

# Why Is Climate Change Not on the Agenda in Russia?

[Russia on the Record](#)

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**Maxim Konankov / Octagon.Media / TASS**

Russia, one of the world's top emitters of greenhouse gases, is already feeling the impacts of climate change. But compared to Western countries, where concerns about the climate crisis are widespread, this topic is nearly invisible in Russian media, politics and education.

In this episode, we decided to find out how Russian society views climate change and the factors that cause many Russians to ignore environmental issues. Climate activist Arshak Makichyan and climate scientist Alexei Kokorin join us to discuss.

For more information about climate denial and skepticism in Russia, check our [recent report](#).

*Russia on the Record is a podcast where Moscow Times journalists, independent experts and ordinary Russians reflect, analyze and explain what's going on in Russia right now. You can listen to us on the following platforms:*

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**A transcript of the podcast audio, which has been lightly edited for clarity, can be found below:**

**MT:** Welcome to the latest episode of Russia on the Record, a podcast from The Moscow Times. In this episode, we will discuss the attitudes towards climate change in Russia. Officially, the country, which is among the top emitters of greenhouse gases, is a signatory to the Paris climate agreement. However, at the government level and in educational institutions, there is almost no discussion of the climate crisis. Moreover, Russian propaganda sometimes casts doubt on the very existence of climate change. Environmental activists have been one of the few groups to manage to draw attention to this problem in Russia, but as protest activity has been suppressed, their voices have been slowly silenced. Arshak Makichyan, a prominent Russian eco-activist, was forced to leave Russia in 2022. We spoke to him about climate activism and Russians' attitudes towards climate change.

**MT:** Arshak, when and why did you start engaging in environmental activism in Russia? And who is your role model?

**Arshak Makichyan:** I started to protest in March of 2019. I was inspired by, actually, Boris Nemtsov, because it was 2019 and he was killed some years before that. I went to my first protest, it was a political protest. And I thought, okay, I should do something. Also, I read about Greta Thunberg's strike. Before that, I didn't know anything about the climate crisis, but I was kind of surprised that there is also a global crisis and we didn't know anything about it in Russia. There was no information about it in Russian media or even Russian environmental NGOs. I was kind of trying to figure out what the climate crisis is, and then I found out that it's a big deal and I started to protest.

**MT:** What slogans did you use as an activist and why?

**AM:** I used a lot of different kinds of slogans at first. It was, of course, like global warming is hunger, war, and death. I was trying to find the right words to describe the climate crisis to the Russian audience because in Russia the situation with climate activism was completely different from European experiences because in Russia we didn't have any knowledge about the climate crisis in society in 2019. It was getting better because we were having a lot of environmental catastrophes and all of them were connected to the climate crisis. And also, we were organizing the movement and it was quite successful even though it was a small climate movement. And we did a lot of great work before Russia started the war in Ukraine. After that, I was using mostly slogans about the war because it's also connected to the climate crisis, of course.

**MT:** You mentioned that there were not many discussions about climate change in Russia. Was it difficult to find like-minded people in Russia who wished to protest for climate action?

**AM:** Climate activism in Russia was completely different. We didn't have any climate knowledge in society and also people were afraid to protest, especially people from environmental backgrounds, because we had some political protests before 2019, of course, but most of the environmental activists were not politically engaged and they were thinking, 'Oh, we can change our habits and we can do something on a personal level.' But the idea of the climate crisis was that it's something so huge that you cannot fight against it just by changing stuff on a personal level. So we were demanding systematic changes on a political level. The first weeks I was protesting a lot, for a lot of weeks, and then other people started to text me. But the problem was that it was really scary to protest in Russia, even back in 2019, when we had so much more freedom back then. So yeah, it was difficult to find people. And then we started to organize a movement and we had a lot of different kinds of protests because the government was refusing to allow us to protest together. It's quite scary to protest alone when you are marching in crowds and you can shout and you feel these like-minded people, you are not alone, it's cool. But in Russia, it was not cool at all.

**MT:** I see. And how do you generally assess Russians' attitude towards climate change? How many people recognize it as a real problem?

