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Rosstrudnichestvo: Origins, Reality, Prospects

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IN SEPTEMBER, Rosstrudnichestvo, which I have the honor and pleasure to head, turned five. On September 6, 2008 the new agency was established "with the aim of enhancing the effectiveness of state administration in the area of international collaboration" as a successor to the Russian Center for International Scientific and Cultural Cooperation (Roszarubezhtsentr) at the Russian Foreign Ministry.

September 2008 was not a very easy but quite an indicative period for Russia, primarily from the point of view of its international image. That applies above all to the consequences of the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict in August. At the time, Russia defended an obviously weaker side against an obvious aggressor, but ended up in a kind of isolation while in foreign media - i.e., in the eyes of the world public - it was even cast as an aggressor. Essentially, we were taught a very serious lesson on the subject of information and image technology.

I believe that it was another - and very important argument in favor of a higher priority to be given to the promotion of the country's image in the eyes of the public abroad. Our entire work is based around the task formulated by V. Putin ahead of the 2012 presidential election: Boost Russia's educational and cultural presence in the world, especially in countries where a part of the population speaks or understands Russian. After the election, that task was broken down into several components in Presidential Decree No. 605 of May 7, 2012, reflecting all of the key aspects of Rosstrudnichestvo's activity: development of a network of centers abroad, promotion of Russian culture, education, and the Russian language, as well as many other things.

At present, on instructions from the country's leadership, we are preparing strategic documents that have a direct bearing on the subject of our activity. That is, above all, a comprehensive strategy for the expansion of Russia's humanitarian influence.

The World and International Relations Today

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TODAY, when the fifth year of the global financial and economic crisis is drawing to a close, no one has any doubts that the world has entered a period of radical transformation. The history of Europe, its modus operandi continue their existence at the level of the established thinking categories used in analyzing the ongoing developments in the world and in making forecasts for the future.

Considering this European historical legacy, it is difficult to say which of its parts prevails - the negative or the positive.

It is noteworthy that the evolution of prerequisites for it coincided on both sides of the "iron curtain."

What happened was a geopolitical "contraction" of Russia, the U.S., the West, and entire historical Europe. So it is difficult to disagree with S.A. Karaganov, honorary chairman of the Foreign and Defense Policy Council Presidium, to the effect that we are going through a period of "suspended politics." All processes in global development have received a boost. Theory and politics are simply unable to catch up with them.

Development problems are taking center stage for all states in the world, possibly more so for the Euro-Atlantic region than for others, considering that today the sources of economic growth as a general rule lie outside the bounds of historical Europe.

Over the past 20 years, Russia has been consistently pursuing a course toward integration into the world economy.

It has become commonplace today to speak about fundamental shifts in the geopolitical landscape of the modern world. This involves the "dispersal" of power, influence and prosperity, including the rise of a whole number of countries, above all the BRICS member states, but also regional powers, such as Indonesia, Turkey and Mexico, which are classified among the "new dynamic economies."

Regrettably, against the backdrop of all the gloomy forecasts about the present situation in the world, few people look at that positive reality. The UN acquired its relevance at a time when the "end of history" spirit was being overcome.

The attempts over the last several decades to promote one's own - formulated within the framework of an individual country or region - interpretation of particular fundamental rights and freedoms as universal have further complicated the overall climate of international relations. Overcoming that conflict, which in reality is the most negative tendency of self-destruction, will be one of the challenges to humanity in the 21st century.

The "New" U.S. Nuclear Strategy and Its Implications for Russia

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IN THE SECOND HALF of June 2013, the United States announced some adjustments to its nuclear doctrine.

The "renewed" strategy received unanimous approval from the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the U.S. Strategic Command, as well as from the Department of State and the Department of Energy.

The key provision of Obama's Berlin speech was a proposal to reduce American

and Russian deployed strategic nuclear weapons by up to one-third from the level established in the New START Treaty, signed in Prague in 2010. That is, the warheads mounted for delivery and on high combat alert.

The U.S. nuclear weapons employment strategy "adapted" in the second half of June this year remains in its essence the same. At its core is still the doctrine of offensive nuclear deterrence envisaging delivery of a first nuclear strike against other states which are not members of NATO and do not belong to the allies and "privileged" partners of Washington. In order to carry it out, a considerable permanently upgraded strategic and tactical nuclear arsenal is being provided. It is also of no little importance that these assets, in turn, are covered by a continually augmented global missile defense system of the United States and NATO, which is also being steadily improved. The U.S. politico-military leadership is still set to ward off the military threat from the continental part of the country, but seeks, like decades ago, following the concept of "forward deployment," to create such a threat "at the threshold" of other states.

The national security interests of the Russian Federation require thorough consideration of all these circumstances in its nuclear and defense policy as a whole, along with new approaches to the problem of reducing armed forces and limiting military activities with the United States. The "pause" in American-Russian relations proposed by Barack Obama in August 2013 under the pretext of the "Snowden case" should be used with a view to developing such approaches.

A Summit of Global Decisions

Author: V. Lukov

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THE ST. PETERSBURG SUMMIT, which took place on September 5-6, became the culmination of the "Russian year" in the life of the G20, the main forum of international economic cooperation between its member states.

The definition of the presidency's priorities became a serious challenge to the Russian side. A large diversity of multi-vector trends

in the development of the global economic and financial system, as well as in the evolution of the positions of the G20 participants had to be taken into consideration. There was also another factor that could not be ignored: The uneven implementation of the G20's previous decisions, which gives cause for periodic talk about the declining effectiveness of that forum and its role as one of the global governance mechanisms. The specific nature and broad scope of the decisions made at the summit show that the G20 is playing one of the key roles in the modern system of global governance, and that our country can confidently act as an intellectual and political leader of the G20.

Foreign participants in the G20 forum tended to believe that "there is no plan." There was also a "bureaucratic" theory that the Russian presidency was bound to fail.

IN REALITY, the Russian side had in good time developed a system of priorities for its presidency and a plan for their implementation.

Russia defined as its first priority task the stimulation of economic growth and the creation of new jobs, above all by encouraging investment, effective regulation and enhancing trust in the markets.

The St. Petersburg Summit formulated work plans or important practical decisions on almost each of the aforementioned priorities.

The G20 St. Petersburg Summit has amply reaffirmed the high relevance of that forum for international collaboration not only with regard to its member states but also the international community as a whole.

Is the End Near for Islamism in the Arab World?

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THE SITUATION in the Middle East is complicated. In some countries Islamists are suffering a defeat while in other states they are putting up resistance.

The situation is naturally affected by the ongoing developments in Egypt. The newly elected president took the path of turning Egypt into an "Islamic republic."

Meanwhile, the proportion of Egyptians living on less than two dollars a day increased from 40% in 2011 to 50% in 2012.

Unemployment among the country's residents under 30 reached 82%.

A signature raising campaign was launched for a call on President M. Morsi to relinquish his post (between 23 million and 30 million signatures were raised). Then the protesters filled Tahrir and other squares in Cairo, as well as in other cities; there were attacks on the offices of the Muslim Brotherhood and the ruling Freedom and Justice Party; for their part, Islamic militia (the Ikhwan) attacked the protesters.

The Western reaction to those events has been generally unequivocal: No one among the Western ruling elite considers the events in Egypt to be a military coup.

