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Dr Mark A Smith



RUSSIAN DOMESTIC CHRONOLOGY JULY 2009 – SEPTEMBER 2009

1 July 2009 The head of the commission for the Caucasus and first deputy speaker of the Federation Council, Aleksandr Torshin, criticises the assessment of the situation in the North Caucasus made by the human rights organization Amnesty International.

1 July 2009 President Dmitry Medvedev speaks at a state reception for graduates of military educational institutions in the Kremlin. He discusses military reform.

1 July 2009 Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov discusses with Vladimir Putin the development of seaport construction. Ivanov states:

In 1998-99, of the total volume of import and export operations, 75 per cent of our cargoes were shipped through foreign ports, mostly Ukrainian and Baltic ones, and only 25 per cent through Russian ports. Now the proportion is as follows: 87 per cent of all cargoes are already shipped and processed through Russian ports, and only 13 per cent through foreign ports. I think that's fairly good dynamics, and in the foreseeable future we will completely get rid of dependence on foreign ports. This is very important from the economic point of view, and of course additional jobs.

1 July 2009 The head of the Rosnano state corporation Anatoly Chubays addresses the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs innovation policy committee. He discusses the need to develop an innovative economy in the Russian Federation.

1 July 2009 Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev says that alcohol abuse or poisoning causes each fifth death in Russia.

1 July 2009 Gazprom begins drilling the first gas well in Kamchatka. According to the region's ministry of natural resources, the explored reserves of hydrocarbons at this deposit are estimated at more than 10 billion cubic metres of gas and 0.425 million tonnes of gas condensate. The gas field is situated in the northwest of the peninsula in Sobolevsky District.

2 July 2009 Various human rights activists issue a statement calling for the release of the former heads of the Yukos oil company, Mikhail Khodorkovsky and Platon Lebedev.

2 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev chairs an expanded meeting of the State Council presidium in Arkhangelsk devoted to energy efficiency. He criticises Russia's record in energy efficiency. He says Russia needs serious projects in renewable energy resources.

We should work on these alternative sources, because sooner or later they will, in their segments, replace the existing traditional hydrocarbons - however sad it may sound to us. Even now, as the largest state in terms of the production of hydrocarbon-based energy, we should think about tomorrow and the day after. Clearly it won't happen in a day, but we know from history that once or even twice every 100 years, there comes an energy revolution: oil, gas, electricity, nuclear energy. One can rest assured that this aim of creating efficient hydrogen fuel will be achieved. Billions of dollars are spent on this - just so as not to buy our oil and gas. So we should also be equal to this challenge.

2 July 2009 Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Zhukov meets Prime Minister Vladimir Putin. He presents data on the situation on the labour market in the Russian Federation. He says that "as of 24 June, according to monitoring data, the overall number of people registered as

unemployed was 2,177,000. In one week, between 17 and 24 June, the number of people registered as unemployed fell by 17,000." He says that the number of people registered as unemployed had fallen in 75 out of 83 regions. Zhukov states that since the end of April, the number of people registered as unemployed in Russia had been falling by an average of "about 0.5 per cent" a week.

2 July 2009 An ITAR-TASS report states that Russian gas extraction and exports have fallen in the first half of 2009, while oil extraction has risen during the same period. Energy Ministry figures report that gas extraction in Russia fell by 72 billion cubic metres in the first half of 2009 in comparison with the same period in 2008. Natural gas exports from Russia fell by 55.9 billion cubic metres. Since the start of 2009, 274.2 billion cubic metres of gas have been extracted, of which 216.4 billion were extracted by Gazprom; 45.5 billion cubic metres of gas were exported, which is 71 per cent of the planned level. The deputy head of the management committee of Gazprom, Aleksandr Anenkov, said earlier that the corporation planned to extract 450-510 billion cubic metres of gas in 2009. According to the forecast announced by the head of Gazprom Export, Aleksandr Medvedev, Gazprom would allocate 82.2 billion cubic metres of this gas to be exported. The report notes that Gazprom expects its gas exports to Europe to fall by 18.8 billion cubic metres in 2009 in relation to 2008, from 158.8 billion cubic metres to 140 billion. The Energy Ministry figures states that domestic gas consumption in Russia has fallen by 11 billion cubic metres in comparison to the same period in 2008, to 237 billion cubic metres. In the first half of 2009, oil extraction in Russia rose by 307 million tonnes in comparison with the same period in 2008. Oil exports increased by 2.2 million tonnes.

2 July 2009 Chechen parliamentary speaker Dukuvakha Abdurakhmanov denies claims about his contacts with exiled rebel leader Akhmed Zakayev in Oslo which appeared in some foreign media.

2 July 2009 Prosecutor-General Yury Chayka says he supports the creation of a single investigations committee in the country.

3 July 2009 The Duma adopts in the third and final reading a law that lifts the ban on the access to mass media for parties which lost at the elections and did not pay their debt for free TV air time.

3 July 2009 The Duma passes in the third and final reading additions to the existing law "On state secrets".

3 July 2009 The Prosecutor General's Office Investigation Committee (SKP) resumes the investigation into the murder case of journalist Paul Klebnikov.

3 July 2009 The secretary of the Security Council, Nikolay Patrushev, says he thinks that the task of neutralizing the threat from narcotics is no less important that fight against terrorism.

3 July 2009 First Vice-Premier Igor Shuvalov says that the increase in tariffs of natural monopolies in 2010 will be minimal.

3 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev signs a decree appointing the prime minister of Ingushetia, Rashid Gaysanov, acting head of the republic until President Yunus-Bek Yevkurov recovers.

3 July 2009 Interfax reports that a Joint Strategic Air and Space Defence Command is created for the first time in the armed forces.

The Joint Strategic Air and Space Defence Command is expected to be formed by the end of 2009, its headquarters will be located near Balashikha, Moscow Region, where the headquarters of the 1st air defence corps was previously located.

All main air, missile and space defence troops and forces were subordinated to the joint strategic command. The Joint Strategic Air and Space Defence Command will be under the general command of the General Staff.

The reconnaissance and warning systems of an air or space attack, as well as systems of suppressing offensive air and space capabilities of foreign states, will be based on units of the air force, air, missile and space defence, which are a part of the Space Troops.

The general course of creating an integrated system for suppressing offensive air and space capabilities of foreign states should make air defence systems capable of countering cruise missiles and hypersonic targets.

4 July 2009 Deputy chairman of the Duma committee on security Gennady Gudkov (SR) says that direct presidential rule should be introduced in Ingushetia. Acting President of Ingushetia Rashid Gaysanov says that the situation in Ingushetia is stable, and external rule is not necessary.

4 July 2009 Head of Roskosmos Anatoly Perminov says six spacecraft of the Glonass system will be launched during 2009, and the number of satellites in the orbital group will reach 24. He says Roskosmos plans to launch six spacecraft a year until the orbital group reaches 30 spacecraft. The Glonass orbital group currently numbers 20 craft.

Roskosmos is planning to launch a Belarusian satellite in early 2010.

6 July 2009 Criminal cases are launched against the Moskovskaya Neftegazovaya Kompaniya open joint-stock company on charges of tax evasion committed in 2002-2003 and 2006.

6 July 2009 The Federal Service for Veterinary and Plant Control says that it has lifted its ban on the import of pork from the states of Illinois, Pennsylvania, Texas and New Jersey.

6 July 2009 The operational-strategic exercise Kavkaz-2009 which started on 29 June, ends. It was held in the North Caucasian Military District. In total, 8,500 military servicemen, about 200 tanks, 450 armoured combat vehicles, up to 250 artillery guns of various calibres and other combat and special equipment took part in the operational-strategic exercise.

6 July 2009 The chairman of the Public Chamber Commission for the affairs of veterans, servicemen and their families, Aleksandr Kanshin, cites data showing that the number of non-combat losses in the Russian Armed Forces is 15 per cent higher in comparison with the corresponding period in 2008. The number of servicemen who died has risen from 197 to 227.

The head of the MOD's press service and information directorate, Colonel Aleksandr Drobyshevsky, says that there has been a rise in corruption-related crime in the Armed Forces. In the first five months of 2009, 667 corruption-related crimes were uncovered in the Russian Armed Forces, while in the same period of 2008 576 corruption-related crimes were uncovered. Senior officers account for 64.5 per cent (140) of the total number of officers (217) who committed these crimes.

6 July 2009 Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says that the Finance Ministry expects the average price of oil in 2010 to be \$55 a barrel, and in 2009, \$54 a barrel. The final version of the 2009 budget was based on an oil price of \$41 a barrel and a fall in GDP of 2.2 per cent. According to the latest forecast, Russia's GDP could fall by 8.5, rather than 2.2, per cent in 2009. At the end of June Kudrin was saying that the Finance Ministry was forecasting an average oil price of \$50-52 a barrel in 2010.

7 July 2009 A VTsIOM poll shows that Russians are expecting less mass protests and are increasingly reluctant to support them personally. In March 2009, 33 per cent expected street protests, in June 2009 this fell to 25 per cent. The number of Russians who believe that protests in their locality are unlikely grew (from 59 per cent in March to 71 per cent in June).

7 July 2009 An unauthorized procession in Red Square (Moscow) in support of ex-head of Yukos Mikhail Khodorkovsky takes place. Seven are detained.

7 July 2009 Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov says that the abolition of the regime of anti-terrorist operation in the republic has so far not yielded any results. "There is only an official statement that the regime of anti-terrorist operation has been abolished. So far there is no positive effect for the republic." He states however that "it is simply good that it was abolished". He says that the information about the number of gunmen in Chechnya is strongly inflated; they actually number 50-70 and about 60-70 per cent of them are foreign mercenaries. He says the Chechen government is holding talks with separatist envoy Akhmed Zakaev. He says Zakaev is welcome to return to Chechnya.

Acting Ingush President Rashid Gaysanov rules out any merger of Ingushetia with Chechnya.

8 July 2009 Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade Yury Borisov says that while transferring a portion of its production to the civilian sector, the enterprises of the Russian defence-industrial complex should make more active use of technologies that have already been developed by foreign companies.

8 July 2009 Interfax-AVN reports that "In the course of the transformation of the Armed Forces a naval operations command will be created on the Caspian Sea over two years. It will become part of the Black Sea Fleet. The process of merger of all the units of coastal forces stationed in the region of the Black Sea, the Caspian Sea and the Sea of Azov started this January."

8 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev calls for greater support for small business.

I would like you [First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov] and all the other members of the government to understand that during the crisis small business may be one of the most important clusters, one of the most important areas of work. Because if small business disappears into the abyss of the crisis, it will take us not years but decades to recover. So, the speed of our recovery from the crisis nose dive depends on what climate we shall now create for small business.

9 July 2009 Demonstrations take place in Rubtsovsk (Altay Territory) by workers of a plant producing spare parts for tractors. They are demanding the payment of wage arrears.

9 July 2009 Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says that Russia's GDP could increase 1 per cent in 2010 according to conservative estimates. He says that Russia would have economic growth of 2.5-3.5 per cent a year in the subsequent three years.

10 July 2009 The head of the Federal Service for Financial Markets, Vladimir Milovidov, says that in the first six months of 2009 the Russian financial market came second in the world in terms of rates of growth. In the first six months stock indices grew by more than 50 per cent. Milovidov states:

We can see positive signals that the market is sending. First and foremost, these are the increased volume of trading on the market. In fact, the first six months showed record figures in terms of volume of transactions on the financial market; also transactions with shares increased. On the whole, talking of the first six months, the

Russian market has demonstrated the second best result in the world in terms of rates of growth. In the first six months Russian indices grew by 58 per cent, which is the second best result in the world after China.

Aleksey Kudrin says capital outflow from Russia will continue in 2010, "of course less than in 2009, but on the whole, there will still be an outflow". Kudrin also says that direct investment in Russia is continuing: "investors are now returning, but there have been fewer incoming investors than outgoing so far". According to Kudrin, capital outflow mainly happens due to credit repayment, outflow from the stock market and the sale of assets. Kudrin says: "I hope that after overcoming the crisis, we will receive a flow of investment in 2011."

10 July 2009 Internal special police (OMON) officers force back workers of the company Magistral in Altay who blocked the M-52 federal road outside Gorno-Altaysk; the road links Novosibirsk to the Mongolian border. They are demanding jobs.

10 July 2009 Rustaman Makhauri, the defence minister of Ichkeria (i.e. the Chechen separatist regime), is detained in Ingushetia.

11 July 2009 The Movement Against Illegal Migration (DPNI) leader Aleksandr Belov steps down. The DPNI will be led by a national council made up of eight members.

13 July 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin expects the Russian economy to start "gathering pace" during 2010. Putin says that the government presidium has approved the main parameters of the forecast for the socioeconomic development of the country for 2010-2012. It is these parameters that the draft budget will be based on.

13 July 2009 Vladimir Putin says that gas production has gone down.

Gas production dropped by 20.8 per cent in the first half of the year. However, we are convinced that already in the next few months, as the economy is recovering, gas consumers both in Russia and abroad will increase their purchases. And in a longer-term prospect, demand for energy products, including such primary and major product as gas, will not only recover, but considerably exceed the pre-crisis level. Certainly, we should be ready for this.

We should keep the most important priority projects in the investment programme of Gazprom, such as the development of new fields in Yamal and Kamchatka, diversification of gas transport routes, the development of facilities to produce liquefied natural gas. Certainly, the programme on providing the Russian constituent parts with gas will be continued. About R18.5 billion will be allocated for its implementation in 68 regions of Russia. On the whole, the updated amount of Gazprom investment programme will be R775 billion.

13 July 2009 A VTsIOM poll states that Russians consider the economic crisis to be the main threat that Russia is facing. 11 per cent say the main threat for the country is the economic crisis, the weak industry and agriculture. 9 per cent says that alcoholism, drug addiction and the degradation of population are the main threat. 7 per cent say the main threat for Russia is the military threat from the USA (NATO, the West as a whole) and the possibility of World War III (7 per cent).

13 July 2009 Novosti reports that the Navy carried out a launch of a regular RSM-54 (Sineva) SLBM.

13 July 2009 AN MOD source informs Interfax-AVN that a new Air Force and Air Defence command headquartered in Rostov-na-Donu has been created in the course of the armed forces reform. The new command will incorporate units of the disbanded fourth and fifth armies of the Air Force and the Air Defence. The fifth army headquartered in Yekaterinburg

was giving protection to southern and central regions, while the fourth army headquartered in Rostov-on-Don was covering the Northern Caucasus.

Colonel Yevgeny Starkov of Commander of the Radiation, Chemical and Biological Defence Troops says these forces are 100 per cent equipped with modern armaments and protective means.

Five brigades and separate units of the Radiation, Chemical and Biological Defence Troops, including an experimental air wing of the General Staff, are deployed in the Moscow and Urals military districts, where the main facilities for storing and disposing of chemical weapons are located. These units are 100 per cent equipped with modern armaments and protective measures and are fully prepared to deter a possible attack or a terrorist act using chemical weapons.

Another two brigades of the forces are under formation. One was formed by 1 June, and the other will be ready by 1 December.

Russia stores chemical weapons in five regions of central Russia: Bryansk, Kirov, Kurgan and Penza regions and Udmurtia. Chemical munitions, equipment and tanks are stored in well-protected depots. No accidents in the storage and disposal of chemical weapons took place in 2008.

Dmitry Medvedev says that Russia has not reduced the financing of the Armed Forces despite the economic downturn.

It is important that much attention has recently been paid to the development of the Armed Forces even regardless of the crisis that, of course, has created quite profound problems for our state, for our economy. Nevertheless, you know that we practically have not amended any parameters of the financing of our armed forces, the army and the navy. We have reduced none of the military programmes, neither in terms of improving the defence capacity nor social programmes that are being implemented in the armed forces, including programmes dealing with creating the basics for life, I mean housing.

13 July 2009 Economic Development Minister Elvira Nabiullina, estimates that the average price of a barrel of oil will be \$55 in 2010, \$56 in 2011 and \$57 in 2012. This would lead to a GDP growth of 1 per cent in 2010, 2.6 per cent in 2011 and 3.8 per cent in 2012, and budget deficits of 6.5 per cent of GDP, 4 per cent of GDP and 3 per cent of GDP respectively. The Ministry of Economic Development has also drafted a "conservative scenario" and an "oil scenario". Under the former, Russian GDP would grow by 0.1 per cent in 2010, 1.5 per cent in 2011 and 3.2 per cent in 2012. Under the latter, Urals will cost \$60 per barrel in 2010, \$70 per barrel in 2011 and \$77 per barrel in 2012

14 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev discusses the situation in Ingushetia with the acting Ingush president, Rashid Gaysanov.

Interior Minister General Rashid Nurgaliyev says that the combined group of forces in the Caucasus will not be reduced for the time being after a counterterrorist operation in Chechnya has been lifted.

14 July 2009 A test of Sineva missile is conducted successfully from the nuclear submarine cruiser Bryansk onto the Chizha range.

Dmitry Medvedev says that the main work on creating a new look for the Armed Forces should be completed by 1 December 2009.

Our task is to create mobile armed forces equipped with the latest hardware, effective

and appropriate for meeting modern challenges, and this is what we will be doing in the next few years. I would like to stress that already by 1 December 2009 the main work to create the new look of the Armed Forces should be completed.

What lies ahead is another large part of this work - rearming our Armed Forces with modern armaments and hardware.

Medvedev says that by 2020 the latter would account for 80 per cent of all armaments and hardware.

Medvedev expresses satisfaction with the results of the operational-strategic exercises Kavkaz-2009. "We should not hold such exercises from time to time; we should hold regular drills, including drills as part of large-scale operational strategic exercises, as well as the relatively small-scale exercises that we are planning for the immediate future." He notes that in 2009 the exercise had covered practically the whole territory of Russia.

We have resumed this practice. It can be said that the situation in this sense has changed rather significantly, even compared with what it was a few years ago.

Essentially, there is nothing we can compare it with because until very recently the total number of exercises was meagre. Now the frequency of military exercises has increased many times over, and this is right, because the main task of these exercises is to check the fighting efficiency of the Armed Forces, their ability to act coherently and effectively, repelling hypothetical aggression from any direction.

15 July 2009 It is reported that the Armed Forces and other power-wielding bodies have fully met the conscription target for the spring 2009 call-up, drafting 305,506 young men. Deputy Chief of General Staff Vasily Smirnov says that about 305,000 young people were called up to the army during the spring military recruitment campaign. Smirnov says the number of conscripts has grown more than twofold as compared with the same period in 2008, when 133,000 people were called up. This happens because of a switch to one-year military service. Smirnov says that the number of people dodging military service is decreasing, but it is still quite significant. A total of 7,100 people dodged military service in spring 2009. In 2008, almost 7,500 people dodged military service, while in 2007, 12,500.

A new commander of the Russian military base in Tajikistan, Igor Krasin, assumes office. Dmitry Medvedev signed a decree on his appointment on 30 June. Igor Krasin replaced Major-General Aleksey Zavizyon who was the commander of this base since 2006.

15 July 2009 Human rights organization Memorial employee Natalya Estimirova is abducted and killed in Grozny. The Leninsky District internal affairs department of the city of Grozny is dealing with the case.

Dmitry Medvedev expresses indignation over the murder of Estemirova. He instructs the head of the Investigations Committee under the Russian prosecutor's office, Aleksandr Bastrykin, to take all the necessary measures to investigate it.

Human rights activist Lev Ponomarev says that Estemirova was in conflict with the Kadyrov leadership in Chechnya.

Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov expresses indignation over the kidnapping and murder. Kadyrov states that apart from the official investigation into the murder of human rights activist Natalya Estemirova, he intends additionally to carry out an unofficial investigation into the crime according to Chechen traditions.

15 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev meets Russian Moslem leaders in Moscow. He states:

Everything is still far from simple in the world: there are ethnic and confessional conflicts. Unfortunately, in many regions of the planet we notice a growth of extremist sentiments and, unfortunately, in Russia the activity of extremist organizations is quite intense. It is clear that extremists are using various slogans as a smoke screen, religious, Islamic, non-Islamic and those that do not have any relation to faith. Nonetheless, this factor is quite complex, destabilising the situation in our country and we have to take it into account, of course, and take all measures to neutralize it. In these circumstances, our most important common task is to spread the ideas of tolerance, religious tolerance, careful attitude to religious values, to traditions of the peoples of our multinational country and its cultural diversity. And the Muslim leadership plays a considerable role in this.

Shamil Zaynalov, prime minister of Dagestan, says that there are now more extremists in Dagestan, compared with July 1999, when there was a major conflict with rebels in Dagestan. "If we make an analysis whether we have fewer or more extremist-minded Dagestanis, we will, of course, convincingly say that there are more. This means that we do not work enough in this regard... With each day there are still more young people who go, believing in this ideology. In this regard, of course, we do not do the full amount of work."

16 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev condemn the murder of Natalya Estemirova and rejects any claims that the Chechen authorities may be responsible.

Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov states that: "The death of Natalya Estemirova is not advantageous for the Chechen government. It is possible that the human rights activist was killed by people who wanted to undermine the Chechen and Ingush leaderships."

Acting Ingush President Rashid Gaysanov offers condolences to the family of Estemirova on behalf of the Ingush people.

Chechen Interior Minister Ruslan Alkhanov says that the situation in Chechnya is stable and under the control of internal affairs bodies.

Memorial human rights centre head Oleg Orlov says that there have been 80 abductions so far in Chechnya in 2009. According to Memorial, more people were abducted in Chechnya in the first half of the year than in 2007 and 2008 put together.

16 July 2009 *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* publishes an order from the Ministry of Communications which gives law enforcement agencies the right of unlimited access to people's mail. This law comes into force on 21 July.

16 July 2009 The Prosecutor-General's Office states that employers' debts to their employees was over R7 billion [around \$221 million] on 1 July. The regions of the Central Federal District rank first in terms of wage arrears.

16 July 2009 The MOD press directorate reports that a test launch of the Bulava intercontinental ballistic missile took place in Russia on 15 July. It ended in failure.

17 July 2009 The lawyer of Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov (Andrey Krasnenkov) is planning to lodge a lawsuit in a Moscow court and Moscow main police directorate in view of public statements by the head of the Memorial human rights centre, Oleg Orlov, who accused the Chechen leader of involvement in the kidnapping and murder of Natalya Estemirova.

Vladimir Vasilyev, head of the Duma committee on security, says he believes that terrorists in the North Caucasus are being financed from abroad. "It is no secret that there are those who oppose the alignment of relations between the USA and Russia. I think the participants

in this process also desire to make us clash heads."

17 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev appoints Ali Magomedov Interior Minister of Dagestan.

17 July 2009 The the Ministry of Industry and Trade says the total number of unemployed in Russia in June 2009 stands at 6.3 million. According to the ministry's data, the level of unemployment in Russia in June fell to 8.3 per cent. It was announced previously that according to preliminary data, the total number of unemployed in Russia in May 2009 was estimated at 7.5 million (and the level of unemployment at 9.9 per cent). Rosstat also states that wage arrears in Russia also fell in June - by 18 per cent - compared to a rise of 10.8 per cent in May. Wage arrears stood at R7.194 billion (around \$227 million) on 1 July, against R8.779 billion (around \$276 million) on 1 June.

17 July 2009 President Dmitry Medvedev signs the law on the Russian Motorways Company. The law gives private investors an access to the construction of roads.

