Chapter – III

FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS THE US AND THE WEST
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Vladimir Putin assumed office as president of Russia on May 7, 2000. It was the beginning of a new era in Russia. Attention was called to how Russia will implement its foreign policy during Putin presidency and its prospect. President Putin took several steps to formulate an effective Russian foreign policy which was unformed before he assumed the high position. He endorsed "The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation" in the year 2000. The 'Concept' has some details about the Russian foreign policy towards the US and the West.

Russia and the USA

By the end of 1999 Russia’s relations with the USA were considerably strained. Even the new leader-in-charge, Vladimir Putin could not indicate that this trend would reverse soon enough, though both countries continued to regard basic commonality of interests on most global issues. The years: 1999-2001 were controversial with regards to Russia-US relations. An atmosphere similar to that of the Cold War period could be seen though it combined elements of partnership with confrontation and disappointment. In addition, there was a sense that time had been wasted and trust in the future squandered.

The first cause of this was the Kosovo crisis in 1991, which changed the outlook of the Russian political establishment. The nationalistic faction expressed solidarity with 'our Slav brothers' (the Milosevic government), and it even strongly favored giving it military assistance. But even the democratic and pro-Western politicians were disappointed by the behavior of the developed countries. They saw in this an attempt by the great powers to dispense with the leading role of the UN and to appropriate the right to impose their will on those involved in armed conflicts, including sovereign nations. From this position the events in former Yugoslavia became the very symbol of the new configuration of forces in the world, which is marked by the desire of NATO, led by the US to demonstrate openly their determination to dominate the international political arena.²

1 Guiling Liu, "Russian Foreign Policy in Putin Presidency", Strategic Digest (IDSA: New Delhi), September 2000, p.1257.
Chapter III

The second cause was the US policy of NATO expansion and of the rejection of the ABM Treaty. With the election of President George W. Bush at the end of 2000, America has tended to revert to very firm protection of its national interests. From the very beginning of his presidency he characterized Russia as a direct threat to the West. Several spy scandals followed by the imposition of visa regulations by both sides. However, the retrograde movement did not reach the level of the Cold War. The US and Russia continued to cooperate in drug control and security problems. Cultural, humanitarian and economic relations are now on a larger scale. The Ljublinana meeting in June 2001 improved personal relations between Bush and Putin. They claim that their countries are not enemies and they pose no threat to each other. In fact this meeting took place three months before 11 September 2001.3

Symbolic of the deteriorating Russia-US relations has been the cold war rhetoric and anti-Putin sentiments expressed in the US press following the conviction of an American businessman, Edmond Pope on espionage charge in December 2000. The scorn was not just aimed at Russia’s judiciary. Barrage of attacks followed that questioned Russia’s recent action in the areas of weapons sales, arms control and strategic alliances, upsetting the US administration. Putin was accused of restoring the role of the security services in Russian political and economic life at the cost of civil society and freedom of the press. His proposed trip to Cuba was dubbed as an anti-US gesture. What has peeved US most of the USSR-Iran, Iraq and Libya. The State Department even sent a delegation to Russia on 6 December 2000, to try to freeze the sale of arms to Iran, which includes tanks and other conventional weapons4.

At the heart of the differences between the US administration and Moscow is development of limited national missile defence system, which Washington says is necessary to defend the US against potential threats from “rogue” state like communist North Korea or Iran. Moscow, Beijing and other capitals are opposed, saying it would weaken the fabric of international arms control.5

Russia warned that if Washington goes ahead with missile defence, Moscow may sever its disarmament agreements with the United States. Russia stressed that the

5 “Arms Control”, The CDPSP (Ohio), vol. 55, no.11, April 16, 2003, p.18.
ABM treaty of 1972 should remain the cornerstone of and the basis for strategic stability in the world. The American missile defence programme could trigger a new arms race at a time when Russia and the United States already have started preliminary talks of START-III treaty, to cut the number of nuclear warheads they each have to below the levels set in START-II of 1993.\textsuperscript{6}

The foreign policy concept indicated a wish list of the ‘Westerners’ within the MFA (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) but also incorporated the fears of the nationalists. The creation of external conditions to facilitate the domestic tasks of economic and political reforms was considered a priority. It was stated that developing relations with the USA could facilitate these favourable external conditions for internal reform. A strategic partnership and future alliance was envisaged with the USA. At the same time it was also stated that ‘we must firmly oppose any possible occurrences of imperialist manifestations in Washington’s policy’.\textsuperscript{7} Russia is prepared to consent to further reduction of its nuclear, potential on the basis of bilateral agreements with the United States of America, and within a multilateral framework with the participation of other nuclear powers, provided that strategic stability in the nuclear sphere will not be upset. Russia shall seek preservation and observance of the 1972 Treaty on the limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile systems – the cornerstone of strategic stability. The implementation of the plans of the United States to create a national missile defence system will inevitably compel the Russian Federation to adopt adequate measures for maintaining its national security at a proper level.\textsuperscript{8}

As soon as Russia announced in the early 1990s that it intended to enter the world market for commercial launches of stationary satellites, the US imposed quotas on launches of American-made satellites by Russian booster rockets. It did so in 1990 for two reasons. First of all, Washington regarded Russia as a country with non-market economy and feared that once Moscow gained access to the world market, it would start engaging in dumping. Second, the US needed leverage over Russia in the event

\textsuperscript{6} “Will S-300’s Undo the ABM Treaty? ”, The CDPSP (Ohio), vol 53, no. 22, (2001), pp. 21-23. Also see, “Arms Control”, The CDPSP (Ohio), vol. 54, no. 24 (2002), p. 18. And, The START-II treaty requires the US and Russia to cut the number of their nuclear warheads in half, to between 3,000 and 3,500. The treaty was signed in 1993 and ratified by the US Senate in 1996. It was ratified by the Russian Duma in April, 2000.


that suspicious about Moscow was violating the Missile Technology Control Regime were confirmed.

Washington set a quota for Moscow of 20 American satellite launches up to Dec. 31, 2000, and gave Moscow permission to lower the cost of its launches, but not by more than 12.5% of the average world price. To date, contractors in Russia working with the Americans - the Khrunichev State Space Research and Production Centre, which makes the proton heavy booster rocket and the Energia Rocketry and Space Corporation, which outfits rocket with a fourth stage, an acceleration module – have launched 15 commercial geostationary satellites. Two more American satellites are to be placed in geostationary satellites orbit by the end of the year a GE-1A (in September) and a GE-6 (in October). The proton accounts for the bulk of the Russian space industry’s revenues (a single commercial launch costs about $ 70 million).  

With Dec. 31, 2000 drawing closer, however a decision had to be made on whether or not to extend the Russian-American quota agreement. In the end, Washington and Moscow decided to set quotas, but to continue to hold consultations from time to time in order to stay abreast of developments in the international commercial launch market.

The outcome of the talks can definitely be regarded as a major success for Russia in general and for Russian Aerospace Agency general director Yury Koptev in particular (it was Koptev who worked to persuade Washington to drop the quotas during a visit to the US in June 2000). Even though Russia has not used its entire quota the fact that the restrictions have been lifted is a great psychological importance for potential clients who can now be confident that there will be no problems in placing their satellites in orbit.

Even so, the US does not intend to abandon the idea of quotas on Russian launches once and for all. To all appearances, Washington simply feels that Russia does not currently pose a serious threat to American booster rocket manufactures.  

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Cuba is once again a bone of contention between Moscow and Washington. A cold wind from the past began blowing again in relations between Moscow and Washington on 21 July, 2000. The US Congress's House of Representatives passed the bill called the Russian-American Trust and Cooperation Act by a vote of 275 to 145. Despite the nice-sounding title, the bill links a restructuring of the debts of the former USSR by the Paris Club to the presence of a Russian radar installation in Cuba. The Republicans, who sponsored the bill, say the reason for the strange linkage is that Russia can use its radar installation in Cuba to gather information on classified American military research and to intercept secure diplomatic and commercial communications. As a result, Cuba, with Russian help can “wage information warfare against the US”.

