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The Great Victory as a Source of Our National Pride

Author: Sergey Lavrov

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation



DEAR VETERANS, esteemed colleagues, friends, First of all, I would like to offer heartfelt congratulations to the veterans who participated in the Great Patriotic War, those who selflessly worked on the home front during the hard war years and all those present, on the 70th anniversary of the Great Victory. It is a great holiday, a great anniversary, and a guarantee of the continuity of our country and the bonds of time. We have never divided the Victory into ours and somebody else's. We have always praised the contribution of our anti-Hitler coalition allies, all those who

fought against Nazism shoulder to shoulder in the name of truth and justice. On May 9, many heads of state and government, heads of international organizations and veterans from over 20 countries will be in Red Square. Military units from our partners in the Commonwealth of Independent States, as well as India, China, Mongolia, and Serbia, will march together with Russian participants in the parade.

The Ministry's veterans include 61 participants in the Great Patriotic War, nine residents of Leningrad during the siege, three inmates of Nazi camps, and 127 workers on the home front. We pay tribute to our predecessors who, in those difficult years, did all they could to defend the country's foreign policy interests and create and consolidate the anti-Hitler coalition, and worked consistently to bring about the opening of the Second Front. A special focus was put on efforts to build the foundations of a fair postwar security architecture, which were crowned by the founding of the UN, the 70th anniversary of which is being widely marked this year.

Today, like never before, it is crucial to remember the lessons of that global catastrophe and the terrible consequences of faith in one's exceptionalism.

Thanks to the Russian leadership's attention to the Foreign Ministry, last year, a presidential executive order was issued to raise pensions for the majority of diplomatic service veterans. For our part, we are doing all we can to mobilize available resources to provide support to all veterans without exception. In this context, we are especially grateful to our missions abroad.

Seventy years ago, the most devastating war in the history of humankind - a great, decisive battle, as our well-known author and war veteran Daniil Granin put it - came to an end. It is our sacred duty to remember the participants in that unprecedented struggle and take care of those who returned as victors and are still with us today.

Once again my best wishes to the veterans on this great holiday. I wish you good health, wellbeing and joy.

World War II in the West and the East

Author: E. Titorenko

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Member of the Central Council of the Russia-China Friendship Association, veteran of the Great Patriotic War



ON MAY 9, 2015, Russia celebrated the 70th anniversary of Soviet Victory in the Great Patriotic War against fascist Germany; September 2, 2015 will mark the end of World War II.

So far, there have been two versions about the beginning of World War II; today, their number is increasing.

A sober assessment of the military-strategic situation indicated that the victory would claim more efforts, more time and, most importantly, more lives. This meant that World War II could not be completed any time soon without the Soviet Union; London and Washington, in the first place, wanted the Soviet Union on their side in the war with Japan. On the eve of the Yalta Conference, a memorandum from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the President of the United States and American delegation said that the U.S. needed Soviet assistance to rout Germany and that

America badly needed the Soviet Union on its side in the war against Japan as soon as the war in Europe had been completed.

Absolutely sure of his speedy victory over the Red Army, Hitler did not insist on Japan's immediate entry into the war against the Soviet Union: he tried to incite it at the U.S. and Britain. Pushed aside and unwilling to act on German orders the ruling circles of Japan were playing their own game.

The United States and its strongest military-economic potential was thus drawn into World War II in the Pacific.

The battle for Manchuria was entrusted to the troops of the Trans-Baikal Front under Marshal Rodion Malinovsky, the 1st Far Eastern Front under Marshal Kirill Meretskov, and the 2nd Far Eastern Front under Army General Maksim Purkaev.

In this war, Japanese losses reached a huge figure of 2, 600,000, the worst defeat of Japan in the last century, not counting the losses inflicted by the American air raids at Tokyo and other industrial centers.

World War II was the last world war: Nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction have made the war as the continuation of politics (at least between the nuclear powers) impossible; it will leave no chances either for the victors or the defeated and will make international military tribunals unnecessary.

We, the veterans of war, have experienced the cruelty and hardships of war and the never healing wounds.

Let us hope that nobody has been forgotten and nothing should be forgotten. We should never forget these words.

The Victory and the Fate of the World

Author: A. Frolov

Leading research fellow, Institute of International Relations, Doctor of Science (History)



THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY of the Victory in the Great Patriotic War is a special day in Russia: "There is gladness, but with sadness in our eyes." Time is increasing the distance between us and the memorable day in May 1945 yet the results and lessons of the war remain hugely important for the fate of the world and the system of international relations. Much has been written about the military-

political lessons of World War II and the world development trends it started. Today, the developments on the European continent bring to mind certain very important lessons of this war. The war shaped the political map of Europe and Asia as we know it now. Impressed by the struggle of the Soviet people against the invaders the world opened doors of diplomatic recognition; Russian became one of the official tongues of the world.

Today, on the one hand, Russia is losing some of its political and economic positions because of Western pressure prompted by Moscow's stand on the Ukrainian crisis. On the other, practically no international problem - the Iranian nuclear program, the Middle East conflicts - can be settled without Russia.

The West feared the Soviet Union; there is no doubt about it. This did nothing good to the relationships with the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc. The Soviet leaders feared that Western influence would destroy the gains of the 1917 revolution, socialist values and the Soviet state. The "iron curtain," the product of bilateral efforts, is one of the results of fears, apprehensions and mutual mistrust.

Nuclear weapons can be described as one of the results of World War II, devised and created while the war was still raging. While in Berlin, Harry Truman learned about the first successful nuclear test and hastened to share the news with Winston Churchill who immediately suggested that the new weapon could be used against one of the major Soviet industrial centers.

The Yalta-Potsdam system has not yet exhausted its potentials. No matter how much Washington wants to push aside the world community and its opinion it should take the UN into account when dealing with serious international crises and conflicts.

The future of Russia depends on its economic course, support of science, fundamental science in the first place, freedom of creativity, and its ability to free its citizens from bureaucratic and other bonds.

The memory of the Great Victory is the factor which inspires the nation. There is no much sense in taking offense at some countries which made May 9 the Day of Memory. In Russia, May 9 is Victory Day, the day of Our Victory.

The Great Patriotic War: The Cossacks' Final Attack

Author: I. Bondarenko

Professor, Doctor of Science (Law), President of the European Academy for Security and Conflictology, Slovakia



ATTEMPTS to falsify the history of the Great Patriotic War in order to erase the very name of that war and knowledge of its events and facts from the minds of whole generations, didn't begin today or even yesterday.

One of the facts that are once again being re-interpreted is the participation of the Cossacks in the Great Patriotic War. That war came to Russia less than two decades after the end of the Civil War. It is no secret that many Cossacks refused to accept the Bolshevik government and fought against it in the ranks of the White Army. Serious damage to the country was done by the "decossackization" policy. But with the increasing likelihood of a new big war, the Soviet leadership radically changed its attitude to the Cossacks.

Under Order No. 67 of People's Commissar of Defense Kliment Voroshilov dated April 23, 1936, cavalry divisions were formed from Cossacks that were called Cossack divisions.

The Soviet Cossacks played a significant role in one of the final events of the Great Patriotic War, the Bratislava-Brno Operation, which resulted in the liberation of Slovakia, involved the defeat of nine enemy divisions, and cleared the way for the Red Army's advance toward Prague. Each day, an average of about 850 Soviet soldiers and officers were killed and twice as many were wounded in the battle of Brno, one of the bloodiest battles between Soviet and German forces on the territory of the modern Czech Republic.

The Bratislava-Brno Operation and the Prague Offensive, which began on May 6, 1945, should not be seen as isolated events.

