

RUSSIA WORKSHOP

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Dr. Michael J. Deane, Moderator and Author

Ms. Margaret A. Harlow, Author

STRATEGIC ASSESSMENTS OFFICE

NATIONAL SECURITY ANALYSIS DEPARTMENT

THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY • APPLIED PHYSICS LABORATORY

11100 Johns Hopkins Road, Laurel, Maryland 20723-6099

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In conducting the workshops, Panel Members principally from academia and sometimes from the military, government, and industry are brought together for a one- or two-day moderated discussion session. SAO personnel lead the discussion through a series of questions posed to the panel. In addition to documenting verbal discussions, the workshop provides computer software for off-line anonymous discussions among Panel Members and workshop observers.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions or comments concerning this report should be addressed to Dr. Michael J. Deane at 240-228-7642 or michael.deane@jhuapl.edu.

INTRODUCTION

RUSSIA WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES AND CONDUCT

The Russia Workshop was held at the JHU/APL on May 10, 2007. The objectives of the Russia Workshop were to develop a better understanding of:

- Russia's motivations, objectives, and priorities;
- The major drivers and constraints underlying Russian foreign policies;
- The state of Russian regional policies and relations;
- The impact of Russian foreign policies and relations on US international and security interests; and
- The strengths and weaknesses of various US policy options in dealing with Russia.

The nine experts, who made up the Panel Members, were drawn from the Academic Community. Individual members are nationally and internationally recognized authorities in Russian affairs, with unique experience and expertise in Russian political, economic, social, military, and foreign affairs. As a group, the Panel Members brought new perspectives, challenging insights, and "out of the box" thinking that are not always readily available.

The discussions focused on domestic and foreign developments in Russia, divided into eight issues:

- Russian National Identity, Objectives, and Priorities
- Russian Worldview and Foreign Policy Motivations, Objectives, and Priorities
- Critical Issues in Russian–Far East Relations (China, Korea, Japan)
- Critical Issues in Russian–European Relations (Ukraine, Belarus, Baltics, East Europe, West Europe)
- Critical Issues in Russian–Caucasus Relations (Turkey, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Iran)
- Critical Issues in Russian–Central Asian Relations (Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan)
- Critical Issues in Russian–US Relations (The Russian Perspective)
- US Russian Policy (The US Perspective and Policy Options)

RUSSIA IN PERSPECTIVE

In many respects, the Russian state was founded by and built for war. For over a thousand years, Russia was almost constantly involved in a major conflict somewhere on its periphery. Surrounded by hostile neighbors, Russia lacked the natural boundaries to shield it from invasion or limit its own expansion. The result was a siege mentality, in which the Russian state had to expand or it would die. Despite some temporary setbacks, Russia was successful in slowly consolidating and expanding its hold on the Eurasian heartland, thereby extending its influence throughout Europe and Asia and securing a position as one of the world's major powers.

Twice in the past century, however, Russia has experienced fundamental disintegration. In both instances, Russia's political, economic, social, and military systems dissolved. The state borders retracted and former "conquered" territories asserted their independence. Just as importantly, Russia's status as a major power evaporated almost overnight.

In 1917, when the tsarist autocratic system broke down under the pressures of World War I, the new Bolshevik regime—partly out of Marxist–Leninist visions of world revolution and partly out of the traditional Russian fears of national vulnerability—reinstalled tight central control and rebuilt the entire political, economic, social, and military apparatus as a quasi-war machine. At the same time, the Soviets fought to regain the pre-revolution boundaries, reconquer breakaway territories, and reestablish the Russian position as a dominant world power. Like the traditional image of Russia as the Third Rome, Russia's communist ideology portrayed Russia as the rightful leader of the world, especially the West, but never an integral member of the international community.

In 1991, when the Soviet system disintegrated, the new Russian leadership under Boris Yeltsin sought to escape historical trends, orient Russia toward the West, establish friendly relations with breakaway peripheral states, and integrate into the world community as a responsible democratic, free-market state. Unfortunately, the Yeltsin administration vastly underestimated the difficulties of implementing essential changes and greatly overestimated the goodwill of the West in assisting Russia's resurrection and rebirth.

For the West, the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 was unexpected and surprising. While anti-Soviet stalwarts had long predicted a steady, but gradual, decline, no one expected the speed and depth of events propelled by Mikhail Gorbachev's *perestroika* (restructuring). Consequently, Western leaders had no clear, long-term policies for dealing with a non-Soviet Russia. Cold War approaches for containing or, at most, engaging the Soviet Union were not adaptable for the new conditions that emerged under Yeltsin. Moreover, distracted by the situation in the Middle East, Western leaders gave the new Russia scant attention beyond its attraction as a new market for Western goods.

