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OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Russian Federation Support of Racially and Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremists

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is provided by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and the Office of the Secretary of Defense in response to section 1237(a) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21 NDAA). It includes an unclassified summary of Russia's support of foreign racially and ethnically motivated violent extremists (RMVE) and a classified annex.

This product was drafted by the National Intelligence Council, National Intelligence Officers for Transnational Threats, and Russia and Eurasia. Central Intelligence Agency and Federal Bureau of Investigation provided substantive contributions.

The Russian Government probably tolerates some private Russian entities' support to RMVEs, at least in part because it aligns with Kremlin efforts to aggravate societal fissures in the West. Russia sometimes uses and manipulates Russian ultranationalist groups at home, but does not welcome their influence and often subjects their leaders to harsh prison sentences. Some Russian private paramilitary groups are trying to recruit and train Western RMVEs to expand their reach into the West, increase membership, and raise money. These groups' training of RMVEs poses a potential threat to Western security by encouraging and enabling attacks on ethnic minorities and government facilities.

We lack indications of Russian Government direct support—such as financing, material support, training, or guidance—to RMVEs outside Russia. However, Russian online influence operations amplify politically divisive issues that probably contribute to RMVE radicalization and recruitment efforts worldwide.

RUSSIA PROVIDING MOSTLY INDIRECT AND PASSIVE SUPPORT TO RMVEs

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Key Russia-based private entities that have engaged with foreign RMVEs include the following.

- **Russian National Unity (RNU) movement.** Founded in 1990, the RNU promotes white supremacist, anti-immigrant, anti-LGBTQ, and anti-Semitic views inside Russia and on social media, according to a review of the group's online posts and public speeches.
- **Rusich Reconnaissance and Sabotage Group.** Russian neo-Nazi Aleksey Milchakov established Rusich in 2014 and led its operations against Ukrainian forces in eastern Ukraine until 2015. Milchakov and Rusich senior member Yan Petrovskiy are under International Criminal Court investigation and Ukrainian indictments for committing war crimes against Ukrainian POWs, according to Belarusian and Ukrainian press reports.
- **Russian Imperial Movement (RIM).** The ultranationalist and monarchist RIM, which was established in 2002, has trained white European RMVEs as well as sought to recruit white U.S. RMVEs to train at its paramilitary camps in Russia. RIM has forged ties with likeminded Western RMVEs, probably to expand its outreach, attract new supporters, and establish footholds in those regions. RIM's Imperial Legion armed wing commander, U.S.-designated Denis Gariyev, manages Russia-based paramilitary training camps for Russian and Western students, according to Western press reporting. In April 2020, the U.S. Department of State listed RIM as a specially designated terrorist group.
- **The Base.** The transnational neo-Nazi group "The Base," which is led by a U.S. national who moved to Russia in 2017, emerged in 2018 and has consistently communicated with likeminded individuals in North America to promote violence and spread radical ideologies.

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European RMVE groups or networks that have been allowed to use a Russian social media platform to amplify their narratives include the Italian fascist organization Casa Pound, the German neo-Nazi group Der Dritte Weg, and the Scandinavian neo-Nazi Nordic Resistance Movement.

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