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PIR QUOTES

«INTERNATIONAL POLITICS ALWAYS UNFOLDS IN THE SHADOW OF WAR...»

Peace in international politics is not the absence of war but a condition in which the use of force is merely postponed. Beneath outward calm lies the possibility of violence, and this expectation shapes states' behavior.

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“International politics always unfolds in the shadow of war”

Raymond Aron, 1962



Pieter Bruegel the Elder
“The Blind Leading the Blind”, 1568

SECURITY INDEX YEARBOOK

2026-2027

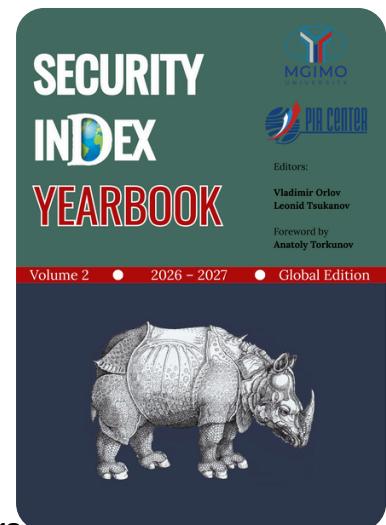
THE DIGITAL EDITION OF THE SECURITY INDEX YEARBOOK 2026-2027 BY PIR&MGIMO VOL. 2 DIGITAL EDITION: A GLOBAL PREMIERE

On New Year's Eve, PIR Center was pleased to offer our readers – and experts worldwide – a gift of appreciation. We invite you to the global premiere of the Security Index Yearbook 2026-2027 by PIR&MGIMO Vol. 2 Global Edition – a comprehensive analytical product that builds on the global premiere and reader success of Volume 1 (2024-2025).

Volume Two of the Yearbook was prepared as part of PIR Center and MGIMO University consortium, and our joint project *Global Security and High-Tech Breakthrough Opportunities for Russia on New Frontiers* under the auspices of the *Priority 2030* Program.

Digital Edition of the Volume Two includes 10 sections and 29 chapters, prepared by 27 experts from Russia and other countries. The authors include renowned Russian experts in international security, ministers (including Belarusian Foreign Minister **Maxim Ryzhenkov**), deputy ministers (including Deputy Foreign Minister **Sergey Ryabkov**), ambassadors, and former presidents (including former Kiribati leader **Teburoro Tito**).

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Security Index Yearbook 2026-2027 by PIR&MGIMO Vol.2 Global Edition is available on PIR Center website



HOT TOPIC

NONPROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IS A FOREIGN POLICY PRIORITY FOR RUSSIA



Mr. Sergey Ryabkov

On October 24, 2025, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation Sergey Ryabkov met with students of the Master's program "International Security" and alumni of the International Dual Degree M.A. Program "Global Security, Nuclear Policy, and WMD Nonproliferation."

We invite our readers to explore Mr. Sergey Ryabkov's statement at a meeting with students of the "International Security" Master's program and graduates of the dual degree International Master's Program "Global Security, Nuclear Policy, and WMD Nonproliferation".

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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

FROM THE NPT TO OUTER SPACE: HOW RUSSIA SEES THE FUTURE OF ARMS CONTROL

We invite our readers to explore the Q&A Session of the meeting with Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister **Mr. Sergey Ryabkov**, held with students from the "International Security" Master's Program and graduates of the Dual Degree International Master's Program "Global Security, Nuclear Policy, and WMD Nonproliferation." During this session, Mr. Sergey Ryabkov shared his insights on various critical issues, including nuclear nonproliferation, arms control, and Russia's strategic priorities in the realm of international security.



His responses address pressing global challenges and offer a candid reflection on Russia's position in shaping the future of global stability.

"We are ready to work towards achieving a result, but not at the expense of our core principles," – Mr. Sergey Ryabkov

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"TRUMP NEEDS DIVIDENDS." DR. IVAN SAFRANCHUK ON THE STATE AND PROSPECTS OF THE RUSSIA-US DIALOGUE

After assuming the US presidency in January, Donald Trump revised his predecessor's policy and made efforts to thaw the Russian-American dialogue. Moscow has chosen a corresponding policy. Nevertheless, relations between the two countries are still complicated by a number of problems, primarily the Ukrainian conflict. In an interview with PIR Center, Dr. Ivan Safranchuk, a member of PIR Center's Advisory Board since 2015, assesses the current state of the Russian-American dialogue and reflects on its prospects.



The interview was conducted by **Mr. Ilya Subbotin**, PIR Center intern.

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ZAPOROZHSKAYA NPP: BETWEEN GUARANTEES AND REALITY: AN INTERVIEW WITH MIKHAIL LYSENKO BY SERGEY SHAHINOV

Following months of alarming reports about the Zaporozhskaya NPP, a piece of news, that could be considered encouraging, has appeared for the first time: a power line has been restored and certain agreements have been reached with the Ukrainian side. Yet, does this truly represent a step towards stabilization? In an interview with PIR Center Dr. Mikhail Lysenko, member of PIR Center Advisory Board, weighs the true value of the “guarantees”, assesses the future role of the IAEA and discusses the critical need for new international legal frameworks to safeguard nuclear facilities.



The interview was conducted by **Mr. Sergey Shashinov**, PIR Center intern.

