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The UN as a Mirror of the Turbulent World

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First of all, these dates - the Victory in World War II and the establishment of the UN - are really interconnected. Essentially, this organization was built, as they say, on the ruins of World War II. So it is quite logical that in celebrating the end of World War II, we throw a kind of a bridge to the establishment of the UN.

To make a brief historical digression, the first session of the UN General Assembly took place in London in February 1946, which made the deci-

sion to establish the UN headquarters in New York. At that time, the Soviet Union supported that choice. We believe that it was the only way of binding the U.S. to the UN.

The entire postwar period shows that there was no alternative to this organization. It is a central multilateral forum that has a unique mandate and universally recognized legitimacy. During the 70 years of its existence, the UN has passed through important stages of evolution: decolonization, the Cold War confrontation, and the change in the balance of forces following the disintegration of the Soviet Union. It is also important to mention the current acute stage in international relations that we are going through. This is a serious test for the UN, caused by numerous issues in international relations as a whole. We are currently working on this.

It would evidently be an exaggeration to say that the majority of countries in the world support U.S. policy. After all, many countries have their own interests and their own agenda and it does not necessarily coincide with the approaches and views that our American partners promote in the organization. A case in point is the Middle East peace process, when the U.S. is often on its own during UN General Assembly and Security Council voting. In other words, the majority does not share its approaches and assessments of the situation in the Middle East peace process. Overall, we believe in the consolidation of the efforts of states and in searching for points of contact, as this is the only way of finding optimal and effective solutions to the problems that we are encountering today, including the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, drug trafficking, organized crime, man-made disasters, and so on. In short, there are a lot of problems, and there is plenty of

room here for the application of joint efforts.

The UN Charter is a kind of a document that comprises everything in a very balanced, clear-cut and careful way. Not surprisingly, it is considered a fundamental legal document that has been crucial to all interstate relations ever since its adoption in 1945.

I would say that we are not aware of being under any pressure or in isolation. What the U.S. is trying to do, that is its policy, but on the practical level we continue to cooperate in the humanitarian sphere. The UN is not only the General Assembly and the Security Council, but also a lot of specialized humanitarian, economic, and social organizations.

I would speak not about sanctions, but about the overall economic situation in the world. Generally, it is not very favorable for all countries, including Russia. Of course, this somewhat narrows our financial capabilities, but we strictly follow our obligations.

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IN RECENT YEARS, the global situation has experienced powerful shocks that have aggravated existing contradictions, fanned tensions and given rise to various threats

There are mounting new threats and challenges in the world. International terrorism has assumed unprecedented proportions, the West pursues policies that encourage clashes between civilizations, and governments' violence against their own people triggers large-scale protest movements that are increasingly difficult to suppress, and methods used for this quite often make matter worse.

Russia doesn't see a potential rapprochement between the United States and China as a threat to its economic or geostrategic interests, but in fact believes it would create a new, and ultimately more favorable, environment for the defense and promotion of these interests.

The reassessment of the Chinese policy of George W. Bush led Barack Obama's administration to the conclusion that it was hardly possible to make Beijing change its political course or monetary policy to suit American interests. This has resulted in the idea of a joint large-scale project to China - a bipolar framework that wouldn't lead critics to accuse Washington of concessions but could be interpreted as a plan to build a joint governance system and elements of a new world order.

However, the Chinese economy with its stability and sustained pace of growth consolidates the leading role of the Communist Party in China's political system, and so there is no reason to expect China to move towards the Western model in the foreseeable future. Therefore, although the Cold War is over in Asia-Pacific as it is in Europe, one can foresee a long period of coexistence in the region of two systems - Chinese and Western - with different economic and political models, ideologies, and values.

China's mounting power poses no threat to Russian regional or global interests. Russia and China are the pillars of a multipolar international structure, and both countries equally need this structure to be strong and stable. There are a lot more points where their interests are similar or coincide than potential sources of disagreement between them. Russian-Chinese strategic partnership is consistently moving from the phase of political declarations to the phase of political practice, including major joint initiatives for bringing more order and harmony into international relations, for ways of building a multipolar system, for defending principles of international law and the UN Charter, and for preventing policies of hegemony and diktat.

Respect for each other's choice, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, and maintaining an atmosphere of confidence and equitable cooperation have become the new platform for relations between Russia and its partners in building the new world order.

Doomed Policy

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TWELVE MONTHS AGO, the Ukrainian crisis invaded the space of international relations; today, a year later, we know much more about its origins and sponsors and have acquired a much clearer idea about its meaning. Ukraine was destined to become a geopolitical battlefield that to a great extent is shaping the global future.

The United States has realized (at least partially) its Ukrainian and European aims even if the combat is still going on and the curtain has not yet been dropped; its main geopolitical project, however, is falling through.

It is impossible to dominate the contemporary world; no

power, not matter how "super" or "hyper" it is, can cope with the task.

Practically everything is changing in international relations: the power balance, the places occupied by different states, the nature of the relationships between them, the place and impact of social structures, the role of economic and military factors, etc. The world order in which the West, for many centuries, remained the center and the motor of the development of mankind is dying: the last pages of its domination are being written today.

Two states - China and India - have already left the camp of the developing states and are moving toward the status of world powers; another and a fairly big group is developing into great powers.

The coalition approach has paved the way toward a more active use of NATO which has already spread far and wide beyond its responsibility zone and has come to the fore in relationships with developing countries.

It is no exaggeration to say that American foreign policy is in crisis.

The international balance of power is changing: Washington's hegemonic trend is inviting a rising opposition while its tactical changes and improvements of methods do not and cannot produce the desired effects.

The course of events, the experience of the last decades, the future of the unipolar world, and its very short, nearly transient life itself demand correction. History is accelerating; it is catching up with empires even faster than before and it has already left American policy far behind. It is impossible to dominate the contemporary world; no power, not matter how "super" or "hyper" it is, can cope with the task. The time of hegemonies has passed.

The world community in America and elsewhere in the world will undoubtedly profit from this correction. The world needs a strong and energetic America and its weighty and sometimes leading role in international affairs.

The 2015 General Elections in the UK

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The results of the general elections in Britain caused a huge sensation: the Tories got 311 seats, Labour, 232, the Scottish National Party (SNP), 56; Lib-Dems, 8; the UK Independence Party (UKIP) and the Greens, one seat each.

It should be said in all justice that not all forecasts were off the target. Those who had said that the SNP would elbow Labour out of Scotland (the Tories had been already pushed out) proved right. In the same way, those of the analysts who had predicted that the Lib-Dems would lose the positions earned at the previous general elections were right yet the gap - three times fewer seats - was much wider than predicted. The analysts rightly pointed out that the votes would be tied to constituencies and that the share of undecided was too high. Finally, those who had spoken about a one-party Con-

servative Cabinet as being "less undesirable" than other possibilities - a one-party Labour Cabinet or a coalition with any of the other parties - showed more perspicacity than their colleagues.

The higher rating of the smaller parties has been ensured by the public which, very much dissatisfied with the Conservatives and Labour, shifted its sympathies elsewhere. Several months before the May 2015 elections, public opinion polls testified that an overall majority was outside the reach of the leading parties and, hence, a one-party Cabinet.

