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Our Past and a Secure World Order Today

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Speech at the international conference "Yalta-Potsdam-Helsinki-Belgrade: In Search of a Secure World Order," Belgrade, November 24-25, 2015

THE 70TH ANNIVERSARY of the Victory in World War II stands apart from all other anniversaries of historic events we marked in 2015 as a vivid reminder of what could be done to the world order by ambitious attempts to establish world domination, belief in the exclusiveness of one's own nation and contempt to the

norms of law and morals.

The Yalta and Potsdam conferences, the events of unsurpassed importance in contemporary history, laid the foundations of the collective security system in Europe and the world. It is the legacy of World War II bought at an exorbitant price of human lives.

Let me remind you that the democratic principles of peace and security at which the sides arrived in Potsdam and that ruled out a revival of Nazism and spoke of sovereignty, national independence, equality, and non-interference in domestic affairs as the cornerstone of interstate relations were accepted by all. They laid the foundation for continued cooperation among the members of the anti-Hitler coalition after the war.

Russia has done a lot to make the OSCE an efficient organization, a reliable security organization in Euro-Atlantic.

Life proved to be much more complicated than the noble plans.

If our Western partners preferred constructive dialogue to the practice of imposing their priorities to the detriment of others' interests and values, many nagging problems could have been avoided.

Everything that was said about the need to return to predictable international relations remained unheeded; Russia's invitation to sign a European Security Treaty to provide all states - the NATO and CSTO members and those that opted for military-political neutrality - with legal guarantees of their security was rejected; the Meseberg initiative of Russia was also declined.

NATO and the EU, the "oases of wellbeing," are no longer safe. This means that collective decisions are needed to achieve genuine unity and security on the European continent.

The decisions of the Yalta and Potsdam conferences and the postwar peace talks prevented an-

other worldwide conflagration and created conditions conducive to the current variety of states and their political, social and economic development.

Terrorists have challenged the foundations of our common civilization; inaction in the struggle against this evil cannot be justified - the lives of our citizens are at stake. We hope that the coming CFM in Belgrade will recollect the lessons of history and will demonstrate political will so that to close ranks in the face of the common threat.

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Speech at the international conference "Yalta-Potsdam-Helsinki-Belgrade: In Search of a Secure World Order," Belgrade, Serbia, November 24-25, 2015

A year ago, we spoke about causes of war. Today, our agenda focuses not on what causes wars but on what should be done to prevent them.

History provides conclusive evidence that, in effect, the beneficiaries of large-scale wars have used the latter as a means of changing the world order. It is

always through war that changes have been made to the world order.

Moreover, all world-order changes have entailed inversions of values and the rejection of established philosophical concepts of good and evil.

For the past two decades, changes have been made to at least five world-order paradigms - the Vienna, Crimea, Frankfurt, Versailles/Washington, and Yalta/Potsdam systems.

All political actors should realize that war cannot be a way to change the current world order. This implies a methodological challenge for humankind: finding a non-military form of development.

Seventy years ago, by joint efforts, the international community defeated the most obvious and greatest evil in history, fascism. This victory led to a world order whose principles were first formulated in Yalta and then reaffirmed in Potsdam.

One more present-day source of danger are attempts to deny the immeasurable contribution that some nations made to the victory over fascism, suffering tremendous losses in that fight. There are countries where the status of a World War II veteran is equally accorded to fascists and to fighters against fascism. This is absolutely hypocritical and absolutely unacceptable ethically.

I would also like to emphasize that some of the ideas of Helsinki '75 were ahead of their times. The Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe is most likely the first international legal document to use the term "civilization." There is a section in it dealing with dialogue among civilizations.

There is a Russian saying, "Everything new is actually well-forgotten old." I have deliberately quoted what may be half-forgotten passages in some documents to make us wonder what future generations will be saying about us, as President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing said today. It doesn't appear to me to be a new idea to hold a public forum and invite politicians to it to discuss key modern issues in an informal atmosphere. It's an idea that was proclaimed in Helsinki. But it

has become a new idea again in the context of current political developments. As a representative of the World Public Forum "Dialogue of Civilizations" and as a Russian citizen, I am deeply convinced that the global recognition of dialogue as the sole acceptable method of conflict resolution is pivotal to the successful implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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ON FEBRUARY 15, 2016, Russia's BRICS presidency came to an end. Its results with regard to state and government agencies, business, the academic community, and civil institutions are yet to be analyzed. However, even now there is good reason to say that we have successfully accomplished the mission of helmsman at the Big Five ship, on the whole fulfilling, in the course of our work in conjunction with our partners.

An important distinctive feature of BRICS activity is that any agreements that are achieved by its participants are based on their positions being fully taken into account. The practice of the imposition of decisions does not exist in BRICS. In fact, this is impossible as a matter of principle. When all is said and done, all the member states possess an important element, specifically real sovereignty, which is defined, above all, as freedom and independence in decision-making and in implementing their decisions. It should be said that far from all formally independent subjects of international relations, which in reality are under the tutelage of their "big brothers," have this foreign policy asset.

So, BRICS today is a community of sovereign and equal states that are active generators and participants of integration processes and are capable of assuming a share of responsibility for the international situation.

Another characteristic feature of BRICS is that it has firmly established itself in the Of course, it would be wrong to ignore the institutional, legal, economic, social, cultural, and civilizational differences that exist between our states, which predetermine their unique and distinctive status in today's diverse world. In this context, certain skeptics clearly exaggerate the situation. A great deal has been done since BRICS came into being. Areas of equal and mutually beneficial cooperation in the political, economic, scientific, educational, cultural, social, and humanitarian spheres, as well as between NGOs, have been identified. Appropriate cooperation mechanisms and formats have been developed.

The work in progress on agreements and an array of cooperation segments already in place constitute BRICS construction blocks as the construction process continues according to the approved plan. Let's try to determine the vector of the construction process and the possible configuration of its upcoming levels.

Obviously, in the foreseeable future, the participants in the group will devote special attention to promoting their trade, economic and investment cooperation and strengthening their financial

stability.

In this regard, a key role will be played by the New Development Bank (NDB) and the BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) both of which were launched last year. Their total capital will be \$200 billion, which is not only the association's solid financial foundation, but also the evidence of its rising profile in the global economic and financial areas.

The BRICS Business Council makes a significant contribution to the development of dialogue between the Big Five business representatives, as well as to strengthening public-private partnership.

The BRICS presidency will now go to our Indian colleagues. Its motto will be Building Responsive, Inclusive and Collective Solutions (or BRICS).

In short, there is a wide scope of important and mutually enriching work for our countries and peoples to accomplish. Russia's active participation in the interstate association on this scale will help provide a more favorable environment for its economic growth, higher living standards and stronger positions in the emerging multipolar world.

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THE ARCTIC REGION attracts the attention of a far larger number of states than those that are adjacent to it. The massive melting of Arctic ice provides broad opportunities for opening new maritime routes and for prospecting for natural resources, and the development of energy and trade; it is also fraught with a serious conflict in the Arctic.

The Arctic is becoming an object of territorial, resource and military-strategic interests. The global economy's dependence on energy resources is another factor stimulating the military and political leadership in a number of countries to develop new strategies to uphold

their national interests in the Arctic.

Russia's bid to extend the outer limits of the adjacent continental shelf in the Barents Sea, the Bering Sea and the Sea of Okhotsk beyond 200 nautical miles from Siberia to the North Pole is based on the premise that the Lomonosov ridge and the Mendeleev ridge are the natural prolongation of the East Siberian continental platform, not oceanic formations of the Arctic Ocean. Russia has the world's only nuclear-powered icebreaker fleet, controls the Northern Sea Route and participates in all international organizations and multilateral international cooperation formats in the Arctic.

By now, submissions to the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, in addition to Russia have been presented by Norway, Denmark and Canada. The United States is also preparing to send its submission immediately after the Convention is ratified.

Russia upholds its right to sea areas in the Arctic north of the Russian coast to the North Pole although many states act on the premise that Russia can only have rights to its territorial waters within 12 nautical miles of land territory, while the rest of the ocean is regarded as international waters.

The presence of the NATO military factor in the Arctic, an area of peaceful collaboration and economic cooperation, raises further questions. Even before the Ukraine crisis broke out, during the last several decades, the nature of relations between Russia and NATO evolved as a "difficult partnership" through ups and downs.

Regarding Russian activity in the Arctic, the United States believes that it acts legitimately in seeking to prove the legitimacy of its claims to the resource-rich Arctic shelf but warns that it is preparing to challenge the Russian claims, including at the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf after the Convention is ratified.

Russia and Canada do not have any strong disagreements on border issues. Both countries' claims

on the Lomonosov Ridge to extend the Arctic shelf can be solved by establishing a dividing line based on compromise.

Just as Norway, Denmark proceeds from the principle of boundaries being the median line and proposes dividing the Arctic among the states along the lines that are equidistant from the nearest points of the baselines of the Arctic states' coasts.

