

Defense and Security Policies of the Russian Federation*

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Resumo

A Política de Defesa e de Segurança da Federação Russa

Este artigo descreve as políticas de segurança e defesa da Federação Russa, enfatizando as envolventes externas que condicionam e definem a elegendagem das prioridades pelo governo em termos de modernização militar para a próxima década.

Abstract

This article describes the defense and security policies of the Russian Federation, emphasizing the external environment conditions that define and prioritize the government military modernization policies for the next decade.

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Since the end of the World War II deep changes in all spheres of life and activity of international community have occurred. Many peculiarities of modern military-political agenda are conditioned by the developing globalization that has triggered the new system of international relations and considerable transformation of basic security principles.

Being a permanent member of the UN Security Council, having sizeable potential and resources in all life activities and keeping up intensive relations with leading states of the globe, Russia is exerting a substantial influence on the formation of the architecture of a new world.

Significant changes in approaches to and practices of military force application, confrontation reduction and overcoming the "cold war" legacy have drastically broadened the cooperation possibilities on the world arena. The threat of global nuclear conflict has been minimized. While keeping the notion of military force in interstate relations afloat, economic, political, scientific, ecological and information issues are becoming more emphatic. The major breakthrough in pivotal spheres of scientific and technological progress leading to the unified world information universe, the enhancement and diversification of international relations are making the states' mutual dependence global. Establishment of a more stable and crisis-resistant world community is a prerequisite.

At the same time, new challenges and threats in international relations are building up menacing Russia's national interests. There is a growing tendency of initiation of such world's structure when by solving principal problems of the international security the stake is placed on predominantly western institutions and forums with a limited membership, on weakening the role of the UN and its Security Council.

The formation of international relations is accompanied by a competition as well as by some states' wish to foster their influence on world policy also by production of mass destruction weapons (MDW). The importance of military and power-wielding aspects in international relations remains acute. Despite the complex international situation and inner difficulties, Russia due to its considerable economic, scientific, technical and military potential, the unique strategic location in Eurasia has been playing a fairly important role in world's processes. The attempts to ignore Russia's interests when solving large-scale problems of contemporary international relations, including conflicts, are fraught with undermining international security and stability, hindering the positive changes in the world.

In many countries, in the Russian Federation too, the problem of terrorism, having a transnational magnitude and threatening the world's stability, has ex-

acerbated preconditioning a consolidation of efforts of the whole international community, an efficiency increase of available forms and methods of fighting this jeopardy.

Thorough alterations of military-political and military-strategic situation in the world required a reconsideration of an array of existing provisions of military science; they influenced the creation of military doctrine and the concept of Russia's defense security in the 21st century. Following are Russia's basic interests in military and political cooperation with the West:

- influence reduction of NATO's expansion especially in the countries bordering on Russia;
- repudiation of nuclear weapons and infrastructure deployment in those countries where it is not deployed now;
- reduction of overall armament and arms level in Europe;
- repudiation to deploy on permanent basis of big foreign armed forces' contingents and relevant infrastructure for their deployment on the territory of those states where these forces were not previously deployed;
- assistance in converting of NATO from a military treaty into a system aimed at provision of common security interests and not against anybody.

But a unilateral alignment to the West alone is hardly productive, when Eurasia, including China, is gaining weight as an important entity in geopolitical and economic interests of the USA. The Chinese sector of Russia's policy should by priority be aligned with the European and American ones. It's important for Russia's and the US's security that China gradually join the process of curbing and reducing the strategic offensive weapons. Currently both Russia and the US are allies fighting the international terrorism; they are also interested in preserving international stability, counteraction to proliferation of MDW. Solidarity of Russian and US interests providing security is not limitless. International terrorism is likely to be sporadic and local in visible perspective like it has been during the last decades. Russia therefore should not rely upon cooperation in the frameworks of the antiterrorist coalition as a long-term and limitless sufficiently fruitful factor in Russo-American relation. Besides, the stronger the US position on the post-Soviet territory might get, the more tangible Russo-American contradictions will become.

Russia's long-term interest is in maximum closing in the European Union, joining the common economic and political space. EU expanding threatens the Russian Federation with insulation and weakening of its positions if it fails to pave the way for mutually beneficial relations.

