



CORRUPTION AS THE HYBRID THREAT IN A CHANGING SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to analyse how the significance of corruption has evolved within today's rapidly developing security environment, as corruption has increasingly transformed from a traditional type of crime into a hybrid weapon. An inherent feature of today's world is the intense strategic competition where the weaponisation of numerous elements is occurring: energy, investment, information, migration flows, data, crime, disease, etc. The competitive environment presents a novel position for transnational organised crime groups, offering advantages to both organised criminals and authoritarian states. In its role as a non-democratic and totalitarian state, Russia controls and collaborates with Russian-based organised criminal groups. Corruption, therefore, serves as a means through which organised crime infiltrates various levels (national and local) of foreign states' administration. The article seeks to assess the specific dangers posed by corrupt activities originating from Russia and directed at Western states. This paper also attempts to address why a low resistance to corruption could be a weakness for the West, where the capacity to resist is rather modest.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this article is to analyse how the significance of corruption as a phenomenon has evolved in a rapidly developing security environment, where corruption as a crime has increasingly become a hybrid threat and in some instances, a hybrid weapon. A distinctive feature in today's world is strong strategic competition wherein everything can be used as a weapon. The term „hybrid threat“ refers to an action either conducted by state or non-state actors aiming to undermine or harm a targeted country by influencing its decision-making at the local, regional, state, institutional or international level. These actions are coordinated, synchronised and deliberately target vulnerabilities in democratic states and institutions, while remaining below the threshold of formal warfare (Hybrid CoE 2022).

A new situation in the contemporary security environment has arisen in which transnational organised crime (TOC) groups provide benefits for both criminals and authoritarian states. There is substantial evidence indicating that Russia, as a non-democratic and totalitarian state, in many ways controls Russian-based organised criminal groups and cooperates with them. Corruption is traditionally one of the means of influence through which organised crime infiltrates various levels of governance. This article endeavours to assess the specific hybrid threats posed by corruption originating from Russia and targeted at the Western world. It seeks to understand why the Western world exhibits comparatively low resistance to corruption, making it especially vulnerable to attacks from this direction (in Latin *locus minoris resistentia*).

1. AGE OF HYBRID THREATS AND THE NEW SECURITY CHALLENGES

Since the end of the Cold War, security concerns have become increasingly serious, both nationally and internationally. Real power competition unfolds between believers in autocracy and advocates of democracy – where authoritarian powers challenge the international order based on rules for their exclusive gain, while the international order defends the common good and promotes shared responsibilities (Bunde 2021).

It is plausible to argue that, since Putin came to power, a new Cold War has been emerging, with Russia standing at the forefront of totalitarian regimes (Lucas 2008).

Security issues have assumed far greater importance than a couple of decades ago. The world we had grown accustomed to, especially in the post-World War II era, no longer exists. Figuratively speaking, the Long Peace (Pinker 2012, pp. 228-354) has come to an end, but the change is even more fundamental as we already live in a world of radical uncertainty. Events that were once considered improbable are now unfolding one after another.

We are faced with primitive forms of warfare and criminal activity that, not long ago, were universally prohibited by the global community and disallowed by internationally established rules. Current conflicts have been described as “New Wars,” highlighting their supposedly unique characteristics, such as the intentional use of extensive refugee flows, widespread sexual violence and transnational criminal groups (Kaldor 1999; Munkler 2005, pp. 5-31). Opponents of the Western world in the present day are dedicated, learn rapidly and swiftly adapt to more effective modes of causing harm and destruction. To achieve their goals, they spare no resources, show no restraint and are inventive and diligent. We can observe a so-called hermeneutic disorder (Cypков 2014, c. 106) and determining whether it is spontaneous or intentionally created is not always straightforward. As a Russian mobster told his lawyer: „You in the West, you think you’re playing chess with us. But you’re never going to win, because we’re not following any rules“ (Belton 2020, p. 448).

Within the realm of security, there is a rapid mixing of genres, often described as „the blurring of genre boundaries“ (Geertz 2017, pp. 3-36), giving rise to the emergence of new practices of social control (Saar 2012). It has become increasingly evident that certain actors on the world stage deliberately instigate chaos, anarchy and confusion as part of their strategic objectives (Thom 2023). Behind this lies a broader sense of irresponsibility, e.g., technological (a`la Chernobyl) and/or natural cataclysms (a`la climate warming), as if there is an assumption that “we may cause chaos and destruction without responsibility, but somebody else should fix it later.” As we can see, this has often been the *modus operandi* in dealing with environmental (and other) hybrid shenanigans conducted regularly by totalitarian regimes.

