

REGIONAL SECURITY DYNAMICS: RUSSIAN FEDERATION

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After the collapse of the USSR¹ and the end of the Cold War, Russia’s perceptions of the term “region” and regional security have changed. The Russian Federation (RF) continued to consider the former Soviet Union countries as a territory of its’ vital interests. It was quite reasonable to define the countries of the world as “near” and “far” abroad. The term “Near Abroad” does not have as much geographical, but rather it has historical-cultural and political justification, as it summarizes the countries under the former USSR (Baltic States, Transcaucasia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia,) even those with no borders with Russia: Armenia, Moldova, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, while some states that border directly with Russia (Finland, Poland, Mongolia, People’s Republic of China and Democratic People’s Republic of Korea) were not considered “close.”² The rest of the world was considered as “far” abroad, and cooperation with those countries was important in terms of international security.

¹ The parade of sovereignty started in RF in parallel with the collapse of the USSR and external threats. It was followed by North Ossetia, the Autonomous Republic of Karelia, the Republic of Komi, Udmurtia, Yakutia, Buryatia, Bashkiria, and that worryingly Tatarstan and Chechnya, thus bothering Russia’s internal stability.

К союзу суверенных народов. Институт теории и истории социализма ЦК КПСС, Москва, 1991, pp. 250-301, available at: <http://soveticus5.narod.ru/85/sborn91.htm#p287> (10.03.2017)

²Jacob Kulkhanek, *Russia and Near Abroad, Past and Present*, 2006, available at: <https://www.amo.cz/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/amocz-RP-2006-121.pdf> (03.04.2017)

Russia's national security and foreign policy towards the countries of both "near" and "far" abroad is based on its' national interests³ and priorities.⁴ According to Russian official documents which hold a view to uphold the national interests of the Russian Federation and achieving its strategic national priorities, the State's foreign policy activities shall be aimed at accomplishing the following main objectives:⁵

- to create a favorable external environment that would allow Russia's economy to grow steadily and become more competitive in order to strengthen Russia's position in global economic relations;
- to consolidate the Russian Federation's position as a center of influence in today's world;
- to pursue neighborly relations with adjacent States, assisting them in eliminating the existent conflicts and preventing the emergence of the new hotbeds of tension and conflicts on their territory;
- to promote the efforts to strengthen international peace and ensure global security and stability;
- to promote, within bilateral and multilateral frameworks, mutually beneficial and equal partnerships with foreign countries, inter-State associations, international organizations and within forums.

RF national security directly depends on the extent to which the strategic national priorities are implemented and how effectively the system for ensuring national security operates and reacts to the existent challenges

³ The long-term national strategic interests of RF are: strengthening the country's defense, ensuring the inviolability of the Russian Federation's constitutional order, sovereignty, independence, and national and territorial integrity; increasing the competitiveness of the national economy; consolidating the Russian Federation's status as a leading world power, whose actions are aimed at maintaining strategic stability and mutually beneficial partnerships in a polycentric world.

The Russian Federation's national Security Strategy 2015, 30, Official website of the President of Russia, available at: <http://static.kremlin.ru/media/events/files/ru/18iXkr8XLAtxeilX7JK3XXy6Y0AsHD5v.pdf> (16.03.2017)

⁴ The national interests are ensured through the implementation of the following strategic national priorities: national defense, state and public security, economic growth, strategic stability and equal strategic partnership. Ibid, 31

⁵ Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on November 30, 2016), 3, Official website of MFA RF, available at: http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICkB6BZ29/content/id/2542248 (04.04.2017)

and threats. The basic threats in the regional and international security sphere after declaring independence in 1991 during the first stage of RF's existence (Yeltsin's presidency period-1991-1999) were caused by the strive of some states and inter-state entities to downplay the role of existing mechanisms of safeguarding international security, primarily the UN and the OSCE, the threat of weakening of Russia's political, economic and military influence in the world, the strengthening of the military-political blocks and alliances, primarily the eastward expansion of the NATO, a possibility of the occurrence of foreign military bases and large troop detachments in the immediate vicinity of the Russian borders, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and carriers thereof, the slackening of integration processes within the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the occurrence and escalation of conflicts in the vicinity of the RF's state border and the outer borders of the member states of CIS, and the encroachments on the territory of the Russian Federation.⁶

In subsequent years, the aforementioned threats to Russian national security and the approaches to their elimination did not change, but were replenished and reformed in the RF further as seen in foreign policy and national security documents. The RF foreign policy and course of actions became more assertive after the RF president Vladimir Putin's speech during the Security Conference in Munich (2007,) where he took the Russian approach into consideration in light of all of the international security threats: from the US endeavors of adapting the so-called democracy in the third world countries up to NATO's extension into Eastern-Europe and the insertion of the US anti-missile systems in Europe:⁷ *"The unipolar world that had been proposed after the Cold War did not take place either. This is pernicious not only for all those within this system, but also for the sovereign itself because it destroys itself from*

⁶ National Security Concept of the Russian Federation, 1997, State system of legal information, available at: <http://pravo.gov.ru/proxy/ips/?docbody=&firstDoc=1&lastDoc=1&nd=102063972> (15.04.2017)

⁷ Vladimir Putin's Speech and the Following Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy 2007, Official Website of the President of Russia, available at <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24034> (16.03.2017)

within. I consider that the unipolar model is not only unacceptable but also impossible in today's world."

The president expressed his disapproval of a unipolar world governed by the US, stressing that the multipolar world should be opposite, where, RF⁸ should be one of its polars.

In order to understand how Russia's main and long-term national security threats in the Unipolar World System affect its regional and international policy, they will be analyzed according to Russia's interests in the "Near" and "Far" abroad.

Russia's Foreign Policy towards "Near Abroad"

Long-term threats

Russia, the successor of the USSR, considers the further cooperation with the countries of the "near abroad" within the framework of different institutions as a guarantee of regional security and the mechanism of the deterrence of threats. The long-term threats are as following.

