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"We Should Clean Up Our Relations From the Cold War Legacy..."

*Author: Alexander Grushko,
Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation*

DEAR FOREIGN MINISTER

Distinguished Ambassadors.

Ladies and gentlemen.



It's an honor for me to welcome participants of the Conference that takes place at a time of changes and dramatic developments in Europe and adjacent areas.

More than twenty years have passed since the fall of the Berlin Wall, one of the landmark events of the end of the twentieth century. World has entered a period of transition from a global confrontation to a new cooperative security system.

The relations between the United States and Russia have been "reset," and a new Russian-American START Treaty has entered into force. It has become possible to bring the relations between the Euro-Atlantic States to an unprecedented level of partnership.

The world, however, has become neither more predictable nor less dangerous. On the contrary, more uncertainties appear in the area of security, with new multidimensional risks growing at an increasing rate and sometimes receiving no adequate response from the international community.

It becomes more and more obvious that the existing architecture of European security, grounded in many respects on the legal base of the last century, is in need of modernization.

Today, it may seem strange that our initiative was seen by many as something "revolutionary" in a negative sense of this word. There was even sort of suspicion that Russia, for some hidden reasons, seeks to destroy the existing system of security mechanisms in Europe.

We all know that such concerns are baseless. The processes triggered by the proposal for a European Security Treaty provide the evidence thereof.

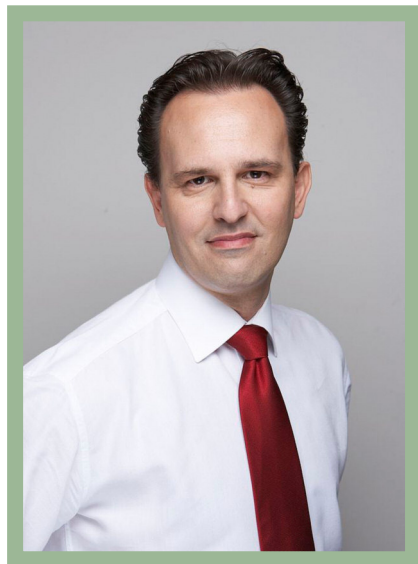
Russia is ready to take its share of responsibility in protecting the continent from potential

missile risks on the basis of partnership and equality.

In conclusion, I would like to note that we are all interested in a more ambitious and positive international agenda. For its implementation, it is extremely important to work towards modernizing the foundation of our relations in the area of security in such a way as to integrate all the elements of the Euro-Atlantic architecture in a non-confrontational and mutually reinforcing manner on a collective and democratic basis.

Author: Dimitrios Drutsas

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Greece



It is my great pleasure to welcome you to this Conference held under the aegis of the Russian and Greek Ministries for Foreign Affairs.

The Conference comes at a very crucial and challenging time for Europe. Today, more than ever, exploring perspectives on European security is as important as coming forth with proposals on the way ahead.

Our conference is particularly important for four reasons:

It is the first such Conference of its kind; it is taking place - as I said - at a very crucial time for international affairs; it is focused on issues of politico-military security; and it is a Conference open to the wider public.

First of all, I would like to focus on the unique character of this Conference.

Today's event is the first Conference on European Security co-organized by Ministries for Foreign Affairs, reflecting the engagement of both Greece and the Russian Federation in this field and the will of both countries to enhance security in Europe. As emphasized in the European Security Strategy: "We need to both think globally and to act locally."

The international community cannot afford to be complacent when it comes to unresolved conflicts, security black holes and threats, be they inside or outside the Euroatlantic and Eurasian area.

The second reason I believe this Conference is particularly important has to do with the state of international affairs today. This state of play highlights how interlinked our security is across the globe.

It is important to recognize that the international community cannot afford to be complacent when it comes to unresolved conflicts, security black holes and threats, be they inside or outside the Euroatlantic and Eurasian area. European security requires creative initiatives and dynamic engagement on a bilateral and multilateral level.

This conference is a golden opportunity to prove that although foreign policy is by definition implemented by professionals, it is also an aspect of government policy that, like any other, must remain as open and transparent as possible, always bearing in mind its role in national security.

With this, I thank you for your attention and warmly thank Mr. Grushko for his personal involvement and his team for the excellent cooperation with our colleagues in organizing this Conference and the speakers for accepting our invitation.

Reforming the UN: the European Vector

Author: Armen Oganessian

Editor-in-Chief of International Affairs



AMID THE CRISIS OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE the UN invites new approaches to its role and potential. In fact, collapse of the bipolar system, the obvious inadequacy of the unipolar world and the financial and economic crisis heated up the hopes and expectations pinned on the UN reform. It has been generally agreed that the UN should be reformed yet there is no agreement on how to proceed.

The range of opinions is impressive: from skeptical to obviously enthusiastic. What else if not the UN? So far, however, its future mission remains vague.

The majority is convinced that the UN should pass decisions related to global challenges such as hunger, climate change, WMD, human rights violations, etc and act upon them.

The UN as a vehicle of interests of the sovereign states should pass two survivability tests, each of them consisting of the conceptual and instrumental parts.

The economic and consumer boom in the developing world which inevitably parodies the "fat old tiger" is not a potential challenge but an actual challenge to the Old and New Worlds and a threat to Earth's continued existence as a human environment.

The economic and consumer boom in the developing world is not a potential challenge but an actual challenge to the Old and New Worlds and a threat to Earth's continued existence as a human environment.

It seems that Europe in the broad sense needs these measures in the first place. Our continent cannot and will not avoid its share of turbulence even though those living outside of European ecumene look at it as an island of stability in the tempestuous sea. Those who hope to find refuge behind the palisade of euro isolationism are absolutely wrong. Its protection is an illusion: no stronghold of this sort will ever guarantee stability; it will rather provoke instability on our continent. Larger Europe can and should be actively involved in reforming the UN to adjust it to the challenges and threats of our day.

In this connection, I would like to quote late Patriarch Alexy II who speaking at a PACE session in Strasbourg said: "The very concept of human rights, Europe's main political idea, has developed not without some influence of Christian teaching of dignity, freedom, and moral character of human being. From the very beginning human rights developed in the context of Christian morality forming with it a kind of tandem" brimming with inexhaustible creative potential in personal and social life.

Author: V. Trubnikov

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The idea of a Euro-Atlantic Security Community belongs to the public organization formed less than a couple of years back in the wake of the Munich Security Conference and named the Euro-Atlantic Security Initiative Commission.

By today, the Commission has reached three main points: first, it is important to employ a comprehensive definition of security - one that includes everything from nuclear weapons and conventional arms control to cyber threats and climate change. Second, EASI is not about institutional invention. Third, there is no "silver bullet" to solve the problem of Euro-Atlantic security architecture (and Euro-Atlantic security). The answer is not a matter of creating the

perfect institution; it will be a complex, multi-step process.

Successful cooperation on ballistic missile defense would be a game changer. It would go a long way towards overcoming the legacy of historical suspicion and achieving the strategic transformation that is needed. Cooperation on missile defense would establish a pattern for working together, build trust and encourage further cooperation in other areas.

The U.S.-Russia intention to "re-set" or "re-load" their relations, the decisions by the Lisbon NATO Summit and the Russia-NATO Council to work out a mutual missile defense system have given the Euro-Atlantic states another chance to take a step towards a Euro-Atlantic Security community.

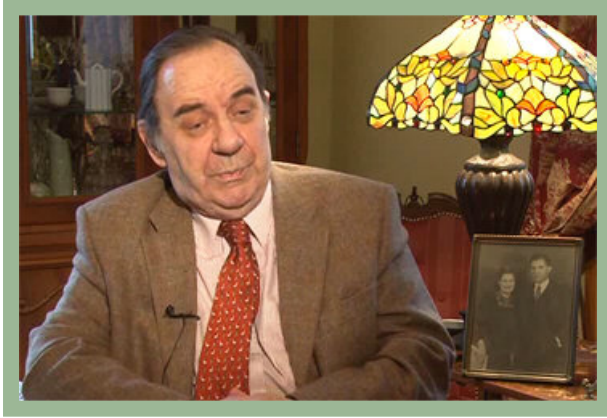
Earlier I mentioned the problem of determining the source of threats by a Government of an individual state, but the same process is much more complicated for a bunch of states which just recently were antagonists and still have to step over mutual suspicions and mistrust to agree on equally significant and real outside sources of existing or potential danger for their security. The Working Group on Missile Defense (WGMD) believes that cooperation on missile defense meets the following shared understanding.

Summing up I'd like to stress that defensive measures such as ballistic missile defense are ultimately aimed at moving away from deterrence by threat of retaliation towards deterrence by denial of objective. That's why cooperation on ballistic missile defense can rightly be framed as reflecting a 21st century approach to 21st century threats.

