



PIR CENTER E-BULLETIN

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MAY – JULY 2026

# YADERNY KONTROL

FUTURE  
FOR ARMS CONTROL

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PAKISTAN AND SAUDI ARABIA

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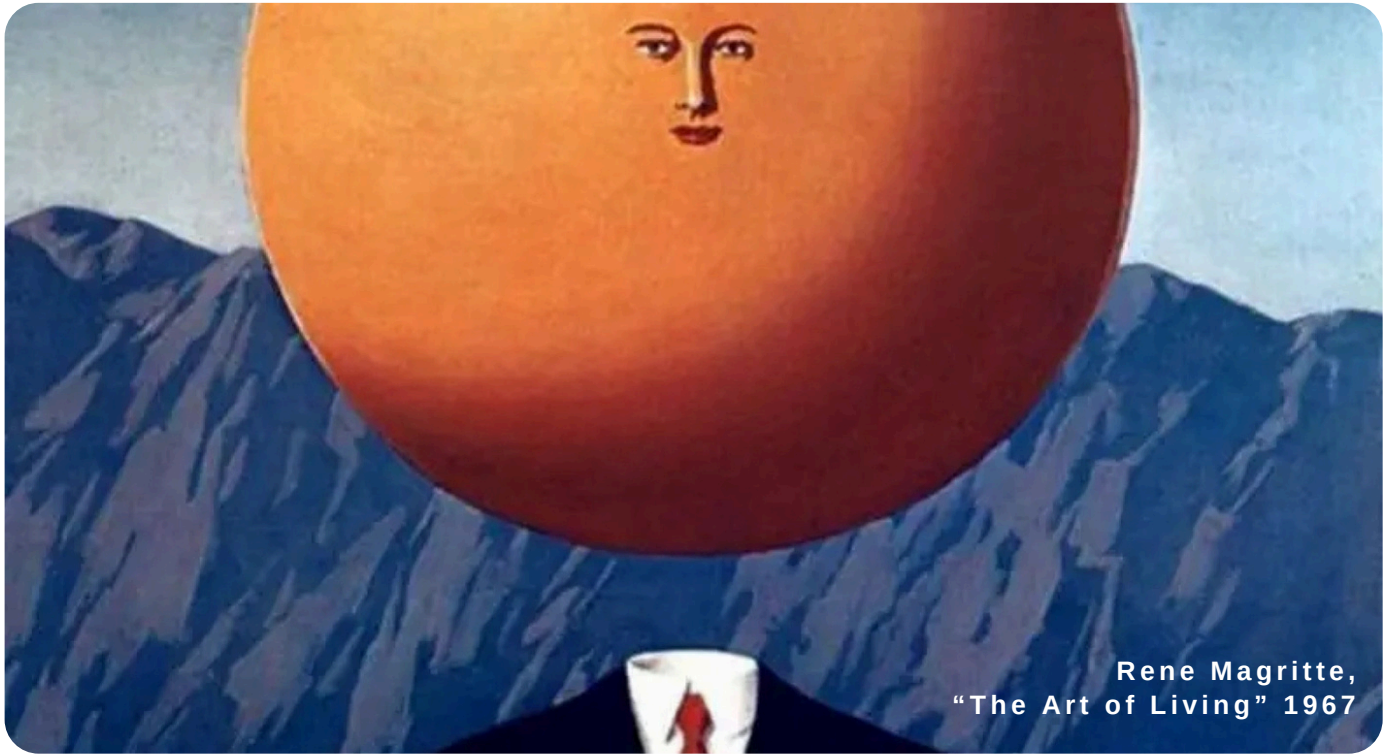
11TH NPT  
REVIEW CONFERENCE

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HIGH-TECH IN AFRICA

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«NUCLEAR UMBRELLAS» AND  
NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON POLISH SOIL



Rene Magritte,  
"The Art of Living" 1967

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**PIR QUOTES:** «Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new»

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# PIR QUOTES

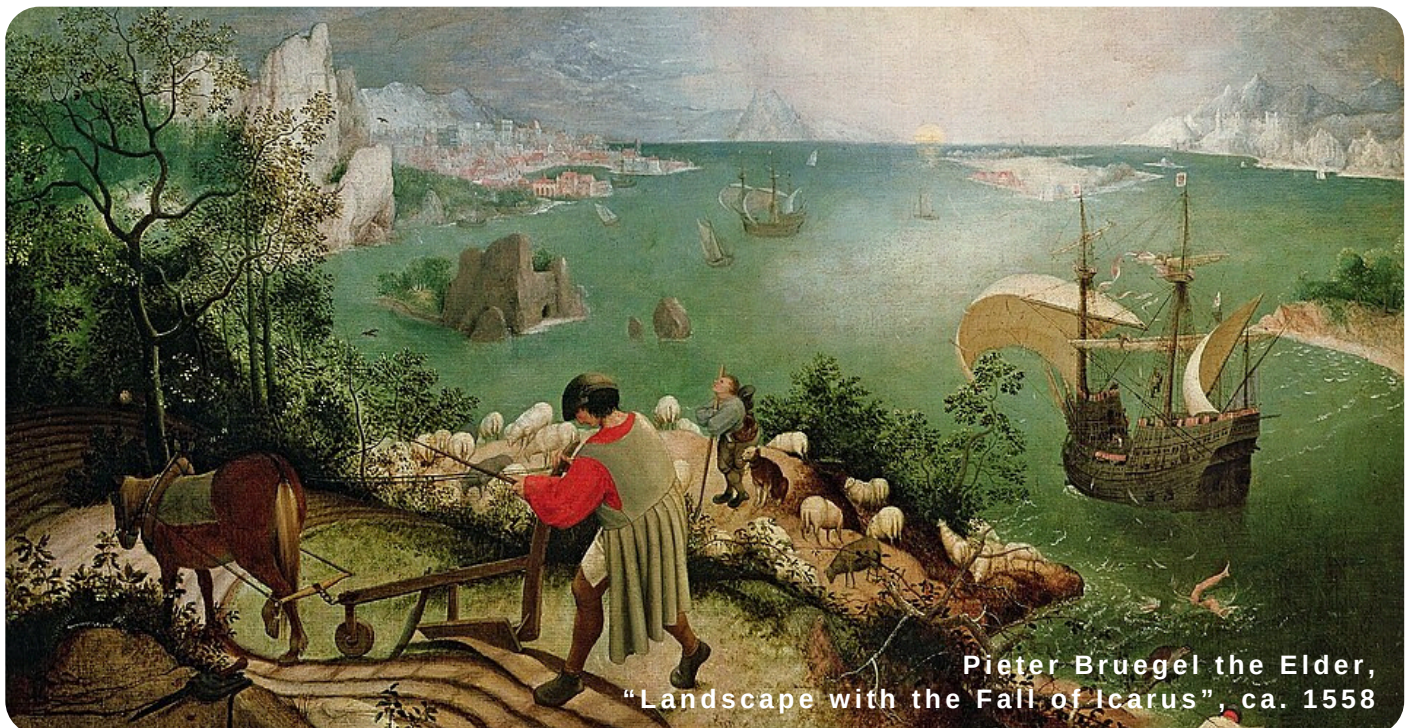
«**ANYONE WHO HAS NEVER MADE A MISTAKE HAS NEVER TRIED ANYTHING NEW...»**

Mistakes in a person's life are not simply a sign of failure or weakness, but moments in which the true process of growth becomes visible. They reveal the limits of our experience, gaps in our knowledge, uncertainty in our decisions, and the aspects of ourselves that require attention. Yet it is precisely through mistakes that people begin to better understand themselves and the world around them. Old ways of acting cease to be sufficient, creating a need to seek new solutions, try different approaches, learn, and move forward. Therefore, a mistake should not be seen as a defeat; it becomes a point of growth, without which the discovery of something new would be impossible.