Striving for military security reinforcement still remains the objective of military policy of world community's countries which guarantees the state ability to counteract unleashing a war, involvement in war, and if any, minimization of losses and damages for national security.

Military security is divided into three levels: global, regional, national.

The global level implies that Russia's military security is procured by measures of control and non-proliferation of MDW, reduction of strategic offensive weapons, etc.

On the regional level Russia's military security is safeguarded by strengthening of Russia's military-strategic position by means of collective security framing within the CIS and NATO.

On the national level Russia's military security is provided with generation of the country's military potential.

The National security concept of the Russian Federation defines the basic directions of foreign policy providing for its military security. Among them are:

- implementation of intensive foreign agenda;
- consolidation of key tools of multilateral control of political and economic processes under the guidance of the UN;
- legitimate participation of Russia in global and regional economic and political structures;
- cooperation in regulating conflicts, including peacemaking activity under the guidance of the UN and other international organizations;
- progressing in control over nuclear weapons, support of strategic stability in the world based on the country's relevant commitments;
- fulfillment of mutual obligations in reduction and liquidation of conventional and MDW;
- assistance in creation of free-MDW zones;
- fostering of international cooperation in combating transnational terrorism and criminality.

There are different approaches to the solution of the problem of state military security provision, of which the most appropriate option for Russia implies primacy of legal diplomatic and other non-military means preventing arms conflicts with sustaining power-wielding structures which possess defense-sufficient potential.

The results of the 5-day war with Georgia have given ground for a thorough analysis of the Russian Armed Forces' condition. Being the victor in August 2008 the Russian army though remained a copy of the Soviet one: the cumbersome administrative structure, the big number of staffed units, the obvious oversupply of officers and generals. The August 2008 incident envisaged the absence of modern automated control and communications systems, comfortable military outfit, state-of-the-art arms and weaponry in the Russian Armed Forces.

Realization of this reality made the military commanders act decisively and quickly. In September 2008 Russian Defense Minister Serdyukov and General Staff Chief introduced a plan on reimagining of the Russian Armed Forces to President

Medvedev. The task to reduce the manpower to 1 million with parallel reduction of officers from 355 thousand to 150 thousand servicemen was set. The changes also foresaw the personnel optimization of central military headquarters including the Defense Ministry and General Staff.

What was achieved in the field of military reforms during 2009-2010? Firstly, Russia adopted the new National security strategy, made amendments to military strategies having defined additional threats by the main and potential enemies, types of possible warfare and conflicts, main forms and methods of the strategic tasks realization.

Secondly, as the next logical step the creation of the Joint strategic command based on the new military-administrative division of the Russian Federation took place in 2010.

Based on the Moscow and Leningrad military districts the Western military district was established incorporating the North and Baltic Fleets, the Joint strategic command "West" (OSK) was organized. The North-Caucasus military district was reorganized into the South military district (OSK "South") which includes the Black Sea Fleet. The Volga-Ural military district and the western part of the Siberian military district are forming the Central military district (OSK "Center"). By uniting the remaining part of the Siberian and the Far-East military districts the East military district was organized (OSK "East") engulfing the Pacific Fleet. This makes a positive fact as the successful outcome of any military action depends on the effectiveness of management on battleground.

The Army General Staffs – air forces, fleet, ground troops – remain unchanged in the new structure of the Russian Armed Forces, but part of their usual functions as well as relevant commodities are subject to the Joint strategic command.

To increase the troop leading effectiveness a transition to the structure military district – operative command – brigade took place.

Major efforts were made to build up a new image of the land forces by forming 85 readiness level brigades (replacing regiments and divisions) of three kinds: armored brigades underlain by tank units; middle – multi-task; and light – air assault and mountain. The brigades are formed on the basis of module principle which implies their capability to carry out autonomous missions. They all are 95-100% manned, equipped with weaponry and other material stuffs. At the same time, in case of war or mobilization 60 weaponry storage facilities were laid down with resources to deploy new brigades consisting of reservists.

Key changes were undertaken in the Air Forces dealing with the transition of the field personnel from corps, division and air regiments to new structures, such as air bases and airspace defense brigades. The aerial combat basis is comprised of 33 air bases while air squadron is the main tactical unit in the Air Forces. Besides, 13 air-space defense brigades were formed.

