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**RUSSIA'S GREAT POWER SECURITY RELATIONSHIP WITH  
THE UNITED STATES**

by

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## *Preface*

In the decade following the Cold War, the US-Russia security relationship was either clouded by suspicion (lingering from the past) or overcome with hope (preoccupation with an ideal relationship that is years in the future, or may never exist). The 11 Sept 2001 attacks brought clarity to Washington and Moscow—since then, the foreign policy machines of these two nations are attempting to calibrate on multiple interests. It is into the fray of the undefined “post-Post Cold War” environment that this research paper leaps.

Thanks go to my research advisor Lt Col Jerry Pritchard for suggesting the topic and encouraging me to pursue it. He first asked the question: “Will Russia pose future threats to US national security, or can it cooperatively integrate into the international community without causing a military conflict with the US?” I responded with a barrage of variants and angles on the issue that fortunately met with approval. Eventually, I settled on a research question that looked somewhat familiar to the original: “What is Russia’s current security relationship with the US and how is it meeting common challenges?”

Thanks go as well to Stephanie Havron of the Air University Library for her initiative and assistance in locating source material. To the maximum extent, I researched works that addressed security concerns after the relationship took a dramatic, post-11 Sept turn. If I used sources written prior to that date, I sought out those authors most prescient about the challenges that terrorism, WMD, and regional issues would bring to the American and Russian relationship.

### *Abstract*

In a post-11 Sept atmosphere fraught with security challenges, the US and Russia are attempting to forge a security relationship that is mutually beneficial. For the US, its expectations of the relationship are outlined in documents such as the 2002 National Security Strategy (NSS), National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), and other key strategies forged in the current Bush Administration. For Russia, its expectations are provided in various forums by President Vladimir Putin, Foreign Minister Igor S. Ivanov, and leading Russian security experts. As varying expectations meet reality, a key question emerges: What is Russia's current security relationship with the US and how is it meeting common challenges?

The method for answering this question is a critical policy analysis involving two parts. The first part assesses Russia's post-Cold War security identity in three phases (failed superpower, great power, and friendly power). From the US perspective, Russia's security identity in the 1990s was a failed superpower—a dysfunctional, imploding empire that felt more comfortable confronting the west rather than embracing it. Beginning in 2000, Russia under Putin initiated reforms that brought stability and economic growth. Correspondingly, the US perspective of Russia's security identity changed; it now views Russia as a great power capable of pragmatic influence in the international diplomatic, economic, and military spheres. The third security identity for Russia is one that proves most elusive—friendly power. The US assumed Russia would migrate to this phase immediately after the Cold War. Today, many foreign policy

experts continue to predict an end state for Russia as a long-term US ally. In early 2003, however, Russia is still far from the free society and reliable ally that characterize friendly powers such as the United Kingdom and Japan.

After establishing Russia's security identity as a great power, the second part of this work pinpoints three security challenges where US and Russia interests overlap: terrorism, WMD proliferation, and the regional instability to Russia's south and east. Because it is a great power pursuing its own interests, Russia oscillates between harmony and conflict with the US in facing these challenges. Not surprisingly, Moscow puts the interests of the Russian state first and foremost, especially its economic agenda. Unlike the past when it confronted the US on virtually every security issue, Russia is presently using its great power security identity to serve as a partner, cooperator, or balancer to the US on the three overlapping challenges.

With this two-pronged assessment of Russia's security identity and common security challenges, a better perspective of the US-Russian security relationship emerges. Suspicion and hope continue to cloud the perspectives in Moscow and Washington, forming an unrealistic view of Russia as a failed superpower or friendly power. By acknowledging Russia's security identity as a great power, one can gain a better understanding of the motives of Russia in the international system. With this identity as a backdrop, the agreements and differences between the US and Russia on common security challenges are also revealed.

## **Introduction**

*The new Russia is not the Soviet Union. Even more important, nor is she the old Russian Empire. Russia's new borders, possibilities, culture, civilization, and inner development have all contributed to making Russia a new state, one that has not previously existed on the global political or geographical map.<sup>1</sup>*

—Sergey V. Kortunov, Chief of Staff, Council of Russian Defense

## **Background**

When the White House released the 2002 National Security Strategy, most of the attention at home and abroad focused on its mention of preemption as a security tool. As compared to the 2000 version, the new strategy reflects the post-11 Sept 2001 environment where assertiveness in national security is a vital assumption. Aside from preemption, a less obvious but very telling departure from previous strategies is that the US now considers Russia a great power, driven by purely realistic interests but a potential ally that could one day back the American side of the “balance of power that favors human freedom.”<sup>2</sup>

The conferring of “great power” status upon his state is exactly what Russian president Putin hoped for when the Bush Administration came into power in early 2001. In the ten years following the official end of the Cold War in 1991, the US-Russia security relationship was largely based on Russia's identity as a failed superpower. Although the Yeltsin-Clinton friendship was seen as positive (resulting in “the most Russophile Washington administration in

history”), the security relationship between the two former Cold War adversaries only worsened as the 1990s rolled on, reaching its nadir during the war against Serbia in 1999.<sup>3</sup> Since then, Russia and the US have attempted to calibrate on security interests. While the 2003 war in Iraq negatively impacted Russian-American relations, long-term mutual threats (such as terrorism, WMD, and regional instability) will force the two former adversaries to focus on similar objectives well into the future.

### **The Question**

With two new heads of state (Bush and Putin), common threats (terrorism, WMD, greater regional instability), and a more realpolitik approach towards security cooperation, Russia and the US are forging into the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century with a new mindset—more open, certainly, but no less based on each side’s national interest than before. The overarching question thus emerges: What is the basis of Russia’s current security relationship with the US and how is it meeting common challenges?

### **The Approach (Methodology)**

The method for answering this question is a critical policy analysis that uses a two-part process. The first part assesses Russia’s post-Cold War security identity in three phases (failed superpower, great power, and friendly power). In examining the phases, Russia shed its failed superpower identity and is now adjusting to its role as great power, which helps explain Moscow’s pragmatic approach to its security relationship with the US. While Russia is cohering as a great power, it does not embody a friendly power -- the security identity America would like to see as the desired end state for Russia. The second part of this work uses Russia’s great power identity to pinpoint its progress on three security challenges where US and Russia interests

overlap: terrorism, WMD proliferation, and the Arc of Instability to Russia's south and east.

Because it is a great power pursuing its own interests, Russia both harmonizes and conflicts with the US in facing these challenges. Specifically, Russia is using its great power security identity to act as a partner, cooperater, or balancer to the US on the three security overlaps.

Despite common security threats, US and Russia foreign policies remain multifaceted, often shifting based on public opinion and domestic politics. Understanding the logic of the arguments outlined in this work should help US security strategists and their Russian counterparts remain cognizant of the practicalities apparent in the current security relationship. Achieving a successful security relationship with the US is no guarantee that Russia will move beyond great power to friendly power (partner and ally). Continued economic growth, long-term stability, and sustained cooperation must also form the basis of a long-term, successful partnership. Of course, Russia's complex nature may keep it from the friendly power phase indefinitely, by choice or by circumstances. But failure to meet the security challenges Russia faces in tandem with the US will diminish its stability and ability to wield power in the international system, making Russia neither friendly nor great.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Sergey V. Iortunov, "Russia: Imperial Ambitions and National Interest," n.p., on-line, Internet, 1 February 2003, available from <http://www.stanford.edu/group/Russia20.html>.

