

## **First Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations speaks at UVU**



On April 5, 2019, the First Deputy Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, Dmitry Polyanskiy, spoke at UVU on the topic of Russian diplomacy in the modern world. Ambassador Dmitry Polyanskiy has been a career diplomat since 1994 and is from Moscow, Russia. He has served in Russian embassies in Tunisia, Germany, Sweden, Austria and Slovenia. Since 1999, Ambassador Dmitry Polyanskiy has worked with EU economic matters and spent 3 years in the Russian Mission to the EU in Brussels. He has diplomatic rank of Plenipotentiary Envoy and is a member of the board of the Russian Council for Foreign Relations (SVOP).

To begin, Ambassador Dmitry Polyanskiy spoke on modern Russia in relation to politics and diplomacy, and the fact that the nation has become more known in recent years due to Russians not being afraid to speak up when something is wrong; they look to defend their reason

and are trying to come to common terms with other countries. Cooperation to find consensus or common ground is their goal as Russian citizens.

Within the United Nations, Ambassador Dmitry Polyanskiy works with peace and security issues. He stated that it was important to him to answer our questions after his brief introduction. His first question was by a UVU student who asked about his feelings toward the current election happening in Russia. His response was diplomatic and direct. The ambassador responded by saying we need to take a step back in history to better understand this process. He explained the current issues with Ukraine and how important they are to both Russia and Ukraine. Not only is the language shared, but also their values and history as well. The deep conflict was described as Ukraine blaming Russia for the conflict and them not wanting to recognize the fact of the internal conflict. The ambassador did not choose political sides from answering the question, he simply stated the issues and that he hoped they would be resolved with the best interest for both sides.

Following the question about the elections, another student asked Ambassador Dmitry Polyanskiy if Russia plans to play a part in Nicolás Maduro's presidency, and where does the support for Maduro come from Russia. The ambassador began his answer by stating that Russia does not support president Maduro, but they do support Venezuela as a country, therefore they will respect what the Venezuelan citizens choose for themselves. Although Russia wants peace with and for Venezuela, they will not impose on the choice from the people there. He went back to say that understanding history will help us know how to handle these type of issues today.

Ambassador Dmitry Polyanskiy talked about how Maduro got into power. The explanation was achieving recognition by big powers and therefore getting the political seat. The current terrible humanitarian situation in Venezuela have people suffering and dying, however, he said that nobody mentions the 30 billion USD that was taken from Venezuela by the U.S. and U.K., as these countries will not recognize the money from Venezuela because of Maduro. Although this money could help the people drastically, Venezuela will not accept humanitarian aid because they say its foreign intervention. The end result is to avoid war and foreign intervention, from all parties. Russia and other countries stand in believing that international law should be applied.

Overall, Ambassador Dmitry Polyanskiy showed a genuine interest in the questions from UVU students. The event was a success and vitally necessary for students interested in global

issues, it allowed personal interaction with a diplomat from a foreign country. Ambassador Dmitry Polyanskiy answered each in great depth with as much information and detail as he could. He explained all sides of each issue and was not biased toward any one side, he remained neutral yet kept a strong connection with his country, Russia. He gave many examples and details to best answer the questions for the audience. Ambassador Dmitry Polyanskiy encouraged questions to students and participants from the audience to help better understand Russia's stance on political issues both domestic and international.

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