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"OPENNESS, DYNAMISM, VIABILITY": APEC IN A CHANGING WORLD ORDER

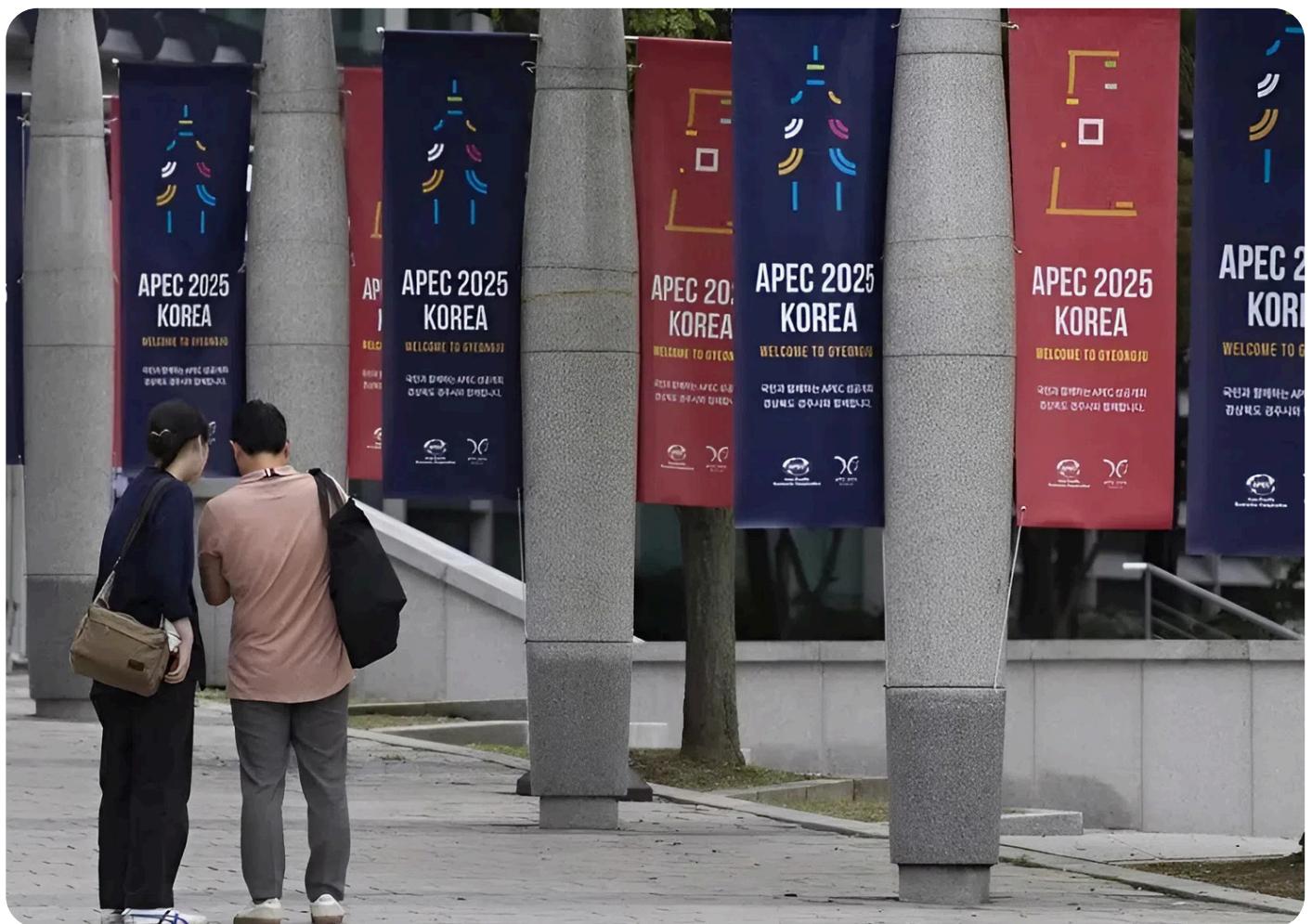
Amid increasing instability in the Asia-Pacific region and challenges to traditional globalization models, APEC persists as one of the few venues for meaningful economic dialogue.

We discussed with **Mr. Marat Berdyev**, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Ambassador-at-Large; G20 Sous-Sherpa; APEC Senior Official; Chief Coordinator for Greater Eurasian Partnership, Russia's role in the forum, the future of the Greater Eurasian Partnership, food and energy security, and why geopolitics is gradually diminishing in APEC's focus.



The interview was conducted by **Mr. Yuriy Shakhov**, Editor, Information, Publications & Digital Communications Program

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PIR POST

MILITARIST IDYLL: THE RESULTS OF THE LATEST BUNDESWEHR CONFERENCE



Mr. Ilya Subbotin



The issue of reforming German armed forces – the Bundeswehr – in the context of *Zeitenwende* declared by Olaf Scholz in 2022 is being constantly discussed in Germany's domestic political discourse.

It has also become the central topic of this year's Bundeswehr conference (Bundeswehrtagung), held on November 6-7. The event featured speeches by Chancellor Friedrich Merz, Defense Minister Boris Pistorius, and Inspector General of the Bundeswehr Carsten Breuer.

[Read more](#)

NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION CHECKUP: IS THE REGIME FIT FOR THE UPCOMING NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE?



Dr. Vladimir Orlov,



As the 2026 NPT Review Conference approaches, familiar questions about its "success" resurface.

Yet the experience of the past three decades suggests that the true test is not the number of agreed-upon paragraphs, but whether the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons remains a living, recognized cornerstone of international security.

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REINFORCING THE GUARDRAILS AGAINST CATASTROPHE AND ADVANCING NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT DIPLOMACY IN A NEW ERA OF STRATEGIC RIVALRY



Dr. Daryl Kimball



Eighty years after the nuclear age began, humanity faces a dangerous rise in nuclear risks. The world remains trapped by nuclear deterrence and an escalating arms race, worsened by emerging technologies and geopolitical tensions. Disarmament diplomacy has stalled, and dialogue among nuclear powers seems uncertain. The international community must find new ways to reduce nuclear threats, strengthen arms control, and rebuild trust before disaster strikes.

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DONALD TRUMP ROCKS THE BOAT BY ENDORSING SOUTH KOREA'S NUCLEAR SUBMARINE PROGRAM: EXPERTS ASSESS REGIONAL SECURITY IMPLICATIONS



Mr. Roman Kalinin



On his way to make «America Great Again», Donald Trump has made yet another step that may challenge arms control and the nonproliferation regime.

During his summit with South Korea leader Lee Jae Myung at the APEC Summit in Gyeongju, South Korea, Donald Trump announced that the US allows South Korea to build nuclear submarines as well as reprocess nuclear fuel. Joint factsheet issued after the meeting reaffirms US support for «ROK's civil and naval nuclear power programs».

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RUSSIA-AFRICA: PROSPECTS FOR STRATEGIC COOPERATION AND IDENTIFICATION OF OBSTACLES. FROM URANIUM TO HIGH TECHNOLOGIES



Mr. Joseph Kindundu Mukombo

Once bound by the rhetoric of solidarity and anti-colonial struggle, the Russia-Africa relationship now finds itself at a crossroads.



As Africa asserts itself as a strategic actor in a rapidly fragmenting global order, Moscow must rethink how a largely symbolic historical legacy can be translated into tangible, long-term influence.

No longer defined by ideology or nostalgia, contemporary Russia-Africa relations unfold within a competitive multipolar environment where relevance is measured not by rhetoric, but by concrete contributions to security, development, and technological sovereignty.

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ANALYSES

"THE GREATEST COMMON DENOMINATOR": BRICS COOPERATION IN THE CONTEXT OF NEW GLOBAL TRANSFORMATIONS

Mr. Sergey Ryabkov

Amid accelerating global changes and the increasing fragmentation of the international system, BRICS remains a key platform for dialogue among nations with diverse development paths, political interests, and strategic goals. In the context of a crisis in traditional global governance institutions, such formats are increasingly serving as spaces to find new common ground and explore alternative approaches to international cooperation.



