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The New Global Development Agenda

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IN THE COMING MONTHS in New York, United Nations member states are expected to agree on a new development agenda which will replace that of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It is shaping up to be an ambitious and transformational development agenda, which would be universal in nature, cover all three dimensions of sustainable develop-

ment, and aim to address the many interlinked challenges our world is facing. The agenda is relevant to countries at all stages of development.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) agenda will be reinforced by the outcomes of other major global development-related processes this year.

Without doubt, there has been tremendous development progress in the time span covered by the MDGs and their targets.

Russia's development cooperation has contributed to this progress, not least to its contributions in the areas of health, education and food security.

The time to act is now. Exclusion is fueling the use of sectarianism and violence. The burden of complex humanitarian emergencies occasioned by conflict or by natural disasters is weighing heavily on peoples on the frontlines of these events, and on international relief budgets.

THE NEW DEVELOPMENT AGENDA will remain mere words on paper unless it can be implemented. A strong package on "means of implementation" will be critical. Capacities need to be strengthened. Renewed global partnerships for development are needed. And, while money isn't everything, access to finance is vital.

GROWING SUPPORT from major emerging economies and donors like Russia for development cooperation will be of significant assistance in achieving the new Sustainable Development Goals and targets. The expansion of sources of support for developing countries is good for development.

Russia has a very wide range of knowledge and expertise from which its partners in the CIS and beyond already benefit. For example, earlier this year, in the process of Kyrgyzstan's accession to the Customs Union, Russia's State Customs Committee and other relevant agencies provided invaluable capacity-building support and expertise on customs regulation and procedures to their

Kyrgyz colleagues.

If we all work together, we have a chance of meeting citizens' aspirations for peace, prosperity, and well-being, and for the preservation of our planet. In 2015, a once in a generation year for development with major new agendas being defined, the opportunity exists to put our world on an inclusive and sustainable course. At UNDP, we count on Russia as a partner in this endeavor.

The Last Geopolitical Game: The U.S. Begins and Loses

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CONTRARY TO THE PREDICTIONS made by Washington advocates, the disintegration of the USSR and the world socialist system did not lead to the end of history. Neither socialism nor the crisis of capitalism has disappeared.

Of course, these are nothing more than historical parallels that illustrate the complexity of the global economic development process. As Russian President V.V. Putin has aptly observed, geopolitics is

the only invariable in it. Its anti-Russian essence has not changed either since the disintegration of the world socialist system or since the collapse of the USSR, remaining the same as it was during the days of the Russian Empire.

Since our Western "partners" think in geopolitical terms, the analysis of these terms can help forecast their future behavior. Otherwise we will only be measuring the stupidity of remarks by representatives of U.S. authorities in Psaki terms, without understanding the logic of their actions. Until now, however, wars with Russia have not brought the West big victories. As a matter of fact, they have caused serious damage both to Russia and to Europe. Granted, not Europe as a whole but its mainland part, to which Russian troops have often advanced to finish off the aggressor in its den.

As the centuries-old experience in the development of capitalism shows, during such periods, the system of international relations sharply destabilizes, the old world order is destroyed and a new order is formed. The possibilities for social and economic development based on the established system of institutions and technologies approach their limits

The aggressiveness and frenzy of U.S. politicians, which seems amusing to many of our experts, should be in fact taken very seriously. It is aimed at inciting a war, while the brazen lies and even the ostentatious stupidity of U.S. loudmouths are only the means to camouflage the seriousness of American oligarchy's intentions.

Russia can become a leader in the formation of a new world economic order and become an essential element of a new world economic development center. However, it is impossible to do this while remaining on the periphery of U.S. capitalism.

The Deglobalization of the World System

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THE PRESENT transitory post-bipolar world system manifests several trends: globalization, transformation of international relations, gradual shift toward a multipolar world and the emergence of new centers of a future world order.

The Cold War ended twenty-five years ago, a very short time in the terms of history, yet this quarter of a century brimmed with a huge amount of world, regional and national events that, under different conditions, could have filled several centuries. The course of history has accelerated; time has become compressed.

The stormy events in the still bipolar world gave rise to another

structure of the world system which can be described as the Western community, a direct product of the Cold War and the efforts of the United States.

America's ambition to stem the process of further evolution of the non-Euro-Atlantic subsystem by consolidating the Western community might fan tension in the Asian part of the world and beyond and threaten the future of the international community.

Globalization has introduced new coordinates into the development of the world system and international relations; each of the world phenomena has objective and subjective sides.

The type of globalization suggested and planted by the Western community was intended not so much to develop (economically and politically) vast geographic spaces as to draw new countries, on Western conditions, into its orbit. Globalization of an expansionist type was pursued with clear political aims in view. The Western community established its control over the political and economic processes in the post-socialist European countries.

The U.S. foreign policy strategy leads to a split along new lines. Many of the Asian countries are facing a dilemma: either the American initiative or China's invitation to set up an Asian-Pacific free trade zone.

The global problems that are steadily piling up should be addressed and resolved by consolidated efforts of the international community relying on all resources at the national, regional and world levels in the interests of all mankind rather than the egotistical interests of one group of states. De-globalization should restore equal cooperation, respect for national interests and the right of states to choose their own development model based on national traditions, customs and mores. Interdependence of states adds to their weight in regulating international processes in different spheres based on respect for national interests as a principle of international communication.

The Greek Crisis: Who Is to Blame? What Is to Be Done?

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LAZY like all other South Europeans, Greeks have been living beyond the means for many years. This is what the core EU countries (Germany in the first place) and the United States think about the roots and causes of the grave economic crisis in Greece. This answers the first question. The answer to the second has been already supplied by the so-called friends of Greece from among the EU members and the notorious "masters of disasters" of the IMF: The Greeks should trim social spending, tighten

their belts and wait for the light at the end of the tunnel.

Both the diagnosis and the treatment prescribed by the medics from Washington and Brussels are off-target. They are far removed from the truth and, as a classic said in his time, from the people. The Greek people in this case.

The Greek national crisis is rooted in the past and is aggravated by the financial and economic factors of the present.

It should be said that the so-called EU partners of Greece never hesitated to credit it; they were especially willing to lend money to the New Democracy government (in 2004-2009). Until 2010, nobody in Brussels talked about the "lazy Greeks." Western banks were growing rich at their expense.

European "aid" bore "fruit." In 2010, the country's GDP dropped by 5.4%; in 2011, by 8.9%; in 2012, by 6.6%. In 2011, the sovereign debt of Greece reached 171.3% of GDP. By that time, European banks had sold about half of their Greek bonds to American hedge funds at a sensational profit: The securities produced huge interest.

It seems that Greece should join the Czech Republic and Poland; it should quit the Eurozone and revive its national currency which should be as cheap in relation to the Euro as the Czech crown. This will make Greek agricultural products cheaper and more competitive.

This does not look like fashionable innovations yet proud Poland was flourishing on potatoes and apples it sold to Russia in the pre-sanction times. Indeed, crisis or no crisis people have to eat. Its currency helped Warsaw negotiate the 2008-2009 crisis which doomed Greece.

In view of the historical and spiritual ties between our peoples, Russia should extend financial assistance to Greece, yet no matter how much money is poured into Greek economy from Moscow (or Beijing or any other capital, for that matter) no positive effects will follow if Athens goes on with what the Troika recommends: No more holes can be punched into the belt.

Evolution of the U.S. Position on China's Role in Central Asia

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BY THE EARLY TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY, the United States and China found themselves strategically and economically interconnected at the global level with elements of military-political rivalry.

At first, the strategic dialogue the U.S. initiated with China in 2005 did not look as a retreat from the sides' principled positions. The administration of Obama, however, stressed the non-confrontational line in its relations with China. In 2009, a group of American experts close to the White House formulated the Big Two idea cautiously declined by Hu Jintao.