NATO's eastern enlargement: The Russian Federation maintains its negative perspective towards NATO's expansion, the Alliance's military infrastructure approaching Russian borders, and its growing military activity in regions neighboring Russia, viewing them as a violation of the principle of equal and indivisible security and leading to the deepening of old dividing lines in Europe and to the emergence of new ones.⁹ NATO's eastern enlargement disturbs RF because of the inadequacy of the current global and regional architecture, oriented (particularly in the Euro-Atlantic region) towards NATO, and likewise, the imperfect nature of legal instruments and mechanisms that create an ever-increasing threat to

⁸According to American world-systems analyst Wallerstein's formulation triple-zoning system operates for the all regions of the planet: Core zone – "Rich North", "Center"; "Poor South", "Periphery"; "Semi-periphery" (China, India, Brazil, Russia), See more Wallerstein I. Geopolitics and geoculture: essays on the changing world-system. Cambridge: Press Syndicate, 1991.

⁹ Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on November 30, 2016), 70, Official website of MFA RF, available at: http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICk6B6Z29/content/id/2542248 (04.04.2017)

international security.¹⁰ The buildup of NATO's military potential and the endowment of it with global functions pursued in violation of the norms of international law, the galvanization of the bloc countries' military activity, the further expansion of the alliance, and the location of its military infrastructure closer to Russian borders are creating a threat to national security.¹¹

According to Russian sources during Gorbachov's presidency period (First and Last president of USSR-March 1990, December 1991) when the Soviet Union withdrew from Eastern Germany he was given verbal assurances (there was no written consent) that NATO would not expand to the east.¹² Immediately after the dissolution of the USSR and the emergence of the newly independent states, opposite developments took place. NATO has expanded into Eastern Europe, including the countries of the socialist camp during the Cold War, including Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic (1999,) Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, Montenegro, and the Baltic States of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia (2004). Georgia and Ukraine also aspire to become NATO members and are actively intensifying dialogue in that direction.

Moreover, NATO is implementing cooperation programs¹³ that involve Armenia and Georgia to take part in its' peacekeeping operations. NATO's interest towards the countries in this region is naturally disturbed by Russia, and the latter has always been protesting against it.

In 2008 at the Munich Security Conference, Russian Prime Minister Sergei Ivanov announced that the prospects of cooperation between Russia and NATO are vague and stated, "We are not interested in the violation of

¹⁰ The Russian Federation's National Security Strategy to 2020, 8, Official website of the President of Russia, available at: <http://kremlin.ru/supplement/424> (23.04.2017)

¹¹ The Russian Federation's National Security Strategy 2015, 15, Official website of the President of Russia, available at: <http://static.kremlin.ru/media/events/files/ru/18iXkR8XLAtxeilX7JK3XXy6Y0AsHD5v.pdf> (16.03.2017)

¹² NATO refuses the existence of such agreement. http://www.bbc.com/russian/international/2014/04/140418_nato_putin_reaction.shtml (06.05.2017)

¹³ NATO and South Caucasian States have developed practical cooperation in many areas, including peacekeeping operations. Available at official website of NATO, available at: <http://www.natoinfo.am/en/armenia-nato-relations/>, http://www.nato.int/cps/es/natohq/topics_38988.htm# (06.05.2017)

NATO's unity.”¹⁴ However, The Russian Federation is prepared for the development of relations with NATO based on equality for the purpose of strengthening general security in the Euro-Atlantic region. The depth and content of such relations will be determined by the readiness of the alliance to take account of the interests of the Russian Federation when conducting military-political planning, and to respect the provisions of international law.¹⁵

Militarization of the regions adjacent to Russia: *“The principles of equal and indivisible security are not being observed in the Euro-Atlantic, Eurasian, and Asia-Pacific regions. Militarization and arms-race processes are developing in regions adjacent to Russia.”*¹⁶

By saying adjacent regions, the regions that are considered as vital zones for Russia are taken into account. Russia is worried about the militarization attempts by another force in the region. The Russian authorities are particularly concerned about the military-political and military-technical cooperation of the South Caucasus countries, particularly Georgia, with the US and NATO. This process began during the reign of Saakashvili (from 2004) and has still continued until the armed conflict with Russia and the almost complete defeat of Georgia's military potential. The United States was implementing a “Train and Equip” program in Georgia, which equipped Georgian officer staff with NATO-standard arms. Georgia's foreign policy, the main object of which was to join NATO and the EU, was opposed by the Russian security and foreign policy doctrines, and was a direct threat to it, causing war between the two countries to be inevitable, which resulted in the Georgian army Defense mechanism suffering huge losses.¹⁷ On February 1st, 2009, Russia established the 4th

¹⁴The stenography of S. Ivanov's speech at Munich Conference on Security Policy 2008, available at: <http://svpressa.ru/society/article/4036/> (13.04.2017)

¹⁵The Russian Federation's National Security Strategy 2015, 107, Official website of the President of Russia, available at: <http://static.kremlin.ru/media/events/files/ru/18iXkR8XLAtxeilX7JK3XXy6Y0AsHD5v.pdf> (16.03.2017)

¹⁶Ibid, 14.

¹⁷“As a result of the Russian military aggression, the Georgian Army suffered material losses worth \$250 million,” Georgian Defense Minister Davit Kezerashvili stated. As to the men in uniform, 270 perished in the five days and more than 1,000 were wounded. In addition to South Ossetia and Abkhazia occupation, Russian military forces entered Gori,

Guard Military Base in South Ossetia (Tskhinvali), and the 7th in Abkhazia, recognizing the independence of those quasi-states. In other words, the complete absorption of these quasi-states was replaced by RF.

Meanwhile, after the Four Day War,¹⁸ Russian Prime Minister D. Medvedev confirmed and defended Russia's policy of selling arms to both Armenia and Azerbaijan, stating: "They would buy weapons in other countries, and the degree of their deadliness wouldn't change"¹⁹ on Russian state television following visits to Yerevan and Baku. In other words, RF pursues a militarization policy in the South Caucasus by selling large quantities of weapons to Azerbaijan, in response to which Armenia is enhancing its weapon supply, as well.²⁰

Therefore, under the aforementioned provision, it can be assumed that Russia does not mean the militarization of the region wholly, but rather its' militarization by other forces rather than the RF itself.

Increase of EU interest towards USSR ex-member countries:

Amongst the eastern extension of NATO, the former USSR member states caught the attention of the European Union's interests, which also began to disturb Russia.

