

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC POLICY**

**Goals and Methods of Russian Arms Control Policy:  
Implications for U.S. Security**

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August 2008

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## Executive Summary

The Russian Federation (RF) remains the only global power capable of presenting an existential threat to the United States. Despite the political and economic turmoil of the decade preceding the collapse of the Soviet Union and the early post-independence period, Russia has retained a significant missile-nuclear potential and a sizeable conventional force.

Under the presidency of Vladimir Putin, increased revenues from the export of energy resources and trade in arms were directed at rebuilding the Military-Industrial Complex (MIC) and modernizing all branches of the armed forces, particularly the Strategic Nuclear Force (SNF).<sup>1</sup> While the officially stated goal is to defend Russia against mounting external threats and challenges, in effect Moscow seeks to restore Russia's great-power status.

The Russian ruling elite remains captive to the notion of parity with the United States. It still views nuclear deterrence and Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) as the preferred foundation for assuring Russian and global strategic security.

Diplomacy in general and arms control negotiations and agreements in particular, are regarded in Moscow as an invaluable means of equalizing military-strategic capabilities of the RF and the United States. In addition they are viewed as preventing U.S. strategic breakthroughs in areas such as ballistic missile defense (BMD), the military use of space and geopolitics at large.

The current Russian leadership appears to be diligently emulating their Soviet predecessors in the use of arms control as the tool of choice in foreign policy. The Soviets took a holistic approach to arms control: each area and/or topic for negotiation was seen as intricately linked within the entire arms control agenda and larger foreign policy goals of the state. Since the Soviet regime was predominantly driven by strong ideological dogmas, arms control diplomacy was essentially geared to the promotion of an ultimate goal: the global victory of Communism.

Today, Russian leaders also regard arms control as an integral part of their global strategy. Like the Soviets before them, Moscow seeks to expand its stature and influence in the Third World to augment its bargaining position in relation to Western powers, including in U.S.-Russian arms control.

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<sup>1</sup> On April 29, 2008, as a symbol of the revival of Russian MIC and SNF, the Kazan Aviation Industrial Association (KAPO) – the Russian center for the production of strategic long-distance aviation, delivered on a new modernized strategic bomber Tu-160 to the Russian Air Force in a high-profile public ceremony. Russian Air Force Headquarters Chief Igor Khvorov declared at the ceremony that the new Tu-160 will bring the number of Tu-160 strategic weapons carriers to 16. “Together with the Tu-95s [strategic bombers], this quantity can keep us on parity with our possible enemies. The total quantity is well able to ensure the security of our state,” said Khvorov. [See: “Russian Air Force Receives New Tu-160 Plane,” *Interfax*, April 29, 2008, Open Source Center Document (OSC Doc.) CEP20080429950229].

The Kremlin often uses its close and expanding relationship with China, India and rogue countries like Iran and North Korea as important bargaining chips in defining the overall balance of interest between the RF and the United States. Russia remains keen on engaging the U.S. in an intricate regional game over nonproliferation, arms transfers, alliance-building and conflict resolution. It seeks to play many roles at once: those of a regional power broker and major arms and energy supplier, and facilitator and/or spoiler in regional affairs.

To make the similarity with the Soviet experiences even more apparent, Moscow uses its Soviet-era arms control mantra to further its internal ideology and political goals.

### **Background for Russian Arms Control Policies**

- The collapse of the Soviet Union made a lasting impression on Russian society thereby affecting the perceptions and actions of the current political establishment. While returning to the oppressive Communist past is viewed as anathema, there is a sense of nostalgia for the prestige and order of the Soviet era.
- The mind of the typical Russian remains captive to ingrained images of foreign aggression and occupation. Behind the official façade of partnership with Western powers, strong distrust of NATO and particularly the U.S. dominates Russian public opinion.
- Possessing one of the world's largest nuclear weapon arsenals is of major psychological and practical importance to Moscow. The nuclear arsenal provides a sense of security, especially since Russia's general-purpose forces have deteriorated significantly.
- Coming to power on the heels of the deep economic crisis and social disillusionment created during the Boris Yeltsin era, President Vladimir Putin managed, in little over seven years, to restore relative stability to Russian society. However, this came at the cost of curtailed democratic reform and revived authoritarian government control.
- Restoring Russia's great-power status [*velikoderzhavnyi status*] and strategic parity with the U.S. has been an important symbolic and practical goal for the Putin administration. Most likely, this will drive the internal and foreign policies of the newly elected administration headed by President Dmitrii Medvedev.

### **Russian Goals in Strategic Arms Control**

- Similar to the Soviet period, Russia continues to view arms control negotiations and agreements as a fundamentally important means of equalizing the strategic balance between the U.S. and the RF. They provide Moscow with a valuable opportunity to deny a unilateral advantage to the United States and NATO

through political and diplomatic methods rather than by military-technological means.

- Key Russian emphasis in arms control is on strategic arms reduction agreements – Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) and Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT). Moscow continues to abide by both treaties. It is particularly keen on extending and/or renegotiating START seen as “one of the most effective agreements on strategic arms limitation, and the first treaty that has led to a real strategic arms reduction.”<sup>2</sup>
- Official Moscow reacted with enthusiasm to a statement in the bilateral U.S.-Russia Strategic Framework Declaration signed by Presidents G. W. Bush and Vladimir Putin in Sochi, in April 2008, to “continue development of a legally binding post-START arrangement.”<sup>3</sup>
- Russia’s professional negotiators and the policymaking elite in general regard negotiations on the fate of START and SORT treaties as a symbol of equality with the U.S. in bilateral relations.
- RF Foreign Ministry officials are particularly keen on engaging their American counterparts in tedious arms control negotiations. The diplomatic process appears to be as important for them as the actual negotiated agreements. The Russian foreign ministry establishment was gratified with the stated U.S. readiness to negotiate a formal treaty to replace START I as reflected in the U.S.-Russia Strategic Framework Declaration.<sup>4</sup>
- However, despite recent progress in U.S.-RF exchanges on strategic arms control, Moscow remains worried by the possibility of eventual collapse of the remaining structure of bilateral strategic agreements. As an alternative and supplement to bilateral arms control, the Russians are now calling for globalized arms control. Russia would like to include other official and unofficial nuclear powers in an effort to limit and reduce nuclear weapons.<sup>5</sup>

### **Russian Opposition to U.S. Ballistic Missile Defense Initiatives**

- An important issue to the Russian military and foreign policy agenda is to defeat U.S. plans to deploy a global ballistic missile defense (BMD) system. Moscow

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<sup>2</sup> “START Provisions for Arms Destruction Met - RF Deputy FM,” *Itar-Tass*, February 5, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080205950271.

<sup>3</sup> “U.S.-Russia Strategic Framework Declaration,” Russian-American Summit Meeting, Sochi, April 5 - 6, 2008, *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/events/articles/2008/04/163213/163215.shtml>.

<sup>4</sup> “Russia and U.S. to Work on New Strategic Offensive Forces Agreement – Minister,” *Itar-Tass*, April 29, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080429950172.

<sup>5</sup> Vadim Solovyev, “Ivanov Deflated Western Fears of the Russian Threat,” *Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozrenie*, February 15, 2008, (In Russian), available at: [http://nvo.ng.ru/forces/2008-02-15/1\\_lubeznosti.html?mthree=1](http://nvo.ng.ru/forces/2008-02-15/1_lubeznosti.html?mthree=1).

claims this system would upset the bilateral strategic balance in offensive weapons.

- A particular irritant for Moscow is the proposed deployment of elements of the U.S. BMD system in Europe. Russian sources have admitted that Moscow's strategic nuclear deterrent will not be weakened by U.S. deployment of a handful of missile defense interceptors and associated missile tracking facilities located in close proximity to Russian borders. However, they insist that U.S. BMD and other strategic assets in Europe could be rapidly expanded to devalue the Russian strategic deterrent in the foreseeable future.
- Moscow has ignored repeated assurances from U.S. officials that the defensive components of the BMD system are intended to protect the United States and its allies from a missile attack launched from the Middle East. Russia's position is rooted in perceptions of bilateral rivalry and hostility dating back to the Cold War.
- Russian leaders have proposed a variety of measures - military and political, offensive and defensive, symmetric and asymmetric - to counter U.S. BMD programs. Russian emphasis on arms control diplomacy among these measures is apparent. Moscow made several proposals to neutralize the U.S. BMD by developing multilateral missile defense programs with Russian participation, e.g. the European Tactical Missile Defense (TMD) system.
- Moscow praised the U.S.-Russian Strategic Framework Declaration for reflecting both sides "interest in creating a system for responding to potential missile threats in which Russia and United States and Europe will participate as equal partners."<sup>6</sup>
- The Russian Foreign Ministry is also on record arguing in favor of negotiating a new multilateral missile treaty,<sup>7</sup> apparently to replace the defunct Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABMT), in order to alleviate its particular concerns over U.S. BMD programs.

### **Russian Views on Weapons in Space**

- In recent years, Russia has placed significant diplomatic and rhetorical emphasis on opposing the militarization of space. This includes regular proposals closely coordinated with China to the United Nations Conference on Disarmament to promoting far-reaching negotiations to prevent an arms race in space.
- Moscow reacted in a highly negative fashion to the U.S. decision to destroy a faulty spy satellite before it re-entered the atmosphere using an interceptor missile

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<sup>6</sup> "U.S.-Russia Strategic Framework Declaration," *op. cit.*

<sup>7</sup> See: "START Provisions for Arms Destruction Met - RF Deputy FM," *Itar-Tass*, February 5, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080205950271.

in January 2008.<sup>8</sup> One of the reasons may be Russia's inability to continue developing its own anti-satellite (ASAT) capability.<sup>9</sup>

- However, Moscow expressed only muted concern over the January 2007, anti-satellite test of its strategic partner, China. This suggests that, if it suits its security requirements, Russia may eventually abandon its public commitment to preserving space as a peaceful reserve.

### **Russian Arms Control Strategies and Tactics**

- Not unlike the Soviets before them, current Russian leaders use the carrot-and-stick tactic to advance Russian interests in arms control. For example in the U.S.-Russia Strategic Framework Declaration, it supported a wide array of cooperative activities with the United States in the fight against terrorism, WMD proliferation, etc.<sup>10</sup>
- On the other hand, Moscow attempts to pressure the U.S. directly and indirectly – through its European allies – on such issues as NATO expansion and the deployment of U.S. global BMD elements in Eastern Europe. It threatens to aim its nuclear missiles against countries that may decide to join NATO in the future (for example, Ukraine), or those that are prepared to provide their territories for U.S. BMD deployment (Poland, the Czech Republic).
- As another pressure tactic, the Russians have raised the possibility of withdrawing from the Treaty on Intermediary- and Shorter-Range Missiles in Europe (INF). It also openly discussed reemphasizing Russia's reliance on tactical nuclear weapons (TNW) in order to strengthen its deterrent in Europe.
- One more play card in Moscow's diplomatic game is the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). Russia announced a moratorium on the implementation of CFE in late 2007. However, it is clearly interested in renegotiating conditions for CFE implementation. Moreover, the Russian Foreign Ministry is on record calling for the establishment of an open system of collective security in the European-Atlantic region.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> "U.S. Spy Satellite Falling from Orbit, Could Hit Earth," *CTV.ca News*, January 26, 2008, available at: [http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/20080126/falling\\_satellite\\_080126/20080126?hub=World&s\\_name=](http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/20080126/falling_satellite_080126/20080126?hub=World&s_name=).

<sup>9</sup> See: Inga Kumskova and Olga Bozhyeva, "They Will Destroy the Spy with a Missile: They Will Shoot down the Satellite Threatening Earth in a Week," *Moskovskii Komsomolets*, February 16, 2008, (In Russian), available at: <http://www.mk.ru/blogs/MK/2008/02/16/abroad/339164/>.

<sup>10</sup> "U.S.-Russia Strategic Framework Declaration," op. cit.

<sup>11</sup> "Russia Proposes New Missile Treaty, New System of Collective Security," *Vesti TV*, February 12, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080212950168.

## **Russia and Proliferation**

- Halting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and related technologies has a prominent place in official statements and debates within the expert community. However, Russia's stated support for nonproliferation conflicts with its military-technical engagement with partners including China, North Korea, and Iran.
- China is a major recipient of advanced Russian weapons and technologies. Although some in Russia worry about the long-term implications of this relationship, financial and near-term diplomatic priorities have thus far won the day. Both Moscow and Beijing are conscious of how this relationship is seen in Washington and have taken limited steps to avoid the appearance of an anti-American coalition.
- While officially supporting international efforts to rein in North Korean and Iranian nuclear programs, Russia has significant political and financial (e.g., nuclear technology, arms trade) interest in both states. Russia may also be seeking to increase its influence in these regions in order to counterbalance the U.S.

An understanding of internal Russian development and debate on arms control issues is important for U.S. policymakers, the expert community and the American public. The Russian Federation continues to present multiple challenges and potential threats to U.S. global interests despite efforts by the American and Russian sides to overcome the legacy of the Cold War and promote cooperation between the two countries in areas where they face similar problems (e.g., proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, global spread of radicalism and terrorism).

While Moscow currently remains generally disposed to compromises with the U.S. and NATO, the Russian internal environment and foreign policy orientation may change. There are strong internal pressures on the government to restore Russia's superpower status through progressively more assertive global behavior regardless of the expense and potential adverse consequences.

The future role of bilateral U.S.-RF arms control depends on the evolution of the regime in Russia, potential emergence of new types of destabilizing weapon systems, changing global and regional balances of forces, etc. There are two opposing roles Russia may play in future geopolitics: that of an important U.S. ally or a serious adversary.

For this and many other reasons, Russia – a country with a huge nuclear arsenal on the rise to prominence in international affairs – should be closely watched in the future.



## **Introduction: Russian Search for New Geopolitical Identity**

The Russian Federation (RF) as an independent state and the legal successor to the Soviet Union – the yesteryear nuclear superpower founded on Communist ideology – came into existence in December 1991. The birth and the early formative years of this new member of the international community were tumultuous and traumatic. Hardly any other society in contemporary history has experienced a rapid and sweeping transformation in a comparable magnitude. The changes were further intensified by the loss of territory, redistribution of demographic, economic, military and other assets.

Conditions in Russia over previous decades – essentially since the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – were far from beneficial for orderly and progressive national development: in effect, hardly any European state experienced a similar endless and vicious spiral of wars, revolutions, devastations and repressions throughout the century that culminated in the Soviet collapse.

The national psyche and the very rationale for the continued existence of Russia as a nation-state suffered tremendously over decades of totalitarianism and authoritarianism regimes. While the majority of Russian and non-Russian populations in the Soviet Union came to sincerely resent the oppressive conditions of life during successive Communist regimes, manifesting conformity and obedience to the authorities became one of the quintessential rules of personal survival.

This is why when the last General Secretary of the Communist Party Mikhail Gorbachev began his crusade for gradual velvet-glove reform of the Soviet system, it was initially accepted by the society with meekness, albeit little sincere enthusiasm. Gradually, Gorbachev's *perestroika* began to instill a sense of disorientation and despondency among common people. Moreover, it created exasperation and resentment among Communist cadres, especially at the top the Kremlin hierarchy.

When Gorbachev's experimentations finally drew the Soviet economy into a total impasse, symbolized by empty grocery shelves across the country, overt opposition to the Gorbachev regime from inside the Communist establishment emerged and began to inexorably grow both in Moscow and the peripheries, i.e., the national republics of the Union.

The crisis of *perestroika* was confounded by Gorbachev's foreign policy ventures, that to the general public looked more like unilateral concessions to the proverbial potential outside enemies. While few Soviets ever genuinely cared about specific aspects of their country's foreign policy, massive indoctrination under the Communists imbued the general public with ingrown suspicion and hostility towards their imperialistic surroundings (*imperialisticheskoe okruzhenie*). The seeming ease with which Gorbachev destroyed the Berlin Wall and retracted Soviet troops thereby disbanding the Russian sphere of traditional influence, long associated in the public mind to the huge sacrifices of the victory of WWII, was shocking and largely incomprehensible to many Russians.

While Mikhail Gorbachev's ouster from power and the actual disbandment of the 75-year-old Communist regime was received in Russia without huge regrets, effects of the disintegration of the imperial Soviet state left deep imprint on the lives of millions of Russian citizens. Adjusting to the loss of significant parts of the Soviet territory and the concomitant problems of travel to and communications with the newly-emerged near-abroad states was only part of the problem. The very issue of national identity and Russia's position in the world had to be redefined in the public consciousness and in government policy.

Without underrating the novelty and magnitude of the problems faced by the government of Boris Yeltsin – the first president of the new Russian state – and minimizing certain achievements, it is clear that throughout the Yeltsin rule, the Russian society continued to slide into moral degradation, structural disintegration and economic morass.

Yeltsin's imposition of top-down market reforms sent the Russian economy into one deep crisis after another. Public confidence in the authorities was shattered by the ostensible fusion between the official bureaucracies and the criminal world. The society was shocked by the use of blunt force by the government in attempts to resolve acute political and ethnic issues, e.g., in the elimination of the anti-Yeltsin legislative opposition in the Russian parliament in October 1993, and in suppressing ethnic unrest in the Chechen Republic. Fundamental values of democracy, like rule of law, were thoroughly discredited in Russian society and replaced by deep public cynicism.

Internationally, the RF earned the dubious nickname of an "Upper Volta with nuclear weapons."<sup>12</sup> Frequent claims, at the early stages of the Yeltsin regime, that Russia sought acceptance into the club of civilized Western nations were not backed up by serious efforts at internal reform to comply with international standards of democratic governance.

While the Yeltsin government supported denuclearization of former Soviet Republics and actually helped in this process, e.g. under the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program,<sup>13</sup> it continued to rely heavily on nuclear weapons and nuclear deterrence strategy for itself.

The government was unable to define coherently and explain to the public the goals and orientation of Russian foreign and military policy. Typically, Boris Yeltsin's assessment of the changing international environment and Russia's place in geopolitics depended on frequent changes of his own mood. True to the quasi-monarchical style of ruling, Yeltsin often delegated authority over defining Russian policy to randomly chosen favorites, many of whom had only vague understanding of and limited expertise in policymaking.

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<sup>12</sup> Aleksandr Golts, "Why Russia Has Let Its Nuclear Arsenal Go for Soap and Sausage," *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, September 5, 1995, available at: <http://www.fas.org/news/russia/1995/sov95175.htm>

<sup>13</sup> See: Ashton B. Carter, "U.S. Assistance to the New Independent States of the Former Soviet Union (FSU) in Dismantling Their Weapons of Mass Destruction," Congressional Hearings, "Special Weapons: Nuclear, Chemical, Biological and Missile," *House Foreign Affairs Committee*, September 21, 1993, available at: [http://www.fas.org/spp/starwars/congress/1993\\_h/930921-ash.htm](http://www.fas.org/spp/starwars/congress/1993_h/930921-ash.htm).

Despite a flurry of international exchanges with foreign dignitaries that were often turned into theatrics by the gregarious Yeltsin, the Russian public remained ultimately confused whether the RF was with or against the United States and NATO on most global and regional issues.

The Yeltsin government tried to appear accommodating and progressive on military-political relations with the West and eager to compromise on arms control. However, internal political bickering between Yeltsin and the leaders of the State Duma prevented the government from assuring ratification of the key arms control agreement signed by Presidents George H. W. Bush and Boris Yeltsin on January 3, 1993 – the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty II (START II).<sup>14</sup>

By the time of his voluntary resignation on December 31, 1999, Russian foreign and internal policies appeared to be heading into an impasse. In effect, the RF was standing on the brink of chaos and imminent national disintegration.

In sharp contrast, Yeltsin's hand-picked successor, originally a little-known apparatchik Vladimir V. Putin,<sup>15</sup> became not only a widely popular Russian leader, but a symbol of Russian economic and political revival.<sup>16</sup> Pundits continue to argue the nature of the Putin phenomenon,<sup>17</sup> which has apparently been rooted in a unique combination of internal and external factors and conditions that made Mr. Putin much more popular among Russians than his predecessor and contributed to the overall vision of Russia rising from its knees during his administration (2000-2008).<sup>18</sup>

A unique factor responsible for Russia's upward movement and Putin's popularity was skyrocketing energy prices. Revenues from the export of abundant oil and gas resources, multiplied by profits from the trade in weapons<sup>19</sup> and growing foreign investments, were used by the Putin administration to revitalize some branches of the economy, especially

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<sup>14</sup> The Treaty was signed on January 3, 1993 by President George Bush Sr. and President Boris Yeltsin. It codified the "Joint Understanding" arrived at by the two Presidents at the Washington summit on June 17, 1992. The U.S. Senate gave its advice and consent to ratification of START II on January 26, 1996. Ratification of the Treaty in the Russian Duma proved illusive for Yeltsin in view of the strong opposition of the Russian legislature. [See: Eugene Myasnikov, "Problems of START-2 Treaty Ratification in Russia. Is START-3 Possible?" *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, September 12, 1996, (In Russian)].

<sup>15</sup> See: Andre de Nesnera, "Who Is Putin?" *Global Security.org*, available at: <http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news/russia/2000/000128-rus1.htm>.

<sup>16</sup> See: "The Insider's Guide to Vladimir Putin," October 26, 2006, *CNN International*, available at: <http://edition.cnn.com/2006/WORLD/europe/10/25/insider.putin/>.

<sup>17</sup> Vladimir Degoev, "Opinion: Putin as Phenomenon of World Politics," *Regnum.ru*, October 10, 2006, available at: <http://regnum.ru/english/721911.html>.

<sup>18</sup> David J. Lynch, "Russia Brings Revitalized Economy to the Table," *USA Today*, December 7, 2006, available at: [http://www.usatoday.com/money/world/2006-07-12-russia-cover-usat\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/money/world/2006-07-12-russia-cover-usat_x.htm).

<sup>19</sup> On February 15, 2007, announcing a reshuffle at the Russian government that elevated the Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov to the post of the First Premier, President Putin stated that in 2006, the Russian "export sales of special equipment and arms set a new record of more than \$6 billion last year." [See: Vladimir Putin, "Meeting with Defence Ministry Senior Officials and Collegium Members," *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, available at: [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2007/02/15/2230\\_118478.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2007/02/15/2230_118478.shtml).

the military-industrial complex, and improve conditions of life primarily for urban populations.<sup>20</sup>

Along with improving Russia's economic situation, Vladimir Putin could find effective ways for consolidated the ruling elites. The construction of the "vertical of power" (*vertikal' vlasti*),<sup>21</sup> while criticized as overly authoritarian,<sup>22</sup> strengthened the central authority and eliminated much of the centrifugal tendencies in Russian regions. The flight of peripheries away from the federal center was further curtailed by containing the Chechen insurgency through a combination of pinpointed strikes against rebel commanders and reliance on local tribal and religious leaders loyal to Moscow. Eventually, Islamic radicalism and terrorist activities could be confined to southern Russia, thereby creating a sense of relative security in the populous hinterland regions.

Populist half-measures avoided addressing core Russian problems. However, they contributed to the rapid growth of Vladimir Putin's image as an uncontested national leader. For example, rather than eradicate rampant corruption among the sprawling Russian bureaucratic class, authorities in Moscow moved to create a peculiar code of conduct in relations between the government and the nascent proprietary class, particularly the superrich (the oligarchs) who were forewarned to desist from aspiring at both political and economic power. Those oligarchs who refused to abide by the code, e.g., Boris Berezovskii and Mikhail Khodorkovskii, were either forced into exile or given long prison terms.<sup>23</sup>

Putin worked conscientiously and consistently to create a new nation-wide ruling elite based strongly on personal devotion and vassal-type dependency. At the core of his cadre reform was the promotion of his personal friends and close associates to top level government and business positions. If cronyism as the basic principle of administrative reform was typical of the Russian bureaucratic tradition, then promoting individuals with roots in St. Petersburg – Putin's home town, and especially in the military, intelligence and law-enforcement communities became the Putin reform's unique trademark.

The explanation for peculiarities of the administrative reform under Putin, may be explained by the new President's former association with the Soviet intelligence as well as in his desire to organize the Russian managerial class on a rigidly structured

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<sup>20</sup> "Public Income Grows at the Expense of Oil," *Kommersant*, July 24, 2006, (In Russian), available at: <http://www.zarplata.ru/book/news/10666.aspx>.

<sup>21</sup> See: "Vladimir Putin Lines Up the Parties Under the Vertical of Power," *Newsru.com*, April 15, 2005, (In Russian), available at: <http://www.moscow2000.ru/news/view2.asp?Id=13767&IdType=2>; "The Russian Opposition Is Unhappy with the Power 'Vertical' Built by Putin," *Information-Analytic Portal of the Union State*, July 9, 2006, (In Russian), available at: <http://www.soyuz.by/second.aspx?document=21540&uid=4&page=4&type=Qualifier>.

<sup>22</sup> "The Russian Opposition Is Unhappy with the Power 'Vertical' Built by Putin," *Information-Analytic Portal of the Union State*, July 9, 2006, (In Russian), available at: <http://www.soyuz.by/second.aspx?document=21540&uid=4&page=4&type=Qualifier>

<sup>23</sup> See: Aleksander Piskun, "Putin's Fight against Oligarchs – Is Settling Personal Accounts... ' Said Known Russian Politician Grigorii Yavlinskii in the Talk with Journalists," *Segodnya*, (Kyiv), July 12, 2001, (In Russian), available at: [http://www.yabloko.ru/Publ/2001/2001\\_7/010713\\_seg\\_kiev\\_yavl.html](http://www.yabloko.ru/Publ/2001/2001_7/010713_seg_kiev_yavl.html); Wladimir Putin. *Der Deutsche im Kreml*, Universitas Verlag, September 1, 2002, (In German).

foundation and to eliminate all outsiders from the process of power-sharing and decision-making.

Interestingly, promoting people with intelligence backgrounds to the top of the Russian political pyramid was a distinct departure from past Soviet practices: the Communist party elite was intrinsically suspicious of the secret police with a few exceptions, e.g. Yurii Andropov and Eduard Shevardnadze, the Politburo usually refused to accept such people in its ranks.

To Putin's critics, the dominance of *siloviki* [literally, people of power] at the top of the Russian political and business hierarchy was patently undemocratic and symbolized Russia's return to autocracy.<sup>24</sup> They believed it would eventually hamper the country's development and prospect for integration into the community of advanced nations of the world.

Many Russian pundits agree that one of the reasons Vladimir Putin chose Dmitrii Medvedev – a quintessential technocrat with no known connections to the *siloviki* clan – to replace him as Russian President in March 2008, was the intention to project a more liberal image of the regime that emerged in Russia during his term in office.

Under Mr. Putin, a considerable effort was devoted to filling in the ideological void (*ideologicheskii vacuum*) created by the disappearance of Communist ideology and propaganda.<sup>25</sup> In the search for a new national idea (*natsional'naya ideya*),<sup>26</sup> wide use was made of traditional tools of social mobilization in Russia – nationalism, religion and patriotism.<sup>27</sup>

While there is no single distinct, let alone dominant ideology in Russia, it is not exactly true that “Russian strategic policymakers have no ideology.”<sup>28</sup> The Russian ruling elite are driven by strong great-Russian instincts and mentality. Another important component of the emerging system of values in Russia is the rejection of the geopolitical model that has at its center the conglomerate of advanced Western powers headed by the United States. In the current Russian political vernacular this aspect of the emerging

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<sup>24</sup> In the opinion of Kremlin-connected analyst Stanislav Belkovskii, “Russia is much more of an oligarchy now than under Yeltsin.” However, “Unlike the Yeltsin-era oligarchs, Putin's new elite are bureaucrats, not businessmen. Each clan uses a key chunk of the state as a source of revenue and patronage – like the state-owned oil company Rosneft, controlled by Igor Sechin, Putin's deputy chief of staff, or Gazprom, headed by Dmitrii Medvedev, the deputy prime minister.” [See: Own Matthews and Anna Nemtsova, “War Inside the Kremlin,” *Newsweek*, December 10, 2007].

<sup>25</sup> See: “Sergei Kortunov, “On the Quality of the National Elite,” *Intelligent*, January 23, 2006, (In Russian), available at: <http://www.c-society.ru/wind.php?ID=244495&soch=1>.

<sup>26</sup> See: V.S. Elistratov, “The National Language and National Idea,” *Gramota.ru*, (In Russian), available at: [http://www.gramota.ru/mag\\_rub.html?id=54](http://www.gramota.ru/mag_rub.html?id=54); “The Russian National Idea,” (In Russian), available at: <http://www.vostok14.ru/?page=idea>;

<sup>27</sup> See: Vladimir Putin, “Speech at the Benediction Ceremony of the Cross-and-Banner Procession,” *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, (In Russian), available at: [http://www.kremlin.ru/appears/2003/07/31/1518\\_type63374\\_49692.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/appears/2003/07/31/1518_type63374_49692.shtml)

<sup>28</sup> Dmitri Trenin, “Russia's Threat Perception and Strategic Posture,” In “Russian Security Strategy under Putin: U.S. and Russian Perspectives,” *Strategic Studies Institute*, November 2007, p. 35.

official ideology and strategy is usually identified as opposition to unipolarity (*odnopolyzrnost'*) and American global dictate.

From this perspective, the analysis of bilateral U.S.-Russian military and arms control relations may hardly be based on a complacent albeit largely self-serving notion that these relations are no longer based on ideological lines of divide.

On the contrary, the experience of recent years clearly demonstrates that at least as far as Russia is concerned, ideological idiosyncrasies have begun to play a major role in bilateral U.S.-RF exchanges over the entire range of global and regional issues: from the attitudes toward existing international regimes and mechanisms, to the assessment of non-proliferation threats and ways of dealing with specific conflict situations, etc. Russia usually insists on the right to have its own visions and policies on these issues. Significantly, more often than not, Russian views turn out to be diametrically opposite to those of the United States. Anti-Americanism is rapidly becoming part and parcel of Russian official ideology.

Russian leaders try to establish their country's place and role in contemporary geopolitics by trial and error. It is doubtful they are interested in precipitously reclaiming the superpower status for Russia while the country is still trying to overcome the effects of the deep crisis of the 1990s. However, they definitely want to see Russian interests, as defined by them, taken into account and respected by others. It is apparently with this purpose, that Moscow has systematically inflated its opposition to Western activities at its borders, e.g., NATO expansion and deployment of elements of the U.S. ballistic missile defense system in Eastern Europe.

Arms control diplomacy emerged as an important tool for the Putin regime in its effort to project a more assertive and influential Russian role in geopolitics. Apparently, it will remain in this role under the Putin-Medvedev duumvirate rule after May 2, 2008, when the Russian presidency was formally transferred from Vladimir Putin to Dmitrii Medvedev.

The Russian arms control agenda is defined by the contemporary geopolitical situation, the interests of the Russian ruling elite, Russia's current military potential, power-projection capabilities, etc. However, to the extent the Soviet past still weighs on the Russian psyche, Soviet arms control experiences and methodologies remain an important source of Moscow's political and diplomatic maneuvering. The past and the present are curiously intertwined in Russian policy and deserve to be studied in detail to help predict their future course with reasonable certainty.

## **Chapter 1: Change and Continuity in Russian Arms Control**

### **Tenacity of Soviet Arms Control Traditions**

Russian leaders invariably underline substantive differences between the Soviet regime and the new socio-economic and political environment that emerged in the Russian Federation since 1991: there is no dictate of single ideology or party, markets are open, and the people enjoy greater personal freedoms. However, similarities between the old and the new regimes are all but apparent.

In the arms control area, these similarities are especially obvious and not only for the simple reason that some key regimes negotiated between the United States and the Soviet Union – the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) first and foremost – are still in existence and define the current U.S.-Russian bilateral relation in the strategic area. Traditions of Soviet arms control – basic philosophic approaches, percepts and methods of conducting negotiations – are still guiding the Russian foreign policy and arms control elite.<sup>29</sup>

Despite considerable changes in the structure and composition of bureaucracies responsible for the development and implementation of the Russian foreign policy, many political appointees and professionals currently in charge of this policy have strong backgrounds in the Soviet system. Educational and training institutions preparing new cadres for the Foreign Ministry and other bodies involved in policymaking on arms control issues, e.g., the Institute of International Relations of the Foreign Ministry (MGIMO) and the Institute of World Economy and International Affairs of the Russian Academy of Sciences, use Soviet methodologies, experience and databases extensively in their work.