The Navy structure hasn't undergone radical changes but for the creation of new submarine commands in the North and Pacific Fleets.

The Air borne Forces remained practically the same. Optimization affected only logistic and control services of the Space and Strategic Missile Forces.

It is worthwhile mentioning the considerable staff rationalization in the Defense Ministry central office, from 10523 to 3500 persons. As to the General Staff personnel, it was reduced by 50%.

In March 2010 President Medvedev in his speech before the Defense Ministry joint panel stated that the task set to the military office staff rationalization has been substantially fulfilled. The manpower was reduced to 1 million.

State Defense Procurement and New Military Equipment Supply

In compliance with the State weaponry Program (GPV) 2011-2020, over 500 new aircrafts of various types, 1000 helicopters and about 200 new air defense systems are to be supplied to the Russian Armed Forces within 10 years. For the anti-aircraft defense a united air-space defense system will be deployed combining anti-aircraft and missile defense capabilities. As to the aviation, beside the fifth generation fighter replacement activities (PAK FA), the work on perspective long-range aviation system was started (PAK DA). The work on developing a perspective early warning and control system (DRLO) and UA-100 are carried on.

The major part of military products for the Russian army is to be acquired from local producers. Those competitive and modern armaments which cannot be offered by the Russian military-industrial complex will be bought from leading western producers with establishing joint ventures in Russia and transferring here corresponding technologies.

Prioritized Russian Army re-armament programs till 2020 have been defined in the armament modernization plan.

- The first priority – strategic nuclear forces (SNF): to preserve the parity with the USA SNF will be developing and modernized as stipulated in the new Treaty on the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms where the stake will be made on the serial production of new solid-fuel missile system RS-24 “Yars” and BRPL “Bulava”.
- The second priority: high-precision weapons.
- The third priority: automated control systems (ACS) to provide possibilities of net-centric combat actions. These will have an open architecture enabling to roll-out their power in any direction.
- The fourth priority: all types of aviation.
- The fifth priority: anti-aircraft and missile defense.

According to Russia's Defense Minister Serdyukov, "arming is a quite long process. We have split it into two stages: before 2015 – the first stage and until 2020 – the second one. We ought to reach the following volumes: there should be not less than 30% of modern weaponry in the army by 2015 and by 2020 – about 70%".

Efforts have been made to close the gap with the leading western countries in regards to development of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV), individual combat sets, certain maritime and amour weaponry. Russia's potential partners in these programs are France (maritime weaponry, outfit), Germany and Italy (maritime weaponry, armor), Israel (UAV).

Manning Issues

Currently, according to General Staff Chief Makarov, "we are not passing to the volunteer army. Moreover, we are increasing the conscription and decreasing the volunteer part". The latter is as high as 20% of the overall number of servicemen. Gradually when the country's economic conditions are favorable the part of volunteers will grow by means of those positions that deal with combat readiness.

As from 2016 volunteer-reservists institution is to be introduced in the army. Much hope is laid on forming a corps of professional sergeants whose training started in Ryazan Airborne Troops School. It is planned to have 100-120 thousand professional sergeants in the Russian Army.

Two and a half years is a short term, but much has been accomplished in the army, more than in the whole history of post-Soviet Russia. The important is that it became possible to set the direction of reforming which will have been finished by 2020.

Definitely, speaking before such a well qualified professional audience I cannot but mention two most important features of the recent Russian Military Doctrine as they have been interpreted by former Chief of the General Staff and now Deputy Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation General of the Army Youry Baluevsky. Russian's new Military Doctrine was approved in February 2010. The main issues raised by this document are the assessment of the military threat posed by NATO, and Russia's policy on using its nuclear weapons.

External Military Dangers

Let us look at the three successive Russian documents that contained the words "military doctrine" in their title.

Looking at the 1993 doctrine, you will discover that the word "NATO" was not even mentioned there. The section of the document headlined Key External Mili-

tary Dangers only mentioned “the expansion of military blocs and alliances”. It also listed as a danger “an increase of groups of forces near the Russian borders to levels that upset the existing balance”. But the document clearly stated that Russia “does not see any of the world’s nations as its enemy”.

