

International Affairs: Summary №3, 2012



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Russia's Historical Privilege of Independent Foreign Policy

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This interview was prepared as part of Voice of Russia Radio's Vis-a-Vis with the World project,
http://rus.ruvr.ru/radio_broadcast/2227329



Syria does not want a civil war.

Russia was therefore absolutely right when it vetoed the resolution formally introduced by Morocco but being de facto a Franco-American one saying that Assad must cease fire while the rebels should do practically nothing at all.

The situation in Syria is very difficult to assess because if it were only about the internal armed revolt, I think Assad would have dealt with it.

I think that under Putin the Eurasian Union is set

to evolve, since it's his strategic idea, one of the key ideas of his program.

The greater the growth of Russia's influence, the smaller the growth of America's which means that it is bad for America. This is a zero-sum game. What's good for the Russians is death to the Americans. This is a basic American approach, no matter what they say about it.

Putin, of course, greatly irritates them as the bearer of the idea of an independent, sovereign Russia, which will be a power center in its own right and likewise a center of attraction for other states.

Kazakh national identity, owing to both the country's leadership and its elite, is not being affirmed at the expense of Russia. They are searching for their roots in the past. Ukraine is also searching for its roots, and that's the right thing to do. But don't search for roots against Russia. It seems to me that Kazakhstan's example shows that one can have, as the Brits say, the best of both worlds.

The West expects Russia to acquiesce to their views, yet we in no way accept that we should.

Putin does not want to automatically agree; he doesn't think that Russia should be acquiescent. He feels that Russia, as he quite rightly said, has had in its history, the privilege of pursuing an independent foreign policy and will continue to carry it on.

Business and Human Rights

Author: Gennady Gatilov

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IN AN INCREASINGLY GLOBALIZING WORLD, where we witness an interweaving of economic, financial, and trading ties, the issue of civilized behavior by transnational corporations is beginning to take on added urgency. The corporations are called upon to be a leader in labor relations and in the observance of labor laws and, accordingly, human rights. It has to be acknowledged that the situation with the legal regulation of relations between TNCs and civil

society has turned out to be fairly complicated. Specifically, a corporation's head office obeys host country laws, while its subsidiary companies and affiliates submit to the laws of the state where they are.

Failure to comply with human rights standards by transnational corporations affects the quality of life and work for millions of people.

Despite rhetoric from an array of companies pledging to observe human rights standards in their work, these pledges have never been truly met.

Some international community members repeatedly attempted to place on the League of Nations agenda the question of the recognition of TNCs as a subject of international public law, which would permit their policies on human rights standards to be subordinated to uniform, internationally recognized rules.

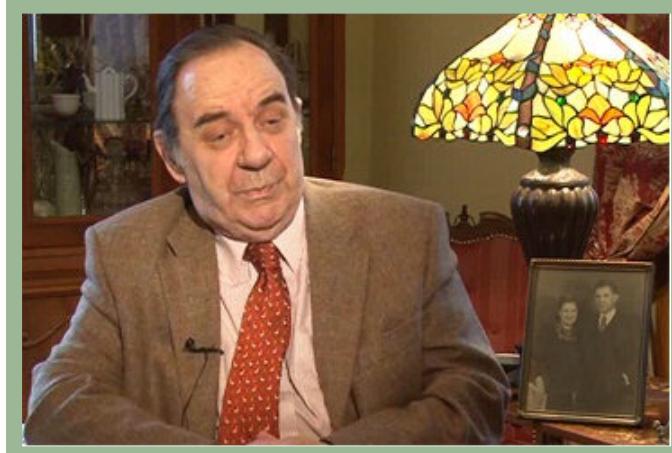
The attention of the international community to human rights themes in the context of big business grew steadily over time. Human rights abuses were beginning to be considered in proceedings before international organizations. As business practices improved and became more sophisticated, the need arose for a clearer understanding of the concept of corporate social responsibility. Today no self-respecting large corporation can any longer afford to be reputed as a "violator" of human rights standards and social obligations. As a result of all this, the business community was rapidly embracing the concept of social responsibility

In 2011, the mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises was succeeded by the eponymous Working Group (WG), which had its mandate approved in November last year. The tasks of the new HRC special procedure include capacity-building at the national and local level, filling the gaps in the mechanism for settlement of disputes out of court, the annual monitoring of the Principles' implementation, and clarifying the most complex international legal standards. In this regard, the interested participation of Russia in the development and promotion of human rights standards in the business sphere confirms our country's mindset for creative work and constructive engagement with partners in the advancement of fundamental human rights values like freedom, justice, life, well-being, equality, social guarantees, and the eradication of poverty and corruption.

World Order or World Legal Order?

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power of law. People have got used to that.

Today, "world order" has become a popular term in scholarly research on international relations. The talk is often about a "new world order," the processes of the formation and development of a human world, including the establishment of a single interdependent global society.

The question is whether people in the 21st century will be living in conditions of the power of right or the right of might.

Russia holds a principled and, most importantly, a correct position with regard to the UN. Moscow considers the United Nations the epicenter of the world legal order and stands in favor of a UN which ensures the interests of all states. Russia, in fact, opposes the foundations of international relations being changed hastily in a rush. The edifice of peace must be built solidly brick by brick, without the use of a military sledgehammer.

Today there are many politicians and even newly-minted diplomats who have heard something somewhere about the basic principles of the United Nations, but consider them obsolete and inapplicable. For them, the historical experience and legacy of the winners in the Second World War do not exist. They are attracted by the "new" reality where the Mafia philosophy reigns supreme: "Might makes right" and "Those who are not with us, are against us."

For Russia, the practice of humanitarian intervention is connected with its national interests, the use of troops abroad, and the participation of Russian forces in peacekeeping operations. Situations may arise where the protection of individual groups of Russians abroad will become a necessity.

An important aim for Russian scholars is to strengthen Russia's position in the world arena and provide the conditions for its success in competition with geopolitical rivals

If in international relations morality and law aren't reckoned with, then for strong states, particularly the superpowers, everything is permitted. International relations are going to be turned into a jungle where political adventurers and financial speculators call the shots.

TROUBLED TIMES have come to the Middle East and North Africa. The stability, albeit fragile, of the entire region and its neighboring countries is put in jeopardy. It looks as though the right to life of the millions of Arabs and Persians doesn't exist. The United Nations has been pushed aside; its potential in the field of security isn't being properly utilized.

It surprises nobody anymore that power politics once again crushes diplomacy and the

BRICS in the System of Global Governance

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THE PLACE OF THE BRICS in the system of global governance is determined by their growing impact on the world economy. To quote Jim O'Neill, who predicted the growth of the BRIC economies in 2001 : "All four of the BRIC countries have exceeded the expectations I had of them back in 2001... Trade between the BRICs has risen far more quickly than global trade as a whole."

And yet the role of the BRICS in the system of global governance is not the function of one

variable - the economic growth of the BRICS countries. The ongoing increase in cooperation between the countries has made a significant contribution to the enhancement of BRICS influence.

The practice of holding meetings for the coordination of positions vis-à-vis the G20 and other financial institutions took hold, and finance ministers now meet more regularly, both on their own and in the margins of the spring and annual meetings of IMF and the World Bank.