The American lawmakers demand that the installation be completely shut down and that all the service personnel are recalled to Russia. Moscow reacted immediately to the unfriendly move. Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov said that “it is inappropriate to link these two things—our installation on Cuba and the debts”. He pointed out that the installation has existed for many years now and is no secret to America”. The installation is used to monitor compliance with international arms limitation agreements, and the US has similar facilities. The Russian Prime Minister feels that the American Congress's decision was prompted by the upcoming presidential election. As for the US administration, Mikhail Kasyanov believes that it has taken a “carefully considered position” on the problem.

Valery Manilov, deputy chief of the Russian Armed Forces General staff, also expressed the view that the US President will not sign the bill. However, the Colonel General was much more emotional in condemning the American lawmakers, referring to the bill's passage as “yet another demarche” and a continuation of the policy of aggravating and destabilizing the situation. Valery Manilov also declared that “Russia has not deviated one iota from the relevant agreements, including their provisions concerning the Cuban installations”. By contrast US efforts to build new military installations that can be used in a national missile defence system “do indeed constitute prerequisites for the violation of fundamental agreements”.

Vladimir Putin’s visit to Cuba and Canada was the last visit by a Russian leader to the Western Hemisphere last century (2000). The visit is symbolic in that Putin bypassed - or flew past, to be exact – the Western Hemisphere’s (and the world’s) leading country. Although the circumstances are different, this invites comparison with Prime Minister [Yevgeny Primakov’s famous U-turn in the spring of 1999 when, one may recall, he turned his plane around in midair off the US’s Atlantic coast, canceling a scheduled meeting with Vice-President Al Gore in Washington because the Americans had begun “humanitarian” NATO bombing raids in Yugoslavia without informing Moscow.\footnote{“The Kosovo Conflict: Unexpected Conclusions”, The CD PSP (Ohio), vol. 51, no. 49 (1999), p. 24.}

The circumstances are different, but the point is the same in both cases. The point and the language chosen to make it, namely the language of gestures. Using the language of gestures, Russia sent a signal that it was pulling back and distancing itself from the US, in an attempt to assert its independence without, however, challenging the world’s leading superpower or that superpower’s ability to put pressure on a recalibrate country.

One of the these gestures was made in conjugation with Canada: the two countries approved to criticize American plans to deploy a national missile defence system in defiance of the 1972 Soviet-American Antiballistic Missile Treaty. Naturally, this language of gestures was even more expressive during Putin’s visit to Castro’s Cuba to which the US has been hostile for 40 years now and for the past decade had an obedient imitation in the form of Yeltsin’s Russia.\footnote{“Assessing Putin Foreign Policy as Bush Term Nears”, The CD PSP (Ohio), vol.52, no.52 (2000), p. 5. Also see, The CD PSP (Ohio), vol. 52, no. 50, pp. 1-5.}

There was nothing unduly defiant about the language of gestures. On the contrary it was polite and diplomatic and avoids harsh words. In Cuba, Putin and Castro called for a multipolar world and spoke out against US domination. But for one thing, these positions are enshrined in Russia’s foreign policy doctrine. Second, it was also during Putin’s visit to Cuba that the Russian president – this time acting alone without Castro-promptly pardoned [Edward] Pope, the American citizen convicted of espionage by a Moscow Court. And it was from Cuba that he called to congratulate George W. Bush on his election to the US presidency.
Going back to Primakov's U-turn, Russia condemnation at the time of the NATO bombardment of Yugoslavia also had a peaceful, diplomatic resolution with the full restoration of Russia-NATO cooperation under the Russia -NATO Founding Act in December 2000. Defence Minister Igor Sergeyev paid a visit to NATO headquarters in Brussels to that end.\textsuperscript{15}

On 20 February, 2001, Russia's Defence Minister Igor Sergeyev handed NATO Secretary General George Robertson Russia's proposals for a cut-price European anti-missile defence shield designed as an alternative to a planned $60 billion US system that Moscow says threatens a new arms race.

Robertson said he wanted to improve relations soured by NATO's air strikes in Yugoslavia in 1999. He was later to re-open the NATO information office closed in a dispute over the operation. NATO and Russia together are building what he calls "crisis-resistant relationship" that will allow both to deal with the tricky issues as well a common issues at stake in the world today. Russia also said it wanted to improve relations, but Sergeyev made clear that a range of awkward issues remained. Moscow opposed NATO plans to grant membership to more of its former cold war allies in Eastern Europe, as well as possibly the Baltic states which were once part of the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{16}

Colonel-General Leonid Ivashov, in charge of the military's foreign relations department said the three-stage plan for non-strategic anti-missile defence was "Radically different from what the American are proposing." Russia's plans put closer assessment of the threat and political efforts before military hardware and would keep arms accords intact. Russia said its plan was far cheaper than its US rival, and will provide Europe with only a partial umbrella against attack, leaving Moscow's own nuclear deterrent intact.\textsuperscript{17}

In late 2004 Putin called for joined work on a non-strategic defence system which he said could head off potential attacks from rogue states without undermining existing disarmament pacts. The Russian plan provides for close assessment of existing and future missile threats. If detected, they could be nipped in the bud by joint political

\textsuperscript{15} The CDPSP (Ohio), vol. 52, no.49, pp.20-21.
\textsuperscript{17} "Inveterate Advisers", The CDPSP (Ohio), vol. 51, no. 49 (1999), p. 23.
efforts. A mobile missile force would be deployed near a potential aggressor only as a last resort. Washington remains skeptical. Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said Moscow was part of the problem of missile technology proliferation which has fed the US desire for NMD.\textsuperscript{18}

Some European members of NATO share Russian misgivings over NMD and sought details of its proposals. They had urged Washington to consult Moscow and Beijing, another fierce NMD opponent, before forging ahead with its own missiles shield. Robertson's visit follows a week of alternating diplomacy and missile tests by Moscow, which had intensified the missile defence debate.\textsuperscript{19}

Russia had been striving for strengthening common European structures instead of a stronger and enlarged NATO. On both the issues of NATO expansion and US NMD plan, Russia had found support in some European quarters, It had also hinted at cooperation with China in the field of strategic armaments and technology if the Americans go ahead with the missile shield plan. Thus Russian foreign policy at that time was oriented towards creation of a multi-polar world, through a European security system, of which Russia will be one of the central pillars, and strategic partnership with some of the states of the former Soviet Union, China and India. It was also in the process of reviving its political, economic and defence ties with some of its old allies.\textsuperscript{20}

Russia and the US were building a Global Monitoring System. Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov and US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Notifications of Missile Launches on December 16 in Brussels.

This was the second document giving concrete substance to the joint statement on exchanging missile launch data that the Russian and US presidents signed on September 1998, in Moscow. In preparing the statement, the two countries' leaders sought first and foremost to minimize the threat of nuclear war resulting from a false launch report by the Russian or American missile-attack warning systems. Another

\textsuperscript{18} "Umbrella Salesman", The CDPSP (Ohio), vol. 53, no. 22 (2001), p. 23.


objective was to initiate cooperation in monitoring missile launches by third countries. It should be noted that Russia and the US are in a unique position—"our countries are the only ones in the world that have missile-attack warning systems."  

However, Moscow and Washington attached different nuances to cooperation in monitoring missile launches and controlling the proliferation of missile technologies. Russia viewed this activity as an alternative to building a national missile defence system, while the US would like mainly to put control on missile production by Russia’s southern and eastern neighbours.  

As a result, the two sides, in the first document fleshing out the aforementioned joint statement—the memorandum on establishing a data exchange center (signed in Moscow in June)—opted not to exchange information during the initial stages about missile launches by third countries.  

The problem is also skirted in the newly signed memorandum. Moscow and Washington codified their agreement on important but essentially technical matter. Perhaps the most interesting circumstance is that the sides decided to provide for the technical possibility of establishing an international multilateral missile launch notification system on the basis of the Russian-American system, whose architecture offers the capability to link up to 200 participants. In this way, the infrastructure was being created for a Russian-proposed global system for monitoring the nonproliferation of missile and missile technologies.  

An important element of the new agreements was that they established a missile-launch notification regime. The sides pledge to provide preliminary information no later than 24 hours before a plane launch. They also set a deadline by which confirmation must be provided after a launch.  