The reaction in Arab countries shows that they support everything that has happened in Egypt. OVERALL, the situation in the Arab world remains uncertain so far. But it is increasingly clear that more and more people are rising against Islamism. However, the followers of moderate Islam have yet to improve the economic situation. If they fail, the people may once again turn to Islamists. It is important to remember that Islamism has been around since the late 19th century, and getting rid of it is a very challenging task.

The role of the U.S. is a separate issue. The overthrow of pro-Western regimes in Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia provides no evidence of the democratization that has been proclaimed. I can't help thinking that the main goal of the U.S. is to create chaos in the Middle East and thereby undermine the policies of China, Japan, India, and South Korea, as well as those of major European powers in that region. That policy will naturally impact Russia. At the same time, this kind of diplomacy is also dangerous for Washington itself, since it cannot ensure control of Salafism. It is also important to remember that the irresponsible support of al-Qaeda against the government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and the Soviet Army in Afghanistan ultimately led to a terrorist attack against the United States.

Central Asia as a Geopolitical Center of Eurasia

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WORLD GEOPOLITICS has entered another post-crisis period which will create a much greater interest in developing economies and regions. The biggest world powers not so long ago holding forth about the Anglo-American liberal economic model as allegedly better suited to navigate the stormy sea of globalization lost the battle. Today, Central Asia (an umbrella term for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan) which has not yet exhausted its natural riches came to the fore as one of the promising developing regions.

Barely recovered from the shock of consolidation with the global periphery caused by the world financial crisis the West, led by the United States, tightened the rules of international rivalry over geopolitical space. Tension in Central Asia is mounting not only because the region has found itself at the crossroads of international economic interests; it is fanned by the narrow clan egoism of the ruling elites which refuse to take the national interests of the people living in these countries into account.

America and the West in general, liked the new term because it signified an era of global re-distribution of the spheres of influence started by the disintegration of the vast Soviet geopolitical space. The United States had been waiting for this for a long time.

TODAY, it is not yet clear whether the Central Asian region has become politically, economically, military-politically and civilizationally mature. The region is home of economically, politically and strategically very different states, which are much closer in ethnic and religious aspects.

Territorial delimitation inside Central Asia did not lead to conflicts even though created tension stemming from the Soviet past of the region and each of the countries.

The above shows that the region's rising geopolitical impacts are both positive and negative and that it demonstrates trends and counter-trends. Can America obstruct Russia's and China's efforts to strengthen cooperation with the Central Asian states?

TO SUM UP, Central Asia has not yet completed its self-identification as a Eurasian geopolitical center. As a newly formed post-Cold War region Central Asia is contributing to the geopolitical changes underway in the world. The regional processes are too contradictory to be forecasted with any degree of exactness.

The "Chinese Century" for Africa

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IN RECENT YEARS, there has been a surge of international interest in Africa, not long ago known as the "forgotten continent."

The African continent, which accounts, according to various estimates, for 30% to 40% of the world's known natural resources, is becoming a major source of oil and other minerals for the Chinese economy.

But Chinese interest in Africa is due not only to the continent's resource potential, but also to the region's growing political weight in the international arena. Relations with Africa are part of the Chinese strategy for a new world order, the creation of a multipolar world and a bloc of states of the South as a mechanism to address the challenges of globalization.

Cultural and scientific ties are developing rapidly. Involvement in the formation of African political and business elites looking towards China is a long-term goal of Beijing's policy. There are active exchanges between Chinese and African mass media. Chinese enterprises are investing in telecommunications and media infrastructure. Let us note that the Chinese information breakthrough in Africa is taking place as Western information agencies scale down their activities in the continent due to financial difficulties.

Thus, Beijing is successfully implementing its foreign policy goals in Africa through soft power, using all possible forms of exchanges to project an image of China as a friendly country ready to provide support and assistance to Africans and expecting reciprocal support from African countries.

IN RECENT YEARS, China has become a significant donor to African countries. In 2012, a report by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace spoke of China as the major source of foreign aid to Africa.

In recent years, Chinese investments are increasingly directed into high technology sectors. After the end of the Cold War, the developed countries began to pay less attention to Africa. China has made them refocus on the problems of the continent's marginalization. While meeting the needs of its economy, China provides new opportunities for African countries. This view is shared by many African politicians and researchers.

"Cadres Decide Everything"

Author: Armen Oganessian

Editor-in-Chief of International Affairs



Looking back over the recent past, you are surprised by how, at the height of the chaos of the early 1990s, the principle of cadre policy in many areas remained quite relevant. Despite the newcomers' obvious partisanship, professionalism was still highly valued outside the political realm. The "Chicago boys", who were whispering the monetarist phantasmagoria into the government's ear, were unable, in such a big country, to break through the thick layer of

the people's common sense all at once. "He knows what he's doing - he's a pro": That was still a criterion for the retention of old cadres if not for the selection of new ones. Crisis mechanisms were to be launched that would automatically discredit the class of experienced employees who had allegedly failed to adapt to the "shock therapy" conditions.

The next important stage was to select crisis managers supposed to perform the "save and rescue" functions while sidelining the class of professionals from management.

The first wave of crisis managers was swept away quite quickly. Having done their job, they cleared the way for a totally different type of managers. Those smiling, ever cheerful gentlemen seemed to be saying: Guys, nothing personal. In contrast to the previous "crisis experts" they were more intelligent and more capable, and some of them were even better educated. They had come to grab property and power, or to be more accurate, to acquire power through the acquisition of property.

The second wave of managers, who before long turned into property owners, finally broke the professionals' will to resist. Today, that is a serious psychological factor in the appointment of political proteges to positions of authority.

This conclusion may appear strange: After all, that has long been common practice in many countries, and in and of itself it does not carry any particular threats.

Dilettantes always compensate for their lack of professionalism with enhanced aggressiveness. For his part, taking into consideration the sad experience of the past, a qualified employee has learned to play dumb, disingenuously playing up to the new "commissars." The results are already there to be seen.

In their days, the Bolsheviks, who had realized that war communism had failed, put forward the slogan "No bossing around!" Who would have thought that it would become relevant to date!

Without Morality, There Is and Can Be No True Law

Author: Sergey Naryshkin

Chairman of the State Duma, Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation

This speech was delivered on October 1 at the session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.



A year ago, my visit here could not materialize. But the reasons that compelled me then to postpone the trip have turned today into the additional demanding circumstances and occasion for us to meet. I see that there is an attempt being made again to sow discord in the PACE's work and to distract the Assembly from discussing and solving truly urgent tasks, including those related to the need for deep reform of the parliamentary monitoring system. I consider

this an important topic and will return to it later.

After all, we meet at a dramatic moment. And although the events in Syria are taking place far from Europe, their very course and background indicate that the contemporary threats to peace are linked directly to disregard for law and the fundamental principles of world order, as laid down right here, on our continent, in Europe. In the worst case scenario, the consequences could affect all our countries; and therefore the most dangerous thing in this situation is to stay aloof, keep mum and show indifference.

By contrast, the Russian President's initiative for resolving the Syrian situation is broadly supported and has begun to be implemented.

You might wonder why I'm talking about this. Because even the WWII events are becoming forgotten and its lessons are getting to be glossed over, distorting the causes and nature of the most terrible tragedy of the 20th century.

Indifference to the spread of so dangerous an ideology ultimately cost the world dearly.

