



PIR CENTER E-BULLETIN

№ 2 (545)

FEBRUARY – APRIL 2026

YADERNY KONTROL

WAR IN
THE MIDDLE EAST

EUROPEAN SECURITY

NUCLEAR PROGRAMS OF
IRAN AND ISRAEL

THE FUTURE OF
ARMS CONTROL

FRANCE'S NUCLEAR STRATEGY





Unknown artist,
"Rustem killing the white devil," Iran, 19th century

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PIR QUOTES

«WOUNDS THAT RESHAPE THE WORLD...»

Wounds in international politics are not merely the consequences of crises and conflicts, but points at which the system exposes its vulnerability. They reveal the weak spots of states, fractures in alliances, and the limits of trust and stability. Yet it is precisely through these ruptures that rethinking becomes possible: old patterns of behavior cease to work, and the need arises to seek new forms of interaction.

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“The wound is the place where the Light enters you”

Jalal ad-Din Rumi, 13th century



HOT TOPIC

«THE WORLD WILL NOT COLLAPSE ON FEBRUARY 5»: DMITRY STEFANOVICH ON THE EXPIRY OF NEW START AND THE FUTURE OF ARMS CONTROL



Mr. Dmitry Stefanovich

On February 5, 2026, the Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms expired. At the same time, the American side left unanswered Russia's proposal to observe the quantitative limits of New START for at least a year after its formal expiration.

In light of these circumstances, we decided to discuss the future of the arms control architecture with Mr. Dmitry Stefanovich, Research Fellow at the Department of Military and Economic Security Research at IMEMO, Member of the PIR Center Advisory Board.

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Dr. Vladimir Orlov

Trump once again called for a “deal” – and once again struck. Why? How are the roles of the United States and Israel divided? And most importantly – can such negotiations be trusted at all?

Read more in the commentary by Dr. Vladimir Orlov, PIR Center Founding Director.

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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

A NEW STRATEGIC REALITY: NEW START, CHINA, AND THE FUTURE OF ARMS CONTROL: INTERVIEW WITH DARYL KIMBALL BY ALEXANDRA ZUBENKO

Against the backdrop of the expiration of New START, the absence of new agreements between Moscow and Washington, and growing attention to China's nuclear factor, issues of strategic stability are once again coming to the forefront. In an interview with PIR Center, **Daryl Kimball**, Executive Director of the Arms Control Association, explains why the United States has not responded to Russia's proposal to maintain New START warhead ceilings, what the prospects are for multilateral arms control, and what the advancement of the "Golden Dome" missile defense system could entail.



The interview was conducted by **Ms. Alexandra Zubenko**, PIR Center Research Associate.

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“THE U.S. «NUCLEAR UMBRELLA» IN ASIA: HOW RELIABLE IS IT FOR JAPAN AND SOUTH KOREA?: INTERVIEW WITH DR. DAVID SANTORO BY ILYA SUBBOTIN

Against the backdrop of a changing military-political environment in Northeast Asia, issues of U.S. extended deterrence are becoming increasingly relevant. The development of China’s nuclear capabilities, as well as the situation surrounding North Korea’s missile and nuclear program, are drawing heightened attention from Washington’s key allies – Japan and the Republic of Korea. In this context, assessing the current state of U.S. security guarantees and the prospects for the evolution of the regional deterrence architecture is of particular interest.



PIR Center conducted a series of interviews with leading international experts on strategic stability and arms control. One of our interviewees was **Dr. David Santoro**, President and CEO of the Pacific Forum.

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

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IAEA SAFEGUARDS UNDER PRESSURE: BALANCING VERIFICATION, OBJECTIVITY, AND GEOPOLITICS: INTERVIEW WITH DR. TARIQ RAUF BY GRANT GEVORGYAN

In an era of rising geopolitical tensions and renewed concerns over nuclear proliferation, the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has become more critical – and more contested – than ever. As the Agency adapts its safeguards system to new challenges, questions of effectiveness, objectivity, and political pressure are increasingly at the forefront of expert debate.



PIR Center continues its series of interviews with leading international experts on strategic stability and arms control. Today's guest is **Dr. Tariq Rauf**, former Head of the Verification and Security Policy Coordination Department at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and a member of PIR Center Advisory Board since 2013.

The interview was conducted by **Mr. Grant Gevorgyan** first-year MA student of the "International Security" program at MGIMO University and PIR Center.

[Read more](#)



“HOW THE MIDDLE EAST COPE WITH THE CHALLENGES OF THE TIME: INTERVIEW WITH VITALY NAUMKIN BY ESENIIA KOSULINA

The Middle East is undergoing a period of deep geopolitical turbulence marked by persistent conflicts, regional rivalries, and shifting global dynamics. Amid these challenges, the issue of collective security has become central to the region’s future.



