

International Affairs: Summary №2, 2013

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Perpetual Reset Means a Glitch in the System

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Last year was difficult. Uneven global development intensified, instability increased, the Middle East was seething. Of greatest worry is the development of the situation in and around Syria. The situation in Mali feels the impact of the events in Libya. Little progress was made towards a solution of the task of non-proliferation of mass destruction weapons.

There has been a trend to again rely on the factor of force, to solve own problems at the expense of others. Things are not simple in the world economy, especially in the eurozone. The search continued for options to overcome the effects of the global economic crisis.

Overall, it is clear that the world is living through an unprecedented transitional period, accompanied by a remaking of the geopolitical landscape and the formation of a new correlation of forces. Under these conditions, Russia sought to pursue a responsible foreign policy and to work on the international stage for the sake of collective actions promoting greater security and stability.

We continue to strengthen our country's position as one of the leading centers of power and influence in the emerging new polycentric system which meets the realities and challenges of the 21st century.

Relations between Russia and the U.S. remain central to addressing issues of Euro-Atlantic security and general global stability.

The December (2012) Russia-NATO Council ministerial meeting noted progress on practical cooperation in a number of fields.

We will be contributing to the international efforts to achieve a peaceful settlement in Syria based on the Geneva accords, without attempting to rewrite and interpret them.

We paid special attention to reinforcing our strategic partnerships with China, India, and Vietnam and developed variegated relations with Japan, the Republic of Korea, the ASEAN countries, and other states in the Asia-Pacific region.

Obviously, in short opening remarks I could not cover everything. We will pursue a coherent foreign policy and will be open to deepening cooperation with all reciprocating states on the basis of equality and mutual benefit. Thank you.

Will the World Remain Hostage to Nuclear Weapons?

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The Cold War is history now, as is the bipolar world order. Mankind has entered a new century, encountering basically new challenges and threats. Nevertheless, the nuclear factor showed enviable continuity and amazing tenacity. Having entered the second decade of the 21st century, we do not see prospects of a nuclear-free world in the foreseeable future. The fundamental questions that we have been asking ourselves since the onset of the nuclear era are still relevant in discussing the nuclear

factor in the world politics of the 21st century.

Today, "nuclear winter" scenarios are no less relevant than they were in the 1980s.

I will put it bluntly: In the 21st century, there will either be general security or there will be none.

However, if nuclear weapons cannot serve as a tool of achieving military goals they should be regarded primarily as a political tool, not a military-technical phenomenon.

I believe that the key element of international security in the 21st century is the question about the historical fate of nuclear deterrence.

So far mankind is simply not in a position to part with nuclear weapons; members of the "nuclear club" still regard these weapons as a kind of strategic insurance against security risks and challenges.

Evidently, one of the fundamental issues that has yet to be resolved is the problem of trust in international affairs.

The Cold War has deeply penetrated public consciousness in the West and the East, and obviously we celebrated its end prematurely.

Without solving the missile defense problem we will hardly be able to make any visible progress along other lines of our strategic interaction with the United States and NATO, let alone the prospects of further reductions of the nuclear arsenals.

The time has come to enhance the role of NGOs and the expert community in addressing the issue of nuclear disarmament. This should not remain a subject solely of interstate negotiations or closed consultations. Broad public interest in military-political issues can on the whole only be welcomed while the authorities for their part should give more consideration to the ideas and proposals coming from independent experts.

The Federal Republic of Germany as an Active Player in the UN Security Council

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GERMANY VIEWS THE UNITED NATIONS as the central, most versatile tool for maintaining global peace and stability, all the while paying tribute to the significant role played by regional organizations and groups, primarily the EU, NATO and the OSCE, in this regard.

Commenting on Germany's election as a non-permanent member of the Council, Chancellor Angela Merkel said that the FRG would use its presence in this body to push forward the re-

form process thereof, which, in her opinion, "meets the expectations of many around the world."

It is obvious that the FRG's policy aims to strengthen its role in the UN, which implies to a certain degree turning this organization into an instrument of growing German influence over world politics.

The German Foreign Ministry notes that, despite the FRG government's bid to seek a permanent Security Council seat for the European Union, this is not at issue right now - first, due to an insufficiently developed EU common foreign and security policy and secondly, because of the unwillingness of France and Britain to abandon their permanent membership for a common seat for the European Union.

At the same time, Berlin indicates that Germany has incomparably greater possibilities to help considerably in shaping UN policies by simultaneously being one of the most active EU member states.

In the context of Russian interests Germany's election as a non-permanent member of the Security Council provided an additional opportunity to continue the practice of constructive collaboration with German partners at the UN.