I consider it unacceptable to fight for the rights of some people while ignoring the rights of others - even if the former are too active and the latter are silent. This shouldn't be so in a law-governed state and a civilized society.

The upcoming anniversary of the Russian parliament has become for us a good opportunity to look deeper into the problems of modern parliamentarism.

I support the efforts of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Mr. Jagland, and his associates in the radical reformation of the Council of Europe

I want to conclude as follows. A huge responsibility for further events in our common home, for its sustainable development now lies with us. And our peoples, the peoples of Europe, have far more similarities than differences. Immeasurably more.

Is the Pan-European Idea Alive and Well?

Author: A. Kelin

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I WOULD LIKE to start with a simple statement. It has become a commonplace that in the conditions of formation of a polycentric international architecture not a single or even a limited group of countries any longer has sufficient resources to address global security issues, including those related to new threats and challenges.

Security is indivisible. This means that there is currently little prospect in trying to create an island of well-being in isolated areas cut off from the outside world; or to build an individual relationship with this island, aiming to improve one's own status. The close interdependency between participants in international intercourse, and the transboundary nature of today's threats cast doubt on this kind of options.

Yet such is now the vector of building relations in Greater Europe.

Is it possible in these circumstances to bring to fruition the concept of a single pan-European space? In other words, is the pan-European idea alive and well at all?

The legitimacy of such a formulation of the question is justified by the current, not the best state of the pan-European structures, including the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Nevertheless the stated aim of building a "security community" is alive. And it's a chance to create a system of relations that would underpin the continent's harmonious development and would rule out a return to confrontation, the arms race and military conflicts.

The OSCE, a forum embracing anyone and everyone, with a comprehensive mandate that encompasses three dimensions of security, is the epitome of the pan-European collective project. Yet its authority and role in international affairs has been steadily declining.

In these circumstances, our goal is to continue to engage partners in conversation on key issues to ensure pan-European unity.

The realization in practical terms of the above approaches to OSCE adaptation would provide a good basis for filling the pan-European idea with new contents. The chances to build a security community are not yet lost. It is important that all major players should take up this issue on a depoliticized basis and see in it mutual benefit, rather than an attempt to remove the NATO-centric security model from the pedestal.

The OSCE and Its Reform Issues

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IN TODAY'S WORLD, security issues as well as economic issues, the aspects of ecology and other concerns, along with the issues of a comprehensive and relentless fight against international terrorism and extremism and of combating international crime and drug aggression are important as never before.

Today, the OSCE is not just a European organization. Being a Euro-Atlantic structure, it is also becoming a Eurasian one.

As a result of the significant expansion of the range of participants, 57 states are currently members of the OSCE. This certainly imparts to the Organization a more representative character while at the same time serving as a factor for the integration into the international community of the new states that have emerged within the former USSR, including, of course, the countries of Central Asia.

In recent years, the central topic of discussion among the OSCE participating States has increasingly been the question of the role and the fundamental understanding of the cooperation-based Organization dealing with security issues. In view of the divergent approaches of the member states to the issues under consideration, the OSCE is at a crossroads.

The absence of a common political platform, the inability to agree on many important issues, the refusal by a number of participants to carry out reforms, and also the distrust among the members of the Organization have reduced its possibilities for crisis response and adaptation to emerging threats.

The OSCE should place special emphasis on efforts to develop more effective approaches toward security in each of the countries of the region, to create the potential for economic development at all levels, as well as to expand political pluralism.

At the same time, work should be done in regard of political and military affairs in conjunction with the key elements of the human dimension to create a comprehensive concept of security on which to base the OSCE.

Consequently, one of the central tasks in the short term is to convert the Organization into a multifaceted institution for security cooperation, including cooperation in the military-political and economic spheres, as well as in the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Expanding the so far limited cooperation in the fight against international terrorism, strengthening arms control, promoting disarmament, and breathing new life into economic cooperation should be the first steps. It is clear that in the future the OSCE will have to face major tests of strength.

European Security at a Crossroads

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TODAY, nearly forty years after the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, European security remains one of the outstanding issues on the international agenda.

Very much as before the Western governments continue talking about the principle of equal and indivisible European security registered in the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act, the 1999 OSCE Charter for European Security, the Rome Declaration "NATO-Russia Relations: A New Quality" of 2002

establishing the NATO-Russia Council and other documents. The Western countries, however, are not bound by these documents and are free to disregard them in realpolitik. The majority of the Western governments still see Europe as a continent divided into allies and potential enemies.

In the last decade. Moscow made several practical steps and put on the table a series of proposals in a hope to lead the continent out of the impasse.

Today, the military-political context and the interstate relations in the Euro-Atlantic region as a whole are unfavorable for adopting an international legal document to enshrine the principle of indivisibility of European security.

The United States confronted the Russian initiatives with a wide behind-the-scenes campaign unfolded in NATO, OSCE and other structures. Washington's pressure forced practically all European capitals to retreat from their previous positions. Their arguments, however, did not hold water.

The Russian idea of an international legal document designed to formalize the principle of indivisible European security, as well as other Russian initiatives, has run against many obstacles; there is no hope that it will be realized in the short-and even medium-term perspective.

The world and Europe as its part are moving toward polycentrism, turbulence and sharper contradictions in the military-political spheres; at the same time, it has become much clearer than before that the countries should draw closer and unite their efforts to neutralize the mounting threats to global and regional security.

Equal and indivisible security in the Euro-Atlantic region based on the EST is not a short-term objective but a long and complicated process which will call for a radical revision of interstate relations. We should also take into account the recommendations of prominent international experts who describe a new Euro-Atlantic Security Forum as a more suitable platform of a full-range dialogue on a wide spectrum of regional security issues.

International Organizations and Contemporary International Relations

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In recent decades, due to the growing interdependence of modern states, the internationalization of their life and the deepening of globalization processes, the significance of international factors for successfully dealing with national matters of individual states has increased markedly. International and domestic aspects of their policies are becoming more organically interlinked. This induces states to look for ways to raise their role in shaping a favorable international environment for national development.

The various forms of multilateral diplomacy, allowing states to not only elaborate common rules and standards of international

behavior, but also to agree on how to provide for their unconditional observance, are taking on growing importance in this field.

The Vienna system for European security existed until the Crimean War of 1856. Eventually it sunk into oblivion because of the sharpening of contradictions between its founders. The international league formed by them had in fact been the first post-Westphalian attempt by a group of states to create a permanent institution of multilateral diplomacy, designed to govern specific areas of international life in Europe.

The possibility of varying interpretations of the treaties, and of the norms and rules established on their basis, gave rise to the appearance, in IGOs' organizational structure, of judicial bodies called upon to settle disputes on this score and to ensure their uniform interpretation that is binding for all member states.

In the current circumstances, the role of countries' international politics in addressing the priorities of national socioeconomic development is markedly increased. The earlier, mostly supporting, functions of international politics are undergoing radical change, and in the face of internationalization of all aspects in the life of modern states, it becomes one of the most important tools that have a direct and immediate impact on the character and pace of their internal development.

Systematic work on the analysis of these tendencies and the changing role of international institutions and organizations in the emerging system of international relations is extremely important and necessary. I would like to believe that our researchers will pay due attention to the study of the role of international organizations in the contemporary system of international relations.

