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# CYBER CRIME: A THREAT TO INFORMATION SECURITY

For the purposes of creating a safe online environment and discussing all the cyberspace-related hopes and fears, challenges and opportunities of the world community, the London Conference on Cyberspace was hosted by the UK Foreign Office on November 1–2, 2011. This forum brought together internet experts and cyber security practitioners from governments, the private-sector, and NGOs around the world.

The PIR Center was represented by the Chairman of the Executive Board Dr. Mikhail Yakushev. Our interest—and involvement—in the analysis of future developments of global internet governance, and policy recommendations on how it will affect international information security, will continue. Moreover, in 2012 the PIR Center plans a series of roundtable discussions and other meetings on the issue, both in Moscow and Geneva, resulting in the publication of a series of reports in our journal.

Indeed, combat action and massive attacks in the cyberspace have moved on from the realm of media speculation and science fiction to become a very real and urgent challenge to international security. In the 21$^{st}$ century, wars are spreading—slowly but surely—to cyberspace and to outer space. For now, there has not been a full-blown war on the internet—but recent events (*Stuxnet, Shady RAT, LulzSecurity*) suggest that such a war is likely to happen in the immediate future.

Many of the security threats in cyberspace now facing Russia are related to economic crime. The existing systems of personal data protection are inadequate. Personal data belonging to Russian users of U.S.-registered social networks end up outside Russia, and not just in the United States itself but also in processing centers physically located in developing countries.

Another important aspect of the problem which is becoming ever more pressing with each passing year is cyber espionage. Web sites of U.S. government agencies are often targeted. During our recent conversations with U.S. congressmen, it became obvious that, in their opinion, this threat is becoming as dangerous as the threat of nuclear proliferation. For Russia, this challenge has not yet become quite as pressing—but the attacks against web sites run by Russian government agencies are becoming increasingly frequent and sophisticated.

Computer viruses unleashed by technologically-advanced terrorist organizations, as well as state-sanctioned attacks, are some of the most dangerous scenarios of the near future. An attack carried out in 2011 with the *Stuxnet* worm against industrial facilities in a number of countries was comparable in terms of the damage it inflicted to a military operation. A similar attack against Russia could have very negative effects for the Russian economy unless adequate counter-measures are developed.

In such a context, it is becoming obvious that countries need a systemic strategy of countering high-tech terrorism, especially cyber terrorism. This kind of terrorism will become one of the most pressing problems for a number of countries, including Russia, in the coming years.

At present the problem of countering high-tech terrorism has yet to be fully addressed in Russia's strategy papers and doctrines. There is no direct mention of cyber terrorism in the Russian Military Doctrine of February 5, 2010. The Russian National Security Strategy until 2020 of May 12, 2009 mentions ''unlawful activities in the cybernetic and biological areas, as well as the area of high technologies''[1] as a potential future threat, but does not detail any specific strategies to counter that threat.

On the national level, measures against cyber terrorism in Russia are regulated by individual pieces of legislation which do not really add up to a coherent national political or legislative concept. On May 12, 2004 the Russian President signed Decree No 611 ''On measures to ensure Russia's information security in the area of international information exchange.''[2] The decree prohibited government agencies from using the internet without any protection measures, and details the remit of the Russian secret services in ensuring safe usage of the World Wide Web. The decree was aimed primarily at protecting the web sites run by Russian government agencies from external threats and unauthorized use. Nevertheless, in 2008 this decree was null and void.

Russia is not a member of the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime, which is the most comprehensive and well-known piece of international legislation regulating measures against cyber terrorism on the international level. The convention was signed on November 23, 2001 in Budapest. Although the convention is open for signature, Russia has not joined the 43 Council of Europe member states and 15 other countries who are members of the convention. On November 15, 2005 the Russian President signed a decree ''On signing the Convention on Cybercrime'', authorizing the Russian government to join the convention on the condition that Article 32, Paragraph B of the document is revised. Russia is adamantly opposed to that paragraph, which allows authorized agencies from one country to access computer data stored on the territory of another country without obtaining prior permission from that country's government.[3]

The Russian President later signed a resolution declaring that Presidential Decree ''On joining the Convention on Cybercrime'' of November 15, 2005 was null and void. The resolution entered into force on March 22, 2008. Since then Russia has shown no interest in the Council of Europe convention, focusing instead on its own initiatives in the area of countering cybercrime.

In the past three or four years, Russia has been working hard on addressing the problem of cyber terrorism (and cybercrime as a whole) via UN channels. Russia's initiative and proposals became the basis of a resolution by the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to set up an open intergovernmental group of experts to conduct a comprehensive study of cybercrime. The resolution was adopted in May 2010. One of the main tasks set before the group is to develop and formulate proposals on improving international legislation against cybercrime and cyber terrorism. During the 65th General Assembly session in 2010 a report on issues of information security was submitted to the UN Secretary General. The report was prepared by a group of government experts representing 15 countries and chaired by Andrey Krutskikh, deputy head of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Department for New Challenges and Threats. The report, which was unanimously approved by the UN General Assembly, focuses on the need to develop common approaches to countering cyber threats and fighting cybercrime (as well as cyber terrorism). It represented a real breakthrough for the group, the first since it was founded back in 2005.

But the ambitious and comprehensive nature of the Russian proposals to regulate issues such as some countries' aggressive behavior in cyberspace is preventing these proposals from being accepted globally. Neither the UN nor the key global powers are at this moment inclined to view the Russian projects for regulating cyberspace seriously. This does not bode well for the latest Russian draft of the UN Convention on International Information Security, which emerged in late September 2011. It is no coincidence that in recent years Russia has been demonstrating rapidly growing interest in various regional formats of cooperation (such as BRICS [Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa], the Shanghai Cooperation Organization [SCO] and the Collective Security Treaty Organization [CSTO]) as alternative platforms for the promotion of its initiatives regarding cyberspace regulation.

At the informal summit of CSTO in Astana in August 2011, the organization's Secretary General, Nikolay Bordyuzha, said that the CSTO is developing a systemic approach to countering the threat

of cyber terrorism. He added that the area was one of the organization's priorities.[4] At Russia's insistence the topic of countering cyber terrorism has also become one of the key priorities for SCO. On June 16, 2009 its member states signed an agreement on cooperation in the area of international information security. The agreement, which was signed in Yekaterinburg, entered into force on June 2, 2011.

On September 12, 2011, four SCO member states (Russia, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and China) submitted to the UN Secretary General a draft code regulating countries' behavior in cyber space, including prevention of cyber wars and cyber terrorism. The quality of this proposal and its efficiency is yet to be assessed as well as the reasons for significant skepticism voiced by a number of international experts already.

The problem of cyber terrorism is not at the top of the BRICS agenda, but Russia is trying to use that platform as well to promote its initiatives. In 2009–2011 Russia was trying to win the support of other BRICS members (primarily South Africa and China) for the initiative to adopt an alternative piece of international legislation regulating measures against cybercrime and cyber terrorism. In 2011 this initiative did not make any progress, mainly due to lack of support among BRICS members themselves. Nevertheless, the issue of cyber terrorism is increasingly being discussed by BRICS, although nothing firm has been decided yet. The final declaration of the April 14, 2011 BRICS summit says that the member states are committed ''to cooperate for strengthening international information security,'' and that special attention will be paid ''to combat cybercrime.''[5]

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The debate about the role of information technologies (especially social networks) as a factor of turmoil and revolutions was fuelled among politicians, experts and journalists by the Arab Spring in 2011. In this issue, we publish the article ''Social Networks in the International and National Security,'' by the PIR Center Research Fellow Oleg Demidov analyzing the impact of the individual social networking services on the world in terms of security. Given the trends in recent years, as well as the recent and ongoing ''online revolutions'' in the Middle East and other regions, the key question is should we regard social networks as a challenge and a threat—or as a technology that can potentially strengthen security?

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In June 2011, the Global Commission on Drug Policy released a statement that condemned the ongoing ''war on drugs'' as hugely ineffective and wasteful. It has determined that drug policies of numerous governments worldwide should be reconsidered scientifically and economically rather than politically.

This report triggered heated debate in the expert community. Will the proposed measures help in struggle against drug abuse? Will this measure contribute to the reduction of the global market of hard drugs? *Security Index* could not stay on the sidelines of the debate. First of all, with Ambassador Yury Fedotov, Under-Secretary General of the United Nations, and Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, we discussed, among other issues of threats beyond the traditional security framework, the prospects of legalizing the ''soft drugs'' as well as the more specific question of drug trafficking from Afghanistan.

Moreover, we've instigated two Russian experts to openly express their different views on the conclusions made by the report. Lev Levinson, expert of the Human Rights Institute, argues that the policies based on constantly increasing restrictions, introducing ever harsher penalties and expanding the lists of banned substances would be counterproductive. On the contrary, Yury Krupnov, expert of the Institute of Demography, Migration and Regional Development, writes that legalizing light drugs is the favorite tactic of those who advocate legalizing all drugs. Read the correspondence of the two experts in our ''Viewpoints'' and join the discussion!

<div align="right">**Vladimir Orlov**</div>

## NOTES

[1] The National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020 (in Russian). The Security Council of the Russian Federation, 2009, May 12, <http://www.scrf.gov.ru/documents/99.html>, last accessed November 23, 2011.

[2] Decree of the President of the Russian Federation No 611 ''On measures to ensure Russia's information security in the area of international information exchange'' (in Russian). The Russian Law Data Portal, 2004, May 12, <http://www.law7.ru/base16/part2/d16ru2954.htm>, last accessed November 23, 2011.

[3] ''A Party may, without the authorisation of another Party access or receive, through a computer system in its territory, stored computer data located in another Party, if the Party obtains the lawful and voluntary consent of the person who has the lawful authority to disclose the data to the Party through that computer system'', Article 32, B, Convention of Cybercrime, Council of Europe, November 23, 2001, <http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/html/185.htm>, last accessed November 23, 2011.

[4] ''CSTO gets ready to fight cybercrime,'' *Rosbalt*, 2011, August 15, <http://www.rosbalt.ru/main/2011/08/15/879601.html>, last accessed November 23, 2011.

[5] BRICS Summit 2011 Joined Declaration. Sanya (China), 2011, April 14, <http://www.pravasitoday.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/BRICS-SUMMIT-2011-JOINT-DECLARATION1.pdf>, last accessed November 23, 2011.
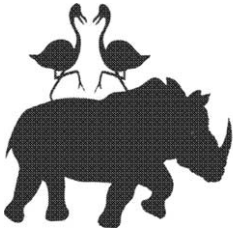
Yury Fedotov

# GLOBAL COMMISSION CALLS FOR LEGALIZATION OF ECSTASY AND CANNABIS

*Drug trafficking and drug abuse, corruption, money laundering and financing of terrorism, transnational cybercrime—all of these problems require serious and unconventional solutions since they go beyond the traditional security framework.*

*Wehave discussed these issues with Ambassador Yury Fedotov, Under-Secretary General of the United Nations, and Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).*

**SECURITY INDEX:** What are the main difficulties in solving the problem of Afghanistan as the source of drug trafficking through Central Asia?

**FEDOTOV:** The problem of drug trafficking originating from Afghanistan has a history. It is rooted in a multiplicity of causes, including the inherent instability and armed violence, the collapse of the country's economy, poverty and the lack of opportunities for social development, polarization within Afghan society, weakness of the law enforcement authorities, neglect of the rule of law, endemic corruption, and the porous nature of state borders.

The main issue is that a huge transnational drug economy has formed around the production of Afghan heroin and it is sustained by drug trafficking routes into Europe that flow through Central Asia and other regions. The production–trafficking–consumption criminal chain generates large amounts of drug money for drug dealers that, in turn, fuels different types of criminal networks, extremism, and terrorism.

UNODC's 2010 Afghanistan Opium Survey highlights the relationship between insecurity and opium cultivation. The Survey regards villages with good security as being less likely to grow poppies in 2011. But the instability and widespread armed insurgency have resulted in increased opium production. Indeed, the insurgents have a vested interest in opium cultivation because their activities are partially supported by the drug trade.

On the other hand, one cannot ignore the fact that opium poppy cultivation and the drug trade are also closely interlinked with the Afghan economy, impeding counter-narcotics efforts. Opium trade accounts for 16 percent of Afghanistan's GDP. Furthermore, 250,000 households or 6.3 percent of the Afghan population is involved in opium poppy cultivation. Who would want to relinquish such lucrative profits?

**SECURITY INDEX:** What prospects of solving this problem do you see?

**FEDOTOV:** Perhaps the greatest challenge for the international community is to coordinate the many social, political, economic, and military interventions needed to address the drivers of the drugs trade in Afghanistan.

Indeed, the problem requires multilateral and coordinated efforts across three main vectors: countering cultivation and production of opium and hashish in Afghanistan, curbing transnational drug trafficking, and the reduction of demand for drugs in other countries.

INTERVIEW

It is necessary to strengthen law enforcement agencies, improve judicial capacity, and develop an effective health system.

It is also essential to take tangible steps towards eradicating corruption and promoting good governance in the state and private spheres. Economic development should also be encouraged with assistance from the international community.

All of these efforts should be concurrent with each other and based on the principle of joint responsibility.

To ensure that appropriate attention is paid to the problem of drugs in the transitional period, there must be strong leadership and a determination at the national and donor levels. There should also be a growing sense of urgency injected into the pursuit of the criminals involved in the drugs trade. It is vital drug traffickers appreciate that the risks of being arrested, indicted, and incarcerated are increasing.

The regional approach is of decisive importance: all countries in the region should accept the problem and look jointly for ways to resolve it.

**SECURITY INDEX:** What role does the UN and in particular UNODC plays in solving the problem of Afghanistan?

**FEDOTOV:** Within its mandate, UNODC is focusing its efforts on the problems of drug trafficking, including other related aspects such as: strengthening the potential of Afghan agencies, justice reform, support for national efforts to eradicate opium poppy crops, and the development of alternative cultures, border controls, countering corruption, prevention of drug abuse, and treatment of drug users.

UNODC is aiming to play a catalytic role in helping Member States develop a common international strategic approach. It is coordinating efforts and increasing cooperation, as well as relying on its knowledge and experience of working in Afghanistan. Our office in this country is the biggest worldwide and has excellent experts and devoted staff members. We are determined to continue our support for the Government and the people of Afghanistan in restoring security and stability.

UNODC supports the Ministry of Counter Narcotics and other ministries to mainstream counter-narcotics. We are also engaged on three fronts: law enforcement, criminal justice reform, and health and livelihoods. There is a direct link between good governance and reduced opium cultivation and UNODC is providing the necessary infrastructure to facilitate the Afghan Border Police and other counter-narcotics agencies in regional border enforcement measures. UNODC is also actively engaged in alternate livelihoods projects in Afghanistan with the aim of providing Afghan farmers with legitimate and sustainable incomes.

The new Country Program for Afghanistan (2011–2014) will be launched shortly providing a strategic guide for UNODC's work within the overall regional strategy. The priorities, and guiding principles, of this program focus on UNODC undertaking the following: integrating thematic interventions, taking a leading role in coordinating integrated assistance to livelihood and conflict prevention, expanding health-related activities and enhancing evidence collection and analysis. It is a three year program with an annual budget of $25 million.

UNODC also works closely with partners at the field level, including non-government organizations and multi-lateral actors, to maximize its activities. Since the grassroots level can be influenced through efforts on a broader scale, UNODC also seeks to create an improved local environment through its country program and the regional strategy.

**SECURITY INDEX:** What is the role of other Central Asian states in regional drug trafficking?

**FEDOTOV:** Nearly a third of Afghan opium follows the northern route through Central Asia. It is becoming apparent that Central Asia has become a major drug traffic route due to instability and porous borders in some parts of the region. While a growing percentage of the Central Asian population consumes Afghan-produced opium, the vast majority of these trafficked drugs flow to Russia and Europe.

The trafficking of Afghan opium through the northern route has had devastating consequences. More than 70 tons of pure heroin reach the Russian Federation every year through Central Asian countries. In Russia alone, thousands of people die each year of heroin overdoses.

Central Asia finds itself adjoining the location where almost all the world's opium is grown. As a result, it is seen as the first point where the drugs flow from Afghanistan can be intercepted.

For more information on Central Asia, please visit the section ''Resources by Region— Central Asia'' on the PIR Center Website: www.pircenter.org/view/centralasia/eng.

At the country level in Central Asia, UNODC helped create a local Drug Control Agency in Tajikistan that is a leader in its field. The creation of the Tajik agency led to intelligence-driven operations against drug trafficking and stronger relations with other organizations. Kyrgyzstan is also adopting this model with the support of UNODC and donors.

A key body is the Paris Pact. Founded in 2003, it has grown into a community of over 70 active partner countries and international organizations. The Paris Pact provides a platform for gathering all concerned players around one table to discuss the drug flow from Afghanistan. In the last three to four years, the body has implemented the Rainbow Strategy of UNODC's Regional Office for Central Asia (ROCA). I am counting on the third Ministerial conference of the Paris Pact, which is planned for December 2011 in Vienna, to give additional political momentum to the ongoing work.

Particular attention has been paid by partners to targeting precursors used in heroin manufacture (''Operation TARCET''), and ''Securing Central Asia's borders with Afghanistan'' (Border Liaison Offices and CARICC). These initiatives play a key role in UNODC's strategy for the Central Asia region and new activities are planned to ensure a coordinated and concerted response to regional counter-narcotic interventions.

The Paris Pact has succeeded in enhancing the collaboration among partner countries and in providing a common direction for future work in these fields. Open dialogue and transparency among governmental agencies involved in the fight against drug trafficking is a fundamental necessity in solving this problem.

**SECURITY INDEX:** What measures can be taken against the poor border security of Central Asian countries which contribute to drug trafficking?

**FEDOTOV:** It is important to remember that trafficking across international borders is not the sole responsibility of one state. Better information and intelligence sharing among Central Asian countries are an absolute priority. The distances are large—for instance, 1,344 km separate Tajikistan from Afghanistan. The terrain in this area is also difficult and remote.

In countering drug trafficking in Central Asia, the work needs to be carried out on a regional basis. The success of the Almaty-based Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre (CARICC) is a good example of effective cooperation. Established with the support of UNODC, to improve cooperation in counter-narcotics between national and regional law enforcement agencies of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan along with Russia and Azerbaijan, CARICC has significantly hindered several traffic routes and resulted in significant drug seizures.

The cooperation between all actors will be further enhanced through UNODC's Regional Program for Afghanistan and Neighboring Countries (RP), thereby enhancing the barriers to the flow of drugs from Afghanistan. UNODC is currently at the final stage of launching the RP and it provides a set of cross-cutting, regional support activities to fill the existing gaps in promoting regional-level action on counter-narcotics.

**SECURITY INDEX:** What are the principles of prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation?

**FEDOTOV:** UNODC has published extensive and well-known guidelines on drug prevention and drug dependence that assist Member States with their prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation programs.

We must reduce the damaging impact of childhood experiences such as abuse and neglect. UNODC's measures can help change children's lives for the better by reducing or even removing risk and enabling them to play a full role within their communities. It is essential to ensure that children grow up in a warm, caring, and protective environment; one where there is supervision and monitoring. If UNODC measures are followed, they can make a real difference in preventing drug-use disorders.

INTERVIEW

Regarding drug treatment, too often policy-makers and politicians choose to ignore the medical and social science data. But it is science that decides the effectiveness of drug dependence treatment. The methods of drug treatment should reflect science-based-evidence, not ideology, prejudice, or personal beliefs.

I should also mention the need for the whole community to become involved in caring for drug-dependent patients. This approach creates social cohesion and avoids discriminating against these individuals or even isolating them. Decision-makers need to recognize that the creation of these conditions can lead to adverse health risks and relapses back to drug use.

**SECURITY INDEX:** What indicators exist to analyze the level of a drug problem within countries?

**FEDOTOV:** As an initial step, we need to reject the old idea of ''destination countries'' being the only countries affected by drug abuse. In today's reality there is a high risk of substance abuse in both ''production'' and ''transit'' countries.

One example is Afghanistan where the cultivation of poppies has led to higher levels of drug use, including heroin, among the adult population, young people and even children. West Africa is another example. In the last few years organized crime has changed the cocaine trafficking routes, and as a result, cocaine transit countries have shown high levels of drug use. There is a similar situation along the Balkan route.

Another important source of information about the domestic situation is a country survey. These surveys provide detailed information on the numbers of drug users, including both the adult population and the young population. Data on ''individuals seeking treatment'' also reflect the level of drug use in a particular population.

Drug treatment service coverage is another good indicator of the situation regarding a drug problem in countries. For example, you can have countries severely affected by problematic drug use and dependence, but which develop a good response, while other countries have services that are insufficient or almost non-existent.

**SECURITY INDEX:** What measures, based on the experience of other countries, could be taken in Russia in order to prevent the drug trafficking and fight against drugs?

**FEDOTOV:** From a drug demand reduction perspective, the Russian Federation is already doing a lot. For example they are successfully implementing drug prevention programs in schools, as well as reaching out to the population affected by drug dependence. Nevertheless, there is always room for improvement. The recent discussion of this topical matter at a special session of the State Council of Russia confirms this.

Currently we are trying to create a platform for the exchange of best practices and scientific data. This will allow the Russian Federation and other countries to benefit from mutual exchanges of experience and knowledge. To achieve this we are encouraging scientists to sit together, and, in doing so, break the one barrier that has kept them apart—the language barrier.

I think we have to continue to promote a care-orientated approach in Russia; one where the public health system offers care to the patient throughout all stages of the disease. This means that the patient is taken from the street to the clinic, from an outpatient setting to a therapeutic community. If we do this we will be encompassing the entire cycle from treatment to recovery and on to the individual's reintegration into society.

**SECURITY INDEX:** In June 2011 the report of the Global Commission on Drug Policy was published. One of the recommendations was to revise the classification of illegal drugs, i.e. actually legalize the ''soft drugs.'' Do you think this measure will help in the struggle against drug abuse? Will this measure contribute to the reduction in the global market for hard drugs?

**FEDOTOV:** UNODC is always open to dialogue with civil society, including the Global Commission on Drug Policy. However, it is important to remember that the international community's guidance on drugs comes from its governing bodies, in this case, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), which meets in Vienna every March. The CND is our parliament where all Member States officially gather to define international drug policy.

The International Drug Control Conventions are a comprehensive legal framework acting to protect people's health from the dangerous effects of drugs. In 2009, CND unanimously confirmed the validity of the Conventions on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, as

well as the list of drugs that are controlled substances. Therefore, calls for legalization of even some of the drugs are essentially aimed at dismantling existing international law.

From the medical point of view, all these substances are dangerous for a person, if they are not used for strictly medical purposes. I am surprised that the Global Commission on Drug Policy is advocating the legalization of ecstasy and cannabis. It is scientifically proven that abuse of cannabis, ecstasy, and other so-called ''soft drugs'' could induce behavioral and psychological problems that increase susceptibility to the use of hard drugs.

**SECURITY INDEX:** What is the role of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) in international security?

**FEDOTOV:** The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an inter-governmental body whose purpose is the development and promotion of policies, at both national and international levels, to combat money-laundering and terrorist financing.

The Task Force is therefore a policy-making body which generates the necessary political will to bring about national legislative and regulatory reforms in these areas to mitigate the vulnerability of the economic and financial markets to these crimes. It comprises 34 member jurisdictions and two regional organizations. However over 180 jurisdictions are now committed to implementing the FATF standards, the so-called 40 + 9 Recommendations.

More recently the Pittsburgh Declaration of the G20 called for the ratification of UNCAC and asked the FATF to help countries in the prevention and detection of money laundering derived from corrupt practices by strengthening standards on customer due diligence, beneficial ownership, and transparency.

**SECURITY INDEX:** Does UNODC work with FATF on some issues? What are these issues?

**FEDOTOV:** UNODC is an observer to the FATF and an observer to all FATF-style Regional Bodies. The two institutions have always enjoyed a close relationship. In fact, the current FATF Executive Secretary, Mr Rick McDonell, was formerly the Programme Manager of the UNODC Global Programme against Money Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism (GPML).

I had an opportunity to discuss with the Chair of the FATF the partnership between our two institutions. The focus is on the fight against corruption, and the UNODC's ongoing research on illicit financial flows resulting from the proceeds of drug trafficking and other transnational organized crime.

UNODC is regularly involved in FATF projects; most recently, it worked on the production of a research study on the links between money-laundering and human trafficking and migrant smuggling, which was adopted in June 2011; and a research study on kidnapping for ransom and maritime piracy and money-laundering, which was also finalized in June 2011. UNODC also regularly provides its expertise on international cooperation for the purposes of confiscation of the proceeds of crime in the context of the regular review of the interpretive notes of the FATF standards.

**SECURITY INDEX:** How do you evaluate the efforts made by Russia according to the UN Convention against Corruption?

**FEDOTOV:** Quite highly. The Russian Federation ratified the United Nations Convention against Corruption on May 9, 2006. Since that time it has actively taken part in the work of the Conference of the States Parties and its subsidiary bodies.

Russia has been involved in the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption since the beginning of the first review cycle. In addition to its participation as a reviewing State in two country reviews, Russia is now undergoing review during the second year of the review cycle, which began in June 2011. The review process will allow the Russian Federation, both through a comprehensive self-assessment and through the active dialogue with the two reviewing States, to assess its legislative and institutional anti-corruption framework in light of the Convention.

**SECURITY INDEX:** Are the activities of Russia's Presidential Council for Countering Corruption sufficient to improve the situation with corruption in Russia?

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**FEDOTOV:** UNODC has good working relations with the members of the Presidential Council. First-hand information on the corruption situation in Russia was reported to the UNODC management and heads of diplomatic missions in Vienna on July 11, 2011 by Mr Sergei Naryshkin, Head of the Administration of the President of Russia. Agreement was reached to continue cooperation with the respective Russian agencies.

**SECURITY INDEX:** In his interview for *Security Index* the Director of the Department on new challenges and threats of the Foreign Ministry of the Russian Federation has mentioned that the European Convention on Cybercrime is not sufficient for solving the problem of cybercrime.[1] How do you evaluate the potential of this Convention? How important is the problem of cross-border cybercrime?

**FEDOTOV:** The internet is an interconnection of networks with global technical standards enabling cross-border communication. Files may be sent from one country to another in seconds and websites can be accessed from anywhere in the world. In addition, there has been a globalization of services. Popular social networks and e-mail services located in one country very often have hundreds of millions of users across the world.

In consequence, cross-border crimes can be greatly facilitated by the internet. Even if an e-mail is exchanged between two suspects in the same country, the involvement of a foreign e-mail provider can give this act a transnational dimension. Close attention should be paid to this phenomenon as cross-border crimes require international cooperation and involve different institutions and procedures than purely national investigations.

In recent years, and particularly during the 12<sup>th</sup> UN Crime Congress, UN Member States have discussed the feasibility of negotiating a new international instrument against cybercrime. In the alternative, there have also been moves by some states to promote the global reach of the Council of Europe's (CoE) Convention on cybercrime.

A compromise was agreed and UNODC was invited to establish an open-ended intergovernmental expert group on cybercrime. The group undertook a ''comprehensive study of the problem of cybercrime and responses to it by Member States, the international community and the private sector. The review would also include the exchange of information on national legislation, best practices, technical assistance and international cooperation, with a view to examining options to strengthen existing, and to propose new, national and international responses to cybercrime.''

The first meeting of this open-ended intergovernmental expert group on cybercrime took place on January 17–21, 2011, and, among other things, the group endorsed a methodology and timeline for the study. Next steps involve completing a questionnaire, data gathering, and analysis. Ultimately, it will be for Member States to decide on whether there should a convention at the UN level.

**SECURITY INDEX:** What are the weak points of struggle against cybercrime on the national and international level?

**FEDOTOV:** At the international level there is a need for a comprehensive approach reflecting the different national and regional demands and capacities, as well as the broad involvement of stakeholders. The effective prevention of cybercrime requires a combination of user education, technical protection measures, and cooperation between key stakeholders. All of these activities need to be underpinned by effective legislation.

Any investigation of cybercrime requires more than just personnel and equipment: it requires legislation and the ability to cooperate at the transnational level. The lack of cooperation at the national, regional, and international levels weakens the struggle to counter cybercrime.

The interconnection of networks and the ease of communication via the internet is a result of technical standards that are basically uniform worldwide. It is argued that a similar harmonization process is needed when it comes to legal standards. To be effective, the global legal framework needs to harmonize legislation, while also strengthening national legislation to enable effective international cooperation. At the same time, this legal framework needs to reflect the different national and regional demands and capacities of the countries involved.

The lack of long-term and sustainable capacity building, especially within developing countries, also constitutes a weakness in the struggle to counter cybercrime. Capacity building and the

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provision of technical assistance are therefore crucial to assist developing countries to counter cybercrime. Working under several mandates, UNODC is looking to assist such countries.

Innovation also needs to be placed at the centre of the international community's response. Indeed, when it comes to emerging threats such as cybercrime, the overriding philosophy of the international community must be to ''stay one step ahead of the criminals.''

No single government can react with the same speed as the technology used by cyber criminals. Not all countries have the same level of access, the same level of technology, or the same capacity. There is an imperative for the international community to work in close cooperation to counter the criminal uses of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). UNODC is assisting in this process.

## NOTE

[1] See: Ilya Rogachev, ''The European Convention on Cybercrime is Inadequate to the Task,'' *Security Index* 97, Fall 2011, pp. 5−8.

INTERVIEW

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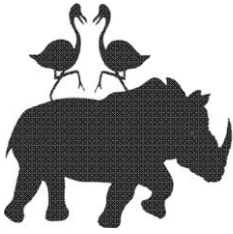
Vyacheslav Trubnikov

# THE COOPERATION OF INTELLIGENCE SERVICES IN COMBATING TERRORISM IS ESSENTIAL

*Being always in the shade of the public discussions on international security problems, standing apart from the summits and conferences, but having an incomparable influence on the country's foreign policy—the intelligence service works overseas to make its country safer and more prosperous. What is the new role of the intelligence service in the 21st century, and how does its activity correlate with the tasks of diplomacy? What are currently the most challenging problems in the work of the intelligence service? What can be done to fight international terrorism more effectively? What is the future of open intelligence?*

*We have put these and other questions to the General of the Army, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Vyacheslav Trubnikov, who served as the Director of Russia's Foreign Intelligence Service (1996–2000), First Deputy of the Russian Foreign Minister (2000–2004) and Russian Ambassador to India (2004–2009).*[1]

I N T E R V I E W

**SECURITY INDEX:** How would you describe the historical role of intelligence?

**TRUBNIKOV:** First of all, intelligence has a long history. Some historians start with the Trojan horse as the first example of an intelligence operation. Some even refer to the Bible (the Book of Numbers, Chapter 15), when the Lord instructs Moses to send spies into an unknown land. So the history of intelligence is very old, and, for many, this profession is the oldest one. Though there are competing points of view, and many think of journalism, which is certainly also a very old profession. In any case, diplomacy came much later, and in its initial stages, intelligence gathering was first associated with merchants, who traveled very far from their lands. For example, the first Russian merchant, Afanasy Nikitin, went to India, which he described as his ''Travel beyond Three Seas.'' Thanks to his travel India became a new and understandable land for the rulers of Russia, though it was located thousands of miles away.

The height of intelligence activity occurred in the 20th century, a very bloody century, with several wars, including two world wars and the Cold War. Of course, the role of intelligence in these events was tremendous, and it started with very delicate and shrewd German operations on the eve of the First World War. German intelligence, at that time, played a leading role in Europe, and the other intelligence services followed the example of German intelligence. Russia stayed apart, because intelligence in Russia was very closely connected with the work of the ministry of external affairs. In the initial stage, it played a significant role in determining the attitude of Russia toward its European neighbors. By and large, any Russian embassy in Europe was practically gathering intelligence information, and ambassadors played the role of political representatives of Russia and, at the same time, the chiefs of its intelligence operations.

**SECURITY INDEX:** How has the situation changed in the 21st century?

**TRUBNIKOV:** Today we see a very different situation in a world that has been made smaller by globalization. Everyone is now very interconnected and interdependent. Today's world requires different approaches to intelligence and diplomacy, which should represent a necessary answer to a lot of new threats and challenges. With the collapse of the ''iron curtain,'' which sometimes was attributed to the Soviet Union, with the fall of the Berlin Wall there was, initially, euphoria in the

West and in Russia, about future relations, about a safer, more reliable world, which did not happen, because of new challenges and threats, which are numerous now, and which require new approaches. No state can deal with those challenges alone. The intelligence of the 21$^{st}$ century should not only work in the interest of the state to which it belongs, but it should be part of a collective effort to confront these challenges together.

When Russia started fighting the international terrorism in Chechnya, our fight did not receive proper understanding in the outside world. When Chechen separatists sometimes were considered to be freedom fighters fighting for their sovereignty, no one paid attention to the leaders of radical Chechen movements, the leaders of radical Islam, such as Amir Khattab, who was one of the brains behind the operations in Chechnya against federal troops. We did not receive proper understanding about what the fight in Chechnya is for. Only the developments of September 11, 2001 have become a kind of an eye-opener on the menace that international terrorism presents for any country in the world, which is considered by terrorists as a target for their efforts.

Terrorism today is, unfortunately, very intensive and creative. The cooperation of different intelligence services, especially from large powers experienced in combating terrorism, is essential. And the artificial fences, which divide these services, should be removed. Otherwise, terrorists will have the upper hand every day, everywhere. Intelligence is one of the most effective ways of combating these threats, and it is essential to rely on every possible means of intelligence—not just contemporary means such as satellites, but human intelligence. To know about the plans of the terrorists, we must have people inside their communities. Only in this way is it possible to penetrate their structures. It is high time that cooperation became the major aim of every intelligence service. Of course, every intelligence organization preserves its sources, so a certain variety of information cannot be shared, but the results of intelligence can be shared, and it should be available for all the leaders of countries attempting to fight these threats.

This problem is being solved step-by-step, because it is immensely difficult to create a climate of trust between these different intelligence services. Even now, we cannot create a climate of trust between the Western countries and Russia. Now it is reflected in our different approaches to some issues. In particular this is an attempt to find ways to create a cooperative anti-missile system between NATO and Russia—a very difficult problem which requires a lot of efforts. Nevertheless, the inertia of the Cold War is still in the minds of those responsible for making political decisions. As for now, there is a special working group inside the Euro-Atlantic Security Initiative. This working group consists of 18 representatives from the United States, Europe, and Russia. From the Russian side, I am the co-chairman of the group, from the American side, it is former National Security Advisor to U.S. President Bush, Steven Hadley, and from Europe it is former German Minister of Defense Volker Ruhe. We are trying to use this *second track* for suggesting to our political leaders a compromise solution to this very difficult problem. I believe that we reached a certain level of understanding. We have drafted a conceptual paper and even created an architectural model of an anti-missile system. It depends on our political leadership to determine how such suggestions might be viewed. To my knowledge, there is a certain positive assessment that is visible, but a concrete result is still far away. In this group, all of us consider ourselves Cold Warriors, not only because we witnessed the period of the Cold War, the fight between intelligence services and diplomatic fights. We actually were part and a parcel of this struggle; we participated actively. So we know how to dismantle what we've created.

**SECURITY INDEX:** As you mentioned, international cooperation is a very important part of intelligence. How do you trust foreign intelligence services? Are there any examples of when they provided you with fake information?

**TRUBNIKOV:** I would consider this question to be a very valuable one. No intelligence service is going to share information which might directly affect the source of the information, so the form in which this information is being shared is rather vague. The facts that they pass along are not hard, but are very vague. There is no deliberate misleading, but they wish to protect their sources, and so their information is sometimes hard to digest.

**SECURITY INDEX:** Could you recall any cases when the intelligence information from the Russian and foreign agencies was different?

**TRUBNIKOV:** Today intelligence plays a very significant role in considering common threats. Our Western colleagues always mention Iran as a potential missile threat to Europe and Israel, but we disagree in our assessments of the level of Iran's technical progress toward reaching their goal of

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obtaining long-range ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons. Here, the voices of intelligence services differ greatly, because, from Russian intelligence's point of view, Iran is still very far from reaching this goal. The Western intelligence services believe that they are much nearer. It depends on the reliability of the information which is received by corresponding intelligence services.

What is very important to understand is that an intelligence service is not an organization that works out and contacts the international political course of the government. An intelligence service assists the ministry of external affairs and the government in making a correct decision. It should not be subservient to the political leadership, but should always report the truth. As an example, the declarations of my former counterpart in the CIA, George Tenet, claimed that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction. At the same time, the Russian intelligence service was absolutely sure that there were no traces of such weapons. Moreover, the inspections following the war of 1991 proved that there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. In order to serve the political aim of changing the regime in Iraq, or removing Saddam Hussein, the American intelligence service had to make false claims. Now, in assessing the common threat of Iran, we differ greatly. The Russian service considers that any country with missiles with 2200km range is too much, especially in case their appetites go further. We have to answer a very important question: which countries might be reachable for those missiles? Iran is in the framework of IAEA control, and within this framework Iran accepts international observance. Nevertheless, certain statements from Iranian leadership sometimes give dubious signals. From this point of view, we must treat Iran as a country to watch. We try to find a common yardstick to measure the degree to which Iran has developed economic, scientific, technological, and military power, in order to ensure that we are ready if Iran becomes a common threat.

In Afghanistan, when collective forces exit in 2014, what kind of country will be left behind? What will be the role of the Taliban? What will be the fate of the Karzai government? These are questions that require a proper answer from the intelligence services. We have to make a sort of prognosis about what kinds of threats we might face after NATO leaves Afghanistan, specifically regarding the neighbors of that country, and Russia as well, because Afghanistan is the source of drug trafficking, for which Russia is unfortunately a consumer. For us, it is absolutely essential that the intelligence service is able to predict what will happen after NATO forces leave.

**SECURITY INDEX:** How do you see the role of Russia and other neighboring countries in Afghanistan as the United States withdraws its troops by 2014?

**TRUBNIKOV:** The danger, which might become obvious after Afghanistan starts living without international forces, will pose a particular threat for the neighboring countries. Currently, the Taliban has a shadow government, and they are in control of 70 percent of the country's territory. In July 2011 a large conference on the situation in Afghanistan with participation of representatives from the Karzai government, the opposition, and representatives of other groups within Afghanistan took place in Berlin. When Ambassador Taylor, who was once the American ambassador in Kabul, suggested the four-point program for the withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan, the response of the Afghans was very interesting—it was a negative reaction. Amb. Taylor said that the year 2014 is not just the year when American troops will leave Afghanistan, but also the year of elections in Afghanistan under its constitution. A representative from Afghanistan asked what he meant by constitutional elections, because, he said, no Afghani person considers this constitution as theirs, but rather as one imposed on them by aggressors. They will not accept these elections. The Karzai government will leave the government with the Americans, so Afghanistan will be free for the Taliban to take. They are not planning to take part in the elections; he rather mentioned they will fight for a representative government and for peace in Afghanistan. When Ambassador Taylor said that the United States maintains hope for the future of Afghanistan after NATO withdraws, the representatives of Afghanistan were skeptical of this. I do perceive a very difficult situation for Afghanistan and its neighbors at this point.