Germany continued to work actively in the UN on the Syrian track.

Another veto by Russia and China in the February 4, 2012 UNSC vote on the draft resolution regarding Syria was received with hostility in Berlin. Chancellor Angela Merkel expressed her disappointment with the Russian-Chinese stance, calling it "myopic."

Overall, it is obvious that the FRG's policy aims to strengthen its role in the UN, which implies to a certain degree turning this organization into an instrument of growing German influence on world politics.

Russia, China and New International Security Architecture in Asia-Pacific

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The interests of developing Siberia and Russia's Far East call for closer attention to cooperation with countries of the Asia-Pacific region, and above all with China and other East Asian nations. Under current conditions this will amount to following a policy of equidistance.

Furthermore, characteristic of both nations is their belief that both are entitled to play the leading global role, and that al-

liances, like G2 or "Chimerica," can be formed for tactical reasons, but never for long-term strategic reasons.

The different formats of multilateral cooperation, including the probable China-U.S.-Russia negotiating and consulting mechanism could balance out the American ambitions and create a more stable system of security and cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region and the rest of the world.

Improving relations between the U.S. and China doesn't threaten Russia's economic and geostrategic interests. Quite the contrary, this creates new (potentially more favorable) conditions for protecting and advancing these interests.

The nature of Russian-Chinese relations, which has emerged in recent years, meets the vital interests of both countries while being a source of stability in the present international environment and an important factor in protecting national security.

Russia and China underpin the multipolar international structure and both are interested in its stability.

China is objectively Russia's ally in promoting initiatives aimed at establishing multilateral mechanisms of security in Northeast Asia and the Asia-Pacific region.

Influential Chinese experts believe that it would be wise to begin first creating a new architecture of regional security in Northeast Asia. Prof. Sheng Shiliang thinks that at the outset there are yet no multilateral security entities whatever in Northeast Asia and that we should talk about setting up a negotiating forum. "As strategic constructive partners, China and Russia are to play the main part in establishing such a forum".

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THE 21ST ANNUAL MEETING of the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF), which took place in Vladivostok on Russky Island on January 27-31, 2013, has become the most representative meeting in the entire history of this international parliamentary organization, ending with the adoption of 14 resolutions on key issues of political, trade, economic, and humanitarian cooperation of the Asia-Pacific states.

Russia's Far East is assigned a key role in breakthrough national projects, in the realization of innovative ideas and attracting large-scale foreign investments.

During the course of the subsequent plenary sessions, roundtables and bilateral meetings, 355 participants from 28 countries, as well as eight international organizations.

New challenges require new solutions and approaches, as well as a new level of interaction and interparliamentary cooperation, especially on peace and security issues, the forum delegates noted.

Without close interaction of countries, their governments and parliaments it is difficult to achieve a higher level of trade and economic integration in the world's fastest growing and developing region, participants in the 21st APPF Annual Meeting said.

Russia expanded the forum's traditional agenda, adding to the topic of trade and investment liberalization the enhancement of food security, the formation of reliable transport and logistic chain and intensive interaction in order to ensure innovative growth, the expert noted.

A comprehensive and colorful presentation of the resource capabilities of East Siberia and Russia's Far East, the region's production, scientific and technical potential, became one of the forum's high points.

The Asia Pacific-Europe: New Horizons of Cooperation roundtable discussion is another innovation of the 21st APPF Annual Meeting.

These and other useful ideas enunciated at the forum were reflected in its final documents. The generally constructive mood made it possible to adopt 14 resolutions on international issues.

On the United States's Observance of Citizen Voting Rights in the Presidential Election on November 6, 2012

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FOR A WHOLE YEAR, the world community closely followed the ups and downs of political struggle, and analysts and pundits carefully scrutinized the experience of organizing and conducting elections in the United States.

Another feature of the American electoral system is the lack of political pluralism and the virtual impossibility to bring a third-party candidate to power.

In general, the presidential election can in no way be considered a general election because the formal victory of the Democratic nominee, incumbent President Barack Obama was achieved by a margin of 326,000 votes in just eight so-called swing states. THE OBVIOUS DISADVANTAGE of the American electoral system is the lack of a centralized independent agency that would administer presidential elections.

Another violation of the principle of the secret ballot is casting provisional ballots, which requires subsequent verification of a voter's eligibility.

There are also other forms of violation of secrecy of voting in some U.S. states.

U.S. AUTHORITIES prefer to avoid any public discussion of the voting rights violations brought to light. In the USA, there is no uniform system of dispute resolution by judicial and electoral bodies.

