



Executive Summary

This year's scenario revolves around the 2014 Winter Olympics, to be held in Sochi, Russia. The simulation is framed around a series of terrorist attacks on Olympics facilities and Russian security forces. Notable in this scenario, the Assad regime in Syria has fallen and an Islamic government has taken its place. Each country team will be told that the terrorists employed conventional tactics in the attacks. However, over the course of Move I, it is revealed that a biological agent was also released, specifically the Marburg hemorrhagic fever virus (MARV). Players are unable to prevent the spread of the contagion and the virus moves beyond the Sochi area. This provides two avenues for the simulation to grow; first will be the challenge of attempting to contain the contagion, with mass movements into Abkhazia (stoking Georgia/Russia conflict), as well as possible infection of Continental Europe, while the second will be an attempt to respond to the attack itself and judging how much influence the new Syrian regime had over the strike.

Country Teams: Russia, United States, Germany, Syria, Georgia, Turkey, IGO/NGO

Primary Scenario Drivers:

Biological Attack – News of a virulent, active, deadly bio agent leads to widespread humanitarian crisis marked by large flows of people trying to escape the path of the contagion. There will be state-to-state issues of quarantines, health emergency responses, and coordination of resources. There will also be significant refugee problems as people flee from Sochi. Refugee flows out of Russia, mainly into the contested area of Abkhazia, will be of great magnitude.

Syrian Government Involvement – With the level of involvement of the Syrian Government unknown to other teams, initially, the main issue will be finding out what the Syrians knew and what to do about it. While Western powers have been unhappy about an Islamist regime rising in Syria, they have not been prepared to do anything about it. A link between the attack and the SIF could change that calculus. Similarly, Russia had managed to keep at least open channels of communication, if not entirely cordial, with the new government, but upon finding any evidence that Syria was either complicit or negligent in regards to the bio agent attack, Russia may also be forced to form a new, perhaps kinetic, relationship with Syria. Western powers will also not be able to directly communicate, at least initially, with the Syrian team, due to the lack of proper diplomatic channels in place.

Background Information

Situational Environment as of Move I: The 2014 Winter Olympics are underway in Sochi, Russia. The Games have brought world media attention to a particularly sensitive area Russian territory. The Olympics site directly neighbors Abkhazia, a Georgian region that was invaded by Russia in 2008, and then recognized as independent by Russia. The majority of the world still considers the territories to be Georgian, although the Georgians have had almost over Abkhazia (or nearby breakaway province South Ossetia) since 2008. Also present in the North Caucasus region of Russia is the separatist Chechnya region, a consistent source of trouble for the Moscow government. In the past 10 years, Chechen separatist groups

have embraced radical Islam, folding it in to their long-running push for independence. The radical Islamic presence in the region is expanding, and there are claims of Al-Qaeda connected cells.¹

Security is extremely tight in Sochi and at the Olympic event sites. Nevertheless, athletes and media have reported relatively smooth workings in the transportation and event infrastructure. Spectators and country teams have been arriving steadily in Sochi, with an anticipated 50,000 attendees expected at the opening ceremony.

In the run up to the Olympics, Georgia-Russia relations have been tense. Georgia has exploited the media attention to petition the international community to resolve the 'Russian annexation' of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. The UN representative from Georgia has made repeated motions for resolutions condemning the presence of Russian troops within its sovereign territory. Several incidents at the border of South Ossetia and Abkhazia have resulted in minor injuries and fatalities.

At the same time, Russian-U.S. relations have significantly soured during Obama's second term. This is largely due to the Russian government's support for Bashar al-Assad in Syria, its refusal to allow UN sanctioned intervention, and the resulting chaos in the country. The U.S. blames Russia for the current radical Islamist group that has gained control of power centers in Syria.

August 29, 2013, after a spring and summer fighting season that saw the rebels outfitted with a wide variety of externally supplied weaponry, rebel forces in Syria finally routed the last remaining government forces in Damascus and removed Assad and his followers from power. The return of the Syrian National Coalition after Assad's fall did little to unify the disparate rebels into a cohesive group transitioning from rebellion to governance. The Islamist groups, rallying under the banner of the Syrian Islamic Front (SIF), held to their previous statements that the Coalition was a conspiracy of Western governments trying to dominate Syria. Breakdowns in negotiations to form a government between SIF, moderate rebel groups, and the SNC led to the Islamist movement seizing control of the government, out maneuvering the SNC leadership, and establishing a new regime. SIF consolidated support around Damascus and Aleppo, while the Kurdish regions to the north fell into de facto independence, prompting tensions with Turkey.

The SIF administration has remained largely unrecognized by the international community. Georgia, the US, and the EU have neglected to recognize the regime. The U.S. and the EU continue to clandestinely fund moderate rebels scattered through Syria fighting against SIF domination. Russia, while not entirely pleased with an SIF-led Syria, stood by its non-intervention stance. Accordingly, Russia has neither officially recognized the SIF government nor provided any support to Syria. Turkey, fearing the reality of an independent Kurdistan, is open to any solution that brings Northern Syria back into the fold.

