

RUSSIA'S SECURITY POLICY
&
EU-RUSSIAN RELATIONS

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&
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**WORKING PAPER No. 6
OF THE
CEPS-IISS EUROPEAN SECURITY FORUM**

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FOREWORD

FRANÇOIS HEISBOURG *

In their oral presentation, the three paper-givers were more particularly urged to give their views on: 1) the durability of President Putin's policy of modernisation "within the West" if Western, and specifically US, quid-pro-quos were seen to be lacking; 2) the extent of potential EU-Russian relations, notably in security terms; to what extent would Kaliningrad be a test case for EU-Russian relations? and how well is the EU organised to handle the relationship? and 3) what kind of division of labour could be worked out between the US, the EU and Russia in terms of managing security in what Angela Stent has called the "post-Soviet space"?

Dmitri Trenin, Deputy Director of the Carnegie Moscow Center emphasised that Putin's strategic vision was not primarily driven by foreign policy considerations, but aimed at achieving modernisation which in turn implies a policy of non-confrontation with the West: this had already begun before 9/11 and has become clearer since.

Therefore, the main problems that the Russian President could encounter would be the result of insufficient economic returns, whereas US unilateral measures on political-strategic issues such as ABM, Iraq or NATO enlargement would have less impact. As far as EU Russian relations are concerned, there would be little to be gained from talk about EU membership. The relationship should be driven by the need to modernise Russia, 40% of whose foreign trade is with the EU: therefore the relationship should not focus too heavily on military affairs – although EU military cooperation with the Russia armed forces could favour military reform. In terms of the "post-Soviet space", President Putin had dropped the old "Great Game" logic and was emphasising co-management in Central Asia, although old-style geopolitics were more visible in the Caucasus, notably in Georgia.

Stephan De Spiegeleire, from the Rand Corporation's Europe office, underscored the need to move away from a ritualised, institutionalised, model of EU-Russia and NATO-Russia relations. He was cautious about the durability of Putin's course, noting that it was occurring as economic (and notably oil-related) factors were uncertain, with a United States not terribly interested in

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expending political capital on Russia. Indeed there was something of a US backlash against the symbolism characteristic of American relations with Gorbachev and Yeltsin. In this context EU-Russian relations are growing in importance.

On the plus side, Russia is facing few external security threats. Conflicts could possibly be dealt with in a cooperative manner between Russia and its partners, but with the need to prioritise conflict resolution as a function of actual circumstances: Transnistria coming before Abkhazia for instance.

Angela Stent, Director of the Georgetown University Center for Eurasian, Russia and East European Studies disputed de Spiegeleire's characterisation of US indifference: Washington actually has something of a concerted strategy of integrating Russia in the European space – and there is a significant constituency paying attention to Russia in the US body politic. Global issues, and particularly concerns about the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, will be of great importance from the US standpoint in shaping US-Russian relations.

Although she concurred with Trenin's analysis on Putin's reforms, the question remains: where is the "new blood" (mentioned in Trenin's paper), the constituency with which Putin is supposed to conduct his policy? In effect, the durability of Russia's policy is dependent both on Putin's popularity (currently high) at home and on US quid-pro-quos. Professor Stent would like to see NATO, but also EU, membership as a long-term proposition vis-à-vis Russia: new dividing lines had to be avoided, and in any case, adopting EU criteria would help Russian modernisation.

Finally, "post-Soviet space" management will occur more along cooperative lines than as an explicit division of labour.

In the debate, a number of points emerged:

- Putin is his own foreign policy advisor, and his constituency is limited (some political allies – Yavlinsky, Luzhkov and a few analysts); but the limits of his constituency are not necessarily a problem.
- On EU-Russian relations, an important question was raised, i.e. the risk of contradictions arising between the EU and the US, notably on issues such as policy towards Iraq: although this risk was summarily discussed in somewhat reassuring tones, it would deserve further exploration, notably in light of President Bush's "Axis of Evil" speech.

- The creation of a high-level EU-Russian Council was suggested, drawing the remark that the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) already made this possible and that the PCA was unique to Russia: would it help to graft yet another institution to an already complex away?
- Kaliningrad was widely mentioned as a test case. As one participant put it, “if we can’t agree on that, what else can we agree on?”.

But then, the Kaliningrad discussions are on track. There will be no “Fortress Kaliningrad” even if there are more tanks in the enclave than in the combined French and British armed forces: it’s a military parking lot. However, if the EU holds a full array of keys vis-à-vis Kaliningrad, the EU has yet to develop a strategy.

- The expression “post-Soviet space” drew some pointed remarks about the need not to create such a new geopolitical category: it would be better to call places by their names (the Caucasus, Central Asia, etc.). It was noted in passing that names also changed: what is traditionally called Transcaucasia is now often called the South Caucasus in the US.
- The term “triumphant unilateralism” was used to characterise contemporary foreign policy-making (not simply that of the US): a country (e.g. Russia) decides what it wants to do, and foreign policy flows therefrom. In the case of Russia, this helped explain the fading of the Balkans as an area of major interest, and the probability that Iraq would not become the “banana skin” in US-Russian relations.
- On Russian policies towards specific regions, it was noted that Putin still had more of a strategic vision (one participant used the expression “an instinct”) than a strategy: for instance, Russia’s Middle Eastern policy was pretty much a blank. Russia is however discovering how much it has in common with Israel, in part because of the war in Chechnya.
- Only the EU can work with Russia in peacekeeping operations in the former Soviet Union: NATO won’t do it. It was remarked that prospects were not too good: Russian military thinking remained unreconstructed, and a number of conflicts in the former Soviet Union were worsening, not improving.

- On NATO-Russian relations there was lively exchange on the implications of the British-proposed “20” Council: if this were to be a true “20” Council, with no pre-arranged agenda and with no prepared NATO positions, how would this differ from a NAC including Russia – in other words something resembling Russia’s entry into the political councils of NATO; conversely, if the scope of items up for discussion in the “20” were to be restricted, would that create trust? As one prominent politician put it, if the project is mishandled, for example if Russia overplays the possibilities involved, “we’ll be thrown back in terms of trust”.

To this was added the question: what of Ukraine, which like Russia, has a Permanent Joint Council with NATO; why not consider joint meetings of the two PJCs?