The Soviet arms control policy went through numerous transformative stages. Official policies, perspectives and diplomatic activities were shaped by a constant interplay of multiple factors: the changing international environment and balance of forces with global opponents, shifts in the ideological preferences and orientations of the regimes succeeding each other in the Kremlin as the result of generation changes and/or under-

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<sup>29</sup> The arms control elite includes parts of the policymaking milieu, the bureaucratic apparatus and public and private entities involved in analyzing, debating, developing and approving the appropriate decisions on Russian arms control policies. Arms control policymaking is directed by the top national leadership through such mechanisms as the Russian Security Council, the Presidential Administration; appropriate legislative and technical bodies of the Federal Assembly – the Russian two-chamber parliament consisting of the State Duma and the Council of Federation, e.g., committees and commissions on defense, national security, international affairs, etc. Key roles in policy implementation and analytic support of decision-making are being played by the professional apparatuses of government ministries and other bodies, particularly the Foreign Ministry of the Russian Federation, the Defense Ministry, the Ministry of Atomic Energy, and the extensive system of academic and educational institutions, public organizations, think-tanks, expert associations, individual specialists and representatives of mass media that concentrate in their activities on matters of foreign and military policy and specifically arms control policy and negotiations.

the-carpet (*podkovernye*) power struggles, evolution in military technologies and strategies, availability of resources for the pursuit of active foreign and military policies.

Soviet arms control strategies followed different distinct paradigms that depended on the specific interplay of external factors and internal circumstances. Historically, they ranged within a broad spectrum from overt confrontation to precarious brinkmanship on the verge of conflagration to relaxation of tensions (*détente*) and limited cooperation.

Significantly, in its relatively short period in existence, the Russian arms control policies also went through several distinct stages that resemble vacillations in the evolution of Soviet arms control. To a striking degree, conceptual foundations for these policies and methods of conducting negotiations remained the same as during the Soviet period. In light of these similarities, it is expedient to look closely at the shifts and prevarications in the Soviet arms control policies and negotiating methodology.

### **Roots of Soviet Arms Control Policies**

Historically, the key Soviet notion and term used to define regulation of weapons in relation to foreign powers was disarmament (*razoruzhenie*). The acceptance of the term arms control (*kontrol' nad vooruzheniyami*) for the Russian use, accompanied the onset of elaborate U.S.-Soviet negotiations on strategic nuclear weapons in the late-1960s – early 1970s. Today, both terms – disarmament and arms control – are often used interchangeably by the Russians though they accept the conceptual nuances between them.<sup>30</sup>

Already during WWI, Vladimir Lenin – the foremost ideologue of the Bolshevik version of Marxism, argued in favor of class approach (*klassovyi podkhod*) to disarmament. He ridiculed the very possibility of non-violent policies under capitalism and rejected disarmament as means of resolving imperial contradictions:

In the twentieth century – as in the age of civilization generally – violence means neither a fist nor a club, but troops. To put ‘disarmament’ in the program is tantamount to making the general declaration: We are opposed to the use of arms. There is as little Marxism in this as there would be if we were to say: We are opposed to violence!<sup>31</sup>

However, in the same breath, Lenin claimed that disarmament is the ideal of socialism: “There will be no wars in socialist society; consequently, disarmament will be achieved,” he claimed incessantly.<sup>32</sup> Significantly, Lenin and other Bolshevik ideologues predicted that before this blissful moment arrives, a lot of revolutionary violence would have to

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<sup>30</sup> See: R. M. Timerbaev, “On the Control over Armaments and Disarmament,” *Moscow Journal of International Law*, 1998, No. 2, Moscow: *Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniya Publishers*, pp. 262-266, (In Russian).

<sup>31</sup> V. I. Lenin, “The Disarmament Slogan,” *Collected Works*, Moscow: *Progress Publishers*, 1964, Volume 23, pp. 94-104.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*



take place: “Whoever expects that socialism will be achieved without a social revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat is not a socialist,” wrote the Bolshevik leader exactly one year before the October 1917 revolution in Russia.<sup>33</sup>

Once in power, the Russian Communists used the slogan of disarmament and the related struggle for peace (*bor’ba za mir*) as one of the primary tools of internal and external propaganda. Their messianic-like struggle for the global triumph of Communism was based on strategies such as peaceful coexistence of states with opposite social systems that first sought incremental temporary gains. The ultimate goal however was to make them “permanent and irreversible both by treaties and agreements and by the increasing military capability of the Soviet Union and her allies.”<sup>34</sup>

Importantly, while fundamentally driven by ideological zeal, leaders of the Soviet Union invariably praised pragmatism in day-to-day politics. Diplomacy for them was usually the art of the possible (*iskusstvo vozmozhnogo*). They were prepared to deviate from the mainstream party line (*magistral’naya liniya partii*) and strike compromises with opponents and adversaries, provided it could eventually lead to the attainment of the ultimate goal of a global Communist revolution.

Early in their diplomatic game, the Soviets developed an elaborate tactic of negotiations based on pragmatic assessment of Russia’s international situation and the use of any window of opportunity to make incremental gains. The famous Lenin slogan “One step backward – two steps forward”<sup>35</sup> was aptly applied to negotiations with the Germans in 1918 (the agreement at Brest-Litovsk),<sup>36</sup> and later on at the Genoa and Hague conferences when the Soviets overcame earlier humiliating concessions.<sup>37</sup>

A key Soviet method was based on the use of inter-imperialist contradictions (*mezhimperialisticheskie protivorechiya*) that pitted Western powers against each other to the benefit of the Soviet side. Stalin’s political maneuvering in Europe epitomized by the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact<sup>38</sup> delayed the German invasion of Russia. However, it contributed to German gains in other European regions.

Another salient feature of the pre-WWII war Soviet diplomatic posture, was aloofness towards Western efforts at organizing international intercourse on the basis of common principles, such as the Covenant of the League of Nations. Joseph Stalin, who succeeded

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> See: D.D. Trifan, “This Weapon Called Peace: The Doctrine and Strategy of Soviet Arms Control and Disarmament Policy,” Ph.D. Thesis, *Duke Univ.*, Durham, NC, 343 pp, available at: [http://www.osti.gov/energycitations/product.biblio.jsp?osti\\_id=6906895](http://www.osti.gov/energycitations/product.biblio.jsp?osti_id=6906895).

<sup>35</sup> Vladimir Lenin, “One Step Backward, two Steps Forward” (1904), *Complete Works, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition*, Vol. 8, pp. 185-414, Moscow: *Politizdat*, (In Russian).

<sup>36</sup> See: “The Brest-Litovsk Peace Agreement,” (In Russian), *Emc.komi.com*, available at: <http://www.emc.komi.com/01/02/183.htm>.

<sup>37</sup> See: I. Saxon Mill: The Genua Conference, London 1922. Hutchinson; Karl Radek (Sobelson), “The Genoa and Hague Conferences,” *Khrono.ru*, (In Russian), available at: [http://www.hrono.ru/libris/lib\\_r/radek\\_genuya.html](http://www.hrono.ru/libris/lib_r/radek_genuya.html).

<sup>38</sup> See: Paul Halsall, “The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, 1939,” *Modern History Sourcebook*, August 1997, available at: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1939pact.html>.

Vladimir Lenin as the tyrannical leader of the Soviet state, was suspect of this prototype of the current United Nations since ideologically and politically the USSR was bound to be pitted against the majority of Western adversaries in that global organization.<sup>39</sup>

The Soviets were careful not to overemphasize pacifism and the value of disarmament diplomacy in their internal propaganda before WWII. Stalin's policy called for intense militarization and mobilization of the country. Moves at limiting military programs through negotiations with outside powers were considered unrealistic if not treacherous to the interest of the state.

After WWII – virtually the only period in Soviet history when the USSR allied with key Western powers in efforts to defeat Nazism – Moscow was soon again confronted with the policy of containment by its former Western allies. Moreover, in the late-1940s, it had to deal with a dangerous lag in developing a totally new class of weapon systems based on nuclear power. While the USSR was trying to catch up with the U.S. in acquiring the A-bomb, in particular by stealing nuclear secrets from the West,<sup>40</sup> it showed little interest in harnessing the nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes.

In 1946, the Soviets rejected U.S. proposals under the so-called Baruch Plan, developed by Bernard Baruch and David Lilienthal, which called for establishing stringent international controls over nuclear energy, particularly its military use.<sup>41</sup> By the end of 1946, Stalin summarily rejected the Baruch Plan on the grounds that it required alleged submission to Washington, and the Cold War began in earnest.<sup>42</sup>

### **Use of Nuclear Disarmament in the Search for Parity**

The emergence of the United Nations Organization<sup>43</sup> failed to create the so-called world government (*mirovoe pravitel'stvo*). Instead, it soon became a platform of intense ideological and political rivalry not only between the West and the East, but also between the prosperous North and the underdeveloped South.

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<sup>39</sup> The Soviet Union joined the League of Nations in 1934 primarily for propaganda purposes. [See: "USSR in the Second Half of the 1920s," (In Russian), available at: <http://kursovye-raboty.ru/fivecat/27/14571.html>].

<sup>40</sup> The first Soviet nuclear bomb RDS-1 was successfully tested on August 29, 1949 at the Semipalatinsk testing ground in Kazakhstan. [See: "The First Soviet Atomic Bomb Was Tested 57 Years Ago," *Cnews.ru*, available at: <http://www.cnews.ru/news/top/index.shtml?2006/08/29/209653>]. For the role of Soviet intelligence in the creation of RDS-1, see "Intelligence and the Nuclear Bomb," *Foreign Intelligence Service of the Russian Federation*, available at: <http://svr.gov.ru/history/stage06.htm>.

<sup>41</sup> See: "The Baruch Plan," Presented to the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission, June 14, 1946, *Atomicarchive.com*, available at: <http://www.atomicarchive.com/Docs/Deterrence/BaruchPlan.shtml>.

<sup>42</sup> See: Peter Myers, "The Baruch Plan for World Government," September 5, 2001, update November 1, 2004, *Users.cyberone.com*, available at: <http://users.cyberone.com.au/myers/baruch-plan.html>.

<sup>43</sup> The United Nations Organization started its official existence on October 24, 1945, with the deposition of documents ratifying the Charter of the world organization by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, representing key allied nations in the war against Nazi Germany, including the United States and the Soviet Union.

In contrast to their virtual rejection of the League of Nations, the Soviet leadership wanted to play an important role in the organization from its very beginning. At the Security Council, the Soviet Union had pivotal veto power. In the General Assembly and other UN bodies, the Soviets controlled a numerically small but active and vociferous block of socialist allies. Eventually, it sided on most issues, including disarmament, with the largest UN group of the so-called non-allied developing countries that emerged in the ruins of former colonial empires.

Starting with Nikita Khrushchev, who succeeded Stalin and terminated massive internal repressions of the Georgian-born dictator, the Communist leadership came to value highly the opportunities the United Nations could provide for Soviet propaganda and diplomacy.

The Soviet Union engaged actively in intense maneuvering on the format and substance of nuclear disarmament debates that began to dominate global politics and especially UN forums in the early-1950s. The debates provided an important arena for the dissemination of the Soviet peace-loving (*mirolyubivaya*) propaganda. However, the overriding practical need for Moscow at that stage was to bridge the extensive technological gap in nuclear weapons and delivery systems with the United States – the first to develop, test and use nuclear weapons in combat. Consenting to real nuclear disarmament at the moment when they were in the position of weakness was unacceptable to the Soviets.

Eventually, Moscow came to regard disarmament negotiations as an important means of slowing down, if not reversing the U.S. progress in developing advanced weapon systems while the USSR accelerated its own WMD programs. Nuclear disarmament or rather the politics of nuclear disarmament, had also become a central component of the peaceful competition of states with opposite social systems (*mirnoe sorevnovanie gosudarstvs protivopolozhnymi sotsial'nyimi sistemami*) promoted by the Communist regime.

Soviet politicians and diplomats developed a multilayered approach to disarmament and arms control. Invariably, planning of all so-called active (*aktivnye*), passive (*passivnye*) and other measures, programs, campaigns, etc.,<sup>44</sup> started with a detailed assessment of Soviet strategic, military, economic, and other advantages and disadvantages in the peaceful competition with the U.S. and other Western powers. These negotiations were conducted in conditions of top secrecy by the military and the party apparatus. Specific goals were then set for the military, the diplomats, the party-propaganda machine, etc., with a view to achieve equilibrium if not advantage favoring the Soviet side.

Fiery demagogue Khrushchev put his unique stamp on nuclear disarmament at the United Nations in 1959, by proposing a patently unrealistic however, ideologically enticing plan

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<sup>44</sup> For valuable discussion of some Soviet tactics related to arms control, see: “Soviet Active Measures in the ‘Post-Cold War’ Era 1988-1991,” *A Report Prepared at the Request of the United States House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations by the United States Information Agency*, June 1992; Christopher Andrew and Oleg Gordievsky, “Comrade Kryuchkov's Instructions. Top Secret Files on KGB Foreign Operations, 1975-1985,” Stanford, CA: *Stanford University Press*, 1994;” Vasili Mitrokhin and Christopher Andrew, “The Mitrokhin Archive: The KGB in Europe and the West,” *Gardners Books*, 2000.

of the so-called general and complete disarmament (*vseobshee i polnoe razoruzhenie*) that would start with the nuclear-missile arsenals of the Soviet Union and the United States. From that time on, the Soviets often began negotiating processes by proposing initiatives that had little or no chance of acceptance by the opposite side but, however, could score big in the war of ideas (*voina idei*), particularly among the progressive world public opinion (*progressivnoe mirovoe obshchestvennoe mnenie*) usually associated in Moscow with antiwar and antinuclear groups in the West. Other added advantages of this methodology were to draw opponents into protracted bargaining and to eventually reach compromise by demonstrating flexibility while lowering the original excessive goals and/or demands.

Bold peace initiatives (*mirnye initsiativy*) of the Khrushchev leadership were clearly predicated on the rapid progress of the Soviet nuclear and missile programs. As the result of intense efforts, in October 1957, the Soviets put into orbit the first artificial satellite with a clear implication that Soviet missiles were now able to hit the U.S. territory flying through space.

Consequently, Soviet diplomatic efforts were instrumental in convening three special sessions on disarmament as well as setting permanent commissions devoted to the disarmament agenda at the United Nations. On September 20, 1961, the U.S. and the USSR signed the “McCloy-Zorin” statement (named after the American and Soviet diplomats involved in its negotiation) announcing “agreed principles for disarmament.”

However, activities at the UN based on the “McCloy-Zorin” statement failed to lead to any tangible international agreements. The areas causing the most difficulty concerned the stages of implementation, the nuclear issue and the verification of disarmament measures. As the negotiation process continued over the years, it became apparent that general and complete disarmament was not going to be achieved through a single, comprehensive international instrument.<sup>45</sup>

It is noteworthy that the Soviets were pushing the U.S. towards compromise not only through diplomacy but also by overt and covert provocations, as in the 1962 Cuban missile crisis.<sup>46</sup>

### **Emergence of the Strategic Stability Paradigm**

Even during periods of relaxation of tension in U.S.-USSR relations, Soviet perspectives on bilateral arms control were heavily tainted by ideological preconceptions. The Soviets invariably believed that the American side sought unilateral advantage for itself. Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko recalled in his memoirs:

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<sup>45</sup> See: Adrienne Blunt, “United Nations-General and Complete Disarmament,” Research Note 5, August 1998, *Parliamentary Library*, Parliament of Australia, available at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/library/pubs/rn/1997-98/98rn05.htm>.

<sup>46</sup> See: “The Cuban Missile Crisis: The 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary,” *George Washington University Archive*, available at: [http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/cuba\\_mis\\_cri/](http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/cuba_mis_cri/).

For Carter, as all other American Presidents – his predecessors, the paramount goal had always consisted in limiting the Soviet nuclear potential, while keeping the main U.S. strike forces intact. Only with great effort, and under the influence of the irrefutable arguments and the constructive line of the USSR that enjoyed wide support in the world, he would deviate from his position aimed at achieving unilateral advantages for the United States.<sup>47</sup>

A real breakthrough for the Soviets in the pursuit of equilibrium (*ravnovesie*) in strategic relations with the United States began to emerge by the late-1960s when the U.S. took note of Soviet efforts to develop a strategic ABM system that eventually became the foundation for the Moscow ABM system.<sup>48</sup> The U.S. became apparently concerned with the prospect of an arms race involving ABM systems.

According to the Soviet Ambassador in Washington Anatolii Dobrynin, between 1964 and 1966 he was continuously sounded out by U.S. officials, including Defense Secretary McNamara, on Moscow's attitude towards anti-ballistic defense systems. McNamara's view was that an ABM system would be too expensive and not effective and that both sides should start talks on a mutual refusal to develop such systems.<sup>49</sup>

The initial Soviet reaction to these soundings was extremely cautious. When the issue was discussed in the Politburo in early 1964, Prime Minister Alexei Kosygin was opposed to talks on limiting ABM because, in his view, defense was motivated by humanitarian concerns and should be permitted in any case. Defense Minister Dmitrii Ustinov and Lev Smirnov, Chairman of the Military-Industrial Commission, were opposed on the grounds that results of Soviet R&D were positive and that the Soviet Union could be left behind if work were delayed due to prolonged negotiations with the U.S.

General-Secretary Leonid Brezhnev agreed with McNamara's view that defense systems would be ineffective against a massive missile attack, but believed that thin defense systems were still necessary for limited purposes. He suggested looking for a compromise between the two extremes. But first, in his view, the USSR should have parity (*paritet*) in offensive weapons. Dobrynin's instructions from Moscow were to agree with starting talks on ABM but only if they were linked with talks on offensive nuclear weapons.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Andrei A. Gromyko, "To Be Remembered," Vol. II, Moscow: *Politizdat*, 1990, (In Russian), p.221.

<sup>48</sup> The Russians pride themselves on being the first in the world to test a prototype ballistic missile interceptor on March 4, 1961 at the Sary-Shagan testing ground near Lake Balkhash. [See: "The Birth of System 'A'," *Voenna-Promyshlennyi Kurier*, No 33 (149), August 5, 2006, available at: [http://www.vpk-news.ru/article.asp?pr\\_sign=archive.2006.149.articles.army\\_03](http://www.vpk-news.ru/article.asp?pr_sign=archive.2006.149.articles.army_03)]. As early as March 1961, the Soviet V-1000 system conducted its first successful missile intercept. The warhead used was a conventional one and intercepted a ballistic missile of the R-12 type that was moving at the speed of 3 kilometers per second. [See: Stanislav Menshikov, "Missile Defense: A Russian Perspective," *ECAAR-Russia Paper*, July 21, 2002, available at: <http://www.fastcenter.ru/eaar/UNdraft.PDF>].

<sup>49</sup> Anatolii Dobrynin, "Highly Confidential. Ambassador in Washington under Six U.S. Presidents, 1962-1986," Moscow: 1997, Avtor Publishers, (In Russian), p. 133.

<sup>50</sup> See: Stanislav Menshikov, op. cit.

According to Russian sources, “this was the first time a linkage [between strategic offensive and defensive systems] was suggested... [From that time on] and until mid-2001 Russia’s position was that it needed strategic nuclear parity with the U.S. as part of any arrangement on offensive and defense systems.”<sup>51</sup>

However, the official talks on the subject did not start until much later:

Both sides were not in a hurry. The U.S. was busy developing Multiple Independently Targetable Reentry Vehicles (MIRVed) warheads, [while still insisting on banning ABM systems] and the Soviet Union was eager to reduce the gap in numbers of offensive weapons. Neither side was ready to talk on limits to the strategic arms race.<sup>52</sup>

In June 1967, President Lyndon Johnson raised the ABM issue in his meeting with Soviet Premier Kosygin in Glasborough, N.J. Johnson said he could delay a decision to deploy a U.S. defense system if he could announce that talks with the Soviet Union on the subject would start shortly. Kosygin repeated his personal view: “Defense is moral, attack is immoral,” and reiterated Politburo’s position that ABM systems could only be discussed together with setting limits for offensive weapons.<sup>53</sup>

However, Soviet progress in ABM systems and progress on both sides in testing MIRV’s finally convinced the Politburo that it was time to start talks. In October 1969, President Richard Nixon was informed that Moscow was prepared to start official negotiations on the subject. Nixon agreed and talks opened on November 17, 1969, in Helsinki, Finland.

It took another two and a half years to prepare the relevant treaties for signature. The ABM Treaty (ABMT) was signed in Moscow on May 26, 1972, the same day as the SALT-1 Treaty on Strategic Arms Limitation. The Brezhnev leadership announced that the ABM and SALT talks and agreements signified that both superpowers had reached “parity” in their strategic capabilities, even though by the time both agreements were ready for signing (1971), the Soviet Union had 2,163 strategic warheads deployed and the United States possessed 4,632 warheads.<sup>54</sup>

SALT-1 did not stop the nuclear arms race: by 1981, the Soviets increased their nuclear arsenals nearly fourfold to a total of 8,043 warheads, while the U.S. more than doubled its own numbers to 10,022.<sup>55</sup>

It should also be understood that the Soviet leadership at no time entertained plans to build a national ABM system. According to information that became available long after

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Dobrynin, op. cit, p. 134.

<sup>53</sup> Dobrynin, op. cit, pp. 150-152.

<sup>54</sup> Menshikov, op. cit.

<sup>55</sup> See: “Missile Defense and the ABM Treaty, A Status Report,” *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. Fact Sheet*, June 2001, available at: [http://editors.sipri.se/pubs/Factsheet/Missile\\_defence.pdf](http://editors.sipri.se/pubs/Factsheet/Missile_defence.pdf).

the initial bilateral debates, negotiations and agreements on the offensive-defensive linkage, feasibility studies ordered by the Soviets at the time resulted in a definite conclusion that such a system would not only be prohibitively expensive but would also be totally ineffective and could be easily penetrated in a massive nuclear attack.<sup>56</sup>

Therefore, Moscow decided at an early stage that it would not waste resources on constructing such a system. To be absolutely certain that the U.S. would under no circumstances achieve a technological breakthrough in defensive systems where the Soviets anticipated failure, thereby gaining strategic superiority over the USSR, they agreed to conclude the ABMT. The complete reversal of the initial Kremlin's skeptical attitude towards regulating strategic defensive systems was based on pragmatic calculations. Establishing a moratorium on developing strategic defensive systems that lasted until the early 2000s, may be considered a serious Soviet achievement in arms control.

With the conclusion in May 1972 of ABM Treaty and SALT-1, the paradigm of "Mutual Assured Destruction" (MAD) became dominant in U.S.-Soviet strategic relations.<sup>57</sup> Negotiations on subsequent major arms limitation and arms reduction treaties (SALT-2, START I and START II) were based on continued reliance on mutual vulnerability to retaliation.

The Russians proclaimed the ABMT the cornerstone of strategic stability (*kraeugolnyi kamen' strategicheskoi stabil'nosti*) in bilateral relations and geopolitical parity between the superpowers.<sup>58</sup>

Diplomatic experiences of the early-1970s had long-term effects on later Soviet and current Russian thinking. They suggested to the Kremlin that:

- Arms control is an extremely valuable means of "equalizing" capabilities of nuclear adversaries even if one of them lags in levels of armaments and technological prowess.
- Success in negotiations is possible as the result of subtle and deceptive moves, like in the game of chess.
- The linkage between strategic offensive and defensive systems is quintessential in preventing unilateral advantages in creating "balance" in strategic relations.

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<sup>56</sup> "Russian Strategic Nuclear Forces," ed. Pavel Podvig, with contributions from Oleg Bukharin, Timur Kadyshev, Eugene Miasnikov, Pavel Podvig, Igor Sutyagin, Maxim Tarasenko, and Boris Zhelezov, *MIT Press*: 2001, pp. 620-622, (In Russian), [Quoted further as RSNF].

<sup>57</sup> See: R.M. Dyachkov, "The History of the Conclusion of the Treaty on Limiting Antiballistic missile defense of 1972," *IX International Conference "Lomonosov-2002,"* available at: <http://www.hist.msu.ru/Science/LMNS2002/23.htm>.

<sup>58</sup> See: "The Struggle of the USSR against Nuclear Danger, Arms Race and for Disarmament. Documents and Materials," A.A. Gromyko, A.A. Bessmertnykh, P.A. Zhilin, G.M. Kornienko, and V.F. Petrovskii, Eds., Moscow: *Politizdat*, 1987, (In Russian).

## Transformations at the Stage of Soviet Disintegration

Reasons and effects of the demise of the Soviet Union are still being debated in Russia. While there is little sympathy for the fate of the Communist regime, the disintegration of the centuries-old empire under Moscow's control is seen by many, including President Putin as the "disaster of the century" and "a genuine drama" for the Russian nation.<sup>59</sup> Even Mikhail Gorbachev himself, often accused of playing a key role in the Soviet disintegration,<sup>60</sup> currently argues that, "the collapse of the USSR should and could have been avoided."<sup>61</sup>

Gorbachev's vision of the reform of the Communist system and gradual integration of the USSR into the community of civilized nations (*soobshestvo tsivilizovannykh natsii*), was reflected in the departure from the traditional arms control gamesmanship of his predecessors.

Soon after his advent to power in early 1985, the youngest General Secretary in the history of the USSR announced his own vision and proposals on the in-depth curbing of nuclear armaments. In September 1985, he offered the United States a reduction in strategic offensive weapons to 6,000 warheads on each side, while concurrently prohibiting the deployment of offensive weapons in outer space, including weapons aimed at satellites.<sup>62</sup> Clearly, Gorbachev continued to abide by the concept of MAD and the traditional Soviet position on the offensive-defensive linkage.

Gorbachev's proposals were specifically aimed against the U.S. SDI program announced by the Ronald Reagan Administration in March 1983. Together with American counter-proposals, they were discussed at the Geneva (November 1985) and Reykjavik (October 1986) bilateral summits. In negotiations, while Gorbachev agreed in principle with Reagan's proposal to reduce by half the numbers of strategic offensive weapons, he also emphasized that this would not be possible if the U.S. went ahead with creating a strategic defense shield. He argued that in this case, the Soviet Union would have to concentrate on developing its strategic strike capacity in order to neutralize the "space shield."<sup>63</sup>

In effect, Gorbachev was the first to offer an anti-BMD rationalization that is currently used by leaders of the Russian Federation. For example, he doubted the American suggestion to share ABM technology with the Soviet Union once it was ready for use. He told the American that, "the creation of a shield... would allow a first strike without

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<sup>59</sup>Vladimir Putin, "Annual Address to the Federal Assembly," April 25, 2005, President of Russia Official Web Portal, available at: [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2005/04/25/2031\\_type70029\\_87086.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2005/04/25/2031_type70029_87086.shtml).

<sup>60</sup> See: Vladimir Aleksandrov, "Gorbachev Manipulated the Soviet People," (In Russian), available at: [http://www.taina.sitcity.ru/stext\\_2301234138.phtml](http://www.taina.sitcity.ru/stext_2301234138.phtml).

<sup>61</sup> "Gorbachev Thinks that the Collapse of the USSR Could Be Avoided," *Interfax*, December 24, 2001, (In Russian), available at: [http://www.gorby.ru/rubrs.asp?art\\_id=325&rubr\\_id=21&page=9](http://www.gorby.ru/rubrs.asp?art_id=325&rubr_id=21&page=9).

<sup>62</sup> Dobrynin, op. cit., pp. 598-599.

<sup>63</sup> Dobrynin, op. cit., pp. 623- 629.



retaliation.” He also said that the Soviet Union had already developed a response to SDI that would be “effective, far less expensive and ready for use in less time.”<sup>64</sup>

In still another effort to reconfirm the rigid linkage of strategic offensive and defensive weapons, Gorbachev declared that the SDI stood in the way of a 50-percent cut in strategic arms and insisted that the U.S. administration should do something about it if it wanted to reduce the nuclear stockpiles.<sup>65</sup>

Academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences Andrei Kokoshin, who at the time of the Reagan-Gorbachev summits worked as Deputy Director of the U.S. and Canada Studies Institute and was member of the Gorbachev-appointed inter-agency group to study Soviet asymmetrical responses to the U.S. SDI program confirmed years later that the Kremlin had indeed agreed on a variety of efficient and cost-effective counteractions to the U.S. strategic defenses if and when they would turn into reality.<sup>66</sup> This more or less rejects the argument of those Russian analysts who claim that the Soviets overreacted in a massive way to the U.S. SDI, and that it was enormous appropriations for fighting the “terrifying” American program that had finally broken the backbone of the Soviet economy.<sup>67</sup>

Gorbachev continued to press for spectacular new agreements with the United States. By December 1987, when the Soviet leader arrived in Washington for his new summit with Reagan, both sides were prepared to sign a treaty banning intermediate range missiles in Europe (the INF Treaty). However, during that summit again, Gorbachev did not fail to refer to the U.S. SDI as a stumbling block and reaffirmed the link between offensive and defensive weapons.

Finally, a preliminary compromise was reached. Both sides would commit themselves to the ABM Treaty as signed in 1972. Some R&D and testing would not be contrary to the Treaty. The Soviet Union and the United States would not withdraw from the Treaty for a specified period of time yet to be determined.<sup>68</sup> During his May 1988 visit to Moscow, Ronald Reagan confirmed that understanding. This cleared the way for further discussions on reducing strategic armaments. Eventually, they resulted in the signing of START I in Moscow on July 31, 1991.

However, in the course of the START I preparations, the part of the 1987 understanding that dealt with the ABM Treaty “was somehow lost on the way.”<sup>69</sup> On June 13, 1991, the Soviet Union made a unilateral statement to the effect that a U.S. withdrawal from the

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<sup>64</sup> Mikhail Gorbachev, “Memoirs,” New York: *Doubleday*, 1996, pp. 406-408.

<sup>65</sup> Gorbachev, op. cit.

<sup>66</sup> See: Andrei Kokoshin, “The Competition of ‘Asymmetrical Responses’ Began in the 80s,” *Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozrenie*, July 7, 2007, (In Russian).

<sup>67</sup> Maksim Kalashnikov, “The Empire’s Broken Sword,” *E-lib.info*, available at: <http://www.e-lib.info/book.php?id=1121022183&p=0>.

<sup>68</sup> Gorbachev, pp. 445, 451.

<sup>69</sup> Menshikov, op. cit.

Treaty could present a *force majeure* leading to the possible Soviet withdrawal from START I.<sup>70</sup>

Even more importantly, no mention was made in START I itself of its linkage with the 1972 Treaty. This omission was brought to Gorbachev's attention and he promised to make an oral statement at the signing of the treaty to imply that if the ABM Treaty was abrogated the Soviet Union would not consider itself tied by START I. But for reasons unknown he failed to do so. Allegedly, as claimed by one of his aides, he did not want to spoil the "festive atmosphere." Actually, in the Russian expert opinion, "this was another of those significant errors Gorbachev made in his last years in office."<sup>71</sup>

Gorbachev's critics in Russia widely accuse him of having consistently given in to American pressures in arms control negotiations. Allegedly, Gorbachev was so carried away by his "pet ideas" of *perestroika*, *détente* with the West, etc., and enamored by summitry with Western leaders that he was prepared to compromise on better Soviet interests, e.g., agreeing to stop construction of the large Soviet phased-array radar near the Siberian city of Krasnoyarsk, while keeping a blind eye at similar American installations in Thule, Greenland and Fylingdales, UK.<sup>72</sup>

Gorbachev's handling of other issues, including conditions for the reunification of Germany, Soviet troop withdrawals from Eastern Europe, elimination of short- and medium-range missiles under the INF Treaty, promises to get rid of tactical nuclear weapons, etc., – all reverberate today in the Russian disappointments and attempts at revising former agreements and understandings.

On December 8, 1991, three Soviet republics – Russia, Ukraine and Byelorussia – formed a commonwealth and declared Gorbachev's government "dead." This effectively marked the demise of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War.

### **Post-Soviet Disarray**

The collapse of the Soviet Union was followed by a prolonged period of chaos in internal Russian affairs. Under the first Russian President Boris Yeltsin, who qualified his own rule as that of "Tsar Boris" for its authoritarian tendencies, there occurred major transformations in the legal system, economic foundation and the composition of political and other elites.

Russia lost the status of a superpower. The armed forces and the military-industrial complex – the backbone of Soviet might – experienced quantitative and qualitative degradation.<sup>73</sup> Unable and/or unwilling to dedicate a major part of the GNP to the

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<sup>70</sup> RSNF, p. 655.

<sup>71</sup> Dobrynin, op. cit., p. 661.

<sup>72</sup> See: Menshikov, *ibid*.

