

ATHENA

FOREIGN POLICY SPEECH

MSc Course

"The EU and the Post-Soviet Space"

Mare

Soetermeer

AS

Slobodan Milošević

Former President of Serbia,
1989-1997



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Fictional Foreign Policy Speech

The EU and the Post-Soviet Space

University of Amsterdam

A Letter from Slobodan Milošević to Vladimir Putin

Introduction

It is the 24th of February 2029. The war in Ukraine has come to an end as NATO bombings on the Crimean Bridge in Moscow have led to collateral damage and pushed Putin into peace talks with Zelensky.

Two years after so-called peace has returned, Russian president Vladimir Putin is arrested for war crimes in Ukraine and extradited by the new Russian president to an ad-hoc court of the UN in Geneva. A long court battle is about to take off at the ICTRF, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Russian Federation, inspired by previous UN tribunals ICTR (Rwanda) and ICTY (Yugoslavia).

One of Putin's long-lasting friends has written a letter of advice to him on how to appear in court, based on his own experiences in The Hague. His friend did not die in 2006, as many thought to believe – he is still serving his sentence. Sending letters is one of the only privileges which he has left.

Putin's friend is called Slobodan Milošević. He is the former president of Serbia, and has been convicted for crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide in Bosnia, Croatia and Kosovo.

Dear Vova,

Where to begin this letter? So much has happened since our last conversation... A sense of grief has befallen me, and writing this letter makes everything even more real.

I grieve for *you*, Vova, because I know what it feels like to be arrested on false charges, in an illegal trial. Powerlessness and injustice are the worst feelings us humans can experience. But I also grieve for your nation, as the Russians have lost a leader who could save them from harm and give their country the status in the world it has always deserved.

Twenty-seven years ago, the evils of the world won in Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo, and evil won again – this time in your beloved Russia. People who you thought were your friend, sold their souls to Western powers, Muslim terrorists and Nazi's, and when law is in the hands of such powers, justice can never be achieved.

Isn't it also funny that Western powers, who colonized half of the world, are accusing *you* of being imperialist? Let them talk. They might be of use one day, when they will give you bags of cash to become your friend. Pathetic.

But there is more that the future holds. Look at what Aleksander is doing in Bosnia and Kosovo! Hope is not lost for Serbia, nor is hope lost for Russia. One day, Greater Serbia and Greater Russia will become whole again. Slavic brotherhood will prosper, I promise you. In the near future, the ones who were your pupils one day, will be the new leaders of the country, honoring your legacy.

Most importantly, your nation will never give up on you. My granddaughter tells me that posters of me can still be found in every local pub in Belgrade and that many remember me for my strong leadership at home, thirty years later. People will continue to care. An orphaned nation will never forget their father.

That is also why you need to defend *yourself* in court. Do not put your power in the hands of some international lawyers who will never have your interest at heart! You need to show your nation that you will not surrender and be part of this criminality. Use your own voice to speak for the oppressed, you owe that to your people.

Vova, don't worry, although I am certain that a great leader like you would not worry. You were not given the name *Vladimir*, great leader, for no reason, just like it was no accident that my

parents called me *Slobodan*, freedom, for I was to protect the freedom of my nation. We both lived up to our duties, and will continue to do so.

I wish you the best in Geneva and I will always be right there with you, whatever may come of that 'Western' justice.

Tvoj drug,

Slobo