

PIR CENTER E-BULLETIN  
№ 2 (537)  
MAY – JUNE, 2024

**GLOBAL  
SECURITY**

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**BRICS**

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**ARMS CONTROL AND  
NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION**

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**ATOMIC ENERGY**

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**IRAN AND  
NORTH KOREA**

# YADERNY KONTROL





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# PIR QUOTES

## «MY SPIRIT FIGHTS FOR BETTER RIGHTS...»

On June 6, Pushkin Day, also known as the Russian Language Day, commemorating the great writer and poet Alexander Sergeevich Pushkin's birthday is celebrated. Notably, 2024 is his anniversary, which makes the celebration even more significant and valuable.

In this regard, we are pleased to share that on June 26, PIR Center held the International Timerbaev Debates in the frames of the XXIII International School on Global Security, which takes place from June 22 to June 30 in Zvenigorod. The topic of the debates was indeed raised in one of **Pushkin's** poems – "Iz Pindemonte" (1836).

### [Read more](#)

*"I value little those much-vaunted rights  
that have for some the lure of dizzy heights;  
I do not fret because the gods refuse  
to let me wrangle over revenues,  
or thwart the wars of kings; and 'tis to me  
of no concern whether the press be free  
to dupe poor oafs or whether censors cramp  
the current fancies of some scribbling scamp.  
These things are words, words, words. My spirit  
fights  
for deeper Liberty, for better rights.*

*Whom shall we serve – the people or the State?  
The poet does not care – so let them wait.  
To give account to none, to be one's own  
vassal and liege, to please oneself alone,  
to bend neither one's neck nor inner schemes  
nor conscience for obtaining that which seems  
power but is a flunkey's coat; to stroll  
in one's own wake, admiring the divine  
beauties of Nature and to feel one's soul  
melt in the glow of man's inspired design  
– this is the blessing, these are rights!"*



Ivan Aivazovsky  
Evening at Sea, 1858

# HOT TOPIC

## ATTACKS ON ZAPOROZHYE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT: HOW TO PREVENT NUCLEAR TERRORISM?



**Mr. Sviatoslav Arov**

The Zaporozhye nuclear power plant (ZNPP) has been under Ukrainian shelling for more than two years. Though Russia has urged the IAEA to condemn the attacks, no practical steps have been taken. Similarly, the US and the West are not seeking to condemn the Kiev regime as well.

Callings by several countries, as well as the IAEA, for “bringing ZNPP back” have no ground, are not substantiated, and are another manifestation of the West’s double standards.

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## LONG TIME NO STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP: SOURCES OF (IN)COHERENCE BETWEEN RUSSIA AND IRAN



**Mr. Adlan Margoev**

Over the past 30 years the coverage of Russia-Iran relationships has been characterized by two intriguing features. Each time they seemed to be on the rise, politicians, scholars, and journalists would claim they reached the level they had never been in history. And each time they debated whether these relationships constituted a strategic partnership.

While there have been instances of cooperation, the extent to which Russia and Iran can be considered strategic partners is open to interpretation.

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# EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

**DR. ALEXEY ARBATOV: «PAST TREATIES HAVE FULFILLED THEIR PURPOSE: THEY HAVE ESTABLISHED SUCH STRATEGIC STABILITY THAT EVEN IN THE CURRENT ALMOST DIRECT CONFRONTATION, NOBODY WORRIES ABOUT THE THREAT OF STRATEGIC WEAPONS»**

PIR Center conducted an interview with Dr. Alexey **Arbatov**, Head of the Center for International Security at IMEMO RAS, member of PIR Center's Advisory Board. During the conversation, we discussed the concept and main principles of strategic stability; the difference between the launch under attack and the launch on warning concept; and the future of the Russian-American dialogue on arms control.



The interview was conducted by Anton **Anufriev**, PIR Center Information & Publications Program intern.