In conclusion, several suggestions were made:

- For Russia, the biggest quid-pro-quo would be the **write-off the Soviet debt**. Accelerated WTO membership, although important, would also be extremely painful for Russia. Quid-pro-quos would become particularly important from the end of 2002 onwards (after NATO’s Prague Summit).
- The EU-Russian and NATO-Russian interfaces should continue to be dealt with **separately**, if only because the first one works reasonably satisfactorily and focuses on practical issues (notwithstanding the EU’s limitations in terms of strategy and leadership), unlike the second one. The forthcoming **Danish presidency** of the EU should put a high premium on **Kaliningrad**.
- ESDP/Russian relations are still in an early stage. They could benefit from the participation of high-level **Russian military officers** in the current ESDP/Russia bilateral discussions.

A RUSSIA-WITHIN-EUROPE: WORKING TOWARDS A NEW SECURITY ARRANGEMENT

D MITRI TRENIN^{*}

At the beginning of the 21st century, the central issue of European security is how, not whether, to integrate Russia within Euro-Atlantic institutions. The conditions are now right to move ahead towards that ambitious goal.

September 11, 2001 marked the end of the post-cold war period. With the new security agenda having moved to the centre stage, the cold war one is not only irrelevant; it is also seen as irrelevant. This opens the way to dismantling the existing, and still formidable, infrastructure of military confrontation.

The second opportunity in a decade to create a Euro-Atlantic security community that would include Russia can now be seized upon for several good reasons.

Putin's decision to side with the West was not made on the spur of the moment. A close analysis demonstrates he had been avoiding confrontation with the US and reaching out to Western Europe ever since coming to office. A combination of narrowly pragmatic, broadly "philosophical" and very personal reasons is responsible for the new strategy – not tactics! – in foreign policy. This course is in full harmony with the main thrust of Putin's economic and social reform programme, which can be defined as modernisation through Europeanisation. As evidenced by a series of post-September developments, including the Russian reaction to the US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, the new Kremlin policy line is sustainable domestically and sufficiently protected against adverse international political conditions.

Of course, Russia's rapprochement with Europe is only in the second instance a foreign policy exercise. Its success or failure will primarily depend on the pace and depth of Russia's economic, political and societal transformation. Russia's "entry into Europe" cannot be negotiated with Brussels. It has to be first "made in Russia" itself. A decade after the end of the Soviet Union, there are fewer and fewer illusions among both the elite and the public about a "unique Russian way". The next hurdle to take is to recognise that Russia as a self-contained and self-sustained "pole" (or a traditional great power) is already history.

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Faced with the challenge of international terrorism, the United States has moved further away from the cold-war mindset. Russia is not on America's mind to the extent that Washington can reduce its strategic nuclear forces unilaterally and withdraw from a major arms control pact without fearing Moscow's response. Although a Russian-American alliance can only be situational, and the winding down of the Afghanistan operation would again reduce the importance of Russia in American eyes, there are a number of potential situations in the new strategic environment where Russia's assistance to the US could be invaluable.

Americans have no reason to oppose Russia's rapprochement with Europe, knowing full well that a Moscow attempt at "wedge-driving" between them and the West Europeans would be dramatically counterproductive. A Russia-within-Europe – which it will never be able to dominate – meets core US national security interests. It forecloses even the remote chance of Russia resuming its hegemonic geopolitical posture and associates the former superpower with America's closest allies. The US may be wary of Russia joining the European caucus on some issues of contention between the transatlantic allies, and in particular of "eroding NATO from within". On balance, however, these concerns do not outweigh the benefits of Russia's integration. They can be best met by an enlightened American leadership, within a more mature transatlantic partnership.

The West Europeans have an even more compelling interest than the Americans in securing an organic relationship with Russia. As the European Union becomes more integrated internally and expands eastward, it has to define itself as a political, as well as an economic actor. Thus, it needs a long-term outward-looking strategy, not only an inward-looking one. This strategy should concern itself in particular with the Union's immediate neighbourhood, which includes, next to the Balkans and North Africa, Turkey, Ukraine and Russia. Indeed, the EU objectives with respect to each of these various relationships speak a lot about the way the Union and its member countries view themselves in the 21st century world and about the role they aspire to and are prepared to play.

Exactly because one is necessarily looking for an organic relationship, Europe's problems with Russia are more fundamental, and more difficult to tackle than those of the United States. It can be stressed again and again that the EU enlargement model may work for the Baltics, Central and eventually even South-Eastern Europe, but not for Russia, and this is certainly true. Yet, drawing

a permanent borderline between the expanded Union and Russia – and possibly also Ukraine and Belarus – would be marking not only the limit of Europe’s expansion but also the limit of its ambitions. However, even if the EU were to opt for a “Europe without Russia”, this does not weaken the case for close security cooperation between the two.

The options for security cooperation leading to security integration between Russia and Western Europe are several. One is NATO. The North Atlantic Alliance, to which most of the EU member states, as well as North America belong, will remain the principal Western security mechanism for the foreseeable future. NATO will necessarily evolve, but it will not wither away any time soon. Russian membership in NATO is not feasible in the near and even medium term. Russia’s association with NATO, however, is. Integrating Russia within common councils with the Alliance will serve the main purpose of demilitarising the Russian-Western (including Russian-Western European) relationship. Collaboration on the new security agenda – from fighting international terrorism and organised crime to dealing with WMD/missile proliferation to peacekeeping – will largely contribute to that.

Obviously, Russia’s security relationship with the European Union will cover the areas in which the Union as a unit will be competent. These are mainly soft security issues, which are most relevant for contemporary Europe. At one end of the spectrum, one will deal with environmental and NBC security (including nuclear waste disposal, chemical disarmament, etc.); at the other, the Petersberg tasks. As the European Union admits former Warsaw Pact states and ex-Soviet republics, it will become more concerned about the safety of its immediate eastern neighbourhood.

The Kaliningrad enclave is a case in point. In view of the Union enlargement dynamic, one cannot afford, either in Moscow or in Brussels, not to deal with it. It is also a test case for EU-Russian cooperation, including in the security field. Kaliningrad also calls for a measure of EU-NATO-Russia coordination.

Another place for such trilateral collaboration can be the Balkans. To the extent the US largely turns over the peacekeeping operation in the region to its European allies, and the EU endows itself with a military capability of its own to serve in crisis areas, Bosnia, Kosovo and Macedonia may evolve into a long-term European responsibility. When the Russians will be dealing with NATO there, they will be dealing increasingly with the Europeans.