17 July 2009 A special commission is set up to investigate the reasons for the unsuccessful test launch of the new strategic missile Bulava, which self-destructed almost immediately after its launch. The MOD press service reported on 16 July that on 15 July as part of the system's flight-development tests the heavy nuclear-powered strategic submarine *Dmitry Donskoy* carried out a launch of the ballistic missile Bulava from the White Sea. The missile self-destructed because of a failure of the first-stage engine operation. This was Bulava's 11th test launch. According to unofficial information, five of the 10 previous launches were also considered to be unsuccessful.

17 July 2009 Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov states that other countries are interested in cooperating with Russia on the satellite navigation system GLONASS. He says that at the present time, two inter-governmental agreements about the full-fledged involvement of India and Kazakhstan in the GLONASS project have been signed. He notes that China, "which is creating its own satellite navigation system is showing interest in separate areas".

In 2009, Venezuela, Egypt, Angola and Nigeria confirmed their interest in GLONASS and relevant agreements have been signed. He also says that Russia is conducting talks with the European Union about the joining of the European Galileo and GLONASS systems.

18 July 2009 Memorial member Aleksandr Cherkasov says that Memorial is temporarily pulling out of Chechnya. "This period of mourning is not the best of times for protracted deliberations. We can see, however, that the work that Natasha did, the work done by our colleagues in Chechnya - documenting the crimes committed by representatives of the authorities - is mortally dangerous. We cannot put them at risk. We are now suspending the work of our offices in the Chechen Republic."

18 July 2009 Oleg Orlov, the head of the Memorial human rights centre, says he is ready to appear in court in connection with a lawsuit filed by the Chechen President, Ramzan Kadyrov, on protecting his honour and dignity.

18 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev visits the Moscow Vishnevsky Surgical Institute, where Ingush President Yunus-Bek Yevkurov is being treated.

19 July 2009 Chechnya's human rights ombudsman, Nurdi Nukhazhiyev, urges the head of the Memorial human rights advocacy organization to reconsider his decision to close its office in Grozny following the murder of Natalya Estemirova.

20 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev speaks at the presentation ceremony for officers on their appointment to senior command positions and promotion to senior military ranks. He states:

We will have to raise the level of operational command, to supply troops with modern

equipment. In this sense, the priorities remain unchanged. Also unchanged are the means of their achievement, goals, facilities and timeframe. All decisions on the timeframe have been made, therefore any deviation from it is unacceptable

We, of course, must do all we can for quality fulfilment of the state defence order; even despite the financial difficulties the parameters of the state defence order remain unchanged in general and remain at the planned level.

He calls for better coordination between law enforcement bodies.

Medvedev says that Russia remained committed to building "new-look" armed forces.

We will be improving our defence potential. New-look Armed Forces is the priority of Russia's national security strategy to 2020, of a number of special decisions taken in relation to the Armed Forces.

We will have to raise the level of operational command and control, supply the troops with modern equipment. In this sense, the priorities remain unchanged. Unchanged are the means of their achievement, goals, facilities and the timeframe. All the decisions on the timeframe have been made, and therefore any deviation from it is unacceptable.

20 July 2009 Ingush President Yunus-Bek Yevkurov issues an address to the people of Ingushetia. This is his first address since the terrorist attack on him on 22 June 2009.

Acting Ingush President Rashid Gaysanov says that the republic's authorities have asked the Russian Interior Ministry to increase the number of employees of internal affairs bodies in Ingushetia by 50 per cent.

Ingush opposition activist Magomed Khazbiyev says that the Ingush opposition has launched a new website (www.ingushetiyaru.org).

20 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev approves amendments to the law "On noncommercial organizations" which simplify the registration and the monitoring of the activities of these organizations. The document was adopted by the State Duma on 3 July and approved by the Federation Council on 7 July 2009.

20 July 2009 An article in *Gazeta* (Denis Telmanov: "Akatsiya Did Not Bloom") says the new automated command and control system failed in the Kavkaz-2009 exercises.

20 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev signs into law the bill "On amending the legal acts of the Russian Federation on elections and referendums concerning the provision of air time and print space for election campaigning".

20 July 2009 Vladimir Putin says that the reform of federal budget-funded organizations, such as institutes of higher education and medical services should be speeded up.

Today, the process of modernizing the budget network is still far from over. And the rates of the reforms do not correspond to the task that we have set ourselves. The total number of federal agencies, though it was reduced in the past years, still amounts to 25,000. This is a very large number. It is either very difficult or sometimes impossible to manage them effectively, and to monitor properly the results of their work.

Many agencies profit by this: they only use budget funds and do not care about the quality of the services rendered to citizens, the effectiveness of their activity and the effectiveness of budget expenses. So it is necessary to considerably speed up the

restructuring of federal agencies, in fact, to give a second wind to this work.

I think that in order to solve this task, we could further considerably enlarge the rights of the federal authorities to manage the agencies they are in charge of. Their directors need to be given the opportunity to decide themselves which federal agencies are really necessary to perform state functions and authorities and where it is simpler and cheaper to buy the corresponding services on the market.

Putin says that the government had been engaged in restructuring federal agencies since 2004 and some results have already been achieved.

21 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev announces his support for the proposals to introduce religious education at school and ministers of religion in the armed forces. He addresses a meeting attended by senior officials and religious leaders from whom he received proposals regarding religious education. He states: "I have decided to back both these proposals: the idea of teaching the foundations of religious culture and secular ethics at Russian schools; I also believe it desirable to organize the work in our Armed Forces on a permanent basis of ministers of Russia's traditional religions. Medvedev suggests that a pilot project to teach religion and ethics at school could be launched in 18 regions of Russia.

The meeting is attended by head of the presidential administration Sergey Naryshkin, first deputy head of the presidential administration Vladislav Surkov, Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov, Education Minister Andrey Fursenko, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Kirill, chairman of the Buddhist traditional sangha Damba Ayushev, chairman of the coordination centre of Muslims of the North Caucasus mufti Ismail Berdiyev, chairman of the Council of Muftis of Russia Ravil Gaynutdin, chief rabbi of Russia Berl Lazar, and supreme mufti and chairman of the Central Clerical Board of Muslims of Russia Talgat Tadzhuddin.

Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov says the introduction of army and navy chaplains in the Armed Forces will take place in three stages.

Stage 1, which would last until the end of 2009, military chaplains should appear in forces stationed outside Russia. The minister explained that he meant the 102nd Russian military base in Armenia, the 201st military base in Tajikistan, as well as forces and brigades in South Ossetia, Abkhazia, in Sevastopol and in Kyrgyzstan.

Stage 2. The introduction of "additional civilian personnel in the main brigades and military subunits and at military bases inside Russia".

Stage 3. The third stage is the creation of the relevant directorate at the central administration of the Russian Armed Forces, as well as sections at military districts and fleets.

Serdyukov estimates that, in all, there should be some 200-250 military chaplains in the Russian army and navy.

21 July 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says that pensions are to rise by almost 46 per cent in 2010.

21 July 2009 Former Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov gives, at the request of the European Court of Human Rights, written evidence in the case of ex-head of Yukos Mikhail Khodorkovsky. He claims that the trial of Khodorkovsky was politically motivated.

21 July 2009 The police seize financial documentation and several computers from the head of the Agora Human Rights Association in Kazan (Tatarstan). The offices of the Kazan Human Rights Centre are also searched.

21 July 2009 The Federal Security Service (FSB) accuses a rights campaigner from Perm, Igor Averkiyev, of extremism. This is caused by Averkiyev's call for an open discussion on the North Caucasus – he wrote an article headlined "Let's leave the North Caucasus and become freer and stronger".

21 July 2009 Rebels in Ingushetia (styled "the armed forces of the vilayat Galgayche" of the Caucasus Emirate,) say they have no links to the murder of Chechen human rights activist Natalya Estemirova. They post a statement on the rebel website hunafa.com.

22 July 2009 The Head of the Karelian branch of the Spravedlivost interregional public organization Andrey Kulagin, an active campaigner for the rights of prisoners, who went missing in mid-May, has been found dead in a sand quarry near Petrozavodsk.

22 July 2009 The press service of the Russian ombudsman says that a working group to prevent serious crime and human rights violations in the North Caucasus has been set up. A document to this effect has been drafted by the plenipotentiary for human rights in the Russian Federation Vladimir Lukin, chairman of the presidential commission for human rights Ella Pamfilova and head of the Russian Public Chamber commission on ethnic relations and freedom of conscience Nikolay Svanidze.

The head of the Moscow Helsinki Group, Lyudmila Alekseyeva, who is a member of the group, states: "I believe that this is a useful step, because it can make it easier to resolve issues linked to human rights activities. Earlier, as was usually the case, we would phone around various state and public structures to get support. Now various organizations, including the state ones, will act simultaneously as part of the working group."

22 July 2009 The Levada-Tsentr polling organization says sociological research suggests that the trust and approval ratings of Vladimir Putin remain high. In July, 72 per cent say they approved of the performance of Dmitry Medvedev as president, while 41 per cent say they trusted him. 78 per cent of respondents were pleased with the performance of Vladimir Putin as government head and 53 per cent said they trusted him. 55 per cent of Russians approved of the government's performance during the crisis.

22 July 2009 The president of the job market information portal SuperJob.ru, Aleksey Zakharov, says that the situation in Russia concerning the level of wages has stabilized recently and in the summer months many employers have decided to increase wage offers to applicants. He says that the level of wages in St Petersburg was now 80 per cent of the Moscow level, in Yekaterinburg - 65 per cent, in Nizhny Novgorod - 50 per cent, and in Rostov-na-Donu - 48 per cent.

22 July 2009 The head of Rosatom, Sergey Kiriyyenko, says the rate of construction of nuclear power generating units in Russia will be lowered in the coming years - from two power generating units a year to one.

We are implementing the programme for construction of nuclear power generating units in Russia in accordance with the task set. It does not change and we will need to build all the planned 26 power generating units but in the conditions of the financial crisis and fallen consumption of the electricity in the country, the peak of the construction has moved several years forward.

22 July 2009 Regional Development Minister Viktor Basargin visits Ingushetia. He says that a programme of social and economic development of Ingushetia with a total cost of R32 billion (about \$1 billion) is at the stage of being approved and its implementation would start from the year 2010.

22 July 2009 The Interior Ministry (MVD) Investigations Committee says that the number of economic crimes in Russia is growing. The number of revealed cases of criminal money

laundering has increased by 11.2 per cent to 6,800. The number of tax-related crimes grew by 10 per cent up to 6,700.

A total of 284,000 of economic crimes have been revealed in the first six months of the year.

22 July 2009 Yury Solomonov, the director and chief designer of the state company Moscow Institute of Thermal Technology, which is developing the sea-based strategic missile Bulava, tenders his resignation.

22 July 2009 Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces Army General Nikolay Makarov discusses the tasks of the Russian-Chinese antiterrorist exercises Peace Mission 2009 which begin today.

23 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev announces that he would not allow a collapse of the authorities in the North Caucasus. He meets the leadership of the YR party and its young members. He states:

One must not relax and show bandits of all kinds that as a result of their actions the work of authorities becomes paralysed and decision are not being taken. One must not do this anywhere in any case. If the authorities become weak - they are no longer authorities. Even more so in the Caucasus - you know yourself about the attitude towards the authorities that do not exercise their powers - they are wiping their feet on authorities like this. This is not permissible because after this there would be a collapse.

23 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev suggests that incentives should be created to encourage Russian citizens to go to the Russian Far East to work.

23 July 2009 A Levada poll states that 83 per cent of Russian citizens are convinced that Dmitry Medvedev in his policy is continuing "exactly" or "in general" the course which was set by Vladimir Putin.

10 per cent think that Medvedev is gradually changing the previous political course, and 2 per cent say that he is pursuing a completely different policy.

23 July 2009 A group of human rights activists appeals to Dmitry Medvedev asking him to assist in setting up a special group within the Investigations Committee under the prosecutor's office to investigate the murder of Natalya Estemirova.

Human rights activists ask Dmitry Medvedev in open letter to suspend Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov for the duration of an investigation into the recent murder of their Chechen colleague Natalya Estemirova.

23 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev predicts that inflation in 2009 will be a little lower than the planned 13 per cent, but he still considers it much too high. "In conditions where the total volume of production in the country is falling, inflation has slowed. Maybe it will even be less than we calculated this year - not 13 per cent, but perhaps 10 or 11 per cent, I don't know. We will see. But this is still very, very, high. We need to drive inflation down to around 4 - 6 per cent. Only then will our financial credit system be effective."

Medvedev says that the Russian authorities will continue to subsidize agriculture.

The deputy economic development minister, Andrey Klepach states: "There are risks of a second wave of downturn at the beginning of the year 2010. This can take place in connection with the inability of Russian enterprises to pay and falling bank lending." He says that according to the forecast of the Economic Development Ministry, GDP growth in 2010 could amount to 1 per cent. He says: "This is essentially a scenario of stagnation of the

economy in 2010 while we predict upturn in 2011."

23 July 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin announces an increase in the insurance part of pensions and in monetary allowances for the military and the staff of law-enforcement agencies.

23 July 2009 Chechen rebel prime minister in exile in the UK Akhmed Zakayev meets chairman of the Chechen parliament Dukvakha Abdurakhmanov in Norway.

24 July 2009 The head of the Russian presidential administration Sergey Naryshkin says that extremism and corruption remain the most serious threats to Russian society. He addresses an expanded meeting of the Prosecutor-General's Office.

Deputy Prosecutor-General Aleksandr Buksman says at the same meeting that 266 crimes of an extremist nature were recorded in the first half of 2009, which is 6 per cent more than in the same period in 2008. Buksman also says that there is a sharp increase in violations of legislation related to wage arrears in Russia.

24 July 2009 Head of the Investigations Committee under the prosecutor's office Aleksandr Bastrykin says that four people have been detained and four have been arrested in the case of the assassination attempt on President of Ingushetia Yunus-Bek Yevkurov which occurred on 22 June.

24 July 2009 Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov says Russia has concluded 31,587 contracts relating to fulfilment of the state defence order, worth R683 billion (around \$22 billion). He says this is 63 per cent of the total amount of the state defence order. He says the total amount of the state defence order in 2009 will be R1,000.082 billion. RIA Novosti reports that the total volume of the state defence order is to rise slightly in 2010.

24 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev signs two laws linked to the payment of pensions. They will allow payments to be raised to the level of R7,700 [around \$250] per month by the end of 2010.

24 July 2009 Vladimir Putin meets metal makers in Magnitogorsk. He discusses state support for the metal industry.

24 July 2009 A recently-formed motor-rifle brigade begins tactical exercises with live firing overnight on 23-24 July in Transbaykal Territory.

24 July 2009 Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov says he hopes a solution can be found that would allow Akhmed Zakayev, a former envoy of Chechen separatists now in exile, to return to Chechnya. He is currently on the wanted list of the Russian Prosecutor-General's Office.

26 July 2009 A suicide bomber kills four senior police officers and one civilian in Grozny. Another person dies later of injuries.

26 July 2009 Navy Commander-in-Chief Vladimir Vysotsky says that the Navy command is developing a concept of creating the country's well-balanced nuclear missile navy by 2050. "The development should be harmonious. We will not only build ships, we will create new combat systems. I would describe it as building a navy with an open architecture, which will include combat systems, complexes, ships, aircraft, anti-missile defence, space and underwater environment." He says that the plan of Russian navy development envisages building one ship and one submarine a year as of 2010.

27 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev asks Prosecutor General Yury Chayka to keep a close eye on any unjustified inspections of small businesses and to call to book supervisory bodies

repeatedly applying for permissions to carry out checks without appropriate grounds.

27 July 2009 A Levada Poll is published. It asked respondents what they saw as Vladimir Putin's main achievements. People in Russia see Putin's main achievements as president and prime minister in improving their living standards and increasing wages and pensions (22 per cent), in the country's economic development (17 per cent) and in increasing optimism and hopes for a speedy improvement of the state of affairs in the country (9 per cent). Among Putin's other achievements those polled named his efforts to put things in order in the country and to maintain a stable political situation (8 per cent), to strengthen Russia's international positions (7 per cent), to improve relations with Western countries (5 per cent), to resolve the Chechen problem (4 per cent). 8 per cent could not name any successes by Putin. The fight against corruption and bribe-taking (35 per cent), efforts to restrain oligarchs and limit their influence (23 per cent), and the fight against crime (19 per cent) have been his least successful actions. 48 per cent said during Putin's years in power the gap between the rich and the poor in the country had increased. 15 per cent expressed the opposite view and another 31 per cent said the gap remained the same as it had been under President Boris Yeltsin. People in Russia believe that: Putin "is dealing with the country's problems successfully and appropriately" (28 per cent); hope that "he will continue to cope with emerging problems in the future" (35 per cent); "cannot see any other person on whom they could rely" (31 per cent). 63 per cent of those polled said it was a good thing that at present practically all power in the country is concentrated in Putin's hands. 16 per cent took the opposite view. The Levada Centre conducted the poll on 17-20 July among 1,600 people in 46 Russian regions.

27 July 2009 A human rights activist in Khimki. Albert Pchelintsev, is shot with a stun gun. Pchelintsev is an anti-corruption campaigner.

27 July 2009 A senior Finance Ministry official, Andrey Lavrov, director of the ministry's budget policy and methodology department, says that Russia's Reserve Fund will be used up in full in 2010 to cover part of the national budget deficit. Lavrov also says that the National Welfare Fund, which would also be tapped into to cover deficit, is expected to dwindle, effectively to about a tenth of its current size, by the end of 2012. Lavrov says that R1,674.6 billion, or about \$55 billion at the current rate of exchange, from the Reserve Fund, plus R681.7 billion from the National Welfare Fund, would be spent in 2010 to cover part of Russia's federal budget deficit. While the Reserve Fund will then run out, money from the National Welfare Fund will continue to be used to offset the deficit: R737 billion in 2011, and R712.1 billion in 2012. Lavrov says that there was "no objective to use up the National Welfare Fund", so Russia would borrow more abroad. He also gives the Finance Ministry's projections for the size of the National Welfare Fund: it is expected to be R2,804.4 billion by the end of 2009; R2,314.3 billion by the end of 2010; R1,625.9 billion by the end of 2011; and R940 billion by the end of 2012. Of this sum, R655 billion will be kept deposited at Vneshekonombank, leaving a balance of just R285 billion. Lavrov says that Russia's federal budget deficit for 2009 would be R3,617 billion, or 9.4 per cent of GDP; and for 2010, R3,186 billion, or 7.4 per cent of GDP.

27 July 2009 The Ministry of Health and Social Development states that the number of the officially registered unemployed in Russia has increased to 2.1525 million people. The Ministry states that "during the period of 16 to 22 July 2009, the number of unemployed citizens increased by 0.4 per cent."

27 July 2009 Chechen separatist leader Akhmed Zakayev says that separatist forces will cease armed resistance to the Chechen police. The latest meeting between Zakayev and head of Chechen parliament Dukuvakha Abdurakhmanov resulted in an agreement to refrain from using arms. Zakayev states:

The decision was taken to instruct the chief of general staff of armed forces to draw up an order to stop provoking armed clashes with the Chechen police and to use

weapons only in self-defence. I think that by 1 August this order will be signed and sent to all the subunits subordinated to the official structures of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria. Considering the new circumstances within the Chechen Republic and the increase of armed clashes, I believe that this is a very positive point which may yield good results if it is acted upon.

Dukuvakha Abdurakhmanov states that Zakayev has no influence on the Chechen forces led by Dokka Umarov.

Deputy chairman of the State Duma security committee Gennady Gudkov (SR faction) says that the issue of Zakayev's possible return to his Chechen homeland "needs to be comprehensively analysed and considered". (Zakayev has received political asylum in the UK and has lived in London in recent years.) Gudkov states:

The material of the criminal case, which was initiated against Zakayev as a leader of militants, needs to be carefully studied. If there is no direct evidence of his direct involvement in murders and abductions, then the federal authorities might be able to give a guarantee for his unhindered return to his homeland.

Zakayev has a certain authority, not with all the militants, but with some of them. Therefore, morally speaking, his return home could have a positive effect on his former brothers-in-arms. Some of them might lay down their arms.

Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov instructs a member of the parliament of the Chechen Republic and former rebel defence minister, Magomed Khambiyev, and an advisor to the Chechen president and former field commander of illegal armed formations, Shaa Turloyev, to render direct assistance to the law-enforcement agencies of the Chechen Republic that are carrying out an operation to kill terrorists in the republic's mountain districts [Nozhay-Yurtovsky, Kurchaloyevsky and Vedensky]. He also says that he has decided to appoint Magomed Khambiyev as an independent advisor to the Chechen president.

27 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev instructs the government to take steps to provide not less than 45,000 military servicemen with permanent and service housing in 2009.

27 July 2009 Aleksandr Khramchikhin, director of the analytical department of the Institute for Political and Military Analysis, says that Russia will soon have to purchase battleships from foreign producers because the domestic shipbuilding sector fails to meet the country's defence interests. "The domestic shipbuilding industry is in a state of irreversible degradation. Today, it already fails to meet the country's defence interests. Should the present-day socioeconomic tendencies continue, the Russian Navy will have only one chance of survival: to purchase ships in the West."

28 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev chairs a session of the Security Council devoted to the issue of developing advanced computer technologies. Medvedev says that Russia had no other choice but invest in the development of supercomputers. He outlines five priority tasks for future work in this area.

First, to identify priority areas for the use of supercomputing and grid technologies in the sphere of ensuring national security and the country's socio-economic development, in other words where we shall be using supercomputers first of all.

Second, to identify steps that will make it possible to raise the level of the domestic electronic component base to meet the requirements necessary for the production of supercomputers.

Third, it is necessary to develop a full-fledged legislative basis for the application of supercomputers.

Fourth, we should create conditions for building so-called grid networks, primarily, in the research and education area so that these distributed networks are in demand. In addition, we need specialized software for a particular class of tasks. We don't have it, or rather we don't have it everywhere, although in some areas we have perhaps made more progress in terms of supercomputer programming than our competitors have. This is our advantage.

Fifth, we need to set up a special system of personnel training at the country's leading universities.

The Secretary of the Security Council, Nikolay Patrushev, says that Russia would make use of US experience as far as the production of supercomputers was concerned.

The session of the Security Council approves a draft document outlining the foundations of state policy for the creation and application of supercomputer and grid technologies.

28 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin discuss the 2010-2012 budget. The government expects that the budget deficit would amount to 7.5 per cent in 2010, to 4.3 per cent in 2011 and to 3 per cent of GDP in 2012. Kudrin says that the year 2009 will create certain difficulties for the budget as GDP is expected to fall by 8.5 per cent. He states:

Taking into account the fall of GDP, our non-oil and gas revenues, i.e. the ones not connected to the production of oil and gas will fall by R641 billion according to our forecast. The revenue from oil and gas, taking into account the increase of the prices and of our forecast, will increase by R488 billion, i.e. regarding some revenues we will feel a reduction and regarding some revenues there will be an increase. The total balance, based on a new forecast, will be negative.

Kudrin says that in the coming year the government expects to fulfil all its social obligations despite the fact that revenues may fall by 30 per cent. He says that the defence order, national projects and agriculture will not face spending cuts. Kudrin says that in the budget for the years 2010-2012 the government was providing for the implementation of three new federal targeted development programmes. The first concerns the financing of the development of "high-technological nuclear equipment for civilian use, as well as the creation of new technologies in the energy industry, first of all in order to achieve savings in the energy sphere". Two other programmes are dedicated "to the development of digital broadcasting and the development of Ingushetia".