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## H.E. SERGEY RYABKOV: «THE BRICS SUMMIT, SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 2024, WILL BE THE CULMINATION OF THE RUSSIAN YEAR IN BRICS. WE INTEND TO CONTINUE THE TRADITION OF ORGANIZING ON THE SIDELINES MEETINGS WITH DEVELOPING COUNTRIES»

Interest in BRICS has steadily increased amidst significant geopolitical challenges and dramatic global changes. The growing influence of BRICS countries and their successes in economic, cultural, scientific, and technological fields highlight their potential to shape the international agenda.



PIR Center interviewed H.E. Sergey **Ryabkov**, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation. During the conversation, we discussed the increasing role of BRICS in the world, the reasons for that, the Russian chairship in BRICS in 2024, and Russian policy aims and priorities within the Association this year.

The interview was conducted by Sviatoslav **Arov**, PIR Center Research Fellow.

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## AMBASSADOR THOMAS GREMINGER: «WE NEED POLITICAL COMMITMENT, WHICH THEN GIVES THE SPACE FOR GOOD, ENGAGED, COMMITTED DIPLOMATS TO DO THEIR WORK»

PIR Center interviewed Ambassador Thomas **Greminger**, Director of the Geneva Center for Security Policy and former Secretary General of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (2017-2020). During the conversation, we discussed the future of the P5 process and the role of the *Nuclear Five* (Russia, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and China) in preserving the NPT in the context of the contemporary geopolitical environment and emerging challenges.



The interview was conducted by Ksenia **Mineeva**, PIR Center Information & Publications Program Coordinator.

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## DR. KIRILL BARSKY: «GREATER EURASIAN PARTNERSHIP IS A CHANCE TO GET BACK TO NORMAL INTERACTION BETWEEN STATES AND MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL COOPERATION BASED ON INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW»

PIR Center interviewed Dr. Kirill **Barsky**, Head of the Department of Diplomacy at MGIMO University, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary. During the conversation, we discussed the future of the “Greater Eurasian Partnership,” the ambivalence of the contemporary global security architecture, and the modern security threats and interstate political tensions hindering deeper cooperation.



The interview was conducted by Elena **Karnaukhova**, PIR Center Deputy Director – Education and Training Program Director.

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# PIR POST

## REVITALIZING THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN NUCLEAR WEAPON-FREE ZONE IN THE ERA OF GREAT POWER RIVALRY



**Mr. Nigel Li**



Signed in 1995 and entering into force two years later, the Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) is a treaty between the 10 ASEAN member-states. Parties to the treaty are obligated not to develop, manufacture, acquire, possess, or control nuclear weapons within the zone. The protocols of the treaty remain open for signature by the nuclear weapon states (NWS), which none have signed. Doing so would mean that the NWS would forgo the threat or use of nuclear weapons against any state party to the treaty.

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## UNITY IN DIVERSITY: CAN BRICS MEMBERS COOPERATE ON SECURITY ISSUES?



**Dr. Vladimir Orlov**



It seems that not so long ago, BRICS was just beginning to find its mission. In 2008, we, experts from Russia, China, India and Brazil, tried to look into the future, but even the boldest forecasts were limited by modest coordination models on financial and economic issues.

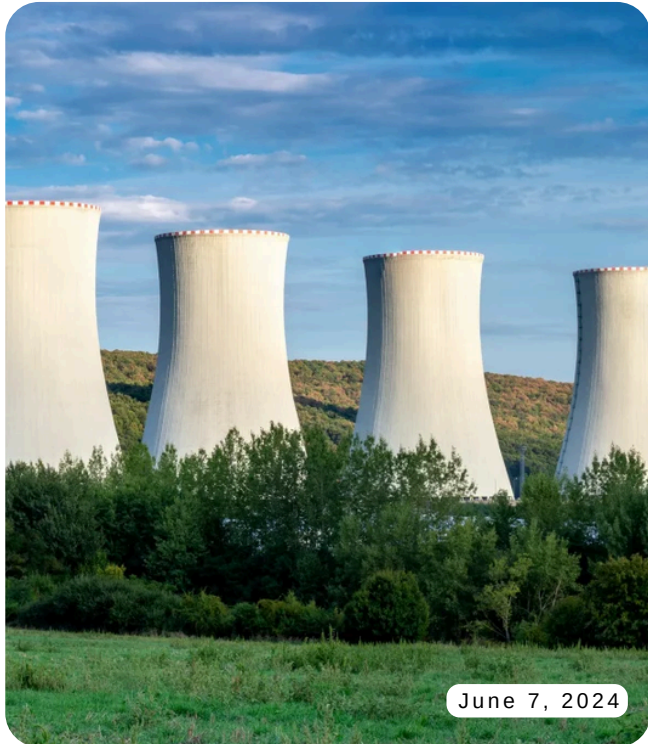
The road ahead will be mastered by walking. The progressive movement of the BRICS made it possible to include the “Peace and International Security” basket in the spotlight.