<sup>73</sup> A telling indication of the state of the Russian MIC is serious problems with technical controls at the Moscow A-135 ABM system. [See: Petr Polkovnikov, "Window of Vulnerability," *Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozrenie*, February 21, 2003, (In Russian)].

military machine, the Yeltsin government curtailed modernization efforts including defense-oriented R&D,<sup>74</sup> and allowed the material, intellectual and human resource base to essentially disintegrate.<sup>75</sup>

For several initial years of his presidency, foreign policy issues became secondary or even tertiary in importance for Boris Yeltsin who was preoccupied with internal issues. These issues included defeating the pro-Communist opposition and fighting insurgency in the Caucasus. Yeltsin brought with him into the Kremlin a peculiar style of governance based on favoritism and opportunism. The “last person who could whisper into Yeltsin’s ear” could often play a decisive role in the President’s decision-making process.<sup>76</sup> Under Yeltsin, the conduct of foreign policy was occasionally delegated to people with little or no knowledge of diplomacy or matters of substance. For a while, Yeltsin was under the dominant influence of his Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, formerly a relatively low-ranking official of the Soviet Foreign Ministry, who espoused extremely liberal and pro-Western ideas.<sup>77</sup>

Kozyrev briefly convinced Yeltsin that after the collapse of the Soviet regime, Russia had no enemies to watch out for. Therefore, Russia could all but abandon competitive relations with the outside world and the policies of militarization that had traditionally been the natural background for the Soviet pursuit of foreign policy objectives.

While relying on this new optimistic vision of Russia’s future as an integral part of the Western world, Yeltsin was prepared to drastically reduce the Strategic Nuclear Forces (SNF) that looked like an aberration and excessive burden for the economy at the time of crisis in all areas of civilian life. The idea of trimming down the SNF reflected the infighting between different branches of the Armed Forces for scarce resources and influence in the Russian hierarchy. It was particularly promoted by Yeltsin’s Defense Minister Pavel Grachev, who represented the interests of the land forces in the Russian military establishment. The Grachev-led faction at the Defense Ministry was eager to terminate the privileged position of the triad forces that had traditionally enjoyed advantage under the Communist regime.

In their reformist zeal, Yeltsin and Grachev ordered several sweeping attempts at modernizing the extremely cumbersome structure of the armed forces inherited from the

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<sup>74</sup> Some Russian military experts saw the closing down of the 4<sup>th</sup> Central Scientific and Research Institute of the Ministry of Defense formerly responsible for the design and testing of all Soviet strategic offensive systems, as a strong indication of the deterioration of Russian nuclear weapons’ R&D and production. [See: Vladimir Yeliseev, “Does the Defense Ministry Need the 4<sup>th</sup> TSNI?” *Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozrenie*, February 21, 2003, (In Russian)].

<sup>75</sup> According to some sources, by the early-2000s, as the result of deficient financing, only less than 20% of the armaments of the Russian troops could be counted as modern. [See: Mark Shteinberg, “‘Abakan’ Kalashnikovich,” *V Novom Svete*, May 16-22, 2003, (In Russian)].

<sup>76</sup> See: Aleksandr Korzhakov, “Boris Yeltsin: From Dawn to Dusk,” *Interbuk*, 1997, (In Russian), partially available at: <http://bookz.ru/authors/korjakov-aleksandr/korg/1-korg.html>.

<sup>77</sup> Andrei Kozyrev became head of the Russian Foreign Ministry even before Russia was proclaimed an independent state. Originally he presided over a symbolic staff at the Soviet Foreign Ministry still run by Gorbachev’s closest acolyte Eduard Shevardnadze, and had no real powers until eventual Yeltsin’s triumph over Gorbachev in 1991.

Soviet times. However, since most of them were ill-conceived and uncoordinated they contributed to further weakening not only the SNF and its key components, (e.g., the Strategic Missile Forces, the Nuclear Navy, the Space Troops, etc.), but the conventional forces as well.

By the early-2000s, military and civilian experts in Russia came to a unanimous agreement that, “as the result of the so-called permanent reforms, that have now entered the second decade, the armed forces, as a system of state military organizations, have ceased to exist,”<sup>78</sup> and that, “the Russian armed forces are not fit for contemporary warfare.”<sup>79</sup>

As for his Soviet predecessors, arms control negotiations with the United States was of paramount importance for Boris Yeltsin and his government. While insisting on the fundamentally changed nature of the new regime in the Russian Federation, the Yeltsin government continued to rely heavily on the philosophy of Mutual Assured Destruction in bilateral strategic relations. The ABM Treaty continued to be praised by Moscow as the cornerstone of bilateral strategic stability.

Unlike Gorbachev, Boris Yeltsin did not have to deal with the specter of imminent overwhelming U.S. superiority in BMD systems that could upset the strategic balance of terror.

After George H. W. Bush became U.S. President, his view of the SDI program was less enthusiastic than that of his predecessor. Even before the Soviet Union was dissolved, the scope of the program was reduced and its official name changed. Practical interest in the U.S. was now concentrated on theatre missile defense. Bush formally announced a shift in focus from SDI to “Global Protection against Limited Strikes” (GPALS). After the Soviet Union ceased to exist, the U.S. no longer faced the threat of a massive Soviet attack and the full-scale SDI concept was all but abandoned.<sup>80</sup>

Boris Yeltsin expected continued arms control with the United States to assist him in reducing the surplus nuclear-missile hardware, while also preserving the semblance of Russia’s global importance as the second-to-none nuclear power. In June 1992, Presidents George H. W. Bush and Boris Yeltsin agreed to pursue a follow-on accord to START I.

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<sup>78</sup> Leonid Ivashov, “We Live in a Failed State,” *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, February 20, 2003, (In Russian).

<sup>79</sup> Vadim Solovyev, Mikhail Rastopshin, “Armored Illusion,” *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, April 15, 2003, (In Russian).

<sup>80</sup> On December 5, 1991, President George H. W. Bush signed into law H.R. 2100, the “National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 1992 and 1993.” That portion of H.R. 2100 dealing with missile defenses was known as the Missile Defense Act of 1991. This act required the Defense Department to “aggressively pursue the development of advanced theater missile defense systems, with the objective of down selecting and deploying such systems by the mid-1990s.” This system was to be “designed to protect the United States against limited ballistic missile threats, including accidental or unauthorized launches or Third World attacks,” but not the massive nuclear attack. See: “Missile Defense Milestones, 1944-2000,” Ballistic missile defense Organization, (Quoted further as BMDO), available at: <http://www.fas.org/spp/starwars/program/news00/bmd-000414.htm>.

START II was signed by George H. W. Bush and Boris Yeltsin in January 1993. It called upon the parties to reduce their strategic arsenals to 3,000-3,500 warheads and prohibited land-based ICBMs with MIRVs. Similar to START I, the newly negotiated treaty called for the elimination of carriers and not the warheads. START II was supposed to enter into force in 2003.

In March 1997, Presidents Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin agreed on the structure of the START III Treaty that was expected to be finalized in future bilateral negotiations. The overall levels of strategic nuclear warheads were supposed to be reduced to 2,000-2,500. Unlike preceding strategic arms control treaties, START III was intended to mandate the elimination of nuclear warheads and not just carrier missiles in order to assure the irreversibility of the strategic arms reductions. Negotiations on START III were supposed to begin after the entry in force of START II which never occurred.<sup>81</sup>

The expert community in Russia was divided over the ratification of the START II Treaty.<sup>82</sup> For a while, the Treaty enjoyed the support of those in the Russian “Military-Industrial Complex” (MIC) and the “Strategic Missile Troops” (SMT) who believed that the radical restructuring of the Russian nuclear triad needed to comply with the treaty would open up federal financing for modernization programs. For this group, the ban on MIRV’ed ICBMs also implied the development and production of new single-warhead missiles that were consistent with existing plans for the “Topol” and “Topol-M” land-based ICBMs.

Government opponents of the treaty argued that adopting and implementing START II would accelerate the disintegration already under way of Russia’s strategic forces by significantly limiting options for developing Russia’s nuclear triad. Allegedly:

- The RF would be forced to accept an American model of strategic force structure emphasizing expensive, potentially vulnerable sea-based platforms.
- By eliminating heavy missiles, e.g., the 10-warhead land-based RS-20 *Voevoda* ICBM [NATO designation SS-18 *Satan*] and agreeing to further conditions such as removing and separately storing warheads away from missiles, the Russian nuclear deterrent might lose credibility at a time when RF military doctrine was being revised to emphasize dependence on nuclear weapons.
- Changes inherent in START II would be implemented before Russia had reviewed its strategic requirements in the post-Soviet era.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> See: “Arms Control in Russia and the U.S.,” *Nuclearno.ru*, available at: <http://nuclearno.ru/text.asp?3473>.

<sup>82</sup> See: Eugene Myasnikov, “Problems of START-2 Treaty Ratification in Russia. Is START III Possible?” *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, September 12, 1996, (In Russian).

<sup>83</sup> See: Vladimir Dvorkin, “On the Value of Discussions on the Subject of START II,” *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, March 27, 1998, (In Russian); Pavel Podvig, “The Russian Strategic Forces: Uncertain Future,” Presentation at Seminar Organized Jointly by Center for Study of Security Problems of Massachusetts

These concerns dominated State Duma debates over START II ratification and strategic issues in general. The perennial rift between Boris Yeltsin and the Russian legislature prevented Russia from following the U.S. example of swift ratification of START II.<sup>84</sup>

In September 1997, in New York, the Russian Foreign Minister Yevgenii Primakov<sup>85</sup> secured U.S. agreement to an addendum to START II that extended the deadline for the Treaty's ratification<sup>86</sup> and also included the Agreed Statements on ABM-TMD Demarcation that, as the Russians calculated, would stall U.S. progress towards developing the strategic defensive potential.

The Russian position became even more intransigent when the Republican majority in the U.S. Congress supported legislation providing for the development of a National Missile Defense System. In January 1999, the U.S. made a formal proposal to modify the Treaty allowing the development of NMD.<sup>87</sup> However, when in February of that year a U.S. delegation came to Moscow for preliminary talks, the Russian side took the view that no changes in the Treaty were possible.

Soon after that, both houses of the U.S. Congress overwhelmingly voted to commit the U.S. to deploy NMD as soon as technologically possible. However, importantly for Russia, the wording passed by the House recommended that the U.S. should continue arms control talks with Russia.<sup>88</sup>

Sensing some vacillations in the approach of the Clinton Administration, Moscow decided to apply political pressure and publicly threatened to walk out of START I, INF and the Treaty on Conventional Force Limitations in Europe (CFE) if the U.S. abandoned the ABMT.<sup>89</sup>

The Russian pressures appeared to have a temporary effect. In June 1999, following a meeting between Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin in Moscow, a joint statement was signed stating that the ABM Treaty was fundamental to strengthening strategic stability and reducing strategic offensive weapons. The parties reaffirmed their commitment to the Treaty and to enhancing its viability and effectiveness in the future.

At about the same time, Moscow chose to extend some accommodation to the U.S. Administration on the ABMT issue. In August 1999, the U.S. and Russia agreed to

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Institute of Technology and Center for Study of Problems of Disarmament, Energy and Ecology of the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology, *Cambridge*, MA, February 2-6, 1998.

<sup>84</sup>The U.S. Senate gave its advice and consent to the ratification of START II on January 26, 1996.

<sup>85</sup> Former head of Foreign Military Intelligence Service, Yevgenii Primakov replaced Andrei Kozyrev in 1996, after the latter had finally fallen out of favor with Yeltsin under the pressures of the Russian "traditionalists."

<sup>86</sup> On the request of the Russian side, the date for the Treaty's entry into force was postponed until December 2007.

<sup>87</sup> RSNF, *op. cit.*, p. 573.

<sup>88</sup> BMDO, *op. cit.*

<sup>89</sup> RSNF, *op. cit.*, p. 574.

resume strategic arms talks that included both further restrictions on offensive arms and a possible modification of the ABM Treaty to allow the U.S. to deploy a limited NMD. However, no substantive talks followed before Yeltsin eventually resigned from his post in December 1999. Overall, his record in the arms control area remained bleak and controversial.

### **Arms Control Decision-Making and Elite: Composition, Interests, Behavior**

Khrushchev disarmament proposals and extravagant behavior was indicative not only of his individual style but also of Soviet thinking and decision-making. In the totalitarian country, both depended heavily on prevailing ideological dogmas. However, of equal if not greater importance were the personal preferences or idiosyncrasies of top leaders and apparatchiks.

Early in the formation of the Soviet regime Vladimir Lenin declared that, “the cadres decide it all,” meaning that the entire process of decision-making in Soviet Russia should be the exclusive prerogative of the carefully selected bureaucratic-managerial stratum “devoted to the cause of communism.”<sup>90</sup> Under Stalin, state bureaucracies particularly the repressive VChK-NKVD-OGPU-KGB<sup>91</sup> apparatuses, controlled every aspect of Soviet life.<sup>92</sup>

Elaboration and adoption of specific decisions on foreign policy and arms control in particular, were usually preceded and/or accompanied by complex procedures involving various components of the political (party) hierarchy and the related civilian (Foreign Ministry, Atomic Ministry) and military (Defense Ministry, KGB) bureaucracies. However, the ultimate choice among available policy options belonged to the Politburo and more precisely to the man at the top – the General Secretary of the Communist party.<sup>93</sup> Occasionally, e.g., during the widely publicized Cuban missile crisis, fateful decisions were made in a capricious spur-of-the-moment manner by the tyrannical “supreme leader.”

The Soviet regime regulated stringently how, when and who could make public statements on policy issues. On matters of military policy including disarmament, there existed a distinct and elite group of trustworthy spokespersons allowed to popularize Soviet external policies inside the country and engage in contacts and exchanges with foreigners.

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<sup>90</sup> See: K. Savichev, “The Teaching of Lenin and Stalin about the Cadres of the Soviet State Apparatus,” Abstract of the Candidate of Juridical Sciences’ Dissertation, Moscow: 1954, 14pp, (In Russian), available at: <http://www.lawlibrary.ru/izdanie33873.html>.

<sup>91</sup> These are all abbreviations for the secret police in the Soviet Union.

<sup>92</sup> See: Eduard Radzinskii, “Stalin,” Moscow: *ACT*, 750 pp., (In Russian).

<sup>93</sup> Importantly, drafting of these options was in itself an elaborate and tricky process: lower echelons in the decision-making hierarchy usually attempted to assess if not ascertain beforehand what kind of analyses and/or recommendations were expected of them at the superior levels of the command chain. Under these circumstances, assuring personal interests of survival and promotion were usually more important to individual apparatchiks than reflecting “stark reality” especially if it deviated from the official “party line” describing that reality.

However, as revealed after the collapse of the Soviet regime, even the most trusted party apparatchiks and top military, intelligence and diplomatic personnel charged with developing various aspects of national military and security policies, and/or in conducting arms control negotiations, were subject to arbitrary and humiliating secrecy restrictions.<sup>94</sup>

A peculiar trait of Soviet diplomatic history, in the immediate post-revolutionary period, was significant reliance on old cadres (*starye kadry*) coming from Imperial Russia's upper and middle class and intelligentsia (Georgii Chicherin, Leonid Krasin, Marsim Litvinov, etc.) Their expertise and familiarity with Western cultures were used to score important diplomatic victories for the Soviet regime. Many of these people later became victims of Stalin's repressions.

During and after WWII, the core of the Soviet diplomatic corps began to be dominated by trustworthy new cadres drawn from the people (*vydvizhentsy*). Hand-picked by Central Committee's personnel (recruitment) departments, they had to comply with specific stringent criteria. They were expected to be among Communist Party and Komsomol activists, war veterans preferably representing the social strata of workers and peasants deemed to be intrinsically devoted to the cause of communism.

Educational background and professional experience were of much lesser importance, e.g., Andrei Gromyko who for decades worked as the Soviet Foreign Minister and epitomized that generation of Russian diplomats was an agronomist by education. Soviet ambassador to the U.S. Anatolii Dobrynin, was an aircraft engineer in 1944, before he was sent to be trained as a diplomat.

Given the clannish nature of elite-formation in the Soviet Union and the strong instincts for cronyism and protectionism, it is not surprising that progeny of this first "homegrown" generation of Soviet foreign policy apparatchiks and their friends and close associates formed the bulk of the next generation of the Soviet diplomatic corps and academia working on foreign policy issues including arms control.<sup>95</sup> Especially under Leonid Brezhnev, who ruled Russia as the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from 1964 to 1982 (longer than anyone other than Joseph Stalin), the Soviet system gave rise to a special caste of people having unique access to foreign-policy decision-making based on familial and clan devotion.

One of the special trademarks of this breed of people occupying a uniquely advantageous niche in the Soviet society, primarily because of the opportunity to travel and work abroad, was getting their education at elite institutions such as the Foreign Ministry's Institute of International Relations. An important segment in the foreign policy elite

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<sup>94</sup> For example, one of the leading Soviet diplomats, Soviet Ambassador to the U.S. Anatolii Dobrynin revealed in his memoir that in arms control and force reduction talks with the United States, he and his other colleagues had to rely on Western figures related to Soviet military potential. [See: Anatoly Dobrynin, "In Confidence: Moscow's Ambassador to America's Six Cold War Presidents," *Times Books*, 1995, 688 pp.].

<sup>95</sup> See: Georgii Arbatov, "The Man of the System. Observations and Thoughts of the Eyewitness to Its Disintegration," Moscow; *Vagrius*, 2003, (In Russian).



belonged to representatives of intelligence services and the military whose expertise and access to classified information was essential for the conduct of sensitive diplomatic negotiations.

Party discipline (*partiinaya distsiplina*) was one of the pillars of the operations of the Soviet foreign policy elite. The absolute majority of open statements and publications on foreign policy and arms control issues of the Soviet period<sup>96</sup> were marked by the proverbial double-think and double-talk.<sup>97</sup> For the uninitiated, they represented endless restatements of the official party line. Only careful expert reading could reveal disagreements, e.g., on negotiating tactics and rarely, mild covert critique of Soviet positions. Cautious self-restraint, driven by fears of recriminations and banishment from the privileged elite, worked as effectively as official censorship to prevent dissident opinions from entering the public realm.

Class consciousness (*klassovoe soznanie*) was supposed to dominate Soviet perspective on arms control agendas and dynamics of negotiations. It was also the guiding principle in the related research efforts and publications.

The collapse of the Soviet system entailed significant changes in the composition of the arms control elite. Most senior officials involved in diplomatic exchanges for many decades, were retired or lost positions of prominence. At the stage of the imminent disintegration of the USSR, two foreign policy authorities, the Soviet and Russian Foreign Ministries, began to function on parallel lines. For a while, the Russian Foreign Ministry, under Andrei Kozyrev, had symbolic powers and staff. However, as soon as Boris Yeltsin acquired the uncontested power as the Russian national leader, “his”

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<sup>96</sup> The Soviet period left numerous publications – from specialized academic to mass propaganda type – devoted to general and specific issues of arms race and arms control, e.g., “The Struggle of the USSR against Nuclear Threat, the Arms Race, and for Disarmament,” Documents and Materials, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the USSR. Moscow, 1987, (In Russian), 559 pp; Aleksandr Yakovlev, “The Ideology of the American Empire. Problems of War, Peace, and International Relations in the Post-War American Bourgeois Political Literature,” Moscow: *Politizdat*, 1967, (in Russian), 393 pp; Vladimir Kortunov, “Strategy of Peace against Nuclear Madness,” Moscow, 1984, (In Russian), 247 pp; Andrei Kokoshin, “Looking for a Way Out: Military-Political Aspects of International Security,” Moscow: *Promizdat Publishers*, 1989, (In Russian), 269 pp; Andrei Kokoshin, and Sergei Rogov, “Grey Cardinals of the White House,” Moscow: *Novosti Publishers*, 1986, (In Russian), 349 pp; Andrei Kokoshin, “On the Bourgeois Prognostications of the Development of International Affairs,” Moscow: *Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniya Publishers*, 1978, (In Russian), 231 pp; Aleksei Arbatov, “Defense Sufficiency and Security,” Moscow: *Znanie Publishers*, 1990, (In Russian), 63 pp; Genrikh Trofimenko, “Military Doctrine of the USA,” Moscow: *Znanie Publishers*, 1982, (In Russian), 63 pp; Vladimir Belous, “The USA: God Is on the Side of Big Battalions,” Moscow; 1990, (In Russian), 366 pp.

<sup>97</sup> In the post-Soviet period, when the oppressive party controls disappeared, arms control publications, especially memoirs by former architects of the Soviet foreign policy began to open the veil of secrecy over important periods and events, see: Georgi Arbatov, “The System: An Insider's Life In Soviet Politics,” *Random House*, 1992, 380 pp; “Soviet Foreign Policy in the Years of the ‘Cold War’ of 1945-1985,” Moscow, 1995, (In Russian), 580 pp; Pavel Palazchenko, “My Years with Gorbachev and Shevardnadze: The Memoir of a Soviet Interpreter,” *University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press*, 1997. 394 pp; Andrei Kokoshin, “Army and Politics: Soviet Military-Political and Military-Strategic Thinking, 1918-1991,” Moscow: *Mezhdunarodnye Otnosheniya Publishers*, 1995, (In Russian), 285 pp; A.V. Karpenko, “Russian Nuclear Weapons, 1949-1993,” *St. Petersburg: Reference Book*, 1993, (In Russian), 160 pp; S.G. Kolesnikov, “Strategic Missile-Nuclear Weapons,” Moscow: 1996, (In Russian), 128 pp.

Foreign Ministry under Kozyrev superceded the authority of the Soviet Foreign Ministry. Kozyrev's associates, most of whom represented secondary levels of the Soviet diplomatic hierarchy, suddenly found themselves at the top of the new bureaucratic establishment.

Kozyrev's Foreign Ministry attracted new blood to the diplomatic work from among academia and other Russian elites previously uninvolved in foreign affairs. Sources of Russian decision-making became significantly diversified under Yeltsin's democratization sweep. Decentralization bordering on lack of consistence and coherence, typical of the Yeltsin style of governance, resulted in the emergence of numerous competing sources of policymaking and conflicting voices claiming to represent the Russian Federation. This often made Russian foreign, military and arms control policies unpredictable by counterparts abroad.

Boris Yeltsin's departure brought an end to the easy-going style of policymaking in Russia. Vladimir Putin's authoritarian style of administration left no place for multipolarity of opinions, let alone for parallel decision-making mechanisms in government.

The Foreign Ministry of the Russian Federation under Putin, began to rapidly acquire the traditional characteristics of the Soviet-style diplomatic service with strict subordination, conservatism and lack of transparency.

As an influential bureaucracy, the Russian Foreign Ministry has vested interests that it is prepared to defend. It is naturally interested in restoring the extensive system of negotiations with the U.S. on arms control and other bilateral and multilateral issues. Foreign Ministry officials consistently speak in favor of preserving and updating the existing arms control agreements and negotiating new ones.

### **Channels for Promoting Russian Arms Control Interests**

Since the days of the classical arms race and arms control negotiations of the Cold War period, Moscow has placed a significant stake on influencing U.S. policies from within by cultivating anti-nuclear and anti-war movements and lobbying groups in the U.S. Significant resources were dedicated to projecting a benign image of Soviet arms control initiatives and policies in the U.S. and internationally.

Over the years, the Communist authorities created an intensive system of formally independent public organizations speaking in favor of disarmament, e.g., the Soviet Peace Committee,<sup>98</sup> the Peace Fund, the Soviet Scientists Committee for Peace Against the Danger of Atomic War,<sup>99</sup> Generals and Admirals for Peace and Disarmament, etc.,

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<sup>98</sup> N. Mikeshin, "The Brief Essay on the History of the Soviet Committee for the Defense of Peace and the Federation of Peace and Accord, and the Movement of the Champions of Peace in Our Country," *The Federation of Peace and Accord*, Moscow, (In Russian), available at: <http://www.ifpc.ru/history.html>.

<sup>99</sup> "The Activities of the Soviet Scientists Committee for Peace against the Danger of Atomic War," Report by E. P. Velikhov, available at: [http://www.ras.ru/publishing/rasherald/rasherald\\_articleinfo.aspx?articleid=2c880a2e-ee6-4f84-a231-23107e5b391c](http://www.ras.ru/publishing/rasherald/rasherald_articleinfo.aspx?articleid=2c880a2e-ee6-4f84-a231-23107e5b391c). It should be noted that many Soviet "peace activists" were also actively involved in Soviet

that functioned under the direct ideological, administrative and financial controls of the Central Committee's hierarchy and the KGB apparatus.<sup>100</sup> While their main declared function was "to mobilize the Soviet public for the struggle for peace and against war,"<sup>101</sup> most of them were also involved in large-scale activities abroad through a wide network of affiliates and partnership organizations in Western and Third World countries in order to create a favorable background for official Soviet policies on disarmament, arms control and related issues.<sup>102</sup>

In order to assist in promoting their diplomatic and propaganda work, related to disarmament and other issues important for Moscow, the Soviets also set up a network of non-governmental institutions with links to the UN.<sup>103</sup>

The formally independent public organizations were used by the Soviets as back-track channels for behind-the-scene diplomacy, e.g., the Soviet Peace Committee was co-sponsor of the Dartmouth Conference – "a long-standing high-level but unofficial dialogue between the USA and the Soviet Union... [involving] top political and civic leaders in both nations, [that had] been widely credited with playing a key role as a 'reality check' during moments of great international crisis like the U-2 incident and the early years of the Reagan administration, when the administration was publicly proclaiming the plan for Star Wars. It created a backdoor forum for talking about actual intentions of both nations."<sup>104</sup>

Currently Moscow lacks the resources for large-scale political or public relations activities abroad. However, it follows closely internal American debate on strategic matters such as on the implications of the Nuclear Posture Review, the deployment of BMD elements in Eastern Europe, etc., and uses them for its own propaganda purposes.

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military programs, e.g., parallel to chairing the "Soviet Scientists Committee for Peace," Academician Yevgenii Velikhov headed the interagency group designing Moscow's "asymmetrical response" to the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). [See: Andrei Kokoshin, "The Competition of 'Asymmetrical Responses' Began in the 80s," *Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozrenie*, July 7, 2007, (In Russian)].

<sup>100</sup> See: Rob Prince, "Following the Money Trail at the World Peace Council," *Peace Magazine*, November-December 1992, page 20, available at: <http://archive.peacemagazine.org/v08n6p20.htm>.

<sup>101</sup> N. Mikeshin, op. cit.

<sup>102</sup> Jeffrey G. Barlow, "Moscow and the Peace Offensive," *Heritage Foundation*, Backgrounder #184, May 14, 1982, available at: <http://www.heritage.org/Research/RussiaandEurasia/bg184.cfm>.

<sup>103</sup> According to one source, at the United Nations, there were registered at least eleven Soviet-sponsored or backed international organizations: The Afro-Asian People's Solidarity-Organization (AAPSO); The Christian Peace Conference (CPC); The International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL); The International Organization of Journalists (IOJ); The International Union of Students (IUS); The Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF); The World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY); The World Federation of Scientific Workers (WFSW); The World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU); The World Peace Council (WPC); and the International Institute for Peace (IIP). Allegedly, "their funds come mainly from the coffers of the USSR and its East European allies." (See: Juliana Geran Pilon, "At the U.N., Soviet Fronts Pose as Nongovernmental Organizations," *Heritage Foundation*, Backgrounder #549, December 1, 1986, available at: <http://www.heritage.org/Research/InternationalOrganizations/bg549.cfm>).

<sup>104</sup> Notes by an American member of the Dartmouth Conference, 1991, available at: [http://www.publicwork.org/pdf/travellogs/Moscow\\_23F.pdf](http://www.publicwork.org/pdf/travellogs/Moscow_23F.pdf).

The twin Russian goals are to substantiate the need for increasing Russia's own military preparedness and to set up political and other impediments for the implementation of proposed U.S. programs. Examples include the campaign to discredit the third-site placements of BMD elements in Poland and the Czech Republic, and create the international alliance against placement of weapons in outer space.

## Chapter 2: Evolution of Russian Arms Control Agenda under Vladimir Putin

### Conceptualizing Transformations of Russian Policies

There exists a wealth of data and analytic research on various aspects of Soviet/Russian arms control policy and bilateral U.S.-Soviet (Russian) arms control negotiations and regimes. The period encompassing the last decade of the Soviet regime and the first decade of Russian independence are particularly well documented, especially as far as the controversies over the fate of the ABM Treaty, the ratification of START II and the conclusion of SORT are concerned.<sup>105</sup>

There is a wide variety of opinions on the driving force behind and direction of post-independence Russian foreign policy. As the Cold War came to an end and Russia re-emerged out of the Soviet Union, many pundits inside and outside Russia believed that it would have no problem integrating into the community of Western nations. The coming to power of pragmatist Vladimir Putin was hailed by some as the sign of a long-term change in Russia's orientation towards fundamental Western values of market economy and democracy.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> See: Thomas C. Schelling and Morton C. Halperin, "Strategy and Arms Control," New York: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1985; "The Arms Race and Arms Control," *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute*, Taylor & Francis Group: June, 1983; Donald M. Snow, "The Shape of the Future: The Post-Cold War World," New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1995; William Cohen, "Proliferation: Threat and Response," Washington, D.C.: *Office of the Secretary of Defense*, 1997; Gwendolyn M. Hall, John T. Cappello, and Stephen P. Lambert, "A Post-Cold War Nuclear Strategy Model, *U.S. Air Force Institute for National Security Studies*, Occasional Paper 20, July 1998; "The New Russian Foreign Policy," Michael Mandelbaum, Editor, *Council on Foreign Relations*, 1998; Leon Sloss, "The Current Nuclear Dialogue," *Strategic Forum*, January, 1999; Lilia Shevtsova, "Yeltsin's Russia," Washington, D.C.: *Carnegie Endowment*, 1999; Victor Mizin, "The Treaty of Moscow," *Nuclear Threat Initiative*, available at: [http://www.nti.org/e\\_research/e\\_3\\_14a.html](http://www.nti.org/e_research/e_3_14a.html); "ABM, MRV, SALT, and the Nuclear Arms Race: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Arms Control, International Law and Organization of the Committee on Foreign Policy," *Government Reprints Press*: October 2001; Robert Legvold, "Russia's Unformed Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2001, available at: <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20010901faessay5570/robert-legvold/russia-s-unformed-foreign-policy.html>; N. F. Chervov, "Nuclear Whirlwind; What Was, What Will Be, Moscow," *OLMA-PRESS*, 2001. (In Russian); Joseph Cirincione, "Bomb Scare: The History and Future of Nuclear Weapons," *Columbia University Press*, March, 2007.

<sup>106</sup> In one opinion, clearly based on moderate and conciliatory moves by the early Putin government, e.g., in support of the U.S. counterterrorist policy immediately after the 9/11 tragedy, "The foundations for a Western-oriented policy... have sturdy roots in Russia's emerging political and economic elites. Russia's primary interests in economic development and in Eurasian stability give it solid interests in the international status quo, including the fight against global terrorism that threatens the existing global system... Putin's long term strategy is one of Western integration... We have every interest in engaging a pragmatic Russian foreign policy leadership in a pragmatic and comprehensive security policy of our own that finds synergies in an economic, political, and security engagement with Russia." [See: Celeste A. Wallander, "Russian Foreign Policy: the Implications of Pragmatism for U.S. Policy," *GlobalSecurity.org*, available at: [http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/congress/2002\\_hr/wall0227.htm](http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/congress/2002_hr/wall0227.htm)].

Another view emerged that since U.S.-Russian relations lost the character of an existential conflict, the need for stringent mutual arms control had all but disappeared.<sup>107</sup> To an extent, as attention to bilateral arms control lost poignancy, efforts at conceptualizing the contemporary arms control process became less intense and more uniform.