28 July 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin signs orders to allocate federal budget funds to two state enterprises for settling wage arrears.

Ekho Moskvy reports that the management of AvtoVAZ has decided to lay off 27,691 workers (about 25 per cent of its workforce). This is later denied by AvtoVAZ.

Activists from the opposition movement Left Front hold a rally in Moscow as a sign of solidarity with workers of enterprises who have lost their jobs and had work cut back as a result of the economic crisis. About 300 met in Pushkinskaya Ploshchad.

28 July 2009 A Levada poll reveals that 57 per cent of Russian citizens believe there is a need for political opposition in Russia. 19 per cent believe there should be no political opposition in the country; 24 per cent have no definite opinion on the matter. The number of Russians who believe the existence of opposition in the country to be necessary has been decreasing gradually over the last few years, from 62-63 per cent in 2005-08. The number of Russians who believe there is no opposition in the country hardly changed - 38 per cent against 35 per cent in 2008. The number of people who had difficulty in answering the

question went up from 19 to 23 per cent.

28 July 2009 Justice Minister Aleksandr Kononov states that the Justice Ministry is planning to revive the institution of solicitors. He says that there is now a significant imbalance in favour of lawyers working in the criminal sector, therefore they need to be divided into two categories: those who will represent the interests of their clients in court, and solicitors, who will specialize in performing simpler legal aid. Moreover, the ministry is currently working on an alternative to criminal sentences: a bill is being prepared whereby over 40 criminal infringements will be made into administrative ones.

Leader of the For Human Rights movement Lev Ponomarev says that he is concerned about the proposal of Justice Minister Aleksandr Kononov that the most complicated criminal cases should be heard in "citadels of justice" isolated from the outside world. He says this aims at having closed trials.

Galina Kozhevnikova, deputy director of the SOVA human rights centre, says: "This is an attempt to lobby the interests of security and law enforcement agencies, not the lawfulness and objectivity of court trials. Let us hope that this initiative will remain a declaration."

29 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev signs into law amendments to the criminal code providing for stiffer penalties for restricting business competition. He admits that some anti-crisis measures distort competition.

29 July 2009 Vladimir Putin states that the budget for 2010 and for the next few years will have deficits.

29 July 2009 YR sets up a directorate for working with the regional media and appoints party coordinators for environmental issues and cooperation with creative intelligentsia.

29 July 2009 The debt of the Ministry of Defence to the shipyards of the Ministry of Industry and Trade exceeds R3 billion [about \$100 million]. This is mentioned in a letter to the Duma from the state secretary, deputy minister of industry and trade Stanislav Naumov. The letter says that the total debt of the Ministry of Defence to Russian Ministry of Industry and Trade shipyards as at 1 May 2009 was R3,183.4 million.

30 July 2009 Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev says that officers of the MVD and the Federal Migration Service committed over 2,500 crimes in the first six months of 2009. The directorate head of the ministry's Department of Internal Security, Oleg Goncharov, says that a total of 44,000 officers of internal affairs agencies have committed various violations of the law in the first six months of the year, which is a 19-per-cent increase on 2008.

30 July 2009 Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Kirill is interviewed on *Vesti TV* (the interview was recorded on 29 July). He warns of the dangers of politicizing the Orthodox Church. He says that disagreements that exist in the Orthodox Church in Ukraine regarding the possibility of independence from the Moscow Patriarchate should be overcome within the church body, as "no church-political projects can be effective or viable if they are aimed at dividing people".

The church is called to work at a level higher than borders, including political borders - at a level higher than historical sympathies and antipathies, and everything that divides people. Because the church is a unique community, it unites people who have faith in their hearts...I think that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate - the true canonical historical local church of that people - has this potential for unification in full measure.

He discusses the problem of church property.

30 July 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says that unning a budget deficit is "more acceptable" than making sharp cuts in federal budget expenditure, and over 70 per cent of such expenditure is to go towards social needs in 2010. He makes the following comment on the 2010 budget:

It is expected that its revenue will be R6,600 billion [around \$209 million], while expenditure will be R9,800 billion. Therefore, we are to have a deficit of R3,200 billion. That is a substantial deficit. It is more than we planned originally. But we are taking this decision consciously.

In the current situation, we do of course have an alternative. What is it? Either to sharply, instantaneously and I would even say dramatically cut expenditure, or to agree to a deficit, but seek out additional sources of revenue and intelligently formulate sources for covering the deficit.

I believe the second option is more justified, and more acceptable for the country today.

The 2010 budget deficit will be equivalent to 7.5 per cent of Russia's GDP. However, it is planned to reduce the deficit to 4.3 per cent of GDP in 2011 and 3.0 per cent of GDP in 2012.

As for the deficit, which - as I have already said - in 2010 will amount to R3,200 billion, or 7.5 per cent of GDP, we shall by all means be able to find ways of covering it. However, I should say frankly that this is the highest deficit that we can afford without causing damage to macroeconomic stability.

Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says: "Overall, next year we shall use R1,674 billion from the Reserve Fund and R681 billion from the National Wealth Fund. Other sources of financing the deficit will amount to R830 billion in expenditures. These are the funds with which we are planning to stabilize the situation and maintain the relevant amounts of the budget deficit."

He lists the following means of covering the budget deficit: "Securities on banks' accounts; privatization; sale of precious metals; funds received from loan repayment."

30 July 2009 Maksharip Aushev, a well-known opposition activist in Ingushetia, is acquitted of organizing mass unrest in the republic in January 2009.

30 July 2009 Grozny TV reports that the Chechen Mufti's office is criticising the activities of madrassahs in Chechnya.

30 July 2009 Rosoboroneksport general director Aleksandr Mikheyev says that the aviation component will dominate deliveries of Russian arms exports in 2009 and constitute about \$2.6 billion. Rosoboroneksport spokesmen earlier said that in 2009 deliveries of defence products for exports would amount to no less a level than in 2008 - \$6.7 billion.

31 July 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin officially inaugurates the construction of the Sakhalin-Khabarovsk-Vladivostok gas pipeline. The pipeline is to be launched in 2011.

31 July 2009 Energy Minister Sergey Shmatko says that Russia does not intend to implement projects under production-sharing agreement conditions in future, and is tightening control over the spending of present operators. Shmatko notes that 8 billion cubic metres of gas could be supplied from the second stage of the Sakhalin-1 and Sakhalin-2 projects to supply the pipeline Sakhalin-Khabarovsk-Vladivostok.

31 July 2009 The Chechen local state-owned TV channel Groznyy says that exiled

separatist leader Akhmed Zakayev is genuine in his call for an end to attacks on Chechen police from 1 August.

31 July 2009 Khabarovsk Territory Governor Vyacheslav Shport says he intends to appeal for additional funding from the federal budget to create new jobs. He meets Prime Minister Vladimir Putin.

31 July 2009 Deputy Defence Minister for Armaments Vladimir Popovkin says that a new strategic naval-based missile to replace the Bulava project, which has suffered a number of setbacks during test launches, will not be developed in Russia. "Scientific research and experimental design work to create a new missile will cost R25-30 billion [about \$0.9 billion]. But the most important thing is years (spent) and we have to change the means of delivery of strategic naval-based nuclear forces."

Rear Admiral Anatoly Lipinsky is appointed commander of the Novorossiysk naval base.

31 July 2009 Vladimir Putin visits the Russian Far East. He discusses the need to develop the region in an interview with Channel 1 TV. He says that the government will not cut funds for the development of the Far East. He notes that gas reserves in the Far East amount to 36,000 billion cubic metres.

August 2009

1 August 2009 Vladimir Putin says that the government will broaden its collaboration with environmental organizations and will not economize on ecology.

Free-of-charge use of environment spoils the economy and business players, preserves outdated, polluting technologies and wasteful production. Meanwhile, practically all developed countries today live according to the logic of sustainable development, closely monitoring how much water, gas and oil is spent per GDP unit, as well as the amount of pollution per production unit. It must be admitted that by such criteria as air pollution, water pollution and waste generation, some Russian enterprises are still behind their foreign counterparts. However, I should say that there are positive examples as well, very good examples. For example, the methods of construction of port facilities on the Baltic Sea, in the Gulf of Finland, the technologies of oil extraction used by our companies in certain regions, for example in the Caspian are unparalleled in the world, and this is a good indicator.

1 August 2009 The Drugaya Rossiya opposition movement says that police have released all activists of the coalition who tried to stage a "dissenters' rally" in Moscow's Triumphalnaya Ploshchad Square on 31 July. 42 people were released from the Tverskoye, Krasnopresnenskoye and Khamovniki police departments. Five people were taken to hospital from the Tverskoye police department.

2 August 2009 Vladimir Putin meets Irkutsk Region governor Dmitry Mezentsev. Mezentsev says the region is asking the federal centre for support in meeting obligations taken during the region's merger in January 2008 with the Ust-Orda Autonomous Area.

3 August 2009 Human rights campaigners issue an appeal to the president to change the atmosphere in which nongovernmental organizations are working in the country. The document is signed by the veterans of the human rights community: head of the Moscow Helsinki Group Lyudmila Alekseyeva, head of the Civic Assistance committee Svetlana Gannushkina, and leader of the movement For Human Rights Lev Ponomarev.

3 August 2009 A VTsIOM poll asks Russians about their degrees of ethnic tolerance. In

recent years the ethnic tolerance of Russians has grown, and the list of nations to which they have the biggest aversion includes inhabitants of the Caucasus, Central Asia and gypsies. 55 per cent do not have a dislike of other peoples, and in the last four years the tolerance of Russian citizens has risen by 21 per cent. The researchers ascertained that Russian citizens have the greatest liking for representatives of their own ethnically Russian people and for Slavs in general (31 per cent). In second place are Belarusians and Ukrainians (13 and 11 per cent respectively). Seven per cent like Europeans - the English, French, Germans, Italians and Spanish; 4 per cent like Caucasians (the Adygei, Armenians, Georgians, Kabardians etc). Three per cent have a positive view of Tatars, 2 per cent for the Bashkir and the Mordvin. Russians like Americans, Buryats, Jews, Chinese, Moldovans and Japanese least of all (1 per cent each). 20 per cent of respondents said that they regard all peoples equally. Since 2005 Russian citizens have begun to sympathize less actively with ethnic Russians and Slavs as a whole (31 per cent down from 36 per cent). In contrast, the proportion of those who view all peoples positively has grown significantly (from 8 per cent to 20 per cent).

Representatives of Caucasian peoples (Azerbaijanis, Armenians, Georgians, Dagestanis, Chechens etc.) lead the ranking of peoples that are disliked - 29 per cent of Russian citizens view them with irritation. Far behind in second place are Central Asian peoples (Tajiks, Uzbeks, Kazakhs) - 6 per cent have a dislike of them. Then come gypsies (4 per cent), Americans, Chinese, Ukrainians, Baltic peoples (3 per cent each), Europeans (English, Germans), and Jews (2 per cent each). Russians least frequently have a negative view of Moldovans, Tatars, Turks, Asians, Arabs and Muslims, and Africans (1 per cent each). The poll shows that in comparison with 2005, the proportion of Russian citizens who regard Caucasians with hostility has increased (29 per cent as opposed to 23 per cent in 2005), and in comparison with 2006 there are more Russians who experience irritation towards Central Asian peoples (6 per cent as opposed to 2 per cent in 2006).

3 August 2009 Minister of Health and Social Development Tatyana Golikova says the number of the officially registered unemployed has reduced in Russia by 5,600 people after it increased by 9,000 two weeks ago. She states: "On 28 July, 2,146,200 people were registered as unemployed."

3 August 2009 *Vesti TV* reports that AvtoVAZ, KamAZ, a joint venture of General Motors and AvtoVAZ as well as Russian factories of Renault and Toyota have stopped their production lines due to lack of demand.

3 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev has appointed Lt-General Andrey Shvaychenko Commander of the Strategic Missile Troops. Shvaychenko was Chief of Staff - First Deputy Commander of the Strategic Missile Troops. Colonel-General Nikolay Solovtsov has been relieved of his duties as Commander of the Strategic Missile Troops and discharged from military service.

An article in *Vedomosti* discusses the defence budget (Aleksey Nikolsky: "Untouchable Budget Item"). The draft budget envisages a rise in defence expenditure from R1.212 trillion in 2009 to R1.219 trillion in 2010.

The nuclear missile submarine *Yury Dolgoruky* finished the next stage of its trials in the White Sea and is back at the embankment of Sevmashpredpriyatiye in Severodvinsk.

4 August 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says that the Russian agricultural sector is coping with the economic crisis more easily than other sectors of the economy. "A support of the agro-industrial sector is undoubtedly our priority. Over the past year the financing of this sector has grown considerably. We have provided a significant increase in the capital of Rosselkhozbank and RosAgroLeasing."

4 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev appoints Aleksandr Reymer as head of the Federal Penal

Service. Reymer, the former head of the Samara Region interior directorate, will replace Yury Kalinin, whom Medvedev has appointed deputy justice minister.

4 August 2009 Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Zhukov says that infant mortality has gone down, and the birth rate has gone up, along with life expectancy. He states that in the first quarter of 2009, around 850,000 children were born. This is 4.7 per cent more than in the corresponding period in 2008. The increase is around 38,000 children. Zhukov as says that mortality had fallen by 3.7 per cent, which is around 40,000 people.

4 August 2009 Protests over wage arrears take place in Kurgan. Workers from the town's largest enterprises are convening pickets and are preparing for indefinite hunger strikes.

4 August 2009 by Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov chairs a meeting of imams. He criticises imams and cadis for raising questions about local administrations. He says that they should concentrate on spiritual and moral issues.

5 August 2009 Air Force Commander Colonel-General Aleksandr Zelin says that a large-scale war against Russia is impossible for as long as the Russian strategic nuclear forces are capable of causing irretrievable damage to the enemy. He says the chances of a large-scale war today were very low. Zelin speaks in favour of developing the triad of the Russian strategic nuclear deterrent forces (Air Force, Navy and Strategic Missile Troops) in order to minimize the probability of a war in 2020-2050. Zelin says that the Russian Air Force is beginning an intense renewal of its aircraft starting from 2009. He says that "the plan is to replace at least 70 per cent of the aviation group with new and upgraded hardware by 2020". He says the Russian air force has launched a programme to upgrade Tupolev Tu-95MS and Tu-160 strategic bombers, and Tu-22M3 long-range bombers.

Zelin says he believes it is unlikely that Russia will become involved in large-scale wars in the future, however, already and in the near future border and internal state conflicts are possible. He says that "the likelihood of a large-scale war arising with Russia's involvement at this time is quite low, and in the future (2020-2050) it should also be minimal". He says localized wars are "quite probable." He also says that "it is not out of the question that there might also be internal state armed conflicts with national and national-ethnic roots".

5 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev criticizes state agencies providing services to businessmen for red tape and "ordinary extortion". He is speaking at a meeting on measures to support small business held in Zvenigorod, Moscow Region.

5 August 2009 Lt-General Yury Draguntsov, head of the Department of Internal Security within the Interior Ministry, says he opposes removing his department from the MVD. This was recently proposed by human rights activists. He says the internal security service within the MVD is an effective instrument for cleansing the police from within.

5 August 2009 *Novaya Gazeta* newspaper editor-in-chief Dmitry Muratov says that the murder of *Novaya Gazeta* journalist Anna Politkovskaya in October 2006 could be solved and the perpetrators brought to justice. "I have no doubt that this case will certainly have prospects if, apart from political rivalry, there is political will, too. New facts appear every day and every day an understanding increases."

5 August 2009 A Levada Centre poll shows most Russians are pessimistic about the situation in the North Caucasus. 17 per cent think the region is calm and problem-free. 73 per cent consider it to be tense, critical and volatile. In 2007, 19 and 72 per cent respectively and in 2008, 17 and 77 per cent. Only 14 per cent of those Russians surveyed believe that during 2010 the situation in the North Caucasus will improve, whereas in 2007-2008 there were twice as many - 25-26 per cent. In 2008, the proportion of those who predict a deterioration of the situation in the region decreased from 24 to 13 per cent, and those who believe that it will remain unchanged has increased from 39 per cent to 59 per cent.

6 August 2009 Spetsstroy director Army General Nikolay Abroskin says that Spetsstroy is completing the work to build a radar station in Armavir, and it will become operational in October-November. The new-generation Voronezh missile attack warning radar station erected near Armavir is the second radar station of this type built in the interests of the Space Troops in recent years. The first Voronezh radar station, in the village of Lekhtusi (Leningrad Region), became operational in March 2006. The radar station in Armavir will fully cover the southern and southwestern missile-threat directions. Earlier, this task was performed, among others, by the radar stations in Sevastopol and Mukacheve (both in Ukraine); the Russian Space Troops stopped using data from them in March 2009.

6 August 2009 A VTsIOM poll asks Russians who they blame for the second Chechen war of 1999. Russians believe that those most interested in the starting of the conflict were international Islamic terrorist organizations (31 per cent), the Chechen field commanders' clans (29 per cent) and the US government (24 per cent).

7 August 2009 Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov says that the plan of state defence procurement in 2010 will be officially presented to the Finance Ministry.

The state defence order has been formed, and all the ministries and departments agreed on six priorities in the provision of the armed forces. Firstly, we will focus on the comprehensive development of the strategic nuclear forces, aerospace defence and long-term contracts signed in 2008-2009. It is a question of intercontinental ballistic missiles, space hardware, aircraft and shipbuilding.

A total of R178 billion will be assigned for the long-term contracts. Our fourth priority is technical support to general forces. We will also strengthen the armed forces, build the infrastructure in strategic directions, including the south, and modernize the Black Sea Fleet. We will fulfil the directives of the president and the premier to buy an additional amount of aircraft for permanent-alert units.

The overall sum of money assigned for the six priorities is R470 billion. That is for purchases alone.

We will mostly invest in strategic missile systems, modern ships and submarines, Sukhoi Su-27SM, Su-30MK 2, Su-35 and Su-34 aircraft, Iskander-M missile systems and X-102 cruise missiles for aircraft.

While drafting the plan of state defence procurements, the military industrial commission had three goals in mind. Firstly, it is necessary to fulfil the state armament programme for the period until 2015. Secondly, it is necessary to support about 1,300 companies in the defence sector. Thirdly, it is the social aspect, because many defence plants are cores of mono-cities.

Ivanov says that almost R500 billion [nearly \$16 billion] are to be allocated in 2010 for supplies to the Russian army.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says that the state defence order is one of the priorities of the budget, and that its volume would not only be maintained but would increase. He says that in 2010 all servicemen should receive permanent housing.

7 August 2009 The Moscow District Military Court refuses to return the case of the murder of Anna Politkovskaya to the prosecutor. The court thus rejected the petition filed by Politkovskaya's children, which was supported by the state prosecution. The petition asked that the case be returned to the prosecutor and combined with the case against the person suspected of carrying out the murder and its unidentified organizers. The lawyer of Politkovskaya's children, Karina Moskalenko, says that the decision will be appealed.

7 August 2009 Chairman of the trade union Zashchita Viktor Vodennikov says around 20 former workers of the enterprise RegionAvtoTrans-Kurgan have gone on hunger strike demanding payment of wage arrears. The workers are currently in the building of the municipal administration.

7 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev orders Prosecutor-General Yury Chayka and head of the President's Monitoring Directorate Konstantin Chuychenko to conduct major checks on Russia's state corporations to assess the effectiveness of their work. Following the inspections, Dmitry Medvedev is expecting proposals about the expediency of the state corporations' continued existence in their current form. A report is to be presented before 10 November. Currently there are eight state corporations:

- Rosatom
- The Deposit Insurance Agency
- Vneshekonombank
- Rosnano
- The Foundation for Assisting in the Reform of Housing and Municipal Services
- Olimpstroy
- Rostekhnologii
- Russian Highways.

8 August 2009 A poll conducted by the Public Opinion Foundation shows that: a total of 59 per cent of Russians trust Dmitry Medvedev. This is the maximum level since the beginning of the year. Medvedev's rating in 2008 was 10 points lower. The level of trust in Vladimir Putin totals 73 per cent now, which is also a maximum index. Similar results were registered in late 2008 - early 2009 when Putin's rating was 70 per cent. 78 per cent of those polled believe that Putin is successfully coping with his current duties. Dmitry Medvedev's activities in his post were positively assessed by 67 per cent of the respondents.

9 August 2009 Duma Chairman Boris Gрызlov says the people of Russia have given the highest possible mark to Vladimir Putin's 10-year work in power. He is speaking on the 10th anniversary of Putin's becoming head of the government. Gрызlov says:

The past decade will go down in history as a period of Russia's revival and ascendancy; and the credit for this, no doubt, to a vast extent goes to Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin...

For all the people of Russia, Putin has become the national leader whom our great country was missing for many a year...He formulated the course which the people tired of the muddle and shifting of the 1980s and 90s had been waiting for. It is the course of strategic development based on national interests.

He says that Putin had "done much to rebuild the power, responsibility and professionalism of the authorities, and this made the country stronger".

10 August 2009 In accordance with paragraph d of article 84 of the constitution of the Russian Federation, Dmitry Medvedev submits to the Duma draft federal law "On the introduction of changes to the federal law On defence". The draft federal law was drafted in line with paragraph 5 of the list of instructions issued following the president's meeting with members of the Federation Council on 17 February 2009 (Ch Pr-429 of 22 February 2009) and is aimed at setting up a legal mechanism providing the president with a capability to promptly use formations of the Armed Forces outside Russian Federation territory. The draft law envisages the addition to article 10 of the federal law On defence a paragraph 21 stating that in accordance with commonly acknowledged principles and norms of international law, international treaties signed by the Russian Federation and the federal law On defence formations of Russia's Armed Forces can be promptly used outside Russian Federation territory to resolve the following tasks:

- repel an attack on the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation or other forces deployed outside the territory of the Russian Federation;
- repel or prevent an aggression against another state;
- defend citizens of the Russian Federation abroad;
- fight piracy and ensure safety of navigation.

It has also been suggested that a new article 101, setting in accordance with the provisions of article 102 of the constitution of the Russian Federation the course in which the decision concerning prompt use of formations of the Armed Forces outside the Russian Federation is taken, be added to the above-mentioned federal law.

Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov welcomes this bill. He states:

The draft submitted by the president aims to create a fully-fledged legal mechanism enabling the supreme commander-in-chief to make prompt use of formations of the Armed Forces outside the Russian Federation for the purpose of protecting the interests of Russia and its citizens. Naturally, the emergence of this bill has become even more relevant following the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict.

10 August 2009 Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says that the Russian economy will return to the previous size of GDP within four to five years.

10 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev meets Duma party leaders. He says the Russian economy requires structural changes; otherwise it has no future. He says this is because the economy is based on raw materials. "Russia needs forward movement; so far there is no such movement. We are shifting from one foot to the other, and the crisis has made this clear...However, as soon as a crisis came about we fell. And we fell further than many other countries did." He makes the following comment related to the fact that the economy is based on raw materials: "We can't continue like this. This is a deadlock. And the crisis has put us in a situation where we will have to take a decision to change the structure of the economy. Otherwise, our economy has no future."