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*“A person who never made a mistake never tried anything new. Most people avoid trying new things because they are afraid of making mistakes. But there is no reason to fear them. Often, someone who has experienced failure learns more about success than someone to whom success comes easily”*

**Albert Einstein**



Pieter Bruegel the Elder,  
“Landscape with the Fall of Icarus”, ca. 1558

# HOT TOPIC

## IS THERE A FUTURE FOR ARMS CONTROL AND THE REGIME OF NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION?



**Mr. Sergey Ryabkov**

The global arms control architecture is under unprecedented strain.

In his remarks, Sergey Ryabkov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, outlines key risks – from the erosion of major treaties to rising geopolitical tensions – and what this means for strategic stability.

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## HOW STATES LEARNED TO STOP WORRYING ABOUT THE NPT TREATY AND LOVE THE NUCLEAR WEAPONS. AND WHAT TO DO WITH IT?



**Dr. Vladimir Orlov**  
**Mr. Sergey Semenov**

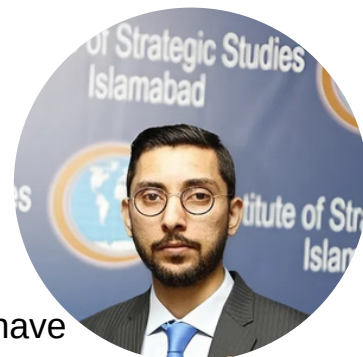
As challenges to the global nonproliferation regime grow, questions about the future of the NPT are becoming increasingly urgent. This PIR Center commentary examines renewed interest in nuclear weapons and what it means for international security.

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# EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

## THE PROMISE OF THE PREMISE: THE IMPLICATIONS OF SMDA BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND SAUDI ARABIA AMID THE ESCALATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST: INTERVIEW WITH TAIMUR KHAN BY MAKSIM NOSENKO

The test of this alliance didn't take long to come. Following the Iranian strikes on Saudi Arabia, the question of whether Pakistan should take action to protect its ally naturally arose. For now, the provisions of the Strategic Mutual Defense Agreement (SMDA) between the two countries have not been publicly activated, nor have the Gulf states taken any significant measures. In an interview with PIR Center, **Mr. Taimur Khan**, a Visiting Researcher at the Institute of Oriental Studies and a Research Associate at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), explains the dimensions of the SMDA and what it may entail in the near future.



The interview was conducted by **Mr. Maksim Nosenko**, PIR Center intern.

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## BEYOND OIL: HOW PEACEFUL ATOM SHAPES THE FUTURE OF THE GULF MONARCHIES: INTERVIEW WITH HAO NAN BY ESENIIA KOSULINA

PIR Center spoke with Hao Nan, Nuclear Futures Fellow with the Ploughshares Fund & Horizon 2045. In the interview, he analyzed the competitive landscape in the nuclear technology market and the factors influencing the decisions of Gulf monarchies, discussed the impact of geopolitical factors on the development of nuclear energy in the region, assessed the potential for alternative areas of cooperation between the Gulf monarchies and Russia, and underlined the prospects for joint initiatives on energy security.



The interview was conducted by **Ms. Eсениia Kosulina**, 2nd year Master's student of the International Security Program (MGIMO University & PIR Center).

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## THE VIEW FROM EGYPT ON THE STRATEGIC MUTUAL DEFENSE AGREEMENT BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND SAUDI ARABIA: INTERVIEW WITH MONICA WILLIAM BY MAKSIM NOSENKO

The situation in the Middle East is changing drastically every day. Following the stalemate in the Islamabad negotiations, Pakistan augmented its forces deployed in Saudi Arabia. At the same time, Pakistan, Turkey, and Egypt continue to attempt to persuade the U.S. and Iran to hold another round of talks, as Middle Eastern powers are deeply concerned about the prospect of ongoing escalation and the erosion of security guarantees.

Would middle powers like Egypt seek new security guarantees akin to the SMDA? **Ms. Monica William**, international relations analyst, answers these and other questions in an exclusive interview for PIR-Center.



The interview was conducted by **Mr. Maksim Nosenko**, PIR Center intern.

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## FATIGUE WITHOUT A BREAKTHROUGH: HOW THE 11TH NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE BEGAN: INTERVIEW WITH ANDREY BAKLITSKIY BY ALEXANDRA ZUBENKO

The first week of the 11th Review Conference of the NPT in New York: less pressure, more fatigue, and the same old disagreements. **Mr. Andrey Baklitskiy**, Senior Researcher in the Weapons of Mass Destruction Programme at United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, discusses the atmosphere and the chair's new approaches.



The interview was conducted by **Ms. Alexandra Zubenko**, Deputy Director at PIR Center.

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## THE LESS ONE KNOWS THE BETTER. HOW DOES THE SMDA BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND SAUDI ARABIA CREATE UNDERSTATEMENT AS A TOOL OF STRATEGIC DETERRENCE: INTERVIEW WITH MARYYUM MASOOD BY MAKSIM NOSENKO

We continue to analyze the implications of the ongoing war in Iran for the Strategic Mutual Defense Agreement between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. Another important question is whether we view the SMDA between the two countries as an example of strengthening cooperation among middle powers in the sphere of security. **Ms. Maryyum Masood**, a Research Officer & Associate Editor at the Center for International Strategic Studies (CISS), gives us a comprehensive overview of this matter and shares with us her opinion on the SMDA.



The interview was conducted by **Mr. Maksim Nosenko**, PIR Center intern.

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## PEACEFUL ATOM, IRAN, AND THE SAHEL: NIGER'S VIEW ON THE 11TH NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE: INTERVIEW WITH ARI TILA BY ALEXANDRA ZUBENKO

PIR Center spoke with **Ari Koutale Tila Boulama Mamadou**, First Secretary of the Permanent Mission of Niger to the United Nations. In the interview, he discussed the key disagreements shaping the 11th NPT Review Conference in New York, the priorities of Niger and African states in the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the prospects for adopting a final document, and also touched upon issues of regional security in the Sahel and cooperation between AES countries and Russia.