ONLY THE STATES of Missouri, New Mexico and South Dakota, and the District of Columbia have laws that allow international observers to monitor elections. In general, international observers invited to the U.S. risk criminal prosecution should they fail to obey U.S. laws even if those contradict federal international obligations.

Summing up, it should be stated that all the 223 years of history of the organization and conduct of democratic elections in the United States are replete with examples of voting rights violations. The procedures of the U.S. presidential election on November 6, 2012 also did not meet the international principles of organization of the electoral process.

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EARLY IN FEBRUARY, while I was talking to Egyptians in Cairo, monstrous news arrived from Tunisia: in broad daylight Chokri Belaid, leader of the Tunisian democratic opposition, was shot dead outside his house.

On the next day, half of the country's population poured into the streets. Rallies continued for several days running. The people could no longer tolerate that their Revolution had been "abducted" by alien forces.

The events which made Sidi Bouzid the "cradle of revolution" got an apt name of Arab Spring.

The country has not seen similar disturbances for two thousand years since the fall of Carthage: an avalanche of terror poured into cities and towns.

Political demonstrations have nothing in common with looting and plundering; President Ben Ali ordered to pacify the unruly mob; according to certain sources about 100 died in fire exchange.

The entire scenario for a revolution had not been born out of youth protests: there had been an "unusual number of internships" given to young Tunisians in Western countries in the months before the revolt.

Political Islam came to the scene at the turning point; it was an epoch of historic change, revolutions and the Arab Spring.

The Islamists will not retreat on their own: they have money of the Gulf monarchies behind them. If Ennahda proves too weak to remain at the helm the country will be plunged into the worst of scenarios.

Politization of the mosques will be another important factor of ideological struggle.

In Egypt the army has always been and remains a privileged element.

Many of the rich and super-rich fled the country together with their money.

The country is split: about half of the population is ready to follow the Islamists, while another half is prepared to go in the opposite direction, together with the secular democratic forces (a patchwork of ideologies).

Russian Muslims and the "Arab Spring"

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TODAY, the peoples of the Middle East are living through one of the brightest and critical periods in their history known in the world as "Arab Spring."

The region's history is brimming with stories of struggle the local peoples waged for their rights.

The leaders of the Arab Spring do a lot to plant negative ideas about Russia. In February 2012, Yusuf al-Qaradawi called the "Islamic umma" to boycott Russia which, he

claimed, supported the criminal Syrian regime with weapon supplies. Encouraged by the Arab Spring, Fethullah Gülen, well-known leader of the Turkish Muslims, nearly wept when talking about religious persecution of the Muslims in post-Soviet states and called on the world to help them liberate themselves from Russian occupation. The expert community of Moscow, St. Petersburg and Kazan is actively discussing the rising anti-Russian wave in the Arab Muslim world; these people have already warned that the Arab Spring will negatively reverberate in Russia, especially in the context of its Muslim factor.

New people, new elite and new leaders in the political, economic and cultural life of the Arab Muslim world were behind the U-turn in what common people thought about Russia.

There is nothing new in this; in the Middle East, politics and religion were practically never separated.

People are often driven by inflexible religious principles rather than by economic or material consideration.

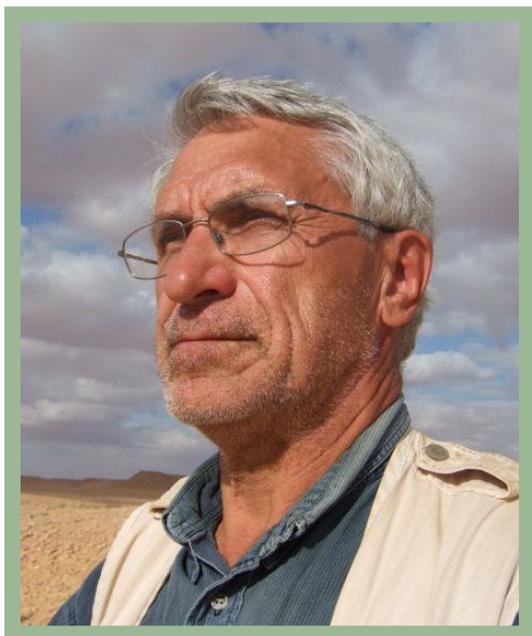
Any careful observer of new political realities, leaders and movements in the changing Middle East will inevitably see that the majority of them are operating within the political, cultural and religious coordinates which cross, in one way or another, in Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Egypt.

In this far from simple context Russia was left with no alternative: it has to restore control over its cultural-religious space in the Muslim community, in the first place.

The Tragedy of the East

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THOSE WHO DISTORT HISTORY, who kill the Truth of History, seek domination over people by depriving them of their roots. Disinformation is a powerful instrument of the self-appointed rulers of the World.