10 August 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin visits Kislovodsk for a meeting of the government commission for regional development. He vows that the state will continue to dish out funds to regions in 2010. In 2010, the state will allocate more than R1,000 billion [over \$30 billion] for anti-crisis support for Russian regions. However he says that regional authorities will have to make savings. He says that responsibility for dealing with such issues as employment, wage payments and ensuring the stable functioning of the public sector lies with regions themselves. The consolidated budget of Russian regions, unlike the consolidated budget of the Russian Federation and the federal budget, is still currently in surplus. In the first half of 2009, the surplus was R99.6 billion. According to Rosstat figures, the consolidated budget of the Russian Federation in January-May 2009 had a deficit of R162.6 billion (in January-May 2008 it had a surplus of R2,050 billion). According to Finance Ministry figures, 23 constituent parts of the Russian Federation are experiencing a budget deficit in 2009, with the worst shortage recorded in Moscow and Krasnoyarsk Territory. Putin says he has instructed the Finance Ministry to monitor how efficiently regions use their allocated funds.

10 August 2009 Two activists of a local NGO in Chechnya concerned with human rights are abducted by armed persons in Grozny. The two are the head of NGO Let's Save the Generation, Zarema Sadulayeva, and her husband Aleksandr Cherkasov, a member of the Memorial human rights centre's board.

Chechnya's Interior Minister Ruslan Alkhanov says that nearly 100 active members of illegal armed organizations are hiding in the mountainous regions of Ingushetia and Chechnya, while over 50 have been killed since May.

Women from the Voice of Beslan group say that they were forcibly prevented from seeing

Dmitry Medvedev whilst he was in Vladikavkaz.

10 August 2009 The president of Ingushetia, Yunus-Bek Yevkurov, is released from the Vishnevsky Hospital in Moscow where he underwent treatment after being wounded in a terrorist act on 22 June.

Rashid Gaysanov, prime minister of Ingushetia, is interviewed in *Izvestiya*.

10 August 2009 Lieutenant-General Valery Yevnevich is appointed chief of the Combat Training and Troop Service Department (the Russian Armed Forces' Main Directorate for Combat Training and Service). Yevnevich replaces Lieutenant-General Vladimir Shamanov, who has been appointed commander of Airborne Troops.

Wide-scale command and staff exercises are launched in Russia's Siberian Military District under the supervision of the district's commander Colonel-General Aleksandr Postnikov.

11 August 2009 Minister of Telecommunications and Mass Communications Igor Shchegolev states that from 2011 onwards it will be possible to receive the services of federal ministries and agencies in Russia via the internet.

11 August 2009 The Chechen Interior Ministry confirms that Zarema Sadulayeva and her husband have been found dead.

Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov says he feels deep indignation over the killings.

A joint statement of representatives of Chechnya's public and human rights organizations signed by the republic's ombudsman Nurdi Nukhadzhiyev and the chairman of the Public Chamber of the Chechen Republic, Sayd-Amin Dzhabrailov, says that the abduction and murder of Zarema (Royana) Sadulayeva and Alik Dzhabrailov is aimed at causing negative reverberations among the Russian and international public.

Lyudmila Alekseyeva, head of the Moscow Helsinki Group, demands that the Russian authorities investigate the abduction and murder.

11 August 2009 Mikhail Margelov, chairman of the Federation Council Committee on International Affairs, says the bill on the procedure for the use of Russian armed forces abroad submitted to the Duma by Dmitry Medvedev complies with the Russian constitution, the principles of international law and Russia's treaty obligations. Margelov says that: "A procedure for the use of Russian armed forces abroad has been prescribed in a bill submitted to the Federal Assembly because, sadly, there are threats that call for this...the experience of the five-day war in August last year has shown this particularly clearly."

Deputy Chief of the Russian General Staff Colonel-General Anatoly Nogovitsyn says that the classified part of the new Russian military doctrine will define the use of the Armed Forces, including nuclear weapons.

The new military doctrine, which is being drawn up under the guidance of the Russian Federation Security Council, will be different from the current text. It will consist of two parts - the public one, which will include mostly military-political aspects, and the classified one, where the issues of the right to use the army and navy, including the use of nuclear weapons as a strategic deterrent, will be clearly defined.

Nogovitsyn is the head of the working group for the drafting of the military doctrine from the MOD. He notes that the MOD was most actively involved in the work of the commission to draft the new text of the military doctrine, which is being drafted under the general guidance of the RF Security Council and its technical structures. The plan is to complete the draft in September 2009. He says that the latest meeting of the commission for military development

at the RF Security Council had been held in mid-July. "It examined the structure of the military doctrine, its individual articles and chapters. We have, in effect, started applying the finishing touches to individual articles in the document."

The commander-in-chief of the Russian Air Force, Colonel-General Aleksandr Zelin, says that Russia will respond to the launch of the US Air Force Global Strike Command by creating new strike systems. He says that "the command itself does not pose any threat to Russia's security; it is the forces and means at its disposal that pose threats...We know full well what forces and means this American command really, not virtually, has; therefore, we must not only defend ourselves but also create our own strike systems and complexes to counter foreign ones". He also states: "Foreign states' air forces, above all that of the USA, will acquire the capability to deliver coordinated high-precision strikes on a global scale against practically any target on Russian Federation territory." He says that such capability would come with the arrival of new kind of means and systems, such as hypersonic air- and spacecraft, unmanned reconnaissance and attack aerial vehicles, weapons utilizing new physical principles. He says that Russia is switching from the current "aviation division - aviation regiment - aviation subunit" structure to the new "aviation base - aviation squadron" structure. He also says that Russia is building a new air defence system capable of destroying "any ballistic missile and hypersonic aircraft...We are creating a new system capable of resolving not only air defence tasks but also air and space defence tasks." Zelin says that that the forces and means of the Air Force must form the basis of the air and space defence system although Navy and Space Troops forces would also be involved, and the Strategic Missile Troops will also have their role in this system. He says that by 2020 a system of aerospace defence capable of repelling any aggression will be created on the basis of the Russian Air Force.

12 August 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin rejects criticisms that the state limits press freedom in Russia.

12 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev says that there has been little progress in the war against alcohol abuse. He says it is a "national scourge".

12 August 2009 The prosecutor has asked for the term of arrest for ex-head of Yukos Mikhail Khodorkovsky and former head of Menatep Platon Lebedev, charged with embezzling oil, to be extended until 17 November. The accused men's period in custody expires on 17 August.

12 August 2009 President Dmitry Medvedev signs a decree on the development of the joint-stock society Korporatsiya Roskhimzashchita. The decree is aimed at developing Russia's scientific, technical and industrial potential in the development and manufacture of means of protection against the effects of weapons of mass destruction and the consequences of man-made accidents, disasters and terrorist acts. The decree is also aimed at developing means of protection required for work in conditions that are harmful and hazardous for life.

12 August 2009 *Novaya Gazeta* suspends the operation of its journalists in Chechnya, due to the risk to their lives.

The Investigations Directorate for Chechnya of the Investigations Committee under the Prosecutor's Office says the number of kidnappings and murders has considerably increased in Chechnya since the beginning of 2009, compared to the same period in 2008. The number of kidnappings in the first six months of the year has grown by 475 per cent, from four to 23, compared with the same period in 2008. The number of murders has grown by 50 per cent from 52 to 78. At the same time, the number of terrorist crimes had fallen by nearly 5 per cent, illegal arrests 75 per cent, attempts on the lives of law enforcers by nearly 12 per cent and organization of criminal communities by 50 per cent.

The minister of construction of Ingushetia, Ruslan Amerkhanov, is shot dead in his office.

Chechen rebel website daymohk.info criticises the idea of holding the world congress of Chechen people agreed between rebel prime minister in exile Akhmed Zakayev and Moscow-backed Chechen parliamentary speaker Dukuvakha Abdurakhmanov in Norway on 23 July.

12 August 2009 Vice-Admiral Viktor Mardusin is to leaving the post of commander of the Baltic Fleet, and his most likely replacement is Vice-Admiral Viktor Chirkov.

Russian Air Force Commander in Chief Colonel-General Aleksandr Zelin says that around 50 per cent of the Russian Air Force's aircraft and helicopter pool will be comprised of modernized and new hardware by 2015.

An article in *Izvestiya* (Dmitry Litovkin report: "Part of the Military Doctrine Will Be Classified") discusses the forthcoming Russian military doctrine. It states: "Russia's new military doctrine will be of two parts: open (the military-political aspects are set forth here) and closed (concerning the possibility of the employment of the army and navy, including the use of nuclear weapons as an instrument of strategic deterrence). The document is to be ready by September 2009."

An article in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* discusses the formation of a Special Operations Directorate for the General Staff.

13 August 2009 State Secretary of the Federal Agency for State Border Control and Maintenance (Rosgranitsa) Vladimir Goncharov says that the number of border crossing points on Russia's borders is to be reduced by about 20 per cent. There are currently 424 border crossing points. It is planned to reduce them to 330-350. The optimization process is to be launched very soon. It is linked to the development of a new federal programme to develop the state borders, which is to be approved for the period 2011-2016.

13 August 2009 The deputy director of the Federal Migration Service, Yekaterina Yegorova, says there are currently 5.4 million foreign citizens in Russia, while in 2008 their numbers reached 13 million. The number of work invitations for migrants has also fallen, by 22 per cent. According to figures from the Federal Migration Service, 1.8 million citizens of other countries are working in Russia.

13 August 2009 Ingush President Yunus-Bek Yevkurov takes up his duties as president again. An attempt was made on Yevkurov's life on 22 June. Yevkurov was taken to hospital in Moscow and discharged from hospital on 10 August.

13 August 2009 Chechen speaker Dukuvakha Abdurakhmanov and separatist emissary Akhmed Zakayev agree to hold a world congress of the Chechen people. Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov has already approved the holding of the congress, where it is proposed that both delegates from Chechnya itself and representatives of the Chechen diaspora around the world will participate. Akhmed Zakayev states that "We decided to hold a world congress of the Chechen people to resolve all vital and current issues of the whole of Chechen society, in order to change the current situation and lay a foundation for the future." Abdurakhmanov says it is hoped to hold the congress before the end of 2009. The congress of the Chechen people is an independent Chechen institution and unites delegates from both the republic itself and from the Chechen diaspora all around the world. The last time it convened was in 2002 in Copenhagen.

13 August 2009 The North-Eastern coastguard division of the FSB Border Service and FSB aviation units conduct large-scale exercises on Kamchatka.

14 August 2009 The former head of Yukos Mikhail Khodorkovsky is interviewed in *Russian Newsweek*. He says is not intending to submit a petition for pardon because he does not

consider himself to be guilty of the crimes for which he has been convicted.

14 August 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says the upper limit of the 2010 budget deficit must not exceed 7.5 per cent of GDP, even in case of unplanned expenditures. He meets Federation Council speaker Sergey Mironov, Duma chairman Boris Gрызлов and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin. Putin says that in 2011-12 it will be necessary to reduce the budget deficit. Putin says the 2010 budget deficit had been planned at 5.5 per cent.

Vladimir Putin reports that the amount of construction being carried out in Russia has decreased by almost 20 per cent. However, the government has allocated around \$14.1 billion for housing construction in 2009. Putin emphasized the need to ensure that economy-class housing should be both affordable for at least 40 per cent of the population and of good quality. Putin also calls the provision of housing for servicemen in 2010 "the number one priority" and promised that the authorities would fulfil their promises to provide such housing "no matter what". He is speaking at a meeting of the presidium of the council for implementing national projects and demographic policy in Sochi.

14 August 2009 Health and Social Development Minister Tatyana Golikova says the population of Russia is 142 million. Golikova says that the birth rate in Russia is 12.1 per 1,000 people, and death rate is 14.6. She says that the aim is to reduce the death rate to 10 per 1,000 by 2020. The Health and Social Development Ministry reports a growing birth rate in all federal districts and falling death rate in all Russian regions apart from the Southern Federal District for the first six months of 2009.

14 August 2009 Dagestan's Interior Minister Ali Magomedov says the situation taking shape in Dagestan, where several militant attacks on policemen have taken place in recent days, has been stirred up from abroad.

The deputy chairman of the Duma Security Committee and SR party member Gennady Gudkov says that the situation in the North Caucasus can only be stabilized through a major state programme to tackle the region's social problems.

14 August 2009 The head of the Investigations Committee under the prosecutor's office, Aleksandr Bastrykin says that witnesses are scared of giving statements in connection with the investigations into the murders of human rights activists in Chechnya. In the Natalya Estemirova murder case only two witnesses are giving statements.

14 August 2009 Eduard Limonov, leader of the Drugaya Rossiya opposition coalition is called in to the directorate of the Investigations Committee under the prosecutor's office in Nizhny Novgorod for questioning as a witness in a case concerning "passing on literature with extremist content".

14 August 2009 An article in *Gazeta* states that Andrey Kokoshin, a former secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, says that the new military doctrine of Russian Federation, the elaboration of which will be completed in September, will take into account the probability that both Iran and North Korea will turn into states with nuclear weapons.

Lt-General Aleksandr Shevchenko is appointed to the post of director of the MOD's Main Tank and Armoured Vehicles Directorate. Until recently Shevchenko held the post of director of the Main Armaments Directorate's directorate for use, maintenance and disposal of arms and military hardware. Lt-General Nikolay Yershov, former director of the Main Tank and Armoured Vehicles Directorate, was dismissed from the Armed Forces upon reaching the maximum retirement age.

17 August 2009 Two suicide bombers blow up a van outside the police department in Nazran in Ingushetia. About 20 are killed.

Dmitry Medvedev dismisses the interior minister of Ingushetia Ruslan Meiriyev in connection with the terrorist act in Nazran. The deputy interior minister Viktor Zhirnov becomes acting interior minister.

Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev says that temporary operational groups of MVD officers who have experience of work in the North Caucasus region will be set up in Ingushetia.

The Ingush president's spokesman, Kaloy Akhilgov, says on *Zvezda TV* that there may be changes in Ingushetia's law enforcement agencies following the attack.

Ingush President Yunus-Bek Yevkurov says that there are no reasons for introducing a counterterrorism operation in the whole of Ingushetia. He blames the West for the situation in Ingushetia.

I don't think that Arabs are behind all this. There are other forces there, more serious. I have already stressed this and can say now that the West will all the same try to prevent Russia from rising to the former Soviet power...The system of intelligence is set up in such a manner that it may be an Arab firm. But we know whose interests it represents: the USA and Great Britain. Also Israel. This is quite realistic.

Mikhail Grishankov, first deputy head of the Duma security committee (YR faction), states: "Most likely, some additional measures may be necessary, and I do not rule out the possibility that a counterterrorism operation will be introduced as a measure of rapid reaction to the situation."

17 August 2009 Yunus-Bek Yevkurov says that Ingushetia will not unite with Chechnya. He also says the border between the two republics should be more clearly demarcated.

Everyone must simply understand that Chechnya and Ingushetia will never unite. There may be an enlargement as a prospect for a Caucasian province, there are such dreamers now who are speculating, but there will be no uniting of Chechnya and Ingushetia. The people of Ingushetia do not want this. Neither do the people of Chechnya want this. We have been together, enough of this.

Yes, I understand, we will have a further stage, a conversation with Ramzan [Kadyrov] to simply identify the border. Why? Because no matter what brotherly peoples we are, there should be a fence between brothers. This should be solved in the near future, this should not be dragged. The republic exists and there is no republic without a border.

17 August 2009 The speaker of the Chechen parliament, Dukuvakha Abdurakhmanov, says that the counterterrorism operation regime in Chechnya was lifted too early. It had been in force since 1999, and was lifted on 16 April 2009.

Activists of the Russian human rights centre Memorial claim that authorities refuse to provide their security in Chechnya, and complain of threats and surveillance.

17 August 2009 A large-scale command post exercise relating to the command and control of forces of an all-arms army ends in the Siberian Military District.

18 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev expresses anger over the terrorist incident in Nazran:

We must establish what happened and answer the question as to what it was - slovenliness, treason, or a sum-total of crimes over which no influence could have been exerted.

We have to find out definitively how the building was being guarded, how well

prepared for defence the building was, who was responsible for the protection of the building, who was responsible for the approaches to the building, and for the presence and use of technical means which block crimes of this sort - because all the means of protection failed.

Medvedev orders Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev to report to him on these matters. Medvedev sends Deputy Interior Minister Colonel-General Arkady Yedelev to Ingushetia to temporarily coordinate the efforts of all the services and subunits of Internal Affairs bodies located in Ingushetia. Medvedev says that a plan has to be prepared to combat crime in the North Caucasus and that this includes making changes to the criminal code.

We will have to prepare a whole range of proposals aimed at taking into account the specific nature of the fight against crime in southern Russia, in particular in the Caucasus, which should include but which should not be limited to changes to the criminal procedure code concerning court jurisdiction and a whole range of other issues.

I would like to ask those present to prepare certain proposals. These should be provisions of law. We will meet again and discuss this. We will do this shortly.

He says this at a meeting in Sochi of heads of security organs. Those at the meeting are FSB head Aleksandr Bortnikov, Security Council secretary Nikolay Patrushev, head of the Investigations Committee under the prosecutor's office Aleksandr Bastrykin and Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev.

The head of the commission for the Caucasus, member of the Russian Antiterrorist Committee and First Deputy Chairman of the Federation Council Aleksandr Torshin says a counterterrorism operation regime may be imposed in some districts of Ingushetia.

18 August 2009 Member of the Russian Public Chamber chamber and director of the Moscow Human Rights Bureau Aleksandr Brod and other human rights activists meet Prosecutor General Yury Chayka. The Public Chamber and the Prosecutor General's Office agree on coordination in the field of human rights particularly in the North Caucasus. Brod says that taking part in the meeting with Chayka were members of the Public Chamber Valery Tishkov, archbishop of Stavropol and Vladikavkaz Feofan, and the director of the Institute of Human Rights Valentin Gefter.

18 August 2009 Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov says that that the Russian bulk carrier *Arctic Sea*, which went missing nearly three weeks ago off the Portuguese coast, was hijacked in the Baltic Sea.

18 August 2009 Vladimir Ustinov, presidential plenipotentiary representative in the Southern Federal District, has talks in Grozny with the president of Chechnya, Ramzan Kadyrov. Ustinov says that there are positive trends in the Chechen Republic as regards the development of democracy. He also says a great many positive things are happening in the republic in the sociopolitical sphere.

18 August 2009 The Investigations Committee under the prosecutor's office says there is no confirmation that the explosion at the Sayano-Shushenskaya power station was an act of terrorism. 12 are dead and 64 missing.

18 August 2009 The Ministry of Finance website publishes the main trends of Russia's budget policy for 2010-2012. It says the funds which could have entered the Reserve Fund in 2011 and 2012 will not go to the Fund, but will be used to finance federal budget expenditure, and the Fund will not be supplemented. The use of the Reserve Fund to finance the deficit in 2009 and 2010 will mean that in 2010 it is practically totally exhausted. At the start of 2009 the Fund consisted of R4,027.6 billion [about \$126 billion], while by the start of

2010 it will have fallen to R1,550 billion. The National Welfare Fund may be used up in 2014 or 2015. It is intended to be used to finance some of the transfers from the federal budget to the Pension Fund, and it will also not be supplemented. In accordance with the government's plans, the usage capacity of the National Welfare Fund will be R681.7 billion in 2010, R737 billion in 2011 and R712.1 billion in 2012. As a result, the size of the National Welfare Fund will fall from R2,600 billion as of the start of 2009 to R900 billion by the end of 2012.

18 August 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin attends the official opening of the MAKS-2009 airshow in the town of Zhukovsky in Moscow Region. Putin says that the development of the aircraft and spacecraft manufacturing industry is a key priority for the government. "Starting from 2004, the amount of state funding, in recent years alone, has seen a 20-fold increase. This year we have allocated an additional R80 billion for this purpose. This money has been used to purchase Russian-made aircraft, to upgrade manufacturing facilities." However he criticizes the work of the United Aircraft Construction Corporation (OAK). He is displeased that enterprises within the corporation sign unprofitable contracts and ruin plans to produce civilian aircraft. Putin states that the grand total of OAK's debts and those of its subsidiaries is around R120 billion (\$3.7 billion). He announces that a financial recovery plan for aircraft manufacturers is to be developed.

19 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev attends a meeting of the Security Council in Stavropol, which discusses security in the North Caucasus. He states:

Much of what we have just won't do. This was proven with all its tragic clarity by the latest criminal act in Nazran, when because of an absence of basic precautionary and security measures, an enormous number of Interior Ministry officials were killed and injured. It is unforgivable. If we're going to speak honestly and put it simply, it is criminal.

If such measures are not guaranteed, leaders on any level from all the bodies here will be held responsible, and may even be dismissed. We won't go soft on anyone. Past services will not be taken into account. If there are human losses, the individual responsible for security will be held directly responsible.

Medvedev proposes making changes to territorial jurisdiction in cases relating to terrorism and extremism in the North Caucasus, and abandoning jury trials in cases against criminal groups. Medvedev states that the main reasons for the security problems in the North Caucasus are domestic, rather than external. He makes the following comment in response to Deputy Interior Minister Arkady Yedelev:

You mentioned the influence of several factors, including international ones, such as the feeding of the underground with money, the problems of religious extremism. All these external factors exist, you are right.

But the main reason is within the country, as regrettable as this may be. The conditions for the development of banditry and religious extremism were created as a result of the disintegration of the state, the roots are in our way of life, unemployment, poverty, the clans who don't give a damn about the people, who just divide up the streams of money coming here, fight for orders and then settle scores with each other, and in corruption, which has genuinely become very widespread within the law-enforcement agencies.

Medvedev instructs Security Council Secretary Nikolay Patrushev and presidential plenipotentiary representative in the Southern Federal District Vladimir Ustinov to hold a full-scale conference on the development of southern Russia.

19 August 2009 The head of the Investigations Committee under the prosecutor's office, Aleksandr Bastrykin says the FSB says it has at its disposal some information about the

organizers of the terrorist attack in Nazran on 17 August.

FSB Head Aleksandr Bortnikov states: "Speaking of the terrorist act in Nazran, primary information had been available, but there was a failure to localize it and make sure the terrorist act did not happen...We are taking the necessary steps to optimize the forces and means, and taking measures to make sure that in future this information is used efficiently."

The parliament of Ingushetia issues a statement in connection with the terrorist act in Nazran on 17 August.

The human rights centre Memorial says it is seriously concerned about the safety of its employees in Chechnya.

19 August 2009 Energy Minister Sergey Shmatko says that the disaster at the Sayano-Shushenskaya hydroelectric power station in Siberia on 17 August was the worst ever, and that its cause is still a mystery.

Emergencies Minister Sergey Shoygu says that it may only be possible to repair five of the 10 power units at Sayano-Shushenskaya. He says there are currently 62 people registered as missing following the accident.

19 August 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin addresses a meeting on the development of the nano industry. He says that Rosnano is currently considering more than 450 projects orientated at the development of specific production. Twenty-two projects have been approved and eight are getting investment. In total, in 2009 the corporation plans to approve 50 projects with a total budget of R80 billion.

Minister of Education and Science Andrey Fursenko says that the total amount of funding for the federal targeted-development programme for developing the infrastructure of the nano-industry in 2011 is R5 billion (about \$157 million). Fursenko recalls that, due to the financial crisis, the financing expected until 2010 has been cut and the set tasks cannot be met. He says that the R5 billion-odd which should be spent in these years will be carried over to 2011.

19 August 2009 Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Zhukov says the government has decided not to index-link the pay of public sector workers in 2010. He adds that if the economic situation developed better than was currently being forecast, indexation would take place.

Deputy Finance Minister Anton Siluanov says that, according to Finance Ministry assessments, the total expenditure of the budgets of constituent parts of the Russian Federation in 2010 would remain at the current level.