The interview was conducted by **Ms. Alexandra Zubenko**, Deputy Director at PIR Center.

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## THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE NPT: BETWEEN DISILLUSIONMENT, IRAN, AND THE SEARCH FOR EQUAL SECURITY: INTERVIEW WITH NABIL FAHMY BY MAXIM NOSENKO

PIR Center continues conducting a series of interviews with leading international experts amid the ongoing NPT Review Conference. We invite our readers to take a look at the Middle East. The guest of our new exclusive interview is **Ambassador Nabil Fahmy**, PIR Center Advisory Board member. During the interview, key aspects of the Middle Eastern agenda were addressed, specifically the establishment of a WMDFZ, proliferation risks, and the universalization of the NPT within the regional context. Attention was also devoted to the “disarmament” article of the NPT and the primary impasse – the situation surrounding Iran. This latter issue was examined within the broader framework of the Middle Eastern security agenda, including the recent Saudi proposal for a non-aggression pact.



The interview was conducted by **Mr. Maksim Nosenko**, PIR Center intern.

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## CONCLUDING THE REVIEW OF THE 11TH NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE: BLITZ INTERVIEW WITH DMITRY STEFANOVICH BY MAKSIM NOSENKO

The 11th NPT Review Conference became a pivotal event in the realm of nuclear diplomacy in 2026. A couple of weeks after its conclusion, the contours of the actual outcomes of the New York review process and the framework for assessing its results began to clearly emerge. The key outcomes of the Review Conference and several other dimensions were addressed in a blitz interview with **Dmitry Stefanovich**, Research Fellow at the Sector of Military Economy and Innovations of the Center for International Security at IMEMO RAS and a member of the PIR Center Advisory Board, conducted on the sidelines of the seminar “Outcomes of the 11th NPT Review Conference: A Meeting with the Head of the Russian Delegation, Ambassador-at-Large Andrey Belousov”.



Blitz Interview was conducted by **Mr. Maksim Nosenko**, Coordinator of Information, Publications & Digital Communications Program.

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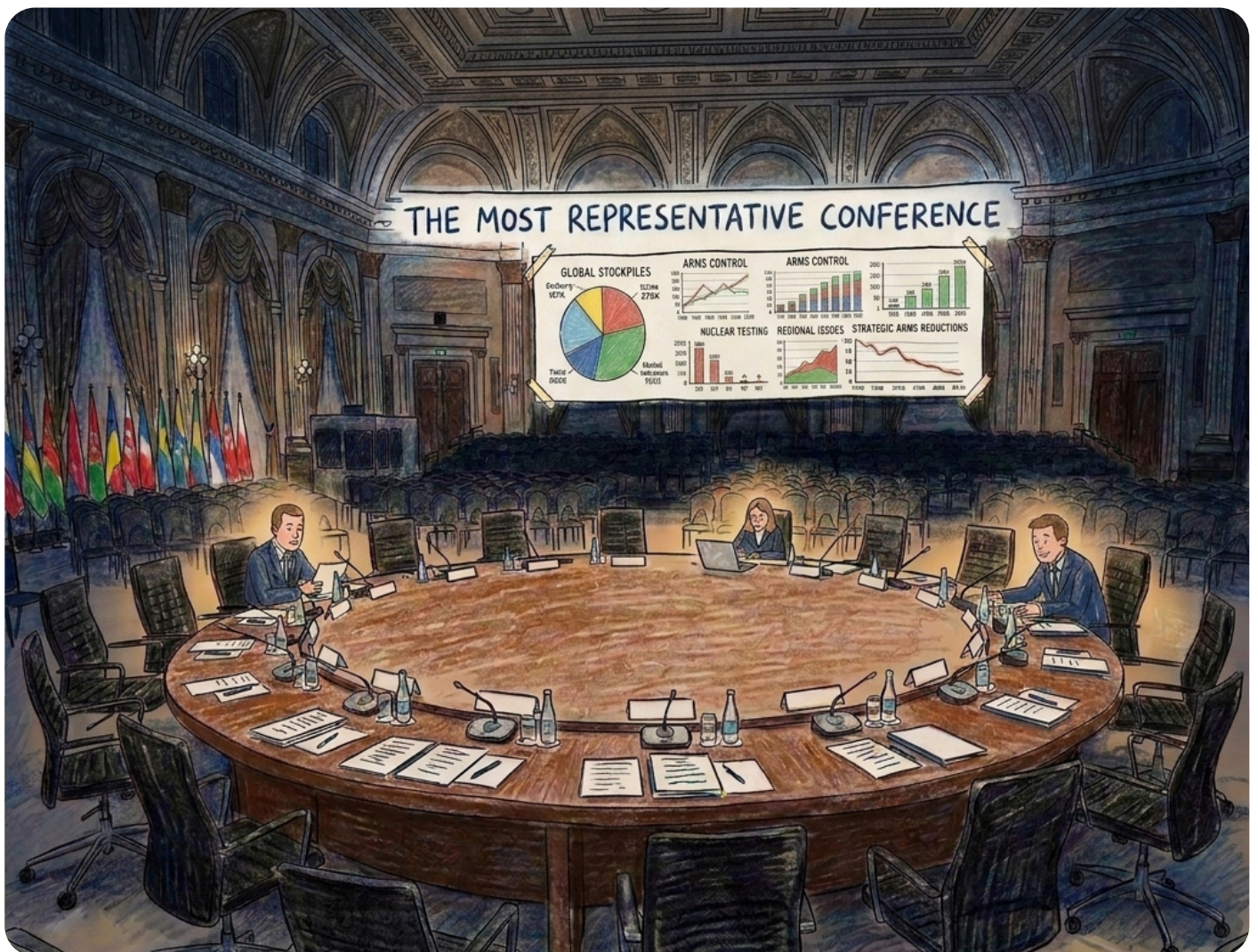
## THE VERDICT ON THE 11TH NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE: INTERVIEW WITH DR. TARIQ RAUF BY MAKSIM NOSENKO

The new guest of PIR Center's exclusive Interview is **Dr. Tariq Rauf**, former Head of Verification and Security Policy Coordination Department at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), PIR Center Advisory Board Member. In this interview, we discussed all the pitfalls of the past Review Conference and everything that was left unsaid. And finally, we looked into the future to assess how many Preparatory Committees would be enough, and whether it would be better to hold the Review Conference in Vienna?



The interview was conducted by **Mr. Maksim Nosenko**, PIR Center Editor, Information, Publications & Digital Communications Program.

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## NORTHERN EUROPE UNDER AN “UMBRELLA”: MILITARIZATION OF THE BALTIC-SCANDINAVIAN MACROREGION, NORWAY’S INVOLVEMENT IN THE EUROPEAN NUCLEAR DETERRENT SYSTEM, AND CHALLENGES FOR RUSSIA IN THE ARCTIC: INTERVIEW WITH IVAN SKRIPKA BY ANNA TISHINA

Is Norway’s statement that the reason for its transition under France’s “nuclear umbrella” was exactly the Russian rearmament in the Arctic justified? Isn’t there any contradiction in Norway’s accession to the French nuclear deterrent in light of the fact that the country prohibits the deployment of nuclear weapons on its territory in peacetime? Can Finland join the French initiative?