The core of the Soviet forces that were conducting the Prague Offensive was Lieutenant General Pliyev's 1st Mechanized Cavalry Group reinforced by the 7th Mechanized Corps, whose tanks were to advance along the Brno-Jihlava-Prague road.

The Red Army forces were opposed by Germany's Army Group Center, which was commanded by Field Marshal Ferdinand Schoerner and consisted of nearly one million well-armed soldiers with rich experience of fighting on the Eastern Front. The Soviet forces had the task of destroying that group and help insurgents in Prague.

Fighting began on May 7. By the midday on May 9, the Soviet tanks had entered Prague. However, the enemy would not surrender. Red Army cavalry divisions passed through Jihlava on the evening on May 9 and reached the southeastern outskirts of Prague after an all-night march. Throughout the night, the Cossacks were suppressing various hotbeds of resistance.

"Historians Should Celebrate and Grieve Together With Their People"

Author: A. Kirilin

Head, Administration Department, Central Election Commission of Russia, Major-General, Member of the Central Council of the Russian Military-Historical Society



DISINTEGRATION of the Soviet Union in 1991 started an unbridled campaign of mudslinging of the Soviet period in the history of the state and the nation. The media of Russia and the CIS competed in slandering the Soviet Armed Forces and the officer corps.

Russian imitators of Western falsifiers distorted the facts and figures related to the Great Patriotic War. They slandered the recent past and misrepresented, from the positions of NATO, Soviet achievements

and Soviet victories in history textbooks for secondary and higher schools.

The preachers of "new approaches" to the history of World War II are trying hard to plant their own version of why the war was unleashed and how it unfolded; they cite distorted statistics of the composition, numerical strength and armaments of the warring sides.

They are deaf to admonitions; they have no conscience and ignore facts: their careers are built on these unseemly achievements. They are pets of certain radio and TV companies and publishing houses. There is a great demand for slanderers in a certain segment of mass media which organize telephone interviews with Vladimir Rezun (aka Viktor Suvorov), author of *Ledokol* (Icebreaker) and other anti-Soviet libelous works.

Strange as it may seem the Germans are not as critical of their army which suffered a crushing defeat as some of our literati who never hesitate to slander the victorious army.

The leadership of the Defense Ministry of the USSR decided to declassify information about the human losses to respond to alternative information and arbitrary assessments of the results of World War II and the scope of losses which had appeared in the media and caused quite a stir.

An interview with Chief of the General Staff of the Soviet Armed Forces, Army General Mikhail Moiseev published in *Voenno-istoricheskij zhurnal* (Military History Journal) (No. 3, 1990) disclosed the figures of human losses. In the same year, acting on his orders a group of experts started working on a volume of statistical data of the Soviet military war losses.

Many historians, both in this country and abroad, understood and accepted this procedure of estimation. In his Foreword to the English edition of Colonel-General G. Krivosheev's *Soviet Casualties and Combat Losses in the Twentieth Century* (Greenhill Books, London, 1997), Prof. John Erickson of Edinburgh University, an expert in demography, drew the attention of readers to these figures and explained them.

Author: A. Davydenko

First Deputy Editor-in-Chief of International Affairs



An international conference titled "The Soviet Union and Latin America during World War II and the Present" organized by the Instituto Bering-Bellingshausen para las Americas (IBBA), the Raul Roa Higher Institute of International Relations (ISRI) and the Institute of Cuban History was one of the most impressive and memorable events. It was carried out on the eve of the Victory Day and the 55th anniversary of restored diplomatic relations between Russia and the Republic of Cuba.

Experts in Latin American history from Russia, Cuba, El Salvador, Uruguay, and Honduras shared the results of their studies and offered highly interesting and hitherto unknown facts about the Soviet-Latin American cooperation during World War II and the way the states of the Southern Hemisphere had been involved, on the side of the anti-Hitler coalition, in the struggle against the common enemy. The papers delivered at the conference dealt with many varied subjects yet all speakers agreed that solidarity and determination to fight common enemy acutely felt during the war had not lost their relevance. The same can be said about the objective historical memory which does not divide the allies into big and small. The Soviet people saved their country and the world from fascist slavery; this is an unrivaled feat. The Great Victory of 9 May 1945 could have never been achieved without the Soviet Union's paramount role in routing fascist hordes. At the same time, while thanking the Soviet veterans of the Great Patriotic War, we should never forget about the countries which, acting on the side of the Soviet Union and the anti-Hitler coalition, contributed to the joint struggle against the common enemy. This fully applies to the contribution made by the Latin American countries to the victory in World War II. Russian historians who specialize in Latin American studies have written extensively on the subject yet the results and the scope of the Latin American countries' contribution to the victory remain unknown to the academic community let alone the public at large.

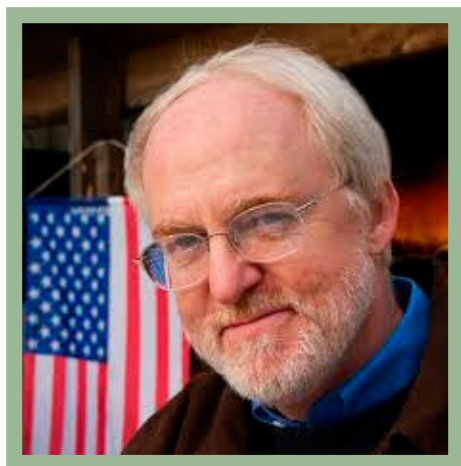
The informal part of the conference was no less active. The Russian participants were communicating with their Latin American colleagues in a festive atmosphere, with an abundance of jokes, traditional exchange of souvenirs, taking pictures, and reminiscences. Academician Davydov shared his memories: "I first came to Cuba 51 years ago as a young man to serve in the Cuban Navy side by side with Soviet officers with the World War II experience behind them. We worked together with officers of the Navy of republican Spain who shared their fighting experience with the Cuban colleagues. The Spaniards were far from young but worked on par with their much younger colleagues.... It was at that time that I became keenly aware of the link between generations, the spirit of camaraderie and mutual assistance."

The ceremony of laying wreaths to the monument of the Cubans killed at the fronts of World War II was one of the most touching moments. Historians, political scientists and journalists from Russia and Latin American countries paid tribute to those who lost their lives for the common victory over the common enemy.

American Soldiers on Red Square

Author: John Beyrle

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States to the Russian Federation (2008-2011)



I AM OFTEN ASKED to name the most memorable moment of my three decades as a U.S. diplomat managing America's relations with the Soviet Union and Russia, 1983-2013. My memories are many and vivid. I recall the bitter cold of Red Square in the winters of 1984 and 1985 when I accompanied Vice President George W. Bush to the state funerals of Soviet leaders Andropov and Chernenko. And I will never forget the unexpected warmth of the summit meetings between Reagan and Gorbachev that I helped prepare in 1988. I was deeply proud when Presidents Medvedev and Obama signed the START Treaty reducing strategic nuclear weapons, an achievement that brought immense satisfaction to all of my Amer-

ican and Russian colleagues who helped negotiate the agreement.

From a purely emotional point of view, though, nothing surpasses the moment on May 9, 2010 when, while serving as U.S. Ambassador to the Russian Federation, I rose from my seat on the grandstand in the shadow of the Kremlin and saluted the uniformed American soldiers marching through Red Square during the celebration of the 65th anniversary of the allied victory in World War II.

Today, a short five years later, the American and Russian governments are embroiled in serious disagreements that are undermining the mutual trust that should be the basis of constructive bilateral relations.

The victory that we celebrated then and again now was a total victory of the Allied Powers. Cooperation between the allies in World War II was crucial to the complete defeat of Nazi Germany. But during my trips throughout Russia as ambassador, and in my travels in the United States, I found myself dismayed at how poorly people in both countries, especially the younger generation, understood the realities of our wartime alliance.