19 August 2009 Deputy Air Force commander-in-chief for armaments, Major-General Oleg Barmin, says that the Russian Air Force has begun procurement of new aircraft in numbers not seen since Soviet times. He tells a news conference that over 80 new aircraft and helicopters are being bought in 2009 and about 200 are undergoing an upgrade or maintenance. Six-year contracts have been concluded for Su-34 and MiG-29SMT warplanes in addition to three other deals for Su-35s, Su-27SMs and Su-30s, Barmin said, adding that all these aircraft can refuel while airborne. Barmin says "that 2009 and 2010 are a time for the Air Force to develop airborne strike capabilities". He says that the Russian Air Force will receive up to 2,000 new and upgraded airplanes and helicopters, as well as more than 500 unmanned aerial vehicles before 2020. He says that "at least 80 per cent of the Air Force's fleet will be updated by 2020".

Mikhail Pogosyan, general director of Sukhoi and MiG companies, says the MOD may launch a programme to use unmanned aerial vehicles in the army by 2010.

Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov says that the military-industrial commission has submitted to the Finance Ministry a draft state defence order for 2010. Ivanov says that "the draft's overall sum for 2010 is R1,109 billion [\$35,065 million], which is higher than the current year's state defence order". He says that the draft specifically anticipated a sharp increase in military personnel housing expenditure. R104 billion will be provided for this cause, which is R50 billion higher than 2009. The MOD state defence order expenditure would be R470 billion. He says that the military-industrial commission had based the assignment of the state defence order on six priorities, linked to ammunition and military technology deliveries.

20 August 2009 Vladimir Putin demands that a revision be carried out of all strategic infrastructure facilities in view of the accident at the Sayano-Shushenskaya hydroelectric power plant. He is speaking at a government presidium meeting devoted to Russia's water strategy for the next decade.

Dmitry Medvedev orders Putin to report on the causes of the accident at Sayano-Shushenskaya within two weeks, as well as to take measures to clean up the scene of the accident and guarantee an uninterrupted energy supply to enterprises, facilities from the social sector and the population.

Energy Minister Sergey Shmatko says that the Sayano-Shushenskaya plant will be restored whatever the cost. Shmatko says that the accident shows a need to re-equip the Russian energy sector on a large scale.

Mikhail Afanasyev, editor-in-chief of the *Novyy Fokus* on-line magazine, dismisses accusations that he has knowingly distorted information in his coverage of the rescue work at Sayano-Shushenskaya.

Mikhail Fedotov, secretary of the Russian Union of Journalists, says it will keep an eye on the criminal case against Afanasyev and, if needed, provide assistance.

The relatives of those killed and missing following the accident at the Sayano-Shushenskaya hydropower plant are setting up a public committee to defend their interests. They make this announcement at a meeting with the head of Khakassia, Viktor Zimin.

20 August 2009 The CPRF holds protests across the country which are directed against the authorities' dictatorship in the media. Sergey Potapov, secretary of the CPRF's Moscow Committee, says that "a one-party monopoly can be observed on the majority of television channels".

20 August 2009 Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov states that the cargo vessel *Arctic Sea*, which was freed on 16 August, is on its way to Novorossiysk for further investigation.

20 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev has talks with the YR leadership in Sochi. He discusses the legislation allowing political parties to nominate candidates for the heads of Russian regions. He says this is a "substantial amendment" which improves democracy and transparency.

We are in new democratic times. Parties submit their candidates for regional leaders in accordance with the law we prepared. In fact, this is not a cosmetic change, but quite a substantial amendment to the rules by which the powers of governors and heads of the Russian Federation's constituent parts are allocated. Indeed, for the first time the party is doing this. What's more, proposals are essentially formulated in full by the party. The presidential administration has a technical role. The administration took part in consultations, but nonetheless it is a technical role. This is now done publicly and openly. Any discussion behind closed doors, so to speak, even if it happens, has no legal weight, because at the end of the day you will come with open,

prepared candidacies. The president has the right, accordingly, either to agree with the candidacies and make a choice, or to reject the candidacies if he believes they are unworthy.

This step is aimed at developing democracy in our country...In the end it will facilitate the development of our political and party system...As a result of this law, parties have gained additional weight, and this is very good since we want our parties to be strong, to reflect the people's will and the hopes of voters, and to take all decisions in accordance with the instructions given to them by voters.

20 August 2009 The Krasnodar Territory court rejects an appeal filed by opposition politician Boris Nemtsov against the refusal of Sochi's Central district court to annul the outcome of the city's mayoral election. Nemtsov's representative, Nikolay Glushenkov, says that he intends to appeal against this decision to the presidium of Krasnodar Territory court, and to submit materials to the European Court in Strasbourg.

20 August 2009 A Levada Centre opinion poll shows an increase in the ratings of Dmitry Medvedev and Vladimir Putin. At the moment, 76 per cent are on the whole satisfied with the way Medvedev is dealing with problems facing the country. Compared to July, Medvedev's approval rating increased by 4 per cent. Vladimir Putin remains the most influential Russian politician, as 52 per cent of citizens said in August that they trusted him, while 82 per cent are satisfied with his work in the post of prime minister, which is 4 per cent more than the previous month. The list of the 10 most popular Russian politicians in August included

- Emergencies Minister Sergey Shoygu - 15 per cent said they trusted him)
- LDPR leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy - 11 per cent
- CPRF leader Gennady Zyuganov - 11 per cent
- Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov - 7 per cent
- Moscow mayor Yury Luzhkov – 6 per cent
- Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov - 6 per cent
- St Petersburg governor Valentina Matviyenko– 4 per cent
- Kemerovo Region governor Aman Tuleyev - 4 per cent.

Sociologists from the Levada Centre conducted the poll on 14-17 August in 46 Russian regions. Also, according to their data, 40 per cent of Russians say that they trust the president.

20 August 2009 First Deputy Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov says the regions' debt to Gazprom for gas supplies exceeds R63 billion [almost \$2 billion].

20 August 2009 The deputy general director of the Russian Space Engineering Research Institute, Andrey Buravin, says in 2009 funding for the GLONASS satellite navigation system has not been cut. He says that at the moment the 2012-2020 GLONASS federal targeted-development programme is being drawn up. The GLONASS programme is the only federal targeted-development programme whose funding has not been cut during the financial crisis. In September 2008 the Russian government allocated an additional R63 billion for 2009-11.

20 August 2009 President of Ingushetia Yunus-Bek Yevkurov decides to cut short his rehabilitation in a sanatorium in Moscow Region and will return to work soon.

20 August 2009 The office of the human rights organization Mothers of Dagestan is struck by a serious fire in the early hours of 20 August.

20 August 2009 The head of the Amalgamated Aircraft Manufacturing Corporation, Aleksey Fedorov, says the government will allocate tens of billions of roubles to help to the aircraft-building industry. He speaks about the outcome of the meeting on aircraft building chaired by Prime Minister Vladimir Putin in Zhukovsky, Moscow Region, on 18 August.

20 August 2009 The head of communications of the Armed Forces and Deputy Chief of the General Staff Yevgeny Meychik says that the communications system that is use in the Russian Army does not meet modern requirements of troop command and control.

Many stationary military communications centres and radio centres are fitted out with outdated equipment and hardware which need to be replaced. At the moment, the share of digital hardware amounts to not more than 15-20 per cent.

Field systems and communications equipment, which are in service, were developed in the 1980s and have become outdated to a considerable extent.

A single inter-departmental command and control system compatible with command and control systems of troops and military formations of ministries and departments, as well as with the system of state control at all levels is being created on their basis.

20 August 2009 In a statement posted on the Chechen rebel website Kavkaz-Tsentr, the group Muwahhidun ar-Rusi jamaat says a member of the group had committed a "subversive act" at the Sayano-Shushenskaya power plant. The group says similar attacks on Russia's other strategic facilities were threatened.

21 August 2009 Interfax reports the death toll from the accident at Sayano-Shushenskaya as 47, with 28 still missing.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin visits the Sayano-Shushenskaya. Putin orders checks at "all strategic and vital infrastructure facilities". He states:

Several theories as to the causes of the accident are currently being put forward. I shall stress that it is important for us to understand very clearly what happened in reality to ensure that such tragedies are not allowed to repeat themselves in the future.

In general, all strategic and vital infrastructure facilities should be checked. We should closely look at the way their upgrading is carried out, also bearing in mind the implementation of new automated control systems. But it is already obvious that we should ensure a qualitative increase in technical discipline, technological discipline. These issues require particular attention.

Putin acknowledges that the recent accident may lead to higher electricity prices, and he proposes introducing state price regulation.

21 August 2009 Deputy Minister of Economic Development Andrey Klepach says electricity rates are to increase following the accident at the Sayano-Shushenskaya power plant.

21 August 2009 Moscow's Basmanny Court issues arrest warrants for all eight suspects in the seizure of the *Arctic Sea* dry-cargo vessel.

21 August 2009 The head of Gazprom, Aleksey Miller, suggests to Vladimir Putin that a tax holiday be introduced for gas projects in Eastern Siberia and the Far East until return of investment into these projects, or export duty on gas extracted be reduced.

21 August 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin visits Yakutia. He pledges state support for the diamond industry. He states:

We have no doubt that the industry will recover, the world market environment will recover. Experts say that the demand in industry has not decreased considerably, by around 5 per cent altogether. This means that the industry should be supported in this difficult period. This will require large funds, about \$1 billion, R35 billion, but the

decision has been made and we shall do it. We shall support you.

He also asks the Ministry of Regional Development together with the republic's authorities, interested federal ministries to complete swiftly and submit to the Russian government a draft plan for the integrated development of Yakutia's production forces, transport and energy. "First and foremost, we are talking about changing the structure of the republic's economy and creating new branches of industry here, such as oil production and oil refining, gas production and gas chemical industry, metallurgy and tourism."

21 August 2009 Two powerful explosions take place in the centre of Grozny. According to preliminary reports they were carried out by suicide bombers. Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov says that the situation is calm in the capital despite the attacks.

Dmitry Medvedev has a meeting with permanent members of the Security Council in Sochi. They discuss measures to neutralize terrorist and extremist threats in the North Caucasian region.

Deputy Chairman of the Duma Security Committee Gennady Gudkov believes that the frequent use of militant suicide bombers in terrorist attacks in North Caucasus shows the inability within the federal centre and North Caucasus governing structures to oppose militants ideologically.

21 August 2009 Prosecutor-General Yury Chayka says that since the beginning of 2009, wage arrears in the Northwestern Federal District have grown fourfold to R675 million.

22 August 2009 Roskosmos head Anatoly Perminov is interviewed on *Vesti TV* on its current and future plans. The Federal Space Agency intends to have its next generation of space craft operational for unmanned flights by 2015 and manned by 2018. It is also continuing an experimental programme intended to eventually culminate in a flight to Mars. Work to build a new launch site at Vostochny is still on track to start in 2012.

22 August 2009 Russian Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev says that in an attempt to improve security in Ingushetia, all law-enforcement personnel in the republic are to undergo re-evaluation and large-scale checks are to be carried out at all Interior Ministry facilities there.

Ingush President Yunus-Bek Yevkurov interrupts his rehabilitation course and returned to Ingushetia.

23 August 2009 Sergey Shaposhnikov, director of the civil defence department of the Emergencies Ministry, says that the number of victims of the accident at the Sayano-Shushenskaya power station has reached 69; another six people are missing.

23 August 2009 Ingush President Yunus-Bek Yevkurov dismisses Ingush Vice-Premier Ruslan Techiyev, head of the republican public utility and housing department Akhmed Kaziyev and presidential aide for education and health care Aishat Pliyeva. Yevkurov says his authority is not undermined by Moscow's decision to send Deputy Interior Minister Arkady Yedelev to supervise law-enforcement in the republic.

23 August 2009 Chechen rebel website Daymohk publishes a decree of the Chechen separatist parliament dismissing Akhmed Zakayev as prime minister. "Parliament chairman Zhellaudin Saralyapov shall undertake fulfilling the duties of head of the cabinet of ministers until a new one is formed."

23 August 2009 The MAKS-2009 international aerospace show closes. Accords and contracts worth \$10 billion were signed at the show.

24 August 2009 The official representative of the Investigations Committee under the prosecutor's office, Vladimir Markin, says that the theory of a terrorist act at the Sayano-Shushenskaya hydroelectric power plant in Khakassia has not been confirmed.

Dmitry Medvedev makes the following comment on the accident.

After what happened at the Sayano-Shushenskaya hydropower plant, there have appeared numerous apocalyptic comments on this matter, both in this country and abroad. Their gist is: that's it, this is the beginning of a technological end of Russia, the 21st century Chernobyl. Those who do not like Russia in its current borders and do not like its role on the international arena have begun to rub their hands together.

We all understand that despite the gravity of what happened, despite the fact that our citizens were killed, all these are lies. The truth here consists in one thing: technologically, our country is very much lagging behind. The matter is not so much in this specific, very dramatic disaster, but in that we truly are very much lagging behind.

This challenge...if we do not overcome it, then indeed all the threats that are being talked about now may become real. However, we have every chance of coping with this technological backwardness.

He says power plants must be modernized.

24 August 2009 The Moscow prosecutor's office has accepted a complaint from a member of the Solidarity opposition movement, Ilya Yashin, who was injured when he was detained during a rally in Moscow on 22 August. The chief of the Russian Interior Ministry public relations directorate Police Colonel-General Valery Gribakin says that Yashin has himself to blame for his injuries.

24 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev visits a Buddhist temple in Buryatia. He expresses support for teaching basic religious culture at schools.

Not so long ago I supported some ideas that heads of our traditional confessions had come forward with, to the effect that teaching Basic Religious Culture as well as Fundamental Secular Ethics for those who are not ready to listen to religious culture issues, be included in the Russian educational standards. I also supported the proposal to introduce posts of army and navy priests. The state and representatives of various faiths have a common, single aim, which is to try to influence the upbringing of young people, younger generation as carefully as possible. Issues related to worldview, achievement of personhood affect state institutions as well as public and religious ones equally.

24 August 2009 The speaker of the Federation Council, Sergey Mironov, makes the following comments on the security situation in the North Caucasus:

The enthusiastic reports by defence and security officials clearly do not reflect the actual situation in the North Caucasus, and the rotations of local police personnel and special missions of investigators from Moscow are not enough to defeat the terrorists. It will be impossible to destroy the bandit underground without imposing basic order in the system of executive power and, first and foremost, the budget sector of the subsidized North Caucasus republics.

He says backing one leader and one ruling clan in every republic according to the "loyalty and stability in return for subsidies" plan is not working.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin makes a brief working visit to the Chechen Republic. Putin

discusses the socio-economic situation with Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov.

24 August 2009 Ingush President Yunus-bek Yevkurov says that security will be tightened up in Ingushetia. The counter-terrorist regime is lifted in Nazran.

24 August 2009 Andrey Nazarov, former first deputy prosecutor of Chelyabinsk Region, is appointed chief prosecutor of Dagestan.

24 August 2009 The Ladoga-2009 operational-strategic exercise in north-western Russia is underway. Fundamentally new tasks aimed at improving the command and control system for a group of troops and forces of different types in a strategic direction are being practised.

24 August 2009 The online reception office of Chief Military Prosecutor Sergey Fridinsky is launched on the official website of the Prosecutor-General's Office.

24 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev has issued a series of orders that were drafted after a meeting on 5 August devoted to lowering administrative barriers for small and medium business. All the orders are to be implemented between 1 October and 1 December 2009.

25 August 2009 The Moscow authorities refuse permission to the Drugaya Rossiya opposition coalition to hold a rally in Triumphalnaya Square in Moscow on 31 August. Drugaya Rossiya regards this ban as illegal and intends to hold its action as planned at 1830.

25 August 2009 The president of major Russian car manufacturer AvtoVAZ, Boris Aleshin, resigns "due to moving to another job".

25 August 2009 Security Council secretary Nikolay Patrushev speaks at a meeting on improving the social and economic situation and rendering assistance to law enforcement agencies of the Southern Federal District in Anapa (Krasnodar Territory). He says certain problems are creating a "breeding ground" for extremism in the North Caucasus. He says corruption, growing crime and multiple problems in the economy are typical for many regions of the North Caucasus.

A Sharia court of the Caucasus emirate sentences to death the exiled Chechen rebel leader Akhmed Zakayev for apostasy. In its ruling the Sharia court said it acted at the request of Chechen rebel jihadist leader Dokka Umarov to consider Zakayev's case.

25 August 2009 Nikolay Patrushev says Russia's military doctrine may be adopted late in 2009 or in early 2010. He says that the presentation of the military doctrine will be held during the Russian Security Council meeting this September.

25 August 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin speaks at a meeting on the progress of the structural changes in the rocket-and-space industry. He says that the space sector is a budget priority. R81.7 billion from the state budget has been allocated in 2009 to support the rocket-and-space industry. R58.2 billion are allocated to fund the rocket-and-space programme, R15.3 billion are allocated for the Glonass federal targeted-development programme and over R8.2 billion for the federal targeted development programme for the defence industry.

25 August 2009 The public movement TIGR (Association of Russian Citizens of Initiative) is registered by the Maritime Territory justice ministry at the fourth attempt.

25 August 2009 Ladoga 2009 military exercises begin near St Petersburg.

Lt-General Aleksandr Aleshin, first deputy chief of the Russian Air Force's Main Staff says that the Air Force will complete its transition to a new organizational air base structure by 1 December. It is planned to take the air divisions and air regiments and to form from them

over 50 air bases in three categories. Aleshin notes that the organizational structure of the new commands would approximate as closely as possible to the structure and composition of wartime functional groups for battle management.

Colonel Andrey Lebedev, who previously held the post of chief of staff of the 7th Assault-Landing Division (headquartered in the city of Novorossiysk), is appointed commander of the 98th Svirskaya Airborne Division headquartered in Ivanovo. He replaces Major-General Aleksandr Lentsov who was head of the 98th division for 13 years. Lentsov is appointed deputy commander of the Airborne Troops replacing Major-General Yevgenny Ustinov who is promoted to the post of deputy commander of the Leningrad Military District troops.

Colonel Igor Vinogradsky, deputy Airborne Troops commander for upbringing, is appointed commander of the 76th Assault-Landing Division deployed in Pskov. He replaces Major-General Aleksandr Kolpachenko who was in July 2009 appointed commander of the Russian Navy's coastal troops.

25 August 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin calls for the reorganization of the rocket and space industry sector to be accelerated. He has a meeting with the relevant ministries and departments to discuss the problems of the sector.

25 August 2009 The Ministry of Industry and Trade states that Russia's defence industry output in January-July 2009 was 6.8 per cent up on the same period in 2008. The Ministry points out that civilian output declined by 45.8 per cent in the conventional armaments industry.

26 August 2009 Minister of Telecommunications and Mass Communications Igor Shchegolev says that there are no plans to take any "prohibitive measures" in the regulation of the Internet in Russia in the near future. He says Russian TV will turn digital in 2015.

26 August 2009 A Moscow court impounds the *Arctic Sea* bulk carrier following a request from the Investigations Committee under the prosecutor's office. The ship is being taken to Novorossiysk.

26 August 2009 Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov says Russian universities should be guided by the interests of the country's security and not by commercial profits while teaching foreign students such "sensitive" subjects as missile engineering and nuclear technology.

26 August 2009 The head of Rostekhnologii Sergey Chemezov will take up the post of chairman of the board of directors of the new automotive holding company Rosavto, which will comprise AvtoVAZ, KamAZ and Avtodizel. Sergey Kogogin, general director of KamAZ, will become Rosavto's general director.

26 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev says the measures being taken by the law-enforcement and security structures to eradicate the threat of terrorism and extremism in the North Caucasus are insufficient. He says the situation in the North Caucasus is getting worse. He says law enforcement agencies have made miscalculations. "I have given instructions to the law-enforcement agencies. They are currently preparing regulatory legal acts which should help the judicial and investigative authorities to unmask the criminals and hold them criminally responsible. Because often what happens is that these militants are caught, but afterwards freed."

26 August 2009 The Chechenpress website publishes a "Resolution of the cabinet of ministers of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria No A-77". It calls for the punishment of rebel MPs:

Over the recent period amid a planned political dialogue with representatives of the Russian Federation for the peaceful resolution of the military conflict between the

Russian Federation and the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, on certain Chechen internet resources have appeared so-called appeals by A Idigov on behalf of the parliament of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, an address of MP I Akhmadov on behalf of the parliament of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, confirming the occupation regime on the territory of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria and lastly, the so-called decree by Zh Saralyapov, dismissing the government of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria. In all instances, the motivation of these appeals and decrees can only be described as an outright deception and slander.

The government of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria views all these actions as attempts to disrupt the legal basis of the independent Chechen state and deprive the Chechen people of hopes for a victory and a peaceful future.

26 August 2009 Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces Army General Nikolay Makarov says Russia has deployed S-400 air defence missile systems in the Far East and plans to use them to safeguard itself in connection with North Korea's missile tests.

26 August 2009 Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov tells a meeting of the commission for export control in Moscow that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction poses a serious threat to Russia's security.

The threat of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the world has existed over the last few years, but it is recently that it is becoming increasingly real. The total amount of problems in this sphere is not only decreasing, but, on the contrary, is growing like a snowball. For the Russian Federation with its long borders to overcome the threat of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is a priority.

I must say that the assessments of the threats voiced by our foreign partners are often selective and are largely formed under the influence of their own political and economic interests. Hence, we should set our course as regards countering weapons of mass destruction on the basis of precisely defined national assessments and an integrated consideration of the country's interests. Russian approaches to solving issues that arise must be promoted in the international arena.

27 August 2009 Eight hijackers of the Arctic Sea bulk carrier have been charged with piracy and kidnapping committed with use of force under articles 227 and 126 of the Russian Criminal Code.

27 August 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin announces various measures which should increase revenue to 2010's federal budget by over R144 billion (around \$4.5 billion).

Starting from next year, it is proposed that all revenue from the tax on extracting subsoil resources and raw hydrocarbons [NDPI] should be entered in the federal budget. You will recall that 95 per cent of the NDPI currently goes into the federal budget, while 5 per cent goes to budgets of the Russian Federation. At one time, we made an exception and left this small part [out of the budget]. But in 2010 this decision - the decision to enter all the NDPI in the federal budget - will provide no less than R46 billion for the federal budget.

Also starting from 1 January 2010, the federal budget is going to receive all revenue from management of the resources of the Reserve Fund and the National Wealth Fund.

In addition, the share of profit which the Bank of Russia is obliged to transfer to the federal budget is to increase for a three-year period. Currently it is 50 per cent. It is going to become 75 per cent.

27 August 2009 Vladimir Putin calls for the full completion by 2030 of the work to liberalize internal markets of energy resources. He is speaking at a government meeting to consider a draft of Russia's energy strategy until 2030. He says: "The emergence of normal, market rules in the area of the fuel and energy complex should also stimulate such important areas as energy saving, a reduction in the economy's energy consumption, the introduction of environmentally friendly technologies."

The government approves the draft text of the Russian Energy Strategy until 2030 with some amendments. The document envisages increasing oil extraction in Russia to 530-5 million tonnes by 2030, gas to 880-940 billion cubic metres, and electricity production to 1,800-2,200 billion kWh. According to the energy strategy, the export of oil and oil products will constitute 329 million tonnes by 2030, and gas export, 346-68 billion cubic metres. It is estimated that by 2030, total investment in the energy sector will have been about R60,000 billion [about \$1,900 billion].