The Russian-American Dialogue on Arms Control

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RUSSIAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS are on another troubling decline.

In this situation, obviously the basic problems of strengthening international security in its military aspect, maintaining strategic stability in the new conditions and moving ahead along the road to arms control appear to be almost the only promising topic of dialogue. In theory, most of these controversial issues could be resolved. At issue is both the sore theme of U.S. missile defense as

well as the closely related prospect of mutual reduction of the two countries' nuclear arsenals by one-third compared to the 2010 New START Treaty limits, especially as the Russian side actively demonstrates pragmatism and willingness to continue the dialogue, stating the absence of any threats or fears, saying through Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov that "there is no Cold

In Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov's view, the "reset" cannot go on perpetually. Russia will commit to further strategic offensive arms cuts only when it is sure that the United States does not undermine its nuclear deterrent. Currently, the following conditions for further progress towards the reduction of nuclear arsenals have been formulated here.:

- Receiving legal guarantees ruling out the use of European missile defense capabilities against Russian strategic nuclear forces;
- Solving the issue of new strategic forces with conventional precision weapons;
- Solving the problem of long-range SLCMs;
- The conclusion of a legally binding agreement on the non-placing of weapons in space and on Earth - in relation to outer space;
- Addressing new limits on conventional armaments and armed forces in Europe to replace the CFE Treaty;
- Withdrawal of U.S. non-strategic nuclear forces to national territory as a precondition for beginning discussions on the topic;
- Involving the other nuclear and formally non-nuclear weapon states in the process of reducing strategic weapons;
- Solving the problem of the upload potential of U.S. strategic offensive weapons; in other words - eliminating the possibility of their breakthrough increase in the future;
- Dealing with the whole set of strategic stability problems in the new environment.

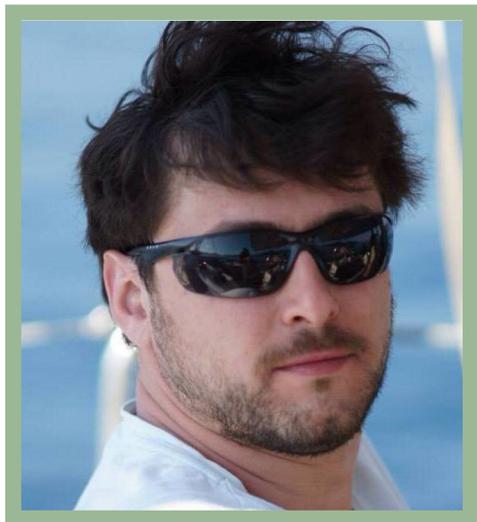
Meanwhile, Russia and the U.S. are not doomed to constantly aim hundreds of nuclear missiles at each other in the post-Cold War era. Nuclear arsenals by themselves do not give rise to the desire to use them, especially against a responsible power.

It is abundantly clear that our relationship will not be rosy in the future as well. But it is crucial to keep an honest, open-minded approach and to free our dialogue from demagogic rhetoric, mossy stereotypes and a desire to succeed at the expense of the interests of the other side.

A Proxy War in Syria

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THE REGIME of Bashar al-Assad in Syria has been demonstrating a relatively high level of tenacity amid the proxy war raging in the country for over two years now.

The local war in Syria is very dynamic and, therefore, unpredictable because of a combination of various social, economic, national and other factors. Its unpredictability is created by an acute shortage of reliable information about the plans and possible moves of the forces involved and also by deliberate disinformation.

THE DYNAMICS of this war is pushing it toward a

religious war dominated by political Salafism and its "global jihad" ideology.

Sectarian sentiments made the conflict between the Syrian Sunni community and the Assad secular regime even more glaring; they armed the jihadists with ideological arguments which facilitated mobilization. The war acquired several new superimposing dimensions: social, economic, regional, and global.

Islamization of the armed opposition is partly explained by the relative ease with which Islamist groups got access to funds and armaments for the simple reason that the war was mainly "sponsored" by Sunni Islamist states.

The high social status of the Syrian army, its popularity and close ties with the regime's political structure are supported by high morale - and that's not just an empty concept. Guided by its political and economic interests, Russia is consistently pursuing the strategy which can be described as "containment policy." The stakes in the battle over control of Syria are unprecedentedly high and its outcome will be of immense importance for Russia. Officially, Moscow insists on a political settlement among all sides and without preliminary conditions. The depth and the range of these interests account for its support of the Syrian regime both at the level of global and regional diplomacy and real politics at all levels including the measures taken but not publicized.

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IN TODAY'S DISCUSSIONS on ethno-political conflicts, Abkhazia and South Ossetia are as a rule considered together. Meanwhile, this approach is fraught with too strong a simplification. After all, the two republics, which have broken away from Georgia, have had very different paths to self-determination.

In the case of South Ossetia, however, we can speak of "involuntary separatism" because the

idea of secession from Georgia was provoked mostly by the extreme nationalist populism of certain Georgian politicians.

All this means that it is time to transform the military-political methods of control into a normal civilian administration. There is a need for effective government institutions, law enforcement agencies, and courts of justice.

The "transition period" has led to a strong public demand for a higher quality of governance. At this stage, the top priority is to have an efficient and viable strategy for economic and social development, institutional reform and effective control over the expenditure of budgetary aid.

Thus, the Georgian Dream's policy toward Russia has practically failed without ever taking off—no improvement has so far been observed, save that the rhetoric has become more neutral and benevolent.

However, the call for the normalization of Russian-Georgian relations exists.

60 Years of Russia's Military-Technical Cooperation

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Soviet cooperation with foreign countries in the military-technical sphere had begun long before that, although perhaps it was from this time that it began to directly influence the foreign policy of our country.

Shortly after the 68th anniversary of the Victory in the Great Patriotic War, the world's attention was drawn to reports in the Russian media about

the possible supply of S-300 air defense missile systems to Syria. Probably thousands of arms supply transactions are carried out in the world each year, but none of them has attracted as much attention as this SAM. Of course, the ongoing war in Syria played a role. However, the reason is not only this. In the 1990s, our country entered into a contract to export S-300s to peaceful Cyprus, but Turkey announced that it would destroy these systems as soon as they were delivered to the island.

The reason for the enhanced attention of the entire world to the S-300 surface-to-air missile system consists primarily of the unsurpassed quality of this weapon. It is able to fundamentally change the balance of power in the region, even as being inherently defensive.

At present, Russia securely ranks as the world's second largest arms exporter, and this export continues to grow.¹³ However, the figures for revenue from arms sale are nevertheless inferior to China's revenue from toy exports or to that of our country from the export of oil and gas.¹⁴ This means the defense industrial complex is unlikely to ever be able to become a "cash cow" that provides the economy with plenty of revenue. It is only perhaps the defense companies themselves and their partners that can enrich themselves by selling military equipment. However, the weapons transferred to foreign clients increase the country's prestige and contribute to the development of high-tech industries. In addition, the best specimens of military equipment can change the tide of history. It is important that such changes should occur in our favor.

Italian-Russian Dialogue: The Art of Diplomacy

Author: Michele Valensise

This interview was conducted by Prof. Igor Pellicciari, International Affairs' correspondent for the European Union, Italy and the Western Balkans



Moscow is the second foreign capital I visited as secretary general of the Foreign Ministry. That is not an accident but quite a definite and conscious choice, designed to underline the strategic nature of partner-like relations between Italy and Russia. Our long-standing relations, including at the foreign ministry level, are reflected in the regular and extremely useful exchange of opinions on topical international issues, such as

the Middle East, Africa, the world economy, human rights, and European policy matters.