The changes in American policies and the Chinese-American dialogue on Central Asia (if it develops further) can be interpreted as a pilot project of "joint governance," a regional Big Two of sorts with Chinese flavor.

These positive assessments of China's role in the region stood in a bolder relief against the very negative assessments of Russia's role there.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry and the U.S. Department of State did not offer information about the consultations on their sites, let alone commentaries. The low level of these meetings was fully compensated for by the fact that this was a new and far from common phenomenon.

The United State makes a good face on a bad game. It accepts China's stronger influence in Central Asia as a fact rather than for strategic considerations. This portrays the chronology of events as a chain of American concessions. We cannot and should not fully rely on the simplest of explanations.

Today, no options should be ruled out because first, Beijing will probably accept American invitation to coordinate their efforts in Central Asia and second, because Washington might remain positively disposed to China's Central Asian projects even if it rejects America's invitation to cooperate and coordinate.

The dialogue between the two countries, however, might go on smoothly until the sides reveal the basic positions on the following.

Today, irrespective of the entire range of opinions in the Obama Administration it has not yet been decided how Washington will use its dialogue with Beijing - either as a step toward the Big Two or as a model of the relationships with China in Central Asia or as a project of China's re-orientation from the APR to Eurasia. The new administration might choose one of the above or even lay new variants on the table.

Geoeconomic and Geopolitical Dilemmas of Asian-Pacific Integration

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ECONOMIC INTEGRATION in the APR has come close to fundamental qualitative changes launched by the emerging mechanisms of multi-sided integration in trade and economies.

Today, FTAAP is being created amid a stiff competition between these integration projects, caused by different geoeconomic and geopolitical interests of the main players.

As it turns to the East, Russia is doing a lot in practical terms to join the integration processes in the APR and increase its trade and economic presence in the region.

Russia's involvement in the talks on free trade zones (FTZ) and integration projects in the APR is explained by its long-term geoeconomic and geopolitical considerations the latter prevailing in its search of the point of entry.

To resolve this dilemma, Russia should soberly assess its potentials; this is no less important than a correct assessment of the trends and prospects of the talks now in progress before it decides whether it can and should join them; it should formulate its aims and tasks at the negotiation table as well as the format and modality of the process.

An involvement of the APEC members would have been favorable for the TPP while an active encouragement of their involvement will keep away the non-members. If the TPP becomes a FTA within APEC then economic interests will prevail over geopolitical considerations.

Russia supported the APEC Connectivity Blueprint for 2015-2025 adopted by the Beijing Summit; it also intends to work together with China in the FTAAP steering group set up by the Beijing Summit to promote connectivity within APEC and the principle of inter-bloc communication by insisting that the EEU should contribute to setting up FTAAP.

Russia which has begun its "turn to the east" cannot and should not remain outside the integration processes in the APR, which is gradually yet consistently turning into a new center of world economy. It is highly important to join it now when the "rules of the game" are formulated to maximally ensure its trade and economic interests and accumulate necessary experience.

This is important not only for Russia's involvement in the Asian-Pacific economic integration but also for the future of Eurasian integration within the EEU. The Eurasian Economic Union is working toward closer inter-bloc cooperation so that to find its competitive niche among the economic giants - the EU, Southeast Asian countries, the U.S., and China.

Is Mr. Trump the Next U.S. President?

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"THE AMERICAN DREAM is dead, but I will bring it back" is the slogan with which Donald Trump literally burst into the presidential election race.

Donald Trump surely has his trump cards, and one of them is his financial independence, something he constantly stresses. The Bush-Clinton elite, encumbered with its clientele, will never make America great, it has no chance of it, he tells his supporters. The Americans, who usually assume that all presidents have had lobbies behind them that financed their election campaigns and have largely controlled their policies, have been pleas-

antly surprised by Trump's uninhibited rhetoric, although he says he needs work more than rhetoric. One distinctive feature of Trump's campaign is his assumption that one way to make America prosperous is a new foreign policy based on the notion of the "good deal." That is the positive aspect of his foreign policy doctrine.

One more pet target of Trump's is big U.S. corporations that locate their manufacturing facilities abroad to hire cheaper labor. He threatens to slap import duties of up to 30% on the goods they bring to the United States.

"One of the things that I heard for years and years: Never drive Russia and China together; and Obama has done that," Trump said. In talking about a visit to Russia two years ago, he said he would be able to "have a great relationship" with Putin and "get along" with the Russian people. Trump appears to be deliberately avoiding the Ukraine theme, and thereby obviously winning points from his fellow Americans, who are scared of anti-Russian rhetoric with increasingly frequent belligerent overtones.

Trump was against the war in Iraq and deplored the United States' human and financial losses in it. He doesn't believe that leadership necessarily means participation. He considers leadership a source of specific economic, mainly financial, benefits, among other things a skill to obtain lucrative deals through tough negotiations.

Critics claim that Trump's foreign policy views can scare voters instead of attracting them. "Maybe, but perhaps they don't understand the American people in the way that Mr. Trump does," says Jeremy Shapiro of Brookings Institution. "He has tapped into a deep well of populist anger that runs through much of the Republican electorate. People are tired of the same old elites peddling the same old solutions, while the working class suffers through economic loss and cultural decline. They do not want any more efforts to explain away their anger in politically correct terms."

Nevertheless, Trump will have a job to do trying to win ground from his eminent rivals, and the billions of dollars on his bank account can't do all the work. Both the Republican leadership and, naturally, the Democratic elite may close ranks against him. But both Bush and Clinton have rivals within their own parties, and at some point Trump may invoke his good deals theory and clinch a deal with some of them.

Who Is Waging "Hybrid Warfare" in Ukraine?

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THE TERM "HYBRID WARFARE," the recent favorite with the media, is an ad hoc invention of American military experts and political scientists used to describe the response of Russia and the population of the Russian-speaking regions of Ukraine to the coup d'état in Kiev.

In Russia, military experts are divided on the hybrid warfare concept. The first approach stresses the use of latest information, communication and social technologies to reformat, through de-stabilization, the population of the countries which the United States finds unpalatable. According to this interpretation, hybrid warfare relies on irregular military units, special services, subversion, provocations and similar methods, information and financial-economic

operations, cyberattacks, and psychological impact on people's behavior.

INTERNATIONAL LAW interprets warfare as large-scale fighting between armed forces of states. The media's steady interest in hybrid warfare has been ignited and is being maintained by the leaders and the press of the NATO and EU members holding forth about Russia's role in hybrid warfare unfolding in Ukraine. This is part of the anti-Russian information campaign designed to associate Russia with the beginning of hybrid warfare in Ukraine or even a real civil war in this country.

It was concluded that the norms of international law related to the principle of self-determination of peoples do not encourage separation from the original state; they prefer the so-called "inner self-determination," that is, legally confirmed rights of the peoples ensured within a state through confederation, federation, autonomy or other forms of self-administration.

We should bear in mind that at that time President Yanukovich and authorities in Crimea and the big cities of Southeastern Ukraine elected in 2010 were the only legitimate power structures in Ukraine. The new government in Kiev was appointed by Maidan; this government and the Supreme Rada were controlled by extremists groups which persecuted the parliamentary factions of the Party of the Regions and the Communist Party.

The West never tires of accusing Russia of "aggression" against Ukraine yet the term "war" to say nothing of "aggression" is inapplicable to what Russia is doing in relation to Ukraine. There are no regular Russian units in Ukraine fighting the Ukrainian Armed Forces. The above mentioned Cambridge professor of international law specifically pointed to this in his interview.

Not a single shot was fired in Crimea; reunification with Russia was based on the overwhelming majority of votes. The same applies to the referendums in Donetsk and Lugansk.

If the West and Kiev persist in their present policies then hybrid warfare they unleashed will go on indefinitely. At some point, however, the people of southeast Ukraine might lose patience and the Ukrainian crisis will be resolved not according to Kiev's scenario. Let us hope that this will come true.

