



About the Contributors

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Russia's Turnaround

Russia has traveled a tumultuous path since the collapse of the Soviet Union nearly seventeen years ago. Hopes that Russia would recast itself as a democracy and align with the West were soon dashed, as the Russian economy collapsed in the 1990s, and federal and local state power deteriorated. Russia lacked the capacity to act as a “responsible stakeholder” during a period when the survival of the Russian state itself was hardly guaranteed. Then, almost as suddenly as the Soviet Union disintegrated, Russia experienced an extraordinary economic recovery. In the decade since the 1998 Russian financial collapse, the country’s gross domestic product (GDP) rose from slightly less than \$200 billion in 1999 to more than \$1.3 trillion in 2007. This figure probably will reach \$2 trillion by 2010—a stunning 1000% growth in just over a decade. Earlier this year, the Ministry of Economic Trade and Development published very ambitious plans for continued economic growth pointing toward a GDP of approximately \$5 trillion by 2020, which would make it the largest economy in Europe and the fifth largest in the world.¹

Russia’s recovery is only part, albeit an important part from Moscow’s perspective, of an ongoing dramatic tilt in the global economic balance of

While Russians are right to point out the anachronistic and often ineffective institutions of global governance, their own capacity to contribute toward a solution is constrained by an emotionally charged view of what has happened in the international system during the past twenty years. Moscow views many of the changes that have occurred since the late 1980s as illegitimate,

areas such as international nuclear and security policy, regional security, energy, managing the global economy, and democracy/human rights.

Russian Economic Goals and Their Implications

We must remember that while Russia's recovery over the last decade has been unexpectedly

Since March 2007, Russian and American negotiators have been discussing the contours of a new bilateral arms control accord to replace the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), set to expire in December 2009. In their more recent 2002 Russian-American Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT), Washington and Moscow committed to reducing their nuclear arsenals to between 1,700 and 2,200 “operationally deployed strategic

Missile Defense

Russian political, military, and other leaders have stridently denounced American plans to erect a comprehensive ballistic missile defense network extending beyond the US territory. In particular, Moscow objects to early US steps to deploy ballistic missile defense (BMD) systems in Poland and the Czech Republic. Russians are dubious of the stated US justification for the BMD deployments—that the systems are needed to defend the United States and European countries against an emerging Iranian missile threat. Moscow argues that Iran and other potential proliferators have yet to develop long-range missiles or the nuclear warheads that would make them truly threatening. Russian representatives further maintain that the best way to discourage countries from pursuing weapons of mass destruction (WMD) is to deal peacefully with their underlying security concerns rather than take military steps likely to trigger aggressive counteractions. Instead, Russian leaders insist that the true object of these deployments along Russia's periphery is to intercept Russian intercontinental ballistic missiles, which may require the cooperation other (and possible future) NATO governments—including Ukraine and Georgia—to build a more extensive and effective BMD system.

Russia's response to US missile defense moves in Central Europe has been creative. As president, Putin broached a number of potential cooperative approaches to the technology and the emerging threat from Iran. For its part, the Bush administration, while expressing general interest in expanding BMD cooperation with Moscow, discounted Putin's specific offers because they would require abandoning its near-term plans. In any case, the two governments need to address both the specific issue of the East European systems and the more important longer-term issue of how to integrate strategic defensive

nuclear fuel from designated provider states and then send the resulting waste back to the supplier for reprocessing and disposal. These incentive systems represent the

Even after years of Russian government effort and outside support, concerns remain about the present condition of the materials as well as their possible diversion during the chaotic

In an effort to avert near-term challenges posed by Iran's nuclear program, Russia and Western governments continue to urge Tehran to comply with UN Security Council resolutions to suspend its enrichment and reprocessing activities. While Russia joined with other UN Security Council members in supporting sanctions in 2006 and 2007, Moscow remains an unenthusiastic backer of punitive measures. Russian diplomats often work to weaken proposed sanctions. In addition, they have always defended Iran's right to pursue nuclear

More problematically, some Russian officials threatened that, if Kosovo succeeded in asserting its independence, other separatist regions in Europe would intensify their efforts to follow suit. In January 2008, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin warned of the potentially far-reaching and “unpredictable consequences” of sanctioning Kosovo’s independence “given that presently “about 200 regions are seeking self-determination in one form or another.” Subsequent Russian moves to enhance ties with the pro-Moscow enclaves in Georgia’s regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia might be traced in part to Moscow’s frustrations over being unable to block Kosovo’s independence. During his last news conference as president, Putin said that European governments that recognized Kosovo’s independence should feel “ashamed” for “having these double standards.” Putin also w

Treaty. Some European leaders also expressed concern about Saakashvili's alleged authoritarian tendencies. The declaration adopted at the April 2008 NATO summit in Bucharest nevertheless stated that the allies eventually expected Georgia to join the alliance, but the recent fighting has underscored the risks of actually bringing Georgia into the alliance since no NATO government is prepared to engage in a war with Russia on Tbilisi's behalf. On the one hand, Putin pointedly warned that, "Georgia's aspiration to join NATO ... is driven by its attempt to drag other nations and peoples into its bloody adventures."

