

Tony Kevin's latest book *Russia and the West: the last two action-packed years 2017-19* reviews urgent issues of worsening tensions between Russia and the West, and the acute dangers this poses to international peace and security.

This book originates in a lecture given by author and former senior Australian diplomat Tony Kevin, to the Independent Scholars Association of Australia, Canberra Branch, at the National Library of Australia on 11 September 2019. The lecture reviewed the past two troubled years in Russia-West relations, 2017-19. It was first published on the prestigious American current affairs website Consortium News (www.consortiumnews.com) on 13 September 2019, and on the British website Off-Guardian (www.off-guardian.org) on 21 September 2019.

Both published texts with selected images are reproduced in this book, together with a new Author's Preface.

Tony Kevin has written five other published books in Australia since retirement from the Australian foreign service in 1998, following postings as Australian Ambassador to Poland 1991-94 and to Cambodia 1994-97. His first book, *A Certain Maritime Incident: the Sinking of SIEV X* (Scribe, 2004), was awarded the 2005 NSW Premier's Literary Award for Multicultural Writing and also the 2005 Australian Capital Territory Book of the Year Award. It explored the controversial history of the sinking of an unseaworthy overloaded asylum-seeker boat in seas between Indonesia and Christmas Island on 19 October 2001, resulting in 353 deaths at sea; Australia's worst-ever maritime disaster. Could these lives have been saved?

His second book, *Walking the Camino* (Scribe, 2007), a travel memoir of his pilgrimage walk through Spain from Granada to Santiago in 2004, was awarded the Australian Capital Territory Book of the Year Award in 2008 and has become a bestseller.

His fifth book, *Return to Moscow*, was published by UWA Publishing, Western Australia, in 2017. A literary travel memoir of Tony Kevin's return visit in 2016 to Russia, scene of his first diplomatic posting in 1969-71, this book asked the question: why are relations between Russia and the West now so tense?