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The CIS as a replacement for the Soviet Union was based on a concept that had not been worked through carefully enough. First of all, Kazakhstan was the only Soviet republic besides Russia, Belarus and Ukraine that was aware of the plan to set up the CIS. So the others were bewildered when the founding accord was signed, and remained so for a while.

In addition, the leaders of the new independent states were divided on how far their countries should go with political and economic reforms - an issue pivotal to the

future of the CIS as the existence of integration processes in the Commonwealth depended on it.

The tragedy in Ukraine, one of the three countries that founded the CIS, has indisputably become the most dangerous crisis in the Commonwealth.

The United States' activities in Central Asia are part of Washington's geostrategic efforts to prevent Russia from restoring and strengthening political and economic ties with the region's countries. It is an unattainable goal, but Washington will try to at least make the Central Asian nations minimize those ties.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, one of the key tasks of the Russian Federation as its legal successor was to bring nuclear weapons deployed in Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan to Russian territory. By that time, the nuclear arsenal stationed in Ukraine alone was larger than the nuclear arsenals of Britain, France and China put together.

The CIS has never had a strategy of fast-track integration controlled by a single supranational authority.

As developments in the past few years have made clear, one of the key objectives of the American foreign policy strategy is to destroy the CIS system, a system guaranteeing the necessary extent and diversity of cooperation between countries existing on the territory of the former superpower.

Due to the Ukrainian crisis and the United States' destructive involvement in it, including via planned exports of lethal weapons to Ukraine and by sending military instructors to it, there have been predictions that the CIS will inevitably fall apart. However, here is obviously a lot of wishful thinking.

On the whole, the CIS is a powerful and reliable structure. It does intensive and effective work to maintain stability in its member countries in spite of the increased difficulties of the current period of change in global politics.

Ways of Building an Innovation Economy in Developing Countries

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There can be no doubt that today's Russia, despite its major scientific and technological achievements and vast experience of industrial development, can be considered a developing country. But neither can there be any doubt that the same industrial experience of Russia and its contribution to world science and technology, which are no less significant than those of devel-

oped countries, mean that Russia is intensively building a knowledge economy.

Russia's movement toward an innovation economy is an official policy decreed by the Strategy for Innovative Development of the Russian Federation 2020 (Strategy 2020), which asserts directly that innovation economy is the only way to achieve high living standards for Russia's population and ensure a stable geopolitical role for the country as one of the global leaders. In a recent comprehensive study, leading U.S. industrial experts and academics argue that "research in science and engineering is integral to America's health, security, and economic strength."

The same path of technological development is followed by some other developing countries, primarily Russia's BRICS partners - Brazil, China, India, and South Africa, - which see technological innovation as an important source of competitiveness.

In our view, the main reason why innovation initiatives cut little ice in many developing countries is that reformers focus on familiar innovation factors themselves while it is the optimum interaction of such factors that can transform an industrialized economy into a knowledge economy. The interpenetration of science and technology and development of breakthrough technologies is impossible without basic research, while a favorable institutional environment is needed for the application of innovations in manufacturing, the service sector, government, and national security systems. The formal part of the institutional environment is mainly comprised of law, state regulation, human capital development mechanisms, and risk management systems. Its informal part essentially consists of cultural milieus, traditions, and basic ethical and economic values.

Clearly, on its own, an individual corporate innovation infrastructure cannot achieve top positions for Russia in international competition - this will only be possible if there is an efficient national innovation system.

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WHEN WE THINK about the world of today, unfortunately, we have to recognize that the so-called end of the Cold War has made it neither more stable nor more secure. The bipolar geopolitical system, which had for nearly half a century kept the world away from a new global confrontation and which disappeared together with the Soviet Union, has still not found a replacement. The struggle for energy resources, in particular the struggle for the sources of oil, has become one of the main causes of disputes and conflicts, both past and present. It can seriously poison the future of hu-

mankind, and in the worst case scenario it can lead to a global confrontation, which could be the last one in its history unless a consensus is found on approaches to ensuring energy needs, based on considerations of safety and respect for the interests of all parties to the energy process, specifically producers, consumers and transit countries.

The desire to exploit, and even better, appropriate Russian energy resources by proposing that Russia's sovereign subsoil and natural resources be regarded as common property, is still present among some Western politicians.

The U.S. repeated the mistake with al-Qaeda, which had turned against its creator, by supporting Islamic militants against the Syrian government. The so-called Islamic State that emerged as a result has become a serious threat to international security, especially considering that it has taken control of an oil source and makes about \$3 million a day on oil deals to finance its military operations and acts of terrorism.

Energy supply routes and means have become less reliable. Amid global instability, transit countries are more likely to succumb to the temptation to use their position to obtain additional benefits in the form of higher transit fees and lower energy prices, not stopping at the simple stealing of oil and gas from pipelines.

The joint work over nearly a decade and a half by representatives of France, Russia and other countries at the Club's scientific discussion platform, with support from the Nice mayor's office and the regional authorities, has produced tangible results.

The latest, the 13th Club de Nice meeting, last November, focused on new challenges in the energy sphere, relations between the EU and Russia in the deteriorating international context and energy and geopolitical problems in Europe and the world.

On the whole, the participants were traditionally represented on a very high level. They included the heads of the energy sector in different countries, prominent scientists, experts and researchers, the Moroccan energy minister and the princess of Liechtenstein. The Nice mayor's office was represented by Deputy Mayor Professor Bernard Asso, a co-founder of the Club.

The Confucius Institute: A "Soft Power" Factor in China's Foreign Policy in the 21st Century

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IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY, the outlines of international relations have changed to a great extent and continue changing under the impact, in particular, of "soft power" that different countries apply to achieve their aims on the world scene.

The top leaders of the PRC selected the Chinese language and culture as the main "soft power" instruments first of all because an interest in China, its history, culture and tongue reached unheard-of dimensions when the country had become part of the group of developed and influential states that could affect the fates of the world.

The aims outlined when the system of the Confucius institutes was being developed and the experience it has acquired suggest that time

has come to look at them as China's "soft power" foreign policy instrument.

Today, the Confucius Institute runs branches in 125 countries (Russia being one of them); there are 417 offices and 730 Confucius Classrooms.

Each country is guided by its national interests in everything it does on the international arena; the same applies to cultural diplomacy and "soft power." This is true not only of the Confucius Institute but also of the linguopolitical events carried out by the American Fulbright Program, the British Council, the Alliance Française, the German Goethe Institute, the Russky Mir Foundation, and the foundations of Saudi Arabia.

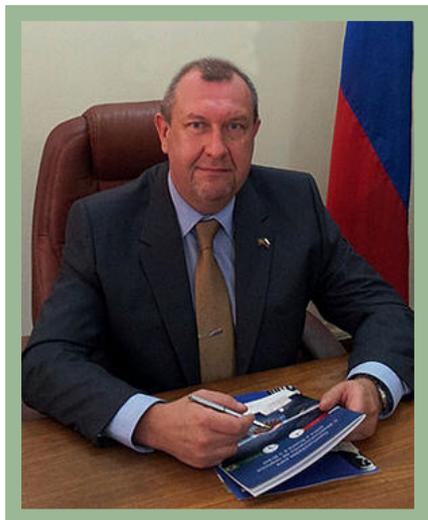
They differ from each other in many respects - structurally, ideologically, the levels of funding, scopes of involvement, and methods - yet they address the same linguistic and cultural tasks as the Confucius Institute.

China joined the general trend of using national tongues as an instrument of foreign policy and cultural impact later than other countries, probably with the exception of Russia. At some point, Russia had rejected the Soviet experience and suspended its cultural activities in other countries only to come to its senses later and set up several state and public organizations.

