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The Rumors of an Imminent EU Collapse Are Premature

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I can't agree that there are now sentiments in Europe with regard to Russia that can be characterized as aggressive. Same goes for France. My latest contacts with French representatives have left an impression about the sincere interest of the French side in deepening and strengthening Russia's relations not only with the individual countries of Europe, but also with our strategic partner, the European Union. This line has opponents, but they are in an obvious minority.

The rumors of an imminent EU collapse are premature.

The factor of "reckless" enlargement to the East became an important part in the mix of causes for the financial and economic crisis that hit the European Union.

For our part, we have repeatedly stressed our interest in a stable, strong and unified European Union.

By the way, EU officials themselves talk seriously about the political threats that the economic disturbances carry with them. So it's really a very hot topic.

The growth of xenophobia, racism and populism is now observable in many EU countries. Many people, and at the highest level too, recognize that the idea of multiculturalism in Europe has fallen flat. What is the EU policy in this area?

Russia currently has a "story of love and hate" with Europe. At the level of Heads of State it is "love, " and at the level of MEPs and the press it is "hate. " How can we build effective collaboration in such conditions?

Unfortunately, in our time, the attention of the broad community is often drawn to only the most problematic aspects of international relations, which overshadow the enormous daily work in tackling the pressing issues of world politics.

In case of further deepening of negative trends in the economy, which is fraught with social upheaval, the possibility that "non-system" politicians may come into power in the EU countries can't be completely ruled out.

We in Russia take a responsible approach towards the situation in the euro area as a whole. We continue to keep a substantial part of our international reserves in euros and do not undertake any unilateral steps that can affect the position of the single European currency. Therefore, we will support our European partners on the basis of the unity of our common long-term goals.

Future of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Its Role and Challenges in the Muslim World

Author: Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu

Professor Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation



This speech was delivered in Moscow on June 7, 2013

The topic of my speech today is mainly the future of the OIC, its role and the challenges in the Muslim world.

The current OIC activities are guided by two principal documents: the OIC Ten-Year Programme of Action, agreed upon in the historical summit convened in Makkah, Saudi Arabia in

2005, and the new OIC Charter, adopted in 2008 Dakar Summit. These two documents speak about the OIC as a vehicle of moderation and modernization in the Muslim world.

One of the major achievements of the OIC in recent years is the establishment of the OIC Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC).

I would like also to speak about other issues related to Islamophobia and better understanding between cultures and religions; and I have to express here very clearly that we appreciate Russia's position on this issue.

Therefore, the OIC was very active in that field and we have managed with the support of our friends and also the Russian Federation to pass many resolutions against defamation of religions, not only Islam but all the religions. However, unfortunately the European countries and the U.S. were against this at the beginning, saying that they do not agree with the notion of defamation of religions.

When we speak about the future of the OIC, I think, it would lie in three domains. The first domain is to ensure peace and security by contributing to solutions of problems in our part of the world. The second domain is the human rights and socio-cultural domain. When we look at the third domain, which is the economic one, I would like to say that the OIC presents a very promising future, despite all the problems that we are going through now in many of our countries.

So, you see that the OIC future in the world from political aspect, from economical aspect, from demographic aspect is promising. And I also think the OIC in the UN should acquire a new position.

The NATO Operation in Afghanistan

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THE JOINT American and NATO campaign in Afghanistan which has been going on for over a decade now became the Alliance's largest and most expensive operation.

Contrary to expectations, the counterterrorist operation launched a new round of the civil war.

The Alliance involved in Afghanistan in many spheres and in many roles had no choice but to combine the "hard" and "soft" power to achieve the tasks it had posed itself.

As could be expected much attention was paid to the law-enforcement bloc. The United States assumed responsibility for some of the organizational, financial and professional issues and shared responsibility in certain concrete spheres with London, Berlin, Paris, and Rome. The 2008 NATO Summit in Bucharest approved a "comprehensive approach" to security, administration and development of Afghanistan.

Set in motion, the mechanism ran into a stall because of numerous problems including massive desertion; it was far from easy to recruit people in the Pushtun regions even though it was planned to make Pushtuns the backbone of the country's armed forces.

THE CLOSE and not so close neighbors of Afghanistan will be more and more concerned with the political arrangements in Kabul if and when the final stage of transfer of control over the country to ANSF is completed.

The pessimists point to the extreme fragility of the state structures, acute ethnic contradictions and the dialogue with the Taliban which ran into an impasse.

The restored neutral status, suggested by Russia and the SCO countries, looks like the best option for Afghanistan: this will consolidate Kabul's international positions irrespective of who will hold the helm.

Unilateral direct interference in the domestic affairs of Afghanistan, irrespective of motives, should be ruled out. This scenario will create negative strategic repercussions for Russia's national interests; will complicate its relationships with the Islamic world, its regional and international partners; might end in international isolation, complicate the situation inside the country and start disintegration processes.

The New Silk Road Concept

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RECENTLY, the United States has been demonstrating much more activity and much more interest in Central Asia. In the latter half of the 1990s, the Atlantic Council of the United States (ACUS) created one of the strongest programs of Central Asian studies in the U.S. which suggested closer cooperation with the Taliban. Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, two closest American allies in the Middle East, officially recognized the Taliban government.

In the 1990s, Americans wanted to preserve and consolidate the new independent states in Central Asia and the Caucasus. Its leaders could count on Washington for political support which carefully cultivated their taste for power and independence.

So far, the EU and Turkey still look at the Caucasus as the "natural gate" to Central Asia; the United States, on the other hand, knows better.

On September 11, 2001, Central Asia acquired a new status: together with Pakistan it became the key partner and the rear of the American military operations in Afghanistan. It became the vantage point from which the region was and is contemplated. This is what the George W. Bush administration contributed to America's Central Asian politics.

The Central Asian leaders are still trying to "outwit" Washington to become partners important enough to reap financial and political remuneration in the form of investments, political rewards and support of the local regimes.

The Obama administration has accepted a truncated version of the Modern Silk Road; there is the Northern Distribution Network, transport infrastructure which goes in the northern (via Uzbekistan and Tajikistan) and north-western (via Turkmenistan) directions. The experts close to the administration speak of it as part of the Modern Silk Road project, something which Prof. Starr cannot accept.