However, it was positive when the Afghan leaders expressed a desire to eliminate the growing trafficking of opium, and I think that they will do this. On the eve of the American intrusion into Afghanistan, the Taliban leadership had issued a ''fetva'' (decree) that mandated the decrease in opium growing. Much of the future, however, will hinge on how the Taliban behave. The changing dynamics in Afghanistan are likely to have an effect on Pakistan's unity as well.

**SECURITY INDEX:** Behind international terrorism what are the currently most challenging problems in the work of the intelligence service?

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**TRUBNIKOV:** Proliferation, which is the direct responsibility of the intelligence services of many different countries, is a test for us. For example, the very good ideas of intercepting shipments of illegal nuclear products along international routes, in case there are signals that these routes and these vehicles are used for carrying fissile material and nuclear technologies, requires, at the same time, a very cautious approach, because intercepting a legitimate vessel is an international scandal, which involves economic, financial, and political consequences. So, intelligence services should be very precise and effective in implicating real violators of international law, participators in proliferation, such as the group of A.Q. Khan, who is now in captivity in Pakistan, but whose network spanned from Arabia to North Korea. This network actively participated in proliferation. The efforts of intelligence led to his eventual arrest, but this is a danger and a challenge of the 21st century—we have to pay a great deal attention to any signals from sources that deal with proliferation.

Again, human intelligence is very important, but technological intelligence is also very important to our efforts to stop these activities. Now, cyber security, which is becoming a serious challenge for many developed countries, is the test for intelligence services to be involved in gathering information. To involve diplomatic services in the solution of this very delicate and very difficult problem is very important. You cannot put a fence in the way of electronic signals, so cyber security is something that we will face in the very near future as one of the most dangerous attacks on the sovereignty of any nation. From this point of view, the efforts of intelligence and diplomatic services might be the decisive factor.

Many new challenges will appear during this century. Intelligence and diplomatic services should be ready to combat them, specifically on a platform of joint efforts, which is rather difficult, and which is still painted in the Cold War colors of yesteryear, because some politicians believe that we are still living in the period of cold peace.

**SECURITY INDEX:** Assessing the intelligence services of other countries, such as CIA or Mossad, what main competitors to the Russian service would you name? What are the main strengths and weaknesses of these agencies?

**TRUBNIKOV:** The intelligence services you named do not include the Secret Intelligence Service (or MI6), which I consider to be the most serious competitor to the Russian intelligence service in the past century. The biggest successes and tremendous failures of Russian and British intelligence are at the same level.

I consider the CIA to have a very serious analytical wing and a very serious technological wing—specifically with regard to satellites. The mechanisms used by the CIA's satellites to locate a situation on the earth's surface are extremely effective, even if clouds or thunderstorms cover the earth's surface. I have seen photos taken from those satellites: it is possible, in the wintertime, to see the tracks of guards who walk around nuclear missile silos. The effectiveness is very high. And the transparency that is achieved by using such mechanisms makes the efforts by countries attempting to acquire nuclear weapons secretly quite futile. However, India was able to develop and test a nuclear device in 1974 before any intelligence service was aware of their activities.

Mossad is effective from the point of view of clandestine operations. The examples of such operations are numerous, and this is their strong point. In any case, I consider the Russian service to be the best one.

**SECURITY INDEX:** Most of the national intelligence services are not ready to share their information. How do you assess the hypothesis that open intelligence is the future of intelligence? What is the role of the private intelligence services?

**TRUBNIKOV:** *WikiLeaks* is the best example of open intelligence. This is the limit to which open sources might be considered as reliable and striving for certain aims. Also the *WikiLeaks* revelations made it clear that diplomatic services and intelligence services are very closely connected, because the suggestions of *WikiLeaks* prompt us to think about diplomatic service as a very good source of intelligence.

In the United States, before the tragedy of Pearl Harbor, intelligence organizations belonged to industrial powers, which were working for themselves, and they would never share their knowledge with the government. Now the system is the same.

As for Russian intelligence services, this problem arose at the beginning of 1990s, when the state-owned industries started to become private. Gathering intelligence for the government was a

clear-cut task for us. Some private organizations began asking for intelligence from the government—ready to pay for it. Nevertheless, the intelligence service continued to work for the government. It is in the government's sphere of responsibility to share the necessary information with private industries. The government cannot make preferences among private industries, but it is up to the government to decide who they will support.

**SECURITY INDEX:** What is the financial intelligence's sphere of activity?

**TRUBNIKOV:** We are all interconnected very closely. Living behind the ''iron curtain,'' the Soviet people were safe from developments in the outside world. Today, when our economy is very deeply interwoven with the world economy, events in Europe and the United States affect us very closely. Now, the role of financial intelligence is extremely important. This is a very different direction of intelligence, which requires a very specific high level knowledge, very good brains, and very serious analytical work. For many decades now, the financial systems have had their own intelligence. Any sum of money that a client brings to a bank which exceeds a certain level immediately involves a very serious attempt to find out the sources and the aims of this client. We have this in Russia as all the developed countries do, and developing economies must also have such structure. In the framework of the Russian–American working group on fighting terrorism, we had very close productive cooperation between the financial intelligence services of the United States and Russia.

Also the recent financial crisis played a very important role in bringing Russia and the West together—a good result from an unfortunate event. Preventing such problems requires the sharing of delicate information among many different intelligence services around the globe. These measures are being taken, step-by-step.

**SECURITY INDEX:** What brought about the failure of Russian intelligence in the United States in summer 2010?

**TRUBNIKOV:** I would like to draw your attention to a very important point: everyone knows about intelligence failures, but no one knows about its victories. There is no remedy against traitors; starting with Judas in Biblical times, traitors always appear everywhere. The major failure was to have a traitor in our ranks. This is not the fault of those who participated in the intelligence work in the United States. It was the traitor's act, no more. The court made a decision while the offender was in absentia to make the offender serve a sentence in a Russian prison.

**SECURITY INDEX:** In what way do the mass media and NGOs affect the intelligence service?

**TRUBNIKOV:** There are definitely many examples of foreign intelligence services using NGOs. Media information is always taken into account by intelligence services. At the same time, it is the sphere where intelligence tries to influence the ways and means of this or that journalist about how to present and interpret the facts. During the Cold War, the mass media were actively used by the Soviet Union and by foreign services as well. Certain sources and pieces of information were excluded from publication. The journalists wrote according to the instructions provided to them by the government.

Today this phenomenon is not so much developed. A level of transparency is high. It is sometimes impossible to distinguish between intelligence and journalistic information. This is a very interesting sphere, because I started my career as an intelligence officer working undercover as a journalist. I do not see much difference between the way serious journalists and intelligence officers gather information. However, the basis on which the two gather information cannot be compared, because an intelligence officer works with an incomparably greater number of resources than a journalist does.

INTERVIEW

## NOTE

[1] The text of the interview is based on Vyacheslav Trubnikov's lecture ''Diplomacy and intelligence in the 21st century'' on July 7, 2011 in the framework of the PIR Center's participation in the international section of the *Youth Forum Seliger 2011.*
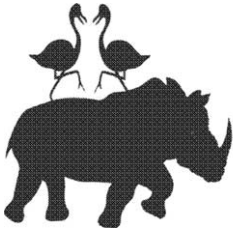
Gérard Stoudmann

# THE REFORM OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE IS LONG OVERDUE

*What are the main aspects of activity of the Council of Europe? How does Russia contribute to this work? How does this European body contribute to social development in Russia? What are the prospects of cooperation? What are the changes this institution is going to face?*

*Deputy Editor-In-Chief of the* Security Index *journal Irina Mironova has put these questions to the Special Representative of the Secretary General for development and reform of the Council of Europe Gérard Stoudmann.*

**SECURITY INDEX:** The three main values of the Council are human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. Some international intergovernmental organizations are critical of the state of these aspects in Russia and in Russian society. One of the latest reports from *Transparency International* is not an exception. Do you think there has been some improvement in any of these aspects? How does the Council contribute to such developments in Russia?

**STOUDMANN:** The aim of the Council of Europe is to contribute to the building of a common legal and cultural, pan-European space, with shared common values. And of course the Council of Europe is mostly known for its activities in the context of human rights. This is well known to the Russian public.

However, there are the other things that the Council is doing in Russia. At first, it is working with the civil society. For instance, in the remote areas of Russia we actively support the civil society. Second, it is assisting the modernization process through the work of experts committees, such as the group of experts against terrorism or on family law including children's issues. Third, the Council has some specific projects, such as assisting the Russian Ministry of Justice in its reform of the judiciary.

We also intend to become very active in the fight against counterfeiting medical products (the public health issue is a big topic for the 800 million European citizens). There is a new Convention on the counterfeiting of medical products and similar crimes involving threats to public health to which we hope Russia will be a party. This issue is a big problem for the former soviet space and other member states of the Council of Europe. Every year it affects about one million people, suffering or even dying from taking counterfeit medicine.

Human rights should be considered in the broader context of social rights—to public health, to live in a predictable and secure environment. It is important to deal with these issues using a complex approach.

The activity of the Council of Europe is not limited by the Human Rights Court—it is much broader and diversified.

**SECURITY INDEX:** How does Russia contribute to the work of the Council?

**STOUDMANN:** The Council of Europe is the only European body in the European architecture today which unites all the countries of the European continent on the basis of legally binding commitments. Thus the main mission of the Council of Europe is to provide a platform of

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cooperation for all countries of Europe, EU members or not. Russia is active in different fields, primarily social and cultural. In the Council of Europe there is no field in which Russia is not interested. The exception is probably the European Bank for Development, which Russia is not a member of.

**SECURITY INDEX:** You have mentioned already the spheres of the Council's activity, such as measures of countering terrorism and organized crime, corruption, and cybercrime. Could this potentially build up a mutually interesting agenda in the dialogue between Russia and the Council of Europe and what are recent developments in these areas?

**STOUDMANN:** In the last decade there has been an evolution of the challenges facing Europe, and the Committee of Ministers had to reflect this in its work. The essential issue is that we all share the same concern with regard to what is happening in our European societies. All countries are facing a growing risk of radicalization and fragmentation. We have a de facto multicultural and multireligious society which has developed very quickly in all our countries, not as a result of any plan or policy by any government but as a result of migration movement. Most of the European governments have to deal with these societal challenges in one form or another.

Today, governments are all confronted with problems that are going beyond their borders, no matter how big a country is. All of these problems are linked to organized crime, from drug trafficking to cybercrime, not to forget corruption. They require determined policies and responses. The role of the Council of Europe is also to contribute to addressing these challenges, based on common rules and values. This is what we call ''standard setting.'' Russia is playing an important role in discussions in Strasbourg concerning these issues.

**SECURITY INDEX:** How do you assess the Russian initiative on the European Security Treaty?

**STOUDMANN:** In today's world, security and stability are not only determined by military issues, therefore a comprehensive approach encompassing all issues ultimately affecting the stability of our societies must be welcome. Working on common norms and standards for the whole continent, creating a common legal space with legally binding instruments the Council of Europe makes its contribution to stability. The contemporary risks are mostly connected not with external military aggression (although there can be some exceptions), but with more complex issues often generated within our borders.

**SECURITY INDEX:** What do you think about the value gap between Russia and Europe that is often mentioned nowadays? How do different perceptions affect relations?

**STOUDMANN:** First of all, one has to remember that the Council of Europe should be a place where all its member states share the same values. I would not speak about a value gap. In the case of Russia, first of all, we have to remember that history tells us that the democracies in Western Europe have evolved over 200 years, not overnight. Moreover, nothing is won for ever—there is always risk of rolling back. So the present situation in many European countries is the result of 200 years of evolution. The democratic evolution in Russia is more recent—just 20 years old.

Then, history also tells us that there are different forms of democratic system that coexist. If you look at the functioning of the Swiss democracy, or the French democracy, these two neighboring countries are completely different. They do not function in the same way. So will you say that the French do not share the same democratic values as the Swiss or vice versa? No, it works differently but on the basis of the same values.

Most of the time historical and cultural differences, as well as local political developments, have led to one or another form of democracy. So, one can not apply the same pattern to everyone. But there are some basic principles and values that are universal, and have to be respected everywhere, such as the principle of ''checks and balances.''
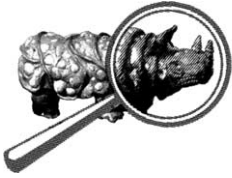
Indeed, the same words can be perceived differently. Organizing the political system in different ways is one thing; not sharing the same values is another. This is why we must insist on the notion of common values, while respecting each other's traditions and political cultures. Russia belongs to Europe and European values, even with the difference in the sensitivities and perceptions.

**SECURITY INDEX:** As the special representative of the Council of Europe's Secretary General for development and reform could you describe the main objectives of reforming the organization?

**STOUDMANN:** First, the reform of the Council of Europe is long overdue. It is today the main objective of the Secretary General. Second, the reform we need is not only administrative, but also political. Of course, the administration needs to be modernized to become more efficient and cost-effective, but that is not the main issue. The main objective is to make the organization more politically relevant. The organization has to contribute to solving common problems, to help the member states in addressing new challenges, in particular the societal challenges that we are facing. In this context, the Council of Europe needs to be transformed into a pan-European space where EU and non-EU countries can cooperate on daily matters of European interest.

What do member states need today? They need an international organization that helps them to save money and time while addressing the problems they are facing. And this is the main objective of the reform.

INTERVIEW

Oleg Demidov

# SOCIAL NETWORKS IN INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL SECURITY

Starting from January 2011 an unprecedented wave of social protests swept through the Maghreb and the Middle East. It has toppled regimes in some countries, brought a brutal crackdown mingled with hasty reforms in others, and sparked a civil war in one particular Arab state which has all but lost its statehood in the process. These events, which have sent repercussions across vast territories from Sudan to Belarus, have now become known as the *Arab Spring*, or as a *Twitter/Facebook Revolution*. That second moniker reflects a common feature of the Middle Eastern protests, i.e. the unprecedented role played by information and communication technologies (IT), and especially by the social networking tools used by the protesters. Coming hot on the heels of upheavals in Iran and Moldova in 2009, the Arab Spring has fuelled the debate among politicians, experts, and journalists about the role of IT (especially social networks) as a factor of turmoil and revolutions.

A harmless technology designed to help people socialize and while away their time is being portrayed as something of a weapon of mass destruction which poses a threat to the stability and security of individual nations and the international community as a whole. The current debate is focused on the role of social networks in the Arab Spring—but the range of the security issues being raised by the new phenomenon is of course much broader than that.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the individual social networking services and their impact on the world in terms of security. Given the trends in recent years, as well as the recent and ongoing ''online revolutions'' in the Middle East and other regions, the key question is what to make of the impact of social networks on international security and Russian national security. That question entails two related questions. First, should we regard social networks as a challenge and a threat—or as a technology that can potentially strengthen security? And second, how should government policy—Russian government policy, in particular—take into account internet technologies and use those technologies to strengthen security?

This analysis focuses on the political aspects of the problem; the legal and technical sides of it deserve a separate study. A discussion of social networks in the context of security—the main purpose of this article stated in its headline—requires legal issues to be set aside for the moment, and terms such as ''national security'' or ''international security'' to be used outside of any specific legal context. The technical aspects are also either omitted or relegated down the list of priorities in this article—they are not the main subject of our analysis. They are discussed only to the extent that is required to gain an understanding of the international politics aspect of the problem.

## SOCIAL NETWORKS—THE DEFINITION

The subject of this analysis is social networking services, although there are several other terms for the phenomenon, such as ''social networks,'' ''social networking communities,'' and, in a narrower context, ''the social media.'' All of these terms are used to denote a combination of virtual services and platforms whose function is to build social networks and social relationships between their users. The Russian terms used in this context are copies of the English ''social

networking services'' or ''social networking sites,'' though they do not convey the essence of the phenomenon quite as accurately. In the technical sense, social networking services are a classic example of Web 2.0. The term denotes a set of design principles that facilitate and enhance broad user participation.

One last thing that needs to be clarified is the internal classification of the social networking services. This article distinguishes between two categories of these services:

❑ the social networks in the proper sense, including universal, specialized, and professional communities (*Facebook*, *Odnoklassniki*, *Vkontakte*, *LinkedIn*, *MySpace*, *Friendster*, *Google +* ); and

❑ the quasi-social communities (blogging communities, microblogging services such as *Twitter*, communities based on interactive platforms such as *Ushahidi*, etc.—the list is open).

The line between these two categories is often blurred. Blogging can be one of the services offered by social communities; ''normal'' sites can have highly advanced social networking features; geosocial networks can function merely as a geolocation service, or they can acquire highly advanced social networking functionality.

For now let us just establish what qualifies a service as a social network. The list of key features of a social networking site was proposed back in 2008 in a notable study ''Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship'' by Danah M. Boyd and Nicole Ellison of the University of California, Berkeley, and the University of Michigan.[1] To qualify as a social network, the site must allow individuals to:

❑ construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system;

❑ articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection; and

❑ view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.

This list probably requires a single qualification: the data in the user profile must be relevant to social communication. For example, a geolocation service will not qualify as a social network unless the user profile contains some socially significant information in addition to geographic coordinates, such as sex, age, hobbies, the purpose of visiting the geographic locations in the profile, etc. Therefore, the networking services that lack some of the functionality outlined above are designated in this study as quasi-social networks.

This classification is fairly generalized and does not reflect numerous technical details—but it will serve for the purposes of this study. For a more detailed classification of social networking services, please refer to a 2008 study by a group of authors from the IEEE Computer Society.[2]

## THE ''ONLINE REVOLUTIONS'' THAT HAVE NOT MATERIALIZED

The initial enthusiasm and excitement in the world media and among the expert community over the role of social networks as the main driving force behind the revolutions in the Middle East and North Africa have now subsided. Skeptics include researchers at Harvard's Berkman Center for Internet and Society—Ethan Zuckerman, Danah M. Boyd, Jillian C. York, Mike Ananny, and Beth Coleman. In Russia skeptical opinions have been voiced by many leading scientists, including Ekaterina Stepanova from the Russian Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO) of the Russian Academy of Sciences, who has published a study of the role of IT in the Arab Spring.[3]

The general opinion in the Russian and Western expert community is that social networks did not play a key role in the Arab Spring, and that opposition forces and protesters mostly relied on other channels of communication. Nevertheless, social networks were one of the factors that allowed events in the Arab countries to unfold so rapidly that they took the governments and government supporters completely by surprise. As Yevgeny Morozov of Stanford University, who coined the term ''*Twitter* revolution,'' rightly put it in an interview with the *Kommersant* newspaper, without the social networks the revolutions in the Arab countries ''would definitely have a different look.''

But can we actually claim that social networks did play a decisive, and, more importantly, independent role in the Arab Spring? In our opinion, such a claim is wrong, and for several reasons. First, protest actions in the social networks were fairly self-sufficient and self-contained. This conclusion is supported by evidence from the Arab Spring and, to a lesser extent, the Online Revolution in Belarus. Online protests did not peak at the same time at the real street rallies that fuelled the revolution. According to Andrey Korotkov, head of the Russian Union of IT Directors, ''street protests in Egypt continue even now, in the absence of any significant influence from internet communications.'' In Syria, meanwhile, the ''days of anger'' announced on *Facebook* failed to spark large street protests; the situation changed only after mass arrests of teenagers, which provoked violent clashes with the police.

Second, there have been protests even in places with very little social network activity. But the protests were less violent in countries where the use of IT was more widespread. Some experts believe this demonstrates the humanizing influence of the internet. But they are probably confusing the cause and the effect. The more likely explanation is that the more socially and economically advanced countries with liberal attitudes to freedom of information have greater levels of IT penetration, including the penetration of social networks.

Third, social networks were not the only (and not even the key) instrument used by the insurgents to communicate and coordinate their efforts. But, unlike satellite TV, mobile phones, text messages, mosques, and other communication tools and platforms, social networks were the main instrument for spreading the word about the protests in the outside world. In the Egyptian provinces and in Cairo itself the main platform for coordination of protest actions and for taking the protest to the masses was mosques, which the protesters turned into their command-and-control centers after Friday prayers. The situation was very similar in all the other countries in the region.

Fourth, Belarus also saw a large spike in online protests, with an emphasis on social networks. But the situation there has not followed the Arab Spring scenario. The leader of the opposition Future Movement in Belarus, Vyacheslav Dianov, is still hoping that social networks and micro-blogs will do the trick—but, after several months, local protests by his activists have failed to become nationwide. This is yet another demonstration that the decisive factor for the success of the protest movement is the social and political background in the country rather than the communication tools used by the protesters. The well-designed technology of street protests coordinated via the internet has worked well in the Middle East and the Maghreb, where there was fertile ground for a revolution after decades of social and political simmering. But once that technology was transplanted to another part of the world with a different social and political context, it failed to deliver.

Also, it is not true that social networks were prodded in the right direction by transnational corporations during the Arab Spring. The management of those corporations made no attempt to direct the protests or influence them in any way. Wael Ghonim, the senior *Google* executive described as ''the international face of the Egyptian revolution'' by the world media,[4] was acting strictly in private capacity. He had been building up a protest community called ''We are all Khaled Said'' since 2010, using his employer's main competitor, *Facebook*, as a platform. Neither did he discuss or coordinate his actions with *Facebook* executives, although in an interview he did express his hope of meeting *Facebook* founder Mark Zuckerberg to thank him for the opportunities his company had given to the Egyptians. Initially Ghonim combined his work as an internet activist with his duties as a senior *Google* executive in the Middle East, essentially leading, in his own words, a double life. All these facts are often ignored by the commentators who are trying to portray the Arab Spring as some artificial and orchestrated project, controlled in some way by IT industry giants.

It is interesting, however, that similar opinions have been voiced by the top Russian leadership. For example, on February 22, 2011, at the height of the protests in Egypt, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev called the whole thing ''a scenario,'' which ''they had previously been preparing for us.''[5] Russian Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin went even further. In an interview with *The Wall Street Journal* he said that ''we need to look closer at what has happened in Egypt. We need to find out what, for example, senior *Google* executives were doing in Egypt, and what kind of manipulations with people's energies were performed.''[6] Such an interpretation of events could be an alarming signal that the Russian political leadership either misunderstands or ignores the role played by social networking services in the Arab Spring.

A N A L Y S I S

Let us note, however, that *Google* is something of an exception among the main social networking services. Unlike *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *Vkontakte* or other social media giants, *Google* has a clear vision of itself as a player in different segments, including the segment of relations with governments as part of PR, GR, or simply establishing friendly ties. In January 2010 *Google's* Chief Legal Officer, David Drummond, made a statement on behalf of his company sharply criticizing the Chinese government. *Google* named Beijing as the main suspect in a series of highly sophisticated hacker attacks to break into the mailboxes of Chinese dissidents in December 2009. The company then went even further by linking the episode to its decision to stop censoring search results on its Chinese website and threatening to quit the Chinese search engine market altogether. The episode highlighted two key elements of *Google's* strategy:

❑ The IT giant decided to link its possible departure from the Chinese market to a broader set of reasons related to freedom of information in China.[7] By doing so *Google* portrayed its policies as a campaign for freedom of the internet, which sounded fairly provocative.

❑ *Google* hastened to secure political support for its actions at the highest level, which later turned out to be very useful. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said the very next day after Drummond's statement that ''We have been briefed by *Google* on these allegations, which raise very serious concerns and questions. We look to the Chinese government for an explanation….''[8] Criticism of the Chinese government over the censoring of search results became one of the key topics of Clinton's famous speech on freedom of the internet made only a week later, on January 21, 2010.

*Google's* official explanation of its motives does not look very convincing. After all, *Google* is a commercial company, not some not-for-profit outfit campaigning for freedom of the internet. The Chinese search market was showing fantastic growth figures, censorship or no. One interesting detail is that ever since *Google* entered the fray for that market, which is the world's largest, it had always been a distant second after the local search engine, Baidu.[9] It appears that the company's executives were merely looking for something to blame for the fiasco of their market strategy in China. There is more than a bit of truth in the argument that it is illogical and irrational for any large company to quit a market which has 384 million users and shows 29–35 percent annual growth.[10]

Be that as it may, *Google* showed itself capable of playing as an equal with the leading world powers, and using their motivations (i.e. America's campaign for freedom of the internet) in its own interests, while at the same time pursuing a hard line that could well trigger a new bout of tensions between the United States and China. According to the government-owned *China Daily* newspaper, *Google* had shown its ''true face to the world, and the politicization of its campaign''[11]—but such an assessment is also an oversimplification. In actual fact *Google* had skillfully resorted to politicization so as to cast a more flattering light on its failed market strategy.

The truth is, big corporate giants behind the popular social media outlets are staying away from politics; they are not trying to play as equals on the same chessboard with state actors. That could well change, of course. *Google* is very different from *Facebook*—it is a far more diversified company, which had for a long time ignored social networking services. But that does not mean than *Facebook* will not become more like *Google* one day in terms of its influence on international politics and international relations, including issues of security.

At present, however, neither the social networking services as a type of internet technology, nor their audience as a distinct self-organized community, nor the corporations behind the social networks poses any threat to the security of individual nations or international security. Therefore, the whole discussion about how we should react to the security challenges posed by social networks is based on the wrong assumptions. Understanding that should be the starting point for any discussions of the social networks phenomenon among the Russian political leadership. There may certainly be some security challenges related to the spread of social networking services—but those challenges are not intrinsic to the technology itself. Neither are these challenges or threats posed by the executives of the corporations behind the social services, and certainly not by the users themselves.

One final touch to this conclusion is an attempt to view nation-states as stakeholders and active participants in these events. In any analysis of the Arab Spring and its aftershocks beyond the Middle East, nation-states are most often portrayed as passive victims of the social networking services actively used by the protesters. Actions by the governments are viewed only as a reaction to the threats allegedly posed by the internet. One exception is the United States, which is often

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ascribed the role of secret orchestrator of the Arab Spring. In most cases such theories are proposed by representatives of conservative or radically anti-Western political forces and movements.

Ideas of American involvement in the Arab revolutions via some secret channels of influence, such as the social networks, find fertile ground in Russia, and for a number of reasons. There is the traditional mistrust of Washington and strong anti-American sentiment among the Russian elite. Also, a combination of anti-Americanism with yet another conspiracy theory is a way to score political points for the leftist forces, whose influence in Russia is on the rise. Finally, the inclination to view global processes such as the Arab Spring as a geopolitical scenario orchestrated by some outside force often results from the lack of understanding of the true nature of these events and of their potential influence on Russia and its allies. As it tries to determine the possible source of the threat, the Russian political establishment turns its suspicions in the traditional direction, i.e. across the Atlantic.

But theories claiming that the Arab Spring was somehow orchestrated or coordinated from Washington fall apart under serious scrutiny. Washington's first official reaction to the events that were unfolding in Tunisia and Egypt suggested that the White House was taken completely by surprise, and that it was inclined to take a cautious wait-and-see stance. At first President Obama spoke in support of the Mubarak regime as a pillar of stability in the Middle East and as Washington's strategic partner in the region. Another important thing to consider is that the Arab Spring revolutions have failed to take off or to achieve their objectives in those countries where a regime change would clearly be in America's interests, such as Syria or Iran. The successful revolutions in the region, on the other hand, have jeopardized many of America's strategic interests in the Middle East.

For Washington, the fall of Mubarak meant the loss of a trusted ally who had for a long time pursued pro-American policies on important issues such as the fight with Islamic fundamentalism, Middle Eastern settlement, countering global terrorism, etc. Events in Libya, meanwhile, had dragged Washington into a military campaign which President Obama neither needed nor wanted, preoccupied as he is with the war in Afghanistan and the looming presidential election. Even worse, turmoil on the Arabian peninsula jeopardized vital American interests, including uninterrupted oil supplies from Saudi Arabia, loyalty of the Saudi regime, which serves as a counterbalance to Iran in the region, and the security of U.S. military bases in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. To understand the scale of American interests on the Arabian peninsula, suffice it to recall that last year Riyadh announced long-term plans to buy $60 billion worth of American weapons.

Finally, one common outcome of all the Arab revolutions has been an outpouring of all the anti-American and anti-Western sentiment that was pent up during the previous decades. Right now Washington is in an unenviable situation, ostensibly welcoming a victory for freedom in Egypt and Tunisia while anxiously awaiting the results of parliamentary elections in those countries, in which Islamists are expected to do very well. The bottom line is that the idea of America's secret role in the Arab Spring has no serious basis—although there is no reason to deny that Washington has long been very interested in orchestrating similar transformations while keeping events firmly under control. Let us not forget, however, that while governments are scrambling to cope with the various effects of IT progress, they are also trying to use information technologies and the opportunities they present (including the social networking technologies) as an instrument to help them implement their own policies.

## BEYOND THE *TWITTER* REVOLUTIONS AND THE INTERNATIONAL AGENDA

Of course, the role of social networks is not limited to being a conduit for social upheavals and protest actions, even if we limit the discussion to their effects on national security. The use of social networking services to strengthen national security is possible, and it has been making progress in several areas.

The first area is the various forms of ''crowdsourcing''; the term was proposed by Jeff Howe in an article for *Wired* magazine in 2006.[12] Crowdsourcing essentially means outsourcing some useful work or function to amorphous groups of people on an unpaid basis. In the several years since it was first invented, crowdsourcing has become widespread in the West as well as in many other regions and countries, including Russia.

ANALYSIS

As present one of the best examples of the use of crowdsourcing in Russia is the *Map of Assistance to Victims of Fires* created in 2010 by Gregory Asmolov, a prominent internet activist and theoretician. The community uses the Ushahidi platform, which aggregates and rebroadcasts information received by mobile phone (text messages), email, and from other websites. The Map has proved to be a very useful information network, a hub that collects timely information supplied by various channels. The Ushahidi platform was created in 2008 to gather and exchange information on incidents of violence after presidential elections in Kenya. Projects built using the platform helped emergency services to rescue people after earthquakes in Chile and Haiti in 2010. A similar interactive mapping technology called *OpenStreetMaps* was used to great effect in Haiti by American rescue workers; this was mentioned by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in her freedom of the internet speech on January 21, 2010.[13]

There is no need to explain why governments would find cooperation with such communities useful. But in Russia such cooperation is practically nonexistent. As Gregory Asmolov said at a meeting between the Russian President and representatives of the internet community, ''we are seeing more and more examples of internet communities being valuable partners to the state in addressing various social problems.''[14] But the creator of the *Map of Assistance* also recognized that contacts with the Emergencies Ministry had to be initiated by the internet community itself, and that the ministry was very reluctant to offer any assistance. According to Aleksey Sidorenko, a co-author of Mr. Asmolov's projects, the Emergencies Ministry was an example ''of a complete failure to make use of internet technologies.''

The same can be said about the government's cooperation with communities working to contribute to public security, such as fighting crime and stopping illegal activities. One Russian crowdsourcing project in this area is *Gdekazino.ru* (the name translates as ''Where is the casino?''), which uses interactive mapping technology to exchange information about gambling establishments. Russian law-enforcement agencies made use of the information on the website only after President Dmitry Medvedev personally instructed Prosecutor General Yury Chaika to conduct inspections at the addresses listed on Gdekazino.ru.[15]

In a number of areas the government not only fails to launch long-overdue initiatives but also ignores the proposals and ideas voiced by communities and experts. At a meeting between President Medvedev and representatives of the Russian internet community on April 19, 2011, several proposals were made regarding cooperation between the authorities (the Emergencies Ministry, the Interior Ministry) and crowdsourcing communities. These proposals were welcomed by the President, but none of them has actually been followed through.[16] As the President himself said at the meeting, at this moment government agencies take an interest in internet communities only sporadically; such cooperation has not become a matter of routine.

But in some areas regional authorities are already beginning to work with crowdsourcing projects. According to Aleksey Sidorenko, crowdsourced information from websites such as *streetjournal.ru* and *roards.teron.ru* is being used by the government of the Perm Territory. Blogger Aleksey Navalnyy's *rospil.info* and *rosyama.ru* projects, which have some crowdsourcing features, have received an official response from the authorities on several occasions. Also, there is growing interest in crowdsourcing from research institutions and think tanks linked to the government. ''One positive example is the Virtual Alarm Bell—Help Atlas, a platform for mutual assistance in crisis situations which is being developed with the assistance of the Institute of Modern Development,''[17] Gregory Asmolov has said.

So far, however, these trends have not spread to the realm of national security. There are several reasons for this. First, there are obvious limitations imposed by secrecy requirements and the centralized nature of information processing and decision-making, which is very different from the grass-roots crowdsourcing methods. But there are also the traditional shortcomings of the Russian government agencies responsible for national security, especially the uniformed agencies. They tend to be very secretive and conservative, bad at making use of new formats of cooperation with various communities, and mistrustful of these communities and of the technologies used by them. In other words, the problem is very deep-rooted, intrinsic to the Russian political and administrative system.

Meanwhile, the need for stronger ties and greater cooperation between government agencies and the internet community is obvious to a number of experts I have spoken to—including representatives of several federal agencies and of the internet community itself. The two main problem government agencies need to overcome in this area are:

❑ inertia and passivity regarding the use of social networking services as valuable partners—which is especially true of the Russian security agencies; and

❑ the trend to micromanage and keep under firm government control all interaction between the government and representatives of the internet community; this trend is an obstacle to sustainable and systemic cooperation.

Also, not-for-profit organizations and local government bodies should serve as auxiliary links and mediators between the state and the people whose social networking projects can strengthen security. These organizations and bodies tend to be more sensitive and attentive to such initiatives. The least Russian government agencies should aim to achieve is to learn not to fear internet projects and the cooperation networks that coalesce around them. They should not be trying to create an environment of mistrust and rejection around such projects.

The second area where social networking services can be a useful instrument in terms of security comprises providing a *snapshot of events and shaping public opinion*. This area, however, can be rather controversial. The role of the traditional media and the internet media (including social networks) as far as security is concerned is usually discussed in a negative context; the term ''information warfare'' often crops up in such discussions. But the experience of Russia and other countries shows that this coin has two sides, and that social networking services can be used not just as a sword but also as a shield in information warfare.

A classic example of the social media being used as a defensive weapon is the campaign by Israeli bloggers during the Second War in Lebanon in 2006. The small but extremely active Israeli blogosphere did much to deflect a torrent of international criticism against the Israeli government from the Arab world, as well as from many Western nations and the UN. It played an especially important role in the notorious episode after the bombing of the city of Cana by the Israeli Air Force on the night of July 30, 2006, which killed 28 civilians. Israeli bloggers managed to disprove the casualty figures announced by Hezbollah, which were intentionally exaggerated by a factor of two. They also played a key role in establishing that some of the gruesome photos from the scene of the bombing, carried by leading media outlets including Reuters, had been doctored. Finally, Israeli bloggers were very energetic in defending their country in other national segments of the blogosphere, including the Russian segment. That had a discernible effect on Russian public opinion regarding Israel's actions during that conflict.

Another good example of the role played by online communities to counter an aggressive information campaign comes from Russia itself. During the Five Day War in the Caucasus in 2008, when Russia was roundly condemned internationally, the blogosphere became one of the few outlets for an alternative version and interpretation of the events. In essence, the blogosphere was the only thing that enabled Russia to score a few points in the information battle in August 2008. Efforts by Russian bloggers and sympathetic activists in other countries failed to turn the overall tide of public opinion on the internet and in the global media—but they did succeed in making some important points. For example, a flash mob organized by Russian bloggers led to a convincing victory of a pro-Russian position in an online poll held by the CNN website. Asked whether Russia's actions in Georgia were justified, some 92 percent of those who took part in the poll, or 273,914 people, said yes.[18] Bloggers also drew a lot of attention to the episode during a news bulletin on Fox News when the anchor prevented two refugees from South Ossetia (Amanda Kokoyeva and Lora Tedeyeva-Koreviski) from voicing a pro-Russian opinion on air. Finally, blogs with personal accounts from the scene of the conflict by military specialists, journalists, and ordinary members of the public did much to corroborate the Russian interpretation of the events.

Compared with the energetic response by ordinary citizens in blogs, microblogging services, and social networks (*Facebook*, *Vkontakte.ru*) the Kremlin's official reaction looked painfully slow and unconvincing—which many commentators pointed out later. The only step the Russian government undertook as part of a pro-Russian information campaign was a tour of the South Ossetian capital Tskhinval organized for foreign journalists on August 12, when the fighting was already over and the mainstream anti-Russian view of the conflict was firmly set in international public opinion. What is worse, the inertia in the Russian uniformed agencies' attitude to internet communities as a potential instrument in countering information aggression persists to this day. They have failed to establish any kind of relationship in this area with the blogger community or other internet communities. It has to be recognized that the Russian government is woefully slow to make use of the potential of social networks in information conflicts.

ANALYSIS

Another area where social networking services can be used to great effect to enhance security is very similar to crowdsourcing. These services can function as a *public announcement system* during various emergency situations, natural and man-made disasters, and other crises. This particular application was pioneered in the United States. In April 2011 it was announced that the Homeland Security Department plans to use popular social networking services such as *Twitter* and *Facebook* to alert the public in the event of a terrorist threat. What is more, according to some media reports, in the future this system could entirely replace America's traditional color scale of terrorist threat.

Another example was provided by the police in the Australian state of Queensland in December 2010 and January 2011. As the state was reeling from the effects of unprecedented floods and the resulting mass evacuation, the normal channels of providing information to members of the public became overwhelmed by a flood of requests to the websites of government agencies. The situation was compounded by a partial shutdown of cell phone coverage networks. The Queensland police department and the information service of Brisbane airport therefore decided to use *Facebook* and *Twitter* as a backup public announcement system. The idea achieved the desired effect. Servers of the social networking sites handled the increased number of requests without any problems, easing the strain on airport and police websites. Finally, users themselves are keen to obtain information from social networks during emergency situations. Immediately after the March 11, 2011 tsunami in Japan, there was a manyfold increase in the number of *Twitter* messages sent by users in Tokyo; at one point more than 1,200 tweets were being sent every hour.[19]

It is therefore quite clear that in technologically advanced countries governments and the public itself are increasingly viewing social networking services as a source or a conduit of information in situations directly related to national security. This trend is set to gain momentum as governments continue to catch up with IT progress.

In Russia, meanwhile, government agencies have not made any tangible steps in this area. For example, the amendments to the law ''On countering terrorism'' approved by parliament on April 22, 2011 introduce the color scale of terrorist threat—but, unlike similar American legislation, they do not contain any provisions for using social networks to inform the public. One possible reason is that the penetration rate of these services in Russia is only about 20 percent of the population, compared with 45 percent in the United States.[20] But, on the other hand, acts of terrorism are a much more frequent occurrence in Russia than in the United States. That is true even for territories outside the terrorism-prone North Caucasus Federal District, where internet penetration rates are extremely low compared with the Russian average.