Furthermore, Moscow and Washington agreed to notify each other of launches of not only intercontinental missile, but also system with a range of over 500 kilometers. Booster rockets, hardware being taken out of orbit and notification will be required.


\[\text{21 "Karaganou Still Upbeat on Ties with US, Putin Policy", The CDPSP (Ohio) vol.53, no.50 (2001), pp.7-8.}\]

\[\text{22 Ibid.}\]

Specific aspects relating to the joint operation of the Data Exchange Center are set forth in four appendices to the December 16 memorandum.

For all the importance of the problem's technical aspects, the Russian leadership also attached a very specific political significance to the new agreement. As Igor Ivanov put it the signing of the memorandum was a "guarantee of the continuity of consistent unceasing efforts by Russia and the US to strengthen strategic stability and mutual trust". Moscow was thus constructing the positions from which it will counter the "missile-defense offensive" that to all appearances, the new US administration intends to mount.24

On the one hand, Clinton sympathized with Russia, but on the other hand, he never lost sights of his own interests. Most importantly, however, he was sympathetic toward a wrong-headed policy in Russia, one that ultimately failed. And therefore this period of Russia-American relations was ending on a bitter note. America's attempts to guide reforms that were patently doomed to failure led to noticeable increase in anti-Americanism. At the same time, this policy led to increased irritation with Russia in the United States, because the American got the impression that they were spending money on Russians and were misusing it. During Clinton's tenure, unfortunately, a tremendous desire arose in Russia to get back at America for all the humiliations that Russia had actually brought upon itself.

So far, the new administration in the White House is saying what it promised it would say. Washington had no intention of helping Moscow pursue policies that it did not understand. The Republicans feels that Russia ought to straighten out its affairs on its own.

A great deal will depend on how the Russians foreign policy was perceived. If it was perceived as anti-American-and there could be grounds for that perception- the American have quite a few possible ways to start putting pressure in Russia, respectfully but forcefully. Although Putin probably does not want a confrontation with America, moves to plug holes and reign certain lost position were creating the impression that they were trying, when possible, to push the US aside. On a conceptual level, this was manifested in the fact that the idea of unpopularity has

begun floating around again in high-level political circles. That as an absurd idea, because of a unipolar world. It was a harmful idea, because it created a direct opposition between Russia and America. It was likely that the US would perceive Russian policy as anti-American and will begin taking measures.

There was a rather large number of people in Russia who would like to mobilize the country or retain their political and economic position by creating a foreign “enemy image” and making Russia partially an enemy. That policy was articulated distinctly in 1999, and Putin hoped that it would be defeated. But that kind of ideology does have to be kept in mind.  

**International Terrorism**

A week after the completion of a visit by US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, a joint statement outlining two countries relations in the fight against international terrorism had been published in Tashkent. Along with generalities, it contains one nuance suggesting that Uzbekistan would be very involved in the retaliatory action.

The statement said that one of the airfields being made available to the US Armed Forces will “primarily” be used only for humanitarian purposes. What kinds of secondary, tertiary and other uses the Uzbek government will permit was not hard to guess.

American military helicopters and Land rovers were already being rapidly assembled at the military bases in Khanabad. The components were being flown in by US military transport planes.

Credible sources have also reported the presence at the Khanabad base of mountain infantry division that was training with Uzbek Special Forces to repel likely attacks from Afghan territory by the Taliban and by Dzhuma Namangani’s opposition’s forces.

Moreover, current information indicates that the American military had decided to settle down $80 million to modernize and renovate infrastructure connected in any way with the functioning of Khanabad. In private conversation, senior Uzbek officers have been talking about very lucrative prospects for their country. They mention
Ballpark investment figures in the hundreds of millions of dollars, some of which would go to update the equipment of Uzbekistan's armed forces.\textsuperscript{26}

In short, (President) Islam Karimov’s statement about the Americans being allowed to use the military base temporarily and only for humanitarian purposes is at least insincere, and at most a lie. Its purpose was probably to dull the vigilance of Russia which was keeping close tabs on quiet US “intervention” in the former Central Asian republics of the USSR.

The majority of the public regards the American military presence as a gift from Allah. The reasoning behind this attitude was primitively simple: “Russia had no money to protect us”. Protecting themselves was something people here weren’t used to.\textsuperscript{27}

The Russian president’s visit (to the United States).... was part and parcel of the post-September era of the war on international terrorism. On September 11, this era replaced its predecessor, the post-confrontational era, which began with the fall of the USSR.

Finally, for the first time since World War II, a firm foundation had been laid for constructive, almost allied, relations between Russia and the US-namely, the existence of a common enemy. That was the view taken by many of theirs respected political analysts. They had someone to be friends against.

\textbf{Arms Control}

During this summit, both Bush and Putin have emphasized the danger of biological or chemical warfare and the possibility that terrorists could obtain nuclear weapons. Who’s next” the rogue nations to use US terminology and the US list? Iraq, Iran, North Korea? If so, the international antiterrorist coalition will probably split apart. Moscow was not prepared to go that far to accommodate Washington. The countries of Western Europe were wavering, too. The enemy was ceasing to be common one.\textsuperscript{28}

\textsuperscript{26} “Is US Crowding Russia Out of Central Asia?” \textit{The CDPSP} (Ohio), vol. 54, no. 1 (2002), pp. 1-3.
\textsuperscript{27} “The War on Terrorism”, \textit{The CDPSP} (Ohio), vol. 55, no. 42 (2001), pp. 17-18.
To return to Putin’s visit to the US, it should be noted that Bush continues to emphasize an outwardly very simple formula that was firmly lodged in his mind: Russia is not an adversary of the US (and for Bush personally, Putin is "almost a friend"). Concealed behind this formula was a surprising revelation: Nothing fundamentally new has happened between Moscow and Washington in the decade since the fall of the USSR. Or if anything has happened, it wasn’t that one would have hoped for. The recent bosom buddies Boris and Bill proclaimed American-Russian partnership, but from an objective standpoint, the American patrons of Russia’s "reforms" only helped Russia sink into an unsteady morass and a bloody mess of theft, corruption and predatory capitalism.\(^{29}\)

Putin and Bush once again announced that they were prepared to make cuts in strategic offensive arms (Bush was willing to go down to 1,700 to 2,200 warheads, and Putin even further.) But that was not the main point. If Russia is not their adversary and they were not Russia’s then why do they need the abstruse, out-of-date Soviet-American treaty system, which was put together in the era of confrontation and was designed to control the nuclear weapons of the world’s two leading nuclear powers—that was what Bush’s aforementioned very simple formula into in practice. The era of parity had ended not only de facto, in view of US nuclear superiority, but also de jure, i.e., in terms of treaties and international law. The US’s desire to withdraw form the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty was no longer an exception; it was the new rule for the entire system of American-Russian relations.\(^{30}\)

Ivanov used to describe the difference between the Russian and American views on the future of strategic offensive weapons after a meeting with (US Secretary of State) Colin Powell in the summit to be held in St. Petersburg and Moscow on May 23-26. According to Ivanov, "considerable progress" war made in Madrid in reconciling the sides’ views on establishing a "new Russia-NATO mechanism" and in drafting accords for the forth coming meeting between the president of Russia and the United States. For the first time, the main documents the presidents will be signing were


officially identified. They are the Treaty on the Reduction of Strategic Offensive Weapons and a declaration on New Strategic Relations between Russia and the US.\(^{31}\)

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov paid a one-day visit to Belgium, having arrived there from Washington. He met in Brussels with George Robertson, the secretary-general of NATO, which will take over the antiterrorist operation in Afghanistan. Mr. Ivanov said Russia was prepared to cooperate with the alliance in that country. Specifically, such cooperation could take from the intelligence sharing, logistical and medical support and rescue operations in the northern Afghan provinces bordering on Tajikistan. However, Russia would engage in such cooperation with NATO “only from its own territory or from Tajikistan, working from positions occupied by Russian Defense Ministry serviceman and border troops,” Sergei Ivanov stressed. The minister ruled out the possibility of sending Russian servicemen to Afghanistan for direct participation in the anti-terrorist operation. In addition, Sergei Ivanov and George Robertson discussed stepping up the activities of the military liaison mission under Konstantin Totsky, Russia’s chief military representative to NATO, in the Belgian town of Mons, outside Brussels. This measure would enable Russia, as it winds down its military presence in the Balkans, to engage in more active work under the provisions of the Rome Declaration, which was signed in May 2002 and established the Russia-NATO Council in the “at 20” format. At issue are such fields of cooperation as peacekeeping, rescue operations and crisis prevention and resolution.\(^{32}\)

**Iran and the Nuclear Proliferation**

The purpose of the anti-Iran campaign unleashed in the United States was to make Tehran believe that if it did not agree to certain concessions, it can expect the same fate as Iraq. These concessions were that Iran end its nuclear program and withdraw its support for Hezbollah. The US was probably hoping that a conflict over these issues will break out in Iran, the country’s leadership will prove decisive and

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weakened, and conditions will become ripe for an uprising of a coup- i.e., for regime change, something Washington had long been dreaming of.