In its determination to use the language and culture to promote its interests, Beijing left French, Russian, Portuguese and other tongues far behind. Today, Chinese probably comes second after English, yet there are reasons to believe that it will catch up with the language born in England. The Confucius Institute as the vehicle of China's "soft power" contributes to the country's linguistic and cultural diplomacy all over the world. The use of "soft power" in the relationships with the rest of the world promotes integration of cultural and humanitarian interests of the Chinese and other peoples.

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THE IMPORTANCE of "soft power" politics objectively increases at the current transitional stage in world development, which is characterized by the exacerbation of a number of disagreements and problems, the escalation of conflicts and a lower level of predictability.

Naturally, Russia's "soft power" diplomacy has been projected to the activity of our state within the framework of regional organizations that are of strategic importance for our national interests, such as BRICS.

Importantly, the activity of the BRICS group is not aimed against third countries or associations, which lends additional credibility and force to its "soft power" diplomacy.

Despite its relatively short history, BRICS has emerged as a weighty factor in global politics, whose role and influence constantly grow, arousing enhanced attention on the part of many states and the international public.

Almost since the very first years of its existence, a distinct feature of BRICS' "soft power" has been its significant scientific research and intellectual capability.

Youth policy is defined as an important element in the implementation of the "soft power" strategy, above all, the formation of the BRICS "youth dimension." This challenging goal will be achieved by holding a Forum of Young Leaders of the Association of States and the BRICS Global University Summit, establishing the BRICS Network University and expanding the admission of citizens from BRICS countries to Russian higher educational institutions.

In addition, plans include stepping up the efforts to promote the cultural component of cooperation within the BRICS framework, among other things, by strengthening cultural exchanges among the member states (with a special focus on promoting Russian culture) and facilitating the development of cooperation in tourism among their relevant agencies, companies and operators.

The successful implementation of the concept of the Russian Federation BRICS presidency in 2015-2016, including its "soft power" component, will help not only increase our state's weight and influence in one of the most promising international cooperation formats, but also advance Russian interests and informational and cultural influence on the global level. According to S.V. Lavrov, "BRICS cooperation has a great future, since it responds to the fundamental interests of our nations, the needs of global economic development and international security imperatives, including the formation of a more equitable and democratic world order."¹⁹ The strengthening of BRICS' "soft power" capability will help to put in place favorable prerequisites for achieving new positions in global politics and will in due course have a positive impact on designing a new model of interstate interaction and the establishment of a modern architecture of international relations based on polycentrism, democracy and justice.

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TODAY, the old conflict between political and economic structures of the West and the East is unfolding against the background of another global crisis. The countries and business structures of the "golden billion" have not relieved their economic pressure on the developing countries. The globalizers do not hesitate to pile political responsibility for regional tensions on the powers that the First World finds unpalatable. Something similar is going on in the information field.

The nature of economic warfare does not differ from the above.

Close scrutiny of the information field of the Western powers that is concentrated around the respected media reveals the true intention of governments, the true level of threat in different subject fields and degree of the "enemy's" readiness to act.

The Western media is not much interested in BRICS and related subjects: In 2013-2014, the subject Russia in the Context of BRICS was covered in 150 items, which is nothing compared with over 1 thousand publications dealing with the Russian-Ukrainian relations and over 2 thousand covering Russia's domestic policies.

WESTERN EXPERTS and journalists like to hold forth about lack of cohesion inside BRICS which brought together countries very different economically and politically. Early in 2013, El-Mundo wrote: "BRICS is a group of countries very different socially and economically. China and India buy huge amounts of raw materials which Russia, Brazil and South Africa sell them." A year later, the talks about BRICS' economic insubstantiality and the contradictions that were tearing the club apart were moved into a different context. First, a new economic crisis became a reality; second, Russia and the West entered a new phase of a Cold War of sorts waged in the information sphere; sanctions and attempts at mutual economic strangulation were also used.

WHILE BRICS IS MOVING toward closer cooperation, a new world economic crisis that has become a reality stands little chance to be defused, especially with the unfolding new Cold War. THE YEARS 2013 and 2014 witnessed U-turns in world politics and economy. The Ukrainian crisis detonated another Cold War, while the international non-Western alliances (BRICS as an alliance of the world's biggest economies being one of them) were gradually consolidating. Any careful observer of the way the Western press treated BRICS throughout 2013 and 2014 could detect considerable shifts.

The changes which have taken place are but the first steps along the road leading to the consolidation of the club into a full-fledged organization in control of the larger part of world economy. Judging by the support the BRICS members extended to Russia during the Crimean crisis and anti-Russian sanctions the club stands a good chance.

Brazil: Our Strategic Partner

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WITH THE DEADLINE of the BRICS Summit in Ufa, Bashkortostan, Russia, drawing near, it is logical to expect heightened interest in Brazil, Russia's strategic partner and its partner in BRICS and the Group of Twenty (G20). Brazil is far away at the other end of the world, yet it shares this country's approaches to major global problems, has nearly equal GDP and several other economic figures, and, no less important, possesses similar national emotional and psychological mindsets.

Economics, economists admit, is a very volatile practice. As a general rule, attempts to predict the coming of a next crisis or make guesses about when it ends once it has come bring no rewards. Complaints heard about the "bleak prospects" confronting Brazil are either a burst of inflamed emotions or conspiracy against all BRICS countries, including Russia. The slowdown in BRICS' headway over the last two years is a kickback of fickle economy, and no reason at all to deny the arrival of new influence-wielding players on the world scene. Still, attempts to deny the accomplished fact are in great abundance.

Acting on its understanding of BRICS, West keeps on ignoring it and perceives skeptically the association's ability to put its imprint on the world economy and politics. It also wants to prejudice the world's public opinion against BRICS and the possibility of the association's member countries expanding cooperation among themselves in many areas. The barely predictable and "transitory" status of international relations today is actually a stand-off between the old and the new where the old does not want to back off without giving a fight first.

Cooperation between Brazil and Russia in maintaining their military and information security is insistently imperative in the context of intensifying rivalry for the planet's natural resources. These two countries are unique, even in comparison to all other mega-countries, because of the abundance of natural resources and minerals that no other country on Earth has.

ADMITTING THE SIGNIFICANCE of Brazil as Russia's strategic partner is no guarantee that the two countries' relations will show rapid improvements in both quantity and quality.

The ongoing crisis in Brazil, we believe, is a brief, if self-evident, stopover on its way up to the top of the world in economics and politics.

The UN and the International Cyber Security Problem

Author: Yu. Tomilova

Attaché, Department for New Challenges and Threats of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation



THE INTERNATIONAL CYBER SECURITY problem has long been one of the top items on international agendas, largely because of the rapidly growing effects of information technology (IT) on global social and political affairs. IT is not just becoming a means of raising living standards and overcoming social inequalities but is increasingly seen both by state and non-state actors as a strategic resource, a means of attaining political, military and

other goals.

RUSSIA has consistently addressed the international cyber security issue from three angles, those of military-political, terrorist and criminal threats.

A special danger is the ability of IT to mimic real attacks, for example terrorism, by means such as hacking. The 2010 attack on Iranian nuclear facilities is a case in point.

The United States and its allies persistently assert that military conflicts in cyberspace are inevitable and insist on creating a regulatory framework for them. Today, many countries experimentally design offensive cyber potentials.

RUSSIA cannot accept the thesis that political conflicts in cyber space are inevitable. It does admit that there is a serious threat of such conflicts, but it consistently advocates the creation of international rules under which nations would have to pledge not to use, or threaten to use, force to resolve international disputes in cyber space.

Cyber security threats are a problem for the entire international community, and Russia believes that global cooperation and debates on this issue in key international and regional formats are highly important for fending off these threats.

The draft resolution, among other things, represented the first ever initiative to standardize terminology on cyber security in order to preclude different interpretations of the same or similar notions by different countries.