There is an increasing necessity to replace former concepts of danger, which were applicable in specific fields such as warfare, crime control and medicine, with concepts that better meet the requirements of the modern world (Chalkiadaki 2016). The very essence of the concept of danger has undergone a profound change, primarily through an unprecedented expansion of the spectrum of danger. A defining feature of today's world is the pervasive competitiveness, where virtually everything has become a weapon or tool for attack, such as energy, investment, information, migration flows, data, crime, disease, etc. (Galeotti 2022; Spalding 2022). The concepts of disease, crime and warfare are becoming increasingly blurred. Furthermore, there is an ever-increasing ambiguity within these concepts themselves. The traditional concepts of war and peace are undergoing a process of redefinition as the clear distinction between these two states is eroding. New forms of deviations are emerging that cannot be classified within the earlier approaches to deviation control. The concept of hybrid warfare only partially resembles the long-established phenomenon of 'political warfare' (Galeotti 2018). As defined by George Kennan, political warfare is "the logical application of Clausewitz's doctrine in the time of peace" and includes "the employment of all means at a nation's command, short of war, to achieve its national objectives." (Kennan 1948). The state of peace has been replaced by a state of continuously ongoing hybrid warfare, especially via generating hybrid threats and the use of hybrid weapons against adversaries (Hoffman 2007).

2. A RUSSIAN „HOLY WAR“ AND CRIMINAL STATE

The Russian style of governance and base of foreign relations are better understood within the context of the enduring and perpetual Russian tradition of warfare as „holy, sacred war“ or religious war. Three main characteristics make a religious war a special kind of warfare. First, what is the purpose and objective of the war and how is the concept of victory defined in this context? Second, who is the opposing force, i.e. what is the argument and how is the enemy identified? And third, how is the war fought, i.e. what methods and rules are used?

In the case of a religious war, all these elements can be reduced to religion – i.e., wars are fought for the global victory of a religiously defined

community and wars are waged against religious enemies, with the methods and rules of warfare sanctioned by God or a superhuman realm. Hence, war becomes sacred because religious warriors are convinced of the unlimited powers given to them by God (Lewis 1990). Much like the concept of jihad in Islam, the religious war embraced by the Russians is not limited by time and space and consequently, will only end when the entire world is subordinated to the will of Moscow.

It is logical that such principles are not declared publicly by the Moscow authorities, as this would make it easier for the opponent to implement countermeasures. Hybrid warfare is often concealed in a way that makes it appear as if it were a spontaneously formed situation, becoming what is referred to as a „wicked problem“. A wicked problem is a problem that proves difficult or impossible to solve due to its incomplete, contradictory and changing requirements that are often difficult to recognise. It refers to an idea or problem that cannot be fixed, where there is no single solution to the problem and the term “wicked” signifies its resistance to resolution, rather than implying evil (Ritchey 2011). Furthermore, due to complex interdependencies, the effort to solve one aspect of a wicked problem may reveal or create other problems. Due to their complexity, wicked problems are often characterised by organised irresponsibility. For instance, the set of problems associated with migration is well-suited for presenting this as a wicked problem, as countries can intentionally trigger large-scale migration flows through targeted means (e.g. by creating unrealistic expectations, by spreading false rumors or inducing socio-economic disasters in specific regions).

During Putin’s rule, the Russian state has acquired the characteristics of a criminal state, with the entire country functioning like a distinctive type of criminal organisation. The concurrent processes of criminalising Russia as a state (Miklaucic, Naim 2013) and the nationalisation of organised crime evolved gradually following the collapse of the USSR (Heathershaw et al. 2021). Several authors have used the term kleptocracy to explain this process (Dawisha 2015; Belton 2020). Kleptocracy is defined as a system of governance „in which public institutions are used to enable a network of ruling elites to steal public funds for their private gain“ (Walker, Aten 2018). NGO Transparency International has implemented a parallel term ‘grand corruption’ (i.e. „the abuse of high-level power that benefits the few at the expense of many and causes

serious and widespread harm to individuals and society“ (Transparency International 2016).

