

POST COLD WAR WORLD: DOWN WITH THE CULT OF "KALASHNIKOV"

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Like our predecessors who established the new world order after World War II, we have a chance to create a new and more reliable system of international stability. The main reason for that is the lesson we all have learned from September 11: namely, that international politics is not under the exclusive jurisdiction of any one or a few powers. The world is becoming ever more open, more interrelated and more interdependent. Violence may no longer serve as the "midwife of history."

Russia - United States

September 11 has left the politicians and the military in Russia and the United States precious little time to get moving. Hardly six months have passed since President Bush proclaimed that Russia and America "were no longer enemies," but circumstances have already made us act as partners and even allies. First and foremost, there is no contradiction between the fundamental national interests of Russia and the United States.

We have to admit that extremism, which challenges mankind today, in some sense is a by-product of the head-on military, political and ideological confrontation between the United States and the USSR. Today the same forces that were formerly mere pawns in the global chess game are trying to force their way into prize positions. The genie is out of the bottle. Both Russia and the United States must bear primary and joint responsi-

bility for getting the better of it.

Our actions in Chechnya have often been bitterly criticized in the West. One of the more common grievances is this: If you claim to be fighting terrorists, then why do you have to use heavily armed army units, rather than smaller special forces teams, which could be capturing field commanders? Our answer to that was that present-day terrorists were armed very differently from the early 20th century "bombists" or even the "Red Brigades." After September 11, the world was forced to admit it was facing an entirely new form of terrorism. The operation launched by the antiterrorist coalition was but another proof that to combat this evil requires the most drastic action.

A common threat made both the Russians and the Americans recognize that they were in the same boat. Meanwhile, our bilateral relations still remain burdened by all sorts of limitations, mainly from the American side. In particular, the Jackson-Vanik Amendment, though nominally no longer in force, has not in fact been repealed even now. The negotiations on Russia's accession to the WTO remain difficult, and Russian companies continue to suffer discriminatory treatment. This is most strikingly exemplified by the protective duties on steel products recently introduced by the American authorities, which have heavily affected Russian and other European interests.

It is common knowledge that the only



explanation for this step was the American administration's desire to help out its own steel industry. The European countries, naturally, resorted to judicial procedures, but Russia, not being a WTO member, has virtually no way to counter this kind of protectionism. However, when Russia imposed measures in response to breaches of sanitary rules by American poultry imports, the reaction in the United States was manifestly inadequate. Certain American officials followed through with statements to the effect that, unless Russia abolished the restrictions, Washington would not support Russia's accession to the WTO.

It would be unfair if I failed to mention the changes for the better in the legal and treaty basis for our bilateral economic relations initiated by the American side. Since the passing in

1993 of the Friendship with Russia and Other Newly Independent States Act, the United States has revised over 70 legislative acts that were of a discriminatory nature. They have extended the General System of Trade Preferences to cover Russia, which resulted in the exemption from duty of the larger part of our exports to the American market. An essential role was also played by the convention for the avoidance of double taxation on income and capital, which came into force in 1994. All these, however are a few happy exceptions against the larger background of restrictions remaining in force.

Trade and economic sanctions represent one of the fundamental instruments of the U.S. foreign policy, positioned between direct coercion by force and conventional diplomatic procedures. The American legislation providing for these sanctions is of a universal nature; that is to say, it isn't directed exclusively against Russia. It is not unreasonable however to question the manner of its enforcement, i.e. whether the sanctions imposed against us are sufficiently well-grounded in terms of the American legislation itself.

Discrimination results, inter alia, from an essential mismatch between the American regulations regarding sanctions and the practices of their application. Besides, many of the U.S. laws that are of concern to us still bear a fairly worn, yet quite discernible, stamp of the Cold War. This stamp has not been definitively removed even by the drastic steps to bring our countries' positions closer together after the events of September 11. We have clearly felt that in the course of activities within the Joint Working Group of the U.S. Senate and the Federation Council.

All this testifies to the fact that our relations are still a far cry from a true partnership and permanently require interference at the topmost level. Without it, alas, everything gets bogged down in the bureaucratic quagmire. A partnership should be like a dance. Where there is harmony, everything works. But if you keep stepping on your partner's toes, you need not expect much enthusiasm or appreciation. Besides, a dance like this wouldn't be nice to watch.

Not so long ago, almost all files on our relations with the United States were stored in the folder marked "security and disarmament." Today, it's no longer so. Yet, having recognized that we were no longer enemies we, the Russians and the Americans, have so far failed to do something that is most crucial for the relations between our two countries. We have not laid the foundation that could and should underlie the relationship between partners, namely, the foundation of essential mutual economic interest.