The peace settlement of the conflict in Moldova, where Russia is currently reducing its peacekeeping/arsenal guard duty military presence and where Ukraine and the OSCE play a limited role, may be an opportunity to geographically expand EU-Russian cooperation in peacekeeping.

Other potential loci for Russian-EU peacekeeping lie in the Caucasus. Having (correctly) acquiesced in a US and European presence in Central Asia, which is likely to outlast the American anti-terrorist operation in Afghanistan, Moscow should be more open in the future to having its European partners shoulder some of the burden of peacekeeping in Abkhazia. Another potential deployment area for EU peacekeepers is Nagorno-Karabakh, but this calls for an agreement between the parties to the conflict that is not yet in sight. South Ossetia is the easiest case by comparison, but it may yet continue under the present arrangement.

As to Chechnya, any foreign military involvement there will remain unacceptable for Russia. Humanitarian assistance and human rights monitoring are the two elements of Western (mainly European) involvement. When a political settlement is finally reached, complete with a working model for self-government and based on Russian-Chechen and Chechen-Chechen reconciliation, the necessity economic rehabilitation of the war-ravaged republic and the North Caucasus as a whole would call for EU involvement on the ground.

This should not be regarded as sheer charity. Bordering on the Moslem world (from North Africa to the Balkans to the Caucasus to Central Asia) and containing significant Moslem minorities within its borders – whether as several ancient ethnic homelands or as millions of mostly recent immigrants – both Europe and Russia have to deal with the factor of Islamic activism, including radicalism and extremism. Already now, European and Russian forces are based in Tajikistan with a view to combating extremism in the region. Moreover, the Europeans make up the bulk of the international peacekeeping force in neighbouring Afghanistan. (Russia's decision not to send its own forces to Kabul is again correct: too little time has passed since the Soviet intervention in that country.)

What is often overlooked in Russia is that close cooperation of the kind outlined above would require a major overhaul of the Russian military system. In its present form and quality, this system allows for very limited and often mutually frustrating cooperation. From the Russian national perspective, demilitarising the country's relations with the West creates the conditions

and provides the incentives for genuine military reform which would produce a system geared to current and future risks and threats, rather than those of the past. Exchanges of various kinds with the European militaries – at NATO, EU and bilateral levels – can be instrumental in bringing about the necessary changes.

Another area facing drastic restructuring is the Russian defence industry. In the last decade, it was virtually kept in the “Asian ghetto” as far as arms trade was concerned. This is unhealthy, especially from the strategic point of view. Allowing the Russian producers to compete in a non-discriminatory environment in Europe, and cooperating with them in modernising Soviet-era equipment still held by several European nations, some of them NATO members, is a serious engagement proposal. Looking ahead into the long-term future, Russia can hardly remain self-sufficient in all required weapons systems. For its part, Europe could substantially enhance its defence industrial capacity by means of joint ventures and various forms of integration with Russia.

Military and industrial cooperation logically calls for close political cooperation. On most international issues, Russia’s position comes close to those of EU member states. This is a good basis for joint action in a variety of regional and functional areas, from the Middle East and Central Asia to non-proliferation and arms control.

There is no single forum for Russian-European security relations. Some issues – mostly hard security stuff or global in nature as dealing with the proliferation challenge and developing missile defences – are best handled within NATO. The British-proposed formula of a NATO-Russia council “at 20” is most promising and should be developed into a working mechanism. The best model for that council is NATO itself.

The current EU-Russian relationship includes 6-monthly summits between the Russian president and the European presidency and the Commission. These could be elevated to an EU-Russia council, to oversee the implementation of decisions made at the top level. To the extent common foreign/security/defence policies and structures take shape within the EU, establishing a practice of regular consultations between them and their Russian counterparts becomes necessary. Russia should strive for observer status in the relevant EU bodies, and be prepared to open its own government bureaucracy for permanent liaison links with Brussels.

This is an ambitious outline. It requires vision at the top, able and enlightened leadership at the political level and a professional and responsive government bureaucracy, as well as a modern-thinking security community. The element in shortest supply is the people to fill the relevant positions. In Russia's case, this would amount to nothing less than a bureaucratic revolution to sustain the emerging revolution in foreign and security policy thinking.

To energise the official Russian foreign and security policy community, an influx of new blood is badly needed. Some managerial talents could be lured to come, even on secondment, from the business community. More importantly, a new generation of diplomats and military officers has to replace what still remains, largely, a Soviet elite.

EUROPE'S SECURITY RELATIONSHIP WITH RUSSIA: STAYING THE COURSE

STEPHAN DE SPIEGELEIRE*

Recent geopolitical changes, including the new “alliance” between the US and Russia on counter-terrorism, have led to various clarion calls for a new bold new move to dramatically upgrade the security relationship between Russia and the West (e.g. by opening a debate on Russian membership in NATO). These statements make reference to a window of opportunity to tie Russia much more closely into the Western security community, but they may underestimate a number of difficulties that have to do both with the realities of today's Europe and today's Russia, and with the changing nature of security cooperation. It is therefore dubious whether any such radical moves are either necessary or desirable from a European point of view. Europe might be better advised to stay its current course.

Europe's security strategy towards Russia

Over the past decade, Western Europe has pursued a patient but determined long-term strategy of re-integrating Russia into Europe, and thence into the world. This strategy is distinctly European: it is quite long-term; incrementally integrationist; multi-dimensional; multi-level (sub-national, national and supra-national); and both functional and institutional. It closely mirrors the neo-functional logic that has served Western Europe so spectacularly well over the past half century: economic integration “spilling over” in political and eventually in security integration. Thus the European approach to the “Russian security question” has been basically (and characteristically) indirect: to assist the country's painful transformation process across the board, in the hope that at some point in time this will also yield security benefits.

Unlike in the US, Russia's salience to European and world security and stability has never been questioned in Europe. The concurrent widening *and* deepening of the European Union have only strengthened the shared European conviction that it is imperative to find appropriate ways of engaging and accommodating Russia. The main focus of these efforts has clearly been on “first pillar” issues, in line with the aforementioned “European” logic. But Russia has also been one of the main targets of the “new” Common Foreign and Security Policy as defined in the Maastricht

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and then Amsterdam Treaties on European Union. When member states decided to create a new CFSP instrument in the form of “common strategies”, for instance, it was self-evident that Russia would be the first country for which such a “common strategy” would be developed.

