Russia: Strategic Outreach Adviser

Confidential: for the assigned participant only. Do not share with other participants, including the other members of your delegation. Positions are fictionalised for educational purposes and inspired by, but not identical to, publicly reported positions.

Your delegation: the Russian Federation (5 members)

You are part of the Russian delegation: the Russian government and the state-controlled gas company Gazprom, playing as one team with five different jobs. Russia is the world's largest gas exporter; roughly a quarter of all gas consumed in the European Union comes from Russia, and about 80 % of it reaches Europe through Ukraine's pipelines.

As of 7 January 2009 Gazprom has cut all deliveries to Ukraine over an unsigned contract and unpaid debt, and all transit to Europe has stopped. Moscow says Kyiv closed the last pipeline; Kyiv says Moscow stopped pumping. Europe is freezing and looking for someone to blame. Your delegation's collective goal: **a deal on Russia's terms (a European price, the debt acknowledged, no EU interference in commercial matters) and a Europe that leaves this room trusting Russia and doubting Ukraine**. But five people answer to different masters: the state, Gazprom's balance sheet, the pipeline projects. You will not entirely agree on how fast, or at what price.

Your delegation is the largest in the simulation. That is an advantage only if you use it: you can be in five conversations at once. Do not cluster together.

Key facts (all members):

- Ukraine paid $179.50 per 1,000 m³ in 2008, a subsidised blended price through the intermediary RosUkrEnergo.
- Gazprom's offer for 2009 was $250; since the cut-off the demand has risen to $418 and then $450. Ukraine's counter-offers: $201–235.
- Gazprom claims about $2 billion in arrears and penalties. Ukraine paid $1.5 billion on 30 December and disputes the remaining ~$600 million in penalties.
- There is no single "European price": long-term contracts differ by country, and countries without alternatives usually pay more, not less.
- The shutdown costs Gazprom roughly $100 million a day in lost export revenue.
- RosUkrEnergo (RUE), the intermediary, is 50 % owned by Gazprom. Its elimination is on the table.
- Nord Stream (Baltic Sea, to Germany) and South Stream (Black Sea, to Bulgaria, with Italy's ENI) are in development as bypass routes around Ukraine.

Decision rule: the delegation decides by simple majority (three of five). The Senior Government Representative speaks for Russia in plenary and announces the delegation's decision at the vote.

Your role

Motivations & constraints: You are the delegation's eyes and ears. While your colleagues handle formal negotiations and the key bilaterals, you work the room: approaching delegations, gathering intelligence, testing proposals, reporting back. You are the most mobile member of the team and should rarely be sitting with the rest of the Russians. Your aims: map the room (who is allied with whom, which member states are sympathetic, whether the EU is close to a common position or fragmented) and report constantly; identify and exploit divisions (Germany and Italy against Poland on solidarity, Presidency against Commission on priorities, government against Naftogaz inside Ukraine); float trial balloons your colleagues cannot yet float formally ("what if the price were around $300 and RUE went?"); and above all **prevent a unified EU front.** A bloc speaking with one voice and demanding concessions is the worst outcome for Russia.

Red lines: You share the delegation's red lines. Your own constraint: you do not make commitments on Russia's behalf. You gather and test; you do not close. Check with the Government Representative or the Commercial Director before confirming anything.

Style: Move constantly; at any moment you should be talking to someone who is neither Russian nor Ukrainian. Five minutes with Bulgaria, a chat with France, a listen-in on Poland and Slovakia. Be personable. You are a diplomat, not a negotiator: ask questions, be curious, people tell things to someone who listens. Feed intelligence to your team in short check-ins: "Germany just told me they won't back a tough EU statement if it risks Nord Stream." And be the voice of pragmatism internally when you think the delegation is making a mistake (privately, never in front of others).

Confidential (for you alone, not for your delegation): You think your delegation is overplaying its hand. The Government Representative wants maximum geopolitical leverage, the pipeline strategist is happy to let it drag on; but you have been watching the European reactions, and the longer this lasts, the more damage it does to Russia's long-term position: Poland is already talking about LNG terminals, the Commission is drafting supply-security legislation, even Germany is getting uncomfortable. The smart play is to resolve this quickly with a reasonable deal, declare victory and move on; a prolonged crisis gives Europe time to organise, and organised Europeans are bad for Gazprom. This is not the prevailing view in your delegation, so make the case carefully and internally, and know that the Commercial Director will vote with you. You also hold two useful pieces of intelligence: the Czech Presidency is under enormous pressure to deliver, so help the Czechs look good while getting what Russia needs, and they may become an unlikely facilitator of a deal on your terms; and France and the UK are not much invested in this dispute and may check out if it gets complicated: the less engaged they are, the weaker the EU's common position. Monitor them.