeons.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of Event
1817	The beginning of the Caucasian War
1859	The Chechens surrender to Russian forces
21 May 1864	The end of Caucasian War
December 30, 1922	The Formation of the USSR
1934	The Chechen-Ingush ASSR was formed
February 23, 1944	The "Red Army Celebrations" and the deportation of the Chechen people and the dissolution of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR
January 9, 1957	The re-establishment of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR
May 1st. 1990	Dzhokhar Dudayev founded the First Chechen National Congress

³⁹ Ware, Richard. Russia's Chechen War Continues. 24 Mar. 1995, researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/RP95-41/RP95-41.pdf Accessed 13 Sept. 2024.

November 1, 1991	Chechnya declared independence
December 26, 1991	The dissolution of the USSR
March 12, 1992	The Chechen parliament passes the First Chechen Constitution
December 11, 1994	Russian forces enter Chechnya
December 29, 1994	Russian airborne forces capture the military airstrip near Grozny and win the battle of Khankala
December 31, 1994	The Battle of Grozny begins
January 19, 1995	Russian forces take control of the Chechen presidential palace
March 6, 1995	The fight in Grozny ends
June 14, 1995	Budyonovsk Hostage Crisis

UN INVOLVEMENT: RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

UN Commission on Human Rights (UNHCR), Report on the 51st Session (E/CN.4/1995/176. 1995)⁴⁰

The Report on the 51st Session of the UNHCR, along with other global issues, discussed the ongoing human rights violations that took place in the Chechen region while strongly recommending long standing ceasefires and peace talks are set in place to eventually resolve the issue. Even though it is very important that these issues are being addressed within the United Nations (UN) and that peaceful ways of resolving the issue are being suggested and promoted, because of the fact that this document is simply a report, there wasn't any significant progress made on the issue.

Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Draft Resolution (Situation in the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation : Draft Resolution. 16 Aug. 1995.)⁴¹

The above draft resolution suggests multiple ways that could help de escalate the situation, such as ceasefires and the return of PoWs, and although those solutions could have been effective, the way they are presented is very vague, therefore these solutions could not realistically be implemented, especially since the ECOSOC does not have any legally binding powers, unlike the Security Council. And even if these solutions were actually implementable, in the end this resolution was never actually adopted, so no real progress was made on resolving the conflict.

⁴⁰ UN. Commission on Human Rights (51st sess. : 1995 : Geneva). E/CN.4/1995/176. 1995.

⁴¹ Chavez, Linda, and Claire Palley. Situation in the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation : Draft Resolution. 16 Aug. 1995.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

Declaration of an Amnesty by the State Duma (13 December 1994)⁴²

The State Duma, (the lower house of parliament), recommended intensifying military operations to suppress Chechen resistance while simultaneously initiating political discussions with them so as to find some type of compromise. They further suggested granting Chechnya a level of autonomy within the Russian Federation and economic aid to address the region's humanitarian crisis. While the declaration did acknowledge the need for political dialogue, the reliance on heavy military tactics could have contributed to the possible increase of civilian casualties.

Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Involvement⁴³

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Assistance Group to Chechnya, began to provide aid to the Chechen region on the 26th of April 1995 and mainly focused on promoting human rights and democratic institutions, while also assisting with constitutional agreements and facilitating humanitarian aid delivery. The group aimed to address both immediate humanitarian needs and long-term political solutions while upholding respect for Russia's territorial integrity. In the end, OSCE's efforts achieved in raising awareness about the humanitarian crisis while also facilitating dialogues between the two parties, although they quickly fell through. Overall, OSCE did not manage to successfully achieve their initial goals for multiple reasons. One of the reasons was that they did not have any power to enforce possible agreements made during the discussions they organised. Moreover, because Russia viewed the involvement of any foreign organisation in the conflict as an infringement on its sovereignty, many organisations were obstructed from entering Chechnya and providing humanitarian aid.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

UN Peacekeeping Mission

A very effective way to avoid further violence in the region could be the deployment of a UN peacekeeping mission in Chechnya. This is because firstly, peacekeepers could help stabilise the region and de-escalate possible situations that could arise, especially in areas where civilians are present, and in that way the amount of bystanders getting hurt will surely decrease. Secondly, since peacekeeping forces are operating under the mandate of the United Nations, they can remain impartial, therefore being very useful when it comes to mediating discussions or overseeing

⁴² "U.S. Department of State Country Report on Human Rights Practices 1994 - Russia | Refworld." Refworld, 2023, www.refworld.org/reference/annualreport/usdos/1995/en/37083 Accessed 8 Aug. 2024.

⁴³ "OSCE Assistance Group to Chechnya (Closed)." Osce.org, 2024, www.osce.org/ag-chechnya-closed Accessed 8 Aug. 2024.

compromises. Peacekeeping missions could also support and oversee the establishment of a possible Chechen government, if both parties reach an agreement. To ensure that this mission will succeed its goals, it is important that all related parties consent, while all concerns related to the intentions and future plans of the mission are addressed, as if this is not done, Russia could possibly view the mission as a threat to their sovereignty.

Humanitarian/Reconstruction Aid

Given the gravity of the humanitarian crisis currently existing in the Chechen region, it is crucial that humanitarian aid is provided as soon as possible. Funding by the UN for/or basic supplies such as food and water, medical care and housing should be provided to organisations, such as the ICRC or the International Rescue Committee (IRC), to help manage the large numbers of displaced people.

Reconstruction aid should also play an important role in restoring areas affected by the war in the Chechen region, especially those inhabited by citizens. Reconstruction aid, which could be organised by the UN Development Programme (UNDP), should firstly be focusing on helping rebuild basic infrastructure such as hospitals, schools and roads, so that citizens can slowly transition back to normal life.

Ceasefire Agreements and Peace Talks

The conflict has been characterised by many and shortlasting ceasefires. Therefore, an important next step would be to begin discussions on a permanent ceasefire, which would consequently give opportunity for peace negotiations to take place. This is because it would create a more stable environment where all parties involved will be able to calmly discuss and more easily come to a compromise. It is highly important that when organising peace talks, representatives from all relevant parties should be present, and discussions should mainly focus on addressing the root causes of the conflict.

Having a way to ensure that the implementation of potential ceasefires are successful, while also making sure that future peace talks remain productive, is necessary when dealing with such long standing conflicts. That is why the presence of an unbiased third-party, such as a UN mediator, could be vital to the success of peace talks, since they could help ensure that all parties comply with agreements and are held accountable.

UN-supervised referendum on independence

One of the most crucial issues that should be dealt with when discussing solutions to the conflict, is the question of Chechnya's sovereignty. The facilitation of a referendum by the UN, which would help determine what the Chechen people want regarding their political status could be an effective way for the UN to resolve this question. This referendum would also be providing an

impartial and democratic way for resolving the conflict and could help make the final decision clear to both parties.

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