Neither has the Russian government made any steps to make use of social networking services as an emergency public announcement channel. The only government initiative in this area is the Social Socket project, which has been in development since 2010. It aims to set up an emergency public announcement channel by turning the existing wired radio sockets in Russian homes into internet access points. The idea certainly has some merits, including the reliability and resilience of the connection and the targeted nature of the announcements it allows. But it also has some major drawbacks, such as low connection speed, the fixed and limited internet access it provides, and dubious commercial viability. All of this means that the project can never become a fully functional alternative to the use of social networking services for the same purposes. Russia, with its chronic problems with terrorism as well as natural and man-made disasters, needs a social networks-based emergency public announcement system more than most other countries—especially considering the explosive growth of the social networks user base. The expert community should send a clear signal to that effect to the Russian government.

## RUSSIAN PRACTICE AND PROSPECTS

### Identification of users

One of the key issues in the discussion of the role of social networks in the context of security is identification of users. According to one leading Russian expert on information law, this is ''the key problem facing Russia and other countries in the area of internet governance.'' User

identification in social networking services is inextricably linked to the overall problem of user identification on the internet. Its importance is highlighted by examples such as the case of the female blogger arrested in Syria on suspicion of spying—although that particular example does not demonstrate all the risks related to so-called active anonymity on the net. A situation whereby a user can easily circumvent the existing identification mechanisms throws the gates open to cyber fraud, socially dangerous and unacceptable content, extremism, and social aggression online.

This problem is already on the agenda of Russian national security agencies. According to our source in the Security Council, ''the Council's agenda now includes the problem of terrorism in social networks.'' The problem is largely rooted in the registration procedure of the Vkontakte network, which used to be extremely lax until June 2011. To this day Vkontakte produces hundreds and thousands of search results with pages, groups, articles and videos containing calls for waging ''jihad against the infidels,'' building ''an Islamic emirate in the Caucasus,'' launching a rebellion by Russia's Muslims against the ''federals,'' etc.

Such a torrent of unacceptable content results from the fact that it is next to impossible to establish the real identities of the users who have posted it. Hence the huge number of profiles of users describing themselves as ''mujahedeen,'' ''warriors of Islam,'' and other such things, which would be unthinkable on *Facebook* or *Google* +. Even as these users fill their profile with some personal information, they feel safe in the knowledge of their impunity, unless the FSB takes a personal interest in them (which is highly unlikely since there are simply too many of them). In addition, on March 15, 2011 Vkontakte won a precedent-setting court case over copyright-infringing content.[21] The judges agreed with the social network's argument that responsibility for posting such content lies with the users. This gives the green light to similar violations by the users, who effectively remain anonymous.

Various technical solutions have been proposed to address the situation. In theory, the most reliable identification mechanism is provided by software and technologies that encrypt and digitally sign information exchanged by the users. A classic example of this approach is the PGP (Pretty Good Privacy) system launched in 1991 by prominent American software developer Phil Zimmermann. The very first version of his software, called Network of Trust, relied on a system of public and private keys and digital certificates. Mutual authentication and exchange of these keys were used to create a network where users could trust each other, and which made it impossible for interlopers, imposters, or fraudsters to break in.

But in this day and age such software is completely unacceptable to large commercially oriented social networking services, which compete on the simplicity and user-friendliness of their interfaces, and on the ease of adding new people to their users' contact lists. What is more, social networks might find it difficult to implement even less radical approaches, such as using HTTPS connections (a secure version of the HTTP protocol), which support data encryption. It is important for social networking sites to give users easy access to external audio and video content posted using the HTTP protocol, so working in the secure HTTPS would be problematic. As a compromise solution, the social networks could use HTTPS only for user registration and sign-in pages.

Meanwhile, the social networks themselves—at least in Russia—are trying to find their own ways of solving the problem of user identification. The results are not always good. On July 11, 2011 Vkontakte.ru introduced a new registration system requiring users to submit their mobile phone number, a compromise between their previous open registration system and a closed one. Linking a user account to a phone number is a fairly effective mechanism of user identification in countries such as Russia, where citizens need to present a national ID in order to obtain a mobile phone number. But this mechanism also has gaping holes because Vkontakte users are not all Russian citizens. About 40 million of them live in other countries, meaning that they buy mobile phone numbers under different rules. As of early 2011, Vkontakte had about 16.5 million accounts for users from Ukraine,[22] where buying a SIM card does not require any form of ID. In some European countries, such as Spain, mobile phone numbers are not even fixed to any specific mobile service provider. As a result, about 30 percent of Vkontakte users cannot really be identified, even though their phone numbers are known. The approach chosen by Vkontakte (which could well be followed by other social networks) therefore needs to be augmented by other solutions to close the aforementioned loopholes.

ANALYSIS

One possible mechanism is to link a social network account to the user's bank details, i.e. follow the approach already used by electronic payment systems such as *PayPal*, *Webmoney*, *Yandex.Money* and others. One clear advantage of such an approach is highly reliable user identification and higher value of the account in the eyes of the user (especially if the User Agreement includes a provision under which a certain sum of money in the bank account is frozen in the event of a breach of the agreement's terms by the user). But the idea has two vulnerabilities:

❑ First, it will not cover the entire user base. As of March 2011, only 47 percent of Russians had bank accounts[23]—although the figure is much higher for young people, who form the core of the social networks' user base. Also, it is not clear what to do with users who have accounts in foreign banks which do not work in the Russian market.

❑ Second, linking social network accounts to the users' bank accounts could face resistance from the social networks themselves and from other stakeholders in this area, as well as from the banks, which will have to process a flow of information they have no use for.

On the second point, any progress is possible only if the social networks successfully commercialize their services, i.e. if the users start to pay for them using their bank accounts. First steps in that direction were made in July 2011 by Russia's two largest social networks, Vkontakte and Odnoklassniki, whose users can now pay for premium services using credit cards issued by certain banks (previously the only way was to send a text message to a premium number).[24] The key question is, will the social networks be able to turn what is now a payment option into a compulsory mechanism, and will their security measures be enough to protect their users' bank details? In terms of security Odnoklassniki seems to have come up with one of the better solutions. During initial registration the network's users work in a secure database operated by the bank itself before being directed to the Odnoklassniki user interface. In essence, such a mechanism is almost fully in line with the aforementioned recommendations by MGIMO institute of international relations expert V. Kabernik.

In any event, all of these measures do not offer a complete solution to the problem of user identification—this will require a holistic approach that encompasses the entire internet. At this moment such an approach is absent in Russia. First, there is no consensus on the role government should play in this area. Second, there is no single vision of the problem by technology experts and the legal profession. Given the situation, there is a clear need for a detailed and comprehensive study of international experience, both positive and negative. According to one renowned Russian expert on information law, ''the Russian government needs to monitor the solutions and practices being used in other countries and international organizations in this area.''

Among foreign countries the most interesting proposals have been voiced in the United States. One initiative actively discussed in recent years is to introduce internet passports—and not just for the social networking services but for all internet users. In late 2010 the White House published a draft of the National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace.[25] The idea is to have a universal, comprehensive, multi-level, and secure internet environment in which users are securely identified and personal data are reliably protected. The strategy is aimed at individuals and other entities, including organizations, services, and software products. It takes into account the global nature of the internet and the need for the proposed user identity instruments to work across national borders. The key principle of security arrangements for the internet environment is to enable the entities exchanging information to provide only the minimum of information that is required for each individual situation, with a multi-level and very flexible range of requirements to each individual type of transaction or entity. In all other cases users remain anonymous and are not forced to disclose any personal information that is not required by the situation.

These proposals could be very interesting for Russia, and for several reasons:

❑ The technical instruments of identification as part of the Identity Ecosystem are extremely diverse. They include USB dongles, special software, electronic smart cards, security chips, software certificates, and even mobile communication instruments. The entire arsenal of these technical instruments relies on universal solutions, and the software modules and certificates can be integrated into almost any device that can access the internet. In that sense the strategy follows the trend of explosive diversification of the ways to access the internet, with a growing range of devices that enable internet access,

including mobile phones. Russia should take note of that fact; its own government strategy on the internet is exemplified by the aforementioned *Social Socket* project, which obviously runs counter to the market trends in this area.

❑ Despite predictions by alarmists, the document clearly states that there should be no monopoly control of the system by any government. It also proclaims the multi-stakeholder principle. The U.S. government plans to build the Ecosystem in equal partnership with businesses, NGOs, and other entities—although the strategy does say that government agencies should set the example and lead the way in identity solutions.[26] Such a balance is very important for Russia, where the inevitably dominant role of the government in such large-scale projects must be counterbalanced by the private sector, with decentralization of control of the system as its development progresses.

❑ Joining the Identity Ecosystem will be voluntary for users; they will also be given a choice between the providers of identification instruments, transaction methods, and Ecosystem services. Diversification of services and solutions is very important as it will make it possible to attract users as voluntary customers rather than foisting the identification system upon them by administrative or regulatory means.

Russian government agencies therefore need to conduct a comprehensive study of this initiative and to borrow some of its solutions and principles so as to develop a similar Russian strategy for a comprehensive user identification system. User identification in social networks would be an integral part of such a system.

### Obstacles to government regulation

Although all the aforementioned problems of user identification in social networks and on the internet as a whole require active state involvement and regulation, government measures should follow several important principles. Most importantly, government efforts to solve the problems related to social networks must not treat these networks as a separate category that stands apart from the rest of the internet.

First, social networks and their users do not see themselves as a separate community that needs targeted and individual government regulation. If the government attempts to impose certain regulatory restrictions on social networks, they can just slip away from government control, with an upsurge in opposition and anti-government sentiment among their audience. The move could trigger the spread of secret methods of online communication, including those that are clearly illegal.

Second, such measures could disrupt the natural dynamics of the social networks and their market growth, as well as their technological and conceptual evolution. The networks whose servers are situated on Russian territory would be the hardest-hit by restrictive regulatory measures. Meanwhile, the globalized English-language networks such as *Facebook* would escape relatively unscathed (partly because they already have more stringent procedures for user registration and for posting multimedia content). As a result, any attempt by the Russian government to impose selective regulatory restrictions on social networking services would weaken the Russian networks such as Vkontakte.ru and Odnoklassniki.ru, who would lose out to *Facebook, Google +* and other transnational projects.

That would hardly be in Russian national interests. Vkontakte.ru, for example, could be used as a valuable instrument for promoting the Russian language abroad. The network itself estimates that some 30 percent of its users, or 42 million people, live outside Russia. These figures look truly impressive compared with the potential reach of the Russian Language federal program for 2012–2015, whose audience will be a few million people at the very best.

Another thing to consider is that Vkontakte is a rapidly growing high-tech company. In late June 2011, in the run-up to its initial public offering (IPO), the company's value was estimated by Russian analysts at about two billion dollars,[27] which is comparable to the value of the Novorossiysk sea port or the KamAZ group.[28] A successful debut by Russian social networking services on the world market would be fully in line with the strategy for modernizing the Russian

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economy announced by President Dmitry Medvedev. Any government regulation of social networks would be an obstacle to their commercial success, which requires a lot of flexibility. *Google*, *Facebook*, *Friendster* and *MySpace* largely owe their phenomenal success at various stages of their development to minimal government intervention in their environment. The same is true of many giants from Silicon Valley, which the Russian President and his team regard as a model for the project to creating a hub of innovative economy in Skolkovo.

<div align="center">*       *       *</div>

Like all other products of IT progress, social networking services in and by themselves can never be a source or a cause of social unrest, let alone revolutions. What is more, unlike transnational corporations, social networking services have not become non-state actors. They do not have any independent interests or strategies in situations such as the Arab Spring. Similarly, there is no substance to the claims that the United States somehow orchestrated the Arab Spring.

Social networking services do not have any distinct or dominant role among other communication tools in social or political transformations. This is why social networks should not be viewed as a potential threat or a challenge to international or national security—that would be a classic example of a false problem.

Social networking services can serve the interests of national and international security in areas not related to international politics or military affairs. At present, there are at least three areas where they can be useful:

❑ countering hostile PR and propaganda campaigns;

❑ doubling as a public announcement system during emergency situations and security threats; collecting and processing information about such threats; and

❑ monitoring and stopping illegal activities, including extremism and terrorism.

As part of its IT-related security agenda Russia should concentrate on developing new user identification mechanisms, making use of international experience in this area.

There needs to be a detailed and comprehensive study of internet security and user identification projects such as the Identity Ecosystem. This project, which is now being developed by the United States, is a promising example of a comprehensive approach to the identification problem. It could serve as a starting point for developing Russia's own national strategy on user identification. Given that Russia's regulatory and legislative base in this area is still at an early stage, there is no point in trying to start from scratch and wasting precious resources in the process. But if Russian government agencies are to be able to study American experience and adapt it to Russia's own needs, they need to overcome their automatic skepticism about any American initiatives in this area.

Developing solutions for Russian projects of this kind should be based on multi-stakeholder principles, with active and equal participation of NGOs, businesses, and horizontal–vertical networks of government agencies at various levels. But in order to realize the importance of these principles, the Russian government needs to receive a clear message from the expert community. PIR Center could be one of the authors of such a message.

Establishing routine cooperation with the internet community, which can serve a variety of useful purposes in the area of security, should be a priority for the Emergencies Ministry, the Interior Ministry, the Federal Security Service (FSB), the Defense Ministry, and other security agencies. At present, cooperation between the government and the internet community is developing too slowly. The main obstacles include:

❑ conservatism and secrecy of government agencies involved in security matters;

❑ lack of the skills and experience government agencies need for cooperation with the internet community and civil society in general; and

❑ lack of understanding of the technologies behind the social services, and lack of appreciation of their potential.

Failure to act in a timely fashion in this area would reduce the efficiency and conserve the existing failures of the Russian government system, including the government agencies responsible for national security. The expert community must take the initiative and convince the Kremlin of the need for government agencies to adapt to the new reality that is being shaped by IT progress, including the rise of the social networking services.

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Alexandra Khodakova

# MISSILE DEFENSE: WHERE DOES THE DANGER LIE?

The global missile defense system being built at the start of the 21$^{st}$ century is a purely American project, in which American missile defense elements and American money spent to deploy those elements play the key role.

At present the American global missile defense system includes five deployment areas. Two of them are in the United States itself (California and Alaska), one in Europe (NATO missile defense system), one in the Middle East (Kuwait and Israel), and one in the Asia Pacific, maintained jointly with Japan, South Korea, Australia, and Taiwan.

Would it be worthwhile to join the missile defense project? Politicians and experts in many countries have been asking themselves that question for quite a while now. Some are in favor of deploying a missile defense system to protect certain territories. They point at the threat of terrorists or pariah states (that is how the United States sees North Korea, Iran, Syria, and some other countries) launching an attack using ballistic missiles, possibly armed with nuclear warheads. Others argue against such a system. They say there are not any challenges to national or international security from the pariah nations, let alone terrorists, serious enough to necessitate the deployment of a missile defense system. Be that as it may, the missile defense program is still proceeding apace.

## USING WASHINGTON'S TEMPLATES

The United States is currently investing resources in several missile defense projects throughout the world. The eventual goal is to create a global American missile defense system.

Missile defense deployment in Europe is one of the best examples of such regional systems being built by the United States. According to John Rood, former Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Nonproliferation, ''today, more than 15 countries…are engaged in missile defense efforts of some kind.''[1]

The European regional system is being built using missile defense instruments developed either by the United States itself or with direct American involvement. The independent role being played by the European NATO allies is currently limited to improving the existing missile-based air defense systems and integrating them for missile defense applications.

According to Viktor Yesin, the former chief of staff of the Russian Strategic Missile Forces, the European missile defense system ''is designed to protect facilities (areas) and troops from short-range (up to 500km), medium-range (500–1,000km) and intermediate-range (1,000–5,500km) ballistic missile strikes.''[2]

Obviously, Moscow could not just ignore the deployment of American missile defense elements in Europe, including the recently abandoned plans to station some of those elements in the Czech Republic and Poland. The United States had set a precedent by announcing its intention to deploy strategic components on European territory. Moscow expressed its deep concern over Washington's plans, arguing that they would disturb the balance of power on the European

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continent and the entire system of global stability. As Victor Yesin noted, ''Russia's opposition to those plans was voiced by President Vladimir Putin at the Munich security conference on February 10, 2007.''[3] Meanwhile, Alexey Arbatov, head of the international security center at the IMEMO institute of international relations (Russian Academy of Sciences), had this to say: ''There is no doubt that the plans to deploy a radar and an interceptor site of the American missile defense system in Europe are an outright act of provocation against Russia…especially in the political sense.''[4]

There is no arguing that powerful radar deployed in the Czech Republic would be able to monitor the airspace over the entire European part of Russia and to detect intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) in the early stages of their trajectory. As for the Ground Based Interceptors which the United States proposed to station in northern Poland, they would have been capable of intercepting Russian ICBMs over the northern Atlantic, according to some experts.

Also, the reasons Washington gave for wanting to station elements of its strategic missile defense system in Europe looked very unconvincing. The United States claimed it was necessary to defend the territory of America itself and its allies from possible missile attacks by Iran, North Korea, and terrorists. Commenting on these claims, Victor Myasnikov, an observer writing for the *Nezavisimoye Voennoye Obozreniye* (*Independent Military Review*) weekly, said that ''in the view of Russian experts, Washington's actions are aimed at limiting Russia's strategic capability rather than defending itself or its European allies from non-existent Iranian missiles.''[5]

It is well known that at present neither Iran nor North Korea, let alone terrorists, has the technology to build ICBMs. For that reason alone it is obvious that in the near time frame the alleged North Korean missile threat to Europe is nonexistent. Also, Pyongyang does not have any rational military or political motives for such an attack. As for Iran, some experts predict that the country will acquire missiles with a range of up to 3,500km, which can be intercepted by theater missile defense systems, by 2015. But Tehran does not have any motive to launch a missile attack either.

Had Washington proceeded with its plans to station missile defense elements in Poland and the Czech Republic, Russia's response would have been to deploy Inskander missiles on the border of its Kaliningrad exclave, capable of suppressing the interceptors in Poland. Such a step would have met with negative reaction in the EU countries because it would pose certain political risks not only to Poland but to other Eastern European states as well. Those states would then fuel anti-Russian sentiment in Europe, straining Russian–EU relations and making any constructive political dialogue between the two all but impossible.

The situation changed with the arrival of the Obama administration. According to Sergey Rogov, head of the United States and Canada Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the new administration did not consider establishing an equitable partnership with Moscow as a top priority—but neither did it see any point in continuing George W. Bush's hard-line course on Russia. President Obama demonstrated his willingness to take into account the concerns expressed by Russia over the deployment of America's strategic missile defense system in Europe—especially since America remains interested in Russia's support on a number of international issues. Those include Iraq and Afghanistan, the Arab–Israeli conflict, proliferation of nuclear weapons as a result of the ongoing North Korean and Iranian nuclear programs, and the situation in Pakistan, where nuclear weapons could end up in the wrong hands.[6]

America is well aware that it would be difficult for it to cope with all these problems alone. As a result, on March 18, 2009 Czech Prime Minister Mirek Topolanek recalled from parliament the agreement with the United States on stationing radar on Czech territory.

On September 17, 2009 President Obama said that the United States was abandoning plans to station elements of America's strategic missile defense system in Poland and the Czech Republic. Several days later the White House announced a new missile defense program for Europe (the so-called Adaptive Approach) consisting of four phases of missile defense deployment on the European continent.[7]

❑ *Phase 1*, for the period until 2011, includes the deployment in Europe of tried and tested missile defense systems, including Aegis ships carrying SM-3 (Block IA) interceptors and AN/TPY-2 transportable radars. These will provide the capacity to defend against regional missile threats.

❑ *Phase 2* is to be completed by 2015. It will include the deployment of sea- and land-based versions of a more capable SM-3 (Block IB) interceptor, as well as improved sensors. These measures will increase the size of the area protected from short and medium-range missile threats.

❑ *Phase 3*, to be rolled out in 2015–2018, will see the deployment of the improved SM-3 (Block IIA) interceptor, in both sea- and land-based configurations, to defend against short-, medium-, and intermediate-range missile threats.

❑ *Phase 4*, in 2019–2020, marks the deployment of SM-3 (Block-IIB) interceptors offering further improvements, with capability against medium- and intermediate-range missile threats, as well as possible future ICBM threats against the United States.

Washington said the Adaptive Approach would have the following advantages; it would:

❑ address the current missile threats;

❑ protect the territory of the European NATO allies; sustain and improve the American missile defense system;

❑ rely on mobile and transportable systems which can easily be adapted depending on the specific nature of the threat;

❑ provide for high survivability of the system, which relies on a distributed network of sensors and shooters; and

❑ provide opportunities for greater cooperation between allies on missile defense.[8]

It therefore became clear that Washington had not in fact abandoned its previous plans to station missile defense elements in Europe. It had merely modified the European missile defense configuration.

On November 20, 2010 the leaders of Russia and NATO met at a NATO–Russia Council (NRC) summit in Portugal, the first since the Five Day War in the Caucasus in August 2008. During the summit President Medvedev accepted NATO's offer of cooperation in the project to build a territorial missile defense system for the North Atlantic region. Medvedev's agreement to take part in the project was announced by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen at a news conference in Lisbon at the conclusion of the NRC summit. Earlier during the summit President Obama said, ''we look forward to working with Russia to build our cooperation with them in this area [i.e. missile defense] as well as recognizing that we share many of the same threats.''[9]

Nevertheless, for a number of political and technical reasons it is still too early to speak about a single Russian–European missile defense system.

In fact, the proposal is not to build a shared missile defense system, but to enable the separate Russian and European systems to work together. Even the definitions used by the two sides are different. Russia is prepared to take part in a European Missile Defense project, while NATO uses the term ''Regional NATO Missile Defense System.''

According to the decision made in late 2010 in Lisbon, the shape of the future NATO missile defense system was to be determined in June 2011 at a meeting of NRC Defense Ministers. But the Ministers failed to agree any decision at that meeting.

For now, one thing is clear: there are differences between the partners in this dialogue. The main stumbling block is that some Western European countries do not want a confrontation with Russia, whereas the United States is unwilling to allow Russia to take part in building a joint missile shield. That is the main reason for the continuing lack of progress on missile defense cooperation between Russia and NATO.

It is possible that at some point in the future Russia and NATO will come to see cooperation on missile defense as the best way of building a genuine strategic partnership and integrating Russia into the European security system. But for now, Russia needs detailed information on the overall configuration of the missile defense system being created, its constituent elements, and its command-and-control system. In other words, ''there needs to be a joint analysis of challenges

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and risks in the area of missile proliferation, and a common understanding of what the benefit for Russia will be from participating in the European Missile Defense project.''[10]

Also, ''leaders can and should take further steps in each of these areas to improve security for all nations, recognising that nurturing the reborn Phoenix of missile defense cooperation is now imperative.''[11]

But while Russia's attention is fixed on America's and NATO's plans regarding missile defense in Europe, the United States is deploying another regional component of its global missile defense system in Asia Pacific. V. Kozin, Russian State Advisor 2nd Rank, says that ''Washington will stick firmly to its course towards maintaining and expanding the Asia Pacific component of its global missile defense system—which, just like the future Eastern European missile defense system, is situated close to the Russian borders.''[12]

The threat posed by the strategic and tactical missile defense systems operated by the United States and its allies in Asia Pacific is quite real—although, at present, that particular component of the global missile defense system is not nearly as advanced as the European segment.

Nevertheless, in the past few years there have been significant improvements in the capability of the information and intelligence component of America's missile defense system in Asia Pacific. The capability versus ballistic missiles has also improved thanks to greater accuracy of interceptors. Finally, there has been progress in terms of interoperability between the national missile defenses of individual countries in the region.

Until now America's strategic and tactical missile defense system in Asia Pacific has not been the subject of much discussion, either bilaterally or multilaterally. President Obama has never mentioned in his foreign policy statements any possible adjustments to the combined American missile defense system in Asia Pacific, which is an important component of America's global missile defense system.

According to V. Kozin, ''during the eight years of the George W. Bush administration, the United States made great progress in improving its multi-layer missile defense system in Asia Pacific, giving it capabilities versus any type of ballistic missile, of any range, and any trajectory.''[13]

At present there are several key components of the strategic and tactical missile defense systems deployed in Asia Pacific, including:

❑ land-based interceptors in silos at Fort Greely (Alaska);

❑ interceptors at the Vandenberg air force base (California);

❑ early warning phased array radar in Beale (California);

❑ SBX radar on a floating platform in the Pacific off the Alaskan coast;

❑ Cobra Dane early warning radar on Shemya Island (Aleut Islands, United States);

❑ forward-based FBX-T radar on Honshu Island (Japan);

❑ SPY-1 and SPY-2 sea-based radars; and

❑ U.S. Navy ships carrying the Aegis multi-functional sea-based missile defense system equipped with SM-3 interceptors.

The United States also provides broad assistance in creating missile defense systems to its allies (Australia, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan).

Even though all of America's allies in Asia Pacific have agreed to participate in the global American missile defense system primarily out of fear of a surprise attack by North Korea or China, they also pursue some purely political goals.

For example, in 2004 Japan agreed to cooperate with the United States in the deployment of a two-layer missile defense system after North Korea conducted its first test of the intermediate-range Taepodong ballistic missile in 1998. Japan's main worry was a surprise missile attack by North Korea. In addition, missile defense cooperation has made defense and security ties between Japan and the United States even stronger.

Australia joined the American global missile defense program in July 2004. But, according to some commentators, ''many local opponents of missile defense argue that the missile threat to Australia is quite low, particularly as North Korea does not yet possess any missiles with sufficient reach to target Australia.'' They say that ''cooperation with the United States on missile defense is seen as part of a much broader effort on the part of Canberra to expand interoperability and military and defense-industrial partnering with the United States, including joint military training with U.S. troops…''[14]

Taiwan had an obvious interest in having missile defense elements stationed on its territory owing to the potential threat of a missile strike by the PRC. It saw several advantages in fostering closer cooperation with the United States on missile defense, such as ''closer military ties with Washington—including greater intelligence-sharing, improved interoperability, and perhaps even joint command and control…''[15]

In the late 20th century South Korea did not regard a missile strike by the North as a real possibility. Seoul did not believe that Pyongyang would seriously contemplate such an attack. Deploying missile defense elements as part of a joint project with the United States could also destabilize relations between the two Koreas. That concern was expressed in March 1999 by South Korea's Defense Minister Chong Yon-taek. He argued that such a move would ''harm reconciliation and cooperation'' between the North and the South.[16]

But the situation changed after the election of South Korean President Lee Myung-bak in 2008. He believed that his country's ''self-imposed restrictions on offensive and defense missiles have not constrained North Korea's continued development of its missile force.''[17] The new President was also less wary of North Korea's reaction to the deployment of missile defense elements in the South. Finally, after yet another (albeit unsuccessful) test launch of North Korea's improved Taepodong-2 ballistic missile in 2009, the government in Seoul decided to move ''from passive defense to proactive deterrence.''[18]

In 2007 the United States, Australia, and Japan launched the Trilateral Missile Defense Forum to improve coordination during the deployment of missile defense systems in Asia Pacific.

At present Japan plays the leading role in the deployment of the Asian component of America's missile defense system. The reason for this is that Japanese missile defense elements are designed as an integral part of the overall architecture of America's global missile defenses. Japan and the United States closely cooperate and coordinate every single aspect of their missile defense plans. By taking part in the program Japan not only ensures greater security of its territory from potential missile threats, but also strengthens its military-strategic partnership with the United States and bolsters its own military-political role in the balance of power in the region.

In January 2011 Japan's Foreign Minister Seiji Maehara said his country fully shared Washington's approach to the prospect of developing a defense and security partnership between Japan and South Korea. The defense ministry in Seoul also welcomed the idea of a defense alliance with Japan. In the coming years South Korea also intends to strengthen defense cooperation with Israel.

As for the Middle East, the deployment of separate missile defense elements covering Israeli territory began back in the late 1980s. In 2003 American Patriot SAM systems were deployed in Kuwait in the run-up to the invasion of Iraq.

The focus on missile defense of Israeli territory is entirely understandable. Several of the country's hostile neighbors, including Iran and Syria, have missiles capable of reaching Israeli territory. Israel therefore views the development of missile defenses as a priority; it intends to deploy a multi-layered tactical system with U.S. assistance. But Washington also has its own interests regarding the Israeli missile defense system. Essentially it wants to create a Middle Eastern component of the American global missile defense system. It must be kept in mind, however, that Israel's missile defenses are designed to counter a very specific set of threats, whose nature has never been strategic.

## WHO IS THE SYSTEM AIMED AGAINST?

The United States and NATO allies say North Korea and Iran are the main international troublemakers—but there is no absolute unity of opinion in that regard within NATO.

For example, Turkey does not view Iran as a potential source of missile threat. It did not back U.S. proposals to impose sanctions on Iran. On the contrary, it said it intended to continue shipments of petrochemical products to Iran despite the threat of U.S. sanctions.[19] Turkey also disagreed with the decision to build a collective NATO missile defense system adopted during the NATO summit in Lisbon in November 2010. Ankara decided to join the project only in September 2011, after NATO accepted a Turkish amendment removing any mention of Iran and other countries as potential sources of missile threat. Now the plan is to deploy on Turkish territory special X-band radar systems for early detection of missile launches in the region. This signals a notable improvement in the relations between the United States and Turkey.[20]

In January 2011 the then Defense Secretary, Robert Gates, said that in five years' time North Korea would be able to build ICBMs putting not only American allies in Asia Pacific but the American homeland itself within striking distance. ''With the North Koreans' continuing development of nuclear weapons and their development of intercontinental ballistic missiles, North Korea is becoming a direct threat to the United States, and we have to take that into account,'' Gates said at a news conference in Beijing.[21] In other words, officially the missile defense system in Asia Pacific is supposed to protect the United States and its allies from the North Korean missile threat.

According to Russian experts, Iran currently does not have intermediate-range ballistic missiles, and will not have them for the next 15–20 years, judging from the current state of its missile technology. At present Iran only has the know-how to upgrade old Soviet missiles shipped from North Korea, and the end result of those upgrades is not very good anyway.

Pakistan represents a much greater risk than either Iran or North Korea; unlike the two pariah nations, it is known beyond any doubt to possess both the missiles and the nuclear warheads. Of course, for now the range of those missiles is not enough to reach even Russia, let alone the European countries. Besides, the current leadership in Pakistan clearly has no intention of launching its missiles against either Russia or NATO. But the worrying scenario for Pakistan is that power in the country could fall into the hands of religious extremists. That would change the situation dramatically.

It is obvious to many Russian researchers that the American missile defense system is being built to defend against a threat from the pariah nations that simply does not exist.

Most Russian experts agree that the global American missile defense system is designed to protect the territory of the United States and its allies from possible missile and nuclear-missile strikes by Russia and China.

China's view of the role of missile defense systems in Asia Pacific is very different from America's view. For example, Washington regards the U.S.–Japanese element of the missile defense system as a reliable deterrent against aggression, and a contribution to security and stability in the region. China, however, regards missile defense—and especially the U.S.–Japanese missile defense system—as a destabilizing factor which undermines security in East Asia.[22] Beijing argues that deployment of missile defense components in Asia Pacific by the United States will lead to an arms race in offensive weaponry as well as in missile defense weapons.

Such a stance stems primarily from traditional mistrust between China and Japan, and from Beijing's outright hostility to Tokyo. The ill feeling between the two Asian tigers dates back to Japanese occupation of Chinese territory in the run-up to World War II, and Tokyo's subsequent refusal to distance itself from its imperial past and apologize to China. That is why, in response to Japan's growing military capability, China is increasing the numbers and improving the technology of its offensive weapons. ''Additionally, Chinese analysts have argued that the so-called defensive TMD technologies can be used by Japan to build offensive missiles to threaten China's interests in the region,'' expert Rex Kiziah writes. ''The Chinese believe the US and Japanese official views of the North Korean threat are merely a ruse to develop and deploy a regional TMD system aimed at countering China's growing power and influence in the region.''[23]

As for Russia, no one doubts that for now and in the foreseeable future the Russian strategic nuclear arsenal will be able to penetrate any American missile defenses. The same applies to China—but, unlike Russia, China will not be able to turn the entire American homeland into a lifeless desert. An American retaliatory strike, on the other hand, would threaten China's very existence. According to experts Joan Johnson-Freese and Thomas Nichols, China therefore has neither the reason nor the motivation for a missile strike against the United States—and neither,

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for that matter, does Russia. ''If the Russians were so concerned, it is unlikely that they would have accepted the new follow-on START treaty,'' they argue.[24]

Russia and China signed the new START treaty on April 8, 2009, and ratified it in January 2011. But does this mean that Russia is no longer worried by the new elements of America's global missile defense system springing up adjacent to the Russian borders? ''We cannot blithely ignore the appearance along our borders of new American missile defense facilities whose catchment area covers Russian territory almost all the way up to the Urals,'' Deputy Defense Minister Anatoly Antonov has said.[25]

Russia has repeatedly voiced these concerns—but on every occasion its opinion and its calls to abandon the idea of creating a missile defense system on the European continent without Russian participation remained unheard. What is more, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's proposal to build a joint Russian–NATO missile defense system, voiced in November 2010 at the NRC summit in Lisbon, has won no support. Brussels believes that NATO and Russia will build their own separate missile defense systems, and then these two systems will somehow interoperate.

Anatoly Antonov and later Russia's envoy to NATO, Dmitry Rogozin, have proposed that the United States, NATO, and Russia should sign a legally binding document to guarantee that the missile defense system being built will not be directed against Russia or any other participant in the collective missile defense system. But our Western partners have refused to put that on paper, claiming that there is no need to state the obvious. But why is there not such a need? And is it really that obvious?

This is what Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov had to say on the matter: ''Such a stubborn unwillingness to put it into writing that the system is not aimed against Russia raises some questions.''[26] Instead of formulating legally binding guarantees, the United States and NATO have begun to implement their plans on building a European missile defense system without any Russian participation whatsoever.

Apart from the launch of a new satellite, which will be integrated into the European missile defense system, and in addition to the decision to station missile defense elements in Romania, a senior official from the U.S. Missile Defense Agency has said that Washington intends to station a radar system in Georgia or Armenia. According to the official, such a system in either of the two former Soviet republics would be a valuable asset for the American missile defense system.[27] Meanwhile, Poland has already agreed to host interceptors.

Russia has made its position on the deployment of a global American missile defense system very clear. But China and several other leading nations have also expressed concerns. For obvious reasons, these countries are worried that such a step would undermine strategic stability by forcing Russia and China to respond in some way, by prodding the two countries to form an anti-Western alliance, and by triggering an escalation of Russian–U.S. rivalry beyond the scope of arms control.

Such a scenario is a distinct possibility, so Russia needs to improve the capability of its strategic nuclear arsenal, which is the basis of its defensive capability. It appears unlikely that the United States will abandon its global missile defense plans any time soon.

These plans are already costing Washington huge amounts of money. According to calculations by the Brookings Institution, more than $34 billion was spent on missile defense programs in the 1950s and 1960s, and $70.7 billion in 1984–1994. In the period from 1993 to 2000 almost 11 billion dollars was spent on missile defense R&D. In recent years spending on missile defense has been ramped up even further. According to the U.S. Missile Defense Agency, more than $65 billion was spent in 1985–2002. It is also estimated that annual American spending on missile defense will reach $8–10 billion, and by 2030 total spending on the project will have reached from $100 billion to $1 trillion.[28]

Nevertheless, as a large number of studies have demonstrated, the performance of the missile defense system now being deployed still remains unimpressive. For example, in late 2003 the American Physical Society published a report saying that the existing interceptors cannot intercept ballistic missiles because guiding them to the target would require thousands of satellites at strictly determined orbits.[29] Of course, the performance of the interceptors themselves has improved since then, but problems still remain.

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The technology behind many elements of the missile defense system is simply not ready yet—and even America's own Missile Defense Agency does not deny that. Nevertheless, efforts to improve the existing system and deploy new elements are proceeding apace.

## THE REAL THREAT

In his article ''Missile Defense: Joint Defense Against a Common Enemy,'' Stanislav Kozlov, a senior fellow of the Institute of Geosphere Dynamics of the Russian Academy of Sciences, argues that the real threat to humankind is posed by comets and asteroids (the Comet and Asteroid Threat, or CAT).[30] He warns that if such a space object strikes our planet's land or water surface, the consequences would be catastrophic, including earthquakes, wildfires, volcano eruptions, tsunami, weather change, and possible climate change.

CAT research has reached a fairly advanced stage, leading to the development of planetary defense systems codenamed Spaceguard 1.2 (United States) and Citadel (Russia). The main objective of these systems is early detection of space objects, identification of those of them heading on a collision course with Earth, and development of methods for preventing such collisions.[31]

In 2005 Dr V. Semenov came up with a proposal to use missile and space defense instruments for these tasks, including missile attack early warning systems, missile defense systems, and space-monitoring systems. Further research has demonstrated that such an approach to countering CAT would be quite effective. It would therefore make sense to use the integrated global early warning and missile defense systems to counter the threat posed by comets and asteroids, in addition to their original tasks.

Granted, the actual likelihood of a large asteroid or comet colliding with Earth is very low. But it cannot be ruled out completely, and in the future humankind must always be prepared to counter that threat. There have been several collisions with large space objects in the history of Earth; scientists believe one of them may have been the cause of the extinction of the dinosaurs.

In the past 250 million years there have been nine large waves of extinctions, at intervals of about 30 million years.[32] Those cataclysms may also have resulted from collisions with large asteroids or comets.

In the 20th century there were several large meteorite events. The largest of them, known as the Tunguska meteorite, landed on June 30, 1908. The so-called Brazil Tunguska meteorite landed on September 3, 1930 in a sparsely populated area near the Amazon River. Another large object, the Sikhote-Alin iron meteorite, was found in Russia, in the Ussuriyskaya Taiga forest, on February 12, 1947.

Had those meteorites landed in densely populated areas rather than some remote corners of the globe, millions would have been killed. An even greater threat to our planet is posed by large-diameter comets whose core consists of large numbers of meteorites. To picture the consequences such an event would have, suffice to recall the collision between Jupiter and the Shoemaker-Levi comet in July 1996. That resulted in giant spots (gas and dust ejected into the atmosphere) appearing on the surface of the planet, each the size of our own Earth.[33]

Scientists say comets have collided with Earth in the past. ''It is comets, rather that asteroids or meteorites, that are believed to have been the cause of the giant catastrophes of the past, leading to climate change, mass extinction of animal and plant species, and the fall of highly developed human civilizations.''[34]

All of this suggests that CAT cannot be discounted as a potential threat to humankind and the entire planet. That is why in the future missile defense systems could serve a dual military and civilian purpose, gaining a pan-human scale and significance.