Certain circles in the West are determined to wipe off memories of the past and everything which refuses to fit into their picture of the Ancient World. They have already found zealous allies - Islamist extremists.

I am writing this in Tunisia... The people in power assured the public that the perpetrators of the acts of vandalism at the holy places would be apprehended; the ideologists of extremist Islam insist that the holy

places do not belong to their "ideas about history."

They obviously have their own ideas about history; they threaten to rewrite it so that it would match the black color of their flag. They blacken the shining historical personalities of Arab civilization and destroy everything which might stir memories about them.

The West which has finally recognized that the Islamists have nothing to do with true Islam, that they are terrorists, declared a war on them up to their complete elimination. It should be said that marauders ravaged not only Islamic shrines but also places where Christians came to pray. They robbed the Orthodox St. George Church in Tripoli. Built in 1647, it is the oldest Orthodox church in Northern Africa.

Here I have described a small part of what is reported from North Africa and the Middle East about the losses; this information cannot be suppressed any longer. The latest reports about the ruined monuments of Islamic culture came from Mali and Libya.

Let me repeat: deprived of their past and their roots normal people become zombies; they become inhuman and can be easily turned into "cannon fodder" to be pushed into new wars, new "jihads." They are not concerned with the value of human life; creativity and the Beautiful and the Eternal are alien to them.

Today, my Libyan friends, with whom we traveled far and wide across the Sahara to look at the treasures they protected for the sake of mankind, do not answer my phone calls...

Stalingrad, an Imperative of History

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Editor-in-Chief of International Affairs



HISTORY DOES NOT KNOW the subjunctive mood, but the imperative is well known to it. There are events, often compressed in a short period of time, which, owing to their high spirit and purport, strongly bind together the capabilities of the human mind and conscience for visionary interpretations. Undoubtedly, one of those moments in history fits into the word "Stalingrad."

The battle, while not a disgrace to the German arms, was and still is a tragedy for Germany.

If there has ever been a battle in which the coming and mysterious Armageddon is reflected, that battle was the Battle of Stalingrad.

To understand the significance of the Stalingrad epic you need to imagine what role it played in the context of the strategy of the Third Reich and why its finale neither altered nor corrected, but brought down and destroyed Hitler's geopolitical goals.

Surprisingly, the strategic mistakes of Moscow and Berlin in the summer campaign of 1942, at the stage of their development, almost mirror each other.

By skillful misinformation Stalin, according to Zhukov, believed that the main blow would be struck not in the south, but on the Central Front, against Moscow. He also underestimated the strength of the enemy, which led to an overall underestimation of the situation on the Southern Front.

The irrevocability of the war's subsequent course, for any sensible person, let alone historians, lies, of course, not only in combat attrition and damage.

Yet in no other battle did the Wehrmacht lose a quarter of the German troops involved on the Eastern Front in its entire infinite extent.

Academician Kumanyov quotes General von Buttlar: "Germany not only lost the battle, but also lost a battle-tested army. It lost the glory..."

Kumanyov aptly quotes the philosopher Ivan Ilyin, "Patriotism can and will live only in the soul for which there is something sacred on the earth, which has had a living experience of the objectivity and absolute dignity of this sacred thing - has gotten to know it in the shrines of its own people." This is not only the Russian, but also the world historical meaning of the epic of Stalingrad.

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Economic diplomacy as a special or even priority type of diplomacy is found at the crossroads of the foreign policy, foreign economic course and foreign economic activity of any state and is an instrument this state employs to pursue its foreign policy aims.

Interstate trade demanded more than visits of consuls. Developing trade called for in-depth market studies and protection of interests of industrialists and merchants in other countries.

For obvious reasons the mediaeval rulers tried to keep foreign ambassadors away from state secrets and prevented their interference in domestic affairs. After a while, the practice of expelling undesirable ambassadors became widespread.

Fast economic growth and capitalist relationships as well as colonial rivalry of European powers in the 18th century and, most importantly, merging of political and economic interests of the states can be described as a form of "primitive economic diplomacy.

Population was growing; the banking system and the market were rapidly developing; raw materials were processed, colonial trade flourished, more and more money was poured into real economy. In the next century, this caused serious economic problems for a number of states. It was at that time that society and the political class started thinking about economic development.

In Europe diplomats were involved in setting up numerous trade companies, outlined the spheres of influence and discussed exclusive mining and oil extraction rights. World War I buried old diplomacy; new diplomacy was born after the war.

Raw materials, oil as the geostrategic resources in the first place, became all-important. During both world wars, diplomacy and economic cooperation came to the fore because of an obvious need to buy weapons, military outfit and foodstuffs.

