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Ukraine in Turmoil – Crisis Committee Application

October 8, 2014

1. What is your past Model UN experience?

Prior to sophomore year, I have never taken part in Model UN, but I have always been interested. Last summer, I did an internship at the Institute of Modern Russia side by side with a current Tufts College student, Paula Kates. She told me much about her experiences with Model UN and convinced me to participate this year.

1. What interests you about the Ukrainian Crisis?

I moved from Russia to the United States when I was six years old and spent three weeks of last summer travelling in Russia and Latvia, following different opinions that different people around the world have on the current crisis. What interests me most about the situation is what it could mean for Ukraine’s, Russia’s, and even our future. It is a clear repeat of multiple scenarios in history. I have very strong opinions on this matter, based on own experiences, as well as things I have heard and read.

1. What are some of the major factors that influence Ukraine’s relationship with both the West and Russia?

In 1991, the Soviet Union had collapsed as president Yeltsin took control of the Russian Federation. Countries that belonged to the USSR now gained their independence, one of those countries being Ukraine. Though many people wanted independence, there were also many who wanted to stay a part of the Soviet Union. In Ukraine, the opinion was split. Eastern Ukrainians wanted to join Russia, whereas Western Ukraine wanted to join the EU. Up to this day, the opinions of the two have clashed, and the annexation of Crimea occurred due to the fact that the population of that part of Ukraine was largely Russian. The United States and Europe support the citizens of Ukraine and other countries that want to maintain their independence, offering them protection. Meanwhile, Russia continues war in the military-less Ukraine and attempts to start their reestablishment of the Soviet Union, as people die by the thousands. Ukraine cannot push back hard enough, and the West is too fearful to interfere too much.

1. The annexation of Crimea – justifiable or a crime? Why? Be concise, be specific.

The annexation of Crimea is, without a doubt, a crime. Popular opinion in former Soviet countries, because of the manipulation of Russian media, is that Crimea rightfully belongs to Russia. In truth, it was a gift to Ukraine, and Russia had no right to take it back. The widely told reason for the annexation of Crimea was that Russia wanted it for trade. In addition, there are many Russians living in this part of Ukraine, but nevertheless this gives no right to the annexation. Citizens have their own choice of what country to live in, but one part of one country cannot all of a sudden decide to join a different country. I strongly believe that there was a much better thought out reason for Putin’s want for Crimea. Crimea is a peninsula, mostly surrounded by water, and the only way to pump water to it is from the Ukraine mainland. Once Crimea was annexed, it was no longer a part of Ukraine, meaning it could be cut off from water and even certain supplies. This gave Russia all the more reason to enter Ukraine with troops and start a war to recreate the Soviet Union. The spark was ignited and it was too late.