Despite the constant tension between Russia-EU relations, they have been sharply aggravated after the crisis in Ukraine and with the sanctions on Russia. Even after the conflict in Georgia the Russian Federation was in favor of strengthening the mechanisms of cooperation with the European Union by all possible means, including the continued formation of common spaces in the economic, educational, scientific, and cultural spheres, and in terms of internal and external security. The long-term national interests of

Zugdidi, Poti, Vazian military airport. Available at: <https://jamestown.org/program/lessons-and-losses-of-georgias-five-day-war-with-russia/> (12.07.2017)

¹⁸ Four Day War or April War is a collective name of the clashes along the Nagorno-Karabakh line of contact, which began on 2 April 2016.

¹⁹Russia defends selling arms to both Azerbaijan and Armenia, available at: <https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2016-04-09/russia-defends-selling-arms-to-both-azerbaijan-and-armenia> (24.05.2017)

²⁰Armenian MFA Eduard Nalbandyan in the conversation with "Russia Today" News Agency stated "Of course, we can not like the fact that Azerbaijan is buying weapons from our ally, which, in cooperation with Armenia, as the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair, is making great efforts to maintain peace and stability in our region". Available at the official website of MFA Armenia, http://www.mfa.am/hy/interviews/item/2017/02/20/min_ria/ (04.07.2017)

Russia are served by the creation of an open system of Euro-Atlantic collective security, on a clear legal and treaty basis.²¹ Currently, the cooperation with the EU has been excluded from the RF official documents.

The West's stance aimed at countering integration processes and creating seats of tension in the Eurasian region is exerting a negative influence on the realization of Russian national interests. The support of the United States and the European Union for the anti-constitutional coup d'état in Ukraine led to a deep split in Ukrainian society and the emergence of an armed conflict. The strengthening of far right nationalist ideology, the deliberate shaping in the Ukrainian population of an image of Russia as an enemy, the undisguised gamble on the forcible resolution of intrastate contradictions, and the deep socioeconomic crisis are turning Ukraine into a chronic seat of instability in Europe and in the immediate vicinity of Russia's borders.²² At the Security Conference in Munich (2015) Lavrov stressed that American colleagues, and under their influence – the European Union, took steps leading to escalation: *“The CIS countries, our closest neighbors, connected with us by centuries of economic, humanitarian, historical, cultural, and even family ties, are demanded to make a choice - either with the West or against the West. It is a logic of zero sum game, which everyone wanted to leave in the past. The Ukrainian crisis cannot be resolved by military force. Despite this, in some Western countries there are more calls to strengthen support for the course of the Kiev authorities for militarization of the society and the state, to “pump” Ukraine with deadly weapons, and pull it into NATO.”*

On the other hand, by interfering in Ukraine and Crimea annexation Russia itself violated the 1994 Budapest Memorandum²³ which was one of the guarantees of Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

²¹The Russian Federation's National Security Strategy to 2020, 16, Official website of RF MFA, available at: http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptlCkR8XLAtxeilX7JK3XXy6Y0AsHD5v/content/id/589768 (09.05.2017)

²²The Russian Federation's National Security Strategy 2015, 17, Official website of the President of Russia, available at: <http://static.kremlin.ru/media/events/files/ru/l8iXkR8XLAtxeilX7JK3XXy6Y0AsHD5v.pdf> (16.03.2017)

²³The memorandum, signed by then-Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma, along with Bill Clinton, Boris Yeltsin, and John Major, required that the signatories “respect the independence and sovereignty and the existing borders of Ukraine” and “refrain from the threat or use of

The crisis in Ukraine was not only political, but also an economic threat to Russia's security, as Russia's trade policy suffered after the sanctions were implemented. RF was restricted to take cheap loans; consequently a lot of companies were blocked with significant amount of officials imposed and assets imprisoned. After the crisis in Donbas and the imposed sanctions on Russia, the first thing to break between Ukraine and Russia were their defense ties. The Russians used their "sanctions" against Ukraine, abolishing their orders from Ukrainian factories (Kharkov, Dnepropetrovsk.) The Russians stopped importing foodstuff, fruits, meat, vegetables, and dairy products from Europe. However, Russian gas still has one of the highest consumption rates in the European market, especially in the severe winter conditions.²⁴

"Old" Structures

With the aim of maintaining relations with the former Soviet Union members and ensuring its own security, Russia established a wide range of cooperation with these countries.

Commonwealth of Independent States. Soon after the collapse of the USSR, on December 8, 1991, the leaders of Belarus, Russia and Ukraine signed the Creation Agreement of CIT,²⁵ attached to it on December 21, 2007, the heads of 11 sovereign states signed the Protocol to the Agreement, in accordance with which they formed the Commonwealth of Independent States on equal bases. The Baltic States did not join from the beginning and in 2009, even Georgia stopped being a member of it.²⁶ Boris Yeltsin, the first president of the Russian Federation, positively assessed the creation of the CIS, noting that through this structure, it was possible to avoid global shocks, possible wars between former republics,

force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine." https://www.larouchepub.com/eiw/public/2014/eirv41n08-20140221/34-35_4108.pdf (19.06.2017)

²⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Natural_gas_consumption_statistics (26.07.2017)

²⁵ Agreement on the establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States, available at: http://www.mid.ru/integracionnye-struktury-prostranstva-sng/-/asset_publisher/r17Fzr0mbE6x/content/id/608944 (25.04.2017)

²⁶ Georgia finalizes withdrawal from CIS, available at: https://www.rferl.org/a/Georgia_Finalizes-Withdrawal_From_CIS/1802284.html (14.05.2017)

and financial and humanitarian disasters that could have occurred after the collapse of the USSR.²⁷ However, after the collapse of the USSR, the program of forming a united military force of the member states was disrupted as the political interests of these countries as well as their understanding of security collided.

Collective Security Treaty Organization. Another step towards ensuring regional security was the signing of a Collective Security Treaty by the leaders of Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan on May 15, 1992,²⁸ which became the basis for the creation of the Collective Security Treaty Organization on May 14, 2002.²⁹ It is noteworthy that the participant countries of the organization are rather consumers of Russian security and military system, than security makers. The aforementioned countries are using USSR heritage weaponry, so they also apply to Russia for the modernization of ammunition, thus falling into a long-term “dependence” on that country.

