DEFENSE DOSSIER

October 2014 ISSUE 12

THE KREMLIN'S INFORMATION WARFARE
MICHAEL BOHM

MOSCOW BETWEEN ISLAMIC CHALLENGES AND ISLAMIST THREATS
PAUL GOBLE

THE STATE OF RUSSIA'S STRATEGIC FORCES
MARK B. SCHNEIDER

PUTIN'S ASYMMETRIC STRATEGY: LESSONS FOR THE FUTURE
STEPHEN BLANK

FORGING A WESTERN-NATO RESPONSE
JANUSZ BUGAJSKI

American Foreign Policy Council

Page Intentionally Left Blank.

DEFENSE DOSSIER

October 2014 ISSUE 12

1. From the Editors **2**
Ilan Berman and Rich Harrison

2. The Kremlin's Information Warfare **3**
Moscow has an ambitious strategy to win friends and influence people.
Michael Bohm

3. Moscow Between Islamic Challenges and Islamist Threats **9**
Unnoticed amid the crisis in Ukraine, Russia's relations with its Muslims are headed for disaster.
Paul Goble

4. The State of Russia's Strategic Forces **13**
The Kremlin has embarked upon a major modernization of its military capabilities. Here's what it looks like.
Mark B. Schneider

5. Putin's Asymmetric Strategy: Lessons for the Future **19**
How Russia plans to succeed in Ukraine, and why we should worry.
Stephen Blank

6. Forging a Western-NATO Response **23**
What the U.S. And Europe should do now to counter Russian aggression.
Janusz Bugajski

American Foreign Policy Council

FROM THE EDITORS

Welcome to the October 2014 issue of AFPC's *Defense Dossier*. In this edition, we take a look at Russia, a country whose aggressive foreign policy moves have reconfigured the geopolitics of Europe over the past half-year, and brought the West to the precipice of a new "cold war" with Moscow.

The government of Russian President Vladimir Putin continues to pursue an aggressive, neo-imperialist policy toward Ukraine—one that could soon expand to threaten other parts of the "post-Soviet space." In service of this foreign policy, the Kremlin has fanned the flames of ultra-nationalism within the Russian Federation, even as it glosses over serious systemic dysfunctions (such as the growth of Islamism within its borders). The Kremlin's focus on revamping their nuclear triad is of a piece with this aggressive new path being charted by President Putin and his followers.

Just how far will Moscow go to reunite the old empire? And will the NATO alliance have the resolve to do anything about it? This edition of the *Defense Dossier* features contributions by a world-class collection of experts that help answer these questions, and many others. We hope that you find it both illuminating and timely.

Sincerely,

Ilan Berman
Chief Editor

Richard Harrison
Managing Editor

THE KREMLIN'S INFORMATION WARFARE

MICHAEL BOHM

Ever since Vladimir Putin became president of Russia in the year 2000, he has exploited state-controlled television as a blunt, but extremely effective, propaganda weapon in the Kremlin's information war against the U.S.

Notably, Putin's first autocratic move was nationalizing the main federal channels, beginning in 2001. This was a disturbing wake-up call, allowing Putin to create a powerful state propaganda machine that manipulated public opinion and whipped-up anti-Americanism among his core electorate.

MOBILIZING THE MASSES

For his first seven years in power, Putin used loyal television stations to consolidate public opinion around his autocratic "vertical power structure." The main propaganda message during this period was: Thanks to Putin's strong hand, Russia has "risen from its knees" and moved beyond the disastrous, crisis-stricken 1990s.

To be sure, the standard of living of many Russians did actually increase from 2000 to 2007. Even if this increase was only modest, it was still a welcome relief from the widespread poverty of the 1990s. And many Russians fell for the Kremlin line that it was Putin and his autocratic model – and not simply the good luck of high global oil prices – that were responsible for this economic growth. As a result, Putin's electorate grew significantly, and his supporters were willing to look the other way as Putin slowly but systematically destroyed many democratic institutions and elements of civil society.

In 2007-08, however, Putin's bubble burst. As the global economic crisis hit Russia hard and as oil prices dropped, the bottom fell out of Putin's so-called "economic miracle." This forced the Kremlin to shift its propaganda focus largely toward anti-Americanism. State-controlled television bombarded Russians with the message that the U.S. was trying to take advantage of Russia's economic decline, just like it did in the 1990s. Washington, Russians were told, was funding the country's opposition and nongovernmental organizations as part of a larger strategy to overthrow Putin and replace him with a pro-Western puppet regime.

The anti-U.S. propaganda reached a peak in December 2011, after tens of thousands of Russians took to the streets in Moscow to protest widespread vote-rigging in State Duma elections. For months, there was a continuous stream of news programs and alarmist pseudo-documentaries on state-controlled television warning Russians that the U.S. is financing these protests to try to orchestrate a "color revolution" in the country, just as it had supposedly done in Ukraine, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan.

FLASHPOINT UKRAINE

By 2013, Putin had turned the clock back 30 or 40 years to a level of anti-U.S. propaganda not seen since the Cold War. But in 2014, the situation got even worse as a result of the sharp U.S.-Russian conflict over Ukraine. Starting with the Crimean annexation in March and the ongoing support of pro-Russian separatists in the Lugansk and Donetsk regions, Putin has ratcheted up the country's state-controlled propaganda to new, disturbing levels. In its escalated information war against the U.S., the Kremlin has gone from primitive, Soviet-style propaganda to outright "war propaganda." Below are the two main components of the Kremlin's war-propaganda campaign over Ukraine:

1) **The U.S. financed and organized the Maidan protests in late 2013 and early 2014. It was a**

Michael Bohm *is an independent journalist in Moscow.*

CIA plot to overturn the pro-Russian president, Viktor Yanukovych.

From November to April, state-controlled television seized on the public admission by Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland that USAID had allocated $5 billion to claim that the funds were used to "support the Ukrainian opposition to foment a revolution." What was conveniently left out, however, was that this money was spent not on Ukraine's opposition movement, protesters or on opposition leaders, but on charitable programs and creating a civil society in Ukraine. And the funds were allocated over the course of 20 years – long before the Maidan protests broke out.

One of the false allegations, propagated by leading Kremlin propagandist Dmitry Kiselyov on Rossiya television, was that U.S. funds were sent to the opposition movement by diplomatic pouches from Washington to Kiev. On one of his weekly news-analysis program on Rossia television in December, Kiselyov showed stock video of closed, nondescript bags being unloaded from a plane at an airport, implying that Russian television had caught U.S. agents in the act of transferring illicit funds to the Ukrainian opposition.

As the global economic crisis hit Russia hard and as oil prices dropped, the bottom fell out of Putin's so-called 'economic miracle.' This forced the Kremlin to shift its propaganda focus largely toward anti-Americanism.

Amid all the bluster about sinister U.S. plots to overthrow then-Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych, state-controlled television mentioned nothing about the real source of the Maidan demonstrations – a widespread, grassroots protest against Yanukovych's rampant corruption and incompetence, as well as anger at the broad-based decline in living standards. Yanukovych's inside deal with Putin to walk away from the European Union Association Agreement in late November 2013 – which was supposed to be part of the country's broader "European pivot" that was popular among most Ukrainians and something that Yanukovych himself promised he would sign – had served as the main catalyst for the Maidan protests.

Russia's state-controlled television systematically falsified information to bolster its war propaganda... [including] numerous examples of television programs inserting old video from war-ridden regions of Syria and Kabardino-Balkaria and presenting it as evidence of war crimes committed by the "U.S.-backed regime" in Kiev.

What's more, Russia's state-controlled television systematically falsified information to bolster its war propaganda. This included reports that U.S. mercenaries were fighting in Ukraine, reports that the Ukrainian Army used incendiary "phosphorous bombs" on civilians, and numerous examples of television programs inserting old video from war-ridden regions of Syria and Kabardino-Balkaria and presenting it as evidence of war crimes committed by the "U.S.-backed regime" in Kiev. Even the Foreign Ministry falsified information, accusing Ukraine of building "concentration camps" for their political and military opponents.

This was topped only by the allegation made in July on Channel One, Russia's largest state-controlled television station, that pro-Ukrainian forces had "crucified a three-year-old child" in in a public square in Slovyansk after they took over this Ukrainian city from rebel forces. The television report contained a three-minute "eyewitness account" from a woman who tearfully explained the atrocity in great detail. The only problem was that it was a complete fabrication.

Another crucial element of the Kremlin's propaganda was the notion that the U.S., in fomenting a revolution in Ukraine, is realizing its dream of driving a wedge between Russia and Ukraine – a classic imperialist strategy of divide and conquer. In reality, however, it is Russia that is most responsible for dividing Ukraine, not the United States. Russia is the country that illegally annexed Crimea and supports a separatist movement in Eastern Ukraine.

Paradoxically – and contrary to Russia's exaggerated concerns about an expanding NATO to the east – it was precisely Russia's military aggression and intervention in Ukraine that revived NATO, giving it a new lease on life as an indispensable guarantor of trans-Atlantic security.

Paradoxically – and contrary to Russia's exaggerated concerns about an expanding NATO to the east – it was precisely Russia's military aggression and intervention in Ukraine that revived NATO, giving it a new lease on life as an indispensable guarantor of trans-Atlantic security. Even Finland and Sweden are now thinking more seriously than ever before about applying for NATO membership. Amid Russia's heavily distorted coverage of Ukraine, the Kremlin – in the worst Orwellian tradition – in early May awarded about 300 journalists who work on state-controlled media awards for their "objective coverage of Ukraine."

2. **Russia is obligated to save ethnic Russians from the "fascists" in Kiev**.

Putin received a golden opportunity to annex Crimea – the "pearl of the Russian Empire," as Catherine the Great called it - when Yanukovych fled Ukraine in late February. After all, as pro-Russian as Yanukovych was, he would have virulently opposed any attempt at a land-grab on sovereign Ukrainian territory. As soon as Yanukovych fled, however, Putin took advantage of the power vacuum and ordered his troops based at the Black Sea Naval Base in Sevastopol to seize Crimean government buildings, install a pro-Russian puppet prime minister of the peninsula and carry out a referendum without the consent of Kiev.

This Kremlin-orchestrated special operation was a blatant violation of international law. But Putin, who refused to even admit that there were thousands Russian soldiers who took part in the occupation of Crimea proper for several weeks prior to the referendum, invented a fake casus belli: Ethnic Russians, he said, were under threat from "fascists" and "neo-Nazis" from Kiev. The only problem, though, was that there was no evidence that ethnic Russians or Russian-speakers were under any threat whatsoever.