<sup>2</sup> *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, September 2002), i.

<sup>3</sup> Dmitri Trenin, "Less is More," in *What Does the World Want From America: International Perspectives on US Foreign Policy*, ed. Alexander T.J. Lennon (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2002), 85.

## Part 1

### America's Evolving Perception of Russia's Security Identity

*The United States needs to recognize that Russia is a great power, and that we will always have interests that conflict as well as coincide.<sup>1</sup>*

—Condoleezza Rice, US National Security Advisor

America's security relationship with Russia is an evolving process. In the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, America viewed Russia as a Eurasian great power – a vast nation-state that balanced its rivals through alliances based on political, military, and economic power. After opposing common enemies in two world wars, the US and Russia achieved bipolar balance with a preponderance of global power, thus elevating them both from great power to superpower status. The decade after the Cold War saw the US solidify its role as preeminent global power, while Russia sank in the opposite direction as a failed superpower. Now, in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, America again views Russia as a great power, with a few experts predicting that a future Russia could move beyond great power and embody the ideal American ally – a friendly power.

Russia's three security identities of the post-Cold War era – failed superpower (Phase I), great power (Phase II), and friendly power (Phase III) – reveal key distinctions about the US-Russia security relationship. While Russia is gaining strength in Phase II, an understanding of the other phases sheds relevant light on past mistakes and future expectations. What Russia's

security policy represented in the 1990s and assumes about its role in the 21<sup>st</sup> century helps form a critical understanding of Russia as a current great power.

### **Phase I: Failed Superpower (Prior State)**

Russia's declining geopolitical influence began long before the collapse of the Soviet Union. With military disaster in Afghanistan, political failures such as the demise of the Warsaw Pact, and imperial overstretch in the Third World, Moscow could no longer rely on its resources and influence to support superpower ambitions.<sup>2</sup> By 1991, the USSR was through. While America held out great hope for Russia's future in the early 1990s, burgeoning challenges such as the loss fourteen Soviet republics, a stagnating military, ruined economy, and proliferating crime gave little indication that Russia could provide a better future for its citizens.

#### **Decade of Doubt, 1991-2000**

For America, the euphoria of winning the Cold War conflicted with its perception of Russia's new instability -- a potentially greater security risk than anything seen during the bipolar conflict. The US sought to overcome this instability by pursuing democratic and economic reforms in the new Russian Federation, but US politicians and investors alike grew frustrated, pessimistic, and ultimately resigned to an antagonistic Moscow with each subsequent crisis. To point, Russia barely averted a civil war between Yeltsin and rival legislators (1993), began its long war in Chechnya (1994), saw its economy collapse (1998), and further alienated Washington by opposing NATO intervention in Kosovo (1999).<sup>3</sup>

#### **The Lens: Wilsonian Liberalism**

Although in hindsight America's efforts to westernize 1990s Russia seemed doomed to failure, at the time, President Clinton and his foreign policy team thought a Wilsonian approach towards Russia was the surest way to prevent a backslide into communism and resumption of

superpower ambitions.<sup>4</sup> With post-WWII Germany and Japan as role-model examples of American nation building, the US wanted to show Russia “the right choices.”<sup>5</sup> But nothing resembling a Marshall Plan materialized—America’s \$4 billion foreign aid for market building, democratic reforms, and weapons reduction could in no way eliminate Cold War legacies in a few short years.<sup>6</sup> Instead, America’s misdiagnosed optimism towards Russia only exacerbated the dire view that Russians held of their failed super-state. While Presidents Clinton and Yelstin kept a personal friendship, the shifting political landscape within Russia left a different impression. Particularly, Russia did not want its western integration to hinge on its democratic failings, such as human rights abuses in Chechnya, media suppression, or other political abuses.<sup>7</sup>

### **The Reality: Instability and Confrontation**

Attempts to turn Russia into a westernized nation and American ally in the aftermath of the Cold War did not address the crumbling superpower’s lost sense of security. The damage was threefold. First, Russia lost its sphere of influence—Central and Eastern Europe, Afghanistan, Mongolia, and Third World nations like Cuba. Second, Russia lost control over its former republics, as Ukraine, Central Asia, Baltic and Caucasus states gained independence and reoriented economically and politically towards the west, Asia, or Middle East. Third, as its external influence dissipated, Russia saw its own economic, legal, political, military and social systems in constant crisis. In the span of 30 months, Russia “lost 50 percent of the Soviet population, 60 percent of its industrial capacity, and 70 percent of the land mass.”<sup>8</sup>

Amid this new geopolitical insecurity, Russia’s foreign policy yielded to internal pressure. Disillusioned with the US and bent on restoring Soviet-style diplomatic might, Russia developed a security doctrine that pleased hard-line communist and nationalist elements by catering to their anti-Americanism.<sup>9</sup> After 1996, Russia opposed the US position on multiple security issues:

Chechnya, Kosovo, relations with rogue states, missile defense, espionage, selling sensitive technology to the highest bidder, etc.<sup>10</sup> Since it could not “stand alone” on these issues, Russia aligned with the Mideast and Asia to counteract America’s growing influence and NATO expansion.

Such an anti-west stance perpetuated failure. By leaning on the Mideast, Russia courted controversy when Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov promoted friendship with such isolated figures as Saddam Hussein, Hafez al-Assad, Muammar Qaddafi, and Yasser Arafat. In a show of support for Iraq during the US and British air strikes in Dec 1998, Primakov “called for a Russia-China-India alliance” to oppose the US role in the Mideast.<sup>11</sup> In looking to Beijing for support, Russia hoped to use its diplomatic and military ties to China as a counterweight to NATO. Instead, Russia found that China’s economic power advantage gave Moscow “junior partner” status in the Russo-Sino alliance. While the old Soviet guard pushed for better ties with Beijing, a growing number of Russian security experts began predicting that China, not NATO and the west, was the greater security threat in the long-term.<sup>12</sup>

### **A Fathomable Bottom**

Few expected Russia to reverse its confrontational path with the US, especially as NATO intervened in Kosovo. True to form, Russia opposed the air campaign over Serbia and claimed with “vehement rhetoric” that NATO demanded too many concessions from the Serbian government.<sup>13</sup> But early signs of change appeared in June 1999 when Russia joined the US and NATO in persuading Belgrade to accept peace terms. For all its bad decisions and failed policies in the 1990s, Russia proved (despite a nearly 50% drop in its GDP and widespread instability) that its collective sanity remained intact. To its credit, Russia did not implode into

the “apocalyptic scenarios” that many predicted.<sup>14</sup> Instead, Russia demonstrated as a failed superpower that its confrontational rhetoric seldom involved hostile action.