It remains to be seen whether UKIP proves able to preserve the image of an anti-system party, "the party which is a clean break from the discredited old parties." Today, it is shattered by sexual and racist scandals; the prospects of deputy mandates started squabbles around the candidates at the coming elections.

The country is moving toward a multiparty system because the leading parties have failed to offer the nation a Big Idea. Neither progressive conservatism nor Big Society, the ideas formulated by David Cameron, became the Conservatives' ideological basis. The Labour Party tried and failed to lure the voters by "responsible capitalism," redistribution, Blue Labour and One Nation Labour. The same can be said about the Orange Book, a manifesto of the Liberal-Democrats. The parties have no choice but to talk about how fast state expenditures and, correspondingly, social spending will be reduced and discuss the candidates and party leaders. The result will depend on the prevailing moods shaped by political developments. The Tories and Labour are moving in the opposite directions: the former move further to the right, Labour, to the left yet neither has a Big Idea.

It remains to be seen whether the UK will get a one-party majority government, a one-party minority government, a coalition government, or a coalition minority government.

So far, for political reasons (the opposition between the Tory and Labour looks uncompromising) a grand coalition of the two leading parties (according to the German pattern) looks impossible though the rebellious idea has been voiced³⁶ in order to keep UKIP outside the Cabinet, even on a marginal role.

Shanghai Cooperation Organization Looking Toward Enlargement

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THE ISSUE of admitting new members has recently become one of the key priorities on the agenda of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

A meeting of the SCO Heads of State Council held in September 2014 in Dushanbe has become a watershed event. At the meeting, Russia took up the baton of chairmanship in SCO in 2014-2015.

The summit's major result was the adoption of a

revised version of a model Memorandum of Commitments to Obtain the Status of a SCO Member State and the Procedure for Granting the Status of a SCO Member State.

Adoption of the above documents has crowned a long and complicated process of forming a legal basis for expanding the Organization's membership, thus offering new opportunities for a consolidated political decision by the member states which will allow starting negotiations with candidate members.

Despite the fact that all member states acknowledge the importance of accepting new members for the purposes of SCO's further development, there still remain substantive differences in their approaches to this process and in their assessments of the first "wave" of candidates. Now therefore, the Organization is confronted with a challenging task of balancing out, on a sustainable basis, two strategies, namely, concentrating the Organization's efforts on strengthening internal consolidation and raising the efficiency of existing institutions, and actively working on the admission of new members.

Obviously, India, Iran, and Pakistan will not be endlessly standing in line to get access to SCO, and will, in conditions of a sharp geopolitical competition prevailing in the world today, turn over to other, more "receptive" regional structures, which would hardly correspond to the SCO member states' interests.

At the same time, if it throws its doors open to New Delhi and Islamabad, and possibly to Tehran in the foreseeable future, the SCO would automatically turn into a political structure able to radically change the Eurasian alignment of forces.

An enlarged SCO, which would comprise all Afghanistan's neighbors having an impact on all major Afghan forces, might come up as an efficient mediator of peaceful settlement in Afghanistan and a source of sizeable economic and humanitarian aid.

No less importantly, an alliance within the updated SCO frame of major energy, agricultural, and hi-tech industrial producers, would provide a background for the formation of a vast domestic market and diverse production chains, ranging from raw materials to finished goods.

Russia has declared its main priorities for its SCO presidency, one of them being admission of new members. Now Russia will have to persuade its partners that the benefits of pivotal regional countries' membership spectacularly outweigh the organizational and technical costs of readjusting the SCO routine in new conditions. We can thus assume that the Organization is on the threshold of landmark decisions that would determine its foreseeable future.

The Soviet Union, United States and United Kingdom: A Step Away From Global Cooperation

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THE TITLE needs a question mark. Indeed, did the Big Three halt a step away from global cooperation? How many mines were laid under the alliance and partnership and when? Natalia Narochnitskaia once said that "Yalta and counter-Yalta were born together."

Reports from the battlefields were heard and discussed yet each of the participants was even more worried about the post-war future. France, weakened by the war and occupation and the coming routing of Germany, created a

great geopolitical hole on the continent, leaving the Big Three with the responsibility for the future of Europe. The war-scarred continent expected novel approaches; there was a shared realization that the world should and would change.

In less than a week, the Soviet Union launched the Vistula-Oder offensive against the German Group A and pushed 500 km into the enemy territory. The Germans and Allies were shocked. Earlier a German tank offensive to the depth of 90 km had created a critical situation for the Allies in the Ardennes. British and American generals begged Churchill to ask Stalin to take measures. The results of the "measures taken" stunned all. The Allies had never expected such result of the military operation which affected, to a great extent, the atmosphere in Yalta.

This operation no matter how brilliant could not change all. Churchill knew only too well how the burden of warfare was distributed among the Allies.

Churchill's attitude to Russia was mixed to say the least. Here we are now in the Livadia Palace, the summer house of the Russian royal family. There was time when Churchill had said a lot of warm words about the Russian army and Nicholas II as the army leader.

It seems that the British premier knew about the critical nature of land tilling in Russia and that amid militant atheism Russians retained much of their religious feelings.

In spring 1945, the cannonade in Europe was heard in Yalta. Churchill and Roosevelt pursued different aims. Roosevelt wanted the Soviet Union to join the war against Japan as soon as possible while Churchill needed free hands in Greece and the Mediterranean.

It has become a cliché (used here as well) to talk about the Yalta Conference as a symbol of global governance which allows Great Powers impose their will on smaller peoples. We should not forget that at all times Great Powers assumed responsibility for the fates of smaller nations or even regions. Suffice it to mention three partitions of Poland in the eighteenth century, the recent division of Yugoslavia or what is called Euro-Atlantic or Brussels discipline... Yalta-45 was no exception in this respect very much in line with the course of history.

Morals in International Politics

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THE WORLD is changing fast; it is changing by leaps and bounds which makes it next to impossible to explain what is going on and to foresee possible repercussions. We all know how houses are built: a firm foundation is indispensable for a solid construction. The former French president spoke of the principles of representative democracy as the main element of the foundation of the "Western house." It remains to be seen whether these principles have remained intact in the West or were reassessed or even eroded. As the standard bearer, Washington insists on them while pursuing the policy

which pushes the world further away from them. The United States and its allies are engaged in the selfless struggle for universal happiness which has already spread far and wide to all corners of our planet but have been ignoring the problems closer at home. Indeed, the Western world is changing, probably not to the best and probably faster than the rest of the world. It seems that not only common people but also members of the Western elites are unaware of this.

Never before American domination over its allies was as obvious as today. Hegemony is an apt definition. In the past, the West was eagerly holding forth about Brezhnev's Doctrine meaning the doctrine of limited sovereignty of the Soviet allies in Central and Eastern Europe. Today, there is enough evidence to say that Western countries, the NATO countries in the first place, have lost part (in some cases a large part) of their sovereignty.