To be sure, there are, indeed, several odious ultra-national and anti-Russian organizations active in Ukraine, but they are small, fringe groups limited to the Western sections of the country, posing no threat to Russians in Crimea. Indeed, the May presidential election gave the lie to the Kremlin propaganda about Ukraine's "fascist threat" to Russians. The head of the Right Sector party received less than 1 percent of the vote, while the head of Svoboda, another far-right party, received only 1.2 percent.

THE PROBLEM WITH RUSSIAN PROPAGANDA

The real problem with Russia's state-controlled media is its monopoly control. This is particularly true when it comes to Ukraine. According to a May 2014 Levada Center poll, 94 percent of Russians rely on state-controlled television as their primary source of information on Ukraine.[1]

What's worse, state propaganda is extremely effective in manipulating public opinion. Opinion polls

consistently show that a majority of Russians believe most of what they hear on these programs – whether it be that Russian orphans are safer in the country's decrepit adoption centers than with U.S. parents, or that U.S. missile defense is a threat to Russia's nuclear-deterrence capabilities, or any other anti-U.S. message the Kremlin wants to send.

The real problem with Russia's state-controlled media is its monopoly control. This is particularly true when it comes to Ukraine. According to a May 2014 Levada Center poll, 94 percent of Russians rely on state-controlled television as their primary source of information on Ukraine.

Take, for example, a Win/Gallup International poll, released in January, that indicated that 24 percent of respondents worldwide consider the U.S. the largest threat in the world – a finding consistent with results over the past decade. But the same study showed that a much larger 54 percent of Russians felt the same way.[2] This means that Russia exceeded the global average by more than two times. The Kremlin's heavy-handed propaganda campaign to whip up anti-U.S. hysteria is the main factor driving this trend.

In much the same way, according to a Levada Center poll conducted in July, 74 percent of the respondents had either "generally bad" or "very bad" feelings toward the U.S. This is the highest percentage since the Soviet collapse.[3]

Notably, as hostility toward the West has skyrocketed, so have Putin's high approval ratings, now at a record 87 percent, according to a Levada Center poll conducted in August.[4] In Russia, these two phenomena are inextricably linked, showing once again that so much of Russian patriotism is defined by the Kremlin's anti-American campaign and its self-proclaimed battle to face down the United States in the global arena.

First, the state-controlled media must demonize the U.S. – that is, show that the U.S. is trying to destabilize and weaken Russia by extending its military infrastructure to Russia's borders, with Ukraine being the latest and most serious battles for Russia's survival as a sovereign nation. Once this is established in the mass media, Putin then emerges as the national hero who is the only global leader capable of standing up to the U.S. and expelling it from Russia's backyard. The state media dutifuly glorifies Putin's "great victories" in Russia's zero-sum geopolitical battle against the U.S.

This is precisely how the state media explains the Crimean annexation and support of pro-Russian separatists. If Russia hadn't taken the bold, pre-emptive move to seize Crimea, Putin claims, Ukraine would have surely become a member of NATO and taken over Russia's historic Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol.

As hostility toward the West has skyrocketed, so have Putin's high approval ratings, now at a record 87 percent, according to a Levada Center poll conducted in August. In Russia, these two phenomena are inextricably linked, showing once again that so much of Russian patriotism is defined by the Kremlin's anti-American campaign and its self-proclaimed battle to face down the United States in the global arena.

The only problem with this line of thinking, however, is that by Russia's blatant aggression and intervention in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine, the Kremlin is making Ukraine's NATO membership all but a self-fulfilling prophesy. This was never the case before. Up until now, polls consistently showed that most Ukrai-

nians were opposed to NATO membership. But according to new polls conducted by the Democratic Initiative Foundation and the Gorshenin Institute in May and June, respectively, more Ukrainians now support NATO membership than oppose it.[5] Putin has only himself to blame for this sharp change in Ukrainians' favorable opinion toward the alliance.

Yes, Putin won Crimea (the illegal annexation has essentially become a fait accompli and has little chance of ever being reversed), but at the same time he lost the rest of Ukraine – a country not only of immense geostrategic importance to Russia, but also the birthplace of Russian culture, religion and civilization. This brings new meaning to the expression "penny-wise and pound foolish." ■

ENDNOTES

1. "Rossiyane ob osvescheniye ukrainskih cobityey i sanktsiyah," Levada-tsentr, May 12, 2014, http://www.levada.ru/12-05-2014/rossiyane-ob-osveshchenii-ukrainskikh-sobytii-i-sanktsiyakh.
2. WIN/Gallup, "Optimism is back in the world; WIN/Gallup International's annual End of Year survey shows a brighter outlook for 2014," December 30, 2013, http://www.wingia.com/en/services/about_the_end_of_year_survey/global_results/7/33/.
3. "Otnosheniye rossiyan k drugim stranam," Levada-tsentr, August 6, 2014, http://www.levada.ru/06-08-2014/otnoshenie-rossiyan-k-drugim-stranam.
4. "Putin's Approval Rating Soars to 87%, Poll Says," *The Moscow Times*, August 6, 2014, http://www.themoscowtimes.com/article/504691.html.
5. "Stvlenna gromadan do vstupi b NATO i inshikh pitan bezpeki," Fond Demoktaritchni initsiativy, n.d., http://dif.org.ua/ua/publications/press-relizy/stavlennja-gromadjan-do-vstupu-v-nato-i-inshih-pitan-bezpeki.htm; "Cherez Rossiyu vze maizhe polovina ukraintsiv hochute v NATO," *Ukrainskaya Pravda*, June 17, 2014, http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2014/06/17/7029305/

Page Intentionally Left Blank.

MOSCOW BETWEEN ISLAMIC CHALLENGES AND ISLAMIST THREATS

PAUL GOBLE

Moscow today faces two distinct but interrelated challenges: that of integrating its increasingly large Muslim population, and the threat of Islamist attacks and even sustained insurgencies. Understanding the nature of these challenges and threats and how they are connected requires a consideration of the Soviet inheritance, the demographic and economic changes of the post-Soviet period, and the impact of Islamist influences from abroad since the collapse of what one might call the southern Berlin wall in 1991.

SETTING THE STAGE FOR DISASTER

The Soviet system set the stage for Moscow's current problems not only by how it treated Islam but also by how it treated its Muslim population and how it aspired to have influence in the Muslim world abroad. Because the Soviet system was committed to the eradication of religion, Moscow destroyed more than 98 percent of the mosques which had existed on Soviet territory in 1917, and killed more than 99 percent of the mullahs and imams who had served in them. Those who remained were among the most reactionary – the Soviet authorities judged them least dangerous – and the most penetrated by Soviet intelligence.

This dynamic created what Soviet and Western scholars called "ethnic Muslims;" that is, people who knew they were of Muslim heritage but who had no idea what Islam entailed. They had never attended a mosque, met with a mullah or had the opportunity to read the Koran. It also led to the formation of what was often called "unofficial" or "underground" Islam—Muslim communities that were not controlled by the state. The numbers of these groups was large, although they did not touch most Muslims. Nevertheless, their appearance had the effect of politicizing Islam. To be a real Muslim in Soviet times was not just a matter of religious affiliation; it was a conscious and very political choice. That, too, has cast a shadow on the present.

Finally, the Soviet system—even as it suppressed Islam—simultaneously improved the health of Muslims as well as others in the Soviet population. The consequences of that, almost all unintended, were that members of Muslim nations, most of whom were far more rural than Slavic ones, not only continued to have more children than the Russians or Ukrainians, but a larger share of those children survived. That in turn produced a relative explosion in the size of the Muslim population not only in the USSR as a whole but in the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) in particular. While this bulge was relatively short-lived—fertility rates among Muslims as among other groups have fallen—it not only peaked just as the Soviet Union was collapsing but continues to affect Russia's demography. If a Muslim woman has ten children, her daughter has six, and her daughter in turn has four, the growth rate among Muslims will be vastly higher even in the outyears than among Russian Christians where the fertility rate was only 1.6 in 1980 and has fallen to 1.2 in Russian cities.

THE FALL OF THE SOUTHERN BERLIN WALL

Most people in the United States and western Europe focus on the collapse of communism in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union from a western perspective. That is, they consider the way in which the

Paul Goble *is a longtime U.S. government specialist on ethnic and religious issues in the Soviet and post-Soviet states. He served in various capacities in the U.S. State Department, the Central Intelligence Agency and the International Broadcasting Bureau as well as at the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. Now retired, he prepares a daily blog, WindowonEurasia2.blogspot.com.*

fall of the Berlin Wall opened the region to Western influence. But historians of the future are almost certain to conclude that the fall of its southern counterpart between what had been the USSR and the Muslim Middle East had equally fateful consequences.

The reasons for that are two-fold. On the one hand, with respect to the Russian Federation, many Russians have proved resistant to Western ideas and institutions. Russian President Vladimir Putin has made his career by appealing to anti-Western attitudes among Russians and arguing that Russians constitute a distinct civilization. As a result, the idea of an opening to the West, at least for the present, may not be as logical as much as many in the West would like to think.

Because the Soviet system was committed to the eradication of religion, Moscow destroyed more than 98 percent of the mosques which had existed on Soviet territory, in 1917 and killed more than 99 percent of the mullahs and imams who had served in them.

On the other hand, the opening that occurred to the Muslim Middle East was at least as large and arguably far more influential. Within the post-Soviet republics, including the Russian Federation, there were a large number of people who—thanks to Soviet policies—continued to identify as Muslims but did not know exactly what that meant. And with the fall of the southern "wall," they were about to be told. A small set of statistics shows how this happened.

In 1991, there were approximately 150 mosques officially operating in the RSFSR. As of 2012, there were 10,500. In 1991, only 40 people from the Russian republic went on the hajj pilgrimage to Mecca. Twenty-one years later, there were more than 40,000. In the year the Soviet Union collapsed, there were four Russian Muslims studying in an Islamic madrassa or university abroad. By 2012, there were 2,000 doing so, a number down from even larger classes in the 1990s. And most important of all, not a single Muslim missionary was allowed into the RSFSR in 1991, but over the next two decades more than 25,000 have been.[1]

In 1991, there were approximately 150 mosques officially operating in the RSFSR. As of 2012, there were 10,500. In 1991, only 40 people from the Russian republic went on the hajj pilgrimage to Mecca. Twenty-one years later, there were more than 40,000.