The Central Asian leaders are fully aware of the basic aims of Washington's regional policies and the related risks. They, however, are still trying to "outwit" Washington to become partners important enough to reap adequate financial and political remuneration for their geopolitical services in the form of investments, political encouragements and support of the local regimes.

Russia in the Asia-Pacific Region

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THERE IS a fairly widespread opinion that at all times Europe dominated in the foreign policy of the Russian State and that Asia remained neglected and forgotten. This is not true.

Today, the countries are mutually complementary in the economic sphere; in the course of time, this will become even more obvious.

In the last two decades, much has been done to improve Russia's relations with Japan:

today, the contacts are wider, deeper and more intensive than ever.

THE SITUATION which can be described as favorable for Russia's integration in the region's political and economic realities is not absolutely cloudless. Some problems infringe on Russia's interests and call for adequate responses.

The Eastern regions of Russia are falling behind socially and economically. This may develop into a national security threat: Russia's neighbors, ignoring its interests, will increase pressure on the Far East and Siberia making them an object of demographic and economic aggression.

Leadership rivalry in the Asia-Pacific Region is dangerous. Today, the regional context brings to mind the latter half of the 19th century in the West when unification of Germany tipped the balance of power; power struggle which followed pushed mankind into a global slaughter.

Russia should more actively include global issues on the agenda of its bilateral talks with APR countries and insist on setting up a regional economic security system.

I would like to say in conclusion that we should get rid of these shortcomings so that to acquire "soft power" which will attract foreign investments and technologies and raise our international rating. This will make modernization of Siberia and the Far East possible and will transform Russia into a fully-fledged and indispensable member of the Asia-Pacific Region respected by all its neighbors.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization: Elaboration of Strategy

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THE SHANGHAI Cooperation Organization (SCO) has become one of the leading components of Russia's foreign policy both doctrinally and on the practical level. It is in Russia's long-term interests for the SCO to stand firmly on its feet and move steadily forward in its development, strengthening its reputation as a macro-organization of a new type.

Serious analytical work is needed in order to

make strategy a moderately conceptual but not purely declarative document.

From the perspective of its geographic parameters, even now the SCO can justly be regarded in terms of "continentalism." The SCO is quickly emerging as one of the new "macro-regional formations" seeking global influence within the framework of a multi-polar world scenario.

At the same time, it is important to remember that internal synchronization within the SCO area is becoming a rather complex task, a kind of a challenge to the Organization's steady development.

The SCO as a forum with initial elements of collaboration should be replaced by a constant platform designed to accommodate continuous multi-format interaction, with the political component playing the lead role.

Despite the cosmetic alterations, the existing procedure for responding to situations jeopardizing the security and stability of the SCO or creating such threats in its space is not effective enough, largely for the same reasons.

REFORM of the SCO's administrative mechanisms is a priority point on the Organization's agenda. There is a pressing need for it in order to ensure the Organization's steady, continuous activity, and in that sense it should become an inherent part of the strategy of its further development and the strengthening of the SCO's geopolitical role in the world.

The 60th Anniversary of Korean Armistice

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THE EVENTS in and around Korea were a reflection of the main processes that predetermined global development in the mid-20th century. The routing of Nazi Germany and militarist Japan in World War with the decisive role of the Red Army put an end to the West's supremacy in international affairs. That irked the West, and the Cold War began.

In December 1945, a meeting of Soviet, U.S. and British foreign policy chiefs in Moscow approved an agreement on temporary administration of Korea,

and a bilateral Soviet-U.S. commission was formed to facilitate the creation of an interim Korean democratic government, which was to prepare proposals based on consultations with Korean democratic parties and public organizations.

Today, as 60 years ago, on both sides of the demilitarized zone - a conditional border between the two states - there are fortifications and thousands of troops confronting each other, equipped with advanced weapons and combat hardware.

The expectations by certain forces that North Korea's state governance system is close to collapse are hardly justified. The system has repeatedly proved that it has a considerable safety margin.

FOR YEARS, the two Korean states existed in parallel worlds, as it were. Neither Pyongyang nor Seoul set the goal of reuniting the country on their own terms.

THE ELECTION of Kim Dae-jung, a prominent human rights campaigner, as the president of the Republic of Korea in the late 1990s opened a new page in inter-Korean affairs.

OUR COUNTRY invariably supports the building of bridges between Seoul and Pyongyang, speaking out in favor of steps by the two Korean states toward an independent and peaceful reunification of their motherland.

It is essential on the practical level, not only in theory to factor in the interests of both Korean states, harmonize them with Russian interests while ensuring that the rivalry and jealousy between the North and the South do not affect Russia's collaboration with each of these countries, let alone lead to tension and conflicts.

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FOOD SECURITY ISSUES have been the focus of the Group of Twenty since about 2005. Then it became clear that the era of continually rising food prices and growing farm output - an era lasting almost 50 years - was over.

We should also not ignore the new phenomenon of the intertwining of global markets for energy and agriculture because of the growing demand for biological fuels. In this context, agriculture is increasingly becoming hostage to the instability characteristic of the global mineral market with all the ensuing consequences of sharp fluctuations in food prices.

It should be borne in mind that the global food security situation is adversely affected by the crises in a number of regions of the world.

In general, the successful activity of the Group of Twenty in the field of food security confirms that, by virtue of its global representative character and the aggregate impact on global processes, it has a significant potential to solve this problem.

The G20's active involvement in food security was largely spurred by the crisis in world agriculture in 2007-2008 and 2010.

The Seoul summit played an important role by mobilizing international efforts for coordination and cooperation among international organizations to promote food security and increase agricultural production and food accessibility.

It appears that the launch of AMIS was in fact the first precedent in global confidence building for food security. In the long run, confidence-building measures will also help to take coordinated measures through the G20 to counter price shocks, trade manipulations, speculative grain stockpiling, etc.

The Group of Twenty's shift to the technical issues of food security could lead to a loss of its competitive advantages as the strategic core of the global food security system. Indeed, FAO, WFP, IFAD, World Bank and other international structures have real technical expertise in this area. The global Agricultural Market Information System created by it likewise needs further development. Market transparency and predictability, as well as forecasting possible crisis situations would be significantly increased if the Rapid Response Forum were given the parameters of a full-fledged advisory body to the G20.

