

Weekly Top 10

WASHINGTON, D.C. October 11, 2019

TO: NCSEJ Leadership and Interested Parties

**FROM: Daniel Rubin, Chairman;
Aleksander Smukler, President;
Mark B. Levin, Executive Vice-Chairman & CEO**

Dear Friend,

I hope your Yom Kippur was meaningful and that you had an easy fast.

On Monday, media reports began surfacing that President Trump is intending to pull America out of the Open Skies Treaty. The treaty came into effect in 2002 and effectively allows the signing parties to conduct aerial surveillance over each other's territories in order to track military activists and their operational strategies.

The Open Skies treaty is one of the most wide-ranging international efforts to date promoting openness and transparency of military forces and activities. Withdrawal from the treaty would effectively allow Russia to ban Ukrainian aircraft from its airspace. The State Department has insisted that Russia had violated the terms of the treaty.

On Wednesday, Russian opposition and Putin-critic Alexei Navalny's organization, "the Anti-Corruption Foundation", was classified as a "foreign agent," by the Russian Justice Ministry. This label is frequently used by President Putin to stigmatize groups critical of the Kremlin. The foreign agent status, since its creation in 2012, has been used by the Russian government on numerous occasions to silence critics and the efforts of Russian civil society organizations which are forced to mostly operate outside of Russia. The ministry said that Mr. Navalny's group had been added to the list of "foreign agents" because it received funds totaling around \$2,100 from a Florida company that sells doors, and from a Spanish national. In a statement, Navalny called the actions of the Ministry "absolutely illegal" and a clear ploy by President Putin to stifle opposition candidates in the aftermath of last month's Moscow local elections in which Putin's control of the capital was threatened by opposition parties.

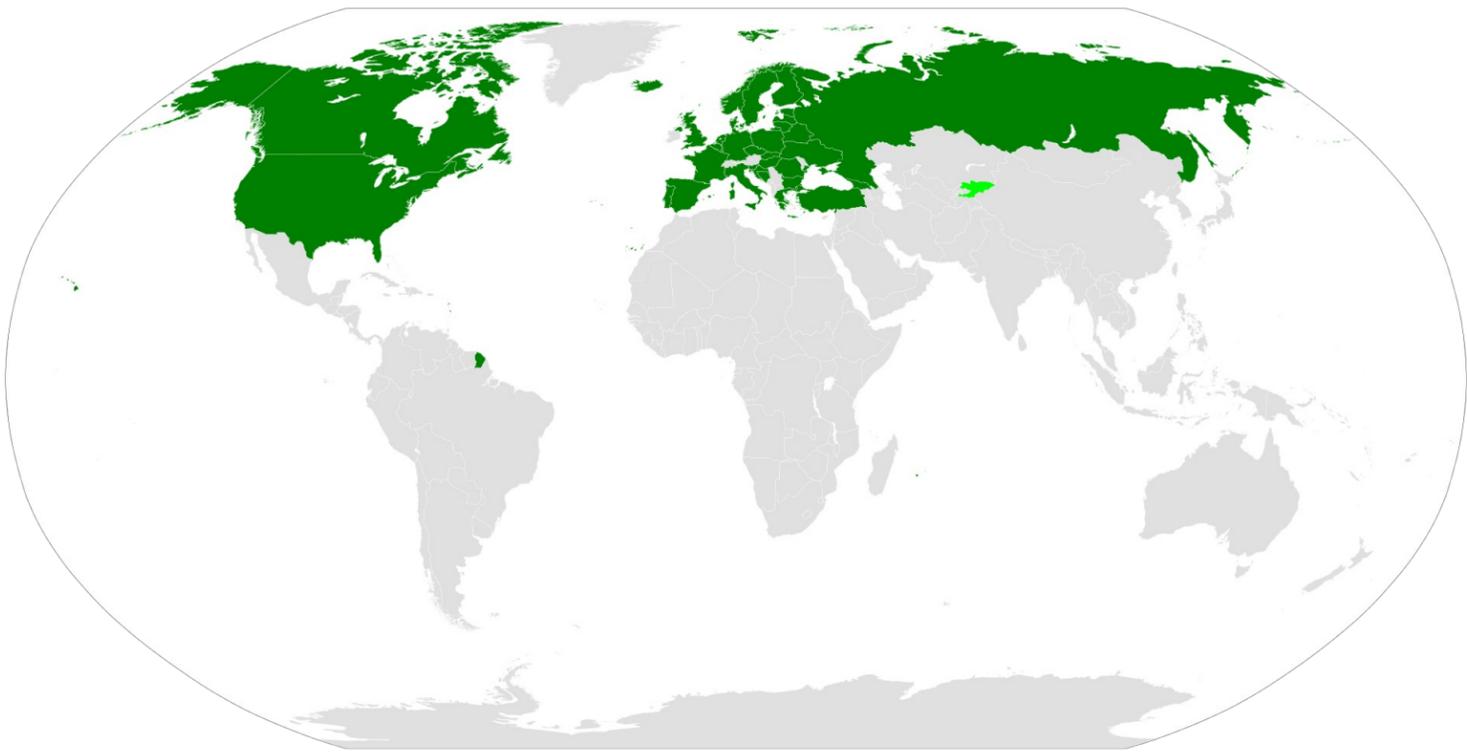
On Thursday, the Romanian government collapsed following a vote of no-confidence in the Social Democrat government of Prime Minister, Viorica Danci. A transitional government will take over until the next national election in December 2020. Dănci, who took office in January 2018, was ousted after 238 lawmakers voted in favor of the motion, just five more than needed. President Klaus Iohannis announced his preference for a new center-right government - and vowed to propose a new prime minister-designate by early next week - likely by October 15. After a candidate is nominated, they will have 10 days to form a working coalition and form a government.