In turn, Russia is trying to control the surrounding region and to resist challenges out of its immediate borders through military bases in these countries.³⁰

²⁷According to Yeltsin, the leaders of the republics tried to alleviate the consequences that could affect the people of the former USSR. “That’s why the visa-free regime was set between the newly independent republics, customs barriers were excluded, and so on. We tried to create a structure similar to today’s European Union model with less bureaucracy and concentration.” Available at: <https://ria.ru/politics/20061206/56569859.html> (20.04.2017)

²⁸Available at the official website of CSTO: http://odkb-csto.org/documents/detail.php?ELEMENT_ID=126 (19.04.2017)

²⁹ In 1993 Azerbaijan, Belarus and Georgia joined the Treaty. However, in September 1999 the protocol on the extension of the treaty was signed by six states, excluding Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Georgia.

³⁰ There are Russian military bases and facilities in Armenia (Air base in Yerevan, military basis in Gyumri), Azerbaijan (Radar station in Gabala), Belarus (Radar station in Baranovichi and communication center of the navy in Vileyka), Georgia (Military bases in South Ossetia and Abkhazia), Kazakhstan (Radar station in Balkash), Kyrgyzstan (Air basis in Kant), Tajikistan (Military bases (Dushanbe, Kurgan-Tube, Tulab) and joint use of the air force at Ayni) etc. Particularly, the absence of a military base in Armenia could make the Caucasus a line of contact between the Russian and enemy states, which is not profitable for Russia.

Margarete Clein, Russia’s Military Capabilities: “Great Power”, Ambitions and Reality, German Institute for International and Security Affairs; available at: <https://www.swp-berlin.org/en/publication/russias-military-capabilities/> (08.05.2017)

Caucasian Quartet: The next format of regional cooperation in the “Near Abroad” was the Caucasian Quartet which was aimed at the peaceful settlement of conflicts in the South Caucasus, national security, international terrorism, as well as the development of a number of spheres related to cooperation in the humanitarian and other spheres.³¹ RF President Vladimir Putin was convinced that the Quartet could become a real mechanism that would help to reduce the Caucasus Conflict potential. Chairman of the RF Federal Council Sergei Mironov tried to reset the activities of the Quartet in 2004 and 2008, but today this establishment does not play a serious role in the preservation of regional security in the Caucasus, which is conditioned by the tense nature of the Armenian-Azerbaijani and Russian-Georgian relations.

New opportunities

Russia will continue to seek to increase regional and subregional integration and coordination potential among CIS, Union State,³² that used to maintain regional security in the “Near Abroad”, but nowadays, the function of these organizations is demonstrative, strictly chary: almost silent. EEU³³ and CSTO, whose functions are dictated by Russia as well, are much more dynamic establishments uniting former USSR countries. One of Russia’s key objectives is strengthening and expanding integration within the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) with the Republic of Armenia, Republic of Belarus, Republic of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic in order to fasten steady development, comprehensive technological modernization and cooperation, enhance the competitiveness of the EAEU member States and improve living standards of their populations. The EAEU aims to ensure the free commodity turnover, services, capital and workforce, and to offer a platform for implementing

³¹Official website of MFA RF, available at: http://www.mid.ru/diverse/-/asset_publisher/ghZALys7bKD3/content/id/544128 (28.03.2017)

³² Union State is the Commonwealth of Belarus and Russia founded on 2 April 1996.

³³ In 2014, the Eurasian Economic Union was formed aiming at providing economic security and encouraging economic integration processes in the territory of CIS countries. A treaty was signed by Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus. Available at official website of EEU: <http://www.eaeunion.org/?lang=am> (09.04.2017)

joint infrastructure and investment projects. The EAEU is based on universal principles of integration, and is designed to play an important role in harmonizing integration processes in Europe and Eurasia.³⁴ However, the united economic region will put its' participant countries Armenia, Kazakhstan, Belarus and Kyrgyzstan into a new dependence on RF.

Russia's Foreign Policy towards "Far Abroad"

The main threats

The implementation of US anti-missile defense systems in Eastern Europe: The Russian President Vladimir Putin expressed his concern over US missile systems during the 2007 Munich Security Conference: *"Plans to expand certain elements of the anti-missile defence system to Europe cannot help but disturb us. And here in Germany I cannot help but mention the pitiable condition of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. NATO countries openly declared that they will not ratify this treaty, including the provisions on flank restrictions (on deploying a certain number of armed forces in the flank zones), until Russia removed its military bases from Georgia and Moldova. Our army is leaving Georgia, even according to an accelerated schedule. We resolved the problems we had with our Georgian colleagues, as everybody knows. There are still 1,500 servicemen in Moldova that are carrying out peacekeeping operations and protecting warehouses with ammunition left over from Soviet times."*³⁵

It is worth mentioning that since the Reagan Era (US 40th President, 1981-1989,) the United States has been striving to create severe anti-missile systems, which are planned to deploy in Poland and the Czech Republic. According to Russian sources, this is done not only in the framework of the fight against terrorism or the threat coming from Iran, but also in order to

³⁴ Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on November 30, 2016), 51, Official website of MFA RF, available at: http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICk6BZ29/content/id/2542248 (04.04.2017)

³⁵Vladimir Putin's speech at the Munich Conference on Security Policy 2007. The stenography available at the official website of the President of Russia: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24034> (16.03.2017)

have a hotbed of pressure on Russia.³⁶ The “hostage” of these missiles by Poland and the Czech Republic threaten them to be targeted by Russia, especially given the tense relations between Russia and the EU. Already in 2009, at the 45th Munich Security Conference, Russian Prime Minister Sergei Ivanov warned that “if the US missile systems in Poland and the Czech Republic are installed, Russia will respond more effectively and at lower costs.”³⁷

In 2011, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov while representing the Russian delegation to Munich mentioned that “*Russia still does not give up on the Treaty of Conventional Forces in Europe and is waiting for it to be adopted by NATO partners.*”³⁸