International Organizations vs. Terrorism

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The September 23, 1999 Statement on Combating International Terrorism issued by the ministers for foreign affairs of the five permanent members of the Security Council has stressed that it is vital to strengthen, under the auspices of the United Nations, international cooperation to fight terrorism in all its forms. Such cooperation must be firmly based on the principles of the UN Charter and

norms of international law, including respect for human rights.

We will note that war as a means of foreign policy and international dispute resolution is prohibited by modern international law. The Security Council is endowed with broad powers to enforce this rule.

It is known that none of the thirteen conventions against terrorism provide a comprehensive definition of "terrorism."

The UN Counter-Terrorism Committee operates on the basis of the principles of "cooperation and transparency" as per the guidelines for the conduct of its work approved on October 16, 2001.

The Committee is to submit regular reports, including recommendations as necessary, to the Security Council on the implementation of resolution 1373, either orally or in writing, as requested by the Council, or where the Committee deems it necessary to submit a report to it.

At a Chisinau summit, the CIS Heads of State adopted a Regulation on procedures governing the organization and conduct of joint anti-terrorism operations which stipulates that the CIS countries should determine in advance, in accordance with national law, the competent agencies responsible for carrying out joint activities and the composition of special anti-terrorist units. Russia gave active support to the efforts of the world community to combat international terrorism.

International law has developed a number of provisions aimed at combating international terrorism, which along with other principles provide the legal basis for action in this area. But as well as domestic law, international law needs to be improved.

Crimes that do not fall under the category of terrorism, regardless of their degree of severity, should not be subject to the laws of counter-terrorism.

Syria: Who Will Take Responsibility for the "Responsibility to Protect"?

Author: Armen Oganessian

Editor-in-Chief of International Affairs



IN A TWITTER DEBATE with the head of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, Alexey Pushkov, the U.S. ambassador to Moscow, Michael McFaul, observed that:

"He (President Obama) wants to protect the rule of international law prohibiting the use of chemical weapons." This position, of course, echoes recent statements made by U.S. Secretary of State, John Kerry, in which he has repeatedly stressed that such crimes against humanity cannot go unpunished.

This thesis is essentially indisputable, in fact, no one argues against it.

If it is a crime against humanity, then humanity should be the judge. If someone in the name of humanity carries out a judgment, verifying and enforcing the verdict, which they themselves have made on behalf of humanity, it is absurd from the point of view of the law and dangerous on the basis of the philosophy of such an approach.

But all of these decisive actions "designed to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity" could be feasible, but only as resolutions declared by the UN.

Obviously, there are those who are right to say that the UN inspection does not give an answer to the main question: who has used chemical weapons in Syria? "The author" can, for example, turn out to be one leaked into or infiltrated from, groups of foreign countries, neighboring or distant.

American foreign policy, in fact stands upon a red line, which was not defined by President Obama but by the new Realpolitik. Namely, it is the fact that no one today is a one-man force, or carries "the white man's burden" in relation to the rest of the world.

Soft Power, Russian Style: In Search of a Fulcrum

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IN RECENT YEARS, politicians, diplomats and experts are increasingly talking about soft power, by which they understand the capacity to obtain what one wants through cooption and attraction. Soft power, as distinct from hard power, which refers to the classical methods of coercion, has come into political vogue and is becoming an accepted tool of international politics.

However, the narrow, applied interpretation of soft power seems to be more interesting and particularly relevant right now when Russian diplomacy is beginning to ever more

confidently master this tool.

Recent years saw Russia becoming increasingly active in solving global problems. Having been during the 1990s a beneficiary of humanitarian, financial and technical assistance, it is gradually growing into an assistance donor, participating in the elaboration of a global strategy for development assistance.

The new version of the Russian Foreign Policy Concept for the first time defined the place of Rossotrudnichestvo in the system of government institutions that implement the state policy in the domain of international relations.

Russia has still much to do to widen the scope and raise the effectiveness of its educational and cultural exchange programs. These expenses are not recouped immediately, but in the end, this tool of soft power turns out to be one of the most effective. There is no need to be afraid of the word "propaganda," using for explaining Russian foreign policies and creating a positive image for the country through all available and effective outreach mechanisms.

For a long time now, our country has been living in an open world, the laws of which are the free exchange of information and ideas. The right and duty to truthfully tell the world about oneself are an integral part of these laws. It is in the spirit of this understanding of soft power and the mechanisms of its projection that Russia will yet tell the world its word, attractive and inimitable.

The U.S. in World Rankings: Economic Indicators

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IN THE UNITED STATES of America and the world, there is increasing speculation about the ever more evident trend of the U.S. losing its dominant economic position, and about a gradually emerging new balance of power in the world economy, in particular in favor of rising China, India and other countries with rapidly developing economies.

Analysis of the main indicators of the level of economic development of the United States and its competitors permits assessing to what extent the U.S. still has global economic potential.

The U.S. remains the largest national economy in the world, with GDP officially estimated at more than \$15.8 trillion in 2012.

This analysis attests to the fact that at the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century, the United States does, of course, retain the leading world position on a majority of the most important macroeconomic and external economic indicators.

Among other indicators characterizing not only the economic but also social level of development, the most representative is the human development index. In 2011, the United States was ranked by this index at third/fourth place in the world, sharing it with the Netherlands and behind Norway and Australia.

The nature of a sectoral economic mix is extremely important when assessing the level of economic development of a country.

Under this approach, the United States economy can certainly be regarded as occupying a leading position in terms of economic development, as the services sector outstripped the proportion of the goods industries earlier in the U.S. than in other countries and now stands at 80 percent in both GDP and employment.

What do the above data on the international investment position of the United States and its dynamics speak about? First of all, they indicate that the United States remains the most attractive place in the world for financial and non-financial assets.

THIS ANALYSIS attests to the fact that at the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century, the United States does, of course, retain the leading world position on a majority of the most important macroeconomic and external economic indicators. The deep financial and economic crisis of 2008-2009 has not shaken this position, and the American economic model has also proved its effectiveness. At the same time, in the long run the relative position of the United States on a number of quantitative economic indicators will probably be worsening.

Italy in the Grip of Crisis: Change or Continuity?