We have wonderful diplomatic relations with Moscow, which truly reflects the friendly relations between our peoples. We often exchange bilateral visits and the scope of our agreements and accords in many areas is also significantly expanding.

In recent years, bilateral programs designed to deepen mutual understanding between our countries have been actively developing. With a view to further advancing the friendly relations between our countries, Italian Prime Minister Enrico Letta has invited Russian President Vladimir Putin to visit Trieste on November 26 to participate in an intergovernmental meeting that is traditionally regarded as the culmination of our bilateral ties. Russia plays a fundamental role on the world arena. There is not a single issue that would not require a dialogue with Moscow.

Italy is a country with a very rich history and very old cultural and artistic traditions. They are unique. So much so that many people perceive our country as some sort of ideal of beauty, harmony, a source of cultural values, common interests, and a progenitor of the institutions of culture and the culture of institutions.

Luigi Barzini, a well-known Italian journalist and writer in the second half of the past century, the author of the book 'The Italians', wrote: "There is always an 'Italian corner' in the heart of every person, regardless of where he comes from, what he likes or where he studied." I believe that running Italy's diplomacy machine means remembering every day that our mission is that this corner in the heart of every one of us - so universal and at the same time so Italian - expands to include all the very best that Italy has ever had.

"Eurasia Will Pull the World out of the Crisis"

Author: F. William Engdahl

This interview was prepared and conducted by Sergey Filatov, International Affairs' commentator



Let me remind you that the first debt crisis broke out in the United States at the turn of 2007, which marked a turning point in the post-war Bretton Woods, or the dollar-based, economic system.

It had survived a series of crises starting with the "gold crisis" of 1971 when it turned out that America could not cover the European payment orders. President Nixon had no choice but to

unilaterally dispose of the convertibility of the dollar to gold: the American currency entered a new life of unrestricted emission.

If Russia, China, Iran, Turkey, and Africa join forces to arrive at concerted decisions, Western Europe will be able to overcome its dependence on NATO and move to peaceful cooperation.

My frequent visits to Russia, Iran and China of the last twenty years convinced me that they are drawing closer for the simple reason that they are great Eurasian powers.

Being former empires they have deep cultural roots, rich historical legacy and many other things they have in common: the geographic and economic space of Eurasia, to say the least. There is a good foundation for Russia and China to draw closer, even if the Mao heritage interferes with the process.

Russia and China, Russia and Iran are drawing closer; sometimes I use the term the "iron triangle" when talking about their three capitals. In the course of time, this cooperation will become deeper and wider: the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is the best evidence of this.

It seems that the world does not need fundamental changes in the form of an orthodox Soviet or Chinese planned economies. On the other hand, the free market model has failed. It fails everywhere because it is geared at maximal profits and nothing else. It failed in the United States: the state of American economy is the best proof of this.

Chinese leadership has been recognized in the course of numerous discussions while practically all Chinese universities and large academic centers stated that the Friedman model created serious problems. The Chinese know this. What is needed is a shift comparable to that which took place in the 18th century when feudalism retreated under the pressure of industrial revolution. The role of the United States in controlling the current changes is waning.

The World Crisis and Eurasia

Author: R. Džarasov

Ruslan Džarasov, leading research fellow, Central Economic Mathematical Institute, Russian Academy of Sciences, Doctor of Science (Economics)



F. William Engdahl's interview with the International Affairs journal is extremely interesting: the prominent Western political scientist and economist whose views and opinions leave him no hope of gaining popularity with the mainstream media in the West speaks about the realities of the contemporary world gripped by a crisis of an unprecedented scope and vehemence which added edge to social,

ethnic and international conflicts. The scope and vehemence alone are enough to realize that the world is moving toward deep-cutting and very painful transformations in the social sphere, world economic relations and the system of international relations.

This article is my comment of sorts on his ideas about the current state of world economy.

This permitted the so-called developed countries to concentrate on their territories high-value-added industries operating on cheap labor-intensive products brought from the periphery. It set up the pattern of development for capitalist countries from the very beginning.

In the world based on the domination of the U.S. dollar the U.S. treasury bonds serve the main sphere of investment of "free" money. This is explained by the nature of global capitalism functioning through exploitation of the periphery by the core.

To retain positions on the highly competitive world market of supplies of industrial goods to the core countries, the periphery should keep the exchange rate of national currency down.

The world needs anti-capitalist reforms to get out of the trap. Big capital, financial-speculative capital in the first place, should be put under public control; money should be channeled to the real sector. The incomes thus produced should be redistributed in favor of the working people rather than the parasitic elites. This will raise aggregate demand to the level of aggregate offer. The core/periphery model of world economy and international relations should be restructured. This task could be accomplished only by global players, such as a union of Eurasian powers of which F. William Engdahl spoke in his interview.

The "Chancellor of Europe" or the End of the Merkel Era?

Author: N. Platoshkin

Assistant Professor, Department of World Economy and International Economic Relations, Moscow University for the Humanities, Candidate of Science (History)



IN GERMANY and outside it, the media spoke and wrote about the results of the German federal elections of September 22, 2013 as a personal triumph of Angela Merkel, the FRG Chancellor since 2005. Journalists hastened to tag her the "Chancellor of Europe." But was she really?

However, it was Angela Merkel who in 2009-2013 stemmed the "taxation breakthrough," the pivot of the liberals' election program. The FRG the widely publicized "locomotive" of the Eurozone, had no money to cover the holes in its budget; it needed all money it could collect as taxes.

It seems, however, that the sliding down began in 1983 in the "old" FRG when the left wing of the German electorate, dissatisfied with the right course pursued by Social Democrats pushed to the fore a new, and even more radical, Green Party. In the 1990s, too much zeal poured into criticism of "totalitarian" GDR cost the SDP its revival and votes of Eastern Germans. A new Left Party (Linkspartei, the Party of Democratic Socialism until 2007 based on the SED, the ruling party of East Germany) emerged and solidly fit into the local context.

The Germans know, or feel, that the common European currency is vitally important for their country: in April 2013, 70% of its population (the wealthier part) wanted to preserve the Euro; 27% was ready to part with it. The share is much higher in the Merkel party: it comes up to 75%.

Well, the German parties probably should have paid more attention to Russia during the election race.

We all know that Angela Merkel has a soft spot for Russia, acquired during her visit as a schoolgirl to the Soviet Union. As a politician she has to take into account the very negative public opinion about Russia shaped by the mainstream media.

The EU should not lose time; it should switch to equal and straightforward relations with Russia. Any post-elections cabinet will have to deal with the Russian issue. Moscow is ready for a dialogue with its traditional and privileged partner; it has new ideas and no prejudices.

The Free Democratic Party in Crisis: What Is to Be Done?

Author: I. Klassen

Secretary Assistant, Consulate General of the Russian Federation in Munich, Postgraduate student, Department of Comparative Politics at the Moscow State Institute (University) of International Relations



ON SEPTEMBER 22, 2013, the bell tolled for the Free Democratic Party (FDP) when the results of the general elections (a meager 4.8%), the worst since 1949, left the junior coalition partner to the CDU/CSU Union in the Bundestag outside the German parliament. An all-time low came only four years after an all-time high of 2009. Let us look at the factors behind the party's amazing victories and the no less amazing defeat.