Move I

Attacks Near Sochi: The Sochi Winter Olympics have officially begun, with the Opening Ceremonies occurring a week ago without incident. However, the days since have been not quite so calm. Forty eight hours after the Opening Ceremonies, an explosion at a Russian army barracks in Dagomys, just north of Sochi, was blamed on terrorists. A car filled with explosives detonated at the barracks, killing 18. A group calling themselves Al-Qaeda in the Caucasus Emirate (AQCE) claimed responsibility, threatening more and more severe attacks.

As emergency responders arrived, a second strike hampered response efforts. The next day, acting on intelligence, Russian security forces raided three suspected safe houses near Sochi, resulting in firefights and explosions at two of the locations. Many of the security forces involved in the operation ended up as

1 See The Economist, "Islam Inflamed," April 7 2011, <http://www.economist.com/node/18530091>, or Sergey Markedonov, "Radical Islam in the North Caucasus," *CSIS*, (November 2010).

casualties and Russian officials have been tightlipped about details surrounding the raids. Soldiers wounded in the raid were taken by ambulance to hospital facilities in Sochi. Soldiers and emergency responders have experienced some dizziness since the attack. These symptoms have led the Russian security forces to conduct an investigation into the barracks explosion and the safe house.

This is the operating environment as of February 10, 2014.

TEAM ANALYSIS

RUSSIA:

Drivers of action – Russia will have three immediate crises to deal with. They will want to determine what if anything Georgia had to do with the attack. Second, Russia will need to coordinate with international agencies and other states to respond to the spread of a virus within the athletes and its territory. Third, Russia will face an escalating crisis of response towards Syria and the SIF. They will want to secure any other CBRNE weapons in Syria and the also get regime's cooperation in cracking down on AQ. Their propensity to take action will likely involve working through their connections with Alawite insurgents.

UNITED STATES:

Drivers of action – The U.S. will also have three immediate crises to deal with. First, they will need to address the problem of what they would like to do with their athletes and citizens in Sochi who have possible exposure to the virus. This will require coordination with Russia over possible quarantine efforts and transportation. Second, the U.S. will need to work through the UN/NGO and Russia to deal with the spreading virus, including transportation infrastructure, refugee flows, and CDC/WHO analysis of the virus. Third, the U.S. will need to deal with Syria and the SIF, creating a possible response to the intransigent regime. The U.S. has ties to rebels in the non-SIF camp, which are still staging occasional attacks from near the Turkish border. Like Russia, the U.S. wants to secure the CBRNE and even get rid of the SIF regime; however they do not want to see a Russia-Iran backed return of the Alawites to power.

SYRIA (the Syrian Islamic Front):

Drivers of action – The Syrian Islamic Front will have a major problem on its hands, namely that two of the world's great powers and most of the UN want to see action in response to the terror attacks. Any links back to Syria, even tangential, would increase the risk of the SIF being removed from power. They must work quickly and carefully to avoid a full scale invasion of their territory.² The SIF will face several complicating factors that will motivate its actions. First, while the SIF did not knowingly provide AQCE with bio weapons, they were responsible for letting them fall into the wrong hands. Additionally, while fringe elements of the SIF being perhaps in contact with AQCE members, with the *raison d'être* of SIF being hard line Islamic principles against Western oppressors, they are not in a position to simply turnover those elements to the U.S. and Russia. SIF and its AQ and Hezbollah connections also provide it a proxy method to strike back should any external power threaten. Because of its international isolation, the SIF will have restricted means of communication.

UNITED NATIONS / NGO:

Drivers of action – The UN / NGO team will have interesting drivers of action internally and externally. Since the crisis will require both humanitarian and diplomatic elements, the tension between the UN/NGO positions (e.g. the WHO rep and the Syria Special Representative) will be a challenge for the UN/NGO

² However, considering their brilliant decision to allow biological agents to leak into the hands of AQ and its affiliates, they are unlikely to be the very adept at avoiding further conflict.

team. The UN team will also serve as a focal point for diplomatic efforts, and so will have immediate crises of organizing international relief efforts, dealing with refugee flows, and creating a Syria plan. The team will also have access to all rooms, including the SIF team, so they will be a key avenue for passing diplomatic messages.

Turkey:

Drivers of action – Turkey must deal with rampant border insecurity and internal terror issues, pressure from both the US and Russia to in turn pressure Syria, and the looming threat of a Kurdistan becoming a reality if the SIF is unable to reconstitute an integral Syria. The last phase of Assad’s rule meant mobilization of left-wing proxies, such as DHKP-C, which remains active, harming both US and Turkish interests. Turkish-SIF relations remain terse, but better than US-SIF relations.

Georgia:

Drivers of action – Main destination for initial refugee flows. Border closure issues will be critical issue. Abkhazia is the breakaway territory, occupied by Russia in 2008, that directly borders Sochi. Russia will likely instruct flows to Abkhazia against wishes of Georgian government, as there is really nothing northwest of Sochi until you get to Ukraine. Georgian goals would be to deter Russia from using Abkhazia as drop zone for infected as well as ensure SIF terror forces did not use Georgia as a staging area.

Germany:

Drivers of action – Germany plays the role of leading the European response to this crisis. Secondly, there is a strong demographic connection between Germany and Turkey, due to the large Turkish population in Germany. This link will be played up as an inject, perhaps with German Turks returning prematurely through Istanbul from the Games, possibly transmitting the contagion.