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The global economic and financial crisis has highlighted not only the serious mistakes in the development of European integration in the last 10-15 years, particularly when creating the Eurozone, but also the serious deficiencies in the economic and political model of a number of countries, including Italy. The crisis in the Eurozone coincided with a political crisis in Italy - namely the inability of President of the Council of Ministers Silvio Berlusconi.

Italy became the latest country in the Eurozone to announce a reduction in public expenditure in 2010 and obey the anti-crisis policy of Brussels.

Italy, despite the crisis, is still the eighth largest economy in

the world and the third largest economy in the Eurozone.

The expert and political community in Italy, assessing the causes and nature of the crisis in the Eurozone, identified five prime reasons. First, it was a violation of the EU rules in creating the monetary union. Second, it was the vulnerability of the European banking sector. Third, it was the role of the credit rating agencies in the global crisis and in the crisis of the Eurozone. Fourth, it was the conflict within the EU between its "successful center," primarily Germany insisting on austerity, and the "troubled periphery." And lastly, fifth, it was the belated and half-hearted response of Brussels, which contributed to the rapid spread of the crisis from country to country. The most vulnerable turned out to be the countries of the so-called southern periphery, including Italy, where the actual economic problems were compounded by ineffective management - bloated bureaucracy, corruption, and weak judicial systems, hindering economic growth.

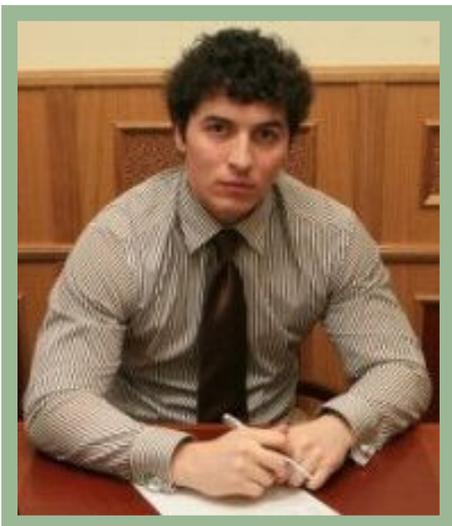
Despite the fact that the main directions of the foreign policy of Italy remained unchanged, the crisis did shift the Monti government's foreign policy priorities to searching for cost-effective projects and transactions, primarily with Russia (Italy ranks fourth among Russia's trading partners in the far abroad, and third among the EU countries) and China.

THE ECONOMIC and political position of Italy and its role in the EU in the coming decades will depend on the outcome of the international economic and currency crisis, on the way European integration will develop, on how the structural flaws of its economy will be overcome and on a clear definition of foreign policy guidelines. "Continuity or change?" is the biggest near-term dilemma for Italian domestic as well as foreign policy.

Qatar's Gas Policy and Russia's Interests

Author: E. Kasaev

Political scientist



THE NOTABLE RISE in Qatar's role on the liquefied natural gas (LNG) market happened due to the fast development of infrastructure, which was facilitated by a favorable market situation and fast growing demand for LNG before the global financial and economic crisis. Putting into operation large-scale production capacities in the emirate led to an increase in LNG production volumes in Qatar.

THE INCREASE in Qatar's gas supplies along that route creates difficulties for Gazprom, since Europe is the principal consumer of Russian gas. For its part, Qatar insists that its export policy is based on long-term contracts and a linkage between gas and oil prices. Proceeding from its own economic

interests, the state can vary the routes of supplies and their price depending on current demand on a particular market.

It should be noted that the importance of Qatari gas in Europe today is rather overstated. Although its supply volumes affect the competitiveness of Russian raw materials they only do so to a very insignificant extent.

The EU's dependence on gas exporters should be expected to rise in the future. That said, Europe will have an opportunity to diversify its suppliers, relying on a more active use of Qatari LNG, which may over time minimize Gazprom's exports to European markets.

Russian industry analysts believe Qatar will supply an additional 50 billion cu m of gas a year to Europe within the next several years, which is 5% of the EU's natural gas market.

If that happens the following scenario is quite possible: Russia will slightly reduce the price of the fuel and increase its export volumes, and then Qatar will find itself in a difficult position.

Many domestic and foreign economists predict in the long term the thriving of the American shale gas industry and therefore the United States' emergence from an LNG importer into its exporter, which appears to be rather controversial, since there may not be an expansion in shale gas production for considerations of environment safety.

Gazprom hopes to consolidate its position in the emirate and to participate in joint projects related to national gas production and liquefaction after 2014, but the situation could change. It is noteworthy that in recent years Russia has offered Qatar a large number of investment projects in the oil, gas, gold mining, construction and other areas. However, Qatar has refused to participate in Russian projects.

The lack of real interest on the part of Qatar business holds out little prospect for dynamic development of bilateral economic collaboration.

Multiculturalism: War or Peace?

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THE CONCEPT OF MULTICULTURALISM cannot be credited narrowly to Europe, considering that Canada, Australia, and the U.S. have decades-long records of putting the design into practice. There are bumps on the road in all.

In fact, multiculturalism drew plenty of critical invectives from the outset.

Switzerland seems to be the only country in Europe to boast harmony and stability within a multicultural framework, but the Swiss confederation took centuries rather than decades to acquire its current shape and, importantly, represents a synthesis of congenial European cultures.

The above does not mean that Europeans no longer eye culture through the religious prism, though. A researcher studying migration remarks that a symbolic barrier sets the followers of Islam apart from the rest of the population, and that, moreover, the perceptions linked to this particular gap override any divisions or sense of commonality of other nature. The culture clashes thus become identity clashes.

It should be noted that the Christian world similarly isolated itself from that of Islam in the Middle Ages. Switching to the language of identities, we indirectly acknowledge the fact that we deal with civilizational differences already loaded with antagonisms.

In contrast to Europeans, migrants almost automatically equate Europe's creed and its culture to which, given its sweepingly modified condition, they can't but react with alienation and outrage.

If multiculturalism apparently does not work for democracies, societies across the world - with their wide range of identities, cultures, etc. - must think twice before subscribing to it. The truth is that this activity is essentially talk and that any such alliances would be inherently unsustainable.

It should be born in mind to what extent politics, legislation, and daily lives in the world of Islam are interwoven with religion and the Quran to realize that Muslims interpret the historical process of secularization literally as the Christians' betrayal of their own God.