27 August 2009 Activists of the Solidarnost political movement hold an anti-corruption rally in the centre of Moscow.

It is reported that the deputy head of the human rights organization Justice (Spravedlivost), Dmitry Baranovsky, has been detained in Moscow on suspicion of extremely large-scale extortion. Baranovsky is reportedly detained on suspicion of committing a crime covered by Article 163 Part 3 of the Russian Criminal Code. This article carries a punishment of between seven and 15 years' imprisonment.

27 August 2009 A Moscow court sentences student Ivan Belousov to six years behind bars. He was found guilty in the case involving an explosion in Manezhnaya Ploshchad in Moscow in 2007.

27 August 2009 A VTsIOM poll indicates that 53 per cent of Russians consider nuclear weapons as the main guarantee of Russia's security. Another 27 per cent believe that nuclear weapons play an important but not decisive role in ensuring the country's security; 6 per cent assign a restrictive role to this type of weapon. Three per cent believe that the presence of nuclear weapons has no impact on Russia's security and the same again believe that they are altogether dangerous for the country; 8 per cent were not able to respond. The all-Russian poll was conducted at the initiative of VTsIOM on 22-23 August 2009; 1,600 people were questioned in 140 localities in 42 regions, territories and republics of Russia. The margin of error does not exceed 3.4 per cent.

27 August 2009 A Levada poll indicates that about half of Russians believe it is possible to establish peaceful life in the North Caucasus, although 38 per cent believe that the authorities will need many years for this and 12 per cent hope for such a result in the next few years. The other 50 per cent do not believe such an outlook and believe that over decades Chechnya will remain a source of tension and conflict (30 per cent) and that Russia will have to recognize its independence (16 per cent). In response to the question "Can the Russian authorities protect the country's population from new terrorist acts?", respondents' opinions were divided: 45 per cent think that they can and 40 per cent that they can't.

28 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev meets in Sochi with the leaders of the southern constituent parts of the Russian Federation to discuss problems of Islam. He calls for youth programmes to prevent North Caucasus youth from being drawn to extremism. He suggests setting up an Islamic TV channel. He also says he supports the idea of introducing strict control over those travelling outside Russia to study at foreign Islamic higher education establishments. He also favours concluding long-term agreements with well-established Islamic education centres.

The president of Ingushetia, Yunus-Bek Yevkurov, says that radical tendencies in Islam - Wahhabism - occupy a strong position in the North Caucasus and calls for the authorities

and spiritual leaders to take all possible measures to remove young people from its influence.

Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov says "very little" is being done to fight religious extremism and the authorities need to look at their mistakes in this area and correct them.

The President of Kabarda-Balkaria Arsen Kanokov proposes building a regional Islamic institute in Nalchik.

28 August 2009 The Presidential Commission to counter the falsification of history holds its first meeting in the Kremlin. Head of the Presidential Administration Sergey Naryshkin chairs the meeting. Naryshkin says that blame for the tragedies of WW2 is being laid on Russia by way of provocation. He says that "The commission is not aimed at re-writing history; it does not intend to act as a censor or a watchdog. First and foremost, we proceed from the principle of freedom of history as a science, we proceed from the understanding that historical truth - whatever it is - should be sought and defended on the basis of the primary source." The commission is going to discuss the level of history teaching in Russia and possible additional measures of state support.

Arseny Roginsky, the Memorial human rights society's chairman expresses concern over the work of the commission and its intention to look at school text books.

29 August 2009 Major-General Viktor Batmazov, deputy C-in-C of the Ground Troops in charge of education says that in 2009 Russian Ground Troops will get about 3,000 units of modern armaments and military hardware. Batmazov points out that modern means of communications and intelligence-gathering are "the Achilles heel of the armed forces". He says Ground Troops are ready to implement amendments to the service regulations related to the transition to the new image. At the moment the Ground Troops are digesting 40 documents which later will be tested in the troops and military schools and will come into force within two years approximately.

30 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev is interviewed on Channel Rossiya's 'News of the Week' Programme. He discusses the Russian education system and criticises other countries' interpretations of WW2 and the Soviet role in it. He strongly criticises the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's assertion that Germany and Soviet Union were equally to blame as a "flat-out lie".

30 August 2009 Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev says that Police chiefs who fail to root out corruption within the month granted to them may be dismissed from their posts.

31 August 2009 President Dmitry Medvedev starts his own channel on YouTube. www.youtube.com/kremlin

31 August 2009 25 opposition protesters are detained in Triumfalnaya Square in central Moscow.

31 August 2009 The Moscow City Court sentences former Audit Chamber officials, whom the jury had found guilty of extorting and receiving a 120,000-dollar bribe, to four to eight years in high-security prison.

31 August 2009 The Chechnya.gov.ru website reports that Chechen human rights activists have sent an open letter to Dmitry Medvedev, urging him to set up a special interdepartmental commission to establish the whereabouts of Chechens kidnapped or missing during the counterterrorism operation in Chechnya.

September 2009

1 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev assigns the FSB the task of preparing and implementing additional measures to neutralize terrorist threats in the North Caucasus region, and to improve the state's antiterrorism system.

1 September 2009 The president of Ingushetia Yunus-Bek Yevkurov is interviewed on Ren TV.

1 September 2009 A MOD spokesman says that the state order for officer training at the higher education establishments of the MOD in 2009 is down to about one-sixth of what it was in previous years. The admissions for officer training at military education establishments in 2009 have been reduced to 3,000 applicants. Annual admission to military academies and military colleges used to be between 18,000 and 20,000.

2 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev urges regional leaders to work "manually" with enterprises when necessary, if issues of employment or payment of wages start to get out of control.

2 September 2009 Vladimir Putin meets Ingush President Yunus-Bek Yevkurov. They discuss ways to guarantee security in Ingushetia.

2 September 2009 A Levada Centre poll shows increasing support for Dmitry Medvedev's activities to overcome the economic crisis. In May, 58 per cent said that they "mainly support" Medvedev's actions as president, in August this figure became 61 per cent. The number of Russians who have formed a "mainly favourable impression" of Medvedev's efforts during the crisis has also risen from 59 per cent to 62 per cent.

2 September 2009 A VTsIOM poll shows that 42 per cent of Russians believe that, as a rule, local terrorists are behind the terrorist acts in the North Caucasus in 2009, although in 2004 49 per cent of citizens held this opinion. 30 per cent of Russians lay responsibility for terrorist acts on certain circles in the West who are interested in the weakening of Russia; since 2004, the proportion of such respondents has risen from 21 per cent.

2 September 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin proposes that a special structure be set up to keep control over facilities funded by Vneshekonombank.

2 September 2009 Yury Gulyagin, deputy prosecutor-general in the Far Eastern Federal District, blames the MOD for non-payment of orders for the fact that some enterprises are not paying wages to their work force.

2 September 2009 Only 16 senior officers of the Russian Armed Forces were admitted to the General Staff Academy in 2009. In July 2009, 142 generals and officers, including 33 foreigners, graduated from the General Staff Academy. Generals and officers from 16 foreign countries - Belarus, Algeria, Angola, Ethiopia, South Korea, Sweden, Finland, Syria, Serbia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Greece, Mongolia, China and Libya - are currently studying at the academy.

3 September 2009 Dmitry Muratov, editor-in-chief of *Novaya Gazeta* newspaper, says that investigators working on the case of former *Novaya Gazeta* journalist Anna Politkovskaya's murder in October 2006 have an idea of who the middlemen and the actual perpetrators of the crime are. Muratov welcomes the Supreme Court ruling on 3 September to return the Politkovskaya murder case to the prosecutor.

3 September 2009 Gazprom's management approves a new version of its draft investment programme and budget for 2009, in which capital expenditure is to fall by 30 per cent to

R488.25 billion (around \$15.43 billion), and the total size of the investment programme is to fall by 17 per cent to R761.53 billion. The volume of long-term investment should grow by 24 per cent to R273.28 billion. The new version of the draft budget for 2009 envisages a fall of R407.9 billion in the total volume of revenue and monetary receipts, to R3,300 billion, and a fall of R126.8 billion in obligations, expenditure and investment, to R3,680 billion.

3 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev discusses the preparation of Sochi for the 2014 Winter Olympic Games with the deputy chairman of the government, Dmitry Kozak. Medvedev also hears a report about the distribution of funds allocated to support the regions during the crisis. Medvedev says that regions must learn to use money efficiently.

3 September 2009 Bashkortostan residents hold a rally in the centre of Ufa demanding affordable housing and the return of public transport concessions.

3 September 2009 A corruption and organized crime report of the Interior Ministry's Investigations Committee says that organized crime's penetration into authorities and commercial entities has grown amid the financial crisis.

4 September 2009 Opposition movement Solidarity says that all its candidates have been disqualified from the election to the Moscow city duma.

4 September 2009 The general director of VTsIOM, Valery Fedorov, says Russians consider the Russian federal government to be the main culprit regarding the difficult economic situation in the country. The Interior Ministry and the law-enforcement agencies take second place and banks third place.

The director-general of the Agency of Political and Economic Communications, Dmitry Orlov, says that the economic crisis has not reduced the level of internal political stability in the country and has not given rise to an increase in the activities of the opposition.

4 September 2009 Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says in London that in the third quarter of 2009 Russia will start emerging from recession. He is speaking after a meeting of the finance ministers of the BRIC countries, Brazil, Russia, India and China. He says that Russia had been worse affected by the world financial crisis than other BRIC countries. He says that GDP will fall by 8.5 per cent in 2009, but in 2010 we expect the economy to grow by 1.6 per cent. He further says: "In 2010 we plan a federal budget deficit at 7 per cent of GDP but by 2012 we plan to bring it down to 3 per cent." He expects a budget deficit of 7.8 per cent at the end of 2009.

Aleksey Simanovsky, the director of the banking regulation and supervision department of the Bank of Russia says that the Central Bank of Russia is not expecting a second wave of the economic crisis and believes that banks are managing to pay back foreign loans.

4 September 2009 The Audit Chamber says the execution of Russia's federal budget revenues and expenditure in the first six months of 2009 was unsatisfactory. According to an Audit Chamber report on federal budget execution in January-June, revenues decreased by R1,200 billion, or around \$38 billion, 27.5 per cent less than the same period in 2008 and 33.3 per cent less excluding revenues from managing the assets of the Reserve Fund and the National Wealth Fund. The drop resulted in a budget deficit of 4.2 per cent of GDP in the period.

4 September 2009 *Ekho Moskvy* reports that British courts deny claims by the Russian prosecutor's office that an arrest warrant for Yevgeniy Chichvarkin has been issued.

4 September 2009 Colonel-General Vladimir Verkhovtsev, head of the MOD 12th main directorate responsible for nuclear security in the Armed Forces, is interviewed in *Krasnaya Zvezda*. He says that the reduction of nuclear weapons should be conducted taking into

account the balance of conventional weapons of high power.

Deputy defence minister with responsibility for armaments Vladimir Popovkin attends Public Chamber hearings. He defends plans to buy arms systems abroad. He also speaks about other procurement decisions, emphasizing the requirement for state-of-the-art technology and value for money.

5 September 2009 Aleksandr Cherkasov, a member of the Memorial centre's council says that unknown people disguised as tax inspectors have quizzed the neighbours of activists of Memorial about the activists' lives.

5 September 2009 Lt-General Vladimir Gagarin, deputy commander of the Strategic Missile Troops, discusses their re-armament with "fifth-generation" missile systems on *Ekho Moskvyy*.

5 September 2009 Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin attends a meeting of G20 finance ministers in London. He says that in 2012 Russian gross domestic product (GDP) will be recovered to its pre-crisis level. According to the revised forecast for 2010-2012, the forecast for GDP growth has been raised from previously forecast 1 per cent to 1.6 per cent in 2010, in 2011 from 2.6 per cent to 3 per cent and in 2012 to from 3.8 per cent to 4.3 per cent.

7 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev discusses stepping up the fight against organized crime with Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev.

Police Major-General Vladimir Kolokoltsev is appointed new chief of the Moscow main interior directorate. Vladimir Kolokoltsev replaces Vladimir Pronin who was dismissed last spring.

7 September 2009 Deputy chairman of the Investigations Committee under the prosecutor's office Vasily Piskarev says the number of reports on corruption coming to is growing. He is interviewed in *Izvestiya*. He says in 2008 slightly over 10,000 criminal cases were instituted over corruption, in the first six months of 2009 there are almost 10,000 cases.

7 September 2009 *Ekho Moskvyy* reports that the Russian authorities have reopened the investigation into the murder 11 years ago of Duma deputy Galina Starovoytova, saying new circumstances have emerged.

7 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev tells Gazprom chairman Aleksey Miller not to pay Ukraine in advance for transit tariffs. Medvedev tells Gazprom head Aleksey Miller to focus on gasification programmes, primarily in rural areas.

7 September 2009 Minister of Economic Development Elvira Nabiullina says that the Russian GDP will grow 3.9 to 4.5 per cent in the second half of 2009 in comparison with the first half. Nabiullina says that industrial production in July has grown by 3.6 per cent since June, adding that, in July, monthly industrial growth has been recorded for three consecutive months. Investments have increased by 0.3 per cent from June to July. She says: "This gives us hope that we have passed the lowest point of economic development." Nabiullina says that she thinks that inflation in 2009 could fall within the 11.6 to 12 per cent boundary. She adds that the Ministry for Economic Development is planning an inflation of 9 to 10 per cent in 2010.

7 September 2009 Lukoil head Vagit Alekperov is interviewed on *Vesti TV*.

7 September 2009 Thomas Hammarberg, the human rights commissioner of the Council of Europe, and Russian ombudsman Vladimir Lukin, meet the chairman of the Chechen Supreme Court, Ziyaudi Zaurbekov and Prosecutor Mikhail Savchin.

8 September 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin states that the state may resort to less borrowing when drawing up the 2010-2012 budget. He is speaking at a meeting on the preparation of the three-year budget. "Over the last few months, we have been feeling certain positive signals, from both the world markets and our economy. Starting from June, industrial production has been increasing by about one per cent a month. Prices on our export commodities are also keeping steady at a level that is quite high and acceptable for us."

Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says that Russia's budget deficit in 2010 might be 6.8 per cent of GDP as opposed to the predicted 7.5 per cent. Kudrin says that Russia has no plans so far to borrow on the foreign markets in 2009.

8 September 2009 Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev says that new methods of fighting militants in the North Caucasus need to be developed, and emphasis should be placed on making the actions of the law-enforcement and security structures more coordinated. Nurgaliyev is addressing participants in a counter-terrorism drill taking place near Novochoerkassk.

8 September 2009 Shamsail Saraliyev, Chechnya's minister of external relations, national policy, information and the press says that representative offices of Chechnya are to be opened in the six European countries where the largest numbers of Chechen emigrants live, in Germany, Austria, Belgium, France, Denmark and Poland.

8 September 2009 Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that the rumours that S-300 systems were on the board of the *Arctic Sea* dry-cargo ship are groundless.

8 September 2009 An MOD source states that the central apparatus of the MOD and General Staff will acquire a new look not by 1 December 2009 as was planned earlier but by 1 October. The first stage of the reorganization was carried out between 1 December 2008 and 1 March 2009. "In that time the total strength of the central apparatus of the Ministry of Defence, including important structures such as the Main Operations Directorate, the Main Organization and Mobilization Directorate and a number of others, was cut by more than 50 per cent." The source says that the central apparatus of the Ministry of Defence and General Staff has already had over 80 per cent of the posts scheduled for closure closed.

9 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev says that the Russian economy is showing signs of recovery, but support for enterprises must continue.

There have been some signs that the general economic slump in Russia is coming to an end and we hope that our economy is moving on to a phase of recovery.

Compared to the first quarter of 2009, the size of GDP in the second quarter has increased quite significantly, by 7.5 per cent. Over the month of July, GDP grew by 0.5 per cent. Certain positive trends in industrial production, freight traffic and transport have also emerged. The decline in investment in fixed capital seems to have come to a halt.

9 September 2009 Health and Social Development Minister Tatyana Golikova discusses employment at a government meeting on economic issues with Dmitry Medvedev. She says that the level of registered unemployment "on the last day of September [sic] was 2.1 million people or 2.8 per cent". The period October 2008 to April 2009 registered unemployment was 2.3 million people.

9 September 2009 The Duma passes in the first reading the presidential bill on the urgent use of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation outside the country. The draft law was submitted to the lower house of parliament by Dmitry Medvedev on 11 August, and is aimed at "creating a legal mechanism to enable the Russian president to use formations of the

Armed Forces of the Russian Federation expeditiously outside the country". The existing legislation only provides for the use of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation outside its territory to meet the objectives of curbing international terrorist activities, and to achieve objectives in accordance with the Russian Federation's international treaties. The law does not provide for any other grounds for their use outside its borders. The presidential bill stipulates that formations of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation can be used expeditiously outside the territory of the Russian Federation to achieve such objectives as "repelling an attack on the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation or on other troops deployed outside the territory of the Russian Federation, repelling or averting aggression against another state, protecting Russian Federation citizens abroad, combating piracy, and ensuring safe shipping".

9 September 2009 An article by in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* (Yury Gavrilov: Decembrists-09: The Ministry of Defence Central Staff Will Slim Down' by December: Verification of a Rumour) discusses the planned reductions of MOD central staff.

9 September 2009 A Rosstat report states that the real size of Russia's GDP in the first six months of 2009 has declined by 10.4 per cent in comparison with the same period in 2008. The nominal size of Russia's GDP in the first six months of 2009 stood at R17,809.2 billion [around \$574.1 billion]. The real size of GDP in the second quarter of 2009 declined by 10.9 per cent in comparison with the second quarter of 2008, but rose by 7.4 per cent in comparison with the first quarter of 2009. The nominal size of GDP in the second quarter of 2009 stood at R9,326.4 billion.

10 September 2009 A commentary on Politkom.ru by Aleksey Titkov of the Carnegie Centre says that Vladimir Putin has more sway with regional leaders than Dmitry Medvedev. Putin meets them more frequently than Medvedev, and Putin's meetings are more substantive.

10 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev writes an article on Russia's economic development in Gazeta.ru. He discusses dependence on raw materials. He says Russia is facing "very big problems" such as "an inefficient economy, a semi-Soviet social sphere, an immature democracy, negative demographic trends, an unstable Caucasus". He says that "the political system will be updated and improved in the course of free competition among open political associations".

The article is entitled "Forward, Russia!"

http://www.gazeta.ru/comments/2009/09/10_a_3258568.shtml

11 September 2009 Vladimir Putin states at Valday that "there was no competition with Medvedev in 2008, and there will be none in 2012". "There will be none in 2012 either. We shall come to an agreement, because we are of one blood and common political views."

An article on the *Osobaya Bukva* website by Stanislav Belkovsky, entitled "Medvedev Is Getting Ready To Run for a Second Term" analyses Dmitry Medvedev's article - "Go, Russia!" which was published on the Gazeta website on 19 September. Belkovsky argues that Medvedev's article is an implicit criticism of Vladimir Putin.

11 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev approves a list of orders for the government following a meeting on measures to reduce alcohol consumption held on 12 August 2009 in Sochi.

11 September 2009 The Novorossiysk city prosecutor's office proposes closing down the Novorossiysk human rights organization for using the slogan Freedom Cannot Be Given, It Can Only Be Taken.

11 September 2009 Representatives of the leadership of the CPRF and the LDPR say there have been violations in the campaigns for the elections in a number of regions of the Russian Federation to be held on 11 October.

11 September 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin gives an upbeat assessment of the state of Russian and global economy at Valdai.

The global economy has never seen anything like this before. Practically all countries showed crisis symptoms and were affected them to a certain degree. The crisis has affected our country very seriously. However, we can state that recently, since last June, certain stabilization has been noticed in Russia and also a modest rise in the economy, 1 per cent since June every month.

He says Russia will come out of the crisis stronger than before and with a more competitive economy. The financial system will also become stable.

11 September 2009 Navy Commander-in-Chief Vladimir Vysotsky denies reports about the direct transfer of the Black Sea Fleet to the command of the North Caucasus Military District.

The chief of Baltic Fleet staff, Vice-Admiral Viktor Chirkov, is appointed the fleet's new commander. The former Baltic Fleet commander, Vice-Admiral Viktor Mardusin, is appointed deputy head of the General Staff Academy.

12 September 2009 A picket in support of motorists is under way in Vladivostok. The protesters demand that an increase in import duties on foreign-made cars should be abolished.

14 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev gives a speech on democracy at an international conference in Yaroslavl called "The Modern State and Global Security".

14 September 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says that Russia's development after the economic crisis should rely on the partnership between the government and the private sector.

The use of the government and private partnership makes it possible to unite resources with the possibilities of the state, the regions and business, to decrease risks for those taking part in a project, distribute their zones of responsibility, coordinate the interests.

The economy, as we know, starts showing certain signs of recovery and therefore we should pay more attention to development issues. I think that now it is an optimal period to finish polishing all the details of the mechanism of the partnership between the government and the private sector. In future, at the stage of a new economic rise it will make it possible to move forward without losing time.

14 September 2009 Sergey Sobyenin, the deputy prime minister and head of government, staff says that the economic crisis has shown a need for change in the state management system.

We understand that there are serious problems there...The processes of modernization, renovation and refinement are endless, but the crisis has pointed out and exacerbated the situation, where we can see the state machine gaining momentum in terms of numbers, increasing spending; the number of its institutions and organizations is not decreasing, but increasing, the number of public system employees has exceeded 17 million.

This puts colossal pressure on the economy and everything would be all right were these systems working as effectively as possible; there are also many problems concerning everyday spending and things linked to investment effectiveness and the effectiveness of educational, health and science systems themselves.

14 September 2009 Three Yabloko party candidates for Moscow's South-Eastern administrative district in the Moscow city duma election in October who were meeting voters outside the Aviamotornaya metro station are detained by police.

Solidarity press secretary Olga Shorina says on *Ekho Moskvy* radio that two of the movement's activists had been detained in Moscow for handing out booklets by Boris Nemtsov entitled "Luzhkov: The Results".

About 50 people have gathered in Chistoprudnyy Bulvar in central Moscow for a rally in support of political prisoners.

14 September 2009 First Deputy Interior Minister Mikhail Sukhodolsky says that in the special detachments of the MVD a pilot is under way whereby special designation centres are being created on the basis of OMON. The pilot is expected to help create a fundamentally new command system for special police detachments to reflect the nature of the tasks that they perform at present. Sukhodolsky says that in 2009 special detachments of the MVD will receive new equipment that will allow them to engage in fighting from behind cover.

14 September 2009 President of Ingushetia Yunus-Bek Yevkurov addresses the conference "The Modern State and Global Security" in Yaroslavl on countering international terrorism. Yevkurov says, when discussing how to counter terrorism:

To develop this situation in the North Caucasus republics and to improve the socioeconomic situation of the republics; to build good ideology, to oppose the ideology imposed on us by terrorism and international terrorism in particular, with our good ideology. Effective fight is, of course, the work with youth, so that the part of the youth which has not yet been affected by this could not be recruited, won over or persuaded by these terrorists or other criminals.

14 September 2009 The head of Rostekhnadzor, Nikolay Kutyn, says that the Russian Federation will fulfil its chemical disarmament commitments on time.

14 September 2009 The head of the Moscow-based Vympel machine-building plant, Sergey Nikulin, has been selected to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Yury Solomonov as director-general of the Moscow Institute of Thermal Technology. MIT is developing the sea-based strategic missile Bulava. Solomonov resigned on 22 July after another unsuccessful launch of the missile.