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## EUROPEAN CONUNDRUM: TO PHASE OUT OR NOT TO PHASE OUT NUCLEAR INDUSTRIES?



**Ms. Veronika Terpigova**



In 2019, the European Commission approved an economic development strategy called The European Green Deal. Its main long-term goal is to achieve carbon neutrality in Europe by 2050. In the short term, the goal has been set to increase the EU's greenhouse gas emission reduction target for 2030 to at least 50% and towards 55% compared with 1990 levels. Each EU member state must submit a revised National Energy and Climate Plan for 2021-2030. To achieve the set goals, all sectors of the economy are supposed to be reformed, but the leading role is still given to the energy sector.

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## DETECTING NORTH KOREA AND IRAN: ARE SANCTIONS A RIGHT WAY FORWARD?



**Mr. Maksim Sorokin**



Traditionally, deterrence is perceived as the *persuasion of one's opponent that the costs and/or risks of a given course of action outweigh its benefits*. In other words, it involves the threat or use of force to uphold the status quo and alter an adversary's conduct.

Nonetheless, understanding the status quo as the relative nuclear stability, established throughout the Cold War, it is imperative to say that it has been significantly challenged in recent years. The reason is the revisionist nuclear politics of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

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# PIR REPORT

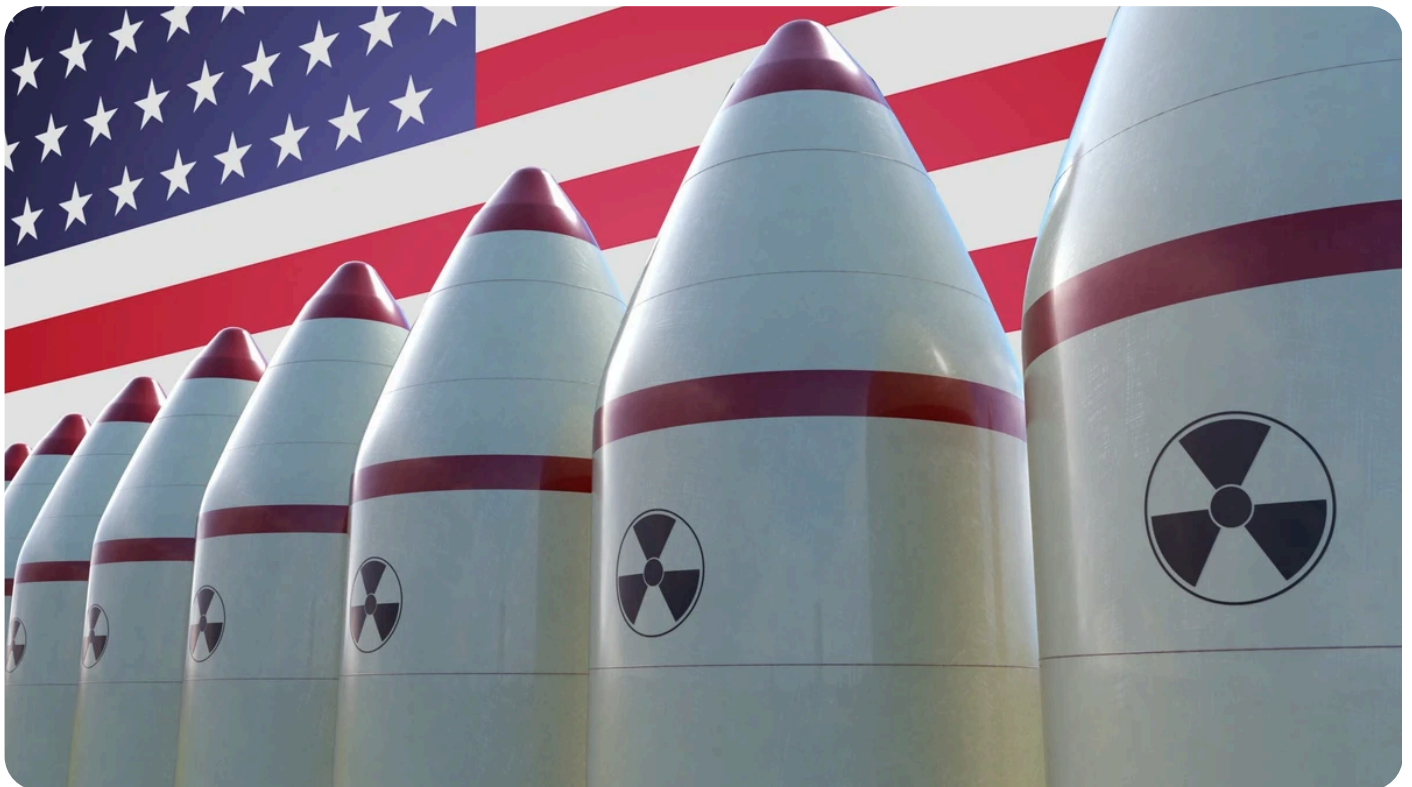
## THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ARMS CONTROL ASSOCIATION HAS TAKEN PLACE: ARE CHANGES IN U.S. NUCLEAR POLICY POSSIBLE?

