A ‘New Cold War’ or ‘War Amongst the People’?

Encouraging cooperation, limiting confrontation, and ensuring Russia’s ability to address threats to national security in changing global context.

A briefing prepared for the President of the Russian Federation before a meeting with security ministers on 1 March, 2016
Executive Summary

Many of the challenges we face today are far removed from traditional threats to our nation’s borders. Yet distinguishing between ‘new security threats’ and ‘territorial defence’ creates a false dichotomy.

While the transnational and revolutionary nature of ‘new threats’ has empowered new actors, it has also provided new means for old adversaries of the Russian Federation to wreak havoc both within our borders and throughout the near abroad. (NSS-NCW, 2016) Thus, we must address not only actions which deliberately target Russia, but also those which undermine the legitimacy and security of other governments worldwide (Manilov, 1997). Addressing these ‘new threats’ is ‘territorial defence;’ strengthening territorial integrity is protecting us from ‘new threats.’

Furthermore, Russia is becoming ever stronger and more independent. Yet as we have progressed, our success has provoked countermoves from the West as they attempt to ensure their domination in global affairs. (NSS-Jamestown, 2016)

Therefore, to most comprehensively address security threats to our people and nation, we must evaluate and implement several options: Encouraging cooperation with the West, limiting confrontations, bolstering our domestic power, and aiming to provide new leadership on a regional and global scale.

The policy options in this brief are provided to enable an adaptable response: cooperating with the West on issues which necessitate an international response, but confronting them where we must to protect Russian interests and values.
Situation Brief

Defining ‘New Security Threats’ and ‘Territorial Defence’

‘New security threats’ can be military, political, informational, economic, or cultural. They are enabled and exacerbated by new communications and manufacturing technology, and their transnational nature mandates an international response. (Nye, 2015)

Examples of New Security Threats include:
- International Terrorism
- Use of Weapons of Mass Destruction by Non-State Actors
- Organised Crime
- Corruption

Territorial Defence (also ‘territorial integrity’) no longer entails mere physical threats; it also encompasses political, economic, and informational threats (Gerasimov, 2013). Addressing these threats requires a strong economy, legitimate and just governance, and above all else safeguarding of Russian values and interests and fostering a sense of national unity (Manilov, 2013)

Examples of Threats to Territorial Defence include:
- Colour Revolutions
- Domestic Terrorism
- Economic Instability
- Expansion of Military Infrastructure in the Near Abroad

Rapprochement and Cooperation with the West

We must demonstrate a firm commitment to ‘universal security’, however, Russia must be included as a leader on equal terms (Zacharova, 2015) This means consolidating our interests, while also leaving open the option of stronger relations with the North Atlantic Alliance—should they choose to respect Russian interests and heritage as equally important as their own. Syria and Ukraine, Da’esh and Al-Shabbab all present new opportunities for both cooperation and confrontation, and as such, must be negotiated carefully (RBTH, 2016).
**Territorial Integrity**

Security is as much about economics, health, and social order as anything else; in many ways ‘security has become virtually indistinguishable from governance.

Gaps in healthcare, education, financial stability, and national unity provide points of leverage for those who would threaten legitimate governments. (NSS, 2015)

- Bad health undermines morale and undermines Russian prestige
- Corruption and patronage allow transnational crime and other new domestic threats to fester
- Economic instability drains defence budgets and creates public unrest
- Challenges to Russian speakers create divisions and undermine the legitimacy of the government (Manilov, 1997)

Territorial integrity is only as strong as national unity; if those who provoke Colour Revolutions are empowered by the same new technology that toppled governments in the Middle East, Russia would be vulnerable not just domestically, but its borders would also be compromised (CSIS). We must ensure we eliminate the vulnerabilities which enabled such revolutions to take place and support our allies who have successfully weathered such revolutions.
Policy Options

Option 1: Preventing Western Dominance while Limiting Confrontation

US/EU/NATO and expansion of military infrastructure towards Russian Borders challenges Russian interests and exacerbates the threat of illegitimate regime change. (NSS-Jamestown, 2016)

Details:
   a. Ensuring the rights of Russian speakers and ethnic Russians in border states
   b. Continued Support for Assad in Syria
   c. Continued Support for Russians in Crimea and the Donbass

Advantages:
   a. Mitigating threat of Western influence on domestic affairs (Lavrov, 2016)
   b. Ensuring respect for Russian interests both domestically and abroad (Manilov, 1997)
   c. Stronger sense of National Pride

Limitations:
   a. West may equally confront us and turn these issues into flashpoints, further exacerbating conflicts (Medvedev, 2016)
   b. Syria – Assad is one of the only leaders to successfully resist the revolutions aggravated by the West; we cannot allow the West to perpetuate their toppling of legitimate governments who refuse to align with Western interests. (The Economist, 2015)
Option 2: Rapprochement and Cooperation with the West

‘We need to launch an intensive dialogue on the future architecture of Euro-Atlantic security, global stability and regional threats more than ever before.’ (Medvedev, 2016) Areas for cooperation include counter-terrorism, nuclear non-proliferation, strategic arms limitation, etc. (see Belfer, 2015 for more)

Details:
   a. Continued dialogue through both military-to-military and diplomatic channels
      • ‘Group of Wise Men’ (Kramer, 2009)