The United States and its allies have embarked on an alarming policy by claiming a right to use force if a cyber conflict breaks out. This means an open and official militarization of cyber space. International law only allows a state to use force against another state under a decision by the UN Security Council or as self-defense against an "armed attack" (see Article 51 of the UN Charter). It is a key point here whether a cyber attack may be qualified as an armed attack. Unfortunately, Western experts have difficulty finding an answer.

Growing tensions in cyber space mean that cyber security issues need special attention and unbiased assessments. Russia continues to see the United Nations as the most appropriate international framework for tackling these problems, as a guarantor of a systematic search for solutions to them, and as a forum where all countries and regions have their interests heeded.

Building an International System of Information Security

Author: D. Gribkov

Analyst at the Security Council of the Russian Federation Presentation at the 14th Conference of Heads of Foreign Special, Security and Law Enforcement Services - Partners of the Russian Federal Security Service, Yaroslavl, Russia, July 29, 2015



INFORMATION SECURITY is one of the top issues on today's global agenda. Awareness of growing threats in information space and of their potential effects prompts the need for a systemic search for solutions to information security problems.

In July 2013, the President of the Russian Federation approved the Fundamentals of the State Policy of the Russian Federation in the Field of International Information Security Effective until 2020.

This document sets guidelines for countering threats to international information security and formulates the objectives, tasks and priorities for Russian policy in that field.

One serious problem is that cyber attacks cannot be deterred in the way that works for strikes with nuclear or conventional weapons. There is no identification friend or foe (IFF) system in the global cyber space. This and the cross-border nature of ICTs make it impossible to evaluate an adversary's cyber potential. It may give someone an illusion of superiority and tempt to deliver the first strike.

Another form of threats is cyber terrorism, including the use of ICT to destroy elements of critical cyber infrastructures, to propagandize terrorism and to recruit terrorists.

A third type of threats is the use of ICTs to interfere in the internal affairs of sovereign states, disturb the peace, fan ethnic, racial or religious strife, propagate racist or xenophobic ideas or theories that can stir hatred, cause discrimination, or incite violence.

The information security issue is not limited to the defense of cyber systems and networks but also includes the defense of the interests of the individual as a priority of state policy. And the main objective of the state policy of the Russian Federation on international information security is the creation of a comprehensive international system of information security.

The Russian Federation believes that the facilities and resources of the United Nations are potentially the best framework for evolving international information security principles.

Our country seeks both multilateral and bilateral partnerships in trying to avert security threats in cyber space.

In conclusion, I would like to say that our country will continue to work for the world community to consolidate its efforts to create a comprehensive international system of information security.

Along the Road Laid in Helsinki

Author: Yu. Piskulov

Editor of the Mezhdunarodnaia ekonomika journal, Professor, Russian Foreign Trade Academy, Doctor of Science (Economics)



THIS WAS THE TITLE of the collection of documents and materials related to the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) (Helsinki 1975) published in Moscow in 1980. The conference was initiated by the Soviet Union and Finland and attended by 35 European states as well as the United States and Canada. The West-Russia confrontation of our days and the Ukrainian developments added significance to this unprecedented event in the history of the West-West relationship and rekindled an interest in it

among the political, business and academic communities all over the world.

We should admit that at times of crisis, the heads of state who combined patriotism and social justice with authoritarian style of governance achieved the most impressive results.

In 1980, in an interview to Pravda Leonid Brezhnev pointed out that "in the context of the steadily worsening international situation the consequence of what was done in Helsinki is steadily increasing, not diminishing... There is no road back from Helsinki. The Final Act very much like the UN Charter means that our civilization ascended new, higher levels.... The day the Final Act was signed could have become the Day of Europe."

DESPITE the authoritarian aspect of trade and political relations between the two countries, cooperation rested on the advantages offered by the international division of labor, good-neighborly relations and mutual economic complementarity. The dynamic and multi-dimensional nature of the relationships based on the principles of peaceful coexistence allows us to describe the Soviet-Finnish trade and economic relations as a pattern of the relationships between the East and the West. The tone of these constructive friendly relations was set up at the highest political level.

The present author who was actively involved in what was going on at that time has repeatedly pointed out that none of the state figures of Finland of the latter half of the twentieth century had done more for his country's independence, development and high international rating than Urho Kekkonen. Today, in the present context of East-West relationships, Finland would have profited from his enthusiasm and "drive."

One cannot but regret that Finland of 2015, as distinct from Finland of the 1970s, the leader of economic and political relations between the East and the West, prefers to keep "low profile" and, in an effort to follow in the footsteps of Brussels bureaucrats, tends to be "holier than the Pope."

France and the Helsinki Final Act

Author: E. Osipov

Candidate of Science (History), Senior Research Associate, Institute of General History, Russian Academy of Sciences, Candidate of Science (History)



THE FIRST DAY of August of this year was the 40th anniversary of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act, the final result of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) which was the central theme of the international relations of the early and mid-1970s. That pan-European conference, which continued for more than two years, is a forum unparalleled in scale in postwar history and can only be compared to the Congress of Vienna, a meeting

that was the reason for another anniversary date in the 2015 calendar - the bicentennial of its closure was marked in June. The essence of the Helsinki process is impossible to fathom out without analyzing the stance of France in the sixties and seventies. In that period, France took a position different from what was advocated by the rest of Western civilization, and stood for cooperation between the two mutually opposing blocs.

Despite the different visions of European security in Eastern Europe and France, it was obvious that a pan-European forum would, at the end of the day, be an act promoting détente - a process inspired by Paris.

As regards the agenda, from the very start France and the rest of the future Western participants were in favor of not only security but also cooperation issues being raised at the conference. Distinctively, the French vision of the cooperation part of the agenda included debates on two separate blocks of issues - economy, on the one hand, and cultural and humanitarian contacts, on the other.

The Americans reacted harshly to this presumed French tactic. They insisted that setting up the commissions with their concrete mandates was a condition set by the West for the conference to take place and could not be a bargaining chip.

The Helsinki Final Act of the CSCE, signed on August 1, 1975, became one of the most outstanding events in 20th-century international relations. Decisions on first- and third-basket issues were the most important and concrete achievements enshrined in it. The Act represented a combination of Eastern and Western, largely Soviet and French, positions. Whereas the first-basket decisions recorded the definitive recognition of the security status quo, which was what Moscow had been pressing for, the third-basket decisions embodied, if incompletely, French ideas of future cooperation in Europe, and, in fact, represented dynamic détente, one of the principal objectives of France's foreign policy.

One can have various assessments of the Final Act. For instance, the French political scientist, philosopher, and journalist Raymond Aron wrote during the signing of the Final Act: "The

CSCE will stand alone in history: never did a conference last for so long and gather so many diplomats to attain so derisory a result."¹⁸ This interpretation appears to be too critical. Despite all its compromises, the Final Act became the basis of the European security architecture and put the issues of human rights, freedom of movement for people, goods and services, and freedom of information on the détente agenda. Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, who signed the Final Act on behalf of France, argued in a speech in Moscow on May 29, 2015 that it was symbolic that, "since the delegations were seated in alphabetical order during the signature of the Act, the representatives of the two Germanies were sitting next to each other."

"Wherever You Look There Is a Specter of Death" Battles on the Bzura and Rawka as Described in Letters From the Front (December 1914 and January 1915)

Author: N. Postnikov

Assistant Professor, Moscow Region State University, Candidate of Science (History)



WORLD WAR I, which began 100 years ago, was the prologue to an age of blood. In those days, the values and achievements of refined European civilization were mercilessly thrown into the furnace of war. They were replaced by dirt and blood that became the lot of millions upon millions of people. Barbarity crushed human dignity, distorted people's thinking, and played havoc with their emotions. Death and terror became an everyday nightmare and stuck firmly in people's minds. Overwhelmed, they started seeing the true face of the war: devastated cities, burned villages, battlefields covered with dead bodies, the groans of the

wounded lying in "no man's land," the agonies of dying soldiers, and the suffering of survivors. They came to know the sickening smell of war.