Speaking of ideology, the collapse of multiculturalism in Europe casts a long shadow over the universality of liberal values as such. If multiculturalism apparently does not work for democracies, societies across the world - with their wide range of identities, cultures, etc. - must think twice before subscribing to it.

In the Spirit of Partnership: CIS Defense Ministers Confer in Minsk

Author: M. Sevastyanov

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ON JUNE 5, 2013, Belarusian capital Minsk hosted the 64th regular meeting of the Council of the Commonwealth of Independent States defense ministers chaired by Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu.

THE MEETING was preceded by a series of bilateral talks followed by a discussion between the heads of delegations at the residence of President of the Republic of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko who presides over the CIS Council of Heads of State this year.

According to the Russian defense minister, the CIS has put in place successful joint systems in air defense, communications, monitoring and estimation of radiation, chemical and

biological situations, safe flights of military aircraft, etc.

The Belarus president also urged for more comprehensive joint efforts in the defense sphere to implement the approved decisions.

CIS MEMBERS must be prepared to oppose new threats likely to arise from the withdrawal of the coalition forces from Afghanistan. This is the view voiced at the session of the CIS Defense Ministers Council by Sergey Lebedev, Chairman of the Executive Committee and Executive Secretary of the CIS.

Taking into account the importance and urgency of getting under way integration processes in the military sphere, the session approved a list of joint activities of the armed forces of the CIS members in 2014.

A broader multilateral cooperation in keeping tabs on the state and condition of ammunition is likely to make up for the mistakes of the post-Soviet era.

Since it is vital to further expand cooperation between archives, the CIS Defense Ministers Council mapped out activities to form an integrated archive reference book for the Commonwealth's defense ministries.

At the close of the session, the heads of the delegations paid homage to the dead heroes of the 1941-1945 Great Patriotic War by laying a wreath of flowers at the Eternal Flame next to the monument to Red Army Soldiers and Partisans in Victory Square in Minsk.

The regular 65th session of the CIS Defense Ministers Council was announced to take place in October 2013 in the Republic of Tuva, the Russian Federation, or in the neighborhood of Lake Baikal.

The Armenian Diaspora as a Transnational Actor

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IT IS CUSTOMARY to recognize sovereign states and the interstate organizations established on their basis as the leading actors in the political system of the contemporary world. Such theoretical schools as realism and, with some differences, constructivism support this approach.

The Armenian government is interested in keeping the Armenian diasporas in their countries of residence, whereby actively using the financial, organiza-

tional and information-analytical resources of the diasporas in the republic's interests.

The supporters of liberal neo-institutionalism claim that in the context of globalization and triumph of the market economy, competition and price formation are becoming more imperfect due to the lack of information and nonsymmetrical distribution of resources among actors. So there is a need to pool and coordinate efforts aimed at decreasing the negative consequences of the market on the economic processes by creating institutions.

To understand whether the diaspora can act as a transnational actor, the term "diaspora" must be defined. However, the objective complexity and diversity of this phenomenon makes it difficult for scientists to reach a unanimous understanding of it.

A graphic example is the Republic of Armenia which maintains ties with and participates in the life of the diaspora of different countries. Armenia itself plays the role of a sacral center of the Armenian world.

It is worth noting that in the modern world the state resource is becoming stratified. Not only is military power important, but also the economic and socio-humanitarian components related to soft power.

So the Armenian authorities view the diaspora abroad as a factor capable not only of promoting the state's development, but also of perceptibly strengthening Armenia's position in international relations. And in this respect, the Armenian diaspora today is an important resource for carrying out the country's effective foreign and domestic policy.

On the whole, economic and financial indices are still the main resource for business structures. At the same time, for many international nongovernmental organizations, this resource also includes possessing information about the regions, having certain knowledge and skills, as well as enjoying the population's trust.

So the Armenian government is interested in keeping the Armenian diasporas in their countries of residence, whereby actively using the financial, organizational, and information-analytical resources of the diasporas in the republic's interests. The diaspora exists in most countries of the world and renders significant financial assistance to Armenia.

Russia's Image in Ukraine

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THE IMAGE OF RUSSIA in Ukraine is signally important for the peoples of both countries, two fraternal peoples which in 1991 found themselves on different sides of the border. Integration of the two states depends on the way Russia is presented to the Ukrainians.

Anybody willing to analyze the image of Russia in Ukraine should first of all examine the means and methods used: education and the teaching of history at schools, the media and personal experience. There is any number of prominent academics and analysts in Ukraine who point out that the history textbooks used in their country present Russia in an extremely negative light.

Post-Soviet Ukrainian historians were slow in the uptake: the revised editions of a history textbook for the 10th form students published in fall 1991 "became outdated before it reached schools" according to one of its authors. Later, Ukrainian historians tried to synchronize their writings with the ups and downs of the Ukrainian political process. Russia looks at its Black Sea Navy as a symbol of its military might and glorious history. In Ukraine, the Russian naval base is presented as a symbol of Russia's potential aggressiveness which does nothing good for its image in Ukraine.

Ethnic and confessional closeness of Russians and Ukrainians does not prevent the authors of textbooks to stress the confrontational aspects in the relationships between the two nations. The image of Russia in the Ukrainian media is formed, first and foremost, by the disagreements of today between the two countries over gas supplies and the role of the Russian language in Ukraine as well as the war of 2008 in South Ossetia and its repercussions.

Religion is another important factor. In the 18th century, Ukrainian Orthodoxy was absorbed by the Russian Orthodox Church; from that time on, Christian Orthodoxy has been drawing Ukrainians and Russians closer together. The Ukrainian nationalists interpret this as "Russification" of Ukrainians.

On the whole, the right nationalist forces in Ukraine gained little if anything by trying to politicize certain historical facts. Common Ukrainian voters in the country's east, in the first place, remained indifferent to these attempts and did not change their ideas about Russia.

The Concept of the Responsibility to Protect

The opinion of the International Law Council of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.



We offer a material that is the result of a discussion in the International Law Council of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

This material is not the first product of the Council's work to have been published in the journal - in the 5th issue for 2012 you can acquaint yourself with the Council's conclusion on the theme of unilateral sanctions.