"You see, BRICS was initially formed as an association of states belonging to different, even civilizational, systems, representing different continents and cultures. Accordingly, each BRICS member has significant national identity, its own vision – both of its role in the grouping and of its direction and development. But more importantly, BRICS is firmly rooted in the principles of genuine equality, openness, and mutual respect. Without these, BRICS simply would not exist. And this is precisely where a very productive balance between national distinctiveness and a shared commitment to this particular model of cooperation manifests itself. From this perspective, BRICS is, of course, in many ways a pioneering international phenomenon. And that's precisely why it attracts so much attention: people in many countries are curious to understand, if you will, to try on the BRICS garments and see how they would look while preserving their national identity."

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THE AUKUS SUBMARINE AGREEMENT AND RUSSIA'S SECURITY CONCERNS

Mr. Vladimir Ladanov

The AUKUS submarine deal has sparked concerns about Russia's security, especially regarding its strategic deterrent in the Pacific. As Australia boosts its naval capabilities, how will this impact the safety of Russia's nuclear-powered submarines?



This article discusses the implications of AUKUS, a capability-building arrangement that envisages acquisition by Australia of nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSNs) with assistance from the United States and Britain, for Russia's security, namely the safety of its submarine-based strategic nuclear deterrent operated by the Pacific Fleet from its base in Vilyuchinsk on the Kamchatka Peninsula.

"Although the Trump administration had initially committed to continuing the implementation of AUKUS, uncertainty prevails not least because the Pentagon is now conducting its review led by Under Secretary of War for Policy Elbridge Colby. In March, at his Senate confirmation hearing Mr Colby did not sound very reassuring on AUKUS. While supporting the agreement in principle, he said that given the unfulfilled requirement of the US Navy for more SSNs, sharing them with Australia would depend upon restoring the capacity of America's submarine industrial base. Pending conclusion of the review, assumptions in this article are based on the AUKUS roadmap, the Optimal Pathway, presented in March 2023."

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NUCLEAR WEAPONS: WHAT FUTURE FOR ARMS CONTROL?

Mr. Dmitry Stefanovich,

The global arms control system is coming apart. As the New START Treaty approaches its expiration, new technologies are transforming warfare, and nuclear and conventional deterrence are becoming more linked, the outlook for strategic stability is more uncertain than at any point since the Cold War.



"There is no need to once again repeat all the current challenges facing arms control, whether nuclear or not. Arms control is in deep crisis with a possibility of further degradation. Almost no major treaties remain operational, although some lesser ones are still in effect (i.e. between Russia, China and Central Asian states regarding near-border military activities, or between India and Pakistan on non-targeting of nuclear infrastructure). The reasons for the existing arms control crisis are numerous but can be assembled into two major groups: political and technological."

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THE SECOND TRUMP ADMINISTRATION AND THE RUSSIA-US RELATIONS

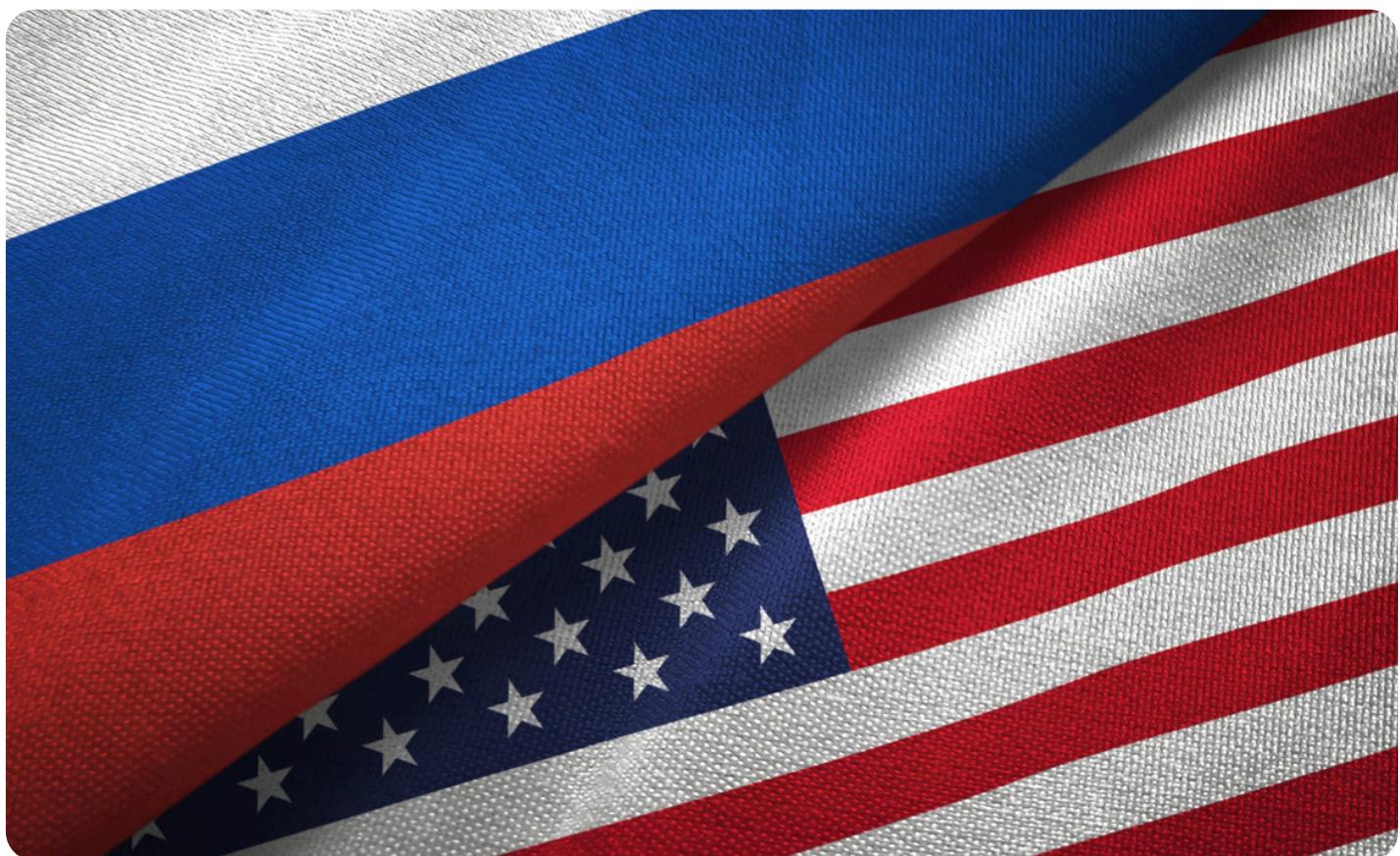
Dr. Andrey Kortunov

Donald Trump's return to the White House in November 2024 reignited questions about a potential new phase in U.S.-Russian relations. While the Kremlin refrained from showing clear optimism, it indicated a willingness to explore the boundaries of engagement with a Republican administration that aimed to diverge from previous policies. The subsequent months uncovered both the extent of these ambitions and the constraints of domestic politics and the ongoing Ukraine conflict.