*     *     *

Based on all of the above, it can be said that for Russia, and for the rest of the world, the missile defense problem is like a coin that always falls tails up no matter how you toss it.

On the one hand, once the Asia Pacific and NATO missile defense systems are in place, Russia will be squeezed by American missile defense shields from both sides. That threatens to disturb the present geopolitical balance of power based on the concept of guaranteed retaliatory nuclear strike. In such a scenario the world could end up in a situation of dangerous unipolarity, or monocentricity, with the United States playing the role of the leader at best, or a hegemonic ruler at worst.

On the other hand, preoccupied as they are with protecting themselves from potential missile threats (posed by North Korea, Iran, Syria, terrorists, or Russia and China), the United States and other countries are paying very little attention to the threat posed by comets and asteroids. This is probably because a scenario involving a large asteroid or comet destroying life on Earth in a matter of seconds is very unlikely. Nevertheless, such a scenario cannot be ignored because, it if does come to pass, the consequences would be apocalyptic. We could well end up with a situation whereby a missile defense system built by the United States and its allies will be able to defend against an enemy's missile strike, but prove absolutely useless against a meteorite hurtling towards Earth and posing an existential threat to the entire planet.

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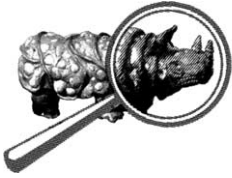
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Svetlana Klyuchanskaya[1]

# NUCLEAR ENERGY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AND RUSSIA'S INTERESTS

The rapid economic growth which most of the developing countries in Southeast Asia are demonstrating has led to an unprecedented rise in electricity demand. These countries are therefore scrambling to identify the best way of satisfying that demand. The current trend in the global energy sector is to find more viable alternatives to expensive and finite fossil fuels. Nuclear energy is one such alternative.

At present, the Southeast Asian countries that have made the most tangible progress in developing nuclear energy are Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Burma, Thailand, and the Philippines.

Like any other regional market, the nuclear energy market in Southeast Asia has its own distinctive features, which have to do mostly with the region's geography and geology. Some of the countries here are in a seismically active zone, the so-called Ring of Fire, which is a horseshoe-shaped chain of volcanoes and tectonic fault lines in the Pacific. The Philippines and Indonesia are the worst affected.[2] Nevertheless, both countries are actively pursuing nuclear energy development plans. The Philippines has already built a nuclear power plant, though it has never launched it. Indonesia has ambitious nuclear energy plans, and views nuclear power plants (NPPs) as an important future source of electricity. Nuclear safety and security are therefore becoming increasingly important issues on the region's agenda.

Nuclear energy development in Southeast Asia has one distinctive feature: most of the countries here are building their nuclear infrastructure from scratch. The only exception is the Philippines, with its already built Bataan nuclear power plant. This means that whoever wins the contract to build nuclear power plants here will also land contracts for personnel training, for building nuclear safety and security infrastructure, etc. In other words, the country which wins the contract for building NPPs in the region will secure more than just economic dividends. Such a contract will also provide work for the winning nation's researchers, designers, machine-builders, and other subcontractors. In the longer time frame that nation will also receive a long-term contract for nuclear fuel supplies. Also, during the initial period the supplier country will have a role to play in operating the new NPP, which is a significant economic dividend.

Besides, the economic and technological ties between the importer and exporter countries built as part of an NPP project can also influence foreign policy.

All of these considerations explain the other distinctive feature of the Southeast Asian nuclear market, i.e. the fact that it is highly competitive. Apart from Russia's Atomstroyexport, interest in the region's nuclear energy programs has been expressed by other large industry players, such as AREVA and Westinghouse[3], as well as Japanese and Korean companies.[4]

Below is a roundup of the six Southeast Asian countries' nuclear energy programs.

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## VIETNAM

Vietnam is Southeast Asia's fastest-growing economy. In 2006 the country's electricity output reached 56.5 billion kWh. Hydroelectric power plants accounted for 42 percent of that figure,

natural gas-fired power plants for 37 percent, and coal-fired plants for 17 percent. The country's oil and gas resources are not large, and the output of hydroelectric power plants depends on the season.[5] The country's rapidly growing economy needs other energy sources. Nuclear energy development therefore seems an entirely logical and predictable step.

First feasibility studies for nuclear energy were held in Vietnam back in the early 1980s.[6] Another study was held in 1995; it became the basis of Vietnam's nuclear energy development program until 2025, which was later adjusted to encompass the 2030 time frame.

The country's existing nuclear energy development plan can be divided into three stages. The first is until 2015, during which time the government plans to conduct a technical and economic feasibility study and award contracts for building nuclear power plants. The second stage, in 2015–2020, will see the construction and launch of Vietnam's first nuclear power plant. During the third stage, between 2020 and 2030, more energy reactors will be launched. Eight sites in five provinces (Ninh Thuan, Binh Dinh, Phu Yen, Ha Tinh, and Quang Ngai) have already been identified. According to a government statement in 2006, two nuclear power plants were to be built in the country. The first one, with an output of 2,000 MW, was to be situated in Ninh Phuoc district; it was scheduled for launch by 2020.[7] The second NPP, to be launched shortly after the first one, was to be situated in Ninh Hai district. Both districts are in Ninh Thuan province. The combined output of the two NPPs will be 4,000 MW. The existing Hoa Binh hydroelectric power plant, the country's largest, has a maximum capacity of 1,920 MW.[8]

By 2025 Vietnam expects to launch 8 GW of nuclear power capacity; by 2030 it plans to have 13 energy reactors in operation, with a combined output of 15 GW, or 10 percent of the country's total.[9]

A preliminary technical and economic feasibility study for the country's first NPP was completed in November 2009. The full study should be completed by 2012. According to the existing plans, construction is due to begin in 2014, with the launch of the first NPP scheduled for 2020.

Several international companies have submitted their bids for the project to develop nuclear energy in Vietnam. At one point the country saw Westinghouse, the world's largest maker of nuclear reactors, as a likely partner for the first NPP. Hanoi also received offers of cooperation in developing nuclear energy from several other countries, including Japan, China, India, South Korea, and Germany.[10] Starting from 2006 Vietnam has signed nuclear energy cooperation agreements with France, China, South Korea, Japan, Russia, the United States, and Canada.

Russia has repeatedly expressed interest in Vietnam's project to built NPPs. During Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's visit to Hanoi in July 2009 representatives of the Russian Rosatom State Corporation for Atomic Energy and the Vietnamese Science and Technology Ministry signed a memorandum of cooperation in nuclear energy development in Vietnam.[11] Shortly afterwards Rosatom deputy director-general Petr Shchedrovistky said that the corporation was considering the possibility of bidding for the Vietnamese contract to build the country's first NPP.[12]

In December 2009 another Russian–Vietnamese memorandum of understanding on cooperation in building the first Vietnamese NPP was signed by Rosatom head Sergey Kirienko and the director-general of the Electricity of Vietnam state energy company, Pham Le Thanh. Shortly afterwards, in February 2010, Rosatom won the contract to conduct a technical and economic feasibility study for the project, beating a Japanese consortium (International Nuclear Energy Development of Japan Co.) consisting of such industry giants as Toshiba, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Hitachi, and others.[13]

On March 17, 2010, during a meeting between senior Rosatom executives and the Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister, Nguyen Thien Nhan, the Vietnamese side confirmed the decision to involve Russian specialists in the project to build the country's first NPP.[14] The two sides signed a memorandum of intentions regarding cooperation in nuclear training and research, including the training of specialists for Vietnam's national nuclear energy sector. According to Sergey Kirienko, Russian–Vietnamese cooperation ''includes the construction of a nuclear power plant and a research center, the training of specialists and help in the development of national legislation in this area.''[15]

According to forecasts for nuclear energy development, the Vietnamese project should become the first in a string of such projects in Southeast Asia.[16] The contract with Vietnam is therefore

very important for Russia. Winning the contract and then delivering on schedule and on budget would send a positive signal to other regional customers. It would give the Russian company a competitive advantage over the traditional players on the Southeast Asian markets, including Japanese and Korean corporations.[17]

Rosatom's success in the negotiations with the Vietnamese side is based on several underlying factors. First, Russia and Vietnam have many years of cooperation experience in such a strategic area as the fuel and energy sector, where joint Russian–Vietnamese oil ventures have worked successfully for several years now,[18] and also in the area of military and technical cooperation. Neither should we forget the cooperation experience dating back to Soviet times, when Soviet specialists played an important role in rebuilding Vietnamese industry. In other words, Russia is not a new player in Vietnam. Second, Russia has an excellent record in the area of training and education projects. This will enable Vietnam not only to build the NPPs but also to train its nuclear specialists.[19]

Despite this impressive list of advantages, until recently Russia was far from certain to win the Vietnamese NPP custom. Suffice to recall the nuclear energy cooperation agreement Vietnam signed in late March 2010 with the United States.[20] The agreement paves the way for American companies to participate in the construction of NPPs in Vietnam. But right now it is safe to say that Russia's efforts have achieved the desired effect. Vietnam has now chosen it as a partner in the project to build the first Vietnamese NPP. Part of the reason for such a decision by Hanoi is that Vietnam regards Russian NPP technologies as the safest in the world—this was stated by the director of Vietnam Atomic Energy Institute, Vuong Huu Tan.[21]

But, despite that relative success, Russia is still facing stiff competition from other players for the actual contract to build the NPP. The project has great strategic importance. Winning this contract will not only pave the way for broader cooperation with Vietnam but also serve as a strong competitive advantage capable of opening up for Russia the nuclear energy markets of other countries in the region.

## INDONESIA

In 2006 some 44 percent of Indonesia's electricity output was generated by coal-fired power plants. Oil accounted for another 29 percent, gas for 15 percent, hydroelectric energy for 7 percent, and geothermal plants for 5 percent.

The country already operates three research reactors. They are run by the National Atomic Energy Agency, BATAN.

First plans for commercial development of nuclear energy were announced by the Indonesian government back in the late 1980s. In 1989 the government identified the Muria peninsula in Central Java province as the likely site for the future NPP. In 1996 it completed the feasibility study which identified Ujung Lemahabang, an area in a seismically stable zone, as the site of a future 7,000 MW nuclear power plant. But in 1997 it was forced to shelve the project owing to economic instability and strong rejection of nuclear energy by the Indonesian public.[22] The idea was resurrected in 2002–2003, when the economy stabilized and demand for electricity started to grow again.

The existing time frame for the implementation of the Indonesian nuclear energy program was set out in several documents adopted in 2006. They include the National Electricity Planning Scheme for 2006–2026 and Presidential Decree No. 43 of 2006. The plan was to announce a contract for the Muria 1 and Muria 2 phases of the project in 2008. Construction was due to begin in 2010, with a launch date in 2017.[23] The projected capacity of the pilot NPP was set at 2,000 MW. The project is to be supervised by BATAN.[24] The NPP will supply electricity to Java and Bali, which account for about 75 percent of electricity consumption in the country. The second phase of the project will see the building of the Muria 3 and Muria 4 reactors. The plan was to announce the contract for these in 2016, with a launch date in 2023. As part of the same program the Indonesian government expected nuclear energy to account for at least two percent of electricity generation in the country by 2017.[25]

The government has also said it is ready to allocate some $8 billion for the construction of four nuclear reactors with a total output of six GW by 2025.

By mid-2010 three areas were identified as possible NPP sites, including Muria (Central Java), Banten Province (Western Java), and the island of Bangka (east of Sumatra, with two sites in the eastern and southern parts of the island).[26] All these sites are situated on Indonesia's northern coastline, away from the tectonic fault lines.

In July 2007, the Korea Electric Power Corporation (KEPCO), Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power Company, and Indonesia's PT Medco Energi Internasional Tbk. signed an agreement to conduct a technical and economic feasibility study for two 1,000 MW reactors worth 3 billion dollars.[27] In addition, BATAN conducted a preliminary feasibility study for the construction of a Korean-designed SMART reactor in Madura Province. But the project cannot go ahead until a reference reactor is built in South Korea itself.

Meanwhile, the IAEA is studying the safety situation for the future reactors on the Muria peninsula in Madura province.

In 2007 the government of Gorontalo Province in northern Sulawesi announced its interest in the Russian project to build a floating nuclear power plant.

Russia is also studying the possibility of taking part in implementing Indonesia's nuclear energy development plan. Indonesia was one of the first countries to express interest in floating nuclear power plants (FNPP) in the late 1990s. Under the Russian proposals for FNPP export mechanisms, the actual power plant remains the property of the Russian Federation; it is operated by Russian personnel and all types of liability, including liability for so-called nuclear damage, are borne by Russia.[28] The FNPP can be used to generate electricity or as a desalination plant.[29] This makes the proposal especially attractive to Indonesia, which is one of the largest consumers of fresh water.[30]

Russia has been working hard to strengthen its positions on the Indonesian nuclear market. In December 2006 the two countries signed a nuclear energy cooperation agreement.[31] Later that year Rosatom head Sergey Kirienko announced the Russian nuclear company's intention to bid for the Indonesian contract for NPP construction. A year later, in September 2007, Russian President Vladimir Putin said during a visit to Indonesia that Russia was ready to assist Indonesia in the building of a nuclear power plant on Java.[32]

The competition for the Indonesian NPP contract is not quite as stiff as for the Vietnamese one. Part of the reason is that Vietnam, rather than Indonesia, is expected to be the first country to actually start building an NPP in the region. Such projections shift the focus of competition. But this does not mean that winning the contract to build the first Indonesian NPP will be easy. Another important factor to take into account in Indonesia is that public opinion there is actively opposed to the construction of an NPP in the country. That could be a significant complication. Opponents of nuclear energy voice a whole range of arguments. Some say that high seismic activity in the region makes it unsuitable for building nuclear power plants. Others insist that the country has cheap and environmentally safe alternatives to nuclear energy, including its abundant geothermal energy sources.[33]

## MALAYSIA

In 2006 oil-fired power plants accounted for 41 percent of electricity generation in Malaysia, natural gas for 35 percent, coal 15 percent, and hydroelectric power plants two percent.[34]

The starting point for the latest nuclear energy development plans in Malaysia was August 2006, when the Malaysian Nuclear Licensing Board said the country should build two nuclear reactors by 2020. The Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation was tasked with implementing the program.[35] In 2008 the government launched a comprehensive study of the country's energy options, including nuclear energy. The study was scheduled to announce its conclusions in 2010. But even before that deadline the state-owned energy corporation, Tenaga Nasional Berhad, said that nuclear energy was one of the most promising future energy sources. In October 2009 the initial nuclear energy plan was revised. The country's Energy Minister, Peter Chin Fah Kui, said that the government saw 2025 as the earliest possible date for the launch of the first NPP.[36]

Until recently Malaysia did not have a clear plan for nuclear energy development, and all the existing proposals looked more like declarations of intent. But in May 2010 the Energy Minister said in a public statement that the country's economic council had given the green light to the

construction of the first Malaysian NPP. The government had also set a firm deadline for the launch of that NPP for 2021.[37]

The statement seemed to signal that the Malaysian government had finally set its NPP plans in motion—but experts were quite skeptical. Later on, however, some media outlets reported that the country's Energy Ministry was selecting the site for the first nuclear power plant and planning to spend about $6 billion on building the first reactor.[38]

The site will most likely be on the country's west coast, i.e. on the coast of the Strait of Malacca. There are some potentially suitable locations in Johor State (Batu Pahat District), Selangor State (Pulau Angsa Island), and Perak State (Sitiawan District) in the west of the country. Another possible site is in Pahang State.

It has to be said, however, that at this time Malaysia has yet to make a final decision on such a fundamental question as the power-output specifications of its future NPP. The existing plan therefore cannot be viewed as a clear roadmap. The Executive Secretary of Malaysia's Nuclear Licensing Board, Abdul Aziz Raja Adnan, has proposed two 500 MW reactors at the first NPP. Other specialists favor a more traditional configuration with two 1,000 MW reactors.[39]

But despite the remaining uncertainty Russia still has a good starting position to win future Malaysian nuclear contracts. Like Indonesia, Malaysia has also expressed interest in the FNPP project. The Russian floating nuclear power plant was designed for the purpose of providing electricity to remote and inaccessible areas in the country's own Far North—but it also has an excellent export potential.

## BURMA

In Burma hydroelectric power plants accounted for 53 percent of the country's electricity output in 2007, natural gas-fired power plants for 41 percent, and oil-fired plants for 4.5 percent.[40]

Unlike the other countries in the region, Burma has already chosen Russia as its sole partner in nuclear energy development. Burmese nuclear energy plans were discussed by the country's Science and Technology Minister, U Thaung, during a visit to Russia in late 2000.[41] In February 2001 Burma received an official offer from Russia to build a research reactor. On May 15, 2002 the Russian government passed a resolution to approve the Nuclear Industry Ministry's draft of an agreement between the two governments on building a nuclear research center in Burma.

In the early stages of the project the exact site of the future research reactor was not disclosed, giving rise to a wave of rumors and speculation. Rangoon was named as one possible site. But according to information published in several sources, the ceremony to lay the foundations of the future reactor was to take place in January 2003 in a location not far from the town of Magwe in central Burma.[42] It was expected that later that year Russia and Burma would conduct a series of talks and sign an official agreement. But those plans were postponed because the IAEA had expressed doubts about Burma's ability to ensure adequate levels of security and safety for the future reactor,[43] and also because Russia doubted Rangoon's ability to pay for the project.[44]

Talks resumed in 2005, and on May 15, 2007 at a special ceremony in Moscow the two countries signed an agreement on cooperation in building a nuclear research center in Burma.[45] The next round of talks on the future of Russian–Burmese cooperation in building a research reactor was held on May 16, 2007. The two sides discussed preparations for the signing of the actual contract for the reactor. Another round was tentatively scheduled for the second half of 2007 in Burma.

But the situation was complicated by the Saffron Revolution in September 2007, which led to serious destabilization in Burma. Further talks and practical steps to implement the project had to be postponed. Then came another calamity; in May 2008 Burma was devastated by Cyclone Nargis. The country was put on the brink of a humanitarian catastrophe, and resuming work on the expensive nuclear project became quite impossible.

The current situation is that the project has been postponed indefinitely. This does not mean, however, that cooperation between Russia and Burma has ceased in all areas. Military and technical cooperation continues to develop, and there is real hope that the implementation of the agreement to build a nuclear research center in Burma will resume shortly. As for Russian–Bur-Burmese ties in strategic areas, including nuclear energy, it must be said that cooperation between the two countries has come under serious criticism from the international community.[46]

Nevertheless, Russia has not abrogated its commitments under the agreement with Burma, thereby bolstering its own reputation as a reliable partner.

## THAILAND

Most of Thailand's electricity is produced by oil-fired power plants (50.3 percent in 2007). In 2009, the share of natural gas was 37.2 percent, coal 10.4 percent, and hydroelectric energy 2.2 percent.[47]

The country's demand for electricity is projected to grow to 30 GW by 2020. For the supply to keep up, the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT) said the country will aim to launch four GW of nuclear power generation capacity by 2020.[48] In a statement made in June 2007 the country's Energy Minister, Piyavasti Amranand, spoke of nuclear energy ''as the best way to keep electricity prices under control.'' The Minister stressed that Thailand needed to end its dependence on natural gas supplies from the Gulf of Siam countries because the gas fields there would soon be depleted. He added that coal was a cheap alternative, but the cost of this to the environment was incalculable.[49]

In 2007 Thailand's national committee for energy policy approved the national energy plan to 2021, which included the launch of a 4,000 MW nuclear power plant. In the new version of the plan approved in 2010 and covering the period until 2030 the output specifications of the future NPP were increased to 5,000 MW. Work at the site was due to begin in 2015, with a launch date some time in 2020. Over the period from 2020 to 2028 the government wants to launch another five 1,000 MW reactors. The project will be led by the state-owned energy company. The output of the future NPP has been set at 5,000 MW. An agency tasked with ensuring safe operation of the NPP is due to be set up by 2014.[50] The first stage of the NPP project is to be financed by Thailand itself.

In addition, the Thai state energy company has conducted a study to identify the best site for the future NPP. Five sites were shortlisted. Three of them were in the south of the country in Surat Thani and Nakhon Si Thammarat provinces—but later they were dropped from the list due to opposition from the local communities. Other sites are in Ubon Ratchathani province in the east of the country, close to the border with Laos, and in Nakhon Sawan province 200km north of Bangkok. The final choice will be made between these two sites.

In December 2009 EGAT, in partnership with Hong Kong's largest energy company, signed an agreement on nuclear energy cooperation with China Guangdong Nuclear Power Corp. In 2010 EGAT signed an agreement on cooperation in building a nuclear power plant with Japan Atomic Power Co.

No information is available concerning any Russian–Thai cooperation on nuclear energy. But the area has been named as one of the priorities during bilateral discussions on future cooperation programs.

## THE PHILIPPINES

The Philippines' electricity output reached 56.7 billion kWh in 2006. Coal-fired power plants accounted for 27 percent of that figure, natural gas 29 percent, oil eight percent, hydroelectric energy 17.5 percent, and geothermal energy 18.5 percent.

The Philippines is the only country in Southeast Asia which already has a nuclear power plant. But whether or not that NPP should be launched has been the subject of heated debate for many years. The decision to build the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant (BNPP), with two reactors and a total output of 621 MW, was made by the government during the 1973 oil crisis. Building work at the Bataan 1 site began in 1976 and was completed in 1984, at a cost of $460 million.[51] The Marcos regime supported the project, but after it fell the project was frozen.[52] The NPP was never launched because of financial problems and unresolved safety issues.

In April 2007 the government made the last payment for the NPP. It has considered the option of converting the plant to use natural gas as fuel,[53] but the project was found to be uneconomic. The government then decided simply to maintain the NPP in a working state without actually operating it, which costs $800,000 every year. In 2007 the energy department launched a feasibility study

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for nuclear energy as part of the overall national energy plan. Nuclear energy is seen in the country as a way of reducing dependence on coal and oil imports.

According to information published in the country's 2008 national energy plan, the government aims to launch two 600 MW reactors by 2025, then add three more 600 MW reactors in 2027, 2030, and 2034, for a total nuclear generation capacity of 2,400 MW by 2034. The project is based on findings of the nuclear energy feasibility studies produced by the country's energy department as part of the overall national energy plan.[54]

In 2008 the Philippines applied to the IAEA for assistance in resolving the situation with the Bataan NPP. It also sought the agency's recommendations regarding nuclear energy development in the country.[55] In the opinion of the IAEA the Bataan 1 NPP can be rebuilt, giving it at least 30 years of economical and safe operation. But the project will cost from $800 million to $1 billion. A number of Korean companies have already expressed keen interest in the proposed project to revive the Bataan NPP.[56]

Also, according to the Filipino ambassador to Moscow, the country is interested in pursuing nuclear energy cooperation with Russia. A visit to Moscow by a delegation of the Filipino Energy Ministry has been scheduled for a date shortly after the May 2012 presidential election in Russia to discuss the prospects for such cooperation. According to an embassy official, the Philippines views Russia as a potential partner because the two countries already have positive experience of cooperation in other areas.[57]

\*       \*       \*

Rapid economic growth in Southeast Asian countries is raising a number of problems related to growing demand for electricity. Given the volatility of the prices for oil, gas, and coal, and the fact that sooner or later the existing reserves will run out, these countries are increasingly opting for alternative energy sources, including nuclear energy. For Russia, which is one of the world's leading exporters of nuclear technologies, such a situation offers a unique opportunity to tap into a promising new market. This objective should be near the top of Russia's list of priorities, but achieving it will not be easy. The country will face fierce competition from other players; it will also have to take into account the specifics of the region as a whole and of each individual country in particular. Whether or not Rosatom succeeds in this venture will determine the company's direction for many years to come. Russia already has extensive experience of cooperation in building nuclear power plants[58] in India and China.[59] That experience, and the reputation Russia has earned as a reliable partner, is the trump card Russian companies will rely on in their efforts to win Southeast Asian markets. Besides, Russia can offer not only excellent value for money to the region's countries pursuing nuclear energy development but also some unique solutions that take into account their geographic situation.

Apart from the financial benefits of winning Southeast Asian nuclear contracts, the technological solutions designed for projects in the region can also be used in Russia itself. For example, building NPPs in earthquake-prone countries like Indonesia or the Philippines will require the utmost attention to safety issues. Later on the solutions developed for projects in these two countries could be used in Russia's own Far East, an area with high seismic activity and a shortage of electricity.

*Table 1*.  **Southeast Asian Nuclear Energy Projects.**

| Country | Project launch | Completion deadline | Number of reactors | Planned capacity | Cooperation with Russia |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Vietnam | 1995 | 2030 | 13 | 15 GW | Yes |
| Indonesia | 2002–2003 | 2025 | 4 | 6 GW | Yes |
| Burma | 2001 | — | 1* | 10 MW | Yes |
| The Philippines | 2007 | 2034 | 4 | 2,4 GW | No |
| Thailand | 2007 | 2028 | 5 | 5 GW | No |
| Malaysia | 2006 | 2025 | 2 | 1 GW or 2 GW | No |

*Notes*: *Research reactor.

Russia's floating nuclear power plant (FNPP) project has very good chances of winning export contracts. Russia is the sole player in this market niche, and it already has a lot of experience in building and operating nuclear-powered civilian ships. The reactor design chosen for the FNPP project is the tried and tested KLT-40S, normally used on nuclear-powered ice-breakers. But before they sign actual contracts, potential foreign customers want to see at least one reference unit launched and operated. The first such unit, the *Mihkail Lomonosov*, is now on the ways at the Baltiysky shipyards in St Petersburg; its launch has been scheduled for 2013.

The main advantage of the FNPP project in the Southeast Asian context is that it would be economical in remote areas and small island countries, where demand for electricity is not large enough to justify building a nuclear power plant of traditional design.

Nuclear energy cooperation is a research-intensive and high-tech area in which Russia already has a lot of experience, making it a reliable supplier of advanced technologies. But there is still a lot of work to be done if Russia is to strengthen its presence in the region's market.

As of late 2010–early 2011, countries in Southeast Asia could be divided into two groups, depending on the progress they have made in implementing their nuclear energy plans and on the seriousness of their intentions. The first group includes Vietnam, Indonesia, and Thailand, where nuclear energy programs are clearly structured, with firm deadlines already set and decisions made regarding the sites of the future NPPs, as well as the number and power output specifications of the nuclear reactors to be built. The second group includes Malaysia, the Philippines, and Burma. These countries have announced their interest in nuclear energy, but for a variety of reasons any major practical steps are still a long way off.

Another thing to consider is the serious impact of the Fukushima crisis in March 2011 on nuclear energy programs all over the world, including Southeast Asia. The accident at the Fukushima plant, which has often been compared in the media to the Chernobyl disaster, has forced the international community to think again about the future of nuclear energy. There is no doubt that the Fukushima crisis has also prompted the Southeast Asian countries to review their own plans regarding nuclear energy development. At present, five of the six Southeast Asian countries studied in this paper (i.e. all but Vietnam) have decided that the implementation of their nuclear energy programs needs to be put on hold[60] for the time being, until additional studies have been conducted and the necessary nuclear safety mechanisms have been put in place. Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Thailand are all facing growing domestic opposition to nuclear energy.[61] Nevertheless, demand for electricity in these countries continues to grow; very soon nuclear energy will come to be seen once again as the only viable and economical alternative to traditional energy sources. The pause will probably last one or two years. That time will be used by the countries concerned to address any problems with the existing projects and to set more realistic deadlines for all the stages of their nuclear plans.

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ANALYSIS

Yury Fedorov

# KAZAKHSTAN: LOOMING INSTABILITY?

Kazakhstan's strategic importance goes beyond the borders of Central Asia. The country is an important supplier of oil and gas to the European and Chinese markets.[1] Even more importantly, Kazakhstan serves as a strategic buffer. It separates Russia from Kyrgyzstan, which is a classic failed state, Tajikistan, which is on the brink of a precipice, and Uzbekistan, which is potentially unstable. A fall of Kazakhstan's mummified regime could lead not only to the disruption of oil exports but also to the appearance of a large regional source of instability covering most of Central Asia plus Afghanistan and lying right across Russia's weakly defended southern border. It cannot be ruled out that in such an event Moscow will have to shoulder the extremely difficult and expensive burden of upholding stability in Kazakhstan through the use of force.

Some might say such a scenario lies in the realm of political pulp fiction—after all, Kazakhstan has been a poster child for authoritarian stability even since the fall of the Soviet Union some 20 years ago. But the Arab revolutions in late 2010–early 2011 have demonstrated that many seemingly unshakeable authoritarian regimes have feet of clay, suffering as they do from deep internal ailments. Of course, it is next to impossible to predict with any precision when and how exactly the latent crisis will explode into the open. But analysts are increasingly predicting the possibility of an explosive escalation of tensions between political power groups in Kazakhstan. They fear that the authorities may lose control of the situation as the succession crisis draws near.

President Nursultan Nazarbayev became a septuagenarian in 2010. Questions are increasingly being raised about his personal and political prospects. The problem is not just his age. Nazarbayev has been in power in Kazakhstan for over 20 years, ever since his election as the First Secretary of the Kazakh branch of the Communist Party in 1989. The Kazakh political elite obviously has personalities and groups that have grown tired of waiting. They are unhappy with the rules of the game set by the incumbent President, and have an eye on his job.

In addition, the setup of the regime built by Nazarbayev requires all important decisions to be made personally by the president. His deteriorating health therefore means that problems are piling up unresolved, waiting for the President's attention; the Kazakh government machinery, not really effective even in its best days, is gradually becoming increasingly inefficient, and at some point may collapse altogether.

## THE MECHANISM OF NAZARBAYEV'S POWER

There are several underlying reasons for the 20 years of stability of the Kazakh regime. First, people in the country are, by and large, significantly better off than their Central Asian neighbors. Living standards have been rising steadily throughout the 2000s. According to government statistics, the share of the Kazakh population living on less than the official subsistence minimum fell from 46 percent in 2001 to 6.5 percent in 2010.[2] Unemployment, as calculated by ILO standards, has halved since the late 1990s to 5.8 percent in 2010.[3] Official figures tend to paint a

slightly rosy picture, and the official subsistence minimum may need to be revised upwards to reflect the actual situation. Nevertheless, there is much reliable evidence of a real improvement in the country's social and economic situation.

Another important reason is that Kazakhstan has never had a political force or a leader capable of capitalizing on the actual or alleged discontent of the Kazakhs and transforming that discontent into political expectations and actions. The officially registered political parties, including those claiming to be in opposition to the government, are the presidential administration's stooges.[4] The country's bureaucratic, political, and business elites are being closely watched by the Kazakh security services. Those implicated in or merely suspected of harboring opposition sentiment, lacking personal loyalty to Nazarbayev or, even worse, actually being able to contend with him for the top job are persecuted, killed, or forced to flee the country.[5]

Kazakhstan does not have any of the influential Islamist groups that pose the greatest threat to the governments in neighboring Uzbekistan or Tajikistan. Although 70 percent of the Kazakhs describe themselves as Muslims, Islam has never had any political role to play in Kazakhstan (or in northern Kyrgyzstan, for that matter). The country does not border on the Fergana valley, which is the main breeding ground for radical Islam in Central Asia. In recent years the young generation of the Kazakh elite has been toying with the so-called Koranite movement, also described as Islam-light. Its leaders have demonstrated clear political ambitions, although the movement has yet to become an influential political force.[6]

But the main factor in Kazakhstan's political stability has been Nazarbayev's personal authority. He has kept the political elite under control by manipulating the bureaucratic clans and business conglomerates. That mechanism has evolved over time, reflecting the changes in the country's political and business elites.

In the first years after the fall of the Soviet Union Nazarbayev's power relied on the loyal Communist Party cadres. But he also had a deliberate policy of promoting representatives of the younger generation, turning them into another pillar of his regime. The principles of recruitment to the upper echelons of power also evolved. In the 1990s a successful political or business career required membership of one of the three *Zhuz*, the Kazakh tribal clans—or direct family ties. But starting from the early 2000s that factor has been supplanted by unconditional personal loyalty to the President and a ready willingness to implement all his orders, reinforced by complete personal dependence on Nazarbayev's favor.

The role of the tribal, family, and clan ties in Kazakhstan's economics and politics is subject to debate. Some experts believe that they are still playing an important, perhaps even dominant role. Andrey Grozin, head of the Central Asia and Kazakhstan department at the Moscow-based CIS Institute, believes that ''in the future, the current President will have to agree the candidacy of his successor with all the key clans. The old feudal system has outlived even the Soviet system in Kazakhstan. The Greater/Southern Zhuz (clan) intends to strengthen its influence. But the heir is unlikely to be from Nazabayev's own entourage. The southerners want a figure with more impressive lineage—possibly even someone from the Genghis dynasty.''[7] But other analysts say that these days the Kazakh clans are built on shared interests, bureaucratic or corporate loyalties, and client–patron relationships; family ties play a secondary role.

The existing mechanism of power in Kazakhstan is centered on the President, who remains at the top of the bureaucratic pyramid. He makes all the important appointments, as well as all the political and economic decisions of any consequence. The mechanism is built on a system of checks and balances, enabling Nazarbayev to act as the supreme arbiter in resolving conflicts between the bureaucratic clans, financial and industrial conglomerates, or the several secret services, all keeping each other under close watch.

Nazarbayev's tactics also include actually stimulating conflicts in the upper echelons of power. He conducts regular reshuffles to prevent the formation of powerful cliques in the ministries and agencies, with their own clientele. He rewards personal loyalty by various means, including appointments that enable the appointee to re-route the financial flows in his own favor. He also metes out severe punishment to those he suspects of disloyalty.

The main support to the Nazarbayev regime comes from a relatively stable group of 10–12 people sometimes referred to as the *Old Guard*. This grouping acquired its current shape in the early 2000s; it consists of people highly trusted by the President.

According to Kazakh analyst Mukhamedzhan Adilov, membership of this group is earned:

> ...by long years of political and government service. Its influence is based on decades of solid reputation; complete or nearly-complete trust of the leader of the nation; their underlings' old habit of obeying and serving; their own knowledge of people, with all their secrets, strengths and weaknesses; and the tried and tested methods of governing from behind the curtains.[8]

Nevertheless, the opposition media insist that the Kazakh leader does not completely trust anyone. So membership of this group (or any prominent position in the bureaucratic hierarchy) also requires the availability of compromising materials which allow criminal charges to be brought against any official if and when such a need arises. Some members of the President's inner circle hold key government offices. Others serve semi-officially, as the President's aides and advisors. Their actual place in the unspoken hierarchy does not directly correlate with their formal position; it depends on their access to the President's ear and on the trust the President has in them, rightly or wrongly. These people carry out the President's will and serve him in delicate areas such as his personal finances. Some of them act as links between the President and the country's largest financial and industrial conglomerates. On the one hand, through these people Nazarbayev exercises a certain degree of control over the conglomerates. On the other, the conglomerates themselves use their trusted contacts in the President's entourage to lobby their interests.

After collating and re-checking bits and pieces of information published by various media outlets, including websites affiliated with various political forces, it appears that the most well-known and influential figures in the Old Guard are:

❑ Aslan Musin, Head of the Presidential Administration;[9]

❑ Kasym Masimov, the Prime Minister;[10]

❑ Umirzak Shukeyev, First Deputy Prime Minister;[11]

❑ Marat Tazhin, Nazarbayev's Assistant and Secretary of the Security Council;[12]

❑ Nurtay Abykayev, Head of the National Security Committee (the KNB);[13]

❑ Kayrat Kelimbatov, Economic Development and Trade Minister;[14]

❑ Imangali Tasmagambetov, Astana Governor;[15]

❑ Akhmedzhan Yesimov, Almaty Governor and Nazarbayev's nephew;[16]

❑ Bulat Utemiratov, Presidential Aide;[17]

❑ Kanat Saudabayev, State Secretary;[18]

❑ Amangeddy Shabdarbayev, Presidential Advisor; and[19]

❑ Nartay Dutbayev, who has not served in any official capacity since 2009.[20]

Members of Nazarbayev's Old Guard are among the richest people in Kazakhstan. But, with few exceptions, they do not own any large companies. The main source of their wealth is their access to the President.

For many years, the most influential member of the Old Guard was Vladimir Ni, President Nazarbayev's close friend and confidante who died in September 2010.[21] Ni held senior offices in the Presidential Administration and at the same time led the so-called Korean lobby, which controls Kazakhmys, one of the country's largest corporations. Apart from all else, Nazarbayev used the ethnic Korean group to keep an eye on the Eurasian group of Mashkevich–Ibragimov–Shodiyev [22] ''in the financial and economic sense of the word, but also politically, ideologically, etc.''[23]

Kazakh observers believe that since Ni's death the most influential members of the Old Guard are Presidential Administration Chief Aslan Musin, KNB Chief Nurtay Abykayev, and Security Council Secretary Marat Tazhin. That seems about right, given that the Presidential Administration has become something of Nazarbayev's personal HQ and plays the same role the Communist Party central committee in the republic used to play in Soviet times. The KNB, meanwhile, is the main

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(though not the only) agency in charge of national security. It is also the main instrument of control over the Kazakh elite. It collects information on all the important processes, identifies those unhappy with the President's policies, and gathers compromising information about all the important players in the bureaucratic and business circles. Finally, the Kazakh Security Council serves as an arbiter settling conflicts between the uniformed agencies (such as the Interior Ministry, the KNB, and the financial police) and monitors their activities.

Another interesting question is the role of the President's family in the political and economic system he has built. Nazarbayev's son-in-law, Timur Kulibayev, leads a powerful financial and industrial group which has a lot of political clout.[24] Some of the President's nephews hold senior (though not key) positions in government agencies or large corporations. His other relatives play an important role in the country's economy and control several large companies. On the whole, however, the influence wielded by the President's extended family cannot be compared to the Old Guard's influence. Not a single one among the President's close relatives, apart from Akhmedzhan Yesimov, is part of the small inner circle of people who serve as the President's main political power base and enforce his will. It appears that Nazarbayev does not have any great trust in his extended family, especially after the conflict with his former son-in-law Rakhat Aliyev, who ended up fleeing the country and becoming the President's main critic abroad. Nazarbayev also has difficult relations with his daughter Dariga, who was married to Aliyev.[25]

Along with the Old Guard, Kazakhstan's ruling elite is dominated by the four largest financial and industrial conglomerates. Each has an extensive system of contacts in the government, and together they control all the leading media outlets in the country.

*The Timur Kulibayev Clan* controls almost the entire oil and gas sector in Kazakhstan. It is thought to be the most powerful clan in terms of its financial muscle as well as its connections in the central and regional governments. Almost half the regional governors in the country are thought to be linked to Kulibayev. The clan rose to prominence after the previous king of the hill, the group led by Rakhat Aliyev and Dariga Nazarbayeva, fell from grace. Evidence of Kulibayev's growing clout is his appointment on April 12, 2011 as chairman of the Samruk-Kazyn National Prosperity Fund, which manages all state-owned assets in the country. The fund controls more than 500 of Kazakhstan's largest companies, Including Kazmunaygaz (the national oil and gas company), Kazakhtelekom, Kazpochta (the national mail service), Air Astana, the People's Savings Bank of Kazakhstan, Kazatomprom (the nuclear industry company), and other industrial and financial giants. Kulibayev, who is married to the second daughter of Nazarbayev, Dinara, is thought to maintain very friendly relations with Prime Minister Masimov, as well as with Astana Governor Tasmagambetov and Presidential Advisor Shabdarbayev.