14 September 2009 AvtoVAZ car manufacturer announces staff cuts of 5,000 people. The move will come into force on 14 December 2009.

14 September 2009 Economist Andrey Nechayev says that some of Russia's state banks will experience "serious" problems this autumn. "Individual banks, very large banks will certainly experience serious problems. It is possible that the most serious problems will be experienced by state banks." He feels however that the crisis will not be systemic in nature. He is interviewed on the "25th Hour" programme of government controlled Centre TV.

15 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev says he does not rule out the possibility of running again for the presidency at the 2012 election. "Some time ago I was not even going to run for the (current) presidency, but fate decided it. So I plan nothing for myself, and rule nothing out."

Medvedev says that no return to elections of Russian regions' leaders is planned.

I personally took part in the decision to change the mechanism of investing with powers. I consider it absolutely correct. I do not see conditions under which we could

give up this decision either today or in 10 years' time.

Despite my democratic beliefs, I do not see any sense in returning to the system that existed before. I do not see anything superliberal or democratic in it; in my view, it does not fully correspond to Russia's traditions and to the level of the existing development of federalism. This is a rather tough statement but this is what I think.

15 September 2009 First deputy head of the Russian presidential administration Vladislav Surkov praises the conference which took place in Yaroslavl titled "The Modern State and Global Security". He calls for wide ranging discussion of democracy in Russia.

15 September 2009 Petros Garibyan, the investigator of the main investigations directorate of the Investigations Committee under the prosecutor's office says the investigation into the murder of journalist Anna Politkovskaya will soon deliver good results.

15 September 2009 An Analysis and Security federal information centre has been set up in Russia to combat corruption. The centre's head is Ruslan Milchenko. He states: "The main task is to fight corruption within state bodies of power by means of information which gives evidence of unlawful actions." He says the centre will use its connections in the Federal Security Service and the Prosecutor-General's Office. It will obtain information about acts of corruption committed by individuals.

15 September 2009 34 workers at the shipbuilding plant Avangard in Karelia have suspended work demanding to be paid wage arrears.

15 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev defends his criticism of Russian business in his 10 September article on the gazeta.ru news website.

This is no tough message, signal or declaration of war on business. God forbid, in my opinion, that would not be the right thing to do at all. It would make no sense at all but would merely make people tense. However, it is a signal to people themselves, people who do business, for them to stop and think for a while at least where they will be putting money. Of course, it is easier to trade in raw materials or goods bought in other countries. But we understand that this is the road to nowhere because when the next crisis comes, our economy will collapse even harder.

Dmitry Medvedev says that he is pleased with the performance of the government, but admits that it has occasionally made mistakes. He says that the government had underestimated the impact of the world economic crisis on Russia.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says the growth of GDP in 2010 might be higher than the forecast 1.6 per cent.

Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says that Russia will emerge from out of recession in the third quarter of 2009. He says that the first month of Russia's getting out of the crisis was July. He states that the anti-crisis measures meant that GDP grew by 0.4 per cent in June as against May. In July the GDP growth rate totalled 0.5 per cent.

Kudrin says that in 2010 the federal budget will use R2,187 billion of the Reserve Fund, at which point it will be fully spent, and R58.4 billion of the National Welfare Fund instead of the previously envisaged R681b. He attends a meeting of the government commission on budget planning. He states:

The use of the Reserve Fund in 2010 is planned in the amount of R2,187 billion. It will be fully spent next year, and will begin to fill up again from 2013, according to our estimates. It is not planned to fill up the Reserve Fund until 2013, all oil and gas revenues will be used for budget expenditures.

We expect that after 2012 the budget should return to the old, pre-crisis rules, and all oil revenues above \$50 per barrel will be accumulated in the Reserve Fund.

In 2011, R762.4 billion of the National Welfare Fund will be used, and in 2012 - R812 billion. By the end of 2012, the fund will stand at R1,421 billion.

As of 1 September 2009, the Reserve Fund stood at R2,706.82 billion and the National Welfare Fund at R2,863 billion.

15 September 2009 Presidential aide on economic issues Arkady Dvorkovich says that Russia should gradually move to selling oil, gas and other raw materials for roubles in order to turn the rouble into a regional reserve currency. "If we can somehow link the rouble to the goods which we have today, that is energy resources, oil, gas, and other types of raw materials, and begin to sell oil and gas contracts for roubles, then the rouble will gradually become a necessary currency for many countries." He says this might take years. "But at least we can set this task." He says it would be necessary to have a steady budget deficit to turn the rouble into a world reserve currency. "The question is whether we want to have a steady budget deficit, for example, so that we have a big and powerful market for Russian debt, and thus [financial] tools will emerge which the whole world will be able to use." Dvorkovich says that in 10 years' time five or six currency unions may emerge which will encompass the majority of countries.

15 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev says that Russia has done many things to stabilize the situation in the North Caucasian republics, but it is necessary to learn to use economic tools for this purpose.

We have done plenty of things over the last decade to create order, to prevent the level of terror in the Caucasus from going off scale, to considerably reduce the level of organized crime, to make the heads of Caucasian republics successful and up-to-date, and to make the monstrous level of corruption that exists there decrease. But we have failed to achieve success in everything.

We have managed to learn to use the element of force. In my opinion, this is done today in a reasonable, proportional and modern enough way, although it would be better if there were none of it. But we have completely failed to use economic tools.

He says he is content with the work of Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov.

15 September 2009 Ingush President Yunus-Bek Yevkurov says rebel groups in the republic include Arabs, two Ukrainians and several Azerbaijani nationals.

15 September 2009 The nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine *Yury Dolgoruky* has set sail for the next stage of sea trials in the White Sea.

15 September 2009 Colonel-General Viktor Trufanov, deputy head of the Border Guard Service of the FSB, says new border facilities will be set up along Russia's entire Arctic coast, including Wrangel Island, to guarantee the security of the Russian Federation in the Arctic. The Border Guard Service has completed the construction of a modern border facility Nagurskaya on Franz Josef Land. He says that in 2008, after a break of many years, Russian border patrol boats resumed patrolling the Northern Sea route in the Chukchi Sea.

16 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev instructs the government to examine the Russian citizen Maksim Kalashnikov's proposal regarding technological modernization of the economy. Kalashnikov's proposal can be found at <http://m-kalashnikov.livejournal.com/141905.html>

16 September 2009 The recently appointed Moscow police chief Vladimir Kolokoltsev gives a press briefing. He says that the Moscow police will continue to disperse unauthorized opposition rallies. He also says that a series of measures is needed to reduce corruption within the police force to an "acceptable" level.

16 September 2009 A member of the Memorial human rights organization board, Aleksandr Cherkasov, says that one of the eye-witnesses in the Natalya Estimirova murder case and a Memorial member "had to be evacuated from Chechnya due to pressure". "The investigation could have been either extended or stopped. In this sense I have no complaints about the investigation procedure. However, if and when the investigation comes to results, the issue of whether there is a political will to punish the murderers will emerge."

16 September 2009 First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov addresses the Duma on the government's anti-crisis efforts.

We have indeed lived through a rather deep drop [in GDP]. That drop turned out to be worse than our forecasts for 2009. Originally we expected that the drop would be slightly over 2 per cent. As you know this drop reached more than 10 per cent. Now we hope that for 2009 as a whole this drop will be slightly over 8 per cent. If the situation is favourable, it will perhaps be not so big.

At the same time we have avoided the unfavourable forecast of a high level of inflation. Data which we have today indicate that for 2009 as a whole inflation will possibly be around 11 per cent. Some even speak about a slightly lower level.

He says the financial crisis is not over. It is only the acute phase that has passed.

We proceed from the fact that the acute phase of the crisis, that is the shock stage, is really most probably over, we are sure of this. Indeed, certain deterioration of the situation is possible, we do not rule this out. Generally we are coming out of this acute phase and are entering a recovery period. What will this period be like? It can be rather short, about two years, or it can drag on, but we proceed from the fact that the recovery period will finish by 2012.

He says that Russia should develop an "innovation economy" and not have to choose between government intervention and privatization.

Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov meets Vladimir Putin to discuss working out a plan of anti-crisis measures for 2010.

16 September 2009 Duma deputies vote for carrying out a parliamentary investigation into the accident at the Sayano-Shushenskaya power plant and suggest to set up a joint commission with the Federation Council for the purpose.

16 September 2009 The Investigations Committee under the prosecutor's office refuses to forward the *Arctic Sea* hijacking case to Malta or Sweden for trial. The Investigations Committee completes investigative actions onboard the bulk carrier *Arctic Sea* in the Atlantic Ocean. The Maltese government as that of the flag state under whose flag the *Arctic Sea* is registered and the ship's owner, Arctic Sea LTD Malta, had been informed that the *Arctic Sea* would be handed over at the port of Las Palmas of the Gran Canaria island between 17 and 18 September.

16 September 2009 The Strategic Missile Troops information and public relations service says that by the end of 2009 the second and final missile regiment of the Teykovo missile formation will be rearmed with the Topol-M mobile missile system. The new missile system armed with the MIRV-equipped intercontinental ballistic missile RS-24 will start being delivered to the troops. Rearming with the silo-based Topol-M missile system will continue.

16 September 2009 Participants in a session of the Coordinating Committee of the CIS Defence Ministers' Council in Astrakhan say that several CIS member-countries are engaged in setting up three joint regional air defence structures as part of the CIS defence system - East European, Caucasus and Central Asian.

16 September 2009 First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov says that the corporatization of the state defence industry should continue. He is speaking about the government's anti-crisis measures at the Duma. Shuvalov says that the state defence order for 2010 will stay at the same level as that of 2009.

17 September 2009 The Moscow City Court finds that extending the term of arrest of former co-owner of the Yukos oil company Mikhail former head of Menatep is legal.

17 September 2009 The Federation Council discusses the main parameters of the federal budget for 2010-2012. Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin, Health and Social Development Minister Tatyana Golikova and the heads of the key ministries present the main financial document. In his speech, Kudrin says that the country's economy was already showing signs of recovery. However he says the end of the recession does not mean the end of the crisis.

The third quarter of this year will be the quarter of exiting the recession. I want to be clear: the exit from the recession is not the exit from the crisis. The problems which arose during this rather serious fall in GDP, industry, investment, people's real incomes and budget revenue at all levels will remain in the economy. It will be possible to speak about exiting the crisis as the key indicators or key measures of the economy are restored.

17 September 2009 Aleksandr Kanshin, a Public Chamber member and chairman of the commission on veterans, servicemen and their families, says that about half of the deaths in the armed forces are from suicides.

17 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev meets the YR leadership. He says that the time taken to select Russian regional governors is to be roughly halved. This is according to a draft law initiated by Medvedev. He says he has prepared amendments to this law, making it possible to reduce the procedural timeframe from 100 days to 45 days.

18 September 2009 Vladimir Putin speaks at the the VIII International Investment Forum in Sochi. He says Russia is showing signs of recovery from the world crisis and the government will soon draw up a crisis exit strategy. He says that one of the main problems in this regard was attracting investment to develop the country's infrastructure and technology, and further measures would be taken to remove barriers for investment projects. "I am convinced that Russia in the end has a chance of becoming one of the world's centres for attracting investment. The crisis should not distance us from achieving this goal, but draw us closer to it."

18 September 2009 The Rostov Directorate of the FSB says that the threat of terrorist and sabotage attacks against facilities of the fuel and energy infrastructure remains real in the south. Six terrorist and sabotage attacks on open sections of the Mozdok-Kazimagomed trunk gas pipeline in Dagestan were prevented during the first six months of 2009 alone.

18 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev is interviewed by Swiss journalists. He speaks about a number of international issues including Russian-Swiss relations, WTO accession and Russia's image in the West. Speaking about Russian-US relations and US missile defence plans, Medvedev says that the two countries are really trying to build new relations and to listen to one another. He speaks about the impact of the financial crisis, Russia's fight against corruption, politics, human rights and problems in the North Caucasus. He also

emphasizes his closeness to Prime Minister Vladimir Putin.

18 September 2009 The Health and Social Development Ministry says several major Russian transport companies are preparing to lay off a considerable number of their employees before the end of 2009 because of a slump in production.

18 September 2009 Deputy chief of the Federal State Statistics Service Aleksandr Surinov says the national census initially scheduled for 2010 will most likely be postponed until 2013 because of the financial crisis. There are insufficient funds to conduct it in 2013.

18 September 2009 The MOD releases information on non-combat deaths in the armed forces in 2009. 245 people have died in the Armed Forces since the start of the year, including 120 servicemen who committed suicide. 81 servicemen died in accidents, 17 as a result of breach of traffic rules and regulations for the use of means of transport. 17 servicemen were killed as a result of careless action, 6 were killed as a result of breach of weapon handling regulations, 4 as a result of abuse of office and breach of regulations for statutory relationships between servicemen, that is to say bullying. The number of crimes and incidents in the Russian Armed Force in August was 1,005 (1,061 in July). The total number of crimes and incidents since the start of the year is 9,373.

19 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev says Russia needs to improve its judicial system to deal effectively with complaints of Russian citizens instead of using the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

19 September 2009 Vladimir Popovkin, deputy defence minister with responsibility for armaments, is interviewed on *Ekho Moskvy*. He identifies the Russian forces' arms priorities, which range from nuclear arms and high-precision weapons to communications, command and control equipment. He suggests that in view of US President Barack Obama's announcement on changes to the US missile defence programme, Russian countermeasures, including the planned deployment of its Iskander missiles in Kaliningrad, would be "reduced to zero". On defence orders, Popovkin underlines the need to move away from pouring money into overhauls and instead concentrate on new equipment. He discusses the possibility of purchasing a French Mistral-class helicopter carrier. He goes on to say that in 2015 the Defence Ministry intends to buy new-generation jet fighters.

20 September 2009 Eight activists of the Oborona movement are detained in the Moscow metro. They are later released. They spent seven hours in a police station after which they were accused of trying to put up a poster saying "Russia against Putin".

20 September 2009 A separate motor-rifle brigade of the North Caucasus Military District completes an exercise at the Prudboy range in Volgograd Region. Over 4,500 servicemen and around 700 pieces of different hardware were involved.

20 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev is interviewed on *CNN*. The interview was recorded on 15 September. He discusses Iran. Medvedev confirms that Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu recently visited Moscow, and discusses other issues such as Russia's relations with the United States, NATO, Ukraine, problems in Russia, Afghanistan, his relations with Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, and the possibility of running for president in 2012.

21 September 2009 *Ekho Moskvy* reports that that Russia's largest small arms manufacturer, the Izhevsk Mechanical Works [Izhmash], could be declared bankrupt. Earlier, production came to a halt at the Molot plant [Vyatskiye Polyany Machine Building Plant Molot] in Kirov Region, a part of the Izhmash concern. This largest Kalashnikov assault rifle manufacturer now stands idle. No state order means no money to pay employees, nor to repay debts to creditors.

21 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev signs decrees under which all candidates for key positions in the country should provide information about their income and property.

21 September 2009 The Russian People's Democratic Union led by former Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov, says it will not take part in a conference on the situation in Moscow organized by the opposition movement Solidarity because representatives of the Right Cause party will be there.

The Right Cause (Pravoe Delo) party launches a website, netluzhkovu.ru, where signatures are being collected for the dismissal of mayor of Moscow Yury Luzhkov. The Right Cause accuses Luzhkov of being corrupt.

21 September 2009 An attack has been carried out in St Petersburg on the executive secretary of the city's editorial office of the newspaper *Argumenty i Fakty*, Mikhail Gorin. The publication's editorial office states that that on 19 September people in police uniforms beat up and robbed the journalist.

21 September 2009 First deputy head of the Russian presidential administration Vladislav Surkov notes the role of the youth movement Nashi in Russia's victories in foreign policy and urges the movement to continue fighting for preserving political stability.

21 September 2009 The Moscow garrison military court sentences Major-General Andrey Glushchenko, former military commissar of Moscow, to six years' imprisonment after finding him guilty of illegally obtaining a flat and cash payments to which participants in combat operations are entitled.

21 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev says he believes that attempts to substitute the normal flow of economic life by state regulation, even during a crisis, will yield no success. He is visiting Switzerland.

21 September 2009 An article in *Novaya Gazeta* alleges that that Airborne Troops Commander General Vladimir Shamanov tried to obstruct the work of investigators at an enterprises belonging to his son-in-law.

22 September 2009 It is reported that the MOD and the Investigations Committee under the prosecutor's office have announced that internal investigations will be carried out into the allegations about Shamanov.

Colonel Aleksandr Cherednik, aide to Airborne Troops Commander Vladimir Shamanov, says that the members of the Airborne Troops did not carry out any unlawful actions and have no case to answer.

22 September 2009 Stanislav Stadnichenko, deputy head of the Prosecutor-General's Office's main directorate for the Southern Federal District, says that in 2009, 90 per cent of criminal cases on charges of terrorism considered by courts in the regions forming part of the Southern Federal District fell on Chechnya, Ingushetia and Dagestan. He says that the Southern Federal District accounts for some 80 per cent of Russia's terrorism cases.

22 September 2009 Lukoil head Vagit Alekperov tells Prime Minister Vladimir Putin that in March 2010 the first oil will be produced at the Russian part of the Caspian shelf.

22 September 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin decides to allocate funds to a number of defence industry enterprises to boost their charter capital and prevent bankruptcy. Instructions to this effect were published in the electronic database of legal and regulatory documents of the Russian government.

The charter capital of the OAO Uralvagonzavod will be increased by R4.4 billion

[about \$145 million] through additional share issue.

In accordance with other instructions, sums of R77.4 million, R314.5 million and R124.76 million will be allocated from the federal budget in 2009 in the form of subsidies with the aim of preventing bankruptcy to the Kazan-based Soyuz experimental design bureau, the Krasnozavodsk Chemical Plant federal state unitary enterprise (Krasnozavodsk, Moscow Region) and the OAO Kalinovo Chemical Plant (Kalinovo village, Sverdlovsk Region) respectively, to enable them to repay arrears on taxes, levies and other mandatory payments.

22 September 2009 Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov says that the state defence order in 2010 will increase by 8 per cent compared with 2009.

23 September 2009 *Krasnaya Zvezda* reports that Major-General Anatoly Zhikharev is appointed commander of the Russian Air Force's Long-Range Aviation. He took up the position on 19 September. *Krasnaya Zvezda* profiles Zhikharev in a report by Aleksandr Aleksandrov: "Long-Range Aviation Has a New Commander".

23 September 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin chairs a government meeting to discuss the economic development forecast to 2012 and budget policy. He says that additional budget revenues should be spent on reducing the budget deficit, which is to reach R3 billion (about \$100 million) in 2010. Budget revenues in 2010 will make R13,670 billion, while expenditures will reach R16,930 billion. The expenditures of the federal budget will grow by R100 million in 2010 in comparison with 2009. Putin says this will enable the government to fully implement its plans in the social sphere.

Putin authorizes the Federal Antimonopoly Service to control the fulfilment by foreign investors and affiliated companies of the obligations arising from the law on foreign investment.

Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says that while the expenditure of the federal budget is growing, the expenditure for state governance will be reduced by 20 per cent in 2009 and 2010.

23 September 2009 The Investigations Committee under the prosecutor's office brings charges against Chechen resident Aslanbek Dadayev for murdering a former Duma deputy and Hero of Russia, Ruslan Yamadayev, and attempting to murder General Sergey Kizyun, in Moscow in September 2008.

23 September 2009 Airborne Troops commander Lieutenant-General Vladimir Shamanov is interviewed in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*. He says that the scandal concerning him has been orchestrated to distance him from the army.

23 September 2009 Chief of the Main Staff of the Russian Ground Troops Lieutenant-General Sergey Skokov says at the HQ of the Ladoga-2009 operational-strategic exercise of the Russian Armed Forces and other force structures.

There are fundamental differences between the potential enemy's methods of conducting military operations and hostilities in different theatres of operations, the western, eastern and southern ones...If we take the western strategic area, Russian forces there may be confronted by innovative armies with forms and means of non-contact use of state-of-the-art forces and resources. In the east, it can be an army of many millions with a traditional approach to military operations: head-on, with large concentration of personnel and firepower in specific areas. As regards southern Russia, there we may face irregular formations and sabotage-and-reconnaissance groups using guerrilla warfare methods to fight the federal authorities.

In this situation, we have to do everything we can to confront all of them - the west, the east, and the south. I am talking of fully mobile groups of troops (forces) capable of operating in specific areas.

He notes that in the western theatre of operations, the Russian Armed Forces had to be prepared to confront the potential enemy in three separate strategic areas: southwestern, western and northwestern. It is in order to train command echelons and troops in these areas that the Osen-2009 strategic manoeuvres, which began in June and include the Kavkaz-2009, Zapad-2009 and Ladoga 2009 operational-strategic exercises, are being staged. Skokov states:

Our potential enemy's reconnaissance assets and weapons allow them to create a single information space and see our vital facilities in theatres of operations. The potential enemy may decide to destroy these facilities with all available forces and resources - using missile and air strikes, or using airmobile forces. The enemy is most likely not to advance along the frontline but to try and outflank our facilities so as to avoid losses.

He says: "What we need is not to build a solid fence, i.e. deploy troops along the entire line of possible confrontation with the enemy, but to send specific units or large units deployed in specific strategic areas to repel enemy aggression."

An auditor of the Audit Chamber of the Russian Federation, Nikolay Tabachkov, says that the share of modern weaponry which the Russian Armed Forces are supplied with does not exceed 6 per cent.

24 September 2009 First Deputy Chairman of Russia's Federation Council Aleksandr Torshin calls for developing effective relations with the Islamic banking system. He says: "We should establish relations with the Islamic Development Bank to gain access to long-term Islamic resources."

24 September 2009 The FSB director, Aleksander Bortnikov, says that the special services of CIS member states should work out a mechanism for countering some western NGOs in the context of coloured revolutions. He is addressing the 27th session of the council of heads of the security agencies and special services of the CIS member states in Aktau (Kazakhstan).

24 September 2009 Telecommunications and Mass Communications Minister Igor Shchegolev says that Cyrillic domains may appear on the Internet soon, and that a new national domain will appear on the World Wide Web and Russian users will get a secure Internet browser.

24 September 2009 Gazprom head Aleksey Miller says that Russia may increase its share of the world LNG market to 25 per cent. Miller says that Yamal will become a new Russian gas production province very soon.

On the Yamal Peninsula and in the surrounding off-shore area 11 gas fields and 15 gas condensate fields have been discovered, the proved probable reserves are estimated at 16,000 billion cubic metres, and possible gas reserves at nearly 22,000 billion cubic metres. Condensate reserves are estimated at 230 million tonnes, and those of oil at 292 million tonnes. The largest gas field in Yamal is Bovanenkovskoye with 4,900 billion cubic metres.

Vladimir Putin emphasizes the importance and the scale of gas reserves in the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Area and the need to develop them so that the area becomes Russia's new oil and gas province. He also invites foreign companies to get involved in the development. Putin is speaking at a meeting in Salekhard.

24 September 2009 OAO Avtovaz states it is going to lay off no more than 27,600 employees. Currently Avtovaz employs 102,000 people. "A workforce of this size cannot ensure the cost effectiveness and break-even performance."

24 September 2009 Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov is interviewed in *Zavtra*. He says he does not rule out the possibility that there is a person in his team who helps rebel leader Dokka Umarov to escape. Kadyrov says that US and British special services are involved in destabilizing the Caucasus.