It seems that every time when the ideals of freedom and democracy interfere with Washington's real policies they are merely pushed aside. This is best illustrated by the unilateral and unconditional support Washington and its retinue extended to the unconstitutional and bloody coup in Ukraine. The U.S. and its allies invariably choose interests and forget their principles. To borrow a well-known dictum of a classic of political thought of the late nineteenth century, we can say that the Western establishment treats principles as nothing but the interests as everything.

This contradicts the statements coming from Washington, which insists that the principles of democracy have been and remain the reason of interference, including military interference, of the United States and friends, into the domestic affairs of sovereign states.

Well, so far, the United States has been and remains the only country which used atomic weapons against another state. It dropped atomic bombs on the heads of the people living in Nagasaki and Hiroshima who presented no direct or indirect threat to the Americans. This barbarous crime against humanity caused tens of thousands of deaths; it took Japan several decades to liquidate the effects.

At all times, the best representatives of our people demonstrated high morality and sense of duty and selflessly served the Fatherland. None of them were cynics or hypocrites; sincerity was one of their best qualities. I think that for many decades the West was deliberately and purposefully distorting the image of Russia in an effort to downplay its own moral degradation and the gradual deformation of the basic principles of Western democracy.

Strengthening the CSTO as a Priority of Tajikistan's Presidency

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IN THE PRESENT-DAY international situation, security has become a paramount concern. The end of the Cold War era brought about deep changes in global politics, which led to a new quality in the system of international relations. The threat of a global nuclear catastrophe gave way to new challenges, such as international terrorism, religious extremism, organized crime, drug trafficking, and cybercrime.

The world in general and international relations have changed considerably. It has become obvious that

conventional methods that are at the disposal of states cannot be applied to fighting against new threats. Global security depends on a large number of factors aimed at preventing the spread of various extremist political trends using violence and terror as the main tool of achieving their goals.

In accordance with the updated Foreign Policy Concept of the Republic of Tajikistan, approved by President Emomali Rakhmon on January 27, 2015, our country believes that its CSTO membership is in its national interests and Tajikistan's efforts within the framework of this organization are aimed at putting in place effective mechanisms to counter the threats to the present-day world. Tajikistan regards its CSTO membership as an important factor in ensuring the country's security and preserving regional stability.

As part of its agenda as the nation holding the CSTO presidency, Tajikistan gives considerable attention to constructive cooperation within the CSTO and advocates for the strengthening of the Organization's capability and the coordination of the member states' efforts in the interest of achieving common goals.

On the national level, Tajikistan is implementing programs designed to uncover, prevent and terminate terrorist actions, suppress the financing of terrorism, and ensure the security of citizens against the threats of terrorism and extremism. A case in point is the successful implementation of the State Program to Combat Terrorism and Other Extremist Practices for 2006-2010. This activity continues to date.

In this context, compliance with the obligations assumed by the international community with regard to Afghanistan is, in our opinion, a key factor in the preservation and multiplication of the results that the country has achieved in the social, political and economic spheres over the last several years.

Tajikistan's CSTO presidency this year is aimed at achieving these goals and we are confident that in close interaction with our partners, we will be able to raise the organization's potential to the level ensuring its effective response to the existing challenges and threats.

"The European Commission Stays Aloof From Reality, Particularly in the Energy Sphere"

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In the 1990s, this country has been in distress, as a result of collapse of a great state. This hit us hard in both political and economic terms. However, already in the 2000s, despite an exacerbation in relations and the emergence of controversies with the West, all our opponents could get behind the following assertion: "Russia has been integrating into global political and economic institutions on a systemic basis."

If Europe wants to discontinue the integration process, then it has successfully attained the task. Throughout all its history, however, Russia would mobilize itself in similar circumstances.

Regarding the sanctions, their adverse effects will be felt till the end of 2015, in 2016 and a few years to follow. So far they have not had any significant impact on the economic situation in this country.

Russia will never cease to exist and will always be there. It will mobilize itself, radically improving the quality of government administration in order to raise the efficiency of the country's life-sustaining activities, and, consequently, enhancing the responsibilities of senior government officials. It is obvious, however, that a course pursued by EU leaders in Brussels has been largely based on ideologically motivated reasoning and that their actions run counter to the interests of the peoples of the EU member states.

Europe should be wary of America's invasion of its energy markets and should also fear China, since China is a really big consumer and, more importantly, one of the largest manufacturers of consumer goods.

Conceptually, Europe needs to solve two tasks. Its first task is to diversify its hydrocarbon. Europe's second task is even more important, namely, entering the Middle East energy market, regardless of a lack of stability in the region. And also without contributing to the situation's destabilization.

When I was a fuel and energy minister, we signed with Ukraine a bunch of relevant official agreements. The Ukrainian part has not fulfilled any of its commitments regarding the integration of pipelines, gas transit and prices... Naturally, Russia was also at fault for all its acquiescence for the "sake of friendship and stability in Ukraine." And this has backfired, leading to the emergence of the North Stream, the South Stream, and the Turkish Stream projects. It was not Russia's free choice to freeze vast sums of money in the above projects.

Generally speaking, the losing side by definition is Ukraine, and then comes Russia followed by Europe (which has refused to participate in the new pipeline projects without any reason whatsoever), while the winning side is obviously China. In geostrategic terms, the country benefitting from this exacerbation will be China.

The Role of Palestinian Domestic Actors and Political Elites in Institutionalizing the State of Palestine

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THE ISSUE OF PALESTINE is unique, and not only because it is part and parcel of the Middle East conflict and attempts to solve it.

It will be essential to mention here that unrecognized states are an old problem in international political practice. Some of the modern states have been through periods of non-recognition that spanned years. The contradiction in international law between the right of nations to self-determination and the

principle of territorial integrity is a potential source of unrecognized states.

This article analyzes the political crisis of 2006 with the split within the PNA, and assesses effects of Palestine's receiving observer status at the United Nations in 2012.

The article also explores internal and external factors in building post-colonial states in the Middle East with a focus on forming Palestinian statehood.

First of all, understanding statehood and stateness as aspects of a state is essential for understanding the rudiments of the institutionalization of Palestine.

One problem of studies by many European and American political scientists is that they focus on democratic development. However, the reality is that many countries in Asia and Africa cannot successfully borrow the nation-state formula from the West and fail to take adequate political control of their territory. This means that, in many instances, it is premature to speak of democracy.

In a word, there were such intense political and ideological controversies and such serious mutual territorial and economic claims that it proved impossible to develop any effective pan-regional cooperation (e.g., in the Arab League format).

IN THE EARLY 1990S, a new situation took shape in the Middle East conflict. The end to the Kuwait conflict paved the way to the Madrid Conference of 1991, an international peace forum on the Middle East that, among other things, led to an accord between the PLO and Israel called the Declaration of Principles.

The most important point in that document, which had been drafted by both sides, was an agreement "to put an end to decades of confrontation and conflict, recognize their mutual legitimate and political rights."

With the internal situation in Palestine becoming complicated, the PNA leadership decided to provoke an armed confrontation and force Israel to accept all its demands.

EARLY IN OCTOBER 2000, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank again became scenes of bloody

clashes between Palestinians and Israeli armed forces.

The problem described by the PNA as "Israeli aggression" against "Palestinian sovereignty" was impossible to solve without interference from the international community and the Arab world. The sole reason that a Palestinian state has never come into existence is a personal choice made by Yasser Arafat at the turn of the millennium: he opted to remain a revolutionary leader who was the center of the entire world's attention rather than becoming president of a small and rather poor country.

In conclusion, it seems worth emphasizing once again that there have been numerous reasons for the failure of the plan to create an Arab Palestinian state, including splits in Palestinian elites and hostility between Palestinian leaders on whom the political process has hinged, the generally traditional character of Palestinian "inner" society, the domination of informal institutions and practices, the religious aspect of the conflict, extremely unfavorable external factors and the role of the United States in the Middle East.

Globalization and Specific Features in the Development of World Cultures

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Historically, globalization trends were more rapidly growing during the inter-civilization wars, ages of great geographical discoveries, religious expansionism, European cultural influence on the external world throughout the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, industrial and scientific discoveries, as well as the colonial division of the world.

The present stage of globalization has been typified by a growing political, economic, financial, and cultural expansion of the West. Indicatively, a cultural component of the global processes has been growing against the backdrop of an accelerated diffusion of the state-of-the-art information technologies, which have so far been owned by the industrialized Western nations.

A rapid pace of political and socio-cultural shifts is based on a continuous update of scientific conceptions, a lot of which become obsolete even before they are made public.

A genuine reason underlying the above contradictions and many other similar controversies is the impact of geopolitical factors. And civilization prejudices are easily forgotten when there emerge some unifying political and economic interests, e.g., Russia and China, the United States and Saudi Arabia etc.

The past few decades have witnessed an increasing over-saturation with American and European culture, accompanied by an unprecedented upsurge of traditional cultures.

The impact exercised by the cinematic art on people's minds, particularly on the young people, bears a great political charge - the cinema becomes an advocate of the American way of life, while misrepresenting the latter in an idealized way.

American pop culture has also been aggressively penetrating the youth milieu via modern music. Even in such traditionalist societies as the Indian and Chinese, almost 50 percent of popular musical disks have been made in the U.S.

It is no secret that the Internet allows getting around the political monitoring of information flows. A global information space is being created which does not allow placing restrictions on the expansion of American mass culture.

One should, however, admit that the process of Western cultural expansion cannot only be assessed in a negative way due to its rather ambiguous and controversial nature. We

should take account of some powerful economic driving forces underlying the development of a global cultural products market, in which American and European mass cultures have become very attractive to a great many subjects of the globalized world.

The process of cultural expansion does not always lead to cultural homogenization. On the contrary, it has been increasingly accompanied by the emergence of socio-cultural differences between Western center and peripheral areas, including inside Western communities. Indicatively, local cultures demonstrate a high degree of viability and sustainability, while persistently rejecting the prospect of becoming a feeble semblance of American or Western cultural identities.

It is no secret that in the past few years a share of American citizens of European descent has been dramatically shrinking due to the growth of Latin American and Asian diasporas, which have a much higher birth rate. California is number one in this regard, claiming the status of the first state with a non-European population majority.

It is particularly disappointing that in their deliberations about the harmful effect of multiculturalism eminent authors come out with almost racist conclusions, saying that problems of modernization and development are entirely dependent on cultural factors.

Summing up the above, one can assume that the orientation of a globalization vector will largely depend on the sustainable economic growth in the non-Western countries, particularly in India and China. A growth of their power accompanied by an increase in their influence on the worldwide global processes will ultimately lead to a gradual demise of Western domination, including in the global cultural environment.

International and national efforts in the field of cultural development will be aimed to seek some kind of equilibrium between global and local trends.

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First of all, I will say that there are media and there are media. Some media readily pick up official propaganda and say "yes sir." Needless to say, these are publications with wide circulation, which play a big role in the country's internal political life, including as part of election campaigns. I believe that we will do without specifics. However, there are also reputable media organizations with an international name that the authorities have yet to persuade to put their reputation on the line, which is not at all an easy

thing to do. Nevertheless, getting such media outlets involved in official propaganda - and we are now talking about real information warfare, i.e., an attempt to regain on the information field something which cannot be seized by force of arms - shows that we are in a state of information warfare with very high geopolitical stakes. As far as I am concerned, this was the time when The Financial Times entered the information battle around Ukraine. This happened last October or November, after the military situation in eastern Ukraine stabilized, the Minsk agreements were signed and it became clear that this internal crisis did not have a military solution. So this is not accidental.

You have to hand it to the newspaper: The publication of items with opposing opinions continued, including the criticism of the positions of London and other Western capitals. Those were either letters from the readers or contributions from a handful of experts who were ready to argue and uphold their point of view, such as, for example, Tony Brenton, the former British ambassador to Moscow.

Western elites pursue an economic austerity policy, claiming that there is no alternative to it. This despite the fact that during the six years of the crisis it has become obvious to everyone that the funds injected into the financial sector do not reach the other economic sectors and do not stimulate consumer demand but reproduce the situation just before the crisis and set the stage for a new and even more destructive wave.

It was painful to see this anti-Russian propaganda being joined in by all of the FT leading political commentators, including even the influential economist Martin Wolf. All of them, without sufficient argumentation, portrayed Russia as "a real and direct threat" to the West and to the post-war "world order."

It is incomprehensible why the Western capitals, with their absolute indifference toward the people, as opposed to their concern about principles, allowed the Western image to be destroyed in Russia's broad public opinion.

The bias of the British media, officials and political commentators is evident from the fact that

they refuse to discuss the key issue of the entire situation, specifically.

I have no doubt that direct Western propaganda, which is insulting to the intelligence of those who pay attention to it, is producing a result opposite to the one intended and provides more reason for the decline in the level of Western public trust in their establishment. As a matter of fact, official circles are spooked by the perceived "connection" between anti-establishment forces in the West and Russia's foreign policy.

European Security System in Crisis: Ukraine on the Road to NATO

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The leaders brought to power by the Orange Revolution of 2004 in Ukraine demonstrated a lot of enthusiasm about integration in NATO (President Saakashvili was doing the same in Georgia); some of the Western states, the George W. Bush Administration in the first place, encouraged and reassured them. Appointed prime minister in August 2006 Viktor Yanukovich preferred to keep away from the "orange" pro-NATO orientation.

NATO's defense planning is based today, very much as in the past, on collective defense (against the "Russian threat") and includes deployment of forward-based forces and facilities near the Russian border - which makes Ukraine a potential theater of war.

Russia spoke of this course of events as a "red line" in its relationships with NATO and the West and demonstrated its firm resolution to "safeguard our own security" and "do this on the principle of reasonable sufficiency."

The declaration of the non-aligned status of Ukraine was not suggested by deliberate strategic choice. It was a product of President Yanukovich's pragmatic interpretation of the political context: a considerable sector of the "anti-NATO/pro-Russian electorate" should be detached from the "orange" Euroatlantists and Moscow's support should be obtained. Kiev had no choice but to accept the fact that the NATO membership issue had been removed from the Alliance's agenda; on the other hand, the West and Russia were engaged in the reset program.