The process of examining the issues and de-

termining the legal opinion on the Responsibility to Protect concept involved the participation of leading Russian scholars on international affairs (their list is attached).

Experience shows that the international law element has ever greater importance in present-day debates on the theme. From this angle, the question is being extensively discussed in international political and expert venues.

THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT, or R2P, is a relatively new, loose concept and, accordingly, exposed to arbitrary, sometimes politicized interpretations.

The term was used for the first time in the report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty established by the Government of Canada in December 2001.

The basic principles of the concept are reflected in the Outcome Document of the 2005 UN World Summit²(hereinafter Outcome Document), adopted with the participation of Russia.

The bottom line comes down to the fact that, first, States have the primary responsibility to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity, while the international community's role is primarily to provide them with expert, humanitarian and diplomatic assistance in fulfilling these responsibilities; and, secondly, that does not preclude where necessary the use of coercive measures should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities manifestly fail to protect their populations. However, such a decision can only be taken by the UN Security Council, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter. R2P is a new concept, formed after its predecessor, the concept of humanitarian intervention, was deemed by the international community to be politically and legally untenable.

RUSSIA'S BRICS PARTNERS, Brazil and China, are showing an increased interest in the subject matter, and their expert and scientific communities are developing their own concepts as opposed or complementary to R2P.

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Every state has the right as an international actor and as a sovereign entity to its own vision of the evolution of international relations and to the determination of their regulatory mechanisms and priorities.

The Russian Federation is no exception. In the long term, it will retain its status as an architect, builder and moderator of the existing and future world order. A confirmation of this is the new Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, approved by President Vladimir Putin on February 12, 2013. At its core it represents an (official, national) system of views on the basic principles, as well as the priorities, goals and objectives of Russian

foreign policy activity.

The concept, forming the essence of Putin's doctrine for his presidential term, has had a noticeable political and practical resonance.

First, the document records the Russian position on respect for international law and the rule of law in international relations.

A second point relating to the politico-legal line of the Russian Federation is linked to the basic disclosure of facts and situations which are part of the so-called "critical mass" of international relations and create, unfortunately, an atmosphere of legal nihilism.

The above background explains the logical appearance in the Foreign Policy Concept of the third aspect, which is linked to concrete suggestions and recommendations for improvement of general international law and the optimization of the system of Russian Federation legal obligations and the mechanisms of coherent interaction between national and international law.

It should be noted that the presence of this component in the 2013 concept not only distinguishes the Russian document from analogous sources, but also contributes directly to the elaboration of a program of diplomatic, legislative and other initiatives, the formation and implementation of which involve many actors of the legislative and executive branches of the state (Office of the President, the Government, the Federal Assembly, the Foreign Ministry, and so on).

Thus, analysis of the 2013 Russian Foreign Policy Concept suggests a creative approach of authority to the realization of the international personality, political will and sovereignty of the Russian state. Russia operates in the mode of civilizational interaction with other international actors, harmoniously coordinating its interests with those of theirs on the basis of the United Nations Charter.

Constitutional Law as a Historical Source

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A SIMPLE SURVEY of constitutional law of different countries reveals that the factors involved in the formation of each nation state vary. The examples used in the article and the corresponding countries are grouped according to the factors which determined national self-awareness in each particular case.

On the whole, constitutional legislation reflects the right of nations to self-determination, the right of any community of people to decide whether they are a nation or not.

Even if amended, suspended, abolished or radically changed, any constitution bears a stamp of the political existence of the society which it registered.

There is every reason to say that constitutional law is a perfect reflection of the contractual nature of a nation and a fact that society agrees to look at itself as a single people and a state.

The theme of land, common historical destiny fairly frequently appear in the fundamental laws of foreign countries.

Constitutions of many countries speak about the right of national minorities to protect their national and ethnic specifics, preserve and develop their traditions, religion, language, and culture. The right of secession, however, is rarely mentioned.

THE PRINCIPLE of civil-law interpretation of a nation is an important aspect of constitutional law in multinational states.

As the religious picture of the world was gradually disappearing from the minds, constitutions, likewise, dropped all mentions of religion and the church.

At the same time, there are enough states the constitutions of which do not betray any traces of national self-awareness and any traces that they are moving toward it; it doesn't even look like the feeling responsible for a national state in the first place.

Law frequently contradicts reality, it is far removed from it; in these cases it remains an inaccessible ideal or a distorting mirror. It is, however, an important source which supplies us with an idea of how social thought develops when officially represented in laws.

Since in ideal conditions of a fair world order, in which conflicts are peacefully resolved and no force is used, law is the only source of conflict settlement an analysis of legislation acquires special importance when dealing with the essence of national self-awareness.

Today's Challenges for the Russian Gas Industry

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The first thing many would think of is the world economic crisis which, without a doubt, also affects the world's energy sector. But I would take a different angle on this problem: the crisis is not in having a competitor. The matter is in our performance and taking correct actions.

We live in a rapidly changing world. The world has begun talking about shale gas; reserves of gas are being discovered or will be discovered in East Africa

and gas reserves are being developed in the Persian Gulf, Iran and Turkmenistan. All these are competitors. These are today's challenges.

The last decade has seen Russia's energy sector, oil and gas, having fully recovered if we judge by Soviet standards. We have reached the maximum of what we once had in the production of gas, oil and petroleum products.

We have certainly restored the potential. But the problem is that we were just restoring. What we have to do now is to expand the potential. And this is a real challenge.

China is our partner in terms of geography and history. To date, we have done much to build up the oil infrastructure in the East. At the moment, we are supposed to press ahead with drilling and starting up production - something of which we have not been doing enough.

We are also behind schedule in building gas infrastructure. For one, Sakhalin is one possible example. We are starting up some projects there.

The United States drills four or five times more than we do. This is the challenge, not the production of shale gas. We ought to increase drilling manifold to keep up with the current production level. We also ought to use Russian equipment, or at least a cross between Russian and Western equipment and new Russian technologies.

Speaking of prices one must be careful. Look at tensions prevailing in the Middle East. What if situation further worsens tomorrow in Iran and then in Saudi Arabia? Can this happen? It sure can. The end result is hard to predict. The prices can either soar or fall.