*The Kazkommerzbank Group*, controlled by Nurzhan Subkhanberdin, is sometimes thought to be part of the Kulibayev financial and industrial empire.[26] But other analysts claim that he is an independent economic and political actor, although he does have some common interests with Kulibayev. In the early 2000s the two groups joined ranks against the Aliyev-Nazarbayeva group. The core of the group is Kazkommerzbank, which has become one of the country's leading banking institutions since its foundation in the 1990s. It is the largest commercial bank in Kazakhstan in terms of assets, credit portfolio, and own capital. Some Kazakh analysts believe that Subkhanberdin and his entourage express the interests of the younger generation of the Kazakh business elite, who are unhappy with the state of affairs in the country.

*The Eurasian Group*, formed in the mid-1990s, controls the production of aluminum and chromium in the country, as well as the ferrous metals industry. Together these sectors account for 25 to 30 percent of national GDP. The group is led by Aleksandr Mashkevich,[27] Patokh (Fattakh) Shodiev, and Alidzhan Ibragimov.[28] It owes its name to the fact that Mashkevich and his colleagues position themselves as advocates of the Eurasian political and philosophical doctrine—although it is not precisely clear what that doctrine stands for. Mashkevich is believed to enjoy fairly close personal relations with Nazarbayev. Along with some other Kazakh figures, he represents the President's economic and political interests in Europe. For example, he lobbied (unsuccessfully) for Nazarbayev's nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize. It is thought, however, that the group's political clout has been in decline since 2009, when its chief lobbyist Danial Akhmetov was sacked after serving as Prime Minister in 2003–2007 and as Defense Minister in 2007–2009. After the removal of Akhmetov from the political arena, the group's main lobbyist in the government is thought to be Kanat Saudbayev, the State Secretary.

*The Korean Group*, which controls the Kazakhmys company, is Kazakhstan's largest producer of copper, some other non-ferrous metals and electricity. The group is dominated by ethnic Koreans, who were deported en masse to Kazakhstan from the Soviet Far East in the 1930s. The leaders of the ethnic Korean diaspora in Kazakhstan are part of the country's political and business elite; they also have ties in South Korean business circles. Following the death of Vladimir Ni, who was the chairman of the Kazakhmys board, the group is led by Vladimir Kim, the owner of a 46 percent stake in Kazakhmys.[29] The Kazakh President's brother, Bolat Nazarbayev, is on the company's Board of Directors. The Korean group's main lobbyist in the government is the Chief of the National Security Agency, Abykayev.

*The Aliyev-Nazarbayeva Group* was formed in the mid-1990s. Its main economic assets included the Sugar Center company, the national sugar monopoly owned by Rakhat Aliyev; the Oil Center company, which owned a network of gas pumps; and Nurbank, a large privately owned bank. But the group's influence derived mainly from Aliyev's contacts in the national security agencies. The group's co-leader, Aliev's wife and Nazarbayev's elder daughter Dariga Nazarbayeva controlled several leading media outlets and the pro-presidential political party Asar. Nazarbayeva was the de facto head of the country's largest media holding, Alma-Media, which included two national newspapers, three TV channels (including Khabar, a leading national channel), several radio stations, and the Kazakhstan Today news agency. Aliyev's career in the law-enforcement system began in 1996, when he was appointed first deputy head of the fiscal police. In 1999 he was transferred to the Committee of National Security (KNB) as head of the Almaty department. A year later he was promoted to first deputy head of the KNB, and in 2001 he became chief of the Presidential Security Service. In other words, unlike the other leading clans, this group was not so much a financial or industrial conglomerate as a center of political influence, whose power was based on connections in the national security agencies and in the media.

Aliyev's downfall began in 2002, when he lost all his jobs and titles, except for his position as chairman of the national Football Union. He was sent into political exile as an Ambassador to Austria. In 2005 he returned to Astana to become first Deputy Foreign Minister, but in February 2007 he was once again appointed Ambassador to Austria. In May 2007 he was sacked and accused of serious criminal offences. He refused to return to Kazakhstan, and announced that he was now in opposition to Nazarbayev. Astana issued an international arrest warrant for him. Then came his divorce from Dariga Nazarbayeva, and in January 2008 he was sentenced in absentia to 20 years in jail. His former spouse lost her political influence and her media empire, but retained her seat on the Nurbank board and on the Political Council of the President's Nur-Otan party. She is also a senior official of the First Kazakh President's Foundation. In 2009 Aliyev published a book entitled ''God Father-in-Law,'' revealing certain sordid details of the Kazakh President's private life and financial affairs, and making any reconciliation impossible.

The official version—i.e. criminal offences by Aliyev—does not explain how his conflict with Nazarbayev came to be, even if he is actually guilty as charged. In Kazakhstan, criminal offences committed by senior officials do not automatically lead to criminal prosecution. Aliev's own claims that he fell out of the President's favor because he had always wanted the country to become more democratic do not hold water either. The more likely explanation of the sharp deterioration in the relations between Aliyev and Nazarbayev is that Aliyev was not careful enough to keep his presidential ambitions to himself for the time being, and that he overestimated the influence of his supporters in the law-enforcement agencies. As a result, Nazarbayev came to see him as a real or potential adversary with a strong backing in the law-enforcement services. In addition, the leaders of the other Kazakh clans united against him to prevent him from disturbing the existing balance of power and interests in the country. It cannot be ruled out that the very same reasons could lead to the downfall of the Kulibayev group, which is now the most influential clan in Kazakhstan.

The downfall of the Aliyev-Nazarbayev clan in the first half of the 2000s was a very important—perhaps the most important—episode in Kazakhstan's politics. It has led to a serious restructuring of the system of checks and balances which Nazarbayev relies on to stay on top of the country's elite. The downfall of the group is a good illustration of the rules of the game in Kazakh ruling circles.

Meanwhile, some Kazakh analysts are certain that Aliyev still maintains contacts with his former subordinates in the security services, and that he could return to the country to play a role in the power struggle if Nazarbayev departs from the political arena. It is also said that Aliyev and his former wife are still on good terms, and that they could form a united front if the political situation in the country changes.

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## EARLY ELECTIONS IN 2011

The early presidential election held in 2011, just one year ahead of the regular one that was scheduled for 2012, became an important event in Kazakhstan's politics, signaling a looming crisis. The ostensible reasoning for that election was as follows.

On December 23, 2010 several prominent public figures unexpectedly proposed a national referendum to prolong Nazarbayev's term of office until 2020. The idea was immediately backed by the Central Election Committee. Only four days later it registered an initiative group to collect signatures among members of the public in favor of such a referendum. By January 2011 the group had collected over five million signatures, which makes up 55 percent of the voting population. The Kazakh parliament unanimously approved the required changes to the constitution and submitted them for the Constitutional Council's vetting. It would be completely unimaginable for such a far-reaching political combination not to have been initiated by the President himself.

But the Constitutional Council ruled that the idea of replacing the presidential elections with a referendum to prolong the President's term was unconstitutional. Nazarbayev promptly agreed with the ruling and proposed an early presidential election for April 2011. The idea was enthusiastically backed by parliament. The election was held on April 3, 2011. Nazarbayev was re-elected for a fourth term of office, which expires in 2016, with more than 95 percent of the vote.

It appears that the scale of the vote-rigging during the poll was quite substantial. The Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights, which monitored the election with the backing of Freedom House and the Open Society Institute, said the turnout was 21 percentage points lower than the official figures announced by the Central Election Commission.[30] Nevertheless, it is clear that the majority of the Kazakh voters gave their support to Nazarbayev.

Analysts point out, however, that universal support for authoritarian regimes does not mean that these regimes are strong. Former Tunisian President Ben Ali won just under 90 percent of the vote in a 2009 election, and former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak won 88 percent in 2005.[31]

The early election has raised two important questions. First, why did Nazarbayev abandon the idea of a referendum so easily, even though it was clearly him who had initiated it in the first place? And second, why did he need the early election?

His decision to abandon the referendum to extend his term of office until 2020 and to hold an early election instead has an easy explanation. He clearly did not want to ruin what remains of his reputation in the West. It is also clear that he needed the early election to demonstrate to everyone—especially to the Kazakh elite—his own legitimacy, political authority, and popularity among the people.

But the true question is, what was the purpose for demonstrating his political might? As Russian expert Adzhar Kurtov puts it, ''early elections are normally held at times of crisis, when the President, parliament or cabinet need to renew their mandate of trust. But that is not the situation in Kazakhstan at this time … It is difficult to find a legitimate explanation for this election.''[32] In essence, however, the answer is contained in the question itself. The early election means the country really is in a crisis—or its leadership fears that such a crisis is imminent.

Some of the official explanations as to why the early election was necessary are patently absurd. For example, Sultan Akimbekov, head of the Institute of World Economics under the First Kazakh President's Foundation, said in early 2011 that ''tactically, we want to get out own elections out of the way by the time elections are held in 2012 in Russia, the United States and China. Given that Kazakhstan is situated at the very center of Eurasia, which is the arena of a serious geopolitical struggle between these countries (the nature of this struggle is clear and obvious), it is better for us to have our own issues sorted well in advance.''[33]

That point of view, which has been expressed by others in Kazakhstan as well, fails to take into account that during and shortly after their own election campaigns Moscow and Washington will be preoccupied with their own domestic problems to the exclusion of all else; they will pay any attention whatsoever to Central Asia only if something completely extraordinary happens there. Akimbekov also said that the decision to hold an early election was made against the backdrop of events happening in the Middle East and North Africa. He added that the decision had ''once again demonstrated Nursultan Nazarbayev's confidence and the confidence felt by our whole country.''[34]

It is tempting to link the early election in Kazakhstan with events in the Arab countries. But the referendum proposal was made on December 23, 2010, i.e. a day before first trouble broke out in Tunisia. And the proposal itself had obviously taken at least several days—more likely several weeks—to draft. It is quite possible, however, that when they were cooking the referendum and early election plans, Nazarbayev and his entourage took into account the events in neighboring Kyrgyzstan, where President Bakiyev was deposed after the key power groups united against him.

There have been several interesting statements made by senior Kazakh officials. In one of his speeches, Nazarbayev's senior domestic policy advisor Yertysbayev mentioned four reasons which he believes gave rise to the idea of the referendum and then early election[35]:

❑ A new wave of a protracted financial crisis is expected by the end of 2011.

❑ The Kazakh elite and Nazarbayev's entourage lobbied the idea of prolonging the President's term of office until 2020 in order to avoid a messy transition of power in the coming decade.

❑ The entire government system hinges on a single man at the top, and the institutions are not functioning properly.

❑ There is still only one political party represented in the country's legislature.

The argument that the Kazakh elite wants Nazarbayev to stay at the helm of the country for as long as possible is not without merit. Part of the Kazakh establishment worries that the arrival of a new President would lead to serious and unpleasant shifts in the existing balance of power between the clans, resulting in a political crisis which could well end up in chaos. Some fear that the country itself might fall apart. But that does not explain the need to hold an election two years ahead of schedule—unless something was expected to happen during these two years that could seriously undermine the President.

Interesting statements were made about the upcoming modernization of the political system, with some powers being transferred from the leader to state institutions, especially parliament. It is true that effective institutions reduce the risk of destabilization in the event of a crisis in the upper echelons of power. But it appears that when Nazarbayev and his entourage speak about modernizing the country's political system, they try to supplant the question of succession (which increasingly troubles the Kazakh elite) with the question of reforming parliament. On the whole, the most likely explanation for the early election is that Nazarbayev needed to bolster his own positions amid growing tension and irritation among the political elite caused by uncertainty over the President and Presidency. As Russian analyst Andrey Grozin put it:

> There is growing discord among the Kazakh elite. That discord became much stronger last year. Its manifestations include squabbles between the uniformed agencies, similar to the ones we saw in Russia in the early 1990s under Yeltsin. Kazakhstan's security service, the KNB, and the Interior Ministry are at each other's throats. Inland revenue, financial monitoring services, and the customs service are also demonstrating rapidly growing ambitions. Many senior officials in uniformed agencies, including a few generals, have been sacked on corruption charges, unnerving the Kazakh political elite. In such a situation it was necessary to freeze the existing situation for as long as possible so as to win some time for the successor to emerge.[36]

The most important reshuffle conducted by Nazarbayev in the run-up to early elections also appears to be a sign of the growing power struggle. The chairman of the Kazakh Senate, Kasym-Zhomart Tokayev, was exiled to a position in the UN system in Geneva. Replacing him is the former prosecutor-general, Kayrat Mami, who is much lower than Tokayev in terms of his real weight in political circles.[37] And although the Senate and parliament as a whole play a minor role in Kazakhstan these days, under the Constitution the Speaker of the Senate becomes Acting President if the incumbent dies or is unable to discharge his duties.

## INSTABILITY FACTORS

The mechanism of personal authority built by Nazarbayev has underpinned the stability of his regime for 20 years. It continues to enable the President to preside as the supreme arbiter over the conflicts and tussles between the various bureaucratic and business groupings, clans, and cliques. In what has become a trademark of Kazakh politics, these groupings have always competed for the President's favor rather than the favor of the electorate or for power as such.

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The President's favor, in its turn, assures access to revenues from exports of energy and minerals, and control of other profitable industries, such as transport, telecommunications, and banking. ''It is largely for this reason that electoral politics in Kazakhstan is either totally absent or remains stuck at the very early stages. As a result, shadow politics is more important than public politics. Political parties are created not to promote an idea or to express the interests of various social groups, but to serve one man or one grouping.''[38]

The various factors of instability that have recently started to emerge cannot be controlled by the existing mechanisms. The concentration of power in the hands of Nazarbayev is much too high. As his ability to make rational decisions declines (in an echo of the late Brezhnev era), the power vacuum in the country will continue to build. That vacuum will inevitably lead to bitter infighting between the financial and industrial conglomerates, bureaucratic cliques, and various clans, all jostling for political power and control of the key law-enforcement agencies and key provinces. Observers are already detecting an increase in separatist sentiment in the western provinces, which hold the bulk of the country's oil wealth.

Theoretically, there are two ways of forestalling such a turn of events. The first is for the President to choose a successor, who would gradually take over the key instruments of power and secure the support of the most influential figures of the regime. Such an option was chosen by Azerbaijan; it is also being implemented in North Korea. Some experts see Nazarbayev's son-in-law Timur Kulibayev, who heads the country's most influential business group, as the most likely successor. But there is little evidence that Kulibayev is being groomed to succeed his father-in-law. There is a good explanation for that. The appointment of an heir-apparent, in whatever shape or form, would inevitably undermine the President's own authority and turn him into a lame duck. That is something Nazarbayev is unable to accept.

There is another way of avoiding a bitter struggle for power and chaos in the event of a sharp deterioration in the President's health or mental faculties. The leading figures of the regime, including the heads of the army and the secret services, could agree between themselves a candidate for the role of successor. In the event of a crisis they would submit that candidate for the approval of the upper echelons of power, with the subsequent launch of all the formal constitutional procedures. Something along these lines probably happened in Turkmenistan shortly before the death of President Niyazov. The option is of course risky; if Nazarbayev were to learn of such collusion behind his back (and it is more than likely that he would), all its participants would immediately face the President's wrath.

The second source of tension in Kazakhstan is that the country's elite is closed to outsiders. For anyone hailing from the common social classes the way to the upper strata of government, business, and politics is barred. As a result, Kazakhstan is witnessing the emergence of a counter-elite consisting mainly of young (or youngish) and ambitious university-educated representatives of the lower and middle classes. Recent events in Egypt, Tunisia, and other Arab states have once again demonstrated that such social groups are the main driving force of anti-government campaigns. If an open struggle for power breaks out between the various Kazakh clans and cliques, the counter-elite groups could throw their weight behind the grouping that offers them the most favorable terms.

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In the end, the future of Kazakhstan will depend on the ability of the leading business and bureaucracy groups to reach a common stance on the next leader of the country. The most common scenario in such situations is for behind-the-curtain consultations and compromises to yield a weak candidate who does not have a strong support base of his own among the law-enforcement agencies and business groups. But the experience of many authoritarian regimes has demonstrated that the leaders first seen as weak transitional figures often go on to take control of all the key instruments of power, and reign as dictators for many years. And if they fail, their country gradually slides towards instability and chaos.

## NOTES

[1] According to 2010 statistics, Kazakhstan's proved oil reserves make up 2.9 percent of the world total. Oil production in the country reached 81.6 million t in 2010, which is 2.1 percent of the world total. Domestic oil consumption that year was 12.5 million t. See: BP Statistical Review of World Energy, June 2011, pp. 6, 10, 11.

[2] Zhanna Ul'yanova, ''Elections in Kazhakhstan: Who Will Come after Nazarbaijev?'' *Trud*, April 3, 2011, <http://www.trud.ru/article/03-04-2011/261110_stabilnost_vrag_demokratii.html>, last accessed October 13, 2011.

[3] ''Kazakhstan Unemployment Rate,'' *Index mundi,* <http://www.indexmundi.com/kazakhstan/unemployment_rate.html>, last accessed October 13, 2011.

[4] There are nine registered political parties in Kazakhstan. Nur Ortan is the main pro-presidential party and the only one represented in parliament; it won almost 87 percent of the vote in the 2007 election to the Majlis (lower chamber of parliament). The Azat National Social Democratic Party claims to be in opposition to the government; it won 4.5 percent of the vote in the 2007 election. The Ak-Zhol Democratic Party, which describes itself as a ''constructive opposition,'' won 3.09 percent. The Adilet Democratic Party did not run in the 2007 poll. The Ayul Kazakh Social Democratic Party won 1.5 percent of the vote in the 2007 election. The Communist Party of Kazakhstan did not run in the 2007 election. The Communist People's Party of Kazakhstan won 1.3 percent. The Party of Patriots of Kazakhstan won 0.8 percent of the vote. Finally, the Rukhaniyat Green Party won 0.4 percent.

[5] Akezhan Kazhegeldin, who served as Prime Minister in the late 1990s, has fled the country and is facing corruption charges. In 2002 his entire file was removed from the Interpol database. In March 2004 the then Almaty governor, Zamanbek Nurkadilov, announced his intention to run for President in the next election. In November 2005 he was found dead in his own house, with two bullets in his chest and one in his head. The official cause of his death is suicide. Altynbek Sarsenbayev, who held important government offices up until 2004, accused the government of vote-rigging that same year and set up the Real Ak-Zhol opposition party. He was killed in 2006 by officers of an elite KNB squad. The President's former son-in-law, Rakhat Aliyev, fled the country in 2007 after charges of crimes against the state were brought against him. Mukhtar Ablyazov and Galimbek Zhakiyanov, both prominent businessmen and statesmen, emigrated and are now leading European-based Kazakh opposition groups.

[6] The Koranite movement is thought to have been born in 2008 in Atyrau Region. It is led by Aslbek Musin, son of the then regional governor, Aslan Musin, who is now head of the Presidential Administration. According to the Kazakh media, the movement enjoys financial and administrative support from big corporations especially oil companies, and from government agencies. It has 70,000–100,000 members, mostly the young generation of the Kazakh elite. Its organizational and ideological centers are the Izgi Amal union, the Congress of Muslim Youth, and the Nash Mir newspaper. The Koranites reject the Sunnah (a collection of remarks, habits, and practices of the Prophet Mohammed), which is thought to be the second source of Sharia law after the Koran itself, meaning that they have much more liberal attitudes than the followers of classic Islam. The Koranites believe that their main goal is to prevent the spread of radical Islam, which is believed to be the main threat to the authoritarian regimes in Muslim countries, including the Central Asian states. The leaders of the movement hope to claim leading roles in the country for themselves in the next stages of the political cycle. See: Talgat Adilov, ''Koranites in Kazakhstan: Future Elite or the ''Ak-Orda''s response to radical Islam?,'' MGU Information and Analytical Center, July 23, 2009, <http://www.ia-centr.ru/expert/5313>, last accessed October 13, 2011.

[7] Andrei Grozin, ''Kazakhstan is Threatened by Demise if Nazarbaijev leaves his Post'', *Pravda.ru*, January 14, 2011, <http://www.pravda.ru/world/formerussr/other/14-01-2011/1063515-elbasi-0/>, last accessed October 13, 2011.

[8] Mukhamedzhan Adilov, ''Nazarbayev's Three Big Problems'', *Eurasia*, September 16, 2010, <http://eurasia.org.ru/index.php?/sobytiya-i-mneniya/2010-09-14-080222.html>, last accessed July 1, 2011.

[9] Aslan Musin was born in 1954; Musin graduated from the Almaty Economic Institute. In 1979–1991 served in the central HQ of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan. In 1995–2006 served as the governor of Aktyubinsk Region and then Atyrau Region. Occupied senior posts in central government in 2006–2008. Appointed head of the Presidential Administration in October 2008.

[10] Kasym Masimov, ethnic Uighur, born 1955. Graduated from the People's Friendship University in Moscow (but according to Rakhat Aliev, does not actually have a higher education). Until 2003 worked in the banking sector and foreign trade organizations. Served as Presidential Aide in 2003–2006 and as Deputy Prime Minister in 2006–2007. Appointed Prime Minister in 2007.

[11] Umirzak Shukeyev, born 1964, graduated from the Moscow Institute of Economics and Statistics. In 1992–1993 served as a consultant at the Higher Economic Council under the Kazakh President and Member of the Presidential Staff. In 1993–1995 served as deputy governor of the South Kazakhstan Region. Economics Minister and Deputy Prime Minister in 1995–1997. Chairman of the Board of the Turan-Alem bank

in 1997–1998. Governor of Astana, then Kostanay Region and South Kazakhstan Region in 1998–2009. Appointed first Deputy Prime Minister in 2009.

[12] Marat Tazhin, born in 1960, graduated from the Almaty Economic Institute. Taught students until 1992. Served in the Presidential Administration in 1992–2001; his last position there was Presidential National Security Aide and Secretary of the Security Council. Appointed Chairman of the KNB in 2001. Served as Presidential Aide and Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration, Secretary of the Security Council in 2002–2007. Foreign Minister in 2007–2009. Presidential Aide and Secretary of the Security Council since September 2009.

[13] Nurtay Abykayev, born in 1947; graduated from the Urals Polytechnic Institute and the Almaty Higher Communist Party School. Served as Nazarbayev's aide since the mid-1980s; appointed as the President's Chief of Staff after the break-up of the Soviet Union. Served as Kazakh Ambassador to the UK in 1995–1996. First Presidential Aide, Chairman of the KNB, Head of the Presidential Administration in 1996–2007. Kazakh ambassador to Russia in 2007–2008. First Deputy Foreign Minister in 2008–2010. Appointed Chairman of the KNB in 2010.

[14] Kayrat Kelimbatov, born in 1969, graduated from Moscow State University. Taught students until 2002, then served in the Presidential Administration and other government agencies. His previous position is Deputy Minister of finance. In 2002–2006 served as economics and budget planning minister. Chairman of the Board of the Kazyn Sustainable Development Fund in 2006–2008. Head of the Presidential Administration in 2008. Chairman of the Board of the Samruk-Kazyn National Prosperity Fund and Chairman of the Corporate Boards of KazMunayGaz Kazakhstan Temir Zholy companies in 2008–2011. Appointed Economic Development and Trade Minister in April 2011.

[15] Imangali Tasmagambetov, born in 1956, graduated from the Urals Teachers' College. Served as first Secretary of the Kazakh Communist Party's youth wing, the Komsomol, in 1989–1991. That made him close to the Head of the Kazakh Communist Party itself. In 1991–2002 served as Chairman of the State Committee for Youth Affairs; Presidential Aide; Deputy Prime Minister; Education and Culture Minister; Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration; Governor of the Atyraus Region; Deputy Prime Minister. Prime Minister in 2002–2003. State Secretary in 2003–2004. Head of the Presidential Administration in 2004. Governor of Almaty in 2004–2008. Appointed Governor of Astana in April 2008.

[16] Akhmedzhan Yesimov, born in 1950, graduated from the Kazakh Institute of Agriculture and the Academy of Social Sciences under the Soviet Communist Party's Central Committee. Served as First Deputy Chairman of the Agricultural Industry Committee of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic. Governor of the Almaty Region; Deputy Prime Minister; State Secretary; First Deputy Prime Minister and Head of the Presidential Administration in 1992–1998. Ambassador to the Benelux countries in 1998–2001. Agriculture Minister and Deputy Prime Minister in 2001–2008. Appointed Governor of Almaty in 2008.

[17] Bulat Utemiratov, born in 1957, graduated from the Almaty Economics Institute. Taught students and worked for trading companies until 1992. Head of the Kazakh Trade Mission in Austria in 1992–1993. Deputy Foreign Trade Minister; First Deputy Industry and Trade Minister; Ambassador to Switzerland in 1993–1999. Presidential Aide in 1999–2003. Secretary of the Security Council in 2003–2006. Presidential Chief of Staff in 2006–2008. Serving as unpaid Presidential Advisor since 2008. Rumor has it that Utemiratov is close to Kanat Saudbayev and Umirzak Shukeyev.

[18] Kanat Saudbayev, born in 1946, graduated from the Leningrad Culture Institute and the Academy of Social Sciences under the Soviet Communist Party's Central Committee. His last office in the Soviet period was chairman of the Kazakh State Committee for Culture. Ambassador to Turkey, the UK, and Sweden in 1991–1999. Head of the Prime Minister's Chancellery in 1999–2000. Ambassador to the United States in 2000–2007. State Secretary in 2007–2009. Foreign Affairs Minister in 2009–2011. Saudbayev has been embroiled in a large international sex scandal. In 2010 he and a group of Russian and Kazakh businessmen were detained by Turkish police during an orgy aboard a yacht. He was forced to lie spread-eagled and face down on the deck of the yacht with Turkish policemen pointing their guns at him. Appointed as State Secretary in April 2011.

[19] Amangeddy Shabdarbayev, born in 1950, graduated from the Kazakh Sports Institute. Joined the Soviet KGB in 1976. Head of security for the Kazakh Communist Party chief, Kunayev, until 1986. It appears that during that time he became close to Nazarbayev, who was chairman of the Kazakh Council of Ministers at the time. After events in December 1986 fired from the KGB on suspicion of helping the students who protested against the sacking of Kunayev—but he maintained his relations with Nazarbayev. Head of Presidential Security since 1992; from time to time he has also served in senior positions at the KNB. Appointed as chairman of the KNB in 2006; relieved of his duties in 2009 and appointed as Presidential Advisor.

[20] Nartay Dutbayev, born in 1956, graduated from the Kazakh Polytechnic Institute and the KGB higher school in Moscow. Served in the KGB department for Almaty Region in 1986–1993. Deputy Head, then Head of the Main Counterintelligence Department of the KNB in 1993–1997. Head of the Pavlodar department of the KNB in 1997–1998. Deputy Chairman of the KNB and Head of its Foreign Intelligence Service in 1998–1999. Chairman of the KNB in 2001–2006. Resigned in February 2006 over the murder of Sarsenbayev. In 2006–2009 served as head of the KNB Academy, Presidential Advisor and Vice-President of AO

Kazatomprom. Has not served in any official capacity since 2009, but continues to carry out the most delicate missions for President Nazarbayv.

[21] Vladimir Ni, born in 1933, died in 2010. Ethnic Korean. Graduated from the Kazakh Mining and Metallurgy Institute. Occupied senior positions in the Presidential Staff in 1990–1999. Member of the Board, Vice-Chairman, then Chairman of the Board of Directors of Kazakhmys in 1999–2010.

[22] Aleksandr Mashkevich, born 1954, graduated from the Kyrgyz State University. Chairman of the Board of the Eurasian Bank, Co-founder and Vice-President of the Kazakhstan Mineral Resources Corporation in 1994–1999. In 2001 elected President of the Euro-Asian Jewish Congress. Alidzhan Ibragimov, born 1953, ethnic Uighur, graduated from the Moscow Veterinary Academy. Chairman of the board of the Eurasian Bank in 1994–1998. President of the Kazkhrom Company since 2002. Chairman of the Board of Kazkhrom since 2004. Co-owner of the Eurasian National Resources Corporation. Patokh (Fattakh) Shodiyev, born 1953, ethnic Uzbek, graduated from the Foreign Relations Institute (MGIMO) of the Soviet Foreign Ministry in 1976. Co-owner of the Eurasian National Resources Corporation. Elected President of the World Foundation for Democracy in 2005.

[23] Mukhamedzhan Adilov, ''Nazarbayev's Three Big Problems,'' *Eurasia*, September 16, 2010, <http://eurasia.org.ru/index.php?/sobytiya–i–mneniya/2010–09–14–080222.html>, last accessed October 13, 2011).

[24] Timur Kulibayev, born 1966, graduated from the Moscow State University. Son of Askar Kulibayev, the former First Secretary of the Guryev regional committee of the Communist Party and then Minister of Construction. Married to Nazarbayev's middle daughter Dinara. Held senior posts in the Altyn Alma concern, ATF Bank, and the State Investment Committee in 1992–2001. Served as Chairman of the board of the KazTransOil and Oil and Gas Transport. First Vice-President of KazMunayGaz in 2002–2005. Deputy Executive Chairman of the Samruk State Assets Management Holding in 2006–2007. Chairman of the Board of Kazatomprom since 2008. Chairman of the Board of KazMunayGaz since 2009. Chairman of the Samruk-Kazakhstan National Prosperity Fund since April 2011. He and his wife own the controlling stake in Khalyk Bank, the fourth largest in Kazakhstan.

[25] Rakhat Aliyev, born in 1962. Graduated from the Almaty State Medical Institute. Son of the prominent Kazakh surgeon, Academy of Sciences member Mukhtar Aliyev. Married Dariga, first daughter of the then Council of Ministers Chairman Nursultan Nazarbayev, in 1985. Has worked in the commercial sector since 1993.

[26] Nurzhan Subkhanberdin, born 1965, son of the writer Salken Subkhanberdin, grand-nephew of Academy of Sciences member Shafik Chokin. Graduated from the Kazakh State University and the Economics faculty of the Moscow State University. Chairman of the board and main shareholder of Kazkommerzbank. Formerly member of the Political Council of the Ak Zhol democratic party.

[27] Aleksandr Mashkevich—in 1994–1999 was the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Evraziysky Bank,Co-founder and Vice-President of the Kazakhstan Mineral Resources Corporation.Patokh Shodiev is a Co-owner of the Eurasian National Resources Corporation.

[28] Alidzhan Ibragimov—since 2002 President, since 2004 Chairman of the Board of Kazkhrom. Co-owner of the Eurasian National Resources Corporation.

[29] Vladimir Kim, born 1960, graduated from a construction college. Ethnic Korean. Until 1991 worked as an instructor at the District Committee of the Communist Party, then Deputy Chairman of the District Executive committee of the Communist Party in Almaty. President and largest shareholder of the Kazakhmys corporation, a gold and precious metals mining company.

[30] Turnover was 21 percent lower than the Central Election Commission data: Human Rights Bureau. *Regnum*, April 5, 2011, <http://www.regnum.ru/news/1391340.html>, last accessed October 13, 2011.

[31] Valdemar Kraus, ''Nazarbayev is better than Lukashenko,'' *ICES*, April 9, 2011, <http://www.elections-ices.org/russian/publications/textid:10261/>, last accessed July 1, 2011.

[32] ''Kazakhstan: Why Nursultan Nazarbaijev needs Early Elections (Experts' Commentaries),'' Fergana international news agency, January 31, 2011, <http://www.fergananews.com/article.php?id=6886>, last accessed October 13, 2011.

[33] ''Experts Believe in Kazakhstan's Fast Modernization after Elections'', *RIA Novosti*, March 10, 2011, <http://www.rian.ru/world/20110310/344652961.html>, last accessed October 13, 2011.

[34] Ibid.

[35] ''What to Expect of the Presidential Election in Kazakhstan?,'' Online conference with Yermukhamet Yertysbayev, *Customs Union*, 2011, March 23, <http://www.customsunion.ru/info/2896.html>, last accessed July 1, 2011.

[36] Andrei Grozin, op. cit.

[37] Kasym-Zhomart Tokayev, born 1953, graduated from the Foreign Relations Institute (MGIMO) under the Soviet Foreign Ministry, from the Beijing Institute of Linguistics and the Russian Foreign Ministry's Diplomatic Academy. Appointed Deputy Foreign Minister in 1992, Foreign Minister in 1994, and Deputy Prime Minister–Foreign Minister in 1999. Prime Minister in 1999–2002. Foreign Minister in 2002–2007. Speaker of the Kazakh Senate in 2007–2011.

[38] ''Influence Groups in the Political System of the Republic of Kazakhstan,'' Eurasian Center of Political Studies and Epicenter social technologies agency. November 29, 2005, <http://www.zonakz.net/articles/10280>, last accessed July 1, 2011.

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Yury Krupnov and Lev Levinson

## HAVE WE LOST THE *WAR ON DRUGS*?

**FROM:** LEV LEVINSON

**TO:** YURY KRUPNOV

**SUBJECT:** *DRUG POLICY*

Dear Mr Krupnov,

I am often asked whether the latest proposals to review the existing proscriptive policies on drugs are justified. Why have our efforts to combat drugs been unsuccessful, and is it reason enough for a radical rethink of the drugs policy?

While trying to understand why there have not been any radical changes for the better in the fight against the drugs trade over the past half a century, let us also remember that the ongoing anti-drugs discourse goes back more than a hundred years. Its history begins from the first attempt to proscribe opium on a global scale, made by the Shanghai Conference of 1909. So not only the 50 years since the adoption of the UN anti-drugs convention, but a whole century has not been enough to put an end to the drugs trade. It would be very strange indeed to expect that the current anti-narcotics strategy set out in the 1961 Convention can solve the problems which it has itself created and aggravated.

What are the drugs we are talking about? The list of substances classed as narcotics some 50 years ago has been growing every year, and there is no end in sight. Neither international treaties nor Russian laws have any references to what makes a substance narcotic. The definitions given in the 1961 and 1988 conventions and Russia's own laws are identical: narcotics are substances included in the Controlled Lists. It appears that a transformation of some naturally occurring or synthetic substance into a narcotic is a magic act, or rather a political act. ''The broader the definition, the wider the field for speculation,'' said Nils Christie in his book *A Convenient Enemy: Antidrugs Policy in Scandinavia*.[1]

I would like to make one thing clear: I am not saying that the problems of narcotics or drug addiction do not exist. I am talking about the ways of solving these problems we have chosen, i.e. the policies of proscription and the war on drugs. Psychoactive substances have been used throughout human history. The consequences of that use are often dire. Some of these substances are addictive, creating a special kind of relations between the supplier and the consumer (i.e. dependence of the latter on the former). Intervention by the state, with its sanctions and proscriptions, is being portrayed as taking care of the health and morality of the nation. But, in truth, these policies are usually about control, in its various manifestations.

The war on drugs has given rise to powerful international and national organizations and institutions. We can leave aside for the moment corruption and the often cozy relationship between the anti-drugs agencies and the drug cartels. But we still have to admit that the anti-drugs institutions (even the paragons of probity among them) are all interested in having a reason

to exist, just as the drugs industry is interested in having its market grow. Proscriptions and prohibitions only stimulate the development of that industry. As the cost of transactions and the price of the risks continue to grow, so do the profits. And so does the difference between the income of the coca bush or poppy plant farmer and the profits of the people who control the drugs trade.

I do not believe that the war on drugs has been lost. I mean, it has of course been lost in the sense of public interests, and the June 2011 report by the Global Commission on Drug Policy is entirely right to recognize this. But the warring factions are not actually interested in winning that one-hundred-year war. They are not interested in fully eliminating drugs or fully legalizing them. They are interested in having this war continue indefinitely.

Best Regards,

Lev Levinson


**FROM:** YURY KRUPNOV

**TO:** LEV LEVINSON

**SUBJECT:** *RE: DRUG POLICY*


Dear Mr Levinson,

I do not believe that we should be talking about the ''war on drugs'' or ''resolving the drugs problem.'' There can be no full and final resolution of the problem of drug addiction or the drugs trade. But, were it not for the existing anti-drugs policies, the scale and the magnitude of the drugs problem would have been far greater, as suggested by numerous lessons from history.

I do not accept the argument that we should not even be trying to combat drugs because we have not managed to resolve this problem over the 50 or 100 years since drugs were proscribed by the world community. The previous policies of doing nothing at all about the drugs trade had failed to produce any positive results. On the contrary, they sometimes led to catastrophes on a grand national scale, such as China's opium catastrophe in the nineteenth century or America's catastrophe in the early 20th century.

For the sake of huge profits, the British organized opium production on a phenomenal scale in India in the late eighteenth century. They produced 10 times more than the whole of Afghanistan produces today. No one tried to impose any restrictions on that trade. Instead there was a system of literally destroying China from the inside using opium, by turning millions of Chinese people into drug addicts.

The British were bringing Indian opium into China on a huge scale. Those imports were paid for through exports from China of tea and silver. Attempts by the Chinese leadership and the Chinese people to resist eventually led to the well-known Opium Wars of the mid-nineteenth century. The logic of a legalized drugs trade is simple, just like the logic of any trade: it wants more and more people to become consumers of its deadly product, because each new consumer means more profit.

By the time when a partial (!) ban on Indian exports of opium to China was introduced in 1907, that trade was generating three million pounds sterling in revenue every year. The situation in China significantly improved only after the introduction of the ban.

The United States is another example of the catastrophic consequences of practically legalizing the drugs trade.

The Shanghai Opium Commission, which was set up in February 1909, and which signaled the start of the international community's efforts to combat the drugs trade, was created at the initiative of U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt and Bishop Charles Henry Brent. Back at

the time the epidemic of opium addiction in the United States had reached an unimaginable scale, and something had to be done.

By that time, a number of countries had already introduced national anti-drugs legislation. France did so in 1845, the United States in 1895 and 1906, and China in 1906. But the drugs trade is transnational, so an international ban was required.

Another example, well after the introduction of the modern international system to combat drug trafficking, is Sweden in the 1960s. The country was facing a veritable epidemic of drug addiction, with huge numbers of new victims falling foul of it every day. That national emergency prompted Sweden to introduce its current restrictive policies. Incidentally, the country's policy on drugs can serve as a model; it is based on not just banning the trade in drugs, but actually criminalizing the use of drugs. Anyone who appears in a public place in a state of narcotic intoxication faces criminal prosecution. It is Sweden's national model of combating drugs that any new Russian model should use as a template.