ENCOURAGED by NATO support and willing to tap to the full the Western logic of sanctions and the energy of containing Russia Kiev decided to revive the NATO membership issue.

NATO membership for Ukraine was restored on the European security agenda.

Programs of direct NATO assistance to Ukraine have been launched through the trust funds that involve 26 NATO members.

The main focus is likely to be placed at assisting Ukraine's transition to NATO standards and promoting the interoperability of the armed forces. This, in turn, means that Ukraine will gradually transfer its armed forces to NATO standards in the field of academic and combat training and technical re-equipment of the armed forces with weaponry and military hardware from NATO countries.

The West (NATO) will want Ukraine as a partner and ally and will, therefore, help it develop its defense capability. NATO's defense planning is based today, very much as in the past, on collective defense (against the "Russian threat") and includes deployment of forward-based forces and facilities near the Russian border - which makes Ukraine a potential theater.

Operations of the Polish Armed Forces Against Ukrainian Nationalists in 1944-1947

Author: N. Platoshkin

Doctor of Science (History)



TODAY'S POLAND, or, more accurately, its leadership, in a strange way supports the openly extremist nationalistic regime that took power in Kiev in February 2014 and glorifies the exploits of Ukrainian nationalists during the Second World War. But Stepan Bandera and other leaders of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) had their arms up to the elbows in Polish blood. Forgetting this means encouraging modern follow-

ers of Bandera to commit similar atrocities. And they have been trying hard as well, for example burning people alive in Odessa, something their predecessors had done in Poland, and not too long ago either.

From the moment of its emergence in 1929, the OUN saw Poland as a historical enemy of a "united (soborna) Ukraine," along with the "Moscow Empire." Between 1929 and 1939, the OUN carried out a series of notorious terrorist attacks against top Polish officials, including Polish leader Marshal Jozef Pilsudski. These terrorist activities peaked in the assassination of Polish Interior Minister Bronislaw Pieracki in 1934. It is worth mentioning that the OUN enjoyed serious support in Polish-occupied Western Ukraine because of the Polish government's chauvinistic anti-Ukrainian policy.

During the German occupation of Poland and Ukraine between 1939 and 1944, Soviet partisans were active in the Lemko region, especially its eastern part, and the majority of the local population supported the Soviet Union. This was in striking contrast to Galicia, where the Germans were able to form an SS division - the Galicina - from Ukrainian volunteers, and where the OUN enjoyed considerable support among the population.

In autumn 1944, Soviet Ukraine and the PKWN signed a treaty on voluntary population exchanges. The treaty was signed by PKWN Chairman Edward Osobka-Morawski and the Chairman of the Ukrainian Council of People's Commissars, Nikita Khrushchev.

The treaty gave ethnic Ukrainians, Belarusians and Russians living in Poland the right to move to Soviet Ukraine and allowed ethnic Poles and Jews who, before September 17, 1939, had been citizens of Poland to return to that country.

The UPA became more popular in the Lemko region after the deportation of local population to Ukraine began. Naturally, the majority of local people did not want to leave their homeland, and the UPA encouraged their reluctance in every way. Poland responded by

coercive ousters of Lemkos, and eventually used three infantry divisions to carry through the expulsions.

The UPA's Security Service and "military police" would make short work of mobilization dodgers. Deserters were shot in front of a line of UPA fighters, their relatives were murdered, and their houses burned down.

The Polish police and security forces, which were still in the making, were unable to take effective action against well-trained and well-armed UPA groups. In winter 1945, there were about 300 Polish police in the whole of the Lemko region, and they were mainly armed with rifles.

UPA Security Service militants would hang on village squares those who refused to collaborate with them and stab babies to death with kitchen knives. In the village of Guzvice, all men, older women, and children were burned alive just because the village had handed over compulsory farm produce supplies to the state. All the victims were Ukrainians. The younger women were shot dead "out of mercy," having been raped before that.

Warsaw came up with a plan for a crackdown on the OUN and UPA to be codenamed Operation Vistula.

Soon after Operation Vistula began, it became clear that the use of large army units against small enemy bands was an ineffective tactic. Many of the army units were unfamiliar with the terrain and with UPA tactics.

The end of Bastion represented the complete defeat of the UPA and rout of the Ukrainian nationalist movement in Poland.

It is surprising that, after Warsaw declared the OUN/UPA a criminal organization, today's Poland supports the Kiev leadership, who are modern ideological followers of Bandera and Shukhevich, those butchers of the Polish people. Playing the nationalist card, no matter what immediate benefits it might appear to offer, can lead to nothing else than innocent blood.

Author: A. Ageev

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IN THE LAST QUARTER of a century, it has become clear that neither great powers nor small and average states nor even the United States are happy with international chaos. Is there a force strong enough to offer an alternative to the slipping into an abyss of hopelessness and initiate adequate measures? Which country except Putin's Russia can shoulder the burden? Has the world found itself at the threshold of another Cold War which offers no choice but a third world war?

Yevgeny Primakov is convinced that another cold war can be avoided because the current alienation with the West is not the cold war as we knew it in the past when two groups of states occupied opposite ideological positions. This could have developed into a hot war; today, the situation is different.

The following can be described as fundamental indicators of a war in progress: negative repercussions in the form of lost potentials - military, demographic, economic, financial, technological, territorial, infrastructural, organizational, administrative, political, reputational, etc. If there are no losses there is no war.

WARS ARE WAGED for objective reasons yet from beginning to end they depend, to a great extent, on subjective interpretations of reality (reflection) and "black swans" as unpredictable or ignored events which cause important and long-term effects.

A BIG WAR is predated by deliberate removal of all barriers to the use of instruments which rely on power in economic relationships. The potential, ability and readiness to use them constitute the core of the global organizational capital of the United States and its allies.

The Russian state and Russian society are living through a very intensive period of acquiring a new attractor yet the strategic choice has not been made. The elites and society remain mesmerized by a mainly fictitious possibility of following the old economic and geopolitical paradigms, viz. integration in Western structures and transfer to it part of responsibility for Russia's civilizational future based on primitive model of state-monopolist economy. The ideas about an alternative model based on much deeper consolidation within the BRICS and MINT are taking roots.

Russia, Our Chief Trading Partner and Main Investor in the Armenian Economy

Author: Edward Nalbandian

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia

This interview was conducted by Andrei Davydenko, First Deputy Editor-in-Chief of International Affairs



The year 2015 is the 100th anniversary of the Armenian genocide. So I will start off with the Armenian foreign policy agency's priorities related to this.

Our people, who lived through the first genocide of the past century, feel a special moral responsibility for the mobilization of the international community's efforts to prevent new crimes against humanity.

Another high priority for the Armenian foreign policy agency is the exclusively peaceful resolution of the Nagorno Karabakh problem, based on respect for the right to self-determination, which is enshrined as one of the main principles of the UN Charter.

We are doing all we can to strengthen our alliance, our strategic relations with Russia. We are working to develop a friendly partnership with the United States, deepen cooperation with countries and organizations on the European continent, consolidate good-neighborly and mutually beneficial relations with Georgia and Iran, expand ties with countries in the Asia-Pacific Region, in particular China, India, and Japan, and develop interaction with Arab, South American, and African states.

