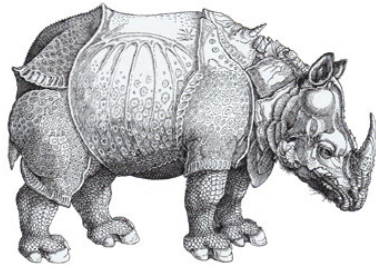


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# SECURITY INDEX

Occasional Paper Series

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## **Towards Global Security Through Equal Rights and Consensus**

*Sergey Ryabkov*



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The international relations system has been in the process of transformation since the early 1990-s. The unfulfilled unipolar project, which was being constructed by the USA, is transforming into a more just multipolar world order, which the future of world development belongs to. At the same time one can observe some

countries pursue their foreign policies through strength, see the ideologization and militarization of international relations. The United States purposefully destroys the arms control system, develops the global missile defense system, withdrew from the INF Treaty, the Open Skies Treaty, does not agree to extend the New START. In these conditions the Russian Federation`s actions are aimed at deterrence at renewing strategic stability. In the current environment the work in the field of international security and arms control should be predicated on the principles of consensus, equal rights, and take into account the interests of the parties involved without attempts of pressure and coercion. For Russia interaction in this field is one of the methods of ensuring national security rather than a goal in itself.

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### Key findings:

- **We see the United States deliberately destroying the arms control system legal foundations**, which *de facto* implies renouncing agreed rules of international interaction in this area and the founding principles of mutual respect for interests and their balance. That fuels the climate of mistrust, reduces the predictability in the nuclear-missile domain.
- **The development of novel Russian weapons systems was a forced, yet a logical response to the actions of the USA and its allies, aimed at upholding deterrence and restoring the strategic balance rather than at achieving military superiority.**
- **Practically immediately after the collapse of the INF Treaty the United States proceeded to test the previously prohibited weapons systems, which is indicative of the high degree of preparedness for such actions.**
- **An unconditional extension of the New START Treaty would allow to avoid a full collapse of the limits and control mechanisms in the nuclear-missile domain, preserve the remnants of predictability in the strategic relations between the two countries and win time for discussing the manner in which to construct arms control in the new environment.**
- **It is necessary to conclude a legally-binding agreement with the participation of all states with significant outer space activities robustly safeguarding against arms placement in outer space based on the Russian-Chinese draft Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of**

## **Weapons in Outer Space, the Threat or Use of Force against Outer Space Objects.**

- **The Russian Federation takes steps to reduce and limit nuclear weapons, lowers the role and place of nuclear weapons in its doctrinal documents, while the reverse tendency is observed in other countries.**
- **The attempts to divide arms control into good and bad, the one looking into the future and the obsolete one are an attempt to masquerade the fragility of the stances and provide propaganda cover for destabilizing actions in this area.**
- **Exchanges in the area of strategic stability and arms control is one of the methods of ensuring national security rather than a goal in itself.**

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### **About the Author**



**Sergey Ryabkov** is Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, responsible for bilateral relations with North and South America, non-proliferation and arms control, Iran's nuclear programme and Russia's participation in the BRICS association.

In 1982, graduated from the Moscow State Institute of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Served at several positions both at the central office of the Russian Foreign Ministry and abroad. In 1995-1999, was the Head of the OSCE Unit of the Department of European Cooperation. In 1999 – 2002 – Senior Counsellor (political) of the Russian Embassy to the U.S. In 2002-2005, served as the Minister Counsellor (Deputy Chief of Mission) of the Russian Embassy to the U.S. In 2005-2008 – the Director of the Department of European Cooperation. Since 2008 - Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

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Our e-mail address: [inform@pircenter.org](mailto:inform@pircenter.org)

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## “Towards Global Security Through Equal Rights and Consensus”

*Sergey Ryabkov*



The international relations system has been in the process of transformation since the early 1990-s. Today one may unequivocally say that the unipolar project, which has been constructed by the USA with the help of its allies, did not materialize. There began the construction of a more just multipolar world order, where the states that made a great economic leap forward on the back of globalization, came to get the key roles. We opine that the future belongs to a similar

vector of the world development.

At the same time there is noted an aspiration of the past leaders to retain their privileged position in the world arena. Foreign policy through strength, ideologization and militarization of international relations have become the sign of the time. The culture of dialogue and search for compromises is being displaced from the international communication.

Global interconnectedness, which previously was perceived as a common good, becomes an instrument of intervention for ones and a point of vulnerability for the others. Trade, finances, information are being utilized for the ends of political pressure.