Why did it say that? It was 1993, a time of certain euphoria and romantic ideas, when everyone thought that the Cold War was over, that the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact had ceased to exist, that everyone was friends now, that there would be no more wars, and that conflicts in general were a thing of the past. NATO’s expansion at the time was still passive. Talking about NATO expansion, there have been six such waves of expansion to date.

The second document is the 2000 military doctrine. That was immediately after the first wave of NATO’s expansion, but there had also been other events relating to the former Yugoslavia. That is when Russia became more critical of the NATO expansion process.

The process of NATO expansion was fairly controversial. In 1952, Greece and Turkey both became members. Greece was not a problem at all, but, as for Turkey, even the proponents of NATO expansion had issues, and certain changes had to be made to the Washington Treaty. The thing is, there is Article 52 of the UN Charter – and all the military and political alliances always refer to the Charter, and their own documents must comply with its provisions. Article 5 of the Washington Treaty is based on Article 51 of the UN Charter – the nations’ right to collective defense. Meanwhile, Article 52 reads that the nations’ right to collective defense is exercised using either “regional agreements” or separate bodies to deal with such issues. And Article 10 of the Washington Treaty says that the geographical remit of the NATO alliance is limited to Europe.

The founders of the UN made a very wise decision. Based on the sad experience of the Second World War, when a bloody war had to be waged against the so-called Axis (Germany, Italy and Japan), they decided – as reflected in Article 52 – that such alliances can be regional but not global. Were it not for those limitations, when the Warsaw Pact was being created in 1955, that organization would have included China, the present-day North Korea, Vietnam,, Mongolia and even Cuba. But that restriction in the UN Charter is absolutely justified.

What was the result of that wave of NATO expansion? In 1961, the United States stationed its nuclear-armed Pershing missiles on Turkish territory. And in 1962, the Soviet Union stationed its own nuclear missiles on the territory of Cuba. What had we really achieved? We put the world on the brink of a nuclear catastrophe. We were half a step away from a nuclear abyss, from putting our modern nuclear weapons to use.

Brent Scowcroft, one of the forefathers of the nuclear race, said once that the U.S. policy of expanding NATO eastwards was a humiliation for Russia.

The 2000 military doctrine stated that the increasing groups of foreign forces in the vicinity of Russian borders posed “the main external threat.” Again, the word “NATO” was not used in that context. But Russia did say that the eastward expansion would lead to an increase in the number of military bases and an escalation of military activity near the Russian borders.

Finally, let us look at the latest version of the doctrine adopted in 2010. There is one particular passage in it that has become a subject of much speculation and attempts to take it out of context. I am talking about Paragraph 8, subparagraph A of the section “Key External Military Dangers”: “The desire to endow the force potential of NATO with global functions and to move the military infrastructure of NATO member countries closer to the borders of the Russian Federation, including by expanding the bloc.” That is how Russia assesses, but not treats, its military dangers – just military dangers.

To understand the reasons, let us look at the events of the past 10 years, the period of 2000-2010. I am talking about the modernization of America’s strategic offensive weapons. In 2002 the United States adopted what was essentially a new policy on strategic offensive weapons. Until 2002, the structure of the U.S. strategic forces could be represented by an isosceles triangle, with three strategic offensive components: the intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), nuclear-armed submarines, and heavy bombers. But in 2002 the United States adopted a revised strategy of developing its strategic offensive weapons, which added a fourth component – conventional high-precision weapons.

The high-precision conventional weapons have now become comparable to nuclear weapons in terms of their destructive power, accuracy, and other characteristics. The Soviet Union was one of the pioneers in creating high-precision weapons. It is all about the state of the economy. The economy defines what kind of weapons a nation can afford. And if it is now possible to create the kind of weapons that enable a country to resolve military problems at a lesser cost (including damage to the environment and the civilian population) – or even to resolve such problems without resorting to force altogether – then why not create and deploy such weapons? The most important thing here is to avoid another arms race, this time in the area of high-precision weapons. That is why our doctrine says that Russia reserves the right to create such weapons and use them, if the need arises.

At the base of the old triangle, at one of the corners, there were active and passive air defense and missile defense systems. At another corner was a flexible integrated infrastructure, and all of it was linked together by a global communication, intelligence, and command-and-control system. Then in early 2010, we had a new U.S. defense review report that stated in no uncertain terms, very clearly, a position of principle adopted by this country, which is now Russia’s partner: the United States rejects any constraints on the development of missile defense.