China, not being an Arctic state, lays no claim to the Arctic shelf wealth, but is closely watching the situation and waiting for a time when the Arctic states straighten out legal issues and establish transparent and understandable rules for free passage through the Arctic waters. China has already appreciated the advantages of sea transit from China to Europe and the eastern U.S. along the Canadian and Russian northern sea routes, which, with year-round navigation, will be 6,000 to 7,000 km shorter each way.

All participants of civilized and constructive collaboration on issues related to new technology, economic and investment cooperation, exchanges of information on the Arctic issues, etc. will benefit as a result.

The Trans-Pacific Partnership: Key Points and Potential Effects

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THE TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP (TPP) agreement was signed in October 2015 by 12 member countries of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) - Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the United States, and Vietnam. The TPP is a brainchild of the United States, which was concerned about its declining influence on the economies and politics of Asia-Pacific

countries. The United States sees the TPP as an instrument for achieving its long-term goal of bringing into being the proposed Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP), an agreement whose signatory countries would be fewer in number than The United States, Japan, and Canada are the main exporters in the TPP.

Exports from some TPP countries to other signatories were worth \$2,074.8 billion in 2014, accounting for 47.4% of the 12 countries' total exports for that year.

The TPP countries are recipients of 28% of the world's total FDI. The main recipients are the United States, Singapore and Canada, which together received 62.1% of the total FDI into the TPP countries in 2014.

The TPP contains a strict definition of the country of origin of a product that sets value-added minimums at between 30% and 55% depending on the type of product. This threatens Vietnamese and Malaysian manufacturers, which buy comparatively cheap ingredients in China, Laos, Cambodia or Myanmar.

The TPP has a separate section on trade in information technology products. It makes it binding on its signatories to sign the WTO Information Technology Agreement (ITA) and to lift restrictions on the storage and freedom of transmission of information. The TPP bans protectionist measures concerning the localization of servers, and mandates prosecution of hacking.

Sections on the liberalization of trade in agricultural goods are a special part of the TPP. This is a very sensitive form of liberalization for countries where the state heavily subsidizes agriculture, including directly subsidizing agricultural exports.

The TPP prescribes that its signatories take part in the WTO process of hammering out a common position on state agricultural exporters and agricultural export loans.

Protectionist barriers, if used by TPP countries, must comply with their commitments under a

WTO agreement on protectionism. They cannot be used in relation to imports subject to tariff quotas or in the relation to emergency imports.

The government of a TPP country cannot make investment from another TPP country conditional on the structure of the investor's board of directors or on the nationality of its members. The TPP makes it binding on its signatories to disclose statistics on investments, although these must be confidential and protected.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS include patents, trademarks, geographical indication rights, copyright, and trade secrets. The TPP prescribes national treatment for all categories of intellectual property.

The TPP has been signed by 12 of the 21 member states of APEC. APEC is working on the proposed Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP), which is due to materialize by 2020 [4], and the TPP is considered one of the means of achieving this goal.

The TPP is also purported to promote technological development. It is a distinguishing mark of the TPP that it institutionalizes economic cooperation.

An "Atomized Caliphate" in Europe

Author: Armen Oganessian

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A PART OF THE WESTERN WORLD, Europe, however, has been very selective about alien cultures and civilizations; not a "melting pot" American style, it is paying dearly for this function imposed on it. The disagreements on the migration issues in the European corridors of power threaten the cohesion of the European Unity.

In the past, Germany and many of its West European neighbors opted for the "Three A's" ideology when

dealing with the Third World migrants. It was believed that the Muslim migrants should, first, adapt themselves to the new conditions; second, to become assimilated and, third, absorbed (to become an integral part of the new socium). This did not happen for many reasons. Suffice it to say that one out of four members of the Turkish community in Germany does not know German; one out of two never communicates with Germans.

The EU directive on the right to family reunification buried the hopes pinned on mixed marriages: Men prefer brides from their native countries.

The official permission to build mosques led to the emergence of monoethnic and monoconfessional communities (enclaves). Saudi Arabia poured a lot of money into mosque building across Europe.

The efforts to dissolve the Muslim migrants or "Westernize" them have failed.

The attacks in Cologne indicate that migrants behave irrationally, Mr. Fico said, and that it is necessary "to prevent the creation of a compact Muslim community." Having pointed out that "the Muslim community as a whole is a serious threat to the European lifestyle" the prime minister of Slovakia concluded: "We cannot allow several thousands of North African and Middle Eastern migrants to settle in Slovakia. We have learned the lesson of other European countries: The migrants cannot be integrated, it's simply impossible."

By calling a spade a spade the prime minister was taking risks. One of my German colleagues said recently: "In Germany, those who do not share the views of Frau Merkel on migrants are branded fascists."

Young men between 25 and 35 constitute up to 80% of the migrant crowds. Robert Fico specified: "Normally, they are well-dressed people with credit cards. They have little in common with migrants who flee from hunger and thirst. There are people among them who need help; we are ready to help the Syrian Christians, in particular, whose lives were threatened."

So far, the relations between confessions cannot be described as adequate, to say the least. In Germany, 500 thousand ethnic Germans adopted Islam; in France, 300 thousand French did the same. The expert community is convinced: "European Christianity is retreating."

Contemporary Wars and Armed Conflicts: Sources, Causes and Possible Solutions

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ALL GREATEST LITERARY CREATIONS of antiquity, be it the Mahabharata, the Bible, the Iliad and the Odyssey, the Avesta, the Kalevala and others tell us about conflicts, confrontations, struggle, and wars as the most important events in the history of mankind. This creates an impression that at all times people knew no other occupations but wars or preparations for new wars once the previous war was over and that mankind appeared on Earth and lived on it to

fight and to destroy itself. Progress was and is limited to consistent upgrade of the old and invention of new types of deadly weapons rather than develop personality, its abilities, talents, and spirituality.

There is no need to look into hoary antiquity; the above is amply confirmed by the wars of the twentieth century - World Wars One and Two - the bloodiest in the history of mankind. Today, the symptoms of World War Three are growing more and more obvious.

The founders of all world philosophical teachings, religions and cultures resolutely condemned evil, hatred, murders, plundering, wars, and everything that brought sufferings to people and death and that, therefore, should be excluded from social life. We can see, however, that greediness of the high and mighty pushed and still pushes the world into wars between countries and peoples and even between religions and confessions.

The best members of mankind denounced and continue denouncing wars and armed conflicts. Some of the religious thinkers, Leo Tolstoy among them, supported the theory of non-resistance to evil by violence; it, unfortunately, did not stop evil and war but even encouraged them. "War is murder. No matter how many people get together to commit murder or what they call themselves, murder is the worst sin in the world."

Today, the United States which in the last few decades have been talking about its exclusiveness and its European allies have been pursuing the policy that breeds no hopes for the future but pushes mankind to a catastrophe. Noam Chomsky, linguist, philosopher, public figure, and one of the outstanding and world-recognized intellectuals, who has been living for many years in the United States, is actively objecting to the aggressive policy of the country's ruling circles.

He called the U.S. and Israel "two rogue states" and pointed out: "Remember the worst terrorist campaign in the world by far is the one that's being orchestrated in Washington. That's the global assassination campaign. There's never been a terrorist campaign of that scale."

Noam Chomsky was very open about his attitude to President Putin's policies: NATO's provoca-

tive eastward expansion that starting with the 1990s invited a very natural response from the Russian leaders as a direct threat to Russia's national interests and security.

Finally, another American citizen and patriot, former chief of staff to former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell (2002-2005), Lawrence Wilkerson was very critical of America's foreign policy. In an interview to Baltcom, Latvian radio station on August 22, 2015, he said: "U.S. politics is determined by about 400 people with a combined wealth of trillions of dollars who control government decision-making from the backstage.... Thus power is concentrated in the hands of about 0.001 percent of the U.S. population."

The United States is still the world's most powerful nation both economically and politically; if it insists on this political course, it will inevitably undermine its power and might becoming isolated and retreating from its positions. We will live and we will see. Let's hope that the Doomsday Clock that stopped at three minutes from midnight will move backward.

The End of the Cold War: A Polemic From Singapore

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In December last year, finding myself in Ukraine, I decided to visit Kiev's Independence Square to observe the EuroMaidan demonstrations. It was a colorful spectacle with flags of all political stripes fluttering in the early winter breeze, including some that I had not expected to see and I wondered if the young people waving them really knew their historical meaning. On one occasion I listened to some European politician - I think it was a Member of the European Parliament - give a rousing speech. He

spoke of freedom and democracy, the usual phrases tripping off his fluent tongue. He spoke in English and I do not know how much the crowd understood. But his tone was clear enough and they responded enthusiastically. Stirring music played in the background. There was a festive air. But the thought came to me: this could all end very badly. Images of Hungary in 1956 flashed across my mind. At that time, the West encouraged an anti-Soviet revolt, then folded its arms as Soviet tanks rumbled into Budapest.