Security Through Cooperation

Author: A. Gromyko

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I WILL FOCUS on the essence of "security through cooperation" and the efforts that we need to make to achieve it.

The stability of an alliance hinges on the ability of its potential members to follow common purposes and objectives. Do Russia and its Western partners follow them? Needless to say, each party is vitally interested in solving the problems of international terrorism, nuclear proliferation, regional conflicts (especially in

the Middle East), international crime and drug trafficking, illegal immigration, piracy, religious extremism, etc.

If we want the alliance to be effective and stable we need constant efforts for dialogue and consultations. Our joint achievements here include, for example, the United Nations, the OSCE, the NATO-Russia Council, the Council of Europe, Russia-EU committees, and ministerial meetings and summits. Nevertheless, none of these institutions specializes in pan-European security. To counter common threats, it is necessary to consolidate our ranks and act together well before potential threats materialize. So it is critical to take preventive measures and cope with threats before they flesh out and bring us trouble; hence the need for a continuous monitoring mechanism and the solid fabric of political and expert interaction.

All international organizations that are involved with the military-political dimension of European security are useful to some degree or other and no one is proposing getting rid of any one of them.

The principal threats to European security today often come from the outside. Nevertheless, the west and east of Europe have yet to shed the legacy of the Cold War and we still live in its shadow.

Russia is equally interested in success along all the three lines: modernization of the OSCE, a new quality of relations with NATO, and a new quality of relations with the EU in the security sphere. As for NATO, one of the main tests for it will be the development of a European missile defense system. So far the signs are not very reassuring. As for the EU, Russia is expecting Brussels and the European capitals to come forward with an initiative on the establishment of a common external policy and security committee.

A European security treaty can still reinvigorate European security. From all indications, efforts will be required to finalize it and it will take some time before it is recognized by the parties concerned, but Europe needs it if we want to get rid of specters of the past.

Dialogue on European Security in Athens: Afterword

Author: V. Sokolenko

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RUSSIA'S POLITICO-DIPLOMATIC ACTIVISM in promoting its initiative on the signing of a legally binding European security treaty has been marked this year by yet another important event. In accordance with an agreement between Russian Foreign Minister S.V. Lavrov and Greek Prime Minister Georgios Papandreou, on May 17, 2011 a conference was organized by the Russian and Greek foreign ministries in Athens. Entitled "The

Military-Political Dimension of European Security: Proposals and Prospects," it essentially provided a political expert examination of the Russia-initiated process of reforming the existing European security architecture.

Most importantly, the forum confirmed that the European dialogue of experts on European security issues, initiated by Russia, in which it pursues its own interests, is developing successfully. Furthermore, Russia is becoming an authoritative participant in the European expert examination of key issues of modern international relations.

Today the situation is obviously changing. One result of our contacts with international, mainly European expert circles is the increasingly pronounced modernization of political consciousness in the West toward the recognition that without Russia, without a real, not token consideration for its interests it will be impossible to create an effective international security system in sync with present-day realities.

Generally, our foreign colleagues made some important points indicating that Russian comments and the explanatory work that we conduct produces results.

The main propositions outlined during the discussion by European experts are in sync with the current views of some U.S. policy expert circles acknowledging that an international security system cannot be realistically built on sole leadership separated from the new realities of globalization.

In this context the importance of the work accomplished by Russian conferees in Athens goes beyond the subject of the European security treaty. Such forums are an important element of the Foreign Ministry's dedicated effort aimed at ensuring the consistent integration of the indigenous political science school into the global expert community, a channel for adjusting Russian interests and value priorities to international standards of thinking, above all in the sphere of global politics.

Henry Kissinger on Historical Memory and World War III

Author: Armen Oganessian

Editor-in-Chief of International Affairs



ON MAY 17, Henry Kissinger's latest book *On China* reached the American bookshops. This is a book about China but the panoramic thinking of the "last of the Mohicans" of international politics extended beyond China, a starting point for the man whose vast experience and an absolute relevance of whose ideas about what is going on in the world leaves one duly impressed.

Kissinger believes that the presence or absence of al Qaeda will be the least of its problems. What might happen, he says, is a *de facto* partition, with India and Russia reconstituting the Northern Alliance, and Pakistan hooked to the Taliban as a backstop against their own encirclement.

He has described a possible scenario for the next world war unrelated, in a direct way, to China. He is convinced that today "China is an indispensable element in any stabilization of perilous situations in Korea. Without China's active participation, any attempts to immunize Afghanistan against terrorism would be futile." The jihadism threatens China as well as the Central Asian countries and also Russia. This brings Russia and China closer together.

What did Kissinger know about China when playing the "China card"? Absolutely nothing, he admits. From the very beginning the talks between the two countries were strictly confidential which meant that briefings from official agencies or the best of the brain centers were excluded.

Kissinger studied China's culture and history; tried to grasp the language and the categories of Chinese civilization until the quantity of knowledge developed into a quality of political decisions. He overcame all bureaucratic barriers to come up with a suggestion that China should be recognized as a single and undivided state. The variant which was miraculously hailed by Beijing and Taiwan offered both a chance to pose, some time in future, as the principal unifier of the Celestial Empire.

Kissinger easily finds his bearings in history to explain the current collisions and developments; he does not indulge in abstract futurology. Predictology is his genre; some of his predictions are rather foreboding. He talks of Pakistan as a "Sarajevo" of the next world war: "Think proxy half-states; the paranoia of encirclement; the bristling arsenals, in this case nuclear; the nervous, beleaguered Pakistanis lashing out in passive-aggressive insecurity.

An India-Pakistan war becomes more probable. Eventually." He goes on to say: "Therefore some kind of international process in which these issues are discussed might generate enough restraints so that Pakistan does not feel itself encircled by India and doesn't see a strategic reserve in the Taliban... I know if we let matters drift this could become the Balkans of the next world war."

The "Soft Power" Humanitarian Dimension: "Human Security" in Russia's Foreign Policy

Author: E. Solovyev

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THERE IS A MORE OR LESS general agreement in the West that by the early 21st century the world has become unipolar. Indeed, the bipolar world disintegrated leaving the United States the only superpower with the status underpinned by its uncontested superiority and uncontested leadership in many fields: the world's most capacious domestic market and the largest and most diversified scientific and technological potential.

Global domination, however, cannot rest on "hard power" alone, that is, on military superiority or economic domination. The last few decades have taught us that economic and military superiority are not necessarily convertible into political control: "soft power" is a necessary third element.

Respect for human rights was treated as a moral justification of the new power dimension of world politics which knew no borders: the world was open to the Western countries' active interference.

THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE figured prominently in the struggle for a "new world order." It is commonly believed in the West that the states which rely on the human rights issue as the linchpin of their policies acquire new sources of their legitimacy.

Contrary to the previously accepted formula of power, the new formula which has gained currency in the rapidly transnationalized world betrays itself in demonstrative non-involvement (rather than involvement), refusal to invest and deliberate inaction - an efficient instrument which forces states, political parties, respect for human rights was treated as a moral justification of the new power dimension of world politics which knew no borders: the world was open to the Western countries' active interference.

To become a reality, a new world order requires an awareness of a mission and widespread messianic ideology in the countries that form its center or serve its axis. The West is concentrated, first and foremost, at democratic proliferation, yet at least one important point remains unappreciated.

It seems that those who think that the West gains points by exploiting the humanitarian issues are quite right; the axiom about Russia being an a priori weak player in the human-

itarian field is at best a theorem which should be proved and verified in rational terms. There is an opinion that since Russia still has to improve the "human security" situation at home, it is too early for it to play this card on the international arena.

CSTO: 10 Years of Countering Threats and Challenges

Author: N. Bordyuzha

Secretary General, Collective Security Treaty Organization



NEXT YEAR it will be 20 years since the Collective Security Treaty was signed and 10 years since the decision was made to create a permanent structure on its basis - the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). During these years the CSTO has been developing dynamically in sync with the intensive evolution of international relations at the start of the 21st century. Practically every year the Organization has been adding a new dimension, a new quality or a new coordinating structure. As a result, based on what was originally designed only to fight off an external military threat, a multifunctional structure was built to ensure all-round security in its area of

responsibility, aimed at countering both traditional and new threats and challenges.

The decision to establish the CSTO pointed to the high degree of coincidence of the fundamental approaches of the Union states toward the main international security issues and their shared understanding of the nature of current threats and challenges. The members of the new organization immediately set themselves the aim of developing comprehensive allied relations in the foreign policy and other areas. One of their leading motives was to give higher priority to political interaction amid the growing diversity of threats on the part of both state and nongovernmental structures.