The actual security agenda between Russia and the European Union, however, remains fairly modest, certainly in the so-called “hard security” field. The political dialogue with Russia on various international security issues dates back to the activation of the PCA instruments and it received a further push with the EU’s Common Strategy on Russia and also with the various agreements to provide Russia with some interface on the new common European Security and Defence Policy (CESDP).¹ As a result, there are now a number of different institutional linkages between the Russian Federation and the European Union through which the two sides can exchange opinions about international security issues. So far, however, these interfaces have not yielded any visible breakthroughs, despite efforts from at least the EU side to identify and pursue possible areas for joint progress (e.g. on Chechnya or Moldova).

In the purely military field, Europe’s direct engagement of Russia remains very (arguably even disappointingly) limited. There are various bilateral military assistance, cooperation and outreach programmes – some uniquely valuable, but all largely uncoordinated among each other.² The EU itself has a few “military” projects it supports mainly out of the Community budget (TACIS). And even in the potentially interesting military industrial field, there have been some spectacular “misses” (such as the joint Russian-Ukrainian AN-70), and very few significant success stories.³ Theatre ballistic missile defence appeared to be another promising avenue for cooperation, but has not led to any real breakthroughs.

Changes in the context and the terms of security cooperation

Security and military cooperation remains of course one of the most difficult areas of inter-state cooperation. NATO’s successes in establishing and sustaining historically unique degrees of military cooperation may have obfuscated some of these intrinsic difficulties. But anybody

¹ Starting under the French presidency with the “Joint Declaration on strengthening dialogue and cooperation on political and security matters in Europe”.

² The coordination of these different military-to-military programmes of EU MS, for instance, seems like a worthwhile task for the new EU Military Staff; or even the new EU Institute for Security Studies.

familiar with NATO's (and a fortiori the EU's) daily struggle to sustain that level of military cooperation even between fairly like-minded and structured countries is likely to be more cautious on cooperation with Russia in these areas.

Recent changes in the security agenda have only brought these intrinsic difficulties more to the fore. *Traditional territorial defence* probably remains the "easiest" area to establish the durable, formal and very politically "heavy" forms of security cooperation that NATO for instance embodies. But this is also an area where close cooperation with Russia remains a very distant possibility, even if only because of Russia's very exposed Southern borders. The two up-and-coming areas on the security agenda – peace operations and countering the new terrorism – clearly lend themselves much more to cooperation with Russia, but the nature and the terms of security cooperation in those areas are likely to be very different from the institutional arrangements that we are familiar with today.

Russia clearly has some experience (albeit a chequered one) with *peace support operations* both in its own "near abroad" and in Europe's "near abroad" – some of which shoulder-to-shoulder with European forces. There is also a clear possibility for closer Russian-European cooperation in such operations in areas where for various reasons US participation might be problematic. The Caucasus and Moldova have for instance been mentioned as possibilities here.⁴ But it has to be recognised that with the important exception of the Balkans, peace operations are frequently coalitions of the willing that tend to be cobbled together relatively quickly outside of the existing institutional arrangements, and therefore are more difficult to use for setting up new durable (and costly – both financially and politically) mechanisms. Furthermore Europe's recent activism in this area has led to a situation where its military resources are extremely stretched (and likely to remain so for quite some time) because of existing commitments, thus hardly leaving any room for taking on sizeable new commitments in any of those areas.

Another potential limiting factor for closer European-Russian military cooperation in the field is the fact that Russia remains a problematic security partner. Despite some encouraging recent trends, Russia's current military policy seems largely untenable (for reasons that would ring

³ Possible exceptions here are agreements between Russia and the W/EU Satellite Centre on the provision of Russian satellite imagery; and on long-haul air transport with the now-defunct WEU itself.

⁴ See e.g. Michael Emerson, *The Elephant and the Bear*, CEPS, October 2001.

home with Europe's own military establishment), with extreme financial constraints⁵ and many urgent needs to even sustain minimal military capabilities, let alone modernise. Quite a few European militaries now also have real life experiences in fighting alongside Russian soldiers – an experience that has not always strengthened Russia's reputation. Russia's track record in civil military relations is likely to remain another sensitive topic. And finally, President Putin has embarked upon a little noticed but quite dramatic international military retrenchment (withdrawal from Vietnam and Cuba; cutbacks in the Balkans; signs of a rethinking of Russian military presence in the near abroad⁶; and the decision not to participate in the peace operations in Afghanistan), that makes Russian participation in "new" international peace operations less rather than more likely.

Finally also the "new-style" security threats ("*hyperterrorism*") that have gained so much attention since 9-11, are even less likely to require the types of security arrangements that are frequently discussed between Russia and the West. In the first instance, these threats require multi-dimensional responses including parties of our governments that have little experience (and quite a few professional impediments) in sustained institutional – let alone politically visible – cooperation. But maybe even more importantly that that, the network nature of these new opponents is probably best combated through (looser) network coalitions than through more formal arrangements with pre-established mechanisms and procedures.

None of this is to argue that security cooperation with Russia cannot or should not be improved. But it does suggest that the terms of such an enhanced cooperation may look different from the ones we have grown accustomed to thinking about.

The transatlantic dimension

Europe and the United States are currently pursuing different security agendas with respect to Russia employing different policy instruments and through different institutions. Without

⁵ The Russian military budget increased by 8% in 2000, and 5% in 2001; but it is still only € billion (e.g. President Bush's FY02 proposal for BMD alone is about the same sum). This sum has to sustain a still-bloated military infrastructure, a costly war in Chechnya that is cannibalising extremely scarce resources (at a very high opportunity given the puny size of the Russian federal budget) and a military reform.

⁶ The costs of maintaining the Black Sea fleet in Ukraine, peacekeeping in the Balkans, Georgia and Moldova, 201st motorised infantry division in Tajikistan and other military facilities abroad add up to \$50

exaggerating the differences, it is important to note that Russia's "ideal" security policy looks somewhat different as seen from European capitals than from Washington, D.C. While both Europe and the US are interested in a further normalisation and demilitarisation of Russia's foreign and security policy and of genuine military reform, they also differ in their views on the desirability of genuinely multilateral approaches to security challenges; on the relative weight of the military arrow in the external affairs quiver (and hence spending), and also on the political weight of the military in the decision-making process.