Depersonalized official documents such as military orders, reports, or dispatches fail to convey the human or moral dimension of that war. That comes across if one reads letters from the front. Then one can see the war with all its horrors "from within," through the eyes of an ordinary combatant. That is the chief and eternal value of frontline letters as a source of historical research.

Typically, letters containing censorable military information also described the personal experiences of those who had written them. It was no accident that personal feelings about the war caught the attention of censors. The latter saw them as a vague threat to Russia's ruling regime. There were no statements of opposition views or, least of all, radical appeals in letters from the front. But they described human suffering, wrongdoings, mendacious propaganda and much else that could have been interpreted as indications of public-spiritedness; this alarmed military censors, and that is why many of the letters have survived and become such an asset for researchers. This public-spiritedness, even if barely traceable in some of the letters, is the leitmotif of this article.

The battles on the Bzura and Rawka were sheer hell for the Russians and Germans alike. Whole regiments would get massacred in a matter of days.⁶ People would be killed by thousands. Corpses lay in heaps so high that they prevented the two sides from firing at each other.⁷ There were so many bodies that there was no time to bury all of them. "Up to 1,000 Germans have got killed, but only 300 to 400 have been buried, and the rest have just been

laid together in order. A terrible, indescribable sight. All the dead have their eyes open, which makes them look even more terrible. Probably many of them had terribly agonizing deaths."8 Dante's "Inferno" and Bruegel's "Triumph of Death" are nothing if put beside the horrors of those battles. And it is letters from the front that give the best idea of the unimaginable brutality of those bloodbath battles.

Madness, horror, and death are the triune image of the war that these letters build up. Those who wrote them have unintentionally brought to us the truth about the bloody battles on the Bzura and Rawka in December 2014 and January 1915.

Spiritual and Moral Implications of Our Victory in the Contemporary Ideological Context

Author: A. Sidorov

Associate Professor, Russia's International Relations and Foreign Policy Department, Moscow State Institute (University) of International Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation



THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR of 1941-1945 was the most disastrous and bloody war in world history. The very existence of the Russian state and Russian nation had never before been so dramatically challenged. By winning the Victory in that war, Russia has saved itself, Europe and the entire world from the Nazi subjugation.

This country celebrated the Victory's 70th anniversary amid heavy geopolitical, economic and ideological pressure. Attempts to revise the history of World War II have become an integral component of such a pressure.

Regrettably, the time will inevitably come when the generations of people who have lived through World War II, and for whom historical wartime memories are a part of their own life experience, will be gone. For the young generations, the war is often something from a very distant past which allows re-writing history in order to accommodate geopolitical environment. This makes society potentially more vulnerable to calculated ideological interventions, the scope of which has been continuously growing in the past two decades.

It should be underlined in this context that a lot of their deceitful concepts and mythologems have survived to this day and have been currently used against Russia.

The Soviet leadership early realized the need for an ideological maneuver. During the war, the Soviet state and people turned to national historic and cultural traditions, which became a key spiritual factor securing the Victory.

A spiritual upsurge in the USSR during wartime also led to impressive gains in the material field. Among the decisive Victory factors, special mention should be made of high professional skills of millions of people, and of their ability to mobilize and organize themselves.

Generally speaking, a compromise is a good thing, but it is only attainable within the framework of some common values. But there can be no compromise between the white and the black or between good and evil. That is exactly why there was no talk about any compromises when the Nazis attacked our country, and only traitors could seriously consider that matter. Just goals for which our people were fighting became another Victory factor. Our cause was just, and our war was sacred. A just nature of the war predetermined a subsequent generosity of the winners who would not take revenge against the prostrate enemy.

The Victory in the Great Patriotic War heralded Russia's spiritual revival. And the lessons of the war and its moral aspects are of paramount importance to our people in the present-day context.

How Berlin Can Change the World: A Phantasmagorical Sketch

Author: V. Grinin

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Federal Republic of Germany



*This essay was written in April 2014 at the request of Uwe Lehmann-Brauns, a member of the state parliament of Berlin. A German translation of it was included in the collection *Wer ist Berlin?* published in early 2015.*

I HAVE spent a total of 10 years working in Berlin. This is long enough to become a genuine Berliner. But am I a genuine Berliner? I'm hardly genuine because, after all, I have mostly had to be a sideline observer of what's happening in this city, although it is always with great interest, with tremendous warmth and affection, with sympathy and at times empathy that I do my observations.

As I was getting to know the Berlin of those days better and better, my deepening romantic feelings about it were increasingly accompanied by a realization that the city was a unique geopolitical symbol - a symbol of the Cold War, a symbol of division. Division of the entire world, not only Germany. And, in fact, the Berlin Wall itself didn't just divide that German city but was a point where two ideologies clashed and a line of confrontation passed between the Warsaw Pact and NATO, between East and West. On both sides of that line, which ran through what, by global standards, was a tiny bit of territory, there lived men and women who belonged to the same nation but followed essentially different ideological, social and moral principles. Four major global powers had armed forces and military command posts based there. In other words, Berlin accumulated an enormous conflict potential, and in that situation any move that went even slightly wrong might have had disastrous consequences.

What began to happen in Berlin immediately after the reunification formalities made such benefits patently obvious. The city was abuzz with activity. The wall was being torn down and through traffic was being restored along streets that it had divided, turning each of them into two dead ends. Other over-and underground transportation lines were getting joined together as well. I remember that, just outside the gate of our embassy, the ground was broken up all of a sudden, revealing an entrance to a mothballed underground station that very few people had even known about.

The numbers of tourists visiting Berlin had grown immensely. The city had generally become more attractive, more inviting and more accessible. Probably for the Berliners themselves as well - the city's population had changed in composition noticeably as people from other parts of Germany and other countries, including Russia, had been moving in.

As an admirer of the great Russian novelist and playwright Mikhail Bulgakov, I'd like to draw a parallel between what is going on in the Euro-Atlantic space today and Satan's grand ball de-

scribed in his outstanding novel *The Master and Margarita*.

It would be a good experiment, though, to try to make the German capital use its creative powers to transform global developments instead of just mirroring them.

In Memory of a Friend and Teacher: Yevgeny Primakov

Author: Sergey Lavrov

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation



DEAR FRIENDS,

Just a few days ago we bid a final farewell to Ye.M. Primakov. A lot of sincere and right words were said, befitting the moment. It is useless trying to enumerate his official positions or his characteristics as a statesman, political and public figure, academician, journalist, scholar, and diplomat.

The most important thing, as Russian President V.V. Putin said at the funeral service, is that Yevgeny Mak-

simovich was a great citizen of his country, who has made a great contribution to the evolution and development of modern Russia. Indeed, this characterization cannot be applied to many people, our contemporaries, to the same extent to which Yevgeny Maksimovich deserved it.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that Ye.M. Primakov is the author of the key principles of our foreign policy doctrine that have preserved their relevance over the past two decades. This is, above all, the country's sovereign, independent foreign policy course, its openness to cooperation with any other states or a group of states on an equal, mutually respectful and mutually beneficial basis. I am confident that they will remain in our foreign policy doctrine for years to come.

The memory of Yevgeny Maksimovich will forever remain in our hearts.



Valentina Matviyenko,

Chairman of the Federation Council, Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation

I remember Yevgeny Maksimovich inviting me to his office and saying that from December 1, we were to start paying pensions on a regular basis. I said that there were no conditions and no funds to fulfill that task. His response was as follows: You have been appointed; this is your responsibility; the task must be fulfilled.



Grigory Karasin,

State Secretary, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation

Before long, everyone noticed his well-meaning but always demanding style among the new minister's many other remarkable qualities. For all the apparent sternness of the new "captain" he stood out for his remarkable - I would even say - enveloping human warmth in relation to us, younger colleagues. Yevgeny

Maksimovich often said in jest that in theory we could all be his children. Sometimes he treated us as naughty kids. It was not until 15 years later, at some event, that he softly corrected himself, observing that at times he had underestimated the diligence and professional qualities of every one of us.