Today, we can speak of merging or mutual penetration of the state's policy and its economics when dealing with its foreign economic course and its foreign policy activity as a whole designed to ensure its strategic and economic interests by diplomatic means.

Kazakhstan and Russia: 20 Years of Strategic Partnership

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ONE OF THE MAIN EVENTS of the past year was the 20th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Kazakhstan and Russia.

Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev wrote: "Kazakhstan-Russia relations have become an attractive model not only for the CIS countries but also an example of how bilateral relations should

develop between states in the 21st century."

The consistency of our foreign policy with regard to Russia has preconditioned the systemic and diverse nature of Kazakhstan-Russia relations in the political, economic, cultural and humanitarian areas.

Joint projects are undertaken to modernize the gas production industry. Work is underway to create a joint venture based on the Orenburg gas processing plant.

Joint efforts continue to develop the transit transport capability of Kazakhstan and Russia.

One important aspect of our bilateral ties is cooperation in science, research and education. There are broad opportunities for developing the academic mobility of students, teachers and researchers.

There are joint research projects in the innovational sphere, including nano - and biotechnology, chemical industry and agriculture.

Kazakhstan-Russia cooperation is also strengthening in the defense and technology sector.

In this context our bilateral cooperation within the framework of the Collective Security Treaty Organization plays a very important role.

Good-neighborly relations between Kazakhstan and Russia, diversified strategic partnership between our countries have become key conditions for the realization of European integration ideas.

Overall, during the past 20 years, a solid foundation has been laid for the model of good neighborliness and strategic partnership that Kazakhstan and Russia have demonstrated not only to their neighbors in the region but also to other countries in the world.

The Importance of the Polish-Russian Dialogue

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RUSSIA'S UNEASY RELATIONSHIP with Poland has no parallel among the other countries next door. But, at the same time, attention should be paid to its versatility. Our being neighbors is not measurable only in political or economic terms. That also includes both culture and private human relations. Suffice to say that, according to some Polish sources, Russia is home to about half a million people of Polish descent.

There are a number of issues the solution of which Moscow and Warsaw see differently. But there is also a whole array of equally pressing issues on which Warsaw and Moscow are, or should be, forming a similar vision.

The views of Poland and Russia diverge more often than not. Polish society voluntarily bars itself from any information flows coming out of Russia, preferring to draw this information not from Russia itself. Warsaw, playing on the opposite side due to historical inertia and ingrained cultural and political traditions, views Russia as a hostile state.

From today's perspective, this approach is not always justified. While in past centuries Poles feared occupation of their territory by Russian forces, to think the same way in our age is an anachronism.

Excuses that relations with Moscow would deprive Warsaw of political sovereignty also seem untenable. Russia needs a friendly Poland just as Poland needs a friendly Russia.

Because the essence of the problem is not current policies, the onus of finding ways to normalize Polish-Russian relations should fall on the shoulders of intellectuals - philosophers, writers, and scholars. Contemporary Europe faces the threat of neo-Nazism, and a joint tough reaction by Warsaw and Moscow on this score could have a significant effect.

Poland is a conservative Catholic country. Russia is mainly an Orthodox land with a conservative bent. Both countries are Christian, and both are facing demographic problems. Preserving and strengthening Christian values is another common task for Poles and Russians, especially now when the West is shifting from exporting "color revolutions" to exporting an anti-family ideology that undermines the ethical foundations of any society.

In such circumstances, Polish-Russian relations are acquiring special importance. If Poland and Russia continue their confrontation as obstinately as before, Europe will only lose as a result. Europe will find it easier to survive economically with Russia's involvement than without it.

USSR-Egypt Military Cooperation Revisited

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THE LONG YEARS of close and fruitful cooperation between the USSR and Egypt in various fields, which peaked out in the 1950s-1970s, might have formed a foundation for its further expansion also in the 21st century. It would make sense to understand the mistakes made during the past years which considerably undermined the trust between the two countries, in military cooperation above all.

Making the creation of a strong army one of the principles in the six-point revolution program for Egypt, Nasser singled out military cooperation for strengthening the national armed forces as the most important component of Egypt's foreign policy.

For the sake of secrecy, the talks on arms deliveries were conducted via Czechoslovakia which was subsequently also taking part in shipping Soviet armaments to Egypt. Delegates of both countries held intensive talks in Prague through June and July of 1955.

Soviet military assistance meant far more than the mere provision of pieces of military hardware. Responding to requests from Egypt's leadership and in line with the signed agreements, the Soviet Union sent to Egypt its instructors to train Egyptian military personnel. Soviet military specialists began working in Egypt's armed forces in 1956.