Also with respect to *instruments*, European member states tend to put more emphasis on indirect levers over Russian security policy than on direct security negotiations. The institutional translation of this difference is that Europe is also investing more political and other capital into the EU as a main vehicle for dealing with Russia than in NATO. This is all the more relevant since the "new" security agenda focuses more on non-military aspects of security, which belong to the Justice and Home Affairs portfolio and therefore to the EU. Since the mechanisms of information-exchange and coordination between the "principals" dealing with Russia in the EU and in the US remain far less developed than the analogous mechanisms in NATO on purely military issues, this may lead to a dangerous disconnect. There is therefore probably still quite a bit of room for improving the direct US-EU-interface on issues such as Russia,⁷ of which an improved EU-NATO interface could be the "military arm".

To give just a few concrete (modest but with significant value-added) examples in the security sphere where this direct EU-US interface could be useful:

- Although the current US administration has shied back from its initial threat to scale back the Comprehensive Threat Reduction, the long-term future of this programme remains questionable. In the meanwhile, the EU is setting up its own joint action in this field, which is likely to receive very significant long-term financial support from a number of EU MS. Coordinating these two programmes in a politically visible way could be quite useful to all involved.

million a month, more than half a billion dollars a year – more than 5% of the Russian defence budget, and that for a military contingent that represents less than 1% of the Russian armed forces.

⁷ The EU's Common Strategy on Russia foreshadows such a triangular formula, but its implementation to date has been disappointingly limited.

- There could probably be better coordination between the respective outreach programmes to the Russian military. One of the main centres of transfer of knowledge in this field, for instance, is the Marshall Center,⁸ funded predominantly by the US Congress (with some additional support from the German government) but located in the Bavarian Alps. Making this a truly joint US-EU centre might be a useful idea.
- The EU could also cooperate more closely with NATO in some of these areas. One possibility here might be the Partnership for Peace Consortium for Defence Academies and Security Institutes, which is for the time being primarily funded by the US, German and Swiss governments, but where the EU could probably make both a substantive and a material contribution.⁹

Potential Dangers of Putin's Rapprochement to the US

In Europe, President Putin's first steps in the international arena have been warmly welcomed (far more so than President Bush's first steps). The higher emphasis put by Russia on Europe as an international actor, but also the more relaxed attitude towards the US role in Europe could not fail to please European capitals, which had been pushing hard for such an outcome for quite some time.

Yet in recent months, President Putin has gone significantly further than those initial changes, seemingly reversing some long-held Russian reservations on some key security issues such as US plans for missile defence, cooperation with the US in general and NATO enlargement. Many European governments seem to have been taken aback by this apparent Russian volte-face, and one of their big fears concerns the sustainability of this new Russian policy, and the potential consequences of a backlash.

In Russia, President Putin's bold new overtures towards the West may be sustainable in the short- to medium-run within the current political environment. Yet Russia's political scene remains fragile. For the first time under Putin's stewardship, just as he is about to embark on his "third

⁸ <http://www.marshallcenter.org>

⁹ <http://www.pfpconsortium.org>

wave” of reforms¹⁰ and a quickly dwindling petrodollar buffer, real opposition is emerging from various quarters.¹¹ Against this background, the sustainability of this new more pro-western policy will to a large extent be predicated on some concessions from the West which are likely to prove quite difficult.¹²

On the *Western* side too, the sustainability of the current course seems questionable. The overall picture of developments in Russia continues to look decidedly ambiguous from a Western point of view. Encouraging signs in the economic and legal realms are being counterbalanced by disturbing realities and trends in others (the re-centralisation of power, the way in which the war in Chechnya is fought, freedom of the press,...). Although some of these more negative elements have recently been downplayed by the West in recent months for obvious tactical reasons, this is unlikely to continue forever – neither in Western Europe (where the first signs are already visible¹³), nor in the United States

This seems most likely in the *US*, where Russia’s salience has shrunk to a level that many in Europe find frighteningly low. The political economy of the US relationship with Russia is radically different from that of Western Europe, with fairly insignificant economic links, no direct neighbourhood issues and no real political (or economic) constituency for a sustained activist Russia policy. If – as now looks likely – some of the last residual cold war issues (mainly in offensive and defensive strategic nuclear arms) get solved, Russia will become even less important in US foreign and security policy. And even with respect to the “new” agenda on which the allegedly “new” strategic partnership is based, Russia’s “value added” may start to look very differently after the current stage of the war on terrorism.

¹⁰ Igor Bunin, Alexei Zudin, Boris Makarenko, Alexei Makarkin, Mark Urnov, *Nachalo “tretei volny”*: *Analiz i prognoz politicheskoi situatsii*, Tsentra politicheskikh tehnologii, 04.12.01. <http://www.politcom.ru>.

¹¹ Including in his own ‘constituency’, the so-called ‘power structures’.

¹² Dmitri Glinski-Vassiliev nicely summarises Putin’s record so far: “The ABM Treaty has been discarded; the militaries of several NATO countries are present on the soil of Russia’s immediate neighbours and, at least in a formal sense, allies, and are not rushing to leave; and NATO has apparently opted for the ‘big-bang’ scenario of admitting all nine East European applicants, while the plan to re-format Russia’s relations with the Alliance into the ‘group of twenty’ giving it an equal voice with others has been shelved” (see Dmitri Glinski-Vassiliev, *The Myth of the New Détente: The Roots of Putin’s Pro-US Policy*. PONARS Policy Memo No. 239, December 2001).

¹³ See for instance Marie Jégo, “Oubliées par l’Occident, les exactions russes en Tchétchénie se multiplient”, *Le Monde*, 27 December 2001.

But even in *Europe*, it is unclear whether the current system could “carry” a new qualitative improvement in the security relationship. Already as a consequence of 9-11, the European Union has ratcheted up its institutional relationship with Russia by providing a new consultation mechanism with the new Political and Security Committee (a mechanism that doesn’t even exist with the US¹⁴). Given the current disappointing state of CFSP and ESDP, it is unclear whether this new channel will really live up to Russian expectations, especially since as in NATO it is essentially restricted to an exchange of information.