In Russia, as a long-standing tradition, there exists a well-established and still visible type of authoritative power, where the roles of the police, military and security services are amalgamated. This “evil trinity” or so called “oprichniks’ tradition” constitutes a distinctly Russian centre of power with deep historical and cultural roots. The main task for this institution has been to unwaveringly serve the central government (ruler), to intensify the vertical of power and to forcefully suppress any form of dissent, let alone major objections. Such all-encompassing structures have no place in the Western tradition of government, following the principles of the separation of powers and the checks and balances. However, in today’s Russia, these structures have acquired absolute power under the leadership of security services (Saar 2022). President Putin, while serving as prime minister, once addressed his KGB colleagues and stated: “The group of FSB operatives who were sent undercover to work within the Russian Federation government is successfully fulfilling their task” (Lucas 2008, p. 32). In fact, this public statement might potentially lead to accusations of conspiracy and high treason against Putin in the future; according to Western legal interpretations, it could be considered a plot. Those who are not well-versed in the governing tradition of Russia might have considered Putin’s statement as a mere platitude or empty bragging. But today, we can see that the objective of taking over the state structures has been achieved and the special services have, over time, become the true masters of Russia, often called the ‘new nobility’ (Soldatov, Borogan 2011).

3. EMERGING OF SHARP POWER

Hybrid warfare, as a form of hostile activity, does not fit well within the framework of international politics and relations, which is characterised by a strict distinction between hard and soft powers (Nye 1990). Hard power is primarily defined in terms of military force and/or the economic capacity to use negative economic incentives, some of which can escalate to the level of economic coercion. Hard power compels other states to act or refrain from certain activities. This type of power is often

openly aggressive and is most promptly and effectively employed when one political body imposes its will upon another with relatively weaker military and/or economic power.

Soft power is the ability of states to co-opt rather than coerce. In other words, soft power involves moulding the preferences of others by using appeal and attraction to gain people's loyalty through sympathy. A defining feature of soft power is its non-coercive nature. It operates in the cultural area through shared values and benign foreign policy. As Joseph Nye aptly stated, "the best propaganda is not propaganda", and "credibility is the scarcest resource." (Nye 2012).

Today, totalitarian regimes do not primarily rely on hard power and are often unsuccessful at generating soft power. However, they still manage to project a certain degree of influence abroad. Distinguished from coercive hard power (Kaplan 2013) and persuasive soft power, they employ a variety of different tools for adverse influence. As Christopher Walker puts it, they use these tools to "pierce, penetrate or perforate the political, media and social environments of targeted countries, to manipulate their politics and in some instances, to undermine their political institutions" (Walker, Ludwig 2017). These regimes have cleverly adopted certain superficial elements of soft power, but not the essence of this. What they are actually pursuing is more accurately characterised as 'sharp power', whose key attributes are outward-facing censorship, manipulation and diversion.

Russia has been especially adept at exploiting rifts and contradictions within democratic nations. This strategy is not primarily focused on attraction or even persuasion; rather, it centres around deceit, manipulation and distraction. The influence wielded by Russia and other totalitarian regimes is not a "charm offensive," nor is it an effort to share alternative ideas or "broaden the debate", as they and their supporters usually claim (Zappone 2017). They are not engaged in public diplomacy as democracies would understand it. Instead, their objectives seem to be more sinister, often associated with new manifestations of externally-orientated censorship and information control, directly at odds with the benevolent conception of "soft power."

These regimes are not necessarily seeking to “win hearts and minds,” which is the usual goal in soft power initiatives. However, they are certainly striving to control their target audiences by manipulating or poisoning the information that reaches them (Orttung, Walker 2014). “Sharp power” likewise empowers authoritarians to infiltrate the functioning of a society, stoking and amplifying existing divisions. Unlike the blunt impact of hard power, “sharp power” entails a certain degree of stealth (Zappone 2017). Taking advantage of the open information environment within democracies, authoritarian regimes’ “sharp power” initiatives are often difficult to detect, affording them a delay before the targeted democracies realise that there’s a problem.