From the very start of its activity, the CSTO aimed for close cooperation with international organizations. This especially applies to those acting in the security sphere.

On the one hand, the relations between Russia and the United States, and Russia and the EU are improving, as is the relations with NATO - in other words, there is a trend toward a new level of cooperation. On the other hand, the situation along the North Africa-Middle East arc is aggravating.

At the same time, there are attempts by groups of states seeking to dictate rules of conduct to others by offering their own interpretation of norms of international law and using international institutions.

We believe that the current contacts between the CSTO and the OSCE Anti-Terrorism Unit and the OSCE Conflict Prevention Centre are very useful. We take their experience into account in developing our own anti-crisis programs. In March, CPC director H. Zalber addressed a session of the CSTO Permanent Council.

Our organization has been instrumental in facilitating the coordination of effective inter-

action with other international structures.

It is also essential to note yet another area of CSTO activity. This is regular exchange of information about the military-political situation, terrorist threats, and security data on concrete circumstances arousing concern or requiring a more detailed analysis and sometimes urgent action.

Which Asia Is Russia Integrating Into?

Author: K. Vnukov

*Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Korea,
Candidate of Science (History)*



It is equally important to know what the Asians think about their region: whether they treat it as an integrated actor of world politics and economics or as an imagined entity created by the added-up potentials of the coastal Pacific states, the impressive, objective and real economic progress of which gladden the eye.

An international conference "East Asia in the World: Prospects and Challenges" held in February 2011 in Seoul attracted 700 participants from the region's countries. The fact that it was held in the Republic of Korea speaks volumes. In several decades, this country closed the gap between its backward and military-totalitarian past and its present place among the world's 15 economically and politically most developed countries.

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Cooperation in the security sphere was trailing behind because of disagreements over the past events, territorial disputes on land and at sea, while the limited mutual trust (much more pronounced there than elsewhere in the world) intensifies the arms race.

Those who favor the Western or the so-called liberal theory of unification of states recommend three components: political democratization, profound economic interdependence and viable institutions conducive to multisided cooperation. The former foreign minister argues that Pax Democratica, the first of the three components, one of Washington's instruments and the core of European integration, cannot be applied, at least for some time, in East Asia, a patchwork of political systems.

So far, East Asia, a mixture of states of highly different sizes, development levels and political and economic systems, can hardly profit from a code of norms and rules similar to those which keep the OSCE members together and which are a sine qua non of unification. It is a question of the distant FUTURE for the region.

A few words about Russia. The materials quoted above as well as contributions at other international forums refer to Russia in passing. The contributors to the January discussion published in the International Affairs journal quite rightly pointed to this. Our politicians, diplomats, businessmen, and academics should work actively and persistently in bilateral and multilateral formats to remove the clinging stereotypes of the Cold War to reveal a positive image of a modern and democratic country attractive for businessmen and prepared to contribute to the common efforts to address the region's political and economic problems.

Central Asia and Afghanistan in Russia's Strategy

Author: A. Lukin

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RUSSIA REMAINS A LARGE COUNTRY to be reckoned with, even though the Soviet Union's disintegration diminished its international weight. With the larger part of the Soviet Union's western regions becoming independent states, Russia's eastern regions and the eastern vector of its foreign policies acquired much more importance.

Today, Russia should pay particular attention to Central Asia and the southern sector from which strategic threats emanate. The Russian Federation has no serious enemies among the largest states wishing to destroy it or, at least, undermine its might.

This should not be taken to mean that there are no serious threats to Russia's security or even its continued existence; today, these threats come not from states but from transnational movements, ideologies and organizations which preach them. The most dangerous of them are born in the south, in the AfPak knot: terrorism fed by radical Islamism, huge flows of drugs which (according to sources) have already turned about 5 million Russians into drug addicts. In some regions of Russia the ideology of radical Islamism stimulates the majority (but not all) terrorist groups and inspires extremist and separatist movements. Today, Russia should pay particular attention to Central Asia and the southern sector from which strategic threats emanate.

DRUGS, RADICAL ISLAMISM and terrorism arrive to Russia from Afghanistan via Central Asia. Destabilization in this part of the world will bring these threats even closer to Russia's borders and will aggravate the situation.

Russia's desire to ensure its national interests in Central Asia contradicts neither the interests of the regional states nor the interests of other big players. In fact, the interests of these powers and groups - Russia, China, India, the United States, and the EU - in the region are very similar. Those who talk about "chessboards" and "great games" based on inevitable and uncompromising rivalry among the external players are either indulging in wishful thinking, or know next to nothing about the real state of affairs or are seeking cheap popularity.

In any case, Russia and the other extra-regional players need stability in the region; the events in the Arab world have demonstrated that despite strong support from outside the

authoritarian regimes are not eternal. Sooner or later corruption and nepotism of the ruling clans will bring popular discontent to the boiling point beyond which all rational arguments will prove futile. Russia and other states with interests in Central Asia should bear this in mind; a joint program of economic and political modernization looks like the best OPTION which calls for cooperation of the main forces and players who should develop a shared awareness of potential dangers.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization: A New Word in World Politics

Author: K. Barsky

National Coordinator of the Russian Federation for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Ambassador at Large



ON JUNE 15, 2011, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) marked its jubilee with a festive fireworks display that lit up the Kazakh skies. Ten years ago, the Kazakh, Chinese, Kyrgyz, Russian, Tajik, and Uzbek heads of state signed a declaration on the establishment of the SCO in Shanghai. The results of the decade of the new regional organization's development were summed up by the SCO heads of state at a summit meeting in the capital of Kazakhstan, the majestic Astana.

The appearance of the SCO came as a natural reaction by its founding states to the dangerous increase of such threats as terrorism, separatism and extremism against the backdrop

of the general imbalance within the system of international relations that has evolved since the end of the Cold War. In order to break the negative trends and reliably ensure their own, as well as regional security the said countries decided to employ multilateral cooperation tools.

The SCO has offered a fundamentally new model of interstate partnership characterized by the genuine equality of big and small countries, mutual trust, respect for diversity, and the striving for collective wellbeing.

TODAY THE WORLD is changing rapidly. Globalization is accompanied by growing interdependence, dynamic integration processes and a close intertwining of the interests of different international players, both governmental and non-governmental. There is an ongoing comprehensive reconfiguration of modern international relations, their basic vector being the formation of a multipolar world.

Over time it is becoming more and more obvious that bloc-to-bloc politics has no FUTURE . Narrowly circumscribed, nontransparent military structures should be replaced by multilateral network diplomacy based on fundamentally new forms of interaction between states.

The SCO as such also needs to advance further: It should continue to develop as a full-fledged regional organization responsible for the situation in its "home area." The SCO is a growing organism, and the majority of issues it has to deal with in its daily life are growth difficulties, so to speak.

TEN YEARS is historically not a very long period. Nevertheless, during these years the SCO has become an inalienable part of the Asia Pacific geopolitical landscape. Its opinion is heeded in the world while interest in establishing contacts with it is being shown by key states and respected international and regional organizations.

The SCO has already said its word in global politics. A new and weighty word. A word, however, should always be followed by action matching that word. Concrete action.

The Middle East Peace Process: Prospects

Author: Fayed Mustafa

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the State of Palestine to the Russian Federation



THE PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI PEACE process that started in Madrid 20 years ago has seen a large number of "ups and downs," successes and setbacks, but it has failed to overcome the resistance to the creation of an independent Palestinian state within the June 4, 1967 borders and with the capital in East Jerusalem. The conflict can be resolved when the two states - Palestine and Israel - start to exist side by side amid security and stability after the Pales-

tinian refugees issue is resolved on the basis of the relevant resolutions and international law. The peace process in the Middle East cannot be successful as long as Netanyahu adheres to his "no" policy. This came through once again in his speech at the U.S. Congress in May where Netanyahu said "no" to the division of Jerusalem, "no" to the dismantlement of settlements, "no" to withdrawal from the Al Ahwar line (on the border with Jordan), and "no" to the return to the June 4, 1967 borders. Striving for peace and the settlement policy are incompatible.

The Palestinian people are committed to peace as the Palestinian leadership "is knocking on all doors" and putting forward initiatives to facilitate it. It has proven its adherence to peace on the basis of international law, UN resolutions, and the Arab peace initiative, as well as to the international vision of the final settlement, namely the coexistence of the two states.

In the impasse that has emerged over the peace process in the Middle East, the Palestinian leadership sees no other OPTION but to apply to the United Nations for the recognition of the State of Palestine within the June 4, 1967 borders.