If Russian disappointment with the “quid pro quo” it receives for its pro-Western security *aggiornamento* leads to a new reversal in Russian security thinking (or even a backlash), the consequences might be quite severe. Russian recriminations would probably be even more virulent than in previous episodes like German reunification or the first round of NATO enlargement, and Russian-Western relations might be set back at least a couple of years.

Two scenarios

Looking ahead to the near to medium-term future, the security relationship between Russia and Western Europe will to some extent depend on the course of the current Russia-US rapprochement. If the security relationship between the US and Russia remains positive – an outcome all Europeans undoubtedly prefer – the Russia-Western European security relationship will likely remain at its current low levels with few incentives for any substantial policy changes. The fundamental integrationist strategy will be pursued on its own terms, and the security relationship between the two will be gradually but slowly upgraded.

If on the other hand the current US-Russian rapprochement does indeed prove to be unsustainable and is either stopped or reversed, all sides involved might have an interest in keeping the (modest) Russia-Europe security channel as alive as possible, and as isolated as possible from the vagaries of US-Russia (and possibly also NATO-Russia) relations.

If correct, this assessment would suggest that Europe’s current strategy is robust against both scenarios, and it would only strengthen the argument to shy away from any radical new moves.

¹⁴ Although the EU’s relationship with the US has other mechanisms – both formal and informal, and both within the ‘New Transatlantic Agenda’ and outside of it.

What is to be done?

Most of the proponents of a bold new upgrade of the relationship argue for some new institutional arrangement. The extent to which both Russia and the West appear to be enamoured with “institutional solutions” to the Russia problématique is sometimes striking. Russia expands a lot of political capital to get a foot into various institutional doors; and both NATO and the European Union are frequently equally tempted to satisfy either Russia’s or their own dissatisfaction with Russia’s current place by creating “new” institutional instruments, such as the Permanent Joint Council, the new NATO-Russia format at “20”, the new COPS mechanism in the EU, etc. This institutional fetishism is all the more regrettable since these new constructs are superimposed on existing mechanisms that have frequently not been used to their full potential – a point that applies to both the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between Russia and the EU; but also to NATO’s Partnership for Peace, EAPC and PJC.

President Putin’s new openings towards the US should be welcomed and no doubt be reciprocated in some way. It is unclear, however, whether Europe can or even should be the one to reciprocate. From a European point of view, the relationship with Russia is arguably too important to leave it hostage to the conjuncture of various impulses. Europe has a long-term strategy for Russia in place. It may not always be clearly or convincingly articulated in official EU documents. It is also not easily “mediatised” and may lack the drama of the US-Russia relationship. But it is also far more intrusive, as it reaches into the fibre of the Russian society and polity in a way that no other external actor could currently come close to.¹⁵ And it is probably also robust against a couple of short- to medium-term scenarios that could be envisaged for the future relationship between Russia and the West. It would be a pity to squander the advantages of that strategy for short-term political expediency.

¹⁵ This is clearly borne out by various public opinion and elite polls, showing that Europe and the European Union are significantly more popular in Russia than the United States.

AN AMERICAN VIEW ON RUSSIAN SECURITY POLICY AND EU-RUSSIAN RELATIONS

ANGELA STENT^{*}

American and European views of Russia's security policy reflect a basic asymmetry: the United States evaluates Russian policy in the context of its global interests and perspectives, whereas EU countries focus on the security implications of Russia's actions for Europe. While America and Europe share a fundamental commitment to integrating Russia into European and Euro-Atlantic structures, their interpretations of Russia's overall interests and actions occasionally differ because the United States views Russia's policies through a global, as opposed to a regional prism. Moreover, on some issues, such as relations with Iran or the role of the United Nations, the EU's perspectives are closer to those of Russia than to those of America. Similarly, Russian policies toward the United States and toward the EU are based on different calculations: a decade after the collapse of the USSR, Russia continues to seek recognition from the United States as an equal global partner, whereas its goals toward the EU are more regionally focused. Although the Soviet penchant for seeking to exploit differences between the United States and its European partners has largely disappeared since communism collapsed, the current Russian government is not averse to making common cause with European countries on security issues over which much of Europe disagrees with the United States – most notably, the ABM treaty.

American views of Russian security policy fluctuated considerably during the first post-Soviet decade. The Clinton administration embarked on its Russia policy convinced that Russia's domestic developments were the key to determining its foreign policy. It found a responsive partner in Andrei Kozyrev, the first post-communist foreign minister, who encouraged US involvement in Russia's domestic transition and vocally espoused a pro-western policy. By the time Kozyrev was replaced by Yevgenii Primakov in 1996, there was disillusionment with Russia's domestic transition and debates about the United States' role in promoting capitalism Russian-style both in Russia and in the United States. Primakov's rejection of a pro-western policy and espousal of "multi-polarity" as the cornerstone of Russia's security policy evoked considerable criticism in the United States. When Primakov's tenure ended, NATO enlargement,

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the Kosovo campaign and growing Russian economic and political contacts with “rogue” states had considerably soured relations between the two countries. American officials and experts believed that Russia was incapable of abandoning “old thinking” in foreign policy, viewing relations with the United States as a zero-sum game and persisting in supporting states that, from Washington’s viewpoint, supported terrorism and were opposed to US interests. When Putin succeeded Yeltsin, the second Chechen war and Moscow’s continued commitment to promoting a “multi-polar” world placed further distance between America and Russia. By the end of the Clinton administration, relations were at low ebb.

The Bush administration came into office committed to downgrading and normalising relations with Russia, de-personalising them and focusing on a new strategic framework, as opposed to Russia’s domestic situation. Indeed, policy towards Russia became a major issue during the election campaign, and the Congressional Cox Report heavily criticised the Clinton administration for betraying American and Russian interests in its Russia policy.¹ Nevertheless, after taking office, the Bush administration quickly realised that, given its objective of deploying a missile defence system and creating a new strategic framework, intensified dialogue with Russia was essential. When Presidents Bush and Putin met in Ljubljana in June, the obvious rapport between the two presidents was a welcome respite, from the Bush administration’s point of view, from the disagreements between the United States and the EU over a wide range of issues, and European accusations of American unilateralism. Thus, prior to September 11, the US-Russian relationship, including the personal ties between the two presidents, was on a positive trajectory.