Instead of an immediate upsurge, the Yeltsin experiment brought considerable political chaos, economic decline, social upheaval, and military stagnation. For example, real GDP fell by 14.5 percent in 1992 and the rate of inflation was about

25 percent. The index of real GDP was 60.6 in 1998, as compared to 100 in 1990. On the periphery, Russia lost control of its borders in many areas, as well as critical military facilities in the breakaway regions. Western financial assistance and commercial interest dissipated quickly when Russia ceased to be a major military threat and proved to be a poor market. As a result, Russia was in turmoil and uncertainty throughout the 1990s.

Since 1999, the Russian situation has begun to take a turn for the better under Vladimir Putin. Significant increases in Russian oil production and export under conditions of rising world oil prices have led to a revival of the Russian economy and a degree of domestic political and social stability. This has permitted Russian leaders and opinion-makers to initiate discussion of the very concept of "modern Russia" and its relationship to the historical Russia, as well as the essential policies and priorities of this new Russia.

The Panel Members of the Russia Workshop were tasked with identifying the critical issues in near-term Russian domestic, regional, and international development and projecting long-term Russian motivations, objectives, and priorities. Special attention was given to Russia's emerging view of the future US–Russian relationship. Finally, the discussants examined US policy options for building a strong and mutually beneficial community of interests with Russia.

PANEL MEMBERS

The Panel Members of the China Workshop were highly prestigious members of the Academic Community, selected to provide new perspectives and "out of the box" thinking.

Dr. Muriel Atkin, Professor, Elliot School of International Affairs, George Washington University

Dr. Harley Balzer, Associate Professor, Department of History, Georgetown University

Mr. Paul Goble, Professor, Institute of World Politics

Dr. Mark Katz, Professor, Department of Public and International Affairs, George Mason University

Dr. Robert Legvold, Professor, Harriman Institute, Columbia University

Dr. Bruce Parrot, Professor and Director of the Russian and Eurasian Studies Program, School of Advanced International Studies, The Johns Hopkins University

Dr. Frederick Starr, Research Professor, Foreign Policy Institute, School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University

Dr. Michael Vlahos, Senior Professional Staff, Strategic Assessments Office of the National Security Analysis Department, The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory

Dr. Jeanne Wilson, Professor and Chair of the Political Science Department, Wheaton College

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

RUSSIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY, OBJECTIVES, AND PRIORITIES

Russian identity and psyche were greatly traumatized by the breakup of the Soviet Union and the loss of great power status. As a consequence, the Russians have been intensely debating once again the meaning of “the Russian state” and the nature of “the Russian character.”

The current Russian leadership in general and Vladimir Putin in particular do not seem to have a strategic vision or plan for Russia’s future long-term development. Basically, the Putin Administration is reacting with tactical moves to emerging issues. The most essential principle in Putin’s political approach is the restoration—or at least the perceived restoration—of Russia as a great power.

The adoption of a Western model of democracy in Russia is highly unlikely in the near term. Russia has no tradition of individualism and sees attempts at democracy in the 1990s as a dismal failure that brought political chaos and economic disaster.

RUSSIAN WORLDVIEW AND FOREIGN POLICY MOTIVATIONS, OBJECTIVES, AND PRIORITIES

Russian foreign policy is driven by a sense among Russian elites of the declining status of their country in the world and the need to promote greater state power. The current leaders assume that inter-state relations are essentially competitive in which engagement has many pitfalls. Thus, national security, stability, and development rest upon the strength of the state. In the current situation, the instrument of choice is energy, rather than missiles.

Russia’s foreign policy under Putin is very pragmatic, devoid of a Soviet-like ideological foundation. Russia seeks to deal with the world, rather than transform it. Russia sees its power and coercive actions as instruments of deterrence and self-defense.

For the present, Russia’s foreign policy is regional, not global. Its key motivation is security and influence on the Russian periphery. Russian foreign policy can be summarized as pragmatic toward the East, paranoid toward the West, and cautious toward the South.

Russian foreign policy assertiveness is a reaction to the post-1991 decline in political cohesion, economic prowess, regional authority, and international prestige. Lacking the ideological appeal and military superpower status of the Soviet era, the Russians

have used anti-American assertiveness as an instrument of foreign policy and a means to gain status in the international community.

CRITICAL ISSUES IN RUSSIAN–FAR EAST RELATIONS

In many respects, China is Russia's closest ally. Russia and China share common foreign policy perspectives on many issues. Still, Russia has serious long-term concerns about China as a rising political power and economic competitor. The Russians fear the rise of another major superpower in the Far East, where the United States and Japan already confront Russia with difficulties. In essence, Chinese policy in the Far East is oriented toward maintenance of the status quo.

Japan has refocused its interests away from Russia toward China, Mongolia, and even Central Asia. (And the Central Asian states have been quite willing to play the "Japanese card" against Russia and even China.) Thus, with several alternatives as well as the inability to solve the northern islands dispute, Japan sees little incentive in closer ties with Russia for now.

From Russia's standpoint, Korea's future fate may be most important because of its impact on Japanese behavior. A unified Korea with nuclear weapons could clinch the case for Japan to develop and deploy nuclear weapons.