There is also another reason why all these issues and NATO itself are now mentioned in the new Military Doctrine. I am talking about the material and ideological support given to Georgia in the run up to and during that country's aggression in August 2008.

Nuclear Policy

The second important issue to analyze is the possibility of using nuclear weapons according to Russia's plans. Again, if we look at the official documents reflecting Russia's military policy, there is nothing that mentions the possibility of a preventive nuclear strike – neither in the 1993 document, nor in the 2000 or 2010 versions. Russia reserves the right to use nuclear weapons. It will exercise that right if the very existence of our country is in danger. Meanwhile, the existing military doctrines and strategies of the other major nuclear power, the United States, stipulate that the United States can use its nuclear weapon preventively. That means that the United States can use its nuclear weapons not only in response to a specific threat, or when the country's very existence is in danger – as stated in the Russian military doctrine – but even if the United States unilaterally decides that such a military threat can emanate from the territory of a certain country.

What is more, Paragraph 16 of the Russian Military Doctrine says: "Nuclear weapons will remain an important factor for preventing the outbreak of nuclear military conflicts and military conflicts involving the use of conventional means of attack (a large-scale war or regional war)". It goes on to say, "In the event of the outbreak of a military conflict involving the utilization of conventional means of attack (a large-scale war or regional war)... the possession of nuclear weapons may lead to such a military conflict developing into a nuclear military conflict".

Section Three of the Military Doctrine, "The Military Policy of the Russian Federation," says that "the Russian Federation's military policy is aimed at preventing an arms race, deterring and preventing military conflicts" (Paragraph 17). And then Paragraph 18 says, "the prevention of a nuclear military conflict, and likewise any other military conflict, is the Russian Federation's main task."

It is therefore clear that the principle of defensive nuclear deterrence forms the basis of the recently adopted Russian military doctrine.

In the new Russian military doctrine, there is not even a hint of any strategy for a forward deployment of our nuclear deterrent. Meanwhile, the US strategy is to deploy U.S. nuclear weapons on the territory of other countries. The United States has its tactical airborne nuclear weapons stationed in Europe now. And those tactical weapons have a strategic capability with regard to Russian territory.

The strategy of forward nuclear deterrence includes the maintenance and de-

velopment of infrastructure required to enable the use of nuclear weapons from the territory of the very recent NATO members primarily the Baltic nations. Meanwhile, there is nothing in the Russian military doctrine to suggest the deployment of a global Russian missile defense system on the territory of other countries. There is nothing on placing weapons in space, or trying to achieve military superiority in space – there is not even a hint of any of this.

Careful study of the Russian strategic planning documents, including the National Security Strategy adopted in May 2008, the Military Doctrine of February 5, 2010 or the Russian Foreign Policy Concept adopted back in July 2008, completely disproves the artificial conclusions by some NATO experts that Russia does not intend to maintain and develop constructive relations with NATO. But such relations are indeed possible in case NATO as a whole and its member states view Russia as an equal partner, and only if they are guided by the principles of equality and shared security. This in particular concerns the prospects of cooperation between Russia and US/NATO in the sphere of Anti-Missile Defence.

Equal and mutually beneficial relations with NATO and its member-states are only possible on the basis of such careful study of our strategic documents. The old prejudices must be swept aside, because they only fuel mistrust.

I as well believe the goal declared in Prague in 2002: “NATO must be able and ready to conduct operations wherever they are required” can only become acceptable and justified with one qualification – if these operations are peacekeeping operations. These must be genuinely humanitarian operations, rather than something else disguised as a humanitarian effort.

