



New Era University  
School of International Relations

**A Webinar**



# Russia's Foreign Policy in East Asia

Guest speaker

**Dr. Nikolay Murashkin,**

Research Fellow, JICA Ogata Sadako Research  
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Google Meet and YouTube Live

## **Turn to Asia: Russia's Foreign Policy in East Asia, discussed**

MANILA, PHILIPPINES – The Russian Studies Center, under the supervision of New Era University-School of International Relations launched its first Webinar on February 12 via Google Meet and YouTube Live.

Dr. Nikolay Murashkin, a research fellow in JICA Ogata Sadako Research Institute for Peace and Development in Japan, was the main speaker in the webinar titled, *Russia's Foreign Policy in East Asia*. In his lecture, Dr. Murashkin focused on the pre-pandemic Russia's 'Turn

*to the East*' policy as well as the country's interactions with Northeast Asia in 2014 dubbed as *'Turn 4.0'*, and Russia-Philippine relations.

According to Dr. Murashkin, Russia's post-2014 *'Turn to the East'* is more of a representation of historical continuity rather than a short-term bid for what some called a 'pivot' to East Asia, especially with Russia's efforts to strengthen ties with East Asia pre-dates 2014 by large.

*"It is important to have this 'inside-out' perspective in our mind that there are important domestic drivers, economic drivers for Russia to pursue that sort of active foreign policy with Asia that includes the development of specific Russian regions."* he noted.

Explaining the early undertakings of Russia to East Asia, Dr. Murashkin described the first movement as *'Turn 1.0'* where in 1850's-70's Russia reduced involvement in European affairs and focused on domestic reforms and modernization, co-extending more active policy in Asia. In late 1990's – early 2000's, Russia constructed multiple and relevant ties with Northeast Asian countries such as Russia joining the East Asia Summit as a full member, the increased of energy imports and Russia's call for *'turn to the Pacific Ocean'* and proposes for Chinese wind blow in the sails of the Russia economy. Growth on Russia's trade with East Asian countries foster in 2013 -China (47%), Japan (44%), and Korea (42%) -making all these events the *'turn 3.0'*.

But the ‘breakthrough turn’, according to Dr. Murashkin, came in the year 2014—the “turn 4.0”—where Russia’s complicated issues with Western countries pushed them to get closer to Asian grip. Specifically, firm engagements with China were organized. Russia, in 2015 participated in China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Although rather than directly engaging with the project, they participated via BRI’s conjunction with the Eurasian Economic Union.

Seven years later, after the ‘*Turn 4.0*’ in 2014, Northeast Asian countries—China, Japan and Korea- were now Russia’s top traders.

Dr. Murashkin subsequently discussed Philippine-Russia relations. He said both countries started diplomatic ties in 1976 and had a few diplomatic interactions since then. He included the supposed first official visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin to the Philippines, which was expected to happen last 2020 but was halted due to Covid-19 pandemic.

Towards the end of his presentation, Dr. Murashkin noted the blossoming people to people relations between Philippines and Russia and the possibility of having a labor agreement between the two countries.

*“People to people exchanges are also important... the number of Filipino workers in Russia has steadily rising up to that ten thousand*

*now as of 2019, and from what I hear there is a bilateral labor being discussed but I don't think it is being finalized yet.*”, Dr. Murashkin said.

After the lecture, Dr. Murashkin willingly answered questions from the participants, resulting to an expanded discussion of several topics ranging from education, youth, business and even politics that all affect Russia's foreign policy.

Dr. Murashkin is a Sessional Lecturer/Honours Supervisor at the University of Queensland. He earned his PhD from the University of Cambridge focusing on Japanese developmental finance and foreign policy-making vis-à-vis post-Soviet Eurasia: Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan. Prior to his academic career, he has worked as an analyst in a London-based bank on commodity finance transactions in Central Asia and Eastern Europe. He has been a Japan Foundation Visiting Fellow at Waseda University, Tokyo, earned his Master's from SciencesPo Paris and his Bachelor's from St. Petersburg State University, his place of origin.