As for the Netherlands, and now also Prague, where the so-called ''light'' drugs have been legalized, these examples are not really relevant. These countries have become typical offshore drug venues. They are merely trying to solve their financial problems through drug tourism; they are not actually solving the problem of drug addiction.

The use of drugs is not just a private decision by an individual. It is a social contagion; even the most resilient young people, let alone teenagers, often fall foul of the marketing super-effort by the death dealers.

History has demonstrated beyond any doubt that liberal approaches to drugs, let alone outright legalization of drugs, have always led to an explosive growth in drug addiction. The need for rigid restrictive policies here is obvious; it follows from the very nature of drug addiction.

I await your reply.

Best Regards,

Yury

**FROM:** LEV LEVINSON

**TO:** YURY KRUPNOV

**SUBJECT:** *TO BAN OR NOT TO BAN?*

Dear Mr Krupnov,

In my opinion, policies based on constantly increasing restrictions, introducing ever harsher penalties, and expanding the lists of banned substances would be counterproductive. One cannot increase the pressure indefinitely, or the lid will blow at some point.

In the past 10 years Russia has introduced harsher penalties for some kinds of crime—but in some cases there have been changes in the opposite direction. Indeed, some offenses have even been decriminalized. But this does not mean that we are now condoning such things as misleading the consumer, which is no longer a criminal offense. This autumn parliament will consider decriminalizing libel and insult—but that does not mean we are condoning such things, either. In the early 2000s parliament reduced jail terms for some kinds of theft—not because theft is good, but because the previous penalties for theft were disproportionate. In 2001, 2003, and 2011 the President initiated several rounds of changes to the penal code to make it more humane.

There are many critics of the Soviet decisions to create cascades of water reservoirs on the Volga, the Angara, and other rivers, which led to thousands of acres of land and numerous villages being flooded. But even the harshest critics are not saying we should dump the water from those reservoirs overnight. Correcting past mistakes by such measures would do more harm than good. So it is with our policy on narcotics.

Lev Levinson

**FROM:** YURY KRUPNOV

**TO:** LEV LEVINSON

**SUBJECT:** *RE: TO BAN OR NOT TO BAN?*


Dear Mr Levinson,

I have to disagree. The actual distinction between ''light'' and ''hard'' drugs is completely unjustified and even harmful.

First, most drug addicts have ''graduated'' to using hard drugs after first trying the so-called light drugs. That is why marihuana and other light drugs are called gateways to hell.

Second, even marihuana has very serious mental effects. The only difference is that the degradation of personality it causes is not physiological (as with desomorphine or heroine) but psychological.

Third, legalizing light drugs is the favorite tactic of those who advocate legalizing all drugs. It is a slippery slope that will lead to legalizing ever harder drugs.

What is more, legalizing light drugs would be in the best interests of the semi-underground corporations, which have learned over the past 10 years to make super-profits on designer drugs. I am talking about the new synthetic substances which bring the drug traders huge profits because they can be sold legitimately for the first six months to one year after they first appear, while governments are scrambling to catch up and add these substances to the banned lists. Calling for the legalization of light drugs is akin to doing voluntary promotion work for those corporations.

Yury


**FROM:** LEV LEVINSON

**TO:** YURY KRUPNOV

**SUBJECT:** *RE: RE: TO BAN OR NOT TO BAN?*


Mr Krupnov,

There is simply no logic whatsoever for keeping cannabis on the same list as the opium poppy. The harms of cannabis are greatly exaggerated—although the same can be said of its medicinal virtues advertised by some proponents of legalization. I believe that the severity of the various bans and penalties should depend on the actual harm of the controlled substance, and I am not just talking about marihuana. I also believe that easing the proscriptions on some substances (such as cannabis derivatives, some hallucinogenic substances, anabolic steroids, and amphetamines) should go hand in hand with stricter controls for other substances (i.e. tobacco, medications which contain codeine, some inhaled substances, etc.).

The theory of ''gateway drugs'' is little more than speculation. Some heroin addicts have smoked and continue to smoke marihuana, just as almost all of them have smoked and continue to smoke tobacco. The vast majority of the people who tried marihuana when they were young have not died of heroin. They have become grown-ups, they have married, had children, they have a job, and they drink vodka.

It is true that a ban on some popular synthetic cannabinoids is sometimes followed by the appearance of their legal modified analogues. The manufacturers of such synthetic substances have no interest whatsoever in having marihuana legalized. On the contrary, that would undermine their own business.

Sincerely,

Lev

**FROM:** YURY KRUPNOV

**TO:** LEV LEVINSON

**SUBJECT:** *AUTHORITIES*

Dear Lev,

Let us not underestimate the findings and the professional experience of the international bodies that are involved in resolving the drugs problem. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) are UN working bodies that represent the collective will of all UN members. Meanwhile, the vaunted Global Commission on Drug Policy (GCDP) is a club of senior retirees who presided over the failure of the war on drugs when they were in office, and who are now voicing their criticisms of the anti-drugs policies.

True, the work being done by UNODC and CND is not always visible, they are not promoting themselves as heavily as the Global Commission did with its report. The approaches and administrative methods used by these UN organizations are not as efficient as we would like them to be—but they are actually working, albeit slowly and with difficulty. And we simply don't have any other mechanisms we could rely on.

The Global Commission is essentially helping the cause of the drug cartels, albeit in a veiled form. The commission's much-publicized report of June 2, 2011 was clearly designed as a distraction to prevent the international community from building a consolidated system of countering the drugs trade and fighting the drug cartels on a global scale.

The drugs trade generates about 700–800 billion dollars in revenue every year. It seems that some of that money has been spent on such PR stunts.

There is plenty of evidence for that.

The most notable member of the GCDP is former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan (1996–2006). During his 10 years in office he presided over a three-fold increase in drugs production in Afghanistan. One clear proof of Annan's inability to contribute anything useful to fighting the drug lords is that the Political Declaration of the UN General Assembly adopted in 1998, two years after his appointment, has not only failed to deliver, but has actually achieved the opposite effects.

The Political Declaration contained a strategic commitment by countries to put an end to illicit cultivation of plants used as sources of narcotic substances. Paragraph 19 of the Declaration reads:

> [We] welcome the United Nations International Drug Control Programme's global approach to the elimination of illicit crops and commit ourselves to working closely with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme to develop strategies with a view to eliminating or significantly reducing the illicit cultivation of the coca bush, the cannabis plant and the opium poppy by the year 2008.

But the results achieved are exactly the opposite—production of the opium poppy has increased by a factor of 40.

Let us move on to another co-author of the report, Mr Javier Solana. Solana is the father of independent Kosovo. In 1996–1999 he was the Secretary General of NATO and led the war against Yugoslavia. As a European Union commissioner in February 2003 he organized the signing of the divorce process, the dissolution of Yugoslavia. Thanks to Javier Solana's work we now have Kosovo as a global heroin transit enclave at the center of the European Union.

And now Solana, along with Annan, is trying to convince us that the war on drugs has failed, and that drugs need to be legalized!

The next co-author is former Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo (1994–2000). It is under that very President's stewardship that Mexico decided there was no need to fight the drug lords. As a result of its passive stance the country became a breeding ground for hundreds of drug cartels, which have now come to dominate South America's drugs trade.

VIEWPOINTS

So what now? Five years ago the current Mexican President, Felipe Calderon, was forced to join forces with the United States and start a war against the drug cartels, which had come close to taking over power in the country and making the Mexican state irrelevant. Now there are heavy clashes, a war, almost—but just think how many problems could have been avoided were it not for Mr Zedillo's policies in the late 1990s, when the problem with drugs was ignored by the state. Now that very same Mr Zedillo is co-authoring the GDCP report.

I believe the facts speak for themselves.

Yury

**FROM:** LEV LEVINSON

**TO:** YURY KRUPNOV

**SUBJECT:** *RE: AUTHORITIES*

Yury,

The world is changing. Things which in the 1960s–1970s only intellectuals dared to write about, and what in the 1980s and 1990s was the domain of marginal parties (such as the Transnational Radical Party), is now being seriously discussed in the upper echelons of the establishment.

The GCDP report does not call for sweeping legalization. Its main idea is that the problem cannot be resolved using only force and proscriptions, and that human rights need to be observed in the process. That has already been discussed.

Opponents of the GCDP report are misrepresenting the conclusions of the report so as to make it look more radical than it is. All of them have focused their attention on just three of its authors out of 19, Kofi Annan and the former Latin American Presidents. That is a situation where not telling all the truth is tantamount to lying.

It does not matter how many ambitious statements were made under Kofi Annan about eradicating the cultivation of the coca bush or the poppy plant. It does not matter what targets were proclaimed. Those targets would not have been met in any case, no matter who the Secretary General of the UN was. There is little progress being made in eradicating drugs under Ban Ki-moon, the current UN Secretary General. Should we now accuse him of aiding and abetting the drug lords as well?

The reputation and authority of the GCDP is so impressive that the opponents of its report have to pretend that the commission does not actually include some former and current senior politicians, outstanding writers, economists, and rights advocates. The commission includes the former Prime Minister of Greece, Georgios Papandreou; former Chairman of the Economic Recovery Advisory Board under President Obama, Paul Volcker; and one of the authors of Germany's current anti-drugs strategy, Marion Caspers-Merck. It also includes prominent Latin American writers Carlos Fuentes and Nobel Prize winner Mario Vargas Llosa. Gabriel García Márquez would surely have joined them, were it not for his old age: he has always been an opponent of prohibitionism. ''It is impossible to imagine how violence in Colombia can be eradicated without eradicating organized drug crime. But eradicating organized drug crime is impossible without legalizing the selling and buying of narcotics, the price of which rises in line with the severity of the proscriptions,'' he said at a congress of intelligentsia and scientists in Antioquia in 2003.

Another co-author of the report is the former Colombian President Cesar Gaviria, a committed enemy of the cocaine cartels; he presided over the destruction of the criminal empire run by Pablo Escobar. Let us also mention George Shultz, the former Secretary of State in the Reagan administration and a prominent Republican; and several prominent rights activists, including the UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial Executions, Asma Jahangir, and the former UN High Commissioners Louise Arbour (for human rights) and Thorvald Stoltenberg (for refugees).

You cannot seriously claim that all these people have been bought by organized drug crime.

Lev Levinson

**FROM:** YURY KRUPNOV

**TO:** LEV LEVINSON

**SUBJECT:** *APPROACHES*

Dear Lev,

There is fighting against drugs and organized drug crime, and there is refusing to fight. That refusal is exemplified by the well-financed and well-organized movement for the legalization of drugs. Instead of fighting drugs, this only aids and abets illegal circulation of drugs and turns society into drug addicts, essentially killing children and young people. In Russia we are talking about at least 30,000 people according to official statistics, but the actual figure is probably double or triple that number.

Organized drug crime exists not because countries or the international community ''intervene, with their proscriptions and sanctions, in the relations between the supplier and the consumer of drugs,'' as advocates of legalization are wont to claim. Organized drug crime exists because it pursues maximum gain at the cost of destroying people's lives and afflicting society and humanity with drug addiction.

Those who have had a chance to study the issue and who realize the true power of organized drug crime are well aware that even the most powerful countries are weak compared with what transnational drug crime can do.

If organized drug crime were a country, its GDP would be the 30th largest in the world. It works anonymously, and it disregards all law and morality. This is why all the complaints that organized drug crime is fuelled by the war on drugs itself have little to do with reality. On the contrary, a real war on drugs, adequately resourced, has not even begun.

That problem is especially urgent today; in the past 10 years a new phenomenon of planetary-scale global drugs trade has emerged, whereby organized drug crime has become transnational, earning up to 80 percent of its revenues without being based in any particular country.

VIEWPOINTS

*Figure 1.* **Organizational and Financial Structures of Drug Trafficking**
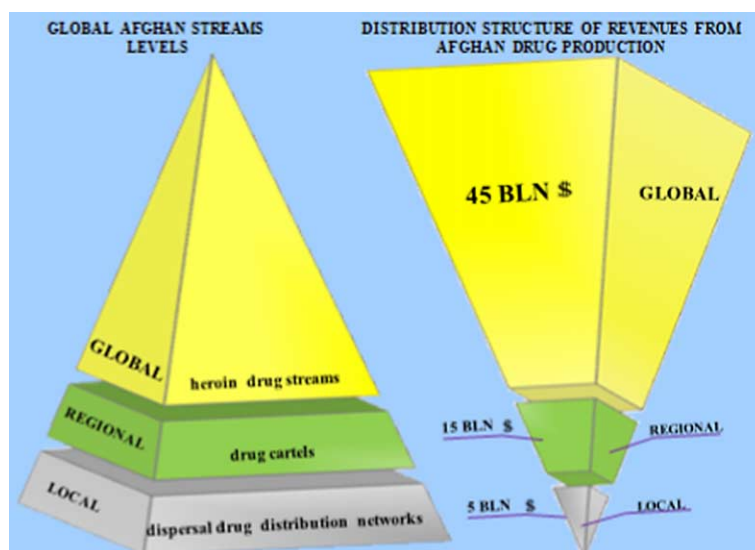


*Source*: The Federal Drug Control Service of the Russian Federation,
<http://www.fskn.gov.ru/dyn_images/expose/big13583.png>, last accessed October 1, 2011.

Meanwhile, most of the efforts to fight drugs are still being undertaken on a local or regional level. That is the reason why the war against organized drug crime is stagnating. The bulk of that crime exists on a higher, global level.

I am attaching a diagram to my letter. It compares the proportions of the international community's effort and of the financial gains of the drugs trade at various levels. It is obvious from the diagram that the main revenues, the financial levers, and subsequently the main springs and political drive belts of the drugs trade are concentrated on the global level.

The financial and organizational power of the global level is demonstrated by the fact that at the height of the global economic crisis in 2008–2009 the global drug cartels injected into the banks, in order to overcome a critical deficit of liquidity, some 352 billion dollars, according to estimates by then UNODC director Antonio Costa.

We have to recognize the emergence of a planetary-scale criminal-political entity which is fuelled by the drugs trade.

Are you saying we should not fight it?

We are threatened by extremely capable armed forces that belong to global organized crime. These forces are fighting against UN member states. Should we really abandon our fight against that Armada?

That would be the same as saying on June 22, 1941 that we should not resist Hitler's armies, and that Hitler had only invaded the Soviet Union because the Soviet Union had not yet achieved total disarmament.

I believe that all the talk of legalization is going on only because its sincere proponents have been seduced by the ideas of abstract market mechanisms, which they believe determine our reality.

In actual fact, our reality is not determined by figments of abstract logic. It is determined by very real powers and entities, including organized drug crime.

Best regards

Yury

**FROM:** LEV LEVINSON

**TO:** YURY KRUPNOV

**SUBJECT:** *RE: APPROACHES*

Dear Yury,

Politics is an art of nuance. Slogans are best reserved for rallies. There is a vast array of options between the two opposite poles you have described. The Global Commission on Drug Policy is searching for the most rational and practical option. I don't see what Hitler has to do with any of this.

The commission's report does not call for sweeping legalization of drugs. Nobody is proposing that cannabis should be handed out freely to schoolchildren. What we are talking about is an adjustment—sometimes a very substantial adjustment—of the currently existing approaches and methods of the anti-drugs strategy. This adjustment is needed not only because the existing strategy is inefficient, but because of the price we are having to pay for it. That price is millions of young lives wasted in prisons because of the war on drugs, or lost to disease and death from overdose because of the lack of humane attitude to those who suffer from drug addiction.

There have been opium wars—but there have never been any cannabis wars, amphetamine wars, psilocybin wars, or sibutramine wars. There is opium drug addiction, which is a very serious form of addiction, very difficult to cure. And there are also some forms of abuse of cannabis, amphetamines, or hallucinogenic substances, all of which are much less dangerous. Right now, we are lumping all these problems together.

To reiterate, the war we are waging now is not on opium. It is a war on a huge list of controlled substances which are not equally dangerous. Not all of them lead to physical or even psychological dependence. Indeed, some of them are less dangerous than the two legal

psychoactive substances, alcohol and tobacco. Alcohol causes a lot more crime than some of the illegal substances, although it is classed as food and not as a banned narcotic substance. More than 20 percent of crimes in Russia are committed in a state of alcoholic intoxication; most of those crimes are directed against the individual or property.

That is exactly the focus of the GCDP report. It highlights the need for different policies on different substances, all of which are currently lumped together. The most widespread narcotic in the world is not heroin but cannabis and its products, marihuana and hashish. In Russia the use of heroin has actually fallen compared with the late 1990s, whereas marihuana is becoming more popular. In some parts of Russia, such as Kamchatka, heroin is a rarity; the most popular drug is marihuana. In Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy young people, mainly students, are being jailed for eight years, even 10 years or more, for selling a few grams of marihuana. That is not a large-scale drugs trade, that is horizontal peer-to-peer resale, not for profit, provoked mostly by the law-enforcement bodies themselves. And Kamchatka is not the only part of Russia where this is happening. When young people are being jailed for growing cannabis for their own use, what does that have to do with fighting organized drug crime? The substances people use to lose weight or to bulk up their muscles can be harmful and must be controlled, but what does that have to do with drug addiction? In the meantime, anti-drugs agencies are conducting sting operations, sending undercover police officers to buy anabolic steroids from gym rats or Chinese fat-burning pills from pharmacists, so as to jail them for ''selling in large quantities.''

If all the efforts currently being expended in Russia alone on fighting all these controlled substances, psychotropic substances, poisons, precursors, and analogues, could be spent instead on fighting heroin and home-made opiates, and on fighting abuse of medicines that contain codeine—if only we did that, we could have several drug agents and police officers chasing after every single heroin dealer.

Hundreds of thousands of people in Russia who have nothing to do with Afghan drug trafficking have been put in jail.

Another thing to consider is that opium addiction is a severe psychological disorder. We need different approaches not just to different substances, but to the actual people involved. And merely proclaiming the slogan of ''treatment instead of punishment'' is not enough. We need real and professional drug rehabilitation doctors, not policemen in white coats. When we talk about Sweden's experience, we should be focusing not on its practice of criminalizing the use of drugs but on its well-developed, accessible, and humane system of helping the drug addicts. The country has a large substitution program (i.e. substituting heroin with a legal medicinal opiate); of all the countries in Europe, that kind of therapy is banned only in Russia.

In the Netherlands, meanwhile, after decades of liberal policies on cannabis, the number of opium addicts has fallen substantially, and the average age of heroin users has grown. That means that heroin addicts are living longer (thanks to state-supported harm-reduction programs) and that fewer young people are becoming heroin addicts.

So the Netherlands is an example of genuine care about the health of its citizens. What happens far more often is that caring about the health of a country's citizens is used as a pretext to cover up political, bureaucratic, or economic interests. So you are right when you say that we have not yet properly started the war on drugs. That war is being waged for the sake of the war itself, and in the interests of those who are waging it.

Lev

**FROM:** YURY KRUPNOV

**TO:** LEV LEVINSON

**SUBJECT:** *RE: RE: APPROACHES*

Dear Lev,

Now that we are talking about Russia's anti-drugs strategy, let me say this. Our main problem is that we do not have a national anti-narcotics strategy which is up-to-date and in line with best international practice, and which takes into account the actual social and moral nature of the drug epidemic.

First, drug addiction is still being seen as a private matter for individual citizens.

Such an approach was endorsed a year before the fall of the Soviet Union by the Committee on Constitutional Supervision. In its ruling No 8 (2-10) of October 25, 1990, ''On legislation concerning forced treatment and labor rehabilitation of people suffering from alcoholism and drug abuse,'' the Committee overruled Article 4 of the Basics of Soviet Legislation, under which ''Soviet citizens must take good care of their health.'' The Committee said that such an obligation ''is not in line with the Soviet Constitution, as well as international human rights laws, and cannot be enforced against people's will. That is why refusal to take treatment for alcoholism or drug addiction—provided that these conditions do not lead to systematic disturbance of public order and violation of the rights of other citizens—must not be seen as punishable offense. For the same reasons, the use of drugs in itself must not be seen as an administrative violation or a crime.''

But it is entirely wrong to see drug addiction as a private matter for individual citizens to decide, because in their search for another dose drug addicts encourage their friends, neighbors, peers, and teenagers to use drugs as well. Drug addiction is an epidemic. On average, each drug addict draws 10–20 people into drug abuse. That fact alone demonstrates the social dangers of drug addiction, let alone the extreme threat posed by people driving cars in a state of narcotic intoxication, or by drugged-up air traffic controllers or senior officers on a missile cruiser (that is a real fact from 2009).

That is why the real danger facing our young people is not ''falling victim to police raids,'' but the fact that they are at constant risk of being sucked in by this epidemic, even pandemic. It is not even a mere risk, it is a fact of life that they are constantly being encouraged to take drugs.

That is why I believe that the Russian anti-narcotics strategy should be based on criminalizing the use of drugs, i.e. making it a criminal offense to appear in a public place in a state of drug intoxication. But when the judge passes down the sentence, the drug addict should be given a choice of serving a jail term or voluntarily signing up for a program of non-medical rehabilitation and resocialization.

Second, the distinction being made between fighting the supply and fighting the demand is entirely artificial.

It has long been demonstrated and reflected in key UN and other international documents that increased supply and availability of drugs lead to growing demand and a growing problem with drug addiction. So all the talk of the ''counter-productiveness of fighting the supply'' is in fact helping the drug dealers in their deadly trade.

Third, the main instrument for preventing drug abuse is good education, healthcare, and sports.

Here we are witnessing a constant degradation; the quality of these very important areas is falling. We should develop them as a direct instrument against drug abuse.

There are also many other failings in the work of our law-enforcement agencies and administrative bodies in charge of the anti-drugs policy. But all these failings need to be addressed individually, without abandoning the war on drugs as a whole.

Best Regards,

Yury Krupnov


**FROM:** LEV LEVINSON

**TO:** YURY KRUPNOV

**SUBJECT:** *PITFALLS OF THE EXISTING SYSTEM*


Dear Yury,

The principles and methods used by the police in Russia are a good example of how real measures to counter the spread of drugs, i.e. real work in the interests of the public, is substituted by a showy but entirely unproductive ''war on drugs,'' which benefits only the bureaucracy.

That is a consequence of the problems I have already mentioned: there is no clear understanding of what exactly we are fighting, and there is no realization that we need different approaches to

different problems. Combined with our traditional target-driven approach to law-enforcement, that leads to obsession with targets and window dressing. Police are making upbeat reports about progress in fighting ''serious crime.'' Their statistics looks impressive. But what does ''serious crime'' mean, exactly? A gas tank stuffed full of heroin? Not necessarily. Mere possession of over 2.5 grams of heroin with no intent of selling, or of a single dose of a smoking mixture which used to be legal only yesterday, is also classed as ''serious crime.''

Some 71.3 percent of the people convicted of drug-related offenses in Russia in 2010 (71,630 people; the source for this and other figures is the Justice Department of the Russian High Court) committed crimes that had nothing to do with selling drugs. In other words, they were convicted for possessing, buying, or growing weed for their own use, in what is classed as large or especially large quantities.

Of the remaining 28.7 percent, very few are drug dealers. They have been convicted under Article 228-1 of the Penal Code (producing or selling drugs)—but most of them are mere users, often casual and inexperienced users who fell victim to a sting operation.

The methods used by our law-enforcement agencies are well known: obsession with targets, corruption, fabricating evidence, blackmail, and profound disrespect for the rule of law.

Our courts are little better. Of the 98,725 people tried in 2010 on drugs-related charges (Articles 228, 228-1, 231 of the Penal Code), only 141 people were acquitted. That is a mere 0.1 percent.

Consider also that 64 percent of the drugs-related cases (63,570 people) were tried under a simplified procedure, without a proper trial, because the accused admitted their guilt under a plea bargain. Such a trial takes about 15 minutes. Can we really expect it to determine who is guilty and who is innocent? The lawyers representing the accused work in tandem with the investigators and inquiry officers to persuade the accused to accept that mockery of justice, offering them a chance not to rot for six months in custody pending trial, and to receive a shorter jail term, possibly with immediate release on probation. The plea-bargain system enables the prosecution and the justice system to process more cases.

The plea bargain is not a Russian invention. Its inclusion in the Russian Penal Code was advocated by the American Bar Association, which played a role—including a financial role—in preparing the new version of the Code. In the United States, plea bargaining is used in most drug-related cases.

Statistics show that crime has been falling in Russia in the past several years (though that is just the official figures; the real situation is open to debate). This means that the fight against drugs, which in our country has become a fight against young people, will become an even greater focus. Remember also that regular police in Russia are competing with the anti-drugs police in an effort to improve their figures.

All the young people in Russia are at risk—and not just because many of them experiment with various legal and illegal substances and plants. It is also because every club, every courtyard, every college classroom has become an arena for the fight against drugs. All these places have become risk zones, meaning the risk of falling foul of a police raid.

Increasing cooperation between the drug enforcement agencies of Russia, China, and undemocratic Central Asian states in the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization signals a trend towards creating enclave supra-national police institutions, i.e. the spread and international institutionalization of the practices I have mentioned above.

Russia is facing a choice between the rational strategy advocated by the Council of Europe, and an arms race proposed by the United States and by our Asian partners in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. From the legal point of view, the choice here is obvious, because, under the Russian Constitution, the highest value and the reason for being of the Russian state is upholding the rights and liberties of the individual, as opposed to the interests of the state, the public in general or some government agency. Please do not interpret everything I have said as denial of the real harm of drugs, or as propaganda for light drugs. In my view, light drugs should be subject to reasonable state control and restrictions. The main evil of the international anti-narcotics strategy and such national models as the American, Chinese, or Russian (although each has its distinguishing features) is that they sacrifice human rights in the name of this self-sufficient war on drugs. These countries have created huge anti-drugs agencies, which spend an enormous amount of resources (saying all the while that many more resources are needed). These countries have the largest population (in absolute and relative terms) of prisoners serving time for drug-

related offenses. But it doesn't look as though the situation with drugs in these countries is better than in Canada, Germany, Spain, or Australia, which pursue a more moderate set of policies (although not an ultraliberal one, like Switzerland does).

Lev Levinson

**FROM:** YURY KRUPNOV

**TO:** LEV LEVINSON

**SUBJECT:** *SOLUTIONS?*

Lev,

There is no doubt that a huge number of problems exist in the area of anti-narcotics strategy. Russia is no exception.

We need a radical reform of our penal legislation so as to enable the courts to give drug addicts who have committed some petty crime to choose between serving time in jail and taking a rehabilitation course, especially in the system of non-medical rehabilitation. That would be an example of really caring for the rights of those who have been trapped by drugs.

These problems can be solved not by abandoning the fight against drugs, but by improving the methods that we use in that fight, by transforming our approaches to the war on drugs, and by pursuing a course of growth and development for our country. By waging war on drugs we are not violating human rights. On the contrary, we are protecting them. Apart from the drug addicts themselves, there is a far greater number of people who have not yet become addicts, but who are constantly being encouraged to take drugs by the addicts. That is the essence of drug addiction as a social epidemic. We should be talking about upholding the rights of every individual, not just the rights of drug addicts.

The best prevention strategy is not anti-drugs propaganda campaigns, but a proper system of education, culture, and sports. But, as we develop our country, another important component is developing measures to fight drugs, and improving the methods of waging that inevitable war. Furthermore, we should recruit the former drug addicts themselves to fight in this war on our side. That is exactly what happens when, after proper social rehabilitation, many former addicts become anti-drugs activists. They use the power of their minds and bodies, freed of dependence on drugs, to warn other young people of the dangers and to save those who are in trouble.

This tells me that drug addiction cannot be cured by medical means, but it can be cured by spiritual means. That is the essence. The war on drugs should be a war of morality and spirit, and it should take into account all the social and anthropological aspects of drug addiction.

Best Regards,

Yury

**FROM:** LEV LEVINSON

**TO:** YURY KRUPNOV

**SUBJECT:** *RE: SOLUTIONS?*

Yury,

To conclude our discussion: the war on drugs was declared 100 years ago; 50 years ago it went global. But as they say, you can fight with bayonets, but you cannot sit on them. Our priority should be resolving social, economic, and political problems so as to pull the rug from under the drugs trade. That requires considerable financial investment—but it's unlikely to cost us more than the war on drugs is already costing us.

To put rhetoric aside, here in Russia the war is being waged by anti-drugs agencies. There is no shortage of people willing to wage that war. But resolving the problem of drugs should not be left to law-enforcement agencies. Looking at our Ministry of Health and Social Development, I cannot

seriously consider putting that ministry in charge of anything, either. No one is seriously considering that. But some specialists, including those advocating an approach based on human rights, are actually proposing that the Federal Drugs Agency should be put in charge of rehabilitating and even treating the drug addicts. That is absurd, but also quite logical in some ways. I don't need to explain why it is absurd. As for why it is logical, the anti-drugs agencies are already gobbling up all the money allocated to fighting drugs. So why not let them treat the addicts as well?

It seems that it would make more sense to prioritize the regional and local levels. But that includes not just the transfer of powers, but also appropriate financing, the formation of real federative relations, and establishing genuine local government. I mean not only the medical and social spheres, but also issues of offenses against the law, which should be addressed insofar as possible not through the criminal justice system, but through a united system of probation and restorative justice. By probation I mean social adaptation and social patronage, i.e. help with receiving education, finding a job, a place to live, obtaining the proper documents, having access to medical treatment—or, to be more precise, overcoming the obstacles to receiving medical treatment and putting an end to other ways of stigmatizing various groups of people, including those who use drugs for non-medicinal purposes.

According to the textbook *Narcology*[2], some of the main consequences of addiction to narcotic substances include the actual reputation of a drug addict, a change in the addict's social status, and a decrease in self-esteem. That needs to be corrected.

Most of the probation measures should be the responsibility of non-governmental, not-for-profit organizations (including religious ones) and local communities acting in pursuit of national and municipal social policies.
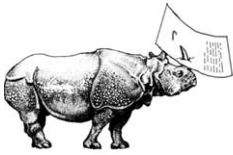
Best Regards,

Lev Levinson

VIEWPOINTS

## NOTES

[1] Nils Christie, *A Convenient Enemy: Antidrugs Policy in Scandinavia* (Norwegian edition), Oslo, Universitetsforlaget, 1985, p. 237.

[2] L.S. Friedman, N.F., Fleming, D.Kh. Roberts, S.E. Khayman, *Narcology*, St Petersburg, ''Neva dialect'', 1998.

Igor Ivanov

# UNDIVIDED SECURITY IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

Since the start of the 21st century the concept of international security has undergone radical transformations. During the Cold War the world had two distinct centers of gravity, and all serious security threats would inevitably acquire a global scale. In essence, any local conflict always had a global dimension. That was the main risk of a bi-polar world: every political crisis, even in the farthest corners of the globe, always posed a potential risk of a world war. But such a situation was also a pillar of international stability: no one wanted to risk an uncontrolled escalation by provoking one local conflict after another. In most cases the principle of mutual deterrence worked not only on the global level but also on the regional one because the stakes were simply too high. As a result, the idea of undivided security was at the very core of the international system.

Now, however, that system is rapidly losing its familiar bi-polar shape. The world is moving towards globalization; the old hierarchy of the great powers no longer applies, and the threats are becoming ever more diverse. The principle of deterrence on a global level is obviously becoming obsolete—and on the regional level it is becoming completely irrelevant. But the international community has not yet developed new principles for conflict prevention. A point in case is the military operation in Libya. The whole campaign was planned and implemented on the hoof, without any legal justification or political platform. Even more importantly, there was no clear strategic purpose for it—surely the mere ousting of Colonel Gaddafi cannot be considered a strategic goal, even if we leave aside its dubious legitimacy.

There has been a sharp rise in the number of local and regional conflicts in the world over the past two decades. Fond hopes that the end of the longest and greatest geopolitical confrontation of the 20th century would automatically lead to world peace, stronger international security, and radical disarmament have not come to pass. The threat of entire humanity perishing in a nuclear conflagration may have receded dramatically—but wars on a smaller scale are now killing a lot more people than they used to. Most experts agree that this trend will continue; we are going to see new crises, new conflicts, and new casualties.

Only a few years ago many analysts opined that a sharp rise in the number of armed conflicts at the turn of the century was temporary. They saw it as merely a delayed effect of the previous era, an effect that would soon fizzle out. They argued that the end of a bi-polar world had released the numerous pent-up antagonisms and frictions that were previously being kept suppressed by the rigid bi-polar system. Old ethnic, religious, and social tensions have surfaced after being artificially kept under the lid for almost half a century, they said. The unprecedented rise of instability on the regional and local levels was therefore seen as a price we were paying for the rapid demolition of the old bi-polar system.

A few years on, these explanations no longer hold water. The Cold War did not end yesterday, and not even a decade ago. Is two decades not long enough for tensions accumulated during the Cold War to subside? How much longer do we have to wait until the world returns to the normal state? Why does the residual potential for conflict in world politics keep getting stronger instead of

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becoming a spent force? Now that the world has entered the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, do we still have the right to blame our problems on the difficult heritage of the previous century?

## CHRONIC INSTABILITY

The situation is something of a paradox. Responsible politicians in Washington, Brussels, Beijing, and Moscow have very similar views of the global challenges and threats to international security. We all think along the same lines, we are being kept awake at night by the same problems, and the proposed solutions we come up with are not much different. I do not want to oversimplify things: not all our opinions can be reconciled to produce a common approach. But one way or another, we are all united by the shared challenges and threats we face. This is our reality, and it is unlikely to change any time soon.

One would have thought therefore that the task of building a reliable global security system is merely a technical challenge. One would have thought that in a world not being torn asunder by irreconcilable differences, the shared fundamental interests of the key actors should inevitably lead to the creation of effective cooperation mechanisms. But we have to admit that such mechanisms are either absent or ineffectual. An undivided security space remains a dream. The world seems to be moving towards greater unity, but the number of conflicts remains stubbornly high.

Some skeptics in Russia and in the West will probably say that a transition from a bi-polar to a multi-polar system of international relations inevitably increases the potential for conflict in world politics. They will argue that by definition, a multi-polar system is more complex and harder to control than a bi-polar one. They will offer a whole range of arguments that have to do with geopolitics, with inherent differences between cultures and civilizations, and even with religion. I am not convinced by any of these arguments. Usually they just conceal a reluctance to abandon old habits, fears, and stereotypes. What is more, they are not supported by historical evidence. The multi-polar international system shaped at the Vienna Congress in the early nineteenth century had proved to be very resilient, underpinning relative international stability for a whole century.

In my opinion, since the end of the Cold War world politics has seen the rise of a very dangerous trend that explains many of our present difficulties. Or, should I say, there have been several trends—but all of them have led to a fragmentation of the undivided global security space. By the early 1990s it had become clear that a fundamental restructuring of the international system built during the Cold War would be difficult, costly, and politically painful. A probably unconscious choice was then made in favor of conserving the old system, even at the cost of allowing localized or regional outbreaks of instability. That choice was based, explicitly or implicitly, on several assumptions.

First, it was assumed that the security of the West (or even the entire North) can be separated from the security of the East (or South), and that local upheavals would not upset the balance of the global system.

Second, it was assumed that efforts to freeze conflicts can be separated from efforts to achieve their final settlement; it was thought that time always works for the peacemakers.

Third, it was assumed that security in general can be separated from development. The belief was that once the shooting has been stopped, the responsibility for the situation can be handed over to some sensible forces in the region, which would then be able to prevent the conflict from flaring up again, with minimal assistance from the outside.

Let me emphasize that none of these assumptions was completely unreasonable. They can be viewed as cynical, immoral, or selfish—but they are not entirely irrational. In some way, the belief that security can be divided and local conflicts can somehow sort themselves out can be compared to the naive hope that the world economy can sort itself out if only market mechanisms are allowed to take their natural course. Both of these assumptions have in the end turned out to be wrong. As a result, over the past two decades none of the serious regional conflicts has been resolved, and new ones are appearing all the time. The former Yugoslavia and Somalia, Afghanistan and the Greater Caucasus, Haiti and North Korea, the Middle East and Rwanda—the the list just keeps getting longer.

Unfortunately, the situation in the former Soviet countries is not much different. Over the two decades since the fall of the Soviet Union the aftermath of the local conflicts that flared up in the process has been dealt with. But none of the causes of those conflicts has been eliminated. As a result we are now facing multiple threats and risks posed by the possibility of those latent conflicts being reignited. And as last year's crisis in Kyrgyzstan has demonstrated, such conflicts do not necessarily have to be international; they can be internal as well.

By the way, an increase in the number of conflicts resulting from a crisis of statehood is a global trend. More and more often international conflicts are being triggered by internal crises and civil wars. As a result, conflict resolution is becoming more difficult to achieve by rational instruments of international relations and diplomacy. These conflicts are becoming increasingly unpredictable. In the 20th century each conflict had clearly defined warring factions who could seek an agreement based on their clear long-term interests. In many of the twenty-first century conflicts the factions take a long time to coalesce; their interests are fleeting and fragmented, and the formidable capabilities of the traditional world powers turn out to be ill-suited for resolving such conflicts.

## MECHANISMS OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The situation we are facing is compounded by the fact that the traditional instruments for preventing or resolving regional and local conflicts seem to have been exhausted. The world is increasingly becoming disillusioned with the idea of intervention by outsiders as a way of solving regional or national problems. The U.S.-led campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan have come under serious criticism in the United States. The military intervention in Libya is facing growing opposition in the EU. In Russia too there is little enthusiasm for sending troops abroad.

Skeptics and pessimists argue that in the foreseeable future the great powers will be too preoccupied with their domestic problems to try to resolve conflicts abroad. They say there is little hope of grand new international security projects being proposed: there is no one left to propose them and, even more importantly, no one left to finance them. All the ideas of restructuring the UN, modernizing NATO, and reforming the OSCE will therefore remain on paper—at least for the next several years. Here, too the similarity with the world economic situation is striking. Remember all the talk at the height of the world economic crisis about the need for a radical reform of the IMF and the World Bank, for a modernization of the WTO and for new measures to keep the world economy from falling off a cliff? Three years on, practical steps in that direction have been timid, and plans for radical reforms have once against been postponed indefinitely.

The international political situation is also contradictory. In a globalized world security is becoming indivisible; any serious crisis sends a wave of repercussions that affects, one way or another, the whole planet. What is more, this build-up of regional factors of instability cannot go on forever. Sooner or later the growing pressure will blow the lid, resulting in a serious and systemic crisis. But despite all that, there is little hope for a reform of key elements of the international security system. There is clearly not enough political will and persistence for such a reform.

It appears that radically new approaches to resolving regional and local conflicts must be sought. The results of humanitarian interventions in the past couple of decades, and the operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya have demonstrated that the old methods simply do not work anymore. All too often intervention by external powers becomes yet another factor of instability. It destroys the local social and political relationships, economic systems, and longstanding cultural traditions. It undermines the legitimacy of both the government and the opposition. The result is chronic instability, which can blow up into a violent conflict at any moment.