Geopolitical divergences have a paralyzing effect over the activities of multilateral bodies, including UN, G20, WTO. The entire normative-institutional and value-conceptual architecture of international relations is being subjected to a stress test.

The space for constructive engagement on a broad range of traditional and emerging challenges and threats is shrinking. These challenges and threats include the settlement of long-standing conflicts and the prevention of the new ones, illicit drug trafficking, transnational organized crime, adaptation to the climate change, global poverty as well as threats in the field of food, ecological and health security.

### **Everyone for oneself**

The propagation of COVID-19 regrettably contributed to the destabilization of the international situation, fueled distrust and conflict potential. Instead of cooperating in the fight against the common scourge, certain states act based on the principle *everyone on its own*. Those states make attempts to use the crisis provoked by the pandemic to settle accounts with their geopolitical competitors and governments *non grata* in defiance of the principles of international communication provided for in the UN Charter.

We proceed from the assumption that in the current period of global uncertainty a direct dialogue between the leading economic and military-political powers is particularly needed. Based on this understanding, the President of Russia put forward a proposal to convene a P5 summit, tasked, as we see it, with launching a sincere conversation on the principles for interaction in international affairs, for the settlement of existing crises and the prevention of new ones; and pathways towards resolving other international issues. The most important thing is to determine the parameters of peaceful co-existence that would prevent a nuclear war or a war with the participation of nuclear powers.



This initiative is especially timely against the backdrop of a crisis in the arms control system. Currently we see deliberate U.S. actions aimed at destroying its legal foundations, which *de facto* implies renouncing agreed rules of international interaction in this area and forgoing the founding principles of mutual respect for interests and their balance.

**Currently we see deliberate U.S. actions aimed at destroying its legal foundations, which *de facto* implies renouncing agreed rules of international interaction in this area and forgoing the founding principles of mutual respect of interests and their balance.**

It is easy to discern Washington`s resurged aggressive egocentrism behind these actions. At the same time the great power competition concept is being imposed on other members of the international community. Such an approach is deeply confrontational in its nature and only exacerbates the atmosphere of distrust, reduces the predictability in the nuclear-missile field.

### **Global U.S. missile defense – an obstacle to cooperation**

In 2002, one of the cornerstones of the strategic stability system – the 1972 ABM Treaty – was destroyed as a result of the U.S. withdrawal. The Americans headed for the deployment of their own global missile defense system, followed by the build-up of land-based and naval MD systems, with a prospect for their deployment in outer space becoming visible. Such actions had a highly negative impact on international security, including in the Euro-Atlantic and Asia-Pacific regions, and laid down the premises for the renewal of an arms race since an inextricable link exists between strategic offensive and defensive means.

On various occasions we presented concrete ideas on how to transform the issue of global missile defense from the category of “irritators” into the area of cooperation. The United States, as well as NATO in general, refused not only to cooperate on equals as we proposed but also to take into account the Russian concerns in principle.

For quite some time the United States had been declaring that missile defense was not created to counter Russia. We never took such affirmations at their face value. Everyone understands that the build-up of the U.S. global missile defense architecture and its approximation to the Russian borders shift the strategic balance in strategic offensive arms and engenders considerable risks of global instability. The U.S. unwillingness to draft together with us the most general criteria of matching the missile defense capabilities with the declared objectives of their development was indicative of the general direction of their efforts. The United States also refused to introduce changes to their ABM plans after achieving an agreement on the Iranian nuclear program in 2015. After all, it was the core and, in essence, the only argument Washington used to justify the deployment of missile defenses in Europe.

Another evidence of the genuine direction of the U.S. global missile defense is embodied by Pentagon`s launching work on giving it anti-hypersonic potential, with only a handful of countries entering in possession of such systems in the foreseeable future. The February 2019 Missile Defense Review finally set the record straight by classifying Russia and China as “potential adversaries”.

**Against this backdrop President Putin in his March 2018 address to the Federal Assembly announced the development of the novel Russian weapon systems, which became a forced, yet a predictable response to the actions of the United States and their allies. At the same time the Russian president underscored that these types of weapons had been developed exclusively to the ends of deterrence and restoring the strategic balance rather than achieving military superiority.**

### **U.S. withdrawal from the INF as complete unwillingness to discuss mutual pretensions**

In August 2019 the United States withdrew from the INF Treaty. Notably, they did so to the accompaniment of ungrounded accusations of non-compliance with the Treaty against Russia, which has absolutely nothing in common with reality. The Russian 9M729 missile's specifics fully fit into the limitations under the Treaty, which we pointed out on various occasions.