The transition from sharp power to the active measures implemented by the special services is smooth and deeply concealed. The oversight of clandestine operations is hidden so that governmental accountability is concealed. To achieve the desired result, authorities clandestinely amalgamate and synchronise activities at different levels. CIA director James Woolsey’s remark from 1999 has become increasingly commonplace: “If you happen to have a conversation with an eloquent English-speaking Russian [...] who wears a \$3,000 suit and Gucci shoes and says he’s the director of a Russian company [...], then there are four possibilities. He may be who he says he is. He may be a Russian intelligence operative operating under the cover of a businessman. He may belong to a Russian criminal group. But the really interesting possibility is that he can be all three at the same time and for any of these institutions it will not be a problem.” (Via Lucas 2012, p. 220).

When planning hybrid attacks, the central concept is to identify the weak spots and sides of the adversary or the target, where the ability to resist is at its lowest (*locus minoris resistentia*). While Russia and other totalitarian states may take somewhat different approaches to the application of hard, soft and sharp power, they all clearly take advantage of the openness of democratic systems. Democracies have assumed that engagement with authoritarian countries would lead to changes in their repressive systems, but there is little parity in an exchange between an open society and a deliberately closed one. In the marketplace of ideas, authoritarian regimes simply do not respect the rules. They protect their controlled environments while attempting to tip the scales abroad. This absence of reciprocity is evident concerning media, nongovernmental

organisations (NGOs), academia and business activities as well. (Walker, Ludwig 2017).

It is not difficult to see that low resistance to corruption can indeed be one of the weaknesses of the Western world, as corruption is directed against the core values of our society. Corruption can be likened to an assault on society, akin to the way HIV infiltrates the human body, prompting society's autoimmune system to turn against itself. The primary targets include free speech and the freedom of opinion in liberal democratic societies, along with the democratic state institutions established on the principles of fair elections and the rule of law. The Kremlin's goal is to find cracks in the free world and widen them into insurmountable gaps. Organising criminal disorders not only poses a direct threat to public order but also results in the internal undermining of the fundamental values and principles that hold society together on a day-to-day basis.

4. DANGER OF RUSSIAN-BASED CORRUPTION FOR THE WESTERN WORLD

The classical approach to corruption begins with criminologist Edwin Sutherland. According to his ideas, for a long period, corruption was tackled as a form of 'white-collar crime'. White-collar crime was defined by Sutherland as "a crime committed by a person of respectability and high social status in the course of their occupation". The term refers to financially motivated, nonviolent or non-directly violent crimes committed by individuals, businesses, and government professionals (Sutherland 1950, p. 9).

Later, corruption began to be increasingly associated and identified in many ways with organised crime (OC), especially with its mafia groups, when organised crime groups ("power ambition without readiness to respond") try to interfere with state power and governance to increase their revenues. A US national commission recognised nearly 50 years ago that there are more similarities than differences between organised crime and white-collar crime. It found that "the perpetrators of organised crime may include corrupt business executives, members of the professions, public officials or members of any other occupational group,

in addition to the conventional racketeer element.” (National Advisory Committee 1976).

Organised crime and white-collar crime share a common objective, which is the constant effort to identify domestic channels for the exploitation of various degrees of power. This process involves both cultivating one’s “own people” to ascend within the power hierarchy (especially in higher social strata) and identifying individuals with weak resistance to so called attractive offers among representatives at various levels of state power. Consequently, the control of white-collar crime is hindered by the entrenched interests of the legitimate sector, comprised of government officials, lobbyists and the elite who benefit from exploiting the financial vulnerabilities in the existing system, allowing for fraud, tax evasion and money laundering. The control of organised crime is similarly compromised, especially when it is used as a tool of business and government for corrupt purposes (Albanese 2021).

The state-OC (of foreign or domestic origin organised criminals) interaction focuses on criminals trying to infiltrate targeted state institutions through individuals connected to states using different tools. Corruption is thus one of the means of influence by which organised crime infiltrates the various levels of state management. In this type of interaction, OC groups are the main initiator and the main motivation is to keep “friendly relations” with the State authorities or to have an insider to take care of their interests. Keeping low profiles and being uninterested in overthrowing a government makes them different from terrorist and insurgent organisations. OC groups want to keep their illicit business safe through their hidden connections. It must be emphasised that the destructive effect of these groups is not a specific goal, but rather collateral damage.