What should Russia do under these circumstances? On the one hand, it does not befit a great power to snap to attention under pressure from America and curtail its program of assisting Iran in the development of nuclear energy. On the other hand, helping Iran make nuclear weapons would be the height of stupidity. Consequently, Russians needed to accurately determine the real state of affairs with the help of the International Atomic Energy Agency and other sources of information, and if they find that the American allegations were not without grounds, then they must act as was dictated by common sense and the interests of Russia, which is only a stone’s throw away from Iran, after all. But to indignantly reject even the slightest possibility that a nuclear threat could emanate from Iran would be to make an unforgivable and possible fatal mistake. 33

In the 12 years since the breakup if the Soviet Union people in Russia have stopped being afraid of an active foreign policy. They have overcome the fear that was expressed mainly by (former Russian Foreign Minister) Andrei Kozyrev (in the early 1990’s). During this period, Russia’s political establishment has seen for itself time and again that a strategic “yes” to America, and attempts to cozy up to the US and thereby win its favor have gotten them nowhere.

Russia’s hopes for full-fledged and substantive partnership with America were left hanging in midair shortly after 9/11. In response to Russia’s unconditional support for America after it was attacked by terrorists, and in exchange for its agreement not to interfere with the US’s establishment of military bases on the republics of Central Asia- a zone of natural geopolitical interests for Russia-all they got was a temporary decrease in criticism over Chechnya. Yes, an important example of the fact that Washington can be persuaded to assume at least some commitments. But from a practical standpoint the document isn’t worth much-the Americans were simply warehousing the warheads they are removing from their missiles. And they can reinstall them at any moment and target them on whomever they please. Apart from the

agreement on strategic cooperation to fight against international terrorism, there was almost no area in which America had tried to accommodate Russia’s concerns.  

The US will not establish military basis in the post-Soviet Baltic’s and in Tsancaucasia, official US spokesmen reassured Moscow on repeated occasions. Russia relies on those reassurances, its Foreign Ministry press and information department says in a statement. A mounting international terrorist threat had come into the foreground. With all that, the US intends to amend the geography of its overseas military bases. It had duly informed Russia about the blueprints in advance. The plans focus on bringing a part of overseas forces and arsenals back to the United States, and a revision of the present base network to bring US contingents close to the sources of tentative danger.

Whatever related plans were to fully comply with US pledged to limit its armed forces and armaments in particular, on the CFE, or Conventional Forces in Europe treaty, the Russia-NATO Founding Act, and Russia – NATO Council statements. Russia was calling US attention, as before, to that vital point. As for bases established in Central Asia with the anti-terror operation in Afghanistan, Russia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs expects the US to wind them up as the operation approaches its end.

The Russian opinion of US plans will depend on further practical arrangements and on whether they will endanger Russian interests, and to what an extent, if any, said the statement.

Sixteen nuclear research chiefs from the US and Russia, in a joint declaration drafted last month (September 2004), outlined an ambitious plan for nuclear’s role in the global energy arena.

The document says “the time had come to develop a comprehensive and a realistic plan to preserve nuclear energy sources for all countries” and “reduce the rises of nuclear arms proliferation, nuclear terrorism and hazardous impacts on environment and population health”. This can be done through a carefully controlled fuel cycle and promotion of advanced reactor technologies that fully use fissile resources, the researchers said.

Chapter III

The document will shortly be forwarded to US president George W. Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin. The six-page summary document, “Toward a Global Nuclear Future”, was established by the directors of seven US and nine Russian national nuclear research establishments. The document was agreed on at a “US Russian Lab Directors Forum” held in Vienna July 19-21, 2004.

The researchers predict “a new nuclear era” driven by global energy demand and factors including increasing stress on availability of non-nuclear fuels, air quality and climate change concerns, as well as international relationships.

They also see opportunities to “significantly reduce both the risks of proliferation and the potential for expended development of nuclear weapons.”

Conclusion

The Putin leadership accepts the reality of the current international system, namely that it is dominated by the USA. Putin himself sees no point in opposing the status quo, given the USA’s strength and Russia’s weakness. However this acceptance of the inevitable contains many paradoxes. Perhaps most interesting is the point made by Sergey Medvedev, when comparing Putin’s current foreign policy with that of the Kozyrev period in the early 1990s. Both Putin and Kozyrev favour close western partnership, but whereas Kozyrev saw this partnership as a means whereby Russia could become an integral part of the West, fully sharing its values, as West Germany did after 1945, Putin sees partnership as simply a means of not being marginalised by US-led globalisation. Marginalisation would destroy any hopes of regaining great power status. This is a paradox, as Putin is pursuing a western oriented foreign policy, but has no interest in westernising (ie democratising) Russia. The lack of interest in becoming part of a western Wertegemeinschaft places limits on the extent of possible partnership between Russia and the USA. It carries the possibility that a stronger Russia might at some point turn its back on partnership. Hence partnership with the USA is not an end itself under Putin, but rather a means to an end. There is little support within the Russian political elite for genuine partnership with the USA, thus any volte-face by Putin or a successor resulting in a rejection of close partnership would probably carry a good deal of support.

Chapter III

Russian approaches towards the USA have also been dominated by the fear that Washington may see Russia as irrelevant. This concern was heightened by attitudes displayed by elements of the Bush Administration when it first came to office. However, if the claims made by certain Russian analysts that the USA now sees Eurasia as a core interest are correct, then this should give Russia an opportunity to enhance her importance as a partner to Washington. This is certainly the approach that Putin has taken since September 2001.

Russia’s relations with the USA always raise the question of the interaction between Russo-European, US-European and Russo-US relationships. In the Cold War, Soviet foreign policy was often seen as attempting to decouple the USA from Western Europe. Similar claims have been made about post-Soviet Russian foreign policy. The Putin leadership has taken great pains to deny this. Then foreign minister Igor Ivanov stated in March 2003 that Russia was "not interested in the aggravation of relations between the USA and Europe". He also made similar comments in April 2004 in his new capacity as secretary of the Security Council:

“Our country does not seek unilateral advantages, nor will it do so in the future, from the differences of opinion which have recently been hampering coordinated actions in the Euroatlantic space. On the contrary, it is precisely the unity of the states located in the Euroatlantic space, regardless of their affiliation to this or that alliance and grouping, that we see as the guarantee of effectively and jointly countering the threats and challenges which our states are currently confronting.”

This is probably true. Moscow has no desire to introduce unnecessary and fruitless irritants into its relationship with the USA. To do so would jeopardize the policy of cooperation undertaken by Putin as part of his strategy of modernising Russia in order to ensure that it becomes an important part of a globalised world. Cooperation with the USA and with Europe can both be regarded as key components of this strategy.

There consequently has been relatively little concern expressed over the second wave of NATO widening that took place in March 2004, when Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia became members of the alliance. Whilst no Russian analyst or policymaker is likely to welcome the eastward expansion of the

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37 See as an example Thomas Graham, 'A world without Russia?', (Jamestown Foundation Conference, Washington DC, 9 June 1999).
Chapter III

Alliance, particularly into the territory of the former Soviet Union, this is probably offset by their awareness of NATO's reduced importance to the USA. Col-General Aleksandr Rukshin, deputy chief of the General Staff of the Russian armed forces, made the interesting comment in January 2004 that "we cannot prohibit NATO from accepting one state or another, which meets its requirements. However, it is worth mentioning that the more member-states NATO accepts, the less controllable it becomes." Defence minister Sergey Ivanov commented in April 2004 that Russia's attitude to NATO widening was "calmly negative", and this appears to sum up the official Russian attitude.