It is too early to predict the FDP's expulsion from the federal political scene, because there is every reason to expect that political conditions will play into the FDP's hands.

Strange as it may seem, Guido Westerwelle himself was another factor behind the party's decline. Having moved from the opposition to the cabinet he scored practically no successes. With no real experience of international politics behind him he never offered a more or less attractive foreign policy agenda. No wonder, in September 2011, 56% of the polled was dissatisfied with his performance while 40% would have preferred to see another man in his place.

THE PARTY, satisfied with Westerwelle's resignation, still needed a replacement yet the choice was far from easy despite having the four ministers in the Merkel Cabinet.

Revision of budget revenues saved the coalition. Higher tax levies and the positive economic situation made it possible to compensate for the loss of tuition fees to the universities and increase allocations for debt repayment. The CSU scored several more points while the FDP, as an opposition in the state government, lost a great share of former supporters.

At the same time, however, the FDP led by Philipp Rösler did well in Schleswig-Holstein, North Rhine-Westphalia and Lower Saxony; the results were too low to enter into a coalition with the CDU, yet many were quite satisfied with over 5% of the votes. On May 13, 2012, the FDP carried an amazingly high 8.6% of the votes in North Rhine-Westphalia where its positions in the past had been fairly weak.

It is too early to predict the FDP's expulsion from the federal political scene, because there is every reason to expect that political conditions will play into the FDP's hands. If it draws the right conclusions from its failure at the last elections, if it manages to concentrate its resources, if it capitalizes on the future federal cabinet's possible blunders and inaction it will revive as a political force of federal dimensions. In short, if the party arouses to the challenges it will regain in 2017 its former role of a kingmaker.

Russia and Greece Mapping Out Bilateral Cooperation

Author: A. Davydenko

Andrey Davydenko, First Deputy Editor-in-Chief of International Affairs



GREECE is perhaps Russia's oldest friend. Relations between our two nations have a history of more than one thousand years. This is not only a matter of time but also of strength of the bonds of genuinely fraternal friendship of the two nations, the depth and ramification of its roots, its spiritual unity sealed with the Orthodox faith.

The official visit to the Hellenic Republic by a delegation of Russia's Federation Council led by its head Valentina Matviyenko made a big contribution to the contemporary history of cooperation between the two countries which in this year are marking the 185th anniversary of their diplomatic relations. It is largely owing to this that the Russo-Greek dialogue in Athens was especially frank and meaningful. The Russian delegates had discussions with their Greek counterparts, members of the executive branch, business people, and public and religious figures of Greece.

The talks also touched upon the Syria problems. Valentina Matviyenko underscored the importance of the understanding reached between Russia and the United States and advocated further efforts to explore avenues for a peaceful settlement in that country.

There was a serious discussion on expanding dialogue between Russia and Greece in trade and economy at the Athens Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

A special event during Valentina Matviyenko's official visit to Greece was her meeting with His Beatitude, Ieronymos II, Archbishop of Athens and All Greece, the primate of the Orthodox Church of Greece.

Further boost to cooperation between the parliaments of both countries was high on the agenda of the Russian delegation.

Participants of the forum reacted enthusiastically to the decision made by the Ioannis Kapodistrias Center for European Studies to award Valentina Matviyenko the "Ioannis Kapodistrias" Gold Medal instituted to honor that outstanding political figure of Greece and Russia, the first head of state of independent Greece. The medal is awarded to distinguished political and public figures for their contributions to the world culture.

Russia-Moldova: Between Past Legacy and Beckoning New Horizons

Author: F. Mukhametshin

*Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Moldova,
Doctor of Science (Political Sciences)*



APRIL OF THIS YEAR marked 21 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Moldova. A pro-European coalition government is currently in power in Moldova. It is made up of the Liberal Democratic Party and the Democratic Party, as well as the Liberal Party Reform Council, which broke away from the Liberal Party during the domestic political crisis in the first half of 2013. After the 2010 elections, these parties, despite the occa-

sional aggravation of differences between them, managed - through the creation of alliances - to secure a parliamentary majority and the right to form a government. The Communist Party, which had ruled for eight years, went into opposition in 2009.

The reshuffle of personnel in the legislative and executive branches has not led to a cardinal revision of the goals set before them. Continuity remains in the foreign policy course of the Republic of Moldova aimed at reaching a rapprochement with the European Union; it started in 2005 when the RM-EU Action Plan was signed as part of the European Neighborhood Policy. Thus, the current Moldovan government's action program for 2013-2014 identifies as a priority objective the completion of the integration into the European Union to the "point of no return."

Efforts are being made to bolster the political dialogue directly between our two countries. In this respect, 2012 has definitely livened up the Russian-Moldovan relationship. Presidents Vladimir Putin and Nicolae Timofti met in Moscow. Moldova's prime minister and parliamentary speaker both paid a working visit to Russia. Inter-foreign ministry ties received a boost, and an exchange of delegations from a number of relevant agencies took place.

Finally, by year's end, the intensified bilateral dialogue will grow even wider as Russian Cultural Days and Russian Cinema Days are held in Moldova at the end of October.

To sum up, in view of the rapidly growing integration processes in the framework of cooperation with European and Asian partners, it can be concluded that to keep the positive momentum in Russian-Moldovan relations involves a number of challenges and complex tasks that require a balanced approach and an open and constructive dialogue on the future prospects of cooperation.

The 200th Anniversary of the Victory in the Battle of Kulm

Author: V. Sibilev

Deputy Director, Department for Work with Compatriots Abroad, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Candidate of Science (History)



CELEBRATIONS took place in August 2013 in the Czech Republic and Russia to mark 200 years since the victory in the Battle of Kulm by the allied forces of Russia, Austria and Prussia over Napoleon's forces. In order to put in perspective this seemingly local and almost forgotten battle in 1813, where valiant Russian soldiers played a decisive part, let us make a brief historical digression to the now distant period that

preceded the fighting at Kulm on 29-30 August 1813 and at Leipzig on October 16-18, 1813.

The Battle of Kulm was fought for two days. On day one, the small Russian formations for hours heroically and at the cost of many losses contained the onslaught of Vandamme's corps that thrice outnumbered them and sought to rout them from the line of march. Special gallantry was displayed by the Russian Guard regiments that had to take on the main thrust of the French forces. The end of the day saw only an insignificant fraction of these Russian braves surviving. 33-year-old general. Count Alexander Ostermann-Tolstoy lost his left hand in the battle. General A.P. Yermolov took over before another hero of the 1812 war. General MA. Miloradovich, stepped in.

Russian casualties in the Battle of Kulm were estimated at 6,000; 2,800 out of this number were Imperial Guards, including from the Preobrazhensky and Semenovskiy regiments. Austria put up a monument celebrating the victory at Kulm and struck a gold medal with an inscription in Latin on the obverse side: "To the Courage of Russian Guards at Kulm." A Russian naval ship of the line was named The Kulm and became part of the Black Sea Fleet in November 1813.