A contemporary so-called strategic competition model describes the relationship between organised crime groups and totalitarian states in a radically different way. The strong competition environment offers a new role for transnational organised crime (TOC) groups which provides benefits for criminals and authoritarian states both. TOC groups provide opportunities for autocratic states against their rivalries. The new type of interactions starts from the state side when state institutions develop

connections with the OC groups to either control their actions or to use them for their domestic/international agenda.

In this scenario, institutions and representatives of the non-democratic state are either directly or indirectly collaborating with organised criminals. This collaboration includes tasks such as vetting and recruiting members for groups of criminals and determining the role of a particular organised group within one's own country. Special services conduct these types of contacts, but they are not the sole participants. The state may be in contact with organised criminal groups through private security companies and other intermediaries (Gürer 2021). The state exercises total control and at the same time, any self-established and independent groups are ruthlessly and swiftly dismantled. The authoritarian state consistently assumes a key and dominant role in this dynamic.

A typical example is the relationship between the Russian mafia (organised criminal groups) and the Kremlin. The Kremlin is able and willing to direct and coordinate the actions of organised criminals to align with Russia's national interests abroad. Mark Galeotti argues: "What makes RBOC (Russian-based Organised Crime) a severe and timely challenge is the growing evidence of connections between such criminal networks and the Kremlin's state security apparatus, notably the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR), military intelligence (GRU) and the Federal Security Service (FSB)." (Galeotti 2017).

Organised crime of Russian origin (Russian mafia), which is an extension of the Russian state outside the country, has become a direct security threat because it attacks the basic values of the Western world. For example, when compared to the previously notorious Italian mafia, which primarily pursued economic interests, a qualitative difference from Russian mafia is evident. The Russian mafia is backed by national resources and harbours more ambitious ideological and political goals. Any Western businessman or politician who has been successfully bought off or blackmailed by the Russian mafia can, as a result, be manipulated by the Russian state's special services. When a person begins cooperating solely for monetary gain, then his desires and greed have been exploited. Individuals targeted by the Russian side face huge pressure while simultaneously living in fear of being exposed by their domestic law enforcement authorities.

5. DIRTY MONEY OF RUSSIAN ORIGIN AS A SECURITY PROBLEM

Today, as already mentioned, there is a permanent active search for the weakest points of resistance in targeted societies. In the Western world, there are generally no strong criminal punishments in place as external constraints ensure that personal weaknesses remain at a modest level. In this context, the “dirty billions“ coming from Russia and the fragility of people’s moral bonds must be feared. Some individuals such as Mr Trump (Belton 2020, pp. 448-488), Mr Schröder and other „big names“ have become prized “trophyies” for Russia’s clandestine business and subversive activities. They are akin to scalps taken from enemies that hang on the belt of a proud Russian warrior (Putin). Holding them and others like them, who occupy top positions in society, accountable under the rule of law is an extraordinarily difficult undertaking because they have enormous legal and economic resources at their disposal.

Western countries face the daunting and complicated challenge of distinguishing between illegal (so-called dirty, dark) money and legal (so-called clean) money. International collaboration among law enforcement agencies from various countries to combat money laundering related to Russia has, in essence, turned into a farce, as “dirty money” of Russian origin has two meanings. First, there is “dirty money No. 1”, i.e. illegal income obtained by criminals operating in Russia or of Russian origin (e.g. drug dealing, human trafficking, arms smuggling). Until recently, it was possible to cooperate with Russian authorities when dealing with such kind of dirty money to prevent illegal income from infiltrating the West and being “laundered” there.

But there’s also “dirty money No. 2”, which has a very direct connection with the Kremlin authorities. This is money that flows into the West and is “laundered” there precisely at the request and in the interests of the Kremlin authorities. The international fight against this type of money laundering, in which Russia participates as a partner, is therefore a “fight against the shadows” because Russia’s top officials and special services are active “launderers” of money obtained in Russia. As a result, the Russia’s official anti-money laundering activity as a whole is selective, triggered only when the Kremlin’s interests are not at stake.