It is perfectly obvious to the entire world that Israel rejects peace talks, bringing them to an impasse. Israel is against the creation of a Palestinian state as that will put an end to its settlement activity in occupied territories and that is opposed by Netanyahu and his ruling rightist coalition supporting such actions.

The Palestinian leadership abides by its international obligations, UN resolutions, decisions and resolutions by the Middle East "quartet," and the treaties and agreements that have been signed between the Palestinian and Israeli sides.

Russia was one of the first to recognize the Palestinian leadership; there is a full-fledged Palestinian diplomatic mission in Moscow. We also highly appreciate the assistance that the Russian Federation has provided to the PNA, as well as Russia's contribution to the establishment of Palestinian state institutions.

After 63 years of banishment and privation, the Palestinian people deserve the right to live, like all other peoples in the world, in their own free and independent democratic state, which will respect human rights and international law, develop their culture and national identity, live in peace and security with their neighbors, and make their contribution to global civilization.

America's Post-Cold War Policies in the Post-Soviet Expanse

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THE RUSSIAN-AMERICAN DIALOGUE on regional issues differs greatly from the Soviet-American dialogue of the Cold War era maintained to prevent regional conflicts and their escalation among Moscow's and Washington's ideological allies to avoid a direct armed clash between the Great Powers fraught with a nuclear catastrophe.

Today, the American establishment has been looking at the conflict with Russia over influence in the post-Soviet expanse as a "zero-sum game" between Western "democracy" and "Russian neo-imperialism." Janusz Bugaiski, Director of the New European Democracies Project, Center for Strategic and

International Studies in Washington, believes: "By naively assuming that Western and Russian national interests are equivalent or compatible, Washington and Brussels play into the hands of an imperial power that has revived its ambitions... Russia possesses global aspirations that do not coincide with those of a democratic world order.

Recently, America has shed part of its "color revolutions" zeal and has begun doubting that they were the best instrument of undermining Russia's influence in Eurasia.

Since 2002, the Pentagon has spent in Georgia \$200 million on military training; it is said that this is done to prepare the Georgian military for counterterrorist operation, not for a war against Russia.

There is an opinion that inFUTURE Americans will rely on the program to deploy their mobile forces in the region to keep the air corridor between the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq open.

To calm down its East European NATO allies, the American military-political leadership decided to supply its political promises with promises of military support. It looks as if the talk about rebuffing Russia's "aggression" against the Baltic countries belongs to the same category.

It seems that Finlandization of the post-Soviet expanse will be conducive to a settlement of the Russian-American regional disagreements: NATO should check its eastward expansion in exchange for Moscow's promise to respect independence and sovereignty of the near abroad. This can be successfully applied to other regional conflicts which cause concerns in both capitals.

Treaty of 2001 and Russian-Chinese Border Settlement Talks

Author: V. Vorobyev

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TEN YEARS AGO, Russia and China signed the Treaty of Good Neighborliness, Friendship and Cooperation. Treaties between governments do not ordinarily set up relations between countries. They at best aptly reflect the state of cooperation and reproduce understandings reached between them. Some major political treaties are good enough to set up bilateral relations for long term and outline substantive guidelines for their further expansion.

Today's Russian-Chinese border is one of the fragments of the former border between the Soviet Union and the PRC inherited from Tsarist Russia. This fragment is taken to comprise two parts. The eastern part extends from Mongolia to North Korea (some 4,200 km.) and the western part ranges from Mongolia to Kazakhstan (under 100 km). All Russian-Chinese border disputes were about the eastern section.

After Japan's defeat in 1945, this line unilaterally established by the Soviet Union and giving the latter actual control over the entire water surface in the Amur and Ussuri, their islands included, remained unchallenged.

It was a warning of sorts signaling that Beijing reserved its own opinion about the border when the PRC leadership remained conspicuously silent in the face of blistering attacks of the so-called "rightists" with regard to Russian-Chinese delimitation also covering the Soviet era during the course of the "let a hundred flowers bloom" campaign launched by the Communist Party of China in the late 1950s. Soon after, the atmosphere along the border became disturbing. In 1963, the parties agreed for a meeting between their delegations to discuss boundary problems.

Regretfully, it proved impossible to nail down tentative agreements. The snag was that the delegations agreed to put off the discussion of the moot points of delimitation in the area of islands at the confluence of the Amur and Ussuri so that these points would not stand in the way of the needed accords. The decision to temporarily exclude this area from the scope of agreements proved to be a positive precedent, but at that time it prevented the sealing of all other accords.

Finally, beginning in 1993, Russia conducted boundary talks with China together with

delegates from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. This format unparalleled anywhere else in the world enabled every participant to resolve all their own border issues, the talks on which were begun in 1964 between the Soviet Union and China. Undoubtedly, this outcome was largely possible because China showed understanding and a constructive approach to this uncommon format of talks.

The 2001 Treaty states that Russia and China have no claims to each other's territory. The boundary between Russia and China has been determined and marked along its entire length on the ground with no exceptions. This hard-won achievement is seen as the cornerstone of the new type of relationship between Russia and China.

Russian-Italian Cultural Cooperation: History and the Present Day

Author: A. Meshkov

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Italian Republic and the Republic of San Marino



TODAY, Italy is one of Russia's most important partners in Europe and the whole world. Intensive cooperation in virtually all areas from commerce to culture has been established and is developing between our two countries. The stances of Moscow and Rome on most issues of international politics are similar or even coincide. Our two countries are active participants of the G8 and G20.

Despite the global economic crisis, ongoing recession, and financial instability in the Euro zone, Italy continues to be one of Russia's key TRADING and economic partners.

Ties between Russia and Italy in the domain of culture and the arts go back many centuries. Their development was furthered by our two countries' common spiritual heritage that derives from a single archetype - Byzantium.

Thanks to growing ties in the domain of culture, politics, and diplomacy, Moscow and Russia begin to appear in Italian written works since the 15th century, while Italy is mentioned with increasing frequency in Russian works.

The luxurious and majestic palaces in the central part of St. Petersburg and the parks and palace ensembles in the suburbs are, in large part, the work of Italian architects.

Italian musical theater played a major role in the development of Russian art. This did not pass unnoticed in Italy.

Russian-Italian cultural ties are more than just a historical episode and a collection of memories about the grandeur of days long past. Today intensive political dialogue between Moscow and Rome, backed up by mutually advantageous TRADE and economic relations, stimulates the development of a broad spectrum of cultural and humanitarian contacts.

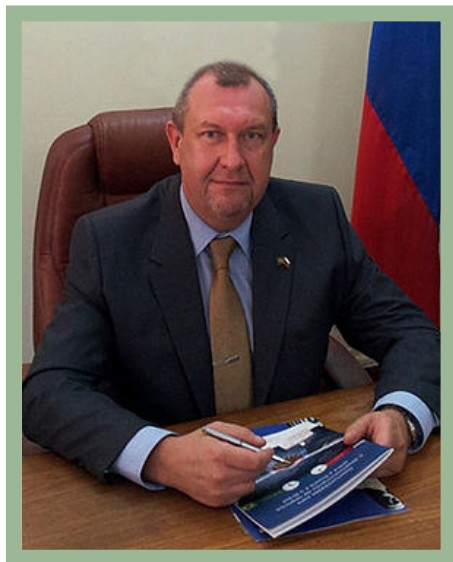
The Russian-Italian Years will officially close in Moscow in December 2011. The key event will be the performance of the orchestra, chorus, and soloists of La Scala on the historic stage of the Moscow Bolshoi Theater.

I am sure that the positive impact of such a remarkable event will have long-lasting effects on the development of Russian-Italian cultural cooperation.

On the 200th Anniversary of the Russian Consulate General in Rio de Janeiro

Author: A. Budaev

Consul General of the Russian Federation in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)



IN JULY OF THIS YEAR, the first Russian consulate in Brazil, a contemporary of the Russian consulate service, celebrated its two hundredth anniversary. From the historical perspective, this was an event of important international magnitude, having a strong impact on Russia's presence on the Latin American continent.

It is a well-known fact that diplomatic relations between Russia and Brazil were established in 1828 and since then have taken a long and rather arduous path.

It is worth noting that the Russian foreign policy department endowed consul general Ksavery Labensky with every means for promoting the development of Russian-Brazilian TRADE

and studying the capabilities of the Brazilian market and the demand for traditional Russian commodities, as well as for paying attention to the political situation in the Spanish colonies in South America, establishing relations with the merchants of these colonies, and convincing them of the advantages of trading with Russia and the protection they would receive from the Russian government.