Until the early-2000s, most Russia watchers in the West assigned Russia a secondary role in geopolitics. However, soon after the regime change in Moscow in 2000, more astute observers of the Russian scene started to note that, “Russian President Vladimir Putin and his administration espouse a nationalist agenda that seeks to re-establish Russia as a great world power and to offset America’s global leadership position.”<sup>108</sup>

Gradually, it began to be recognized that, “There is a new reality on the global scene: a Russian foreign policy that is proactive and strategic,” and that it was at this background that “that quiet debate [about Russia’s motivations and strategy] occupying analysts and policymakers in Western capitals... has begun to take public form in disagreements.”<sup>109</sup>

However, at the early stage of Putin’s rule, the stated Russian goal of speeding up its integration into the Western community was seen as a platform for achieving changes in Russia’s behavior towards China, Iran and other rogues in line with U.S. requirements.<sup>110</sup>

Already by the end of the first Putin administration (2000-2004), it became apparent that Moscow was determined to challenge U.S. unilateralism in global politics and wanted to pursue, to the maximum extent possible, an independent course in foreign affairs that was bound to put it at odds with Washington on specific issues. Significantly, despite this dynamic that was less than favorable to U.S. interests, recommendations could still be heard on the value of compromise and conciliation as the main instrument in dealing with a progressively more assertive Moscow.<sup>111</sup> Some of these recommendations, emphasizing conciliation in relations with Moscow, would often directly favor the Russian arms control agenda.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> See: Amy F. Woolf, *Nuclear Arms Control: The U.S.-Russian Agenda*, CRS Issue Brief for Congress, The Library of Congress, Order Code IB98030, Updated January 3, 2006, available at: <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/nuke/IB98030.pdf>.

<sup>108</sup> Ariel Cohen, “Putin’s Foreign Policy and U.S.- Russian Relations,” Heritage Foundation, Backgrounder #1406, January 18, 2001, available at: <http://www.heritage.org/Research/RussiaandEurasia/BG1406.cfm>

<sup>109</sup> Celeste A. Wallander, “Russian Transimperialism and Its Implications,” *Washington Quarterly*, Spring, 2007, pp.107, 109, available at: [http://www.twq.com/07spring/docs/07spring\\_wallander.pdf](http://www.twq.com/07spring/docs/07spring_wallander.pdf).

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>111</sup> In essence, these recommendations would be based on the “stick-and-carrot” approach: “At a time when Russia is intermittently ratcheting up the Cold War rhetoric, offering little on foreign policy issues of most concern, and heading in an increasingly authoritarian direction at home, what is most needed in Washington is a new version of the dual-track strategy Ronald Reagan pursued after 1982: offering serious cooperation on strategic matters while at the same time standing up for America’s democratic principles.” [See: Michael McFaul and James M. Goldgeier, “What to Do about Russia. Engage the Government and Aid the Democrats,” *Policy Review*, Hoover Institution, October-November, 2005, available at: <http://www.hoover.org/publications/policyreview/2921316.html>].

<sup>112</sup> For example, McFaul and Goldeier suggested in their *Policy Review* piece [see the above footnote]: “The U.S.-Russia relationship is in desperate need of a new, grand, and cooperative initiative... Accelerating the dismantlement of nuclear weapons, perhaps even with the aid of a new treaty, would be

Moscow closely monitored internal American debate on strategic issues and used them selectively for its own propaganda purposes. The twin goal was to substantiate the need for increasing Russia's own military preparedness and/or to set up political and other impediments for the implementation of the proposed U.S. programs. Examples include the campaigns to discredit the third-site placement of BMD elements in Poland and the Czech Republic, and the attempts to create an international alliance against placement of weapons in the outer space.

Some publications in the U.S. occasionally triggered a flurry of government statements leading to changes in Russian policy. A remarkable illustration was an article by Keir Lieber and Daryl Press in the *Foreign Affairs* magazine in 2006.<sup>113</sup> Despite arguments against the validity and accurateness of key assertions by Lieber and Press,<sup>114</sup> its main assertion that Russia was falling behind the U.S. in deterrence capabilities energized Moscow's efforts at militarization.

### **Russian Rejection of Stagnation in Arms Control**

The two-term Russian President Vladimir Putin (2000-2008), left a powerful imprint on all aspects of Russian internal and foreign policy including arms control. Putin himself, and the policymaking elite he had come to lead, refused to accept Russia's inferior global position. Their grand strategy called for mobilizing all available internal resources to restore Russia's political, economic and military grandeur. Diplomacy was called upon to play an important supportive role in the program of national revival.

Vladimir Putin came to the Kremlin at a time when U.S.-Russian arms control was rapidly declining. START II symbolized not only the pervasive stagnation in the strategic negotiations between the two countries but also the acute crisis of conceptual foundation for managing bilateral relations. To many, particularly in the West, the disappearance of the USSR made basic precepts of the system of arms control agreements, e.g., Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD), vulnerability to retaliation, etc., questionable or irrelevant.

However, the Putin regime refused to accept stagnation in disarmament as a natural and unavoidable consequence of global change following the end of the Cold War.<sup>115</sup> Rather,

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one way to generate a new atmosphere of cooperation between Russia and the United States... Similarly, President Bush could propose to Putin a new bilateral agreement pledging to discontinue research and development of new nuclear weapons. Neither the United States nor Russia needs to develop "mini-nukes" or bunker-busting nuclear weapons, since the deployment of such systems would increase, however slightly, the probability of using nuclear weapons." [See: Michael McFaul and James M. Goldgeier, op. cit].

<sup>113</sup> Keir Lieber and Daryl Press, "The Rise of U.S. Nuclear Primacy," *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2006.

<sup>114</sup> See: Peter C. W. Flory, Keith Payne, Pavel Podvig, Alexei Arbatov, Keir A. Lieber, and Daryl G. Press, "Nuclear Exchange: Does Washington Really Have (or Want) Nuclear Primacy?" *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2006.

<sup>115</sup> See: Vladimir Putin, "Speech at the New Headquarters of the Chief Intelligence Directorate of the Russian Armed Forces General Staff," November 8, 2006, *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, available at:

[http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2006/11/08/0000\\_type84779type127286\\_113593.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2006/11/08/0000_type84779type127286_113593.shtml).

it preferred to regard it as a manifestation of malicious Western plans to gain superiority over Russia. Key Russian laments and accusations related to:

- U.S. unilateralism in geopolitics, including alleged disregard for the international legal norms, particularly the UN Charter rules and regulations written to reflect the outcome of WWII.
- Abandonment by the U.S. of the foundations of a MAD-type relationship with Russia, epitomized by the U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty.
- Perceived U.S. attempts to undermine the Russian strategic deterrence potential by lifting limitations on defensive systems; militarizing outer space; forward-basing strategic systems near Russian territory; developing destabilizing and advanced systems, e.g., low-charge nuclear weapons; and strategic missiles equipped with non-nuclear warheads.
- U.S. refusal to abide by the “traditional” elaborate mutually restrictive and binding strategic agreements.
- NATO’s eastward expansion, driven by the US, to the detriment of Russian geo-strategic interests.

In one of his last public presentations leaving the presidential post on February 8, 2008, Vladimir Putin summarized Russian complaints drawing a depressive picture of an intensely hostile foreign environment closing down on Russia, starkly reminiscent of the Soviet period:

It is now clear that the world has entered a new spiral in the arms race. This does not depend on us and it is not we who began it. The most developed countries, making use of their technological advantages, are spending billions on developing next-generation defensive and offensive weapons systems. Their defense investment is dozens of times higher than ours. We have complied strictly with our obligations over these last decades and are fulfilling all of our obligations under the international security agreements, including the Conventional Forces in Europe [CFE] Treaty. But our NATO partners have not ratified certain agreements, are not fulfilling their obligations, but nevertheless demand continued unilateral compliance from us. NATO itself is expanding and is bringing its military infrastructure ever closer to our borders. We have closed our bases in Cuba and Vietnam, but what have we got in return? New American bases in Romania and Bulgaria, and a new missile defense system with plans to install components of this system in Poland and the Czech Republic soon it seems. We are told that these actions are not directed against Russia, but we have received no constructive responses to our completely legitimate concerns. There has been a lot of talk on these matters, but it is with sorrow in my heart that I am forced say that our partners have been using these discussions as information and diplomatic cover for carrying out their own plans. We have still not seen any real steps to



look for a compromise. We are effectively being forced into a situation where we have to take measures in response, where we have no choice but to make the necessary decisions.<sup>116</sup>

The Putin government's decision to put arms control in the center of its foreign policy agenda was apparently taken with several important goals in mind. Firstly, by associating arms control failures with the weakness of Russia's global power and stature, Moscow was creating justification for intensified efforts at internal militarization in general and modernization of the Russian strategic forces in particular.

Secondly, by playing the arms control card, Vladimir Putin was subtly distancing himself from his predecessor Boris Yeltsin's administration, associated in the Russian mind with many troubles of their country in the 1990s. In effect, without ever blaming Yeltsin personally for the degradation of the Russian military machine and failures of arms control regimes,<sup>117</sup> Putin made the critique of Russian weaknesses in the 1990s one of his preferred subjects in public speeches. He claimed that during that time:

There occurred the weakening of all state institutions and disdain for the law... most of the economy fell under the control of oligarchic and openly criminal structures... Our armed forces were demoralized and not prepared for combat. Military servicemen received a pittance, which even then was not always paid on time. Equipment was becoming outdated at an alarming rate. Our defense industry, meanwhile, was choked by debts and its human resources and production base were shrinking.<sup>118</sup>

Thirdly, emphasis on arms control was Vladimir Putin's way of signaling to the U.S. and other nuclear powers that Moscow would not sit idle while others augment their own capabilities.<sup>119</sup> In a way, the Russians were offering to the outside world a choice between a new race in advanced weapon systems and return to binding restraints and limitations in developing and introducing these systems.<sup>120</sup> In the latter case, they expected opponents, the U.S. in particular, to recognize that Russia deserves a special

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<sup>116</sup> Vladimir Putin, "Speech at Expanded Meeting of the State Council on Russia's Development Strategy through to 2020," February 8, 2008, *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, available at: [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2008/02/08/1137\\_type82912type82913\\_159643.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2008/02/08/1137_type82912type82913_159643.shtml).

<sup>117</sup> Apparently, Vladimir Putin always felt gratitude to the man who elevated him to the pinnacle of the Russian political system.

<sup>118</sup> Vladimir Putin, "Speech at the Expanded Meeting of the State Council 'On the Strategy of Russia's Development Until 2020'," *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, February 8, 2008, (In Russian), available at: [http://www.kremlin.ru/appears/2008/02/08/1542\\_type63374type63378type82634\\_159528.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/appears/2008/02/08/1542_type63374type63378type82634_159528.shtml).

<sup>119</sup> See: Andrei Yashlavskii and Inga Kumskova, "Moscow Flexes Its Muscles," *Moskovskii Komsomolets*, March 1, 2007, Open Source Center (OSC) Doc. CEP20070301021003.

<sup>120</sup> Vladimir Putin, "Speech and the Following Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy," February 10, 2007, *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, available at: [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2007/02/10/0138\\_type82914type84779\\_118135.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2007/02/10/0138_type82914type84779_118135.shtml).

place in geopolitics by virtue of its military and economic potential, size, history, culture, etc.<sup>121</sup>

However, despite political intensity and rhetorical emotionalism with which Russian leaders were often pursuing their diplomatic initiatives under Vladimir Putin, on the whole, they were more flexible and accommodating than the predominantly ideology-driven Soviet arms control negotiators.

Global phenomena – from fluctuating market conditions to the rise of radicalism, international terrorism, proliferation of WMD, etc., affected Russian interests in numerous ways. The changing international environment created a strong stimulus for Russia to cooperate with global powers, led by the United States, in a pragmatic fashion. As a consequence, Moscow's agenda for arms control began to reflect contradictory tendencies to both compete and cooperate with the West.

### **The Putin Game-Plan: Between Pragmatism and Ideology**

In retrospect, it is apparent that the policies of the Putin regime were evolving according to an elaborate plan of action that emphasized the attainment of specific strategic goals but also allowed for flexibility and maneuvering in its practical execution.<sup>122</sup> Despite his seeming lack of experience in foreign relations, Vladimir Putin proved to be a much more determined and consistent pragmatist and *realpolitik* player than his recent predecessors in the Kremlin. This however, does not mean that he was not driven by strong ideological motives, Russian nationalism in particular.

Clearly, Yeltsin's successor brought to his job in the Kremlin a strong belief in Russia's greatness and special role in geopolitics. However, at the early stages of his rule, he deliberately muted down those aspects of his personal beliefs that could be interpreted as aggressive or *revanchist* by the outside world, fearful of a potential relapse into imperial policies.<sup>123</sup> Two terms in office demonstrated Vladimir Putin's ability to patiently wait for favorable conditions before he would make calculated advances in the international arena.

During the first half of his presidency, marked by continued Russian preoccupation with severe internal problems, e.g., the war in Chechnya and considerable economic and

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<sup>121</sup>See: Nikolai Zyatkov, "Where Is the Smell of Gunpowder Coming From?" *Argumenty i Fakty*, February 19, 2007, OSC Doc. CEP20070224950135.

<sup>122</sup> By the end of his presidency, Vladimir Putin gave his name to a "blueprint" of national development for the next several decades – the "Putin Plan." The "Plan" called for full restoration of Russian economic and military power. [See: Michael McFaul, "Putin's Plan," *Washington Post*, December 4, 2007, available at: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB119671894800412213.html>; Andrew Kuchins, "What Is Putin's Plan?" *Washington Post*, September 28, 2007, available at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/27/AR2007092701714.html>; Vladimir Putin, "Meeting with Members of the Valdai International Discussion Club," September 14, 2007," *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, available at: [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2007/09/14/1801\\_type82917type84779\\_144106.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2007/09/14/1801_type82917type84779_144106.shtml)].

<sup>123</sup> See: Jeffrey A. Larsen, "NATO Counterproliferation Policy: A Case Study in Alliance Politics," INSS Occasional Paper 17, Proliferation Series, November 1997, *USAF Institute for National Security Studies*, US Air Force Academy, Colorado, available at: <http://www.usafa.af.mil/df/inss/OCP/ocp17.pdf>

military weaknesses, the Putin government demonstrated readiness to compromise with their Western counterparts largely on their conditions. Above all, Russia was careful not to challenge American and NATO global positions and strategies directly before it could restore its economy, military machine and international stature.

In an obvious demonstration of his readiness to deflate tensions and fulfill Russia's arms control obligations, shortly after his formal election to the presidential post, Vladimir Putin moved to expedite ratification of the START II Treaty. On April 14, 2000, Putin was able to master the majority of votes in the State Duma in support of the Treaty. In assuring the ratification that eluded his predecessor for many years, the new Russian President was motivated as much by the desire to bring the Russian legislature under his control, as by the need to avoid the image of a weakling in the eyes of Washington.

However, Vladimir Putin and the people around him were evidently well aware of the serious misgivings of the Russian military about START II. Almost from the moment it was signed by Presidents Bill Clinton and Boris Yeltsin on January 3, 1993, many in the Russian political elite and the expert community argued against its ratification because allegedly it worked against better Russian interests and represented a huge concession to the U.S.

Moscow could also see that parallel to efforts at making START II effective, the United States was considering changes to or abrogation of the ABM Treaty in order to implement its BMD program. Clearly, it was with Putin's acquiescence that the State Duma added a provision to its START II ratification document stating that Russia would not be tied by this or other arms control agreements if the ABM Treaty was violated by the U.S. According to Russian experts, "Thus, the link that Gorbachev failed to insist upon in 1991 was re-established nine years later by Russia" under Vladimir Putin.<sup>124</sup>

The START II Treaty never entered into force. Besides linking the fate of the treaty to U.S. adherence to the ABMT, the Russian legislative decision on ratification made its implementation contingent on U.S. Senate ratifying a September 1997 Addendum to the Treaty which included Agreed Statements on ABM-TMD Demarcation.<sup>125</sup> Neither of these occurred because of U.S. Senate opposition.

On June 14, 2002, one day after the U.S. formally withdrew from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, Russia announced its withdrawal from the START II Treaty.

However, Russian firmness was of dubious political and practical value. In effect, failure to prevent the demise of the ABMT was apparently a good lesson for the Putin government. It demonstrated that no amount of rhetoric and verbal threats can have any significant impact on the actions of a stronger and determined opponent. The Russians realized that dragging their feet with START II ratification, refusal to accept earlier

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<sup>124</sup> Menshikov, *op. cit.*

<sup>125</sup> See: Amy F. Woolf, "Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty Demarcation and Succession Agreements: Background and Issues," *CRS Report to Congress*, April 27, 2000, available at <http://www.cnie.org/nle/crsreports/international/inter-68.cfm>.

compromise proposals on BMD modification to accommodate particular U.S. interests in developing limited ABM capabilities and generally speaking, lack of flexibility and failure to use windows of opportunity in fluid diplomatic exchanges, had resulted in the ultimate loss for the weaker side.

To the credit of the Putin government and Vladimir Putin personally, they refused the temptation to react hysterically and stir up still another massive accusatory campaign against the U.S. in response to the U.S. moves to withdraw from the ABM Treaty (the U.S. announcement on the withdrawal was issued on December 13, 2001, and the Treaty ceased to exist on June 13, 2002.)

Putin's short statement in response to the American withdrawal announcement made the following points:

- The U.S. has the legitimate right to abandon the Treaty in accordance with its provisions.
- Though an American "mistake," the withdrawal decision does not create immediate threats to Russian security.
- Abandonment of the ABM Treaty leads to the emergence of a legal vacuum in the elaborate system of agreements in the sphere of disarmament and nonproliferation.
- That vacuum should be filled up by rapid elaboration of a new framework of strategic mutual relations.
- Under the framework considerable reduction of offensive weapons should take place (preferably to the level of 1,500-2,200 warheads for each side).<sup>126</sup>

In the opinion of a Russian expert:

In mid-2001 Putin suddenly softened the linkage [between strategic offensive and defensive weapons]... eventually permitting George W. Bush to scrap the ABM Treaty without worrying about an adequate Russian response. By doing so, Putin also undermined the arguments of the opposition in the U.S. to Bush's decision that claimed that scrapping the Treaty would lead to a new armaments race.<sup>127</sup>

Similar *realpolitik* calculations apparently played a mitigating role in defining Russia's reaction to the initial NATO enlargement.<sup>128</sup> Obviously, Vladimir Putin was personally responsible for preventing outbursts of indignation and promises of counteraction that

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<sup>126</sup> See: Vadim Markushin, "Bad News for the World Community," *Krasnaya Zvezda*, December 15, 2001, (In Russian).

<sup>127</sup> Menshikov, op. cit.

<sup>128</sup> "Russian Reaction to NATO's Enlargement," *Analitik*, March 4, 2004, (In Russian), available at: [http://analitik.org.ua/ukr/current-comment/ext/407412da4f691/pagedoc1095\\_25/](http://analitik.org.ua/ukr/current-comment/ext/407412da4f691/pagedoc1095_25/)

could not be supported by actual demonstration of Russian power and could do more harm than good to the Russian reputation in Europe and the world.

No less noteworthy was Mr. Putin's response to the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks against the U.S. In a marked departure from your-loss-my-gain attitude that had prevailed during the Cold War, the Russian President declared unambiguously that Russia intended to be on the U.S.' side in the war against terrorism and was determined to overcome all vestiges of the Cold War.

On September 25, 2001, speaking in the German Bundestag, Putin had even offered an alliance to the West based on the need to give up Cold War mentalities and practices and recognize the existence of new threats to civilized humanity. He declared:

We continue living under the old system of values - we talk about security, however in reality we have not learned how to trust each other. Despite endless sweet talk, we continue to tacitly oppose each other... The world has become much more complex. We do not want or cannot comprehend that the structure of security that has been created over previous decades and has been effective to neutralize former threats is today unable to deal with new threats... Today we must say that we relinquish our stereotypes and ambitions, and henceforth we will provide jointly for the security of the populations of Europe and the world.<sup>129</sup>

Moscow saw a relative compensation for ceding ground on the ABMT and for taking an accommodating stand on global issues in the U.S. agreement to negotiate and conclude the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT), also referred to as the "Moscow Treaty."<sup>130</sup> The Kremlin actually presented the signing of the Treaty between the U.S. and the RF on May 24, 2002, as its big success despite the Treaty's alleged deficiencies, e.g., lack of explicit elaborate verification and other implementing arrangements, on the analogy with START, and the possibility of uploading stored warheads removed from their carriers (*obespechenie vozvratnogo potentsial*).<sup>131</sup>

By consenting to a significantly less structured arms control agreement and the abandonment of the direct qualitative and quantitative parity in offensive and defensive capabilities, the Kremlin appeared to have not only accepted the unavoidable, but also untied its own hands in pursuing modernization of nuclear forces in line with internal economic and political exigencies.

The Russians took advantage of the relatively improved strategic relations with the U.S. to facilitate the elimination of weapon systems that were either too old or too costly to maintain for purposes of sufficient deterrence, while concentrating on the development

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<sup>129</sup> "Address of the President of the Russian Federation Before the German Bundestag, 25 September 2001," Official Website of the President of Russia, June 13, 2002, available at: <http://194.226.80.159/events/313.html>

<sup>130</sup> SORT was ratified by the Duma on May 14, 2003 by votes of 294 deputies with 134 voting against and none abstaining.

<sup>131</sup> See: Nikolai Sokov, "The Russian Nuclear Arms Control Agenda After SORT," *Arms Control Today*, April 2003, available at: [http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2003\\_04/sokov\\_apr03.asp](http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2003_04/sokov_apr03.asp).

and production of modern and more effective systems. They also sought to promote bilateral and multilateral cooperation with the West in areas where Moscow lacked resources and advanced technologies (e.g. the Ballistic missile defense).

A key Russian diplomatic initiative, intended as an alternative to the U.S. global BMD system, was the offer to create a European ABM system. The Euro-ABM was supposed to be built with the help of Russian tactical ABM technologies that could allegedly protect the European continent, including the European part of the RF, against non-strategic ballistic missiles.<sup>132</sup>

Moreover, the Russian government proposed to participate in developing strategic ABM systems in cooperation with the U.S. on the basis of equality of rights and under an appropriate legal framework. As stated by the former Head of the Russian General Staff Army General Yurii Baluevskii, following his visit to Washington in August 2005:<sup>133</sup>

Our approach towards cooperation in the field of missile defense is on the whole quite simple: it must be based not on the “your ideas, our money” principle, but on the “joint ideas, joint money, and joint results” principle.<sup>134</sup>

Baluevskii added that, “effective [bilateral] cooperation in the field of strategic missile defense will require the signing of several new bilateral agreements, including on the protection of sensitive information and the exchange of defense technologies.”<sup>135</sup>

### **Controversy over Priorities**

Perceived lack of positive responses to their accommodating overtures to Western powers, e.g., on the joint BMD system in Europe, fueled Moscow’s anxieties. Premonitions of Western advances, harmful to Russian interests, were consistently outweighing the urge to continue movement towards the West.

It is noteworthy that along with his earlier overtures towards the West and the U.S., already on June 28, 2000, Vladimir Putin initiated the adoption of a new version of the “Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation,” that emphasized the existence and growth of the Western threat to the RF.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> “Sergei Ivanov: Russia is for the Creation of Europe’s Non-Strategic Anti-Missile Defense System,” *Itar-Tass*, August 30, 2005 (In Russian).

<sup>133</sup> On June 3, 2008, Yurii Baluevskii was replaced as Head of the RF General Staff by his First Deputy Army General Nikolai Makarov. In recent years Baluevskii was a prominent Russian voice on arms control.

<sup>134</sup> “General Says Missile Cooperation with U.S. Possible ‘But Must Be Equal,’” *Itar-Tass*, August 6, 2005, OSC doc. CEP20050806029005.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> See: “The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation,” (In Russian), *Nasled.ru*, (In Russian), available at: <http://www.nasled.ru/analit/vnesh/koncep.htm>. English version available at: <http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/russia/doctrine/econcept.htm>.

An interesting illustration of the conflicting sources of decision-making under the early Putin government may be found in Moscow's 2000 decision on decommissioning MIRVed heavy ICBMs, a large number of which were nearing the end of their service-lives, ahead of any agreement with the U.S. on coordinated mutual arms reductions. In a related move, the Strategic Missile Troops (SMT) was slanted for significant downgrading and downsizing.

Actually, plans to reduce the role and size of the Russian strategic deterrent began to be promoted under Boris Yeltsin. They were initiated by the powerful faction of the then Defense Minister Pavel Grachev, representing the Ground Troop Command that had traditionally envied and resented the prerogatives of the missile men (*raketchiki* – Missile Troops and related sectors of the MIC) going back to the Soviet times. Redistributing scant resources, by Soviet standards, earmarked by the Yeltsin government to the military machine in favor of the conventional forces, was the main goal of the Grachev faction.

In a reflection of certain inertia in decision-making that marked the early-Putin regime, and as a continuation of the Grachev-led campaign against the dominance of the missile men, on June 1, 2001, the Russian government decreed that the hitherto single branch-service, the Strategic Missile Troops, was to be split into two independent services – the Strategic Missile Troops and the Space Troops.

Russian media reported that accelerated reductions of the SMT had actually started in 2000:

Of the 19 divisions that made up the Strategic Missile Troops in 2000, today there are just 10 left. Strictly speaking, only two combined units – the Tatishchevo Division (Saratov Oblast) and the Uzhur Division (near Omsk) – can be described as combat-ready. The eight others have already become storage depots for arms and hardware or will become that in the foreseeable future... The Chita large strategic formation has already died a [natural] death and a similar fate also lies in store for the Orenburg army. And that represents no more and no less than whole six divisions – at Kartaly, Nizhnii Tagil, Yoshkar-Ola, Bersheti, Yasnoye, and Yuriya.<sup>137</sup>

Not surprisingly, the protests against SMT reorganization and downsizing that started under Yeltsin, continued under Vladimir Putin. Asserted former Deputy Chairman of the State Duma Defense Committee Aleksei Arbatov:

The decision of the RF military-political leadership in 2000-2001 on the downsizing of the [land-mobile ICBMs] within Strategic Nuclear Forces (SNF) was a mistake of historical dimensions.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Yuriy Gavrilov, "Under the Foliage of the Topols," *Moskovskii Komsomolets*, March 14, 2002, (In Russian), available at: <http://www.mk.ru/blogs/MK/2002/03/14/archive/139755/>  
<http://www.mk.ru/blogs/MK/2002/03/14/archive/139755/>.

<sup>138</sup> Aleksei Arbatov, "Military Reform In the Light of Others' Mistakes," *Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozrenie*, May 23, 2003.

Many experts, e.g., Major General (Ret.) Vladimir Dvorkin, former Director of the 4<sup>th</sup> Central Scientific and Research Institute of the Defense Ministry responsible for the development, maintenance and testing of all Soviet strategic offensive systems, declared that the proposed changes in the SNF and particularly the SMT were going in the exactly opposite direction of what the U.S. was trying to accomplish with its deterrence potential:

The United States has just added Ballistic missile defense to the long-ago integrated military space and strategic nuclear forces, while we have almost totally demolished a compatible structure having spent several hundred million rubles on that disintegration. Bankruptcy of former decisions on the composition of SNF including the premature liquidation of ICBMs was patently apparent already in 2000 in connection with the unavoidability of U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty and the impossibility of START II entering into force.<sup>139</sup>

Largely in order to stop the growing disarray and bickering in the military establishment over the relative importance of different branch-services for Russian security, in March 2001, Vladimir Putin moved his closest political associate, Sergei Ivanov, from the position of the Secretary of the Security Council to that of the Defense Minister. It was one of the many personnel changes that introduced significant changes in the style and substance of Russian decision-making in the military and foreign-policy areas.

These changes also put Vladimir Putin firmly in control of the vast Russian bureaucracy and state monopolies, e.g., in the oil-and-gas sectors. Most of the new appointees hand-picked by Putin had roots in the Soviet/Russian intelligence services and other power ministries (*silovye ministerstva*), and/or worked with Putin in St. Petersburg during his civilian career.

By late-2002, SMT reorganization plans were scrapped. Expanding U.S. BMD programs were the strongest argument in favor of preserving the status of the SMT and extending the service lives of aging heavy ICBMs, expressly to counter the perceived U.S. BMD threat to the Russian deterrence potential. Any doubts the Russian military-political leadership had previously about the value and importance of the Russian offensive missile-nuclear capability completely vanished.

Ultimately, Vladimir Putin argued that stopping the decay of Russian military power was among the main achievements of his 8-year presidency. In 2006, Vladimir Putin reported to the Russian legislature:

The situation in the armed forces today has changed dramatically. We have created a modern structure for the armed forces and the different units are now receiving modern, new arms and equipment, arms and equipment that will form the basis of our defense through to 2020... Naval shipbuilding has got underway again and we are now building new vessels of practically all types. The Russian

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<sup>139</sup> Vladimir Dvorkin, "Kremlin Relies on Blind Cynics," *Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozrenie*, February 7, 2003.



Navy will soon commission two new nuclear submarines carrying strategic weapons. They will be equipped with the new *Bulava* missile system, which together with the *Topol-M* system will form the backbone of our strategic deterrent force. I emphasize that these are the first nuclear submarines to be completed in modern Russia. We had not built a single vessel of this type since 1990.<sup>140</sup>

By the end of his first term-in-office, President Putin acquired sufficient confidence in the conduct of internal and foreign affairs. In the March 2004, presidential elections he was reelected as an incumbent in his own right and not as someone else's political appointee, as in 2000. Improved economic performance and increased internal security, primarily as a result of progress in Russia's fight against separatism and terrorism in Chechnya, freed the government's hands to pursue active foreign policy. By this time, Russia and its President were already actively involved in high-level international exchanges (e.g., within the NATO-Russia Council and at G8 summits).

Towards the end of his second term, in late 2007 – early 2008, Vladimir Putin moved to develop comprehensive long-term programs of military modernization as the key prerequisite for restoring Russia's grandeur in the world arena. Speaking on February 15, 2007, in front of the Defense Ministry's leadership, Putin declared:

We have worked together to draw up and adopt realistic programs for developing and modernizing the armed forces and the state's entire defense component for the period through to 2012-2015. The main task today is to implement these programs and ensure that their goals are reached.<sup>141</sup>

In his farewell speech to the Russian political elite on February 8, 2008, Vladimir Putin promised a major build up of the Russian military power in the future:

Russia has a response to... new challenges and it always will. Russia will begin production of new types of weapons over these coming years, the quality of which is just as good and in some cases even surpasses those of other countries. At the same time, our spending on these projects will be in keeping with our possibilities and will not be to the detriment of our social and economic development priorities. The use of new technology also calls for a rethinking of strategy in the way our Armed Forces are organized. After all, new breakthroughs in bio-, nano- and information technology could lead to revolutionary changes in weapons and defense. Only an army that meets the most modern demands can be entrusted with the deployment, servicing and use of new generation weapons. The human factor is becoming more important than ever. What we need is an innovative army, an

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<sup>140</sup> Vladimir Putin, "Annual Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation," *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, May 10, 2006, available at: [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2006/05/10/1823\\_type70029type82912\\_105566.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2006/05/10/1823_type70029type82912_105566.shtml).

<sup>141</sup> Vladimir Putin, "Meeting with Defense Ministry Senior Officials and Collegium Members," *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, February 15, 2007, available at: [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2007/02/15/2230\\_118478.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2007/02/15/2230_118478.shtml).

army based on the very highest modern standards of professionalism, technical breadth of horizon and competence. To achieve this, we need to make military service more prestigious, continue to raise wages for servicemen, provide them with better social protection and resolve their housing problems. Overall, strengthening our national security requires a new strategy for developing the Armed Forces through to 2020, a strategy that takes into account the challenges and threats to our country's interests today.<sup>142</sup>

### **Reliance on Nuclear Weapons**

It was under the Putin government that the Russian missile-nuclear potential became the symbol of Russia's survival as a nation-state and the absolute guarantee of its security. In the Russian President's words:

When looking at today's international situation and the prospects for its development, Russia is compelled to realize that nuclear deterrence is a key element in guaranteeing the country's security."<sup>143</sup>

In part, the Russian reliance on nuclear weapons may be explained by deficiencies of the Russian conventional forces, which remained in a deep structural crisis, despite continued efforts at reform. Possession of one of the world's largest arsenals of strategic weapons augmented the Russian sense of security against foreign encroachment (*posyagatel'stva*).

However, at the same time, preserving a robust and modern deterrent force began to be seen as a powerful bargaining chip in the conduct of foreign affairs especially vis-à-vis other existing and potential new nuclear powers.

Under Vladimir Putin, the nation's nuclear complex, including the Strategic Nuclear Forces and parts of the Military-Industrial Complex responsible for maintaining and modernizing the missile-nuclear shield, returned to the position of prominence it enjoyed under the Soviets. According to Putin:

The Russian nuclear weapons complex constitutes the material basis for this nuclear deterrence policy... Keeping the necessary minimum of nuclear weapons that will guarantee accomplishing tasks of nuclear deterrence remains one of the main priorities of the Russian Federation's policy in this area.<sup>144</sup>

Above all, in the eyes of the Russian leadership, maintenance of the Russian nuclear triad created preconditions for strategic parity with the U.S. The Russian logic was simple:

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<sup>142</sup> Vladimir Putin, "Speech at Expanded Meeting of the State Council on Russia's Development Strategy through to 2020," February 8, 2008, *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, available at: [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2008/02/08/1137\\_type82912type82913\\_159643.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2008/02/08/1137_type82912type82913_159643.shtml).