My worst fears have not come to pass, but it is bad enough. Crimea is lost to Ukraine forever. The western narrative on the Ukrainian crisis has demonized President Putin personally. Yet, as anyone with even a cursory knowledge of the region's history and Ukraine's complex relationship with Russia should have known the intensity of cultural, historical and economic ties between the two countries. It was feckless of the Europeans to have encouraged those Ukrainians who sought a closer association with the EU - Ukrainians were and remain deeply divided on this question.

Whatever the proximate cause of the Ukraine crisis - and historians will debate it for years to come - the ultimate underlying impetus for the bad decisions that led to an imbroglio that nobody really wanted was the end of the Cold War.

The fundamental imbalance is conceptual, epitomized by the idea that with the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, history had somehow found its summation in western liberal democracy and thus "ended." It is now painfully evident that history is still playing itself out and cruder versions of the idea of "the end of history" have been smothered by an embarrassing silence. But the idea still lingers in more invidious forms.

After the Cold War there seemed to be no alternative to American power and American ideas. Successive U.S. administrations of both parties acted on that assumption in their domestic and foreign policies. When Madeleine Albright famously dubbed America the "indispensable nation" that stood taller and saw farther than all others, she was merely articulating what many Americans of all political persuasions believed.

The biggest beneficiary of the end of the Cold War was not the U.S. or Europe but China. Freed from the constraints of American leadership in a de facto anti-Soviet alliance, China has begun to pursue an independent and increasingly assertive course, particularly in East Asia. The globalization that was consequent on the end of the division of the world economy into two competing camps has allowed China to position itself as a vital node in the international economic grid and given Beijing the capacity to pursue such a course.

Today, U.S.-China relations are the most important relationship in East Asia, setting the tone for the entire region.

In post-Soviet Russia too, capitalism exists without liberal democracy. But the Chinese experience punctures the western myth of universality in a way the Russian experience does not because China is an economic success story in way that the resource-dependent post-Soviet Russian economy cannot yet match. And more crucially, the core of Russian civilization lies west of the Urals and in Orthodox Christianity as even Stalin recognized. A significant number of Russian intellectuals would, I believe, not fundamentally disagree with the western historical narrative and at least to some degree share western anxieties.

At the CICA Summit held in Shanghai in May, President Xi called for a new security concept based on the principle that "it is for the people of Asia to run the affairs of Asia, solve the problems of Asia and uphold the security of Asia." Russia attended the CICA Summit, but who are "people of Asia" that President Xi referred to? Was it a geographic definition or an ethnic and cultural definition? This was not entirely clear. But the notion of "Asia for Asians" was eerily reminiscent of an earlier concept of Asian "co-prosperity."

Only Russians can answer the many questions I have raised in this essay. But that is not a role that any friend of Russia would want to see a great power to accept.

Russian-Japanese Relations in a Parallel History Format

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The history of our relations has an extensive experience of mutual attraction, cooperation and good neighborliness. Back in the 19th century, the Japanese intelligentsia took interest in Russian culture and rightfully called Russia their teacher. At the same time, the political leaders of our two countries managed to find compromise solutions at the most difficult moments when conflict seemed all but inevitable.

As for the recent period of Russian-Japanese relations, i.e., during a post-bipolar world period, both countries have come to an understanding of the exclusive importance of good-neighborly relations for their own national interests. Good interaction at the top level has made it possible

The history of Russian-Japanese relations includes many pages that arouse controversy in the public mind in both countries. The history of mutual confrontation and even hostility has not passed without a trace: The Japanese for the most part take a negative view of Russia. A feeling of hurt national pride, based on a historical subtext, is certainly not the best possible foundation for developing bilateral ties.

At the same time, there are no outstanding unresolved problems between Japan and Russia except, of course, the issue of border delimitation. All issues related to the legacy of World War II were legally settled in 1956. In this sense, Japan and Russia are not hostages to this historical past.

We praise the balanced and constructive position that Japan holds today on most international issues and that makes it possible for us to maintain a trusting dialogue even in the complicated geopolitical situation today. I hope that Japan, too, recognizes our country as an important partner in establishing a lasting and secure system of international relations in the Asia-Pacific Region and the world as a whole.

Despite the burden of problems that have accumulated during more than 300 years of contact, Japan and Russia not only have retained interest in partnership, but have in fact preserved and multiplied all the valuable elements in their bilateral relations that have been acquired throughout their history.

The publication of the book "Russian-Japanese Relations in a Parallel History Format" (Rossiisko-yaponskiye otnosheniya v formate parallel-noi istorii: kollektivnaya monografiya. / Ed. Academician A.V. Torkunov, Prof. M. Iokibe. M.: MGIMO-U, 2015, 1000 pp.) was the result of three years of intensive work. In 2011, a group of Japanese historians visited Moscow and had

an informal meeting with their Russian colleagues in the course of which an idea was born for a joint research project on the history of bilateral relations between Russia and Japan in the 20th-early 21st century. In June 2012, Russian historians formed the commission on difficult issues of Russian-Japanese relations that included about 20 Russian experts. Both young researchers and experienced, merited historians participated in the commission's activities. Essentially, the commission became a cross-section of Russia's academic community. As for the Japanese authors' team, it features well-known historians and political scientists who represent leading universities and training centers in Japan and other countries.

It is important that the monograph was published by respectable university publishing houses in both countries - in Russia, by the MGIMO University Publishing House and in Japan, by the Tokyo University Publishing House. A pilot edition of the Russian-language monograph was presented on May 21, 2015 in Tokyo at the Third Russian-Japanese Forum, Points of Contact: Business, Investments, Sports. In October 2015, the book was published in Japan and in December, the main Russian-language edition was published in Russia.

Before the project was launched, many people were concerned that joint work would be complicated due to the existing differences on the most difficult and delicate issues in the history of bilateral relations.

However, it turned out that those concerns had no basis in reality. We not only did not quarrel with each other but we were able to find a common language on the most sensitive issues, often taking a critical view of our own governments.

On the whole, the historians from both countries have demonstrated their ability to work productively in one team and find a common language in areas where it was impossible to find appropriate mutual understanding on an official level.

The book has generated considerable interest. As far as I know, two-thirds of the print run have already been sold. Of course, it takes time to fully appreciate the readers' reaction and its academic value. However, one thing is clear: The publication of the book is an event that is far from ordinary. I believe the monograph will receive broad public recognition in Russia. Work is in progress to publish the English edition of the book, which is designed to popularize the project's research achievements all over the world.

United Nations Peacekeeping Activities in the 21st Century

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THE UNITED NATIONS peacekeeping operations are a key means of settlement of armed conflicts and post-conflict political normalization. Due to the escalation of some conflicts, they are more important in the 21st century than ever before.

The United Nations has carried out 71 peacekeeping operations between 1948 and 2015, with 3,395 people being killed in them. In recent years, UN

peacekeeping activities have increased vastly in scale and have had more resources allocated for them. As of August 31, 2015, there were 16 peacekeeping operations underway with nearly 125,000 people from 122 countries involved in them. More than 106,000 of them were troops, police and military observers, and the rest were civilians and volunteers.

New threats mean that accumulated peacekeeping experience needs a large-scale analysis.

For Russia, participation in UN peacekeeping operations is an important aspect of foreign policy, as it is one of the determinants of the international prestige of the country and ensures it considerable political payoffs from conflict-stricken areas after the settlement of the conflicts.

Today's conflicts are completely different from former ones. They are marked by a diversity of features, including cross-border threats and challenges. Modern conflicts are normally domestic collisions and have ethnic, religious, territorial, political, economic, or other causes.

Effectively, UN peacekeeping operations are no longer peacekeeping activities pure and simple. Today, peacekeeping forces usually have mandates authorizing them to take up matters of government and look for solutions to conflicts. Peacekeepers often include large police and civilian contingents in addition to troops. Their duties include protection of civilians, refugees and displaced persons, assistance in organizing national police forces, control of human rights observance and elections, defense of democracy and civil society, and help in rebuilding economies ruined by conflicts.

As UN peacekeeping activities grow in scale, use of modern technology in peacekeeping operations, primarily means of communication and means of surveillance such as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs or drones), is increasingly an issue.

The council allowed UAVs to be used only in limited offensives to pre-empt attacks from armed groups.

The idea that armed force is the most effective peacekeeping method has been questioned increasingly often during debates at the UN General Assembly Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and Fifth Committee, the committee dealing with administration and budgetary matters. We believe that setting the stage for dialogue and eradicating the ultimate cause of a conflict must remain the main objective of each peacekeeping operation.

As for Russia, it has the advantage of being able to take part in UN peacekeeping operations not only on its own but also as a member of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, namely via the potential participation of CSTO forces in UN peacekeeping missions.