CRITICAL ISSUES IN RUSSIAN–EUROPEAN RELATIONS

Russian relations with Western institutions, like the European Union (EU) and NATO, are likely to deteriorate somewhat over the next several years but then improve as Russians overcome their 1990s "crisis of expectations."

Russia is less and less willing to make Europe qua the EU a foreign policy priority because it sees the EU as less crucial in a global political perspective. Russian–EU relations have been strained recently over the energy issue. However, the Russians believe that they have the upper hand and the EU members will accept Russian policies. Europe for Russia is not merely the old Western Europe (of Germany, France, and Great Britain), but now the erstwhile dominions of Poland, the Czech Republic, the Baltics, etc., and these are seen as pushing "Europe" in an anti-Russian dimension.

Russia's primary concern in this region relates to "the lands in between," namely, Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine, and the Eastern European states. Russia has traditionally viewed these areas as rightfully within the Russian sphere of influence and as a critical buffer against Western invasion.

CRITICAL ISSUES IN RUSSIAN–CAUCASUS AND RUSSIAN–CENTRAL ASIAN RELATIONS

Russia's traditional hegemony is challenged by new players: China, the United States, and now India. To some extent, these states do share a common interest in the stabilization of the region, but this also leads to tensions among them, especially in

the economic realm, most notably with respect to energy. Russia and China have to some extent a shared interest in reducing US influence in the area.

The Russian–Iranian relationship is a very complicated balancing act. The Russians support Iran’s anti-US stance and anticipate considerable economic trade benefits, especially in the oil and commercial nuclear sectors. At the same time, the Russians fear that the Iranians may go too far in pushing the Americans and developing an Iranian nuclear weapons capability. The Russians prefer a moderately anti-US Iran, which neither provokes war with the United States nor reaches rapprochement sufficient to replace Russian trade.

Russia in Central Asia and the Caucasus should probably not be assessed in terms of Islam as the driving force in shaping its agenda. Russian Muslims are generally not fundamentalist or radical. Internal divisions among Islamic groups are even stronger in Russia than in the Middle East. Yet, future problems could emerge as external Muslim influence continues to infiltrate the region.

From the Russian perspective, Chechnya is not a Muslim problem but a separatist problem. It was only after the conflict began that the Chechnyan Muslims adopted Islam in a political sense. This was because only Muslim states extended support to the Chechnyans.

CRITICAL ISSUES IN RUSSIAN–US RELATIONS (THE RUSSIAN PERSPECTIVE)

In the early 1990s, it was a popular Russian expectation that the collapse of the Soviet regime would end the US–Russian conflict. Russia and the United States—the world’s two superpowers—would join forces atop the international community.

From the Russian perspective, the primary problem in today’s Russian–US relationship is the United States’ lack of respect for Russia. The Russians believe that the United States is capitalizing on the weakened Russian state to foment Russian regime change, interfere in Russian domestic affairs, and encircle Russia with US/NATO allies and US military presence.

Putin’s Munich Speech was a good summary of recent Russian thinking on directions in the Russian–US relationship. Sounding to many as a return to Cold War rhetoric, Putin chastised the United States for:

- Ignoring Russian domestic, regional, and international interests
- Acting unilaterally as the world’s single superpower
- Using its military power without restraint or consultation
- Encroaching on the Russian periphery and traditional spheres of influence

US RUSSIAN POLICY (THE US PERSPECTIVE AND POLICY OPTIONS)

The United States should avoid “hostile” actions and “demeaning” rhetoric toward events in Russia. US policy-makers should support a European lead in the “soft issues,” such as human rights and democratization in Russia.

Traditionally, arms control forums have been critical forums for engaging Russia in bilateral dialogue. As the US leadership has lost interest in arms control, so has our dialogue. There is a need for a new agenda to engage Russia in discussions in either the existing or new structures.

When asked to list the most critical issues for the future US–Russian agenda, the Panel Members listed the following (in no order of importance):

- Bilateral and multilateral nuclear arms control
- WMD nonproliferation
- International terrorism perceptions and policies
- International energy security
- Bilateral trade and investment
- Security of nuclear weapons sites in Russia
- Weapons in outer space
- NATO–Russia coordination and discussion
- Duma–Congress and military–military regular talks, with evolving agenda
- Student exchanges at high school and college levels

DISCUSSION FORMAT

The workshop centered around free-wheeling give-and-take among the Panel Members on the issues of interest. There were no formal presentations. In addition to oral discussions, each Panel Member was provided with an individual laptop computer running groupware that permitted supplementary comments on oral discussions and/or the development of side-bar issues. Both forms of input were encouraged in order to capture the widest documentation of Panel Member opinions possible. In all instances, Panel Members' oral remarks and typed comments were documented on a non-attribution basis.