In this interview, **Ms. Eseniia Kosulina** speaks with **Dr. Vitaly Naumkin** about the prospects for building an inclusive security architecture, the role of external powers, the effectiveness of regional organizations, and the lessons of ongoing conflicts.

[Read more](#)



ONE EUROPE, TWO UMBRELLAS: EXTENDED NUCLEAR DETERRENCE A LA FRANCAISE



Mr. Ilya Subbotin



The European security architecture is entering a phase of deep transformation. Against the backdrop of growing doubts about the long-term reliability of the American “nuclear umbrella” and increasing strategic uncertainty on the continent, France is taking steps to institutionalize its own nuclear dimension of European deterrence.

Emmanuel Macron’s initiatives – from the idea of “forward deterrence” and expanding the format of nuclear exercises to the creation of a Franco-German steering group on nuclear issues – indicate Paris’s attempt to rethink its role in Europe’s security system.

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IN THE SKIES OVER THE GULF: MOST OF IRAN’S TARGETS IN THE PERSIAN GULF HAVE BEEN ON UAE TERRITORY



Ms. Alexandra Zubenko



The escalation of the Iran-Israel conflict has, for the first time, directly affected the Persian Gulf states. The UAE faced the heaviest strikes, with hundreds of missiles and drones launched within days.

Although most were intercepted, the attacks have raised new concerns about the resilience of air defense systems and the sustainability of interceptor stockpiles during prolonged conflicts.

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«TO BE FREE, ONE MUST BE FEARED»: ON MACRON'S ANNUAL ADDRESS AND EUROPEAN REACTIONS TO CHANGES IN FRANCE'S NUCLEAR STRATEGY



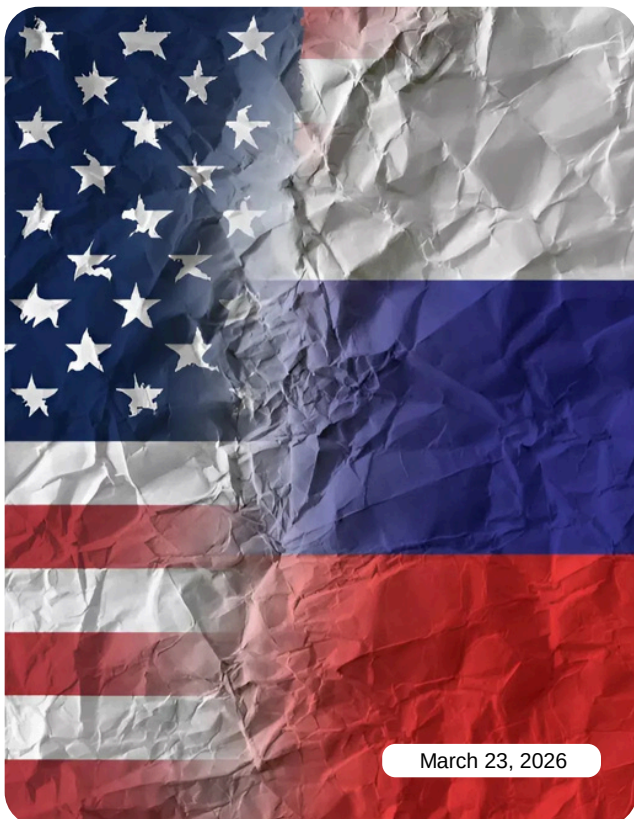
Ms. Alexandra Zubenko



The speech by Emmanuel Macron at the Île Longue strategic submarine base signalled a potential reassessment of France's role in Europe's deterrence architecture. He announced plans to expand the nuclear arsenal, consider deploying nuclear-capable systems abroad, and deepen defence cooperation with European allies. These steps have already sparked reactions across Europe and intensified debate over the future of nuclear deterrence and the nonproliferation regime.

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AFTER NEW START: MUST THE WORLD FACE DISASTER BEFORE RESTRAINT



Ms. Maryyum Masood



For decades, nuclear stability relied on fragile but intentional agreements between rival powers. In February 2026, that fragile balance was further destabilized as New START expired, removing the last major constraint on U.S.-Russian strategic arsenals.

As uncertainty grows, an unsettling question arises: must humanity once again come dangerously close to nuclear disaster before realizing the importance of restraint?

[Read more](#)

ANALYSES

OUTER SPACE: ARENA FOR AN ARMS RACE OR A PLATFORM FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION?

Dr. Andrey Malov

As space activities expand, the line between military and peaceful uses of space is becoming increasingly blurred. The rapid growth of space traffic, new technologies, and the involvement of private companies are reshaping the security landscape.