Current State and Objectives of the Eurasian Higher Education Area

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RUSSIA'S EASTWARD TURN in its foreign policy has resulted in the resumption of debates on proposed Eurasian priorities in its educational and scientific policies. The political basis for this is a Russian-Chinese statement on the planned mutual integration of two projects, the Eurasian Economic Union and Silk Road Economic Belt, that was issued during a Russian-Chinese summit in Moscow on May 8, 2015.

THE MUTUAL INTEGRATION of the education and scientific research systems of various countries is a way of building knowledge economies. The knowledge economy concept is not new. In Russia, Valery Makarov, a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, is a long-time and enthusiastic advocate of it.

However, a combination of factors has made it much more popular among the world's political and economic elites in recent years.

As we build the Eurasian higher education area, we should remember that its ultimate purpose is to sustain and raise the quality of higher education in Russia and the region as a whole.

The Chinese have found a good solution: a lecturer is entitled to a sabbatical - either one year's leave every five years or six months' leave every two and a half years.

We would like to emphasize that reasonable concern for maintaining the quality traditions of its higher education should not prevent Russia from showing flexibility and trust in considering the recognition of education qualifications obtained in partner countries.

THE HARMONIZATION of education standards and mutual recognition of education qualifications and research achievements as part of Eurasian educational integration will help stimulate academic mobility among SCO member countries and eventually create an academic, expert, and interpersonal communication basis for the social and economic development of the region.

Author: S. Razov

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Italy



I took the office of ambassador to Italy in June 2013 - in fact, at the peak of cooperation between our countries, better described by the term "strategic partnership." I would like to quote Russian President V.V. Putin's remarks to the effect that Russian-Italian ties have always had a privileged status both in the political and in the economic spheres.

However, in 2014, amid the Western policy of sanctions and pressure on Russia over the crisis in Ukraine, the intensity of contacts declined. Understandably, this did not happen on our initiative. In particular, a number of important bilateral events on our joint calendar did not take place. Bilateral trade also declined. At the same time, I should give credit to our Italian partners, who, at the most critical period of a freeze in relations

between Russia and the EU, despite peremptory orders from Brussels and Washington, on the whole took a balanced and farsighted approach, seeking to minimize the damage to the potential for the bilateral interaction that has evolved over decades.

Governments and political parties in power change but national and state interests remain. I am absolutely confident that our interests are essentially identical, parallel or similar. Add here the established age-long traditions of friendly relations and cooperation, the shared Christian roots, the fundamental civilizational values, and so on. In addition, our Italian partners are very well aware that without Russia it is impossible to resolve any major international issues today. We realize, of course, that Italy as an EU and NATO member is bound by allied obligations, the bonds of Euro-Atlantic solidarity and discipline. There should be no illusions in this regard. Membership in alliances certainly limits their participants in pursuing an independent foreign policy course but it does not deprive them of this right.

Italy is our fourth largest trading partner. In 2014, trade turnover was \$48.5 billion, falling by 10% compared to 2013. In 2015, according to preliminary data, the trade volume fell by another one-third, including Russian exports to Italy by 30% and Italian imports to Russia by almost 40%. The number of Russian tourists visiting Italy has fallen approximately as much. The reduction in the number of Russian clients at Italian clothing and footwear shops is obvious even at a glance, while their average purchase has basically halved.

Russia's decision to close the South Stream project, in which Italy participated, among others, is well known. The prospects for another southern transit route, called Turkish Stream, given Ankara's unfriendly actions, also have complicated. Needless to say, the lack of a southern gas transport corridor from Russia is not conducive to the energy security of south European and Mediterranean countries.

As for Italian tourists coming to Russia, the devaluation of the ruble, among other things, has made these tours significantly cheaper. Our consular agencies issued about 75,000 tourist visas in 2015 and these figures are growing.

Recently, Visit Russia, an office of the Federal Agency for Tourism to promote tourism to Russia, opened in Rome. The opening ceremony was attended by the Russian minister of culture. We wholeheartedly support such initiatives. For our part, we work to demonstrate in the Apennines Russia's tourism potential.

Russia-India: New Formats of Old Partnership

Author: G. Ivashentsov

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary



INDIA IS RUSSIA'S TIME-TESTED PARTNER; throughout many years, the Soviet Union and India were almost allies and co-operated practically in all spheres of human activity.

Today, India is a country that created nuclear weapons and nuclear reactors, put a satellite into Mars orbit and is working on space travels on India-made spaceships.

Its science-intensive branches, information technologies in the first place, are rapidly developing. The IT segment of its economy is from \$80 to 90 billion; the country occupies about 18.5% of the world software market. This made India one of the outsourcing platforms - in 2015, software export from India was estimated

at \$112 billion, or 8% of GDP⁵; it has found its niche in world economy and became confident of its ability to profit from economic globalization.

Economic successes, however, have not solved the problems that slow down India's progress. It is dependent on oil imports; it suffers of deficit of electric power and of very limited water resources.

INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY has not changed much after the 2014 elections; the consensus of sorts among the main political parties is more than half a century old. Today, however, India demonstrates more assertive-ness on the international scene.

From the very beginning, India has been seeking a place of its own among the world's leading powers. For a long time, however, its international resource was limited to its moral authority and support extended by its Asian, African and Latin American friends. By the early twenty-first century, India acquired powerful economic, scientific, technological, and military potentials indispensable for a premier league member.

RUSSIA AND INDIA, with their very different and very distinctive specifics, are facing many similar problems both inside and outside their borders. First, they are coping with the task of maintaining national and social harmony within the multi-million poly-ethnic and poly-confessional states. Our two countries learned better and earlier than many others the lesson taught by Cashmere and Chechnya: Aggressive nationalism, religious extremism, terrorism, and separatism were an absolute evil. Second, they oppose the efforts to establish diktat of the West in everything that is going on in the world and have addressed the task of building a democratic, polycentric international order to guarantee all and each state in the West and the East, in the North and the South peace, security, justice, and development. Today, their combined international weight made them indispensable participants in settling international problems.

Russia and India occupy close or even identical positions on the majority of contemporary problems - liquidation of the seats of local conflicts in the neighboring countries, in the first place,

struggle against international terrorism, transborder drug trafficking and other types of trans-border crimes.

COOPERATION WITH RUSSIA in the energy sphere is of strategic importance for India. It is forecasted that in the next 10 to 15 years the country will double its energy consumption and by the year 2025 it will become the world's third biggest oil importer.

IN THE LAST QUARTER of a century, the Russian-Indian partnership with a long history behind it acquired a new quality. Two great powers cooperate to ensure their mutual interests and interests of each of the sides in the far from simple regional and international context. Having spread to practically all spheres this cooperation confirmed its vitality and efficiency. The relations between the two countries are based on mutual trust; they are predictable and constructive. Russia's partnership with India fits Russia's basic interests and contributes to peace and security in the world.

The History of Public Diplomacy in Russia

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PUBLIC DIPLOMACY is today understood as the communication of the governmental and nongovernmental players of a country with foreign public in order to indirectly influence public opinion and foreign policy decisions in a foreign state.

Public diplomacy has been adopted on a wide scale in modern Russia as well, due to the opening of the country's borders and the development of civil society in it. An increasing role is given in international affairs to "soft power" policies when a nation uses its cultural, historical, and political values rather than its military or economic power to attain its objectives.

Public diplomacy in Russia is mainly exercised by ordinary people who care about what is happening in their country and by promi-

nent nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

In the mid-20s, the Soviet Union established diplomatic relations with some European countries, China, Mexico, and Japan, and in 1933 with the United States; in 1934, it became a member of the League of Nations. Having thus become an equal entity in international relations, the country began to build up official cultural contacts with the outside world.

Boosting cultural contacts with foreign countries has justly been one of the top items on Russia's agenda after these ties were mostly severed due to radical social and political changes in the country in the late 80s and early 90s.

When the war was over, the Soviet Union had to adjust its foreign policy, including its system of cultural relations, to the requirements of the postwar Yalta-Potsdam world order.

In September 2008, President Dmitry Medvedev closed down Roszarubezhentr, replacing it with the Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad, and International Humanitarian Cooperation (Rossotrudnichestvo). Rossotrudnichestvo has offices in 73 countries. From March 2012 to 2015, it was headed by Konstantin Kosachev, who was superseded by Lyubov Glebova.

The Russian Association for International Cooperation (RAMS) is one of the main partners of Rossotrudnichestvo. Today, Rossotrudnichestvo is organizing what is going to be called the Russian Union of Friendship Societies (RSOD). It is also working to reopen Moscow's House of Friendship with Peoples of Foreign Countries.

RUSSIA'S PUBLIC DIPLOMACY is acquiring special importance because of current political, economic and social globalization.

Research and assessment is one of the main parts of RIAC's work. The council assesses and forecasts international risks and opportunities in the interests of Russian diplomacy, companies,

education centers, and NGOs and their international partners. It organizes large-scale studies of key international problems, prepares analytical reports, analyzes force majeure events, and translates foreign publications into Russian.