In turn we had grounded pretensions to the manner in which the United States complied – or better to say – uncompiled with the Treaty, deploying Mk.41 launchers capable of launching intermediate-range cruise missiles on soil, by refining the prohibited-class missiles though the use of the so-called targets for missile defenses, by developing heavy attack UAVs, which fell under the definition of a land-based intermediate-range cruise missiles according to the Treaty.

**For many years we had been trying to make progress in settling the counter-pretensions under the Treaty. But Washington appears to have been pursuing different objectives.**

Further developments only confirmed this conclusion. Practically immediately after the collapse of the INF Treaty the United States proceeded to test the previously prohibited weapons systems, which is indicative of the high degree of preparedness for such actions. The United States also voiced plans of deploying such delivery vehicles, first of all, in the Asia-Pacific region.

Thanks to the INF Treaty two classes of land-based nuclear missiles were eliminated from the two countries' arsenals. Now there is an increased risk of an arms race in different regions of the world. In these conditions Russia committed not to deploy land-based intermediate-range missiles in those regions of the world where the respective weapons of American fabrication will not be deployed. We also called on NATO countries to agree on a similar moratorium. But our proposal got rejected.

### **No optimism regarding the prospects for the New START**

There is no confidence whatsoever that the U.S.-Russian New START Treaty, which expires on February 5, 2021, would be extended. As early as in December 2019 Russia officially proposed to the United States to extend the Treaty without artificial linkages.

**We opine that an unconditional extension of the New START Treaty would allow to avoid a full collapse of the limits and control mechanisms in the nuclear-missile domain, preserve the remnants of predictability in the strategic relations between the two countries and win time for discussing the manner in which to construct arms and new military technologies control in the new environment and what the circle of parties to eventual possible agreements may look like.**

We lament to note that the USA makes attempts to link the extension of the New START to the matters that have nothing to do with the Treaty. In particular, they demand that Russia agree to work on arms control issues based solely on the American templates and exert pressure on China in order to engage Beijing in the respective negotiations. Notably, the United States only talks about a small-term extension of the New START and insists on adjusting its verification mechanism to the American advantage, which will deprive the document of its balanced character and will result in the unsealing of the text.

Such U.S. actions do not make us more optimistic regarding the prospects for the New START. However, such actions are quite logical from the military superiority standpoint. In this respect one can also recall the U.S. blocking the CTBT's entry into force, the subversion of the JCPOA to settle the situation around the Iranian nuclear program, the recent blow dealt against the Open Skies treaty regime.

#### **Weapons have no place in outer space**

Of special concern are the American activities in outer space aimed at “dominance, military superiority, all the way to total dominance in the outer space”. In conformity with the doctrinal beliefs of the West and NATO countries, outer space is regarded as a battlefield, including for offensive operations. The objectives of waging hostilities in outer space are being presented as being in compliance with the international law and the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, which provides for the peaceful uses of outer space. In order to legitimize military operations in outer space, the United States proposes to focus on developing some standards of behavior, adapted exclusively to their own interests. Russia is a proponent of outer space free of all kinds of weaponry.

**It is necessary to conclude a legally-binding agreement with the participation of all states with significant outer space activities robustly safeguarding against arms placement in outer space based on the Russian-Chinese draft Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space, the Threat or Use of Force against Outer Space Objects.**



### **Russia is opposed to elevating the role of nuclear weapons in doctrinal documents**

We cannot help being troubled by the stiffening of security doctrines, the broadening of nuclear weapons role and the lowering of the threshold for their use, by the development and realization of the relevant arms programs, which are being carried out in the United States against this backdrop. The United States actively modernizes and expands its non-strategic nuclear arsenal, blurring the border between tactical and strategic armaments. A very telling example is the equipment of some of the American “Trident II” SLBMs with tactical class nuclear warheads. Underway are the preparations for returning nuclear-tipped SLCMs into the American arsenal. Ongoing are the preparations for the B-61-12 nuclear gravity bomb with a varied yield and high precision to come into service. Among other tasks the bomb is designed to be used by the NATO allies and is capable of solving a wide range of tactical and strategic missions.

The USA deploys nuclear weapons on the territories of other states and envisages the participation of non-nuclear weapon states airplanes and military cadre in its use in combat. Such a practice runs in flagrant contravention of the basic NPT provisions outlined in Articles I and II of the Treaty.

In contrast, the Russian Federation for many years has been taking steps to reduce and limit nuclear weapons, lowers the role and place of nuclear weapons in its doctrine. The Basic Principles of the State Nuclear Deterrence Policy, approved on June 2, 2020 in particular, reflect this state of affairs.