On June 6, the annual meeting of the well-known U.S. non-governmental organization, the Arms Control Association, was held in Washington. Modern complexities within American nuclear policy were scrutinized, with significant emphasis being placed on the modernization of the U.S. nuclear program, its doctrinal shifts, and strategic posturing vis-à-vis Russia, China, Iran, and the DPRK.



Alexandra **Zubenko**, MA Candidate, International Dual Degree M.A. Program “Global Security, Nuclear Policy, and WMD Nonproliferation” (MGIMO-MIIS-PIR Center), attended the meeting. We are pleased to share the principal findings Alexandra noted from the event.

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Hildur Nilsen Prahl  
Check Mate in Three Moves, 1885

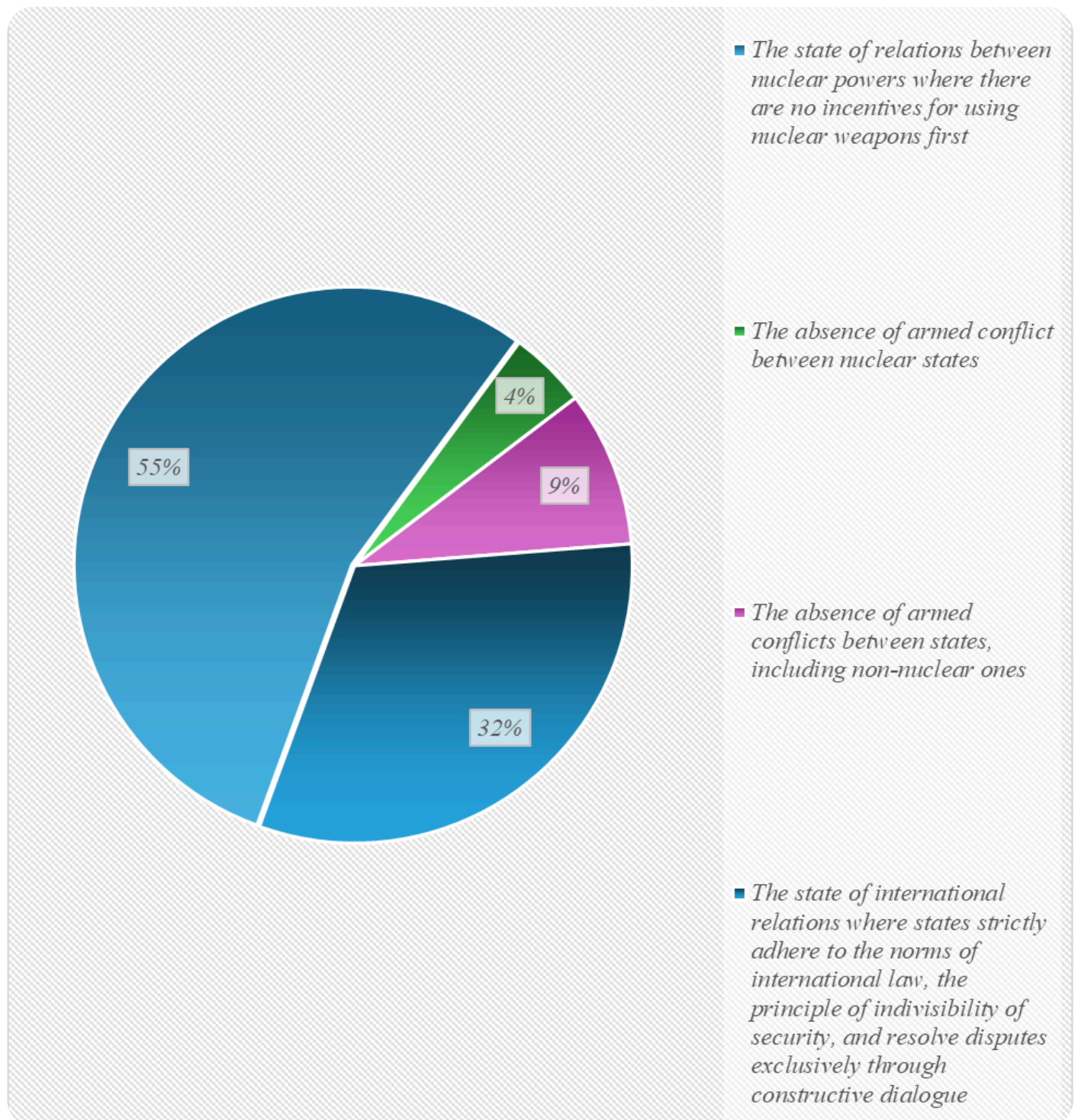
# SURVEY

DOES THE POSSESSION OF NUCLEAR  
WEAPONS PROVIDE A GUARANTEE OF THE  
SECURITY OF A STATE?

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# RESULTS OF THE MARCH-APRIL PIR CENTER SURVEY

## WHAT SHOULD BE MEANT BY *STRATEGIC STABILITY* IN CASE OF FUTURE BILATERAL OR MULTILATERAL TALKS ON ARMS CONTROL?



# NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN

INTERVIEW OF DR. VLADIMIR ORLOV WITH H.E. SERGEY  
RYABKOV: FURTHER SANCTIONS AGAINST IRAN  
POINTLESS, 2012



*The Iranian nuclear problem is a multi-faceted issue, which is tightly interlinked with many other problems on the international agenda. For more than a decade we have been facing a paradoxical situation; all our attempts to find a resolution to the problems related to the Iranian nuclear program are not yielding any results, even though these efforts have included elements of pressure as well as elements of dialogue, i.e. attempts at political engagement of the Iranian side to discuss the problem.*

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# BOOK REVIEWS

## VALDAI: WHAT LESSONS OR WARFARE HAS THE WORLD LEARNED SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE CONFLICT IN UKRAINE?



**Economic Statecraft: Lessons of The Conflict In Ukraine // Valdai Discussion Club Report. 2023.**

**Mr. Sviatoslav Arov**

Starting in February 2022, the situation in Ukraine has rapidly escalated into a military conflict on a scale that Europe has not seen since World War II (WWII) (1939-1945). The conflict involves large concentration of ground forces and a broad range of modern weapons. It is radically different from the conflicts of the past few decades when technologically advanced powers more or less successfully conducted military operations against an adversary that is much weaker technologically.