**AM:** Before the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the situation was actually getting much better because the climate crisis is happening in Russia. I would say that the problem in Russia is that most of the media resources are kind of concentrated in Moscow and in other big cities like St. Petersburg. And most of the Russian people actually don't know what is happening in Russia. For example, I went to Kemerovo oblast, and in Kemerovo oblast, we have a lot of coal mines, and the environmental situation there is terrible. And also in the republic of Sakha, permafrost is melting and the climate crisis is affecting people's lives. But most Russian people don't know about it. And also on an international level, there is no knowledge about what is happening in Russia. Russia is a huge country. In some regions, we have desertification. In some regions, permafrost is melting, but there is no knowledge because Russia is a dictatorship. So people, especially on the regional level, are afraid to speak up about environmental problems. Now the situation is different because now we have the war in Ukraine and people are trying to survive. They are trying to escape mobilization. They are trying to do their best in some ways not to die. And so they don't have the resources to think about the climate crisis. But it's happening. For example, now we in Russia have more environmental protests than political protests because the environmental crisis continues and you can see environmental problems from your window. So a lot of people are continuing to protest, but there are people in the West, who actually don't know that people still can protest in Russia. And yeah, Russia is a dictatorship, but people still do protest and they are fighting against the destruction of nature in Russia, even though most of them cannot afford to protest against the war in Ukraine because the price for protesting against the war in Ukraine is much higher.

**MT:** So if I can sum up the problem with climate activism and environmental activism in Russia back in 2019 and 2021, the problem was that Russia is very centralized and the most active cities like St. Petersburg, Moscow and other cities with a population of several million people, they are not aware of the problems of the distant regions. So if they protest, the

protest is concentrated on the problems of their cities, and this extreme centralization and the huge territory of Russia make these protests a reason for low climate change awareness of Russians.

**AM:** Yeah, but also we tried to organize a lot of solidarity campaigns. For example, in 2020 in Krasnoyarsk, they had a black sky mode. It's when, because of the coal burning, it's impossible to go out on the streets. We protested, we organized some small protests in different cities in Russia, we organized a solidarity campaign and Greta Thunberg retweeted it. Then we had a lot of reaction from the media and even the local government responded to our protests. So it's possible to influence the situation even in an authoritarian regime. Of course, it's different in dictatorship. For example, now we are having a lot of more radical actions because, probably, openly opposing the government now, like protesting with posters, it's not that effective. Now we have a partisanship movement, but it's of course a completely different story.

**MT:** In your opinion, why are there so many climate skeptics in Russia?

**AM:** I wouldn't say that there are a lot of them. There are climate skeptics everywhere, actually, and most of them are financed by the fossil fuel industry. In Russia, the fossil fuel industry is huge. And also in Russia, we also have a problem with independent media. Most of them were prosecuted, declared foreign agents and now they are working from abroad, which is also a problem, of course. They don't actually know what is happening in Russia and they are not connected to these environmental problems in the republics in Russia or in the regions in Russia. And also most of the independent media are kind of writing more about human rights violations because they don't have any expertise in environmental problems, it's also a problem.

**AM:** And, yeah, it's about propaganda, Russian propaganda denies the climate crisis. They say, 'No, it's global warming, tomorrow we will have global cooling.' The problem is that most of the people in Russia just hear these stories from Russian propaganda. They see that the climate is changing. They see that we are having more wildfires, we are having heating quite often. We are having more environmental catastrophes. Most of them are connected to the climate crisis, but they don't have any access to information about the climate crisis. And the climate crisis is quite a complex thing, it's quite difficult to understand. And especially now, when most of the environmental NGOs are also declared foreign agents, undesirable organizations, and they cannot continue to operate in Russia.

**MT:** Do the authorities benefit from ignoring the problem of climate change and making Russians doubt whether it exists at all?

**AM:** They earn a lot of money from selling fossil fuels to a lot of countries. Actually, they get money for this war from selling fossil fuels. It's another side of the story that Europe and the world are financing this war, actually. And it's a huge problem. I was demanding an embargo on Russian fossil fuels when the war started and also before the war, because before the war, they were using this money to repress the Russian people, to repress the media, repress human rights defenders. So all of that is connected. The Russian government, they don't think about the future. They don't think, 'Oh, probably in the future, the world won't be buying fossil fuels from Russia,' because in the world, we are having different kinds of processes, like

the energy transition and stuff like that. And in Russia, most people just don't know anything about renewable energy. They don't know that the world is changing, economies are changing, and it's a huge problem for us. Even if we will have regime changes in Russia, we will have a lot of economic consequences of these policies because they don't have any strategy for the future. They don't understand what is happening in the world.