Everybody still remembers President George W. Bush's address to the nation, in which he pronounced his notorious definition of the "axis of evil." In that important political statement, Russia was named among America's allies in the global coalition against terrorism, but that was in the U.S. President's address. On the lists of the U.S. Department of the Treasury Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, we remain side by side with representatives of the same "axis."

Russia - Europe

Europe has endured the American tragedy as if it were its own. Russia's unequivocal support has lent a new dimension to the Atlantic solidarity. This course of events was only natural. A lot was said to the effect that a



common enemy (in this case, the international terrorist) had reunited the civilized part of mankind. Let's hope that this will allow us all to step on the road towards adapting the international relations to the realities of the post-Cold War world.

There is no doubt that in the foreseeable future NATO will remain the backbone of the Europeans' defense policies, and the United States will retain its position as the political and economic leader of the Western world. At the same time, Europe ought to take due account of how much Russia has changed over the past years.

Our goal is to achieve full-fledged participation in all those mechanisms, which truly affect the security policies on the continent. Given Russia's military and political potential, this desire is only natural. The Russia-EU Summit in Brussels has declared as a strategic goal the need to form a single economic space, including Russia. This space however is unthinkable outside of a single security space.

Integration processes in Europe are of an objective nature. For us this has long been axiomatic. However, we would like to see due account of Russia's interests in these processes become equally axiomatic for the EU. What I mean, certainly, is the issue of Kaliningrad.



Over the past few years, this has become a separate issue in our relations with the EU. Here we face a tight knot of energy, transportation, ecological and humanitarian problems.

European integration has been accompanied by changes in the transportation map of Europe. We are convinced that Kaliningrad should remain part of this map. Constructing alternative routing is impractical and contrary to the very idea of integration. Today, Kaliningrad has no means to construct highways and trunk-railways. What it has, however, is manpower.

Very soon we will see the issue of visa requirements for the citizens of Kaliningrad acquire the proportions of a major problem. It would seem that President Vladimir Putin's recent proposal for a visa-free regime between Russia and the EU is completely in line with the world realities after September 11.

Kaliningrad is only a small territory, but it represents a crucially important bridge between Russia and Europe. Our common task is to promote harmonious development of this region and its intensive economic growth through joint efforts. The building of a united Europe should not take place to the detriment of any one of its parts. This is the main point and

the object of the dialogue between Russia and Europe.

Russia - Afghanistan

Longstanding instability in Afghanistan has hampered the development of the entire Central Asian region. Afghanistan holds a strategically important position in terms of the potential access of its energy resource-rich neighbors, such as Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, to international markets. However, unending conflicts have canceled all prospects for the construction of the necessary transport facilities in the area each time. Instead of promoting its economic development, Afghanistan's key position has time and again caused it to be drawn into one or another "great game." In the 18th century, that was the game between the British and the Russian empires. By the end of the 20th century, the country became the scene of an all but open confrontation between the USSR and the United States. This resulted in destruction of the country's economic potential and mass pauperization, which were accompanied by an upsurge of extremism, thus gradually turning Afghanistan into a land of lawlessness.

It is obvious that any plans for energy resources sent through the territory of Afghanistan are contingent on sustainable peace in this country. Everybody would stand to profit from it: the Afghans, who would get new jobs and a steady source of revenue to the national treasury, which is virtually empty at present; the Central Asian states, which need to increase their export capacity to assure further development; Russia, which is interested in stabilizing the region adjacent to its southern borders; and the United States, aspiring to safeguard its interests in the area. Today, the internation-

al community has a realistic chance of learning a lesson from the past.

Russia - Middle East

Since early this year, escalation of violence in the Middle East has reached the limit. Unfortunately, the only inference from this was the recognition of Israelis' and Palestinians' inability to sit down at the negotiating table without pressure from outside.

The U.S. administration continues its preparation for military action against Iraq and is anxious for a degree of freedom to maneuver in the region, which is only possible if key Arab states remain at least neutral.

Naturally, the co-sponsors of peaceful settlement may and should support any initiatives aimed at the cessation of violence in the region. That's the very essence of their activities. And that's what Russia is actually doing, as well as the UN and the EU. However, the co-sponsors should not allow the new initiatives and mediation missions to be used merely for camouflage.

One of the main conclusions for our foreign policy drawn from our experience in recent years is that Russia may not profit from any confrontation. Where formerly we wouldn't exclude resorting to force, today we strive to actively rely on negotiations and to seek concurrent interests.

In its foreign policy, Russia is getting rid of all remnants of great power ambitions and illusions of self-sufficiency, which were inherited from the former USSR. What contributes to this process is the clear formulation of long-term goals for the country's development and our aspiration to make its economy competitive and equal to the challenges of the 21st century. Therefore, the fine gesture is being replaced by a pragmatic approach and an unwavering protection of national interests.