Special Military Operation of Russia in Ukraine has revealed a number of characteristics of modern conflicts, many of which can be applied to other conflicts, and also revealed security problems that European countries had swept under the carpet for decades.

Firstly, manpower shortages limit the operations even for a modern and well-equipped army. Secondly, the existing production levels of conventional arms and ammunition do not correspond to the conditions of a new type of conflict; tanks, artillery, armored combat vehicles are also growing in importance. Thirdly, defense expenditures at current levels are insufficient to prepare for a large-scale conflict. An increased spending will be needed to modernize the military-industrial complex, to produce more weapons and maintain the army. In addition, new technologies are becoming crucial in modern conflicts.

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# PIR TEST

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING *INTERNATIONAL TREATIES* DOES NOT INCLUDE THE PROVISIONS ON PREVENTING THE DEPLOYMENT OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION (WMD) IN OUTER SPACE?



- a. Declaration of Legal Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space (1963)
- b. Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (1967)
- c. Proposed Prevention of an Arms Race in Space (PAROS) Treaty (2008-present)
- d. Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (1979)

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# UNVEILING THE ANSWER TO THE PREVIOUS PIR TEST

WHICH OF THE LISTED *FALSE ALARM INCIDENTS* WAS NOT RELATED TO TECHNICAL PROBLEMS WITH NUCLEAR EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS?




- a. November 9, 1979 (USA)
- b. June 3, 1980 (USA)
- c. September 26, 1983 (*The Man Who Saved the World*, USSR)
- d. January 25, 1995 (*Norwegian Rocket Incident*, Russia)

**Correct answer:** d. January 25, 1995 (*Norwegian Rocket Incident*, Russia)

# GOSSIP COLUMN

Ambassador Roland M. Timerbaev was one of the authors of the NPT and founders of the international nuclear nonproliferation regime, a Soviet and Russian Ambassador, and our colleague at PIR Center for many years (1994–2010). He often became bored and restless at major international conferences because he did not like to listen to the platitudes that were often repeated there and was very happy to have coffee breaks. It was live communication with real people — exactly what he really valued — and the opportunity to learn the latest news, as well as unconfirmed information and *expert gossip* in the corridors, on the sidelines, over coffee... At such moments, Ambassador Timerbaev would joyfully say: “Well, now is the time for some good gossip”.

Hence the title of this column. PIR Center is not responsible for the accuracy of what our employees and authors heard in the corridors and on the margins of the conferences and told us without reference to the source. Although we know what are these sources.

 *We've heard the gossip that there is an increasing risk of possible provocations from the Kiev regime and the countries of the West in the context of the South Ukraine nuclear power plant. Though the plant is currently operating in a regular mode, Ukraine may attempt to blame Russia for actions allegedly directed against its safety. Kiev sees the unwinding of “nuclear anxiety” as more than just tempting. Some experts at the IAEA have begun to talk about their concerns about ensuring the safety of the South Ukraine and Rivne nuclear power plants; however, they have not made any public statements so far.*

The South Ukraine NPP (SUNPP) is situated on the shores of the Yuzhny Bug River near Yuzhnoukrainsk in southern Ukraine. It consists of three VVER-1000 reactors. Construction of this nuclear power plant began in the spring of 1975. The first power unit was commissioned in December 1982, followed by the second and third units in 1985 and 1989, respectively.

SUNPP feeds about 17-18 thousand gigawatt-hours of electricity into the country's power grid during the year, which accounts for over 10% of electricity production in Ukraine and about a quarter of its output at Ukrainian nuclear power plants.

Following the beginning of the Special Military Operation, the work of SUNPP has periodically encountered failures. In November 2022, due to the destruction of the power grids, the external power supply of SUNPP was disrupted. According to the IAEA, the plant has stopped receiving electricity through one of the three power lines. It is worth noting that the Zaporozhye NPP is connected to the same line, and in November 2022, the plant was subjected to unprecedented attacks by the Armed Forces of Ukraine. As a result, the capacity of one of the three SUNPP reactors decreased by 50%.