A special place in the development of Russian-Brazilian relations belongs to Franz Frantsevich Borel (Baron Palensky). Appointed as early as 1809 as head of the Expedition of Consular Affairs of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he personally drew up the draft of instructions for the first Russian general consul in Rio de Janeiro,

Brazil did not recognize the Soviet Union until 1945. During the Second World War, the Soviet Union and Brazil entered the anti-Fascist coalition together and, after the victory over Hitler's Germany, became members of the UN.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the establishment of direct Russian-Brazilian relations between our two countries, a new stage in cooperation began.

During the second half of the 1990s, Brazil was declared to be Russia's leading business partner in Latin America.

As we celebrate the 200th anniversary of the founding of the first Russian Consulate General in Rio de Janeiro, I would also like to give tribute to and express my immense respect of those people who trail-blazed Russian-Brazilian relations and exerted great efforts, along with their knowledge and professionalism, to bring our countries and peoples closer together, despite the fact they are situated on different continents and have many geographical, climatic, and other differences.

Russian Business Abroad: Problems and Prospects

Author: V. Likhachev

Advisor to the Chairman of the Federation Council, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Doctor of Science (Law), Professor



THE PROGRESSIVE and steady development of the modern world order depends on a large number of national and international factors. Civilizational globalistics requires their harmonization and interaction with the proactive and creative role of sovereign states and interstate partnership as a whole. The practical wisdom of this approach becomes obvious in the process of analysis of some rather conflicting trends in the evolution and integration of global economic connections.

As is known, the construction of the Nord Stream gas pipeline across the Baltic Sea was completed recently. It can eventually meet up to 25% of Europe's increased demand for gas. However, the issue of Nord Stream's connection to the European system has yet to be resolved.

EU critics, who are often infected with Russophobia, ignore our country's proactive role in the improvement of global energy security.

Another sensitive aspect is the realization of the EU's new policy on chemicals. Two-thirds of Russian exports fall under the effects of REACH, EU regulations on chemicals and their safe use. If REACH requirements are not met Russian goods will be barred from the EUMARKET. There also plenty of difficulties in the nuclear material TRADE sector where Russia has long been the EU's important partner.

The Europeans' diplomatic position is tough: self-imposed limitations on supplies of Russian nuclear materials and services due to "safety" concerns. The EU's arguments, covertly designed to crowd Russia out of the EU market, do not hold water.

Needless to say, it is in sharp contrast with the general declarations on strategic partnership with the EU, Russia's main trading partner that ACCOUNTS for about 50% of Russian TRADE turnover.

As for Russia-EU ties, it is important to remember that there is a relevant agreement and an organizational basis both for a search for effective tools to protect business interests in the broad sense of the word and for their harmonization.

So, in the era of political and economic globalization topical issues, including the formation of security systems based on effective sovereign contacts between states, interaction between them and international organizations and other international players, including the business community, can proceed only on the principles of democracy, law, and justice.

One Hundred and Sixty Million Women Liquidated ... Without a Single Shot Being Fired!

*Author: Armen Oganesyian
Editor-in-Chief of International Affairs*



DUTCH JOURNALIST Mara Hvistendahl comes to the conclusion in her book *Unnatural Selection* that mankind today is missing 160 million women. Most of these missing females are not victims of neglect. Choosing boys over girls was a conscious choice that deprived girls of their right to life in their mothers' wombs. They were selected out of existence by ultrasound technology and abortion.

On the whole, the West has been seriously accused of female genocide, much to the displeasure of many foreign bloggers. As is often the case, without reading the book themselves, they began making evaluations based on incorrectly formulated annotations.

Nevertheless, as America's *International Herald Tribune*, a more informed source than bloggers, writes in an editorial, "Western governments and philanthropic institutions have their fingerprints all over the story of the world's missing women. From the 1950s onward, Asian countries that legalized and then promoted abortion did so with vocal, deep-pocketed American support."

American journalist Ross Douthat believes that "the American establishment helped create the problem, but now it's metastasizing on its own: the population-control movement is a shadow of its former self, yet sex selection has spread inexorably with access to abortion, and sex ratios are out of balance from Central Asia to the Balkans to Asian-American communities in the United States.

What is amazing is something else: neither the past nor the present of the "mad sanity" Hvistendahl is sharing with the world have been evaluated from the perspective of international law. It is difficult not to agree with Ross Douthat who believes that further study of the problem of the "missing 160 million women" raises the issue of some enormous crime against humanity.

The thing is that contemporary ideology and methods of birth control coincide surprisingly well with the policy Hitler pursued in the occupied territories. One of the documents of the Nuremburg Trial states the following, "The press, radio, cinema, as well as brochures, booklets, and lectures should be used to spread the idea among the Russian population that it is disadvantageous to have several children. They should be shown how expensive

it is to raise a child and the useful things that could be bought for that MONEY instead. It should be indicated that childbirth is detrimental to women's health... A widespread campaign should be launched in favor of contraception... Voluntary sterilization should be propagandized."

If Hitler had contemporary means of birth control, he would certainly have used them to "refine" the implementation of his racial hygiene theory. But 160 million women of "inferior" races taken out without a single shot being fired... This is something beyond the limits of even his inflamed imagination.

Author: Juan Antonio March Pujol

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kingdom of Spain to the Russian Federation



The year of cultural exchange between our two countries consists of a whole range of different economic, cultural, art, educational, and social events.

I think that it will strengthen our relations. More Russians will begin visiting Spain, and many more Spaniards will show an interest in Russia. More enterprises and companies of both countries will start a dialogue on cooperation.

It seems to me that the relations between our countries since 1992, after the Soviet Union ceased to exist and the Russian Federation became its legal successor, have continued to grow and develop. Russia's role on the international arena has become stronger. Im-

portant political consultations, meetings, and talks between the heads of state, governments and ministries have taken place. I think that our relations are developing quite intensively.

You know it is much easier for an ambassador to work in the atmosphere of mutual friendliness that has developed in recent years between the leaders of our states at the highest level, between His Majesty King Juan Carlos and President Dmitry Medvedev, between government chairmen Vladimir Putin and Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, and between the ministries of foreign affairs and deputy ministers. It is easier and more pleasant.

There are quite a few of our companies working in Russia. For example, food companies that have been here for more than 16 years now. It is enough to mention such brands as Chupa Chups, Gallina Blanca. Campofrio, and the Roca Company, which has several sanitary engineering factories in your country, in particular in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Cheboksary, and Kaluga. Russians are also very familiar with the fashionable clothing of the Zara Company. New Spanish companies, which are INVESTING more than 300 million Euros in the automobile industry, are making their debut in the Russian market. I can also name the energy company Iberdrola, which is trying to develop the production of renewable electric power, has won a tender and is cooperating with a combine in Ekaterinburg. This year, our large oil and gas company Repsol is beginning to make investments in Russia. I would like to note that the best Spanish companies have an interest in cooperating with the Russian Federation in such areas as telecommunications, the automobile and aerospace industries, and many other spheres. We are already striving to build cooperation in innovations and to diversify our business relations.

I think that both Spaniards and Russians have a zest for life, a desire to discover something new, and a striving for action. I can also say that Russians who come to Spain are very satisfied with their experience in our country. They want to come again. Eighty percent of visitors to Spain share this desire. They want to repeat their experience and find out more about the country. And when you ask Russians where they would go again on a long weekend (four or five days, which we call "puente"), most of them say Barcelona. As a native of that town, I am always pleased to hear this.

"It Is Very Hard to Say Goodbye..."

Author: Bui Dinh Dinh

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam



In the past, relations between Vietnam and the Soviet Union were very good. At that time, Vietnam mainly had relations only with socialist countries, the most important of them being the Soviet Union. Relations between our countries at that time covered a broad range - TRADE, cultural, and educational.

Now things have changed somewhat. Relations have not been fully established in all spheres. But ten years ago, on March 1, 2001, the Declaration on Strategic Partnership between the Russian Federation and Socialist Republic of Vietnam signed during Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit to Vietnam

gave a strong boost to the development of our relations.

Our largest TRADE turnover at present is with China. Our export volumes are small, while import is high. This is not good for us. We TRADE with the U.S., Japan, South Korea, and Singapore. Singapore is a small country and acts as an intermediary - Vietnamese goods go through Singapore to Africa and other countries.

Over the span of three years, TRADE turnover with Russia doubled from \$1 billion in 2007 to 2 billion in 2010. At the same time, Russia calculates it at \$2 billion 400 million.

Russia must fortify its position not only in Europe, but also in other regions, for example, in Southeast Asia. It is very important for Russia to develop cooperation with the ASEAN countries. It is a large organization covering an enormous area and with a vast population. Russia has the opportunity to expand sales of its commodities in the ASEAN countries. Vietnam has received a large amount of assistance from the Soviet Union and Russia. Now we also want to do something for Russia. Vietnam is always ready to help and assist Russia's cooperation with ASEAN.