There have been nine meetings to date, with four documents adopted.

The quantitative data show that the BRICS development is moving according to the logic of the functions of global governance: from deliberation to agreeing on collective action agendas to decision-making and on to implementation.

Despite the fact that the BRICS are often viewed by experts and practitioners as a political forum, their agenda is dominated by economic issues (about 28% of the discourse) and those of finance (almost 20%). Although the aggregate proportion of financial and economic problems shrinks as the BRICS agenda widens.

Conservation issues, access to energy sources, development of clean, affordable and sustainable energy systems, energy efficient technologies, renewable energy development, and energy security are invariably a part of the BRICS leaders' dialogue.

BRICS member countries have consistently emphasized their commitment to the principles of multilateral diplomacy and cooperation with international and regional organizations. As members of many international organizations, BRICS countries have been seeking to coordinate their positions and pursue a single policy in them. One mechanism of coordination is informal meetings of representatives of the BRICS countries to international organizations.

China-Africa: Experience of Mutually Beneficial Cooperation

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THE OPENING of the 18th Summit of the heads of state of the African Union in Addis Ababa on January 28, 2012 was not quite ordinary. The leaders of African nations attended the cutting of the ribbon ceremony for a modern 100-meter long building of the African Union conference center in the Ethiopian capital built as a gift to Africa from "the government of China." Undoubtedly is also the fact that this gift from China sends a clear message to the international community that China's presence in Africa is in earnest and long-term.

Relations between China and Africa continue to grow at an amazing pace. There is hardly an African country without relations with China.

China's positions in Africa are growing along with the worries among the major powers - the USA, Britain and a number of other countries - over their interests in this region of the world.

In 2009, the African Products Exhibition & Trade Center in Yiwu, Zhejiang Province, was opened which became China's largest trading platform for offices of 23 countries of Africa. The authorities in African nations are increasingly opting for China as a source of soft loans. The level of cooperation in this area is highlighted by the following: nearly half of all China's external loans are distributed in African states.

A new development consists of growing contacts in science and culture. In 2011, Africa and China hosted at least ten joint conferences on the most diverse topics.

The West often criticizes Beijing for its relationship with the "authoritarian" regimes of Omar al-Bashir in Sudan and Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe. From the viewpoint of international law, however, this criticism is absolutely groundless.

"Look East!" has become a common phrase in Africa signifying that many African nations are trying to diversify their relations and reduce the impact on their external and internal affairs by former colonial powers and the United States. From this viewpoint, China is an ideal partner which cares little about internal politics of the states it deals with.

Even if China's economic growth should somewhat slow down in the coming years, as many experts expect, its future relations with Africa are no less encouraging than they are today.

African states see Russia as their natural partner; some also see it as an ally.

The USA in Afghanistan

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LAST SPRING, U.S. President Barack Obama definitively decided to withdraw American troops from Afghanistan.

Even though Washington brought a vast force to Afghanistan and spent about a trillion dollars on the campaign, it was unable to gain control over the country. It is generally believed that U.S. allies, with the exception of Great Britain, do not have much influence on the situation. Attempts to negotiate with the armed opposition have not had

any success so far.

IN THE DISCUSSION OF TERRORISM on the territory of present-day Afghanistan, it would be opportune to mention the production of narcotic substances. As the United States is largely responsible for what is taking place in this country, it belittled local drug production for a long time, as it hurt its image.

ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, Afghanistan will continue to be an overtly Islamic state, and the Taliban will come to power after the complete or partial withdrawal of U.S. troops. Nevertheless, the main achievement of the Taliban was a significant reduction in Afghan drug production.

Thus one can make the following conclusions:

- 1) The Taliban movement will soon come to power in Afghanistan once again;
- 2) The Taliban movement does not pose a bigger threat to Russia than other Afghan armed groups.

Cooperation with the Taliban can help attain two important tasks in Afghanistan today: turning the country into a stable and peaceful state and radically reducing illegal drug production.

The Taliban movement is, most likely, not a homogeneous entity under a single command but a branched network structure with a multitude of commanders and separate fighting units (mahaz). Although they can join forces and coordinate their activities in some cases, they for the most part act independently. Arresting such a commander or destroying his battalion changes little in the big picture. Although the Taliban movement has a single command (Shura in the Pakistani city of Quetta¹³), "Taliban" refers, on the whole, to heterogeneous groups of people ranging from professional militants that fight constantly to farmers and small businessmen. The only thing that such groups of people have in common is their Pashtun ethnicity, their "brand name," and their animosity towards foreign invaders. It makes sense to hold peace talks only with such people. Unfortunately, the Americans have not understood this so far.

Political Crossroads of the Afghan Crisis

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The West confirmed its earlier intention to extend its aid to Afghanistan after 2014, the year of the final pull-out of the International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) from the country. President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai who chaired the conference promised to step up anticorruption struggle.

The results of parliamentary and presidential elections were devalued by information of massive falsifications which destabilized the political situation.

Today, the Afghan people and the international community have many other concerns beyond the security issues.

The United States tried to establish control over the Middle East, a strategically important region. After ten years of the Western counterterrorist operation, none of the large-scale economic tasks was realized to say nothing of the military aims.

Today, it has become abundantly clear that lack of security and continued hostilities interfered and are interfering with the realization of large economic projects in Afghanistan.

After ten years of the U.S.-led Operation Enduring Freedom the neighbors, and not only them, still look at Afghanistan as a source of threats which these countries have to keep in mind.

An analysis of Russia's antidrug activity at the international and regional levels suggests that the drug threat is perceived as second most important threat emanating from Afghanistan, closely connected with extremist activities in this country.

The prospect of U.S. military bases in the IRA revealed the depth of regional disagreements on the Afghan issue. Pakistan and Iran, two closest neighbors of IRA, had been dead set against American bases.

As a nuclear state, Pakistan is second only to the United States when it comes to its ability to influence the situation in Afghanistan. In the last 30 years, Islamabad developed into a key player in the situation around Afghanistan.

The Cold War between the U.S. and Pakistan which gained momentum in 2011 made the situation in Afghanistan and in the region as a whole even less predictable. Relations between the two countries should be reset so that to achieve positive shifts without which normalization in Afghanistan is unthinkable - it remains to be seen whether the sides are ready to reset.

The Customs Union: Technologies Overcome the Crisis

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This interview is part of the "Vis-à-Vis the World" project of the Voice of Russia Radio Broadcasting Company.



Today there are no customs borders between Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan. All forms of state border control have been abolished, except passport and visa controls at the Russia-Kazakhstan border.

According to our estimates, about half of the time that the cargo was in transit it awaited clearance at the border. Today, there is nothing of the kind and we are witnessing the first results. Last year, mutual trade increased 1.5-fold.

This is a colossal breakthrough.

The Customs Union has an effect not only on simple trade in goods, but primarily helps to restore cooperation in production, when goods are produced by enterprises of several countries. Each time the goods cross a border, costs and expenses increase.

Objectively, Ukraine cannot survive without Russia or close cooperation with our Customs Union. Virtually all three engines of the Ukrainian economy are geared towards the Russian market.