On March 2015, Russia ceased its participation in the sessions of the Joint Advisory Group on the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe expressing a clear disagreement with NATO actions. A year later, in October 2016, Russia deployed short-range missiles (Iskanders) in Kaliningrad. In spite of the small remote-distance, they are located in the heart of Europe and considering the geographical position of Kaliningrad, it can be argued that Russia has taken a “restraining action” against NATO’s eastern enlargement. The Russian side insists that they do not violate the Treaty on Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles.³⁹

Later in the RF National Security Doctrine (2015,) it was stated: “*The strengthening of Russia is taking place against a backdrop of new threats to national security that are of a multifarious and interconnected nature. The Russian Federation's implementation of an independent foreign and domestic policy is giving rise to opposition from the United States and its allies, who are seeking to retain their dominance in world affairs. The*

³⁶ During his speech at Valdai Discussion Club 2015, RF President V. Putin stated: “The emergence of nuclear weapon made it clear that there can not be a winner in the global conflict. The result can be one: Mutually assured Destruction”. Putin’s speech at the plenary session of the Valdai Discussion Club, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aGtYEwm-22Q> (14.06.2017)

³⁷ Sergey Ivanov’s speech at the Munich Conference on Security Strategy, the stenography available at: <http://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=162342&cid=9> (10.05.2017)

³⁸ Official website of MFA RF, available at http://www.mid.ru/en/press_service/minister_speeches/-/archive/year/2011 (18.03.2017)

³⁹https://ria.ru/defense_safety/20170215/1488022739.html (17.03.2017)

*policy of containing Russia that they are implementing envisions the exertion of political, economic, military, and informational pressure on it.*⁴⁰

According to the Russians, all US actions are aimed at them. The idea of an outward enemy, a Western military threat, is even profitable for the Russian authorities to justify their economic hardship and internal instability. During his speech in 2015 at Valdai, the Russian President Vladimir Putin declared: “The basis of contemporary international security has been violated under the pretext of a nuclear threat from Iran. The contract on anti-missile defense from which the US withdrew has been violated. Additionally, the Iranian nuclear threat was solved, as previously stated, there was no threat from Iran and there currently is not. Thus, the reason to prompt American partners to build a missile defense system disappeared. It would have the right to expect that the work on the development of US missile defense will cease. And what actually happens? Nothing like this, on the contrary - everything continues.”⁴¹

Syrian conflict: From the “far abroad” conflicts, the Russian Federation has the greatest role and participation in the Syrian crisis, where it also lays its definite economic interests. If Syria falls under the influence of Sunnis, the middle-eastern gas (for example, the Qatar gas, which is transported by tankers,) will be transported to European countries via Syria and Turkey. If taken into account that Russia’s economy is mainly based on raw materials by interfering in war actions in Syria, Russia tries to prevent this situation. Being in Syria, Russians dictate their monopoly status in the European gas market. Europe, on the other hand, tries to find alternatives in order to erode its dependency from Russia. By its presence in the Middle East, Russia ensures the neutralization of its competitors such as Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait, that they have their own interests towards European market. On the other hand, Russia uses the Syrian war for both advertising and testing its own weapons thus showing its power to the

⁴⁰Russian Federation’s National Security Strategy 2015, Official website of the President of Russia, available at: <http://static.kremlin.ru/media/events/files/ru/18iXkR8XLAtxeilX7JK3XXy6Y0AsHD5v.pdf> (16.03.2017)

⁴¹Vladimir Putin’s speech at the plenary session of the Valdai Discussion Club, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aGtYEwm-22Q> (14.06.2017)

world. Russia is guided by common geopolitical and cooperative interests of two countries while providing weapons and ammunition to Syria.

The RF President V. Putin explains the insolubility and uncertainty of the Syrian conflict by ineffective US policy. Referring to the actions of US-led coalition in Syria, he notes that though the USA has the biggest military potential in the world, it is always hard to play a double game. “*It is impossible to succeed in the struggle against terrorism, when most of the terrorists are used for overthrowing the undesirable regimes.*” It is understood that armed fighters in the Middle East are a threat for everyone including Russia.

“Old” organizations

United Nations. In this set of materials, Russia perceives the United Nations and the Security Council of the United Nations as a central element of a stable system of international relations, at the basis of which lie respect, equal rights, and mutually beneficial cooperation among nations, resting on civilized political instruments for the resolution of global and regional crisis situations.⁴² “The only mechanism that can make decisions about using military force as a last resort is the Charter of the United Nations,”⁴³ in other words, the use of force can only be considered legitimate if the decision is sanctioned by the UN. There is no need to substitute NATO or the EU for the UN,⁴⁴ stated V. Putin at Munich 2007.

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe: The OSCE, the member of which was RF since 1992, according to the Russian official documents is no longer viewed as a tool for ensuring international security.

⁴²The Russian Federation’s National Security Strategy to 2020, Official website of RF MFA, available at: http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptlCk6BZ29/content/id/589768 (09.05.2017)

⁴³Putin’s Speech and the Following Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy 2007, Official website of the President of Russia, available at: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24034> (16.03.2017)

⁴⁴ During his speech at Munich Security Conference 2008 Russia’s Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov approved: “In cases where the use of military force is necessary, it must be carried out within the framework of international law under the leadership of the United Nations and other international organizations.” Available at: http://www.ng.ru/ideas/2008-02-19/11_ivanov.html (07.05.2017)

*“It is impossible not to mention the activities of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). As is well-known, this organisation was created to examine all – I shall emphasise this – all aspects of security: military, political, economic, and humanitarian and, especially, the relations between these spheres. What do we see happening today? We see that this balance is clearly destroyed. People are trying to transform the OSCE into a vulgar instrument designed to promote the foreign policy interests of one or a group of countries.”*⁴⁵ Thus, the RF President expressed his concern about the OSCE’s activities, including those in the former USSR states (except for Turkmenistan). Currently Russia insists that the OSCE interferes in the internal affairs of the member states and dictates their development. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov also points to the South Caucasus situation in 2008 as an example of the OSCE’s exhaustion and inefficient operation. Russia’s FM is dissatisfied with OSCE mission statement on Ukraine.⁴⁶

New opportunities

For the protection of the global economy, The Russian Federation declares that it is increasing collaboration with its partners within BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), RIC (Russia, India, China,) the Shanghai Cooperation Organization,⁴⁷ the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, the G-20,⁴⁸ and other international institutions.⁴⁹

⁴⁵Putin’s Speech and the Following Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy 2007, Official website of the President of Russia, available at: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24034> (16.03.2017)

⁴⁶ <http://hvylyya.net/news/digest/rossiya-nedovolna-otchetami-obse-o-sobyitiyah-nadonbasse.html> (08.05.2017)

⁴⁷According to Russian Federation’s National Security Strategy 2009, of particular significance for Russia will be the reinforcement of the political potential of the SCO, and the stimulation within its framework of practical steps towards the enhancement of mutual trust and partnership in the Central Asian region.