"The militarization of space, including its "weaponization", that is, the deliberate deployment of precursors of strike systems, the development of anti-satellite weapons, space-based missile defense elements, the possibility of non-kinetic – non-observable impact on individual spacecraft and satellite constellations, the uncontrolled increase in space debris, as well as cyber threats – all this creates a complex and interconnected system of risks for various areas of activity in space and requires a systematic and comprehensive approach."

[Read more](#)



INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION SECURITY AND RUSSIA'S NATIONAL INTERESTS

Dr. Elena Chernenko

In the digital era, information has emerged as a crucial strategic resource closely tied to state sovereignty and national interests security. The growing integration of the global information space has created both new opportunities and serious cyber threats. Against this backdrop, Russia has developed a comprehensive approach to international information security, seeking to strengthen legal norms, protect digital sovereignty, and shape global rules governing the use of ICT.



"The modern information space is becoming increasingly integrated and simultaneously vulnerable to various types of cyber threats, which can significantly impact the national security of states. Russia, as one of the world's leading powers, has developed a comprehensive strategy to ensure international information security, taking into account both national interests and the need to form joint international mechanisms."

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HACKING THE FUTURE: HOW ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES RESHAPE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Dr. Vadim Kozyulin

Artificial intelligence and digital technologies are rapidly transforming the landscape of international security. Civilian innovations are increasingly integrated into military operations, blurring traditional boundaries and creating new legal and ethical challenges.



"Globalization and technological progress have blurred the boundaries between civilian and military applications of a wide range of digital solutions – from microelectronics to artificial intelligence. This has resulted in the emergence of new types of threats that require thorough scholarly consideration and effective legal regulation. A significant place in this process is occupied by so-called dual-use technologies, which, although initially intended for civilian purposes in medicine, industry, and ecology, are increasingly used in the defense sector, forming the foundation for new types of weaponry and military equipment."

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TIMES WE DO NOT CHOOSE: LEADING POWERS, INTENSE RIVALRIES AND THE GLOBAL SECURITY LANDSCAPE

Dr. Igor Istomin

The global security environment of the twenty-first century is increasingly influenced by renewed competition among major powers. After a period in which interstate rivalry seemed to fade from the forefront of international politics, strategic tensions have reemerged as a central feature of the global order.



"The last decade witnessed major shifts in international politics that undermined preceding expectations regarding global security landscape. The scope of these changes questions our ability to predict major strategic trends. It reinforces skepticism regarding predictability in international politics[1]. Nevertheless, closer examination of this record provides valuable lessons, incentivizing better forecasting in this field. Through careful exploration of the past, one can learn that future is never just a repetition of the present."

[Read more](#)



PROSPECTS FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN RUSSIA AND AFRICA IN NUCLEAR ENERGY

Mr. Sviatoslav Arov

The growing imbalance between energy demand and supply in Africa has become one of the key constraints on the continent's economic development. As traditional energy systems struggle to keep pace with demographic and industrial expansion, interest in alternative and large-scale energy solutions is rising. In this regard, nuclear energy is gaining attention as a potential long-term answer, positioning cooperation with technologically advanced partners such as Russia as an important element of Africa's energy strategy.



“Nuclear energy remains one of the most promising areas of cooperation between Russia and African countries. Africa accounts for only 6% of global energy, while nearly 600 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa live without access to electricity. Electricity demand in Africa today is 700 terawatt-hours (TWh), and it is expected to doubled by 2040, reaching 1 600 TWh. Due to demographic factors, such as rapid population growth, Africa has even greater growth potential. In 2025, Africa's population is 1.5 billion people, and it is expected to reach 1.7 billion by 2030. Additionally, Africa is gradually industrializing, while more than 600 million people still do not have access to grid electricity. The energy deficit, which is one of the main obstacles to achieving sustainable economic growth in the region, is prompting African governments to seek solutions in the energy sector. According to the Outlook for Nuclear Energy in Africa, published by International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 2025, more than 20 African countries exploring potential of nuclear energy.”

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THE PROSPECTS FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN MONGOLIA AND THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION IN THE ENERGY SECTOR

Mr. Roman Kalinin

The shift of global economic and energy dynamics towards Asia has heightened the importance of regional cooperation. In this context, Mongolia and the Russian Federation are natural partners due to their geographic proximity and resource complementarity.



"Mongolia occupies a strategic geopolitical position sharing borders with only two countries, Russia and China. Mongolia maintains friendly relations with neighbours across various fields while promoting "Third Neighbour" policy. It presumes creation of partnership with countries that do not share direct borders with Mongolia in order to become more independent in its political and economic sphere. Being rich with natural resources such as copper, coal, rare earth elements (REE), lithium and others Mongolia attracts foreign capital from the developed economies. Thus, it is strategically important for Russia to enhance commercial and political ties with Mongolia."