Competition in Europe has become tougher. This gives Gazprom big problems, and we have to solve them. Gazprom will surely do something about prices, and surely earn less than it is hoping for. But it pays to supply gas to Europe.

Considering the current situation, I think, the possible objective is to put ample supply of gas on the Russian market and lower the price of gas.

Russia-Jordan: 50 Years of Cooperation

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AT A MEETING with King Abdullah II of Jordan in Moscow on February 19, 2013 Russian President V.V. Putin handed the monarch a yellowed copy of the newspaper Pravda of August 21, 1963. It carried a report on the establishment that day of diplomatic relations between the USSR and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The reaction of the king was lively and interested. He said that when he took the paper he touched, as it were, remote past.

Jordan is a small young state that gained independence in 1946. It has a population of just a little over 6.5 people and rather limited mineral resources, which makes the country rather dependent on energy import and foreign financial and economic assistance. The kingdom is traditionally oriented toward the West, but Jordanian

leaders have always sought to develop partnership with various world centers among which Russia is one of major importance.

One specific feature of Russian-Jordanian political ties is the intensive nature of top level contacts. King Hussein had visited Moscow several times and was always a welcome guest. Abdullah II has made the dialogue with the Russian leadership even more active and regular. Between 2001 and 2013, he made 11 visits to Russia, establishing a warm and trustful relationship both with V.V. Putin and with D.A. Medvedev. Russian leaders responded in kind. V.V. Putin visited Jordan twice - in 2007 and in 2012, while D.A. Medvedev made a visit in 2011.

At present, Russian-Jordanian cooperation is gaining momentum, encompassing new promising areas, including the implementation of energy and infrastructure projects. Jordan's first nuclear power plant could become the most important one among them. Russia is participating in a tender for the project and has good chances of winning it.

An essential element of bilateral ties is cooperation in the defense and technology sector. It began during the reign of King Hussein but was suspended in the 1990s. In recent years, cooperation in the defense and technology sector resumed.

Higher education is quite a significant segment of Russian-Jordanian relations. Jordanians had started studying in our country well before diplomatic relations were established (from 1951). I would like to wish the leadership and the people of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan success in clearing all the "reefs" and "underwater currents" and in preserving and consolidating the image of the country that has built up and preserved the traditions of moderation, the rejection of extremism and violence, and peaceful coexistence between representatives of different confessions. That will facilitate the further development of good and friendly relations between Russia and Jordan.

Russia and Japan Viewed by an Interested Observer

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Russia's policy towards its eastern neighbor does not consist merely in maintaining stable relations. Japan ranks as the world's third economy and a very influential player in the Asia-Pacific region which is attracting growing attention of the international community.

IT IS NECESSARY for Russia, in implementing its strategy in the Asia-Pacific region, to build bal-

anced relations with the PRC, Japan and South Korea while no longer focusing mostly on China with which it agreed on strategic partnership in June 2012.

Russia-Japan relations continue to be plagued by the dispute over the South Kuril Islands. Even so, one cannot ignore the obvious factors for cooperation between the two countries.

The fact that Russian politicians have begun to come up with ideas of laying a greater emphasis on Japan is seen, for example, in statements by Russian expert Dmitry Trenin, who calls for making Japan "a Germany in the East" for Russia.

While politicians and officials were thought to be looking for defining territorial boundaries, the issue became deadlocked with Japan taking part of the blame for that - a fact recognized even by the Japanese press.

The coming to power in the fall of 2009 of Naoto Kan's cabinet was marked by a fresh spiral of tensions.

The tragic events caused by an earthquake, tsunami and the Fukushima I nuclear power plant disaster, Russia's aid and support for Japan diffused tensions and brought the two sides back to common sense both in their actions and rhetoric.

THE POTENTIAL of Russo-Japanese trade and economic cooperation, which is supposed to form the cornerstone in relations between the two countries, is not being realized in full measure.

THE DIFFERENCES between Russia and Japan can only be bridged through stepping up economic cooperation and building a number of horizontal ties sufficient for minimizing these differences and making the dialogue on debatable issues more constructive.

But the expansion of these relations is being constrained today by the underdeveloped Siberian and Far Eastern territories, continuing reliance on developing mostly its raw materials base, and the low level of investments in science, technology and education.

Traditions of American Anti-Imperialism and the World Wars of the 20th Century

Author: A. Fomenko

Historian and writer



AT ALL TIMES, the American Republic remained highly suspicious of European "imperialism."¹ In fact, both trends of the American foreign policy thought - isolationism and interventionism - were a psychological response to this irritant, the common root of two contradictory trends of foreign policy behavior: the desire to be different from Europe and the desire to be identical to it - the former of which prevailed in the first century of American history.

Early in the 20th century, Europe still believed in the use of force: European powers poured a lot of money into their armies and were used to acquire new territories and resources. The repercussions were obvious: good money for arms producers and their

creditors before, during and after the war and crippled politics and economics and irretrievable loss of life for all warring sides.

Certain civilizational specifics of the United States of America and of still disunited Europe helped the Americans to surge forward in formulating their new understanding of the aims and tasks of foreign policies; the possibilities and methods of external expansion of states and, in the final analysis, of the contemporary principles of a Great Power's geopolitical behavior. Strange as it may seem, it was Americans, the novices at the intricacies of great power rivalry, rather than the experienced Europeans, who realized, on time, that real control over economics and politics of any territory was much more important than official control of the same space. For a long time, the Washington Conference of 1921-1922 remained "one of the most significant, and overlooked diplomatic meetings in American history."³⁸

This conference was equally important for Russia, albeit uninvited and kept away from official discussions.

In the postwar period, America acquired a new political and economic phenomenon which President Eisenhower called a "military-industrial complex" in his Farewell Address in January 1961.

Since that time the American military-industrial complex has increased its impact on foreign policy decision-making many times over; many of these decisions pursued corporate rather than national interests.

Today, with the world wars of the 20th century relegated to the past everything against which John Quincy Adams warned and which he feared most has become a grim reality of the U.S. foreign policy: the traditions of its Founding Fathers and anti-imperialism have been forgotten once and for all.

The Road that Took a Quarter of a Century: On the History of Soviet-Egyptian Relations

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ON AUGUST 26, 1943, that is 70 years ago, the Soviet Union and Egypt, having completed a twenty-five-year journey, finally arrived at diplomatic relations.