Best wishes to you and your family for an enjoyable Sukkot.

Sincerely,



Mark B. Levin
NCSEJ Executive Vice-Chairman & CEO



Signatories of the Open Skies Treaty
Dark Green = States that signed and ratified the treaty
Light Green = States that have signed, but not ratified

NCSEJ WEEKLY TOP 10
Washington, D.C. October 11, 2019

Open Skies Treaty Allowed Eyes Over Russia; Trump Wants to Give Them Up
The NYTimes Editorial Board
October 10, 2019

Conceived in the depths of the Cold War by President Dwight Eisenhower and pressed forward by President George H.W. Bush to promote international stability after the fall of Communism in Eastern Europe, the Open Skies Treaty allows the United States, Russia and other nations to send unarmed surveillance flights over one another's territories to monitor military buildups or warnings of a surprise attack.

[Read the full article here](#)

Ukraine peace drive hits first bump, but Moscow says summit possible
Pavel Polityuk and Olzhas Auyezov
October 9, 2019

KIEV/MOSCOW (Reuters) - Ukraine on Wednesday refused to pull back troops in its restive east, saying for the second time this week that continued shelling by pro-Russian separatists there precluded the implementation of a disengagement agreement.

Moscow, however, said the door was still open for a fresh meeting of the leaders of Russia, Ukraine, France, and Germany to discuss resolving the five-year-long conflict in the Donbass region, in which U.N. monitors say more than 13,000 people have been killed.

[Read the full article here](#)

Kremlin Critic Navalny Accuses Putin of Foreign Funding 'Setup'
The Moscow Times
October 10, 2019

Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny has accused President Vladimir Putin of framing his anti-corruption group as a “foreign agent” after Navalny urged people to strategically vote against pro-Putin candidates in elections last month.

The Justice Ministry on Wednesday blacklisted Navalny’s Anti-Corruption Foundation (FBK) under a 2012 “foreign agent” law that imposes crippling auditing and reporting requirements on groups listed. Navalny and his allies maintain that they receive funding solely through Russian donations, but the Justice Ministry later said that it blacklisted the FBK because of donations from the U.S. and Spain.

Navalny countered Thursday that the Kremlin had “arranged” the two foreign transfers to the FBK’s frozen bank accounts so that the group wouldn’t be able to return the money.

[Read the full article here](#)

Russia brands opposition leader Navalny anti-corruption group a 'foreign agent'

DW

October 10, 2019

The Russian government formally declared an organization run by opposition leader Alexei Navalny as a "foreign agent" on Wednesday, the Justice Ministry announced on its website.

The listing is seen as the latest attempt to squeeze the opposition. Navalny is a well-known challenger to Russian President Vladimir Putin and has been jailed repeatedly for organizing protests.