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PIR PRESS NEWS

MGIMO UNIVERSITY HOSTED A SOLEMN CEREMONY TO ANNOUNCE THE WINNER OF THE 2026 VYACHESLAV TRUBNIKOV GRANT COMPETITION

MGIMO University hosted a solemn ceremony to announce the winner of the Vyacheslav Trubnikov Grant Competition. The nominees were first-year students of the International Security Master's Program, run by MGIMO University in partnership with PIR Center. The competition takes place annually, and the winner is awarded a full tuition waiver for the second, third, and fourth semesters of the program.

In 2026, the winner of the competition is **Irina Klimenkova**, who received the majority of votes from the members of the Selection Committee. The Committee included: **Dr. Andrey Baykov**, Chairman of the Committee, Vice-Rector for Research at MGIMO University and member of PIR Center Advisory Board; **Mr. Evgeny Buzhinsky**, Co-Chairman of the Committee, Lieutenant General (retired) and Chairman of PIR Center Executive Board; **Ms. Anastasia Voytsitskaya**, Director of the Department of Work with Students and Alumni at MGIMO University; **Mr. Aleksey Dundich**, Head of the Master's Programs Expertise Division at MGIMO University; **Dr. Igor Istomin**, Head of the Department of Applied International Analysis at MGIMO University and member of PIR Center Advisory Board; **Dr. Mikhail Lysenko**, Advisor to the Director General of Rosatom State Corporation and member of PIR Center Advisory Board; **Dr. Vladimir Orlov**, Director of PIR Center, Professor at the Department of Applied International Analysis at MGIMO University, and Academic Director of the International Security Master's Program; **Dr. Alexander Fedorov**, Associate Professor at the Department of Information Security at Bauman Moscow State Technical University and member of PIR Center Executive Board.

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PIR CENTER REPORT SERIES: “THE NUCLEAR PROGRAM OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN: AN ASSESSMENT OF ITS CURRENT STATUS AND CAPABILITIES”

On March 2, PIR Center released into the public domain its report (in Russian) “The Nuclear Program of the Islamic Republic of Iran: An Assessment of Its Current Status and Capabilities.”

The authors are **Dr. Leonid Tsukanov**, PhD in Political Science and PIR Center Consultant, and **Sergey Semenov**, PIR Center Research Fellow.

The report’s Executive Editor and Academic Supervisor of the project “Assessing Nuclear Proliferation Threats in the World: Who the Emerging Actors Are” is **Dr. Vladimir Orlov**, Founding Director of PIR Center and Professor at MGIMO University.

The report, part of PIR Centre Reports Series (№48), offers a detailed overview of Iran’s nuclear program’s current status. It assesses technological capabilities in uranium enrichment and conversion, explores prospects for nuclear weapons development, discusses religious and doctrinal restrictions, reviews missile delivery systems, and examines the implications of the June 2025 Israeli-U.S. strikes along with the ongoing diplomatic deadlock over Iran’s nuclear dossier.

The data in this report are current as of 27 February 2026. This publication is a simplified version of a more extensive PIR Center study titled “The New Nuclear Dozen: Assessing Nuclear Proliferation Threats Worldwide for 2026-2030.” The detailed study is currently under review by a select group of experts and will be released to the public at a later date.

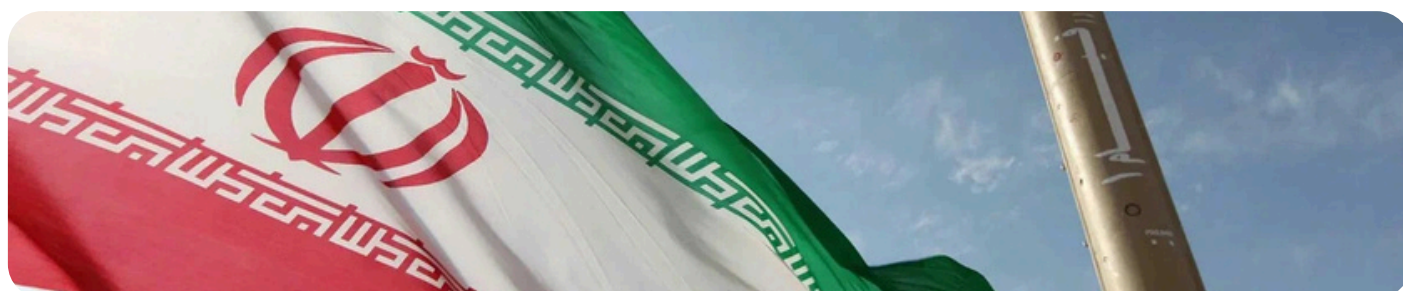
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Ядерная программа Исламской Республики
Иран: оценка нынешнего состояния и
возможностей

Серия «Доклады ПИР-Центра» № 48

Март 2026 г.