Not surprisingly, this sudden exposure to Islam had some dramatic effects. It made most members of the Muslim nations within the Russian Federation far more conscious of their religious heritage. That meant that Moscow had to deal with the task of integrating people increasingly aware of their distinctiveness at precisely a time when the center sought to create a new Russian identity. And it simultaneously led to the recruitment of a smaller but not unimportant segment of them by radical Islamist groups.

DISMAL DEMOGRAPHY

Meanwhile, demographic trends continued to work against Moscow in three ways. First, because of the collapse of the ethnic Russian birthrate in the 1990s, the relative size of the Muslim population increased because its fertility rates did not decline nearly as much. By 2008, the share of members of Muslim nationalities among the prime draft cohort was so high, perhaps as much as 40 percent, that Moscow started playing games by drafting more heavily in ethnic Russian regions and less heavily in Muslim ones, something that annoyed both. The Russians felt they were paying a tax the Muslims had been excused from, and the Muslims felt they were being excluded from full citizenship.

Second, the low birthrate among Russians forced Moscow to open its borders to immigrant workers.

A large percentage of them came from the newly independent Muslim-majority countries of Central Asia as well as Azerbaijan. At present, there are perhaps as many as 18 million of these gastarbeiters in the Russian Federation, of which perhaps three-quarters are from Muslim nations. If they are counted alongside the rising numbers of members of Muslim nationalities within the Russian Federation, the share of people of Muslim background living there is more than a quarter, a shock to many Russians who have seen their share in the population fall and who often feel that the Russian Federation is not truly their country.

Third, these two trends have converged, insofar as most of the gastarbeiters and an increasing share of the members of the Russian Federation's own Muslim nationalities are moving into Russian cities. In Moscow, for example, the number of members of traditionally Muslim nationalities in 1979 was 60,000. Today it is more than 2.5 million, making the Russian capital the largest Muslim city in Europe.

Not surprisingly, this state of affairs has generated a backlash among Russians, one that the Russian government under Putin has both tried to contain and sought to exploit. But its success in maintaining that balance has been limited both with Russians and with Muslims more generally. For the former, a failure to restrict immigration is seen as a threat to the Russian way of life; for the latter, crackdowns on gastarbeiters look like attacks on Muslims per se. That not only allows Islamists to recruit but makes ordinary Muslims ever more suspicious of Moscow's intentions and makes it more difficult for the regime to hold things together.

AN AWKWARD BALANCING ACT

Moscow thus faces two increasingly complicated and dangerous balancing acts, between ethnic Russians and those of Muslim nationality it must integrate in order to build a state and between stopping Islamist terrorists and avoiding alienating other Muslims or even driving more of them into the hands of the extremists. In neither case has the Putin regime done well.

As economic growth has slipped, Putin has increasingly used ethnic Russian and imperial themes to gain support among the predominant ethnic Russians, most recently and notoriously with his ideas about the defense of "the Russian world" in Ukraine and elsewhere. That has sent his poll numbers skyrocketing among ethnic Russians, yet his statements and actions are alienating ever more non-Russians, including perhaps especially those of Muslim background. His especially clumsy handling of the Crimean Tatars in the course of the Russian occupation of the Crimean peninsula has had resonance both among the closely related Kazan Tatars, the second largest nation in the Russian Federation, and among Muslim nations in the North Caucasus. All of them are now looking at Moscow and Putin more skeptically than ever before.

A failure to restrict immigration is seen as a threat to the Russian way of life; for the latter, crackdowns on gastarbeiters look like attacks on Muslims per se. That not only allows Islamists to recruit but makes ordinary Muslims ever more suspicious of Moscow's intentions.

At the same time, Putin's failure to block more immigration from Central Asia has cost him support among Russians opposed to it. But the statements of the latter, and their attacks on Muslim gastarbeiters, have crossed the line into outright Russian hostility to Muslims—at least that is how many Muslims inside the Russian Federation see it. And they are furious: given that they will likely form a majority of the population of the Russian Federation sometime before mid-century, many of them are thinking about alternative futures that are separate and distinct from living under Moscow. As the Ukrainian crisis fades, all of this will become more evident.

Muslims in the Russian Federation are simultaneously encouraged and angered by Moscow's policies in the Middle East, policies that sometimes look like sup-

port for Muslims and at other times look like a stand in opposition to them. No Russian leader could easily balance this, but Putin has done especially poorly.

The Kremlin's approach to Muslim Radicals... is proving the most disasterous. Virtually all Islamists and Islamist groups active in the world today have some presence within the Russian Federation.

Yet it is the Kremlin's approach to Muslim radicals that is proving the most disastrous. Virtually all Islamist and Islamist terrorist groups active in the world today have some presence within the Russian Federation. Most are small. But as the world knows, it does not take large numbers to engage in terrorism. The Russian government has a legitimate interest in suppressing such groups and the right as a sovereign state to take action. Moreover, the West is interested in seeing such groups destroyed as well.

Unfortunately, Putin's government has botched the effort. On the one hand, it has become obvious that when its members speak of "Islamist extremists," they are talking about any Muslim Moscow doesn't like. That includes a large percentage of people who are ordinary Muslims. Being so described or so oppressed, many who were not radicals before have become radicalized, and many who are not touched by the Kremlin's overly broad net come to view Moscow as an enemy rather than a partner against extremism.

On the other hand, and precisely because of its inadequate definition of extremism and exploitation of the term "Islamist extremist" to target its opponents, Moscow is increasingly failing to target and block those who really are a threat. As a result, there is growing evidence that despite Putin's much-ballyhooed "counter-terrorist" campaign in the North Caucasus, some Islamist groups are spreading into the Middle Volga and elsewhere as well. Unless the Russian government is able to prevent that from happening, it will face a far larger and potentially more lethal conflict than any it has had up to now. ■

ENDNOTES

[1] "Russian Federation," Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2012, http://www.oecd.org/migration/mig/IMO%202012_Country%20note%20Russian%20Fed.pdf

THE STATE OF RUSSIA'S STRATEGIC FORCES

MARK B. SCHNEIDER

The substantial and ongoing modernization of Russia's nuclear forces has enormous implications for U.S. national security and international stability. The matter has taken on an even greater significance in the aftermath of the Russian invasion and annexation of the Crimean Peninsula, and the Kremlin's continuing military pressure on—and quiet invasion of—Eastern Ukraine. Ukraine's Defense Minister has stated that, "Russia has threatened to use tactical nuclear weapons" against the Ukraine.[1] There have also been reports that Russia plans to speed up its nuclear modernization programs.

Toomas Ilves, the President of Estonia, has summed up the current situation: "Everything that has happened since 1989 has been predicated on the fundamental assumption that you don't change borders by force, and that's now out the window."[2] Moreover, as Russian expatriate Alexei Bayer has observed, Putin's Russia is "bursting with negative energy, hatred of the outside world and enthusiasm for confrontation." [3]

Russia sees nuclear weapons as central to its "great power" status, critical to its national security and a usable instrument of military power. Nuclear deterrence is incredibly popular in Russia, so much so that it has even been endorsed by the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church.[4] It is noteworthy that Russia has not announced strategic force eliminations in years. Indeed, during the 2010 Russian ratification of the New START Treaty, Russian Defense Minister Anatoliy Serdyukov said that Russia will increase the number of its deployed nuclear warheads and delivery vehicles up to the New START limits.[5] Russia is now likely to build up to 2,000-2,500 strategic nuclear warheads, exploiting loopholes and counting rules in the treaty (which count an entire bomber-load of weapons as one weapon).[6]

GROWTH INDUSTRY

Russia still maintains legacy Soviet ICBMs (the SS-18, the SS-19 and the SS-25) and SLBMs (the SS-N-18 and the SS-N-23) through life extension programs. Russia modernized the SS-N-23 SLBM (Russia says it became operational in 2014)[7] and the SS-19 ICBM has been tested with a "new warhead section."

The core of Russian defense spending on strategic nuclear forces, however, has been on the development and deployment of new systems. In 2008, the Bush administration summarized Russian modernization as follows:

- a new road-mobile and silo-based *Topol*-M (SS-27) ICBM;
- a new SS-27 derivative with a Multiple Independently-targetable Re-entry Vehicle (MIRV) payload the Russians call the RS-24,
- a new *Bulava* (SS-30) SLBM;
- a new *Borey*-class Ballistic Missile Submarine (SSBN);
- a new long-range strategic nuclear cruise missile designated as the KH-102;
- modernization of Blackjack (Tu-160) heavy bombers;
- increased training for nuclear operations in all military branches; and
- upgraded nuclear weapons storage sites.[8]

At the time, comparable U.S. programs were literally zero, a situation that remains unchanged today. U.S. modernization programs are only partial,

Dr. Mark Schneider *is a Senior Analyst with the National Institute for Public Policy. Before his retirement from the Department of Defense Senior Executive Service, he served in a number of senior positions within the Office of Secretary of Defense for policy relating to strategic arms control, missile defense and nuclear deterrence.*

long-term and generally not under contract.[9] Ironically, the lack of Russian interest in additional strategic or tactical nuclear arms control is explained in part by the asymmetry in modernization.[10]

A GROWING RUSSIAN STRATEGIC ARSENAL

Since 2008, the number of announced Russian strategic nuclear weapons development programs has more than doubled, increasingly rivaling the worst of the Soviet Union's Cold War nuclear efforts. The Obama administration says Russia will deploy "several substantially MIRVed new strategic missiles," including a "new 'heavy' ICBM to replace the SS-18 that will almost certainly carry several MIRVs."[11]

Notably, Russia has announced that its new Sarmat heavy ICBM will be operational in 2018-2020. It reportedly will carry 10 heavy or 15 medium nuclear warheads.[12] Major General (ret.) Vladimir Vasilenko, the former head of the Russian Defense Ministry's Fourth Central Scientific Research Institute, recently said the Sarmat will be capable of attacking the U.S. over the South Pole.[13] Colonel General (ret.) Viktor Yesin reports that the new heavy ICBM could put five tons of throw-weight into orbit.[14] Since this is not the way ICBM throw-weight is normally measured, it could suggest that one version of the Sarmat will be a space weapon. In addition to the Sarmat, Russia has announced it is developing a new "ICBM" called the RS-26 *Rubezh*, with deployment of nine missiles scheduled for 2014.[15] Sometimes called a "reduced range ICBM" in Russia, it appears to be an IRBM-range missile replacement for the Soviet-era SS-20 IRBM eliminated under the INF Treaty. At a minimum, the RS-26 circumvents a basic prohibition in the INF Treaty and it may violate the INF Treaty or New START.[16] The Air Force's National Air and Space Intelligence Center lists its range at about half that of any other Russian "ICBM."[17]

Russia sees nuclear weapons as central to its "great power" status, critical to its national security and a usable instrument of military power. Nuclear deterrence is incredibly popular in Russia, so much so that it has even been endorsed by the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church.