Because of the complexity of the issues covered, two ground rules were established. First, the discussions were oriented toward higher-level insights, observations, and assessments. The discussions were not intended as an exercise in data-gathering. Second, discussants were asked to express their views and assessments in terms of "the most likely" and "the least likely." While this may have minimized the nuances of some difficult issues, it tended to avoid less useful "on the one hand and on the other hand" observations.

The Moderator opened each of the topics for discussion with a brief introduction to focus the thrust of the exchange. In addition, the Panel Members were presented with a set of potential "Initial Issues for Discussion," which were intended to provoke, but not direct or delimit, the discussions. The majority of the time was then given to panel discussions. At the end of each topic discussion, a few minutes were given to questions from the in-house and invited observers.

DETAILED DISCUSSIONS

RUSSIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY, OBJECTIVES, AND PRIORITIES

Initial Issues for Discussion

Is there a consensus and operative concept of “Russian national identity” or a set of permanent principals that motivates the Russian leadership in domestic and foreign policy decision-making?

What are the most important motivations that guide the Russian leadership in the development of Russian domestic policy?

What impact will the end of the Putin Era have on Russian domestic politics, domestic development, and national objectives?

Is Russia capable of developing a strong democratic political system in the long term?

Is Russian nationalism inherently aggressive and militaristic?

Key Points from Panel Discussions

For a century and a half, the Russians have debated whether Russia should be Westernized or separate from the West. In many ways, Russia is neither European nor Asian. Yet, many recognized that for Russia to prosper it had to integrate with the West.

Russian identity and psyche were greatly traumatized by the breakup of the Soviet Union and the loss of great power status. Boris Yeltsin cast his lot with the Westernizers, emphasizing Russia’s political and economic integration with the West. In the post-Yeltsin period, many contended that Russia had moved too far West and had lost its national identity. As a consequence, the Russians have been intensely debating once again the meaning of “the Russian state” and the nature of “the Russian character.” For the Russians, these discussions have very practical implications, such as: What is the appropriate type of Russian political leadership? Where are Russia’s territorial boundaries? What should be Russia’s position in the world?

The current Russian leadership in general and Vladimir Putin in particular do not seem to have a strategic vision or plan for Russia’s future long-term development. Basically, the Putin Administration is reacting with tactical moves to emerging issues. The most essential principle in Putin’s political approach is the restoration—or at least the perceived restoration—of Russia as a great power. In some respects, this requires Russia to establish a “Russia way” that is separate and independent of the West, especially the United States, so as to avoid being seen as a subordinate state.

Russian national identity at the elite level is intertwined with the notion of restoration of great power status. In this sense, it is also defined in relationship to the West, in particular the United States. This ties in also to the notion of Russian inferiority. While Russian nationalism may not be inherently aggressive and militaristic, Russian assertiveness is currently considered essential to avoid further state disintegration.

The adoption of a Western model of democracy in Russia is highly unlikely in the near term. Russia has no tradition of individualism. Moreover, the Russians see their attempts at democracy in the 1990s as a dismal failure that brought political chaos and economic disaster. Thus, the current generation sees little benefit in democracy for Russia.

In absence of a consensus among both elites and the populace concerning Russia's future development, there is considerable uncertainty whether Russia can maintain its internal stability and, ultimately, its survival post-Putin. It is most likely, therefore, that Putin's successors will seek largely to maintain his policies and priorities. Changes in direction are more likely to occur from circumstances such as economic stagnation from declining oil prices than from political decision.

If the state-centered model fails to increase Russia's international power over the next decade or so, then a conception of Russian nationhood centered on citizenship and popular political participation may come to the fore. However, this will take a large political shock, because this societal notion of the nation was tried under Gorbachev and Yeltsin and seemed to produce huge losses internationally and domestically.

A major challenge to Russian identity and leadership stability is the evolving demographic situation. One pressing problem is the low Russian ethnic birth rates in contrast to the high birth rates among Muslims and the high immigration rates of Muslims into former Russian areas.

RUSSIAN WORLDVIEW AND FOREIGN POLICY MOTIVATIONS, OBJECTIVES, AND PRIORITIES

Initial Issues for Discussion

What are the fundamental premises in the Russian leadership's worldview? How does this worldview compare with the Soviet leadership's worldview?

Does the Russian leadership have a set of permanent interests that drive its foreign policy?

What are the most critical objectives that the Russian leadership seeks to attain in the international environment? Does the Russian leadership have a strategic vision that it seeks to implement?

What impact will the end of the Putin Era have?

What impact would a significant decline in world energy prices and/or energy export capabilities have on Russian foreign policy?

Key Points from Panel Discussions

Russian foreign policy is driven by a sense among Russian elites of the declining status of their country in the world and the need to promote greater state power at home and the enrichment of elites. The misreading of threats abroad is sometimes the result of trauma but often a calculated distortion of reality to serve these ends.

In contrast to Yeltsin's policies for engagement and integration with the West, the Putin leadership has a more Hobbesian worldview. While not as extreme as the Soviet concept of international struggle, the current leaders assume that inter-state relations are essentially competitive in which engagement has many pitfalls. Thus, national security, stability, and development rest upon the strength of the state. In the current situation, the instrument of choice is energy, rather than missiles.