Igor Ivanov,

President, Russian International Affairs Council

I ONCE WROTE that I was lucky enough to work under superiors who served as role models for me to emulate. I was also lucky this time. I was lucky enough to work together with Yevgeny Maksimovich as his first deputy at a time when he was the minister. Our work was our life. We became a team of like-minded people.

At the same time, he showed me another decree signed by the president - on my appointment as foreign minister. "I had no time to confer with you," he said. "I trust you, and the president endorsed by proposal. So, go ahead and take things over." This episode encapsulates Ye.M. Primakov: a responsible statesman, a great professional and a real friend.



Boris Pyadyshev,

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Doctor of Science (History)

ACADEMICIAN Yevgeny Maksimovich Primakov was an unmatched expert on the Middle East (needless to say, alongside his great expertise in other foreign policy areas). I am talking about this particular aspect of his personality because we first met in Egypt.

Primakov the minister devoted special attention to our journal, contributing highly valuable articles to *International Affairs*, which I had the honor of heading for over two decades.

Over many years, every December, the *International Affairs* Editorial Board selected the best materials among those published during the outgoing year. Needless to say, Primakov, a rare and much sought after author, was always on our shortlist.

I should say that as I read this article again today I understand clearly that Yevgeny Maksimovich scripted a scenario for the future events in the Middle East, including the Arab Spring.



Grigory Rapota,

State Secretary of the Union State of Russia and Belarus

WHEN HE JOINED the intelligence service, he introduced methodology. It should be pointed out that he received a guarded welcome, and that was only natural. An outsider, a civilian and Academy of Sciences' member ends up in a professional milieu, among people who have been working in the intelligence service for many years. Nevertheless, within a very short time, he managed to remove the wall of caution, and before long we felt real colleagues - colleagues doing the same thing.

It is essential to note that understanding the importance of expert analysis with regard to any issue, Yevgeny Maksimovich conferred with those who dealt with a particular subject. Eventually, he could disagree and make a different decision, but all those who participated in that knew that their opinion would be heard and heeded. This is very important. And this is perhaps what we lack in our life today.



Yuri Shafranik,

President of the World Politics and Resources Foundation

I believe that the shock of the 1998 crisis can be compared neither to 1991 nor to 1993. That was the time when Yevgeny Maksimovich headed the government, and the step that he took by assuming responsibility for the country can be regarded as a heroic deed. Furthermore, Primakov and his government led the country out of the crisis. Within a very short period, they managed to boost the country's development.

I would particularly like to note that for the first time the country had received a positive effect from state policy. Even though Primakov headed the Russian government for a very short time, the following 15 years moved along the vectors set by Yevgeny Maksimovich. He was able to reverse the good for nothing liberal policy that had brought our country to the verge of an abyss and to set a different trend for the development of the state, which is maintained today, albeit not without difficulty.



Anatoly Torkunov,

Rector, Moscow State Institute (University) of International Relations, RF Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences

OUR GENERATION became acquainted with him above all by reading his materials in the Pravda daily. There is no doubt that his name is in the same league of unique foreign policy journalists as Melor Sturua, Valentin Zorin, Tomas Kolesnichenko, Stanislav

Kondrashov, and Igor Belyaev. He was friends with all of them, and as for Tomas, they were pretty well inseparable. Yevgeny Maksimovich never refused to address young people who aspired to become international journalists. In this way, I first saw him in 1968, when he came to the Moscow State Institute of International Relations to speak about the situation in the Middle East.

From that moment, he became a part of our life. As I opened a copy of Pravda I would read an article by Primakov without fail. He always made some interesting point, always had common sense and offered wonderful observations. Generally, I should say that Yevgeny Maksimovich was a remarkable person for several reasons; he was a methodical and highly sensible person. "Sensible" may sound banal, but in our challenging era common sense is of paramount importance.



Konstantin Dolgov,

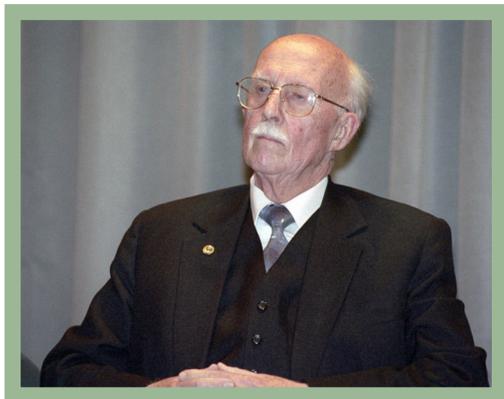
Professor, Doctor of Science (Philosophy)

I was struck by his knowledge of world culture, above all Russian classical literature, as well as the classical literature of the West and the East from ancient days to the present. He cited passages from various treatises, novels, poems, and verses, providing thorough and apt characterizations of the authors of those works, which pointed to his excellent artistic and aesthetic taste. Even his research stands out for a good literary language and an artistic style.

Rereading Wartime Correspondence

Author: S. Tikbivinsky

Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences



THE CORRESPONDENCE between the leaders of the anti-Nazi coalition during the Great Patriotic War, which was first published in our country upon the Foreign Ministry's initiative almost 60 years ago, holds a special place in the study of the diplomatic history of the war. It is a major source recognized throughout the world as an authentic and reliable collection of messages exchanged among Joseph Stalin, Franklin Roosevelt (then Harry Truman) and Winston Churchill on key issues of the joint conduct of the war and

the postwar settlement. Even at the height of the Cold War, the pickiest critics in the West could find no fault with this work. I remember very well what a big event this publication was, as this happened a long time before the relevant Anglo-American documents were declassified, and it became a real breakthrough in world historiography. However, many years have passed since then. The main archival wartime documents have become available to researchers; a huge amount of memoirs and specialist literature have appeared, and the historical science has made great progress in studying the political and diplomatic history of the war. All of this has laid the groundwork for revisiting the famous correspondence for an in-depth re-reading thereof through the prism of new historical knowledge. It is encouraging that this research was initiated by V.O. Pechatnov, a Russian scholar, a prominent historian, an expert on the Americas, and head of a department at the Moscow State Institute (University) of International Relations, who was subsequently joined by his young co-author I.E. Magadeyev. The result was a two-volume work, which is of considerable scholarly and practical interest, "Stalin's Correspondence with Roosevelt and Churchill During the Great Patriotic War."

Its concept and structure are quite original. The already well-known texts of the messages are harmoniously built into the authors' analytical commentary, which bears the principal research load and in terms of volume far exceeds the texts of the messages as such. This makes it drastically different from the previous editions of this correspondence, which were provided only with brief, purely factual notes.

The work contains an extensive and substantial preface, which lays out not only its purposes and goals but also its conceptual principles. Furthermore, the book is divided into issue-related chronological chapters covering the main stages of Allied relations during the war years; each of them opens with a wide-ranging overview of a given stage and its reflection in the correspondence.

We believe that its biggest research value is that the authors have thoroughly reconstructed the process of the writing of messages, which in all of the three capitals were the product of collective efforts despite their personal form. This required a close textual analysis of thousands

of archival documents in order to trace the entire process of message writing - from drafts to final documents. As a result, the authors have revealed the *modi operandi* of Soviet, British and U.S. diplomacy, each of which has its distinctive features.

It is equally important to mention yet another strong feature of the authors, namely their ability to put the correspondence into the general context of the global coalition war in all of its principal dimensions: political, military and diplomatic.

The British Monarchy: Does a Sovereign Reign but Not Rule?