The aftermath of September 11: A new security agenda?

Since President’s Putin’s call to President Bush in the immediate aftermath of the terrorist attacks, both the perception and the reality of US-Russian relations has become more positive. From the American point of view, Putin has made the strategic choice to support fully the anti-terrorist coalition by not interfering with US overflights and bases in Central Asia, and has eschewed, for now, talk of multipolarity. Many officials and analysts attribute Putin’s support to pragmatic reasons. More cynical observers point out that the United States and its allies have

¹ See *Russia’s Road to Corruption*.

succeeded in accomplishing what Russia, for the past decade has been unable to do: ridding Afghanistan of the Taliban, whose influence has destabilised a number of Central Asian countries, and whose spillover effects within the Islamic areas of the Russian Federation have caused Moscow great concern over the past years. The anti-terrorist coalition promises to bring greater stability to Central Asia and to Russia. Moreover, by making the direct link between Russia's Chechen problem and Al Qaeda, Putin has all but silenced American criticism of continuing Russian military action in Chechnya.

Although it is undeniable that Russia's security interests are served by America's actions in Afghanistan, it is nevertheless also true that Putin faced considerable domestic opposition, both from the military and parts of the foreign policy elite, to his vocal support for American policies. His willingness not to prevent the establishment of an American military presence in Central Asia, and share Russian intelligence on the Taliban and Al Qaeda, and his muted reaction so far to the Bush administration's announcement that the United States intends to withdraw from the ABM treaty continue to raise opposition domestically. However, his personal popularity is so high that, at this point, this opposition has not cost him politically at home.

As the anti-terrorist campaign continues, the Bush administration seeks to balance its commitment to Missile Defence and withdrawing from the ABM Treaty with its recognition that Russia should receive a quid pro quo for its support of the United States. After all, one could argue that, up till now, Russia's contribution to the anti-terrorist campaign has been greater than that of most of America's NATO allies, with the exception of the United Kingdom. The agreement at Crawford that both sides will pursue deep cuts in their strategic nuclear arsenals was a beginning. After a year-long review of all Comprehensive Threat Reduction programmes in the FSU, the administration has decided to retain the bulk of these programmes, contrary to signals that were initially given in February of 2001. Washington has also offered Russia accelerated WTO membership and the possibility of other economic incentives, including permanent graduation from the Jackson-Vanik amendment tying most-favoured nation status to emigration policies; further debt rescheduling or even debt forgiveness – an issue on which the United States and Russia's major creditor, Germany, do not agree. But there is also recognition that the United States and its allies should take more concrete steps toward encouraging Russia's integration into Euro-Atlantic structures.

As the NATO alliance debates the next round of enlargement before this fall's Prague summit, NATO is seeking to enhance the NATO-Russia relationship and create an institutional framework that will be more effective than the PJC, towards which Russian officials have always felt profound ambivalence. The United States and its European partners are still grappling with the modalities of a new NAC-Russia body. If it is not to be a repeat of the PJC's "19+1", it must give Russia more of a voice – which, as Lord Robertson has said, also implies potentially a veto. From the American point of view, the question is how far Russian thinking on NATO has now evolved since the low point of the Kosovo campaign and whether the innate suspicion of NATO and "zero-sum" mentality has dissipated. Russia's own actions will, of course, have an impact on this debate, and so far, President Putin has responded to the intra-western debate with caution.

Despite this new US-Russian rapprochement, Washington's concerns with other dimensions of Russia's security policies persist. The United States remains preoccupied by the activities of Russian entities – technically not government entities, but closely allied to them – that it considers have exacerbated nuclear proliferation, thus endangering global security. Russia's ties with Iran, Iraq and North Korea are the prime concerns. Washington also remains concerned about Russia's policies towards many of its CIS neighbours, its use of energy leverage in Ukraine and other CIS countries and its continued support of undemocratic regimes, the most egregious example being that of Belarus' Alexander Lukashenko. Thus, the United States continues to view its security relations with Russia within a broader global context.

EU-Russian relations: The US view

Broadly speaking, the United States has supported EU policies toward Russia and has viewed them as complementary to American goals. As expressed in the EU's 1999 common strategy, the twin goals of "a stable, open and pluralistic democracy in Russia, governed by the rule of law and underpinning a prosperous market economy" and "maintaining European stability, promoting global security and responding to the common challenges on the continent through intensified cooperation with Russia" are basically those of the United States.² Throughout much of the 1990s, the United States and the EU shared an assessment of Russia's domestic evolution, and American and EU assistance policies were directed toward similar sectors. American advocacy of

² *Common Strategy of the European Union on Russia*, 4 June 1999, p. 1.

neo-liberal economic policies, however, which were espoused by Gaidar, Chubais and other officials in the early and mid-1990s, were not echoed in EU policies.

Nevertheless, both the United States and the EU recognise the imperative of supporting Russia's institutional integration into Europe as the most desirable path both for Russia and for Europe. Putin has reiterated that he made this choice – for integration with the West – some time ago, and that September 11 was merely the culmination of a long process of resolving Russia's identity. Nevertheless, both the US and the EU recognise that Russia's choice of a European, as opposed to a Eurasian, identity is an ongoing process whose end result is not yet clear.³ Both believe that closer institutional cooperation between the EU and Russia will also affect Russian perceptions of the relative value of a European choice, but that concrete results will be important. In the tradition of Russian modernisers since Peter the Great, reportedly one of Putin's heroes, the Russian president seeks both to import Western techniques and organisational structures and to increase economic and political ties with Europe. Nevertheless, as Putin has also reiterated, Russian history and culture differentiates it from the mainstream of European civilisation, and it is as yet unclear whether Russia's closer integration into European structures will involve a wholesale acceptance of European values. Although these questions might appear at first sight as rather abstract, they do have an impact on security policies, because they affect how Russia views its place in Europe and how far it is willing to eschew its belief in the legitimacy of its uniqueness to become part of the European mainstream.

In terms of EU policies, during the 1990's, there was some concern in Washington that the EU initially moved too cautiously in its move to bring the post-communist states into Europe. Indeed, the United States would have preferred an accelerated timetable for EU enlargement, particularly toward the Baltic States, because that might have altered the debate about NATO enlargement. With the next round of EU enlargement in sight, the US recognises Russian concerns about the impact of Baltic enlargement on Kaliningrad and the ensuing economic and security issues. The place of Kaliningrad, should the Baltic states be invited to join NATO, is also a major Russian preoccupation, although so far Russia has expressed more equanimity about EU Baltic accession than about NATO enlargement to the Baltics.