When I think about the service of my father, I understand that it is impossible to overestimate the frontline brotherhood that emerged between the millions of soldiers and sailors that made up our strategic alliance, fighting a common enemy on the ground, in the sky and the sea. If not for the joint efforts of all the peoples of the anti-Hitler coalition, the final victory over the enemy would have remained just a dream.

Thank the Soviet soldiers, the men and women who took my father into their ranks when he was defenseless, fed him when he was starving, treated his wounds, helped him get to the U.S. Embassy in Moscow and return home to his family alive and well. It was of these men and women that I thought in 2010, as I saluted the American soldiers marching across Red Square. And perhaps it is for this reason - personal and emotional, yes, but no less genuine - that I continue to believe in the possibility of - and to work for - a constructive and productive relationship between our two governments.

"We Are Relevant, Influential and Respected"

Author: Sergey Ryabkov

Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation



The most important thing for us is the continued strengthening - and I mean it - of Russia's positions on the international arena, in spite of all the attempts to portray the situation as if Russia is in isolation, all alone. Nothing could be further from the truth. We are relevant, we are influential and we are respected everywhere.

In April, Russia's BRICS presidency got off to a flying start. Within two and a half months, a number of major BRICS related events took place in

Russia. Furthermore, a major nonproliferation forum took place, a review conference in New York from late April until late May.

The sanctions that the U.S. introduced against us last year are arranged so that they do not hinder the more or less normal development of trade.

Incidentally, addressing another aspect of our relations with the US, we recently published a commentary on the State Department's report on the implementation of international treaties. Some people, who see the situation in our relations as difficult, perhaps artificially politicized and affected by leftover phobias, will say that this document, our commentary was made on the "you are another fool" or "you lynch Negroes" principle. This, however, is a primitive view of what is going on. For a normal dialogue to develop and for countries to communicate and achieve results, it is impossible always to agree with one another. Thesis and antithesis produce synthesis. Natural discourse - call it what you will - consists in that a country upholds its views but at the same time listens to what its opponents have to say. This is precisely how Russia acts.

Unfortunately, it is difficult for the Americans to have a debate or simply dialogue about the U.S. "exclusiveness," messianism, its vision of its role, questions such as why the country's image that has evolved there over decades and centuries is that of "a city upon a hill" or "a beacon of democracy" that lights up everything around it.

What is happening in our relations with the European Union is a separate question. I think that the sanction scheme that is being used against Russia on the U.S. initiative contains approaches and mechanisms that are hurting Europeans, European economic operators more than they are hurting U.S. operators.

The BRICS political segment is developing. Over the past several weeks alone, a series of consultations on space security and the Middle East took place in Moscow. A meeting of high-level BRICS representatives for security issues took place in Moscow. All of these topics are discussed in a friendly, collective spirit without any attempts to impose decisions or artificially accelerate this process.

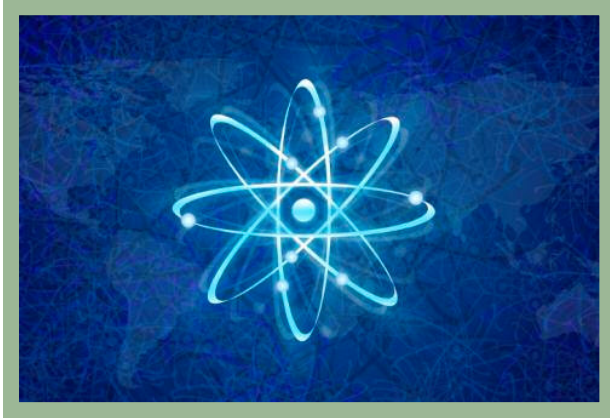
The role of the public, NGOs and the nongovernmental factor, which has a direct influence on politics, has grown significantly. Foreign policy is increasingly losing its status as an elitist occupation of people sitting in offices behind closed curtains, in frozen postures, and writing, if not with a goose feather, and typing on a keyboard something that is understandable only to themselves and their bosses. They need to liven up, to be more resourceful.

Prospects for International Nuclear Cooperation

Authors: Vladimir Annenkov, Professor, Diplomatic Academy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Doctor of Science (Military Sciences);

Leonid Kononov, Professor, Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Civil Service;

Yuri Fokine, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary



IN RECENT DECADES, globalization processes have affected many spheres of human activity, including the nuclear sphere.

The evolution of the nuclear world has changed the structure of global nuclear threats. The previously dominant threat of the outbreak of a world nuclear war has significantly diminished, receding to a lower risk category. At present, center stage

has been taken by nuclear threats that until recently were regarded as potential threats.

At present, the aforementioned new nuclear threats have essentially not affected the format of international cooperation in the nuclear sphere. The array of international cooperation measures has proved clearly insufficient for putting in place effective barriers to contemporary global nuclear challenges.

Current global nuclear threats require an upgrading of the existing model of international nuclear relations.

THE PROBLEM is that persons involved in the decision-making process regarding global nuclear issues have received their education mainly at national colleges and universities, where training is based on a national approach toward ensuring safety. Practically, not a single college or university in the world trains international specialists with a supranational perspective on global nuclear problems. As a result of this, the thinking of modern political and military elites in different countries is dominated by narrowly empirical perceptions of the nuclear world, which are often not based in reality. This creates a barrier of mutual misunderstanding between representatives of different countries, which has a destructive impact on international nuclear relations and the nuclear policy of modern states.

The creation of a communicative scientific environment is also an indispensable precondition for the evolution of a single scientific space in the nuclear sphere. There is a need for regular international forums, conferences, workshops, seminars, and roundtables on global nuclear issues, as well as for the implementation of joint research projects and international exchanges of scientists.

Author: V. Chernega

Consultant for the Council of Europe, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, Doctor of Science (Law)



THE CONFRONTATION between Russia and the West sparked by the Ukrainian crisis has affected many aspects of their mutual relations, including those in the format of the Council of Europe.

This article, in addition to looking at relations between Russia and the Council of Europe, makes a brief review of this problem. But it appears reasonable to start with an abstract of the Council's history from its inception in 1949 to the present day, a history that has determined the Council's role in Europe, and consequently its significance for Russia.

It is in the objective interest of Russia to continue to cooperate with the Council of Europe. There is no alternative to this be-

cause, generally speaking, such cooperation is the main guarantee that the country will remain part of pan-European civilization, even during its present-day confrontation with the West.

Today, no other organization can replace the Council as the main builder of a common humanitarian space in Europe, or shoulder the Council's role in passing pan-European conventional law and controlling its enforcement, a role that remains one of the Council's core activities.

Of course, the Council of Europe, being a Western institution, has repeatedly used double standards which is an extra source of tension. PACE has practiced this especially often.

Today, the Council of Europe and PACE take a completely different line on the civil war in Ukraine. The territorial integrity principle is given paramount importance and the use of force against the "separatists" is seen as legitimate. Formally, both sides are held responsible for human rights violations, but interest is mainly taken in the militias' human rights records.

Even the European Court of Human Rights sometimes shows doublestandards in its judgments on Russia.

Even more Russians have been taught such methods during courses in Russia organized by the Council of Europe. Not all such methods are applicable in Russia but the majority is accepted as useful and amount to what are not always noticeable but on the whole very valuable contributions to the humanitarian evolution of the country's society and state, making improvements to the education system and penitentiary practices, among other things.

It is likewise in the interest of the Council of Europe to collaborate with Russia despite all the controversies and frictions described above. Without Russia, there can be no Greater Europe, something that has always been and remains the Council's *raison d'être*.

