

Framework for conflict analysis



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Framework for Conflict Analysis (SPITCEROW) Sources Chechnya is a region in the North Caucasus that has waged a long battle against foreign rule. Beginning with the opposition to Ottoman turks in the 15th century, the region went under the rule of Czarist Russia before coming into Soviet domination during the 20th century. Apart from this domination that continued for ages, Chechens were further angered by the mass deportations to Siberia under the Iron fist rule of Stalin.

The disintegration of the Soviet Union prompted Chechnya to declare independence in 1991, which led to the first Chechen war against Russian forces in 1994, which ended after two years of a bloody battle that eventually witnessed the withdrawal of Russian forces. During the late 90s, a transfer of power in the Kremlin saw the emergence of Vladimir Putin as the head of the State. At about the same time, the tension in Chechnya began to simmer with the repeated skirmishes involving Chechen militants, who had now begun to target people in the neighboring Russian republics (John Russell, 2007).

Parties

Primary Parties: Russian Government vs. Republic of Ichkeria

Secondary Parties: Republic of Chechnya (on the side of the Russians), Caucasian militants and Foreign Islamic mujahedeen (on the side of the Republic of Ichkeria).

Issues

The Situation in Chechnya can be attributed to a similar situation in Africa, where smaller states have been trying to break off from bigger powers. Russia on the other hand, has always resorted to mass bombings and oppressive techniques to keep the region under its control. In doing so,

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Russia has violated several international conventions in areas such as Human rights, which has added to the animosity within the Chechen population (Bruno Coppieters, 2002). Additionally, it is the Chechen civilians who have borne the brunt of this long period of oppression and it is thus quite natural for them to rebel any perceived occupation.

Tactics

Since the inception of the Soviet Union, Stalin was of the view that western powers were colluding to overthrow the communists. In doing so, he always viewed the Chechens as collaborators and deported them to Kazakhstan in order to prevent any mass uprising. With Stalin's death, the Chechens were allowed to return to their homeland. This has been one of the main contribution that has helped keep Chechen nationalism active.

Russia began to offensive in 1999 through a massive air campaign which began with the eviction of separatists from the neighboring republic of Dagestan. This was followed by a massive land offensive that consisted of shelling and ground troops. The Chechen rebels launched their fight from the mountains and resorted to Guerilla warfare. They mingled in the local population and carried out surprise attacks on the advancing Russian troops. However, this made the local population targets for Russian counter offensives resulting in a large number of civilian death due to missile raids and shelling (John Russell (2007)).

Changes

Over these past few years, Russia has disabled the Chechen separatist movement and there is no widespread fighting in the republic. The high level of military presence on the streets has come to an end. Grozny, which once resembled the ruins of Berlin after World War II, has undergone massive

reconstruction. However, Chechen militants continue to resort to sporadic violence on federal troops and local forces in the region. Journalism and reporting from the region continue to be a dangerous activity and many reporters have gone missing over the years, especially those covering incidents of human rights violation by the Russian troops (Tracey German, 2003).

Enlargements

In 1991, with the break up of the Soviet Union, many small republics proclaimed their independence and Chechnya was no exception. However, Russia never accepted this due to economic and geo-political reasons. The crisis further deepened with the internal anarchy in Russia, which further strengthened the belief in the Kremlin that Chechnya was an exception and had to be dealt in a different way. The resulting tensions were also exaggerated by the Oil needs of Russia and Europe due to the presence of major petroleum infrastructure in the region. The first Chechen war gave Russia a bloody nose and this worsened the humanitarian crisis in the region. Both sides looked to a military response as the only way to ensure power and this precipitated the Second Chechen war eventually, when the Russian army came upon the separatists in a much more organized manner (Pavel Baev, 2007).

Roles

The belligerents in the war were the Russian military forces on one side and the conglomeration of the militants belonging to the Chechnya separatist movement and foreign mujahideen. Vladimir Putin, the Russian president, assumed control of directing the military operations, while the separatists were under the command of Aslan Mashkhadov.

Outcomes

It was not until early 2009, when Russia formally ended counteroffensive operations in Chechnya. Despite the conclusion of heavy fighting in 2000, Chechen fighters continued to resort to guerilla tactics for many years, launching their offensives from the mountains. Terrorist attacks from the Chechen side have also prompted stern actions from the Russian military, which has been accused of gross violation of human rights and had drawn widespread condemnation from several parts of the world. Several mass graves have been unearthed over the years and both sides have been accused of resorting to mass murder and ethnic cleansing (Pavel Baev, 2007).

Winners

Russia government - managed to establish state control over Chechnya and the capital Grozny.

References

1. John Russell (2007), Chechnya - Russias war on terror. New York: Prentice.
2. Bruno Coppieters (2002), Moral constraints on war: principles and cases. London: Lexington.
3. Pavel Baev (2007), The Russian Army in a time of troubles. New York: SAGE.
4. Tracey German (2003), Russias Chechen war. London: Routledge.