Navalny's Anti-Corruption Foundation (FBK), which regularly publishes investigations into graft by state officials, will now be subject to increased oversight by Russian authorities and made to submit regular reports on who its managers are and how it spends its money. They must also declare their sources of funding and their objectives.

Navalny denies foreign involvement

[Read the full article here](#)

A peace settlement in the Donbas: big talk and small commitments

Pavel Luzin

October 9, 2019

The recent signing of the Steinmeier Formula, which outlines the implementation of the Minsk Agreements of 2015, left neither signatories nor observers indifferent. In Ukraine, the move has provoked a wave of discontent. In pro-European circles, it spawned some cautious optimism. The Russian authorities, who had promoted this formula and achieved, so it would seem, success, have also not rushed to celebrate victory. On the contrary; Russia’s Minister of Foreign Affairs declared that Russia had made a concession.

Furthermore, many oppositional-minded Russian experts and columnists have appeared openly demoralised and hurried to declare the agreement an act of Ukrainian capitulation. However, this story gives no good grounds to be optimistic about a quick resolution to the conflict, nor reasons to sound the alarm.

[Read the full article here](#)

Specter of Revolution Looms Over Moves Toward Peace in Ukraine

Kanstantin Shorkin

October 9, 2019

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's team has come up against its first serious problems since triumphantly sweeping to power. Massive street protests have broken out in Kiev under the slogan of "No Capitulation!" in response to the Steinmeier formula signed in Minsk and aimed at ending the conflict in Ukraine's Donbas region. There is even talk of another Maidan revolution.

The local elections in the Donbas stipulated by the much-vaunted Steinmeier formula quickly awoke fears in some parts of Ukrainian society of legalized Russian interference. The exact conditions and procedures for Donbas elections are still theoretical at this point, and depend on complex negotiations, but many Ukrainians already expect the worst.

[Read the full article here](#)

Romanian government falls

Anca Gurzu

October 10, 2019

The Romanian government collapsed Thursday after Social Democrat Prime Minister Viorica Dăncilă narrowly lost a confidence vote in parliament.

Dăncilă, who took office in January 2018, was ousted after 238 lawmakers voted in favor of the motion, just five more than needed. She is also her party's candidate for president in an election to be held on November 10.

President Klaus Iohannis will now have to choose a replacement prime minister. He said he will meet with political parties Friday morning and once a nomination has been made, he or she has 10 days to form a government.

[Read the full article here](#)

FM confirms initiative to sign 'historic' non-aggression pact with Arab states

RAPHAEL AHREN and TOI STAFF

October 6, 2019

Foreign Minister Israel Katz on Sunday confirmed that he has been advancing non-aggression treaties with several Arab countries in the Gulf, a "historic" démarche he said could end the conflict between Jerusalem and those states.

"Recently I have been promoting, with the backing of the prime minister, a diplomatic initiative to sign 'non-aggression agreements' with the Arab Gulf states," Katz wrote on Twitter.

[Read the full article here](#)

Russian Jews who became Wehrmacht generals

BORIS EGOROV

October 10, 2019

According to Nazi doctrine, they should have ended their lives in a concentration camp. But instead

they managed to occupy high positions in the armed forces of the Third Reich.

Not all Jews were sent to concentration camps to die in the Holocaust. Tens of thousands fought for Germany in WWII, and were even decorated with awards.

Mischlinge (as the Nazis called those with mixed Jewish and “Aryan” roots) were allowed to serve, but officially forbidden from advancing through the ranks. In practice, however, it depended on whether the individual was beneficial to the regime.

As such, dozens of Mischlinge commanded divisions, corps, and armies. About Air Field Marshal Erhard Milch, whose father was Jewish, Herman Goering, who highly rated him, said: “I will decide who is a Jew and who is not.”

[Read the full article here](#)

[Read full articles here](#)

1120 20th Street NW, Ste. 300N Washington, DC 20036-3413
Telephone: +1 202 898 2500 | ncsejinfo@ncsej.org

About NCSEJ

Founded in 1971, the National Coalition Supporting Eurasian Jewry represents the organized American Jewish community in monitoring and advocating on behalf of the estimated 1.5 million Jews in Eastern Europe and Eurasia, including the 15 successor states of the former Soviet Union.

 [JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST](#)

 [FORWARD THIS EMAIL](#)