"Though in early November of 2024 decision-makers in the Kremlin had no compelling reasons to stand by Vice President Kamala Harris, who was destined to continue the tough Joe Biden's policy towards Russia, their immediate reaction to the victory of Donald Trump was predictably cautious and restrained. The relatively fresh experience of the first Trump Administration (2017–2021) called for a careful expectation management on the Russian side."

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THE MIDDLE EAST: REGIONAL SECURITY AND THE ROLE OF RUSSIA

Dr. Elena Suponina

The Middle East is once again experiencing increased turbulence, with local crises rapidly expanding into regional and global challenges. Tensions related to Iran, unresolved Palestinian issues, and the weakening of state structures in several countries are creating a more unstable security landscape. In this scenario, Russia's involvement in the Middle East is driven by strategic need rather than ambition, serving the interests of both the region and Russia.



“Russia should be in the Middle East. The Middle East needs Russia. And Russia needs the Middle East. These simple theses cause delight among supporters, cautious curiosity among doubters and irritation among opponents, resulting in attempts to push Russia out of this field or, on the contrary, to push it to overloading in this area with the main goal of weakening it. And the weak are not respected in the Middle East. To be in the Middle East, you have to be strong. There are enough allies and partners who want Russia to be presented in the region. The principle is mutual benefit and justice. Common security is at the forefront. Indivisible and equal. Not more for someone, less for someone else, or even nothing at all. No.”

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WHERE AUKUS CAME FROM AND HOW THE WORLD MET IT?

Ms. Mikhaela Lokteva,

AUKUS has been called everything from a “historic breakthrough” to a “dangerous precedent.” Why did Australia join such a far-reaching nuclear-technology partnership? How does the agreement fit into a century-long history of military cooperation among the three countries? And why has the deal stirred excitement in some capitals and alarm in others?



“In terms of political prerequisites in modern times, AUKUS reflects Australia’s shift toward a clear strategic alignment with the ongoing U.S. resistance against China and its presence in the South Pacific. It also demonstrates the U.K.’s renewed support for the U.S. strategy. China is regarded not only as a competitor to the U.S. but also as a challenge to Australia in the Pacific, due to its growing economic influence and the expansion of its artificial islands, which serve as attempts at naval posturing.”

[Read part I](#)

[Read part II](#)



PIR PRESS NEWS

ON SEPTEMBER 18 AND SEPTEMBER 25, 2025, A SERIES OF WELCOME MEETINGS FOR THE 2ND COHORT OF STUDENTS OF THE MA PROGRAM “INTERNATIONAL SECURITY” TOOK PLACE

On September 18 and September 25, 2025, a series of welcome meetings for the students of the Master's program “International Security”, educational initiative by MGIMO University and PIR Center, was held. The program aimed at educating professionals to staff foreign policy-oriented organizations, majoring in global security.

Dr. Vladimir Orlov, PIR Center Founding Director, Professor at MGIMO University, and Academic Director of the MA program “International Security”, welcomed the students with an introductory speech. PIR Center Director highlighted peculiarities of the educational program, focusing on practical components of the MA program implementation, as well as put an emphasis on the program development, within which students will be able to solve practical cases and discuss burning issues in international security jointly with practicing experts in this field.

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PIR CENTER HOSTED IX TIMERBAEV DEBATES ON “IS THE THREAT OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS USE IN THE NEXT DECADE REAL?”

PIR Center, jointly with MGIMO University, hosted the IX *Timerbaev Debates* on the topic “Is the Threat of Nuclear Weapons Use in the Next Decade Real?” Participants were split into two teams – the Affirmative and the Negative. In preparation, each team developed arguments both supporting and opposing the proposition; however, the participants were informed about their position only a few hours before the debates started.

A key part of preparing the participants was played by the teams’ mentors – expert practitioners in the fields of international security and nonproliferation. The mentor of the Affirmative Team was **Mr. Anatoly Shchekin**, Attaché at the Department for Nonproliferation and Nuclear Arms Control, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. The Negative Team was led by **Dr. Oleg Krivolapov**, PhD in Political Science, Senior Researcher, Department of Military-Political Research, Institute for US and Canadian Studies. Thanks to their professional experience, deep expertise, and attentive mentorship, the debaters were able not only to strengthen their arguments but also to see the topic from multiple perspectives – both diplomatic and analytical.

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PIR CENTER HOSTED A SEMINAR TITLED “RUSSIA AND MONGOLIA: ETERNAL NEIGHBORS AND NEW PARTNERS”

PIR Center, jointly with MGIMO University, hosted a seminar titled “Russia and Mongolia: Eternal Neighbors and New Partners.”

PIR Center pays special attention to Russian-Mongolian relations. In 2024, PIR Center published an analytical report (in Russian) titled “Mongolia as a New Center of Struggle for Resources: Prospects for Russian-Mongolian Cooperation in Nuclear Energy, Mineral Exploration and Mining.” The report was authored by Mr. Roman Kalinin, Research Fellow at PIR Center, and Mr. Arslan Khatmullin, a Senior Specialist in the Geology and Mining Department at Irkutsk Oil Company LLC.

The main report at the seminar was presented by **Mr. Sergey Demin**, Executive Director of the Rosatom Mongolia and a member of PIR Center Executive Board since 2024. The expert offered a comprehensive analysis of the current state and future outlook of Russian-Mongolian relations. The speaker outlined the historical roots of bilateral cooperation, highlighting the vital role of the USSR in establishing the Mongolian People’s Republic and fostering its economic, educational, and social development. At times, Soviet aid comprised up to one-third of Mongolia’s GDP, helping the country achieve an unprecedented transition from feudalism to a modern state.

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PIR CENTER REPORT SERIES: “URANIUM COMPETITION IN THE SAHEL REGION AND RUSSIA’S INTERESTS. CURRENT SITUATION. ASSESSMENT OF PROSPECTS. RECOMMENDATIONS”

PIR Center is pleased to announce the publication of a new report (in Russian), “Uranium Competition in the Sahel Region and Russia’s Interests. Current Situation. Assessment of Prospects. Recommendations.” The report, part of PIR Center Reports Series (№47), is devoted to analyzing the current state and future development of the uranium sector in the Sahel countries.

The study examines the political, economic, and legal characteristics of the region, as well as the specifics of the mining sector in Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, and Chad. It also explores the influence of geopolitical factors on the industry’s development. Particular attention is given to Russia’s role in ensuring the region’s security and shaping new avenues of cooperation in nuclear energy and the peaceful uses of the atom. The report includes an assessment of the region’s geological potential, the competitive landscape of the uranium market, and trends in the participation of international actors – France, China, Canada, and Russia.

The report was prepared within the framework of PIR Center and MGIMO University Consortium under the auspices of the Priority-2030 Strategic Academic Leadership Program.