Around 502,000 Vietnamese have graduated from higher education institutions in the Soviet Union and then in Russia. Now they form the backbone of the administrative, management, and scientific spheres of our economy. The people who obtained an education in the Soviet Union and Russia were the ones who built Vietnam and have been very successful.

I do not want to leave Russia because I consider this country my second home. It is very hard to say goodbye and I am sad. But life goes on...

The Way Forward in a Profound Era of Change

Author: Erlinda F. Basilio

Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines



ON JUNE 2, 2011, the Philippines and Russia mark the 35th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, a milestone in the partnership between a dynamic developing country and a major global player entering an era of modernization.

The Philippines forged formal diplomatic ties with the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in 1976. With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Russian Federation assumed all

the responsibilities and obligations arising from bilateral agreements signed with the Philippines. CONTACT AND INTERACTION between the Philippines and Russia in the past have been chronicled diligently in Russia.

Russians nowadays are aware that 6,000 "White" Russian refugees lived in the Philippines from 1949-1951 after escaping communist China. These so-called "White" Russians were supporters of Tsar Nicholas II and had escaped the 1917 Revolution and settled in China, particularly Shanghai.

When no country in the world dared welcome the White Russians for fear of reprisal from the USSR, it was only the Philippines that provided them sanctuary.

With the establishment of diplomatic relations on June 2, 1976, Philippines-Soviet relations embarked on a path of nurturing, albeit slowly, a broadening, deepening and mutually beneficial partnership. As such, both countries have made tangible strides over the past three and a half decades, especially in the areas of defense and security, TRADE and INVESTMENT, tourism, culture, and labor migration.

BEFORE US lies the vital next step of realizing the potential for enhanced cooperation in the areas of trade and investment, defense, energy, tourism, culture, education, and science and technology.

We hope that with Russia's entry into the East Asia Summit (EAS) in 2011, there will be emphasis on key issues such as the strengthening of regional security, security energy and cooperation, innovation and modernization, climate change, and disaster management and mitigation.

Our desire to harness our partnership is resolute, as our partnership is built on friendship and the promotion of our shared interests. The foundation has been laid for the Philippines and the Russian Federation to build on the gains of the first 35 years of formal relations. Together, we can look forward to taking our bilateral cooperation to new heights in the next 35 years and beyond.

Russian Federation-European Union: Beyond Forums

Author: Yu. Shafranik

Chairman of the Board of SoyuzNefteGaz, President of the World Policy and Resources Research Foundation



The Europeans go down their own path in which every step is discussed in detail and adopted by the majority, i.e., it becomes law. Regardless of whether we like it or not, we should accept it as something given. And, instead of criticizing their decisions, we should try to turn things to our advantage.

Perhaps cooperation is becoming stronger in the forum declarations of partners, yet politics and economics are determined by trends and vectors that are set down in legislation. The EU acts according to documents that, in the understanding of European politicians, make competition stiffer and counteract the monopolies of energy producers.

This version of cooperation is the most advantageous both for the producer and the consumer. Yet it does not suit our neighbors, who frighten themselves with the specter of monopolies. Thus there is good reason to "suspend" this theme in discussions with our partners...

Yes, very tightly. When you lay another pipe - for your own money and without the financial participation of Europeans - you increase your dependence on consumers. You INVEST tens of billions in order to bind yourself even more tightly.

I wouldn't like to dramatize the FUTURE of Europe and should simply say that this is definitely a challenge for it. After all, it's no secret that the bankruptcy of a number of European companies is due to the expansion of Chinese production. In addition, unification gives Europe quite a few additional problems. Take Greece for example. To save its economy, the most highly developed European countries have to sacrifice their "economic comfort." Still, countries like Germany stimulate their own manufacturing when they grant credits to Greece.

We should forget about what took place. Europe is a good customer that gives a good price. You can't abandon such customers.

The most important way of launching the mechanism of mutually advantageous partnership is to make inter-state summits (including the St. Petersburg Forum) have a totally concrete content specifying what is needed for the successful implementation of different projects - augmenting funds, solving organizational or personnel problems, etc. And it's a matter not only of company business strategies but also of state policies.

The outstanding politician Charles de Gaulle dreamt of building "Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals." One could even dream of extending it to the Pacific Ocean. It's good and even necessary to dream. Yet in economics and politics it's more important to set down concrete goals and make concrete constructive steps. In this case, it should be a matter of grandiose infrastructure projects on the territory between Tyumen and Vladivostok.

How to Upgrade the Russian Banking System

Author: G. Tosunyan

President of the Association of Russian Banks



We have been doing nothing but talking about the world financial crisis for the past three years. This is like the English habit of speaking about the weather. As I've said time and again, what happened in our country differs radically from what took place in the rest of the world. In Russia, it was a crisis of the underproduction of financial services. Today, this trend has begun to abate. The year 2010 was marked by positive results.

A stable figure has emerged in recent years - and not just over the three crisis years but also earlier. One even gets the impression that somebody has set down a limit. Every year, 30-40 banks are stripped of their licenses. In principle, this is a normal and

natural process of reduction - after all, new banks are also being established. Moreover, this is a result not only of the recall of licenses but also of mergers and takeovers.

Another matter altogether would be the attempt to fix the number of banks and set down the limits of reduction. I'm a categorical opponent of this approach. The market itself determines the demand for financial services and should also determine the number of participants.

We have proposed to structure the notion of "bank." A regional bank (when it works in the limits of a certain territory) corresponds to one scale and level of risks.

I understand that some people may be skeptical, yet let me say what I think. We try to lobby many different laws that relate to the development of the FINANCIAL MARKET, yet we do this not just because banks need them. Every one of us is also a consumer on the market of FINANCIAL SERVICES and a Russian citizen, no matter how lofty this may sound. I don't work in a bank today, although I served as a bank director in the 1990s, yet I understand that society has its own interests, too. In its interests, there is a need in a legislative framework that would simultaneously protect the banking system and consumers.

It would be wrong to think that the Association of Russian Banks simply lobbies the interests of banks (in the sense that it would do so to the detriment of others). We are interested in the development of the market. The banks themselves want consumers to develop into their future clients. In this domain, there are many exceptions, contradictions, and collisions, as in all relations between people. Yet the Association of Russian Banks tries to choose a line that would correspond to systemic rather than partial interests.

One needs a proper fiscal policy and judicial system, as well as stability. If the judicial system does not function properly or does not protect investors' rights and property owners' interests (and not just the rights of large monopolists), the INVESTMENT climate will never become attractive for investors.

Should the Government Support Russian Investments Abroad?

Author: A. Kuznetsov

Head of the Center for European Studies, Institute of World Economy and International Relations, Russian Academy of Sciences (IMEMO RAS), Doctor of Science (Economics)



MANY EXPERTS BELIEVE that a country's economic competitiveness in a globalizing world is mainly maintained by large national companies that export capital. Today, the major companies of all economically developed countries export significant amounts of capital (outward direct investment).

Well-known Russian researchers often express diametrically opposite views on the need to stimulate foreign investment activities by Russian companies.

In this article, I would like to present both the main reasons for the negative attitude to the promotion of capital exports from Russia and

some of the arguments in favor of support for Russian direct investment abroad, with guidelines for the development of state policy on Russian outward direct investments, which is so far represented in Russia by a number of fragmentary and often contradictory measures.

It would be a mistake to think that in the absence of significant direct assistance Russian TNCs do not get any government financial support at all in implementing their investment plans abroad. A DEEPER ANALYSIS of Russian direct INVESTMENTS abroad shows their significant heterogeneity, which calls for a differentiated approach to different types of capital INVESTMENT. In particular, apart from "classical" TNCs of various forms of ownership operating in different sectors, direct investments are also made by direct investment funds and other Russian-controlled legal entities, and also by individuals (especially when buying foreign real estate).

It can hardly be disputed that an examination of the pros and cons of promoting the export of Russian capital makes sense only with respect to "real" foreign investments by "classical" Russian TNCs. But in my view this does not mean that other forms of capital export should be tightly restricted.

In this context, it would make sense to revisit the idea of creating a Russian export credit and INVESTMENT insurance agency that has been around for several years. The last time when the decision on its establishment as a wholly owned subsidiary of Vnesheconombank with an authorized capital of 30 billion rubles was announced was in early 2011.¹¹ True, the main emphasis will be on export credit insurance against noncommercial risks, while the scope of support for Russian direct INVESTMENTS is still unclear.

Finally, little use is made of opportunities for consulting Russian businesses. Competent information support could be provided by the relevant ministries and departments in partnership with appropriate research organizations.