Author: E. Ananieva

Head, Center for British Studies at the Institute of Europe, Russian Academy of Sciences, Candidate of Science (Philosophy)



ACADEMICS and man-in-the street are equally interested in the institute of monarchy, albeit for different reasons. The institute of British monarchy is doubly interesting: On the one hand, it has been smoothly functioning since the seventeenth century; on the other, embedded in the country's democratic system it has retained some of its independent functions. Galina Ostapenko, D. Sc. (History), the author of "The British Monarchy From Queen Victoria to the Heirs of Elizabeth II: The Concept of Governance and Personality of the Sovereign,"* has posed herself the task to "dissipate the illusions of Russian monarchists" through an analysis of the contemporary constitutional monarchy in Great Britain and transformation of its functions (pp. 3-4). This explains the

chronological limits - from Queen Victoria (1837-1901) to the transfer of royal prerogatives from Elizabeth II to heir apparent Prince Charles.

The author has successfully combined the strictly academic approach and captivating style to disclose the phenomenon of the British monarchy's amazing tenacity: It survived amid the revolutionary upsurges on the continent when other monarchies disappeared and thrones tumbled down. Dr. Ostapenko has looked into the ways the objective historical trends and purely subjective factors affected the transformations of the institute of monarchy in the context of the country's objective need to modernize the legislative and executive power (traced down to our days). The subject goes far beyond the purely academic interest driven not by idle curiosity but by the fact that it is closely connected with the country's future. The sovereign can use his royal prerogatives after consultations with Parliament; amid political crises, however, the institute of monarchy acquires more weight.

By preserving the institute of constitutional monarchy, the UK, "mother of parliaments" and an epigone of western democracy, ensures continuity of power and preserves the order when prime ministers and parties alternate at the helm. "In the words of Victorian Constitutional expert Walter Bagehot, editor of *The Economist*, 'a parliamentary system educates the public, while a presidential system corrupts it'."14 Time is changing and the parliamentary system, House of Lords in the first place, should be reformed. In the same way, the Scotland referendum on independence in September 2014 caused backlash and the "phenomenon of English nationalism" which moved the issue of state reforms high on the political agenda. The 2015 elections revealed the glaring gap between the share of votes won by a political party and its share of seats in Parliament and revived the talks about an electoral reform.

The British as a nation of empiricists cannot bring any theory to its logical end and are never bothered by its contradictory nature. The "lottery" of inherited monarchy is an illogical, unde-

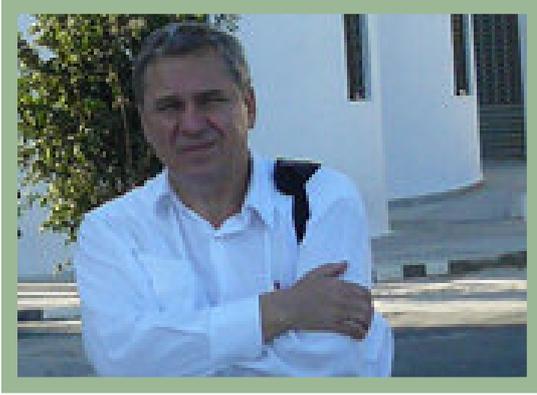
mocratic, unmeritorious, and archaic phenomenon. The subjective factors - positive or negative personal traits of the monarch and family scandals - affect, albeit not much, the level of republican sentiments in society. Today, thanks to personal qualities of Elizabeth II, the level of republicanism is low.

Great Britain has come close to the challenge of huge dimensions: reforms of the state structure and the party-political and parliamentary system. Will the institute of constitutional monarchy keep Britain in a quiet haven or will the disenchantment with politics and political games affect the monarchy as well?

A True Story About the Life of Raul Castro as Narrated by His Russian Friend

Author: A. Moiseev

Commentator for International Affairs



THE PRESENTATION of a monograph about Cuba's leader Raul Castro has been recently held in the Big Mansion of Russia's Foreign Ministry. Its author is Nikolai Leonov, a KGB Lieutenant-General, and also a historian and an author. Raul Castro and Nikolai Leonov met each other by pure chance. When travelling to Mexico to continue his undergraduate training, Nikolai Leonov met on board a ship a guy from Cuba, Raul Castro, and they have become solid friends ever since.

The presentation of Nikolai Leonov's book about Raul Castro was opened by Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov who spoke in praise of the monograph's hero, focusing on the many years of Raul Castro's service for the benefit of his country and people.

Nikolai Leonov's book about Raul Castro, which has been quickly and expeditiously published in the series "Lives of Outstanding People," is the first publication in Russia, and, possibly, in the world, about the prominent Cuban political leader. The book is based on truthful and authentic information, because it has been written not only by a witness to certain historical events, but also a long-time friend of Raul Castro, knowing him for over 62 years now.

"The present-day Cuba looks completely different," notes Nikolai Leonov. "One can see the signs of renaissance and renovation everywhere. I kept thinking that I should probably try and relive and summarize my old memories in one book. The idea kept brewing in my mind, and I finally decided to start collecting material about personal and professional life of Raul Castro, providing the present and future generations with a maximally truthful image of that amazing person, whom Fidel has always relied on and indefinitely trusted. A man who has been able to win respect of an overwhelming majority of the Cuban people and who has been firmly and confidently engaged in building what is presently called a 'new social and economic model'."

Nikolai Leonov is convinced that the signal victories achieved by Cuba are a just reward for the Cubans' fortitude, courage and excellent ability to resistance. The Cuban revolutionaries are sure of the bright prospects lying down in front of them, although they also clearly understand that their movement forward will always go hand in hand with a need to overcome tremendous obstacles that will invariably come their way.

Leonov's monograph is both modern and historical, with a very entertaining narrative. It has great chances to become a bestseller.

A Chronicle of the Great Victory

Author: N. Yablokov

Historian



The book "The Great Patriotic War: An Illustrated Chronicle" by Igor Bondarenko and Dmitry Klimov does not claim to be an all-embracing and detailed academic publication. Rather, the authors have made an attempt to present in a concise form a daily chronicle of the most disastrous war in the history of mankind, by relating concrete episodes of the Soviet troops' struggle on the fronts, picturing war heroes and presenting combat materiel, as well as describing major military operations. Of particular value is their day-by-day presentation of major events. Such an approach can significantly limit the possibility of an arbitrary interpretation of history by those who up until now cannot "forgive" our nation for winning WWII and keep trying to get their own back on "paper battlefields."

History, like a mosaic, is composed of individual fragments and human lives. It is those precious fragments so important for any historical research that have been included in the book. Regrettably, we can often hear today absurd deliberations of those who advocate Nazism, despite the fact the relevant verdict was already reached at Nuremberg in 1945; facts, however, are stubborn things, even if someone keeps trying to play with them, pursuing his self-interest. This publication is based on factual material, presenting unbiased assessments of the Great Patriotic War. Western politicians and the so-called "researchers" had started making attempts at falsifying WWII in Russia long before the final salvoes were fired.

Just a few researchers have paid attention to the fact that Nazi Germany's allies were reluctant to start combat action against the USSR. The Third Reich had to force its allies into fighting, resorting to all kind of compulsive means. Thus, Finland declared war on the Soviet Union only four days after Germany's attack on the Soviet Union - on June 26, 1941 (p. 17).

The book contains data on the Soviet troops' military equipment. Specifically, about a heavy KV tank which was regarded invulnerable. A lot of myths have been disseminated in the West about it, also (regrettably) picked up by some Russian researches.

It is noteworthy that a foreword to the book has been written by the head of the Russian Imperial House, Her Imperial Highness Grand Duchess Maria Vladimirovna. It says, in particular, that the "Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945 has been a mega-victory of our people who paid a heavy price to win over a powerful aggressor and defend the Motherland's independence.

The publication is also valuable in the sense that it contains a lot of authentic pictures of that period, allowing better understanding of the dramatic and heroic nature of the wartime events by creating the relevant emotional background and visual imagery relating to the narrated events.

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