If Putin is unconcerned about the stationing of US forces in Central Asia, then he is unlikely to be overly perturbed about US forces being stationed in Eastern Europe. However, if Arbatov's assessment that the pro-American constituency in the Russian political elite is small, then NATO widening will enhance their negative perceptions of the USA's international role, particularly if Russian foreign policy does undergo any radical change in the future.

It is significant that most analysts have tended to downplay the importance of the rifts that arose between the USA and "Old Europe" in 2003 over Iraq, and have instead seen the attempts to heal these differences as evidence that centripetal tendencies in the Trans-Atlantic alliance prevail over centrifugal ones. The problems were depicted as a dispute within the western camp which will not decouple the Atlantic Alliance. This is not to say that Moscow would not welcome a looser relationship between the USA and Old Europe, with Russia in the long term becoming a more important partner of the major European powers. The possibility of the USA stationing its forces in Poland and other former Warsaw Pact states makes the development of Russia's ties with "Old Europe" an important counterweight to the USA's focus on "New Europe". However, Russia is unlikely at present to desire a major rift, as she would hate to have to choose between the two, not least because of her current weakness. A strong Russia, on the other hand, may feel that if she ever did have to choose, then in the long term she is a European power, and therefore has more in common strategically with Old Europe than with the USA. Therefore, even though Moscow has in 2004 expressed some concern over the economic implications for her of EU widening, and has also been discomfited by EU criticisms of certain human rights

issues, this will not dissuade her from seeking to see the EU as an important economic and security partner.

**Russia and the West**

The relationship with the West remains a major priority from the standpoint of military, political and eventually, economic security. Backing up efforts toward a well-balanced disarmament by promoting close military—political cooperation, with the leading developed nations is Russia’s best guarantee of domestic stability and security. Yet it had been typical of Russia’s leadership until recently to delude itself into believing it possible to have economic security assured with massive Western financial support. However, plagued by problems of their own, Western countries are able to give only so much, thus putting the onus on Russia to reform its own economy. It was high time for Russia to understand that by now it had received nearly the maximum that the West was willing to give. Moreover, the West did not want a powerful rival of its own making to emerge within such a historically short space of time. Therefore, while it was necessary to maintain and expand economic cooperation with the West wherever possible, it was also necessary to understand that there will be no breakthrough in the near future. And in any case, since the buildup of authoritarian trends in Russia was inevitable, so, there, will be the disenchantment of Western democracies.  

Interaction with Western European states, primarily with influential ones, such as Britain, Germany, and France, represents an important resource for Russia’s defence of national interests in European and world affairs, and for the stabilization and growth of the Russian economy.

If questions about Russia’s identity and status shadow the country’s foreign policy on a deep emotional level another set of concerns is more practical and immediate. The first of these was whether to seek partnership with the West. This question was not about identity but about strategic choice. With whom should Russia align to advance its workaday interests? It was important to recognize that this question was posed not in a neutral or general way but specifically in terms of the West. Other alignment

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40 "Foreign Policy Concept....., n. 7, pp. 1-8.
41 Guiling Liu, "Russian Foreign Policy in Putin Presidency", Strategic Digest (IDSA: New Delhi), September 2000, pp.1257-1262. Also see, Contemporary International Relations, vol.,10, no.6, June 2000.
options come afterward and arise only as part of the leadership’s (unsuccessful) struggle to resolve the question of Russia’s attitude, aims and approach toward the West.

Westernisers among the Russian foreign policy elite sometimes insist that the choice had already been made. Putin deeply desires to draw Russia toward the West, they say but – unlike during the early years of Boris Yeltsin’s presidency to Russia’s terms. They consider Putin’s references to Russia as a European nation and to Russian culture as European as a signal of his desire to be invited into Europe.\textsuperscript{42}

Russian foreign policy from 2000 had been predominantly European-oriented. This was different from the US-oriented policy in the earlier post-Soviet period. Europe had been recognized as a natural partner. Putin and his government had started to develop bilateral relations with all West European countries. Germany had remained the main trade and economic partner since the fall of communism in Russia.\textsuperscript{43}

Toward the close of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century Russia found itself at a historic crossroads. One path entailed persistent attempts to regain its former superpower status, to increase its influence on European and world affairs using all available means, and to make its partners respect its claims to zones of influence, regardless of the resources expended in achieving all this. The other path involved focusing on efforts to solve its extremely difficult domestic problems in order to become an organic society, especially in terms of economic and political organization, and to eventually join the system of Western alliances on the same terms on which the major European countries had joined forces in them.

Under present-day conditions taking the first of the paths described here –let’s call it the imperial path- would mean, in terms of foreign policy, to continue making gestures of dramatic effect but little practical effectiveness in an attempt to establish an opposing pole. For example, playing the West European card against the US and the Indian and Chinese cards against the West, vigorously seeking to uphold the ‘trampled’ rights of rogue states, and so on. And, in ideology, to aggressively instill in their people’s minds such reactionary utopian ideas as a “Eurasian civilized model of

\textsuperscript{42} Robert Legvold, “Russia’s Unformed Foreign Policy”, \textit{Foreign Affairs} (New York), vol.80, no.5, September/October 2001, pp. 62-75.

\textsuperscript{43} Ludmilla Selezneva, n. 3, p. 17.
a multi-polar world”. The most polite thing that can be said about this is that it was a
typical school of political thought in the 20th or perhaps even the 19th century.

The European civilization its great variety of ethno-cultural features and nuances
notwithstanding, rests on such solid foundations as the market economy, civil society,
developed democracy, the rule of law, the dismantling of various barriers between
nation-states, a variety of social initiatives, and much more. Needles to say, European
societies were not perfect or free of all contradictions, conflicts and forms of injustice.
No such society had ever existed or ever will. But...Russia’s national interests lie
mainly in bringing its societal life into conformity with the invariant features of
European Societies as quickly as possible. That being the case, Russia’s national
interests must be defended mainly inside the country not outside it. This doesn’t
mean, of course, that Russia had no interests beyond its borders. Russia’s most
important external humanitarian and cultural interests were to be found primarily on
the territory of the collapsed Soviet Union. Its trade and other economic interests lie
in the realm of relations with the developed countries, which were potential sources of
capital high technology and advanced ways of organizing production. As for Russia’s
security interests, they encompass the entire world.

Competition and economic rivalry – including competition and economic rivalry
between states, which were called upon to protect the interests of national producers
and consumers – will exist as long as the world market itself and states exist
Relationships in the market always involve bargaining. So they had to learn the rules
of this bargaining, without blaming its own lack of competitiveness and sluggishness
on discrimination. They must skillfully support national economic entities in the
world marketplace using international economic agreements and the entire
acknowledged arsenal of techniques to promote exports and regulate imports. Solving
these problems was another task that must be accomplished within Russia for the
most part, not outside it.