⁴⁸Russian national Security Doctrine 2009 also indicated the need to deepen relations with the G8 countries. In 2014 after the conflict in Ukraine and Crimea’s annexation, Russia was not invited to the G8 talks, so this structure is no longer mentioned in the 2015 national security doctrine.

⁴⁹The Russian Federation’s National Security Strategy to 2020, Official website of RF MFA, available at: http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICk6B6Z29/content/id/589768 (09.05.2017)

One of the crucial components in RF-Asian countries relations, particularly with the aforementioned ones is the RF's ammunition sale and export which is an essential tool not only for the economic and social purposes, but also for the country's foreign policy. The Soviet Union tried to extend its impact on the world and attempted to create a more favorable political and insecure situation by using weapon sale.

In 2012, the RF President V. Putin announced that the export of weapons is an effective tool for promoting the country's both political and economic national interests.⁵⁰ Russian Deputy Prime Minister, Secretary of the Military-Industrial Committee Dmitry Rogozin stated that the Federal Service for Military-Technical Cooperation is the country's second foreign policy agency and its goal is to sell as much as possible for Russia to achieve or increase its influence in other countries.⁵¹

According to data from Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Russia accounted for nearly 21 percent of global arm sales in 2016,⁵² ranking behind only the US and leaving behind China, Germany, France and the United Kingdom by material scale of exports. Between 2000 and 2016, the country was responsible for an annual average of 25 percent of global exports.

In the late 1990s, its arms sales were overwhelmingly concentrated in China and India. This caused some concern in Russia that exports would diminish sharply if either country were able to produce domestic analogues of Russian products, or if other countries were able to supplant Russian products. Russia's customer base has diversified since 2000. It has cultivated a number of significant clients, such as Algeria and Vietnam, easing fears that its arms export performance was excessively dependent on only one or two countries.⁵³

⁵⁰ Meeting of the Commission for Military Technology Cooperation with Foreign States, the official website of the President of Russia, available at: <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/15865> (13.05.2017)

⁵¹ https://ria.ru/defense_safety/20131211/983472868.html (11.04.2017)

⁵² Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Arms Transfers Database – Methodology, <https://www.sipri.org/databases/armstransfers/background> (02.05.2017)

⁵³ Russia's Role as an Arm Exporter, Chatham House, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, available at: <https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/publications/research/2017-03-20-russia-arms-exporter-connolly-sendstad.pdf> (02.05.2017)

Asia is the most important foreign market for Russian arms producers, accounting for 70 percent of their exports since 2000.

India, China and Vietnam are the principal sources of demand for Russian weapons in the region, and Russia is the dominant supplier in a large portion of Asian countries. The Middle East and North Africa is the second-most important market, but competition from other suppliers is much more intense there. Latin America and Africa are of relatively modest importance.

Asia is by far the most important export market for Russian arms. Not only does the region contain Russia's two largest customers, China and India (together responsible for 56 per cent of all Russian arms exports in 2000–16,) it also includes significant customers such as Vietnam (5.6 percent,) Myanmar (1.4 percent,) Malaysia (1.3 percent,) Kazakhstan (1.3 percent,) and Indonesia (1.1 percent). Russia is the dominant supplier of weapons across large swathes of Asia. Between 2000 and 2016, it was responsible for 43.1 percent of the weapons exported to the region. By way of comparison, over the same period the US accounted for 24.6 percent of arms sales to the region and China for 6.8 percent.⁵⁴

Thus, Russia's ammunition export is the principal sector for integrating in the global economy as well as the other tool to spread its' influence in the world.

Russia's Foreign Policy towards Turkey and Iran: Clash of interests in the South Caucasus

The Russian Federation foreign policy is not only guided by its political, military and geopolitical interests, but also by its economic priorities. After the economic sanctions⁵⁵ are applied on RF, it began to place huge importance on trade deals with any country. Turkey continued its trade-economic cooperation with Russia not paying attention on sanctions. Russian-Turkish bilateral cooperation was at risk after Turkey

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ After the Russian military intervention in Ukraine, United States, the European Union, Canada, Australia and the other countries and international organizations applied sanctions against individuals, businesses and officials from Russia and Ukraine. Official website of US Department of State, available at: <https://www.state.gov/e/eb/tfs/spi/ukrainerrussia/> (05.04.2017)

downed a Russian jet in late 2015,⁵⁶ but that ended and the relations after the fact have already produced positive results: *“The contract with Ankara to deliver cutting-edge Russian anti-aircraft S-400 missile systems is agreed upon, everything is clear, the issue of a loan has not been resolved yet,”* Russian President Vladimir Putin’s aide on military-technical cooperation, Vladimir Kozhin, said at the 7th International Maritime Defense Show in St. Petersburg. Thus, NATO member Turkey is going to purchase anti-aircraft S 400 missile systems from Russia, not their analogues from the US.

The other major transaction between the two countries is the “Turkish Stream”⁵⁷ natural gas pipeline, which will serve as a transit route to deliver Russian gas to Europe. Given the sanctions imposed on North Stream⁵⁸, the importance of Turkish Stream as a guarantee of Russian economic stability sharply grows. Hereby, Turkey is an important economic partner for RF, although the geopolitical interests of two countries are opposite, particularly in the Syrian crisis.