The highest point in military cooperation between Egypt and the Soviet Union was reached when Soviet crews began to take direct part in protecting the airspace during the Arab-Israeli conflict in 1970.

The 15-year Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between the USSR and the UAR that could be automatically extended for another five years was concluded on May 27, 1971 during Nikolai Podgomy's visit to Egypt.

The Soviet leadership put the main emphasis on political and military-technical support to Egypt. They also pinned much hope on the results of the USSR's efforts for many years to assist Egypt with the organizational development of its national army and training its personnel which was expected to pay during the course of combat operations.

All Soviet military presence in Egypt was actually discontinued in a short space of time. By the end of August 1972, nearly 8,000 members of the Soviet military personnel, specialists and their families, military equipment and weapons owned by the USSR were shipped out of Egypt to the USSR.



Session I

WE HAVE COME HERE to Yalta for the third conference organized by the International Affairs journal with support of the Foreign Ministry of Russia to discuss Eurasian integration, an unprecedentedly broad subject, with people invited from a broad geographic space.

The subject covers a vast territory and large populations, great economies which have their problems but are gradually getting out of the crisis. I am looking forward to our discussion.

The Eurasian Union can be described as an idea of gathering together the disunited and scattered states (atoms) to create an integral whole. The Eurasian Union is a multipolar (or Platonic) phenomenon: there are integral poles of power, which cannot and should not be broken.

We have already come to the point where the idea of Eurasian attractiveness has no appeal anymore, and we badly need some concrete and successful business projects to show - preferably through the media - how in practice the Customs Union is working and how the economic process is functioning in general.

Russia's leaders are striving to make "soft power" an instrument of long-term and systemic use; to develop the wealth of positive experience in using "soft power" in Russia's foreign policy.

Russia is vast enough and its civilizational space is wide, therefore it, first, should not go out of its way to justify its course; second, this course or the way of survival was identified long ago.

Priority should be given not to the organizational but the informational component, since any integration project is, above all, interaction between information and communication spaces and the elaboration of a value and worldview foundation and positions along key lines.

Since the times of the descendants of Genghis Khan and Peter the Great, the Eurasian project has preserved its historical, social and cultural potential despite the previous faults and failures. It is deeply rooted in the historical memory of our peoples.

The "time to gather stones" has come; all we need is a system-forming idea.

Following the European countries example it is advisable to develop joint technology platforms and create a unified research network with the participation of universities and scientific research centers. Effective commercialization of scientific developments is the foundation of competitive industrial production.

Mittelstadt: A German "Miracle"

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Editor-in-Chief of International Affairs



MITTELSTADT is a small town, barely visible on the map of Germany. However, economists around the world are well familiar with this word, and Bonn has a whole research institute which deals exclusively with issues of Mittelstadt.

No nanotechnology or sophisticated information technology, except the Internet for communicating with customers in different parts of the world. Mittelstadt belongs 99 percent

to the classic industrial era; it currently provides 60 percent of employment in Germany, and European and U.S. economists believe that Mittelstadt is the place that not just ensures leadership for the German economy, but also saves the whole European financial system from collapse.

In an era of global lending, the representatives of Mittelstadt purposefully avoid its magical power. "I do not have a bank loan. That's what makes Mittelstadt a special phenomenon," says one of the typical female members of the Mittelstadt community, whom Mrs. Merkel recently honored with her attention.

"They want to increase their independence from banks and foreign financial loans," a leading expert at the Bonn Institute comments on the situation.

Companies assigned to Mittelstadt are those that have fewer than 500 employees and whose annual sales do not exceed EUR 50 million. Today Mittelstadt is expanding its markets in China, Asia and Latin America.

The main motto of all activities is prudence above all. This virtue matters more than income. Stability, not growth, is put at the top of the list.

Many Germans see the origins of the present financial crisis in the inability to give up the risks involved in the pursuit of manifold profits and momentary growth for a strong and balanced market in the future.

According to surveys by the Federation of German Industries, more than half of the Mittelstadt companies evaluate their businesses as successful and very successful in the current year.

Russia and Germany have an equal stake in nurturing direct and long-term contacts between Mittelstadt and the Russian consumer and between the middle and small businesses of our two countries. The recently concluded forum under the name Petersburg Dialogue could become an important, though not the only, venue for promoting these contacts and forming a special business folder "Russia-Mittelstadt."

On the Potential of Twin Cities in Russian-German Relations

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OVER THE PAST 20 YEARS, Russian-German relations have become large-scale and multifaceted. Probably, the Federal Republic of Germany is the only European country with which Russia has experienced such qualitative changes in its mutual relations since the end of the Cold War.