PIR CENTER REPORT SERIES: “THE ROAR OF THE LONE LION”: CONTOURS OF ISRAEL’S NUCLEAR POLICY AFTER THE STRIKES ON IRAN

On March 10, PIR Center released into the public domain the report (in Russian) “The Roar of the Lone Lion: Contours of Israel’s Nuclear Policy After the Strikes on Iran.”

The report is published as part of PIR Center Report Series (№49) and analyzes Israel’s presumed nuclear potential and its role in the regional security architecture of the Middle East amid the escalation of the U.S.-Israeli confrontation with Iran in 2025-2026. It examines the characteristics of Israel’s policy of “nuclear opacity” (“Amimut”), estimates the possible size of the arsenal and fissile material stockpiles, as well as key elements of the country’s nuclear infrastructure and scientific-technological base.

Special focus is given to the likely configuration of delivery systems (such as the Jericho family of missile systems, along with air and naval components), and to whether tactical nuclear weapons might be present or absent. The report also examines Israel’s doctrinal approaches to nuclear deterrence (including the inevitability of retaliation and the “Begin Doctrine”) and evaluates their influence on the selection of forceful measures in relation to Iran. By comparing statements from the involved parties and indirect evidence, the report reviews the outcomes of strikes against Iran’s “nuclear perimeter” in summer 2025 and during the late February-early March 2026 campaign, as well as their implications for regional escalation, the nonproliferation regime, and the future direction of Israel’s nuclear policy.



«Рычание одинокого льва»: контуры ядерной политики Израиля после ударов по Ирану

Серия «Доклады ПИР-Центра» № 49

Март 2026 г.

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POLEMICS

OLD CONTINENT, NEW PROBLEMS. DMITRY DANILOV AND ANDREY ZAGORSKY ON PRESSING ISSUES OF EUROPEAN SECURITY

Dr. Dmitry Danilov; Dr. Andrey Zagorsky

Relations between the United States and its European allies stand at a crossroads. The widening rift between the Trump administration and Brussels has highlighted the future of Europe's security and arms control policies, both within the European Union and within NATO. What are the prospects for the US nuclear umbrella? What does the deployment of intermediate-range missiles in Germany entail? On what terms will the Greenland crisis end? And to what extent are the initiatives of the "coalition of the willing" feasible?

We discuss these and other topics with **Dr. Dmitry Danilov**, PIR Center Advisory Board Member, professor in the Department of Integration Process at the MGIMO University, Head of the Department for European Security at the Institute of Europe of the Russian Academy of Sciences, and **Dr. Andrey Zagorsky**, PIR Center Advisory Board Member, Head of the Department for Disarmament and Conflict Resolution Studies, Head of the Sector Section for Non-Proliferation and Arms Limitation of the Center for International Security.

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MIDDLEGAME IN THE MIDDLE EAST? POLEMICS BETWEEN EVDOKIA DOBREVA AND LEONID TSUKANOV ON THE SITUATION IN IRAN.

Dr. Leonid Tsukanov; Evdokia Dobreva

The situation around Iran has reached a new peak and escalated to an entirely unprecedented level. For the first time, the monarchies of the Persian Gulf – Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia – have faced such massive strikes. «Gunboat diplomacy» has become more about «gunboats» than «diplomacy». Donald Trump, much like a poker player, sees Iran’s «game » as a bluff and, confident in his hand’s strength, is sharply raising the stakes without regard for the chips – his own or others’. In the course of a joint US-Israel operation, one of the main targets was Iran’s top leadership, including Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei. The scenario proven effective in Venezuela was decided to be tested in a new context to provoke a change of power in the country.

How will Iran’s domestic political situation evolve amid these foreign policy challenges? How will the Gulf monarchies respond to missile strikes on their territory? And finally, what are the prospects for the current escalation? Today, **Evdokia Dobreva**, Junior Research Fellow of The Institute of World Economy and International Relations and **Dr. Leonid Tsukanov**, PIR Center Consultant, have engaged in polemics on all these and the other questions.

[Read more](#)



NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN

ADLAN MARGOEV: LONG TIME NO FIND: IRAN AND ITS NUCLEAR PROGRAM



When would Iran be ready to produce a nuclear weapon? Even the US intelligence community was confused with its own assessments. In 2005, its experts estimated with high confidence that Iran was determined to develop a nuclear weapon despite the international obligations. But in 2007, they understood that Iran was not prepared to do so. If we turn to the 2007 US National Intelligence Estimate Iran: Nuclear Intentions and Capabilities, we will see how different the assessment of Iran's nuclear program became in 2007, and that means even some of the strongest intelligence communities in the world are not exempt from making mistakes.

