Magnitsky Updates

Magntisky is the key to US/Russian relations

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, **4/12**/2012 (Lavrov warns Magnitsky bill would hurt U.S.-Russia relations, p. <http://www.rferl.org/content/us_russia_magnitsky/24545755.html>)

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov says legislation proposed by U.S. senators on the death in prison of lawyer Sergei Magnitsky would hurt bilateral relations. Magnitsky, 37, died in pretrial detention in 2009 after implicating top Russian officials in a scheme to defraud the government. He was routinely denied medical help in prison. This week, Russia dropped charges against one of two prison doctors accused of causing Magnitsky's death through negligence. The proposed U.S. legislation envisages sanctions against Russian officials deemed to have committed human rights violations. It would replace the 1974 Jackson-Vanik Amendment limiting trade with the Soviet Union, which has not been formally repealed. Lavrov, speaking at a news conference after a Group of Eight (G8) meeting in Washington on April 11, slammed the bill as "anti-Russian" and an attempt at "meddling" in Russia's internal affairs. He said that would be "categorically unacceptable" for Russia. "The American side knows our position on attempts to replace Jackson-Vanik with something new," he said, "and transform an anti-Soviet amendment into anti-Russian legislation. **Such attempts are categorically unacceptable for us**. This will hurt our relations rather seriously because the Magnitsky case is, first and foremost, a Russian issue." Jackson-Vanik has long been a thorn in U.S.-Russian relations.

Hurts overall US/Russian cooperation

**Bloomberg**, **4/23**/2012 (Russian Ambassador Says U.S. Rights Bill May Undermine Relations, p. http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-04-23/russian-ambassador-says-u-s-rights-bill-may-undermine-relations.html)

An effort by Congress to link a human-rights bill to legislation granting Russia normal trade status may undermine Russian-U.S. relations, the Russian ambassador to the U.S. said. Proposals for travel and financial restrictions to counter the use of violence to quash anti-corruption efforts in Russia **infringe on the nation’s sovereignty**, Ambassador Sergey Kislyak said yesterday at a luncheon for journalists at his residence in Washington. “If anything of the type is adopted, there will be significant reaction,” he said. “In Russia, I cannot predict the way we will react, but I’m certain that **it would undermine” the ability to work together “on a** number of issues.”

Magnitsky has support and will be linked

**Ivanov**, **6/21**/2012 (Eugene – political commentator who blogs at the Ivanov Report, Will the Magnitsky bill “replace” the Jackson-Vanik amendment?, Russia Beyond the Headlines, p. <http://rbth.ru/articles/2012/06/21/will_the_magnitsky_bill_replace_the_jackson-vanik_amendment_15927.html>)

In the Senate, with the Democrats in majority, events are developing more favorably to the administration. Recognizing political realities on the ground, Sen. Max Baucus (Democrat-Montana), whose Senate Finance Committee is in charge of passing the PNTR legislation, has proposed to link both bills: to pass the PNTR legislation – while simultaneously repealing the Jackson-Vanik amendment – along with passing the Magnitsky bill. This approach looks increasingly like a winning proposal, especially since Baucus secured the support of Sen. John McCain (Republican-Arizona), the leading anti-Russian voice in the Senate.