During the 2010 Russian ratification of the New START Treaty, Russian Defense Minister Anatoliy Serdyukov said that Russia will increase the number of its deployed nuclear warheads and delivery vehicles up to the New START limits

Indeed, Russia, through violations and circumventions, appears to be recreating the Soviet-era intermediate-range missile capability. In January 2014, the New York Times reported Russian testing of an INF Treaty-prohibited ground-launched cruise missile—a story that was subsequently confirmed by the State Department.[18] In July 2014, the Obama administration formally determined, "…that the Russian Federation is in violation of its obligations under the INF Treaty not to possess, produce, or flight-test a ground-launched cruise missile (GLCM) with a range capability of 500 km to 5,500 km, or to possess or produce launchers of such missiles."[19] In June 2014, Russia's official RIA Novosti news agency said the Russian Army "currently uses" its *Iskander*-M and *Iskander*-K (the *Iskander* K is apparently the prohibited cruise missile).[20]

Russian INF compliance issues discussed in the Russian media include the INF-range cruise missile, the RS-26 "ICBM," the reported *Iskander*-M range (up to 1,000-km range), the reported retention of the Soviet-era *Skorost* IRBM (never declared under the INF Treaty) and the reported surface nuclear attack capability of Russian surface-to-air missiles and missile defense interceptors. If these reports are true, the

INF Treaty is effectively dead with regard to limiting Russia's INF-range forces. Concerning the cruise missile, General Philip Breedlove, the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), has stated that "A weapon capability that violates the I.N.F [Treaty] … is absolutely a tool that will have to be dealt with."

Russia has also announced the development of a rail-mobile ICBM.[23] The New START Treaty's mobile ICBM launcher definition was literally changed to exclude rail-mobile ICBMs.[24] If deployed, this would provide Russia with an option to have in its arsenal a large force of RS-26s, or any other ICBMs, outside of arms control constraints. In addition, there are a number of other programs being discussed in the Russian press, although it is not clear exactly what these missiles are or their status.

Russia, through violations and circumventions, appears to be recreating the Soviet-era intermediate-range missile capability. In January 2014, the New York Times reported Russian testing of an INF Treaty-prohibited ground-launched cruise missile—a story that was subsequently confirmed by the State Department.

Work is reportedly underway in Russia on the development by 2020 of a 5th generation missile submarine which will reportedly carry ballistic and cruise missiles.[25] Russia is also developing a new stealth bomber, probably for deployment in the 2025-2030 timeframe. Russian President Vladimir Putin has said the new bomber will carry cruise missiles, and a recent report says hypersonic missiles.[26]

Russia's production of strategic nuclear missiles, meanwhile, has been significantly increased. Since 2011, announced Russian ICBM deployment numbers indicate that the production rate has increased 3-4 times. (The comparable U.S. number is zero.) In February 2012, President Putin said Russia would procure more than 400 new ICBMs by 2020. Russia says it will modernize 98% of its ICBM force by 2021. The eight Borey-class missile submarines are supposed to be operational by 2020. The comparable U.S. number is again zero.

In February 2012, President Putin said Russia would procure more than 400 new ICBMs by 2020. Russia says it will modernize 98% of its ICBM force by 2021… The comparable U.S. number is again zero.

And, in stark contrast to U.S. policy, Russia says it is developing new types of nuclear weapons and this, reportedly, is being carried out through hydro-nuclear (very low yield) testing.[30] For example, in 2005, then-Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov declared, "We will develop, improve and deploy new types of nuclear weapons."[31] Russian press reports say Russia is developing, or in some cases has deployed, a new single warhead, a new small MIRV warhead, precision low yield nuclear weapons and "clean" nuclear weapons. Unlike the U.S., Russia maintains a fully functional nuclear weapons complex that reportedly can produce 2,000 weapons a year.[33]

The Obama administration estimates Russia has 4,000-6,500 nuclear weapons.[34] Russian press estimates are frequently higher. Russia has retained ten times as many tactical nuclear weapons as the U.S., and it has retained virtually every type of Cold War tactical nuclear weapon. According to former Duma Defense Committee Vice Chairman Alexei Arbatov, the list includes short-range nuclear missiles, nuclear artillery, nuclear landmines, nuclear air and missile defense weapons, nuclear anti-ship missiles and bombs, nuclear depth charges, nuclear antisubmarine

warfare missiles, nuclear torpedoes, nuclear bombs, coastal missile complexes, and the missiles of the Russian Air Force's and Navy's non-strategic aviation.[35] The U.S. tactical nuclear stockpile, by contrast, has been reduced to a single type of bomb, the B-61. Significantly, Russia is now also modernizing its tactical nuclear force.[36] Russia clearly can launch types of nuclear attacks that the U.S. can't duplicate, and, hence, may not be able to deter.

Asymmetry in capability, numbers and modernization is even more dangerous because of Russian attitudes toward first use of nuclear weapons. In fact, Russian military doctrine allows for first use of nuclear weapons in local or regional conventional wars.

Despite commitments in the 1991-1992 Presidential Nuclear Initiatives, Russia, according to the country's generals, has maintained battlefield nuclear weapons and is reportedly modernizing them.[37] In 2009, the third ranking general in the Russian Defense Ministry affirmed that the new Russian *Iskander*-M tactical missile is nuclear capable.[38] More recently, the *Iskander* is known to have been launched in October 2013 and May 2014 as part of large strategic nuclear exercises.[39] As a result, in the words of a popular Moscow weekly, "The Russian tactical nuclear arsenal dominates Europe…"[40]

NUCLEAR BRINKSMANSHIP IN MOSCOW

This asymmetry in capability, numbers and modernization is even more dangerous because of Russian attitudes toward first use of nuclear weapons. In fact, Russian military doctrine allows for first use of nuclear weapons in *local or regional conventional wars*.[41] In December 2009, then-Commander of the Strategic Missile Troops Lieutenant General Andrey Shvaychenko, declared that "In a conventional war, they [the Strategic Nuclear Forces] ensure that the opponent is forced to cease hostilities, on advantageous conditions for Russia, by means of single or multiple preventive strikes against the aggressors' most important facilities. In a nuclear war, they ensure the destruction of facilities of the opponent's military and economic potential by means of an initial massive nuclear missile strike and subsequent multiple and single nuclear missile strikes."[42] As the U.S National Intelligence Council observed in December 2012, "Nuclear ambitions in the US and Russia over the last 20 years have evolved in opposite directions. Reducing the role of nuclear weapons in US security strategy is a US objective, while Russia is pursuing new concepts and capabilities for expanding the role of nuclear weapons in its security strategy."[43]

Russian views are important because Russian military doctrine holds that Russian first use of low yield nuclear weapons "will not result in immediate nuclear war."[44] A declassified CIA report links Russian nuclear doctrine to its new weapons: "Moscow's military doctrine on the use of nuclear weapons has evolved and probably has served as the justification of the development of very low yield, high precision nuclear weapons."[45]

Russian views are important because Russian military doctrine holds that Russian first use of low yield nuclear weapons "will not result in immediate nuclear war.

Russian leaders routinely make threats of nuclear attack. This includes threats of preemptive nuclear attack and targeting of nuclear missiles on named countries, which President Putin himself has done several times.[46] Russia constantly exercises its nuclear forces, including drills involving the first use of nuclear weapons, against the U.S and NATO.[47]

A PERILOUS IMBALANCE

Under the current asymmetry in nuclear weapons policy, Russia is: 1) headed toward nuclear superiority (with attack options we can't match); 2) changing international borders by force; 3) planning on the first use of nuclear weapons in

local and regional conventional wars; and 4) making blatant nuclear threats. This is quite a dangerous combination of policies, ones that could lead to a major European War with great risk miscalculation and, possibly, nuclear escalation. Noted Russian journalist Pavel Felgenhauer writes, "…our superiors are potentially ready to burn all of us in nuclear fire because of disputes over ice, rocks or South Ossetia."[48] Hopefully, they will be more restrained than their words indicate, but hope is not a security policy. ■