The author of the report is **Ms. Alexandra Zubenko**, PIR Center Research Fellow. The reviewers are: **Mr. Vsevolod Sviridov**, Deputy Director, Faculty of World Economy and International Affairs, Centre for African Studies, HSE University; **Dr. Alexey Ubeeov**, PhD in Engineering and member of PIR Center Advisory Board; and **Dr. Grigory Shalamov**, PhD in Political Science and Advisor at the Department for Africa and Latin America, Rosatom State Corporation.

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«Урановая конкуренция в регионе
Сахеля и интересы России»

Текущая ситуация. Оценка перспектив. Рекомендации.

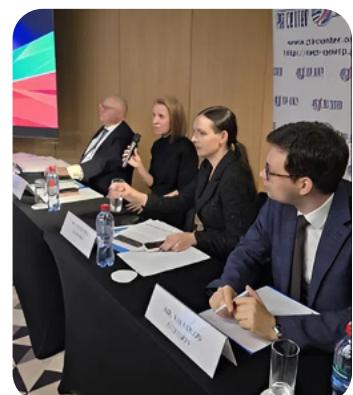
Серия «Доклады ПИР-Центра» № 47

INTERNATIONAL EXPERT SEMINAR ON “RUSSIA-AFRICA: ANALYZING PROSPECTS FOR STRATEGIC COOPERATION & IDENTIFYING OBSTACLES. FROM URANIUM TO HIGH TECHNOLOGIES” WAS HELD IN MOSCOW. IT WAS ORGANIZED BY PIR CENTER IN COOPERATION WITH THE TRIALOGUE CLUB INTERNATIONAL

On November 14, 2025, international expert seminar was held in Moscow on the topic “Russia-Africa: Analyzing Prospects for Strategic Cooperation & Identifying Obstacles. From uranium to high technologies.” It was organized and conducted by PIR Center in cooperation with the Trialogue Club International (as part of the 128th Winter Session of the Club). The event was attended by ambassadors, senior diplomats, business representatives, experts and young professionals from 25 countries, namely Russia, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Ghana, Egypt, Eritrea, Kenya, Rwanda, Niger, Namibia, Brazil, Australia, Finland, France, Israel, Germany, South Korea, Spain, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, New Zealand, Japan, the USA, the delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Moscow, among others.

Dr. Vladimir Orlov, Director of PIR Center & President of the Trialogue Club International in his opening remarks described PIR Center’s ongoing projects on Africa: “Uranium Markets of Sahel: Competition, Strategies, Further Developments”; and “Prospects for Cooperation between Russia and Africa on Global Security and High Technologies”, which PIR Center has been working on since 2022. Dr. Orlov also provided plans for their development in 2026-2027 for the audience. He acquainted the participants with the publications of PIR Center on this issue, in particular: [«Prospects for Russia’s Cooperation with African and Persian Gulf States in the Peaceful Use of Atomic Energy»](#); [«From the Gulf to Sub-Saharan Africa: The Development of Digital Technologies and Russia’s Interests»](#); [«Technological Renaissance in Sub-Saharan Africa: Challenges and Opportunities for Russia»](#).

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PIR CENTER REPORT SERIES: “BEYOND THE BILATERAL: RETROSPECTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE ISSUE OF BRITISH AND FRENCH NUCLEAR ARSENALS OFFSET IN US-RUSSIAN STRATEGIC STABILITY DIALOGUE”

PIR Center releases the report “Beyond the Bilateral: Retrospective Analysis of the Issue of British and French Nuclear Arsenals Offset in US-Russian Strategic Stability Dialogue,” authored by PIR Center Research Fellow **Ms. Aleksandra Zubenko**.

The report, part of PIR Center Reports Series (№46), offers a retrospective analysis of the discussion about the potential inclusion of France’s and the UK’s nuclear weapons in arms control talks from Soviet, U.S., and French-British perspectives. The study aims to explain why the inclusion of French and British forces has not been possible to date and whether the Ukrainian crisis has prompted shifts that could enable such a dialogue.

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Alexandra Zubenko

Beyond the Bilateral: Retrospective Analysis of the Issue of British and French Nuclear Arsenals Offset in US-Russian Strategic Stability Dialogue

Report

PIR Center Reports Series

№ 46

Moscow

2025



PIR CENTER REPORT SERIES: “THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL FACTORS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF IRAN’S NUCLEAR PROGRAM AND TEHRAN’S STRATEGIC DECISIONS”

The events of June 2025, when Iran’s nuclear facilities were targeted by Israeli and U.S. attacks, followed by political and diplomatic pressure on Iran from the “E3” (France, Germany, and the United Kingdom), sharply raise questions about the role and capabilities of external actors regarding the development of Iran’s nuclear program.

PIR Center releases the report [Foregone Conclusion? The Interactions Between Global Actions and the Iranian Nuclear Program](#), authored by emerging nonproliferation researcher Mr. Linus Hoeller. The report, part of [PIR Centre Reports Series](#) (№45), offers an analysis of Iran’s nuclear program history, emphasising five key phases and exploring how international actions influence Iran’s decisions regarding nuclear technologies, particularly within its military context.

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Linus Hoeller

Foregone Conclusion? The Interactions
Between Global Actions and the Iranian Nuclear
Program

Report

PIR Center Reports Series
№ 45
Moscow
2025



NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN

MR. NIKITA DEGTYAREV, MR. SERGEY SEMENOV: “NUCLEAR SHARING ARRANGEMENTS: MILITARY-TECHNICAL ASPECTS AND CONTROVERSIES”



The Soviet Union did not openly criticize nuclear sharing after entry into force of the NPT. Neither did the Russian Federation in the 1990s-2000s. However, in 2014 the Russian approach to this question changed, and Russia started to speak out against NATO nuclear sharing arrangements by pointing out that such arrangements violate Articles I and II of the NPT.

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BOOK REVIEWS

UNITING THE DISSIMILAR: RUSSIA'S «HIGH-TECH BRIDGE» BETWEEN AFRICA AND THE GULF



From the Gulf to Sub-Saharan Africa: The Development of Digital Technologies and Russia's Interests. An analytical report on the potential of the Gulf and sub-Saharan Africa states in the field of digital technologies and on the prospects for advancing Russia's interests in this area by Dr. Leonid Tsukanov. PIR Center, MGIMO University. Moscow, 2025.



Dr. Sergey Sebekin

Digital technologies are playing an increasingly important role in global politics and economics. As the global networked society develops, the need for nation-states to utilize advanced technological tools to achieve their foreign and domestic political goals is becoming fundamental, driven by their desire to secure advantageous positions in the new, high-tech world. Moreover, in a context of intense political turbulence and global instability, Russia faces the urgent need to seek new foreign policy allies. Equally urgent is the need to accelerate the pace of such promising scientific and technological cooperation (including cooperation in the field of emerging technologies). Moscow's focus is, among other things, on Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and the Gulf states.