Author: N. Bordyuzha
CSTO general secretary



During the 13 years that have passed since the establishment of the Collective Security Treaty Organization in May 2002, through joint efforts, we have created a multifunctional collective institution the main goal of which is to strengthen peace, international and regional security and stability, and to protect the independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of its member states on a collective basis. Amid the growing military and political instability in the world and in regions bordering the CSTO zone

of responsibility, the role of the organization's military component increases. Its core is constituted by the CSTO Collective Forces (Troops), which include bilateral and multilateral regional and coalition forces, existing and newly established integrated air defense, communication, command and control systems, and collective defense technology and military economic cooperation mechanisms.

Work is currently underway to provide the Collective Forces with modern and interoperable models of arms, military and special equipment. The framework for cooperation in the defense and technology sector regulates their manufacturing, supplies on a preferential basis and operation.

According to the Russian National Antiterrorist Committee, about 2,000 Russian citizens are fighting on the side of ISIL. I believe that there are at least as many citizens from other post-Soviet countries. Add here the well-organized terrorist training of our citizens in special camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

It is impossible to ignore this extremely dangerous problem. Otherwise whole regions can be plunged into bloody chaos.

In addition to the top priority political and diplomatic tools of ensuring collective security, we have established a defense capability, which is constantly upgraded. Unfortunately, this is the order of the day.

At the same time, it is important to note the active position on the Ukraine crisis that has been adopted by CSTO member countries in their national capacity. Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan have, without a doubt, played a highly positive role in bringing about a settlement in southeastern Ukraine. Their efforts have been instrumental in establishing a fragile but long-awaited ceasefire in the Donets Basin, ensuring continuous humanitarian aid supplies to the war-ravaged population, accepting hundreds of thousands of refugees and providing decent living conditions for people in distress.

In May, the whole world will observe the great date: the 70th anniversary of Victory over German Nazism, which was nurtured by Western democracies. Today, the need to observe the anniversary of the Great Victory is important like never before. Nazis are again rearing their ugly heads.

Evolution of China's Foreign Policy Under Xi Jinping

Author: I. Denisov

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XI JINPING has been more successful than his predecessor, Hu Jintao, in consolidating China's system of government. The domestic political agenda of the "Xi-Li rule" with the institutions and mechanisms that it has brought into being has taken even less time to put together than observers generally expected. This is the result of Xi's style of governance and new and more difficult challenges that have needed prompt reactions, chiefly internal Communist Party issues that had obviously been the new leader's priorities until mid-2013 or even later. Proposals for revising China's foreign policy course were, furthermore, raised by leading military experts in articles, interviews and speeches in 2012.

Whereas the year 2008 was, as it were, a dividing line, a point where Chinese foreign policy began to show an increasing hardline trend, the preplanned transition in 2012-2013 to "fifth generation" governance was expected by some experts to put a logical end to debates on the practical value of "taoguangyanghui."

Propaganda and the explanation of the essence of the Chinese Dream should be closely linked to the concept of modern Chinese values. Modern Chinese values are socialist values with Chinese characteristics.

At theoretical level, China continues to link its foreign policy objectives to domestic issues, but today this linkage is more sophisticated and more holistic.

The majority of Chinese experts have a rather low opinion of the country's general standards of scholarly foreign policy research. "Let's see how many rubbishy articles are produced yearly by leading Chinese journals on international relations. This immediately makes clear how serious is the problem of superficiality and separation from reality in this kind of research," Professor Chen Qi of Tsinghua University said during a debate.¹⁵

China will gradually be trying on the attire of a great power, and this may dash the hopes of the nationalistic part of Chinese society. It is fair to surmise that the government will closely watch both liberal pro-Western and nationalist currents in China in order to avert destabilization such as anti-Japanese demonstrations in 2005 and 2012.

One way to avoid errors and stereotypes in trying to understand Xi's global "Chinese dream" is to give a fresh impetus to Track Two diplomacy. This should be a concrete and practical dialogue between persons who would need serious references to be entrusted with the task. The Russian Chinese Council of Sages, set up in 2014, may become one such high-level floor. Russia-related projects will be among the tasks of renovated or newly set-up Chinese think tanks, and so it is worth starting to shape an agenda that would meet the strategic interests of Russia and China in the rapidly changing architecture of international relations.

A Long and Winding Road to Peace on the Korean Peninsula

Author: G. Ivashentsov

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary



SIXTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, on June 25, 1950, the first salvoes of the Korean War were fired - a war that lasted for over three years and has become one of the most bloody and devastating military conflicts of the latter half of the twentieth century. Its disastrous effects are still being felt today.

The start of the Korean War was in many ways predetermined by the rise of the Cold War. From 1910 to 1945, Korea was Japan's colony.

The Korean War started as a confrontation between the two Korean poles - the North which was striving to implement a Soviet model in order to unite the country, and the South which was con-

tinuously declaring its commitment to American standards. Under the Cold War, however, a confrontation grew into a full-scale military conflict, which was one step from using nuclear weapons. Neither the North nor the South, however, was able to reach the desired objectives.

Both Russia and China are objectively interested in U.S. presence in Asia and in joint cooperation with it, but, naturally, outside the "America-centric system."

The situation in the Korean peninsula has long been largely determined by the China factor. At one time, both Pyongyang and Beijing claimed that North Korea and China "depend on each other like lips and teeth," that "the two countries' friendship has been sealed with blood," because over 500,000 Chinese people's volunteers were killed in the Korean War, fighting on the side of the North.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION like in North Korea? By shifting focus from Marxism and Socialism to national traditions and Confucian values, the South Korean leadership declared the "Songun policy" a framework for the strategy of the country's survival, i.e., prioritizing the role of the army in the affairs of state, which implies the stepping up of military preparations, including the nuclear program.

A peace treaty which should ultimately supersede the Korean Armistice Agreement of 1953, should not only be a non-aggression pact, but also a comprehensive partnership instrument, turning DPRK from a "rogue state" into a full-fledged member of the international cooperation and a beneficiary of international financial institutions.

Forming legally binding regional partnerships or associations in accordance with the sectoral division and adjusting their working mechanisms will finally allow creating the conditions for an accelerated movement toward establishing an integrated security system in Northeast Asia.

Author: N. Khaustov

Second Secretary, International Organizations Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation



INFORMATION has always played a key role in the life of people, society and the state. From ancient times, the powers that be realized that the possession of information gives an advantage over others, helps achieve a victory, enforce subjugation, and control everything. Today, only he who creates and controls information flows has real power.

Newspapers, radio and television are the media that have long been used in the struggle for global domination and they have a serious impact on the life of each member of society. During the years of their existence, a clear understanding has emerged in society about what the media are, how they work and what their responsibility is, and the relevant international regulations

have been adopted. The Internet has become a new tool that is used to influence people. This technology has drastically changed our life and the rules of the game in the information world.

A leading humanitarian international organization that addresses, among others, problems related to the impact of information on people at an international level is UNESCO. Unlike other international agencies, UNESCO has always oriented itself not toward political discussion but toward the scientific analysis of modern challenges and threats facing humankind. UNESCO serves as a kind of laboratory accumulating the advanced expertise of the world's best scientists and issues recommendations.

UNESCO's activities are greatly assisted by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA). It would seem that amid the free access to information and the development of the Internet, the role of libraries as scientific centers and storages of the most valuable information has declined, as has their popularity and demand for them among broad sections of the population.

To understand the depth of the issues studied by UNESCO, it is important to know why information should be preserved, why access to it should be ensured, and what media and information literacy, information ethics and multilingualism in cyberspace are.

From UNESCO's perspective, the role of the Internet in advancing respect for and the realization of human rights, in ensuring human dignity and in promoting peace raises issues for ethical consideration.