The Stability of the Electoral System

Author: V. Churov

Chairman of the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation



The electoral system in the Russian Federation is going through a period of great stability. Since the current Russian Constitution was adopted in 1993, early presidential elections were held only once, slightly ahead of time. This happened in 2000. All other elections, both parliamentary and presidential, took place on the dates set down by the Constitution.

Today, we are entering a new electoral cycle. This is the last time, at least in the coming ten years, that the two election campaigns virtually coincide.

About 400 polling stations will be opened abroad. During the last elections, we opened polling stations in 141 countries. Russians with electoral rights (i.e. those with Russian passports and age 18 or older) live in at least 141 countries.

We strive to inform our voters about new possibilities and polling stations. This year will be marked by a novelty. In a number of countries including Germany, Israel, Poland, and maybe others, polling stations will be equipped with electronic voting booths. In other words, paper ballots will be replaced by electronic ballots.

It's fairly complicated to organize ads and electoral coverage for our citizens abroad. First of all, certain countries do not allow foreign political ads. Moreover, our law does not permit parties to accept services free of charge. For example, a foreign newspaper may come and offer a party that it will publish information on its candidates free of charge. Yet, by Russian law, it's forbidden to accept the services of foreign sponsors. This may give rise to problems. In such cases, Internet and TV and radio channels can help to inform Russians living abroad. They give very detailed information, including information about nominated candidates. We will continue to help all political parties with nominated candidates to reach voters living abroad.

In contrast to the USA, where these restrictions have recently been removed, we have a ceiling on electoral spending.

The Russian Federation calls on both domestic observers and international observers. In contrast to most European states, this is set down by law in our country. Observers may be nominated by political parties or candidates. As a rule, there is one observer from every party or candidate at a polling station. Yet there can be more. For example, a second observer may follow voting at home and a third is present during vote counting.

Together with many other countries, we are also studying distance voting through the Internet and cell phones and experience of voting by mail. For example, there is negative experience in Great Britain, where voting by mail is fraught with scandal every time. There is interesting experience of voting by mail in South Korea, where voters are first sent a letter asking them if they want to vote by mail. These letters are not sent to all voters but only to those on the list of social services - senior citizens, handicapped individuals, and bedridden patients. If a person agrees, he is sent a special envelope and ballot.

Author: N. Konkin

Secretary of the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation



FOR NEARLY 20 YEARS of its existence, the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation has gained a wealth of experience in cooperation with its counterparts in other countries. I will cite here only the high points of our cooperation with Latin American partners.

The Central Election Commission of Russia and the National Electoral Court of Peru proposed the creation of a new international non-governmental organization to bring together those who organize elections in countries of the Asia-Pacific region. The practical aspects of the plan were for the first time discussed by delegates of

two electoral agencies: The talks on November 24-25, 2008 took place in Lima concurrently with the APEC summit and the state visit to Peru of Russian President Dmitry Medvedev. Brazil is the largest and most influential Latin American country in which the organization of elections is comparable in scale and complexity with organizing elections in today's Russia.

The greater diversity and broadness of contacts between experts of the CEC of Russia in Latin America naturally resulted in the forming of partnership with Brazil - the largest and most influential Latin American country in which organization of elections is comparable in scale and complexity with organizing elections in today's Russia. Mutual interest in building contacts between us had been in evidence before, but the relationship between the two electoral agencies achieved a real breakthrough in 2010.

The consultations Russia's CEC delegates had in Brazil with their Superior Electoral Court counterparts were specific and detailed and indicating their eagerness to expand contacts for mutual benefit.

Remarkably, our Brazilian counterparts never since departed from the principles of relations with Russia's CEC they stated in October 2010. Their earnest interest in building business contacts with the Russian side was instrumental in making prompt arrangements for their trip to Moscow and an important prerequisite for holding substantive and useful consultations.

The head of the Superior Electoral Court said he fully realized the importance of the federal election campaigns in Russia in 2011 and 2012. He was ready to give Russia's CEC all possible support and assistance.

Spiritual and Moral Roots of Russia's National Catastrophe

Author: L. Reshetnikov

Director of Russia's Institute for Strategic Studies, Candidate of Science (History)



NINETY YEARS AGO, in November 1920, the Civil War in European Russia ended with an evacuation of the Russian Army of Baron Wrangel from the Crimea; thousands upon thousands of our compatriots of all social groups, religions and nationalities found themselves abroad. The Russian Exodus created a unique phenomenon of Russian emigration, a great tragedy of the great people which cut both sides - those who left Russia and those who stayed behind.

The moral and spiritual ties which for centuries had been keeping the nation together snapped. For many decades,

Whites and Reds remained divided by an abyss of irreconcilable enmity.

All sober-minded people in Russia and abroad know that the two parts of the formerly united people should be reconciled and re-united.

To unify the country and to chart its road, we should go back to the reference point to sort out what happened to us ninety years ago. This spiritual and moral analysis is indispensable for Russia's development as one of the world's leading countries which speaks to other nations, explains its aims and reveals the meaning of life.

Russians were destined to serve the Divine Truth; their predestination was their strength; this was why for many centuries the Russian Empire attracted other peoples; this was why Muslims, Buddhists, Judaists and even pagans accepted the Russian czar as their ruler.

The Righteous Saint John of Kronstadt warned: "You have forgotten God and abandoned Him and He abandoned you with His Divine Providence to wild and unrestrained despotism."

Atheism of Russian intelligentsia divorced them from real life and real Russia; it misled them to believe that they alone "knew what people needed"; hence their conviction that social upheaval should be imposed on society by force.

Let me state here that in the first decade of the 20th century the "educated" part of Russian society became alienated from Russian spirituality and traditions to the extent that it was equally alienated from Russia's historical statehood.

We should never forget that Constitutional Democrats and Socialists-Revolutionaries, the enemies of imperial Russia, joined the coalition yet insisted on their liberal or revolutionary and frequently terrorist ideologies. Common people, on the other hand, first took the Civil War for a war waged by the czarist army against godlessness.

There is no need to discuss whether republic is better than monarchy or vice versa. Life will suggest a form of governance; it is much more important to restore to their rightful place in our lives the great postulates of Russia's enlightened conservatism - God, Fatherland, Family - traditionally shared by all peoples of our country.

Young Compatriots and the 50th Anniversary of Yuri Gagarin's Space Flight

Author: V. Sibilev

Deputy Director of the Department for Work with Compatriots Living Abroad, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation



WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK of a program in effect between 2009 and 2011, the Government Commission on Compatriots Living Abroad (GCCLA) is giving priority attention to work with young compatriots - our reserves and the future replacement of the older generation of compatriots - thus having a significant impact on realizing the initiatives of the young organizations of compatriots aimed at holding forums, festivals, creative competitions, exhibitions, and cultural and sporting events in Russia and

abroad, as well as on expanding their ties with the historical Homeland.

The young astronaut spoke about the possibility of flights to other planets to study and develop extraterrestrial civilizations and "as additional paths of retreat, just in case."

The photography session that followed the official part of the conference, during which there was an endless stream of people wishing to have their photograph taken with the Russian astronaut, was additional evidence of the extent to which Roman Romanenko's space trip and his invitation to join the ranks of the astronauts inspired many of those in attendance.

Along with the enthusiasm and healthy optimism expressed in the essays and reflections of the young participants of the forum, particularly those from the CIS and Baltic countries, there was also concern that the once broad cooperation in space exploration in the post-Soviet expanse has been shrinking. A. Gnatik from Uzbekistan, S. Minakov from Abkhazia, and A. Glazurin from Estonia talked about this in particular in their reports.

The organizers of the conference assured the young compatriots that their interest, concern, and empathy for the fate and present-day development of Russia meant a lot and would not go unheard.

The participants adopted a statement on the results of the conference. The document mentions in particular, "We will use the new knowledge acquired at the conference during the events marking the 50th anniversary of man's first flight into space to be held in our countries. Celebration of this anniversary will be reason to join the efforts of compatriots living abroad aimed at retaining and strengthening ties with the historical homeland."

All of the speeches, which proved too many to be heard during the two-day conference, will be published in a separate collection.

Post-War Normalization of Russian-Japanese Relations

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IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE JAPANESE ATTACK on December 7, 1941, on the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and on British colonies in the Far East, the American and British governments began to urge the USSR to enter the war against Japan.

Striving to make the Soviet Union enter the war against Japan, American diplomacy voiced its determination to strip Japan, after the war, of territories that it had seized earlier, including the Kuril Islands, as punishment for aggression.