## **Phase II: Great Power (Current State)**

Russia proved that it could not shift from failed superpower (Phase I) to friendly power (Phase III) without first regaining stability and confidence as a great power (Phase II). After Putin came to power in early 2000, Russia slowly eased off its anti-US stance and showed signs of establishing commonality with the US, EU, and NATO. Improvements to the Russian economy took root at this time as a combination of new fiscal policies and less confrontational diplomacy led to a rise in Russia’s global standing. This new Russia sought great power status not through tough security agendas but through a more benign economic path. The following remarks by Putin to his Foreign Ministry set the tone:

Russia has emerged from a period of prolonged confrontation in international relations. It is no longer seen as an enemy or adversary, but increasingly as a predictable, reliable, business-like, and equal partner. As a matter of fact, this is all we need from the outside world.<sup>15</sup>

### **The New Perception of Russia as Great Power**

America’s changing perception of Russia from failure to a budding success occurred over a relatively short period, beginning in early 2001 and concluding 11 Sept 2001 with Putin’s call to Bush offering loyal support in the war against terrorism. At least two factors contributed to US acceptance of Russia as a great power even before 9/11. First, Putin’s rise to power amid broad popular support allowed him to shift Russia’s foreign policy away from failed practices in the 1990s to foster better economic growth and improved ties to the west. This included a more pragmatic and tolerant stance towards NATO, the EU, and US security concerns. Second, Bush responded to Putin’s western-leaning overtures at their first meeting in June 2001 and began

addressing Russia's place in the international system in positive terms. Accelerated after 9/11, America's new strategic approach towards Russia included pragmatism towards mutual security issues and encouragement for Putin's integration into the west.

### **The Foundation for Great Power in Russia**

America's understanding of Russia as a post-11 Sept great power is not based simply on perceptions and foreign policy postures. In concrete terms, Russia under Putin is in better shape across the board than it was during the Yeltsin years. While elements of Russia's power taken separately may not appear significant, the combination of factors such as internal stability, economic growth, military improvement, and diplomatic clout characterize Russia's improving sources of power in Phase II.

*Internal stability.* Putin's consolidation of state power, specifically his ability to unite rival agencies, oligarchs, political groups, and diverse citizens in Russia's vast geographic homeland, kept Russia from fragmenting as many predicted.<sup>16</sup> Despite "vicious" elections and clampdown on press freedoms, Russia is strengthening internally with improved democratic processes, a legal system that is reducing the mafia's influence, judicial reforms, vast natural resources, educated workforce, labor codes, and many other civil improvement plans.<sup>17</sup>

*Economic growth.* Since its financial crash in Aug 1998, Russia has substantially gained economic clout with the US and the west. A stable market economy with WTO membership as a near-term goal, Russia gets high marks for its anti-inflationary measures, stabilized ruble, and domestic investment.<sup>18</sup> Although poverty and unemployment continue to hamper economic growth, Russia reversed deficit spending and instituted a popular 13 percent flat tax.<sup>19</sup> Foreign investment is climbing, especially in critical areas as oil development. Perhaps Putin's most

impressive success to date is the extent that privatized land is revitalizing the internal stability of his nation, a complete reversal of seven decades of land-control under Soviet rule.<sup>20</sup>

*Military improvement.* Russia's conventional military is not its most impressive source of great power. Presently, it cannot sustain major operations beyond its borders.<sup>21</sup> After drawing down from a force of 4.3m in 1986 to its current 1m, Russia's military finds itself lacking in readiness, training and modernization; procurement of new weapons systems now stagnates.<sup>22</sup> On the positive side, Russian soldiers are finally getting paid, Putin's reforms following the Kursk disaster show promise, and Russian military doctrine is finally moving beyond a 50-year anti-NATO stance, focusing instead on pre-emptive engagements against terrorist groups and their state sponsors. Most importantly, because Russia can still destroy most of the globe with nuclear weapons, it remains a global power on arms issues, nuclear policy, and deterrence.

*Diplomatic clout.* The most visible aspect of Russia's new security identity is its current diplomatic clout. To erase a century of poor diplomatic ties to the west, Putin and his foreign policy team aspire to the diplomatic traditions of Russia's great power past. Instead of territorial expansion or ideological indoctrination, the "Putin Doctrine" seeks to improve Russia's image to all (not select) trading partners. The global war on terror, incentive to join the west, conflict over Iraq—each of these is based first and foremost on economic interests. Not surprisingly, Putin's strategy reduces Russia's isolation. Heads of state from Beijing to Berlin, Paris to Baghdad, see political and economic advantages in Moscow, and base their diplomacy accordingly.

### **Implications of the Putin Doctrine for the US**

In viewing Russia's great power diplomacy, US diplomats prefer the Putin Doctrine over Yeltsin's diplomacy because it addresses political and economic realities. First, Russia's relationship with the US is less confrontational and intrusive on realpolitik issues such as

national security than it was in the 1990s. The Putin Doctrine ensures that internal human, political, financial, and military resources “aren’t diverted to resolve external conflicts.”<sup>23</sup> While this partially explains why Russia is not supporting the US in Iraq, Putin is hopeful the US and the west will continue to invest time, energy, and resources in Russia via public policy and private sector ties. Second, as the next section will outline, Russia is more inclined to accommodate US security intentions than it did as a failed superpower, especially when there is an economic benefit for Russia.<sup>24</sup> Despite disapproval from many of his military advisors, Putin approved the closure of an intelligence collection center in Cuba, vacated a naval base in Vietnam, and facilitated US withdrawal from ABM.<sup>25</sup> The reason for Russia’s concessions had less to do with diplomacy and more to do with Putin’s pragmatic view that fiscal savings and foreign investment outweigh Cold War-era infrastructure, policy, and treaties. America responded with praise for Putin and his policies in general, even on the contentious issue of Chechnya.<sup>26</sup>

The downside to the Putin’s great power diplomacy is that it cultivates too many partners. While it desires strategic partnership with the US, the Putin Doctrine operates on an “axis of friendship” that views everyone as a money-raising source.<sup>27</sup> In essence, the Putin Doctrine is free-market diplomacy. It allows Russia to keep economic “friendships” with China, North Korea, India, Europe, Iraq, Iran, Yemen, Latin America, and virtually everyone else.<sup>28</sup> Unfortunately, Russia cannot please everyone with this strategy. For instance, Russia set back relations with the US by aligning with France and Germany against war with Iraq. By pursuing investments in Baghdad and better economic ties with the EU, Russia showed how its quest for influence within the Mideast and Europe can run counter to America’s security interests.

At present, Russia continues to view itself as a great power and is treated as such by a growing number of states. Despite Russia's opposition on Iraq, Washington understands Russia is still a key figure in European, Middle Eastern, and Asian security issues. Russia is central to "future of strategic arms control, missile defense, and dealing with nuclear proliferation and international terrorism."<sup>29</sup> With more natural resources than anyone in the world, including vast oil and gas reserves, it no longer makes strategic sense nor is it vital to US security to treat Russia as a failed superpower. But is it realistic to view Russia as a future friendly power?