What military capabilities does Russia have in the Arctic to respond to the threat of Norwegian weapons? In a new interview with PIR Center,

**Dr. Ivan Skripka**, PhD in Political Science, Research Fellow, Nordic Center of the Department of Country Studies, Institute of Europe of the Russian Academy of Sciences, analyzes the reasons for Norway’s increased military cooperation with other European states, highlights the importance of the Kola Peninsula for Russia’s nuclear deterrent system, and explains the processes shaping the trend towards militarization of the Baltic-Scandinavian Macrorregion.



The interview was conducted by **Ms. Anna Tishina**, PIR Center intern.

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# ANALYSES

## IN THE RHYTHM OF HIGH-TECH: DEVELOPMENT OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES IN AFRICA AND THE ROLE OF RUSSIA

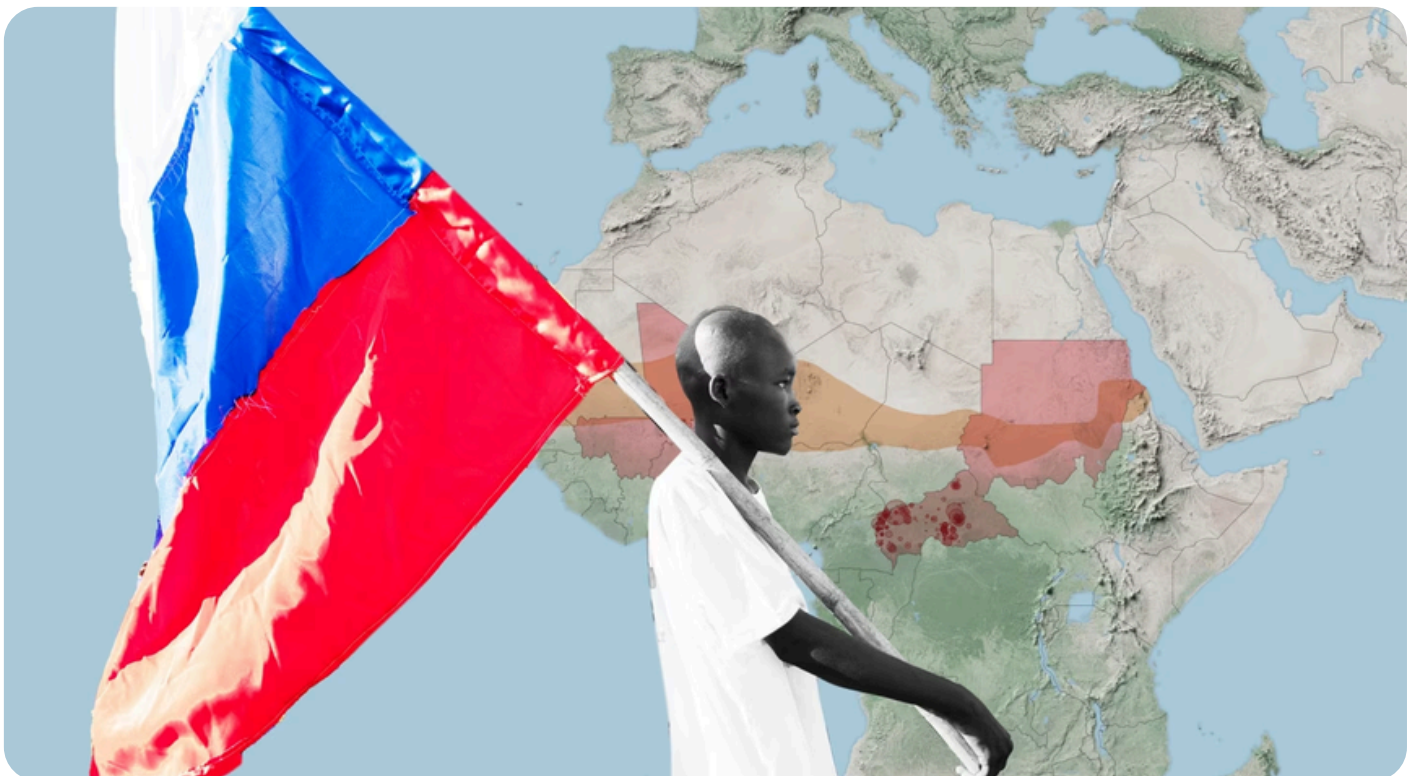
Mr. Leonid Tsukanov

Africa is rapidly redefining its place in the global economy, shifting from a peripheral region to an emerging hub of high-tech growth. Advances in cybersecurity, space research, and biotechnology are shaping the continent's new technological agenda, while intensifying competition among external actors. In this context, Russia's role as a partner in Africa's high-tech transformation deserves closer attention.



***"African nations' place in the international relations system is evolving. The area is increasingly seen as a quickly growing market for advanced technologies – although a couple of decades ago it was associated mainly with instability and geopolitical conflicts. Experts have been discussing the “New Africa” since the 2000s, and it is slowly taking shape and “declaring its rights” to a portion of the high-tech market. In light of this, it is critical to evaluate the present standing of African nations in the high-tech industry as well as the potential contribution of Russia to the region’s continuous change."***

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# PIR PRESS NEWS

## PIR CENTER TURNED 32!

**«On April 30, PIR Center turned 32. For Russian non-profit organizations, this represented an almost remarkable span of time. Still, there was no need to speculate about what was probable or improbable. We commemorated our 32nd birthday by continuing our work and implementing various practical initiatives», – said Dr. Vladimir Orlov, PIR Center Founding Director.**

These days PIR Center, founded on 30 April 1994 in Moscow, is a leading institution in analysis and education on international security issues, first and foremost, in the field of nuclear nonproliferation.

The first development related to our applied research projects. Three years after the publication of our widely discussed report “A New Nuclear Nine?”, PIR Center prepared a new study, “A New Nuclear Dozen? The Prospects for the Spread of Nuclear Weapons in the Medium-Term Perspective”, examining current trends in nuclear proliferation. The report was being finalized for publication and discussed with government agencies and the expert community. Its key findings were presented by Dr. Vladimir Orlov and Mr. Sergey Semenov in an article published in the latest issue of Russia in Global Affairs magazine.

The second development related to PIR Center’s educational projects. In July 2026, PIR Center will hold the 24th International School on Global Security, combining its traditional strengths with a more interactive and dynamic format. According to Dr. Orlov, the School remained one of PIR Center’s most successful and rewarding educational initiatives.