The forces which prevent us from realizing our common historical and economic goals, the goals of reuniting our economies and removing barriers between our citizens, are motivated from outside.

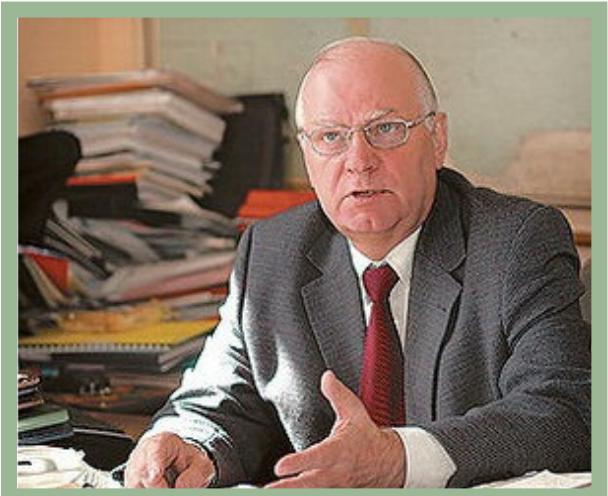
In joining the Customs Union, Ukraine would gain 9 billion dollars worth of additional improvements in the terms of trade for imports and exports. And in creating a free trade area with Europe it would lose about 5% of its production because more competitive European goods and cheaper Turkish goods flowing through Europe into Ukraine would replace its own production.

Nevertheless, very influential political forces in Ukraine continue to talk obsessively about a European choice, saying that Ukraine should be part of Europe. Hopefully, common sense will prevail.

In the 1970s, we managed to avoid a world war only because our scientists spent a lot of time and effort to explain to the Americans that there would be no winners in a new war and that the whole of mankind would perish. Common sense prevailed, and the parties confined themselves to the Cold War and the arms race.

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FUEL AND ENERGY COMPLEX is a key economic sector for the absolute majority of countries. It underpins, especially in terms of technology, the level of national security in economic, social and political aspects. Hence the special focus on assurance of energy security by the leaders of many states. Russia is making a significant contribution to ensuring global energy security, as one of the main suppliers of energy resources to markets in Europe and Asia. Accordingly, foreign policy support for the sector's modernization must become a priority in Russian energy diplomacy.

There is the problem of developing the energy resource base along with the issue of its geographical position.

The recovery factor of oil and gas reservoirs in Russia over the past 30 years has decreased from 42% to 30% (in the U.S., by contrast, it grew from 32% to 40%).

Russia is pursuing an active foreign energy policy on international energy security.

The problem of the relationship between producers and consumers of energy resources is the focus of the International Energy Forum (IEF), an informal international institution which holds biennial ministerial meetings. Russia takes an active part in the activities of the IEF.

Referring directly to energy, it must be noted that Europeans expect Russia to help ensure the EU's energy security, primarily through an uninterrupted supply of energy resources. For Russia, energy cooperation with the EU could mean more opportunities to attract energy technologies and investment.

In addition to the raw materials base, Russia has a fairly strong industrial infrastructure and intellectual potential, including in fuel and energy industries. Their development underpins significantly the reinforcement of Russia's economic and geopolitical standing in the world. If Russia does manage to increase energy efficiency by 40%, then we will have saved a lot of oil, gas and coal. And if the economy becomes more energy efficient, alternative sources of energy will also be able to find their place.

THE FORMATION of effective economic and legal mechanisms for the real public-private partnership in the field of the modernization of energy producing and energy consuming branches of the Russian economy in the light of international experience should lead to the development of appropriate legislation and regulations.

Uzbekistan: Economic Development in the Post-Crisis Period

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THE ATTAINMENT of national independence by Uzbekistan and its international recognition mean that Uzbekistan will now pursue an independent domestic and foreign policy and establish mutually beneficial relations without any intermediaries.

It is undoubtedly important for the transition from one system to another to be, if possible, gradual and evolutionary. Economic reforms

should gradually, step by step, move the country forward towards the set goal, forming separate elements and the whole system of market relations.

As practice shows, the transition from one socioeconomic formation to another cannot occur by leaps. Any revolutionary solutions result in great social upheavals.

In view of the economic situation in Uzbekistan and the low living standards of the vast majority of Uzbek families, the use of shock therapy in the transition to a market economy is unacceptable for Uzbekistan.

In order to protect the population, the government set price ceilings on a limited range of food products and manufactures, and also on the rates charged for some consumer services.

Key importance in the entire chain of economic reforms is attached to transformations in the agricultural sector.

The agricultural sector is the major source of national income, the main foreign exchange earner.

Agriculture will continue to be a major focus of economic reform. It is the basis of the whole economy of Uzbekistan.

The main thing is to create a management mechanism in agriculture that would enable every dehkan farmer to work freely, independently and with real interest, to dispose of the results of his work, and to provide for his family.

The main agricultural products in Uzbekistan are cotton, fruits, vegetables, and grain (wheat, rice and corn).

The Uzbek society and economy are firmly and consistently focused on recovery from the crisis "with a plus," which means maintaining what has been achieved and acquiring new markets for modern products based on innovative technologies.

Germany: From Cultural Imperialism to Equal Partnership Strategy

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IN EUROPE, culture and education became part of foreign policy when the number of cultural projects reached a "critical mass" which spilled over the borders of national sovereignty. German historians agree that consistent German cultural policy began with consistent funding of German schools abroad. Lamprecht was the first in Germany to insist on active cultural policy in emulation of the French and their cultural projects. Back in 1920, the Weimar Republic's foreign ministry set up a department for cultural matters and German nationality. The new department was also entrusted with academic exchange and encouragement of scientific research.

AFTER WORLD WAR II, the FRG moved as far away as possible from the racist Nazi policies when realizing its cultural projects abroad.

The FRG started its cultural policy abroad with restoring the pre-Hitler structures. It also set up several new organizations intended to promote the country's foreign policy aims in the field of culture and education; the Deutsche Welle TV and radio station set up in 1953 to address foreign audiences.

Until the mid-1970s, Germany strained to overcome international isolation and rehabilitate itself.

Early in the 1970s, the second postwar period of the FRG's external cultural policy began with a comprehensive reform suggested by new concepts and ideas formulated by the Foreign Ministry.

In 2012, the Foreign Ministry will allocate nearly a quarter of its annual budget of €3.3 billion to support cultural and educational initiatives abroad. German schools abroad will receive additional funding of €24 million.

There is an obvious intention to preserve and widen Germany's cultural presence abroad to be able to use cultural projects to promote bilateral relations and create the country's positive image in the world.

The strategy, however, was changing together with the changing world: the country was gradually drifting away from cultural imperialism and expansion to equal inter-state cultural dialogue. This means that what has been already accumulated within the Russian-German dialogue will be further developed for the sake of deeper bilateral cooperation.

Russian Art in Soviet-U.S. Relations

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Russian Art in Soviet-U.S. Relations: Selected Pages from the 1930s Surprise Appointment

ON AUGUST 26, 1936, the American press was abuzz with the news that William Bullitt, the first U.S. ambassador to Moscow, had returned to Washington before the end of his tenure.