### **Phase III: Friendly Power (US-Preferred Partner End State)**

For the US, it is better to have security relationship with friendly powers than with great powers. Just as the great powers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century precipitated the destructive world wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a pure balance of power system in today's world runs counter to the US's stabilizing role in global security, such as leading the war on terror, reducing state-on-state conflict, etc. A potential reordering of EU and NATO amid conflicting security and economic agendas foreshadows a return a traditional balance of power system where states entered alliances to advance their own security interests while reducing the security advantages of their rivals. In such a case, the US should adapt to balancing efforts by rival great powers such as Russia and China. An alternate view is advocated by the US in its new NSS – the intent is to have friendly powers on one side, with opponents of human, political, and economic liberty on the other.<sup>30</sup>

#### **Friendly Power Criteria**

Friendly powers include Great Britain, Australia, Japan, Spain, and Italy. First, friendly powers possess long-term political and economic stability, embody democratic values, and promote good diplomatic ties with the US. Second, friendly powers do not balance each other on

security issues; any competition occurs in markets. Third, friendly powers do not emerge overnight, but mature over time. Disagreements occur, but harsh foreign policy rhetoric and opposition on vital matters of national security are rarely evident. Great powers confront and balance each other; if they cooperate in a security relationship, it is usually on an ad hoc basis. Friendly powers, on the other hand, act as long-term partners and allies.

### **Russia's Progress Towards Phase III**

Russia is a great power that shows weakness in each of the criteria above, thus falling far short of friendly power. In the criteria of stability, democratic values, and diplomatic ties, Russia still seeks to unite its fragmented parts. Although Russia's political and military elites back Putin's foreign policy decisions, regional oligarchs still disrupt internal stability.<sup>31</sup> Putin's reelection campaign in 2004 will test his ability to hold these rival factions in check. In the criteria of balancing on security issues, Russia is a security partner in the war on terror. But economic priorities outweigh common sense on security issues such as WMD proliferation and Middle East stability.<sup>32</sup> In the criteria of maturing towards friendly power, Russia shows some cooperation but few signs of true partnership on arms control, NATO, NMD, Chechnya, etc. Not enough time has passed, nor enough democratization occurred, to make Russia a friendly power to the US. And outside the Kremlin, few are sure if Russia's courtship of EU leaders is part of a long-term strategy to divide the west and reduce the US role in global security.

Russia ultimately needs to move beyond Putin's "Byzantine-like establishment" to gain full acceptance by the US.<sup>33</sup> For his part, President Bush is encouraging Russia to pursue a transition to Phase III: "We need a strong and democratic Russia as our friend and partner."<sup>34</sup> Despite the Iraq setback, foreign policy experts still believe that Russia is laying the groundwork for long-term friendly ties towards the US, as evidenced in one report submitted to Congress:

Changes of position that Putin has made on major issues in relations with the US are cumulatively so substantial that they seem too high a price to pay in exchange for some short-term tactical objective(s)...concessions that Moscow made to Washington in the past year could be difficult or impossible to reverse.<sup>35</sup>

Of course, similar observations in 1989-1992 about irreversibility preceded the “Cold Peace” of the Yeltsin years. Inspired by their impressions of stability under Putin, advocates for a friendly Russia often fail to base their assumptions on concrete evidence of a long-term security partnership. To help in this assessment, the next section determines the status of the US-Russia relationship on key security issues.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> James Goldgeier and Michael McFaul, “George W. Bush and Russia,” *Current History: A Journal of Contemporary World Affairs*, 101, no. 657 (October 2002): 314.

<sup>2</sup> Robert V. Daniels, “Putin’s Patient Strategy,” *The New Leader* (July/August 2002): 7.

<sup>3</sup> Andrew C. Kuchins, “Introduction,” *Russia After the Fall*, ed. Andrew C. Kuchins (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2002), 1-18; Dmitri Trenin, “From Pragmatism to Strategic Choice,” *Russia After the Fall*, 188-189.

<sup>4</sup> Strobe Talbot, *The Russia Hand: A Memoir of Presidential Diplomacy* (New York: Random House, 2002), 46-56.

<sup>5</sup> Paige Bryan Sullivan, *US-Russia Relations: From Idealism to Realism* (Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2002), 137.

<sup>6</sup> Stuart D. Goldman, *Russia*, Issue Brief for Congress (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 17 September 2002), ii.

<sup>7</sup> Goldgeier and McFaul, 313; Sullivan, 64-66.

<sup>8</sup> Trenin, *End of Eurasia: Russia on the Border Between Geopolitics and Globalization* (Washington, D.C. and Moscow: Brookings Institution Press, 2002), 78-91.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 275; Goldman, CRS-6.

<sup>10</sup> Angela Stent and Lilia Shevtsova, “America, Russia, and Europe: A Realignment?” *Survival*, 44, no. 4 (Winter 2002-03): 122.

<sup>11</sup> Goldman, *Russian National Security After 11 Sept*, Issue Brief for Congress (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 20 August 2002), CRS-2.

<sup>12</sup> V.N. Tsygichko and A.A. Piontkovsiy, “Russia’s National Security in the Early 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” *Military Thought*, 10, no. 2 (2001): 75.

<sup>13</sup> Goldman, *Russia*, CRS-7.

<sup>14</sup> Kuchins, 5.

<sup>15</sup> Vladimir Putin, “Key Tasks of Russian Diplomacy,” Statement by RF President V.V. Putin to Russia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Moscow, 12 July 2002. *International Affairs*, 48, no. 4 (2002): 1-7.

<sup>16</sup> James Alexander, Andrei A. Degtyarev, and Vladimir Gel’man, “Democratization Challenged: The Role of the Regional Elites,” *Fragmented Space: In the Russian Federation*, ed. Blair A. Ruble, Jodi Koehn, and Nancy E. Popson (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2001), 157-217; Celeste A. Wallander, “Russian National Security Policy in 2000,” *PONARS Policy Memo 102*, January 2000, 6, on-line, Internet, 13 February 2003, available from <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/ponars/>.

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<sup>19</sup> Daniels, 8; Stent and Shevtsova, 130-131.

<sup>20</sup> Gregory Feifer, “Russia: Farmland Reform May Be Putin’s Lasting Legacy,” *Johnson’s Russia List*, 15 February 2003. n.p., on-line, Internet, 16 February 2003, available from <http://www.cdi.org>.

<sup>21</sup> Goldman, *Russian National Security After 11 Sept*, CRS-31.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, CRS-7; Goldman, *Russia*, ii.

<sup>23</sup> “Igor Ivanov Defends Post-Sept 11 Foreign Policy,” *Izvestia*, 10 July 2002, 1, in *The Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, vol. 54, No. 28 (7 August 2002): 1.

<sup>24</sup> Stent and Shevtsova, 122.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Goldgeier and McFaul, 318; Goldman, *Russian National Security After 11 Sept*, CRS-1.

<sup>27</sup> Kuchins, 1-18; Stent and Shevtsova, 126.

<sup>28</sup> “The Putin Doctrine,” *Vremya MN*, 15 July 2002, 3, in “Is There a Putin Doctrine in Foreign Policy?,” *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, 54, no. 31 (28 August 2002): 1-3.

<sup>29</sup> Goldman, *Russia*, CRS-2.

<sup>30</sup> *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, September 2002), i.

<sup>31</sup> “Igor Ivanov Defends Post-Sept 11 Foreign Policy,” 3; Nichols, 310.

<sup>32</sup> Nichols, 308-311.