Russia's foreign policy under Putin is very pragmatic, devoid of a Soviet-like ideological foundation. Its standard is mutual benefit where possible and its approach is power politics where necessary. Russia seeks to deal with the world, rather than transform it. Russia sees its power and coercive actions as instruments of deterrence and self-defense.

For the present, Russia's foreign policy is regional, not global. Its key motivation is security and influence on the Russian periphery. Here, Russia sees several "problems" that need to be controlled and dealt with, such as Chinese emergence, Indian competition, and Iranian nuclear development. There are no immediate security threats. In contrast to the Soviet period, the Russians do not speak of interests in Latin America or Africa today.

Russian foreign policy assertiveness is a reaction to the post-1991 decline in political cohesion, economic prowess, regional authority, and international prestige. Some Russian elites are paranoid that the West never intended to engage and integrate Russia into the global arena. Rather, the West always sought to dismantle and exploit Russia. In this mind-set, every new milestone in US and EU relations with states on Russia's periphery was (and is) assessed as a move to undermine Russia.

Lacking the ideological appeal and military superpower status of the Soviet era, the Russians have used anti-American assertiveness as an instrument of foreign policy and a means to gain status in the international community. In this sense, Russia simply seeks to exploit the current wave of world anti-Americanism for its own benefit.

Russia's flirtation with an uncontrolled market economy, after years of a command economy, resulted in severe domestic dislocations, profit gauging, and corruption. The Putin Administration has sought to reassert state control over large portions of the economy. However, Russian inefficiency and lack of reinvestment are likely to further hamper Russia's industrial development and, thus, its competitive position in the world market.

CRITICAL ISSUES IN RUSSIAN–FAR EAST RELATIONS (CHINA, KOREA, JAPAN)

Initial Issues for Discussion

Is the improvement of Russian relations with China based more on political interests or economic considerations? On short-term common interests or long-term common values?

Has the Russian–Chinese relationship peaked? Will Russian fear of being surpassed by China in the aggregate “correlation of forces” elements limit long-term bilateral relations?

What is the purpose of the Shanghai Cooperative Organization and the joint Russian–Chinese military exercises?

Does Russia assess the Japan’s pro-military orientation as more of a dangerous threat to Russian security and interests or more as a beneficial counterweight to Chinese military modernization?

Does Russia perceive its long-term interests in a divided Korea or a unified Korea under Seoul’s control?

Key Points from Panel Discussions

The Sino–Russian relationship is the best that it has been in a long time. In many respects, China is Russia’s closest ally. Russia and China share common foreign policy perspectives on many issues. For example, they both seek to fashion a multi-polar world to balance the United States. Furthermore, Russia and China have settled many of their past differences, such as their border dispute in the Far East, and even developed a degree of military cooperation through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

Economically, Russia views China as a potential major market, especially for Russian oil and gas. Thus, Russia has taken under consideration the construction of a new oil pipeline to the Far East, in part to fulfill recent large-scale oil supply commitments.

Still, Russia has serious long-term concerns about China as a rising political power and economic competitor. Russia was compelled to join the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which was a Chinese initiative, to avoid surrendering political leadership and military influence in Central Asia to China. Since joining, Russia has sought to capture the organization’s agenda, which has become a point of contention for China.

The Russians fear the rise of another major superpower in the Far East, where the United States and Japan already confront Russia with difficulties. The Russians fear that growing economic relationship between China and the United States will isolate and damage Russia. Some fear that the Sino–Russian economic relationship will increasingly favor China, potentially turning Russia into a Chinese economic vassal. For example, Chinese efforts to diversify its oil supply sources might at some point

surrender oil price control to the Chinese. In essence, Chinese policy in the Far East is oriented toward maintenance of the status quo.

Some Panel Members believed that Russian oil commitments to China are beyond the ability of the Russian infrastructure to deliver even with the new pipeline. While China is diversifying its supply sources, a Russian default could become a major cause of Sino–Russian conflict.

Russian–Japanese political relations have moderated recently. While below levels of the 1960s, Japanese economic investments have expanded beyond the Far East into Moscow and St. Petersburg. Still, Japan has refocused its interests away from Russia toward China, Mongolia, and even Central Asia. (And the Central Asian states have been quite willing to play the “Japanese card” against Russia and even China.) Thus, with several alternatives as well as the inability to solve the northern islands dispute, Japan sees little incentive in closer ties with Russia for now.

Korea provides a good example of the tension between Russia’s long-term economic interests and short-term geopolitical gains. In the long run, a stable, prosperous Korea would be a good economic partner for Russia (even if simply as a market for commodities). However, geo-strategy leads them to seek to preserve the status quo, which provides multiple opportunities to play off other countries and yank America’s chain over nuclear issues. Moreover, rather than perceiving a united Korea as an economic opportunity, the Russians see it as a security threat.