ENDNOTES

1. Damien Sharkov, "Russia Has Threatened Nuclear Attack, Says Ukraine Defence Minister," *Newsweek*, September 1, 2014, http://www.newsweek.com/russia-has-threatened-nuclear-attack-says-ukraine-defence-minister-267842Putin Reportedly Dangles Nuclear War Threat.
2. John R. Bolton, "NATO Is Still the Answer," *Weekly Standard*, May 5, 2014, http://www.weeklystandard.com/articles/nato-still-answer_787373.html.
3. Alexei Bayer, "Prepare for War, Not Peace," *The Moscow Times*, June 8, 2014, http://www.themoscowtimes.com/opinion/article/prepare-for-war-not-peace/501720.html.
4. "Russia needs nuclear weapons - Patriarch Kirill," RIA Novosti, September 11, 2009, http://en.ria.ru/russia/20090911/156098682.htm.
5. "Russia to reach New START ceilings by 2028 (Part 2)," Interfax-AVN, January 14, 2011, http://business.highbeam.com/407705/article-1G1-246550534/russia-reach-new-start-ceilings-2028.
6. Mark B. Schneider, *New START: The Anatomy of a Failed Negotiation* (Fairfax Va: National Institute Press, 2012), ii, http://www.nipp.org/Publication/Downloads/Downloads%202012/New%20START%20Final %20for%20web.pdf; See also "Russian Experts Assess U.S. Missile Defense Capabilities, List Topics for Arms Negotiations," *Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye Online*, August 5, 2013, http://www.wnc.dialog.com.
7. "Russian Navy takes into service Layner ICBM," BBC Monitoring, April 2, 2014, http://search.proquest.com/professional/login.
8. *National Security and Nuclear Weapons in the 21st Century* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Energy and U.S. Department of Defense, September 2008), 8, http://www.aps.org/policy/reports/popareports/upload/nuclear-weapons.pdf.
9. Mark Schneider, "Nuclear Modernization The Obama Administration's Fading Commitment," *Weekly Standard*, October 11, 2011, http://www.weeklystandard.com/articles/nuclear-modernization_ 594674.html.
10. "Russia not interested in U.S.-proposed arms reduction - Russian presidential chief-of-staff," Interfax, March 5, 2013, http://rbth.com/news/2013/03/05/russia_not_interested_in_us-proposed_arms_reduction__russian_presidenti_23504.html).
11. Madelyn Creedon, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Global Strategic Affairs, Statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, June 21, 2012, http://www.foreign.senate.gov/ imo/ media/doc/Madelyn_Creedon_ Testimony. pdf.
12. "New Heavy ICBM to Be Put Into Service in 2018 - Expert (Part 2)," Interfax, May 5, 2011, http:// www.interfax.co.uk/russia-cis-military-news-bulletins-in-english/new-heavy-icbm-to-be-put-into-service-in-2018-expert-part-2-2/; "Russia to build RS-20 'Voyevoda' successor," Interfax-AVN, July 21, 2011, http://www.interfax.co.uk/russia-cis-military-news-bulletins-in-english/russia-to-build-rs-20-voyevoda-successor/.
13. "Russia's prospective heavy liquid-fuel missile to travel across South Pole - expert (Part 2)," Interfax-AVN, February 25, 2014, http://www.dialog.com/proquestdialog/.
14. Mikhail Fomichev, "New Russian ICBM Can Carry Bigger Warhead - Expert," RIA Novosti, September 7, 2012, http://en.ria.ru/military_news/20120907/175827204.html Topol-M.
15. "Deployment of First Regiment With New Strategic Missile Complex Will Begin in 2014 -- General Staff," Interfax-AVN, June 7, 2013, http://www.wnc.dialog.com/.
16. Mark B. Schneider, "Russia's Noncompliance with Arms Control Obligations," Gatestone Institute, July 31, 2013, http://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/3906/russia-arms-control.
17. National Air and Space Intelligence Center, "Ballistic and Cruise Missile Threat," 2013, http://www.afisr.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-130710-054.pdf.
18. Michael Gordon, "U.S. Says Russia Tested Missile, Despite Treaty," *New York Times*, January 29, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/30/world/europe/us-says-russia -tested-missile-despite-treaty.html.
19. "*Adherence to and Compliance with Arms Control, Non-Proliferation, and Disarmament Agreements and Commitments*," (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of State, July 2014), p. 8, available at http://www.state.gov-/t/avc/rls/rpt/2014/230047.htm.
20. Aleksei Danichev, "Russian Missile Troops Test-Fire Iskander Systems During Military Drills," Ria Novosti, June 2, 2014, http://en.ria.ru/military_news/20140602/190301292/Russian-Missile-Troops-Test-Fire-Iskander-Systems-During.html.
21. Mark Schneider, "Confirmation of Russian Violation and Circumvention of the INF Treaty," National Institute for Public Policy Information Paper 360, 2014.
22. Michael R. Gordon, "NATO Commander Says He Sees Potent Threat From Russia," *New York Times*, April 2, 2014, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/03/world/europe/nato-general-says-russian-force-poised-to-invade-ukraine.html?_r=0.
23. "Russia Plans Rail-Mounted Missiles to Counter US Global Strike Program," RIA Novosti, December 18, 2013, http://en.ria.ru/military_news/20131218/185683711.html.
24. Schneider, New START: The Anatomy of a Failed Negotiation, 7-9.
25. Vitaliy Ankov, "Russian 5G subs to be equipped with ballistic, cruise missiles - source," RIA Novosti, March 19, 2011, http://en.ria.ru/military_news/20110319/163091053.htm; "Russia Goes Ahead with 5G Submarine Project," RIA Novosti, March 8, 2013, http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20130318/ 180092698/Russia-Goes-Ahead-with-5G-Submarine-Project.html.
26. Grigoriy Sysoev, "Russia Speeds Up Development of New Strategic Bomber," RIA Novosti, November 28, 2013, http://en.ria.ru/military_news/20131128/185110769/Russia-Speeds-Up-Development-of-New-Strategic-Bomber.html; "Russia Has a Hypersonic Mis-

sile, but It Flies Only for a Second," RIA Novosti, September 14, 2013; "Putin asked the Russian Air Force began developing a new strategic bomber (map)," ABC News, August 31, 2011, http://www.9abc.net/index.php/archives/21876.

27. "Putin Stresses Strategic Systems," Russian Defense Policy blog, December 10, 2013, http://russiandefpolicy.wordpress.com/2013/12/10/putin-stresses-strategic-systems/: Sergei Mamontov, "Russia Ready To Produce 6 - 7 Topol-M Missiles Per Year – Ivanov," Interfax, December 7, 2007, http://www.dialog.com/proquestdialog/; "Russian Missile Forces to get 22 new ICBMs in 2014," ITAR-Tass, November 27, 2013, http://en.itar-tass.com/russia/709273; Pavel Podvig, "Missile production plans for 2011-2013," Russianforces.org, May 2011, http://russianforces.org/blog/2011/05/missile_production_plans_for_ 2.shtml; Dmitriy Litovkin, "Army Awaits Fifth-Generation Missiles," Izvestiya (Moscow), May 13, 2011, http://www.dialog.com/proquestdialog/.
28. "Putin Pledges 400 ICBMs for Russia in Ten Years," RIA Novosti, February 20, 2012, http://en.ria.ru/russia/20120220/171407962.html.
29. "Putin: Russian seaborne nuclear forces to be renewed by 2020," Interfax, December 23, 2013, http://www.interfax.com/newsinf.asp?pg=2&id=469260.
30. Mark Schneider, "The Future of the U.S. Nuclear Deterrent," Comparative Strategy, July 2008, 347-348, http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01495930802358539 #preview; "Interview with Colonel-General Vladimir Nikolayevich Verkhovtsev, chief of RF Defense Ministry 12th Main Directorate," Krasnaya Zvezda (Moscow), September 4, 2009, http://www.dialog.com/proquestdialog/; Alexei Fenenko, "Russia and the future of the CTBT," RIA Novosti, November 3, 2010, http://indrus.in/articles/2010/11/03/russia_and_the_future_of_the_ctbt04851.html.
31. Alexei Berezin, "Moscow Emphasizes Quality of its Nuclear Potential," RIA Novosti, January 13, 2005, http://www.ghana.mid.ru/nfr/nfr331.html.
32. Mark B. Schneider, The Nuclear Doctrine and Forces of the Russian Federation (Fairfax Va.: National Institute for Public Policy, 2006), 15-16, http://nipp.org/Publication/Downloads/Publication%20Archive%20PDF/Russian%20nuclear %20doctrine%20--%20NSF%20for%20print.pdf; VADM (ret.) Robert R. Monroe, "A Perfect Storm over Nuclear Weapons," Air & Space Power Journal, Fall 2009, http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil/airchronicles/apj/apj09/fal09/monroe.html.
33. National Security and Nuclear Weapons in the 21st Century, 8; Robert Joseph, "Second to One," *National Review*, October 17, 2011, http://www.nationalreview.com/articles/304310/second-one-robert-g-joseph.
34. James N. Miller, Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Statement before the House Committee on Armed Services, November 2, 2011," http://armedservices.house.gov/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=faad05df-9016-42c5-86bc-b83144c635c9.
35. Aleksey Arbatov, "Tactical Nuclear Weapons: Problems and Solutions: Strategic Offensive Weapon Reductions Could Extend to Nonstrategic Munitions," *Voyenno-Promyshlenny Nezavisimoye Online*, May 20, 2011, http://www.dialog.com/proquestdialog/.
36. "Army Brigade To Be Equipped With Iskander Systems This Year – Commander," ITAR-Tass, September 28, 2009, http://www.wnc.dialog.com/; "Russian Federal Nuclear Center," (Sarov: All Russian Research Institute of Experimental Physics, 2006), 59; "Up to 120 Iskander missiles to be supplied to Russian Armed Forces," Interfax-AVN, August 1, 2011, http://www.interfax.co.uk/russia-cis-general-news- bulletins-in-english/up-to-120-iskandermissiles-to-be-supplied-to-russian-armed-forces; "Russian strategic aviation to be reinforced with Su-34 frontline bombers," Interfax-AVN, March 19, 2012, http://www.wnc.dialog.com/; "Lead 4th generation multirole nuclear sub of Project 885 to undergo state sea trial in November," ITAR-Tass, September 5, 2012, http://www.itar-tass.com/ en/c154/511570.html.
37. Schneider, New START: The Anatomy of a Failed Negotiation, 64-66, 80.
38. "Army Brigade To Be Equipped With Iskander Systems This Year – Commander"; "Ground Forces Personnel Will Be Armed With Iskanders," Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye (Moscow), October 29, 2009, http://www.dialog.com/proquestdialog/.
39. Ibid.; "Four Iskander and Tochka-U missiles fired during surprise check of troops," Interfax-AVN, October 29, 2013, http://www.dialog.com/proquestdialog/.
40. Pavel Felgenhauer, "Rebuilding the USSR," *Jamestown Foundation Eurasia Daily Monitor* 11, iss. 81, May 1, 2014, http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=42296&no_cache=1#.U2fDx1ctodw.
41. "Russia to broaden nuclear strike options," RT, October 14, 2009, http://rt.com/news/russia-broaden-nuclear-strike/.
42. "Russia may face large-scale military attack, says Strategic Missile Troops chief," ITAR-Tass, December 16, 2009.
43. National Intelligence Council, "Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds," December 2012, 69, http://www.dni.gov/nic/globaltrends.
44. Schneider, The Nuclear Doctrine and Forces of the Russian Federation, 24.
45. Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Transnational Issues, Evidence of Russian Development of New Subkiloton Nuclear Warheads, August 30, 2000, 4, http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/ NSAEBB/NSAEBB200 20000830.pdf.
46. Keith B. Payne, Testimony before the United States Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development July 25, 2012.
47. Simon Saradzhyan, Russia's Non-strategic Nuclear Weapons in Their Current Configuration and Posture: A Strategic Asset or Liability? (Boston Ma.: Harvard Belfer Center, January 2010), 18, http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/files/russian-position-NSNWs.pdf; Stephen Blank, "European Proposal on Tactical Nuclear Weapons Highlights Russian Nuclear Dilemmas," *Jamestown Foundation Eurasia Daily Monitor* 7 iss. 33, February 18, 2010, http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=36056&cHash=349320ee5c; Baker Spring, "New START: Increasing the Risk of Nuclear War," The Heritage Foundation, August 11, 2010, http://blog.heritage.org/2010/08/11/new-start-increasing-the-risk-of-nuclear-war/.
48. As cited in "Pavel Felgenhauer and Novaya Gazeta," Esiweb.org, June 9, 2011, http://www.esiweb.org/index.php?lang=en&id=281&story_ID=26&slide_ID=15.