<sup>33</sup> “The Putin Doctrine,” 3.

<sup>34</sup> President George W. Bush, quoted in Arkady Dubnov, “Putin and Bush Reach Maturity,” *Vremya Novostei*, 22 November 2002, 1, in “Brief Putin-Bush Summit Exudes Accord,” *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, 54, no. 47 (18 December 2002): 3.

<sup>35</sup> Goldman, *Russian National Security After 11 Sept*, CRS-14.

## Part 2

### Where Russia's Great Power Security Challenges Overlap with the US

*Foreign policy cannot be based on the principle, "You scratch my back, and I'll scratch yours." Foreign policy should ultimately yield dividends, of course, but not because you're bargaining, but because you're constructing it the right way.<sup>1</sup>*

—Igor Ivanov, Russia Foreign Minister, 10 Jul 2002

*We will preserve the peace by building good relations among great powers.<sup>2</sup>*

— US National Security Strategy, Sept 2002

As America and Russia continue forward in the increasingly insecure environment of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, both states are finding benefits in mutually addressing security threats. In particular, US and Russia security interests overlap on three key challenges: organized terrorism, WMD proliferation, and the growing Arc of Instability that spreads along Russia's southern border from the Near East to the Far East. In each of these challenges, the US and Russia are seeking common ground. But as Russia's security identity is one of great power and not friendly power, counterproductive elements exist and vary according to the circumstances of the security challenge.

In assessing these three overlaps, Russia's status is clarified as "partner," "cooperator," or "balancer." To delineate the terms, partner (a prerequisite for friendly power) implies unity with the U.S. in policy and action; every attempt is made to mitigate counterproductive elements.

Cooperator (a downgraded form of partner, associated with great power) implies ad hoc support for mutual security; counterproductive policy and actions are more evident. Balancer (firmly in the great power realm) implies selective engagement on mutual security; policy and actions support or oppose the US, depending on the perceived power advantage.

## **Overlap 1: Terrorism**

America as a global power and Russia as a rising great power both face enormous security threats from organized terrorism. More so than the Cold War terrorism of freedom fighters, hijackers, and ideologues, the new strain is shaped by virulent blend of ethnic, religious, and political ideology, induced asymmetrically at sources of vulnerability, and executed in such a manner to maximize violence.<sup>3</sup> Because of their direct threat to state power, global economics, and morale, Islamist terrorists such as al Qaeda emerge as the new enemy; in fact, they represent the US and Russia's first mutual adversary since 1945. At Shanghai on 21 Oct 2001, Bush and Putin clearly articulated their position on organized terrorism: "The President of the United States and the President of Russia categorically reject and resolutely condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, regardless of motive."<sup>4</sup>

### **America's View of Terrorism**

As it embarks in the new century, America's greatest security concern is terrorism. As 9/11 proved, America's geopolitical stature no longer guarantees freedom from attack. First, America sees terrorists as a dangerous threat to American sovereignty. Terrorism is able to do what most of the world's conventional militaries cannot: strike America on its own soil. Second, terrorism flows from international sources and will require a long-term approach to eradicate. Therefore, America must take a preemptive and global stance to "destroy the threat before it reaches our borders."<sup>5</sup> Third, America needs partners willing to use any political, economic, or military

means necessary to deter and defeat terrorism. This partnership may involve hostilities with sovereign states that offer terrorists safe refuge, logistics, arms, and financial support.

### **Russia's Parallel Interest**

Moscow understands that partnership with the US is vital in the war on terrorism. First, Russia shares the American view that terrorism is a dangerous threat to state sovereignty. Like al Qaeda in the US, the Chechens proved capable of launching terrorist strikes in the heart of Russia. In the Moscow Theater hostage crisis, the Chechens “combined the murder-suicide bombing tactics of al Qaeda, Hamas, the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade and Islamic Jihad with hostage-taking.”<sup>6</sup> Second, Russia is also resigned to fighting terrorism’s international sources and due to its proximity to terrorist hotbeds such as Afghanistan, understands the long-term nature of the problem. In its 2000 National Security Concept, Russia reassessed the Chechen threat as more than an internal/separatist issue: “international terrorism has launched an open campaign designed to destabilize the situation in Russia.”<sup>7</sup> All is not in perfect alignment, however. While Russia’s security benefits from the US-led war on terrorism, Russian leaders have not fully overcome their fear of US military presence as a tool against terrorism.<sup>8</sup>

### **Russia's Status in Overlap 1: Partner**

Russia is a partner in the war of terrorism largely because of Putin. While not concerned with the full spectrum of terrorism (i.e., the terrorism spawned by drug wars in Latin America more vitally affects the US), Putin is dedicated to the fight against Islamist terrorism.<sup>9</sup> Russia shared information, granted overflights, provided forces and gave specialized support for the US and Northern Alliance offensive against the Taliban and al Qaeda. As the war on terrorism continues, Russia is assisting US efforts to purge al Qaeda from the Caucasus and Central Asia.

To this end, the two countries' intelligence services continue to share information on terrorist organizations, methods, and overlapping ties to organized crime.

Russia's partnership with the US on terrorism is all the more impressive because of the potential political costs to Putin. He accepted many concessions in order to keep the relationship intact, such as his moderated opposition to NATO expansion, US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty, and missile defense.<sup>10</sup> When his defense minister opposed US operations in Central Asia, Putin overruled him and effectively voided Russia's national security and foreign policy concepts that warned of US intervention in the C.I.S.<sup>11</sup> In return, the coalition against terrorism directly benefited Russia's security. As Foreign Policy Minister Igor S. Ivanov admitted, "what was accomplished through the joint efforts of the coalition Russia could not have done on its own."<sup>12</sup> In 2003, the Bush Administration continues to back Russia's anti-terrorist rhetoric on Chechnya, while voicing praise for Russia as an "excellent partner in the war on terror."<sup>13</sup>

However, the excellent rapport between Washington and Moscow on this challenge may have shallow roots. Beyond NATO, little permanent infrastructure exists for the two sides to work terrorist issues. Even if Putin keeps his presidency in 2004, his doctrine of economically providing for Russia's future comes at the expense of its security. As the next overlap details, counterproductive efforts such as arms and technology deals with Iran and support for Middle East dictators make short-term economic sense in Moscow. But Russia is creating greater long-term threats by enabling regimes whose support for terrorism destabilizes the region and harms not only US security, but also Russia's.<sup>14</sup>

## **Overlap 2: Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)**

The proliferation of nuclear, biological, and chemical WMD is a security issue with catastrophic implications. During the Cold War, the US and USSR became "status-quo, risk

averse” rivals who took great strides to responsibly manage their WMD capabilities.<sup>15</sup> In today’s environment, WMD proliferates not only in states friendly to the west, but among unfriendly states, failed-states, and non-state actors such as terrorist groups. The issue involves more than just WMD possession; the intent to use WMD in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is clearly a reality.