From Russia’s standpoint, Korea’s future fate may be most important because of its impact on Japanese behavior. A unified Korea with nuclear weapons could clinch the case for Japan to develop and deploy nuclear weapons.

CRITICAL ISSUES IN RUSSIAN–EUROPEAN RELATIONS (UKRAINE, BELARUS, BALTICS, EAST EUROPE, WEST EUROPE)

Initial Issues for Discussion

What are the most important factors driving Russian–European relations?

Why does Russia oppose the expansion of the EU and NATO?

What is the likelihood that Russia will renounce the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty and begin a buildup of forces?

What is the likelihood that Russia will renounce the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty and begin production of intermediate-range ballistic missiles?

Key Points from Panel Discussions

Despite the historical competition between Westernizers and Slavophiles, Russia has never really been a part of Europe and never bought into the European value system. Still, the Russian identity problem has a problem deciding to what extent Russia is a European state.

Russian relations with Western institutions, like the EU and NATO, are likely to deteriorate somewhat over the next several years, but then improve as Russians overcome their 1990s "crisis of expectations." Russia–European relations in the future will be defined above all by the degree of post-Putin evolution within Russia itself.

Russia is less and less willing to make Europe qua the EU a foreign policy priority because it sees the EU as less crucial in a global political perspective. Economic interest remains strong (50% of Russian trade) and heavily focused on the energy relationship, a relationship that has powerful positive and negative effects. However, Europe for Russia is not merely the old Western Europe (of Germany, France, and Great Britain), but now the erstwhile dominions of Poland, the Czech Republic, the Baltics, etc., and these are seen as pushing "Europe" in an anti-Russian dimension.

Russian–EU relations have been strained recently over the energy issue. However, the Russians believe that they have the upper hand and the EU members will accept Russian policies for several reasons. First, they believe that the European economies are dependent on Russia for oil supplies, which will give Russia considerable leverage against an EU united front in opposition to Russian policies and behavior. Second, they do not believe that EU political cohesion is sufficiently strong to adopt and enforce major obstacles to Russian policies.

Russia's primary concern in this region relates to "the lands in between," namely, Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine, and the Eastern European states. Russia has traditionally viewed these areas as rightfully within the Russian sphere of influence and as a critical buffer against Western invasion. Western political encroachment, especially by means of the regional expansion of NATO into "the lands in between," are deemed a threat to Russian security and very existence.

A key issue for Russia in particular and US–Russian relations in general concerns future Russian commitments to the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) and the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaties. While it is unlikely that Russia would withdraw from either treaty, it is not precluded that events could change Russian attitudes.

CRITICAL ISSUES IN RUSSIAN–CAUCASUS RELATIONS (TURKEY, AZERBAIJAN, ARMENIA, GEORGIA, IRAN)

Initial Issues for Discussion

What are the prospects for US–Russian cooperation in the Caucasus and Central Asia regions?

What is Russia's long-term relationship with emerging Muslim entities in the Caucasus and beyond?

How would an up-surge of Islamic fundamentalism impact Russian foreign policy in the Southeast Europe and the Caucasus regions?

What are Russian motivations (perceived benefits) and constraints in its relations with Iran?

Key Points from Panel Discussions

Russia is NOT a potential partner of the United States in the Caucasus or Central Asia because the goal of Russia's policy is to limit and channel sovereignties there and the goal of US policy is to undergird and support sovereignties.

The Russian–Iranian relationship is a very complicated balancing act. In the Russian view, the Iranians have contempt for everyone in the world, except the Americans. While the Iranians are hostile toward the Americans, they have a grudging respect and admiration as well.

On the one hand, the Russians support Iran's anti-US stance and anticipate considerable economic trade benefits, especially in the oil and commercial nuclear sectors. At the same time, the Russians fear that the Iranians may go too far in pushing the Americans and developing an Iranian nuclear weapons capability. The Russians prefer a moderately anti-US Iran, which neither provokes war with the United States nor reaches rapprochement sufficient to replace Russian trade.

CRITICAL ISSUES IN RUSSIAN–CENTRAL ASIAN RELATIONS (KAZAKHSTAN, TURKMENISTAN, KYRGYZSTAN, TAJIKISTAN, UZBEKISTAN)

Initial Issues for Discussion

What are Russian options as the Central Asian states evolve away from their traditional relationship with Russia and adopt more independent courses?

Do the Central Asian states view Russia as their natural friend/ally or their natural competitor/enemy?

Do the Central Asian states view US presence in the region as a counterweight to Russian influence or a magnet for Russian intervention?

What is the likelihood of Russian–Chinese competition for Central Asian energy resources to implode Russian–Chinese relations?

Key Points from Panel Discussions

Russia's traditional hegemony is challenged by new players: China, the United States, and now India. To some extent, these states do share a common interest in the stabilization of the region, but this also leads to tensions among them, especially in the economic realm, most notably with respect to energy. Russia and China have to some extent a shared interest in reducing US influence in the area and can make use of the SCO (2005 declaration) to insert this as a common goal.