I do not pretend to have ready solutions to all the problems of conflict prevention and settlement. Neither am I claiming that we must abandon all attempts to reform the existing security institutions; they still have an important role to play in safeguarding global and regional stability. But I do believe that trying to build a new security system for a new globalized world using last century's templates is a completely hopeless task. The time of hierarchies in world politics is gone. There is no guarantee that any new institutions will be better than the existing ones, whose potential is still far from exhausted.

But we need to recognize that the current window of opportunity in the relations between Russia and the West will not stay open for much longer. The nature of the political cycles in the United

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States, Russia, and some of the leading European countries is such that two or three years from now achieving a breakthrough in our relations could become a lot more difficult than it is today. I do not want to sound like a pessimist, but the chance we have been given now could become the last for our generation of politicians.

## HOW NOT TO MISS THE CHANCE HISTORY HAS GIVEN US?

It is time for all of us, both in the West and in the East, to sit down and think about what we could have done differently in the past. In my own view, one of the key causes of our failures has been the desire to find a single magic solution to all our problems. We have been looking for some kind of philosopher's stone of world politics, a universal mechanism, institution, or construct that would solve the world's security problems once and for all. Some believe all our problems can be resolved by Russia becoming a NATO member. Others speak of the need to reform the United Nations, or to replace it altogether with an entirely new organization centered on the G8 or the G20.

The feverish talk of the existing or proposed new security institutions reminds me of Europe's obsession with treaties and pacts in the 1930s. Back then the European powers were desperately trying to forestall the looming catastrophe by signing all kinds of bilateral or multilateral treaties of cooperation, nonaggression, neutrality, etc. We all remember how the 1930s ended; the obsession with treaties did not—and could not—solve a single European or global security problem.

Far be it from me to draw parallels between the 1930s and present days. Let me just say that world politics—and especially politics in the 21$^{st}$ century—does not boil down to institutions. Many of the rapidly unfolding international events completely bypass the international organizations, with their arcane procedures, unwieldy bureaucracy, and interminable debates. All too often the regional and global security institutions such as the UN, NATO, the OSCE and others are simply too slow to react to the unfolding crises. In such cases they are being supplanted by tactical ad hoc coalitions thrown together to achieve certain specific objectives.

I am not at all arguing that the existing international organizations should be consigned to the dustbin—they still have important roles to play. But a globalized world—if ever we achieve a globalized world—will probably begin as a tight network of mutually complementary international regimes. As for the institutions, they will be either reformed or created anew as and when the need for them arises.

That is exactly the approach we have tried to use in the relations between Russia and the EU when we agreed in 2001 to create the common spaces in four areas of cooperation: the Common European Economic Space (CEES); the Common Space of Freedom, Security, and Justice; the Common Space of External Security; and the Common Space of Research, Education, and Culture. These four common spaces were to be based on the use of common or joint rules and regulations, including joint administrative procedures, as a foundation for joint action in many areas. Unfortunately, for a variety of political reasons the roadmaps for the formation of these common spaces are being implemented much more slowly than we would have liked. But the approach itself is sound; indeed, in the current circumstances this may be the only workable approach.

I believe that the same approach, based on a network of separate but interconnected regimes, can also be applied to regional and global security. There are plenty of suitable platforms for such regimes. They include joint measures against terrorism, prevention of nuclear and missile proliferation, cyber-security, managing migration, the future of energy and the environmental situation in Europe, countering drug trafficking and transnational crime—the list could go on and on. Efforts to establish such regimes should probably be made simultaneously in many areas; a breakthrough in one area can help us to succeed in several related areas as well.

Each of these regimes should be based on its own procedures, its own individual list of participants, its own geography and principles of working out a common approach. The role of individual nations in the various regimes will be different: the problems of nuclear energy or migration are not equally pressing for every country.

Experience shows that the effectiveness of international regimes depends on a whole number of factors.

**UNDIVIDED SECURITY IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD**

First, such regimes appear only in areas where there are significant shared interests—and these interests must actually be perceived by the participants as shared. That perception is, I believe, key to the success of many sub-regional formats of cooperation, including cooperation on the European continent. The same applies to various specific international regimes that serve a clear function, such as the international regime of civil aviation safety. Such regimes would obviously be easier to build in technical, politically neutral areas, gradually moving on to more sensitive subjects.

Second, the effectiveness of international regimes depends in many important ways on the involvement of the international expert community. Joint political declarations mean little unless they are built on a solid foundation of expert analysis and proposals. There needs to be continuous and very practical dialogue between the experts in every single area of cooperation. It would be no exaggeration to say that international regimes only become successful when the experts and specialists representing the member states start to speak the same language.

Third, one clear advantage of regimes compared with a rigid institutional system is their openness and flexibility. We should make use of that advantage by inviting all the interested parties to join in. As a rule, regimes do not give their participants the right of veto; they do not make a clear distinction between the great powers and all the other nations. Indeed, in some cases they even include non-state actors that have a role to play in world politics.

Fourth, regimes are an effective instrument of reducing uncertainty in the relations between the key players. Trust and channels of communication established in one area reduce the risks and uncertainties in other areas. In that sense regimes are a more flexible but still very effective instrument of neutralizing the anarchic nature of international relations compared with institutions.

Fifth—and this, perhaps, is the greatest difficulty—while recognizing the general principle that security is always undivided in this day and age, we must learn to isolate and shield the successful international regimes from problems, crises, and conflicts in other areas. Our world has become interdependent—but we must not allow our security cooperation to be limited to the lowest common denominator. We must not allow another crisis in our relations—and such crises might yet break out from time to time—to throw our cooperation in all areas back to square one. The practice of linking progress in one area to concessions in other unrelated areas must be abandoned. The principle of indivisibility must strengthen the overall level of regional and global security rather than undermining it.

To the romantics dreaming of a globalized world all these proposals will probably seem too uninspired and down-to-earth. Yet I would prefer slow but steady progress on the long road towards resolving practical problems of international security to overly optimistic goals dictated by short-lived political considerations. Such goals would only freeze the whole process of building a new architecture of regional and global security. The regime-based path towards greater international security will require persistence and many years of painstaking work. But in the end it will probably prove more productive than the ambitious plans of the past two decades which remain firmly on paper.

Of course, as we develop various security regimes and make them part of the international system we must not allow ourselves to be distracted from making the existing international organizations more effective. There have been plenty of proposals to that effect. There is no deficit of new ideas. The real problem is the deficit of political will, commitment, and readiness by the key players to sacrifice immediate tactical advantage in pursuit of strategic interests. There is a clear and urgent need to begin a cautious but profound reform of the UN system; to strengthen the role of regional organizations by delegating to them some of the UN powers; to make better use of the potential of public diplomacy and of the private sector in conflict resolution. There is an equally pressing need for decisive steps in the reform of international law, including a rethinking of such basic definitions as ''aggression,'' ''sovereignty,'' ''the right to self-determination,'' ''humanitarian intervention,'' ''information security,'' and many others.

These tasks are at the top of the agenda of the recently created Russian Council on Foreign Relations, which I have the honor to chair. We would welcome any opportunity for cooperation with all interested partners and colleagues both in Russia and abroad. The problems we are facing are monumental; there is plenty of work for everyone.

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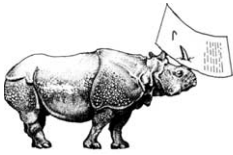
Dmitry Evstafyev

# THE WORLD AFTER LIBYA: NEOCOLONIALISM IN THE 21st CENTURY

Everything that needs saying about Colonel Gaddafi has already been said. He was an operatic figure, and his exit from the scene of world politics was equally as operatic. He shed lots of blood in the process—but has not demonstrated any intelligence, resilience, or courage. Some ''patriotic'' political analysts claim that the Colonel lost because NATO has bombed Libya into the Stone Age. These claims are naive. The fact is, the air campaign was not nearly as energetic as those in Yugoslavia or Iraq. NATO's control of Libyan airspace was far from complete; hundreds of units of armor, moving in large formations, have somehow managed to escape with no particular haste to Niger, Chad, and who knows where else. Even more importantly, the infrastructure and the resources made available for the NATO operation in Libya were fairly limited. Had Libya possessed even a mediocre air defense system, NATO's air campaign would have been much less successful. And one can only imagine what would have happened had Gaddafi dared to strike southern Italy or Sicily using his special task forces. But the Colonel lacked proper air defenses and a proper air force; his vaunted special task forces have also vanished into thin air. All he was left with were his Amazon bodyguards and his trademark hairdo. His behavior also raised eyebrows. Shortly before the final rebel assault on Tripoli all his demeanor and all his ostentatious bellicosity seemed to betray a vain hope that NATO would somehow get bored with a fruitless war and leave him be. It did not.

The routing of Gaddafi seems to have produced so deep an impression on the Russian military that the Chief of General Staff himself, General Nikolay Makarov, felt compelled to comment. He said with little ambiguity that, leaving diplomacy aside, a repeat of the Libyan scenario in Russia is not at all inconceivable. What exactly did he mean? Does he not believe in the monolithic unity of the All-Russian People's Front, which is standing united around the country's leadership? Does he really believe that a handful of malcontents can actually destabilize the country by seizing a town and turning it into a rebel capital? Or was he trying to say something else entirely? In that case the chief of General Staff must call things their proper names and paint a very grim scenario facing Russia. In other words, if it still needs explaining, he must say that after Libya foreign military intervention in Russia is no longer inconceivable. Yes, it still remains a very unlikely scenario, but not a completely outlandish one. The only strange thing is the way of preventing a repeat of the Libyan scenario in Russia that General Makarov is proposing. He wants Russian snipers to be armed with Western sniper rifles. And in general, Russia should start buying weapons abroad. The very same weapons which, as any child understands, will suddenly stop shooting, flying, and working at the first signs of the Libyan scenario being implemented. It seems that buying weapons abroad is no longer just a fixation for the Russian MoD—it has become an obsession which, I'm afraid, is resistant to mild therapy. As one Russian politician used to say, *it's time to send for a doctor*.

Meanwhile, it would be very interesting and productive to try to understand what the Libyan scenario actually means from the political and military point of view. It is, as a matter of fact, a classic example of a colonial war, not much different from the wars Victorian Britain used to wage in India or South Africa. But the modern aspects of such a war can be very educational.

First, this war requires an imitation of mass protests. Given the almost total control wielded by the Western democracies over international media outlets, and given their brainwashing know-how,

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which Joseph Goebbels and Soviet propaganda experts never even dreamed of, persuading the Western public that mass protests are under way will not be difficult in the slightest. And if the required footage of street protesters cannot be shot on site, it can be shot elsewhere, as Al Jazeera has already demonstrated. The fact that this footage has been doctored will be irrelevant. After all, haven't the Western media managed to persuade the public in their countries that it was Russia who attacked Georgia?

Second, and perhaps most importantly, there needs to be an alternative center of government, even if that center has been cobbled together on an American or French warship. Libya's Transitional Council was very good at posing as an alternative government, even though its leaders kept to their quarters on a French helicopter carrier, the Mistral. Part of the reason the Libyan scenario has failed in Syria is that all attempts to create some semblance of an alternative government have been unsuccessful. Also, not a single Syrian town was ''liberated,'' and besides, the factions involved hated each other so much that even the Saudi puppet masters had failed at herding them into some kind of organized structure. It took five months for some semblance of an opposition council to emerge—but by that time the factor of surprise was no longer there.

Third, the regime's money abroad needs to be frozen. That is a simple and obvious solution. To get an idea of the scale of the disaster, imagine for a second that three-quarters of Russia's gold and currency reserves have been wiped out overnight at the very moment when its relations with the West—and especially the Empire of Good, the United States—start to turn sour. All attempts to invoke international law will be useless. And that is exactly why the situation with Russia's currency reserves, as opposed to the ill-fated Bulava missile, should be viewed as the main national security threat.

Fourth, for a Libyan scenario to succeed, both sides must be encouraged to resort to violence. In other words, before a humanitarian neocolonial war can begin, the two sides need to start shooting at each other. The regime needs to start unilaterally crushing the opposition with tanks, and the opposition needs to start throwing Molotov cocktails at those tanks. The opposition must be encouraged to choose radical leaders who are ready for anything other than dialogue with the government; those radicals then need to unleash a civil war. That sounds gruesome of course, but that is the modus operandi of the Axis of Democracy, i.e. Washington–Paris–Riyadh. Free-dom—and, let us add, oil and gas—need to be copiously watered with blood. Not American blood, of course, and not French or Saudi.

We can think whatever we like about this scenario and about the actions by the Western coalition in Libya. But there is no denying the unpleasant truth that, first, the scenario really does work; second, the scenario is effective not just against Gaddafi; and third, the authors of the scenario are not always in control of its consequences. Not that they are bothered, mind you. And that means we may have to recognize this: as they try to channel the energy of the Libyan scenario away from their allies, many political forces in the West could well try to re-enact it in one of the former Soviet countries in Eurasia. Especially since in many Central Asian states, famous for their skin-deep stability, the situation for a repeat of Libya is becoming ripe.
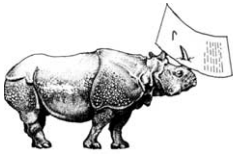
Awadh Al Badi

# NUCLEAR ENERGY IN THE GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL STATES

The Gulf region occupies a position of major strategic importance, as a result of its geographical location and its abundant natural energy resources. In the past, these factors have led rival powers to compete for dominance in the region, and this trend will continue into the future.

During the past six decades, this competition has favoured the United States, causing the Arab States of the region to align, more or less, with U.S. policies designed to protect its own interests and security.

As these countries relied on the United States and its vast energy resources for their external security, they did not feel the need to seriously consider the nuclear option for either peaceful or non-peaceful uses. None of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states[1] attempted to acquire the scientific and technical expertise necessary for the development of nuclear technologies.

Though the GCC countries have, all along, emphasized the right of every state to develop and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, they have taken very few steps toward developing any sort of nuclear capacity. Being ardent opponents of nuclear weapons proliferation, they demanded a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, ratified or acceded to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), joined the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), signed the comprehensive safeguards agreement and the IAEA Additional Protocol, and acceded to a number of international agreements, such as the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its amendments, the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident, and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. However, these activities were insufficient to create a nuclear non-proliferation culture in these countries.

This situation is changing rapidly. While the political positions of these states remain the same with regard to nuclear weapons, they are exhibiting an increased interest in nuclear power as a source of energy.

In December 2006, the leaders of the member states of the GCC, at their annual summit, commissioned a joint visibility study designed to set up a common program in the area of the use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, according to international criteria. Pursuant to this decision, the GCC states asked the IAEA to prepare a primary feasibility study for the use of nuclear energy to generate electricity and to desalinate water.

The purposes of this initial feasibility study were to identify the GCC's current and future needs regarding electric power and desalinated water, to explore the possibility of meeting these needs, at least partially, through the economical and safe development of nuclear energy, and to identify the main requirements of the institutional structures, regulatory legislation, and workforce for this joint project. This study, which was completed in October 2007, concluded that the use of nuclear energy to produce electricity and to desalinate water in the GCC countries is one of the least expensive options available. The study also included general guidance on procedures and steps

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for developing a joint nuclear energy program, as well as its legal, legislative, and institutional aspects.

Following approval of the conclusions of this study, the General Secretariat of the GCC and the IAEA forged a technical cooperation agreement for the years 2009–2011 on three projects designed to develop national and regional programs in the areas of safety, security, research, and development related to the uses of nuclear energy. Within this framework, the IAEA and the nuclear agencies of GCC members launched a program of studies and workshops designed to assist members in establishing the legal grounds, infrastructure, and training necessary to ensure standards of efficiency, safety, and nonproliferation.

In 2009, Qatar hosted the regional workshop on ''The Elaboration of Strategic, Business and Management Plans: Developing a Regional Nuclear Training Center for Capacity Building and Research,'' the IAEA regional workshop on ''Basic Principles of Legislative Infrastructure and International Legal Conventions on Nuclear Safety,'' and the IAEA workshop on ''The Revision of International Basic Safety Standards (BSS) for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources.''

In 2010, the UAE hosted the IAEA regional seminars ''Nuclear Safety Infrastructure for the GCC Member States,'' the regional seminar ''The Implementation of Legislation on Nuclear Security, Safety and Safeguards,'' and the IAEA conference on ''Human Resource Development for Introducing and Expanding Nuclear Power Programs.''

In 2010, IAEA organized a workshop in Vienna entitled ''GCC Milestone Workshop: Considerations Related to the Building of Nuclear Power Infrastructure,'' with the following objectives: ''to sensitize GCC States on the IAEA guidelines and milestones for considering the nuclear power option, and to sensitize participants on specific processes, organization and management systems related to the nuclear power business.''[2]

In 2011, Kuwait hosted a national workshop for ''the development of expert support capacity in nuclear security applications.''

In addition to these cooperative activities between the GCC and the IAEA, official institutions, universities, and think tanks in all GCC countries were active in organizing conferences, seminars, workshops, and expositions on nuclear and renewable energy and on the peaceful applications of nuclear technology.

In November 2008, the King Abdulaziz University in Jeddah (Saudi Arabia) organized the first international symposium ''Peaceful Application of Nuclear Technology in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Countries'' to discuss the ways and means of introducing nuclear technology for peaceful purposes in the region. Also, the Naif Arab University for Security Sciences (NAUSS) in Riyadh (Saudi Arabia) has been organizing seminars and workshops on nuclear security in partnership with IAEA and the Arab Atomic Energy Agency (AAEA) since 2006. The latest conference was held in Tunis, in October 2010, to discuss strategies for nuclear security in Arab countries. NAUSS has a memorandum of academic cooperation with the IAEA to assist in developing academic, teaching, and research programs focused on nuclear security. NAUSS has published various studies on nuclear security.

The latest step in creating a nuclear nonproliferation culture in the region is the establishment of the Gulf Nuclear Energy Infrastructure Institute (GNEII) by the Khalifa University of Science, Technology, and Research in Abu Dhabi in partnership with the Sandia National Laboratories (SNL) and the Texas Engineering Experiment Station of the Texas A&M University System in the United States. This structure aims at strengthening nuclear energy security, safeguards, and safety infrastructure development throughout the region.

The GCC countries are aware of the need to acquire a nuclear nonproliferation culture before entering the nuclear age. They have started the process, and they are active in doing so. Therefore, they will be able to finally absorb it as they move ahead with their peaceful nuclear programs.

While these countries work collectively in their quest to establish a nuclear culture, it seems that each of these six countries is proceeding independently with its own plans. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are the only countries of the GGC states that have taken tangible steps to realize their nuclear design. The other states are still in the research phase.

Following the decision of the GCC Summit of 2006 to study the possibility of using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, Saudi Arabia has witnessed a significant change in the degree of commitment to enter the field of nuclear energy. Since then, all of the government's decisions and actions in this matter have asserted that this option is strategic.

In May 2008, Saudi Arabia and the United States signed a Memorandum of Understanding on civil nuclear energy cooperation, which states that the two countries:

> ...will establish a comprehensive framework for cooperation in the development of environmentally sustainable, safe, and secure civilian nuclear energy through a series of complementary agreements and that the United States will assist the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to develop civilian nuclear energy for use in medicine, industry, and power generation, and also will help in the development of both human and infrastructure resources in accordance with evolving International Atomic Energy Agency guidance and standards.''[3]

In the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) Saudi Arabia has stated its intent to rely on international markets for nuclear fuel and not to pursue sensitive nuclear technologies.

In November 2009, Saudi Arabia formed a ministerial committee to study the country's current and future national needs regarding electricity and water, as well as the contribution of atomic energy to meeting these needs. This committee concluded that the country is witnessing steady growth and high rates of demand for electricity and desalinated water as a result of population growth. Therefore, the use of alternative sources of sustainable and reliable electricity and desalinated water production reduces the reliance on hydrocarbon resources and, thus, provides an additional guarantee for the production of water and electricity in the future, which will prolong the lifetime of hydrocarbon resources.

In April 2010, King Abdullah decreed the formation of a new institution in Riyadh—the King Abdullah City for Nuclear and Renewable Energy (KACNRE)—to develop and implement the national policy on nuclear and renewable energy. In June 2010, the Kingdom hired a Finnish consulting firm, Poyry, to assist it in defining its strategy for the application of nuclear and renewable energy.

In July 2010, Saudi Arabia reached an agreement with Shaw Group, Inc., Toshiba Corporation, and Exelon Nuclear Partners to pursue the opportunity to acquire a full complement of services for designing, engineering, constructing, and operating new nuclear electric generating plants.

In October 2010, the Council of Ministers of Saudi Arabia approved a cooperation agreement on nuclear energy with Russia. In January 2001, Saudi Arabia and Japan signed an agreement to expedite the construction of nuclear power plants and the training of Saudi engineers in matters related to the production of nuclear energy. In February 2011, Saudi Arabia signed a nuclear cooperation agreement with France, which supplied the Kingdom with knowledge of nuclear energy and the training of Saudi engineers. In April 2011, the Council of Ministers of Saudi Arabia approved a cooperation agreement on nuclear energy with China.

In May 2011, the Kingdom announced plans to build 16 nuclear reactors over a 20-year period.

In June 2011, the Kingdom signed a nuclear cooperation agreement with Argentina, which supplied the Kingdom with cooperation in the design, construction, and operation of commercial reactors and research reactors, safety and emergency preparedness, waste treatment, and the use of atomic technology in medicine, industry, and agriculture.

The United Arab Emirates was faster than the other GCC states in implementing its plans to acquire nuclear energy. Since 2008, the UAE has taken a number of practical steps in cooperation and coordination with the IAEA to ensure its ability to begin the actual implementation of nuclear energy as soon as possible.

In 2008, the UAE published a comprehensive policy paper entitled ''Policy of the United Arab Emirates on the Evaluation and Potential Development of Peaceful Nuclear Energy.'' This paper analyzed the energy needs of the country over the next several decades, and it concluded that the construction and operation of civilian nuclear power plants is the best path to ensuring continued economic growth and national security. In this paper, the UAE committed itself:

> ...to complete operational transparency; pursuing the highest standards of non-proliferation; highest standards of safety and security; will work directly with the IAEA and conform to its standards in evaluating and potentially establishing a peaceful nuclear energy program; hopes to develop any peaceful domestic nuclear power capability in partnership with the Governments and firms of

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responsible nations, as well with the assistance of appropriate expert organizations; and approach any peaceful domestic nuclear power program in a manner that best ensures long-term sustainability.[4]

In 2009, the UAE signed an agreement for cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy with the United States, Japan, France, and South Korea. The agreement with the United States contains special terms, under which the UAE agreed to forego its right as an NPT signatory to produce its own fuel, and will instead obtain nuclear fuel from reliable international suppliers.

In September 2009, the UAE established the Federal Authority for Nuclear Regulation (FANR) as an independent regulatory authority in charge of developing and enforcing binding safety standards and regulations intended to achieve the highest standards of nuclear safety, nuclear security, and radiation protection, on a par with those adopted in the countries with the best records in these areas.

In December 2009, the UAE established the Emirates Nuclear Energy Corporation (ENEC), which was charged with implementing the UAE nuclear energy program, as well as with the deployment, ownership, and operation of nuclear power plants within the UAE. In addition, ENEC was charged with:

❑ overseeing the work of the eventual prime contractor in the design, construction, and operation phases;

❑ working closely with the Abu Dhabi and Federal governments to ensure that the civil nuclear power program is aligned with the industrial infrastructure plans of the UAE (this includes overseeing work that will be done near the eventual power plant site, which would include community development, roads, utility, and telecommunications projects);

❑ working to build the human resource capacity for the nuclear energy program in coordination with the educational sector in the UAE; and

❑ developing public communications and education programs to ensure that the public understand the civil nuclear energy program and are provided with information on the program's progress.[5]

In December 2009, the Korea Electric Power Corporation (KEPCO)-led consortium won a $20 billion tender to build four 1,400 MW civil nuclear power reactors in the UAE. The first of the four units is scheduled to begin providing electricity to the grid in 2017, with the three later units being completed by 2020.

In February 2010, an International Advisory Board (IAB) was established, in order to provide the UAE nuclear program with the expertise and knowledge of internationally recognized experts in the fields of nuclear science, non-proliferation, regulatory affairs, energy generation and distribution, reactor operations, waste management, human resource development, and other related fields.[6]

In November 2010, the UAE signed a nuclear cooperation agreement with the UK. In December 2010, construction work for the four reactors began (at Braka).

One can conclude that the GCC countries are entering the nuclear era with a clear vision of their needs and with a commitment to abide by all of the rules and safeguards established by the international community for nonproliferation. However, if the international community fails in its efforts to make the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone, the GCC countries will have the same right as the others in terms of benefiting from such knowledge and programs in protecting themselves. Who knows what the future holds?

**NOTES**

[1] The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states are Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates (UAE).

[2] *Nuclear Power Newsletter* 8 (March 2011), pp. 4–5.

[3] U.S.–Saudi Arabia Memorandum of Understanding on Nuclear Energy Cooperation, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Media Note, May 16, 2008, <http://www.carnegieendowment.org/2008/05/20/u.s.-

saudi-arabia-memorandum-of-understanding-on-nuclear-energy-cooperation/aeq>, last accessed October 4, 2011.

[4] Policy of the United Arab Emirates on the Evaluation and Potential Development of Peaceful Nuclear Energy, Federal Authority for Nuclear Regulation, <http://fanr.gov.ae/en/media/get/20100523_nuclear-policy-eng.pdf>, last accessed October 4, 2011.

[5] History, The Emirates Nuclear Energy Cooperation, <http://www.enec.gov.ae/about-us/history/>, last accessed October 4, 2011.

[6] The International Advisory Board, <http://www.uaeiab.ae/>, last accessed October 4, 2011.

C O M M E N T A R Y

Dayan Jayatilleka

# THE END OF THE GLOBAL EQUILIBRIUM: A COUNTER-NARRATIVE FROM THE SOUTH

PAGES OF HISTORY

There is internal debate in Russia today on whether China is a threat—even the main danger; whether the West in the form of NATO is a viable strategic partner for Russia; whether Russia can carve out its own space without a tilt to either West or East or tilting only on an issue-by-issue basis towards one or the other. Given today's global realities and emerging trends, it should be further examined, critically, whether these are desirable or viable strategic options.

While it may or may not be true that the United States is in relative historical and strategic decline, the paradox is that it possesses far greater grand strategic clarity than does any other global power, including Russia and China. That clarity, deriving from American exceptionalism, is summed up in the phrase ''full spectrum dominance,'' which is but a restatement and extension into the 21st century of *Time/Life* founder Henry Booth Luce's slogan of the 20th century as the American Century. What this means is nothing less than U.S. global predominance over any power or combination of powers.

The implications of this for countries such as Russia and China have not been grasped clearly or consistently. These powers have therefore failed to frame their strategies accordingly. The implications are twofold: the United States and its allies cannot and will not permit a truly multi-polar world order, and the minimum role in world affairs that is commensurate with Russia's and China's interests and destinies will fall short of the maximum role that the United States and its allies will be willing to concede.

To put it at its most succinct, an authentically strong Russian state will never be viewed as anything but a threat by U.S. strategic planners, just as they will never view a strong China as anything but a threat. The West will always try to keep both Russia and China contained and encircled, and will attempt to encourage their internal political evolution, while it will never countenance anything that remotely resembles containment of its own ambitions. While the United States and its allies attempt to maximize the politico-strategic space available to it, it will seek to limit if not minimize the politico-strategic space available to Russia and China.

In the current global conjuncture the United States and its allies are on the offensive, intervening militarily in civil conflicts in the Arab world, elasticizing the concept of Responsibility to Protect and hopeful that its leading edge in information technology and dominance of ''social media networks,'' combined with the so-called democracy wave, will eventually cause the roll-back of all rivals and competitors, real and potential, and guarantee U.S.-led Western global hegemony. This means a diminution of the strength of the Russian and Chinese states. At the heart of the matter is the question of national and state sovereignty. Russia and China share a common conceptual, politico-philosophical, and strategic vision on a core issue, sovereignty, while the U.S.-led West fails to concede such sovereignty to these states and is attempting to dismantle sovereignty as a cornerstone of the world order.

This situation of global imbalance arose from and is rooted in the victory of the United States in the Cold War. It can only be reversed or re-set by an understanding of why one side prevailed over the other in that contest. The history and analysis of the Cold War has itself been the subject of ideological obfuscation.

This paper argues that the defeat of one side in the Cold War was not inevitable or systemic, but resided precisely in the domain of strategy; it was due to a strategic rupture, a change in power relations. This was avoidable if there had been strategic clarity and institutional mechanisms, methods, and practices of permanent coordination. If indeed the defeat was due to systemic reasons, those were at the level not so much of the economic or internal political system, but much more so at the level of the system and structure of inter-state relations—or, to be more precise, the absence of such a system or structures; a systemic or structural vacuum.

This paper argues that there was a firm balance in the world order when there existed a parallel strategic project which brought together the two main Eurasian powers, and that balance was irreversibly disrupted when the already flawed equation between these two powers, Russia and China, was drastically mismanaged, creating a breach for the United States, in relative decline, to exploit. The breaking of that equation meant the rupture of the Eurasian counterpoise and its replacement with a West–East equation, isolating Russia.

While that created the conditions for the collapse of the USSR and the weakening of the Russian state itself, and appeared to provide the space for China's rise, it has currently resulted in a situation in which even the sea on China's periphery is named a core security interest of the United States. Thus it is in the interests of both Russia and China today to forge a non-ideological, secular strategic alliance that provides strategic space and defence in depth for both states, and can constitute a core which the BRICS and other new pivotal powers that give priority to national sovereignty and a strong state can rely on as a counterweight. This would also mean giving greater depth and dimension to the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

One of the ironies of the 20th century was that socialist states and leaderships, which were supposed to be internationalist, proved to be far less capable of evolving common structures and practices for managing common interests and reconciling contradictions than did the capitalist states, which were supposedly driven apart by competition, even to the point of war. The present essay shows the devastating consequences of mismanaging the relations between the two Eurasian powers and indicates, by implication, the strategic value and indeed strategic imperative for closer coordination at political strategic, diplomatic levels, learning from the examples of NATO and the EU.

This essay deals with the backdrop and origins of the evolution of the contemporary global balance and indicates, implicitly, a strategic perspective for its re-balancing. It argues that the end of the earlier global equilibrium (if not essential equivalence) and the emergence of the project of full-spectrum dominance for global hegemony is possible primarily because of the rupture in the late 20th century of the relationship between an alternative and an emerging power centre. The implicit conclusion of the essay is that the balance can be re-set, the project of sovereign democracy rendered sustainable over the long term, and the global equilibrium restored only if that history is lucidly reflected on and if there is a new, qualitative (rather than tentative and tactical) renovation of the equation between these two power centres. Ironically, the latest book by Dr Henry Kissinger may lend weight to this argument.

Today, at the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century, there is hardly a facet of global reality that can be identified as unrelated to the defeat and fall of socialism.[1] The crisis, decline, and fall of socialism will be a traceable origin or determinant of future history. The existing diagnoses entrench the hegemonic ideology, reinforce capitalist triumphalism, and, because of the one thing they have in common, whether of the Right or Left, underline that the defeat of socialism was in some way inevitable.

In an attempt to suggest a counter-hegemonic explanation, this essay argues that the defeat and downfall of socialism were determined, in the last instance, by the changing power relations between the two Communist centres, i.e. by the Sino-Soviet struggle. It suggests even more specifically that the decisive factor was the evolution of Chinese foreign policy following the Sino-Soviet schism, and its turn, in the 1970s in favour of the United States, against the USSR and forces throughout the world assumed to be helpful to the accretion of Soviet strength.[2] As the Report of the Finnish Inquiry Commission on Kampuchea decades later would confirm, ''China's strategic rapprochement with the United States is perhaps the most significant move since the Second World War in terms of the global great power balance.''[3] In this essay, the defeats of socialism are understood as internal to socialism and the revolutions, and located not at the level of economics but precisely at the level of politics, i.e. of political contradictions; contradictions within the political vanguards of the revolutions.

## THE SINO-SOVIET CONFLICT

Prior to the Great (Sino-Soviet) Divide there was no crisis of socialism as such. In the aftermath of the Second World War and specifically in the wake of the Chinese revolution of 1949 there was a widespread consensus throughout the socialist spectrum that the scales had tipped: socialism was not only on the ascendant, but also stronger than the rival system.

The main reason for this was spatial and geo-political: the world biggest country (Russia) and the world's most populous (China) had both turned socialist. It was also geo-strategic: now the frontlines of revolutionary struggle had a strong ''rear base'' in the contiguous Eurasian landmass encompassing the USSR and China. The leading American sinologist A. Doak Barnett, writing just before the Sino-Soviet schism, depicted the strategic reality:

> These two powers, ruling some 850 million people and comprising the strategic ''heartland'' of Eurasia, have forged an intimate association—ideological, military, political and economic—and now pursue joint or coordinated policies towards the non-Communist world. The support which they give each other greatly adds to the capacities of both nations to pursue their common aims.[4]

There was a lesser known, but no less important reason for the sense of historical optimism; one located in the realm of political economy. For the first time there existed the possibility of a parallel world market and a parallel world-economy, rivaling the logic of the capitalist world economy.

The first set of factors, the geopolitical and geostrategic, were in and of themselves seen as sufficient to conclude that the initiative had shifted to socialism. Taken together, the geostrategic and economic reasons formed the basis of a clear perspective of the feasible victory of socialism. The Sino-Soviet alliance was at the core of both the new phenomena—geostrategic/geopolitical and economic—and thus was utterly central to the socialist perspective and global project. Its fissure, disappearance, and later its very reversal into enmity, could not but have the most fundamental impact on the fate of socialism, both in the sense of objective strength and capacity, and in the sense of subjectivity, i.e. collective Communist consciousness.

## THE LENINIST PROBLEMATIQUE

It is well documented that Marxist hopes were pinned on a revolution in the economically and culturally advanced societies of Western Europe. However, towards the end of his life, Marx together with Engels had in a reply to Vera Zasulich admitted the possibility of a Russian revolution, which could act as prologue and signal for a Western European revolution. This latter would in its turn reinforce the Russian, rendering possible its advance to socialism by-passing capitalism and on the basis of a regenerated *mir* or communal farming system.[5]

While the Bolshevik perspective was preponderantly focused on a Western European revolution, there were occasional hints of a different outlook. This was particularly evident in an article by Lenin entitled ''Backward Europe and Advanced Asia,'' in which he argued that contrary to the conventional notion of a backward Asia and an advanced Europe, Asia was in fact more advanced in that the bourgeoisie was still fighting against imperialism and feudalism—and therefore continued to have a progressive character—while in Europe the bourgeoisie no longer played any such role and had therefore lost all vestige of progressivism.[6] This dissenting or ''track B'' perspective assumed much greater importance in the context of the failure of the European revolutionary outbreak following World War I and the Russian revolution of 1917.

Lenin's global perspective had begun to shift fundamentally in the early 1920s, the last years of his life. Already in his work on imperialism during World War I, and in the hope of comprehending the behavior of the mass working-class parties that lined up with their own capitalist classes to fight the fraternal workers of neighboring nations, Lenin had posited an explanation that went beyond a mere denunciation of treachery. His was a structural explanation, sourced in the world economy. Imperialism enabled ''super profits'' to be reaped in the colonial, semi-colonial, and dependent periphery, and thus enabled the material corruption of a whole stratum of the working-class movement, transforming it into what he termed a ''labor aristocracy.''

With the possibility that the blockage of the European revolution would be structural, the prospect of Asian revolutions and their reinforcement of the Russian assumed the most pivotal importance in the Communist perspective. It was on this that Lenin's hopes were pinned. Only days before his paralyzing stroke, in an article published in *Pravda* on March 4, 1923, he concluded that:

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> In the last analysis, the outcome of the struggle will be determined by the fact that Russia, India, China etc. account for the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe. And it is precisely this majority that, during the past few years, has been drawn into the struggle for emancipation with extraordinary rapidity, so that in this respect there cannot be the slightest shadow of doubt what the final outcome of the world struggle will be.[7]

Eschewing all forms of economic determinism, Lenin's perspective was one in which (i) imperialism would be besieged, undermined, and overwhelmed by revolt at its periphery and semi-periphery (''Russia, India, China''), (ii) the peripheral and semi-peripheral location in the world economy/system would be offset by overwhelming geopolitical and demographic advantages (''the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe'').

This essay explores the possibility that Lenin was correct, but in a sense which ironically was completely the opposite of that which he had hoped. It suggests that in the final analysis the outcome of the struggle was significantly determined by the trajectories and interactions of Russia, China, and India—those countries which had the greatest geo-strategic weight—and the conflict between Russia and China (in the widening of which the Sino-Indian war of 1962 played its part); in the last analysis, the outcome: the victory of world capitalism over the forces of socialism.

## THE CHINA SYNDROME

The longer-range historic significance of the Chinese Revolution was best expressed not by a Communist/Marxist-Leninist ideologue but by Isaac Deutscher, belonging to a different tradition within Marxism, possessed of a very different cast of mind, and addressing readerships and audiences far removed from the battle-hardened cadres of an Asian Communist party under arms.[8]

Writing on ''Maoism—Its Origins and Outlook,'' Deutscher elaborated:

> The main forces of the Chinese revolution waged the most protracted civil war in history and won their victory in 1949, making the greatest single breach in world capitalism since the October Revolution, and freeing the Soviet Union from isolation . . . the Chinese revolution...in its scope is the greatest of all revolutions in history . . . .[9]

The Chinese revolution and the Sino-Soviet alliance provided the answer to the utterly crucial problem for Marxists. As observed, Lenin's later perspective was one of the scales being tipped against imperialism by the geopolitical and demographic weight of a rebellious Eurasia. While this shifted the main emphasis from the economic to the strategic or grand strategic, the fundamental economic question remained: given the failure/absence of revolutions in the advanced societies of the West, i.e. with these societies still remaining capitalist, how was socialism to go beyond survival and growth, and prevail over capitalism as a socioeconomic system? Whether they were conscious of it or not, for Marxists of whatever stripes the economic answer resided within the same set of geopolitical and demographic factors that Lenin made his wager upon.