The problem was resolved when an old friend of President Franklin Roosevelt, Joseph E. Davies, took the vacant post.

In his book *Mission to Moscow*, Davies gave a

detailed account of the events he found himself in the midst of as ambassador to Moscow.

He was amazed by the scope of construction and the people's enthusiasm. So that the most skeptical people could share his impressions, he liberally peppered the pages of his book with statistics, as though it were a reference guide or encyclopedia.

As ambassador, Davies was criticized for praising the Soviet Union and ignoring the shortcomings that cried out from every corner of Soviet reality. He was called the Kremlin's troubadour and accused of "allowing himself to be used."

Warner Brothers co-owners Jack and Harry Warner decided to make a film of the bestseller.

It was a feature film using documentary chronicles and very expensive for the time. *Mission to Moscow* was the first Hollywood war film to be shown in the Soviet Union. Davies himself, ignoring the opinion of his contemporaries, who followed his activities with great skepticism, always did what he thought necessary. He was not forgiven for his "servility" and naivete, for finding human qualities in Stalin.

The Davieses continued to collect works of Russian art with passion. They quickly acquired the intuition and keen eye of experts.

As soon as the war began, the Davies returned home, to America. They had an extensive collection - a true museum of Russian art valuables.

It looks like the Davieses are continuing their diplomatic mission today. Their cause is serving the people. They chose the language of art for this, which requires no translation.

The Problems of Cooperation Among Civilizations

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Interethnic and interreligious armed conflicts, separatism, religious extremism and other complex problems with a civilizational dimension enhance the scale of the possible destructive effects caused by the impact of a range of new global challenges and threats.

Over the past decade, confrontation between the West and the Islamic world has become an ever more pressing problem.

An important role in the quest for harmonization of international relations based on convergence and interpenetration

of economies and cultures may lie in establishing constructive dialogue formats, not only at the interstate level, but also at the level of social structures and civil society institutions as well as directly at the interpersonal level.

In solving the practical problems of creating effective and flexible mechanisms for dialogue among civilizations, an important role belongs to nongovernmental organizations.

Nationalism and ethnic separatism often exploit religious fundamentalism for their own political ends. Ties between these movements and terrorist organizations are growing stronger.

The diversity of the modern world, manifested in the religious sphere, and the public nature of the confessional space allow us to consider the potential of religious organizations and movements as an influential force in the world's political processes.

In this politicized era, the need to consider the relationship between religious and ethno-national factors and their overall influence on the public consciousness is acquiring special importance.

International cooperation in countering international terrorism must be based on developing effective mechanisms for dialogue and partnership among civilizations, with primary focus on young people as the ones most likely to be recruited by criminal groups.

The effectiveness of the various lines of international cooperation in Russian foreign policy is largely determined by the solution of problems of intra-civilizational dialogue.

The global political experience, bearing witness to a growing tendency towards a rift between civilizations, actualizes the need for the establishment of effective dialogue formats predicated on conceptual value approaches to promote the unity of the human community.

Who Will Protect the Christians of the East?

Author: Armen Oganasyan

Editor-in-Chief of International Affairs

This article is being published within the framework of the RIA Novosti project "From the Author."
See: www.rian.ru/authors/20100204/207658418.html



OVER THE PAST SEVEN YEARS, the number of physical reprisals and terrorist acts against Christians in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East has increased by 309%. The Arab Spring has added momentum to this process, causing it to snowball. By the end of last year, 200,000 Copts had left their homes to escape the repressions of the new Egyptian authorities. Thousands of Christian refugees from the East, have little chance of returning - their homes are being torn down and plundered.

Whereas at the beginning of the 20th century, 25% of Christians of all confessions lived close to their main shrines in the Middle East, today this number has shrunk to less than 5%. It is worth noting that acts of vandalism and physical reprisals are frequently carried out with the tacit support or direct assistance of the governments of Muslim countries.

It has always been thought that Israel and Iran are the most tolerant countries toward Christians. Against the general background of the humanitarian disaster, this does indeed seem to be true. However, dozens of Christians were arrested in Iran for praying in.

The fact that al-Qaeda is coming forward in defense of Christians today, while the Christian world remains silent, looks sadly odd, to say the least. The leaders of this terrorist organization are calling for Christians to be left alone so as not to give cause for external intervention.

Another legitimate question arises: who is benefitting from the victories over the autocratic regimes of North Africa and the Middle East? We will learn about it fairly soon, but the time for deciding the fate of the Christians who have lived in the East for centuries has already run out.

Russia and the Republic of Korea: A View From Seoul

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WITH THE END OF THE COLD WAR and collapse of the bipolar system, Russian leaders reoriented national foreign policy towards cooperation with the West and other stable, moderate and economically strong states. The Republic of Korea (ROK) was assigned a place of no small importance among them.

After the establishment of official relations, postal, telegraphic and telex communication was arranged between the RF and the ROK, along with opening a direct maritime line between Nakhodka and South Korean ports and a regular Moscow-Seoul air service. These efforts began to shape a regulatory framework for the development of business ties between the countries.

Seoul also took an approving view of the multi-vector foreign policy strategy proclaimed by the Russian president, which was essentially that Russia has no enemies, that it can and should work with most countries, especially its neighbors. Bilateral ties became particularly intense during the period 2004-2005.

Although Russian-South Korean military contacts were begun almost immediately after the establishment of diplomatic relations, the collaboration had no real content until some point in time. For the ROK it was very important that the Russian side decided not to renew the USSR-DPRK treaty of 1961, and for Russia it was important to acquire new buyers of its arms and partners for cooperation in the military-technical field.

The natural obstacle to military-technical cooperation between Russia and the ROK continued to be the United States, occupying a leading position in South Korea's system of military relations.

It is right to expect from Russia that its economic and social policy in Siberia and the Far East will not focus narrowly and specifically on the interests of the region, but will merge with its strategy across the entire expanse.

South Korea officially recognized Russia as a market economy and backed its accession to the WTO. Yet the potential of mutual relations remains not fully realized. Russia still ranks only the 15th among South Korea's trade partners.

In light of the foregoing, the most promising area of cooperation so far is the energy and fuel sector which means developing energy deposits in Siberia and the Russian Far East.

The partnership between the two countries has a special value primarily in terms of the creation of a checks-and-balances system of multilateral security in Northeast Asia.

We may well assume that Russia-South Korea relations will continue to develop progressively, untangling deadlocks and overcoming all obstacles along the way.

Brazil-Russia Relations (1991-2011)

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There were two phases in bilateral relations during the period of 1991-2011 - one during the 1990's characterized by the moderate intensity of previous periods, and the second after 2000, marked by its hyper-intensity.

RUSSIA AND BRAZIL went through a similar process of redefinition of their identities in the 1990s and early 2000s.

The denial of unipolarity and the affirmation of different poles in search of coordination are the keynotes of the concept of multipolarity for Russian diplomacy in the 21st century.