In 1954, Ichiro Hatoyama came to power in Japan. In his election campaign, he promised to begin talks with the USSR. He kept his word, although the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs was clearly

pro-American and anti-Soviet at that time. The Soviet side proposed that the talks be held in Tokyo or Moscow, yet this was rejected by the Japanese. Their proposal to hold talks at the UN Headquarters in New York, where the Americans could influence the negotiations, did not suit the USSR. Finally, after a long discussion, London was chosen as the site of talks.

I arrived in Tokyo on May 13, 1956. Despite the late time of the day and the heavy rain, about a hundred people met me at the airport. Japanese business circles were interested in normalizing relations with the USSR. They were supported by left-wing parties and moderate circles - in particular, those that were outraged at the continuing occupation of Japan by U.S. forces. Japanese-Soviet friendship organizations had been set up; their members included people from trade organizations, fishing enterprises, and men of culture, science, and the arts.

Upon his return to Tokyo from a foreign mission, Foreign Minister Shigemitsu declared that he would go to Moscow himself to conclude the talks and obtain concessions.

Many years have elapsed since that time. The extensive efforts of Soviet and later Russian diplomats to establish good-neighborly relations with Japan did not bear fruit. At times, it seemed that a breakthrough in concluding a peace treaty was imminent, as was the case in May 1964 when A. Mikoyan, First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, came to Japan with a delegation of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. Yet Japan got mired in the Cold War. Japanese revanchists got the support of some ruling circles of Japan and, most importantly, support from the USA.

In an interview to the editor-in-chief of the radio station Ekho Moskvyy on March 2, 2011, S. Lavrov replied to a question on the stance of the Russian Federation on US interference in Russian-Japanese relations by saying, "We were taken aback by the form in which US representatives commented the state of Russian-Japanese relations. [...] In Potsdam, it was set down that the Kuril Islands would belong to the Soviet Union. [...] We tell our American colleagues that we don't entirely understand why, after having been so calm about our relations with Japan over the past decades, they have suddenly taken a different attitude towards it. We don't understand it very well."

"The Matter of Iran Came Off Well Indeed"

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Throughout the 19th and the early 20th century, Iran (known as Persia until 1935) remained an apple of discord between the British and Russian empires which in 1907 agreed to divide the country into two zones of influence: the Russian in the north and the British in the south. World War I, the Russian revolution, British intervention in the Transcaucasus and Transcaspian from the Persian territory upturned the agreement of 1907. In the 1920s-1930s, the old rivalry flared up; at the early stages of World War II, Brits and French contemplated, for a while and because of the Soviet-Finnish Winter War of 1939, an air strike at the Baku oil fields from Iran. The German offensive at the Western Front in May-June 1940, however, created problems much closer to their borders.

The occupation of Iran was probably the first experience for the members of the budding anti-Hitler coalition with agreement on an important international issue and joint military-political action.

According to the latest writings of Russian historians Tehran did not pattern its foreign policy on Berlin. Ruler of Iran Reza Shah Pahlavi relied on Germany for his country's industrial advance and used Germans to improve the transportation network, strengthen the armed forces and address other problems. Not a fascist puppet blinded by the brilliancy of the Third Reich's might, he remained on the alert and as pragmatic as ever while meandering between Moscow, London and Berlin and cooperating with the latter as the most active and successful player of the three. Today, historians doubt the Soviet official version of Iran or its territory being a real military threat to the Soviet Union; they say that the Soviet leadership was merely "going on with Stalin's prewar policy of expanding the Soviet borders and 'restoring' the lost imperial frontiers."

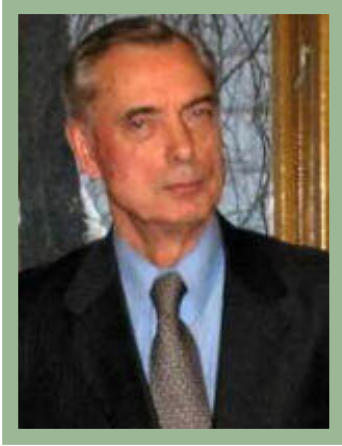
The Persian Corridor was one of the main routes used for lend-lease deliveries from the United States and Great Britain to the Soviet Union: 23.8% of supplies were moved via Iran (compare with 22.6% moved by the famous Arctic convoys to the Soviet northern ports). Nearly half of the wartime supplies (47.1%) were delivered across the Pacific.

Finally, in the summer and fall of 1941 when the Red Army was retreating and the number of casualties was mounting prompt, practically bloodless and successful Iranian march encouraged, to a certain extent, the Soviet people.

A New Environment for Russia

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WHEN WE HEARD that the new book by Srecko Djukic, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Serbia to the Republic of Belarus and Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, called "Russia and the End of the Soviet Union: A New Environment for Russia" had been published in March of this year in Belgrade by "Suzhbeni glasnik," a leading Serbian publishing house, we in Moscow could not wait to read it. And we were not disappointed. Ambassador Djukic's book presents a comprehensive and vivid account of the events he set out to relate.

He says himself that this book took years, if not decades, to prepare and come to fruition. Working in the diplomatic field and reflecting on it, he began making preparations, collecting his thoughts, and gathering the necessary information as early as perestroika times in the Soviet Union. This book also reflects his professional interests and serves as a continuation of his earlier works, which International Affairs' readers are familiar with from other issues.

The author rewrote the manuscript of this book more than once, since any narration of the history of difficult stages in international relations must be as precise and readable as possible, as well as written in an appealing and understandable language. And the author rose admirably to this task.

The name of the book itself speaks volumes. On the one hand, it is about the collapse of the Soviet Union and Russia's leading role in this process. While on the other, it covers the post-Soviet expanse and the structures created in it, as well as the young countries that appeared in it after the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

The book consists of three parts, "The Big Games Continue," "The CIS and Other Projects: Between Hope and Reality," and "The Post-Soviet Expanse: A Commonwealth or Twelve Neighbors?"

International Affairs' readers will perhaps remember the articles by Srecko Djukic published in our journal on the problems of world energy, in which he is a recognized expert. Here too, in his new book, he devotes much attention to the topic of the post-Soviet expanse and post-Soviet countries relating to the energy resources they have at their disposal. Big energy serves big goals, emphasizes the author, and is the foundation of long-term cooperation and European unification. The practical steps taken since the beginning of the 1960s, when Europe was politically more divided, have yielded good results. Solutions to continental Eurasian unification must still be sought. After the fall of the Berlin wall, a new class of people and leaders with a new vision appeared in Europe. Russian gas in Europe was the first sign that international tension was de-

fusing and detente beginning in international relations in the postwar period. Srecko Djukic reminds us that almost three centuries ago, after the victory over the Swedes, Russia cut open a window to Europe through St. Petersburg in the North, but not in the South. Neither then, nor later did the Russian state succeed in cutting open another southern window to Europe. But the northern route was not at all one-way in Russian-European relations.

The Political Situation in Italy Today: A View from Russia

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RUSSIA AND ITALY, two countries joined by a long history of relations, are continuing to move toward closer political, economic, and cultural cooperation. The changes in Italy's political system that started at the beginning of the 1990s and are still going on today present a unique political situation for the country.

In Russia, academic historians are paying keen attention to the problems created by the transition from one type of democracy to another that began in Italy in the 1990s.

Their works offer a comprehensive and complete picture of the political life of the Italian Republic at the current stage. It is precisely the absence of similar historical experience in other European countries that is arousing the historians' interest in the events going on in Italy. The works of Soviet and Russian academic experts on the history of Italy of the second half of the 20th century and beginning of the 21st century present detailed coverage of this unique political process.

This article aims to set forth in detail the main issues relating to the political development of contemporary Italy that Russian historiography has been focusing on in recent years. All of the researchers are primarily examining the collapse of Italy's traditional political parties and the formation of new types of parties.

Most of the academics are inclined to think that the former system under which the Christian Democratic Party had immense advantages could quite well be restored, only this time with Berlusconi's party in the center. On the whole, Italy's party system over the past 20 years can be characterized by a quotation from LB. Levin's article, "The opposition between the left wing and right wing seems to have been preserved, but it has acquired an entirely different dimension, beginning with the fact that there is no longer a taboo on the ruling bloc and leftist opposition taking turns in power."

We will note that the works of the Russian experts in Italian studies focus particular attention on the transition period in the history of the Italian Republic. In recent years, several articles have come out by well-known researchers that are entirely devoted to this problem. The few monographs published in our country also note the transition from the First to the Second Republic in Italy as the main milestone in the country's entire postwar history.

We agree with this viewpoint, since the domestic political situation in the country still differs significantly from that in the classical Western democracies. Italy's experience is in fact unique and, as of today, the problems of the transition period in Italian history remain controversial and have not been fully studied.

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