PUTIN'S ASYMMETRIC STRATEGY: LESSONS FOR THE FUTURE

STEPHEN BLANK

Russia's war against Ukraine raises many of the most profound and basic contemporary issues of war, peace, and international affairs. While space precludes a complete discussion of all these issues and their global implications, three key topics deserve further consideration than they have hitherto received.

HOW MOSCOW SEES THE WORLD

The first is the question of Russian threat perceptions. The Russian government has now assigned its military the task of insisting to the world that the U.S. is behind all the so-called "color revolutions" in the world, with the intention of destroying Russia as a great power (i.e., empire) and that these revolutions are a new method of instigating war to prevent Russia from regaining great power status and destroying it as a state.[1] Indeed, Russian press outlets even accused the U.S. of inciting the demonstrations in Hong Kong in September/October 2014.[2] However ridiculous this sounds, Putin's regime has been broadcasting this perception for years, and Russian national security policy still originates from the presupposition of conflict with the outside world and the Leninist linkage of domestic and foreign "enemies."

This has naturally led to the growth of a domestic police state. Several hundred thousand people are now enlisted in an ever-expanding plethora of internal armies, paramilitary, auxiliary police, Ministry of Interior (VVMVD) and FSB forces. The main task of these forces is the coercive imposition of domestic order against all political opponents.[3] But as Ukraine shows, these forces—along with specially trained and designated units—are available for combat operations beyond Russia's borders as well.[4] Russia truly believes that it exists in a state of permanent siege or conflict with all of its interlocutors and neighbors. This does not mean actual shooting wars, but the constant exploitation and incitement of conflict through the measures described below. Furthermore, this posture confirms what we should have long known, namely that for the Russian government its system of rule and the state itself cannot be secured except as an empire.

In other words, Russia is not secure unless all its neighbors and partners are insecure. Moreover, in the Russian view, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all of its neighbors is contingent, not withstanding the solemn international treaties that Moscow may have signed.

Russia's quest for empire necessarily means war, not only or even primarily shooting wars but asymmetric or managed proxy conflicts wherever possible. But this pathology also means that the deck is stacked from the outset in favor of the incessant inflation of worst-case threat scenarios, without a countervailing and more realistic approach. The deep-rooted infrastructure of the siloviye strukturi (power organs or agencies) that controls Russian politics is wedded to a self-serving process of threat inflation with no real checks or balances.

BEYOND UKRAINE... WHAT?

A second aspect of the current conflict is its consequences for Russian power projection beyond Eurasia. Much has rightly been written about the fears of the Baltic States, Poland, Finland, and Sweden. But Russian history shows that Russia only began to project power into the Balkans and the Middle East once it

Dr. Stephen Blank *is Senior Fellow for Russia at the American Foreign Policy Council in Washington, DC.*

conquered Crimea in 1774 and subsequently undertook encroachments upon the Ottoman Empire. Today the conquest and annexation of Crimea has set the stage for a new drive to the south. And, as the British historian Niall Ferguson observed, "Russia, thanks to its own extensive energy reserves, is the only power that has no vested interest in stability in the Middle East."[5]

Russia's quest for empire necessarily means war, not only or even primarily shooting wars but asymmetric or managed proxy conflicts wherever possible.

Back in February 2014, Russia and the United States co-chaired the abortive Geneva-2 conference in an effort to fashion a political settlement to Syria's civil war. Indeed, Moscow's unwavering support for Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad and its insistence that Assad's opponents essentially surrender as a precondition of progress helped torpedo the gathering.[6] Russia also has substantial economic or energy relationships with Iran, Turkey, Cyprus, Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, and Israel and is negotiating a huge energy deal with Iran that would effectively break the sanctions regime despite being a major participant in the 5+ 1 talks on Iran's nuclearization. Additionally, Moscow sells weapons not only to Syria but also to Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Egypt, and is negotiating a resumption of arms sales to Algeria and Libya. In doing so, Moscow fully grasps that many weapons it sells to Syria or Iran are passed on to Hezbollah and Hamas.

Russia has permanently reconstituted its Mediterranean Naval Squadron and repeatedly employed gunboat diplomacy to deter Western intervention in Syria and Turkish intervention in Cyprus.[7] It has also acquired naval bases in Syria and Cyprus, as well as an air base in Cyprus.[8] Other potential opportunities abound. Indeed, the new Egyptian government has said is stands ready to franchise Russia to build a military base either in the Red Sea or the Mediterranean. Such "power projection activities" represent attempts to gain access, influence and power with the aim of restructuring the regional strategic order.[10] Moscow also has launched a major buildup of its Black Sea Fleet, as well as improvements to air and air defense infrastructure that are the starting points for power projection into the Mediterranean and beyond. Indeed, Russia has sought military bases in Montenegro for its fleet, giving it a base in the Adriatic Sea, and a base in Serbia for landward projection of power throughout the Balkans.

Clearly, the impressive scope and range of these achievements—and many others—represent more than merely tactical flexibility and opportunism. These policies clearly indicate the scope of Moscow's ambitions, if not its capabilities. And those ambitions will undoubtedly grow, given the weak Western response to the invasion of Ukraine and occupation of Crimea.

Much of the discussion about foreign fighters traveling to Syria has focused on radicalized Muslim youth coming from Western countries, but the greatest numbers of foreign fighters, on both the Sunni and Shi'ite sides of the equation, have come from the Middle East.

The lackluster Western reaction thus far to the most blatant aggression since Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 will also enhance Russian perceptions of a diminished West and contribute even further to a growing skepticism (if not worse) about U.S. policy among regional states in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. It is in keeping with the axiom that, in the contemporary world, "Geopolitical power is less about the projection of military prowess and more about access and control of resources and infrastructure."[11]

PUTINS ASYMMETRIC STRATEGY

The third issue worthy of deeper examination is the character of Putin's "asymmetric strategy"—a strategy that has been on display in recent months in Ukraine.

Russian military thought has long seen irregular warfare as a constant manifestation of contemporary politics whose objective is the mass manipulation of individual and collective political consciousness.

Subversion.

To avoid a direct physical confrontation with NATO or a protracted war with the Alliance and Ukraine (which Russia knows it cannot win), Moscow has been rehearsing and preparing such operations aimed at undermining state structures and stability since 2008. This fact has been pointed out by Russian and Western analysts, and admitted to by none other than Putin himself.[12]

Intimidation and propaganda.

Russia is steadily modernizing its conventional and nuclear forces, and has used them to deter and divert Western and Ukrainian audiences. At the same time, Russian media—now wholly state-owned or controlled at home and abroad—constantly subjects ever-larger audiences to unrelenting "agitation and propaganda" to create an environment of fear, hysteria, belligerence, and so forth.

Information operations.

Moscow is buying media influence in Europe, the U.S. and elsewhere even to the extent of bribery of journalists, and the establishment of pro-Moscow and Russian-financed think tanks and "experts." Many of these supposed journalists, as we have learned in Ukraine, are actually affiliated in one way or another with Russian intelligence services.[13]

All these elements demonstrate an approach to irregular warfare (IW) fundamentally different from that of the West. Whereas the West sees IW and information operations (IO) as entailing mainly the destruction or corruption of physical information networks, Russian military thought has long seen IW as a constant manifestation of contemporary politics whose objective is the mass manipulation of individual and collective political consciousness.[14]

But Russia's asymmetric strategy does not end here. Together with IW applied on this grand and unceasing scale, Russia works assiduously to gain leverage over key sectors of Western economies, and use that capability to buy influence, political leaders, and movements, suborn corruption, and undermine the political and public institutions of targeted states. The many manifestations of Western disunity during the course of Moscow's war in Ukraine are a testament to the success of these operations.[15] In effect, Russia is utilizing all the instruments of national power to overthrow the status quo set up in the wake of the Cold War and reestablish itself as a hegemon of Europe and Eurasia.

Russia is utilizing all the instruments of national power to overthrow the status quo set up in the wake of the Cold War and reestablish itself as a hegemon of Europe and Eurasia.

This asymmetric strategy—comprising diplomacy, sustained global information operations, intelligence penetration, subversion, the use of organized crime, the modernization of conventional and nuclear forces, plus the aforementioned paramilitary or auxiliary, deniable forces—functioned in Ukraine at an unprecedented level of effectiveness. But we have seen earlier manifestations of it, in the case of Russian cyberattacks on Estonia in 2007, the lead-up to war with Georgia in 2008, and Russian cyber operations across the globe, including the hacking of major U.S. banks.[16]

PAST — AND PRESENT—AS PROLOGUE

In having missed the warning signs, the West has only itself to blame. Russia planned its actions in Ukraine for years, and is undoubtedly planning new operations. Yet U.S. and European intelligence and policy communities have proven unwilling and/or unable to grasp the implications of the Kremlin's efforts.[17] Few observers seem willing to accept that all these activities are part of an overall strategy rather than merely the results of improvisation and purely tactical decision-making.