Russia in Central Asia and the Caucasus should probably not be assessed in terms of Islam as the driving force in shaping its agenda. Nor should their or our fear be—at present—the imminent danger of Islamic extremism, although Moscow may use the issue to bolster its position with conservative regimes in the region. On the other hand, Russia does mean to restore and increase its influence within the region.

Russian Muslims are generally not fundamentalist or radical. Internal divisions among Islamic groups are even stronger in Russia than in the Middle East. Isolated under the Soviet regime, Russian Islam developed independently. Many who claim to be Muslims actually know very little about the religion and are strongly integrated into Russian culture.

From the Russian perspective, Chechnya is not a Muslim problem but a separatist problem. It was only after the conflict began that the Chechnyan Muslims adopted Islam in a political sense. This was because only Muslim states extended support to the Chechnyans. As expressed by one Panel Member: "If the United States had become involved in 1992–1993, we would not be talking about a Muslim problem now."

The Panel Members were split on the issue of Muslim immigration into Russia. Some contended that Islamic radicalism has for the most part not taken root in the Stans (that is, former members of the Soviet Union in Central Asian) and Russia. Outside of the Arab/Persian world, Islamic radicalism is typically rejected on cultural and religious grounds. Conversely, other Panel Members highlighted concerns that Russians see as potential indicators of future problems.

- The number of Russian Muslims going on the Hajj is now up to about 30,000
- The numbers of Russians studying Islam abroad is way up
- Muslim proselytizers coming into Russia, mostly from Iran, are up to 22,000 over the last few years
- 70% of Russian troops, including conscript policeman, have served in Chechnya and many are now not happy with the growing numbers and influence of non-Russians especially Muslims

CRITICAL ISSUES IN RUSSIAN–US RELATIONS (THE RUSSIAN PERSPECTIVE)

Initial Issues for Discussion

Does Russia perceive the Russian–US relationship as a zero-sum relationship? Is the Russian concept of "multipolarity" equal to anti-US bipolarity?

Does Russia have a strategic design and approach for undermining US global influence and power? What would be the essential instruments and actions of such a design?

What was the essential message in Putin's Munich speech?

Key Points from Panel Discussions

During this discussion, the Panel Members stressed that they were not evaluating the correctness of Russian perceptions, they were just examining the basic premises behind the Russian view.

In the early 1990s, it was a popular Russian expectation that the collapse of the Soviet regime would end the US–Russian conflict. Russia and the United States—as the world’s two superpowers—would join forces atop the international community.

Russian insistence on competing with the United States goes back to the desire to be seen as a great power. If Russia do not compete, then it is not a great power—even in (indeed, especially in) their own eyes.

From the Russian perspective, the primary problem in today’s Russian–US relationship is the United States’ lack of respect for Russia. For example, the Russians view that they were equal allies in World War II but that the United States minimizes their contribution and personal sacrifices. Likewise, the Russians cringe at US assertions that we “beat them in the Cold War.”

The Russians believe that the United States is capitalizing on the weakened Russian state to foment Russian regime change, interfere in Russian domestic affairs, and encircle Russia with US/NATO allies and US military presence.

Putin’s Munich Speech was a good summary of recent Russian thinking on directions in the Russian–US relationship. Sounding to many as a return to Cold War rhetoric, Putin chastised the United States for:

- Ignoring Russian domestic, regional, and international interests
- Acting unilaterally as the world’s single superpower
- Using its military power without restraint or consultation
- Encroaching on the Russian periphery and traditional spheres of influence

The Russian definition of the United States is changing from partner to competitor and possibly ultimately to main enemy again. That is not inevitable, but it is where things are drifting. The Russians cannot compete, but they have learned one thing from us, namely, throwing occasional fits like the Munich Speech is the only way that the United States is likely to pay attention. It is difficult to imagine that any other leader of any other country could speak as Putin did and that the American expert community would conclude that this rage means that the United States needs to reach out and reassure.

US RUSSIAN POLICY (THE US PERSPECTIVE AND POLICY OPTIONS)

Initial Issues for Discussion

How would you characterize the current US Russian policy?

What are the long-term consequences of an antagonistic and assertive Russia for US global and regional interests?

The US–Russian relationship lacks any permanently operating structures or institutions. From a US perspective, what structures would you recommend as means to improve US–Russian relations?

How determinant should the following factor(s) be in US policy toward Russia: political cooperation, economic interests, military developments and military–legal arrangements, anti-terrorism cooperation, and social policy?

In the long term, does US emphasis on Russian democratization and human rights help or hinder the improvement of US–Russian relations?

Key Points from Panel Discussions

Panel Members summarized Russian foreign policy as pragmatic toward the East, paranoid toward the West, and cautious toward the South.