THE PROCESS OF REDEFINITION of Brazilian and Russian identities kept a similarity. To the extent that the process of redefinition of identities grew stronger, cooperation intensified, albeit erratically because of the timing of the changes in each country. Finally, when Brazil and Russia started to assume their new identities, the former as a developmentalist and the latter aiming recognition as a great power through the defense of multipolarity, relations between them reached its zenith.

When Russia begins its "crusade for multipolarity," Brazilian foreign policy puts aside the emphasis on development and prioritizes the benefits of the new globalized liberal order, in which the north-south axis would no longer make sense. It is in this context that Primakov visits Brazil in November 1997 to sign a few more acts between the two countries.

It took almost three years for the High-Level Commission, which is presided by the Brazilian Vice-President and Russia's Prime Minister, to start working.

IN THIS PAPER, we sought to demonstrate that there is a clear relationship between the change in the identities of Brazil and Russia in the post-Cold War and the convergence of interests that resulted in the intensification of cooperation between the two countries in the first decade of the 2000's. To think about the future of bilateral relations in this new context, it is necessary to bring back to light the theoretical framework presented earlier in the text. Therefore, the hyper-intensification of the Brazil-Russia bilateral relations derives in part from the new identities these states have consolidated in recent years, but also from the transformations in terms of social imaginary that their social claims brought to the international order. Under this light, it is possible to understand the space that exists in the world for the emergence of a phenomenon like the BRICS. Even though materially the economic crisis of 2008 and China's and India's growth are cited as the conditions of possibility for the existence of the BRICS, it seems that the actors who most sought to consolidate the bloc were Brazil and Russia.

Anniversary Celebration as a Business Meeting

The report prepared by Evgeniya Pyadysheva, Executive Secretary of International Affairs.



ON APRIL 16, 2012, the Editorial Council of Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn (International Affairs) gathered in the Grand Mansion of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to celebrate the journal's 90th anniversary. Diplomats, politicians, scientists, and journalists came to congratulate the journal on this auspicious occasion and talk about the prospects for its development.

In short, the journal is part of the larger foreign ministry system, or foreign ministry family if you like. The journal and editorial board have always existed, exist now, and will continue to exist in the future.

Dear colleagues, you all know that our journal has two birthdays, since its work was interrupted during the 1930s, an extremely tempestuous time for our country, then during the Great Patriotic War. It was not until 1954 that the journal resumed its activity and emerged in its present form.

It has been very important for us to preserve the journal's continuity - from the Soviet diplomacy of the 1920s to the present day. Many articles published back then are still of immediate interest today. These articles could well be published in today's press.

I would like to say straight off that the members of the Editorial Council have helped us to correlate the different stages in the journal's history. My sincere thanks go to S.V. Lavrov and A.I. Denisov who supported this idea. B.D. Piadyshev has made an invaluable contribution with his consultations and assistance. And I would also like to thank the Historical and Documentary Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for supplying us with many documents.

The journal currently comes out in several languages - English, French, German, Chinese, and Spanish. In May-June, an Arabic collection will be published.

But life goes on and I would like to talk about our priorities for the future.

We are always pleased to receive articles by foreign authors.

We also attend international conferences.

Another vector of our activity is our presence in the multimedia sphere. We have a studio and have the opportunity to invite experts and post material on the Internet on current and more strategic topics.

I am pleased with the journal, I am pleased with the new format both as a reader and as a member of the journal's Editorial Council. I think it maintains a good balance between the topics it covers and the way it presents its information.

Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn as the Mirror of the Russian Revolution

Author: Armen Oganesyan

Editor-in-Chief



Late in December 1921, the people's commissariats and other departments of Moscow and Petrograd were informed: "Subscription to the periodicals of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs (NKID) is going on. The NKID Bulletin has been replaced with the Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn journal, a much wider publication. This was obviously suggested by the new economic policy.

As distinct from its predecessor the new publication was a journal in the true sense of the

word: it carried signed articles stamped with individual style, commented surveys of events in other countries and of émigré publications, foreign press comments, political calendar, and official information.

The first issues of the new journal concentrated at the Genoa Conference which suggested that Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn had been set up for propaganda and counterpropaganda purposes. This was a wrong impression.

In his greeting to the journal on the occasion of its 90th anniversary former Foreign Minister of the U.S.S.R. Alexander Bessmertnykh has wisely pointed out that while foreign policy can be frequently ideologically biased professional diplomacy is free from this fault. At first glance this looks like an obvious contradiction: we have all learned to look at diplomacy as a foreign policy instrument and nothing more. A career diplomat, however, much more depends on what is called Realpolitik closely connected with objective geopolitical challenges which change from country to country.

Alexander Bessmertnykh is quite right: the journal offered the adepts of the world revolution a rostrum from which they could, more or less skillfully, defend the "principles of the year 1917." Career diplomats, however, many of them with prerevolutionary experience knew better: they were not waging ideological battles - they had to feed the starving, to pull the country out of the quagmire of devastation and nearly total degradation.

Professional diplomats contributed profound and highly interesting analyses of world processes which retained their topicality till our days.

The journal was closed in 1930 reportedly due to its Trotskyism yet an analysis of the article and materials of that period fail to reveal any Trotskyist biases; geopolitical analyses were well substantiated and dominated over ideology.

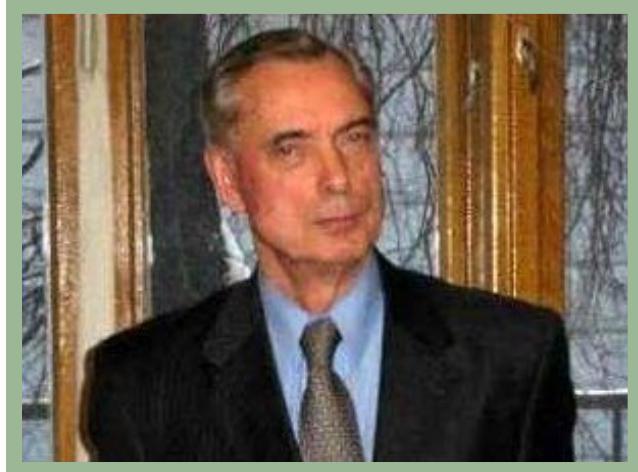
The emigrant community, on the whole, proved unable to read into the situation and accept the choice of these people.

A diary of one of the diplomats of that time contained a quote which obviously harmonized with his own feelings: "Society is a means. Those who look at it as an aim merely deprive it of an aim and render it empty and lifeless...".

Our Journal Is 90 Years Young: Great Future Ahead...

Author: Boris Pyadyshev

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Honored Worker of the Diplomatic Service of the Russian Federation, Doctor of Science (History), Editor-in-Chief of International Affairs (1987-2009)



IT ALL BEGAN in 1917 when many people came to develop the romantic notion that secrets in international affairs were no longer secrets and that diplomacy and politics should be an open book. In 1919, this resulted in the appearance of the *Vestnik NKID* which published diplomatic notes and other documents of the Commissariat along with articles by individual contributors.

In February 1920, the People's Commissariat of

Foreign Affairs began also publishing in February 1920 its *Biulleten'* (Bulletin), which carried collections of digests of the most important articles published elsewhere in the world. In March 1922, *Vestnik* and *Biulleten'* were superseded by *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn* (International Life), the predecessor of today's journal *International Affairs*. It appeared on average once every two months in print runs ranging from 500 copies during its first year to 2,000 in subsequent years.