This is undoubtedly the prelude to further tragedy. For a failure to comprehend Putin's asymmetric strategy means that we will face it again, at a time and place of Russia's choice and under even more unfavorable circumstances. ■

ENDNOTES

1. Anthony H. Cordesman, *Russia and the "Color Revolution": A Russian Military View of a World Destabilized by the US and the West* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2014); Alexander Golts, "Are Color Revolutions a New Form of War?" The Moscow Times, June 2, 2014, http://www.themoscowtimes.com/opinion/article/are-color-revolutions-a-new-form-of-war/501353.html.
2. Karoun Dmirjian, "Russian View: West Stirs up Hong Kong As a Way to Punish — Russia," *Washington Post*, October 1, 2014, http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2014/10/01/russian-view-west-stirs-up-hong-kong-as-a-way-to-punish-russia/.
3. See Stephen Blank, "Civil-Military Relations and Russian Security," in Stephen J. Blank, ed., Civil-Military Relations in Medvedev's Russia (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College 2011), 1-76; Brian Taylor, "Russia's Power Ministries: Coercion and Commerce," Institute for National Security and Counterterrorism, Syracuse University, 2007.
4. Benjamin Bidder, "Did Putin's Man in Crimea Have Mafia Ties?" Der Spiegel (Hamburg), March 25, 2014, http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/dossier-suggests-crimea-prime-minister-aksyonov-had-crime-ties-a-960644-druck.html; Taras Kuzio, "Crime and Politics in Crimea," Open Democracy, March 14, 2014, http://www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/taras-kuzio/crime-and-politics-in-crimea-Aksyonov-Goblin-Wikileaks-Cables.
5. Quoted in Gordon G. Chang, "How China and Russia Threaten the World," Commentary, June 2007, 29.
6. Anne Gearan and Loveday Morris, "Syria Talks End on a Note of Uncertainty, U.S. Frustration With Russia," *Washington Post*, February 15, 2014.
7. Stephen Blank, "Putin's Agenda: Gunboat Diplomacy," *Jamestown Foundation Eurasia Daily Monitor* 8, iss. 225, December 12, 2011, http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=38773&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=13.
8. Stephen Blank, "Is Egypt Russia's Next Major Middle Eastern Arms Customer?" *Jamestown Foundation Eurasian Daily Monitor* 11, iss. 91, May 15, 2014, http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=42364&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=7#.VDRTAl4irwI; "Egypt Turns to Russia to Buy $4 billion Weapons Supplies," Middle East Monitor, November 9, 2013, https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/news/africa/8246-egypt-turns-to-russia-to-buy-4-billion-weapons-supplies-; Theodore Karasik, "Arms to Egypt, From Russia With Love," Al-Arabiya (Dubai), November 20, 2013, http://english.alarabiya.net/en/views/news/middle-east/2013/11/20/Arms-to-Egypt-from-Russia-with-love.html; "Government refuses Russia's request to set up a military base in Montenegro," Independent Balkan News Agency, December 20, 2013, http://www.balkaneu.com/government-refuses-russias-request-set-military-base-montenegro/.
9. Ibid.
10. Henk Houweling and Mehdi Parvizi Amineh, "Introduction," in Mehdi Parvizi Amineh and Henk Houweling, eds., Central Eurasia in Global Politics: Conflict, Security, and Development (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 15.
11. Corey Johnson and B. Matthew Derrick, "A Splintered Heartland: Russia, Europe and the Geopolitics of Networked Energy Infrastructure," *Geopolitics* XVII, no. 3, 2012, 495.
12. Dmitri Trenin, "Russia's Goal In Ukraine Remains the Same: Keep NATO Out," *Al-Jazeera* (Doha), June 2, 2014, http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/6/2/russiaa-s-goal-inukraineremainsthesametokeepnatoout.html; Kremlin transcript, "Putin Admits Russia Trained S Ossetians Before 2008 Georgia War," August 10, 2012, www.kremlin.ru; Reuben F. Johnson, "The Expansion Process Has Begun, "*Weekly Standard*, XII, no. 4, October 10, 2006.
13. For example, "Russian Journalists Detained for Spying In Ukraine – Claimed To Be Finnish Media," *YLE UUtiset*, Helsinki, June 7, 2014, http://yle.fi/uutiset/russian_journalists_detained_for_spying_in_ukraine__claimed_to_be_finnish_media/7284974.
14. Timothy L. Thomas, "Russian Information Warfare Theory," in Stephen J. Blank and Richard Weitz, eds., The Russian Military Today and Tomorrow: Essays in Memory of Marty Fitzgerald (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2010); Stephen Blank, "Information Warfare a la Russe," Paper presented to the Conference on "Cyberspace: Malevolent Actors, Criminal Opportunities, and Strategic Competition," Ridgway Center of the University of Pittsburgh, November 1-2, 2012.
15. Edward Lucas, The New Cold War: Putin's Russia and the Threat to the West (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Luke Harding, Mafia State (London: Guardian, 2011); Karen Dawisha, "Is Russia's Foreign Policy That of a Corporatist-Kleptocratic Regime?" Post-Soviet Affairs XXVII, no. 4, October-December, 2011, 331-365.
16. Stephen Blank, Web War I: Is Europe's First Information War a New Kind of War?" *Comparative Strategy* XXVII, no. 3, 2008, 227-247.
17. "Former Ambassador to Russia: Putin Has No Master Plan For Ukraine," *NPR*, May 15, 2014, http://www.npr.org/programs/fresh-air/2014/05/15/312828844/fresh-air-for-may-15-2014.

FORGING A WESTERN-NATO RESPONSE

JANUSZ BUGAJSKI

Russia's multi-pronged attack on Ukraine has sent shockwaves from the Baltics to Central Asia. The unilateral annexation of Crimea and the subversion of eastern Ukraine through an ongoing proxy war have removed any doubts about President Vladimir Putin's geopolitical objectives: to create a new and extensive sphere of influence at the expense of Russia's neighbors.

In truth, any confusion about Kremlin ambitions should have evaporated in August 2008, when Russian forces invaded and partitioned Georgia and recognized South Ossetia and Abkhazia as independent states. Instead, Moscow's attack on Georgia's sovereignty was treated in the West as an anomaly. Hence, there were no punishing international consequences, few lessons were learned about Russia's multi-regional intentions, and NATO's verbal reassurances to the new members in Central-Eastern Europe (CEE) proved ritualistic and insubstantial. However, Moscow's assault on Ukraine strikes closer to Europe's heartland and should become a clarion call for a reinvigorated NATO that can perform its core function of defending all of its members, while generating security toward neighboring states that are targeted by Russia.

RUSSIA'S STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The principal aim of Moscow's foreign policy is to restore Russia as a major "pole of power" in a multipolar world, and to reverse the predominance of the U.S. within the broader Eurasian region. In pursuit of a dominant neo-imperial position in its former zone of control, Moscow is intent on constructing a Eurasian Economic Union, with economic, political, and security components directed by Moscow. To achieve these goals, the Kremlin is prepared to redraw international borders and to challenge governmental legitimacy and territorial integrity in targeted countries.

Instead of controlling the political and economic systems of its new satellites, as it did during the Soviet era, the Kremlin primarily seeks to determine their foreign and security policies so they will either remain neutral or support Russia's agenda. Despite its bellicose claims, Moscow's security is not threatened by the NATO accession of nearby states. However, its ability to control the foreign policy orientations of these countries is indeed challenged by NATO's protective umbrella.

While its plans are imperial, the Kremlin's strategies are pragmatic. It employs flexible methods, including enticements, threats, and pressures, and is opportunistic and adaptable, preying on weakness and division among its Western adversaries. But Moscow also miscalculates on occasion, and its aggressiveness can propel some states toward a closer relationship with NATO or the EU as protection against unacceptable pressures exerted by Russian officials.

Although Putin's ambition to create a Eurasia Union is unlikely to be fully successful, especially given Russia's escalating economic problems and the resistance of several neighboring capitals, attempts to create such a bloc can still have a destabilizing effect on a broad region in Europe's East. As the largest target of the Kremlin, Ukraine serves as a pertinent example of the impact of Moscow's imperial aspirations. The open collision between Russia and Ukraine challenges the post-Cold War status quo and unsettles regional se-

Dr. Janusz Bugajski *is a Senior Fellow at the Center for European Policy Analysis (CEPA) in Washington, DC and author of 19 books on Europe, Russia, and trans-Atlantic relations. His latest book is entitled Conflict Zones: North Caucasus and Western Balkans Compared (Jamestown Foundation, 2014). He is currently working with Margarita Assenova on a book entitled Eurasian Disunion: Russia's Vulnerable Flanks, due to be published in 2015.*

curity throughout CEE. Conversely, Russia's re-imperialization also gives NATO a reinvigorated mandate to protect the integrity of CEE members, including their eastern borders, and provide adequate deterrents against instability emanating from nearby states.

SEEKING A ROBUST NATO RESPONSE

In his June 4, 2014 address in Warsaw, President Barack Obama declared that the U.S. maintains an "unwavering commitment, now and forever," to the security of its NATO allies and that Poland and other Central-East European members "will never stand alone."[1] According to Obama, these are "unbreakable commitments backed by the strongest alliance in the world and by the armed forces of the United States of America."

Stirring speeches are intended to provide a rationale for policy, and not become a substitute for strategy. Obama immediately came under criticism for promising more than Washington or most of its European allies were inclined to deliver. The White House seems unwilling or unable to mobilize Western Europeans in substantially strengthening NATO capabilities or in pursuing an effective sanctions regime against Moscow. Several NATO members, notably Germany and France, evidently value trade with Russia above the security of their CEE allies.

While its plans are imperial, the Kremlin's strategies are pragmatic. It employs flexible methods, including enticements, threats, and pressures, and is opportunistic and adaptable, preying on weakness and division among its Western adversaries.

As Anthony Cordesman of the Center for Strategic & International Studies points out, "it is time for Europe to work collectively to reduce its over-dependence on Russian gas" and to impose meaningful sanctions against Russia's aggression.[2] Thus far, America's European allies have proved weak, divided, and dependent on U.S. leadership. Such a posture serves as a potential invitation to Russia's future offensives. Even the CEE Visegrad Group has proven disunited, with Poland adopting a more assertive posture toward Moscow, while Slovakia, Hungary, and the Czech Republic remain hesitant.

The White House seems unwilling or unable to mobilize Western Europeans in substantially strengthening NATO capabilities or in pursuing an effective sanctions regime against Moscow.

In light of Russia's attack on Ukraine, NATO's post-Afghanistan mission needs to be clearly enunciated: to fully protect the sovereignty and integrity of all allies by upgrading the land and air defenses of all countries bordering Russia. Unfortunately, the Alliance's September summit in Wales did no such thing. At present, the bloc lacks an effective strategy or sufficient deterrents to defend Poland, the three Baltic states, or other vulnerable NATO members from a direct Russian military assault—something that would require a comprehensive reconfiguration of NATO's threat assessment and force deployments. [3]

NEXT STEPS FOR THE ALLIANCE

General Philip Breedlove, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander for Europe, has called Moscow's conquest of Crimea a "paradigm shift" that requires a fundamental rethinking of where American forces are located and how they are trained.[4] Thus far, however, Alliance commitments have been limited and tentative.

