

Russian policy in external affairs essay

[Business](#), [Strategy](#)



The initiating character of Russian policy in external affairs clearly showed itself most recently, as had been the case before – at a radical change in world history – following the tragic events in the United States of America.

Russia was the first to come out for joining the efforts of the international community against the threat of terrorism and for creating an antiterrorism coalition. This was yet another confirmation of its active role in the modern world and of its direct participation in shaping an equitable new world order. Recent developments have served as an impetus for profound reflections in the world community on the state of affairs in the world, on the new challenges arising before mankind in the 21st century and on ways to build a more secure and prosperous world. It is these issues that set the major direction of today's foreign policy of Russia, which, as before, aims to provide favorable external conditions for the stable development of Russian society and continued deep-going democratic, economic and social reforms. This undoubtedly manifests the pragmatism of Russian foreign policy.

Moscow has been sensitively reacting to the changes occurring in the world – it has been one of the first to draw the attention of the world community to the new threats and challenges which the processes of globalization involve. Russia itself has already had to face many of them – separatism, terrorism, nationalism. These and other dangers in this age of globalization are assuming a general character. This calls for a strategy of joint actions that can direct the contemporary processes into the channel of a fair solution of the key problems facing mankind. Russia stands for the adoption of collective measures that would impart to globalization a controlled, and consequently a safe character. It is willing to cooperate closely in this with all

states. Speaking recently in the center of Europe, in Berlin, President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin urged nations “ before it is too late, to stop and have a look at how much the world has changed, how it is possible to build our common system of security, where and in what to combine efforts rather than follow the old course.

Russian policy will continue to allot key significance in the formation of a new world order to the United Nations. The important decisions adopted by this organization immediately after the terrorist acts in the United States bear out that it is and should play a leading role in international affairs, serve as the chief instrument of peace and security, and be the center for regulating international relations in the 21st century. This was once again reaffirmed by the leaders of the APES member countries gathered in Shanghai.

Russia will resist all attempts to erode the role of the UN and its Security Council and will advocate reforms in the organization which would raise its effectiveness. A priority for Russia is to see the consolidating function of the UN reinforced, conferring on it the ability to respond more quickly and adequately to events in the world, and building up the capabilities of this universal mechanism in the settlement of crises and conflicts. Various international and regional organizations operating in the realm of security and economic policies, such as the Big Eight, COSEC, the European Union, CICS, SOC, WTO, APES, and others ought to be the aides of the UN. Participation in regional organizations is seen as one of the major elements of Russian’s foreign policy. Moscow is well aware that the line of attack on both its own and global problems is through the integration of efforts, not

isolation. With the structures of which it is not a member Russia seeks to foster productive contact. More specifically, this applies to NATO, with which Russia is ready to expand cooperation, just as with other organizations concerned with European security issues. At the recent meeting with the leadership of the North Atlantic Alliance, the Russian leader suggested considering also creating permanent security structures and readjusting those already in place.

It is understandable that of regional organizations, the Commonwealth of Independent States has a priority significance for the foreign policy of Russia. Activity has markedly grown in the development of good-neighborly partner relations with the CIS nations and of mutually beneficial integration processes. Russian policy in the Commonwealth is built on a realistic approach, based on the consideration of mutual interests and reciprocal openness. Confidence in the future and prospects of the Commonwealth has grown stronger since the CIS summit in Socio this summer. It is based on the growing comprehension of the fact that its participants will benefit from rapprochement and cohesion, and not from disunity and moving away from each other.

It is particularly remarkable that in the light of the aggravation of the international situation, the consultations and cooperation of the member countries of the Commonwealth have recently become more intensive precisely in the area of security. Another traditional priority in Russian foreign policy is Europe. Being realized on this track are the main foreign interests of Russia, which at the present time manifest themselves on two

major planes – the security field and the economy. On the former, Russia is pursuing a line for the establishment of a stable, not discriminatory and a comprehensive system of European security. Vladimir Putin's visits to Germany and Belgium and his talks with the leaderships of the European Union and NATO were focused on just this task. Russia is prepared for a close and frank dialogue with the Europeans, but in so doing it must act as an equal partner. The second major task of the dialogue on ways of forming a Greater Europe is to deepen the partnership between Russia and the EU and establish a common economic space. Europe will strongly and for long enhance its reputation as a powerful and genuinely independent center of world politics if it can unite its own capabilities and resources with Russia's.

The time has come to ponder about what must be undertaken to ensure that a united and secure Europe becomes a forerunner of a united and secure world. It seems that Western Europe is now beginning to embrace these ideas. What matters most in them is that without a full-fledged participation of Russia in European affairs a common and effective security system cannot be created. The interest of Russia as a European power is understandable. This does not detract from the importance which is being attached to other foreign policy directions.

Before our eyes a new framework is taking shape of the relationship between Russia and the United States, with which an active and saturated dialogue, most intensive of late at the highest level, is being conducted. Issues of strategic stability – the major element of international security – are topmost in this truly wide-ranging dialogue. Russia has put forward a comprehensive

realistic program aimed at the consolidation of strategic stability and acceleration of the disarmament process.

Russia has reconfirmed its proposals to the United States for the agreed reduction of strategic offensive arms to 1, 500 nuclear warheads for ACH of the parties by the year 2008, and then perhaps even lower. The realization of this initiative not only would help promote global stability, but also would make a weighty contribution to the Joint building of new strategic relations between Russia and the US. Russia is ready to discuss with the US all the issues linked to the appearance of new threats and challenges and to achieve a new quality of partnership. Averting the placement of weapons in outer space occupies an important position in the complex of measures to ensure strategic stability. Russia suggests that the international community should begin to prepare a comprehensive cord on non-placement of weapons in space and on the nonuser of force or threats to use it against space objects. The practical realization of these and other initiatives demands both a responsible attitude to and regard for the fate of 1972 BAM Treaty.

It forms an important part of the established pattern of strategic stability and of a package of disarmament agreements. Repudiating this Treaty would lead to a breakdown of the international legal system in the field of disarmament and nonproliferation, affecting the interests of not only Russia, but also of many other dates. Hence the importance of the adoption on Russian's initiative of the resolutions of the UN General Assembly in favor of the preservation of and compliance with the BAM Treaty. The interests of Russia and of its foreign policy are not confined to Europe and the United

States. Its very geopolitical position presupposes a multivolume, geographically balanced policy. The importance of Asia will steadily increase in Russian foreign policy.

As an integral part of the Asian continent, Russia has the most wide-ranging interests here. As the speech of President Vladimir Putin at the APES forum in Shanghai has shown, we will continue to lay emphasis on more active participation in the main integration structures of the Asia-Pacific region. The major foreign policy moves over the last two years have borne out that Russia continues to build partner relations with the great powers of Asia – China and India – with which it has a considerable identity of views on central issues of world politics.

The signed historic Friendship and Cooperation Treaty between Russia and China has laid down the principles for the development of relations during the coming decades.