The use of Russian money as a hybrid threat directed against the Western world serves two main purposes. First, these funds are used for subversive activities in the Western countries, such as financing campaigns like the Brexit campaign in the UK or supporting far-right leader Marine Le Pen's presidential campaign in France. The Mueller report demonstrates how Russian offshore finance and oligarchs were deployed by the Kremlin to interfere in and after the 2016 US election (US Department of Justice 2019). Second, Putin and his corrupt associates keep their riches in the West as Russia has no valid property rights and legal guarantees for asset preservation. This was in addition to the reserves of the Central Bank of Russia, which are held in the Western banks. It was an absurd situation from the point of view of both Russia and the West because one's possessions should be never stored in the hands of the enemy. However, at the same time, the West turned a blind eye to the real dangers associated with Russian money in the economy and social life.

Corruption, along with energy supplies, has been Russia's main export commodity to the West (Lucas 2008). The estimated amount of Russian „private dark money“ in the West is approximately \$1 trillion (Åslund, Friedlander, 2020). Nord Stream has brought to Europe not only dependence on cheap gas but also corruption, along with a large amount of Russian „dark money“ being funnelled into places like London City, Cyprus or Vienna (Heathershaw et al. 2021). Corruption can be considered as the first step towards more serious crimes (e.g., high treason, espionage), particularly in situations of potential hot conflict (e.g. kinetic warfare), where a “fifth column” begins to emerge from among these individuals as their essential interests and even their lives are at risk. Therefore, corruption emanating from Russia should not be seen as a phenomenon that develops spontaneously, but rather as a result of deliberate activity led by Russian special services to create corrupt incentives and identify individuals susceptible to such temptations.

Russia and other totalitarian states have weaponised corruption, utilising it as a “core instrument of their national strategy to exploit democratic countries' vulnerability to this kind of malign influence.” (Rudolph 2021). Assessing the level of corruption as very low with minimal danger potential in Western countries is a serious mistake in security context. It is incorrect to assess the impact of corruption on everyday life as essentially non-existent. When an authoritarian state, such as Russia,

systematically corrupts influential individuals in the West, it guarantees the acquisition of certain assets for the Kremlin. First, corrupt individuals can have a significant impact on decision-making in both political and economic spheres. Second, when a corruption case becomes public, a corrupt individual can be sacrificed and used as an example of the weaknesses within Western society, highlighting the decay of our entire „social fabric“.

For a significant period, the West engaged in extensive discussions but did little to seriously combat the infiltration and influence of dirty money of Russian origin. The situation changed radically after the beginning of the Russo-Ukrainian war on February 24 2022, when de facto all money of Russian origin began to be treated by Western authorities as dirty in the West. On 28 February 2022, the Central Bank of Russia was blocked from accessing more than \$400 billion in foreign-exchange reserves held in Western banks. Overall, three types of sanctions were imposed against Russia: a ban on the provision of technology for oil and gas exploration, a ban on the provision of credits to Russian oil companies and state banks and travel restrictions on influential Russian citizens close to President Putin and Kremlin. Although the international sanctions must primarily reduce Russia's ability to wage war, they have a wider positive impact on the international security environment especially by reducing the corruptive influence of money of Russian origin.

CONCLUSIONS

Corruption, i.e. the abuse of power for personal gain, is considered a grave and despicable transgression according to Western understandings, which should be combated seriously, not merely superficially. The misuse of power is a danger to state security, causing unequal treatment of people, damaging competition and blocking economic development (Treisman 2000, pp. 431- 432). Corruption erodes democracy, diminishing people's equal opportunities to affect the collective decision-making in the common interest, their equality before public institutions and the efficiency of public activity. It is obvious that the Western world must remain in these challenges and must know how to use its strengths as

best as possible and not give new opportunities to enemies to exploit its weaknesses.

The perception and attitude towards corruption in Russia differ from the corresponding outlook in the Western world. Within certain limits, the use of public resources for personal interests is considered normal and permissible in the Russian power tradition (Saar 2019). At the same time, Russia's economy itself is not immune to the negative effects of corruption. For instance, corruption has largely caused the Russian military, which on paper claimed to be "the second strongest military force in the world", to be unable to cope with the tasks assigned to the military during the ongoing Russian- Ukrainian war.

Corruption is at the core of the Putin regime but also represents one of its greatest vulnerabilities. In the long term, the tide is likely to turn against the asymmetric attacker itself, a fact proven by practice. The vertical of power has turned into a corrupt vertical, reaching a scale of corruption that has spiraled out of control. As the primary export commodity abroad, corruption has inflicted harm on Russia in the same manner as it always has - hindering socio-economic development, wasting resources and stifling people's productive initiative.

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