<sup>143</sup> Vladimir Putin, "Opening Address at Meeting on Developing Russia's Nuclear Weapons Complex," *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, March 30, 2006, available at: [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2006/03/30/2300\\_type82913\\_104010.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2006/03/30/2300_type82913_104010.shtml).

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

Russia and the United States are the biggest nuclear powers. Our economy might be smaller, but Russia's nuclear potential is still comparable to that of the United States... Also important is that we have the years of experience, the technology and the production potential, the technological chains and the specialists. Russia is a great nuclear power. No one disputes or doubts this. And the United States and Russia definitely have a shared interest in ensuring security on this planet.<sup>145</sup>

Moscow developed an elaborate system of doctrine and strategy documents that reserved a special place for strategic weapons in assuring Russian security, including the Federal Law On Defense,<sup>146</sup> the National Security Doctrine,<sup>147</sup> the Military Doctrine,<sup>148</sup> the Foreign Policy Doctrine,<sup>149</sup> as well as policy statements by high government officials, e.g., annual Presidential Addresses to the Federal Assembly. While these documents do not identify potential adversaries (*potentsial'nye protivniki*) of Russia by name, it is obvious that the United States and NATO powers are at the top of the list of the "threat factors" for Russia.

From this perspective, as noted by independent Russian experts writing for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace:

The frequently repeated announcements regarding the path selected by Russia of a strategic partnership with the United States and Western Europe to counteract the new global challenges to security are contradicted by the assertions on the threat of NATO's encroachment on Russian borders and the placement of U.S. military bases in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, on the main priorities for Russia's armed forces in "repulsing an air and space attack," which logically could be undertaken only by NATO, headed by the United States.<sup>150</sup>

Around mid-2006, news began to circulate about the preparation of a new version of the Russian Military Doctrine that was supposed to define Russian threat perceptions and

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<sup>145</sup> Vladimir Putin, "Interview with Al Jazeera Television Channel," *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, October 16, 2003, available at:

[http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2003/10/16/1648\\_54238.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2003/10/16/1648_54238.shtml).

<sup>146</sup> See: "The Law of the Russian Federation on Defense, Adopted by the State Duma on April 24, 1996, and Approved by the Federation Council on May 15, 1996," (In Russian), available at:

<http://www.hro.org/docs/rlex/defence/index.htm>.

<sup>147</sup> See: "The National Security Concept of the Russian Federation, Adopted by the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation № 1300 of December 17, 1997, in the Edited Version of the Presidential Decree № 24 of January 10, 2000," (in Russian), available at: <http://www.iss.niit.ru/doktrins/doktr01.htm>.

<sup>148</sup> See: "The Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation, Adopted by the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation № 706 of April 21, 2000," (In Russian), available at:

[http://www.rg.ru/oficial/doc/ykazi/doc\\_war.htm](http://www.rg.ru/oficial/doc/ykazi/doc_war.htm).

<sup>149</sup> See: Robert Legvold, "Russia's Unformed Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2001, available at: <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20010901faessay5570/robert-legvold/russia-s-unformed-foreign-policy.html>.

<sup>150</sup> "Nuclear Deterrence and Non-Proliferation," Eds. Alexei Arbatov and Vladimir Dvorkin, Members of Working Group: Pavel Kamennov, Elina Kirichenko and Vladimir Pyryev, *Carnegie Moscow Center*, Moscow, 2006, p.4, available at: [http://www.carnegie.ru/en/pubs/books/9735arbatov\\_eng\\_blok.pdf](http://www.carnegie.ru/en/pubs/books/9735arbatov_eng_blok.pdf).

strategy.<sup>151</sup> According to media reports, the new document was intended not only to directly identify the U.S. and NATO as Russia's key potential adversaries, but also equate threats from Western sources to the threat of terrorism.<sup>152</sup>

On January 20, 2007, at the Military-and-Scientific Conference of the Academy of Military Sciences, the leadership of the RF Armed Forces formally reviewed the structure and the content of the new version of the Doctrine. According to the report of the conference proceedings by the Academy's President, Army General Makhmud Gareev, nuclear issues occupied a special place in the discussions. They were also expected to lie at the core of the proposed doctrinal manifesto of the Russian military.<sup>153</sup>

The Doctrine was reported to stress the reemergence of the existential nuclear threat to the RF. As emphasized by General Gareev, "nuclear weapons of all states that possess them are ultimately aimed at Russia." In particular, as seen by the Russian military, "NATO is engaged in creation of powerful groupings of armed forces that are dramatically changing the military balance," in Europe and globally.<sup>154</sup>

Not surprisingly, in light of such drier assessments, the proposed new military doctrine document was expected to call for "augmenting the [Russian] nuclear potential" in the future.<sup>155</sup>

Justification for modernization of the Russian strategic triad was found in the American declaration of intentions, statements and announced programs, e.g., the decision to resume the production of plutonium parts for nuclear bombs<sup>156</sup> and the development of new types of efficient low-yield warheads.<sup>157</sup> Alarmist Russian media reports accompanied the appearance of practically any official U.S. policy statement dealing with the issue of nuclear weapons. For example, it was widely reported in 2006:

The Russian political establishment was shocked by the information flowing from the "U.S. Nuclear Strategy Review" that placed Russia together with other countries on the list of American nuclear targets.<sup>158</sup>

As time went by, Moscow was gradually building up its premonition about U.S. intentions related to the implementation of strategic arms control agreements. Moscow

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<sup>151</sup> See: Yurii Kirshin, "The Generals Blueprint New Military Doctrine," *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, August 28, 2006, (In Russian).

<sup>152</sup> See: "The Draft New RF Military Doctrine: U.S. Equated to Terrorists," *Agentura.ru*, September 19, 2006, (In Russian), available at: <http://www.agentura.ru/?p=14&col=1&id=1158642000>.

<sup>153</sup> See: Makhmut Gareev, "New Conditions – New Military Doctrine," *Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozrenie*, February 2, 2007 (In Russian).

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Yevgenia Borisova, "U.S. Restarts Its Nuclear Machine," *Moscow Times*, April 24, 2003.

<sup>157</sup> "The U.S. Develops a Super Bomb," *Utro.ru*, May 19, 2003, (In Russian); Vasilii Sergeev, "Nuclear Bombs Become Smaller," *Gazeta.Ru*, May 21, 2003, (In Russian).

<sup>158</sup> Alla Yaroshinskaya, "Is the World Moving Towards the Nuclear War?" *Rosbalt.ru*, March 23, 2006, (In Russian).

began to progressively stress their concern over the potential negative effect of the reverse potential (uploading) allowed by SORT. Explained Vladimir Putin:

Together with the United States of America we agreed to reduce our nuclear strategic missile capabilities to up to 1700-2000 nuclear warheads by 31 December 2012. Russia intends to strictly fulfill the obligations it has taken on. We hope that our partners will also act in a transparent way and will refrain from laying aside a couple of hundred superfluous nuclear warheads for a rainy day.<sup>159</sup>

In the Russian view, implementation of SORT would be further jeopardized if the START I Treaty, with its extensive measures of control and verification, would be allowed to lapse after 2009 when it is scheduled to expire. In this case, according to the Russians, strategic arms reductions would become essentially unrealistic. Parallel to renewed calls for extending or renegotiating the Treaty, the Russians let it be known that they would intensify efforts at modernizing their nuclear deterrence forces:

As for the improvement of quality and quantity figures for our nuclear deterrence forces, we will do this regardless of what NATO does. NATO is not relevant here. All nuclear powers improve their nuclear potential, and Russia will do the same.<sup>160</sup>

### **Weighing Russian Strategic Options**

Despite claims of nuclear parity with the U.S., the Kremlin had to recognize the obvious: following the debacle of the Communist regime, the RF was unable to compete with the U.S. on a quid-pro-quo basis in strategic armaments. In his 2006 Annual Address to the Federal Assembly, Vladimir Putin admitted:

The Russian defense spending as a share of GDP is comparable or slightly less than in the other nuclear powers, France or Britain, for example. In terms of absolute figures, and we all know that in the end it is absolute figures that count, our defense spending is half that of the countries I mentioned, and bears no comparison at all with the defense spending figures in the United States. Their defense budget in absolute figures is almost 25 times bigger than Russia's.<sup>161</sup>

Russian leaders concluded they would not be engaging in symmetrical arms competition. Stated former RF Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov:

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<sup>159</sup> Vladimir Putin, "Speech and the Following Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy," February 10, 2007, *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, available at: [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2007/02/10/0138\\_type82912type82914type82917type84779\\_118123.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2007/02/10/0138_type82912type82914type82917type84779_118123.shtml).

<sup>160</sup> Vladimir Putin, "Interview with the ANSA Italian News Agency, Corriere della Sera Newspaper and the RAI Television Company," *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, November 3, 2003, available at: [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2003/11/03/2139\\_54964.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2003/11/03/2139_54964.shtml).

<sup>161</sup> Vladimir Putin, "Annual Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation," *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, May 10, 2006, available at: [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2006/05/10/1823\\_type70029type82912\\_105566.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2006/05/10/1823_type70029type82912_105566.shtml).

Russia will always have nuclear weapons. Nuclear threats must be offset effectively, so that anyone who wants to carry out a strike against us should know that there would be a response and they would suffer irreparable damage... [However] Russia should not seek to equalize its number of nuclear warheads with that of other nuclear powers.<sup>162</sup>

Moscow was pushed to recognize that the goal of equalizing bilateral U.S.-Russian strategic capabilities could only be achieved through smart and flexible asymmetric responses. As a stopgap measure to prevent rapid disintegration of the strategic deterrence potential, the Russians aborted plans to decommission older heavy missiles in their arsenal and actively sought to extend the service lives of the existing systems until they would be able to organize the production of modern replacements.

As the result of test-launches and other required procedures, the prize RS-20 *Voevoda* missile [NATO designation SS-18 “Satan”] was extended on combat duty until 2016-2018.<sup>163</sup>

In a development that further buttressed its nuclear arsenal, Moscow could purchase from Ukraine a number of strategic systems, including eight Tu-160 bombers [NATO designation Blackjack] and three Tu-95MS bombers [Bear-H] and 575 Kh-55 [AS-15A Kent] cruise missiles,<sup>164</sup> as well as service-ready MIRVed RS-18 [SS-19 Stiletto, by NATO classification] ICBMs. These systems were added to the Russian triad with considerable pomp.<sup>165</sup>

At the same time, even before Russia could overcome the worst effects of the deep economic crisis of the reformist 1990s, Moscow made the decision to restore all elements of the Military-Industrial Complex needed for the development and production of new all-Russian ICBMs and SLBMs. Since other former Soviet Republics (e.g., Ukraine where a lot of missile-building capacity used to be concentrated under the Soviets), were going their separate way, self-reliance became essential in developing the Russian missile-nuclear potential.

The Russian military and political leadership concluded that, “the future of the Strategic Missile Troops is linked with the introduction of silo-based and mobile-based *Topol-M* missile systems.”<sup>166</sup> Moscow also announced widely that, “in the near future... *Topol-M*

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<sup>162</sup> “Russia Will Always Have Nuclear Weapons - Defense Minister,” *Interfax*, November 28, 2006, OSC Doc. CEP20061128950336.

<sup>163</sup> “RS-20 Voevoda Missiles To Remain On Duty Until 2016-18,” *Interfax-Agentstvo Voennykh Novostei*, February 19, 2007. OSC Doc. CEP20070219950178.

<sup>164</sup> “Former Ukrainian Heavy Bombers Transferred to Russia,” Nuclear Threat Initiative, *Nti.org*, February 21, 2000, available at: <http://www.nti.org/db/nisprofs/russia/weapons/bombers/bombdevs.htm#22100>.

<sup>165</sup> See: “Special Correspondent: Stiletto,” *TV Channel Rossiya*, February 18, 2007, (In Russian), available at: <http://www.rutv.ru/tvp.html?id=33646&cid=4&d=0>.

<sup>166</sup> “RS-20 Voevoda Missiles To Remain On Duty Until 2016-18,” *Interfax-Agentstvo Voennykh Novostei*, February 19, 2007. OSC Doc. CEP20070219950178.

ballistic missiles may be fitted with multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles (MIRV).”<sup>167</sup>

The Russians decided they would keep and develop all arms of the triad and not just the land-based Strategic Missile Troops as suggested by some experts. Modernizing the nuclear naval forces became a particularly important albeit controversial program. Efforts to develop a new advanced solid-fuel SLBM *Bulava* [SS-NX-30] at the Moscow Institute of Thermal Technology (*Institut Teplotekhniki*), that was also the lead developer of the *Topol* missiles, for the new generation of Russian strategic submarines [Project 955 *Borei* class submarines *Yurii Dolgorukii*, *Aleksandr Nevskii*, and *Vladimir Monomakh*] met with considerable difficulties. Several test launches of the system failed, putting in jeopardy the entire program of reequipping the strategic Navy.

However, in a clear demonstration of its determination to modernize the triad regardless of failures and the cost involved, the Defense Ministry continued the development of the *Bulava*.<sup>168</sup>

### **Ballistic Missile Defense**

With the collapse of the Soviet military power, Moscow felt particularly disadvantaged compared to the U.S. in the area of strategic defensive systems.

Painful Russian reactions to U.S. ballistic missile defense programs were to a large extent rooted in former Soviet attitudes:

- Limiting and essentially renouncing strategic defensive systems had been at the core of the MAD-based paradigm of bilateral strategic relations. The Soviets, and the Russians after them, became intrinsically convinced that reliable arms control and strategic offensive weapons’ reductions could only be viable at the background of vulnerability to retaliation assured by the ban and/or severe limitation on strategic defensive systems.
- The U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty and the emerging American BMD program was interpreted in Moscow as a manifestation of Washington’s plans to undermine the Russian missile-nuclear capability requiring adequate response by the RF.
- In the Russian expert opinion, the RF could hardly keep up with the U.S. in advanced strategic ABM systems given the past decay and disintegration of segments of the Russian economy and military forces responsible for BMD.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> “Russia to Make Announcement on MIRVing “Topol-M” Missile Soon – Commander,” *Interfax-Agentstvo Voennykh Novostei*, February 19, 2007, OSC Doc. CEP20070219950360.

<sup>168</sup> See: “Work on ‘Bulava’ SLBM System Will Continue,” *Interfax-Agentstvo Voennykh Novostei*, December 26, 2006, OSC Doc. CEP20061226950104.

<sup>169</sup> See: Vladimir Dvorkin, “The Kremlin Relies on Blind Cynics.” *Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozrenie*, February 7, 2003, (In Russian).

- Results of studies based on Cold-War models of nuclear exchanges send alarming signals to the political leadership on the potential ability of expanding U.S. BMD systems to eventually affect the Russian deterrence capability in a negative way.
- Moscow saw global deployments of elements of the U.S. BMD system as fitting the pattern of encirclement and as proof of the system's ultimate goal to neutralize Russian strategic assets.

Interestingly, at the early stages in the evolution of the U.S. BMD program, there was no unanimity among Russian experts on the potential value of such systems. In 2002, specialists of the Center for the Study of Problems of Disarmament, Energy and Ecology of the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology argued:

Technical limitations nullify advantages of anti-ballistic missile weapons... ABM-penetration systems are so diverse that absolutely every country that really wants to reach America with its missiles will be able to do so... The system intercepting 99% warheads will never be built.<sup>170</sup>

However, other experts talked about the potential advantages of robust BMD systems if and when they come into existence. In the opinion of the Director of the U.S. and Canada Studies Institute of the RF Academy of Sciences, Sergei Rogov:

Creation of the combat control system of the future missile defense system is the most dangerous factor. Firstly, it will require a network of the so-called land X-band radars. Secondly, it will require a group of SBIRS-high and SBIRS-low satellites essentially controlling the whole planet. When Russia has 1,000 warheads and hundreds of delivery means, neither five, nor ten or one hundred interceptors will be adequate for even a reciprocal strike, much less for the first one... However when the combat control system is built, upping the number of available interceptors to several thousands is not a daunting task at all.<sup>171</sup>

Russian ability to compete with the U.S. on a symmetrical basis in BMD systems has been clearly limited by the lack of available resources and know-how.<sup>172</sup> Moreover, the Russians continue to be mesmerized by the notion that it was the Soviet involvement in the race to beat the American Star-Wars program that eventually broke the backbone of the Soviet economy.

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<sup>170</sup> Olga Ruban, "No Real Threat in the U.S. Creating Effective Missile Defense," *Ekspert*, No. 20, May 2002, (In Russian).

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> A major deficiency for the Russians was the loss of qualified cadres of all levels in the R&D, design, and production of new advanced, especially breakthrough, weapon systems. The situation was complicated by internal disarray and petty competitiveness among the remaining design bureaus in leading MIC sectors, as reflected in controversies over the development of strategic missiles for the Russian Navy.



Politically and diplomatically, Russian activities against U.S. BMD programs became representative of provocative and threatening promises of various Russian “adequate counteractions.”<sup>173</sup> On the other hand, political, diplomatic and propaganda overtures and campaigns suggested accommodation to the United States on BMD and broader issues of bilateral relations. This type of tactic was traditionally used by the Soviets: going between threats and offers of compromises was intended to test the will of the opponent and establish his true intentions and limits of tolerance and patience.

U.S. plans to deploy elements of the global BMD system in Eastern Europe raised the pitch of alarmist Russian statements. Moscow asserted unequivocally:

The deployment on the European continent of a global missile defense position area means that the advance groupings of the U.S. armed forces in Europe are being given strategic components they did not have until now... Moscow sees the missile defense grouping deployed near Russia’s borders as a strategic purpose system which, when increased, will have the potential to exert significant influence on Russia’s deterrent potential.<sup>174</sup>

The Russian leaders accused the U.S. of acting unilaterally, even in circumvention of its NATO allies, and stressed the fundamentally anti-Russian nature of proposed deployments. According to Vladimir Putin:

Our American partners are looking to deploy elements of a missile defense system in Eastern Europe, a radar station in the Czech Republic, and interceptor missiles in Poland, and these plans look like they will indeed go ahead. But who asked the Czechs and the Poles if they actually want these systems on their soil? According to the information I have received, the vast majority of Czech citizens are not enthusiastic about these plans. Our General Staff and our experts think that this system represents a threat to our national security. If this system is established, we will be forced to make an appropriate response. In such a situation we probably would be forced to retarget our missiles against the sites that represent a threat. But it is not we who are creating these sites. We are asking that this not go ahead, but no one is listening.<sup>175</sup>

Moscow ignored U.S. assurances that, “Russia’s strategic nuclear deterrent is not the intended purpose of 10 ballistic missile interceptors in Poland and a tracking radar in the Czech Republic,”<sup>176</sup> and that “the goal to have elements of a missile defense system

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<sup>173</sup> “Russia Will Respond to the Deployment of Foreign ABM Systems near Its Borders,” *Pravda.ru*, January 3, 2007, available at: <http://www.pravda.ru/news/politics/military/03-01-2007/208832-proo-0>.

<sup>174</sup> See: “Russian Generals to Go to Pentagon for Missile Defense Discussions,” *Itar-Tass*, February 28, 2007, OSC Doc. CEP20070228950235.

<sup>175</sup> Vladimir Putin, “Transcript of Annual Big Press Conference,” February 14, 2008, *President of Russian Official Web Portal*, available at: [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2008/02/14/1011\\_type82915\\_160266.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2008/02/14/1011_type82915_160266.shtml).

<sup>176</sup> See: Jacquelyn S. Porth, “Proposed Missile Defenses in Europe Would Target Iranian Threat. State’s Fried Says Limited Defenses in Central Europe Not Aimed at Russia,” *Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State*, February 22, 2007, available at:

based in Europe by 2011 is intended to protect American and allied assets against emerging hostile Middle Eastern threats—not against Russia.”<sup>177</sup>

Efforts to prevent the appearance of the third U.S. BMD site in Eastern Europe continued despite the opinion of the majority of Russian experts that the proposed architecture of the site presents no immediate danger to the RF deterrent force.<sup>178</sup> For the Kremlin, it is even of little consequence that the Russian military generally confirm that they would be able to deal with elements of the proposed third site without resorting to sophisticated and costly procedures.<sup>179</sup>

As part of its intense anti-U.S. BMD propaganda, Moscow has used threats of potential retaliation against East European countries that engage in discussions with the U.S. over the specific parameters of the third site.<sup>180</sup>

Russian propaganda emphasized a wide array of military countermeasures to prevent the emerging U.S. BMD system to undermine the Russian deterrence potential. The Russians insisted they were working on unique offensive and anti-ABM weapons “no other country in the world has” to deal with the U.S. defensive systems.<sup>181</sup>

However, the most important venue explored by Moscow was direct political and diplomatic negotiations with Washington. Essentially, it followed a familiar pattern used by the Soviets in their arms control negotiations with the Americans. As it often happened in the history of U.S.-Soviet arms control, the Putin government relied heavily on summitry when bilateral relations usually reach their productive apogee.

At the G-8 summit in Heiligendamm (Germany) in June 2007, Vladimir Putin suggested to his American counterpart a number of interrelated measures in the area of BMD diplomacy clearly intended to sidetrack the U.S. plans aimed at expanding its global BMD system to Eastern Europe and other locations in proximity to Russian borders.

Russian proposals on BMD accommodation included the offer of joint use of the missile Early Warning station at Gabala in Azerbaijan to monitor missile developments in Iran.

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<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=February&x=20070222164550sjhtrop0.7261316>.

<sup>177</sup>See: Jacquelyn S. Porth, “European Missile Defense Would Protect Against Mideast Threats,” *Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State*, January 29, 2007, available at:

<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=January&x=20070129165332sjhtrop2.544582e-03>

<sup>178</sup>Aleksei Arbatov, “An Unnecessary and Dangerous Step. Negative Consequences for Russia from Withdrawing from INF Treaty,” *Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozrenie*, March 2, 2007, OSC Doc. CEP20070302436004.

<sup>179</sup>“Russian Air Force Says It Has the Planes to Knock out U.S. Missile Defenses,” *Interfax-Agentstvo Voennykh Novostei*, March 5, 2007, OSC Doc. CEP20070306950371.

<sup>180</sup> Vladimir Putin, “Speech at Expanded Meeting of the State Council on Russia’s Development Strategy through to 2020,” February 8, 2008, *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, available at: [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2008/02/08/1137\\_type82912type82913\\_159643.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2008/02/08/1137_type82912type82913_159643.shtml).

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

The Gabala radar used to be part of the Soviet EW system and is still being used by the Russians for the same purpose under an agreement with the Azeris. An additional Russian offer was to start joint use of the new Russian EW radar being built near the southern Russian city of Armavir. According to Deputy RF Foreign Minister Sergei Kislyak, the Russian proposals originally made by Vladimir Putin at Heiligendamm “were based on the real evaluation of the situation and the readiness to seek forms of the interaction, which would ensure predictability and prevent damage to security of cooperating partners.”<sup>182</sup>

Eventually, Putin’s proposals in Heiligendamm led to the 2+2 contacts, i.e. between heads of defense and foreign policy establishments of the two countries later in 2007 and in early-2008.

### **Preventing Militarization of Outer Space**

In a traditional Russian view, outer space is an important potential area of arms competition. Therefore it should also be an integral part of arms control efforts. Since Soviet times, Moscow has insisted systematically that this sphere should be free of weapons, especially nuclear weapons, and subject to stringent regulatory measures, e.g., it supported the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies that entered into force on October 10, 1967.

Militarization of outer space began to be intimately linked in the Russian mindset with the U.S. BMD programs, starting with the Strategic Defense Initiative. In the 1990s, during the campaign to save the ABM Treaty, Russian leaders warned that the removal of the treaty “clears the way to introducing weapons into outer space, particularly anti-missile weapons at first, then followed by other types of weapons.”<sup>183</sup>

Under President Putin, preventing militarization of space shifted to the center of foreign policy activities. Moscow’s concern about the danger of the placement of weapons, especially anti-satellite weapons in outer space, were largely driven by the realization that economically and technologically it would not be unable to keep up with U.S. programs.<sup>184</sup>

In the oft-repeated Russian view, not unlike WMD proliferation, once unleashed, militarization of outer space would become unstoppable in the absence of clear-cut and stringent norms regulating military uses of space. Moscow was also concerned that the problem would defy any reasonable solution with the emergence of new space powers, e.g., China:

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<sup>182</sup> [See: “Russia-U.S. Interaction Should Not Damage Their Security – Diplomat,” Itar-Tass, February 5, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080205950369].

<sup>183</sup> Mikhail Vinogradov, “Contemporary Problems of Ballistic missile defense,” Lecture Delivered April 1, 2003 at the Center for the Study of Problems of Disarmament, Energy and Ecology of the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology. (In Russian), available at:

<http://www.armscontrol.ru/course/lectures03a/msv30401c.htm>.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

The anti-satellite weapons situation is reminiscent of the nuclear situation, where both sides have recognized the futility of an uncontrolled threat on both sides. But, as in the nuclear sphere, more and more players, for whom there are no ‘space etiquette rules,’ are appearing in orbit.<sup>185</sup>

Russian responses to militarization of space were mostly political, diplomatic and propagandist. In the traditional Russian game of words, the Kremlin periodically warned that the Russian “military doctrine and plans will have to be reviewed in order to deal with the potential threat” to Russian security seen in space militarization programs.<sup>186</sup>

Russian diplomats have sought broad international coalitions to prevent unilateral advantages for the U.S. in the military use of outer space.<sup>187</sup> In 2002, Russia and China joined forces to introduce a draft document on militarization of outer space at the UN Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva. The draft defined key elements of an obligation not to put into terrestrial orbits objects with any type of weapon, not to place such weapons on celestial bodies and not to use force or threaten force against space objects.<sup>188</sup> In February 2007, the Kremlin announced that it would be submitting its own “project of an agreement on the prevention of deploying weapons in outer space” in the near future.<sup>189</sup>

In February 2008, Moscow and Beijing submitted a formal draft treaty banning weapons in space at the UN Commission on Disarmament (UNDC). While presenting the draft in Geneva, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov argued that the deployment of any arms into space will inevitably lead to a new round of the arms race:

If anyone deploys arms in space, this will inevitably trigger a chain reaction, which in its turn could bring about a new round of the arms race on earth, as well as in space.<sup>190</sup>

According to Lavrov, the draft “bans the deployment of any type of arms in space, the use of force or threat of force with regard to space objects,” and essentially “fills in the remaining gaps in international law, create conditions for the further study and use of space, guarantee the safety of space property and boost general security and arms control.”<sup>191</sup>

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<sup>185</sup>Nikolai Khorunzhii, “Stop Not Control. Should Space Be Militarized?” *Izvestiya*, February 12, 2007, (In Russian), available at: <http://www.izvestia.ru/armia2/article3101096/>.

<sup>186</sup> “Interview with Head of Russia’s Space Agency,” *AP*, May 11, 2003.

<sup>187</sup> Vyacheslav Baskakov and Aleksandr Gorshkov, “The Pentagon Is Not Afraid of Failure. The Scope of U.S. Military-Space Programs Has Peaked.” *Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozrenie*, May 23, 2003, (In Russian).

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>189</sup> Vladimir Putin, “Speech and the Following Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy,” February 10, 2007, *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, available at: [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2007/02/10/0138\\_type82914type84779\\_118135.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2007/02/10/0138_type82914type84779_118135.shtml).

<sup>190</sup> “Deployment of Arms in Space Will Trigger Arms Race – Lavrov,” *Interfax*, February 12, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080212950138.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*

The Russians presented the draft while being fully aware of the stated U.S. opposition to any “new legal norms and other limitations which aim to ban or curb access to space or use of space.”<sup>192</sup> U.S. diplomats argued that, “it is impossible to guarantee that such a treaty is implemented.”<sup>193</sup>

In the opinion of some Russian experts, the reported Chinese test of anti-satellite technology (ASAT) on January 12, 2007, confirmed their predictions that:

The U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty...clears the way to introducing weapons into outer space, particularly anti-missile weapons at first then followed by other types of weapons. In the opinion of many experts, this step adds to an arms race in a most dangerous direction: toward proliferation of ballistic missiles... Countries that possess missile weapons as a tool of deterrence, like China, will not sit by idly as their missile potentials are weakened.<sup>194</sup>

Official Moscow’s reaction to the test was carefully muted since obviously, the Russians did not want to upset their emerging strategic alliance with the Chinese.<sup>195</sup>

However, in all probability, some of the tough words in Vladimir Putin’s controversial speech at the Munich Conference on Security Policy on February 10, 2007, were addressed specifically to Beijing. While arguing that, “it is impossible to sanction the appearance of new, destabilizing high-tech weapons,” he warned that, “militarization of outer space... could have unpredictable consequences for the international community, and provoke nothing less than the beginning of a nuclear era.”<sup>196</sup>

A much more negative Russian reaction accompanied the U.S. decision to destroy a faulty spy satellite before it re-entered the atmosphere using an interceptor missile in January 2008.<sup>197</sup> It was seen as an overt demonstration of U.S. BMD power and “an

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<sup>192</sup> “United States Says Discussing Merits of Treaties to Prevent ‘Weaponization’ of Outer Space ‘Pointless’, as First Committee Continues Thematic Debates,” Sixty-Second General Assembly, GA/DIS/3349, First Committee, 13th Meeting, *Department of Public Information, News and Media Division*, New York, October 22, 2007, available at: <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/gadis3349.doc.htm>.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

<sup>194</sup> Mikhail Vinogradov, “Contemporary Problems of Ballistic missile defense. Lecture delivered April 1, 2003 at the Center for the Study of Problems of Disarmament, Energy and Ecology of the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology,” (In Russian), available at: <http://www.armscontrol.ru/course/lectures03a/msv30401c.htm>.

<sup>195</sup> Some Russian experts expressed doubts that the ASAT test by China actually took place. [See: A. Feklistov, Y. Bronstein, “On Regional Missile Defense,” *InfoRos*, February 12, 2007, available at: <http://www.inforos.com/?id=17046>.

<sup>196</sup> See: Vladimir Putin, “Speech and the Following Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy,” February 10, 2007, *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, available at: [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2007/02/10/0138\\_type82914type84779\\_118135.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2007/02/10/0138_type82914type84779_118135.shtml)

<sup>197</sup> “U.S. Spy Satellite Falling from Orbit, Could Hit Earth,” *CTV.ca News*, January 26, 2008, available at: [http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/20080126/falling\\_satellite\\_080126/20080126?hub=World&s\\_name=](http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/20080126/falling_satellite_080126/20080126?hub=World&s_name=).

invitation to race in space weapons.”<sup>198</sup> The Russian Defense Ministry claimed that, “the satellite’s planned interception was designed as a test for anti- satellite weapons that in effect means creating a new type of strategic weapon.”<sup>199</sup>

In part, this reaction might have been the reflection of Moscow’s disappointment over its inability to pursue its own ASAT program. In the opinion of many Russian experts, the RF lost Soviet anti-satellite (ASAT) assets and would have been unable to match the U.S. accomplishment with the faulty satellite. According to Colonel-General Viktor Yesin, first Vice President of the Academy for Security, Defense and Law and Order Problems:

We [the Soviets] conducted similar tests successfully back in Soviet times. We had several special complexes on alert duty. They also were deployed at Baikonur. In the early 1990’s, however, they had completely exhausted their service life and were written off. New complexes were not created, although all technologies were preserved. It takes a political decision to unfold their production again, so we do not have these complexes now and therefore are incapable of technically executing a mission such as downing a satellite in orbit today.<sup>200</sup>

### **Playing the European Card: INF Treaty**

Proposals to retaliate for the U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty and other perceived snubs from the West by quitting the INF Treaty were initially made public by the hardliners in the expert community.<sup>201</sup> By 2006, the Kremlin’s attitude and rhetoric toward Western capitals become progressively more acerbic and political leaders in Russia began to openly debate the possibility of making such a move. On February 15, 2007, former General Staff Chief Yurii Baluevskii stated that, “the [U.S.] ABM deployment area in Europe defies any explanation,” and may be used as a formal foundation for Russia’s move to abandon the 1987 Treaty.<sup>202</sup>

General Baluevskii added that another reason Moscow may pursue this course is “the emergence of shorter- and intermediary-range missiles in many third countries neighboring the RF since the introduction of INF. The U.S. and the RF are the only powers that voluntarily accepted limitations on such missiles.”<sup>203</sup> Apparently, Russian

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<sup>198</sup> *Rossiia TV News Broadcast*, February 15, 2008, (In Russian).

<sup>199</sup> “Russia Slams U.S. Plan to Destroy Faulty Satellite,” *Interfax*, February 16, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080216950150.

<sup>200</sup> See: Inga Kumsikova and Olga Bozhyeva, “They Will Destroy the Spy with a Missile: They Will Shoot Down the Satellite Threatening Earth in a Week,” *Moskovskii Komsomolets*, February 16, 2008, (In Russian), available at: <http://www.mk.ru/blogs/MK/2008/02/16/abroad/339164/>.

<sup>201</sup> See: Sergei Brezkun, “On the ‘Sixes’ in the Gear Wheels: The Pro-American Lobby Has To Be Given Provocative Ideas Framed in Reasonable Proposals,” *Voенно-Промышленный Курьер*, July 26, 2006, OSC Doc. CEP20060725436007.

<sup>202</sup> “Baluevskii Threatened the U.S. with Withdrawal from the Treaty on Intermediary- and Shorter-Range Missiles,” *Lenta.ru*, February 15, 2007, (In Russian), available at: <http://www.lenta.ru/news/2007/02/15/rsmd/>.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*

leaders came to believe that by reintroducing intermediate- and short-range missiles in their arsenals they would augment Russian security at its borders.

Russian sources claim it would be relatively easy for Russia to set up mass production of missiles such as the medium-range RSD-10 *Pioner* [SS-20 according to NATO classification] since it has a high degree of unification with the *Topol* ICBM. SMT Commander Colonel-General Nikolai Solovtsov stated on February 19, 2007:

If a political decision is taken on the withdrawal from this treaty [INF]... the Strategic Missile Troops will be prepared to deal with this problem. Although the whole class of medium-range missiles has been eliminated, we still have all the blueprints, all the technology and, moreover, the same production facilities where these missiles were being made. This is why should the appropriate decisions be made, it will not be difficult to resume their production.<sup>204</sup>

Director and General Designer of the *Topol-M* and *Bulava* missiles Yurii Solomonov confirmed that resuming production of intermediate-range missiles was technically feasible but he deferred to the political leadership to weigh the options:

We are ready for possible production of medium-range ballistic missiles, both intellectually and in terms of our production capacity. But it is the country's political leadership that must take the decision on this. The question is a very serious one since it touches on the interests of the USA and other Western countries. All this needs to be thought through carefully.<sup>205</sup>

That threats of INF withdrawal were being used mostly as trial balloons or invitations to bargaining on the U.S. BMD by the Russian side was confirmed by the Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov indicating that, "Russia has yet to make a final decision on [INF] withdrawing... Naturally, we have to take into account the development of the strategic situation near our borders."<sup>206</sup> What that means in practical terms is that Moscow will be closely watching European reactions to its INF-related threats and activities aimed at curtailing the U.S. BMD.

Independent experts argue that the tactic of blaming the U.S. and its BMD programs in Europe for Russian withdrawal from the INF Treaty does not make logical sense:

Withdrawal from the INF treaty, which would enable Russia to develop intermediate-range missiles, is not very congruent with the threat that the U.S. missile defense system in Europe might pose. In the extreme case, if it was necessary to hit these targets, they could be targeted by *Topol-M* ICBMs, as was

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<sup>204</sup>“Russia Can Resume Production of Medium-Range Missiles, Commander Says,” *RTR Planeta TV*, February 19, 2007, OSC Doc. CEP20070219950251.

<sup>205</sup>“Russia Ready to Resume Production of Medium-Range Missiles,” *Itar-Tass*, February 15, 2007, OSC Doc. CEP20070215950221.

<sup>206</sup>“Lavrov Says Russia Not Yet Decided On Withdrawal From INF Treaty,” *Interfax*, February 16, 2006, OSC Doc. CEP20070216950299.

officially stated recently at the level of the command of the Russian Strategic Missile Troops.<sup>207</sup>

These experts also warn that Moscow's threats of INF withdrawal and attempts at driving a wedge between the U.S. and its European allies may eventually backfire against Russia:

Russia's withdrawal from the INF treaty would actually be to the United States' advantage: It could use it as an argument for a possible missile as well as ABM deployment in Europe... And, if the United States responds by deploying its missiles on its European allies' territory, the likelihood of a surprise attack on Russia will increase sharply... Moscow is calculating that 'old' Europe, panicked by the prospect of Russia's withdrawal from the treaty, will put pressure on Poland and the Czech Republic not to allow the American ABM deployment on their soil... That is not very realistic... Russia's withdrawal from the treaty will light a fire in European-American relations, but it will also worsen Russian-European relations.<sup>208</sup>

### **Tactical Nuclear Weapons**

The notion of Russia withdrawing from the INF Treaty is closely linked to renewed Russian interest in tactical nuclear weapons (TNW). A hotly debated military issue in Russia is reemphasizing TNW as an integral part of the Russian strategic deterrence capability. As with INF withdrawal, the main party targeted by proposals to return TNW to Russian arsenals appears to be the U.S. European allies.

In the dominant Russian view, after the end of the Cold War, Russian (Soviet) and Western perspectives on TNW experienced dramatic reversals:

In the Cold War years, the USSR viewed the TNWs of the U.S. and its allies as an important supplement to their strategic nuclear forces (SNF), while Western countries were taking them as a critical element of the American nuclear guarantee to its allies and as a counterbalance to the East's superiority in conventional forces. Moscow regarded its own TNWs as an element of deterrence against the use of similar western arms and as a means of substantially reinforcing the striking power of its conventional forces in the theater of war. After the end of the Cold War, dissolution of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and the breakup of the USSR, the situation changed radically. Moscow lost its superiority in conventional forces over NATO, China and the U.S. and its allies in the Far East. Now it was Russia that looked at its TNWs as "a nuclear equalizer" of the growing weakness of its conventional forces relative to the West and China, and –

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<sup>207</sup> Aleksei Arbatov, "An Unnecessary and Dangerous Step. Negative Consequences for Russia from Withdrawing from INF Treaty," *Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozrenie*, March 2, 2007, OSC Doc. CEP20070302436004.

<sup>208</sup> Ilya Azar and Dmitrii Vinogradov, "Response with Intermediate-Range Missiles," *Gazeta.ru*, February 15, 2007, (In Russian), available at: [http://www.gazeta.ru/2007/02/15/oa\\_231768.shtml](http://www.gazeta.ru/2007/02/15/oa_231768.shtml).



in the near future – the shrinkage of its strategic nuclear forces relative to those of the U.S.<sup>209</sup>

By about 2005, the Russian leadership indeed came to emphasize TNW as one of the essential asymmetric countermeasures to the U.S. BMD deployments in the European continent and continued NATO expansion towards the Russian borders. Explained Corresponding Member of the Academy of Military Sciences Major-General Vladimir Belous:

The main common task of strategic and tactical nuclear weapons is deterrence at the global and regional scales... As the [U.S.] BMD system's combat capabilities grow, its impact on the balance of forces will be progressively shifting in favor of the U.S. Assurances by American officials to the effect that the BMD system will be aimed not against Russia but only against "rogue states" can hardly be a guarantee of this being so. From the perspectives of deterrence, it is expedient to clearly define for the eventual enemies those limits in the development of a military-political situation that once trespassed will create the real threat of the use of nuclear weapons against them. Strategic Nuclear Forces (SNF) may not be fit for deflecting an aggression with conventional forces since particularly at the initial stage the intruding troops will wage war in the territories of Russia or its allies... Under such circumstances, Russia will have no other choice but to use Tactical Nuclear Weapons (TNW) as the last resort.<sup>210</sup>

In General Belous' opinion, the "increased attention of the Russian military leadership to tactical nuclear weapons" was confirmed during the Russian-Belorussian command-staff exercise Union Security – 2004 (*Souznaya bezopasnost' -2004*) in July 2004, that involved virtual tactical nuclear strikes against a sudden aggression of superior enemy forces and by the creation of the operational-tactical *Iskander* missile complex capable of delivering nuclear warheads at ranges of up to 280km.<sup>211</sup>

In view of this increased attention to TNW as a strategic equalizer for the RF, it is easy to understand why Russian leaders systematically rejected U.S. proposals related to nuclear force transparency initiatives for this class of weapon [e.g., the proposal by Senator Sam Nunn to get a final figure on tactical nuclear weapons for counterterrorist purposes].<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>209</sup>Anatoli Diakov, Eugene Miasnikov and Timur Kadyshev, "Non-Strategic Nuclear Weapons. Problems of Control and Reduction," *Center for Arms Control, Energy and Environmental Studies of the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology*, 2004, available at:

[http://www.armscontrol.ru/pubs/en/NSNW\\_en\\_v1b.pdf](http://www.armscontrol.ru/pubs/en/NSNW_en_v1b.pdf).

<sup>210</sup>Vladimir Belous, "Nuclear Weapons as Guarantee of Stability," *Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozrenie*, January 21, 2005, (In Russian), available at: [http://nvo.ng.ru/concepts/2005-01-21/4\\_stability.html](http://nvo.ng.ru/concepts/2005-01-21/4_stability.html).

<sup>211</sup>Ibid.

<sup>212</sup>See: Viktor Myasnikov, "The Last Secret: The United States Insistently Strives to Control Our Tactical Nuclear Weapons," *Nezavisimoe Voennoye Obozrenie*, June 10, 2005, (In Russian), available at: [http://nvo.ng.ru/armament/2005-06-10/1\\_secret.html](http://nvo.ng.ru/armament/2005-06-10/1_secret.html).

Colonel-General (Ret.) Leonid Ivashov, formerly in charge of the Defense Ministry's Main International Military Cooperation Directorate, known for his vocal critique of rapprochement with the West, argued:

The number and makeup of Russian tactical weapons is among the most important state secrets today, and could be of concern to the United States only in an attempt to establish military control over Russian territory.<sup>213</sup>

Russian conditions for discussing the problem of TNW appear to preclude any possibility of progress, e.g., on June 2, 2005, the former RF Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov declared:

We are prepared to begin a conversation about tactical nuclear weapons only when all countries which possess them store them on their own territory.<sup>214</sup>

Deputy Chief of the 12<sup>th</sup> Main Directorate of the Defense Ministry at the time Sergei Ivanov was in charge of the Russian nuclear arsenal was even more straightforward:

Even if the Americans remove their tactical nuclear weapons from Europe, it will not do any good. The storage infrastructure for these weapons will still be there and it would take 12-14 hours to bring them back. So, it should also be destroyed and this should absolutely be done under international control.<sup>215</sup>

Moscow came to regard TNW as a potential wild card in the diplomatic game with the United States and NATO.<sup>216</sup> U.S. concessions on the BMD issue are apparently of primary importance for the Russians in this type of gamesmanship.<sup>217</sup>

## **CFE Treaty**

Moscow's displeasure with NATO's advances after the collapse of the bipolar world found reflection in its attitudes to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe [CFE]. The treaty was signed in Paris on November 19, 1990, by the 22 members of NATO and the former Warsaw Pact in order to help established parity in major

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<sup>213</sup>Ibid.

<sup>214</sup>Ibid.

<sup>215</sup>Dmitrii Litovkin, "Senator Nunn against Russia. He Wants to Control Tactical Nuclear Weapons," *Izvestiya*, May 30, 2005, (In Russian).

<sup>216</sup> See: "CFE Treaty Must Accord With Current Situation – Grushko," *Interfax*, April 17, 2007, OSC Doc. CEP20070417950133.

<sup>217</sup>Arms control experts A. Diakov, E. Miasnikov and T. Kadyshev believe the absence of progress on TNW will be "invariably poisoning" U.S.-RF relations. In the absence of real interest of involved parties to negotiate a formal agreement on TNW, these experts propose the mechanism of "coordinated unilateral steps" which they hope will eventually lead to "treaty-based measures of control". [See: Anatoli Diakov, Eugene Miasnikov and Timur Kadyshev, "Non-Strategic Nuclear Weapons. Problems of Control and Reduction," Center for Arms Control, Energy and Environmental Studies of the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology, Moscow: 2004, available at: [http://www.armscontrol.ru/pubs/en/NSNW\\_en\\_v1b.pdf](http://www.armscontrol.ru/pubs/en/NSNW_en_v1b.pdf)].

conventional forces/armaments between East and West from the Atlantic to the Urals. The original CFE Treaty (which was of unlimited duration) entered into force in 1992.

Following the demise of the Warsaw Pact and the enlargement of NATO in the 1990s, the then 30 CFE state-parties signed the Adaptation Agreement at the Istanbul OSCE Summit on November 19, 1999, to amend the CFE Treaty to take account of the evolving European geo-strategic environment.<sup>218</sup>

NATO Allies made their ratification of the adapted Treaty contingent on Russia's compliance with adapted CFE flank provisions and continued fulfillment of its Istanbul summit commitments regarding withdrawals of Russian forces from Georgia and Moldova.<sup>219</sup>

The Russians had a different perspective on fulfilling their arms control obligations after the collapse of the USSR and the way NATO countries were fulfilling their obligations, particularly to make the adapted CFE regime effective. As stated by Vladimir Putin:

We have complied strictly with our obligations over these last decades and are fulfilling all of our obligations under the international security agreements, including the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty. But our NATO partners have not ratified certain agreements, are not fulfilling their obligations, but nevertheless demand continued unilateral compliance from us. NATO itself is expanding and is bringing its military infrastructure ever closer to our borders. We have closed our bases in Cuba and Vietnam, but what have we got in return? New American bases in Romania and Bulgaria, and a new missile defense system with plans to install components of this system in Poland and the Czech Republic soon it seems. We are told that these actions are not directed against Russia, but we have received no constructive responses to our completely legitimate concerns. There has been a lot of talk on these matters, but it is with sorrow in my heart that I am forced say that our partners have been using these discussions as information and diplomatic cover for carrying out their own plans. We have still not seen any real steps to look for a compromise. We are effectively being forced into a situation where we have to take measures in response, where we have no choice but to make the necessary decisions.<sup>220</sup>

On July 23, 2007, President Putin signed a decree establishing a moratorium on Russia's implementation of the CFE Treaty, allegedly in view of the "non-implementation of the Treaty by its members from the NATO Alliance, and the significant increase of their

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<sup>218</sup> See: "Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty. Fact Sheet," *U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Arms Control*, Washington, DC, June 18, 2002, available at:

<http://www.state.gov/t/ac/rls/fs/11243.htm>.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> Vladimir Putin, "Speech at Expanded Meeting of the State Council on Russia's Development Strategy through to 2020," February 8, 2008, *President of Russia official Web Portal*, available at: [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2008/02/08/1137\\_type82912type82913\\_159643.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2008/02/08/1137_type82912type82913_159643.shtml)

military hardware and troops beyond the agreed-upon levels.”<sup>221</sup> Both chambers of the Russian parliament supported the decree and on December 13, 2007, it became effective.<sup>222</sup>

The CFE moratorium was used by Moscow to apply additional pressure on the U.S. and NATO in the European context. One of the obvious Russian goals was to revive fears of potential regional tensions and conflict in the U.S. European partners.

At the same time, following the traditional whip-and-carrot pattern and with a view to draw Western powers back into elaborate negotiations on conventional forces in the European continent, Russian diplomats began to talk about Moscow’s “preparedness for continuing negotiations on the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE)” almost as soon as the moratorium decision came into effect.<sup>223</sup>

The Russians recognized the paramount importance of the U.S. position for the compromise. They were pushing for solutions benefiting Russian interests. Colonel-General (Ret.) Viktor Yesin explained the Russian position and expectations linked to the solution of the CFE problem:

A solution to the CFE problem is obvious. First, our partners must agree with Russia’s stand and not tie the ratification of the adapted CFE to those Istanbul accords that had to do with the withdrawal of Russian groups of forces from Moldova and Georgia. All sides to the CFE Treaty need to follow Russia’s example and begin the ratification of the adapted treaty without delay... The U.S. must take the lead. Then others will follow.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>221</sup> “Federation Council Supported Moratorium on the Conventional Weapons’ Treaty in Europe,” *Lenta.ru*, November 16, 2007, (In Russian), available at: <http://www.lenta.ru/news/2007/11/16/senate/>.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

<sup>223</sup> “Russia Ready to Continue Talks On CFE Treaty – Lavrov,” *Interfax*, February 12, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080212950373.

<sup>224</sup> “Russian Pundit Sees Scope for Agreement on CFE,” *Agentstvo Voennykh Novostei*, March 14, 2008, OCS Doc CEP20080314950422.

### Chapter 3: Russian Approaches to Non-Proliferation

Russian leaders regard arms control as an integral part of their global strategy. Just like the Soviets before them, Moscow seeks to expand its stature and influence in Third World regions to augment its bargaining position in relations with Western powers, including in the area of arms control.

After the collapse of the bipolar world, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and means of their delivery began to progressively dominate regional politics. The Russians recognize the growing perils of proliferation, especially if coupled with such other dangerous contemporary phenomena as the expanding potential for conflict in international relations, regional instability and global terrorist activities. In the assessment of the RF Foreign Ministry:

New threats and worsening of the existing threats on a global scale – from terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to global warming, need response by means of consolidated efforts of the world community. We are confident that it is the demand of the times. Humanity has no alternative to ensuring security by joint effort or the entire world together. In military and financial terms this task can be fulfilled neither by a separate country, nor by a limited coalition.<sup>225</sup>

However, in specific regional situations, American and Russian approaches differ, often to a significant degree. To a certain extent, this is a reflection of traditional superpower rivalries that used to spread over global regions. While the RF has clearly lost its superpower status, its linkages with the ruling elites in many former client-states of the Soviet Union remain relatively strong. Russia still possesses many instruments of influence in Third World countries. In particular, it remains the key supplier of arms to many regimes shunned or boycotted by the West.

Russia has been particularly eager to restore and expand patron-client relations with regimes that challenge the United States and its allies, (e.g., Iran, North Korea, Venezuela.) This is undertaken in order to receive political, trade, military and other advantages by filling up vacuums that emerge when the West initiates sanctions, embargoes, and other restraining measures against rogues, as well as to increase its global position.

Pointing to its special relations with rogue regimes ostracized by the West, Moscow often claimed it could play an important intermediary role in tense international situations, for example, their efforts at restraining the Saddam Hussein regime prior to the U.S. invasion of Iraq, international attempts to denuclearize North Korea, etc. Russian politicians and diplomats used every opportunity to project their country's image as an impartial peace

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<sup>225</sup> "Russia Against Unilateral, Blockade Acts In Settlement Of Security Problems," *Itar-Tass*, February 12, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080212950189.

broker and champion of the “new world order that is free of the monopoly and dictate of one global power.”<sup>226</sup>

As in the area of bilateral strategic arms control, the Russians have made a consistent strong emphasis on the preservation and strengthening of the system of formal statutes and regimes related to nonproliferation, conflict resolution and other pertinent regional issues regardless of how effective they were in the past.

In Moscow’s view, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) remains a particularly “valuable international instrument for containing the spread of nuclear weapons.”<sup>227</sup> It claims it is prepared to stick by the NPT and seek its strengthening in order “to make it universal.”<sup>228</sup> The official Russian position is also that all countries abiding by the NPT should have unimpeded access to peaceful uses of atomic energy for purposes of their national development and international cooperation.

The RF supports the expansion of zones free of nuclear weapons. It hailed the creation of such a zone in Central Asia, similar to regimes in Latin America, Africa, the Pacific and South-East Asia. The agreement on the Central Asian zone free of nuclear weapons was signed by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan in August 2006.<sup>229</sup>

In the area of missile technologies, Russia argues that it follows all applicable international regimes, e.g., the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), and that all its transfers abroad are fully legitimate and subject to national export control rules.<sup>230</sup>

Officially, Moscow insists it is prepared to cooperate closely with the U.S on all aspects of regional situations where such cooperation may be mutually beneficial. As a model of such cooperation, on July 15, 2006, in St. Petersburg, Russia, President Bush and President Putin launched the joint Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism with the purpose of combating the global threat of nuclear terrorism.<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> “Russia Will Not Be Able to Defend Its National Interests,” *Businesspress.ru*, February 16, 2006, (In Russian), available at: [http://www.businesspress.ru/newspaper/article\\_mId\\_40\\_aId\\_371267.html](http://www.businesspress.ru/newspaper/article_mId_40_aId_371267.html).

<sup>227</sup> Ksenia Kaminskaya, “Russia Says Non-Proliferation Treaty Contains Spread of Nuclear Arms,” *Itar-Tass*, March 17, 2005, (In Russian).

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>229</sup> “Central Asia and Kazakhstan Proclaimed Themselves Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons,” *Rosbalt*, August 9, 2006, (In Russian), available at: <http://ura.ru/content/world/08-09-2006/news/10926.html>.

<sup>230</sup> Gennadii Khromov, “On the Regime of Control over Missiles and Missile Technologies. Main Thesis of the Lecture Presented at the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology on March 10, 2004,” *Center for the Study of Problems of Disarmament, Energy and Ecology of the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology*, available at: <http://www.armscontrol.ru/course/lectures04a/gkh040310.htm>.

<sup>231</sup> On October 30-31, 2006, representatives from the governments of Australia, Canada, China, France, Germany, Japan, Italy, Kazakhstan, Morocco, Russia, Turkey, the United States, the United Kingdom met in Rabat, Morocco and reached agreement on the “Statement of Principles” for the Initiative, as well as “Terms of Reference for Implementation and Assessment.” The International Atomic Energy Agency has been invited to serve as an observer to the Initiative. [See: “The Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism,” *U.S. Department of State*, available at: <http://www.state.gov/t/isn/c18406.htm>].

However, despite the stated Russian concern over the global spread of weapons and official support for nonproliferation regimes, practical Russian behavior, in particular, close cooperation in the area of sensitive technologies with a number of third-world countries has often been viewed in the West as contradicting nonproliferation goals. Specific aspects of this cooperation periodically resulted in disagreements and political clashes between Russia and the U.S. and other Western countries. Differences in geopolitical perspectives and conflicting economic interests play a major role in such disagreements.

In its efforts to justify its foreign and export policies, as well as particular deals with problematic countries, Moscow often accused the West of applying double standards to gain unilateral advantages over the RF.<sup>232</sup> A frequent argument used by the Russians is that given its unique geographic situation and history, Russia's relations with countries such as China, India, Iran, etc., call for fundamentally different approaches than those applied by the West.

### **Russian-Chinese Axis**

Relations between the RF and the People's Republic of China provide ample examples of contradictions in Russian regional policies including nonproliferation. Both countries pursue these relations with a keen eye on American and Western reactions.

Historically, Russian-Chinese relations vacillated between close alliance and open hostility. Dramatic internal changes in both countries invariably complicated their relations, as did their involvements with third parties. Under Vladimir Putin, the Russians began to progressively regard Beijing as a potential strategic counterbalance to the U.S.<sup>233</sup>

Moscow and Beijing have worked together in various areas of military cooperation (e.g., arms trade and transfers of military technologies). Observers note that both countries are linked by aloofness towards the West and the desire to curtail U.S. global and regional influence besides geographic proximity and complimentary interests in exploitation of human, energy and other resources.<sup>234</sup>

Under Mr. Putin, Russian-Chinese military relations, including trade in arms and joint exercises and maneuvers, progressed steadily.<sup>235</sup> It was reported that large numbers of Russian scientists and engineers with long-term contracts are working in Chinese design bureaus and defense plants. Chinese engineers are training at Russian facilities and more than 100 joint production projects have been launched.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> See: S.A. Kovalev, "Tragedy and Farce of Russian Democracy," *Speech before Members of the German Bundestag*, February 1996, (In Russian), available at: [http://www.hro.org/editions/kovalev/kov3\\_3.htm](http://www.hro.org/editions/kovalev/kov3_3.htm).

<sup>233</sup> See: Leonid Ivashov, "Russia Hopes the U.S. Will Observe the Terms of the ABM Treaty," *Krasnaya Zvezda*, March 23, 2000, (In Russian).

<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

<sup>235</sup> See: "Russia and China: Can a Bear Love a Dragon?" *Economist*, 26 April 1997, pp. 19–21.

<sup>236</sup> Alexander A. Sergounin and Sergey V. Subbotin, "Russian Arms Transfers to East Asia in the 1990s," SIPRI Research Report No. 15, New York: *Oxford University Press*, 1999, p. 92.

Moscow and Beijing have been involved in developing a regional military-political alliance the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), that includes China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan as full members, and Mongolia, Iran, Pakistan, and India as observers.<sup>237</sup>

Russian traditionalists want SCO to evolve into a second pole, apart from the U.S. and NATO, of the multi-polar world structure that, in their opinion, would be the “optimal configuration of contemporary world order.”<sup>238</sup> According to Colonel-General Leonid Ivashov, a retired top apparatchik at the Defense Ministry, currently President of the Academy of Geopolitical Sciences:

When developing the project of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, we built into it the contours of the second pole of the world. A man cannot stand on one foot therefore bi-polarity is his natural state.<sup>239</sup>

Anti-Americanism plays an important cementing role in Russian-Chinese relations. While pursuing their distinct national interests, both powers cooperate closely in political and diplomatic efforts to limit American dominance in global and Asian affairs. The RF-China campaign against the U.S. BMD system provides a pertinent illustration.

Ever since Washington declared its intention to withdraw from the ABM Treaty, Moscow tried to involve Beijing in efforts to prevent this eventuality. One of the main Russian counterarguments against the U.S. withdrawal from the ABMT was that:

If the Americans unilaterally break the ABM, Russia and other nuclear states, such as China, for example, will have no other way than to follow suit: to develop their own anti-missile systems and resume building their nuclear arsenals.<sup>240</sup>

On the surface, Chinese leaders appeared receptive to these efforts. Beijing also had special concerns related to the ongoing conflict with Taiwan that could, in its opinion, be significantly affected by the introduction of sophisticated American Theater Missile Defense systems in the Far East.

In July 2000, President Putin visited Beijing where he cosigned a Joint Statement with Chinese President Jiang Zemin calling for preservation of the ABM Treaty and non-deployment of a limited U.S. national missile defense (NMD). The statement expressed deep worry over the U.S. NMD plan, which it interpreted as unilateral superiority. The statement accused Washington of hegemony and of using NMD “to seek unilateral

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<sup>237</sup> See: Lionel Beehner, “The Rise of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization,” Council on Foreign relations, June 12, 2006, available at: <http://www.cfr.org/publication/10883/#1>.

<sup>238</sup> Viktor Enikeev, “SCO as a Factor of Multi-Polarity of Contemporary World,” *RUVR Broadcasting Company*, August 23, 2007, (In Russian), available at: <http://www.ruvr.ru/main.php?lng=rus&q=40579&cid=21&p=23.08.2007>.

<sup>239</sup> “Senior Russian Official on Shanghai Cooperation Organization,” *Agentstvo Voennykh Novostei*, March 12, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080312950407.

<sup>240</sup> *Itar-Tass*, 3 May 2001.



military and security advantages that will pose the most grave, adverse consequences” to China, Russia and the United States itself. Mr. Putin and Mr. Zemin said, “the pretext of a missile threat [from rogues such as North Korea] is totally unjustified.” They also criticized a U.S. proposal for a more limited ABM system to protect its troops and allies in East Asia, which Beijing fears would undermine its claim to Taiwan.<sup>241</sup>

In the Russian view, it was inevitable that China would become “an invisible participant” in the U.S.-Russian ABM Treaty/NMD dialogue.<sup>242</sup> Significantly, before he left for his first meeting with President Bush in Ljubljana, Slovenia in June 2001, Vladimir Putin conferred with Jiang again at the so-called Shanghai Forum [shortly thereafter transformed into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization], in order to present at the U.S.-RF negotiations a consolidated Russian-Chinese position on the package of issues related to strategic arms control.<sup>243</sup>

However, at this early stage, some experts expressed doubts about the determination of Moscow and Beijing to engage in anything but a rhetorical confrontation with the U.S. over the NMD issue. Some Russian experts questioned the Chinese role in the global campaign to save the ABMT. Remarked Vitalii Tsygichko, academician of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences:

China – for whom deployment of the U.S. NMD system does indeed devalue its nuclear deterrent potential – has officially stated that it does not object to the U.S. plans provided they have no impact on its relations with Taiwan. It is obvious that the issue of the ABM Treaty is merely an excuse for opponents of a new relationship with America to continue with today’s unfathomable and often unjustifiably confrontational Russian foreign policy... It is an excuse for creating the semblance of the preservation of a situation of nuclear confrontation that no longer exists a priori.<sup>244</sup>

Further events confirmed the futility of Russian attempts to prevent the demise of the ABM Treaty and U.S. advances in BMD. Nevertheless, Moscow and Beijing continued their efforts to minimize the perceived unilateral U.S. advances in hi-tech areas such as BMD and militarization of the outer space. Anti-Americanism continued to play an important cementing role in bilateral Russian-Chinese relations even though the national interests of the two states remained incompatible on many issues<sup>245</sup> which was illustrated by the Chinese test of anti-satellite technology (ASAT) on January 12, 2007.<sup>246</sup>

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<sup>241</sup> Christopher Bodeen, “Beijing, Moscow Hit U.S. on Shield,” *Washington Times*, 19 July 2000.

<sup>242</sup> Dmitrii Safonov, “Russia Is Ready to Bargain and Deal on Missile Defense,” *Izvestiya*, 8 June 2001, (In Russian).

<sup>243</sup> Yekaterina Grigoryeva, “Between ABM Defense and the Ballet,” *Izvestiya*, 14 June 2001, (In Russian).

<sup>244</sup> Vitalii Tsygichko, “With the U.S. -- Together or Separately,” *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 9 June 2001, (In Russian), available at: [http://www.ng.ru/politics/2001-06-09/3\\_together.html](http://www.ng.ru/politics/2001-06-09/3_together.html).

<sup>245</sup> See: “Interview with the First Deputy Commander of the Ground Troops Col-Gen Vladimir Moltenskoi,” *Itar-Tass*, August 10, 2005, OSC Doc. CEP20050810322007.

<sup>246</sup> Some Russian experts doubt the ASAT test by China actually took place. [See: A. Feklistov, Y. Bronstein, “On Regional Missile Defense,” *InfoRos*, February 12, 2007, available at: <http://www.inforos.com/?id=17046>].

The Chinese ASAT test was a serious wake-up call for Moscow: it told the Russians that the Chinese military programs were constantly becoming more sophisticated and diverse and additionally the test appeared to put into question the validity of the coordinated RF-PRC political and diplomatic effort at keeping outer space free of weapons.

In light of the expanding Chinese ambitions and capabilities, the Russian expert community began to seriously question the wisdom of significant technology transfers from Russia to the PRC. It has been estimated that, “already today the Chinese conventional military potential exceeds that of the RF and in case of a conventional military conflict with China, Russia is bound to lose.”<sup>247</sup> It is also being recognized that these transfers are helping turn Beijing into Moscow’s fierce competitor in arms markets that have been traditionally influenced by Russian exports.

Official Moscow insists that it does not want to precipitate a formal military-political alliance with Beijing, especially an alliance that will be aimed against any third party. Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov stated in April 2008:

Neither Russia nor China is aspiring to conclude a military alliance. As strategic partners we have a common interest in maintaining stability and security in the region that adjoins the borders of our states. We have absolutely compatible approaches to the need to do this first of all using political and diplomatic methods and methods for building up potential, including of the countries that are members of the SCO. And in all the documents, we put in the idea that we will not make friends against anyone.<sup>248</sup>

However, the future of Russian-Chinese relations will depend on the evolving global situation and ambitions of the leaders of both countries.

### **Russian-Indian Link**

The RF seeks to expand its traditional political and military-technical cooperation with the Republic of India. While mildly censuring India for *de facto* entering the Nuclear Club in 1998, Moscow refused to join international sanctions against India apparently in recognition of the old friendship during the Soviet period, and in anticipation of future beneficial relations.<sup>249</sup>

In October 2000, shortly after his election as RF President, Vladimir Putin visited Delhi and laid a strong foundation for renewed bilateral military cooperation between India and Russia. Russia’s leniency in response to India’s departure from the NPT paid off.

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<sup>247</sup> Aleksei Khazbiev. “VTS Problems between Russia and China,” *Ekspert*, May 24, 2004, (In Russian).

<sup>248</sup> Andrei Baranov, “Russia’s Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov: We Will Not Make Friends with Anybody against Anybody,” *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, April 17, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080421021004.

<sup>249</sup> “Sanctions. India Becomes Global Pariah,” (In Russian), available at: <http://today.viaduk.net/0093/0203/0203p2.htm>.

Currently, India is Russia's second largest partner in military-technical cooperation after China.<sup>250</sup>

In mid-1999, Moscow and New Delhi developed a joint venture to produce *BrahMos* cruise missiles. The first launch of such a missile from a coastal site was successfully carried out on June 12, 2001. On February 05, 2007, an announcement was made that, "over one thousand *BrahMos* missiles [will be delivered] to the three services of the Indian armed forces within the next few years."<sup>251</sup> Moscow claims all such ventures are conducted under strict government controls that correspond to MTCR requirements.

On his 2007 visit to Delhi, Vladimir Putin confirmed Moscow's readiness to facilitate complete removal of the sanctions that were introduced by the Nuclear Suppliers Group in 1998, after India conducted a nuclear weapons test.<sup>252</sup>

Since the early-2000s, Moscow has been also working on trilateral Russian-Chinese-Indian cooperation that could potentially become the dominant alliance in Asia. While regular meetings of the heads of foreign ministries of the three countries emphasize that this endeavor is not aimed against any third party, it is obviously intended as an added counterbalance to the U.S. global and Asian influence.<sup>253</sup>

However, in recent years, an unforeseen impediment appeared in the way of the Russian plan to foster a close partnership with China, India and other important third world clients. It consists of the diminishing ability of the Russian MIC to remain the dominant source of military technology transfers to these countries.<sup>254</sup> Russian sources note that key importers of Russian arms – China, India, Algeria, Syria, etc., - have recently raised the issue of their quality, and have actually refused to accept defective Russian systems.<sup>255</sup>

Another factor working against Russian plans to monopolize relations with countries like India is changes in Western, particularly U.S., attitudes to military-political cooperation with the emerging countries in Asia and other regions. If and when the West overcomes its inhibitions to India's accession to the Nuclear Club, Moscow will face serious competition in promoting its interests in Indian weapons and sensitive technologies markets, as well as, potentially, similar markets of other countries, including China.

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<sup>250</sup>“Russia Sees India as its Major Arms Client,” *Itar-Tass*, February 27, 2007, OSC Doc. CEP20070228950469.

<sup>251</sup> See: “Russia To Deliver 1000 BrahMos Missiles to 3 Indian Armed Forces,” OSC Doc. SAP20070206384002.

<sup>252</sup> Nataliya Melikova, “Waiting for a Contract,” *Nezavisimya Gazeta*, January 26, 2007, Doc No: CEP20070130004015.

<sup>253</sup> See: “Russia, China, India Foreign Ministers Declare Common Approach to World Issues,” *Itar-Tass*, February 14, 2007, OSC Doc. CEP20070214950089.

<sup>254</sup> See: “Many Defense Companies Not Ready for Mass Production of High-Tech Systems - Sergei Ivanov,” *Interfax*, March 21, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080321950174.

<sup>255</sup> See: Natalya Roeva, “Russia Is No Longer in a Position to Export High-Quality Modern Armaments and Military Equipment,” *Forum.msk*, February 26, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080227358011.

## Russian-Iranian Connection

Developing cooperation with countries identified by Washington as rogue states has become an integral part of Vladimir Putin's regional policy. This policy was implemented to demonstrate Moscow's independence in foreign policy and bring practical dividends for Russia, e.g., revenues from preferential relations with regimes ostracized by the West. The new Russian President Dmitrii Medvedev confirmed adherence to this policy approach established by Putin.<sup>256</sup>

Russia's relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran provides an important illustration of the complicated and inherently dangerous nature of Russian relations with rogue states involved in acquiring advanced weapons and technologies including WMD.

Iranian nuclear programs and ambitions lie at the center of relations between Moscow and Tehran. Official Moscow insists that, "Russia will not drop its demand to Iran to stop its nuclear programs" which may have military application, e.g., independent uranium enrichment.<sup>257</sup>

In effect, the RF agreed to apply pressure against Tehran and participated in coordinated efforts of six international mediators – Russia, the USA, France, Great Britain, China and Germany – to bring about a negotiated solution to the Iranian nuclear problem.<sup>258</sup>

However, Moscow has systematically objected to any use of force against Tehran. Russian politicians insist that as a party to the NPT, which includes accepting the authority of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Tehran is fully entitled to have access to nuclear technologies used for peaceful purposes (e.g., energy production) in line with international requirements and guarantees.<sup>259</sup>

Putin and other senior Russian officials insist that Moscow's cooperation with Tehran in the nuclear sphere is based on "assurances from Iranian President Khatami that Iran has no plans to build its own nuclear weapons."<sup>260</sup>

Moscow argues that, "ways should be found to develop Iran's nuclear power sector that would not hurt the legitimate rights of the Iranian people and their interests in developing peaceful nuclear technologies."<sup>261</sup> On numerous occasions, Moscow pledged to guarantee

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<sup>256</sup> *Vzglyad.ru*, February 7, 2008, (In Russian), available at:

<http://roh.figvam.ru/showpost.php?s=899137ae9df13958db04e5d40be758ea&p=104625&postcount=1>.

<sup>257</sup> "Russia Not to Drop Demands to Iran to Stop Nuke Program -- Churkin," *Itar-Tass*, March 4, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080304950445.

<sup>258</sup> "Russia Seeks To Create Negotiating Conditions On Iran Program," *Itar-Tass*, February 29, 2008, OSC Doc CEP20080229950231.

<sup>259</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>260</sup> Vladimir Putin, "Press Conference with Russian and Foreign Media," June 20, 2003, *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, available at:

[http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/text/themes/2003/06/201700\\_47465.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/text/themes/2003/06/201700_47465.shtml).

<sup>261</sup> "Russia: Kremlin Source Says Position on Iran Unchanged. Against Nuclear Proliferation," *Interfax*, August 17, 2005, OSC Doc. CEP20050817026012.

uranium supplies to Iran provided it abides by conditions on the return of the spent fuel, non-military uses, etc.<sup>262</sup>

Under Vladimir Putin, Moscow became Tehran's premier supplier of arms, despite pleas from the U.S.' and other Western countries' to curtail sales of advanced military technologies to Iran (e.g., air defense systems).<sup>263</sup>

The Iranian ambassador to Moscow, in February 2008, stated in connection with persistent rumors that the RF intends to supply the Islamic Republic with advanced Air Defense systems:

The scientific and technical cooperation between Iran and Russia can be broad. Currently, it is developing in the defense equipment sector. It goes without saying that when Russia and Iran feel a joint need to expand cooperation, they will continue negotiations. I do not think there are any obstacles for the progress. Russia and Iran can build fruitful defense cooperation.<sup>264</sup>

However, Tehran's efforts to acquire expanded nuclear and missile capabilities have played a somewhat sobering effect on Moscow and its eagerness to provide political and military support to Iran in the face of American and other Western pressures.

In particular, Moscow's concerns over the Iranian missile potential increased significantly after the launch by Iran of the space rocket Explorer-1 on February 4, 2008. In the opinion of Colonel-General Viktor Yesin, former Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Strategic Missile Troops:

This achievement (the launch of Explorer-1) clearly shows that Iranian experts have mastered the production of liquid-propellant rocket engines that in future will enable them to create ballistic missiles with a range of 3,500-4,000 km or more... Tehran will soon become a space power.<sup>265</sup>

Moscow found itself in a tactically difficult situation as the result of the 2008 Iranian missile test which gave credence to the argument for U.S. BMD deployment in Europe. For that reason alone, it was forced to publicly disapprove of Tehran's action. However, at the same time, it continued to recommend restraint and caution in international reactions to Iranian behavior, allegedly in order not to disrupt efforts to maintain IAEA controls over Iranian nuclear activities. RF Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov stated in connection with the Iranian space-rocket test:

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<sup>262</sup> "Russia Not To Drop Demands To Iran to Stop Nuke Program-Churkin," *Itar-Tass*, March 4, 2008, OSC Doc CEP20080304950445.

<sup>263</sup> See: "The U.S. Resents the Supply of Russian Missiles to Iran," *Pravda.ru*, June 12, 2005, (In Russian), available at: <http://www.pravda.ru/news/world/06-12-2005/69673-0>.

<sup>264</sup> See: "Iran Hopes for Partnership with Moscow in Aerospace, Defense," *Agentstvo Voennykh Novostei*, February 27, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080227950337.

<sup>265</sup> "Iran Close to Having Long-Range Ballistic Missile -- Russian expert," *Interfax*, February 5, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080205950266.

Russia does not approve of Iran's ongoing demonstration of its intentions to develop the missile sector and to continue enriching uranium. However, such actions are not banned from the point of view of international law. It has to be taken into consideration that a number of problems regarding Iran's nuclear program has been revealed in previous years. Until they have been resolved, it would be reasonable for everyone to refrain from making steps and statements heating up the atmosphere and creating an impression that Iran intends to ignore the international community, the UN Security Council and the IAEA.<sup>266</sup>

Some Russian observers noted that the change in Russian rhetoric vis-à-vis Tehran was intended as an accommodating sign towards Washington:

By expressing its concern over Iran acquiring long-range missiles Moscow effectively supported the official U.S. position... Such a shift has its own explanations. The growing confrontation in Russia's relations with the West (primarily the United States) creates serious threats, including for ourselves. Therefore a certain "détente" in these relations may play a positive role for both sides. Besides anything else, a less charged atmosphere in global politics may contribute to the success of a more pragmatic candidate at the forthcoming U.S. presidential elections – which in itself could be a positive development.<sup>267</sup>

Furthermore, some Russian experts associated the change in Russian attitudes with the agreement the U.S. and Russia concluded in February 2008, on nuclear fuel trade. The agreement was to permit Russia to significantly increase the volume of export of enriched uranium to the USA. It also provided Russia with an opportunity to sell enriched uranium directly to American enterprises.<sup>268</sup>

The agreement concluded in Washington between the U.S. Secretary of Commerce Carlos Gutierrez and the director of *Rosatom*, the Russian Federal Atomic Energy Agency, Sergei Kirienko, has huge commercial, political and strategic significance for Russia. According to Kirienko, in the next 5 years alone, the volume of trade will comprise \$5-\$6 billion US. By 2014, one in five American nuclear power plants will operate on Russian uranium. Receiving access to the American market will allow Russia to fully load its uranium enrichment capacities, which comprise 40 percent of total world capacities.<sup>269</sup>

In a larger sense, U.S.-Russia nuclear deal was understood in Moscow as an expression of the American support for Russia's steps aimed at creating an international cartel for control of nuclear fuel. The first step in this direction was the announced Russian intention to set up a multilateral enrichment and reprocessing center at Angarsk.

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<sup>266</sup> "Russian Foreign Minister Warns Iran over Nuclear Plans," *Itar-Tass*, February 13, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080213950544.

<sup>267</sup> *Vzglyad.ru*, February 7, 2008, (In Russian),

<http://roh.figvam.ru/showpost.php?s=899137ae9df13958db04e5d40be758ea&p=104625&postcount=1>.

<sup>268</sup> See: "US-Russia Nuclear Deal Leaves Iran 'Out in the Cold'," *Proatom.ru*, February 14, 2008, OSC Doc CEP20080229337001.

<sup>269</sup> *Ibid.*

Reprocessing centers of this sort are expected to strengthen the regimen of non-proliferation.

At the same time, it is understood that Angarsk-type international centers would function under strict rules, e.g., they would not be allowed in zones prone to proliferation activities. As stated by Kirienko:

We believe that it is necessary to create a series of such centers, but they must be located only in those countries, which possess all of the technological cycles for uranium enrichment. Thanks to this, such technologies will not be proliferated farther throughout the world.<sup>270</sup>

Even though the Russians claim that any country that has signed the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons has the right to buy enriched nuclear fuel from the international centers, apparently there will be significant limitations for individual buyer countries, e.g., Iran.

Some Russian pundits speculate that the U.S.-Russian deal on nuclear fuel was somehow predicated on Russia's concessions on future dealings with Iran in the nuclear sphere. Allegedly:

This may be confirmed by the ostensible haste with which Russia has fulfilled its obligations on delivery of low-enrichment nuclear fuel to Bushehr in the volume of 82 tons - in eight deliveries over a period of 6 weeks, starting on December 16, 2007. The eighth and last fuel delivery to Bushehr was performed on 28 January - only 4 days before conclusion of Friday's deal in Washington.<sup>271</sup>

### **Russia - North Korea**

The Russian position on the nuclear program of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is similar to its position on Iran. Officially and publicly, Moscow has invariably insisted that North Korea should "visibly, verifiably and irreversibly dismantle its nuclear weapons program."<sup>272</sup> However, as in the case of Iran, while urging Pyongyang to return to the NPT, Moscow has been actively engaged in protecting North Korea against outside coercion and the use of force.<sup>273</sup>

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<sup>270</sup> Ibid.

<sup>271</sup> "US-Russia Nuclear Deal Leaves Iran 'Out in the Cold'," *Proatom.ru*, February 14, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080229337001.

<sup>272</sup> "Joint Press Conference Given by President of Russia Vladimir Putin and President of the United States George W. Bush," June 1, 2003, St. Petersburg, *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, available at: [http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2003/06/01/0000\\_46656.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2003/06/01/0000_46656.shtml).

<sup>273</sup> "Vladimir Putin Met with South Korean President Roh Moo-Hyun," *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, May 9, 2005, available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/text/news/2005/05/87893.shtml>

Moscow viewed the progress in the six-party talks on the North Korean nuclear program as a positive example that should be extended to the situation with the ongoing Iranian nuclear program.<sup>274</sup>

As in the case of Iran, Moscow offers its services, such as access to the multinational uranium enrichment centers to assure the implementation of peaceful nuclear energy projects in countries like North Korea provided they forego plans to acquire nuclear weapons, and abide by the rules and control of IAEA.<sup>275</sup>

Moscow continues to take an active approach to negotiations on North Korea's denuclearization.<sup>276</sup> It also maintains close political and economic relations with the regime in Pyongyang, as well as the authorities of South Korea.<sup>277</sup> It is clearly interested in establishing its presence in the Korean Peninsula which may become a fast-growing global market after the resolution of the military stand-off between the North and the South.

Russia remains keen on playing the intricate regional game of nonproliferation and arms transfer, alliance-building and conflict resolution. It seeks to play many roles at once: that of a regional power broker, major arms and energy supplier, and facilitator or spoiler in regional affairs.

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<sup>274</sup>“PRC: More on DPRK Said Starting Preparations to Shut Down Nuclear Facilities,” *Xinhua*, March 17, 2007, OSC Doc. CPP20070317968090.

<sup>275</sup> See: “Uranium Enrichment Center in Russia to Promote Nonproliferation – Official,” *Itar-Tass*, February 5, 2008, OSC Doc CEP20080205950273.

<sup>276</sup> See: “Yonhap: President Lee Reaffirms U.S. to Demand DPRK Denuclearization Verification,” *Yonhap*, April 20, 2008, OSC Doc. KPP20080419971072.

<sup>277</sup> A potentially important project to involve the economies of both Koreas relates to modernizing the railway line linking Russia's border station of Khasan to the eastern North Korean port of Rajin in order to eventually create a transportation artery for shipping freight on the Trans-Korean Railway via the Trans-Siberian Railway to Europe. [See: “Yonhap Cites Itar-Tass: DPRK, Russia To Set Up Joint Venture for Railway Work,” *Yonhap*, April 20, 2008, OSC Doc. KPP20080420971006].



## Chapter 4: Russian Perspectives on the Future of Arms Control

### Russian Policies under the Medvedev–Putin Regime

Russian approaches to foreign policy and arms control will to a large measure depend on the ideology of the Kremlin leaders. An important indicator of the direction in which the official regime has been evolving under Vladimir Putin can be seen in that most Russian nationalists, including neo-Communists, are currently among the most ardent supporters of the Putin legacy. In effect, they would like Vladimir Putin's successor Dmitrii Medvedev to continue rebuilding the authoritarian regime in Russia. Some of them actually suggest that a "safe dose" of Stalinism will be in order for Russia to ultimately restore its lost grandeur. A leading ideologue of Russian revival, Aleksandr Prokhanov argued:

Stalinist Development... was accompanied by several modernization techniques: a purge and repressions against those in party circles who opposed Development, and ruthless coercion against the broad popular masses, from whom the resources for development were removed by force... That was the phenomenology of Stalinism... Medvedev, if Development is not a front but the essence of his policy, cannot avoid repression against corrupt officials. He cannot avoid hitting those oligarchic and comprador circles that have no interest in Development, sabotage Development, and prefer "external administration" to Development, parasitizing on the raw material economy, keeping the people in a state of death-like inaction, and inhibiting the people's creative forces with the poison of destructive propaganda. The "technique of suppression" must be accompanied by techniques of "spiritual takeoff," the "unfreezing" of national energies, and a breakthrough to the national culture that the liberals "walled off," to a Common Cause philosophy, to the exhortation of a Russian Victory.<sup>278</sup>

Under the essentially authoritarian regime in Moscow, a lot will depend on the composition of the Russian ruling elite. The March 2008, presidential elections, resolved the most immediate issue of legal succession at the Kremlin, but left many questions unanswered about the way the elite will function under conditions of a virtual Vladimir Putin – Dmitrii Medvedev duumvirate.<sup>279</sup> To complicate the situation, in the next few months, major shifts in the balance of power among key Russian interest groups are to be expected, as well as sweeping reshuffles in the vast Russian bureaucratic system.

The casting that put First Vice-Premier Dmitrii Medvedev, a 42-year-old personal friend and associate of Putin, into the number one slot in the presidential hierarchy, and at the

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<sup>278</sup> Aleksandr Prokhanov: "When the Pre-Election Fog Disperses," *Zavtra*, March 6, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080306021001.]

<sup>279</sup> The emergence of a new regime in Russia based on two equally important centers of power led to various speculations among Russian pundits. Attempts to define this regime and predict its eventual structure and distribution of authority between Medvedev and Putin found reflection in the use of different terms describing similar power-sharing arrangements in other historical contexts: duumvirate, diarchy, tandem, etc.

same time, moved Vladimir Putin to the post of the Russian Premier was obviously intended to eternalize the grip on power of a compact group of top political leaders and apparatchiks that ruled Russia since 2000.

Dmitrii Medvedev was obviously chosen to fill in the presidential post as the most trustworthy among Putin's inner circle at the Kremlin. His purely civilian background and reputation as a liberal might have also played an important role in his promotion.<sup>280</sup>

In a flurry of statements during and after the Duma and presidential election campaigns of December 2007 – March 2008, Russian officials asserted that the transfer of power from Vladimir Putin to Dmitrii Medvedev would not entail any major changes in Russia's internal and foreign policies.<sup>281</sup> However, the reality may prove to be different.

Critics of the official regime argue that the elections gave proof of intense behind-the-scene rivalries between opposing power groups within the Putin regime. The lines of divide between them are both vertical (between groups representing military- and civilian-oriented sectors of the economy) and horizontal (between regional elites and the Moscow-St. Petersburg center of political power).<sup>282</sup>

The winners and losers in the elections are expected to continue their rivalry and infighting for months following Medvedev's formal inauguration. This will put strong pressure both on the President-elect and the new Premier and may complicate their personal relations.

Another factor of divisiveness at the top of the Russian hierarchy may be related to the state of the Russian economy and the level of political stability in the country. Despite incessant official claims about Russia's steady progression<sup>283</sup> under conditions of controlled democracy, many factors are at work making its socio-economic and political conditions volatile and therefore poorly predictable.<sup>284</sup>

The Russian constitution, adopted in December 1993, in the wake of a bloody clash between the legislative and executive branches under Boris Yeltsin, delineates respective powers of the President and the Head of Government, heavily in favor of the

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<sup>280</sup> See: Anna Ivanova, "Mikhail Delyagin: Liberals Expect That Medvedev Will Restore Yeltsin's Times," *Forum.ru*, March 3, 2008, OSC Doc CEP20080303380001.

<sup>281</sup> "Medvedev to Ensure Continuity of Russia's Foreign Policy – Lavrov," RIA-Novosti, arch 11, 2008, OSC Doc CEP20080311950364.

<sup>282</sup> Ivan Khrenov, "Clan Wars at the Internal Affairs Ministry," *Compromat.ru*, February 4, 2008, OSC CEP20080204009002.

<sup>283</sup> Moscow currently claims Russia would "join the top five global leaders in terms of GDP in 2015-2020." By Russian estimates, in 2007, Russia ranked seventh among all countries in terms of GDP as calculated by purchasing power parity behind the United States, China, Japan, India, Germany and Britain. [See: "Russian Economy Could Be Among World's Top Five by 2015 – Ministry," *Interfax*, March 17, 2008, OSC Doc CEP20080317950144.]

<sup>284</sup> "Russian Pundit Nikonov on Putin-Medvedev Tandem," *Center TV*, March 3, 2005, OSC Doc. CEP20080303950579.

presidency.<sup>285</sup> Both Putin and Medvedev made public declarations to the effect that they would honor the constitutional distribution of authoritative functions, i.e., Dmitrii Medvedev would be recognized as the RF Commander-in-Chief and will “govern the foreign policy of the Russian Federation” (Articles 80, 86 and 87 of the Constitution), e.g., he will be the only top-level Russian representative at the forthcoming G8 summit in Japan.<sup>286</sup>

However, in the dominant opinion of Russian pundits, Vladimir Putin will use his well established personal authority to retain actual control over foreign policy, the military-industrial complex, and key sectors of national economy producing real revenue, e.g., the oil-and-gas complex.<sup>287</sup> Clearly, this may lead to further disagreements and/or clashes between the two most powerful apparatchiks in Moscow. On April 15, 2008, in an indication of the imminent competition for real power, Vladimir Putin was elected to the post of the ruling United Russia (*Yedinaya Rossiya*) party.<sup>288</sup>

The area of long-term planning and development of doctrinal foundations for foreign, military, and arms control policies will provide early indications of the way the Putin-Medvedev diarchy will evolve. Before his departure from the Kremlin, Vladimir Putin put a lot of effort into laying out the conceptual and political framework of Russia’s development for many years to come. One of Vladimir Putin’s moves to draw a line under his presidency and plan for the future was setting the general parameters for the New Strategy of Building Armed Forces Through to 2020.<sup>289</sup> The document is supposed to strengthen national security and respond to “new challenges and threats that Russia faces.”<sup>290</sup>

A potential test to the division of authority in Russian foreign policy may arise from the elaboration of the amended version of the Concept of RF Foreign Policy adopted in 2000, shortly after Vladimir Putin’s coming to power.<sup>291</sup>

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<sup>285</sup> “Constitution of the Russian Federation,” *Constitution.ru*, available at: <http://www.constitution.ru/en/10003000-01.htm>.

<sup>286</sup> “Putin Will Not Go to G8 in Japan,” *Itar-Tass*, April 18, 2008, (In Russian), available at: [http://www.gazeta.ru/news/lenta/2008/04/18/n\\_1208322.shtml](http://www.gazeta.ru/news/lenta/2008/04/18/n_1208322.shtml).

<sup>287</sup> “Cadre Quadrille,” *Warweb.ru*, February 26, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080226018002.

<sup>288</sup> “Transcript of the Meeting of the 9th United Russia Party Congress,” *President of Russia Official Web Portal*, April 15, 2008, available at:

[http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2008/04/15/2120\\_type82917type84779\\_163840.shtml](http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/text/speeches/2008/04/15/2120_type82917type84779_163840.shtml).

Also see: Aleksandr Golts, “When Will the Party Committees Appear on the Scene?” *Ezhednevnyi Zhurnal*, April 17, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080417021008.

<sup>289</sup> The proposal was advanced in Vladimir Putin’s presentation to the State Council on February 8, 2008. The Council represents leaders of the Russian policymaking elite. [See: “Russia Needs New Armed Forces Development Strategy,” *Agentstvo Voennykh Novosti*, February 8, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080208950199.]

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>291</sup> See: “The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation Approved by the President of the Russian Federation V. Putin, June 28, 2000,” *Fas.org*, available at: <http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/russia/doctrine/econcept.htm>

The new Russian President will be entitled to put his own stamp on a new version of this key document that will not only guide Russia's foreign policy but will also be used for internal mobilization and propaganda purposes. As explained by a Russian expert on public opinion polls:

Russian citizens regard the foreign policy course as one of the most successful spheres of the authorities' activity. And that is not surprising. Russia's foreign policy is geared mainly to the "domestic consumer," and Russians respond with gratitude to the authorities: they believe that Russia is becoming a "great power" and that the Russian course has become more "resolute and independent."<sup>292</sup>

Arguments in favor of revising the Foreign Policy Concept have been heard in Moscow for the last several years. Many premises of the old Concept, including those related to the establishment of conflict-free relations with the near-abroad neighbors (i.e., former Soviet republics), attainment of systematic growth of Russian popularity and improved image internationally, etc., could not be achieved for various reasons.

The new Concept, if and when developed by the Medvedev-Putin regime, will set the long-term goal of restoring Russia's greatness and its special place in geopolitics. The Concept is expected to clarify the tools and methods of achieving this ultimate goal.

Russian pundits are currently engaged in an intense debate over scenarios of future Russian development and potential models of behavior of the duumvirate regime.

One interesting suggestion is that the duumvirate itself represents a calculated attempt by the ruling regime to diversifying the arsenal of policymaking tools at its disposal. Allegedly, Vladimir Putin will continue to epitomize the Kremlin's hard-line perspective on internal and foreign affairs, particularly Russia's relations with the U.S. and NATO. Dmitrii Medvedev will be playing the role of peacemaker open to compromises on complex international issues:

From now on there will be a "good cop" – Medvedev, and a "bad cop" – Putin in foreign policy. The good cop will announce the development of mutually advantageous relations with the West and attend the G8; the bad cop will carry on with the polemical rhetoric, reinforce the military-industrial complex, and enhance the combat-readiness of the strategic nuclear forces. This is a very convenient position since, on the one hand, Russia demonstrates a readiness for cooperation and compromise while, on the other, it reminds the West that it is prepared to respond to encroachments on Russia's interests.<sup>293</sup>

Other analysts of Russian politics argue that multiplication of power centers in Moscow is bound to exacerbate the traditional clash between the two dominant tendencies in Russian policymaking – towards continuity and stability on the one hand, and change and

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<sup>292</sup> See: Roman Dobrokhotoy, "Concept Has Changed. New Document on Russia's Foreign Policy Priorities Could Appear in Near Future," *Novye Izvestiya*, March 4, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080304021007.

<sup>293</sup> "Medvedev's Non-Six," *Warweb.ru*, February 26, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080226021002.

reform, on the other. They predict that eventually, given the specific Russian cultural and political environment, the majority of the population will opt for conservative internal policies but assertive and even aggressive foreign policy:

Ever since the breakup of the USSR many Russian citizens have been nostalgic for a firm hand—they count to the credit of the authorities not diplomatic successes or the ability to tackle complex issues constructively, but resolute, conflict-based, unilateral actions, which are associated with the country’s political might and independence. Everything for which Russian citizens, together with many other countries of the world, criticize the U.S. foreign policy course appears to our fellow citizens to be acceptable and even required in relation to our own policy. Political experts call this the “imperial complex,” and sociologists assert that it is by no means a new phenomenon. Russian citizens have always shown a demand for this conflict-based foreign policy strategy, it is simply that in recent years the authorities have tried to play up to these sentiments and thereby inflame them still more strongly.<sup>294</sup>

The majority of experts agree however that a lot depends on the outcome of administrative and personnel reshuffling in the presidential and government apparatus.<sup>295</sup> Potential competition between the two dominant bureaucratic structures – one in the Kremlin, the other in the so-called White House (*Belyi Dom*) [Russian metaphor of the seat of the government] – may not only contribute to tension in relations between the President and the Premier, but also create confusion in the conduct of Russian internal and external policies.<sup>296</sup>

The most plausible near-term prediction is that the regime of virtual diarchy in Russia will resemble closely the Putin regime. Vladimir Putin’s continued grip on power will be a guarantee against sharp reversals. His personal style of incremental advancement of Russian interests accompanied both by tough rhetoric and accommodating overtures to opponents has a good chance of becoming the preferred method in the conduct of foreign policy of the Medvedev administration.

Long-term forecasts of the evolution of the Russian political scene are much more ambiguous and dim. They range from a delicate, however workable, power-sharing arrangement between Vladimir Putin and Dmitrii Medvedev<sup>297</sup> to bitter competitive

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<sup>294</sup> See: Roman Dobrokhoto, “Concept Has Changed. New Document on Russia’s Foreign Policy Priorities Could Appear in Near Future,” *Novye Izvestiya*, March 4, 2008, OSC Doc. EP20080304021007.

<sup>295</sup> See: Mikhail Tuskii, “Dmitrii Medvedev’s Future Team,” *Argumenty Nedeli*, March 13, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080314009007.

<sup>296</sup> “Aleksandr Bulbov and Sergei Storchak Expected to Change Places with Active Members of Sechin’s Group,” *Forum.ru*, March 13, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080314006002.

<sup>297</sup> See: “Russian Pundits Ponder Political Implications of Medvedev-Putin ‘Tandem,’” *Strana.ru*, March 3, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080304021016.

struggle<sup>298</sup> resulting in the political or even physical elimination of one of the protagonists.<sup>299</sup> None of these may be rejected as totally unrealistic.

### **Conflicting Russian Perspectives on Relations with Western Powers**

The new regime in Moscow will inherit essentially contradictory attitudes to Russian relations with the U.S. and NATO that emerged in previous years. Under Vladimir Putin, the Kremlin persistently argued:

Modern Russia is an open, peaceful and democratic state. We do not threaten anyone and will not act from the position of force... and won't get involved in the arms race.<sup>300</sup>

However, at the same time, Putin and other Russian leaders kept warning that:

Russia would give an appropriate response to the development of the military infrastructure near its borders and the potential threats to security.<sup>301</sup>

It is curious that on the one hand, already under Boris Yeltsin, the Russians began to identify the U.S. and other Western powers as their partners. However, on the other hand, they often argued that the main challenges and threats to Russian security also originated in the West. In a way, this obvious dichotomy demonstrates the tenacity of deeply suspicious attitudes historically felt by the Russians towards the West, especially during the Soviet period. It also reflects various psychological complexes experienced by the Russian society and the policymaking elite in the wake of their country's loss of a privileged place in geopolitics.

One of the common Russian complaints relates to Western disregard for Russia's rightful concerns. An example was the plan for BMD deployments in Eastern Europe which turned into a particular irritant for Moscow. According to Vladimir Putin:

There is a lot of talk on this issue, but, regretfully, our partners are using all that only as a media and diplomatic cover-up to implement their own plans. So far we do not see any real steps towards a compromise.<sup>302</sup>

In some cases, pronouncements by Russian leaders can be interpreted as manifestations of the inferiority complex. They also reflect a strong Russian inclination to visualize the U.S.-Russian relationship as a continuous contest for power and prestige. A pertinent

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<sup>298</sup> See: "Medvedev Will Try to Be 'Sole Leader' of Russia – Commentator," *Ekho Moskvy*, February 29, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080303950552.

<sup>299</sup> See: "FSB Received Warning on Attempts against Medvedev," *Gazeta.ru*, February 21, 2008, (In Russian), available at: [http://www.gazeta.ru/news/lastnews/2008/02/21/n\\_1182337.shtml](http://www.gazeta.ru/news/lastnews/2008/02/21/n_1182337.shtml).

<sup>300</sup> "Putin Says Russia Will Not Get Involved in Arms Race," *Itar-Tass*, February 22, 2008, OSC Doc CEP20080222950421.

<sup>301</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>302</sup> "Russia Will Respond to New Challenges, Threats," *Agentstvo Voennykh Novostei*, February 8, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080208950236.

illustration may be found in the following statement by veteran Russian politician Evgenii Primakov, known for his strong nationalist views:

What the United States is doing today against Russia and against our national interests does not mean that America wants ‘hot’ confrontation with Russia. Unfortunately, a lot of such things are being done, but I don't think the U.S. really fears Russia as a potential enemy. This is being done in order to put us in what they see as our deserved place, which is a secondary place, but, anyway, this won't work. With its potential, its capabilities, and its energy sufficiency, Russia has been and will be one of the most active players on the world arena.<sup>303</sup>

Russian politicians object to alleged Western double standards in treatment of Russia, and the perceived Western attempts to “undermine the unique Russian culture, history and traditions.”<sup>304</sup> In recent years, Russian leaders often blame Western powers for engaging in strongly ideologically-motivated policies. At the same time they claim emphatically that with the abandonment of communism as the official ideology, Russia’s own policies have been fully deideologized (*deidiologizirovany*), and are currently being predominantly driven by pragmatic interests. According to RF Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov:

Following the collapse of the USSR we abandoned ideology, but our Western partners did not do the same. They still believe that their ideology is “right,” because it has allegedly emerged victorious from the test of time. That is a mistaken approach.<sup>305</sup>

In the Russian view, the U.S. and other Western powers are seriously at fault for abandoning traditional foundations of international legality, e.g., mechanisms and procedures rooted in the Charter of the United Nations.

Russian traditionalists call upon their government to learn from the Western example of reliance on force in defense to promote Western interests. The often heard argument is that, “in order to be respected one needs to use force.”<sup>306</sup>

Despite suspicions and fears of Western intentions, Moscow has systematically tried to keep channels for extensive contact and potential compromise and accommodation open in its relations with the West. In the long Russian tradition, anti-Western phobias often competed and even coexisted with pro-Western sympathies.<sup>307</sup>

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<sup>303</sup> “Relations with U.S. Priority for Russia – Primakov,” *Interfax*, March 13, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080313950134.

<sup>304</sup> See: O.A. Platonov, “Russia’s Crown of Thorns. History of the Russian People in the XX Century,” Vol. 1, Moscow: Rodnik, 1997, 1040p., (In Russian).

<sup>305</sup> Wacław Radziwiłowicz, “Interview with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov,” *Gazeta Wyborcza* (Poland), February 7, 2008, OSC Doc. EUP20080207021002.

<sup>306</sup> “Russia May Use Force to Protect International Law – Russian Ambassador to NATO Dmitrii Rogozin,” *Interfax*, February 22, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080222950098.

<sup>307</sup> See: Robert Joseph and J.D. Crouch, “Moscow’s Missile Gambit,” *Washington Post*, March 13, 2008, A-17.

As noted, at least at the early stages of his administration, Dmitrii Medvedev may be expected to project a particularly benign and liberal image towards the West. As the Russian First Deputy Prime Minister, Medvedev often sounds even more accommodating than Putin to potential cooperation between the two countries. He also has tried to convey an idea that bilateral understanding is possible on issues that separate both countries, e.g., BMD:

Russia and the United States have common goals and common concerns, and, frankly speaking, common challenges such as terrorism, drug proliferation and international crime... There is no threat of a possible new "Cold War," despite differences between Moscow and Washington over anti-missile defense. The current level of our relations is entirely different to raise any talk of the possibility of such a conflict. Thank God, the 'Cold War' is over.<sup>308</sup>

Medvedev's views and policies will be influenced by many factors, including the results of the U.S. presidential elections and his ability to establish good working relations with the new U.S. President and other Western leaders. His foreign policy attitudes and moves will also be closely watched inside Russia. For example, as soon as he was elected RF President, the former Head of the Russian General Staff Yuri Balueskii declared that he expected Medvedev to follow scrupulously in the steps of his predecessor in the military area:

I am convinced that president-elect Dmitrii Anatolievich Medvedev will definitely pursue the course that has been in place over the past eight years, including in the military area.<sup>309</sup>

### **Keeping Bilateral Arms Control Alive**

Moscow's contradictory approaches to relations with the U.S. and NATO find reflection in the Russian defense and arms control perspectives. For example, an apparent conflict exists in assessing Russian nuclear deterrence requirements in the post-Cold War environment.

In effect, Russian military experts talk of paradoxes of deterrence after the collapse of the bipolar geopolitical structure. On the one hand, they recognize incongruities and pitfalls of the classical nuclear deterrence policy:

Future nuclear deterrence will not be able to provide security for the leading powers either on its own or even as a principal means of protection... Treating nuclear deterrence as a sacred cow is... entirely unwarranted. It has never been an ideal means of providing security... and will become increasingly unable to meet

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<sup>308</sup> "There Will Be No New 'Cold War' - Medvedev," *Interfax*, October 15, 2007, OSC Doc. CEP20071015950369.

<sup>309</sup> "Russia Will Not Change Military Course under President Medvedev," *Agentstvo Voennykh Novostei*, April 11, 2008, OSSC Doc. CEP20080411950100.



its objective in the future. Furthermore, the continued reliance on deterrence as the basis for military and strategic relations between the great powers could become an extremely serious obstacle to resolving new security problems, foremost of which relates to the proliferation of nuclear weapons, including to “rogue countries,” non-state actors and international terrorist organizations.”<sup>310</sup>

On the other hand, they are forced to recognize:

It would be premature, of course, to raise the matter of doing away with deterrence altogether or of complete nuclear disarmament... It is obvious that as long as there are nuclear weapons, nuclear deterrence will remain the most important approach for the indirect use of these weapons and a basic element in strategic mutual relations among those countries that have such weapons. Ideally, nuclear deterrence means that nuclear weapons are not a means of conducting war, but a political instrument that primarily guarantees that nuclear weapons will not be used in practice, neither within the context of a premeditated attack nor as a result of the escalation of a non-nuclear conflict between nuclear nations.<sup>311</sup>

One thing however is a near certainty for the Russians: “Russian-U.S. relations in limiting and reducing strategic offensive arms are crucial (even if) there is no decision on how the process will develop in the future.”<sup>312</sup>

At the time of the transfer of power between Vladimir Putin and Dmitrii Medvedev, the Russian ruling elite started to prepare a long-term plan of action in the area of internal and foreign policy. Continuity of basic approaches in the arms control area became part and parcel of the Putin Plan (*Plan Putina*). Under this plan, Moscow may be expected to actively seek the revival of a wide array of arms control exchanges with the U.S. on all issues of bilateral military-political balances starting with strategic weapons.

Moscow’s apparent minimal goal is to return to binding mutual limitations with the United States especially in areas where Russia trails the U.S. technologically as in ballistic missile defense. Maximally, it is interested in restoring fully Russia’s status of a missile-nuclear superpower and America’s equal in geopolitics.

At the same time, Moscow claims its goals and requirements are in no way unrealistic or excessive. As explained in the Review of Russia's Foreign Policy and Diplomatic Activities in 2007, published by the RF Foreign Ministry in March 2008, its behavior is firmly based “on a pragmatic and comprehensive approach, which envisions the development of interaction with the U.S. in areas where [bilateral] interests overlap,

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<sup>310</sup> “Nuclear Deterrence and Non-Proliferation,” Alexei Arbatov and Vladimir Dvorkin, Eds., Members of Working Group: Pavel Kamennov, Elina Kirichenko and Vladimir Pyryev, Moscow: *Carnegie Moscow Center*, 2006.

<sup>311</sup> Ibid.

<sup>312</sup> “Russia, U.S. Have Yet to Reach Acceptable Accords in Strategic Offensive Arms Reduction,” *Agentstvo Voennykh Novostei*, February 12, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080212950194.

while at the same time demonstrating more firmness in promoting our ideas without unneeded confrontation.”<sup>313</sup>

In their efforts to chart the future of arms control, Russian strategists continue to be guided by the Soviet idea that arms control treaties and regimes represent a comprehensive internally interlinked edifice, and the removal of any single building block may result in the collapse of the whole structure. In effect, this was one of the arguments used in the efforts to preserve the ABM Treaty.

At the current stage, the Russians apply similar logic of comprehensive linkages to the combination of START and SORT treaties and other arms control regimes. Sergei Rogov of the U.S. and Canada Institute in Moscow argued:

If negotiations [on the fate of the START Treaty due to expire in 2009] do not continue, what will happen with the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT)? Up to now, the U.S. has refused to talk about new international commitments on verification, for one. How can we discuss ceilings on deployed warheads if we don't know what these are? How can we check their presence? If SORT does not enter into force, the Intermediary-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty will become pointless because there will be no limits on strategic offensive and defensive weapons. What will happen with tactical nuclear weapons? Agreements that prohibit one class of nuclear weapons and allow all others are devoid of any sense.<sup>314</sup>

The Medvedev-Putin government may be expected to continue and intensify the campaign to renew, extend, or replace the START I Treaty which is deemed by Moscow to be central for maintaining bilateral strategic stability and predictability in arms control. Russian officials continue to repeat that in their view, START is “one of the most effective agreements on strategic arms limitation, and the first treaty that has led to real strategic arms reduction.”<sup>315</sup> They stress that one of the most important aspects of START is that it deals both with warheads and delivery vehicles possessed by the U.S. and the RF.

While exalting the virtues of START I, the Russians essentially minimize the benefits of the Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty since allegedly the latter “deals mostly with warheads that do not exist without the delivery means.”<sup>316</sup> They actually maintain that “there is presently no need to prolong SORT” beyond its expiration date in 2012, despite certain confidence-building measures written into the Treaty and the importance ascribed to these measures by the U.S. side.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Kislyak explained:

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<sup>313</sup> *Interfax*, March 18, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080318950286.

<sup>314</sup> Sergei Rogov, “Five Steps to Preventing a New Cold War,” *Washington Times*, July 31, 2007, p. A14.

<sup>315</sup> “START Provisions for Arms Destruction Met - RF Deputy FM,” *Itar-Tass*, February 5, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080205950271.

<sup>316</sup> *Ibid.*

The American partners mostly talk about confidence-building measures, as applied to the Moscow Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty, valid till 2012... The essential thing about our approach is that the stabilizing elements of deterrence, as regards delivery vehicles that make the situation more or less predictable should be preserved and, if possible, strengthened... We are now more concerned with the future, namely, what will happen to our relations with the U.S. in the strategic area after 2009. Warheads do not exist apart from anything else; they are delivered by strategic vehicles.<sup>317</sup>

Just like the Soviets before them, the Russians value the very process of arms control diplomacy as highly as the concrete results obtained in bilateral negotiations. To the Russian political elite and the diplomatic apparatus, maintaining arms control negotiations as a continuous process provides many benefits from preserving the symbolic status of Russia as American's equal in the strategic area, to the opportunity to have multiple channels of communication between the two capitals and their military and foreign-policy bureaucracies.

Moscow came to appreciate highly the high-level contacts on military-political and arms control issues under the 2+2 exchanges (between the heads of the defense and foreign policy establishments of the two countries) originally approved by the Russian and U.S. Presidents at the July 2007, summit in Kennebunkport, Maine.<sup>318</sup>

The Kremlin was especially pleased with the equal status of the negotiating teams involved in the exchanges. Consultations under the 2+2 formula provided a welcome opportunity for Moscow to publicly reiterate Russia's position on SORT, START, BMD and other important bilateral issues.

The visit of the U.S. Secretary of Defense and Secretary of State to Moscow for purposes of 2+2 exchanges in March 2008, was treated as a special event by the Kremlin. Both Vladimir Putin and President-elect Dmitrii Medvedev were featured prominently on that occasion by the Russian media. The apparent goal was to demonstrate, particularly to the internal Russian audiences, the unanimity of both leaders' foreign-policy views and emphasize their complimentary roles in policymaking.

Russian official sources claimed that the 2+2 contacts in March 2008, produced significant results. In particular, it was stressed that the Russian negotiating team succeeded to make Moscow's position on key arms control matters not only taken into account but also recognized as pertinent and important by Washington. Foreign Minister

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<sup>317</sup> Ibid.

<sup>318</sup> See: Secretary Condoleezza Rice, "Remarks with U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Defense Minister Anatolii Serdyukov After 2+2 Meetings," *Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, Moscow, Russia, October 12, 2007, available at: <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2007/10/93511.htm>.

Sergei Lavrov claimed that as the result of the negotiations on March 18, 2008, “the Americans finally admitted: our concerns are not unfounded.”<sup>319</sup>

According to Russian reports, at the same round of negotiations:

As regards a future treaty on strategic offensive weapons, an agreement has been achieved that it must be legally binding, although there is still a lot of work ahead in order to draft such a document so that it will be substantive enough.<sup>320</sup>

Another important outcome viewed Moscow at the 2+2 talks was the reaching of an agreement on the need to conclude a “strategic framework document that would tackle all areas of Russian-American cooperation but would not be an official treaty.”<sup>321</sup> Positive aspects of U.S.-Russian interaction were stressed as the basis for such an agreement, including “action against nuclear terrorism and willingness to give access to nuclear energy to nations that pose no threat to proliferation of nuclear weapons.”<sup>322</sup>

According to Russian sources, at the March 2008, 2+2 meeting, it was also possible “to break the impasse over the treaty on conventional armed forces in Europe (CFE).”<sup>323</sup> Moscow restated its readiness to resume the operation of the Treaty “if the adapted agreement comes into effect and if an accord is reached on a range of measures to restore the viability of the CFE regime.”<sup>324</sup>

However, unofficial Russian reactions to high-level bilateral exchanges contrasted sharply with the generally optimistic reaction to the meeting by official Moscow.<sup>325</sup> Many private observers in Russia remained skeptical of the prospect of Russia and the United States achieving a breakthrough in resolving their differences. They argued that the main impediment, besides conceptual and practical differences in U.S. and Russian approaches to arms control, was “the changing political situation in both countries” following presidential elections in Russia and in anticipation of the results of the presidential elections in the United States.<sup>326</sup>

Independent Russian experts with strong military connections were particularly skeptical about any possibility of agreement between the RF and the U.S. on hardest issues such as ballistic missile defense in the foreseeable future. The traditionalists continued efforts at demonstrating that despite all assurance to the contrary, the real goal of the U.S. BMD

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<sup>319</sup> “The U.S. Proposed Russia to Watch the Way BMD in Europe Works,” *Lenta.ru*, March 20, 2008, (In Russian), available at: <http://lenta.ru/news/2008/03/20/lavrov/>.

<sup>320</sup> See: *Agentstvo Voennykh Novostei*, March 18, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080318950376.

<sup>321</sup> “Russia, U.S. To Sign Accord on All Areas of Relations – Rice,” *Interfax*, March 18, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080318950372.

<sup>322</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>323</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>324</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>325</sup> In effect, the reaction of the Russian Defense Minister to the outcome of the March 2008, consultations was more reserved than that of his colleague from the Foreign Ministry. Anatolii Serdyukov commented that “the positions of the sides were not brought any closer by the consultations.” [See: *Agentstvo Voennykh Novostei*, March 19, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080319950018].

<sup>326</sup> Fedor Lukyanov, “World Practice,” *Kommersant*, March 18, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080318019002.

was to devalue the Russian deterrence potential. To prove the point, they frequently used data and arguments from American sources, especially those that criticized U.S. BMD programs in Eastern Europe and potentially, other locations in proximity to Russian borders, e.g., Georgia and Turkey.<sup>327</sup>

Moscow was happy to host the April 2008, final summit between Presidents G.W. Bush and Vladimir Putin in Sochi, southern Russia, as a symbol as equality in bilateral relations. The summit was the last for Putin in his capacity of the Russian President and ended with the adoption of the U.S.-Russia Strategic Framework Declaration summing up the accomplishments in the two countries' relations over the period of his entire administration.<sup>328</sup>

Although the Framework Declaration did not go beyond general statements, for the Kremlin, it was an important American acknowledgement of the issues requiring special attention to promote bilateral understanding and cooperation. The Russians were especially gratified by the express statement in the Declaration on the readiness of both sides to "continue development of a legally binding post-START arrangement."<sup>329</sup>

The RF Foreign Ministry was particularly satisfied with the prospect of negotiating a new binding agreement to replace START I. According to a post-summit statement by Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Kislyak, the Ministry expects a prolonged period of negotiations ahead:

The USA's statement about its readiness to sign with Russia a legally binding agreement on strategic offensive forces reflects the U.S. position and its understanding regarding the work on the document, which is to replace the [present] agreement on strategic nuclear forces [START-I]... We start from the principle that it has to be a legal document, but we have not yet reached agreement on the content of the document. The main work is still ahead.<sup>330</sup>

The Strategic Framework Declaration gave Russia an opportunity to restate its disagreement with the U.S. decision to establish BMD sites in Poland and Czech Republic, and reiterate "its proposed alternative."<sup>331</sup> The Declaration made another

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<sup>327</sup> An example of the direct linkage between arguments of opponents of the U.S. BMD programs in Russia and the U.S. may be found in an article by Colonel (Ret.) Vladimir Vasiliev that deals with the "In-Flight Interceptor Communications System" (IFICS) [See: Vladimir Vasiliev, "Possible Targets for the Third Deployment Area," *Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozrenie*, March 21, 2008, available at: [http://nvo.ng.ru/concepts/2008-03-21/1\\_pro.html?mthree=9](http://nvo.ng.ru/concepts/2008-03-21/1_pro.html?mthree=9)]. The article meticulously reproduces key points in a respective publication on the same issue by the Federation of American Scientists. [See: "In-Flight Interceptor Communications System (IFICS)," *Space Policy Project, FAS*, available at: <http://www.fas.org/spp/starwars/program/ifics.htm>].

<sup>328</sup> See: "U.S.-Russia Strategic Framework Declaration," *Russian-American Summit Meeting, Sochi, April 5 - 6, 2008*, President of Russia Official Web Portal, available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/events/articles/2008/04/163213/163215.shtml>.

<sup>329</sup> Ibid.

<sup>330</sup> "Russia and U.S. to Work on New Strategic Offensive Forces Agreement – Minister," *Itar-Tass*, April 29, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080429950172.

<sup>331</sup> Ibid.

important allusion to the interest of both sides “in creating a system for responding to potential missile threats in which Russia and United States and Europe will participate as equal partners.”<sup>332</sup> Obviously, the formula on equal partnership in potential multilateral BMD activities was of special value for Moscow.

Statements in the Declaration on a wide range of other issues – from the INF Treaty and preventing WMD proliferation to combating nuclear terrorism and cooperation in peaceful uses of nuclear energy – confirmed, in the eyes of the Kremlin leadership, Russia’s importance for the resolution of acute global issues.

Post-summit comments on the significance and meaning of the “Framework Declaration” by independent analysts varied widely. A known critic of the authoritarian Putin regime, Pavel Felgengauer, hailed the summit as a new round of bilateral détente that also brought important dividends to the U.S. side:

At the “outgoing presidents’ summit” in Sochi George Bush managed substantially to advance the ABM development program while at the same time achieving a reduction in international tension... Putin agreed to start talks on a global missile defense system. Back in December Chief of General Staff Yurii Baluevskii maintained that missile defenses in Europe are dangerous not in themselves but as part of a future global system aimed directly against our strategic nuclear potential. In Sochi Putin declared that work on global missile defenses “with equal democratic access to management of the system” will be “the best guarantee of security for all.”<sup>333</sup>

In Felgengauer’s opinion, the summit had another important effect for future U.S.-Russian relations under President Medvedev:

The détente begun by Putin has created an important bridgehead for Medvedev, who will be able, if he wishes, to go still further, and this will be not a course revision but continuity.<sup>334</sup>

However, other observers were more reserved and actually skeptical in their assessments of the significance and future impact of the bilateral Declaration signed in Sochi. In the opinion of Sergei Rogov:

The Sochi summit helped win some time, however not a single key issues could be resolved there. Ambivalent diplomatic formulas continue to hide deep contradictions over Missile Defense, strategic offensive weapons, NATO’s expansion, and other pivotal problems of international security... In other words,

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<sup>332</sup> Ibid.

<sup>333</sup> Pavel Felgengauer, “Disarming Device,” *Novaya Gazeta*, April 14, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080414018003.

<sup>334</sup> Ibid.

the Sochi agenda will be transferred to Medvedev and the new American President that will come to power on January 20, 2009.<sup>335</sup>

An astute Polish commentator underlined that the American agreement to engage in high-level bilateral contacts on military and arms control issues, and certain conciliatory moves reflected in the proceedings of the 2+2 meetings and the Sochi summit, came as a reward for Moscow's perseverance in constantly pressuring Washington on such issues as placement of elements of the U.S. global BMD system in former Warsaw Pact countries:

Theoretically Russia's strategy concerning the deployment of elements of the "missile shield" in Poland and the Czech Republic is very simple. It can be summed up in one sentence: to do everything to prevent them from being built. That is the maximal goal. Russian politicians realize very well that achieving it is not very realistic, but are acting in line with the old maxim of Soviet diplomacy, "one has to demand a lot in order to gain anything." Very often, that "anything" entails quite a decent outcome, one calculated and anticipated by the Kremlin. If it can be achieved, from Moscow's point of view that means a success, while many naive commentators believe that the Russians have suffered a defeat. That is true in the case of the "missile defense shield." The Kremlin knows it cannot persuade the White House to abandon building the "missile defense shield," yet it wants the respective agreements to be as indistinct and devoid of real content as possible.<sup>336</sup>

### **Globalizing Arms Control**

Sensing that the existing bilateral strategic arms control agreements may eventually lapse and disappear, just like the ABM Treaty, Moscow has been laying ground for expanded arms control that would include other nuclear powers besides the U.S. and the RF. In one expert opinion:

Russia... has not lost interest in arms control. It would be ready to negotiate new, but more comprehensive, agreements, i.e., including other countries besides NATO members and itself, and on an equal footing. Otherwise, the Kremlin would prefer a freedom of hands.<sup>337</sup>

In his February 3, 2008, presentation at the Munich Security Conference, former Russian Defense Minister and First Vice-Premier Sergei Ivanov, speaking on behalf of Russia, suggested globalizing the regime of strategic arms reductions to include other nuclear powers:

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<sup>335</sup> Sergei Rogov, "The Cold War Is Being Postponed," *Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozrenie*, April 11, 2008, (In Russian), available at: [http://nvo.ng.ru/armament/2008-04-11/1\\_coldwar.html](http://nvo.ng.ru/armament/2008-04-11/1_coldwar.html)

<sup>336</sup> Marek Koprowski, "Missile Defense with the GRU as a Package Deal." *Warsaw Najwyższy Czas*, April 19, 2008, OSC Doc. EUP20080419021005.

<sup>337</sup> Dmitri Trenin, "Russia's Threat Perception and Strategic Posture," In "Russian Security Strategy under Putin: U.S. and Russian Perspectives," *Strategic Studies Institute*, November 2007, p.35.

START 1 should be replaced by a regime that would keep providing maximal transparency in this sphere vitally important for the entire humanity. Moreover, it is vitally important to assure that its clauses are legally binding so that in the future we would acquire a real possibility to put the control over nuclear weapons and the process of their orderly reduction on the multilateral basis. In effect, there are several nuclear powers in the world today, and even more states with significant missile potentials. All of them, and not just Russia and the U.S. should bear their share of responsibility for maintaining strategic stability.<sup>338</sup>

About the same time, faced with the gradual erosion and potential collapse of arms control agreements specifically devised for the European context – the INF, CFE, etc., Moscow started to argue in favor of a virtual overhaul of the entire system of collective security in Europe and beyond. In a way, the Russian proposals on record were reminiscent of Soviet mega initiatives on disarmament.

In what was apparently planned as a landmark statement at the UN Disarmament Conference in Geneva on February 12, 2008, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov proposed the conclusion of not only a new multilateral missile treaty, but also the establishment of an “open system of collective security in the European-Atlantic region.”<sup>339</sup> Said Lavrov:

We propose drafting and concluding a multilateral treaty based on the corresponding articles of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles. We are calling for the creation of an open system of collective security, primarily by forming a single security area in the European-Atlantic region. We are convinced that security is not needed from each other, let alone against someone, but rather against the trans-border threats that are common for all of us.<sup>340</sup>

The Russian leadership and the expert community have long sensed that the foundations of the global system that emerged out of WWII suffered deep and probably irreversible erosion after the collapse of the Soviet Union and as a result of major geopolitical transformations and adjustments in the post-Cold War world. Currently, Moscow is trying to define its place in the new international system. It seeks to position itself in such a way as to be able to assure an advantageous place and role for Russia in this emerging system.

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<sup>338</sup>Vadim Solovyev, “Ivanov Deflated Western Fears of the Russian Threat,” *Nezavisimoe Voennoe Obozrenie*, February 15, 2008, (In Russian), available at: [http://nvo.ng.ru/forces/2008-02-15/1\\_lubeznosti.html?mthree=1](http://nvo.ng.ru/forces/2008-02-15/1_lubeznosti.html?mthree=1).

<sup>339</sup>“Russia Proposes New Missile Treaty, New System of Collective Security,” *Vesti TV*, February 12, 2008, OSC Doc. CEP20080212950168.

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid.*



## **Conclusion: Implications for U.S. Security**

**The Russian Federation continues to present multiple challenges and potential threats to the United States** despite efforts by the American and Russian sides to overcome the legacy of the Cold War and promote cooperation between the two countries in areas where they face similar problems (e.g., proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, global spread of radicalism and terrorism).

Internal transformations in the Russian Federation including a major overhaul of the economic and political systems, redistribution of wealth and influence among power groups, and changes in the composition of the ruling elite, have produced **conflicting influences on Russian foreign and military policies.**

Based on the analysis undertaken, the following conclusions may be drawn on the **sources and motivations behind Russian policies and attitudes**, especially towards the United States:

- The collapse of the Soviet Union left a lasting traumatic imprint on Russian society and the Russian political establishment. While a return to the oppressive Communist past is generally rejected, there is a sense of nostalgia for the prestige and order of the Soviet past.
- Mistrust and fears of outsiders remain deeply engrained in the Russian psyche and contribute to public skepticism towards Western policies and activities, e.g., NATO expansion and U.S. global military involvements.
- President Vladimir Putin's coming to power on the heels of a deep economic crisis and social disillusionment of the Yeltsin era, managed to restore relative stability in the Russian society, in little over seven years. However, this came at the cost of curtailed democratic reforms and the restoration of authoritarian government controls.
- Emboldened by the resulting economic upsurge, largely due to skyrocketing energy prices, the Putin government launched major modernization programs in the military-industrial sector. Parallel to this, Moscow announced it would seek reestablishing Russia's great-power status (*velikoderzhavnyi status*) and strategic parity (*strategicheskii paritet*) with the U.S.
- Moscow insists its military build up comes as a response to the mounting threats to Russian security (e.g., from WMD proliferation and the spread of international terrorism). However, the Russian list of threat perceptions is topped by Western encroachment on Russia's interests.
- Possession of one of the world's largest nuclear weapon arsenals is of major psychological and practical importance to Moscow. It provides a sense of

security, especially since Russia's general-purpose forces have experienced significant deterioration. As during the Cold War, the nuclear triad's primary mission is to deter major nuclear powers, particularly the United States.

- While abiding by strategic nuclear force reductions, codified by START and SORT Treaties, Moscow has publicized efforts at modernizing its strategic offensive systems. High-level statements on nuclear weapons reliance are part of the Russian deterrence posture. Nuclear weapons are among the key asymmetrical countermeasures offered by the Russians against the perceived U.S. technological edge in strategic defensive systems.
- At the current stage, the RF is unable to engage in a direct and large-scale Cold-War-type competition with the United State. However, it has the ability to play a serious spoiler role in Europe, Asia and other regions where it seeks to counter the perceived American expansion.
- Moscow is determined to slow down and/or undermine progress of U.S. military programs (e.g., in BMD and military applications of space) while steadily rebuilding its own military-industrial and power-projection capabilities.

As during the Soviet period, **arms control negotiations and agreements remain a tool of preference in the Russian strategy** of promoting its military and political interests, and denying unilateral advantages to the United States, notably in BMD:

- In an attempt to pressure the U.S. directly and indirectly, through its European allies, Moscow has raised the possibility of withdrawing from the Intermediary-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. It also floated the idea of reemphasizing Russia's reliance on tactical nuclear weapons for added deterrence effect in Europe. While there are signs of disagreement in the Russian policymaking elite on abandoning existing agreements, the future Russian arms control posture has become less predictable.
- In recent years, Russia has placed significant diplomatic and rhetorical emphasis on opposing what it calls militarization of outer space. This includes regular proposals to the United Nations' Conference on Disarmament (in recent years closely coordinated with China) for far-reaching negotiations to prevent an arms race in space. Moscow expressed muted concern over the January 2007, anti-satellite test of its strategic partner, China. Eventually, Russia may change its commitment to the preservation of space as a peaceful reserve if it suits its security requirements.
- Despite the announced readiness to sacrifice some arms control regimes (e.g., the INF) for political or propaganda purposes, Moscow wants to continue the strategic arms limitation process with the U.S. Negotiations on the fate of the START and SORT treaties are favored by Russian professional negotiators and the policymaking elite in general as a symbol of equality in bilateral relations.

- The Kremlin has floated the idea of involving other nuclear powers, besides the RF and the U.S., in strategic arms limitations. This is a reflection of Moscow's growing disappointment with the current state of affairs and the future prospect of bilateral arms control.
- Halting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and related technologies has a prominent place in both official statements and debates within the arms control community in Russia. However, Russia's stated support for nonproliferation is in tension with Moscow's military-technical engagement with many third-world countries, including those on the U.S. list of rogue states.
- China is a major recipient of advanced Russian weapons and technologies. Although some in Russia are worried about the ultimate implications of this relationship, financial and near-term diplomatic priorities have thus far carried the day. Both Moscow and Beijing are conscious of how this relationship is seen in Washington and have taken limited steps to avoid the appearance of an anti-American coalition.
- While in principle supporting international efforts to rein in North Korean and Iranian nuclear programs, Russia has significant political and financial (e.g., nuclear technology, arms trade) interests with both states. Russia may also be seeking to further its influence in respective regions of the third-world to counterbalance the perceived U.S. unilateral advances.

At the current stage, **Moscow remains generally disposed to compromises with the U.S. and NATO:**

- Russia has taken important strides to integrate its economy, infrastructure, and banking system, with the global economy. Many Russian elites and a significant strata of the Russian society at large are oriented towards liberal and open models of development and improved relations with the West at all levels.
- The Russian economy needs Western investments and know-how to deal with many internal problems that may not be easily resolved with Russia's own resources.
- While disagreeing on tactical issues, Moscow generally appreciates the importance of U.S. and NATO efforts in the international struggle against terrorism that presents an acute challenge to the RF as well as the West.
- Even on issues that currently divide the RF and the West (e.g., BMD) there is significant compatibility of views on mounting dangers of WMD and ballistic missile proliferation as well as incentives for cooperation.

- Russian leaders value highly the productive relations they could establish with their Western counterparts and their country's access to Western political institutions and associations, (e.g., the Group of Seven, the European Community, the NATO-Russia Council). Moscow is eager to capitalize on advantages of improved relations with neighbors to the West and East of its borders.

Depending on the evolution of the global environment and situations in Russia and the United States, several **scenarios of future development in the area of bilateral arms control** may be identified:

- In the next few years, the remaining key treaties on limitation of strategic arms – START and SORT – will be nearing expiration. While political and diplomatic exchanges on the future of bilateral arms control regimes are under way between Moscow and Washington, there is little clarity to whether the future of arms control will follow the familiar pattern of incremental mutual reductions based on agreed methods of verification, or based on other principles, e.g., parallel, unilateral or other regulatory mechanisms. In effect, the possibility of no arms control in bilateral relations is also possible, but with unpredictable consequences.
- Of significant importance will be the quality of bilateral U.S.-Russian political and military relations by the time the existing arms control regimes expire. It is doubtful that both sides will agree to allow the process of strategic arms limitations/reductions to simply lapse if these relations remain at their current level, let alone deteriorate beyond the current state. On the other hand, it may hardly be expected that the opposite, a benign scenario would be realized in the next few years, in which the RF would be able to achieve a high degree of democratization and fully enter the Western community which, theoretically, could eliminate the feasibility of a major armed conflict between the RF and the U.S.
- If Moscow's current strategy stays on course, its efforts at arms control negotiations will be continued, even intensified and expanded in the near future, and will likely include new types of strategic weapons and new spheres of their application. The pursuit of formalized agreements is likely to continue, either in a continuation of the past arms control tradition or as adapted to requirements of the changed post-Cold War world.

The nature and outcome of future arms control negotiations will be defined by new administrations in Washington and in Moscow. However, as far as Russia is concerned, given the continued central role Vladimir Putin may be play in the Russian political setup, Putin's style and methodology of combining aggressive rhetoric with offers of accommodation will continue to dominate Russian arms control diplomacy at least in the foreseeable future.

Dmitrii Medvedev should not be discounted as simply Vladimir Putin's shadow. In effect, he may turn out to be a dominant political figure in Russia and an active

participant in international affairs in his own right. Soviet and Russian experience demonstrates that a new leader may change the rules of the game for the country's political hierarchy and national policies once his grip on power is guaranteed and his influence begins to grow.

For this and many other reasons, Russia – a country with a huge missile-nuclear arsenal and on the rise to prominence in international affairs – should be watched closely in the future.