Cyberspace is global and transnational and therefore stands out for its particular complexity and sensitivity and calls for a comprehensive approach toward the resolution of a broad range of issues related to its use. An inclusive multilateral process can help put in place a platform to enable all participants, including government agencies, industry and civil society, to study these challenging issues and propose relevant recommendations. In this context, UNESCO can play an important role, facilitating dialogue and bringing together all stakeholders to find a consensus on the global, regional and national levels.

Germany: Following the Concept of Washington's Global Leadership

Author: E. Leonov

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IT WAS NEARLY SEVENTY YEARS ago that the process of postwar settlement was completed in Europe which turned defeated Germany into a "political dwarf." Having spent these seven decades to become Europe's strongest socially-oriented market economy and a donor for its "small states," as well as Europe's main integration force, Germany can hardly claim the key role in international relations. It has no independent

foreign policy course, the fact reconfirmed by its position on the Ukrainian crisis manufactured by the United States.

It seems that Germany is a new type of colony used by the United States as a "political puppet" to promote its own interests. Germany, on its side, has accepted this state of affairs; it does not insist on a pullout of foreign troops from its territory (with the exception of sporadic protests of the Left, pacifists, etc.) and has been reconciled with the huge sums poured into their maintenance and the resultant unfavorable ecological effects.

Today, Berlin's position is obscure and weak. It is imposed from outside and is burdened with a widening range of issues of special importance for the United States. The recent scandal stirred up by the involvement of the Bundesnachrichtendienst (BND) in political and industrial espionage in some of the European countries under the patronage of the National Security Agency (NSA) of the United States is one of the pertinent examples.

There is another aspect of Germany's "financial slavery": Nearly half of its gold reserves is kept in the Federal Reserve System of the United States. To be successful, any state needs gold and foreign exchange reserves, that is, liquid assets. Adequate reserves make anti-crisis measures and sustainable exchange rate of national currency possible. "German gold reserves, the second-biggest in the world after those of the U.S., totaled 3,386.4 tons on March 31, according to World Gold Council data. Due to German postwar history, the biggest part is stored at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York; the rest is in London, Paris and Frankfurt."

The shifted accents towards transatlantic partnership will probably accelerate the loss of

Russia as Germany's historical partner. This means that Russia should probably insist on the idea of a single economic and humanitarian space from Lisbon to Vladivostok through a free trade zone between the EU and EurAsEC, among other instruments.

Transformation of cultural awareness of German society under pressure of American standards is another important factor which affects the status of the FRG in the system of international relations.

Russia needs strong Germany to balance out other powers. Let us hope that in the long-term perspective Germany will finally disprove the cliché of former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger: "An economic giant but a political dwarf."

The Russian Federation's Foreign Trade amid anti-Russian Sanctions: Preliminary Conclusions

Author: I. Gladkov

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE has been marked by dramatic dynamics in the years after the global financial crisis of 2008-2009. The 23% plunge in global exports - in monetary terms - was followed by a nearly "mirror-like" increase in 2010 and 2011, by 22% and 20% respectively. However, in 2012, international trade stagnated, showing effectively zero growth, and 2013 saw a mere 2% increase (see Table 1).

One remarkable point are last year's negative dynamics of exports from BRICS countries. The explanation is

that, for various reasons. Brazil, Russia, India, and South Africa lost some of their positions in global trade in 2014.

Ukraine is obviously a separate case. Its exports also went down seriously that year, sinking the country to the 50th position in global exporter rankings.

EXPERTS who see a specific economic dimension to the sanctions surely have a point. Moreover, the well-known conductor of the sanctions orchestra is trying to achieve several serious, major goals with a single movement of his baton.

STATISTICS from the Russian Federal Customs Service show that 2014 was by no means the best year in the history of Russia's foreign trade. One may look at that year at different angles. For instance, the end of its first quarter saw the "Crimean spring" and then the anti-Russian sanctions because of the crisis in southeastern Ukraine.

By now, it has become obvious that the sanctions are here to stay and may be made more rigorous.

The EU as a collective partner of Russia posted losses of a mere 1.4 percentage points for 2014, but the situation varied significantly from country to country in the Union.

Russian exports to and imports from countries of the CIS, Russia's third collective partner, dropped by an average of 15% in 2014, sustaining a trend for decrease.

TRENDS that originated in spring 2014 continued into 2015. Russia's foreign trade kept declining in volume in January and February, going down by 28.7% year on year, with exports dropping by 23.8% and imports plunging by 37.6%. As before, there was a surplus, this time \$31.9 billion.¹¹

The first two months of the year saw escalating negative trends in the geography of Russia's foreign trade.

The CIS still ranked third among Russia's partners, but the country's trade with CIS nations dropped both in absolute terms - by \$5.8 billion - and in relative terms. The CIS-related proportion of Russia's foreign trade volume edged down to 11.6% from 13.2%.

The Ideology of a Hard-Working Nation: Lee Kuan Yew and the Lessons of Singapore's "Economic Miracle"

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THE GLOBAL ATTENTION to the reforms of the architect of Singapore's "economic miracle" is easily explained by the country's socio-economic successes. Lee Kuan Yew, the first prime minister of Singapore, is an iconic figure in the modern world. In many developing and industrial countries, he is regarded as a true economic and political guru.

Although Singapore is located in a region where corruption is standard practice, it is among the top ten countries with the lowest level of corruption, although in recent years the country has seen a slight drop in this indicator as it slipped from fifth to seventh

place in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) published by Transparency International. Singapore is also among the leaders in terms of quality of life, ranking ninth in the Human Development Index (HDI).

IN CONTRAST to liberal Western countries, the Singapore government openly declares that one of the state's tasks is to educate citizens. In today's world of aggressive "Western values," Singapore attracts attention by its government's efforts not only to enhance the material well-being of society, but also to educate it.

SINGAPORE'S EXPERIENCE in the area of ethnic policy is extremely interesting. There are many languages in Singapore, including five official ones: Mandarin Chinese, English, Hokkien, Tamil, and Malay; the largest ethnic groups are Chinese (74.2% of the population), Malays (13.3%) and Indians (9.2%).¹⁸ The state has been doing its utmost to strengthen the national identity of Singaporeans as a single nation and has achieved some successes in this area. The central theme of Singapore's state ideology is as follows: We are all different, but we are all citizens of Singapore and we love our country.

The experience of Singapore is instructive as an example of successful policy in maintaining ethnic peace in a multiethnic state, an effective fight against corruption, skillful attraction of foreign investment, a high level of healthcare and education, and very wise social engineering and public administration.

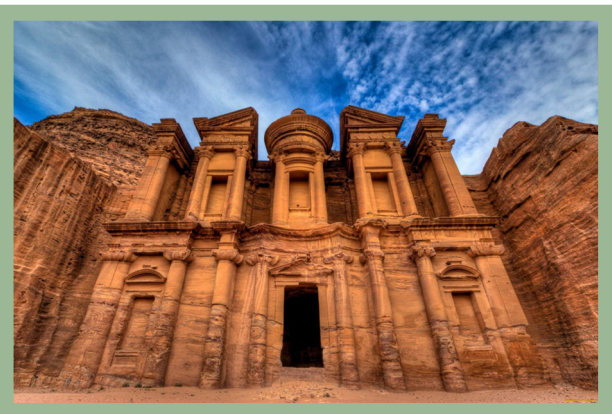
LEE KUAN YEW'S DEATH once again raises the eternal question about the role of the individual in the social process.

The non-acceptance of the new prime minister and the political system of Singapore in the global liberal community is in large part biased and superficial, and the reason for this is an adherence to the stereotypes propagated by the United States and its allies.

Singapore's political culture is characterized by an extremely cautious, balanced and pragmatic foreign policy. U.S. Navy ships call at ports and docks in Singapore, but at the same time it has friendly relations with China.

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THEIR RELATIONSHIPS have been and remain very special. Jordan has never left its anti-Zionist course but was invariably guided by practical considerations: Israel's geographic proximity, the pro-Western orientation of King Hussein and very modest territorial aspirations. The state of war between them which had begun in 1948 ended much later with a peace treaty of July 25, 1994.

Authors of memoirs and political scientists never fail to point out that at all times information channels between Israel and Jordan remained open and that in wartime contacts, albeit limited, were maintained through secret talks.

Israel and Jordan behave like neighbors doomed to live side by side and address common problems with no love lost between them.

The tension between Hussein and the Palestinians reached the boiling point after the Six-Day War: In November 1968, the Jordanian army clashed with PLO armed units.

At the peace talks, Jordan pursued a dual aim: stable relations with Israel, its closest neighbor, and a final settlement between Israel and Palestinians.

America planned to achieve the same in regard to Israeli and Jordanian troops with the goal to sign an intermediary official agreement between them but failed.

The security measures of the Jordan-Israel agreement did not interfere with Jordan's obligations in its relationships with the Arab neighbors.

The new king vowed to follow his father's foreign policy course and pointed out that the model created by the joint efforts of Hussein and Rabin had stood the test of time to become an example of how peace should be achieved and preserved. He added that his country would develop the still untapped potentials of the peace treaty with due account for domestic and foreign policy factors.

The death of the PLO leader Yasser Arafat opened a new stage in the relations between Israel and the Arab world.

The relations between Israel and Jordan have been and remain complicated and highly specific: progress is tortuous while interruptions are frequent and long in full accord with the far from simple Middle Eastern realities. Israel and Jordan behave like neighbors doomed to live side by side and address common problems with no love lost between them.

Ethnic Minority Integration Strategy: What's in the Offing for Russian Speakers in Moldova?

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MATTERS RELATED TO LANGUAGE use go beyond the framework of philological disciplines and in some way or other impact various aspects of public life. Language and culture are recognized within the international community as principal "soft power" tools for promoting a country's positive image abroad.

Being the mother tongue of many Russian compatriots living abroad, the Russian language remains an important unifying factor in the evolution of integration processes in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

In April this year, the Moldovan authorities put forward their concept of promoting the atmosphere of interethnic accord in the republic in their Ethnic Minority Integration Strategy, which was submitted to a public discussion for its subsequent approval.

Analysis of its approaches helps identify a key trend in ensuring the rights of ethnic groups living in Moldova. It consists in the gradual review of Moldova's national legislation toward limiting the rights and the legitimate interests of ethnic minorities, as well as in providing conditions that effectively restrict the use of the Russian language in the republic.

During the meeting with the OSCE high commissioner, the leaders of ethnic and cultural organizations said that the provisions of the Code, which effectively guarantees the education process only in Romanian, are in conflict with Article 35, Point 2 of the Moldovan Constitution, which establishes that the state will ensure a person's right to choose the language of instruction in accordance with the law.

On the whole, ethnic minorities, disappointed with the fact that their opinion was not taken into consideration in the drafting of this law, are also pessimistic with regard to the National Minority Integration Strategy.

Moldova's political parties only recall ethnic minority problems shortly before elections, promising them protection, support and even the abolition of regulations limiting their rights. Nevertheless, after the election race, draft laws not only limiting ethnic minority rights but also in conflict with current national legislation on their protection are submitted to parliament.

Integration and intercultural dialogue as the basic goals put forward by the Moldovan government in the Strategy cannot proceed in an environment that is becoming less and less comfortable for ethnic minorities.

One is only left to hope that the public discussion of the draft Strategy will prove effective and help eventually make this document more balanced and viable in addressing existing problems.

Specifics of Public Diplomacy in Russia

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FOR MANY CENTURIES, the term "diplomacy" was limited to the official sphere of interstate relations: talks and exchange of official documents such as notes, charters and other instruments. Put in a nutshell, traditional diplomacy is "the management of international relations by negotiation; the method by which these relations are adjusted and managed by ambassadors and envoys; the business or art of the diplomatist."

Public diplomacy per se cannot replace traditional diplomacy; it creates a favorable political climate and adds efficiency to what traditional diplomacy is doing in its sphere. Public diplomacy is de-

scribed as "soft power"; it relies on persuasion and ideological, cultural and institutional attractiveness to create the country's positive image.

In Russia, there is no state body responsible for public diplomacy, the duty being spread between the Foreign Ministry (MFA), the Ministry of Regional Development, the Public Chamber, Rossotrudnichestvo responsible for contacts with compatriots abroad, the RIA Novosti News Agency, Russia Today (RT) TV channel, etc. each left to its own devices.

Russia still lacks fully trained professionals in this sphere: there are no relevant university curricula or on the job training programs. Russia Today, for example, had to start from scratch; it offers on the job training yet after several years on air it still needs more trained professionals.

Broadcasting in foreign languages is one of the public diplomacy trends absolutely indispensable in the contemporary world with ideas flowing freely.

Russia's politics and culture have been and remain the main attraction for the audience abroad hence cultural exchanges is the main instrument of Russia's public diplomacy. Rossotrudnichestvo mainly relies on exhibitions, cultural presentations, tours, cross-cultural years, and conferences on learning Russian language abroad.

The Russian Council for International Affairs (RCIA) set up by the presidential decree of February 2, 2010 is expected to become an NGO dealing with the studies and educational programs in the field of foreign policy and international relations. This is a non-commercial partnership of representatives of Russia's foreign policy community - diplomats, academics, businessmen, and state and public figures.

The fact that the RCIA is a neutral platform is all-important: It has no political or ideological biases, which does not mean that its individual or collective members should be politically neutral. In this respect, the RCIA differs greatly from many of the functioning structures

which demonstrate political or ideological biases when it comes to international relations or which serve power, political parties, foreign donors, etc.

"Soft power" should become an active resource of any state with long-term foreign policy aims - either consolidation of its influence in the world, or seeking new markets and outside stability for consistent domestic development. In the sphere of education, "soft power" presupposes solid relationships at the level of societies as a possible foundation for political contacts in future.

Unique History of a Unique Consular Office

Author: I. Demianenko

Unique History of a Unique Consular Office: Towards the 75th Anniversary of Russia's Consulate in the Aland Islands



A CONSULATE of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs operating in Aland is the only such agency endowed with a special status. Both its history and legal status are extraordinary not only in terms of Russian but also foreign consular practices.

This is largely explained by the fact that the Aland Islands have a status of a demilitarized zone; Russia's consulate is thus essentially an element of the international instrument which allows securing the archipelago's special political and legal status in the Baltics

within the framework of the international legal relations.

Special mention should be made of a unique nature of this instrument consisting only of four articles, and yet containing, from the point of view of international legal practices, a great variety of international legal standards: declarative, defining, regulatory, protective, binding, empowering, material, procedural, self-enforced, and technical, defining the parameters and boundaries of the demilitarized zone.

Over a hundred years of common history, many human lives also intertwined - from the times of the Bomarsund fortress up to World War I. The consulate was obviously taking into account the above factors when developing contacts on both an official level and also on the level of economy, culture, tourism, and sports, as well as when promoting activities of the Aland division of the Finish-Soviet Friendship Society.

Russian consulate is also engaged in maintaining and upkeeping Russian burial grounds, regardless of their confessional affiliation. Thus, the isle of Presto has five cemeteries - Russian Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Muslim, and Jewish - dating back to the nineteenth century when the Bomarsund fortress was built and Russia was still present in Aland.

Regardless of a clearly defined nature of the tasks performed by the consulate in the Aland Islands, there was a period marked by great uncertainty. On decision of Boris Yeltsin's administration the consulate suspended its activities from 1996 to 1998, and the then consulate's head was seconded for service to Russia's General Consulate in Turku.

Through the many decades and at different points in time, 19 Soviet/Russian consuls actively promoted the above activities. An "old timer" in this regard was Consul Vassily Maksimov who worked in Aland from 1959 to 1965. Many consuls were World War II veterans; among them, an alive-and-well V.N Sorokin. In their effort to maintain links between generations, many of the consuls who worked in Aland in the 1990s and 2000s, still keep in touch with the agency.

Ninety-five Years of Russian-Turkish Diplomatic Relations: Historical Facts and Prospects

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RUSSIAN-TURKISH diplomatic relations marked their 95th anniversary on June 3, 2015. Russia and Turkey, each of which is situated partially in Europe and partially in Asia and possesses a rich cultural and historical heritage, are, in a sense, bridges between East and West.

After the collapse of the Russian and Ottoman empires, the two countries began to build their relations from scratch. This was largely the result of the international situation of those days and the revolutions in Russia and Turkey.

The Decree on Peace, passed by the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of People's Deputies, and the campaign against bourgeois and imperialist states declared by the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), its plans to export revolutions to other countries in order to have proletarian governments established there, and Russia's withdrawal from World War I in violation of its pre-revolutionary military alliance commitments became obstacles to the country's international recognition. Embroiled in a civil war, the young Soviet state found itself in diplomatic isolation. Given the instability along Russian borders, it is in the interests of Moscow to maintain good-neighborly relations with Ankara, as this directly affects Turkey's positions on various international and regional issues.

An important aspect of the Soviet-Turkish relations of the 1930s was economic cooperation. Soviet loans and assistance from Soviet specialists enabled Turkey to create light industry and build large state-of-the-art cotton factories in Kayseri and Nazilli.

DESPITE the positive start of contacts between the two young states with a rich shared history and the warm relationship developed between the governments of the RSFSR and the Soviet Union, on the one hand, and Turkey, on the other, it was not long before Moscow and Ankara came up against their first difficulties, which largely had objective causes.

DURING THE LAST DECADE of the 20th century, major changes in the global system of international relations inevitably affected Russian-Turkish relations.

When the Soviet Union ceased to exist, Ankara realized that Turkey no longer played the important role of a deterrent of Moscow's policies assigned to it by the United States. Washington was now lending Turkey much less money and seriously cut down its weapons supply. This put Turkey in a situation where it essentially had to look after itself.

In the run-up to the 95th anniversary of Russian-Turkish diplomatic relations, cooperation between the two nations once again stood the test of endurance, and it can be asserted confidently that Moscow and Ankara can successfully solve any problem by combined efforts.

The Democratic Republic of Congo: Marking the 55th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations

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THE YEAR 1960 has come to be known as the Year of Africa as 17 states of the Black Continent became independent that year, throwing off the chains of colonialism. Among them was the Belgian Congo, the then name of today's Democratic Republic of Congo (DR Congo), the world's most populated Francophone country and, in terms of area, the largest country in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Belgian Congo became independent on June 30, 1960. Today, June 30 is DR Congo's main national holiday.

A week after this Central African country was declared independent, the Soviet Union recognized it and established diplomatic relations with it at ambassadorial level.

During the 55 years that have elapsed since that date, July 7, 1960, relations between Moscow and Kinshasa have been through ups and downs, stagnations and revitalizations, tensions and detentes.

During the 32-year tenure of the pro-Western leader Mobutu, relations between our countries remained tense.

A new page was opened in relations between Russia and DR Congo in 1997 after the collapse of the regime of the dictator Mobutu, who was overthrown by a former ally of Lumumba, Laurent-Desire Kabila.

As a result of systematic work, the Congolese leadership has drawn closer to Russia in dealing with key problems of building a multipolar world order and begun to show more consideration for our arguments in pursuing its line at international organizations, primarily the United Nations, including on highly sensitive issues such as nuclear disarmament (the nuclear programs of Iran and North Korea), regional conflicts, Russia's role in post-Soviet space, and Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Despite the great potential for boosting Congolese-Russian economic relations, Russian business is still being cautious because of the ambiguous image of DR Congo. Just a few Russian companies are doing business in that country: Russian Special Alloys Asset Management, which is involved in a niobium concentrate production project, Valko Mining Investment, which specializes in the production of nonferrous and rare earth metals, and IFC Metropol, an investment company that has run into difficulties in setting up Mining Bank of Congo, an investment bank. In summing up these thoughts about DR Congo and our relations with it, it seems that bringing back the name Patrice Lumumba to the People's Friendship University of Russia, something that many Congolese dream of, would make our country closer and more understandable to the Africans and symbolize Russia's return to the Black Continent after hasty withdrawal from it in the early 1990s.

Peaceful Development Through Solidarity

Author: S. Mironov

Chairman of A Just Russia political party



THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY of the Victory over Nazism in the Great Patriotic War and World War II, which we celebrated this year, is the most important event for the entire international community. The titanic efforts of the Red Army and the Soviet people and the military victories of the allied forces saved the world from the Nazi plague and ensured firm guarantees of stable democratic development for the majority of modern states.

The world community is currently faced with a great deal of acute problems. The 21st century has been testing humankind for common sense and the ability to jointly respond to global threats and challenges.

The main problem of our world is the imbalance between freedom and justice.

We remember very well that the modern international security architecture emerged as a result of the Yalta and Potsdam conferences. At that time, many people hoped that the end of the bloodiest war in human history would lead to the establishment of the principles of humanism and justice. They were consolidated by the Helsinki Agreements, the 40th anniversary of which will be observed this year on August 1. The world's political future seemed predictable and rational.

Today, however, this entire geopolitical structure is falling apart in full view of everyone.

Today, tectonic shifts are taking place in society. The unipolar world is being replaced by new centers of gravity. These are, above all, the associations of the BRICS, SCO and APEC countries. The Eurasian Economic Community, which was launched earlier this year, also has good prospects. Despite the fierce resistance of the U.S., the center of gravity in global politics is gradually shifting from the Atlantic and the West to Eurasia and the East.

In order to steadily move forward in this direction, it is important to build an alternative architecture of collective counteraction against modern challenges and threats, ensuring economic, energy and military security.

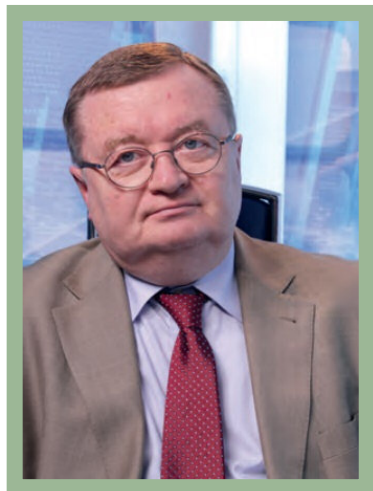
It is time to put an end to the endless series of wars and conflicts. After all, quantity always carries the threat of turning into a new quality. We should restore the practice of successful interstate cooperation in tackling political, economic and environmental issues. We had such achievements and - I am sure - will have new ones.

Only through dialogue, by pooling efforts is it possible to achieve mutual understanding, overcome prejudices and alienation, and successfully meet the challenges and threats of today's world.

"The Congress of Vienna, That Bright Festival of All the Diplomats": The 200th Anniversary of the Congress of Vienna

Author: A. Kuznetsov

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Today, very much as in the past, the Congress of Vienna remains an outstanding and unique, for its time, experiment of systemic reformatting of international relations. It laid the foundations of international order which maintained peace in Europe for nearly forty years. Some of its elements survived till World War I, others are still alive. I have in mind the present status of Switzerland, its borders and neutrality formulated at the Congress with Russia's active and benevolent participation.