AFTER STALIN'S DEATH in March 1953, after the arrest and execution of the hated man, Lavrenty Beria, a tussle began among the top leaders in Moscow for deciding on which road to take with respect to the West. The country had to open up to the rest of the world. Each had his own ideas and wielded the means available to them to implement these ideas. One of the ideas, none too grand, was to launch a new quality foreign policy monthly journal.

Many things changed during the early 1990s, a time of great upheaval.

We created a new editorial policy. We write about everything, because internal policy, economy, natural environment and culture have direct bearing on foreign policy and vice versa. *INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS* maintains close contacts with the Russian Foreign Ministry. These contacts go way beyond the ministry's duties in accordance with the journal's charter.

The journal is becoming a media holding of sorts and, keeping in step with the times, it employs the latest in IT. Of unquestionable interest are also special issues on the most pressing problems of today's international politics.

International Affairs in the Context of Time



The journal started publishing under the title *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn* on March 20, 1922. It is still unknown who was behind the idea, whose initiative it was to establish the journal.

The journal is a historical document providing a chronicle of the birth of Russia's new school of foreign policy analysis.

For us, the journal's 90th anniversary, among other things, is an opportunity to introduce into international journalism that style and that language which are superior to contemporary models. In the late 1920s, after the New Economic Policy was scaled down, that style was difficult to reproduce. The most favorable period for the journal in terms of access to information sources was on E.A. Shevardnadze's watch even though today he is a somewhat controversial figure.

The world's first policy journal was not born in a vacuum. It was a world trend. Half a year later, in September 1922, the Foreign Affairs journal was launched in the United States. A little later, the International Affairs journal came out in Britain, in 1924.

The journal has always brought something new, something that was not done anywhere before. Take 1954. A journal is launched that simply has no analog in the Soviet Union in its declared mission or spirit. They write about international affairs in a totally different language, analysis is allowed - something that is horrifying just to think about.

Defense of the country's interests has probably been one of the journal's fundamental positions, which has at all times been immutable. Not blunt, not propaganda like, but well argued, sophisticated and sincere.

The audience has been taking increasing interest in the multimedia product. We started making it last year when we built our own multimedia studio. This platform, which has started working, and working effectively, enables us to perform the most ambitious creative tasks. Some of our multimedia projects lend themselves very well to the paper format while journal publications successfully move to the online format.

Despite the different stages in the journal's activity, it is very important that International Affairs has proved to be a symbol of integrity and continuity of our national foreign policy. It is important to preserve the corporate spirit, professionalism oriented toward Foreign Ministry officers, our diplomats, also giving the Russian reader an opportunity to see the journal as a national brand. The combination of political analysis and bright international journalism is also very important. This is difficult but this essential balance needs to be maintained.

Congratulations on the Occasion of the 90th Anniversary of Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn (International Affairs)



Sergei Lavrov, Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation

Yevgeni Primakov, Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation in 1998-1998

Igor Ivanov, President of the Russian Council on International Affairs, Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation in 1998-2004

Alexander Bessmertnykh, President, Foreign Policy Association, Foreign Minister of the U.S.S.R. in 1990-1991

Sergei Stepashin, Chairman of the RF Auditing Chamber

Yuri Shafranik, Chairman of the Board of the Union of Oil and Gas Producers of Russia

Andrei Denisov, First Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation

Grigory Karasin, State Secretary-Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation

Mikhail Bogdanov, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation

Gennady Gatilov, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation

Alexander Grushko, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation

Sergei Ryabkov, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation

Konstantin Kosachev, Head of the Russian Federal Agency for the CIS, Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation

Alexander Yakovenko, Ambassador of the Russian Federation to the UK

Alexei Meshkov, Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Italy

Alexei Vasilyev, Director of the Institute of Africa, Russian Academy of Sciences

Diana Berlin, journalist

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

Alexei Fedotov, Ambassador at Large

Yaroslav Skvortsov, Dean of the School of Journalism, Moscow State Institute (University) of International Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

Viktor Kamyshanov, President, International Federation for Peace and Conciliation

Vladimir Kuznetsov, Deputy of the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to FAO

I. Morgulov, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation

N. Kalashnikov, Director of the Institute of Latin America, Russian Academy of Sciences

V Voronkov, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to International Organizations in Vienna

Yu. Fedotov, Deputy UN Secretary-General, Director-General of UN Office in Vienna

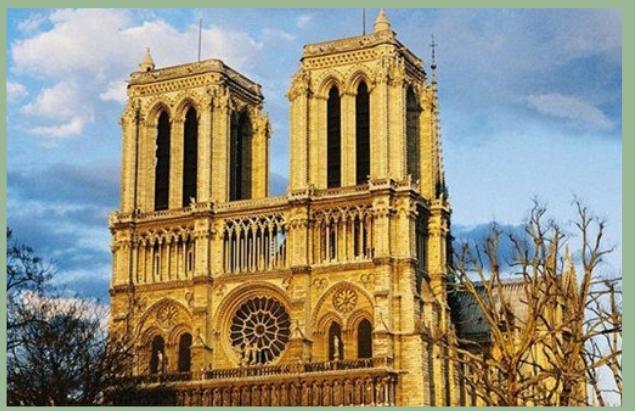
S. Lebedev, Executive Secretary of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)

A. Sinaysky, Secretary of the Council of Defense Ministers of the CIS Countries

Christian Democracy in France

Author: M. Arzakanian

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LATE IN 2011, Dmitry Shmelev's "Christian Democracy in Postwar France: The Popular Republican Movement (1944-1967)"* appeared in Kazan. The author, a historian with several monographs to his name, dedicated at least fifteen years of his life to the centrist political movements in France. His latest contribution, which closed the gap in the Russian studies of political parties in postwar France, caused quite a stir in Russian French studies.

The voluminous work of over 500 pages consists of three chapters.

The first one, "MRP Emergence: Its Organizational Principles, Electorate and Ideological Principles," tells the story of the party's emergence and development and the way its leaders perfected its ideology and programs.

The chapter starts with a carefully researched introduction on the history of French Christian Democratic ideas and associations mainly in the first half of the 20th century.

The profound analysis of the party's domestic and foreign policies makes the second chapter "MRP in Political Life of France" the most interesting of the three.

The longest and the most important part of the second chapter deals with France's foreign policy.

The author has repeatedly asked to which extent the Christian Democrats of Europe were similar; every time he concludes that the French Christian Democrats stood apart from their European colleagues. The author, however, deemed it necessary to devote a section of his book to MRP's international contacts on most pressing international issues.

Chapter Three, "MRP's Political Strategy," investigates the role of MRP in the ruling coalitions between 1944 and 1962. The author has pointed out thatat the beginning "MRP was a party of parliamentary majority with a great role to play in shaping domestic and foreign policies. It had a program, enjoyed massive grass-root support and restrained the Communists' mounting influence."

