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## TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW

Reynaldo di Archrillie, Universitas Indonesia, 17 March 2015.

1. What motivates Russia to host the 2015 World Cup?

From the view point of international politics, Russia uses it as a *soft power* (1) to promote the image that Russia is an open country, (2) to prove that Russia is a safe country, (3) to prove that Russia is technically capable of organizing an international event and (4) to show that Russia is eager to be a part of the international community.

2. Why is Russia eligible for hosting the 2018 World Cup?

Russia may have met the standards – from FIFA – I’m not really familiar with the technicality of the election. Russia may be considered as a developed country based on its involvement in some international organizations which have legitimized and justified Russia in the international community.

3. How did Russia convince FIFA and other countries that it has what it takes to host the 2018 World Cup?

Again, it’s about *soft power* and other technical things like security, based on the fact that Russia has been able to maintain its domestic and regional stability. This is understandable because other countries are concerned about the potential disturbances during the 2015 World Cup, and the current unfavorable situations related to the conflict with Ukraine that may pose a threat to Russia’s hosting the 2018 World Cup.

4. What factors may affect Russia’s preparations in hosting the 2018 World Cup? How important are they?

Based on FIFA’s regulations, technicalities such as infrastructure that covers accommodations and transportation are essential. The committee should guarantee that all guests should have an easy to access to all venues of the event. Therefore, this preparation will really be important to convince the international community.

5. What strategies have the government, like Putin, and other figures taken in nominating Russia as the host of 2018 World Cup?

The 2015 World Cup is yet Russia’s another victory after successfully it hosted the Winter Olympics in Sochi last year. Russia should prove the world that it is willing and able to guarantee the security and infrastructure during the event, which, at the same time, boosts the tourism industry. Therefore, the strategies applied for the 2014 Winter Olympics can also be used for the 2015 World Cup.

6. How far is Russia’s involvement in the international sports events?

Despite its involvement in the domestic and international warfare, Russia has always participated actively in the sports events, in which every country should let go of its ego and take part even during economic and political sanctions. It’s also a fact that Russia ranks the fifth in the Olympics.

7. One of the factors that prompts Russia to host the 2018 World Cup is its economy through its big companies. What are the big companies’ roles in Russia’s nomination to host the event?



Prior to the nomination, the big companies contributed a 60 % profit to the country, which was allocated for infrastructure development.

8. Why is sport utilized by many countries as a medium of diplomacy?

There're no more limits of diplomacy, especially because of the technological advancement that can easily spread information publicly, making it difficult to find strategic information and necessary to set some exclusive limits like the one in Sochi with the openness and cooperation through sport to develop the economy, resources, and technology.

9. Does Russia lack strategic diplomacy?

Russia is actually incompetent in diplomacy and easily neglected due to its image as an authoritarian country and an ex- communist country, making it difficult to open itself to the international community.

10. Why do most western countries remain unchanged on their perception and stigma about Russia?

It's a complicated matter, depending on the sources and the variables of perception.

11. What kind of image does Russia want to gain through the 2018 World Cup?

Russia is underway to reach the era of openness and be a part of the international community and since football is a popular spectator sport, the World Cup is considered the most effective way to achieve that purpose.

12. How did Russia manage the Sochi Olympics? What did it imply?

It was a great success and proved Russia's capability in organizing a sport event. The World Cup is another event that will involve several cities, making it more challenging to handle.

13. What constraints does Russia face in preparation of the 2018 World Cup? What does Russia intend to gain from it?

There won't be any significant obstacles as long as Russia is capable of guaranteeing its people's prosperity. It would also need a lot of local or foreign human resources to ensure that the event would run as planned. It is also essential to maintain a harmonious relationship between the citizens and the immigrants to avoid any potential conflicts.



1. How did the Russians react knowing that their country was elected as the host of the 2018 World Cup?

I was there in 2010 and saw their enthusiasm and excitement. Filled with great euphoria, people marched on the streets and celebrated the victory.

2. What is Russia's biggest motivation to be the host of the 2018 World Cup?

From the social and economical viewpoints, they see an opportunity of having repairs and construction of the building facilities to serve the upcoming tourists and spectators during the event. Without the 2018 World Cup there might be no significant development in Russia, and the fact that football is a very popular sport aside from tennis and winter sports.

3. Why is Russia considered eligible to host the 2018 World Cup?

Russia is capable and eligible, having plenty of qualified construction experts, who had demonstrated their ability in the infrastructure construction in Sochi.

4. How did Russia convince FIFA and other countries to host the 2018 World Cup?

It was able to convince them of having good financial and facility capabilities besides the promising prestige and its intention of being the World Cup host.

5. What factors supported Russia to host the 2018 World Cup?

It has solid economy, spacious plots of lands, plenty of young experts, and hardworking Russians.

6. What has Russia done and achieved in the world sports?

In the development of sports, Russia has built sports centers in the universities with professional trainers to develop qualified athletes. Another feat is its success in building the facilities in the Sochi Winter Olympics.

7. What were the government's roles in nominating the country as the 2018 world Cup host? Any other people besides Vladimir Putin?

The Russian government had provided a full support for the event. As the head of the government, Putin has a big authority in the preparation of the World Cup such as in lobbying activities. During the nomination period, Russia's determination in preparing the event could be seen in most newspaper headlines.



8. Having a robust economy with its well-established companies made Russia nominate itself to host the event. How did the big companies contribute to the nomination?

This is a new Russia, where each development project always involves the rich private sector to support the campaign, especially in 2010, when Russia's economy was very solid and stable.

9. How does sports help create a new image for Russia? How does the 2018 World Cup affect Russia?

Russia was so excited and was trying hard to show the new image while focusing on working on each related aspect.

10. What are your expectations from the 2018 World Cup in Russia?

Russia is going to grant free visas as it has been difficult to get them. Russia should increase the number of visiting tourists, offer more openness to other countries, some of which have shown interests in learning more about Russia.

11. What do you think about the conflicts Russia is facing at present?

It has been several attempts of settling the conflicts; but the biased mass media tend to incline to the western countries.



1. Why is every country interested in hosting the 2018 World Cup?

They see an opportunity to raise the country's revenues from the visiting tourists, the construction of infrastructures, and the sale of merchandise.

2. Despite its huge costs, what makes a country eager to host the World Cup?

As a sport with a large number of fans and enthusiasts, football also has a political force. We can see how Angel Merkel, the German politician, has succeeded in maintaining her regime.

3. In terms of financial spending, do the countries which have hosted the World Cup consider about the risks? What other factors have they considered?

They didn't really think about that as it will impact on a few individuals only. Since the 1994 World Cup, most World Cup hosts got a payback and some losses.

4. What are the requirements to be the 2018 World Cup?

Infrastructures and capabilities of constructing the facilities have been the main concerns, which have turned biased due to some unfairness of several FIFA authorities.

5. So, which country actually deserves to host the 2018 World Cup?

England's stadiums and infrastructures are available and ready to use. It's understandable that England got furious when it lost in the election of the 2018 World Cup host.

6. Are there any positive sides of Russia's hosting the 2018 World Cup?

Russia gets a lot of supports from its millionaires. This means that the 2018 World Cup is financially secure.

7. How does a country raise its bargaining position to show its readiness of hosting the World Cup?

FIFA has to trust the country's capability in meeting all of the requirements, having a favorable football culture, especially its supporters, and providing a convenient distance among the stadiums – airports – hotels.