**MT:** You were an environmental activist in Russia for several years. What are the biggest results and achievements you've had as an environmental activist?

**AM:** We organized the first climate movement. Now, climate awareness in Russia is much bigger, but our biggest achievement is when the war started, we opposed the war, we posted statements, and together with all Fridays for Future branches from all around the world, we stood up against the war. It was a huge solidarity campaign with the Ukrainian people against this terrible war. I think that we showed the world how much the climate crisis is connected to the human rights crisis. If you don't have human rights, you cannot protest for climate action or for anything. I was stripped of my citizenship. My family was deported exactly for my activism, and that means that my activism was very effective. It's kind of strange and kind of sad that my achievements were not that we achieved some policy changes in Russia.

**AM:** But I do believe that in the future when Russia will be free, we will be able to have real climate policies because now I have the trust of Russian people because I did a lot of important things on many other different levels. So for me, it's also important to do other kinds of activism. I think we have achieved a lot, but we still have a lot of work to do.

**AM:** For example, we recently posted on our social media about the situation, the environmental catastrophe, which is happening in the Sakha republic, in Yakutia. Most of the Russian people just don't know what is happening in our different republics in the Russian Federation. I think we still have a lot of work to do, to connect more with anti-colonial movements, to mobilize people in the regions, in the republics.

**AM:** I think the environmental topic is very important because the Russian government can say, 'Feminism is a Western theory, we don't need feminism because we have traditional values,' and stuff like that. They cannot say, 'We don't need the environment, because it's something that the Western countries are trying to promote in Russia,' because Russian people care about the environment. And we have a lot of proof of that. So I think it's very important also to use environmental topics to politicize Russian people because Russia doesn't have any real policies about climate adaptation. They don't have any real climate policies or anything else [such as] environmental restrictions for corporations. So the situation is getting worse. It will be much worse in the coming years. We need to politicize the environmental movement to connect the dots in people's minds between this huge political crisis which is unfolding in Russia, and the environmental crisis.

**MT:** You mentioned that you and your family were stripped of your Russian citizenship, although you moved here as a child and lived in Russia your entire adult life. Why is the Russian government so afraid of environmental activists?

**AM:** I think because I was speaking up against the war and connecting the dots between the environmental crisis and the political crisis. I was trying to politicize the environmental movement in Russia. The environmental movement in Russia is huge. There are a lot of

people who are concerned about what is happening with our forests, with our lakes, seas, and everything else. So I was trying to do that because it was obvious to me that we had a terrible regime in Russia. They were violating all our possible rights. This case against me was also a racist case because I'm Armenian by ethnicity. They were trying to use this against me, like, 'Oh, you are even not Russian. You don't have this right to speak up about anything because you are not Russian.' They were trying to use it against me. But I actually used the case against me against them, because after the beginning of this case, I was having a lot of interviews. I was speaking about Russian racism, about Russian nationalism, about Russian oppression. We as activists, we always can fight against this kind of stuff, even if we live abroad. We still have a lot of instruments, and we still have the truth behind us. I fled from Russia not because I was afraid, but because I thought it probably would be more effective to continue my work when I am free, when I can use my social media, when I can use all other kinds of different instruments that we are trying to create and to evolve. I think it's not about them being afraid of me, but it's about using terror as an instrument, a political instrument. And I was trying to oppose that. I was trying to mobilize minorities in Russia. I was trying to mobilize Armenian people in Russia, environmental activists, and that's exactly the thing we should continue to do because the war in Ukraine continues. All crises continue in Russia as well. A lot of people die, and we don't have any choice to give up and say, 'Okay, they won.'

**MT:** You left Russia in 2022. How do you and your fellow climate activists continue to pursue your activism from outside the country? And is their environmental agenda still relevant to Russians after February 2022?

**AM:** The environmental agenda is very relevant. As I said, Russian propaganda is doing a lot of work in environmental propaganda. And the problem for the Russian anti-war movement is that they don't know much about environmental issues. It's a huge problem, because most of the normal Russian people in Russia, they are concerned about the environmental crisis. But most of the political activists don't know anything about climate. They think, 'We need to define human rights, we need to donate to Ukraine.' All this is very important. But we also need to speak about stuff that is important for Russian people who are continuing to live in Russia, because we need to oppose Russian propaganda. We need to use these topics against them because they are failing the Russian people in every aspect of life. So we need to speak up about the environmental crisis as well because it's happening and it's very important for all Russian people and the Russian government is failing all of us.

**MT:** We now speak with climate scientist Alexei Kokorin about climate skepticism within the Russian scientific community.

**MT:** Which regions of Russia are feeling the effects of climate change the most? Probably some regions in particular that you may name where it is the most noticeable.

**Alexei Kokorin:** It's a common question. Just recently, the Russian Academy Institute of Global Climate and Ecology specially studied it and presented to everybody — to government, to business, to the general public — that they identified four areas and number one is not the Arctic and Far East. Number one is the south of the European part of the country because they ranked it according to human health, human well-being and agriculture.

**AK:** It looks reasonable because big business everywhere has a lot of resources for adaptation,



but regular people do not. Therefore, the metric of well-being and agriculture looks very reasonable. According to this metric, more frequent, more long, and more severe heat waves and droughts in the south of the European part of Russia is the main factor affecting many millions of people or maybe dozens of millions of people. Number two is the Far East. It's well-known. Monsoon climate, precipitation, floods. Number three is the Arctic. Sure, climate change in the Arctic is the largest. Largest, of course, and sharpest. However, the number of people is very small. Native indigenous people are very adaptive. So-called Europeans mainly disappeared from the Arctic [except for] some workers of the largest oil, gas, and mineral companies, it's usually young and healthy people who can survive everywhere. Therefore, the Arctic is only number three. And number four, which is probably number one, is megalopolises. Because any megalopolis is an area of risk. The 20 million people of the megalopolis of Moscow or even 5 million of St. Petersburg or 2 million in Yekaterinburg. It's all a megalopolis. In a megalopolis, a heat wave is significantly worse for people, for human health, than in some rural areas. Therefore, on the whole Russian territory, megalopolises are also an area of risk.

**MT:** You mentioned that indigenous people are very adaptive to climate change. So how do they adapt and why is it more difficult for the residents of urban areas to change their lifestyles because of the climate changes?

**AK:** I mentioned indigenous people in the Arctic. In the Arctic, the variation of temperatures, variation of weather conditions, was always very large. Therefore, native Nenets, Yakutians or Chukchi people used to live in large variations of different climate conditions. And style of life and traditional knowledge allow them to be very adaptive. Speaking about megapolises, adaptation is a very difficult task, particularly for people with many diseases and old people. Medical doctors speak about so-called non-timely mortality. It doesn't mean that somebody dies due to a heat wave or some climate or weather event, but the duration of his or her life becomes shorter. Maybe by only one year or three years, but anyway shorter. It's a very serious problem.

**MT:** And what measures should be introduced to slow down the changes? Are those measures introduced in Russia right now?

**AK:** When we speak about Russia, it's very difficult to construct any theory of future steps. However, there are one or two very simplifying factors. There are at least two absolutely evident tasks that have to be implemented in Russia. Number one is energy efficiency and energy saving. Nothing new. The minister of economy repeated it five years ago, 10 years ago, 15 years ago, 20 years ago. So, Russia has to implement its own plans for energy efficiency and energy saving. Any wording on climate is not required — just implement it at last. The second is forest fires. Also, nothing new. Again, Russia should implement its own plans for the mitigation of forest fires. Let's suggest by 2030. If successful, it will be a significant reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. After that, we could sit down again and think what will be next steps. I don't appeal now for massive renewable energy. It's clear that it's impossible now. It's not timely now. But fortunately or unfortunately, Russia has two huge gaps which should be closed. Two tasks: forest fires and energy efficiency. After that, in 10 years in the future, we will discuss this here again and plan what is next: renewables or maybe some other things, I don't know.

**MT:** To what extent is Russia aware of the seriousness of climate change and its consequences both in the scientific community and at the government level?

**AK:** The scientific community is not even, because if you speak about professional climatologists, a climatologist is not a geographer. A climatologist is a specialist in the physics of the atmosphere and ocean because its measurement measures from satellites, from the ground, a combination of all factors. Of course, he or she should be only a specialist in the chemistry of the atmosphere and ocean, etc., etc. And all these people have absolutely the same opinion, that this is a very serious problem and adaptation is required, serious adaptation is required and required now. All of them understand and there is no skepticism and no disagreement about the reasons for climate change, about the scenario. Of course, there are a lot of uncertainties, in particular, relating to clouds or maybe permafrost melting. Anyway, it's secondary. The basic things are the common opinion of all climatologists and they understand that now serious greenhouse gas emission [reductions] in Russia looks non-timely. Energy efficiency and forest fires are another matter. It's not necessary to appeal for that. Therefore, these scientists speak about urgent adaptation. Medical doctors support them completely. In some regions, people are quite well educated and understand the problem, and are ready for serious adaptation. In other regions, in particular, in the middle of Russia, the governments of the regions don't see real and dangerous signals because they are not the Far East, they are not the south, they are not the Arctic, they are not a megapolis. So as a result, they are quite relaxed, yeah? But anyway, adaptation is required. However, there are some other scientists who are not climatologists, but they could be philosophers or economists. They pay attention mainly to money. And in many cases, they have a very skeptical view of the necessity of Russia to reduce emissions. Moreover, in the current economic and geopolitical conditions, this looks like something non-timely. Therefore, summarizing all of that, it's possible to say that a professional climate society of climatologists exists in Russia, it's small but it exists. They have absolutely clear and certain scientific opinions. They appeal for urgent adaptation. And in 10 years in the future, I hope we will be able to undertake more.

**MT:** You said that Russian society is not very homogeneous in its attitudes toward climate change. So, how successful are they in explaining and informing Russians about the consequences of climate change?

**AK:** It's trying to do the best. The general public has no direct access to science through media. Frankly speaking, Russian media, which informs about the physical basis of climate change, is better than years ago or even five years ago. So, the message from the media now is 70-80% quite correct — that yes, this is anthropogenic, this is dangerous. It's not global flooding. It's not global fire. But it's really serious. It's scientifically based. Adaptation is required. Just a transition in energy is also required. Not immediately, but in 50 years, but required. So, all is correct. However, they have two serious problems. One is the older generation of Russian society does not trust in anything. They trust in nothing. Absolutely nothing. They have the experience of the Soviet Union. They have the experience of modern Russia. Therefore, they do not listen to science. They do not listen to the media at all.

**AK:** So they have a so-called skeptical opposition of people who are around my age, almost 65 or older. It's not a big problem, to be honest. The big problem is the second problem, the absence of climate change consideration in schools. In the school curriculum, there is only minimal information about climate change. And this information is very non-structured. It



looks like some puzzle, some mixture of something unclear with unclear. Therefore, school people and teachers have no clear knowledge about what climate change is. I mean just physical, not economic geography. So in the course of physical geography, in what is probably the seventh grade of regular school, children obtain a lot of information about cyclones, anticyclones, some very complicated atmospheric events — with maybe 1% of this remaining in their memory, not more — and almost nothing about climate change. It's really bad. Anyway, I see that the younger generation of Russian people, who look at not only the first program of Russian television or school [textbooks], but the internet around the globe, different sites. They are quite good at understanding climate change. Anyway, it's clear that climate change is not problem number one in Russia now. Number one is the problem which you know even better than me, I hope: climate change is now in the shadow of this very large problem. Therefore, I don't think that it's possible to achieve significant progress in Russia in the near future, in the 2020s. Therefore, I think that it's better to appeal to people, to business, and to government officials to improve the situation of energy efficiency and forest fires, even without mentioning the climate effect of these very big tasks.

**MT:** And how do government officials benefit from making Russians doubt the reality of climate change? Because you mentioned that there is no specific education about it.

**AK:** Russian officials, probably all ministries, are too busy and too overloaded with problems, which you know. Therefore, they don't think about the climate at all. Many of them are quite familiar with the problem without any skepticism, with a clear understanding that the energy transition will be necessary, adaptation will be necessary. But they are too busy to sort out problems with export, import, oil, gas, coal, minerals, computers, everything.

**MT:** You mean that they are more concentrated on adapting to the extreme conditions in the Russian economy, to the extreme circumstances?

**AK:** Yeah, yeah. Of course, the problem is not completely forgotten. Maybe mitigation of greenhouse gas emission reduction is temporarily forgotten. But adaptation is not forgotten. And therefore, in many regions, they have a real intention for adaptation. They see the clear impact signals, losses in the economy, and even losses in life. And therefore, they do agree, they want to go ahead. Some regions have their own money, like Moscow, or Yamal-Nenets Okrug, or Khanty-Mansiysk, Khabarovsk Krai, or Primorsky Krai. Some others have no money, they are not so rich, but they try to do their best anyway.

**MT:** And if we compare Russia with its neighboring countries, especially in the post-Soviet space, how high is the level of understanding of the consequences of climate change there, and what measures are being taken to prevent them?

**AK:** The closest country is Belarus. I was in Belarus several times, not last year, but in the last 10 years, I went more than five times. And people there are significantly more familiar with climate change than Russians. Significantly better. Teachers, schoolchildren, government officials. So at least by level of awareness, Belarus significantly overruns Russia. They are quite serious, they understand that the fate of their forests depends on climate change. Agriculture also depends on climate change. It looks like Belarus is a country without fossil fuel, without some rich mineral resources. But based on agriculture, and forestry to a large extent, they have significantly larger concerns about climate change, about adaptation, about

the future. This is about Belarus.

**AK:** Unfortunately, after that, I know Armenia a bit. Armenia has a very serious problem, a shortage of water. And the prognoses for Armenia are really very bad because there will be a larger shortage of water and a shortage of not only groundwater but smaller, smaller precipitation from the sky. You know that Armenia has many other problems now, but anyway, people understand that. People hope that the Armenian diaspora around the globe will help in the future climate situation. They have great concern, and if I could rank post-Soviet countries on the impact or potential future impact of climate change, unfortunately, Armenia would be the number one most vulnerable country. And in the coming conference in Dubai, I hope to be there. I will speak about that and appeal to global society to pay attention just to Armenia — not to Russia, not to Belarus, but Armenia — because it's a really weak country now. Unfortunately, it's a rather poor country and very vulnerable. Five others is Central Asia. Now I do a lot for Central Asia. I am a consultant. I'm retired, but simultaneously I'm a consultant of the Regional Environmental Center for Central Asia and working on a project with two components. One is adaptation, and the second is the participation of all people of these five countries, — by all people I mean government officials, NGO, media, business — in the UNFCCC process and Paris Agreement implementation. And I also could confirm that concern and awareness on climate change in all these five countries are quite large, quite serious. I met only a few skeptics. So, if Russia looks like some reserve of skeptics, a global reserve for skeptics, Central Asia is absolutely a forbidden zone for skeptics. All people and children and everybody are quite familiar with climate change, they understand that droughts and high temperatures and the shrinking of glaciers are big problems for Central Asia.

**AK:** As a whole, the prognosis for Central Asia is significantly better than for Armenia. I mean that, according to the prognosis, the amount of precipitation will be the same as now. The problem is not the existence of water. The problem is the storage of water. How to use this water in summer? Glaciers are an accumulator of water. If your accumulator is smaller, you will need a huge flux in spring, and then nothing. Therefore, they try to construct some reservoirs and try to change traditional agriculture to more modern agriculture, [using] other agriculture species, even in other animals. So a lot of things are required there. And I hope that Central Asia will be able to avoid disaster because we are quite active now.

**MT:** What immediate measures should be taken in Russia to slow down climate change? You mentioned the climate, probably something should be done in climate change education in Russia.

**AK:** According to my experience, media in Russia is only limited to the so-called physical basis of climate change, nothing more. Media doesn't intervene in school education, because school education is considered a very political issue. Now there are some new things in school courses which are political, some accents in Russian history. Therefore, the media try to keep themselves out of this dangerous topic of school education. There's no influence. Anyway, it's already not so bad that Russian media doesn't follow skeptics on the physical basis. They frequently follow skeptics in carbon regulation, in emissions reduction, in some norms of emissions, in low-carbon development. Yes, it is, unfortunately. I would like to add that the problems which Russia and Russians have now are long-term but temporary. The absence of Russia as an active player in carbon regulation, in emissions reduction, in some projects on

greenhouse gas mitigation in 10 years or even in 20 years is not a global tragedy. It's just a part of the earth, not more. In any case, in any problem, somebody is an outsider. So if Russia will be the outsider in the next 20 years, it's not a tragedy for global progress, and it's not a tragedy for the Russian people, because fortunately, the situation with us is not so bad as in Armenia and Central Asia. So please do not dramatize this pause too much.

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