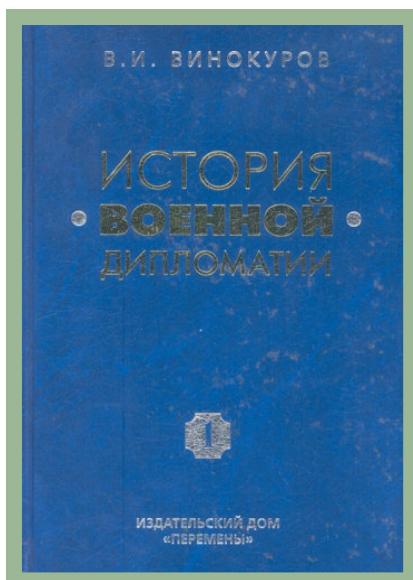
The monograph's concluding part deals with MRP activities when de Gaulle returned to power and during the first years of the Fifth Republic and when political changes led MRP to decline and disintegration.

The monograph deserves positive assessments; it can be described as a valuable contribution to the studies of political parties of France and other countries. In fact, specialists in French history as well as wide readership interested in European political history will find it highly useful; the same can be said about those who write all sorts of textbooks and lecture courses on new and recent history.

On the History of Military Diplomacy

Author: A. Frolov

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THIS NEW PUBLICATION* (V.I. Vinokurov, "The History of Military Diplomacy", volumes 1-4) merits the attention of those who are interested in strategy, military history, the evolution of the art of war, diplomacy, and international relations in general. The study's author, Professor Vladimir Vinokurov, takes as a basis of military diplomacy the activities of military attachés - military officers representing the war departments of their state before the war department of the host country, and as the starting point for Russian military diplomacy.

Military diplomacy is designed to tackle two tasks: fostering military cooperation with the host country and providing information to the home country (intelligence). If the former is not performed, the emphasis is on the latter.

October 1917 changed a lot in the country. Upon coming to power, the Bolsheviks were confronted with the choice to keep or destroy the old structures. Military diplomacy was set a task to study foreign countries' armed forces, military and economic power, defense plans and to draw up reference materials.

The formative period of the Soviet rule was a very tortuous one. Most of the military agents went into exile. Those who stayed were also in a tight spot, given their general attitude towards Soviet Russia. And all this took place amidst reorganization of the apparatus.

With the unfolding of large-scale military operations on the front the main goal of Soviet foreign policy and military diplomacy was to provide the most favorable international environment for organizing resistance to the enemy, finding allies and preventing an attack on the Soviet Union by neutral states. This work was compounded by maneuvers of the diplomacy and intelligence services of the United States and Britain.

After the Second World War, the idea of establishing a special military diplomacy school was finally brought to fruition. The Military Academy of the Red (then Soviet) Army - VASA - already came into being at the beginning of 1946. Candidates for training were, for the most part, selected from among combat army officers and underwent testing on reliability and morale which lasted for two to three years. A department of military diplomacy was created as part of the academy.

Obviously, by this time, the functions of military diplomacy had become clearly delineated. The author lists three principal ones - consultative/advisory function when a military attaché helped his ambassador on all military matters; the function of representing the national armed forces and their command in the host country; and an informative function consisting in collecting information by legal means only. At the same time, he emphasizes that along with obtaining information the obligations of a military attaché office include its analysis and assessment.

"Lo Stivale": Facing the Challenges

Author: S. Gavrilova

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EARLY IN 2012, the Institute of Europe, Russian Academy of Sciences, published a collective monograph "At the Mediterranean Crossroads: «Lo Stivale» Faces the Challenges of the 21st Century."

This fundamental work offers a sweeping picture of politics, culture and economics of the Italian Republic and covers in detail the situation in the Vatican, Italy's closest neighbor on the Apennine Peninsula. The book gathered together the best experts in the history of. Today, the late 1990s and the 2000s attract a lot of academic attention; the authors dwell on the key aspects of domestic and foreign policy and Italy's relations with the Russian Federation.

The following aspects of Italy's contemporary history received closer attention. Prof. Valery Lyubin, one of the prominent experts in Italy's contemporary history, has described the Italian political system "as the most challenging, when it comes to academic studies and analysis, among the political systems of the countries traditionally referred to the West European democratic area."

Prof. Oleg Barabanov who has written the section dealing with regionalism, one of the central issues of Italian politics, pointed out that as distinct from some other states Italy has avoided the threat of armed separatism even though the country is not completely free from separatist sentiments.

The monograph, or rather the contributors, concentrates on several signally important aspects of Italian foreign policies. Oleg Barabanov has analyzed ideological concepts of the country's foreign policy. Prof. Barabanov describes several key features of the new course. Prof. Barabanov has described Central and Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean, the Middle East and a more active involvement in Northern Africa as Italy's foreign policy priorities. He has paid particular attention to Italy's involvement in the war in Yugoslavia and the Kosovo crisis as an evidence of Italy's intention to acquire responsibility zones of its own to upgrade its international prestige.

Elena Maslova analyzes foreign policy of the right and left Cabinets of the early 21st century in a special chapter where the reader will find a detailed analysis of the 2006 election program of the left bloc of Romano Prodi: intensive European integration; peaceful preventive conflict settlement, priority of international law and development of a multipolar world.

The monograph deals with another important issue: the way Russia and Russians are perceived in Italy. Svetlana Knyazeva offers a detailed discussion of the image of Russia in Italian public opinion.

The monograph is the only Russian publication dealing with the domestic and foreign policies of Italy of the two recent decades; the authors have revealed the roots of many processes underway in Italy. Their attention to various aspects of the Russian-Italian relations is very important in the conditions when the two countries demonstrate growing interest in each other.

First Post-War Steps of the Soviet Union and the FRG Toward Each Other

Author: A. Orlov

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I WAS PROMPTED to take up the pen by a conversation with my longstanding acquaintance from the MFA Komsomol years Dmitry Ezhov. After showing me a book of reminiscences by his father, Vsevolod Ezhov called "From the Life of a Young Diplomat,"* he asked if I would be interested in writing a short review of it.

Vsevolod Ezhov's reminiscences, presented in the classical memoir style, are combined with the author's deep reflections on the essence of the com-

plicated and contradictory processes that characterized Germany's revival at the end of the 1940s-1950s. It is clear that the events of more than fifty years ago still have a deep effect on the author and compel him to analyze them over and over, including from today's perspective.

The author's assessments of Conrad Adenauer, an undoubtedly outstanding figure who became the main architect of contemporary Germany, are extremely interesting and informative. Without hiding, and even emphasizing, the deep anti-Communist sentiments of Conrad Adenauer, Vsevolod Ezhov also focuses on such qualities of this politician as his pragmatism, political realism, and resolve in combination with his rational flexibility for the sake of achieving the set goal. The issue of German prisoners-of-war was one of the most urgent and complicated Moscow had to deal with. In his book, Vsevolod Ezhov describes an extremely important episode for the future of bilateral relations.

The author's reflections about some Soviet leaders of that time are extremely interesting. Although they do not dramatically change the idea of them that has developed in the mass perception, nevertheless certain comments and touches, like the icing on the cake, give a certain new twist to their personalities.