[Read more](#)

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR DISARMAMENT AND NON-PROLIFERATION AWARENESS



The educate-the-educators programme in non-proliferation studies in the Russian Federation was established by the PIR Center (Russian Center for Policy Studies), which was founded in 1994 in Moscow. This included regular visits and a series of lectures by PIR Center's associates at most of the Russian universities that focus on international relations and security. In addition, the PIR Center brings professors and research institute staff from all over the country, as well as the post-Soviet states, to Moscow for specialized training courses.

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE «GREAT GAME» STRATEGY: RUSSIA AND THE USA IN THE NEW WORLD



Evstafiev D. The «Great Game» Strategy: Russia and the USA in the New World. “Conceptual” Publishing house, 2024.

Mr. Herman Selyavin



The monograph by Dr. Dmitry Evstafiev “The “Great Game” Strategy. Russia And the USA in the New World” is a large-scale scientific work covering key aspects of Russian-American relations in the context of the transformation of the global world order. The book analyzes both the modern challenges facing Russia and the structural changes in the system of international relations, which the author examines through the prism of history, economics and politics.

The author points out that modern Russian-American relations have reached one of the most difficult stages in the last five decades. The reasons for this are both external factors, such as the degradation of the elites in the United States and the strengthening of transnational companies, and internal aspects, including Russia’s unsuccessful attempts in the 1990s to integrate into the global financial system controlled by the United States and its partners.

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THE MIDDLE EAST – AT THE CROSSROADS OF PATHS AND DESTINIES: URAL ORIENTALISTS ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF ACADEMICIAN VITALY NAUMKIN



URAL SURVEY OF ORIENTAL STUDIES. Scientific peer-reviewed Journal, 2025. Vol.15. Ural Federal University, 2025. Editor-in-Chief: Professor V.A. Kuzmin.

Dr. Leonid Tsukanov



“URAL SURVEY OF ORIENTAL STUDIES” Journal – is an international academic journal covering a wide range of topics in the history, culture, linguistics, political science, economics, philosophy, and religious studies of Asia and Africa. Published since 2005, it remains the only journal on Asian studies at Ural Federal University (UrFU) and one of the largest specialized journals published in the Ural-Siberian region. The journal’s scholarly mission is to explore issues of cross-border relations, contact zones, and interregional and intercultural interaction in the East. This explains its emphasis on colonial and postcolonial studies, imagological issues (the formation of the image of the Other in various cultures), the history of international relations in East Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East from antiquity to the present day, the history of relations between Russia and the East (in particular, the history of Russian emigration to Asia and Africa), and regional integration in Asia and Africa today.

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PIR TEST

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS CORRESPONDS TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE TREATY ON THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS?



- a. States Parties undertake to achieve complete nuclear disarmament under international control;*
- b. The Treaty prohibits only the creation of new nuclear weapons but does not require the elimination of existing ones;*
- c. States Parties undertake to provide assistance to victims of the use or testing of nuclear weapons;*
- d. The Treaty does not require verification measures to confirm the elimination of nuclear weapons.*

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OPEN COLLAR

«IT IS EASY AND PLEASANT TO TELL THE TRUTH» – INTERVIEW WITH ANA LIVIA ARAUJO ESTEVES

The new guest of PIR Center's Open Collar Interview is Ana Livia Araujo Esteves, PhD in Political Sciences (HSE University), specialist in Brazilian-Russian relations and a member of the PIR Alumni Community since 2019.

This interview offers a comprehensive look at Ana Livia's early life in Brazil, her university years, and her professional journey. In this conversation, Ana Livia shares the story of her journey from Brazil to Russia through New York and answers questions about how Russian culture won her heart, what role East Timor's independence played in her life, and why academia is the beach where she hangs a hammock. Of course, an unavoidable part is the story of meeting the PIR Center.



"My interest in International Relations came very early, maybe because English classes were so much fun. Also, my parents were always debating international issues, like the independence of East Timor. My school received refugees from various parts of the world, particularly from former Yugoslavia. Their past experience and future prospects were very intriguing to me. My interest in Russia came with gymnastics. My dream was to be trained by the best coach in town: Valeria Lakerbai. She emigrated to Brazil after the fall of the USSR. She eventually became my coach, which was an honor for me. Whenever she felt emotional – be it happy or angry – she would scream a word or two in Russian. Her professionalism, kindness, and confidence made me fall in love with the language."

"What I love most about Moscow is its cultural life. Not only are the museums great and the music halls fantastic, but I also love how culture is ingrained in people's everyday lives. I love how people are used to including cultural activities in their weekend plans, and how they do this without pretentiousness."

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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 JANUARY-MARCH 2026:



Ladanov, Vladimir A., Minister-Counselor, Embassy of Russia in India, New Delhi (since 2025); PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2024.

January 4



Fahmy Nabil, Foreign minister of Egypt (2013-2014), Dean Emeritus of School of Global Affairs and Public Policy at the American University in Cairo, Egypt; PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2023.