Thus, heroism and self-sacrifice of Russian fighting men at Kulm added a lasting page to the history of Russian armed forces. Many contemporaries regarded the Battle of Kulm as a turning point in the 1813 campaign. The victories by the allies over the French forces at Kulm and later at Katzbach prevented Napoleon from furthering his success in the Battle of Dresden and prevented the breakup with Austria and its intention to enter into separate talks and form an alliance with Napoleon. They also boosted the morals of allied forces, strengthened their confidence and paved the way for victory in the decisive Battle of Nations at Leipzig in October 1813.

Author: E. Guseva

Counselor, History and Documents Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation



THERE REMAINS an unflagging interest in the personality of Chiune Sugihara (1900-1986), a Japanese diplomat who rescued more than 6,000 Jews during World War II. Some refer to him as Japan's Wallenberg. He is one of the best-known and revered citizens of Japan of the 20th century, who was honored by Israel's government with the title "Righteous among the Nations." Scholarly conferences devoted to Chiune Sugihara are being held; there are also films and books about him.

The Archives of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation (AVP RF) of the Russian Foreign Ministry contain docu-

ments never published before which shed light on the actual role the Soviet side played in those distant days and add some facts to what was going on.

In 1938, Sugihara worked for the Japanese legation in Finland. In March of 1939, he was appointed vice-consul of the Japanese Consulate in Kaunas thus becoming the first Japanese diplomat who arrived in Lithuania.**

At the end of 1939, the NKID received orders to arrange the transit across the USSR of Jewish refugees from Poland and Jews from the Baltic States. In particular, it was to evacuate students and teachers of Jewish religious schools in the Vilnius Region from Lithuania for what used to be Palestine at that time.

The Soviet Union agreed to let several thousands refugees and émigrés to travel across its territory.

The transit of émigrés was more than once discussed between Georgy Zarubin, head of the Consular Department of the People's Commissariat, with Japanese diplomats and they also explored the possibilities of routing the refugees via Vladivostok and Manchuria. It is reflected in the transcripts of discussions between Zarubin and First Secretary of the Japanese Embassy in Moscow K. Saito of February 1 and 22, 1941.⁷

The Soviet side obtained Japan's consent to let émigrés enter the country. According to a report from an NKID representative in Vladivostok, all the refugees holding Japanese visas managed to leave the USSR for Japan.¹⁰ The cause of rescuing the lives of several thousand people initiated by Chiune Sugihara one year earlier triumphed.

Russia and China: History and Contemporaneity (Three Views on a Book)



Igor Morgulov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

A COLLECTIVE MONOGRAPH "Russia and China: Four Centuries of Interaction," which has been published by the Diplomatic Academy of the MFA of Russia,* is a new scholarly work expanding the horizons of Russian Sinology.

The authors, representing a variety of research centers and universities, not only analyze the complex dynamics of Russian-Chinese rela-

tions, but also draw a stereoscopic, panoramic picture of their rise. It is only natural that evaluations in our countries of certain periods of shared history may not necessarily coincide.

There is no doubt that the appearance of a new fundamental study on Russian-Chinese relations will not only attract wide interest, but will also make a positive contribution to deepening the friendly ties between the two countries.

Audrey Denisov, Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of the Russian Federation to the People's Republic of China, Candidate of Science (Economics)

The monograph is a multi-authored study of the problems of history, current state and prospects of Russian-Chinese relations in the international context. It covers all the periods of the Russian-Chinese relations since the 17th century to the present. Leading Sinologists of the Diplomatic Academy and of other Russian educational and research institutions took part in the work on the monograph.

One of the features of the study, and what appears to be its strong point, is that it reflects not only the authors' views on the problems touched on, but also differing points of view of Russian, Chinese and other foreign scholars. It gives readers a more complete picture of the character of discussion on the issues stated, and the opportunity to learn and compare different interpretations of historical events.

Alexander Lukin, Vice-Rector of the Diplomatic Academy, Doctor of Science (History)

THIS MONOGRAPH is the first analysis in Russian scholarly literature of the interaction of the two continental giants throughout their history, compressed in a single volume. Perhaps for some, this phrase sounds strange. After all, there have been a great many books and articles written on the history and current state of relations between the two great neighbors over nearly 400 years; whole scientific institutions have been conducting research on them. All this is true, but the fact remains that until this point neither in Russia nor in the USSR was there a single textbook or monograph published, which would have sought to consistently examine the relations between Russia and China over the entire course of their history. Meanwhile, similar studies were put out in Chinese and even in European languages.

The Most Important Things in World Politics and Russian Diplomacy

Author: E. Pyadysheva

Executive Secretary of International Affairs, Candidate of Science (History)



ANOTHER REGULAR VOLUME of the "Diplomatic Yearbook" has been published shortly before the 80th anniversary of the Russian Foreign Ministry Diplomatic Academy. For a number of years now, each subsequent volume carries articles on the key events in the current period of time and analyzes top subjects of world politics. The names of contributors undoubtedly point to their superior professional skills.

This time too, the Yearbook editors, headed by Yevgeny Bazhanov, rector of the Diplomatic Academy, and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Yury Fokine, who is its executive secretary, bring together star authors. The volume opens with Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's article "The World in the Age of Change: Russian Federation's Foreign Policy Priorities." The minister paints a clear picture of our nation's foreign policy activities. He describes Russia's role in the world as that of "the most important factor of global equilibrium, geopolitical stability and balanced approach to world politics, one of the influential centers of the modern-day world" (p. 14). The compilers of this volume quite justifiably published back-to-back the articles penned by two foreign contributors - Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the PRC to Russia Li Hui, "The 18th CPC Congress and Avenues of Developing Internal and External Policy," and Director of the Institute of Problems of Central Asia Bermet Akayeva "China after the 18th CPC Congress: Achievements, Problems and Strategy for Further Development." Both materials are essentially on the same subject. The Chinese author, though, looks on the subject from within and the Kyrgyz scholar looks at it from outside. Even if Akayeva's impressions coincide on many points with China's official policy expressed by Ambassador Li Hui, the truth is somewhere in-between.

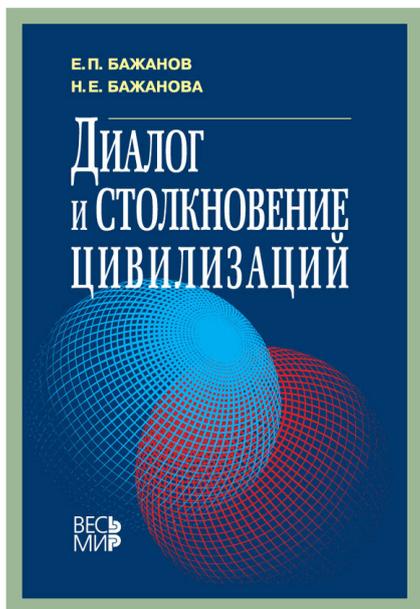
The volume contains a variety of materials of general interest.

"Diplomatic Yearbook -2012" offers subjects of interest to seasoned international affairs experts, university students and all those who like to read about world issues.

A Debate on Dialogue vs. Clash of Civilizations

Author: T. Zvereva

Head of the Center for Euro-Atlantic Studies and International Security, Institute for Contemporary International Studies, Diplomatic Academy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Candidate of Science (History)



THE NEW BOOK by Ye.P. Bazhanov, Russian diplomat, scholar and rector of the Diplomatic Academy, and his wife N.Ye. Bazhanova, Doctor of Economics, is of great importance today. In some way it is an answer to the ongoing debate in Russian society on the so-called "clash of civilizations." The name of the book written by the Bazhanovs, "Dialogue and the Clash of Civilizations," is of symbolic significance to a degree. The book is, above all, about expanding international cooperation. Discussing the most pressing international problems the authors rely on a large body of factual material. They come up with a number of interesting proposals of practical value that could improve understanding between different nations.