The Russian Federation has contradictory and different relations and cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Russia is committed to the comprehensive development of cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran and seeks to ensure the consistent implementation of the joint comprehensive agreement to settle the situation around the Iranian nuclear program based on UN Security Council resolution 2231 (July 20, 2015,) and relevant IAEA Board of Governors decisions, and assists this process in every possible way.⁵⁹ These two countries have no principled

⁵⁶ On 24 November 2015, a Turkish Air Force F-16 fighter jet shot down a Russian SU-24 M attack aircraft near Syria-Turkey border. http://eng.mil.ru/en/news_page/country/more.htm?id=12066900@egNews (22.06.2017)

⁵⁷ The Turk Stream pipeline will surface on the shore of the European part of Turkey near Kiyıköy with gas delivery point at Lüleburgaz for the Turkish customers, and a border crossing between Turkey and Greece in İpsala serving as delivery point for the European customers. <http://www.gazpromexport.ru/en/projects/> (23.06.2017)

⁵⁸ The North Stream and the North Stream 2 are the optimal pipeline routes to transport Russian gas to Europe, directly linking Russia and Germany. <http://www.gazpromexport.ru/en/projects/5/> (23.06.2017)

⁵⁹ Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on November 30, 2016), 94, Official website of MFA RF,

contradictions in terms of geopolitics, they have cooperation arena in Syria, but as two raw material states, and they are in economic competition. Iran has lost much of its oil market after being under the sanctions for a long time, and now, it denies the agreement⁶⁰ between RF and OPEC, which is aimed at balancing the global oil market. At the same time, Iran has increased oil production and thus, has attracted a number of European countries, which previously used to buy oil from RF, offering them substantially lower oil prices.

Russia and Iran are potential rivals in the gas market as well. According to National Iranian Gas Company data, Iran is currently the third producer of gas with 180 billion cubic meters (bcm) per year, but this volume is expected to rise to 400 bcm by 2020.⁶¹ Iran has no gas liquefaction capabilities (like Qatar or USA,) however; it can supply gas to Europe through gas pipelines and seize some of the Russian market, just as it does in oil market.

Thus, Russia's relations with abovementioned countries are complicated and separated by economic and geopolitical sectors. The interests of the Russian Federation, Turkey, and Iran also collide in the South Caucasus. As previously mentioned, South Caucasian states are of vital importance for Russia and are natural barriers to withstand external threats; therefore Russia tries to strengthen its influence and positions in these countries. In turn, Turkey understands that in order to preserve internal stability in the country, it should undertake external expansion and Panturkizm is one of the instruments of foreign expansion. There is a permanent competition between RF and Turkey in keeping Azerbaijan in their influence zone. In that sense, the Russians have irreversibly failed the "rivalry" with Turkey, as Azerbaijan, based on historical ties and the "One

available at: http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICkB6BZ29/content/id/2542248 (04.04.2017)

⁶⁰https://www.opec.org/opec_web/static_files_project/media/downloads/press_room/OPEC%20agreement.pdf (22.06.2017)

⁶¹<http://theiranproject.com/blog/2015/06/18/iran-targets-berth-as-second-gas-producer/> (18.06.2017)

nation, two states” concept, strives to align with Turkey more.⁶² Russia is also interested in normalizing relations with Georgia in areas where the Georgian side is willing to do the same, given the current political environment in the South Caucasus.⁶³ Russia is worried about Georgia, which aspires to be closer to Europe, but actually is under the economic and demographic expansion of Turkey and Azerbaijan. As for Armenia, it is not considered a conflict field in this regard, since the fundamental contradictions between Armenia and Turkey are not resolved.

On the other hand, Iran, as a powerful regional “player,” certainly has its pretensions in South Caucasus.⁶⁴ Iran views the South Caucasus as a part of its natural imperium,⁶⁵ but unlike the Russians and Turks, its political behavior and actions are aimed in the long-term, i.e. centuries, not in today’s immediate interests.

To review, the development of bilateral relations and multilateral cooperation with the South Caucasus Republics, Abkhazia, and South Ossetia is for the Russian Federation a key foreign policy area.⁶⁶ Simultaneously, Russia strongly advocates a political and diplomatic settlement of conflicts in the post-Soviet space, specifically; Russia works within the existing multilateral negotiating mechanism to settle the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict by working with other States that are co-chairs in the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in

⁶² After the collapse of the USSR Azerbaijan, has also refused from the Alphabet based on the Cyrillic. From the Central Asian republics of the former Soviet Union, the Cyrillic alphabet left Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. Kazakhstan, which is a Turkish-speaking country and member in Eurasian Economic Union, is also preparing for the transition of Kazakh language to the Latin alphabet. <https://intmassmedia.com/2017/04/12/kazakhstan-refuses-from-cyrillic-to-latin/> (05.07.2017)

⁶³ Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on November 30, 2016), 59, Official website of MFA RF, available at: http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICk6BZ29/content/id/2542248 (04.04.2017)

⁶⁴ Iran has certain claims towards Farsi-Speaking Talishs, and also towards Nakhijevan region, which is connected to Azerbaijan through Iran.

⁶⁵ Caucasian territories were under Iran’s supremacy till Russia completed conquering of all that lands during Russian-Persian wars (1804-1813, 1826-1828).

⁶⁶The Russian Federation’s National Security Strategy 2015, 89, Official website of the President of Russia, available at: <http://static.kremlin.ru/media/events/files/ru/18iXkR8XLAtxeilX7JK3XXy6Y0AsHD5v.pdf> (16.03.2017)

Europe (OSCE.)⁶⁷ Russia's future foreign policy will seek to maintain solid historical-political and trade-economic relations with South Caucasian states, as losing its leverage in the South Caucasus would mean to lose the entire Caucasus.

Conclusion

- The analyses of Russia's national security and foreign policy official documents makes it clear that during the historical phase "post-cold war era" the world has become neither "western-centered" nor secure and stable. Russia's main priority behind this is the conviction that a multipolar system is needed for international security and stability.⁶⁸

- The collapse of the USSR and the elimination of ideological contradictions didn't put an end to the Russia-West antagonism as the geopolitical interests of these two were collided. Based on this it is quite reasonable that Russia will continue its' policy of expansionism by trying to fill the vacuums both in the Near and Far Abroad, in order to prevent them to be filled by other countries or forces.

- After the collapse of the USSR, Russia's power hunger and the revival of being a world power has only increased, since now the US is ahead of Russia in both economic and social aspects, and therefore the historical competition which the two countries hold, makes Russia create a foreign and domestic agenda which will bring back its importance in the modern geographical and political sphere.

