

Russia's Non-Linear Warfare Strategy: Realist Game of Checkers in Bosnia and Herzegovina

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Though headlines about fake news and the authenticity of reported information dominate the news, few realize or choose to accept that this is a symptom of a wider campaign by Russia to counter the influence of the West, predominantly the United States. The Russian government is conducting a series of hybrid warfare campaigns meddling into domestic affairs of sovereign nations. The examples are many: from Ukraine, Poland, Germany and, now, Bosnia and Herzegovina. This paper will delve into the “why” and “how” the Russian government is supporting the separatist movement in Bosnia and Herzegovina and answer the following questions: How does Russian influence in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) translate to a larger geopolitical impact in relation to the United States and the European Union? What hybrid warfare measures is Russia using in its campaign in Bosnia and are they comparable to those used in Crimea? What are the indicators of Russian hybrid warfare in Bosnia and Herzegovina? In answering these questions, the paper posits the following hypothesis: Russia is engaging in yet another political front and proxy conflict to counter the European Union expansion and limit the United States influence in order to defend its Near Abroad as well as the wider sphere of influence. This is evident through a comparative study of the use of same non-linear warfare methods in Bosnia and Herzegovina as were used in Russia's campaign to annex Crimea in 2014.