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# OPEN COLLAR

## DIPLOMAT SHOULD BE PERMANENT OPTIMIST – INTERVIEW WITH AMBASSADOR VENKATESH VARMA

*To achieve excellence in this field of diplomacy and expertise in this field of arms control, disarmament and nonproliferation, it is important to maintain a certain professional discipline in one's approach and attitude. Professional discipline involves a constant process of learning and relearning.*



*I think one should have varied and persistent interests. If you are committed to your objectives, any temporary difficulties can be handled. Practical matters should always be balanced with life values. It is these values that give you the mental stamina to deal with long-term issues.*

*When working, I normally listen to Mozart. Very soft and rhythmic music is good while reading something. Reading, in its turn, is always good for inspiration and new ideas. It is said that if you want new ideas, then read old books.*



*To stay competitive in your field over a period of time requires that a person combine both diplomatic professionalism and expertise and the best way for diplomats to keep up with the expertise is to be in touch with good think tanks and good research bodies, like PIR Center.*

*Keep your mind open, and do not be swept away by anyone. You keep your own personality, but you enrich your mindset by reading what others have written and by the inspiration that they provide. Also, draw inspiration from the culture and civilizational values of your country, but always in association with respect for other cultures and civilizations.*



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# PIR TOAST

ON BEHALF OF PIR CENTER, WE WISH HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES WHO CELEBRATED THEIR BIRTHDAY IN MAY-JUNE:



**Kuchinov**, Vladimir P., Associate Professor at the Department of International Relations of the Institute of International Relations, National Research Nuclear University MEPhI, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2018.

**May 7**



**Palazzolo**, Ekaterina V., Head of External Affairs, Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund, Geneva, Switzerland.

**May 11**



**Lysenko**, Mikhail N., Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary (retired), Deputy Director of the International Law Department at MGIMO University, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2004.

**May 12**



**Müller**, Harald, Professor emeritus of International Relations at Goethe University Frankfurt, Principal Investigator of Peace Research Center, Prague, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 1997.

**May 13**



**Antonov**, Anatoly I., Ambassador of the Russian Federation to the United States of America.

**May 15**



**Zhiye**, Ji, President of the Chinese Academy of Contemporary International Relations, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2007.

**May 16**



**Naumkin**, Vitaly V., President at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2014.

**May 21**



**Baev**, Pavel K., Research Professor at the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2007.

**May 22**



**Ermakov**, Vladimir I., Director of the Foreign Ministry Department for Nonproliferation and Arms Control.

**May 24**



**Belyaeva**, Marina P., Director, Department of International Cooperation, State Atomic Energy Corporation ROSATOM.

**May 28**



**Akhtamzyan**, Ildar A., Associate Professor, Department of International Relations and Russian Foreign Policy, MGIMO University, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2002.

**May 31**



**Evstafiev**, Dmitry G, Professor of the Department of Theory of Law and State at Peoples' Friendship University of Russia.

**May 31**



**Kirichenko**, Elina V., Head of Group, US Economic Research Group, Center for North American Studies, Primakov National Research Institute of World Economy and International Relations, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 1994.

**June 4**



**Lukatsky**, Alexey V., Business Consultant on Information Security, Cisco Systems, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2014.

**June 4**



**Nikonov**, Vyacheslav A., First Deputy Chairman of the Committee on International Affairs, Russian State Duma.

**June 5**



**Murogov**, Victor M., Head, International Center for Nuclear Education NRNU MEPhI; Chief Scientist, Kurchatov Institute National Research Centre; PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2009.

**June 7**



**Sushentsov**, Andrey A., Dean of the School of International Relations at MGIMO University.

**June 8**



**Rogachev**, Ilya I., Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Republic of South Africa and Kingdom of Lesotho, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2019.

**June 10**



**Sinaysky**, Alexander S., Professor, Lieutenant-General (ret.), PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2014.

**June 10**



**Nikitin**, Alexander I., Professor, Faculty of World Economy and International Affairs of the School of International Affairs, HSE University; Chief Research Fellow of the Section of Military-Political Analysis and Research Projects, IMEMO RAS; PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 1994.