In the interest of facilitating collective efforts in the joint search of answers to current challenges, we cooperate on a bilateral and multilateral basis with our partners who are willing to cooperate.

Russia is our chief trading partner and the main investor in the Armenian economy. There are over 1,400 joint ventures in our country, and more than 250 bilateral documents have been signed.

Armenian-Russian interstate relations are backed up by our effective cooperation at international and regional organizations, including the UN and the OSCE and especially the CSTO, the CIS and, of course, the Eurasian Economic Union.

Obviously, genocide is the most heinous international crime. Armenia makes its contribution to the international community's efforts to prevent such crimes. This happens within the framework of international organizations, parliamentary assemblies, international con-

ferences, and other formats.

Armenians all over the world are unanimous that the genocide must be condemned by the entire international community, all those who consider themselves to be part of the civilized world and who share basic human values.

We have repeatedly expressed our deep concern over the current situation in Syria and Iraq, urging the international community to take decisive steps to prevent new tragedies. We constantly stress the need to immediately stop any assistance to terrorist groups, including the use of the territory of neighboring countries for trans-border attacks. Armenia completely supports the implementation of the corresponding resolutions of the UN Security Council.

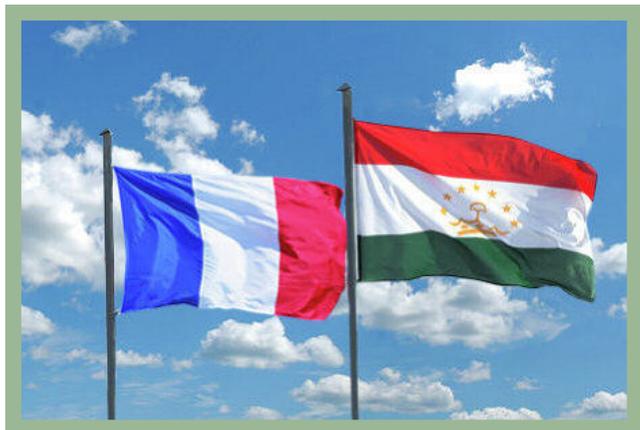
Today, Armenian-Georgian relations are at a level that gives us an opportunity to discuss frankly the issues that come up, and find mutually acceptable solutions to them.

Armenia is also very interested in the positive dynamics of Russian-Georgian relations. After all, Russia is our ally, while Georgia is our close neighbor.

Tajikistan-Russia: Geopolitical Relations at the Turn of the 21st Century

Author: Zafari Sberali Sayidzoda

Senior Adviser to the Office of the Assistant to the President of the Republic of Tajikistan on Foreign Relations, Candidate of Science (Philosophy)



THE LEADERSHIP of the Republic of Tajikistan was obliged to make hard decisions during the country's transition to state sovereignty. These decisions brought our country into the world community as a subject of international law and international relations - an historic national goal. The objective to build close ties and contacts with Russia can be motivated not only by Russia's political and economic weight in the world commu-

nity and the FSU but also by such an important factor as affinity and shared history of the peoples of our countries.

The shaping of the Tajik Republic's foreign policy faced big objective and subjective hurdles. Civil war broke out in the country following the collapse of the Soviet Union. After the end of the war, the peacebuilding process took from June 27, 1997 to April 1, 2000. The shaping of foreign policy of the country which gained independence in September 1991 was a painful process because it had to be launched virtually from scratch.

Tajikistan's close military-technical cooperation with Russia during the 1990s made, as we know, Western politicians and some of the mass media ask many questions. To see why, let us briefly look at the recent past.

At the turn of the century, the people of Tajikistan grew confident about their future as stability and security in the country took hold largely as a result of close cooperation with Russia in key areas.

Tajik-Russian political relations are growing stronger. Tajikistan nearly always backs Russia on important international issues like adherence to collective principles in international relations and building up multipolarity and democratization of the world system.

Tajikistan and Russia proceed from virtually the same stance on matters related to building up the potential of the CIS, CSTO, and SCO. bringing peace and stability to Central Asia and Afghanistan, and achieving more comprehensive integration of former Soviet states.

The Republic of Tajikistan is constantly demonstrating its readiness to expand cultural and information cooperation with Russia. Both countries are planning to establish information and culture centers in Dushanbe and Moscow. An appropriate bilateral agreement was signed to this effect in February of 2011. Now work is on to fully implement it.

Russia and Greece: A Time-Tested Relationship

Author: A. Maslov

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Hellenic Republic

This interview was conducted by Alexander Gasiuk, Rossiiskaia gazeta correspondent in Greece.



The new Greek government not only sustains continuity in our relations but has also expressed the desire to develop them at a faster pace. Our bilateral cooperation has clearly remained stalled for several years, and today there is a chance to revitalize it.

The preparation of the program for the Russia Year in Greece and the Greece Year in Russia in 2016 will be an important factor in our interaction. We are determined to cooperate with Greece intensively and see it as a serious and friendly partner that

is open to dialogue. Russian-Greek relations rest on a solid, time-tested foundation - mutual emotional affinity and warmth, the shared cultural legacy of the two Orthodox Christian nations, many centuries of cooperation between them, including during wartime, and close intertwining of individual lives.

We want to resume our equitable and mutually respectful political dialogue with the European Union. For this reason, we would undoubtedly have welcomed any offer to mediate in such a dialogue from a country that is close to us because of cultural similarities, historical ties, and shared traditions and is simultaneously a member of the EU.

We highly appreciate the role of Greece in restoring relations between Russia and NATO after Georgia's aggression against South Ossetia in 2008. Athens launched what became known as the Corfu Process and was a catalyst in the resumption of cooperation between Moscow and the alliance. Today as well, our European partners would be advised to heed sober-minded proposals from Athens for how to improve the dialogue atmosphere between Russia and the EU.

On the Ukraine issue, Athens firmly supports the Minsk agreements, urges the parties to the conflict to start negotiations, and offers mediation.

Russian-Greek relations rest on a solid, time-tested foundation - mutual emotional affinity and warmth, the shared cultural legacy of the two Orthodox Christian nations, many centuries of cooperation between them, including during wartime, and close intertwining of individual lives.

Greece seeks to be a serious player in the Southern European gas market and a transit country in gas transmission to the Balkans and Central Europe. Participation in this project would benefit Greece because it would not only bring the advantages of being a transit country but also mean the creation of jobs as it would involve building infrastructure facilities.

Author: A. Varfolomeev

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THE PAST FEW YEARS have seen what, to all intents and purposes, is the revival of sea piracy. Hundreds of incidents in the Gulf of Aden, the Gulf of Guinea, and elsewhere on the high seas, involving attacks on ships from dozens of countries, have again made piracy one of the main threats to international security.

International piracy has reached a point where it can nearly be qualified as a threat to international peace and security with the potential invoking of Chapter VII of the UN Charter.

Until now, the UN Security Council has given such qualifications to only two types of non-governmental threats - international terrorism (Resolutions 1368 and 1373) and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (Resolution 1540).

There arises a question: What is to be done about sea attacks that, in line with the letter of international law, cannot be qualified as anything else than acts of quasi-piracy but, unfortunately, are regularly committed in waters that are under national sovereignty?

There has never been more urgent need for an answer - statistically, acts of quasi-piracy, i.e. assaults that fall outside the 1982 Convention's definition of piracy and include attacks within territorial waters, have by and large been more numerous in recent years than acts of piracy as such (see Table).

The Security Council provided a legal basis for international anti-piracy laws to be applicable in Somali territorial waters. Hence, the two-element "piracy and armed robbery at sea" formula became effective from the practical standpoint, authorizing the maximum pooling of resources for offsetting the threat posed by Somali sea robbers, a threat that is indivisible in practical terms. At the same time, by using the two-element formula rather than a single general term, the Security Council emphasizes that piracy and armed robbery at sea are different forms of crime and are not interchangeable in terms of international law.

Anti-piracy action has been put under universal jurisdiction for centuries since piracy has been seen as one of the most dangerous international crimes and a threat to the entire civilized world. Pirates were called *hostis humani generis* (enemy of mankind) for several centuries since antiquity.

The Legal Regime of the Arctic Region: Military-Political Dimensions of the Arctic Strategies of Russia and Canada

Author: A. Abdullin

Attache, Third Department for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation



For many years, Canada positioned itself in its Arctic policies as an inseparable part of the Western world, sharing its anti-Soviet line. Despite the collapse of the Soviet Union, the end of the bloc confrontation, and the plummeting role of geopolitics in international relations, the distribution of rights to the control and use of Arctic territories and resources remains an uncompleted process.

In analyzing Russian and Canadian Arctic policies, one should first of all get to the legal sources of Arctic-related

problems. The legal regime of any region depends on the demarcation of its boundaries. Scientifically, the Arctic is the part of the globe north of the Arctic Circle that includes the North Pole. That vast territory encompasses land and sea areas and the air space over them. Most of the land in the Arctic is under the sovereignty of some state or other. Sea areas outside the sovereignty of Arctic states are governed by international law.

However, there is one problem that frequently comes up in debates - lack of a basis in international law for dealing with potential future conflicts.

However, numerous as the above-mentioned declarations are, the majority of them state intentions rather than binding rules of conduct. Nor does any the declarations establish a mechanism for the enforcement of any such rules.

Ottawa's claim of sovereignty over Arctic waters was primarily based on the international law principles of historic waters, straight baselines and division of the Arctic into national sectors that extend to the geographical North Pole. These principles amount to the prerogative of a littoral state to draw its borders within the limits of its sector.

A state is entitled to a sector if it has an Arctic Ocean coast. The boundaries of a sector are meridians passing through the two extremities points of the state's Arctic coastline.

Efforts by Russia and Canada to assert their sovereignty over Arctic areas has exerted a considerable doctrinal effect on international law. especially its sections concerning the Arctic, and the sectoral principle was not the only innovation either.

The defense of national interests in Arctic waters is the core of Russia's maritime policy due to the importance of free access to the high seas for Russian ships, to the geopolitical position of Russia's Arctic continental shelf, and to the vital need for the freedom of maneuver for the Russian Navy's Northern Fleet. The doctrine envisages a special role from the navigation point of view for the Barents and White seas, other Arctic seas, the North Sea Route, and the North Atlantic.

"Where the Russian Flag Has Been Raised, It Must Never Be Lowered": Who Sold Russian America and Why

Author: Yu. Bulatov

Dean, Faculty of International Relations, Moscow State Institute (University) of International Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Professor, Doctor of Science (History)



ON MARCH 30, 1867, the Russian Empire signed the Treaty concerning the Cession of the Russian Possessions in North America by His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias to the United States of America. Today, there is no agreement in Russia about the reasons behind the decision of the czarist government to sell this part of the Russian territory to the United States.

The Alaska deal is a unique and unprecedented event in the history of Russia.

There was no military confrontation between Russia and the United States and no hostile intentions; there were no military cataclysms in Russia which could have explained the unexplainable decision. It was a gift which

did not harmonize with Russia's political interests and was, therefore, unmotivated and unexplainable. Today, this interest is still very much alive. During the April 2014 Q&A conference broadcasted by all federal radio and TV channels, somebody asked Putin about the future of Russian America in the twenty-first century, the question suggested by the reunification of Crimea with Russia. The president answered the hotheads: "Why would you need Alaska Let's not get hot-headed."

One thing is clear: emotions should be excluded from any conclusions related to the transfer of Russian America to the United States; discussions should be based on historical facts which are not easy to discover. The basic documents related to the sale of Alaska have not yet been found in Russia.

A far-sighted politician, Prince Gorchakov knew that sooner or later his role in the Alaska deal would become known to the public and was doing everything in his power to limit the scope of a possible damage to his career inflicted by what he described as "compulsory Americanism." He revealed no mean skills in limiting information about his involvement in the Alaska deal yet never hesitated to brandish his Americanism when he saw it fit.

We can surmise that there was not enough money in the Treasury, let alone the huge sum of \$7.2 million. The Civil War of 1861-1865 had just ended leaving behind ruined economy, devastated country and impoverished population, the very visible signs of the sad state of affairs in the United States.

The facts of history cannot be refuted. There was no money in the state coffers yet Alaska was purchased from Russia. Who was rich enough to pay an exorbitant sum for the new possessions?

Russia lost rich sources of raw materials, which means lost profit. This profit could have been otherwise earned at gold and oil land and offshore fields, sea fisheries, etc.

The years which have elapsed since March 30, 1867 have shown that when dealing with Russia the United States has been never seeking good-neighborly relations but at all times remained a partner-rival. The lesson of the past was ignored.

Molotov and Soviet Diplomacy During World War II

Author: Yu. Rubtsov

Professor, Doctor of Science (History)



DURING the last few decades, opinions about Vyacheslav Molotov, his role and his personality and about practically all other prominent Soviet political figures, for that matter, have swung back and forth from extolment to unacceptable rudeness.

Molotov occupied many different posts in the Communist Party and state structures, yet he is primarily associated with the Soviet Union's foreign policy. For nearly 13 years, he remained the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs/Foreign Minister of the Soviet

Union responsible for the country's foreign policy when it was struggling for international recognition and consolidating its international position on the eve and during World War II. It is more or less commonly believed in the West that the so-called Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact triggered World War II. In fact, Hitler was encouraged by the short-sighted appeasement policy of Western democracies. The Pact was a temporary military-political compromise, which gave the Soviet leaders time and geographical space in anticipation of an inevitable armed clash. The Soviet Union was guided by its security interests and the need to fortify the defense lines at distant approaches.

Molotov was directly involved in drafting the secret protocols to the non-aggression treaty of August 23, 1939 and the treaty on friendship and borders of September 28 of the same year. He talked to Ribbentrop and signed the documents yet never admitted that such documents existed.

An analysis of Molotov's behavior at the talks with the Nazi leaders suggests that he was not absolutely independent. We should bear in mind that he had no diplomatic experience and that his contacts with foreign diplomats and his knowledge of any of the European tongues were minimal. This strongly affected his first steps as the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs.

Molotov compensated for the minimum of diplomatic experience by his huge experience of administering many spheres of state activities. By the late 1930s, he became a mature and versatile politician with his own opinions and enough determination and skill to defend them in front of Stalin.

Western politicians could not ignore Molotov's contribution into the foreign policy successes which, together with military victories, paved the Soviet Union's road toward victory over Germany and its allies.

Molotov remained prominent on the international scene after World War II: he worked on realization of the decisions of the Yalta, Potsdam and San Francisco conferences and actively

promoted peace agreements with the wartime allies of Nazi Germany: he knocked out peace agreements from these states since "my task as minister of foreign affairs was to expand the borders of our Fatherland."

In March 1949, he was removed, not released, from his post because Stalin suspected him of abetting "enemies of the people." Had Stalin lived longer (he died in March 1953) Molotov, Mikoyan and Voroshilov could have become victims of another wave of purges among the top political figures.

Do Germans Have a "Grope Zukunft" in the Russian Economy?

Author: L. Klepatsky

Professor, Diplomatic Academy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation



THE FIRST EDITION of *A Great Future: Germans in Russia's Economy* is a hardcover volume of nearly 400 pages. It describes nearly 800 years of commercial and economic contacts between Russia and Germany. The introduction describes those centuries as "an uninterrupted line of development with its ups and downs".

The inception of trade relations between Russia and Germany came in the Middle Ages, roughly, in the middle of the eighth century. They were interrupted only during the world wars. The first German trade missions were established in

Novgorod and expanded after Archangelsk, Moscow, and Petersburg joined in. The presence of German merchants gradually extended to include the Volga Region, the Urals, Siberia, and the Russian Far East.

Appropriately, the period between the 1990s and 2014 saw an appreciable increase in the presence of German business people in Russia's economy both in terms of their number and quality.

In addition to an extensive background of bilateral cooperation, the book looks at the areas of cooperation. These areas vary widely from the light and food industries to heavy industry, railway infrastructure, transportation, telecommunications, automotive industry, medicine, mass media, film industry, construction, agriculture, banking, and so on. Cooperation in these areas is based on modern technology. Cooperation in investment is an important factor.

The book is replete with facts of history and events while it also describes the political context of the ups and downs of economic relations between Russia and Germany. Its compilers come up with their own views of the different periods.

The compilers of the volume think that the future of German business interests in Russia mainly depends on the state and development of Russia's economy probably in the belief that the Cold War era and its rules are now things of the past.

Berlin's policy in the context of the Ukraine crisis, which the FRG helped to broaden, set the Russian public wondering: "What that could mean?" To their credit, German entrepreneurs grew gradually desperate with Angela Merkel's policy that was harming their own interests and those of the entire nation. This policy on the part of Angela Merkel could amount to a factor destabilizing both German-Russian relations and European security. This prompts the question of whether Germans' "great future" in the Russian economy is likely to materialize.

Russia's Policy in Asia: New Opportunities for a Breakthrough

Author: V. Denisov

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Professor, Doctor of Science (History)



RUSSIA has fallen on hard times. The entire pro-U.S. army has turned against this country, which seeks to assert in international relations the principles of law, equality, justice, equal security for all states and nations in the world, good neighborliness, and mutually beneficial cooperation. However, this approach toward international affairs is not to the liking of those forces in the U.S. and some other states that are trying to preserve the system of dictate, subordi-

nation and sanctions, which is humiliating for the world community.

These attempts are doomed to failure. Russia has been and will remain a great intellectual and spiritual Eurasian power.

A.V. Lukin's new work is a collection of articles published in various academic editions and periodicals mostly in the past decade. It is a study of general issues of Russia's foreign policy and its relations with the U.S. and other countries, prospects for the development of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and the complicated situation in Central Asia (Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan). A special section is devoted to Russia's Asia policy and our country's relations with certain states in the Asia-Pacific Region. In this context, I would like to mention in particular the Korean problem, which is given considerable attention in the book under review.

According to the author, one of Russia's principal goals at the present stage is the concentration of resources to provide a fitting response to the existing challenges and threats and to "strengthen itself and its position in the fast changing world".

The author believes that economic cooperation within the framework of the SCO is not yet developing as actively as it should. It is necessary to step up the creation of an effective financing mechanism and launch the SCO Development Bank and the SCO Energy Club (p. 214). There is plenty of work to be done here.

The author analyzes the U.S. policy in Central Asia. Washington actively promotes all sorts of concepts, in particular the Greater Central Asia Partnership for Cooperation and Development (GCAP).

The section of the book entitled "Russia and Asia: Strategy and Tactics" considers the situation in different countries on the Asian continent. These include Iran, Kampuchea, North and South Korea, Syria, Lebanon, and Turkey. Russia maintains friendly relations with these states, developing equal cooperation and ties with them.

A.V. Lukin's work is well written and contains interesting and profound albeit not indisputable ideas that require further elaboration and analysis. His book, without a doubt, deserves the attention not only of the expert community but of all those who take interest in Russia's foreign policy.

Radio Orpheus: A Mission Abroad

Author: E. Pyadysheva

Executive Secretary of International Affairs



PEOPLE ACROSS THE WORLD have long been applauding Russian musical arts. Main opera stages in Milan, Vienna, London, and New York have hosted Russian operas performed by Russian singers.

It is an undeniable fact that classical music in general and Russian classical music in particular is presently high in demand. Fortunately, classical music has become far more accessible to the general population, not only to elite circles. Full houses and sold-out performances at theater and concert venues are no surprise to anyone anymore.

But how can one preserve those magic, heavenly sounds evoking general admiration? Regardless of a general spread of digital records radiobroad-

casts of classical music have become increasingly more popular.

For many years, a unique musical radio station has been operating in this country - Radio Orpheus. It has a stunningly professional and elegant repertoire, and it mainly broadcasts unique and superior classical music pieces.

Radio Orpheus has a lot of listeners not only in Russia but also in numerous countries across the world. It has become possible following its joining the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), which is the world largest professional non-profit association uniting over 70 national state and public TV and radio broadcasters from 56 countries with headquarters in Geneva.

A number of requests from foreign radio stations to download the Orpheus products have been continuously growing. Numerically it looks as follows.

In 2014, Radio Orpheus prepared 43 programs. A total of 91 requests from 49 countries have been submitted amounting to 203 hours of broadcasting at radios across the world.

As of today, Radio Orpheus uploaded to the common bank 70 programs, including 39 new broadcasts; as many as 212 requests from 49 countries have already been registered. A total chronometry of its products has reached 287 hours 5 minutes.

It is noteworthy that big audience would listen not only to concerts by reputed musical groups and big-name musicians, but also to recordings of a new generation of Moscow musicians performing lyrical songs by Mikhail Glinka, chamber vocal works by Modest Mussorgsky and Genady Sviridov (sung by soloists from Kolobov's Novaya Opera Theatre and some others).

It is difficult to object to the above statement. I would like to specify, however, that thanks to Radio Orpheus millions of people across the globe have an opportunity to listen to exquisite music making them feel better and happier.

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