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REVIEWS ON THE PIR CENTER REPORT “URANIUM COMPETITION IN THE SAHEL REGION AND RUSSIA’S INTERESTS. CURRENT SITUATION. ASSESSMENT OF PROSPECTS. RECOMMENDATIONS”

*“The report is extensive and interesting. I read it from cover to cover. Undoubtedly, the report is instrumental as a source of factual material, above all, of its numerical dataset. It utilizes rich infographics, diagrams, and tables. Fortunately, this report has been released today. It seems to me that it will become an indispensable reference tool for State Atomic Energy Corporation «Rosatom» and for other Russian companies that work, or plan to work, on the African continent,” – **Dr. Mikhail Margelov, Vice President of the Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC), Member of PIR Center Advisory Board***



*“The report possesses a number of strong merits. First, the topic itself is of clear relevance: the uranium sector in the Sahel countries lies at the center of global politics and energy security, making its study both timely and in demand. Second, the use of satellite-image analysis to determine the status of individual projects adds novelty and provides a solid empirical foundation. The quantitative examination of the mining sector’s contribution to national revenues is also a notable strength. Another important advantage is the systematic treatment of the legal frameworks governing the mining industries of the Sahel states. Finally, the attention given to political-legal constraints and the consequences of coups enhances the applied value of the text,” – **Dr. Grigory Shalamov, PhD in Political Science and Advisor at the Department for Africa and Latin America, Rosatom State Corporation***



*“Ms. Alexandra Zubenko’s report is extremely relevant ‘here and now’ and represents a significant contribution to examining the prospects for regional cooperation between Russia and the Sahel states in the field of uranium extraction and processing. The author provides a thorough analysis of the current state of uranium mining and production in the region, considers the factors that hinder deeper development of this sector, and identifies the geopolitical threats and challenges faced by the region,” – **Mr. Vsevolod Sviridov, Deputy Director, Faculty of World Economy and International Affairs, Centre for African Studies, HSE University***



*“We are presented with a highly coherent and comprehensive monograph – indeed, a monograph in the full sense of the word, in which one finds political analyses of each country, an overall economic assessment, and reviews of their relations with Russia. Should PIR Center decide to publish Ms. Alexandra Zubenko’s report precisely as an academic monograph, it would be the correct decision,” – **Dr. Oleg Barabanov, Professor at the Department of Integration Processes of MGIMO University, and Professor of the Russian Academy of Sciences***

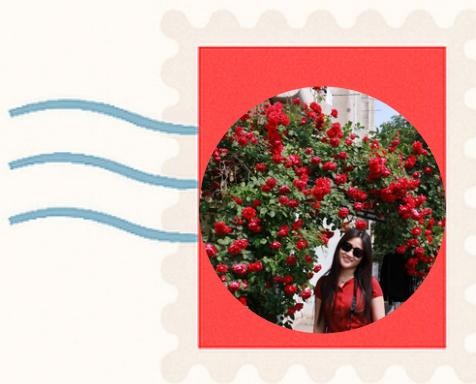


[Read Report \(in Russian\)](#)

[PIR Center project “Uranium Markets of Sahel: Competition, Strategies, Further Developments”](#)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

YINGSHUI MA: POSTGRADUATE STUDENT OF CHINA FOREIGN AFFAIRS UNIVERSITY



I am a reader of “Yaderny Kontrol” from China. Having recently read through all content of the past two issues of the “Yaderny Kontrol E-Bulletin” in detail, I am deeply impressed by its academic depth and practical relevance. I am writing to express my sincere appreciation.

I would like to thank “Yaderny Kontrol” for its long-standing focus on global arms control issues, consistently maintaining admirable professionalism and foresight. The articles focus on nuclear arms control while branching out into various related themes – from New START to JCPOA, from OSINT to AI, from HEU to HGV, from Europe to the Middle East, etc. With rigorous logic and substantial data, these articles offer readers a clear perspective on contemporary arms control dynamics. Notably, “Yaderny Kontrol” has always upheld an inclusive academic attitude: through your publication, readers can access not only viewpoints from seasoned arms control experts but also voices from emerging young scholars.

I also appreciate how shares arms control knowledge through diverse and engaging formats. Beyond analyses and interviews, I am also captivated by the PIR Quotes and paintings featured in it. They are always thematically relevant and enlightening, endowing “Yaderny Kontrol” with both academic rigor and artistic elegance – a truly outstanding feature. I believe this is a testament to the editors’ profound cultural sophistication. My intense interest in nuclear arms control was constantly reinforced through reading publications of PIR Center, ultimately becoming the anchor of my academic exploration.

PIR TOAST

ON BEHALF OF PIR CENTER, WE WISH HAPPY BIRTHDAY
TO OUR FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES WHO CELEBRATED
THEIR BIRTHDAY IN SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER 2025:



Eleukanov, Dastan S., Chairman of the Board of the Kazakhstan Agency for International Development (KazAID), Member of PIR Center Advisory Board since 1994



September 7

Stepanova, Ekaterina A., Head of Peace and Conflict Studies Unit and Lead Researcher at Primakov National Research Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO RAS), Member of PIR Center Executive Board



September 10

Fedorov, Valery V., PhD in Political Sciences. member of the Board of Directors and heads the Scientific Council of VCIOM, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2011



September 11

Trenin, Dmitri V., PhD in History. Research Professor at the Faculty of World Economy and International Affairs of the Higher School of Economics. Leading Researcher at the Sector for Non-Proliferation and Arms Limitation of the Center for International Security, Primakov National Research Institute of World Economy and International Relations of the Russian Academy of Sciences (IMEMO RAS), Member of PIR Center Executive Board



September 11

Danilov, Dmitry A., Professor at the Department of Integration Process of MGIMO University, Head of the Department for European Security at the Institute of Europe of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Member of PIR Center Advisory Board since 2011



September 22

Mursankov, Sergey G., Leading Specialist in the Information and Analytical Department of the Skolkovo Foundation, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2010



September 29

Kibaroglu, Mustafa, Dean of the Faculty of Economics, Administrative and Social Sciences, Director of the Center for International Security Studies and Strategic Research at MEF University, Member of PIR Center Advisory Board since 2013



September 30

Soltanieh, Ali Asghar, Multilateral Diplomat on International Security and Disarmament and Nuclear Scientist, President of Vienna International Institute for Middle Eastern Studies (VIIMES), member of PIR Center Advisory Board since 2015



October 1

Orlov, Vladimir A., Founding Director of PIR Center; Founding President of the Trialogue Club International



4 октября

Varma, Venkatesh, Distinguished fellow at the Vivekananda International Foundation, visiting faculty at the Kautilya School of Public Policy, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of India to the Russian Federation (2018–2021), member of PIR Center Advisory Board since 2023