### **America’s Concerns**

The US understands all too well that its adversaries can achieve strategic effects by inflicting indiscriminate civilian casualties using any unconventional means available. WMD in the wrong hands could involve destructive scenarios that make 11 Sept look mild. Potential terrorist use of WMD could include the use of radioactive dispersal devices (dirty bombs) on civilian targets, bio-terror attacks, or conventional attacks against chemical or nuclear plants in the US.<sup>16</sup> As for undesirable states controlling WMD resources, Iraq and North Korea are clear examples of irresponsible and harmful regimes using WMD acquisition as a means of dictating security terms to the international community.

In devising countermeasures to such threats, the US adapted a threefold approach in its December 2002 *National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction*. First, the US and its partners must globally deter states and terrorists from using WMD. Second, in the event of a WMD attack, the US and its partners must find a way to mitigate the effects. Third, the US and its partners must prevent terrorists and states from acquiring WMD.<sup>17</sup> It is on this third point that Russia plays its most crucial role, but one that it also falls short.

### **Russia’s Role**

In May 2002, Russia and the US signed the Treaty of Moscow—this agreement paves the way for deep cuts in the US and Russian strategic nuclear force; it also addresses potential cooperation on missile defense. The treaty reveals a limitation as well. While the US places

great importance on “stockpile stewardship” issues such as proper storing, monitoring, and security for long-term nuclear weapons storage, Russia – with its limited fiscal resources and vast bureaucratic oversight – is unable to put forward the same effort.<sup>18</sup>

This creates a dilemma for Russia and its role in WMD proliferation. With its Cold War experience in managing threat issues, its nuclear stockpile, and its close proximity to unstable regions where new WMD threats originate, Russia is vital to US efforts in controlling WMD. On the flipside, Russia is part of the proliferation problem, since Moscow’s economic priorities have thus far failed to terminate sales of nuclear materials, missile technology, and expertise to questionable buyers.

### **Russia’s Status in Overlap 2: Cooperator**

Unlike its overlapping interests on organized terrorism, Russia’s policy and actions in helping the US address the proliferation of WMD make it a cooperator, not a partner. A partner would better regulate its arsenal of WMD weapons and materials and factor in the long-term strategic effects for failing to do so. Instead, Russia puts forth efforts to support mutual goals with the US on proliferation, but also plays the role of a great power more concerned with financial self-interest than with the ulterior motives of its clients.

In its efforts to help, Russia is cooperating with US concerns that nuclear, biological, and chemical materials are safeguarded together and disposed of accordingly. Threat reduction assistance is in place, as an assortment of US congressional and G-8 measures help reduce WMD proliferation in Russia by tying responsible behavior to debt relief, WMD storage facilities, etc.<sup>19</sup> Russia’s Defense Minister places nonproliferation of WMD at the top of Russia’s strategic priorities, and offers to support and upgrade any international treaties that make this happen.

The problem is that Russia's cooperation on WMD only goes so far; it instead solely pursues diplomatic means, not military or economic pressure to address the challenge. On the issue of backing preemptive military force against sponsors of WMD proliferation, Russia is very clear: "this may only be considered as a last resort, with UN Security Council sanction."<sup>20</sup> And Russia's short-term economic goals seek to avoid costly expenditures on long-term projects that address safe and effective WMD management.

In short, concerns still outweigh optimism on Russia's role in WMD proliferation. The threat is twofold. First, Russia is transferring WMD materials, delivery systems, and associated technology to questionable states for economic profit. These rogue states could then use WMD to advance their own security agendas on the international stage, either by threat or by use of WMD, or subversively putting WMD into the hands of terrorists in order to strike opponents (which could obviously include the US and Russia).<sup>21</sup>

Second and far more dangerous is Russia's potential for "private sector" or illegal export of WMD. Russia has 20,000 nuclear warheads, 160 tons of excess weapons-grade plutonium, and 1000 tons of excess enriched uranium housed among 120 separate facilities and storage sites.<sup>22</sup> Bomb making equipment, nerve agents, chemical stockpiles, and unknown biological programs exist in one state or another—many in rundown buildings with questionable security.<sup>23</sup> Over one million Russians work in the nuclear facility network, either in production, storage, employment, dismantling, or government oversight. Unemployment in the industry is high, making experienced personnel vulnerable to bribes or black market profit. In fact, Russia reported "23 attempts to steal fissile materials" between 1991-1999, some with insider support.<sup>24</sup>

Taken together, Russia's "arsenal of mega-terrorism" is a disaster waiting to happen.<sup>25</sup>

Russia needs to move beyond its diplomatic rhetoric and become a partner with the US on the full spectrum of options against WMD proliferation. As 11 Sept and the Moscow Theater takeover proved, enemies of the US and Russia show a propensity to cause massive civilian casualties for political effect. WMD will further enable extremist agendas, as evidenced by Osama bin Laden's 1998 declaration that obtaining WMD is a "religious duty."<sup>26</sup>

### **Overlap 3: A Growing Arc of Instability**

The "Arc of Instability" is a geopolitical reference used by Putin to describe Russia's insecure borders to the south and east. A variety of political, social, economic, and military threats emanate from the arc, which includes such diverse areas as the Caucasus region, Middle East, Central Asia, and the Russian Far East. Russia could hardly stabilize the arc even as a superpower; as a current great power and potential friendly power, Russia lacks the vast resources, influence, and commitment to address the arc's myriad threats. The Putin Doctrine recognizes this--to preserve its internal resources and reduce exposure to external threats, Russia is now more open to U.S. presence in its former sphere of influence to help mitigate instability.

#### **US Stake in the Arc of Instability**

For the U.S., the Arc of Instability is not just a Russian or even a Eurasian security problem. Instead, the arc affects U.S. vital interests by creating breeding grounds for terrorism, WMD proliferation, radical anti-Americanism, and economic threats to global stability. The US cannot address the arc unilaterally; even with its impressive instruments of power, the US's best hope is that a friendly Russia can eventually solve many of the arc's security issues in ways favorable to the west. Such an outcome may take years—in the immediacy to take on terrorism and WMD, the US is increasing its role in forming a "stable neighborhood" around Russia.<sup>27</sup>

### **Russia's Status in Overlap 3: Cooperator/Balancer**

Depending on the arc threat, Russia is cooperating with the US or balancing against its security concerns. The following identifies specific arc challenges to US and Russian security, and assesses how Russia's status as cooperator or balancer impacts its security ties to the U.S.