NATO added combat aircraft support to NATO's Baltic air policing mission, dispatched a dozen F-16 fighters to Poland, and sent AWAC reconnaissance aircraft to Poland and Romania. The U.S. deployed four airborne companies (to Estonia, Latvia, Lithua-

nia, and Poland). Even though they lack heavy weapons, it indicated a more concrete commitment to defending CEE allies. Washington now needs to request similar commitments from its West European allies by dispatching German, French, and British military units to the "frontline states." The rotation of American and European units for air policing duties and upgrading CEE air defense capabilities can also be supplemented with periodic large-scale NATO exercises that enhance local capabilities. For the frontline states bordering Russia, it is vital to have a year-round presence of U.S. and West European forces that will act as a tripwire to deter any direct Russian assault.

General Philip Breedlove, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander for Europe, has called Moscow's conquest of Crimea a "paradigm shift" that requires a fundamental rethinking of where American forces are located and how they are trained.

General Breedlove has urged the U.S. Congress to reconsider previously planned reductions in the number of American troops in Europe.[5] NATO defense ministers have also agreed to develop a "Readiness Action Plan" to enable the pre-positioning of supplies and equipment in member states and improve military capabilities to help NATO speed up its reaction time to any direct military threat.[6] But even these measures are insufficient and hardly comparable to Russia's ability to rapidly mass in excess of 40,000 troops on the border with Ukraine and keep them there, prepared for an invasion, for several months.

Russia's attack on Ukraine has reinforced CEE plans to switch from an out-of-area orientation, in line with U.S. and NATO overseas missions, toward the construction of more credible territorial defense forces. Each state must ensure that it has adequate capabilities to engage in conventional and unconventional warfare against foreign aggression. This will require such assets as ground-based missile defense systems and anti-tank weaponry, as well as the development of anti-subversion units, which Russia's proxy war in eastern Ukraine has highlighted as a necessity.

Russia's attack on Ukraine has reinforced CEE plans to switch from an out-of-area orientation, in line with U.S. and NATO overseas missions, toward the construction of more credible territorial defense forces.

Additional steps will be required if NATO is to deter aggression, and this must include the positioning of Alliance infrastructure along its eastern flank. Several military bases will need to be moved from Western to Central Europe because, unlike during the Cold War, Western Europe no longer faces potential military assault. NATO has military installations in Britain, Spain, Italy, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Greece, Portugal, and Turkey, but none in CEE. During his June visit to Warsaw, Obama announced a $1 billion European Reassurance Initiative to increase the U.S. military presence in CEE.[7] Yet this fell far short of calls in Warsaw to establish a permanent NATO base in Poland.

At the NATO Summit on September 4-5, 2014, Alliance leaders did not endorse the positioning of permanent bases in the CEE region despite the urging of Warsaw and the three Baltic governments. However, they did agree to create a spearhead contingent within the existing NATO Response Force (NRF) – a Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) capable of deploying at short notice along NATO's periphery and consist of land, air, maritime, and Special Operations Force components. The VJTF is to include 4,000 troops trained to move on 48 hours notice to hotspots in any NATO member state. It will benefit from equipment and logistics facilities pre-positioned in CEE countries, but the troops will not be perma-

nently stationed in the region.[8] It can evidently be used as a mobile tripwire when dispatched to a threatened state. However, at this early stage in its planned deployment, it is difficult to estimate the effectiveness of a relatively small VJTF contingent in deterring either the subversion or outright invasion of a NATO member.

NATO also needs genuine commitments to increased defense spending. Today, only four countries in the Alliance meet the mandated two percent of GDP requirement. While Russia has raised its defense spending by 50 percent over the last five years, the Allies have cut theirs by a fifth. Since the start of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, governments across the region, including in Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, and Romania, have pledged to boost their defense spending, but few Western European capitals are following suit. As former U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates famously stated, the fundamental obstacle to long-term security is the "demilitarization of Europe," and the prospect of "collective military irrelevance," where political leaders and large sectors of the public remain averse to adequate defense spending and the deployment of military force.[9]

NATO also needs genuine commitments to increased defense spending. Today, only four countries in the Alliance meet the mandated two percent of GDP requirement.

NATO can demonstrate its relevance and vitality by issuing membership invitations to Montenegro and Macedonia, as both countries have fully qualified for inclusion and are eager to enter the Alliance. Even though enlargement was excluded from the agenda of the September Wales Summit, invitations can be offered in subsequent NATO meetings. Meanwhile, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Georgia need to obtain NATO Membership Action Plans (MAPs) to confirm that they will also join the Alliance at some future date. In addition, NATO needs to pursue closer military cooperation with Ukraine, Moldova, Azerbaijan, and other countries bordering Russia that seek closer links with the West. Such steps will demonstrate that Russia cannot veto NATO decisions and that collective security is the sovereign choice of each state.

The new epoch can be better defined as a Shadow War, in which Moscow no longer recognizes the independence or integrity of neighboring states and the West and Russia compete for political and economic influence throughout Wider Europe.

To provide an additional buffer against Russia's aggression, all NATO partners (under the Partnership for Peace [PfP] initiative) facing potential subversion need assistance in creating viable territorial defense forces, beginning with Ukraine. The most effective deterrent to potential Russian attack is adequate military preparedness and a political commitment to resist attack. Following a meeting of NATO defense ministers in Brussels on June 3, 2014, Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen stated that the Alliance will finalize a package aimed at modernizing and reforming Ukraine's armed forces.[10] There is an urgent need for reorganizing and equipping all branches of the Ukrainian military, as Russia's subversion of eastern Ukraine shows little sign of abating. Unfortunately, the Allies have been reluctant to provide lethal weapons to Kyiv, contending that this will escalate the conflict with Russia. In reality, without adequate defensive weaponry that would be costly to any invasion force, the Ukrainian government will be unable to prevent Moscow from creating a "frozen conflict" in the Donbas region that it can manipulate to its political advantage.

UNCERTAIN FUTURE

Despite the frequent comparisons, the world has not entered another Cold War. The Cold War was a frozen condition that divided Europe for nearly fifty years, while the Eastern and Western blocs avoided direct

military confrontation. The new epoch can be better defined as a Shadow War, in which Moscow no longer recognizes the independence or integrity of neighboring states and the West and Russia compete for political and economic influence throughout Wider Europe using a wide assortment of economic, political, informational, and military tools.[11] Although Western leaders contend that there should be no zero-sum games, Russia's officials believe they are engaged in an existential struggle with only one possible winner.

In such a volatile geopolitical context, the U.S. should not have to reassure NATO's newest members every time Moscow launches an attack on one of its neighbors. A more effective strategy would be to have adequate defenses and deterrents in place preceding any planned Russian aggression in NATO's neighborhood. If the Alliance were adequately prepared, there would be no need for CEE nervousness and Washington's ritualistic reassurances. If NATO is serious about defending its declared strategic interests and the professed values of freedom, democracy, and national independence, allies will be afforded sufficient protection and partners will obtain sustained assistance to resist Moscow's unilateral interventions. ■

ENDNOTES

1. "Obama Vows to Stand with Ukraine as He Meets President-Elect in Poland," *CNN*, June 4, 2014, http://www.cnn.com/2014/06/04/politics/obama-europe.
2. Anthony H. Cordesman, "NATO and Ukraine: The Need for Real World Strategies and for European Partners Rather than Parasites," Center for Strategic & International Studies CSIS Report, June 5, 2014.
3. Edward Lucas, "Weakness or Strength: The European Reassurance Initiative," Center for European Policy Analysis, June 5, 2014, http://cepa.org/content/weakness-or-strength-european-reassurance-initiative.
4. As cited in Julian Borger, "Nato to Step Up Presence Near Russian Borders," *Guardian* (London), April 16, 2014, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/apr/16/nato-step-up-presence-russian-borders-eastern-europe.
5. James Rosen, "NATO Chief to Move Forces from U.S. to Europe to Respond to Russia in Ukraine," McClatchy, June 30, 2014, http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2014/06/30/231970/nato-chief-to-move-forces-from.html.
6. "NATO Agrees to 'Readiness Action Plan' to Counter Russia," Agence France-Presse, June 3, 2014.
7. White House, Office of the Press Secretary, "European Reassurance Initiative and Other U.S. Efforts in Support of NATO Allies and Partners," June 3, 2014, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/06/03/fact-sheet-european-reassurance-initiative-and-other-us-efforts-support-/.
8. "NATO Response Force, at the Centre of NATO Transformation," 2 October 2014, www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_49755.htm
9. U.S. Department of Defense, Secretary of Defense Speech, "The Security and Defense Agenda (Future of NATO)," Brussels, Belgium June 10, 2011, www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1581
10. "NATO To Finalize Military Aid Package For Ukraine," *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, June 3, 2014, http://www.rferl.org/content/nato-military-aid-ukraine/25409240.html.
11. Janusz Bugajski, "The Shadow War," Center for European Policy Analysis, Washington DC, May 9, 2014, http://cepa.org/content/shadow-war.programs/fresh-air/2014/05/15/312828844/fresh-air-for-may-15-2014.

Page Intentionally Left Blank.

Ilan Berman	Chief Editor
Rich Harrison	Managing Editor
Amanda Sawit James Williams	Graphic Design and Layout

"Red World Map" cover art courtesy of Vector Templates

MANUSCRIPTS SHOULD BE SENT TO the attention of the Editor at 509 C Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002, or submitted via email to defensedossier@afpc.org. The Editors will consider all manuscripts received, but assume no responsibility regarding them and will return only materials accompanied by appropriate postage. Facsimile submissions will not be accepted.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The opinions expressed in the Defense Dossier (ISSN 2165-1841) are those of the author(s) alone and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the American Foreign Policy Council.

About the American Foreign Policy Council

For more than three decades, AFPC has played an essential role in the U.S. foreign policy debate. Founded in 1982, AFPC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to bringing information to those who make or influence the foreign policy of the United States and to assisting world leaders with building democracies and market economies. AFPC is widely recognized as a source of timely, insightful analysis on issues of foreign policy, and works closely with members of Congress, the Executive Branch and the policymaking community. It is staffed by noted specialists in foreign and defense policy, and serves as a valuable resource to officials in the highest levels of government.

DEFENSE DOSSIER

AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY COUNCIL

American Foreign Policy Council
509 C Street, NE
Washington, D.C. 20002
www.afpc.org