TO SUM UP, the Russian leadership has done a great deal over the past two decades to make Russian society better aware of what happens in the realm of foreign policy. Public diplomacy plays an increasing role in Russia, as it does worldwide, and has become an important supplement to official diplomacy.

Russia possesses a huge potential for public diplomacy. It includes the serious international prestige of Russian science and arts, experience accumulated since the Soviet era, Russian cultural centers all over the globe, and the Russian World - millions of people in former Soviet republics and other countries who are drawn toward Russia, its language and culture, and who vitally need permanent contact with their historical home.

Public Diplomacy as an Instrument of International Dialogue

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TODAY, with Russia in the center of a discussion about the world order, public diplomacy can and should be used to inform foreign audiences about Russia's positions, to organize their discussions and to achieve mutually acceptable solutions.

Public diplomacy leads to cooperation and the efforts to arrive at common points. Edmund Gullion, dean of the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, was the first to use the phrase in its modern meaning; it presupposes a dialogue on the most important international issues between representatives of expert communities and civil societies of different countries.

Those who look at public diplomacy as a synonym of "soft power" or "people-to-people" diplomacy are wrong: It is an instrument of "soft power." In English, the public diplomacy concept includes people-to-

people diplomacy while in Russia they are two different concepts. Public diplomacy concentrates on the expert community correlated with the aims and targets of official diplomacy.

Unlike propaganda, public diplomacy is expected to build bridges, not barbed-wire fences; it is expected to shape objective ideas about one's own country rather than to spread slander about other international actors. Regrettably, analysts from Russia's closest noted recently that Russia's main aim was to rebuff "soft power" of the West; therefore, Russia should work hard to explain its position on the burning international issues to foreign audience.

It should be said that public diplomacy is a very complicated process that unfolds at many levels. Until recently, everything that was done in the sphere of public diplomacy in Russia was limited to interstate relations or projects of the creative class and academic community. Practically nothing was done to draw civil society - NGOs, public opinion leaders, decision-makers, and experts in international relations - into public diplomacy.

The correctly chosen foreign policy should be complemented with work among young people - undergraduates, post-graduate students, young professionals who in five to ten years from now will become analysts, diplomats, journalists, lecturers or heads of NGOs. This is another important and indispensable aspect of public diplomacy, the results of which will crop up much later.

To sum up: Public diplomacy makes it possible to cut down the trends leading to greater disunity and to capitalize on cooperation trends. This is practically impossible to achieve in the present conditions, therefore, the legislative, cultural and historical specifics of states should be taken into account. It is very important to listen to what the other side has to say and to borrow its positive experience; a space for a dialogue helps consolidate long-term relations between states. On the other hand, there is no need to insist on absolute compatibility of all positions; it is much more important to identify the space of common interests to build up cooperation on this basis. In this respect, public diplomacy can be very useful.

Contemporary Integration Processes in the Post-Soviet Space

Sixth International Conference, Yalta, Republic of Crimea, October 19-23, 2015



Armen Oganesyyan, *Editor-in-Chief of International Affairs (Russia)*: It gives me great pleasure to see our old friends and those who have for the first time come to the sixth international conference that the International Affairs journal, with support from the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is holding in Crimea. I will now hand the floor over to G.L. Muradov, deputy prime minister of the Republic of Crimea and permanent representative of the Republic of Crimea to the President of the Russian Feder-

ation.



Georgy Muradov, *Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Crimea, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Crimea to the President of the Russian Federation (Russia)*: I would like to convey greetings and the best wishes to the participants in the conference on behalf of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Crimea.

Your forum, which has already become traditional and a kind of an intellectual club, is of special importance for us as it addresses the most pressing issues, including those related to the future of Crimea. I would like to remind you that the forum was already taking place at a time when Crimea was still in the process of sailing into a "home port," as our president said.



Sergey Bazdnikin, *Deputy Director, Foreign Policy Planning Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (Russia)*: This conference is an excellent opportunity for like-minded people to get together and share their opinion on current and relevant issues. The expert dialogue that we will have during the next two days is very important under the present circumstances.

Our work here is our contribution to the overall effort to advance positive processes in the post-Soviet space.



Vyacheslav Svetlichny, *head of the RF Ministry of Foreign Affairs mission to the Republic of Crimea (Russia)*: I would like to thank International Affairs for the attention that has been given to the developments on our peninsula.

A year has passed, an entire year full of events in the world, in Russia and here in Crimea. We have witnessed the strong evolution of the Republic of Crimea as a full, legitimate member of the Russian

Federation with all the trappings, including a system of international and foreign trade ties.



Valery Kovalenko, *Director General, the Russiya rehabilitation and fitness center (Russia)*: Historically, Crimea has been closely involved in integration processes practically since the very start of its existence. This is where the main historical, geographical and geopolitical crossroads for the great migration of peoples are located.

The 2014 referendum in the Crimea identified a new vector in its life and provided a vivid example of

peaceful democratic integration in the post-Soviet space. We the residents of Crimea made our choice consciously, correcting a terrible injustice, making the long cherished dream of several generations of Crimeans come true, and finally completing this long journey back to the motherland. Crimea and little provincial Yalta are emerging as a center for addressing key geopolitical issues in today's world.



Mikhail Yevdokimov: When we discuss the specifics of modern integration processes in the CIS space, I become aware of a kind of internal resistance because I believe that they are largely identical to the processes that are unfolding primarily in Europe and Asia.

It is important to remember that all regions, all countries are faced with the same kind of threats - extremism, terrorism, drug trafficking, and illegal

migration. We have all integrated into the global economic system, and the situation in one region or even in one country, unfortunately, affects the economic situation in other regions, in other countries. Integration processes in the CIS have intensified in recent years.

Integration is a process that will continue, and our presidents have very serious plans for the future. This is about economic integration because, in contrast to other forms of integration within the Union, it is the only form of association where a certain part of national authority is delegated to a supranational body. As in the European Union, this is quite a sensitive issue. We, including

Russian ministries and government agencies, need to get used to the fact that on certain issues, the Russian side alone is not competent to make decisions. This is difficult, but it is essential to accept it and learn to make collective decisions, naturally, taking into account both national interests and controversial issues. Disputes proceed at the level of experts, deputy prime ministers and heads of government, who meet on average every three months. The most complicated issues are addressed at the presidential level.



Sergey Ordzhonikidze, *Deputy Secretary, Public Chamber of the Russian Federation (Russia)*: I would like to focus on the situation around the integration processes in the CIS space and the political situation in our country and other CIS countries, because this clearly underlies the integration processes that we will discuss. Some serious changes have taken place on the international arena recently.

I would like to say a few words about the EU, because the integration processes there began much earlier. Let's see how we were able to collaborate with the EU. Initially, in the 1990s and the early 2000s, the EU evolved largely as an autonomous association. However, then NATO solidarity came into play through the mechanism of the military-political bloc, and the EU countries started increasingly gravitating towards the Big Brother. As a matter of fact, they were forced to do so. Meanwhile, our country repeatedly proposed to the EU a constructive program on the entire range of issues both in the military and political sphere, including the creation of a single and undivided European security system, and on economic issues.

Recent reports on the creation of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) as the world's largest trading bloc with the participation of 11 countries are disturbing. This accounts for about 40% of global trade.

Remember when NATO was founded in 1949, the first proposal put forward by the Soviet government was to join it. However, at the time they said "no" to us, because NATO with our participation would make no sense. Perhaps the Transatlantic and Trans-Pacific partnerships should be viewed from the same position, too? It is important to note that if only recently a policy of open confrontation with Russia was followed in the EU space over the events in Ukraine and in Syria, today, society, primarily the business community, increasingly believes that this is a road leading to nowhere and that the EU countries should cooperate with Russia. In particular, there have been several visits by EU members of parliament to Crimea in breach of EU rules and the policy of their own national governments.

G. Muradov: We say that Ukraine has fallen victim to the Eastern Partnership program and I believe that this situation will be repeated in other CIS countries. However, if we are civilized integration associations and if our partner behaves in this way, why cannot we respond? For example, invite Greece or some other countries to join the Eurasian Union. In my opinion, we do not have a coherent strategy as a counterbalance to the options proposed by our opponents - i.e., the European Union or NATO. The question is: Are we going to develop this kind of strategy?

M. Yevdokimov: I have been dealing with the European Union for 20 years and I can say a lot about the Eastern Partnership program.

Regarding Ukraine, I would like to suggest that after all is said and done, the coup in Ukraine did not result from the signing of the Ukraine-EU association agreement. The agreement was only a pretext. Regardless of whether the president had or had not signed it, the result would have been the same. All actions by the West, primarily by the U.S., were aimed at overthrowing the regime.