The third development concerned staffing. On the eve of PIR Center’s anniversary, Dr. Vladimir Orlov appointed Ms. Alexandra Zubenko as Deputy Director. In her new role, she became responsible for strategic and partnership development, coordination of flagship events, oversight of Dialogue Club International’s operations, and the implementation of special projects. Dr. Orlov noted that her appointment reflected her professional growth within PIR Center, from intern and trainee to Deputy Director.

For more on the history and achievements of PIR Center, [see here](#). The founder of PIR Center also strongly recommends visiting the organization’s [virtual museum](#).

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## THE SPRING SESSION OF THE TRIALOGUE CLUB INTERNATIONAL ON «IS THERE A FUTURE FOR ARMS CONTROL AND THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION REGIME? A VIEW FROM RUSSIA» HELD IN MOSCOW

«The Western pursuit towards decisive military advantage as a tool for consolidating its global dominance has, among other things, clearly got in conflict with the fundamental principle of equal and indivisible security, as well as with the imperative of mutual acknowledgement and respect for each other's core interests. Yet it is precisely these principles that are intended to serve as the basis for the development and implementation of mutually acceptable, effective, and viable frameworks and arrangements, including in the field of arms control», – Mr. Sergey Ryabkov, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation.

**Dr. Vladimir Orlov**, Founding Director of PIR Center, Founding President of the Trialogue Club International, delivered opening remarks and outlined the latest news and future plans of the Club and PIR Center. **Mr. Sergey Ryabkov**, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, delivered the keynote speech. Following the remarks, a traditional Q&A session ensued. The discussion with Mr. Sergey Ryabkov was moderated by **Gen-Leut. (ret.) Evgeny Buzhinskiy**, Co-Chair of the Trialogue Club International, Chairman of PIR Center Executive Board, as well as **Irina Klimenkova** and **Ilya Subbotin**, 1st year Master's students of the International Security Program (MGIMO University & PIR Center).

The session was attended by the ambassadors of Ecuador and Denmark, Brazil and Ethiopia, the Republic of Korea and Mozambique, senior diplomats, businessmen, experts and young professionals from 24 countries, namely Russia, Egypt, Rwanda, Australia, Great Britain, Finland, France, Israel, Germany, Spain, Singapore, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Norway, New Zealand, Japan, the USA, the delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Moscow, the International Committee of the Red Cross Delegation in Moscow, and others.

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## PIR CENTER ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER NABIL FAHMY APPOINTED NEW SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES

«International relations are, first and foremost, about relationships. They are not a transaction or a zero-sum game», – Nabil Fahmy, PIR Center Advisory Board member and member of the International Editorial Board of the *Security Index Yearbook*.

**Nabil Fahmy**, PIR Center Advisory Board member, member of the International Editorial Board of the *Security Index Yearbook*, and a long-standing friend of PIR Center, has been appointed the new Secretary-General of the League of Arab States. His candidacy was unanimously supported by the foreign ministers of the LAS member states. In this position, he will succeed Ahmed Aboul Gheit, who has headed the League of Arab States for almost ten years. His official term of office will begin in July 2026.

For PIR Center, Nabil Fahmy's appointment is of special significance. Since 2023, he has been a member of PIR Center's Advisory Board. He is also a member of the International Editorial Board of the *Security Index Yearbook*, one of PIR Center's key analytical publications on global security, arms control, and nonproliferation. For many years, Nabil Fahmy has maintained an expert dialogue with PIR Center on Middle Eastern security, diplomacy, arms control, disarmament, and nonproliferation.



In March 2025, Nabil Fahmy was featured in PIR Center's «Open Collar» interview series, where he spoke about the challenges facing foreign ministers, decision-making in a complex geopolitical environment, and his transition from diplomatic service to expert and academic work.

PIR Center congratulates Nabil Fahmy on his appointment to this high office and wishes him every success in his new responsible mission at the helm of the League of Arab States!

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## MGIMO UNIVERSITY HOSTED AN OPEN DAY FOR THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY MASTER'S PROGRAM

«A primary advantage of Master's programs lies in the integration of academic rigor with practical application. Through involvement in research projects, analytical studies, and collaborative publications, students acquire not only theoretical insights but also comprehensive professional experience during their studies. The curriculum enables participants to explore diverse facets of international security, refine their professional trajectories, and prepare for careers within government agencies, international organizations, think tanks, or the corporate sector», – Dr. Andrey Baykov, Vice-Rector for Research at MGIMO University.

MGIMO University hosted an Open Day for the International Security MA Program, implemented jointly with PIR Center. The event brought together prospective students interested in the study of global security issues. Participants were provided with comprehensive information regarding the program's structure, the educational process, and future career prospects.

**Dr. Vladimir Orlov**, PIR Center Founding Director and Academic Director of the International Security Master's Program, outlined the key features and practical orientation of the curriculum. He noted that the program integrates foundational training in international relations with the study of contemporary security challenges, ranging from arms control and nuclear non-proliferation to cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and emerging technologies. **Dr. Andrey Baykov**, MGIMO Vice-Rector for Research, underscored the international and multidisciplinary nature of the International Security Master's Program. He noted that the program attracts students from diverse national backgrounds, fostering a rich educational environment that facilitates the examination of global issues from multiple perspectives.

Further information regarding the International Security Master's Program is available via the link on [PIR Center's website](#) (in Russian). Detailed information concerning the Vyacheslav Trubnikov Grant Competition Committee could be found at the [following link](#) (in Russian). Also, check out the PIR Center's video series in the International Security MA Program section on our [website](#) (in Russian).

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## PIR CENTER HOSTED A SEMINAR ON «NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON POLISH SOIL: A BLUFF OR A REAL THREAT?»

«The only viable dimension of the “Polish nuclear dossier” remains civil nuclear energy, a field in which the Polish leadership has recently achieved significant progress», – said Mr. Sergey Shashinov, PIR Center intern and student of MA Program International Security (implemented by MGIMO University jointly with PIR Center).

PIR Center, jointly with MGIMO University, held a seminar on the topic “Nuclear Weapons on Polish Soil: A Bluff or a Real Threat?” The keynote speaker at the seminar was **Mr. Sergey Shashinov**, PIR Center intern and student of the MA Program International Security. **Dr. Vladimir Orlov**, PIR Center Director, served as the scientific advisor of Mr. Sergey Shashinov’s research paper.

The research paper was reviewed by **Dr. Andrey Zagorsky**, PhD in History, Head of Department at IMEMO RAS and Professor at MGIMO University, and **Dr. Igor Putintsev**, Ph.D. in History, Vice-Rector for language and pre-university education and Associate Professor at the Department of European and American Studies. In his comments, Andrey Zagorsky noted that the research addresses a highly relevant and significant topic in contemporary European politics that warrants rigorous analysis. Dr. Igor Putintsev, in turn, emphasized that the work deserves the highest commendation, considering the conducted analysis of the nuclear factor role in Warsaw, as well as the author’s conclusion regarding changes of Poland’s nuclear track in the contemporary period. Following the review of the referees’ reports, the defense concluded with a Q&A session. At the end of the seminar, Mr. Sergey Shashinov received an excellent mark for his research work.