Advantages:
   a. Eases sanctions, opens trade
   b. Allows Russia to emerge as leader, and perhaps negotiate new norms
   c. Addressing ‘the baffling complexity of entwined conflicts and expanded conflict areas’ (Lavrov, 2016)

Limitations
   a. Conditions must be easing of sanctions and recognizance of Russian interests as legitimate
   b. Attempts to change agreements retroactively in order to achieve ‘unilateral advantages’ often impede success (Medvedev, 2016)
      • Ukraine – NATO violate Minsk Protocols, attempts to revise and reinterpret them.
   c. ‘Old instincts die hard’
      • NATO and the EU have ‘refused full cooperation with Russia,’ ‘created the image of an enemy,’ and ‘deployed arms’ to reinforce these assertions. (Lavrov, 2016)

‘Are our differences really so deep, or are they not worth it?’
-Dmitri Medvedev, 2016
Option 3: Bolstering Russian Unity and Strength at Home

Given the use of technology and foreign agents to topple legitimate governments in Ukraine, Libya, and Syria, we must simultaneously address the factors which make States vulnerable to such attacks, as well as organising sufficient means to address attacks should they arise (Gerasimov, 2013).

Details:
   a. ’Improved social outreach’ with a strong emphasis on legitimacy of governance and defence of Russian values (Galeotti, 2015).
   b. Ensuring ‘counter-intelligence services can identify and turn, convict, or expel those who would fund and stir up divisive local movements.’ Not just physically, but also in the information domain (Galetotti 2015).
   c. Continued focus on economic development and anti-corruption measures.

Advantages:
   a. Defence against ‘hybrid warfare’ and ‘grey-zone incursions’ by West and Non-State Actors (Galeotti, 2016)
   b. Increased international prestige and respect as a ‘global power.’

Limitations:
   a. Transnational threats require transnational cooperation, and new technologies and growing interdependence make these harder to counter alone.
   b. By more rigorously attempting to ensure domestic stability, we are liable to exacerbate certain destabilising factors.
      • Provoking Ultra-Nationalism
      • Deepening Social Divides

‘Security and governance have become virtually indistinguishable’
-Galeotti, 2016

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Final Recommendations

While it is undeniable that security in a changing global context mandates more communication, trust, and cooperation between Russia and other major powers, we must also be capable of pursuing a strong and independent security policy should the West refuse to cooperate or pose a threat itself.

Therefore, some combination of options one and two would provide a robust and adaptable approach to both new security threats and threats to territorial integrity. We must cooperate with the West where we can, and confront them where we must, tailoring each situation to meet the ever changing needs of a transcontinental country (Stavridis, 2016).

This means pursuing open dialogue with our Western counterparts, both through military channels, diplomatic communications, and informal meetings such as those conducted by the ‘Wise Men.’ We must endeavour to work more closely with US forces in their efforts to counter Da’esh, illicit transnational economic activity, and international terrorism while also limiting their ability to undermine legitimate governments.

‘We must cooperate with the West where we can, and confront them where we must’

We must search for compromise in Syria and Ukraine, while ensuring Russian interests are adequately represented and respected. Should the West continue to disregard our values, heritage, and interests, we must be ready and capable to address such threats alone.
**Key Sources**

**General:**
Medvedev, Dmitri (2016)
  • Remarks by Medvedev at the Munich Security Conference. A good overview of current issues, as well as opportunities for cooperation.

Lavrov, Sergey (2016)
http://www.mid.ru/en/web/guest/foreign_policy/international_safety/conflicts/-/asset_publisher/xIEMTQ3OvzcA/content/id/2086892
  • Remarks by Lavrov at Munich Security Conference. Builds on necessity of cooperation, but also pinpoints issues of confrontation and miscommunication.

‘Russia’s National Security Strategy’ (2016)
http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=44978&cHash=7195f2b66e7e7d1595d74d46c31aa2ad#.VsRh_Mc7TZr
  • An English language translation of the NSS

**Option 1:**
The Economist (2015)
  • Explanation for Russian support of Assad in Syria. Notes long historical connection and influence of Western efforts in Middle East.

Gerasimov (2013)
https://inmoscowsshadows.wordpress.com/2014/07/06/the-gerasimov-doctrine-and-russian-non-linear-war/
  • Translation of ‘Gerasimov Doctrine’ published in the *Military-Industrial Courier* [Link to original Russian available on website]).

**Option 2:**
‘Russia in Review.’ (2016)
http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/publication/26170/russia_in_review.html
  • Lists opportunities for cooperation between the US and Russia and details steps that have been taken to help ensure their implementation.

Kramer (2009)
  • Details of the ‘Group of Wise Men’ made up of former US and Russian government officials (to include Henry Kissenger and Charles Schultz) who are working to improve US-Russia Relations.

**Option 3:**
Galeotti (2015)

• How to defend against ‘hybrid warfare’. Keys are good governance and building legitimacy.

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Stavridis, James (2016) “Russia’s Future Lies With Europe and the West”
<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/admiral-jim-stavridis-ret/new-cold-war_b_9252730.html?>

Stavridis, James (2016) “Are We Entering a New Cold War?”
<http://foreignpolicy.com/2016/02/17/are-we-entering-a-new-cold-war-russia-europe/>