Organization (CSTO) on joint operations to counter Afghan narcotics trafficking.¹³ Since NATO is still struggling to ensure security in that country, heightened cooperation with Russia to curb terrorism and narcotics

presidency. In fact, the Ukrainian

reflects the extent to which Russia is now integrated into the global economy, with commensurate stakes in global financial stability.¹⁵

It stands to reason, then, that global financial stability is the area where one can expect to see the most constructive Russian approach. Unlike the security and political realms, this set of issues is not heavily burdened by the legacy of the Cold War. In fact, the Soviets remained outside the Bretton Woods process during and after World War II as a matter of their own choice. Six decades later, as the existing financial system struggle with current challenges, the Russian leadership is determined not to repeat the mistake of their Soviet predecessors. The first significant Russian foray, in 2007, was to push former Czech Finance Minister Josef Tosovsky as a candidate for Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, as an alternative to the EU candidate, Dominique Strauss-Kahn. While most of the media coverage portrayed the move as yet another Russian obstruction or geopolitical game, *The Financial Times* recognized the validity of Russia's position on its merits:

It is depressing when the Russian executive director speaks more sense about the future of the International Monetary Fund than does the European Union. Yet Alexei Mozhin did so when he criticized the EU's decision to foist Dominique Strauss Kahn, a former French finance minister, on the IMF. Only those who want the Fund to be irrelevant can applaud the decision. This is the wrong candidate, chosen in the wrong way. Mr. Mozhin was right when he said "the IMF is facing a severe crisis of legitimacy." He was correct to insist that "we must select the best candidate" if the institution is to remain relevant for developing countries."¹⁶

The "crisis of legitimacy" is especially acute at the IMF where the voting power quotas are so convoluted and archaic that China's quota is less than that of that of either Great Britain or France, and where India's share is less than Belgium's. Global wealth is moving east and south while the IMF distribution of voting power harkens back to the colonial era. This deficit of legitimacy also implicates the World Bank, given the cozy arrangement that for 60 years put an American at the head of the World Bank, while a European leads the IMF. Many in the US government recognized that Tosovsky was a stronger candidate than Strauss-Kahn, but the decision to go along with the EU's French candidate showed how reluctant Washington was to upset the old arrangement, which after all had put the Bush administration's own Robert Zoellick in the Bank's top job. While the Russian candidate did not prevail in the IMF contest, the fact that Tosovsky was defeated despite the support of China, India, and many other developing and

the “economic selfishness” of other international actors that has contributed to the dramatic increase in food prices in 2008.

Democracy and Human Rights

The long tradition of democracy promotion as a hallmark of US foreign policy can impede Americans from being aware just how distinctive that tradition is—and how strange to other political cultures. Indeed, with support from China and a host of other authoritarian governments, Russian leaders have sought to break the momentum of “color” revolutions that appeared to be sweeping Eurasia when George Bush spoke so eloquently about democracy and peace in his second inauguration.

trauma of the Soviet collapse and the perceived humiliation of the 1990s recede from the forefront of Russians' national identity.

In addition to domestic considerations, Russia's participation in the international system will be most affected by the behavior of other countries, especially the United States and, to a lesser degree, Europe. Perhaps even more so than the behavior of other countries covered in this series, Russians will respond to US policies given the recent and decades-long history of bipolar Cold War confrontation with Washington. The Russian political elite still has a

end of the Cold War. Rather, it is seen as a collection of assorted players, some rather arrogant, some quite impotent, with a number of sensible ones thrown in—but all of them guided by their own perceived interests, despite trying to dress them up in ideological or rhetorical wrapping. Consequently, Russia's approach to Western counterparts is to appealing to their self-interests.

As the existing order is visibly crumbling, Moscow wants to be present at the creation of its replacement. Essentially a strategic loner, Russia is trying to renegotiate the terms of engagement with the powers in decline, (i.e. the United States and the European Union); build strong ties with Asia's emerging powers (China and India); reach out to the forces of moderation in the Muslim

vis-à-vis the United States and too much *schadenfreude*