A Couple of Words about the Military Reform in Russia

If in the US and leading European countries reform of the military organization and economy was accompanied by strengthening of military power, modernization of military-industrial base, its adaptation to the new environment, Russia faced meltdown of the military production, abrupt weakening of military organization, combat readiness and combativity of the Armed Forces. The world financial crunch hasn't seriously affected the global military expenditures level: two thirds of the states increased third military expenses. Due to substantial cuts of federal spending on weapons, military equipment and military R&D in Russian in the 1990's (from 65,8% in 1990 to 27,4% in 1999) the science and production base of high-tech industries of the military-industrial complex (MIC) was undermined. As a result, for the time being we have the share of modern samples of weapons and military equipment as low as 10% compared to over 70% in the western countries. We are still having rather unfavorable military expenditures structures. By estima-

tion, 53% of military budget is spent on maintenance of the army, only 47% on investment (R&D, arms military equipment purchase, capital development, etc.). Compared to the developed western countries, military R&D investments in Russia are 10 times less. About 75% of production assets actively exploited at MIC enterprises has become morally obsolete, 50% of which outspent. Their renewal pace doesn't exceed 1% per annum with minimal necessary being at 8-10% a year. The average employers' age at military research institutes is 57 (the age of 90% of researchers exceeds 50).

In the 2000's a considerable growth of military spending initiated in Russia. In 2010, its level was at 1,537 billion Rubles. More funds are being allocated to military R&D. Government's defense order is being increased. Increase of expenditures on national defense is provided as high as 20,5%. In a short time implementation of the state arms program and the targeted federal program on development of MIC in 2010-2020 will start (with its financing at 22-22,5 trillion Rubles). By 2020 is posed to spend at least 19 trillion Rubles on new weapons and military equipment acquisition.

Notwithstanding the increase of federal spending and some positive shifts in military industries, army and fleet re-armament is implemented rather slowly and the amounts of new weapons and military equipment don't cover natural diminution.

The past two years brought significant progress in relations between Moscow and Washington, helped by a personal rapport between the two presidents. Their approach was pragmatic and transactional. After the United States changed its George W. Bush-era plans for a missile-defense system in Europe which Russia viewed as a threat, and downgraded its engagement in the Caucasus, Moscow reciprocated by voting in June 2010 to back tougher UN sanctions on Iran. Russia also facilitated transit of more US equipment and personnel through its territory and airspace to Afghanistan. The two countries conducted a joint counter-narcotics operation in Afghanistan and expanded cooperation on tracking illegal finances of drug traffickers. Russia supplied equipment including helicopters and small arms to the Afghan National Army.

In addition, the New START arms-control treaty was ratified, and bilateral talks were held on how to develop cooperation on European missile defense. A visit to the United States by Russian Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov, followed by a visit to Moscow by US Defense Secretary Robert Gates, heralded the relaunch of military cooperation, which had been suspended in the latter years of the G.W. Bush administration.

In spite of warming relations since the "reset" called for by the Obama administration, difficult issues remained. One was missile defense. We want legally binding guarantees that the US system in Europe would not be directed against

Russia. Obama could not agree to any such limitations because of strong opposition in Congress.

In November 2010 President Medvedev took part in a NATO-Russia summit here in Lisbon, a day after NATO adopted its new strategic concept. Moscow had been reluctant to commit to the meeting due to uncertainty over whether the new concept would identify Russia as a threat or as a subject of NATO's Article V commitments to mutual defense. In the event, the meeting passed in a friendly and constructive atmosphere, marking a shift away from frosty relations after the 2008 Russia-Georgia War. The summit agreed on an ambitious program of cooperation between NATO and Russia and reaffirmed a commitment to building trust and overcoming the legacies of the Cold War.

Cooperation on missile defense emerged as a key issue for NATO-Russia relations. NATO agreed that missile defense in Europe would be the business of the alliance rather than a bilateral issue for Washington – even though in practice the technology and funding would depend almost entirely on the United States. Medvedev proposed that cooperation should be based on a “sectoral approach”, with Moscow responsible for defending its own territory and that of northeastern Europe, including the Baltic states (which are NATO members). This was opposed by NATO, and since March 2011 the Russian side has modified its approach and insists instead that NATO – meaning the United States – should provide legally binding guarantees that future land-based interceptors aimed at intercontinental missiles would not be geared to intercept Russian weapons. In Russia's perception there is no evidence that Iran could develop intercontinental missiles in the foreseeable future and that the only actor with such missiles in the region was Russia. The United States offered a counter-proposal to start practical cooperation on earlier, shorter-range phases of the missile-defense system, and use these to establish trust which, from my personal point of view, together with Russian proposal creates a sufficient basis for further official and non-official negotiations and discussions.