As never before, it is important today to properly assess the role and place of civilizational factor in international relations and preserve and strengthen the harmony of ethnic relations inside the country.

With their extended experience of diplomatic work, both authors value most of all the ability to make friends which diplomats have honed into an art form. "We should make friends wherever we can and rebuff attempts to take advantage of us without sliding into confrontation," the authors believe (p. 176). This precise and plain phrase conveys the sense of professionalism and wisdom of the seasoned diplomats.

The plain style of writing makes the book easy to read but this does not make its subject less important. Being concise, the authors manage at the same time to convincingly describe the core of their subject be it the United States' foreign policy concept, the policy of today's China or the hard time of radical renovation which is experienced by Russia.

There are absorbing pages on the influence of Chinese culture on most of the countries and nations surrounding China. The authors note that authorities in the PRC are paying close attention to preserving the language and hieroglyphic writing and popularizing them in other countries through China's culture. China's experience in the use of "soft power" merits particular interest for all with an interest in international politics.

The authors think that Russia has no alternative to a democratic future. This view is backed by the broad public recognition of democratic norms around the world and the growing cultural level of our people and the rapid growth in the number of cultural exchanges. All these things predetermine a democratic future for Russia which will occupy a fitting place in the world the sooner the quicker it carries through reforms and further democratization of its sociopolitical system.

Author: A. Torkunov

Rector of Moscow State Institute (University) of International Relations (MGIMO), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Member of Russian Academy of Sciences, Doctor of Science (Political Sciences)



The School of International Relations is undoubtedly MGIMO's trademark. In this open and ever more globalized world, it remains an attractive choice for those who would like to study and do research.

The school and the institute have the same objective: to be a high-class and competitive center of learning in Russia, Europe and the world, generating and reproducing knowledge on a totally new level of science and cognition.

As for the tasks before the School, it is supposed to set new-generation standards, of course. The president of the Russian Federation granted it the right to independently approve them. We have approved third-generation standards the higher schools in this country comply

with today. We, who have developed these standards, approve our own standards which will most certainly be higher than those in general use. To meet these high standards, the students and teachers will have to work even harder.

My dear students, former students, professors, teachers, and our dear and revered veterans! For all of us, this is of course a great event.

I'd like to say that it is not going to be a routine celebration. I'm just back from a conference on new technology and language training for international affairs experts. It is attended by delegates from nearly 120 universities and 26 countries. Celebrations are fine things but it is important that they are meaningful. When earlier in the day I saw the faces of notable people, linguists, language teachers, and researchers, it gave me confidence that the 70th anniversary of the School is a meaningful event.

I wish everyone continued good health, success and prosperity. Happy 70th anniversary! May our School grow and prosper!

"MGIMO Graduates Might Be the Future Leaders of Our Country"

Author: Yu. Bulatov

D.Sc. (History), Dean of the School of International Relations, Moscow State Institute (University) of International Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Doctor of Science (History)



The School of International Relations is first and foremost the preservation of traditions laid down in the middle of the 1940s and the augmentation of these traditions in present-day conditions.

Our Institute has entered the Guinness Book of Records thanks to the School of International Relations. The 53 foreign languages that are studied at MGIMO are for the most part taught in the School of International Relations.

We retain the regional studies specialization laid down way back in the years, many decades ago, when the School was divided into two sections: the West and the East.

The School has sixteen departments. Of them, eight are foreign-language departments and seven are departments for general education. Most departments date back to the very founding of the School and only one is comparatively recent.

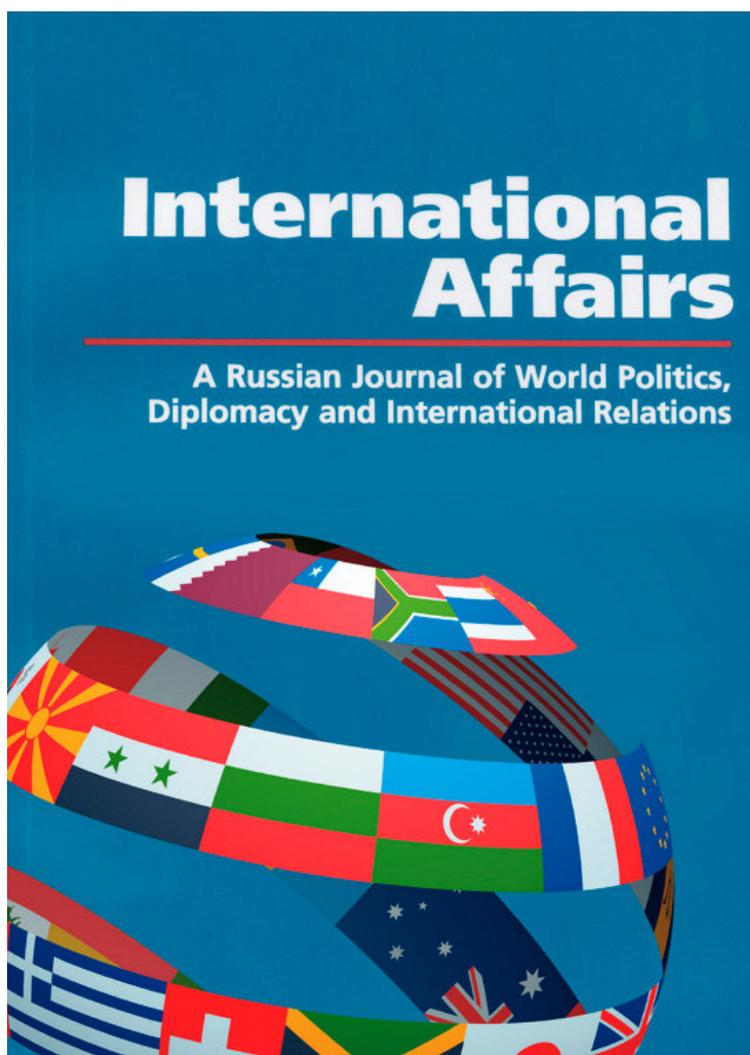
1954 saw a significant event - the merger of the School of International Relations with the Institute of Oriental Studies. It had already become a tradition with us to train specialists not only with knowledge of western, but of Oriental languages as well. In the late 1950s, the Institute of Foreign Trade was made a part of our institute.

Of course, the program changed after the breakup of the Soviet Union. Now we introduce in stages, as requested by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the languages of former Soviet republics. We combine these languages with related languages that have traditionally been taught by us.

The languages of former Soviet republics are studied not as a third language, but as a second or even the first. We teach the economy and history of a given region. To date, all this has become a full-fledged tradition. We make such enrolments every two or three years, depending on relevant needs.

We remember and thank the entire faculty who taught us and gave us a start in life. Some, unfortunately, are no longer with us. I would also like to thank the entire faculty currently working with me. To thank the MGIMO's alumni of all generations whose success, achievements in life and career are for us the tangible result of what we do.

Congratulations!



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