January 5



Dvorkin, Vladimir Z., Doctor of Technical Sciences, Professor, Major General (ret.); Chief Research Fellow of the Section of Military-Political Analysis and Research Projects in the Center for International Security IMEMO RAS; PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2003.

January 12



Arbatov, Alexey G., Academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Doctor in History, the Corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Head of the Center for International Security of IMEMO RAS; PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2004.

January 17



Savelyev, Alexander G., Doctor of Political Sciences; Chief Research Fellow of the Section of Military-Political Analysis and Research Projects in the Center for International Security of IMEMO RAS; PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2002.

January 18



Kozyulin, Vadim B., Member of PIR Center Executive Board; PIR Center Consultant; Chief Researcher of the Center for Global Studies and International Relations of the ICIS, Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

January 22



Lata, Vasily F., Lieutenant-General (ret.), Doctor of Military Sciences, Chief Research Fellow at the Peter the Great Military Academy of the Strategic Missile Forces; PIR Center Executive Board Member since 2023.

January 24



Lukyanov, Fedor A., Editor-in-Chief of the Russia in Global Affairs Journal; Research Director of the Valdai Discussion Club; Chairman of the Council on Foreign and Defense Policy; Research Professor at the Faculty of World Economy and International Affairs of HSE University; PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2010.

February 1



Yakushkin, Dmitri D., Journalist, Professor at the Faculty of Communications, Media and Design, Department of Integrated Communications at HSE University; PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2014.

February 4



Kalinina, Natalia I., Doctor of Medical Sciences, Professor, Senior Researcher of IMEMO RAS, Head of the Group on Non-Traditional Threats to Security of the IMEMO Center for International Security; PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2017.

February 11



Yesin, Viktor I., PhD in Military Sciences, Colonel General (retired); Advisor to Commander of the Strategic Missile Forces of Russia; Associate Professor of the Faculty of World Politics of the Advanced National Security Studies Center of HSE University, Associate Professor of the School of World Politics of Lomonosov Moscow State University; PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2002.

February 14



Vorontsov, Alexander V., PhD in History; Head of the Department for Korean and Mongolian Studies at the Institute of Oriental Studies of RAS; PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2013.

February 20



Zagorski, Andrei V., PhD in History; Head of the Department for Disarmament and Conflict Resolution Studies; Head of the Sector Section for Non-Proliferation and Arms Limitation at the Center for International Security; PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2014.

February 25



Vasiliev, Victor L., Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary; Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the Collective Security Treaty Organization (since 2024); PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2015.

February 25



Stepanov, Oleg V., Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to Canada, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2023.

March 8



Nazarin, Yuri K., Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary (retired); Professor and Honorary Doctor of International Relations (honoris causa) at the Geneva School of Diplomacy and International Relations (GSD); PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2021.

March 12



Volchinskaya, Elena K., PhD in Economics; Chief Specialist for Information Law in Federal Notary Chamber; PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2015.

March 18



Belousov Andrey I., Second Class Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary; Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation in Geneva, responsible for arms control, disarmament and nonproliferation issues (2019-2025); Ambassador-at-Large at the MFA of the Russian Federation (since 2025); PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2024.

March 21



Tuzmukhamedov, Bakhtiyar R., PhD in Law; Professor of International Law; Honored Lawyer of the Russian Federation; Vice-President of the Russian Association of International Law; Member of the International Committee against Torture; PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2001.

March 30



On January 12, 2026, Dr. Vladimir Dvorkin, Doctor of Technical Sciences, Professor, Chief Research Fellow, Section of Military-Political Analysis and Research Projects, Center for International Security IMEMO RAS, Major General (ret.), PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2003, celebrated his 90th birthday.



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

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

Dear Vladimir Zinovievich, On behalf of the entire PIR Center team, please accept our most sincere congratulations on your 90th birthday! These days it is extremely difficult to find a person whose contribution to Russia's foreign policy in the field of international security is as significant as yours. Your role in drafting the foundational documents for the Strategic Rocket Forces and Strategic Nuclear Forces of the Russian Federation as well as your involvement in developing key strategic stability treaties (SALT II, the INF Treaty, and START) was fundamental in shaping our nation's balanced and firm stance. Thanks to your scholarly work, an entire generation of dedicated and highly qualified specialists has been raised. Today, they proudly carry your legacy forward, advancing Russia's strategic interests on the international stage. Your enduring and dedicated service to the Fatherland, marked by the highest professionalism, is held in the deepest respect by your colleagues. We wish you and your loved ones robust health and well-being. May each day bring you joy, desire for new endeavors and all the warmth life has to offer.

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On January 17, 2026, Acad. Alexey Arbatov, Academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Doctor in History, Head of the Center for International Security IMEMO RAS, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2004, celebrated his 75th birthday.