October 7

Antipov, Sergey V., Deputy Director of Strategic Planning and Project Management of Radiological Security at Nuclear Safety Institute, Russian Academy of Sciences (IBRAE RAS), member of PIR Center Advisory Board since 2004



October 11

Chernenko, Elena V., Member of PIR Center Executive Board; Special Correspondent of the Kommersant Daily; Co-Chair of the Trialogue Club International



October 15

Rauf, Tariq, Director of SIPRI's Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-proliferation Program, Board Member of Atomic Reporters, Former Head of Verification and Security Policy Coordination, Office reporting to Director General, International Atomic Energy Agency, member of PIR Center Advisory Board since 2013



October 19

Rybachenkov, Vladimir I., PhD in Technical Sciences; Counsellor to the Russian Foreign Ministry (ret.), PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2000



October 29

Feoktistov, Dmitry V., Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to Argentina, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2011



November 9

Efremov, Gleb V., Deputy Director General – Head of the Department of New Technology Development, JUSTA Group of Companies, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2023



November 11

Safranchuk, Ivan A., Director and Leading Researcher of the Center of Euro-Asian Studies of the Institute for International Studies at MGIMO University, Member of PIR Center Advisory Board since 2015



November 12

Sveshnikova, Yulia V., Expert in international security and Middle Eastern politics, formerly an Assistant Professor at the University of Nottingham in Malaysia, PIR Alumni Community Member



November 28

Lebedev, Vladimir V., Advisor to the Mayor of Moscow, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2000



November 29

Ponomarev-Stepnoi, Nikolai N., Scientific Advisor to Director General, Directorate Member, Rosenergoatom; PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2002



December 3

Jayatilleka, Dayan, Senior Advisor on International Relations to the Leader of the Opposition, Daily FT Columnist, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2022



December 3

Einhorn, Robert, Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2007



December 7

Berdyev, Marat V., Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Ambassador-at-Large; G20 Sous-Sherpa; APEC Senior Official; Chief Coordinator for Greater Eurasian Partnership, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2025



December 7

Borodavkin, Alexey N., Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Kazakhstan



December 10

Margelov, Mikhail V., the Head of UNESCO Department on Asian and African Studies: Modern Methods of Studying and Teaching at the Institute of Asian and African Studies of Moscow State University



December 22

Ponamareva, Anastasia M., PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2022



December 23

Polikanov, Dmitry V., Deputy Head of the Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation (Rossotrudnichestvo)



December 28

Baranovski, Vladimir G., the Chief Research Scientist, a member of Directorate of IMEMO RAS, the Head of Research of the Center for Situational Analysis



December 30

On October 4th, 2025, Dr. Vladimir Orlov, Founding Director of PIR Center, Founding President of the Trialogue Club International, and professor at MGIMO University, celebrated his birthday.



PIR Center team sends its congratulations to **Dr. Vladimir Orlov** on this special day!



DR. VADIM KOZYULIN

Dear Volodya! Happy Birthday! On this day, I want to celebrate your rare qualities that unite people and make our team stronger. Your gift for true friendship is a treasure for everyone around you. You are not only there at the important moments, but you know how to bring joy to communication, creating an atmosphere of trust and mutual support. Your organizational talent always commands respect: you have the ability to gather strong, gifted people around you, to inspire joint work, and to lead a team toward high goals. Thanks to your energy and the generosity of your ideas, PIR has been able to realize ambitious projects that would have seemed impossible without you. You also possess remarkable pedagogical mastery – you truly know how to make complex ideas clear and captivating. You are always there to support students and colleagues, motivating them to reach higher and opening up new opportunities before them. You inspire people to work, to learn, and to be friends. Even more importantly, you have an extraordinary gift for recognizing and developing talent. With your intuition and academic generosity, today both in Russia and across the world there are experts and professionals who owe much of their success to you. Many have become true leaders in their fields. This is your contribution to the future, one you have every reason to be proud of. I wish that these qualities continue to help you achieve new successes, and that you are always surrounded by people who value and cherish you. May life bring you ever more reasons for joy and pride, and may your ideas and good deeds return to you many times over!



MR. SERGEY SEMENOV

Dear Mr. Orlov! I join many others in celebrating your birthday with a message of gratitude! Thank you for the Russian school of nonproliferation, for sharing your expertise, and for guiding us toward the practical side of the profession. I wish you strength and inspiration – I look forward to your travel notes from your many vibrant and colorful journeys. And, of course, good health – as we all know, the rest we will buy!



MR. YURIY SHAKHOV

Dear Mr. Orlov! I sincerely wish you a happy birthday! I want to thank you for your wisdom, professionalism, and the inspiration you bring to our team. Your leadership and support are the pillars of our collective success. You are not only a role model but also help each of us grow and develop professionally. Your attention to detail, ability to inspire, and talent for helping each student unlock their potential serve as a true example for everyone. You create an environment where it is possible not only to gain knowledge but also to build confidence in one's abilities. I wish you good health, success in achieving all your goals, and continued inspiration for new accomplishments. May your work bring you joy and fulfillment, and may many more achievements continue to follow.



MS. ALEXANDRA ZUBENKO

Dear Mr. Orlov! I am sure that on this day you receive calls and messages from all over the world despite sanctions, crises, and restrictions. Admirably, you have an exceptional ability to reconcile diplomacy and science, youth and experience, Nabokov and his critics, and this list could go on and on. In even the most challenging situations, it always seems that you know exactly what to do, which brings calm to us, the younger generation. Thank you for your daily dedication and the time you generously give to us, aspiring experts, diplomats, and specialists. Wishing you good health, fortune, good weather outside, and everything you hope for on this special day. Happy birthday!



DR. ELENA CHERNENKO

Dear Vladimir! Happy Birthday! I wish you good health, boundless energy, and continued success in your important and responsible work. May you always find enough time for the millions of great ideas and projects you generate at PIR Center and beyond, for reading fairy tales to your little daughter, and for leisurely walks in your beloved Zvenigorod. Happy Birthday, hooray!



DR. LEONID TSUKANOV

Dear Mr. Orlov, In celebrating your birthday, I want to move beyond the usual wishes of health and happiness and highlight one of your remarkable achievements. For over thirty years, you have led an organization that provides timely and comprehensive coverage of issues related to international security, arms control, and WMD nonproliferation. During this time, you have gained a vast amount of knowledge and, more importantly, mentored many highly skilled professionals. On your special day, I wish you continued success and inspiration on your chosen path, as well as the strength to keep serving as a mentor and guide for young specialists.