³ For a discussion of this choice, see Dmitri Trenin, *The End of Eurasia: Russia on the Border between Geopolitics and Globalization* (Moscow: Moscow Carnegie Center, 2001).

Both the EU and NATO have recognised that, in the post-September 11 climate, it behooves the West to reassure Russia that the dual enlargements will bring greater prosperity and security closer to Russia's borders and that neither enlargement is intended to isolate Russia. Indeed, given the large Russian minorities in Estonia and Latvia, the EU will gain a bloc of Russian-speaking members after Baltic accession. Since Russians still view NATO through a cold-war lens but do not have this perception of the EU, it is easier to dispel Russian concerns about EU enlargement. Nevertheless, the Schengen regime and its impact on Russian mobility – particularly in Kaliningrad – pose major challenges. Despite Western assurances to Russia, it is undeniable that the prospect of an EU and NATO that stop at Russia's borders could have the impact of creating a Europe of “haves” and “have-nots”, which poses a long-term security challenge to both the United States and the EU. A Europe in which Russia remains outside the mainstream of European stability and prosperity is not a recipe for long-term security on the continent.

As the EU intensifies its cooperation with Russia on a broad range of issues – as outlined in the EU-Russia October 2001 joint statement – the issue of Russia's role in ESDP has become more salient. The initial American response to ESDP ranged from hostility, to scepticism, to enthusiasm. The Bush administration has generally supported the evolution of ESDP, but continues to express scepticism about the resources that will be devoted to it and whether it will function effectively with these limited resources. Nevertheless, the concept of Russia participating in future ESDP operations of the Petersberg type would probably be welcomed by the United States if they contributed to greater stability in Europe. As the U.S. looks towards phasing out its involvement in the Balkans, there will be new opportunities for European-Russian joint efforts.

Future security challenges and opportunities for US-EU-Russia cooperation

The events of September 11 have made it abundantly clear that traditional security challenges, while still important, have been overshadowed by the new security challenges – terrorism, bioterrorism, WMD proliferation and activities that enable terrorism to flourish, particularly money-laundering and illegal movement of people across borders. Both the EU and the United States have recognised the need to confront these threats more directly, and both have initiated new cooperative mechanisms with Russia for dealing with these challenges. However, these new

mechanisms will have to be improved and their area of application widened. Intelligence-sharing between the United States, the EU and Russia will remain a major means of coping with our common threats, and will require overcoming traditional constraints on such cooperation.

Beyond dealing with money-laundering and similar issues, however, the United States, Russia and the EU must begin thinking more proactively about broader security in the post-Soviet space. Before September 11, the major reasons that the West paid any attention to Russia, according to one scholar, were three-fold: “the atom, the veto and the location”.⁴ Since the terrorist attacks, location has assumed an even greater importance. Neither America nor Europe has, so far, approached its policies toward Russia in the broader framework of the entire post-Soviet space. Yet this is now more imperative than before, because Russia’s security is indivisible from its place in that post-Soviet space. Central Asia and the Caucasus may be a long way from Europe and the United States, but their future will be key to dealing with the longer-term threat that terrorism poses in a globalised world. The EU and the United States should discuss more systematically a possible framework for post-Taliban cooperation in Central Asia. This could include the United States, the EU, Russia, China, the Central Asian states and their South Asian neighbours, and would involve creating and maintaining a more stable environment there. There would of necessity be a division of labour, since the United States would focus more on military tasks, and the EU more on non- military economic and political tasks. Such a framework will be difficult to construct and maintain. Nevertheless, if the history of the past 20 years teaches us anything, it is that walking away from Afghanistan and Central Asia after a military victory – or defeat – is a recipe for future troubles.

In the 1990s, the United States and the EU were largely preoccupied with containing the potentially negative impact of Russia’s weakness on the rest of Europe. September 11 showed that we have to move beyond this containment policy. The challenge for the United States and the EU in the next decade is to encourage a domestic evolution in Russia that combines market-oriented economic reform with as much pluralism, democracy and rule of law as the Putin administration will tolerate, while strengthening trilateral security cooperation in Europe. But that cooperation will have to move beyond Europe’s borders to the broader post-Soviet space. Otherwise, the EU’s goals, as set out in the Common Strategy on Russia, will not be realised and

⁴ Robert Legvold, “Russia’s Unformed Foreign Policy,” *Foreign Affairs*, September-October 2001.

Russia will remain outside Europe's zone of prosperity, democracy and security, with potentially devastating consequences for the entire continent.

ABOUT THE EUROPEAN SECURITY FORUM

The Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) and the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) joined forces late in the year 2000, to launch a new forum on European security policy in Brussels. The objective of the *European Security Forum* is to bring together senior officials and experts from EU and Euro-Atlantic Partnership countries, including the United States and Russia, to discuss security issues of strategic importance to Europe. The Forum is jointly directed by CEPS and the IISS and is hosted by CEPS in Brussels.

The Forum brings together a select group of personalities from the Brussels institutions (EU, NATO and diplomatic missions), national governments, parliaments, business, media and independent experts. The informal and confidential character of the Forum enables participants to exchange ideas freely.

The aim of the initiative is to think ahead about the strategic security agenda for Europe, treating both its European and transatlantic implications. The topics to be addressed are selected from an open list that includes crisis management, defence capabilities, security concepts, defence industries and institutional developments (including enlargement) of the EU and NATO.

The Forum has about 60 members, who are invited to all meetings and receive current information on the activities of the Forum. This group meets every other month in a closed session to discuss a pre-arranged topic under Chatham House rules. The Forum meetings are presided over by François Heisbourg, Chairman of the Geneva Centre for Security Policy. As a general rule, three short issue papers are commissioned from independent experts for each session presenting EU, US and Russian viewpoints on the topic.

The Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) is an independent policy research institute founded in Brussels in 1983, with the aim of producing sound policy research leading to constructive solutions to the challenges facing Europe.

The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), founded in London in 1958, is the leading international and independent organisation for the study of military strategy, arms control, regional security and conflict resolution.