A video recording of the expert seminar and the speaker’s presentation are now available on PIR Center website in the “NONPROLIFERATION.WORLD” section, under the subsection of the online-course titled “Current Issues in International Security 2025-2026: PIR–MGIMO Seminar Series” (in Russian).



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## MGIMO UNIVERSITY HOSTED A SEMINAR ON «IT'S GOING TO RAIN: PECULIARITIES & PROSPECTS OF NUCLEAR UMBRELLAS»

«A nuclear umbrella constitutes the ultimate manifestation of a comprehensive military-political alliance; it is never established under any other circumstances», – Mr. Ilya Subbotin, PIR Center intern and student of the MA Program International Security (implemented by MGIMO University jointly with PIR Center).

PIR Center, jointly with MGIMO University, held a seminar on the topic “It’s Going to Rain: Peculiarities & Prospects of Nuclear Umbrellas”. The keynote speaker at the seminar was **Mr. Ilya Subbotin**, PIR Center intern and student of MA Program International Security. **Dr. Vladimir Orlov**, PIR Center Director, has served as the scientific advisor of Mr. Ilya Subbotin’s research paper.

The reviewers of the paper were **Dr. Dmitry Trenin**, the RIAC President and PIR Center Executive Board Member, and **Dr. Alexey Krivopalov**, PhD in History and Senior Research Fellow at IMEMO RAS. “A “nuclear umbrella” did not always facilitate a country’s abandonment of its nuclear program; conversely, in some instances, such as Romania, the program continued even under the “umbrella,” Dr. Alexey Krivolapov noted, commenting on the research. The current format of Russian NSNW deployment in Belarus should be interpreted precisely as a mirrorlike response to NATO’s nuclear sharing missions”. In his review of Mr. Ilya Subbotin’s research paper, the RIAC President Dr. Dmitry Trenin underscored that the conclusions drawn by PIR Center intern in his research are of practical significance for assessing the evolution of the military-strategic situation in the region’s most critical to Russia, such as Europe, the Middle East, and the Asia-Pacific region. Following the review of the discussants’ comments, a Q&A session was held. Based on the results of the research paper defense, Ilya Subbotin’s work was awarded an excellent mark.

A video recording of the expert seminar and the speaker’s presentation are now available on PIR Center website in the [“NONPROLIFERATION.WORLD”](#) section, under the subsection of the online-course titled [“Current Issues in International Security 2025-2026: PIR–MGIMO Seminar Series”](#) (in Russian).



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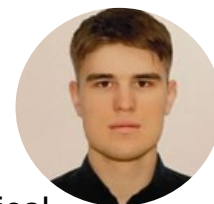
# BOOK REVIEWS

## «HITTING A BULLET WITH A BULLET»: WHEN FILM DEPICTS NUCLEAR STANDOFF



Political thriller «House of Dynamite» (written by Noah Oppenheim, directed by Kathryn Bigelow, 2025).

### Mr. Sergey Shashinov



The premiere of the feature film «The House of Dynamite», directed by Kathryn Bigelow, took place in October 2025. The film simulates a hypothetical crisis triggered by a launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile at the USA and a failed attempt by the US national missile defense system to intercept it.

The film is divided into three parts, each depicting the reaction of key US decision making centers (the White House Situation Room, the US Strategic Command, and the US Presidential Administration) to the unidentified launch.

The film has an open ending, featuring the US President having to make a decision on a retaliatory nuclear strike.

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# HOW GERMANY LEARNED (NOT) TO LOVE THE BOMB. A GERMAN PERSPECTIVE ON THE HISTORY AND PROSPECTS OF GERMANY'S NUCLEAR POLICY



«Germany and Nuclear Weapons in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Atomic Zeitenwende?» / U. Kühn (Ed.) Abingdon: Routledge, 2024.

**Mr. Ilya Subbotin**



In light of intensified discussions about “European deterrence” and the credibility of the US nuclear umbrella in Europe, the book *Germany and Nuclear Weapons in the 21st Century: Atomic Zeitenwende?*, published in 2024, is of particular interest. Edited by Ulrich Kühn, it is a representative collection of works united by a common theme: the history, current state, and prospects of the nuclear policy of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). Substantially, perspective, the book examines such topics as Berlin’s course in the field of nuclear nonproliferation, arms control, and disarmament, Germany’s role in maintaining the US extended nuclear deterrence system in Europe and, in particular, NATO’s nuclear sharing, as well as domestic political discussions on these issues. The comprehensive approach and focus on the current stage endow the study with significant scientific novelty.

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# A BONE OF CONTENTION OR THE GOLDEN CHANCE: PROSPECTS FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION BETWEEN RUSSIA AND NORTH AFRICA AS A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITIES



**Financial and Economic Development Dynamics of North African Countries: Opportunities for Russia in the New Political Landscape. S. Babenkova; edited by S. Gavrilova, I. Bocharov, A. Korzun, D. Rastegaev. Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC), 2024.**



**Mr. Artem Astvatsaturov**

There is no denying that the North Africa is one of the most significant political regions in the contemporary era due to its resources, geostrategic role, and rapidly changing level of economic development. Currently, in the period of transformation of international relations, we are facing numerous challenges of both hard and soft security. Despite the dynamics, changing the character of security in the region, it is crucial to point out that it is soft security that remains the most pivotal issue for all states in the North Africa, regarding particularly in terms of the superior role of food security. Amid the latest developments, the North Africa can be tantamount to a window of opportunity for actively involved regional and global players within the international arena, such as Russia, the US, the EU, etc. Hence, there is a relevant question: “Is North Africa the region of new possibilities or a new epicenter of economic rivalry between major superpowers?”

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# PIR TEST

**WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THE AGREEMENTS ON THE DE-TARGETING (MUTUAL DETARGETING) OF STRATEGIC NUCLEAR MISSILES BETWEEN RUSSIA, THE UNITED STATES, AND THE UNITED KINGDOM?**



- a. A full-fledged international treaty with legal liability for the parties and an inspection regime;*
- b. A temporary military measure automatically revoked when the level of combat readiness is increased;*
- c. A political declaration of intent without legally binding force or verification mechanisms;*
- d. Part of the obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).*

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# UNVEILING THE ANSWER TO THE PREVIOUS 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.*

**Correct answer:** States Parties undertake to provide assistance to victims of the use or testing of nuclear weapons

# GOSSIP COLUMN

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

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



## **WE'VE HEARD THAT THE BILATERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND SAUDI ARABIA MAY POSSESS A NUCLEAR DIMENSION**

We've heard that the bilateral relations between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia may possess a nuclear dimension. The historical trajectory of their engagement demonstrates that the issue of nuclear weapons and security guarantees has consistently emerged on the bilateral agenda, as systematically reported by sources of varying credibility. The Strategic Mutual Defense Agreement has renewed interest in this matter, while the escalation surrounding Iran in February 2026 has prompted regional actors to seriously reconsider their posture toward nuclear weapons. Although current reports indicate Saudi attempts to propose a non-aggression pact in the Middle East, it remains highly plausible that a reassessment of the role of nuclear weapons is already underway, specifically between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