The worst enemy of a realistic national world view was a “defensive” mindset of the
kind that Russians inherited from the past and that influential political forces were
doggedly trying to revive today. It was essential to realize that no military threat to a
democratic Russia can come from the West. The real danger of aggression against
Russia, like the threat to the entire world community, comes from international
terrorist organizations and from regimes that in a display of profound irresponsibility
toward their own citizens provide such organizations with bases and try to acquire weapons of mass destruction in various ways. In the face of this new challenge, no effective means of coping with which have yet been developed, the interests of Russia, the West and a sizable part of the third world coincide. An understanding of this was manifested quite clearly in President Putin’s recent foreign policy steps, which were strongly opposed by certain political forces in the country. They argue that the West still doesn’t see Russia as a full partner and is in no hurry to open up the doors of its politico-military alliances to us. In reality, the well-known American political analyst Michael McFaul is right: A quasi-democratic Russia can only be a quasi-ally of the US. Never before have progress toward democracy and efforts to safeguard Russia’s national security been so closely intervened.44

Finally, Putin’s foreign policy reflects an orientation toward establishing closer relations with Europe as quickly as possible. Putin is the first leader of the USSR or Russia to insist that closer ties with Europe be their No.1 priority. Before him, the need for such relations was invariably proclaimed but then everyone would throw himself either into confrontation with the US or into its embraces. A radical shift has occurred in Russian foreign policy—from attempts to continue the great-power policy of the Soviet Union in a somewhat paradox from (because Russia’s grand claims were inconsistent with its limited capabilities) to a policy aimed at building an alliance with the West and integrating the country into Western structures. There was simply no alternative to this policy, and the shift that Putin had made stems from an understanding of a number of basic facts and trends in today’s world on the part of the president and some of his closest advisers. Among them, first of all, was the fact that at the world level, Russia is a relatively weak country, and that even if it developed in the most successful way possible, its proportional significance in the world was going to decrease, not increase. It will never be a “power-centre” in the former sense. Furthermore, the Russian Federation is surrounded in the south and east by neighbours that aren’t the most tranquil or predictable. Only membership in the strong and expanding Western alliance can ensure the security of such a country.45

44 “Putin’s Turn Toward West Sparks More Debate”, The CDPSP (Ohio), vol.54, no.1 (2002), pp.4-5. Also see, “(In Roundtable) Kortunov: Putin must not make Strategic Policy shift without consulting Russian Parliament, Public, Zolotaryov: Russia must provide global Counter balance to US: Makarenko: No, it now has chance to advance in long-stalled reorientation toward West”, ibid., pp.5-6.
45 “Is there a ‘Putin Doctrine’ in Foreign Policy?” The CDPSP (Ohio), vol. 54, no. 31 (2002), pp. 1-3, 7.
Russia - Germany

German Chancellor Gerhard Schroder, emphasised to the visiting US President Clinton in June 2000 that economically and politically the European Union was in no position to afford a new arms race, that was bound to follow if the United States goes ahead with the NMD plan. The European governments are worried that the plan, if carried on would deteriorate Russia-US relations, which in turn would have profound negative effects on Europe, this may be one reason why the European countries are responding positively to Putin’s European policy. They even sought to involve Russia in some way with NATO, to ease its opposition to NATO expansion. In 1997, on European member’s suggestion, NATO signed a basis relationship agreement with Russia, and the two sides also established a permanent bilateral committee. Despite relationship having gone sour since Kosovo crisis, leaders of NATO countries have gone out of this way to welcome Russian back to the NATO-Russian permanent joint council. Russia’s voting rights in the Council of Europe, which was suspended during its military campaign in Chechnya, have been restored.

Putin’s active European diplomacy has found favourable response and brought positive dividends. London Club of creditor nations and Russia reached an agreement on rearrangement of debts, by which the western creditor nations agreed on a package of postponing repayment, reducing principal and interests and lowering interest’s rate, a reduction of US $16.6 billion debts and an extension of repayment period for 30 years.46

A brief meeting that the Russian president and the German chancellor held in Hanover on Sunday (Dec.9) was marked by race harmony and surprising rapport. “It would have been simply impossible for it to be any more pleasant” the chancellor told journalists with satisfaction.

The exchange of compliments began at the Hanover airport, where Vladimir Putin landed on his way back to Moscow from Greece. Despite a piercing wind and other features of typical Moscow weather,” as Gerhard Schroder joked, the host and guest embraced warmly and had warm words for each other. Lunch at the Schroders’ apartment took place in an even more cordial atmosphere. When the Russian

Chapter III

president saw the apartment, he said with a smile that the chancellor "lives very modestly" but "very comfortably." Since the guest had arrived in a causal jacket, the host decided to take off his necktie too, so he wore just a suit and white shirt. This further reinforced the impression of a friendly, personal get-together. The hostess served the guest smoked eel and wild boar Stroganoff. But the main dish of course, was conversation about politics. Needless to say, Chechnya was not mentioned.

The conversation touched on postwar arrangements in Afghanistan and the conflict in the Middle East, as well as energy policy, oil prices and Russian sales of energy to Europe, including Germany. The two men also talked about relations between Russia and NATO, and the president said he was pleased with the Chancellor's clear and definite position.47

The two leaders continued their exchanged of compliments at an important press conference. Schroeder stressed that much of the credit for success in Afghanistan must be given to Russia and to Putin himself, who played an active role in the antiterrorist coalition. The president, for his part, congratulated Germany and Schroeder on the successful UN Conference on Afghanistan, held at the Petersburg Hotel in Bonn. The participants were able to find the "optimal solution, "Putin said. The head of the German government took the opportunity to report that Germany is waiting for a UN mandate to send a contingent of Bundeswehr peacekeeping troops to Afghanistan. Both men expressed concern about the situation in the Middle East and said that pressure should be put on the Israelis and the Palestinians, although they did not say how. The two leader's personal meeting in Hanover confirmed that mutual understanding between Germany and Russia is deeper now than it had been for a long time.48

Russian Minister of Culture, Mikhail Shvydkoi held a press conference on 14 March, 2003 in Moscow on transferring the so-called Bremen collection to Germany. The collection of drawings from the Bremen Kuntshalle was discovered in 1945 in the cellar of a castle in Brandenburg. It was saved by the well-known restorer Viktor

Baldin, who served as a captain in the Soviet Army during the Great Patriotic War. He saved works by Director, Rembrandt, Rubens, Titian, S Van Gogh and Manet from the potential fate of being used by soldiers as paper for rolling cigarettes. In 1948, the collection was added to the holding of the Moscow Museum of Architecture, whose director at the time was the legendary Aleksei Shchusev. In 1964, Viktor Baldin himself became director of the museum. During his year as director, Baldin repeatedly asked the CPSU Central Committee to return the collection to the city Bremen, as had been done earlier with holding belonging to the Dresedn Gallery. But his noble gesture was not understood or accepted. In the early 1990s the Bremen collection was confiscated and transferred first to the ministry of Culture for temporary storage, and then to the Hermitage, Nikolai Gubenko was minister of culture at the time.49

The Bremen collection was saved by the Soviet Army captain on his own initiative, and for that reasons its removal from Germany was deemed to had been illegal. Mikhail Shvydkoi reminded the reporters that the wording “illegal removal” with respect to the transfer of the Bremen collection to Russia was confirmed by the Constitutional Court in 1999. The collection had now been moved from the Hermitage to the State Repository in Moscow, and preparations are being made to ship it to Germany.

However, the originally scheduled date of shipment. March 29, 2003, was changed in connection with another event. Nikolai Gubenko, who was now chairman of the Duma’s committee on culture and tourism and was a fierce opponent of returning the Bremen collection, was threatening the Russian Federation government-to be specific, the Ministry of Culture—with a lawsuit in the capital city’s Presnya Court. The opposition’s status was neutral. The deputies are insisting that the Kuntshalle treasures were removed not by Baldin personally, but the USSR. Consequently, giving them back was against the law. Furthermore, the collection was estimated to be worth quite a hefty sum-$1.5 billion, by Gubenko’s calculations. (Mikhail Shvydkoi explained yesterday that this figure was overstated and that the value of the “Trophy” was closer to $50 million, which was still quite a lot, one must agree.) For that amount of money, they should get something back themselves.

49 The CDPSP (Ohio), vol.55, no. 11(2003), pp.18-19.
Yury Sharandin, head of the Federation Council’s committee on constitutional law, said that Russia’s relations with Germany were far more valuable than the Bremen collection. He described as “inappropriate” proposals that the collection’s transfer to Germany be applied toward their country’s debt to that country. “If they start talking about a deal, Germany will no longer consider itself obligated to support Russia in various aspects of both bilateral relations and international politics.”