We think that in the current environment the nuclear powers` responsible behavior is important as never before. This is why we advocate for the reaffirmation by Russia, the United States as well as by other P5 nations of the cornerstone principle that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. It is critical to avoid the repetition of the tragic events that took place 75 years ago, when the United States employed nuclear weapons against Japanese cities with no military need for such a step.

### **It is necessary to strengthen the regimes banning other types of WMD**

Russia fully supports the universalization and strengthening of the international regimes banning chemical, biological and toxin weapons.

Of serious concern is the absolutely unacceptable situation in the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). The aspiration of certain states to subdue this once successful multilateral structure to their geopolitical interests led to the OPCW being fragmented on the issue of the Syrian chemical dossier and its being assigned with the functions of determining those culpable of using CW – the so-called attribution. As a result, an irreparable blow is being dealt against the entire disarmament and WMD nonproliferation system.

We regard the work on strengthening the BTWC as one of the priorities for the international community. We consider indispensable to renew the work on a legally binding protocol to the Convention equipped with an effective verification mechanism and create an open-ended working group for this end.

### **International security on the basis of the principles of consensus, equity and taking into account mutual interests**

We are mindful of our responsibility for international security, global and regional stability and pursue the policy aimed at the preservation of peace. We consider it critical to deepen mutual trust, consolidate exchanges in the field of international security, exercise restraint in military activities.

In our work we are consistent in promoting political and diplomatic measures aimed at precluding the degradation of the security and stability situation. Arms control is called upon to play a tangible positive role in these matters. We regard as erroneous the attempts to supplant the proven mechanisms in this field with new improvised formats or “groups of interests”, which have neither a clear international mandate, nor agreed rules of work. We cannot agree with the attempts divide arms control into good and bad, the one looking into the future and the obsolete one, liberal/democratic and authoritarian. We regard such attempts as an effort to masquerade the fragility of the stances and provide for propaganda cover for destabilizing actions in this area.

The consolidation of the instruments in force and the elaboration of new treaty regimes in this area on the basis of consensus would contribute to the cause of preserving and solidifying the arms control architecture. We reserve the central role in this process for the United Nations and its multilateral disarmament machinery: the Conference on Disarmament, the UNGA First Committee and the UNDC. We propose a constructive unifying agenda on all key matters of arms control, disarmament and nonproliferation: we have a packet of draft resolutions prepared for the upcoming anniversary session of the UNGA First Committee, which include the space bloc, a document on chemical and biological weapons and a draft resolution in support of the system of arms control treaties and agreements.

In the current conditions we would consider the following as important elements of the ulterior work in the field of international security and arms control:

- Deepening systemic, comprehensive and practical-oriented dialogue on strategic issues between Russia and the United States that are the largest nuclear powers, fruitful exchanges within P5 and other possible for a with the participation of countries with significant nuclear potential;
- Joint efforts to minimize and neutralize the negative impact of the factors undermining strategic stability and international security. Those factors include the unconstrained deployment of the U.S. global missile defense, development of high-precision conventional strategic offensive arms, lowering of the nuclear weapons employment threshold on the doctrinal level accompanied by the simultaneous expansion of low-yield nuclear weapons, the prospect for offensive arms to be deployed in the outer space, the lack of instruments for regulating the imbalances in conventional armaments, attempts to debilitate the defense potential of other countries with the use of illegitimate means of pressure in circumvention of the UNSC;
- Confidence building and transparency measures based on the principles of not damaging the security of sides.

We suppose that this process – especially in multilateral formats – should be predicated on the principles of consensus, equal rights and mutual consideration of all the parties involved` interests. We think it would be counterproductive to force anyone to participate in such discussions. At the same time for us it would be of tangible importance to engage, first of all, the U.S. NATO allies – France and the United Kingdom.

The ultimate goal of exchanges in this direction would be achieving complex agreements that form solid foundations for the international security architecture taking into account the previous experience in this field and fully attendant to the realities of today.

**It is necessary to underscore that we do not regard exchanges in the field of arms control and strategic stability as an abstract goal in itself. For us it is, ifrst and foremost, a means to to ensure national security.**

Russia, like any other country, has its legitimate interests and its concerns. Our partners have to understand it and take it into account in their work. Only on this basis will the dialogue be of equal rights character and lead to achieving balances mutually acceptable agreements.

*The text of the present article is based on the public part of Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia Sergey Ryabkov, which was delivered at the 20<sup>th</sup> PIR Center International School on Global Security. The lecture and the following seminar discussion took place in Zvenigorod, Moscow Region on October 1, 2020.*