Historians develop a lively interest in the Congress of Vienna every time the continent is facing the challenging task of postwar settlement.

Every time a big war ends, the victors gather together to decide the fate of the losers. To a great extent this lays the foundations of a new world order.

The Congress of Vienna moved Russia to the forefront of European politics. During the previous century, after Peter the Great had opened "a window on Europe," Russia was invited to take part in European politics where it was protecting its own interests. The victory over Napoleon gave Russia a chance, for the first time in its history, to shape Europe's political order. The West was concerned: It needed Russia to rout Napoleon, not to become one of the great European powers.

In the face of the suddenly revived common enemy, the allies closed ranks yet the crisis left scars. Western Europe could not decide whether Russia was a full-fledged member of European politics or a potentially very dangerous power. Foreign Secretary of Great Britain Lord Castlereagh who called Alexander I "a czar of Kalmyks ready to turn Europe upside down" stirred up doubts and fanned apprehensions.

The Congress of Vienna offered a mind-boggling picture of sumptuousness and magnificence which eclipsed, to a certain extent, its political achievements. Never before had Europe seen so many emperors, kings, crown princes and princes, ministers and diplomats gathered together in one place. Idle observers (who came to Vienna in huge numbers) saw a long chain of festivities, balls, masquerades, "live pictures," official dinners, fireworks, hunting, and military parades.

The Congress demonstrated that to be efficient, diplomacy should rely on the states' political will, their ability to see the limits and recognize the interests of others. Today, certain states have acquired a deplorable habit of insisting on their national exclusiveness and act accordingly while holding forth about morality and their monopoly on the truth. They ensure their security at the expense of others; they narrow down the field of diplomacy and upset international balance.

Trust in the Author: A Criterion for Evaluating the Books of Yevgeny Primakov

Author: A. Dzasokhov

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A NEW ADDITION to the library of works by Academician Yevgeny Primakov is a book with a pointed title that adequately reflects the current stage of history - Russia: Hopes and Fears.

The book deals with many of today's most important topics.

Careful reading of the book shows convincingly just how balanced and relevant to the country and its people are the author's deep knowledge of international relations (political and economic), on the one hand, and his combining it with a deep understanding of the domestic situation inside Russia, on the other. This is perhaps the most important feature of Primakov's books, to which not only his talents but his enormous life experience testifies.

They range from the situation in Ukraine, around which political and international tensions have deteriorated, as well as to the highly relevant problems of approaches to developing federalism in Russia. The author contemplates both the role of the federal Russian state and the prospects of the regions that comprise it.

What distinguishes this book from others Primakov has written is, of course, his deep practical reasoning - in other words, offering practical solutions to a number of problems. The author's posing of this issue is interesting. It would seem that the bipolar world is a thing of the past, but Primakov goes on to explain it is high time we systematize and assess Washington's views, as they are now the American ideology. On this matter, I agree with him.

Moving away from politics, Primakov proposes opening up the potential opportunities of the EAEU countries' free trade zone to the rest of the world's nations regardless of their geographical locations - whether they lie in Asia, the Americas, or in Africa. "In one way or another," he writes, "the development of integration processes is a key parameter of our globalizing world."

Another important topic is how Primakov was saving the Academy of Sciences. This story deserves its own television coverage, and possibly even a movie adaptation.

It would seem that trust is a criterion by which Yevgeny Primakov's books can be judged. If a reader believes in the author, such a work can help shape his own views.

The Land Untouched by the Arab Spring: Thoughts Aloud After Reading Eldar Kasaev's Book About Qatar

Author: V. Trubnikov

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THE ARAB SPRING has been one of the most sensitive issues in the world for more than two years now - hence a nonstop flood of information, chronicles and analyses. Standing apart from them is a recently published monograph by Eldar Kasaev, a well-known expert on the Middle East, "Qatar in the 21st Century: Current Trends and Economic Development Forecasts."

As is clear from the author's preface, his work is not based on a range of Russian and foreign publications, because the latest monograph analyzing Qatari economic development and production came out in 2000, and since then "the Qatari economic situation has changed dramatically

- largely due to its turn into a powerful, global-scale gas trader" (p. 8).

The author underscores that a global financial crisis of 2008-2009 did not decrease direct foreign investment in Qatar's economy: on the contrary, it reached its peak in 2009 at \$8.13 billion. Paradoxically, in 2011, foreign investment dropped sharply almost to zero. Kasaev avoids categorical statements as he studies the above phenomenon which is only understandable: conclusive statements require a broader range of data than was accessible at the moment.

Kasaev's greatest achievement is a detailed analysis of the basic trends in Qatari economic development in the early 21st century and up to 2017 or over.

I fully agree with the monograph's leitmotif: "Sustainable development of the national economy, based on the extraction of hydrocarbons and exports of LNG and oil, is the cornerstone of all reforms in Qatar" (p. 38).

The monograph contains a detailed analysis of other, less significant aspects of Qatari-U.S. strategic partnership, including trade and economic cooperation, and stresses that Qatar's dependence on U.S. protection does not prevent the Emirate from promoting flexible and efficient contacts with the Muslim world, including with its radical Islamic wing - suffice it to mention the Taliban mission in Qatar and also Doha hosting unofficial U.S. contacts with the Taliban.

I share the opinions voiced by the author in the concluding sections of his book, and his hope that "the provided analysis will help the readers to find their bearings in the genesis, the current state and prospects of Qatari economic development, which is known far outside the country, and will provide a starting point for further research in this area" (p. 165). I would like to add that Qatar, as the other Gulf monarchies, deserves comprehensive coverage in research literature and nonfiction.

Two Koreas in the Contemporary World

Author: A. Vorontsov

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A long-term trend in Russia's strategic turn to the East has already surfaced some time ago, but it has only recently become a tangible reality. The 2014 foreign policy developments have given the trend an additional impetus. According to Russia's leadership, the world has become increasingly more polycentric, and this is the fact that should be reckoned with.

A collective publication "An Uneasy Neighborhood: Problems of the Korean Peninsula and

Challenges for Russia" (Ed. Prof. G.D. Toloraya) is a multifaceted research into the problems of the Korean Peninsula. The book's distinguishing feature is that it contains materials written by representatives of several generations of researchers, i.e., both renowned Russian experts - G.D. Toloraya, M.Ye. Trigubenko, S.S. Suslina - and very young professionals. The book is divided into three parts: Two Koreas in the Early 21st Century, Two Koreas and the Great Powers, and Russia and the Two Koreas: Lessons of History and Challenges. Various experts have been continuously predicting an imminent collapse of the North Korean regime.

The book maintains that good relations with Pyongyang and Seoul are equally important for Russia. At present, however, it is our cooperation with North Korea that allows Russia strengthening its positions in Northeast Asia.

The researchers are convinced that it would be even more erroneous to exaggerate the two countries' political closeness - there exist substantial differences of opinion on a number of issues.

Regarding Russia's relations with South Korea, it helps to remember that Seoul is bound to Washington with allied commitments which it has always been unfailingly following. The book underlines that Russia has an opportunity to cooperate with both Koreas, facilitating the resolution of the existing problems and thereby confirming its role as an influential and active party to the negotiation process on settling the situation around the Korean Peninsula. Interestingly, the idea of a multilateral dialogue and political guarantees belongs to Moscow. The authors have concluded that a negotiating process involving six parties, specifically, the DPRK, South Korea, China, the U.S., Japan, and Russia, should remain an important framework for settling the Korean Peninsula problems.

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