The agreement between the Federal Ministry of Economics (BMWi) and the Ministry of Atomic Energy of the Russian Federation (Minatom), setting up infrastructure for dismantling about 120 decommissioned nuclear submarines, is to be signed next month when German Chancellor Gerhard Schroder and Russian President Vladimir Putin meet in Yekaterinburg, according to German officials. According to German officials, the Russo-German agreement had been initiated by BMWi and Minatom bureaucrats, calling for EWN and organizations under Minatom to be paid from proceeds that Germany had pledged during G-8 summits since 1996. The heart of the contract was the decommissioning of 120 Soviet nuclear submarines from the northern fleet, based in naval yards around Murmansk. EWN officials said that the interim storage facility would hold the reactors for about 70 years.

The funding for the project will be drawn from Germany’s Euro 1.5-billion commitments to the Euro 20-billion G-8 programme for reducing nuclear proliferation and safety threats in the former USSR. The Federal budget for FY 2003 has appropriated Euro 25-million for the project. For FY 2004, now under consideration by law makers and the cabinet, an appointment of Euro 60-million was planned by BMWi.

Early in February 2004 Russia’s Gazprom, Ukraine’s Naftogaz Ukrainy and Germany’s Ruhrgas held a tripartite meeting to discuss the establishment of “an international consortium to manage and develop the gas transport system of Ukraine”. It was easily to understand the mutual interest of Russia and Ukraine in the consortium’s establishment. At the same time, the interest of Ruhrgas in the project can be explained by the fact that the German gas giant had been the largest purchaser

50 Ibid.
51 “Russia-Germany: EWN could get 120 million euros for Submarine Decommissioning” The Strategic Digest (IDSA: New Delhi), vol.33, no.11, November 2003, pp.1257-58.
52 Ibid.
of Russian gas in Europe in the past three decades. After becoming a partner under the project, Ruhrgas will get a reliable instrument of control over the Russian-European market.53 Yet bilateral relations remained close and tension-free, while trade and commerce between the two continued to increase.

Russia - France

After Germany there was France in Russia's priorities in Western Europe. The effectiveness of the Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyamov’s trips abroad can be judged by how much foreign investment in Russia increases as a result. The first result of his visit to Paris was apparent: Paris did not dismiss out of hand German Chancellor Gerhard Schroder’s idea of converting Soviet debts into investments in Russia.54

Relations with France were tension-free and put on a steady course; so much so that Russia occasionally sought to use French reservations on European integration to its own advantage. Second only to Germany in Russian priorities in Europe is France. French and Russian diplomats fondly recall the historic Franco-Russian alliance of 1893 and their common struggle against German armies in two world wars. As their Soviet predecessors did from the time of Charles de Gaulle, on occasion Russian leaders have subtly reinforced France's continuing rivalry with Germany and its resentments at Washington’s perceived wish to dominate Western Europe. While Yeltsin’s personal relations with President Mitterrand never approached the level of warmth he exhibited with Chancellor Kohl, the personal dimension in diplomacy has loomed larger since the election in 1995 of Jacques Chirac as France’s president.55

The agreements that Russian arms exporter Rosoboronexport and combat aircraft manufacturer Sukhoi signed recently with primarily French companies appears to be aimed at creating a counter-weight to growing US technological superiority in the combat aircraft market. Trans-Atlantic tension between the US on one side and France and Germany on the other was understood to have provoked the move.

54 The CDPSP (Ohio), vol.52, no.49, p.23. Also see, “Russia will Get Status of Morocco”, The CDPSP (Ohio), vol. 52, no. 51 (2000), pp. 21-22.
At the 15-22 June 2003 Paris air show the Russian pair signed memoranda of understanding (MoUs) with EADS, MBDA, Thales Sagem and Dassault Aviation. The MoUs establish feasibility studies between European and Russian industries to identify areas where the companies can cooperate.\textsuperscript{56}

The French Association for Holders of (Russia) Czarist Bonds launches a new round in its battle with Moscow, demanding repayments of Czarists debts. The demand that the treasures of the Hermitage Museum, currently on display at the Paris Exhibition "when Russia spoke Russian", be sequestrated was only one instance of this 'exhausting battle. In this conflict the Russian side sticks to the memorandum on a final settlement of the property law-suit, signed by the Prime Ministers of both countries in November 1996. Moscow gave Paris 400 million dollars in repayment for the Czarist debts. Experts had calculated that this sum was the difference between the mutual financial claims of the two countries from 1917 to 1945. However, the French that have preserved the Czarist bonds consider that the sum of 400 million is merely 1 per cent of what Russia owes them according to the Czarist bills. Pierre de Pontbriand, president of French Association for Holders of Czarist Bonds, which includes 15,000 members, is convinced that Russia will have to pay the bills; otherwise it will be faced with a prospect of numerous international trials, which in property disputes usually take the side of the injured party.\textsuperscript{57}

Work on a Russian-French agreement on the airlifting of French military units to Afghanistan via Russia is nearing completion says the communique of the Russian foreign Ministry in connection with some Russian politicians maintaining that the airlifting of French units to Afghanistan via Russia was under way.

The press and Information Board of the Russian Foreign Ministry notes in the commentary that matters of foreign military transit via the Russian territory was regulated by the April 8 and July 12, 2004 resolutions of the Russian government. The commentary said that in 2003 France, taking an active part in the international effort for Afghanistan stabilization asked Russia to consider the possibility of concluding a separate Russian-French agreement on the transit of munitions and personnel via the


\textsuperscript{57} "Russia-France: The French Want to get 150 Billion from Russia", \textit{Strategic Digest} (IDSA: New Delhi), vol.33, no.9, September 2003, p.971.
Russian territory to meet the needs of the French contingent within the international force to promote security in Afghanistan. 58

Russia – U.K

Russian President Vladimir Putin visited Great Britain in the year 2001, for the first time in his capacity as president of Russia. Nevertheless, the visit seemed decidedly unofficial: The Russian President never even set foot in the British capital, conferring with Prime Minister Tony Blair at Chequers, the prime minister’s country residence. But the outcome of the meeting which was dubbed a family get-together, surpassed the results of many official negotiations.

Perhaps the chief sensation of Vladimir Putin’s visit to Great Britain was a statement by Tony Blair at a joint press conference: The British prime minister in effect became the first Western leader to hold Chechen terrorists directly responsible for the apartment house bombings in Moscow and other Russian cities. Until now, Western officials have either declined to discuss the subject or suspected the Federal Security service of masterminding the bombings. It’s not surprising, then that Vladimir Putin made a point of thanking the British Prime Minister and other cities of the Russian Federation. 59

The Russian president and the British prime minister enjoyed a very close relationship earlier as well. Tony Blair was the first Western leader to openly support the new Russian leader when he was still acting president. “That was a signal that we were being heard and understood,” Vladimir Putin said at Chequers. In the wake of this latest visit, the two leaders’ relations have become downright friendly. And they lavished compliments on each other in front of dozens of TV cameras.

Tony Blair has in effect assumed the role of Russia’s chief lobbyist in the West. It was Blair who recently unveiled the initiative to raise Russia’s relationship with NATO at a qualitatively new level, by replacing the old “19+1” format with a full-fledged “20” in which Russia could participate in the discussion of various issues on equal terms with alliance members. Moscow appreciated the initiative.

58 “Russia-France: French Military Units to be Airlifted to Afghanistan via Russia” Strategic Digest (IDSA: New Delhi), vol. 34, no. 9, September 2004, p. 1352.
Chapter III

The special trust between the two countries and their leaders was evidenced by an agreement reached during the “familly visit” to establish a bilateral British-Russian working group on combating terrorism. The accord was unprecedented in that the group’s meetings will bring together at one table officials of the two countries’ Defence Ministries, Foreign Ministries and, most importantly, intelligence communities (MI-6 and the Foreign Intelligence Service). Exchanges of classified information will begin “in the near future,” Tony Blair said.

British oligarchs who visited Chequers specifically in order to confer with Vladimir Putin expressed a willingness to see to the material foundation of Russian-British relations. After holding separate meetings with the heads of Shell, British Petroleum, Rolls-Royce and British American Tobacco, Vladimir Putin drew an encouraging conclusion: “I am confident that their interest will soon take the form of a series of major British projects in the Russian Federation.” His friend Tony Blair instantly promised to help with that, too.60

British Nuclear fuels plant (BNFL) renewed its push for more Russian business when it opened a Moscow Office in November 22, 2002. There was undoubtedly significant mutual benefit in close cooperation with the Russian nuclear industry. Russia and UK “share an understanding of the value of nuclear fuel recycling and a commitment to safety and non-proliferation”. Pryor’s group, which had become more commercially driven prime BNFL restructured in June 8, 2002, includes the fuel manufacturing and reactor services business of Westing-House Electric Co. and Coordination of international spent fuel and mixed-oxide fuel transport. Pryor pointed to 20-year contract signed earlier in year 2003 by Westinghouse for testing fuel elements at the Kurehatov Research Centre, and to continuing Uranium agreements expected to be signed shortly by BNFL and Techsnabeport. Another UK fund of 70 million pounds, over 10 years, was earmarked for plutonium disposition work. That fund over-laps somewhat with the 84-million pound fund. The latter package also covers work involved in dismantling up to 100 nuclear submarines in northwest Russia, the safe storage of large amounts of spent fuel at Andreeva Bay, and re-employment of nuclear scientists and technicians in 10 of Russia’s closed nuclear cities of creating “sustainable non-weapons jobs and industries”. BNFL has a number of bilateral

60 Ibid.

93
arrangements with these establishments' laboratories under a collaboration agreement with Russia’s Ministry of Atomic Energy.\textsuperscript{61}

In a statement adopted at the conclusion of their meeting at Evian, the group of eight nations urged Iran and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to refrain from developing nuclear weapons. That demand could make it difficult to complete the nuclear power plant at Bushehr, which was being built with Russian assistance. Opponents of Russian-Iranian cooperation did not waste any time in turning this was their advantage. A high-ranking British diplomat, without waiting for any explanations from the Russian delegation, offered his own interpretation of Moscow’s policy. He quoted Putin as having said that Russia would not export nuclear materials to Iran until it agreed to allow thorough international inspections. The remarks made by the official, who asked to remain anonymous, were instantly picked up by the news media. Their reports suggested that Russia was indeed prepared; if not to pull out of the Bushehr project entirely, them at least to freeze it.\textsuperscript{62}

The state visit of President Vladimir Putin to Great Britain which began on June 23, 2003 saw special ceremonies. The hearty royal welcome is expected to facilitate the practical part of Putin’s visit, which includes issues that should facilitate the rising Russo-British Cooperation.

Mutual trade had grown by 14.6 per cent to USD 5 billion in 2002, while Russia’s export to Britain has risen by 14.5 per cent to USD 3.5 billion. The largest contracts were signed in power engineering. British Petroleum and Shell have announced their intention to invest in the Russian fuel and energy complex (USD 6.75 billion and USD 10 billion, respectively). The Kremlin believes that the implementation of these projects would make Britain the leading investor in Russia.

The ongoing talks in London are to be crowned with the signing of a communiqué on cooperation in power engineering and memorandum on the North Eastern gas pipeline.


\textsuperscript{62} “Unnamed British Diplomat claims Putin, at G-8 meeting, said Russia would not send Iran nuclear materials unless it agreed to through IAEA inspections; Putin’s public remarks leave matter ambiguous; Iran’s pursuit of nuclear arms would confront Moscow with hard choice”, \textit{The CDPSP} (Ohio), vol.55, no.22 (2003), pp.6-7.
The protocol also stipulates the presence of President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Tony Blair at the conference on energy an area where the two countries have seriously progressed. A vital task of the London meetings was to spur on political dialogue. The cool period provoked by the Iraqi crisis has given way to a warm spiel. Putin and Blair had stated that differences concerning methods of international influence on certain regimes had not undermined the fundamentals of bilateral partnership.63

Conclusion

Russia will continue her rapprochement with the West whilst Putin remains president. The development of the Russia-NATO and Russia-EU relationship and also of the Russia-US relationship is likely to see the creation of a more institutionalised relationship, and the Russian leadership may also take up Karaganov’s suggestion of arguing in favour of developing the G8 into a more formal alliance. Putin considers that Russia has no alternative other than to develop close political and economic ties with the major western industrialised powers. He had embarked upon such a course prior to September 2001, and the events of “9-11” gave an impetus to this course. It confirmed to the West the correctness of Moscow’s views on what it calls international terrorism, and thereby showed Russia’s value as a partner in cooperating to counter this threat. In the “leastworst case” scenario for Moscow, the West is now less likely to see Russia as an irrelevance in the international system, which was a danger she faced at the turn of the millennium. The development of closer ties with NATO and the EU means that she is likely to play a greater role in the management of European security than she did in the 1990s. This is likely to be enhanced further if the USA becomes less interested in NATO and Europe. A less Atlanticist Europe may give Russia greater opportunities to develop ties with the EU and the major European powers.

Outside of Europe, improved ties with the USA may give Russia scope to play a greater role than hitherto in attempting to resolve crises in areas such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. During the Cold War, the USA sought to minimise the Soviet role in the Arab-Israeli dispute. Washington is now in favour of greater Russian involvement in the Middle East peace process, so enhancing Russia’s importance as a

63 “Russia-UK: Putin’s Visit to Britain”, Strategic Digest (IDSA: New Delhi), vol. 33, no. 8, August 2003, p.815.
partner of the USA. Russia also has the potential to enhance her importance as an energy supplier to the West, and the energy dialogues she has with both the USA and the EU may help develop her energy sector. The desire to cultivate Russia as a partner may mean that both the USA and Europe may play down their concerns over Chechnya and press freedom in Russia. It is also possible that the Putin leadership may in the long term become more flexible about a greater western role in peacekeeping and other security operations in the former Soviet Union. The Putin leadership is certainly more relaxed about NATO widening, including even the possible accession of the Baltic States.

This is not to say that the new Russo-Western relationship will be without its strains. It is at the moment questionable to what extent the new US-Russian partnership goes beyond cooperation in the struggle against terrorism, or in taking steps to counter the spread of weapons of mass destruction. While it is clear that Russia and the USA have common views on the Taliban and Al Qaeda, the Putin leadership does not share the Bush Administration’s perception that there is an Iraqi-Iranian-North Korean “axis of evil”. Russia did not welcome the US attack on Iraq. Russia and the USA also have significantly different views on Iran, which are unlikely to be reconciled. Although the USA’s withdrawal from the 1972 ABM treaty has not seriously damaged the US-Russian relationship, this action is seen by many in Moscow as an indication of how the USA is prepared to ignore Russia when it suits American interests. Despite Putin’s tolerant attitude towards the US presence in Central Asia and Georgia, there are many in the Russian politico-military leadership that do not take this view, and this could become a future source of resentment. Therefore whilst the Russo-US partnership is currently very close, it may face significant problems in the future, irrespective of the extent to which the relationship is institutionalised. The USA’s greater willingness to use military force since September 2001, and the possibility that Washington may become more willing to undertake pre-emptive military action against certain states and organisations could also intensify US-European differences over global security management, and lead to a less close US-European relationship. If such a situation emerges, then this may create greater opportunities for the development of Russia’s relationship with Europe, which in Moscow’s view of the world will become her key foreign policy relationship. Chairman of the Duma international affairs committee Dmitry Rogozin said in February 2002:
"We noticed recently how many European leaders turned to Russian President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin with a request of sorts, a proposal on becoming a defender of European interests in the face of the USA, which means that Russia is gradually turning into an advocate of the European world before this superpower, the USA. This is very interesting because it creates a very interesting game for us in Europe. We are becoming a leading European power, and we are respected in this role of ours."  

Commenting on the possibility of US takes military action against Iraq, Iran or North Korea, he said: "However, if there is no proof and if decisions which run counter to the UN Security Council and the opinion of the USA's European partners in NATO, including such leading countries as Germany, Great Britain and France, are taken, Russia's political points will sharply increase and Russia will become not just a mediator but a co-organizer of a new world order."  

Russia as a "co-organiser of new world order" with (or ideally, in) Europe is an optimistic vision, but it may be a vision held by many in the Russian foreign policy leadership and they are likely to pursue their long-term relationship with the EU, particularly with its leading powers, with this in mind.

\[64 \textit{SWB, 7 February 2002, SU/4422.}\]
\[65 \textit{Ibid.}\]