The government of Egypt refused to recognize the Soviet state established after October revolution of 1917; diplomatic missions and consulates of pre-revolutionary Russia were functioning in Egypt as if nothing had happened. This severed the official relations between the two countries.

The first step toward diplomatic relations with Soviet Russia was made on October 6, 1923 when the Egyptian government withdrew its recognition of the diplomatic and consular structures of old Russia and annulled the capitulations (extraterritoriality) for its subjects.

The rulers of Egypt were guided by different considerations: in the first place they wanted to end the capitulations for the Russian emigres who had settled down in their country, not establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.

Amid the world crisis of 1929, Egypt needed trade with the Soviet Union even more than before. According to Minister of Trade Abdessalam Fahmi, in the mid-1930s the Soviet Union was the fourth largest importer of Egyptian cotton.

Not all Egyptian officials were dead set against diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. Sidarus Bey, Chargé d'Affaires of Egypt in Britain, was one of them. Cairo, however, refused to support his initiative.

The fear of the "red threat" still loomed large in Abdeen Palace: in 1937, for example, the government banned books by Henri Barbusse about Stalin and Jean Jacoby about Lenin "in the interests of public security."

On September 9, Izvestia carried the following information: "For some time, Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs I.M. Maisky and Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Egypt Mustafa el-Nahhas Pasha exchanged communications, in the name of their governments, as a result of which the countries established diplomatic relations on August 26, 1943. The agreement presupposes exchange of envoys in the near future."

Cooperation between the Soviet Union and Egypt reached its highest in the 1960s. This varied and highly satisfactory period deserves a detailed discussion.

Rereading Shebarshin

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ALGORITM Publishers reissued the memoirs of Leonid Shebarshin, former intelligence chief of the Soviet Union, chronologically the last head of the First Chief Directorate of the KGB of the USSR (from February to September 23, 1991), - a praiseworthy attempt to attract attention to this unique book. It first appeared in October 1992 when few people had time or desire to read books, let alone specialist literature.

Now I know that in the last two centuries the civilized world produced only two books dealing with the role of intelligence in the emergence and development of a world superpower and its state machine and the technology of mastering the skills of an intelligence agent. They were written by different authors for different reasons. I think that any learned reader has already guessed that I have in mind the books of two retired intelligence officers: former CIA Chief Allen Dulles' *The Craft of Intelligence* and Leonid Shebarshin's *The Hand of Moscow*.

In their books two chief intelligence officers of the mightiest states of the 20th century told *urbi et orbi* about the role of the intelligence; what kind of relationships should the corporate professional community establish with the state; how should the state train these unique specialists and what they thought about the relationships inside the professional community.

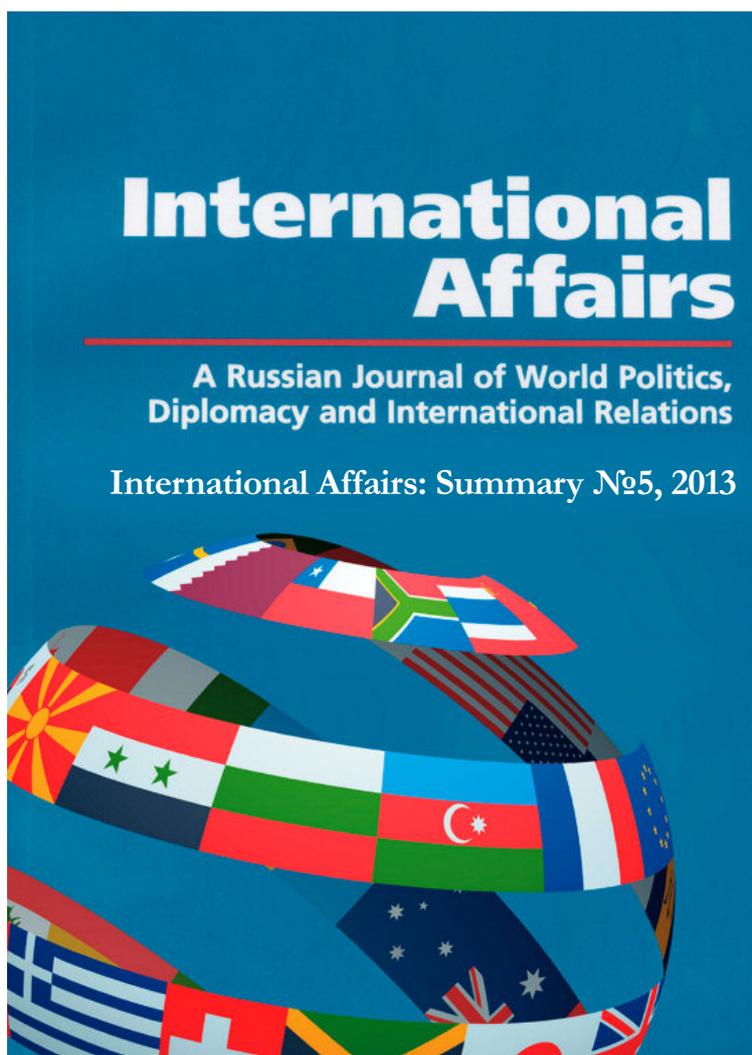
I should say from the very beginning that these books were written by professionals and for professionals or, rather, for those who train professionals and those who aspire to become a professional. Both authors paid much attention to intelligence techniques; both stressed that intelligence as a lifelong profession demands a great deal of patriotism.

Otherwise, these are two different books. While Allen Dulles concentrated at ideology and described opposition to the Communist threat as the main task of any intelligence agent Leonid Shebarshin was of a different opinion: "We are alive and are aware of our existence because we have Motherland. We will insist on it, we will assess the past, the deeds of our ancestors and our contemporaries and look into a stormy future from this point.

This is what makes Leonid Shebarshin's book and his position different from the positions of all CIA directors: his unalloyed and natural patriotism has nothing in common with the ideological smokescreen his American colleagues used to conceal their national geopolitical interests.

A different state is taking shape; it will require a different intelligence service. But "when time comes we will have to build it from scratch." This sad epitaph seems to sum up the author's deliberations on the changing fortunes of the intelligence service in our country and of many other things.

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