[Read more](#)

# OPEN COLLAR

## «THE MOST SERIOUS OBSTACLES ARE OFTEN THE ONES WE CREATE IN OUR OWN MINDS» – INTERVIEW WITH PAVEL DEVIATKIN

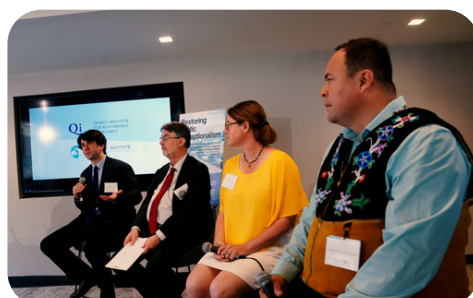
The new guest of PIR Center's Open Collar Interview is Pavel Devyatkin, Senior Associate and Leadership Group member at The Arctic Institute, and a member of the PIR Alumni Community since 2023. His research focuses on Russian Arctic policy, U.S.-Russia and U.S.-China relations, international cooperation, governance, security, and diplomacy. Pavel also provides consultations to companies and academic institutions on Arctic affairs.



In this interview, Pavel Devyatkin speaks about his childhood in New York, his academic years in London, and the path that led him to specialize in Arctic politics. He reflects on the role of scientific diplomacy in maintaining dialogue between major powers, his work at The Arctic Institute, and his experience in teaching international relations at HSE. He also shares his thoughts on the importance of maintaining professional dialogue between countries even during periods of geopolitical tension.



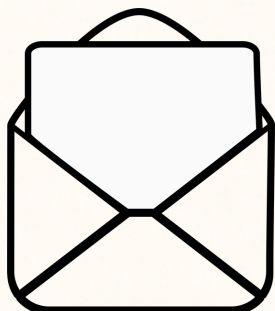
*"Looking back, I feel that my life experiences naturally led me toward international relations. At the same time, I fully understand that for many people choosing a profession is far more difficult. One of my main goals has always been to promote dialogue between Russia and the United States. I try to serve as a bridge between the analytical and academic communities in the two countries, as well as among experts, diplomats, and business representatives."*



[Read more](#)

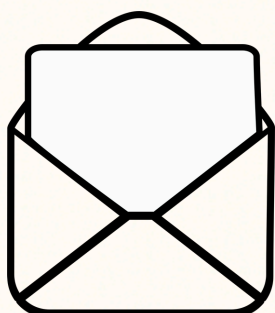
# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**MR. SERGEY RYABKOV, DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, SHARED HIS FEEDBACK ON THE SECURITY INDEX YEARBOOK**



*The second volume of the Security Index Yearbook is a significant contribution to the analysis and understanding of processes developing from different perspectives and angles. The methodology employed in compiling this volume is highly modern and relevant. I had the opportunity to familiarize myself with its contents during the preparation stage. I strongly encourage both specialists and anyone interested in this field – which, to a great extent, influences the peace and well-being of our lives – to pay close attention to this publication and to properly acknowledge its authors and editors.*

**MR. AHMED SALEM AL-WAHAISHI, AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN TO RUSSIA, SHARED HIS FEEDBACK ON THE SECURITY INDEX YEARBOOK.**



*I highly appreciate the first edition of the Security Index Yearbook: Global Edition. We eagerly await the publication of the second volume in print.*

# PIR TOAST

ON BEHALF OF PIR CENTER, WE WISH HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES WHO CELEBRATED THEIR BIRTHDAY IN APRIL-MAY 2026:



**Toloraya**, Georgy D., Doctor of Economics. Member of Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718, UN Security Council, Executive Director of the National Committee on BRICS, Head of Asian Strategy Center at the Institute of Economics RAS, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2013.



**April 3**

**Kozhokin**, Evgeny M., Doctor of Historical Sciences. Professor of the Department of International Relations and Foreign Policy of Russia at MGIMO University, Dean of the Faculty of International Relations, Political Science and Foreign Area Studies of RSUH, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2010.



**April 9**

**Rozhkov**, Oleg V., Director of the On-site Inspection Division of the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2019.



**January 12**

**Sumsky**, Victor V., Doctor of Historical Sciences. Leading Expert in the ASEAN Center in the MGIMO University, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2012.



**April 13**

**Yarnykh**, Andrey Yu., Independent expert. Chairman of the Information Security and Cybercrime Commission of the Russian Association for Electronic Communications (RAEC), PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2015.



**April 15**

**Fedorov**, Alexander V., PhD in Physics and Mathematics. Associate Professor at the Department of Information Security of the Faculty of Computer Science, Artificial Intelligence and Control Systems of the Bauman Moscow State Technical University, Member of PIR Center Executive Board.



**April 16**

**Mostinskiy**, Sergey B., PhD in Technical Sciences. Advisor in the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the International Organizations, Vienna, Austria (2016-2018), PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2015.

**April 16**



**Malgin** Artem V., PhD in Political Science. Associate Professor, Vice-Rector for Strategic Development – Chief of the MGIMO University Rector's Office.

**April 18**



**Buzhinskiy**, Evgeny P., Lieutenant-General (retired), Chairman of PIR Center Executive Board; Co-Chair of the Dialogue Club International.

**April 19**



**Vishnevetskiy**, Igor S., Second Class Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary (retired); Independent Expert; Deputy Director of the Department for Nonproliferation and Arms Control of the Russian Foreign Ministry (2021-2023); PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2024.

**April 23**



**Soldatkina**, Lubov A., Head of the Department for Patriotic Work and Interaction with Public Organizations in the State Foundation «Defenders of the Fatherland», Founder & Art Director of ANO Art-Formula; Member of the Committee, Russian State Council on Culture, Member of PIR Center Executive Board.

**April 24**



**Stefanovich**, Dmitry V., Research Fellow of the Center for International Security at the Primakov National Research Institute of World Economy and International Relations of the Russian Academy of Sciences (IMEMO RAS), co-founder of «Vatfor» Project, Member of PIR Center Advisory Board since 2022.

**April 25**



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

**May 7**



**Lysenko**, Mikhail N., PhD in Law. Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary (retired). Advisor to the Director General of Rosatom State Corporation, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2004.

**May 12**



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

**May 13**



**Antonov**, Anatoly I., PhD in Political Science. Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the United States of America (2017 – 2024), Professor at MGIMO University, *PIR Alumni Community* Member.

**May 15**



**Naumkin**, Vitaly V., PhD in History. Professor, Academician of the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS). Academic Advisor at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the RAS, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2014.

**May 21**



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

**May 22**



**Belyaeva**, Marina P., Director for International Cooperation at State Atomic Energy Corporation «Rosatom».

**May 28**



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

**May 31**



**Evstafiev**, Dmitry G., PhD in Political Science. Professor of the Department of Theory of Law and State at RUDN University, *PIR Alumni Community* Member.