MR. ARTEM ASTVATSATUROV



Dear Mr. Orlov! I sincerely congratulate you on your birthday! You are a remarkable example not only of an effective leader but also of a leading nonproliferation expert, both in Russia and internationally. Your lessons and guidance provide an essential foundation for the future professional growth of the younger generation of international security specialists. I wish you success in all your professional endeavors, happiness, and many years filled with joy and good health!



DR. EVGENY BUZHINSKIY



Dear Vladimir! Happy Birthday! Your deep knowledge, boundless enthusiasm, and dedication to science serve as an inspiring example for all of us. Your name symbolizes the highest level of professionalism and motivates an entire generation of international experts. I hope you always stay at the forefront of innovation, never settle for what you've already achieved, and continue sharing your bold ideas and solutions! May many more bright moments come your way, and may each day bring new successes, both professionally and personally. Wishing you health, energy, and all the best in everything you do!

[Read more](#)



On December 10, 2025, Alexey Borodavkin, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Kazakhstan, celebrated his the 75th anniversary.



Evgeny Buzhinskiy, Lieutenant-General (retired), Chairman of PIR Center Executive Board and Co-Chair of the Trialogue Club International sends his congratulations to **Alexey Borodavkin**:



Dear Alexey Nikolayevich! On behalf of PIR Center, please accept our most sincere congratulations on your birthday! Most importantly, we wish you strong health, great success in your professional and personal endeavors and constant good cheer! May good fortune be always with you and your diplomatic wisdom guide you in all matters. We incredibly value our long friendship! Peace, happiness, and prosperity to your entire family! Happy anniversary!

[Read more](#)

On December 28, 2025, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of **Dmitry Polikanov**, the Deputy Head of the Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation (Rossotrudnichestvo); Member of the International Editorial Board of the Security Index Yearbook; Member of the PIR Alumni Community since 1998.



For the PIR Center team, this is a special date. Dmitry Valeryevich's journey at PIR Center has been one of remarkable growth: starting as an enthusiastic intern and rising to become a member of its Board. He has become an integral part of our team, someone who can always be relied upon both as an expert and in a personal capacity.

His scholarly works, dedicated to international and European security, as well as Russia's domestic and foreign policy, are not merely academic articles. They represent intellectual capital that helps other experts and researchers comprehend and overcast complex global processes.

One cannot fail to note Dmitry Valeryevich's multifaceted nature. Dmitry Valeryevich is not only a highly qualified analyst and a true patriot of his country, but also an intensely creative individual. Through his participation in theatrical activities, he reminds all of us that behind every sharp analytical mind lies a vibrant and multifaceted soul, capable of deep feeling and creative transformation. This serves as an additional source of inspiration and respect for each of us!

The PIR Center team highly values the long-term, fruitful cooperation with Dmitry Valeryevich and expresses sincere gratitude for his contributions to our shared mission.

Congratulations are sent to **Dmitry Polikanov** from: **Dr. Vladimir Orlov**, the Founding Director of PIR Center; **Dr. Irina Abramova**, the Member of the Presidium of the Russian Academy of Sciences; Director of Institute for African Studies of the RAS; Corresponding Member of the RAS; **Dr. Vadim Kozyulin**, the Member of PIR Center Executive Board; PIR Center Consultant; Chief Researcher in the Institute of Contemporary International Studies at Diplomatic Academy of MGIMO University; **Ms. Lubov Soldatkina**, the Head of the Department for Patriotic Work and Interaction with Public Organizations at "Defenders of the Fatherland" Foundation; Founder of the non-commercial organization "Art-Formula"; Member of the Russian State Council Committee on Culture; Member of PIR Center Executive Board; **Mr. Albert Zulkharneev**, the Head of the representative office of Rossotrudnichestvo – Russian House in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

[Read more](#)

On December 30, 2025, Dr. Vladimir Baranovski, the Chief Research Scientist, a member of Directorate of IMEMO RAS, the Head of Research of the Center for Situational Analysis, celebrated his anniversary.



Dr. Ekaterina Stepanova, Doctor of Pol. Sciences, Head of Peace and Conflict Studies Unit and Lead Researcher at Primakov National Research Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO RAS), Member of PIR Center Executive Board, sends her congratulations to **Dr. Vladimir Baranovski**:

Congratulations to my dear colleague at IMEMO RAS, the esteemed Dr. Vladimir Baranovski, on his anniversary! Dr. Vladimir Baranovski is one of the leading academic specialists on the issues of European and global security. His lifelong service to Russian science and IMEMO is defined by his unwavering commitment to its excellence and his role in shaping the careers of numerous young researchers. For all his immense experience as a researcher and scientific administrator, he retains a keen interest in novel scientific methodologies and is a consistent champion of innovative work. Dr. Vladimir Baranovski possesses a rare talent for stimulating scientific discussions, even contentious at times, and moderating them in a constructive and respectful manner. He is a kind-hearted person, firmly associated – I believe, not only in my mind – with the image of a wise sea captain with a pipe in hand, a good sense of humour and unwavering attentiveness to both colleagues and students. To Vladimir Georgievich's health, happiness and a future filled with creative triumphs!

[Read more](#)

GALLERY OF MEMORY

VIKTOR SLIPCHENKO HAS PASSED AWAY

"Viktor Slipchenko was a top-class specialist in the field of nuclear nonproliferation, a student and colleague of Ambassador Roland Timerbaev, our 'guru' on such issues as nuclear tests and UN Security Council Resolution 1540. Until his last days, Viktor Slipchenko remained a member of the PIR Center Advisory Board, participating in scientific conferences and educational programs of the PIR Center for three decades. I remember Viktor Sergeevich as a true professional, a deep expert. I mourn. At the PIR Center, we share our memories of Viktor Sergeevich with the younger generation of nonproliferation specialists," – Dr. Vladimir Orlov, PIR Center Founding Director.

Born on February 19, 1945. In 1968, **Victor S. Slipchenko** graduated with honors from MGIMO University. In 1968-2009, he worked at the Central Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR/Russian Federation, as well as abroad. For 15 years he worked at the UN Secretariat in New York and Geneva. Victor S. Slipchenko is an Honorary Employee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. He has repeatedly participated in arms control and nonproliferation negotiations. In 2005-2009, Victor S. Slipchenko was an Expert of the Committee on WMD Nonproliferation of the UN Security Council. He has state awards. Author of numerous publications on disarmament and nonproliferation in domestic and foreign publications. Author of the book of memoirs "One Life of a Disarmament Diplomat". PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2022.



YADERNY KONTROL



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

Editor, design and DTP: Mr. Yuriy **Shakhov**

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PIR CENTER

Founded 32 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 27 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)

PIR CENTER'S LIST OF ACTIVE PROJECTS 2025-2026

You may find the full list of the PIR Center's active projects 2025-2026 here:

<https://pircenter.org/en/pir-centers-list-of-active-projects-2025-2026/>

Editorial work on this issue of the E-Bulletin was completed on January 31, 2026.

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