The 1990 Treaty made it possible to affirm a new atmosphere in Russian-German relations - an atmosphere of trust, mutual understanding, and the establishment of mutually advantageous cooperation.

Economic cooperation has become particularly widespread. Russia opened up its market, which was of immense significance for Germany's export-oriented economy. And there has always been respect and demand for German technology in Russia. In recent years, Russian capital has become increasingly engaged in the German market.

We need to understand that reconciliation does not mean consigning the history of the war with all its horrors and sufferings to posterity. No matter how tragic it in essence was, it must be preserved in the national memory of our peoples.

Keeping in mind the historical specifics of Russian-German relations, it is noteworthy that the nature of the relations between the peoples can be changed by changing the conditions of these relations.

The establishment of an Idstein House, or Friendship House as it later became known, shows how serious the intention of the two sides was.

The people of Idstein wanted contacts with Uglich to be constant, not sporadic. So an official post was.

From the very beginning, the Circle of Friends focused on targeted humanitarian support. The Uglich social service supplied information about people in the greatest need: large families, single mothers, orphans, and other categories.

Russian veterans are also engaged in the Uglich-Idstein partnership. The Circle of Friends invites them to Germany and arranges meetings with young people.

In conclusion it can be said that placing the stakes on establishing and developing twin-city relations between the Russian and German sides was the right thing to do; it has largely justified itself. Twin-city partnership has great potential for developing friendly relations between the citizens of our countries.

Russia and Germany: 1,000 Years of History

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AN EXHIBITION called "Russians and Germans: 1000 Years of History, Art and Culture" opened the Russia-Germany Cross-Cultural Year 2012-2013.

Contacts between the two nations have a long history and spread to many spheres of life. The exhibition area was arranged in such a way that it resembled a collection of short stories based on the lives of different people, in which the differences and similarities of the two nations were reflected in the most characteristic way.

The project was also unique in that it displayed an enormous number of early historical artifacts for the

first time. The archeological material showed how Russia left its footprint in Germany and Germany its traces in Russia; the territory where such finds were discovered stretches from the Rhine to Siberia.

Following the generally accepted rules and traditions, that is, according to protocol, presents and gifts that speak eloquently of the level of interest of the sides in developing relations play a significant role in interstate relations between heads of state.

A selection of documents from the foreign policy archives of the Russian empire and the Russian Federation and the German Historical Archives formed the central thread running through the history of interstate relations.

The monuments of architecture were selected to show different phenomena and events in the history of multilateral contacts.

The "Literary Dialogues" exhibit presented a recording of the works of poet Lev Rubenstein read by the author on the subject of translations from the German. One of Russia's favorite literary characters, Baron Munchausen, was shown on a plasma screen by means of a social network.

Russian folk art formed an image of the German, a kind of stereotype that became embedded in the public consciousness.

The motto of the cross-cultural year is "Germany and Russia - We Are Building the Future Together." It is important, while recalling the past, to be concerned about the future, a future without wars and upheavals, where historical and cultural experience will be able to prevent us from making tragic mistakes.

The Little World War in South America

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SITTING IN THE RUSSIAN STATE ARCHIVES for Socio-Political History (RGASPI), formerly the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute, on Bolshaya Dmitrovka Street in Moscow, I hold in my hands a top secret, until recently, folder with unique documents in Russian, Spanish and English.

It contains materials from the history of the organization with the name exotic even for po-

litical gourmands. I mean the Paraguayan Communist Party (PCP) of the mid-1930s.

THERE WAS in the denominator of the events mentioned above a war between Paraguay and Bolivia half-forgotten by the outside world, but very important for understanding the political psychology of South Americans.

Of course, at first glance, it was a purely regional conflict. But it also left a far greater trace than commonly assumed in world military and political history.

The war between Paraguay and Bolivia has been half-forgotten by the outside world, but is very important for understanding the political psychology of South Americans.

AT THE TURN of the 1920s-1930s, Latin American leftists claimed that "powerful imperialist trusts, Standard Oil (Yankees) and the Anglo-Dutch Royal Dutch Shell," were pushing Bolivia and Paraguay to war amidst hopes for the presence of oil in the disputed region.