*Caucasus.* From both US and Russia perspectives, Chechnya destabilizes the strategic Caspian region. While its self-determination began the cycle of violence with Russia, Chechnya evolved post-9/11 into a greater threat due to terrorist recruiting, financial support from state sponsors of terrorism, repressive Islamism, and spreading dissent that impacts economic interests such as oil development.<sup>28</sup> With ties to al Qaeda, Chechnya added a WMD dimension to its operations with the 1996 deployment of a dirty bomb in Moscow. Mindful of such threats, the US is equipping and training 500 Georgian to deter terrorists in the region.<sup>29</sup> Russia does not oppose US intervention in the Caucasus and cooperates on intelligence, but Moscow is raising fears with its strong talk of preemptive strikes into Georgia if US support in the region fails.<sup>30</sup>

*Central Asia.* Aware of its past failings in Afghanistan, Russia is nevertheless pursuing economic interests in the region while relying on the US presence to stabilize the region.<sup>31</sup> In addition to Afghanistan, the Central Asia states produce tense ethnic instability, crime, drug-trade, and the spread of radical Islam. The strong influence of Saudi Wahhabism exists in the region, particularly in Uzbekistan where rival factions are recruiting al Qaeda in a jihad against the Uzbek government. China complicates strategy in Central Asia as militant Islam threatens its northwest provinces. Oil and gas issues add to the tensions and balance US-Russia-China interests in Central Asia, but the greater concern is that future Taliban governments will emerge and give al Qaeda-type organizations "military training, battle experience, weapons, funding, access to the drug trade, and contacts with the whole world of Islamic radicalism."<sup>32</sup>

*China.* US interest is to keep Russia pro-western but also exert a positive influence on China's integration with the US economy. The US and Russia both view China as a trading partner that is economically strong and politically isolated, with its nationalism in check. If the latter two change (political isolation and nationalism), Russia and the US will face significant security challenges. To prevent China from gaining strength as a strategic threat, Russia may balance against the US on issues such as NMD because it instills a security dilemma in China, leading to an arms race Russia wants to avoid.<sup>33</sup> Russia sees the US as "long-term guarantor of the territorial status quo in northeast Asia," which bodes well for future partnership.<sup>34</sup>

*North Korea.* For the US, North Korea has remained a military threat since the Korean War; 37,000 US troops in South Korea continue to serve as a buffer. With a nuclear threat and hostile government, North Korea poses a direct strategic threat to the Far East—hardly good news for Russia. Russia is cooperating diplomatically on North Korea's nuclear grandstanding and threats of military force, but Russia's economic ties to North Korea remain counter-productive. In response, the US sees China as a more reliable negotiator with Pyongyang.

*Oil market instability:* As a balancer to the US in the Mideast, Russia weakens the international fight against terrorism and proliferation of WMD because it benefits economically from the status quo in the region. Because one-fifth of its budget depends on oil exports, Russia opposed the war in Iraq to prevent an oil glut – if oil prices drop below \$21 dollars per barrel, then Russia's government operates in the red in 2003.<sup>35</sup> Russia's opposition to IRAQI FREEDOM not only cost the US on the battlefield; Russia helped divide world opinion on vital security issues, as appeasement of Hussein implied support for WMD proliferation. It also signaled that totalitarian regimes could dictate terms of security to a compliant international

community. Russia did hedge its bets on Iraq despite balancing against US interests--Moscow is now attempting to secure guarantees from the US for an economic stake in post-Saddam Iraq.<sup>36</sup>

### **Shaping the Arc**

While concern exists that US presence in the arc is a blow to Russia's strategic independence, others see US involvement across the region as a long-term necessity. In the view of one Russian security expert, Russia has "no alternative to this policy, [with] neighbors that aren't the most tranquil or predictable. Only membership in the strong and expanding Western Alliance can ensure the security" of this Arc of Instability.<sup>37</sup> Of course, non-western influences in the region such as China, Pakistan, India, and the Mideast will continue to seek partnership with Russia as well in the struggle to manage the arc's instability. With such competing ties to the arc's security, Russia will always balance against some nation's interest. As Dmitri Trenin suggests, Russia must realize the US is a more reliable strategic partner in the region than any of the other exhausted alternatives such as Russian isolation, or partnership with China, Syria, or Iran.<sup>38</sup> If such thinking takes permanent hold in Moscow, Russia's great power may more closely resemble friendly power.

### **Notes**

<sup>1</sup> "Igor Ivanov Defends Post-Sept 11 Foreign Policy," 1.

<sup>2</sup> NSS, i.

<sup>3</sup> Walter Laqueur, "Postmodern Terrorism," *World Politics Annual Editions 97/98* (Guilford, CT: Dushkin/McGraw Hill, 1997), 258-267.

<sup>4</sup> President George Bush and President Vladimir Putin, Joint Statement, *Foreign Policy Bulletin*, 167.

<sup>5</sup> NSS, i, 6.

<sup>6</sup> Ariel Cohen, "The Fog of Terror: Chechen Hostage-taking in Moscow Left a Toxic Fallout," *NRO*, 14 November 2002, n.p., on-line, Internet, 13 February 2003, available from <http://www.nationalreview.com>.

<sup>7</sup> *National Security Concept of the Russian Federation, Rossiiskaya Gazeta*, 18 January 2000, n.p., on-line, Internet, 26 January 2003, available from <http://www.fas.org/nuk/guide/russia/doctrine.html>; Stephen J. Blank, "Threats to Russian Security: The View From Moscow," *Strategic Studies Institute Report* (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College, July 2000), 28-30.

<sup>8</sup> Defense Minister S. Ivanov, "Strategic Stability at the Contemporary Stage," *International Affairs*, vol. 48, no. 5 (2002): 3; "Igor Ivanov Defends Post-Sept 11 Foreign Policy," 3.

<sup>9</sup> Honorable George Tenet, "Converging Dangers in a Post-9/11 World," *ROA National Security Report*, Washington, D.C. (May 2002), 30.

<sup>10</sup> Goldman, *Russian National Security After 11 Sept*, CRS-4, CRS-31.

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- <sup>11</sup> Ibid.; *National Security Concept of the Russian Federation*, n.p.
- <sup>12</sup> “Igor Ivanov Defends Post-Sept 11 Foreign Policy,” 3.
- <sup>13</sup> Condoleezza Rice, transcript of interview by Andrei Sitov, ITAR-TASS, *Johnson’s Russia List*, 14 February 2003, n.p., on-line, Internet, 14 February 2003, available from <http://www.cdi.org>.
- <sup>14</sup> Robert J. Einhorn and Gary Samore, “Ending Russian Assistance to Iran’s Nuclear Bomb,” *Survival*, vol. 44, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 51-70; Alla Kassianova, “Russia: Still Open to the West? Evolution of the State Identity in the Foreign Policy and Security Discourse,” *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol. 53, no 6, (2001): 821-839.
- <sup>15</sup> NSS, 15.
- <sup>16</sup> Tenet, 30.
- <sup>17</sup> *National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, December 2002), 2.
- <sup>18</sup> Rose Gottemoeller, “The East-West Nuclear Relationship,” *Russia After the Fall*, 273-276.
- <sup>19</sup> Goldman, CRS-20-CRS-22.
- <sup>20</sup> Ivanov, 3-6.
- <sup>21</sup> Robert J. Einhorn and Gary Samore, “Ending Russian Assistance to Iran’s Nuclear Bomb,” *Survival*, vol. 44, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 51-70.
- <sup>22</sup> Mark Galeotti, “Russia’s Arsenal of Megaterrorism,” *Jane’s Intelligence Review*, vol. 14, no. 9 (September 2002): 48-49.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>26</sup> Tenet, 30.
- <sup>27</sup> NSS, 26-27.
- <sup>28</sup> Cohen, 4.
- <sup>29</sup> “Russia vs Georgia: Insurgency or Old-Fashioned Bullying?” *Jane’s Terrorism and Security Monitor* (October 2002): 5; *2002 Year in Review* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 31 December 2002), 6.
- <sup>30</sup> Ivan Safranchuk, “The US National Security Strategy: A Russian Perception,” 26 September 2002, n.p., on-line, Internet, 1 October 2002, available from <http://www.cdi.org/russia/224-1-pr.cfm>; “Russia vs Georgia: Insurgency or Old-Fashioned Bullying?,” 10.
- <sup>31</sup> Eric S. Margolis, *War at the Top of the World: The Struggle for Afghanistan, Kashmir, and Tibet*, rev.ed. (New York: Routledge, 2002), 299-307; “Igor Ivanov Defends Post-Sept 11 Foreign Policy,” 3; Svante E. Cornell, “America in Eurasia: One Year After,” *Current History: A Journal of Contemporary World Affairs*, vol. 101, no. 657 (October 2002): 330.
- <sup>32</sup> Ahmed Rashid, *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002), 8-9, 206-209, 223-225; Cornell, 330-337.
- <sup>33</sup> Trenin, “Less is More,” 92-93.
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid., 92-93.
- <sup>35</sup> Georgy Bovt, “A Gentleman’s Agreement with Specifics,” *Izvestia*, 23 November 2002, 2, in *Current Digest of the Post-Soviet Press*, 54, no. 47 (18 December 02): 2-4.
- <sup>36</sup> Trenin, 94; Bovt, 4.
- <sup>37</sup> “The Putin Doctrine,” 1-3.
- <sup>38</sup> Trenin, *End of Eurasia: Russia on the Border Between Geopolitics and Globalization*, 323-325.