**May 31**



**On April 3, 2026, Dr. Georgy Toloraya**, Doctor of Economics, Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary (retired), Member of Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 of the UN Security Council, Executive Director of the National Committee on BRICS, Head of Asian Strategy Center at the Institute of Economics RAS, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2013, celebrated his anniversary.



**Dr. Dmitri Trenin**, Research Professor at the Faculty of World Economy and International Affairs of the HSE University; Academic Supervisor at the Institute for Global Military Economics and Strategy of the HSE University; Leading Researcher at the Section for Non-Proliferation and Arms Limitation of the Center for International Security at IMEMO RAS; RIAC president (since 2026); Member of PIR Center Executive Board sends his congratulations to **Dr. Georgy Toloraya**:

*Dear Georgy Davidovich! Please accept our warmest congratulations on your anniversary! You've just conquered another peak – 70 years – and you keep climbing higher. You have unique experience working in Asia, America, Europe, and also in the distinctive Russian world. You are an experienced diplomat and an astute analyst. You are an excellent colleague and a caring mentor. Your wisdom – both innate and acquired – turns every conversation into an intellectual feast. We are very delighted to work alongside you. Carrying on: in Asia – a region you so enjoy traveling through – 70 years is nothing more than ripe youth. You keep climbing higher – and we follow it with great admiration!*

[Read more](#)

**On April 16, 2026, Dr. Alexander Fedorov**, PhD in Physics and Mathematics, Associate Professor at the Department of Information Security of the Faculty of Computer Science, Artificial Intelligence and Control Systems at Bauman Moscow State Technical University, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2001, celebrated 71st birthday.



**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, sends his warm wishes to **Dr. Alexander Fedorov**:

*Dear Alexander Valentinovich! Please accept our most sincere congratulations on your birthday. If one were to measure your age not in years, but by the number of students you have mentored, the numbers would be truly impressive. For us, your colleagues, it is especially striking that your intellectual curiosity and your burning desire to stand up for the truth have not dimmed with time – they still remind us of your student years. You are not only an outstanding expert in the field of information and international security, but also a person whose profound analytical insight, scholarly integrity, and pedagogical approach have become a cornerstone for the development of various research and educational programs. Your many years of collaboration with PIR Center, your signature courses at Bauman Moscow State Technical University, and your contributions to monographs and projects have helped nurture an entire generation of specialists – for whom your textbook on the political foundations of information security has become an indispensable desk reference. From the bottom of my heart, I wish you robust health, peace of mind and unwavering vigour – so that you may keep fearlessly pushing the boundaries of security research and practice. May you always be surrounded by loyal colleagues, grateful students, and close ones who share your deep interest in the most complex and pressing issues of our time. Wishing you new ideas, exciting projects, and many more years of fruitful work! Yours, Vadim Kozyulin, together with all PIR veterans and juniors!*

[Read more](#)

**On April 19, 2026, Dr. Evgeny Buzhinskiy**, PhD in Military Sciences; Lieutenant-General (retired); Professor of the Institute for Advanced Strategic Studies at Higher School of Economics; Associate Professor and Head of Center for Applied Political-Military Research of School of World Politics at Lomonosov Moscow State University; Vice-President of the Russian International Affairs Council (RIAC); Chairman of PIR Center Executive Board and Co-Chair of the Trialogue Club International celebrated his 76th birthday.



**Dr. Elena Chernenko**, PhD in History, Member of PIR Center Executive Board, Special Correspondent of the Kommersant Daily, Co-Chair of the Trialogue Club International sends her warm congratulations to **Evgeny Buzhinskiy**:

*Dear Evgeny Petrovich! Please accept my most sincere congratulations on your birthday! It is a pride and a joy to know you and to work alongside you. Your experience and professionalism, your depth of analysis and openness to new ideas, as well as your dedication and genuine warmth, are truly inspiring. I wish you and your loved ones good health! With deepest respect and warmest wishes, Lena*

[Read more](#)

**On April 24, 2026, Ms. Lubov Soldatkina**, Head of the Department for Patriotic Work and Interaction with Public Organizations at State Foundation “Defenders of the Fatherland”; Founder & Art Director of ANO Art-Formula; Member of the Committee at Russian State Council on Culture; Member of PIR Center Executive Board since 2009, celebrated her birthday.



**Ms. Yulia Tseshkovskaya**, Marketing Manager at Evocargo, Member of the international working group “AI Military Dialogue”, PIR Center Advisory Board Member since 2024, sends her warm congratulations to **Lubov Soldatkina**:

*Dear Lyuba, please accept my sincere congratulations and warmest wishes on your birthday! May each day bring new opportunities, inspiration, and harmony in all your endeavours. May your professionalism, wisdom, and inner strength help you achieve your goals, and may the support of your loved ones and like-minded people make your path to success easy and inspiring. Stay as determined, sincere, and unique as you are!*

[Read more](#)

# GALLERY OF MEMORY

## IN MEMORY OF YURI KONSTANTINOVICH NAZARKIN

«I ask my students at MGIMO: "Name the only arms control treaty in the entire history of bilateral relations between the USSR/Russia and the United States that was not only signed and ratified, but also fully implemented by both parties." My students are well prepared – and they have the internet to help them. "START I," they reply. "And who headed our delegation? Who brought this landmark agreement – so vital for our interests and security – to its conclusion?" "Ambassador Nazarkin"», – from the foreword by Dr. Vladimir Orlov, PIR Center Founding Director, to Yuri Nazarkin's book *On START, on Africa, on Life: Memoirs of a Diplomat*.

On May 24, 2026, **Yuri Konstantinovich Nazarkin** – Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the USSR and Russia, retired diplomat, outstanding scholar, and expert in international security – passed away at the age of 95.

We have lost a man whose name is inseparably linked with some of the most significant chapters of Russian diplomacy in the second half of the twentieth century and the beginning of the

twenty-first century. For more than forty years, Yuri Konstantinovich devoted his life to serving his country in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR and Russia, as well as in the Security Council of the Russian Federation. A Candidate of Historical Sciences and an honorary doctor of international relations, he made a substantial contribution to the development of the international legal framework for arms control and the nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

His memory will endure not only in the immense legacy he and his generation left behind, but also in the hearts of his family, friends, colleagues, students, and all those who had the privilege of working with and knowing this remarkable man.

PIR Center website features a memorial gallery dedicated to Yuri Konstantinovich Nazarkin. We extend our deepest condolences to the family and loved ones of Yuri Konstantinovich Nazarkin.

May his memory be eternal.





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

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

*Yaderny Kontrol (Nuclear Control)* — PIR Center E-Bulletin. № 3 (546). May – July, 2026 // Ed. by Yuriy Shakhov // M.: PIR Center, 2026. — 35 p.

## 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 2026

You may find the full list of the PIR Center's active projects 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 June 15, 2026.

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