**June 11**



**Parkhalina**, Tatiana G., Advisor to Director at the Institute of Scientific Information on Social Sciences, Russian Academy of Sciences (INION RAS), PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2002.

**June 11**



**Baturin**, Yury M., Chief Research Fellow of the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS) Vavilov Institute for the History of Science and Technology, RAS Corresponding Member.

**June 12**



**Malov**, Andrey Yu., Associate Professor, International and National Security Department, Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2018.

**June 14**



**Satanovskiy**, Yevgeny Y., President of the Institute of Middle East Studies, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2004.

**June 15**



**Rudakov**, Vladimir N., Editor-in-Chief of the “Istorik” (Historian) Journal, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2022.

**June 16**



**Miasnikov**, Evgeny V., Independent Expert, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2011.

**June 18**



**Baykov**, Andrey A., Vice-President for Research at MGIMO University, Editor-in-Chief of the “International Trends” Journal, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2021.

**June 18**



**Voronkov**, Vladimir I., Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, Head of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Office, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2009.

**June 21**



# UNQUOTE

## BETWEEN THE «LOCARNO» AND «LOCKOUT»



*He, to whom so-called politics (that ridiculous sequence of pacts, conflicts, aggravations, frictions, discords, collapses, and the transformation of perfectly innocent little towns into the names of international treaties) meant nothing, would sometimes immerse himself with a thrill of curiosity and revulsion into the vast bowels (...), where next to the “Locarno” button there was one for “Lockout” and where a pseudo-clever, pseudo-entertaining game was conducted by such ill-matched symbols as “The Five Kremlin Rulers,” or “The Kurd Rebellion,” or individual surnames that had lost all human connotations (...) this was a world of prophetic utterances, presentiments, mysterious combinations, a world that was in fact a hundredfold more spectral than the most abstract dream.*

Vladimir Nabokov  
The gift, 1938

[Read more](#)



Editor-in-Chief: Dr. Vladimir **Orlov**

Editor, design and DTP: Mr. Maksim **Sorokin**

*Yaderny Kontrol (Nuclear Control)* — PIR Center E-Bulletin. № 2 (537). May – June, 2024 // Ed. by Maksim Sorokin // M.: PIR Center, 2024. — 22 p.

## PIR CENTER

Founded 30 years ago, in April 1994, by Dr. Vladimir Orlov, PIR Center is a leading Russian nongovernmental organization dealing with international security, with the emphasis on nuclear nonproliferation and nuclear policy. PIR Center's portfolio currently consists of 36 projects combining research and consultancy, education and training, publishing and outreach, and networking and partnerships. Most recent addition to this portfolio (since April 2024) is an ambitious *Security Index Yearbook (Global Edition)*. With its vibrant 1200+ member-strong alumni community residing in 72 countries of the world, with its internationally renowned Summer Schools on Global Security, with its two MA Programs, and with its online training platform Nonproliferation.World, PIR Center is in the forefront of educating new generation of security and nonproliferation experts. As an independent think-tank, PIR Center is engaged in various formats of policy discussions on the most urgent topics of global and regional security agenda. PIR Center's status has been recognized by the United Nations with its consultative ECOSOC status (since 2010) and by the Russian Government, which has granted PIR Center a privileged status of a socially oriented NGO (SONKO) (since 2020)

## NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION AND RUSSIA

*Nuclear Nonproliferation and Russia* Program is a core research program of PIR Center, which analyzes Russia's place and role in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) review process, the state of the arms control regime, the Russian-American dialogue on strategic stability and global security, the situation around Iran's nuclear program, the problem of the establishment of the Middle East WMD-Free Zone, the prospects for the development of nuclear energy, and many other topics. Furthermore, PIR Center is engaged in the preservation and transmission of the historical memory of the role of Russian diplomats and military officers in the shaping of the modern architecture of arms control, disarmament, and nuclear nonproliferation.

Editorial work on this paper was completed on June 27, 2024.

PIR Center: <https://pircenter.org/en/>