Dmitry Stefanovich, Research Fellow of the Sector of Military Economy and Innovations of the Center for International Security IMEMO RAS, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2022 sends his congratulations to **Acad. Alexey Arbatov**:

Dear Alexey Georgievich! Without any doubts, you are a foundational figure in modern studies of strategic stability, arms control and international security. Without any exaggeration, your ability to balance theory with real-world application across our scientific field is truly one of a kind. Working with you is both a great honor and a constant opportunity for professional and personal growth. Your advice and guidance are always highly valuable for research, analytical work, and preparing scientific publications. We wish you robust health and success in all your endeavors! May a new golden age for arms control begin without delay! Happy anniversary!

[Read more](#)

On January 22, 2026, Dr. Vadim Kozyulin, Candidate of Political Sciences, Professor of the Academy of Military Science, Chief Researcher of the Center for Global Studies and International Relations of the ICIS, Diplomatic Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Member of PIR Center Executive Board since 1994, celebrated his 61st birthday.



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 since 2009, conveys her warm wishes to **Dr. Vadim Kozyulin**:

Dear Alexey Georgievich! Without any doubts, you are a foundational figure in modern studies of strategic stability, arms control and international security. Without any exaggeration, your ability to balance theory with real-world application across our scientific field is truly one of a kind. Working with you is both a great honor and a constant opportunity for professional and personal growth. Your advice and guidance are always highly valuable for research, analytical work, and preparing scientific publications. We wish you robust health and success in all your endeavors! May a new golden age for arms control begin without delay! Happy anniversary!

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On January 24, 2026, Dr. Vasily Lata, Lieutenant-General (ret.), Doctor of Military Sciences, Chief Research Fellow at the Peter the Great Military Academy of the Strategic Missile Forces, PIR Center Executive Board Member since 2023, celebrated his 82nd birthday.

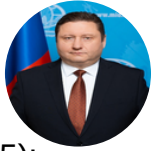


Dr. Dmitri Trenin, Research Professor at the Faculty of World Economy and International Affairs at HSE University; Academic Supervisor of the Institute for Global Military Economics and Strategy at HSE University; Leading Researcher at the Section for Non-Proliferation and Arms Limitation of the Center for International Security IMEMO RAS; PIR Center Executive Board Member since 2022, sends his warm regards to **Dr. Vasily Lata**:

Dear Vasily Filippovich! Please accept our warmest and most sincere congratulations on your birthday! You are one of the most respected national experts in the field of strategic arms and arms control. Your extensive professional experience and precise assessments of the unfolding situation always remain in high demand. They provide us with critical guidance in the highly intricate and ever-pertinent field of nuclear deterrence. We wish you robust health, vigor of spirit and prosperity! Long life and happiness to you!

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On March 21, 2026, Mr. Andrey Belousov, Second Class Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary; Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation in Geneva, responsible for arms control, disarmament and nonproliferation issues (2019-2025); Ambassador-at-Large at the MFA of the Russian Federation (since 2025); PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2024, celebrated his anniversary.



Dr. Vladimir Orlov, the Founding Director of PIR Center, sends his congratulations to Mr. Andrey Belousov:

Dear Andrey! On this special day, let me congratulate you with all my heart on your anniversary! You are a true diplomat. The one who knows how to build bridges even when everything lies in ruins- and how not to destroy them when there are mere hints of a crossing. You are a charming person, deeply sensitive to nature, with a love for its beauty and tranquility. Quite recently, you revealed yourself to me in a new light – as a connoisseur of poetry and an expert in cinema. You are a true and reliable friend. That means more than anything to me. The road ahead implies intense and demanding work- all in the name of preserving the nuclear non-proliferation regime. But today may I wish you not only new professional triumphs, but also the tender spring sunshine of Moscow. Yours, Volodya. PS: My wife Tanya joins me in sending the best wishes.

Evgeny Buzhinskiy, Lieutenant-General (retired), Chairman of PIR Center Executive Board and Co-Chair of the Trialogue Club International, also sends his best regards to **Mr. Andrey Belousov**:

Dear Andrey Ivanovich! Please accept my warmest congratulations on your 60th birthday! Having served for many years within the UN system, you still continue to profoundly advance Russia's interests in nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Owing to your efforts, dialogue with Western states – and with the United States in particular – was upheld even during the most trying times on the most delicate matters of international security. Your iron self-control, diplomatic tact and extensive knowledge, along with your kindness and openness, evoke sincere respect. This is precisely what the coming generation of diplomats and international affairs specialists ought to aspire to. I wish you and your family robust health, inexhaustible energy, well-being and continued success in all your endeavours. May your rich experience and wisdom serve our country's interests for many years to come.

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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/>

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