## **Conclusions**

### **Assessing Russia's Security Identity**

The US benefits from having a clear and accurate view of Russia's security identity. Instead of maintaining unrealistic views of Russia as a failed superpower or friendly power, the US should acknowledge that Russia's great power identity forms a middle ground between these two extremes.

First, Russia is no longer a failed superpower. The Soviet superpower identity ended with the USSR's collapse in 1991. The resulting stigma of failure persisted through the 1990s as Russia's instability, confrontational diplomacy, and questionable alliances isolated it from the west. After Yeltsin resigned in 1999, Putin was able to shift Russia away from its failed superpower identity due in large part to improved economic measures and more open, pro-western style of diplomacy. This helped free Russia from its isolation as a failed superpower.

Second, Russia is forging ahead as a great power. Although elements of instability and weakness persist throughout its many regions, Putin's Russia is improving across the board. While vital to its strategic deterrence of foreign military threats, Russia's nuclear arsenal is no longer the centerpiece of its diplomatic clout. Instead, Putin's doctrine of aggressive economic self-interest perpetuates a great power image, with the US, Europe, and China (among others) seeking Russia's political support on a variety of security and economic issues.

Third, Russia is not yet a friendly power. Although the US would like Russia to join its partnership of friendly powers against undemocratic states, Russia is not in the same league as

Great Britain or Japan in terms of internal stability and democratic values. Counterproductive security ties such as the ones Russia has to Iraq, Syria, and Iran also tarnish its image as pro-US.

In short, Russia's current great power identity forms the basis for its security relationship with the US. The US should accept a certain degree of neutrality and Russian self-interest in the near-term. But in the long-term, the onus is on Russia to resist the misuse of its state power in pursuit of economic goals. If Russia (through circumstance or choice) remains a great power, it must at least prove willing to join the US and its friendly powers in full partnership against vital security threats to global stability.

### **Finding Common Challenges**

With Russia's great power security identity as a frame of reference, the second part of this research paper examined three vital security threats to global stability: terrorism, WMD proliferation, and threats from the Arc of Instability. On each of these issues, US and Russia interests overlap. The assessment of Russia's security status as partner, cooperater, or balancer on each of these threats shows Russia's commitment to strengthened security ties to the US, but it also reveals how Russia's economic short-sightedness makes partnership an elusive goal.

First, Russia and the US view terrorism as a dangerous threat to state sovereignty and global stability. While not fully comfortable with US power, Russia is nevertheless a partner in the war on terrorism. To prove his commitment, Putin risked the ire of Russia's elites by forming a strategic alignment with the US on this security overlap. In return, the US offered pragmatic support towards Russia, allowing it to grow as a great power while avoiding the demands previously made for internal reform, full democratization, reducing corruption, human rights in Chechnya, and freedom of the press. On the downside, little permanent infrastructure outside NATO exists for the two sides to combine resources and resolve terrorist issues.

Second, Russia joins the US as a cooperator on reducing WMD proliferation. Russia is making efforts to reduce its nuclear arsenal and is providing intelligence to the US on many WMD issues. But Russia's cooperation is beset with two counterproductive elements: nuclear assistance and the transfer of WMD technology to Iran and the lack of a full commitment in securing its WMD arsenal from theft or black market export.

Third, Russia no longer plays a controlling role in the vast Arc of Instability. While it remains influential in the regions connecting the Near East to the Far East, Russia has realistically assessed that US presence in the arc is a stabilizing factor. However, due to its Putin Doctrine that leverages short-term economic victories over long-term national security, Russia is balancing against US security interests where oil is concerned, notably in Iraq, less so in Central Asia. Elsewhere, Russia is a cooperator on security issues with the US, but counterproductive elements tied to economic interests appear in North Korea, Iran, and Afghanistan.

### **Recommendation: A First Step Towards Long-Term Security Partnership**

From the US perspective, the optimum security identity for Russia is friendly power. Russia's current perspective, however, is at odds with such an identity. At present, and despite Putin's tilt to the west,

Russia's leaders have chosen not to accept US dogma without first questioning and evaluating the terms on which they join the system....Russia's leaders seek participation, but not integration. They want to help shape a new system, not expand the old one, which they now unfortunately associate with an arrogant, dogmatic policy of US hegemony and unilateral intervention.<sup>1</sup>

Such excuse making on the part of some Russians misses the point. To "help shape a new system," Russia must enter a partnership on the concrete security issues of terrorism, WMD proliferation, and massive regional instability, despite its misgivings of US global strength.

While pursuing economic interests, Russia must consider the impact such policies have on its future security.

The first step towards full security partnership between the US and Russia is the creation of a US-Russian organization for countering terrorism and WMD proliferation. More than just a strategy group, this partnership should resemble a task force, with permanent infrastructure and robust funding. The Working Group on NATO-Russia Relations, Bush and Putin's Consultative Group for Strategic Security, and the U.S-Russia Working Group on Counter-terrorism are early test cases towards such a partnership.<sup>2</sup> These model groups must merge into a single organization connected to the highest levels of government in Moscow and Washington, and should include a counter-terrorism intelligence center, combined training, logistical support, joint use facilities, public relations, increased participation in peacekeeping and counter terrorism exercises, etc. To streamline operations and reduce bureaucratic oversight, the organization may need to evolve outside of the new NATO-Russia Council. The important end product is full partnership, not ad hoc cooperation and counterproductive balancing on terrorism, nuclear trafficking, missile defense technology, and other critical strategic concerns.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Sullivan, 139.

<sup>2</sup> Goldman, CRS-19-21; Robert E. Hunter, Sergey M. Rogov, and Olga Oliker, *NATO and Russia: Bridge-Building for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Report of the Working Group on NATO-Russia Relations* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2002), 1-25.

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