The more antagonistic nature of the current phase in Russian–US relations is a predictable pendulum “correction” to the extreme euphoria of the early 1990s. Yet, there are many different possible futures in this relationship depending on energy, peripheral politics, etc.

The United States should avoid “demeaning” rhetoric toward events in Russia. US leaders and opinion-makers sometimes incur surprisingly hostile responses to “friendly” advice (for example, human rights in Russia), because they are not always attuned to how their messages are received and assessed in Russia.

Likewise, the United States should avoid “hostile” actions. For example, the United States took the decision to deploy missile defense assets in Poland and the Czech Republic, apparently without prior discussions with Russia and little forethought to possible Russian reactions. While the US leaders saw this as a proper action of allies to counter Iranian missile programs, the Russians perceived this as a critical challenge to Russian security and a bold encroachment into the traditional Russian sphere of interest.

US policy-makers should support a European lead in the “soft issues,” such as human rights and democratization in Russia. In the Russian view, the Americans have only used these issues as a means to “talk down” to the Russians, exacerbate internal Russian differences, and exploit Russian weaknesses. For the Russians, the Europeans have more credibility here.

Traditionally, arms control forums have been critical forums for engaging Russia in bilateral dialogue. As the US leadership has lost interest in arms control, so has our dialogue. There is a need for a new agenda to engage Russia in discussions in either the existing or new structures.

A close working relationship should be developed between NATO and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. At present, both see themselves as competitors for influence in Central Asia, rather than allies with common interests.

When asked to list the most critical issues for the future US–Russian agenda, the Panel Members listed the following (in no order of importance):

- Bilateral and multilateral nuclear arms control
- WMD nonproliferation
- International terrorism perceptions and policies
- International energy security
- Bilateral trade and investment
- Security of nuclear weapons sites in Russia
- Weapons in outer space
- NATO–Russia coordination and discussion
- Duma–Congress and military–military regular talks, with evolving agenda
- Student exchanges at high school and college levels

WORKSHOP PANEL MEMBERS

Dr. Muriel Atkin, Professor of History in the Elliot School of International Affairs at George Washington University. Previously, she was Director of the University's Russian and East European Studies Program. Her areas of research interest are modern Central Asia, the Muslim peoples of Russia and the USSR, and Russian and Soviet relations with Iran.

Dr. Harley Balzer, Associate Professor of Government and International Affairs and an Associate Faculty Member of the Department of History at Georgetown University. Previously, he served as Director of the University's Center for Eurasian, Russian and East European Studies. His research interests include political economy, Russian domestic politics, education, Russian and Soviet social history, science and technology, and US–Russian relations.

Mr. Paul Goble, Professor at the Institute of World Politics. He previously served as a Vice Dean of the Social Sciences and Humanities at Audentes University in Tallinn, and Assistant Director for Broadcasting and Director of Communications at Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. In his various positions, he helped to organize and prepare INR's *Soviet Nationalities Survey*, RFE/RL's *Daily Report*, and the *Newsline* family of publications.

Dr. Mark N. Katz, Professor of Government and Politics at George Mason University. His research focuses on Russian foreign policy, the international relations of the Middle East, the Caucasus, and Central Asia, and transnational revolutionary movements. He has written extensively on these topics and writes a weekly column for United Press International.

Dr. Robert Legvold, Marshall D. Shulman Professor in the Department of Political Science at Columbia University. Previously, he was Director of the University's Harriman Institute and of the Soviet Studies Project at the Council on Foreign Relations. His areas of particular interest are the foreign policies of Russia, Ukraine, and the other new states of the former Soviet Union, US relations with the post-Soviet states, and the impact of the post-Soviet region on the international politics of Asia and Europe.

Dr. Bruce Parrot, Professor and Director of the Russian and Eurasian Studies Program, School of Advanced International Studies, The Johns Hopkins University. He has been a consultant to the US Departments of State and Defense. He has contributed articles and chapters to numerous books and journals on Russia and the post-Soviet new states of Eurasia.

Dr. S. Frederick Starr, Research Professor at the Foreign Policy Institute, School of Advanced International Studies, The Johns Hopkins University. He was founding secretary of the Smithsonian's Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies. His research focuses on the rise of pluralistic and voluntary elements in modern societies, the interplay between foreign and domestic policy, and the relationship between politics and culture.

Dr. Michael Vlahos, Senior Professional Staff, Strategic Assessments Office of the National Security Analysis Department at The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory. Previously, he was Director of the State Department's Center for the Study of Foreign Affairs and Director of Security Studies at The Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies. His research has led to the development of a broad analytic model for examining war and culture, with a primary focus on how military societies adapt to change.

Dr. Jeanne L. Wilson, Professor and Chair of the Department of Political Science at Wheaton College and a Research Associate at the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Research at Harvard University. Her research interests include Russian–Chinese relations and the politics of transition in Russia and China. She is currently comparing the impact of the color revolutions in former socialist states on Russian and Chinese foreign and domestic policy.