The problem of Ukraine's agreement with the EU is not the agreement as such. Talks on the agreement were absolutely nontransparent. The EU forbade the Ukrainians to show the agreement to us. We first saw it when it was published in the Ukrainian press in English, even without a translation. It was clear that it is not simply a free trade agreement but an agreement on the complete transfer of the Ukrainian economy to EU standards.



Audrey Fursov, *Director of the Institute of System and Strategy Analysis (ISAN) (Russia)*: Very often, there's wishful thinking behind a lot of what is said during debates on integration issues.

Today's statements to the effect that we'll now reach agreements and integrate with each other remind me of the situations of 1912 and the 1990s. We shouldn't use the subjunctive mood. We should talk about real interests and take a broader view. The point is that the

current world system, the capitalist system, is experiencing a systemic crisis. The last such crisis took place in the period from the middle of the 15th to the middle of the 17th century. If it seems to someone that those times are far away, they delude themselves. Developments of the same kind await us in the near future because, in very many respects, the world is entering something that used to be called the "precapitalist" era. One of the main aspects of its first entry into such an era was the creation of large political and economic entities.

As for the Chinese vector of Eurasian integration, it has one big minus - let's say not anti-Chinese sentiments but negative memories of China in Central Asia and other Asian countries. When we talk about Eurasian integration and wonder whether China can become the engine that reverses the situation if it joins forces with Russia, or especially with BRICS, we shouldn't have any illusions. The point is that, in spite of all its successes, China is the global workshop, the bottom tier of the world economy. It's not those who work with their hands that call the tune in the world economy but those who design serious, high-tech goods. For the time being, China is going to stand in the way of anyone seeking access to that market. To boot, China has the kind of Achilles' heel today that Russia had in the early 20th century.



Gavriil Avramidis, *member of the Regional Council of Central Macedonia, former member of the Greek parliament, coordinator of Greek-Russian Alliance, a public association (Greece):* "The Greeks Are the Most Pro-Russian of Europeans" was the headline of articles published in the Greek press on September 11, 2014.

We believe that closer Greek-Russian relations would benefit both nations. I personally completely support my country's geopolitical turnaround toward Russia

in politics, economics, and defense, which may become our strategic task. Close cooperation with Russia as a strategic partner may become the main objective of the polycentric foreign policy of Greece.

Greece is a small country that is deep in crisis. This difficult situation is pushing Greece into subjugation. It is pressing the country to relinquish its sovereign rights, to become a colony under the oversight of creditors, and to sell off its state enterprises, infrastructures, and rich natural resources. One effect of this protracted economic decline is increasing unemployment, which is forcing experienced and competent workers to leave Greece. But that small country imports on average nearly twice as much oil per capita than other EU countries. Natural gas provided by Gazprom accounts for 65% of the gas imports of the state company DEPA.

Greece is located geographically between energy producers in the Middle East, North Africa, and the Caspian, and on key transportation routes in the Aegean Sea and the eastern Mediterranean, which gives it the status of a highly important energy hub. Moreover, in terms of natural gas reserves, Greece itself is in fourth place in the world after Russia, Iran, and Qatar.

At the end of the day, it is Russian energy interests, vital interests of Russia, that are being attacked. Russian companies can make investments in various sectors in Greece. They can invest into completing large-scale energy projects, acquire leading energy companies, set up companies on Greek territory to produce various types of energy, acquire railroad networks in combination with seaport facilities, set up enterprises in Greece to process oil and gas, and invest in the tourism sector.

We believe that our proposal for Greece to turn geopolitically to Russia means a new political path for the Greek people to take, a path that can open new opportunities for Greek-Russian economic, political, and defense relations. As a member of the Greek parliament, I constantly spoke in parliament against the anti-Russian sanctions. One of my colleagues and I were the first EU politicians to pay an official visit to Crimea.



Oleg Tsarev, *Speaker of the Parliament of Novorossia:* Ukraine is a painful but unavoidable subject: Everything that is going on there might happen in any other country.

It has been and remains a divided country with a Russian and Ukrainian populations. Today, we should push aside everything that was said about us as one people to accept the simple fact that we are different.

We speak different languages; one people fought fascists while the other was either neutral or served in a certain other army. Some of us are Orthodox Christians while others are Catholics or belong to the Greek Catholic Church.

Speaking about the efforts Russia poured in Ukraine I should say that it invested about \$30 billion into infrastructural projects, commercial and state structures. Joint credits of state and private banks on the Ukrainian territory amount to over \$30 billion (repayment chances are slim). The same can be said about the energy sources discount of about \$100 billion. Americans, who had spent \$5 billion, according to Victoria Nuland, spread the negative attitude to Russia to 80% of the country's population. This trend should be changed, not an easy task because, in particular, there are no corresponding media.

I regret to say that Russia has no similar projects to be realized from the territory of Russia, Belarus, Crimea or Transnistria. According to the Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, not supported and not promoted in Russia, transborder transmissions cannot be banned.

I think that the Minsk Agreements will be probably fulfilled if Ukraine lives up to its obligations. The meetings of Normandy Four took place; the elections in the Donetsk and Lugansk republics were postponed. They will be carried out according to the Ukrainian laws yet the new law should be agreed with the republics and adopted by the Supreme Rada; the law on amnesty should be passed as the first step.

Ukraine will find it hard, if at all possible, to live up to the Minsk Agreements. The fly-wheel of hatred that Poroshenko and people in Kiev set in motion can be hardly stopped, let alone reversed.

I think that Ukraine will need a dictator to cleanse itself of the results of the current chaos. The situation is far from simple; serious and prolonged perturbations are in store. I think that very soon Premier Yatsenyuk and head of administration Lozhkin will be removed. The Ukrainian media are brimming with compromising materials; the campaign is very active. Much in Ukraine depends on the name of the next premier.

Here is another Ukrainian specific: Ukrainians have flooded Washington via embassies and special services with mutual accusations in the numbers that shocked both Republicans and Democrats. As far as I know, Biden allowed Kiev to remove Yatsenyuk. This means that the processes will gain momentum.



Dmitry Vydrin, *writer, TV anchorman, Deputy of the Supreme Rada of Ukraine, fifth convocation (Ukraine)*: The problems in Ukraine and Russia and the problems between Ukraine and Russia are caused by the fact that due to the irony of their historical destinies they have acquired different types of elites or, rather, different sets of elites that, by definition, cannot agree due to different architectures of their mentalities, souls, temptations, and requirements.

By and large, Russian civilization or the Russian World was set up in Yalta in 1945 where the Yalta World and a new Russian civilization appeared. Any civilization is a place where new Mean-

ing is created; therefore civilization is a factory of Meaning. In this way, Russia became a civilizational center in 1945 when it formulated new principles and created a new center of formulation of new great Meaning.

By the irony of fate this civilization died also in Yalta (Foros is part of Yalta) in 1991 because it could no longer create meanings. For twenty-five years, Russia lived in the context of Yalta "world-lessness" or Yalta timelessness. A year ago we saw a miracle: Russia awakened to its mission - "Russia never abandons its people" and "Russia always defends its people." This happened in Crimea after the Maidan.

I lived in Kiev practically on Independence Square (Maidan) and saw enough with my own eyes to go mad.

I am sure that a new Meaning will be consolidated; next year or, probably, earlier the leaders of new ecumene or new prototypes of civilizations - the Slavic world, the Turan world of which Iran is the center and the Confucian world with China as its center - will get together in Yalta to say that they share many values, much more than those that disunite them. These are common values of everyday life and the values of geopolitics; these are common values related to social justice. It seems that today we can and should create a new axiological bloc, a homogenous world. In 1945, the leaders of the countries which disagreed on a much greater number of issues than those that might disunite the ecumene today did precisely this. The problem of Ukraine will disappear since the country will be orientated at an axiological center and not at an axiological province.



Denis Baturin, *member of the Public Chamber of the Republic of Crimea (Russia)*: Russian-Ukrainian political relations are also a conflict area. A document has come out in Kiev that sets out a so-called strategy for the return of Crimea. Sentiments of this kind are stoked by emigres from Crimea - politicians, former officials, journalists, public figures, etc. They know the Crimeans and the objective problems of Crimea. Let's be frank, these problems do exist, and the Russian

government and Crimean government are dealing with them. Emigres set up organizations with the aim of obtaining grants and whipping up unrest.

The document that I've mentioned and that is entitled Strategy for the Return of Crimea has the following points that deserve special attention. One is a diplomatic program - maintaining deep international isolation of Russia. Another is economic isolation of Crimea in a bid to undermine its economy. The strategy has its social basis - support by Ukraine for Crimeans who are loyal to it. The most interesting point in that strategy is the admission of its authors that people with pro-Ukrainian attitudes will stably account for no more than half the population of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. The main target groups of the strategy are small and medium-sized businesses, ethnic Ukrainians, and now a new term has come into use, "political Ukrainians," - those who feel Ukrainian regardless of their ethnic origin. And, of course, the Crimean Tatars as well.

Ukraine today is a country with rampant nationalism, and yet Ukrainian nationalists promise the birth of someone else's nationalism on what they consider part of their lawful territory. We know history pretty well and we realize that two nationalisms will never get on together within the same country. It is for this reason that no Crimean Tatar national autonomous territory was ever set up in such a free and democratic Ukraine. There were discussions about that at the dawn of Ukrainian statehood, but then it came home to even romantic nationalists that there couldn't be two nationalisms within the same country, and so the idea of a Crimean Tatar national territorial autonomy was driveled off the agenda.

All ethnic conflicts that have taken place in Crimea were brought in from without, which is what the Mejlis is trying to do right now. The Mejlis is designing such conflicts in a bid to build some political capital for itself, and that explains measures such as the blockade of Crimea and plans such as organizing a Muslim battalion.



Kerim Has, *expert on European politics at the International Strategic Research Organization (Turkey)*: The Middle East has once again come to play a key role in a big game between world powers. Today's game is a clash in which regional and extraregional forces are involved. The Russian air operation in Syria has made clear to the world community that Russia is determined to be directly involved in the current processes and has enabled Moscow to assert its large-scale plans not only

by aerial but also by maritime means.

Naval strategy, as we know, is an inalienable part of national security. It is critical to the military policy of maritime powers, which obviously include Russia. Russia's escalation of its military presence within and outside its territorial waters represents a normal world-power policy of seeking control of principal sea routes. Russia obviously won't stay on the sidelines, and so it finds ways of fortifying its water frontiers and asserting its power outside them.

The reunification of Crimea with Russia has led to a further buildup of Russian naval power in the Black Sea and to the modernization of Russian naval bases in Sevastopol, Novorossiysk, and Feodosiya. Recent Russian-Armenian military exercises at the Alagyaz training center in the Armenian mountains and the integration of Abkhazia and South Ossetia into extensive military cooperation make clear that the South Caucasus is becoming one of Russia's footholds in implementing its foreign policy strategy and would give the country access to vital sea routes.

Naturally, Black Sea countries that are members of NATO - Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey - react to greater Russian military presence, and this raises the risk that extraregional forces, primarily the United States, will become more active near Russian borders.

Washington has sent out a clear signal by opening a new base in Batumi and by the biggest-ever American-Ukrainian naval exercise, Sea Breeze. But it is just as obvious that Russia needs more resources to take part in controlling energy transportation routes in the eastern Mediterranean, namely off the coasts of Cyprus, Israel, Egypt, and Turkey, and that explains why Russia wants to set up new bases in Syria, something that the Russian general Andrei Kartapolov spoke about

recently.

At the same time, the Middle East is an extremely complicated region, one where it may be quite difficult to find a long-term partner. There are many reasons for this. They include a religious and ethnic diversity and numerous conflicts that tend to move from a latent to a violent phase from time to time.

To sum up, it is obvious that military action alone cannot solve all the problems, and that a lack of a verified strategy and failure to use soft power, primarily economic, social, and cultural methods, may have negative international effects and adverse domestic consequences in Russia.

As an observer in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Russia would be able to put forward some initiatives to raise its prestige in the Muslim world. In this connection, Vladimir Putin's support for the proposal of Nursultan Nazarbayev, president of Kazakhstan, for setting up an "Islam against terrorism" forum is important and would have a long-term positive effect.

A. Fursov: Kerim Bey says that the naval activity of the Russian Federation in the Middle East will bring Russia into confrontation with an extraregional actor, the United States. But no matter what the Russian Federation does today, the United States is near our borders already. It's part of an anaconda strategy, which wasn't invented by Brzezinski but was first described in 1854 by our brilliant political economist Vernadsky Sr, the father of the geochemist, in the book *Political Balance and Britain*. Today, Russia is pushing this anaconda away from its borders.

A. Oganesyanyan: Many thanks to all the participants. What makes our meetings interesting and substantial are the speeches and debates. I want to thank everyone who stated their points of view. I think we will remember this conference.

Author: Yu. Bulatov

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THE GREAT NORTHERN WAR (1700-1721) created a new balance of power in the Baltics and made the Finnish file part of czarist Russia's foreign policy agenda.

From the very beginning, Russia concentrated on the protection of its northwestern borders and was especially concerned with the safety of St. Petersburg. In 1712, Peter the Great had moved the capital from Moscow to St. Petersburg. Separated from the

Finnish border by about 40 km, the new capital on the Neva was dangerously close to Finland and, therefore, was much more vulnerable to enemy attacks than Moscow, the first capital of Russia situated in the country's center. From that time on, the defense of St. Petersburg against possible Swedish expansion or attacks of any other state for that matter became the headache of Russia's military structures and the central point of their operational plans.

Having conquered Vyborg and adjacent areas, Russians acquired the Finnish Question as part of Russia's domestic policies. The czarist government pledged to guarantee its new subjects their rights and privileges they had enjoyed in the Kingdom of Sweden. The Russians never missed a chance to stress that Russian autocracy respected the traditional values of the Finns and protected the interests of its new subjects.

THE RUSSIAN MILITARY got the first taste of direct administration of the Finnish lands during the Great Northern War. By 1714, they had occupied the entire territory of Finland and administered it for seven years until the Treaty of Nystad.

The Russian military had to look into the problems of administration since as soon as the Duchy became a theater of the Russian-Swedish wars the Swedish secular and church nobility moved or fled to Sweden leaving the Finns to their fates and depriving them of their normal life style. ALL OTHER Russian-Swedish wars of the eighteenth century were fought during the reign of Elizaveta Petrovna (1741-1761) and Catherine the Great (1762-1796). Eager to revenge the defeat in the Great Northern War the Swedes drew Russia into a military campaign of 1741-1743 in the course of which the Russian Empire conquered the entire territory of Finland and enriched its experience of administering the Finns. It should be said that the Russian ruling circles opted for a new tactics in dealing with the Finns.

It was Russia that made the greatest contribution to the Finnish "economic miracle." It was Russia that shouldered the heavy burden of defense spending. Finland's security was protected by Russian money.

In the course of the Russian-Swedish wars of the eighteenth century. St. Petersburg used the

temporal Russian administration in the Duchy as its political instrument in Finland.

The usual methods could not be applied to the Finns. The empire could not unify the political, social, economic and other processes to achieve complete homogeneity as it was doing in other newly acquired possessions. Never before had St. Petersburg contemplated a special status for any of its national parts. The European practice of vassalage was alien to Russia's experience; throughout its history, the autocracy had failed to master the relationship between rights and obligations.

As part of the Russian Empire, Finland was a very special element that looked after its internal affairs and was guided by its own laws. The Instrument of Government made the czar a constitutional monarch with an undivided right to convene the parliament (Diet) and the right of legislative initiative. In Finland, the rights of the Russian autocrat were limited: He could not approve new or change old laws without the expressed consent of the Diet; the same applied to introduction of new taxes or the revision of estates' privileges.

THE DUCHY'S AUTONOMOUS STATUS in the Russian Empire limited the presence of the imperial executive power in Finland to only one official: Governor General with the rank of plenipotentiary representative of the Russian czar.

ALL WORKS devoted to the "Russian" period in the history of Finland at the turn of the century invariably pay particular attention to the policies of Emperor Nicholas II (1894-1917). In the West, this period is described as Russification.

I will write here not about Russification singularly, but about Russifications in various hypostases. In other words, in the case of Finland we should assess Russification as a regional form of assimilation that could be observed in different degrees in varied spheres of everyday life and activities of the local socium.

BY THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY, Europe already had several military-political blocs and was divided into two hostile camps. Russia joined the Entente that stood opposed to the Triple Alliance headed by Germany. The Russian General Staff and other military structures were actively working on operational plans of the future war. The top military in St. Petersburg agreed that Germany, having concentrated its main forces at the Eastern Front, would move against the Russian bases in Finland to threaten Russia's northern capital.

It should be said that Russia's military presence in the Grand Duchy during World War I allowed it to retain Finland within its orbit. The Finns, in their turn, recognized that neutrality was the wisest option during a world war. Very much like in peacetime, the Romanovs were true to their principle: The borders of the empire should remain safe.

At that time, the history of Russia performed a U-turn: The Bolsheviks who came to power "followed a different path." Lenin confirmed the right of Finns to self-determination; at the small hours of January 1, 1918, he signed a document on the independence of Finland. The Bolsheviks gained nothing of this "New Year gift." Contrary to expectations, the socialist revolution did not win all over the world and Finland did not return to Soviet Russia. The border between Soviet Russia and Finland came too close to Petrograd; the Soviet government hastily moved to Moscow. For the long years of the Lenin-Stalin "proletarian" governance, Finland remained a difficult neighbor for Russia.

Diplomatic Experience That Never Fades

Author: A. Yakovenko

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the United Kingdom



SUCCESS multiplied by intuition is behind many discoveries. This fully applies to British historian Prof. Gabriel Gorodetsky who has written numerous scholarly works including *The Precarious Truce: Anglo-Soviet Relations, 1924-1927*, *Stafford Cripps' Mission to Moscow, 1940-1942*, etc.

Recalled from London in 1943, Maisky sent his diaries to Stalin. According to available information, Stalin transferred them to Molotov unread who, in his turn, placed them in the USSR Foreign Policy Archives.

It was Prof. Gorodetsky's lucky chance and he used it. He studied the diaries in depth to discover new and still unknown facts related to the Soviet foreign policy during World War Two and its sources. The British professor, the recognized authority in the history of Soviet foreign policies between the wars and in wartime, was amazed to discover precise comments and straightforward accounts of the events in which the Soviet ambassador had taken part or which he had witnessed, to say nothing of his excellent style.

In his book, Gorodetsky has pointed out that Maisky was "a superb 'public relations' man at a time when the concept hardly existed, he did not shy away from aligning himself with the opposition groups, backbenchers, newspaper editors, trade unionists, writers, artists, and intellectuals." All and everyone who closely followed what was going on in the Soviet embassy invariably pointed to the ambassador's communication skills.

It should be said that some of the British reviewers were unpleasantly surprised and could hardly palate the openness of British politicians of that time and their contacts with the Soviet ambassador. This means that history does not tolerate lacunas. Complete and unabridged knowledge would have probably made it much harder to insist on stereotyped ideas about the Soviet Union/Russia and to push the world to the Cold War.

Having studied mountains of archival documents, from British and American archives among others, Prof. Gorodetsky concluded that World War Two could have been prevented if the Western powers had come to an agreement with the Soviet Union not in July 1941 but two years earlier.

The Maisky Diaries are an inexhaustible source of information that British historians can use when studying the interwar and war periods. Not infrequently, the Diaries and Maisky's telegrams to Moscow are the only source of information about his contacts with Churchill and other state and political figures of the United Kingdom. The Cold War and its ideological imperatives distorted, to a great extent, the history of Europe's drift toward the catastrophe of World War Two.

The book itself is a shortened variant (it covers only one-fourth of daily entries) of the complete three-volume edition of *The Maisky Diaries* that crowned the British historian's fifteen years of studies of one of the most important testaments of that epoch.

Vagaries of Historical Memory in the Baltics

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IN HIS LATEST MONOGRAPH, "By Fire, Bayonet and Flattery," Vladimir Simindey investigated an important problem that has so far remained barely analyzed in Soviet/Russian historiography, viz. interpretations of history and impacts of World Wars One and Two on the Baltic republics and their development between the wars as presented by official analysts in the Baltic states. The author has pointed out that the works recently published with

official support in the three Baltic states offer a nationalist interpretation readily accepted in the academic, educational and socio-political spheres.

His book based on the latest articles that appeared in historical journals, official multivolume publications and booklets issued by museums offers objective assessment of their content.

The monograph consists of three parts, each dealing with a distinctive subject and its interpretations in fundamental official historiographical works, the legal basis that regulates the studies of history, main trends and assessments of historical works in the Baltics (the Republic of Latvia serves a pertinent example), as well as some of the author's reviews of historical works and documentary publications that appeared in 2009-2012.

The author has demonstrated a good knowledge of the region's specifics and the specifics of the knowledge of the region among the Russian readers.

The author has rightly pointed out that the contemporary Baltic historians do not pay equal attention to the above-mentioned events and their studies are not equally profound.

Vladimir Simindey relies on the most illustrative works dealing with the period when the Baltic republics became independent to analyze the methodology used by the contemporary Baltic authors. Many of them are not alien to irrelevant "apocalyptical forecasts" that associate the events of 1917-1919 and 1939-1940 with the "modernization" of history.

The reviewed monograph contains a conceptually important observation: Each republic treats the history of the revolutionary events of 1917-1922 in its own specific way. The Lithuanian authors offer a detailed investigation of the social and economic hardships caused by World War One; their Latvian colleagues pay more attention to the 1917 February revolution and the related discussions in the Latvian political class of that time.

The reader cannot miss the description of wide anti-Hitler sentiments and protests in the Republic of Latvia in 1933-1934 supported by the Social-Democrats in the Latvian parliament. However, Latvia retreated after a short and cruel customs war with the Third Reich and never dared to resume its efforts to cut short Nazi propaganda on its territory.

The author has based his analysis of Baltic diplomacy and the specifics of the Baltic republics' unification with the Soviet Union on the eve of World War Two on the latest works of Baltic authors to discuss what the nationalist Baltic underground was doing before June 22, 1941 and the historical myths created to justify its cooperation with German Nazism.

The author proceeds from the above to reveal that the mechanisms of shaping historical memory and the assessments offered by contemporary official historians prompt a conclusion that they are part and parcel of official policies. It seems that the book dealing with a topical subject of shaping historical memory and its repercussions addressed to the present and future will be appreciated by historians, sociologists, political scientists, and diplomats working in the Baltics.

Apotheosis of Islamist Radicalism: An Academic Assessment

Authors: Andrey Fedorchenko, Director, Center for the Middle East Studies. Institute for International Studies, Moscow State Institute (University) of International Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Professor, Doctor of Science (Economics)

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FUTURE GENERATIONS will associate the early twenty-first century with an upsurge of international tension and the emergence of new security threats in all spheres of human life and activities. In the Middle East, the process began five years ago with the Arab Spring, the term coined to describe a wave of radical Islamism that inundated the region. Today, it is a knot of numerous geopolitical, economic, demographic, religious and other con-

tradictions of worldwide significance. Disentanglement will require time and political will.

The "Islamic boom" reached its present dimensions against the background of the crisis of "secular ideologies" (Western liberalism and communism, in the first place). In search of a way out the broad Muslim masses turned to familiar religious values, their spirit and mentality being close to their hearts and minds. As could be expected, the Muslim world has gradually acquired Islamist parties, movements and organizations, many of them determined to liquidate secular regimes and consolidate the positions of Islam.

The secular community, therefore, should undertake an in-depth interdisciplinary analysis of the terrorist Islamic State, which is a multidimensional phenomenon, and identify the prospects and methods of struggle. The recently published report "The Islamic State: The Phenomenon, Evolution and Prospects" by the Institute for International Studies (IMI) of the MGIMO can be described as one of the important contributions to the analysis of the Islamic State. It belongs to the IMI series of analytical papers dealing with the crucial problems of the Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia, and the Caucasus and possible developments in these regions (previous publications can be found on the sites of the MGIMO and IMI).

The authors have convincingly demonstrated that the absolutely new phenomenon best described as a terrorist international which calls itself the Islamic State brought Islamist radicalism to its apotheosis. On July 29, 2014, the first day of the holy month of Ramadan, the jihadist Islamic State (IS) (earlier known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant - ISIL) declared a caliphate on the occupied Iraqi and Syrian territories. The IS leaders capitalized on weak governance and exploited fierce ethnic and tribal conflicts to lure crowds to their side, gain more weight and attract more money than any other extremist group had ever accomplished.

The authors have pointed out that "there is a growing awareness in the region that the battle was lost to those civilizations that have adjusted themselves to the rivalries in the new global

world and to the injustices of foreign, especially Western, policies. There is an opinion fairly popular in the Middle East that Islamization is a new model of sorts, a third road, an Islamic variant of democratization and revival" (p. 38). In other countries similar processes have taken peaceful forms, such is the idea of "revital-ization" and the China Dream in the PRC.

The authors have not only discussed why the phenomenon of the Islamic State became possible; they looked into its history, its structure, the way it is promoting its ideology; they revealed its financial and economic foundations, the forms and methods of brainwashing and paid particular attention to the specific ideological context in which the jihadist trends in Islam were revived as "theoretical models" of sorts of the IS.

The ideas of the Islamic State are very popular, write the authors, because Islamists while talking about a caliphate based on medieval dogmas, the ideas of fairness and equality "rely on the latest methods of agitation and propaganda.

The authors have concluded that "the struggle against radical Islamism, on the whole, and the IS, in particular will bring the desired results, first, if the IS-controlled territories will be steadily shrinking, second, if the opposing forces, including the so-called moderate Islamists consolidate their efforts and, third, if everyday life in the countries where radicals mobilize the majority of human and other resources considerably improves" (p. 38).

Ideology is another important weapon of struggle against radical Islamism; alternative theoretical concepts designed to achieve social peace should be offered and combined with reforms in the system of education at all levels.

The report speaks of economic, educational, social and other projects to be realized in the region through the concerted efforts of the world community (including Russia) as indispensable and practicable; they may become an efficient counterweight to the plans of imposing democracy by the force of arms. "This will add to the ruling regime's viability and create the conditions for gradual modernization of the systems of governance deeply rooted in the past. It means that the local resources, traditions, tribal, clan and ethno-confessional relations should be taken into account" (p. 40).

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