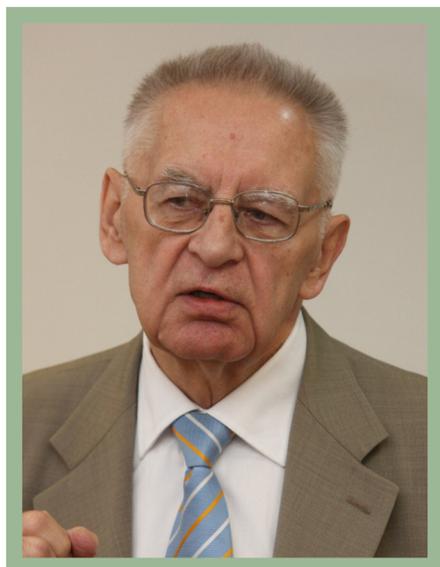
Over the years, Argentina's role has also become increasingly obvious and proven. A large part of the disputed Chaco was owned by an Argentine, Carlos Casado, brother-in-law to President of Argentina Agustin Justo.

Further, serious reservations arise with regard to mainly British influence on Paraguay. No less interesting is information about the political views of those foreigners who fought in the Chaco conflict on the side of Bolivia.

Conversely, in those countries of Latin America (like Cuba) where the Communists made an alliance with the Social Democrats and against the Fascists, events followed a completely different path. It is telltale that Paraguay and Bolivia later dragged their feet, not only in declaring war on the Axis countries, but even in breaking off diplomatic relations with them.

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IN THE ERA OF GLOBALIZATION, it is hard to overestimate the growing role of non-official international forums which generate new projects and ideas in economics and finance, help to ease permanent crises and resolve big and small issues. This perhaps gave rise to contacts that boosted European spirit and projects seeking mutually beneficial cooperation in Europe.

These meetings in Davos usually bring together up to 2,000 participants from all over the world. It is also attended by foreign ambassadors accredited in Bern and members of international organizations based in Geneva.

WEF meetings aim as a rule to assess and analyze the most pressing long-term world economic problems. This is why they pass no final documents, announce no recommendations or offer practical solutions. Brainstorming is the tried and tested form of discussion among the experts.

The forum creates favorable conditions for bilateral and multilateral meetings.

THE EMBASSY highly assessed the WEF head's high-class grasp of economic postulates and his vast experience as an expert in international affairs. Dr. Schwab is a scholar and practitioner keen on looking for imaginative ideas, a modern-type skillful organizer and manager.

In January 1993, the WEF developed a Davos Concept, or a new look at economic assistance to Russia based on the development of its energy sector.

The Davos Concept said that investing in Russia was a tough proposition. I would like to confirm that many potential investors at that time adopted a wait-and-see policy due to disappointments at the pace of reforms and lack of faith in a new Russia.

Serving in the embassy we could see in Davos members of the Russian ruling elite who could become potential leaders and we could assess the disposition of forces

BY THE LEVEL OF REPRESENTATION and relevance of its agenda projected into the 21st century, the 1998 World Economic Forum lived up to its reputation of the world's "economic Mecca" where they compare notes and discuss the most pressing economic and political issues.

Russia's more active part in the WEF will enable our country seeking economic and technological progress to gain access to its latest achievements and broaden mutually beneficial cooperation with the world business community.

A Road Map of Twelve Centuries of World Politics

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SEVERAL MONTHS AGO, the presentation of a new MGIMO University (Moscow State Institute of International Affairs) textbook. "The History of International Relations,"* took place. In each of the three volumes of the textbook researchers and faculty members of the university have contributed chapters that correspond to their specific subjects of study ranging from the establishment of the Westphalian system to the collapse of the system of Yalta and Potsdam.

Explaining why these books were to appear precisely now, Academician Anatoly Torkunov writes: "The twenty years of study and teaching of history without the stringent ideological con-

trols of the Soviet period, with the liberal early-new-era romanticism overcome and with a pragmatic and balanced attitude to the state's role and that of non-state political and economic actors gave the opportunity to prepare a well-rounded, detailed and reader specific textbook." Quite a few memoirs written by our distinguished diplomats, and monographs dedicated to individual regions and some historical themes have also come out.

These and many other publications can be considered the intellectual engine that gave birth to the concept of the textbook. It is difficult enough even in 1,500 pages to describe and review a historical process spanning almost twelve centuries.

As distinct from many other publications, the authors evenly present the situation both in Europe and North America, as well as in the Middle East and Latin America. A considerable part of the volume is devoted to the Asia-Pacific, offering a detailed study of the functioning of the Washington System in the region.

The credible, facts-based and methodologically consistent version of presentation of the history of international relations and Russia's role in major world events is likely to serve as a tool of soft power that will be conducive to shaping the desired positive image of the country in the eyes of other nations and peoples.

Today, much is said about the ranking of higher education institutions. To be honest, for the common man not involved in the process, it is difficult to grasp the essence of the problem. But when an institute or university has the intellectual and financial resources to publish such high-level studies as this textbook, it speaks to its highest caliber among peer institutions.

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