It was Stalin who in 1951 unveiled a new perspective of how socialism could prevail over capitalism in the world economy:

> The disintegration of the single all-embracing world market must be regarded as the most important economic sequel of the second world war and of its economic consequences . . . . China and other European people's democracies broke away from the capitalist system and, together with the Soviet Union, formed a united and powerful socialist camp confronting the camp of capitalism. The economic consequence of the existence of two opposite camps was that the single all-embracing world market disintegrated, so that now we have two parallel world markets, also confronting one another.
> . . . it follows from this that the sphere of exploitation of the world's resources by the major capitalist countries (United States, Britain, France) will not expand but contract; that their opportunities for sale in the world market will deteriorate, and that their industries will be operating more and more below capacity. That in fact is what is meant by the deepening of the general crisis of the world capitalist system in connection with the disintegration of the world market.[10]

In his George Macaulay Trevelyan Lectures delivered at the University of Cambridge in January–March 1967, Deutscher made the clearest independent reckoning of the macroeconomic potentialities of the Sino-Soviet alliance:

> Indeed the time seemed auspicious for the establishment of something like a socialist commonwealth stretching from the seas of China to the Elbe. In such a commonwealth one third of mankind would have jointly planned its economic and social development on the basis of a broad rational division of labour

and of an intensive exchange of goods and services. Socialism might at last have begun to turn into ''an international event'' (Engels). A broad division of labour and intensive exchange were sure to yield considerable advantages to all members of the commonwealth, to economize resources, to save energies, and to create new margins of wealth and new economic elbow room for all.[11]

That the Marxist estimation of the economic challenge that such a bloc posed to world capitalism was not overblown is confirmed by top-level U.S. policy planning documents of the 1940s and 1950s. The defining statement is contained in a study produced in 1955 under William Yandell Elliot of Harvard:

> The study group of the Woodrow Wilson Foundation and the National Planning Association (...) described the primary threat of communism as the economic transformation of the Communist powers ''in ways which reduce their willingness and ability to complement the industrial economies of the West,'' their refusal to play the game of comparative economic advantage and to rely primarily on foreign investment for their development.[12]

The exact remarks are as follows:

> A serious reduction of the potential resource base and market opportunities of the West owing to the subtraction of the communist areas from the international economy and their economic transformation in ways which reduce their willingness and ability to complement the industrial economies of the West.[13]

Insofar as the alliance of the USSR and China were seen to provide (a) a contiguous rear area of great military strategic significance; (b) the possibility of a parallel world socialist market and therefore a factor of great economic significance; (c) a huge population and therefore a demographic edge for socialism; and (d) a source of great psychological sustenance for revolutionary states and movements, the sundering of that alliance could not but mean a dislocation and diminution in all four dimensions.

In the period relevant to this study, the alliance went through several stages of decomposition: schism, sundering, competitive rivalry, and, finally, bitterly destructive antagonism. The factor of the alliance as the core of a socialist camp or fraternal community not only diminished but degenerated from an asset through a neutral factor, to an actual negative for the ''world revolutionary process'' and a plus for the U.S.-led global status quo.

This degenerative spiral, commencing with sundering and culminating with China's alignment with the United States, could not but result in a fundamentally decisive strategic setback and considerable psychological disorientation and damage to the forces engaged in struggle against the United States and its allies.

The final evolution of China's policy took place during the third revolutionary wave, or a little before it. The revolutionary swing (which had as one of its distant sources China's own revolutionary victory of 1949) was so powerful that China's shift could not forestall it. However, that shift played a significant part in retarding, checking, and finally disintegrating the third revolutionary wave. China's shift also framed and formed the psychological context in which the eruption of the phenomenon of intra-socialist armed conflict took place. The Sino-Soviet schism and its evolution thus adds to and confirms the thesis that political conflict within the anti-systemic forces in general, and intra-socialist conflict in particular, constituted the decisive factor in the defeat and downfall of socialism. The hammer and sickle had become the weapons of Cain.

## IMPACT ON THE GLOBAL BALANCE

An incalculable amount of time, physical and mental energy, and scarce material resources were consumed within the Marxist revolutionary ranks worldwide on this struggle, which could have been resolved in the mid-1960s, when three propitious factors converged:

- ❑ the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) leadership changed and unilaterally declared a truce;
- ❑ the U.S. war against Vietnam escalated; and
- ❑ centrist or non-aligned CPs attempted to mediate.

That opportunity was negated by the Cultural Revolution. The loss of that opportunity, its passing up, indeed its spurning by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leadership, had incalculable consequences for the balance of forces between socialism and capitalism.

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It is evidence of the force and velocity of the revolutionary impulses of that time that the third revolutionary wave or offensive actually took place, despite the massive dissipation of energies involved in this inter-socialist conflict. However, (1) the loss of the economic potentials of a unified socialist camp, (2) the exit of the enormous strategic weight of China from the socialist bloc of forces, and (3) its subsequent transference to the side of the global status quo, precisely in a conjuncture in which the latter was convulsed by revolutionary change, cannot be estimated as other than decisive. All the factors that lent world historic importance to the setting up of the Peoples' Republic were rendered unavailable to the forces of revolutionary and radical systemic change. These factors were withdrawn and later turned against those forces.

It is difficult to overemphasize the importance of Sino-Soviet antagonism in understanding the fate of socialism and the course of contemporary history. The analyst has only to consider the situation that would have obtained had the split either not taken place, or been resolved. The latter was a distinct possibility both in 1964–1966, after Khrushchev's ousting and the U.S. escalation in Vietnam, and following the death of Mao Tse-tung, who was the architect of and therefore the personality most identified with the anti-Soviet line.[14]

Real history took the opposite path. In summer 1981, on his first visit to China, Secretary of State Al Haig, a rightwing hawk even by the standards of the Reagan administration, confirmed that "U.S. and Chinese perceptions of the international situation have never been closer."[15] The U.S.-led global status quo was able to compensate for its losses at the hands of the Vietnamese and revolutionaries on four continents, and stabilize itself due largely to the shift of China to its side.[16]

Though over the long term the revolutionary significance of the Chinese revolution remains, in an irony of history China became the reserve force or rear area of the systemic forces, i.e. a powerful counterrevolutionary factor, during the last—and therefore decisive—revolutionary conjuncture before the fall of socialism.

The more intangible factors, the cognitive dissonances, and dislocations of the communist psyche that the Sino-Soviet conflict and the trajectory of China's international policy entailed must not be underestimated either. Without the divisions and diversions the third wave may have spread further and faster than it did; without the psychological and spiritual damage the split and its trajectory caused, the global revolutionary offensive may not have imploded. The schisms within that wave were not all caused by the Sino-Soviet split or reflected it—but some were, including the most important (Indochina). Others replicated the sectarian political behavior of the Sino-Soviet conflict (and, arguably, the Cultural Revolution). All of them occurred in a context of revolutionary movements confused, disoriented, and spiritually damaged by the bitter Sino-Soviet rivalry turned enmity. The internecine conflicts that consumed the "third revolutionary wave" occurred in a context—and this includes a psychological context—framed and perhaps forged by the Sino-Soviet conflict.

This third period in China's foreign policy slightly preceded and ran throughout the period of the third wave of revolutions worldwide. Mao's rethinking concerning the hierarchy of China's external enemies was based on exactly the same set of factors that makes it possible to identify and confirm a period of global revolutionary upswing or high tide from 1968 to 1980. The single most important factor was the Tet offensive and the realization on the part of the United States that it could not win the war in Vietnam. Nixon's policy of Vietnamization (1969) signaled a certain retrenchment from Asia. Mao advised the Vietnamese leaders to revert to protracted guerrilla war in order to complete their victory, rather than resort to mobile-conventional warfare for the purpose. He realized that the latter option would mean increasing Vietnamese reliance upon the USSR, which was the sole source of the type of heavy weaponry needed for a large-scale final offensive. Mao's was a characteristically accurate reading of the emerging balance of forces: the United States was on the retreat and the turn of the tide would benefit the Soviets. From this he concluded that China was in danger—primarily from the USSR. (The 1969 border clashes and the Soviet victory in the third such clash on March 15 would have been a powerful catalyst of this perception.) In order to offset this, he advocated the use of his old tactic of the broadest possible united front to unite the many, defeat the few—and this line the Chinese party-state attempted to generalize (even to the point of imposition) globally.

There was thus a radical asymmetry between the thrust of the world revolutionary offensive—which in ironic consonance with the Chinese line of the first stage was directed against the United States and its allies (or U.S. allies and their patron)—and China's third stage international line. More: the Chinese line of the third stage 1970/1–1985 was one of the main factors that stood

against the revolutionary high tide of 1968–1980, and especially the ''third wave of revolutions'' in 1974–1980. The Chinese line, which was a factor in favor of the revolutionary upsurge in the Third World, turned into major obstacle and counterweight to it. The Chinese perspective that stood for a more militantly assertive socialist stance against imperialism stood against it when that stance finally crystallized. The Chinese struggle against revisionism and for a purer socialism became a powerful instrument in its disintegration and death of socialism itself.

In 1962–1964 Mao was already developing the conclusion that capitalism had been restored in the USSR and was in danger of being restored in China. Thus his chief preoccupation was not so much the external danger posed to China by U.S. encirclement and neither the escalation of the war in Vietnam nor the rise of national liberation struggles throughout the Third World. That, however, was not the consensus within the Chinese Communist party, though the party was united in the ideological struggle against Soviet revisionism. It took the massive convulsion of the Cultural Revolution to shift the CCP to Mao's positions—it was a shift that entailed, even necessitated, the deconstruction of the party in no small measure.[17]

It is of fundamental import that the leading cadres purged during the Cultural Revolution were precisely those who had been in the forefront of the ideological polemics with the Soviet party.[18] These elements were hard-line Marxist-Leninists who genuinely abhorred Khrushchev's capitula-tionist line but were in favor of united action (at the least) with the USSR when Khrushchev had been deposed and the United States escalated the Vietnam War with its bombing of a member of the socialist camp, North Vietnam. This stand was in complete consonance with the militantly anti-imperialist Chinese line of 1960–1963, and more generally 1956–1963.

These leading cadres purged during the Cultural Revolution consisted of one layer or wave of ideological and strategic anti-imperialism. The next such came from Lin Piao, albeit without the component of a renewed detente with the USSR. His line of global guerrilla war waged in and by the global village, which would encircle the metropoles, was set out in his 1965 essay on Peoples' War.[19] His ousting following the 9th Party Congress in 1969—the zenith of his power—effectively removed those elements within the Chinese Communist party who regarded the United States as the main enemy. The balance in the party now shifted to—or permitted—a drastically revised line on U.S. imperialism.

The line of the CCP's 9th Congress in 1969 appears in retrospect to have been a compromise and a transitional position. The consensus at the Congress was that both the United States and the USSR were enemies. But here were two views on which was the main enemy. Both views manifested themselves. The 9th Congress thus contained the potential of transiting to one or the other position. Lin Piao was more inclined to the view that the United States remained, on balance, the main enemy. With his ousting, the 9th Congress proved transitional to the line that the USSR was the main enemy, the United States the lesser evil—and a potential ally.

Mao had won his final war—against the Soviet revisionists, capitalist roaders and ''social imperialists''—at the expense of everything he had stood for. The enemies he had fought against for most of his life, imperialism and world capitalism, thereby triumphed. The Sino-Soviet struggle sapped and finally helped destroy the Soviet Union. It could not destroy China as a state but, when it was over, so too was China's socialism. The Sino-Soviet struggle—within and over socialism—damaged, depleted, and destroyed socialism in both countries, and therefore in the world. It was a classic example of the dialectic at work: ''Everything turns into its opposite.'' It was also the ultimate irony of the history of the 20th century.

Hugh Seton-Watson was thus uncannily prophetic when he wrote in 1963 that:

> No problem of world politics today is likely to have greater effects on the fate of the human race in the rest of this century than the relationship between Russia and China.[20]

## FURTHER QUESTIONS

A series of important questions suggest themselves: What was the political fate in both the Soviet and Chinese Communist parties of those elements who held that the United States—and not each other—was the main enemy? Why, in other words, did the inner party dynamics in both parties (doubtless coinciding with and feeding off external events and processes) evolve in such a way that the preponderantly anti-U.S. elements never succeeded in winning out within both Soviet and Chinese parties, within the same time-frame?

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This would have, at the least, attenuated Sino-Soviet hostility, perhaps even removed it; and, by diminution or removal of this negative factor, caused an upsurge in the global revolutionary struggle. Was the most powerful corrosive the perception of separate national interests? If so, i.e. if nationalism was the main factor, why did it manifest itself in or accommodate itself to a Sino-Soviet alliance in the early years, an intra-bloc ideological dispute in 1956–1960, and escalate into an open schism only in 1964, and then into a clash between bitter enemies in 1969–1971 onward? Why were the distinct national interests perceived to be antagonistic, especially at the time they were, and why did this perception win out in the inner-party struggles? Why was nationalism or the national interest, seen as residing in anti-Sovietism—and later, pro-Americanism, rather than in any other variant, i.e. a looser alliance (the re-designing could have taken place in 1964–1966) or going it alone (the Cultural Revolution model)? Were the Soviet and Chinese Communist parties less nationalistic in 1950 or 1960 than in 1970, and if so why?

These are questions that face the serious researcher on the Sino-Soviet conflict and its impact on the downfall of world communism.

It is noteworthy that the opening up of the Soviet archives has not resulted in any scholarly Western publications that shed new light upon the Sino-Soviet conflict, its origins, and turning points. Though there is a prolific output of studies on the internal realities of the Soviet bloc and on East–West relations, there are hardly any new path-breaking studies on the internal history of the world communist movement, embracing for instance new material on the downfall of the powerful German communist movement in the 1930s, the Spanish civil war, analytical Soviet reports of guerrilla movements in Latin America in the 1960s, the Sino-Soviet dispute etc.

These questions are outside the scope of the present study and would require a full-length inquiry into Sino-Soviet antagonism, based on the recently opened Soviet bloc archives. Some tentative ideas may, however, be suggested. One common factor runs through all the internecine violence in the third world revolutions from Kampuchea through Afghanistan to Grenada: that of Left fundamentalism. "Anarchism is the price the working-class movement pays for the sin of opportunism," said Lenin. In the post-1956 period the working-class movement paid the price for the sin of tepidity and timorousness (born perhaps of war-weariness of the pre-eminent Communist Party, that of the Soviet Union), with the often fanatical ultra-leftism of the Chinese Cultural Revolution, and, latterly, the fanatical barbarism of the Khmer Rouge.

The answers to the deeper questions concerning China's political behavior may reside in the nature of religious ideology in general and fundamentalism in particular. Throughout his "Critique of Political Reason,"[21] Regis Debray strongly makes the case for the correspondence between ideology, politics, and religions. The history of religions in general and of fundamentalism in particular bears a close congruency to the history of the world communist movement—and it is possible that fundamentalism of any sort results in this type of outcome. One and a half decades before Debray, the Pulitzer prize-winning journalist Harrison Salisbury identified the quintessential point:

> The battles of the Communists are more savage than other battles.... What lends special ferocity to the battle of Communist against Communist is the quasi-religious quality of doctrine and belief.... Once conflict and controversy begin between Communists there is little that can be done towards compromise, for how can a true believer break bread with the infidel? It is this quality of medieval religious war which gives to the Sino-Soviet quarrel its schismatic syndical, Talmudic quality....[22]

The corruption within the Catholic Church resulted in radical schisms and bloody violence between the establishment and the schismatic sects. One who eschews the two extremes—the corruption and hypocrisy of the established hierarchy, and the fanaticism and/or fundamentalism of the rebellious sects—and takes such a standpoint is rare but attainable in the world of ideology and politics: Lenin, Gramsci, Ho Chi Minh, Amilcar Cabral, Samora Machel, Fidel Castro, and Che Guevara. In these individuals political resoluteness and daring were never confused xwith fundamentalism.

## CONCLUSION

An age died that winter in Moscow in 1991. And with it a way of being in the world. It was an age that had begun in Russia in 1917, or in 1905, or was perhaps born earlier, in 1848, with the publication of the Communist Manifesto. It was a Promethean Age, the age of the struggle

between capitalism and socialism on a world scale; the age of Socialism and Revolution. Philosophically, intellectually, it was the age of Marxism.

In 1969 the gunshots—and rocket barrages—were aimed by revolutionary armies, the armed forces of the two principal revolutionary states, the USSR and China, at each other. In 1975–1979, the gunshots were heard between Kampuchea and Vietnam. In 1979 they were heard between China and Vietnam, two states born of titanic guerrilla wars of national liberation, waged by similar leaderships according to overlapping military doctrines.

"History is what hurts," says Fredric Jameson.[23] The present study holds up the conclusion that is most discomfiting to Marxists. The defeat was not inevitable; it was avoidable. This is an indictment, in that it implies failure to avoid defeat. The explanation advanced here is lacerating for a second reason. The defeat is held to be the result of the erroneous handling of internal contradictions, in sum, the result of fratricidal strife. External encirclement and enemy action are understood to have been successful chiefly because they impacted upon and acted through the existing internal conflicts. The end is seen as one of self-destruction: the post-mortem reveals a set of wounds that were self-inflicted.

## NOTES

[1] For example unipolar hegemony, neo-liberal globalization, the September 11 2001 attacks in New York and Washington, the spread of Islamic fundamentalism.

[2] The pioneering authority on Maoism, Stuart Schram, had been prescient when he opined as far back as 1963 that "For the moment there appears to be little possibility of meaningful dialogue, let alone of agreement between Mao Tse-tung and the United States. Yet, in the long run, Sino-American relations may well prove to be the most important single factor in shaping the world of the future." See: Stuart Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung* (New York: Praeger, 1963), p. 74.

[3] Kimmo Kiljunen, *Kampuchea: Decade of the Genocide* (London: Zed Books, 1984), p. 84.

[4] A. Doak Barnett, *Communist China and Asia* (New York: Random House, 1961), p. 337.

[5] Umberto Melotti, *Marx and the Third World* (London: Macmillan, 1971), pp. 128–140.

[6] V.I. Lenin, "Backward Europe and Advanced Asia," in *The Awakening of Asia* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1973), pp. 28–29.

[7] V.I. Lenin, "Better Fewer but Better," in *Selected Works* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1952), Vol. 11, Part 11, p. 750.

[8] Isaac Deutscher in his "Marxism, Wars and Revolutions" posthumously published an anthology of essays from four decades with an introduction by Tamara Deutscher. See: Isaac Deutscher, *Marxism, Wars & Revolutions: Essays from Four Decades*, ed. Tamara Deutscher(New York: Schocken Books, January 1985**)**, 256 p.

[9] Ibid, p. 182.

[10] J.V. Stalin, *Economic Problems of Socialism in the* USSR (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1972), pp. 30-32.

[11] Isaac Deutscher, *The Unfinished Revolution: Russia 1917–1967* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 91.

[12] William Yandell Elliot, *The Chomsky Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987), p. 251.

[13] Noam Chomsky, *Radical Priorities* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1984), p. 226.

[14] Harrison Salisbury, writing in 1969, envisaged the scenario and set out the consequences of any such rapprochement: "It would be dangerous to overlook the possibility that Mao's death could bring a sharp turn in Chinese policy, a switch back towards a line of arms-length collaboration with Moscow, a deliberate relaxation of border tensions, in ideology, and in relations with other Communist parties, an effort to minimize rather than maximize frictions. Such a right-angle turn in Chinese policy could…restore the Sino-Soviet alliance as a major actor in the world balance of power and inaugurate a new era of Russian-Chinese collaboration directed…specifically against the United States. It would confront the United States with the most critical foreign policy crisis of the century—the prospect of facing 1,000 to 1,200 million Chinese and Russians armed with nuclear weapons in bewildering array, the latest in modern military technology, striding the Eurasian supercontinent like a colossus." See: Harrison Salisbury, *The Coming War Between Russia and China* (London: Pan, 1969), p. 205.

[15] Keith Richburg, ''Back to Vietnam,'' *Foreign Affairs* (Fall 1991), pp. 111–132.

[16] ''The United States qualitatively expanded its relationship with China. As early as 1980 U.S.–Chinese cooperation assumed a more direct strategic dimension with sensitive undertakings not only toward Afghanistan but also on other matters. Thus the Soviet Union faced the growing geopolitical menace of a counter-encirclement.'' See: Zbiegniew Brzezinski, ''The Cold War and Its Aftermath,'' *Foreign Affairs* (Fall 1992), p. 42.

[17] See: ''Resolution on CPC History (1949–1981),'' adopted by the Sixth Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on June 27, 1981 (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1981).

[18] Franz Schurmann and Orville Schell, eds., *Communist China* (London: Penguin, 1968), pp. 598–602; also Mark Selden, ed., *The People's Republic of China* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1979), p. 107.

[19] Lin Piao, *The International Significance of Comrade Mao Tse-tung' s Theory of Peoples' War* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 1965), in Franz Schurmann and Orville Schell, eds., *Communist China* (London: Penguin, 1968), pp. 342–354.

[20] Hugh Seton Watson, ''The Great Schism,'' *Encounter*, 116 (London, May 1963), p. 61.

[21] Regis Debray, *Critique of Political Reason* (London: Verso), 1983.

[22] Harrison Salisbury, *The Coming War Between Russia and China*'' pp. 184–185.

[23] Fredric Jameson, *The Political Unconscious* (London: Methuen, 1981), pp. 101–102.

ON SUPR GROUP PROPOSALS

TO THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:

Sir,

We have carefully studied the article ''Next Steps for the U.S.–Russian Sustainable Partnership'' in the previous issue of *Security Index* (No. 3 (96), Summer 2011) containing recommendations by the Sustainable Partnership with Russia (SuPR) Group for building further cooperation between Russia and the United States in the area of nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation.

First and foremost, please accept our gratitude to you and your SuPR and PIR Center colleagues for your active and regular efforts to generate ideas on topical issues on the agenda of Russian–U.S. dialogue.

A number of the proposals voiced by SuPR experts have a lot in common with the Russian approaches. For example, we share the Council's conclusions on the need for the disarmament process to become multilateral, and on the absolute need for all nuclear weapons to be stationed only within the national borders of the countries to which they belong. We also agree that there is a need to develop common definitions for terms related to non-strategic nuclear weapons.

There are also some interesting ideas in the Group's proposals for mechanisms of potential cooperation with the United States and NATO on missile defense, which include integration of the decision-making process for launching missile interceptors. Naturally, putting such proposals into practice will only be possible if the key problem is resolved—i.e. the problem of guarantees that the American and NATO missile defense systems are not aimed against the Russian strategic nuclear forces.

At the same time, a number of the proposals made by SuPR require additional comprehensive review. For example, we doubt the viability of the idea of launching before the end of this year substantive Russian–U.S. negotiations on further nuclear cuts. We believe that the current priority is to accumulate practical experience of implementing the New START treaty and to produce an accurate evidence-based assessment of the quality and viability of that treaty. Given the circumstances that came to light during the ratification process for the treaty, it is important to see how the treaty's basic principles of parity, as well as equal and shared security, are working in practice. Such an analysis will enable us to make detailed and well-informed plans for new steps towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

Also, given the lack of any progress in resolving a wide range of key military-strategic problems (imbalances in conventional forces and plans for creating strategic offensive weapons with non-nuclear warheads, for placing weapons in space, and for unilateral creation of a global missile defense system by the Americans), it is difficult to see how we can have a serious conversation on tactical nuclear weapons.

SuPR recommendations on active Russian–U.S. cooperation in achieving a more universal participation of the Middle Eastern states in the nuclear nonproliferation regime, as well as on

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establishing dialogue with those states on the peaceful use of nuclear energy, appear broadly justified. But it is important to maintain a balanced approach to the issue of what specific steps our countries should make. Obviously, Washington has more leverage to persuade Israel to join the non-proliferation treaty (NPT). But for now the United States is not making any discernible practical steps in this area.

Washington could also make very useful practical steps to achieve a speedy entry into force of the comprehensive test ban treaty (CTBT). Russia has already ratified the treaty and is working to achieve universal membership. But the Barak Obama administration seems in no hurry to submit the treaty for ratification, despite its numerous public statements to that effect.

The same can be said about the SuPR proposals on establishing nuclear fuel banks. A guaranteed reserve of low-enriched uranium, managed by the IAEA, already exists on Russian territory. Any IAEA member state that is in compliance with its nonproliferation commitments can request a supply of fuel from that reserve. Meanwhile, the nuclear fuel bank being proposed by America's nuclear threat initiative (NTI) exists only on paper.

We do not quite agree with the SuPR notion that the United States and Russia should bear the brunt of the responsibility for ensuring the success of the 2012 conference on establishing a zone free of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their delivery means in the Middle East. Responsibility for establishing such a zone lies primarily with the actual states in the region. It is on those states that the success of the 2012 conference will depend. Russia, the United States, and Britain, as NPT depositaries, are taking active steps to implement the decisions of the 2010 NPT Review Conference regarding the establishment of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East. Efforts are being made to select a candidate for the job of special coordinator on WMD-free zone issues, and to select the host country for the 2012 conference. Speaking of which, we would welcome any practical contribution by international NGOs to organizing the conference and securing the participation of every single Middle Eastern state.

As for the Iranian nuclear program, our main objective now is to persuade the United States to adopt a more realistic approach to formulating a strategy of dialogue with Iran. It is crucially important to show Tehran that there is ''light at the end of the tunnel'' by clearly defining the prospect of lifting all sanctions and enabling further development of its peaceful nuclear program once all the demands contained in UN Security Council and IAEA Board of Governors resolutions have been met.

Let us also take into account that the recommendations prepared by PIR Center based on the results of the SuPR meetings represent a compilation of ideas and proposals voiced by the participating experts rather than a consensus. We believe that the resulting menu of ideas is useful as a roundup of the views existing in the expert community regarding the future of the strategic dialogue between Russia and the United States. We see it a useful stimulus for stepping up the intellectual effort in this area.

On the whole, the proposals made by SuPR are an important contribution to the global process of analyzing the security problems the world is facing. That process requires all the parties to adopt creative and non-standard approaches. In our day-to-day work we take into account the conclusions contained in the information and analysis materials produced by PIR Center.

We are interested in developing fruitful cooperation with PIR Center and SuPR.

*Mikhail **Ulyanov***
*Director*
*Department on Security and Disarmament*
*Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation*
*Smolenskaya-Sennaya pl., 32/34*
*Moscow, 121000, Russia*

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

**Al Badi**, Awadh, Dr., is the Director of the Department of Research and Studies at King Faisal Centre for Research and Islamic Studies (Riyadh, Saudi Arabia). E-mail address: *awadhb@ yahoo.com* (pp. 93–97).

**Demidov**, Oleg, is Junior Research Fellow in the PIR Center. Graduated from School of Public Administration of Moscow State University. In 2006–2009 completed additional specialization program in Higher School of Translation and Interpretation in Moscow State University. Currently is a postgraduate student at the Department of political science at Moscow State Institute of International Relations. The dissertation's thesis deals with the influence of transnational actors on armed conflicts in the region of North Caucasus. Previously held the position of Project Coordinator at the Center of Political and International Studies (CPIS) (pp. 23–36).

**Evstafyev**, Dmitry, Dr., is the Director of the Department of the Communication Strategy in TNK-BP (Moscow, Russia). Graduated in 1989 from the History Department at Moscow State University's Asia and Africa Institute, served as a junior research associate, and then as a research associate, at the U.S. and Canada Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS). In 1995–1998 he worked as a senior research fellow at the Russian Institute of Strategic Research (RISI). Later served as a senior research associate and project director at the PIR Center. In 2001–2006 worked for the *KROS* Public Relations Development Company, serving part of that time as Vice President, for the *Techsnabexport* (TENEX) as Director of the Public Relations Department and for the National Laboratory for Foreign Policy as Deputy Director General. The PIR Center Advisory Board and *Security Index* Editorial Board member (pp. 91–92).

**Fedorov**, Yury, Dr., is an Associate Fellow in the Chatham House—The Royal Institute of International Affairs (London, UK). *Security Index* Editorial Board member. Graduated from Moscow State University's Physics Department. Worked at the Sociological Research Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences, and headed the section on disarmament issues at the Institute for International Economy and International Relations (IMEMO) RAS. He also worked in the international division of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee, after which, in 1991, he became Deputy Head of the political science department at MGIMO. In 1998 he became section head, and in 2000 head of the division on military policy research at the U.S. and Canada Institute RAS. In 2001–2002 served as the PIR Center Deputy Director. In 2002–2003 was Deputy Director of the Institute of Applied International Research. He is the author of a monograph entitled ''Substrategic Nuclear Weapons and Russian Security Interests'' (2001). E-mail address: *yufedorov@rambler.ru* (pp. 59–70).

**Fedotov**, Yury, Ambassador, is the Under-Secretary General of the United Nations, the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). He is also Director General of the UN Office in Vienna. His roles include the promotion the reforms launched by the Secretary General to adapt the UN to the global challenges of the 21st century. He graduated from the Moscow State Institute of International Relations in 1971. He has held many foreign service positions to the UN and at Russian embassies in Algeria and India. In 2002 he was appointed the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs (Russia) and held this post until 2005. From 2005 until 2010 he held the post of Ambassador of Russia to the United Kingdom (pp. 5–11).

**Ivanov**, Igor, Ambassador, Dr., is Professor of Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO); Member of the Supervisory Council of the International Luxembourg Forum on Preventing Nuclear Catastrophe, Member of the European Council on Tolerance and Reconciliation; the member of the *Lukoil* oil company Board of Directors. In 1969 he graduated at the Maurice Thorez Moscow Institute of Foreign Languages. He joined the Soviet Foreign Ministry in 1973. In 1998–2004—Russian Foreign Minister, later—Secretary of the Security Council of Russia (2004–2007); previously—Deputy Foreign Minister (1993–1998), RF/USSR Ambassador to Spain (1991–1993). In 2011 he took seat in the Advisory Council of The Hague Institute for Global Justice (pp. 85–89).

**Jayatilleka**, Dayan, Ambassador, Dr., is Sri Lanka's Ambassador to France with accreditation to Spain and Portugal, and Sri Lanka's Permanent Delegate to UNESCO. He is an Honorary Senior Fellow of the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS) at the National University of Singapore (NUS). He has got his PhD at the Griffith University in Brisbane. A Senior Lecturer at the University of Colombo, he was a Visiting Senior Fellow at John Hopkins University, Washington. In 2007–2009 he served as Sri Lanka's Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva. He also has served on several international panels, including the UN Human Rights Council's Inter Governmental Working Group on the effective implementation of the Durban Declaration which he chaired, in addition to chairing the Governing body of the International Labor Organization. He was Vice President of the Human Rights Council, and Coordinator of ''General and Comprehensive Nuclear Disarmament'' of the UN Conference on Disarmament as well as of the Asian Group of UNCTAD. Member of the PIR Center's International Expert Group (pp. 99–108).

**Khodakova,** Alexandra**,** graduated in 2011 from the World Politics faculty of the State Academic University of Humanitarian Sciences. In May 2009 worked as an intern at the NATO Headquarter in Brussels and at the Allied Command Operations Headquarter in Mons. In April 2010 took an internship at the University of Maryland. In April 2009 took a trainee program at the ITAR TASS News Agency (pp. 37–46).

**Klyuchanskaya**, Svetlana, is a PhD candidate of the Tomsk State University (Russia). In 2008 graduated from Novosibirsk State University of Economics and Management (International Relations and Law Department). Participant of the International Summer schools of Tomsk State University in 2008–2009 and PIR Center International Summer School on Global Security. PIR Center intern in 2010. Research interests include nonproliferation policy issues in the region of ASEAN. E-mail address: *babianna@mail.ru* (pp. 47–57).

**Krupnov**, Yury, is the Head of the Development Movement and Chairman of the Supervisory Council of the Institute for Demography, Migration and Regional Development. Has a rank of the State Advisor of the Russian Federation of the 3 class. Graduated from the agricultural faculty of the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia in 1984. In 1989–2000 worked in the Russian Academy of Education. In 2000–2002 served as Advisor of the Information and Educational Department in the Russian Ministry of Education. In 2007–2008 he was an Assistant to the Plenipotentiary Representative of the Russian President to the Far Eastern Federal District. E-mail address: *kroupnov@gmail.com* (pp. 71–83).

**Levinson**, Lev, is an expert of the Human Rights Institute, the Head of the ''New Anti-Drugs Policy'' Program. The Head of the Russian Human Rights Library, the Member of the Advisory Council of the Human Rights Ombudsman of the Russian Federation. E-mail address: *levlev@yandex.ru* (pp. 71–83).

**Orlov**, Vladimir, Dr., is the founder and President of the PIR Center— the Russian Center for Policy Studies and Editor-in-Chief of the *Security Index* journal. He is a member of the Public Board at the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation. Graduated from the Russian Foreign Ministry's Moscow State Institute of International Affairs (MGIMO). In 2001–2002 he served as UN consultant on disarmament and nonproliferation education by appointment of the UN Secretary General. Dr. Orlov regularly publishes his views in Russian and foreign periodicals and has edited more than a dozen books on international security issues, published both in Russia and aboard. Dr. Orlov continues to teach on a regular basis, giving lectures on Russian foreign policy and WMD nonproliferation. E-mail address: *orlov@pircenter.org* (pp. 1–4).

**Stoudmann**, Gérard, Ambassador, is the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe for Organizational Development and Reform (from November 2009). He studied law at the University of Lausanne and International Relations at the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva. He held various positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs,

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Ministry of Defense, and Ministry of Economy. In 1997, he was appointed Ambassador and elected Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights in Warsaw. In 2002–2006 he was Director of the Geneva Centre for Security Policy. In 2006 he served as UN High Representative for the Elections in Cote d'Ivoire. Lately he served as Special Envoy of the Swiss Foreign Ministry for Francophone Africa (pp. 19–21).

**Trubnikov,** Vyacheslav, Ambassador, General of the Army, graduated from the Moscow State Institute of International Relations in 1967 and started to work for the First Chief Directorate (Foreign Intelligence) of KGB. In 1971–1977 he worked in India under cover of a correspondent of the *RIA Novosti*. In 1977–1984 he worked in the central office of the First Chief Directorate. In 1984–1990 he worked in Bangladesh and India. In 1990–1991 he was the Chief of the Department of the South East Asia of the KGB. In 1992 he became the first deputy of the Director of Foreign Intelligence Service (Russia). In 1996–2000 he served as the Director of Foreign Intelligence Service. From 2000 to 2004 he was the First Deputy of Foreign Minister of Russia. In 2004–2009 he served as Ambassador of Russia to India (pp. 13–17).

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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**International Affairs**, journal, Moscow, Russia

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**Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO University) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation**, Moscow, Russia

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**Nonproliferation for Global Security Foundation (NPSGlobal),** Buenos Aires, Argentina

**Novikov** Vladimir, Dr., Senior Research Officer, Russian Institute for Strategic Studies (RISI), Moscow, Russia

**OSCE Academy**, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

**Parkhalina** Tatyana, Dr., Deputy Director, Institute of Scientific Information on Social Sciences (INION), Director, Center for European Security Studies, INION, Moscow, Russia

**Ponomarev-Stepnoi** Nikolai, Dr, Prof., Acad., Moscow, Russia

**Radchuk** Alexander, Dr., Advisor to the Chief of General Staff, Russian Armed Forces, Moscow, Russia

**Reshetnikov** Leonid, Dr., Lieutenant-General, Director, Russian Institute for Strategic Studies (RISS), Moscow, Russia

**Rybachenkov** Vladimir, Dr., Leading Research Associate, Center for Arms Control, Energy and Environmental Studies, Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology (MIPT), Moscow, Russia

**Satanovsky** Yevgeny, Dr., Prof., President, Institute for Middle East Studies, Moscow, Russia

**Savelyev** Alexander, Dr., Head of Strategic Studies Department, Center for International Security, Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO), Moscow, Russia

**Semin** Valery, Dr., Prof., Senior Counselor, Permanent Mission of the Russia to NATO, Belgium, Brussels

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**Tuzmukhamedov** Bakhtiyar, Dr., Prof., member, Trial Chamber II of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, Counselor, Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation, Moscow, Russia

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**Voronkov** Vladimir, Dr., Director, Department of European Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Moscow, Russia

**Yesin** Viktor, Dr., Prof., Col.-Gen. (ret.), Advisor to the Commander-in-Chief, Strategic Missile Forces, Ministry of Defense, Moscow, Russia

**Zababakhin All-Russian Scientific Research Institute of Technical Physics** (VNIITF), Federal Nuclear Center, Snezhinsk, Russia

## INTERNATIONAL EXPERT GROUP (INTEG)

**Arguello** Irma, Founder and Chair, Nonproliferation for Global Security Foundation (NPSGlobal), Buenos Aires, Argentina

**Buzhinsky** Evgeny, Lieutenant-General, Head, International Treaty Directorate of the Main Department of International Military Cooperation of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation (2002–2009), Moscow, Russia

**Dunay** Pal, Director, International Training Course (ITC), Geneva Centre for Security Policy, Geneva, Switzerland

**Eggert** Konstantin von, Member, Royal Institute of International Relations, Moscow, Russia

**Jayatilleka** Dayan, Sri Lanka's Ambassador to France, Sri Lanka's Permanent Delegate to UNESCO, Paris, France

**Karaveli** Halil, Senior Fellow, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute and Silk Road Studies Program Joint Center, Ankara, Turkey

**Kortunov** Andrey, Dr., President, the New Eurasia Foundation, Moscow, Russia

**Potter** William, Prof., Director, James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies and Sam Nunn and Richard Lugar Professor of Nonproliferation Studies Monterey Institute of International Studies, Monterey, USA

**Ramalho** Antonio Jorge, Full Professor of International Relations, University of Braslia, Brasilia, Brazil

**Sager** Abdulaziz, Chairman and Founder, Gulf Research Center, President of Sager Group Holding, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

**Sanaei** Mehdi, Head of the Iranian Center for Research on Russia, Central Asia and Caucasus, Professor of Tehran University, Tehran, Iran

**Satanovsky** Yevgeny, Dr., Prof., President, Institute of Middle East Studies, Moscow, Russia

**Tian** Chun-Sgeng, Professor, Deputy Director, China Association for Economic Studies on Russia and Central and Eastern Europe, Beijing, China

**Tolipov** Farkhod, Political Analyst, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

**Unnikrishnan** Nandan, vice-president, *Observer* Research Foundation, Delhi, India

## SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIP WITH RUSSIA (SuPR) GROUP

**Antonov** Anatoly, Amb., Dr., Deputy Minister, Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, Moscow, Russia

**Buzhinskiy** Evgeny, Lieutenant-General, Head, International Treaty Directorate of the Main Department of International Military Cooperation, Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation (2002–2009), Moscow, Russia

**Cirincione** Joseph, President, Ploughshares Fund, Washington, D.C., USA

**Elleman** Michael, Senior Fellow, Missile Defense, The International Institute for Strategic Studies – US (IISS-US), Washington, D.C., USA

**Gankin** Leonid, Head, International Department, *Kommersant* Daily, Moscow, Russia

**Hoffman** David, Foreign Editor, *Washington Post* (2001–2009), Washington, D.C., USA

**Holloway** David, Dr., Prof., Member of the Board, Ploughshares Fund, San Francisco, USA

**Orlov** Vladimir, Dr., President, PIR Center, Moscow, Russia

**Pifer** Steven, Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C., USA

**Spassky** Nikolay, Amb., Dr., Deputy Director General, *Rosatom* State Corporation for Atomic Energy of the Russian Federation, Moscow, Russia

**Squassoni** Sharon, Director and Senior Fellow, Proliferation Prevention Program, Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Washington, D.C., USA

**Zevelev** Igor, Dr., Director, Moscow Office, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Moscow, Russia