⁶⁷ Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on November 30, 2016), 58, Official website of MFA RF, available at: http://www.mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICk6B6Z29/content/id/2542248 (04.04.2017)

⁶⁸The inevitability of multipolarity has been introduced by the formulation of Putin's speech at Munich Security Conference, according to which "the combined GDP measured in purchasing power parity of countries such as India and China is already greater than that of the United States. And a similar calculation with the GDP of the BRIC countries – Brazil, Russia, India and China – surpasses the cumulative GDP of the EU. And according to experts this gap will only increase in the future." Official website of the President of Russia, the stenography available at <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24034> (16.03.2017)

- The Russian Federation will use its economic and military levers in efforts to enlarge its power and make the situation in the near and far abroad stable.⁶⁹

- RF's further policy, in "Near Abroad" will be implemented in the deepening of integration processes in the territory of CIS, including the continuation of the Treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union and the United Economic Area, the transformation of the CSTO into a multi-functional structure for regional security and stability capable of responding effectively to current challenges and threats.⁷⁰ On the other hand in Far Abroad Russian diplomacy will work on multilateral formats: UN, BRICS, G20, SCO, etc.⁷¹

- Despite the active efforts of the Russian authorities, the former USSR states, particularly the members of the Eastern Partnership, are simultaneously under the influence of the EU active propaganda. The efficiency of these organizations and the development of the Russia-US relations that lie in a 4km distance through the Bering Strait will be seen in time. Therefore, Russia will continue its' policy of Western resistance, which will be highly disturbed by its' economic situation, low oil prices, internal social situation etc.

Assumptions

Based on the aforementioned and RF's priority to become a center of influence in today's world, it can be argued that RF should first strengthen its positions in the post-Soviet space by enhancing its alliances with the stable countries, and then engage the weaker ones within its institutions. Russia's foreign policy in the South Caucasus should aim to work thoroughly with their societies and applying soft power in those countries,

⁶⁹After the collapse of the USSR, the successor of the USSR, Russian Federation gradually removed its troops from Baltic countries, German, Poland, Mongolia. In order to temporarily keep military-bases treaties with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and other countries were signed. Now there are Russian military-bases in the territory of former USSR countries: Armenia, Belarus, South Ossetia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, as well as Vietnam and Syria.

⁷⁰Activity Plan of RF's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to 2018, Official website of RF MFA, 1, available at: http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/official_documents/-/asset_publisher/CptICkB6BZ29/content/id/102086 (25.03.2017)

⁷¹ Ibid

otherwise it will lose its influence on the societies, resulting in the eventual loss of influence on the authorities.

To restore its influence in Georgia, Russia can skillfully use the dissatisfaction of Georgian society, particularly nationalists, from the Turkish-Azerbaijani expansion. In Azerbaijan, RF could work intensively with the national minorities in order to force the Azerbaijani authorities to become more compliant with RF-integration. By selling arms to Azerbaijan and making concessions at the expense of Armenia, RF will further aggravate it, making Azerbaijan even more unmanageable.

Relations with the United States have vague prospects for improvement given the toughening of recent sanctions. To resist them, RF aims to strengthen its economy by dealing with import replacement, and increasing its real economic capacities. RF's currency reserves should be withdrawn from the US by creating alternative payment options with different countries as the risk to freeze those reserves and to disengage RF from the SWIFT⁷² payment system (as it happened to Iran) is high.

RF could seek to continue its cooperation with Iran in the fight against terrorism, trying to deepen trade relations and, most importantly, to use Iran's experience of development under the severe sanctions.

Russia will continue its participation in the Syrian War amidst the final victory against terrorism by cautiously playing on the contradictions of the other countries, thus expanding its political and military role in the Middle East.

RF is interested in cooperation with Turkey as a convenient trade partner, trying to reach the European gas market through Turkey, while not forgetting its expansionist aspirations not only in the former USSR territory, but also in some regions of Russia.

RF will establish a strong trade partnership in the sphere of high-technology products with China as well yet will pay close attention to China's natural demographic-expansionist aspirations towards the Far East and Siberia.

⁷² Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications (SWIFT) is a global member-owned cooperative and the world's leading provider of secure financial messaging services.

Thus, despite the current negative turn in global affairs, Russia will remain open but cautious for dialogues with both regional and global powers to overcome the regional challenges and ensure global security and stability.

**ՏԱՐԱԾԱԾՐՋԱՆԱՅԻՆ ԱՆՎՏԱՆԳՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԳԻՆԱՄԻԿԱ:
ՌՈՒՍԱՍՏԱՆԻ ԴԱՇՆՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ**
Ամփոփագիր

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Բանալի բառեր՝ Ռուսաստանի Դաշնություն, տարածաշրջանային անվտանգություն, քաղաքաբնույթ աշխարհ, Ռուսաստան-Արևմուտք հսկանարտություն, «մերձավոր արտասահման», միջազգային կառույցներ

Հոդվածում քննարկվում են Ռուսաստանի Դաշնության ազգային շահերի և առաջնահերթությունների թելադրանքով ձևավորված անվտանգային և արտաքին քաղաքականության հիմնական դրույթները՝ համաձայն երկրի պաշտոնական փաստաթղթերի և բարձրաստիճան պաշտոնյաների ելույթների:

ԽՍՀՄ փլուզումից և Սառը պատերազմի ավարտից հետո փոխվել են ՌԴ պատկերացումները «տարածաշրջան» և «տարածաշրջանային անվտանգություն» հասկացությունների վերաբերյալ: Այդ հասկացությունների ժամանակակից իմաստը ճշտելու նպատակով քննության է առնվում ՌԴ արտաքին քաղաքականությունը նախկին ԽՍՀՄ անդամ երկրների, ինչպես նաև տարածաշրջանում իրենց շահերն ունեցող համաշխարհային այլ դերակատարների նկատմամբ:

Հոդվածում վերլուծության է ենթարկվում տարածաշրջանային սպառնալիքներին և մարտահրավերներին դիմակայելու նպատակով ձևավորված նախկին և գործող կառույցների գործունեության արդյունավետությունը, ինչպես նաև առաջարկվում են մեխանիզմներ տարածաշրջանային անվտանգության և կայունության ամրապնդման համար: