

Were recent events in Georgia a one-off or the start of something more permanent in Russia's "near abroad"? We hear distant echoes of Herr Hitler, his quest for Lebensraum and a Greater Germany, using allegations about the treatment of ethnic Germans in neighbouring states as a pretext for action for their "protection" followed by rapid annexation. And history buffs will recall the troubles caused to the British Empire in that part of the world by a rampant Russia.

The U K Defence Forum has previously published a series of papers about the Kremlin's southern flank which bear a revisit (at www.ukdf.org.uk)

RS 26 The Stans: The Great Game updated

RS 26A Uzbekistan

RS 26B Kazakhstan: A political overview (large oil producer, 26% ethnic Russian population)

RS 26C Turkmenistan: A political overview

RS 26D Tajikistan: A political overview

RS 26E Kyrgyzstan: A political overview (US has airbases used in support of operations in Afghanistan here)

RS 28A Georgia: a country update (preceeds recent events but an interesting reflection on how we got here)

RS 28B The Transcaucus - Armenia and Azerbaijan: An update (separatist pressure in Nagorno-Karabakh)