The current generation of Russian foreign ministry employees will primarily be interested in learning how the Soviet embassy was established in the FRG, how the first generation of Soviet diplomats worked in this country, how they organized their daily lives, what they thought about, and what they did in their free time.

Vsevolod Ezhov ends his book with the promise to continue working in the memoir genre, recounting the experience of his political and scholarly work as an officer of the CPSU Central Committee. All that remains is to hope that this continuation of his reminiscences will not be long in coming. Such books are extremely important for forming a correct understanding in society of our rich, complex, but glorious history, which in recent years has become a target of superfluous or openly ill-willed "rehashing," and even downright falsification, both in our country and abroad.

Afghanistan and Iran Through the Eyes of a Diplomat

Author: P. Akopov

Chairman of the Association of Russian Diplomats, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary



EVGENY OSTROVENKO, Member of the Board of the Association of Russian Diplomats and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, has added a new book to the literature about Afghanistan and Iran, countries with which Russia has close ties, called "30 Years with Afghanistan and Iran: Country Profiles by a Diplomat."

The book is written in the form of a diplomat's reminiscences, however not in the traditional memoir style, but, as the author

indicates, taking the country-focused approach. Based on many years of experience of diplomatic service in Afghanistan and Iran, he entertainingly and knowledgably draws a picture of these countries themselves, as well as relates several of the important aspects of life in them before and after the Islamic revolution in Iran and the so-called Saur Revolution in Afghanistan at the end of the 1970s.

The fact that he had occasion to visit Afghanistan while he was still a student at MGIMO is an important detail in the process that shaped Evgeny Ostrovenko as a diplomat, Orientalist, and specialist on the Near East.

During that year, he worked as a translator at the construction site of the Jalalabad irrigation canal located in the southeast of the country in the Nangarhar Province.

Evgeny Ostrovenko's book consists of an introduction, preface, and 18 separate topics divided into two thematic sections - "True Afghan Stories" and "Iranian Essays." Each section ends with a kind of afterword in which conclusions are drawn.

Each topic is prefaced with selected epigraphs, many of which are quotes from the poems of well-known poets of the Muslim East in magnificent Russian translations by our talented poets. Each topic is furnished with many footnotes and informative reference inserts, which, in order not to overburden the main text, contain interesting historical information and explain specific terms and concepts of Afghan and Iranian reality.

Together, both sections create an original multilayered narration of events in Afghanistan and Iran that have already become history, supplying many new and interesting facts about them, and offering a better understanding of their past and present.

With this in mind, the book will certainly be of practical interest for students at the MGIMO and the Diplomatic Academy. Drawing on his experience, the author clearly wants, and I think he has succeeded, to help future specialists on Afghanistan and Iran to prepare themselves for diplomatic service in these countries.

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"Man is changing - mankind remains the same."

Gabriel Laub

"The world is not a quantitative concept but a qualitative one."

Albert Einstein

"THE WORLD has entered the era of thorough transformation. Geopolitical landscape is radically evolving, and those changes are accompanied by the growing turbulence both globally and regionally."¹ These words of Foreign Minister of Russia Sergei Lavrov at the media conference convened on January 18, 2012 to draw the line under the key developments of 2011 put in a nutshell the essence of the latest book of Evgeny and Natalia Bazhanov "International Relations in the 21st Century."

This is a profound philosophical essay on the nature of man and society, the role of subjective and objective factors in global transformations of the world system as a whole and of our day-to-day existence.

Today, few historians look at what is unfolding before their eyes as part of the longue durée; they fail to grasp the meaning and causes of what is going on. This can be described as one of the gravest problems of the science of history.

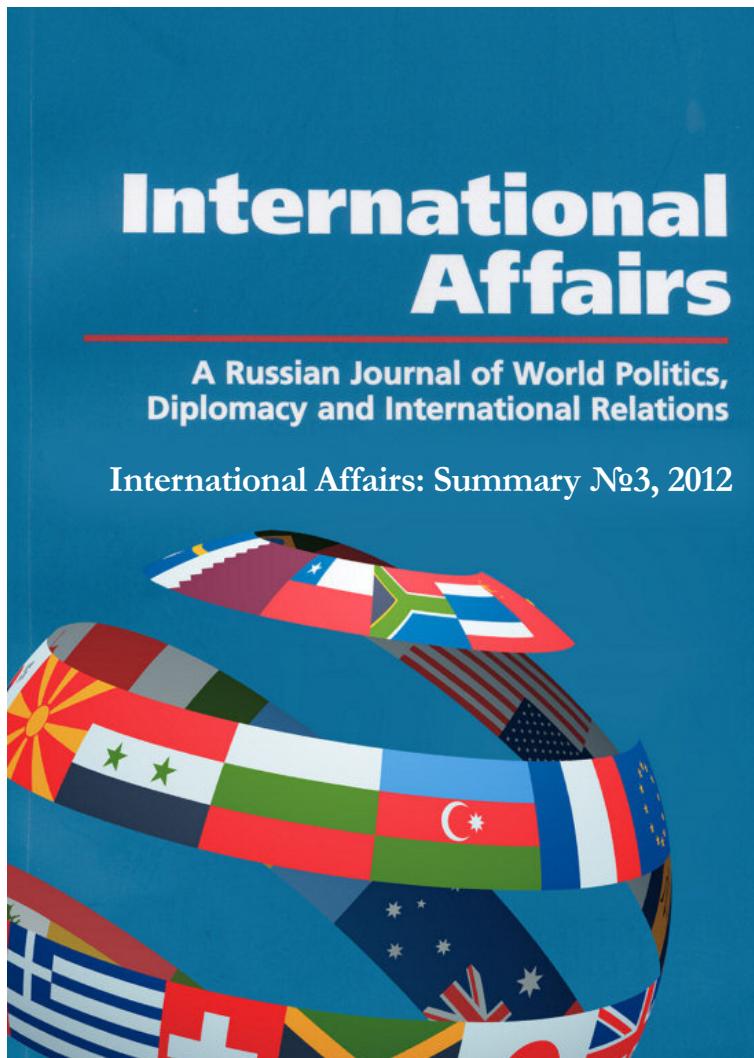
The book under review is a happy exception: the authors applied the Braudelian approach and refused to limit themselves to a long list of facts of the recent history of international relations. They analyze them as part of the longue durée and an element of an intricately organized structure.

Continued insecurity in the world is directly connected to the regularly recurring one-sided use of force, a part of the "syndrome of Western victory in the Cold War," and a result of the persistent desire to re-ideologize and re-militarize international relations.

The world is changing much faster than we can grasp the meaning of changes yet we should strain our mental powers to keep up with the process. The book "International Relations in the 21st Century" will help those who are interested in world politics and those who shape it to grasp the meaning of the current changes.

The authors rely on their rich academic and political experience to look at the world as a qualitative phenomenon; the reader will learn many interesting or even unique facts and have a glimpse of the depths of social-political and cultural-historical problems of many countries. The authors are lavish with the jewels of philosophical aphorisms and highly instructive facts from distant or not so distant past.

International Affairs: Summary №3, 2012



"International Affairs" Journal
Editor-in-Chief: **Armen Oganesyan**
Head of Internet & Multimedia projects: **Valentina Zlobina**
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