The West is interested in cutting the Caucasus off Russia. The Caucasus is Russia's strategic frontier. If the Caucasus is taken away from Russia, consider that half of Russia is taken away. In the past, the Americans created bin Laden and taught him the art of terrorism. Now they are sending groups of foreigners here. They are not 'freedom fighters', they are perfectly trained terrorists. In the mountains, we are fighting against US and British special services.

Kadyrov says that Duma deputy Adam Delimkhanov may become his successor as the head of the republic. Kadyrov and Delimkhanov visit the Vedensky District interior affairs directorate.

24 September 2009 Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Ground Troops, General Vladimir Boldyrev, says the Russian Ground Troops "already have, in essence, formed 85 permanent combat readiness brigades including combined-arms, missile, amphibious assault, electronic warfare and other units capable of operating on any assignment".

24 September 2009 An article in *Moskovskiy Komsomolets* discusses the creation of a new agency ,the Special Operations Force. Plans to create it have been suspended.

Kadyrov has ordered to combine forces of the law-enforcement agencies to eliminate all rebel groups before the beginning of 2010.

25 September 2009 An article in *Gazeta* by Denis Telmanov entitled "Reserve Draftees to go to Barracks" states that the draft may increase after the 2012 elections.

25 September 2009 Vladimir Putin says that the attack on Dagestan by militants in autumn 1999 was not a regional conflict but a serious attempt to initiate the process of breaking up the country.

25 September 2009 The Duma passes in the first reading and on the whole anti-crisis amendments to the 2009 federal budget that increase budget expenditures to 24.2 per cent of GDP and budget deficit up 7.7 per cent of GDP. The amendments envisage an increase in the 2009 federal budget expenditures by R152.99 billion [\$5.9 billion], that is by 0.4 per cent of GDP, to reach R9,845.2 billion (24.2 per cent of GDP). Along with the growth in expenditures the budget deficit is growing: to 7.7 per cent instead of the previously planned 7.4 per cent of GDP. In absolute terms, the 2009 budget deficit will amount to R3,131.4 billion (previously it was R2,978.3 billion).

Economic Development Minister Elvira Nabiullina says that the economic crisis has shown the weakness of the Russian economy and its growth model.

The weakness is linked to the homogeneous structure of our economy, monoexports, dependence on the volatile dynamics of oil prices and external sources of borrowing. We want another model - an innovational one.

I am deeply convinced that the future competitiveness of countries will depend not so much on economic structure as on a capability to rapidly adapt.

26 September 2009 ITAR-TASS reports that Prime Minister Vladimir Putin early this week signed an instruction to approve a concept of the federal programme for the development of television and radio broadcasting in the Russian Federation in 2009-2015.

26 September 2009 The Yabloko Political Council adopts a statement criticizing the policy of the federal authorities.

26 September 2009 Lieutenant-General Sergey Razygrayev, Air Defence Chief and Air Force Deputy Commander-in-Chief for air defence is interviewed on *Ekho Moskvyy* on the programme Military Council. He discusses Russia's air defences and the S-400 and S-500 air defence missiles.

28 September 2009 Chairman of the Federation Council and leader of SR Sergey Mironov speaks out in favour of suspending the inflow of migrant workers to Russia. He says that even according to official statistics the number of foreign nationals illegally residing and working in Russia is about 5 million.

The chief of the immigration control directorate of the Federal Migration Service, Police Major-General Aleksandra Zemskovaya, says that the global financial crisis has led to a drop in the number of foreigners entering Russia; the number of those who have entered since the beginning of 2009 is 16 per cent down on the same period in 2008.

28 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev calls for the consequences of the crisis not to be dramatized and for the economy to be restored calmly. He states: "The crisis has created problems, but they are not dramatic. I hope that there will not be further deterioration of the situation because favourable changes are taking place in the world economy and in Russia's as well."

28 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev says Russia should rebuild its Navy in the next decade. He meets service personnel who excelled in the Zapad-2009 exercise. He states:

We are now faced with a most ambitious task, that of rebuilding the navy, because a large number of our ships, both surface ones and submarines, are indeed nearing the end of their service life. This does not mean that they cannot do the job; nonetheless, new ships most certainly need to be added. We currently have both submarines and ships in the pipelined.

Funds have been planned in advance for this programme as part of the Armaments state programme. Despite financial problems, these funds have been preserved practically in full even in this difficult period in 2009, 2010 and 2011, but in the future all this should increase.

I am therefore confident that we will be able to rebuild our Navy in the next 10 years to the level that our state will require. And we require a strong navy.

28 September 2009 A draft law that obliges Internet providers to submit information about users at the request of investigative bodies is sent to the Justice Ministry for examination. The draft legislation, which was prepared and submitted for examination by the government, has been published on the ministry's official website. It provides for making changes to the federal law of 27 July 2006 149-FZ "On information, information technology and the protection of information".

29 September 2009 The president of the analytical centre Neokon, Mikhail Khazin, says that there are no grounds for saying that Russia has come out of recession.

29 September 2009 A forum participant posts a message on a jihadist website reporting an

assassination attempt on Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov by a female suicide bomber on 27 September, in Gudermes.

29 September 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says that Russia will remain a market economy open for cooperation with investors. He is speaking at the international investment forum "Russia calling!" in Moscow. He rejects the idea of "blind faith in the omnipotence of the state". Putin says that Russia will look to liberalize the domestic gas market in the near future, although a monopoly is likely to remain on foreign gas deals for the foreseeable future.

Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin tells the Federation Council that Russia's economy is out of recession and expects new investment activity. He also says that in 2010 Russia may sell some government-owned stakes in individual companies in order to raise funds for the state budget, while in the longer term it will continue with privatization and be putting large stakes in big state-owned companies on the market. He says that the state will provide support to inefficient enterprises only in exceptional cases and on condition of their compulsory restructuring. He says state support "amounts not to trillions but to R200 billion [\$6.6 billion], without taking banks into account, and half of this money goes to the energy industry".

29 September 2009 Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev states: "Since the beginning of 2009 the Combined Force in the North Caucasus has killed 270 and detained 453 members of illegal groups."

29 September 2009 Ground Troops Commander-in-Chief Army General Vladimir Boldyrev says that all military districts will be equipped with Iskander tactical missile systems in 2009. He says that 4,000 new units of military hardware had been put on service in the Ground Troops in 2009, with about 1,000 more units to be received by the end of the year. In addition, he added, the modernization of military equipment, including missile defence systems, was under way.

30 September 2009 The speaker of the Federation Council, Sergey Mironov, calls for the setting up of a national consultative body which would involve leading Internet users and bloggers. This consultative body could focus on the drawing up of a code of tolerant behaviour in the Internet. He says: "Virtual confrontation should be completely ruled out, and the code should not contain even the slightest hint on political censorship. It should facilitate the adoption by Runet of the state's and civil society's fundamental social functions."

30 September 2009 Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces Colonel-General Vasily Smirnov says all the units and large units of the Armed Forces will move to permanent combat readiness as of 1 December. "The creation of new-look Armed Forces is in the closing stages. The creation of military units and large units of permanent combat readiness in place of military units and large units of reduced complement and cadre is being completed." He says that all the permanent-readiness units and large units will be manned to 100 per cent of their wartime strength.

30 September 2009 Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov says that all the remaining rebels in the republic had to be killed before the winter and that for this purpose all police forces would be put on high alert.

RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY CHRONOLOGY JULY- SEPTEMBER 2009

1 July 2009 Mikhail Margelov, the chairman of the Russian Federation Council's International Affairs Committee, says Russia and the USA should update the "agenda" for bilateral talks and consider the possibility of jointly settling problems in other regions of the world. "The problems which are created for international community by piracy off the Somali coast or uncontrolled arms trafficking in the sub-Saharan zone are those new threats which Russia and the USA should see together." He says that at the current stage of Russian-US relations the first discussion point is START, but it is necessary to look for new approaches to cooperation in those regions of the world which "are neither American nor Russian backyards."

A Levada opinion poll reports that 49 per cent of Russians currently view Moscow-Washington relations as positive: "friendly, neighbourly and calm"; 46 per cent are of the opposite opinion, saying that they are "tense and cold" or even "hostile". 42 per cent think that Russian-US relations will improve after the July meeting between the Russian and US presidents; 39 per cent think they will remain the same, and 3 per cent are pessimistic.

Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov says that Russia and the USA have made greater progress in drawing up a new START treaty than expected, which makes it possible that it will be signed by December 2009.

1 July 2009 The 6th round of talks on security and stability in the Caucasus take place in Geneva.

Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia Kirill receives a delegation from the Georgian Church led by the head of external relations, Metropolitan Gerasime of Zugdidi.

1 July 2009 *Vesti TV* reports that the Russian Gas Society is putting forward the idea of setting up a new international non-governmental organization. It proposes the idea of the Eurasian Energy Forum. This structure would unite European and Asian countries; within the framework of the forum it is being planned to develop an energy code that could become an alternative to the Energy Charter and in which the voice of new participants in the market – such as China, Korea, Japan and India - would be taken into account.

1 July 2009 The Russian and Belarusian agriculture ministers, Yelena Skrynnik and Syamyon Shapira, reach a final agreement on all problems relating to the deliveries of livestock products from Belarus to Russia.

1 July 2009 Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has talks with his Brunei counterpart Prince Mohamed Bolkiah in Moscow.

2 July 2009 Vladimir Putin's press secretary Dmitry Peskov says that Russia views the integration process under the Eurasian Economic Community of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan as its priority but will continue with the policy towards the World Trade Organization (WTO). Peskov says that "the modality of our willingness to join the WTO has changed: in this case it has turned out that the integration processes in the CIS space have been proceeding much faster than Russia has been approaching its desired goal of joining the WTO".

2 July 2009 Sergey Lavrov has talks with his Turkish counterpart Ahmet Davutoglu in Moscow. He encourages Turkey to participate in the South Stream gas pipeline project.

2 July 2009 Sergey Lavrov says that Russian-US talks on a new treaty to replace START are "continuing constructively and successfully".

2 July 2009 Foreign Ministry (MFA) spokesman Andrey Nesterenko says the Russian military are studying information about reported missile launches in North Korea.

Mikhail Margelov, chairman of the Federation Council's International Affairs Committee, says that North Korea continues to destabilise the situation in North East Asia.

2 July 2009 Chief public health officer Gennady Onishchenko says Belarus is trying to disrupt the agreements reached on the "milk issue" and technical regulations, which could lead to the cancellation of the transition period and a new suspension of deliveries of dairy produce from Belarus to Russia.

2 July 2009 The head of Roskosmos Anatoly Perminov and the head of the China National Space Administration, Sun Laiyan, say that Russia and China are planning joint space exploration projects.

2 July 2009 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Grushko is interviewed in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* on Russia-NATO relations.

3 July 2009 Presidential aide Sergey Prikhodko says that the creation of a special US-Russian commission could be agreed during the presidential Medvedev-Obama summit.

Deputy foreign minister Sergey Ryabkov gives a radio interview on the forthcoming Obama-Medvedev summit. He mainly discusses arms control.

Vladimir Putin's press secretary Dmitry Peskov says that the discussion of the Russian and US presidents on a new treaty to replace START at their upcoming Moscow summit will be linked to US plans to deploy missile defence systems in Europe. Peskov says that Moscow is yet to receive a formal reply from Washington to its proposal that the USA and Russia jointly use the Qabala radar base in Azerbaijan for missile defence.

The deputy chairman of the Federation Council's International Affairs Committee, Vasily Likhachev, says that the visit of US President Barack Obama to Moscow will become key in forming a real and long-term partnership and establishing a climate of mutual understanding between Moscow and Washington. He says that Moscow and Washington have common problems not only in the military sphere, but in the sphere of regional crisis settlement. He says that Obama has the chance to correct the mistakes of the previous administration regarding Moscow.

A VTsIOM poll reports on Russians' attitudes towards the USA. 46 per cent regard America positively (in July 2003 and June 2008 the figures were 48 and 49 per cent respectively). The highest point was reached in November 1991, when 83 per cent of Russians approved of the USA. In September 2008 65 per cent of Russians were negative about the USA. 33 per cent are currently negative about the USA. In September 2008 37 per cent saw US-Russian relations as tense. Now 37 per cent consider them to be normal and calm (37 per cent). Five per cent believe relations between Russia and the USA are friendly and 9 per cent that they are good-neighbourly. The relations were described as cool and tense by 26 and 13 per cent respectively. Finally, the number of those who think Russian-US relations are hostile has dropped from 11 to 2 per cent since last autumn. The poll was carried out on 27-28 June among 1,600 people in 140 towns in 42 regions, territories and republics of Russia. The margin of error does not exceed 3.4 per cent.

3 July 2009 Head of the Investigations Committee under the prosecutor's office Aleksandr Bastrykin say that investigators have gathered evidence proving genocide and the killing of civilians in South Ossetia in August 2008. He says that "the files in the criminal case number more than - I'll give the exact figure - 380 volumes. We believe that we have fully proved the corpus delicti: genocide and the killing of a large number of civilians." Bastrykin says he

hopes to obtain documentary proof of the existence of an order by the Georgian president to begin military aggression against South Ossetia in August 2008.

3 July 2009 The first deputy chairman of the State Duma International Affairs Committee, Leonid Slutsky, says that the decision of the upper house of the Japanese parliament to approve a draft law under which the Southern Kurils are declared to be "original territories" of Japan can be attributed to the parliamentary election campaign in Japan. He says that this decision does not have legal force at an international level.

Chairman of the State Duma international affairs committee Konstantin Kosachev expresses regret that the upper chamber of the Japanese parliament has adopted the law.

3 July 2009 Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov says the MFA expects new proposals on reforming the world financial system, including the creation of an additional reserve currency, to be put forward before the G20 summit. He states: "Closer to the start of the G20 summit, which is to be held in St Petersburg, the United States will see specific steps to create a model of a new-look financial system. It will not undermine anything that functions today, but it will include some new elements, including, we hope, an additional reserve currency."

3 July 2009 Memorial head Arseny Roginsky says he believes the Russian Federation must support a resolution by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly which condemns the crimes of Nazism and Stalinism.

6 July 2009 US President Barack Obama visits Moscow for a summit with Dmitry Medvedev.

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, Security Council Secretary Nikolay Patrushev, First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov, the presidential aides, Sergey Prikhodko and Arkady Dvorkovich, Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov and Minister of Economic Development Elvira Nabiullina, Chief of General Staff Nikolay Makarov, the head of state's press secretary Natalya Timakova take part in the talks on the Russian side.

They sign an agreement on strategic nuclear weapons. This defines the maximum levels for strategic delivery vehicles so that after seven years since the coming into force of a treaty, these levels would fall within the range of 500-1,100 units and for warheads related to them - within the range of 1,500 and 1,675 units. The agreement is entitled: "Joint understanding on the issue of further reductions and limitation of strategic offensive weapons".

They adopt joint statement on the missile defence issues.

They adopt a joint statement on Afghanistan. An intergovernmental agreement on military transit to Afghanistan is signed. The intergovernmental agreement with the USA concerns the transit of arms, military technology, military items and personnel through Russian territory in connection with the participation of the US armed forces in efforts to guarantee the security, stabilization and reconstruction of Afghanistan.

Medvedev and Obama agree to set up a bilateral presidential commission. It will be headed by the two presidents, and its work will be coordinated by Sergey Lavrov and US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. The commission will for the time being consist of 13 working groups for various areas of cooperation. Additional working groups, including groups for defence cooperation between the military, for foreign intelligence, and for sporting ties, and also, if need be, subgroups within each group, will be created and announced over the next few months. The working groups will be:

- the group on nuclear energy and nuclear safety, headed by the director of the Russian Rosatom nuclear energy state corporation, Sergey Kiriyyenko, and US Deputy Energy Secretary Daniel Poneman;

- the group on arms control and international security, headed by Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov and US Undersecretary of State Ellen Tauscher;
- the group on foreign policy and the fight against terrorism, headed by Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov and US Undersecretary of State William Burns;
- the group on countering drug trafficking, headed by the heads of the two countries' drug control agencies, Viktor Ivanov and Gil Kerlikowske;
- the group for the development of business ties and trade and economic relations, headed by Russian Economic Development Minister Elvira Nabiullina and US Secretary of Commerce Gary Locke;
- the group on energy and the environment, headed by Russian Energy Minister Sergey Shmatko and US Secretary of Energy Steven Chu;
- the group on agriculture, headed by Russian Agriculture Minister Yelena Skrynnik and US Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack;
- the group on science and technology, headed by Russian Education and Science Minister Andrey Fursenko and US presidential science adviser John Holdren;
- the group on space cooperation, headed by the head of the Russian space agency Roskosmos, Anatoly Perminov, and the head of NASA to be appointed;
- the group on health care, headed by Russian Health and Social Development Minister Tatyana Golikova and US Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius;
- the group on cooperation in the prevention and elimination of emergencies, headed by Russian Emergencies Minister Sergey Shoygu and the head of the US Federal Emergency Management Agency, Craig Fugate;
- the group on civil society, headed by the first deputy head of the Russian presidential administration, Vladislav Surkov, and US National Security Council senior director Michael McFaul;
- the group on educational and cultural exchanges, headed by Russian presidential special representative Mikhail Shvydkoy and US Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy Judith McHale.

A new strategic framework for US-Russian military-to-military engagement is signed in Moscow by Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, First Deputy Defence Minister Army General Nikolay Makarov and Adm Michael Mullen, Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff. They also sign a memorandum on the approval of a work plan for improving military cooperation between the Russian and US armed forces in 2009.

Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov says that Russian and American experts will start the second round of consultations on a treaty on strategic offensive weapons immediately after the meeting between Medvedev and Obama. He also says that Russia and the USA have not been able to reach specific agreements on cooperation in missile defence but they have moved forward in the joint assessment of threats.

Interfax reports that an MFA source has stated that Russian and US diplomats have fully agreed the text of the document on strategic offensive weapons to be signed by Dmitry

Medvedev and Barack Obama.

Presidential aide Sergey Prikhodko comments on the US-Russian summit: "It is very important that we are sensing our US partners' desire to combine broad cooperation on international issues, on strategic matters with readiness to breathe a new life into bilateral trade and economic cooperation." On arms control he states: "In our view, the US partners understand the need to link the issue of signing a new agreement in strategic offensive arms with the issue of deploying the third positional area of US missile defence in Europe...In any event, our concerns regarding the third positional area in Europe should be lifted."

Federation Council speaker Sergey Mironov says: "It is impossible to build partner relations with Russia if our country's position on missile defence is not taken into account. The strategy of developing missile defence systems in Europe should be agreed with Russia and without fail in coordination with the development of a new treaty on the restriction of strategic offensive arms." Mironov says that Washington cannot solve its main problems without Moscow - it cannot stop armed opposition in Afghanistan and Iraq, find the key to the conflict in the Middle East or defuse the situation around the Iranian and North Korean nuclear programmes. He criticises the previous Bush Administration for its arrogance and messianism.

Federation Council International Affairs Committee Chair Mikhail Margelov says a foundation for unfreezing Russian-US relations has been laid.

6 July 2009 Russian permanent representative at NATO Dmitry Rogozin gives details on the US-Russian Afghanistan transit agreement. He says that armaments and troops will not be shipped:

What we are talking about is that certain cargoes, which may be used to support the efficiency of the military group, may be shipped by railway in a certain form. For example, this can be jet fuel, this can be fuel for armoured vehicles, this can be something else, but we are not talking about shipping military hardware as such, still less about the personnel of the US armed forces, which could travel across Russia by railway.

As for the second opportunity for military transit, this is an air corridor, it can also be provided by one country to another. There we are talking about shipping military cargoes, but with the help of military transport aviation.

A VTsIOM poll reveals that the majority of Russians do not have any strong feelings towards US President Barack Obama. 36 per cent are indifferent towards him. 20 per cent say that "they are pinning their hopes on Obama". 7 per cent trust the US president and 5 per cent distrust him. Four per cent regard him with doubt, 2 per cent with antipathy, and 1 per cent respectively with admiration and disappointment.

The Federal Service for Veterinary and Plant Control says that it has lifted its ban on the import of pork from the states of Illinois, Pennsylvania, Texas, and New Jersey.

6 July 2009 The MFA spokesman Andrey Nesterenko says the MFA regrets the recent missile launches by North Korea.

6 July 2009 Naftohaz Ukrayiny press secretary Valentyn Zemlyansky says Naftohaz Ukrayiny has transferred to Gazprom the money for the natural gas supplied in June.

7 July 2009 US President Barack Obama has talks with Vladimir Putin. Putin says that Russia and the USA lost a great chance to establish new cooperation on missile defence (ABM) under the Bush presidency.

Deputy Head of Russian Government Staff Yury Ushakov says that President Obama has promised to take into account Russia's positions in US policy in relation to Ukraine and Georgia.

Sergey Lavrov is interviewed on *Vesti TV*. He says President Obama is coming to the conclusion that the USA cannot counter global threats single-handedly. He discusses the Obama-Medvedev agreement on missile defence, and the deal on US military freight transit to Afghanistan through Russian territory, and the two presidents' joint statement on Afghanistan.

Russian ambassador to the USA Sergey Kislyak says that the position that the current US administration is taking over the issue of deploying elements of the American ABM system in Europe is causing "certain optimism" in Moscow.

The chairman of the Duma international affairs committee, Konstantin Kosachev says that "one should not mix together the issue of missile defence with that of Iran, no matter how much the Americans may insist on that". Kosachev states: "At all times the Americans justified the creation of a missile defence system in Europe by the Iranian nuclear threat. But I sometimes got the feeling that the Iranian nuclear threat was largely exaggerated specifically for the purpose of somehow justifying plans for the deployment of the third positional region of US missile defence in Europe."

The first deputy chairman of the Duma International Affairs Committee, Leonid Slutsky, says that the Russia-USA summit in Moscow has become a real step on the road of restoration of mutual trust between the two states.

7 July 2009 The MFA criticises US Vice-President Joe Biden's remarks of 5 July that Israel has the right to make "a sovereign decision" on launching a strike against Iran.

We were rather bewildered by such statements by US Vice-President Joseph Biden. Our understanding is that they radically differ from the approaches which have been proclaimed by US President Barack Obama with regard to ways of settling the situation concerning Iran's nuclear programme, including the USA's readiness to begin a dialogue with Iran and to search for solutions to this problem by political and diplomatic methods.

Furthermore, from the point of view of international law, the statements by Joseph Biden contradict all existing decisions of the UN Security Council on Iran, UN Security Council Resolutions 1737, 1747 and 1803 concerning the Iran issue, which were adopted under Article 41 of Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which does not envisage the use of military force in any circumstances.

We have more than once said that the optimal way of settling the current situation is through joint work for searching for a political solution to the problem relating to Iran's nuclear programme, in a wide context taking into account the legitimate interests of all countries of this region in the field of security.

7 July 2009 The Federation Council suggests that the Russian president should impose a moratorium on visa-free exchanges between the Southern Kurils and Japan. This proposal was made due to the recent amendments approved by the Japanese parliament that referred to the Southern Kurils as Japan's native territory.

7 July 2009 President Dmitry Medvedev says that Russia intends to join the WTO in the near future. He is speaking at a US-Russian business forum.

I would like to say once again on behalf of this country that we intend to join the

WTO. And we will do it taking into account the achievements that have already been made, that have been created over the last years. The format may change, some additional agreements may be required. However, we would not like to lose anything that has been achieved over the last years. The way has turned out to be long and difficult. We are, frankly speaking, tired: 16 years. But let's hope that the change of the format will help us to come to an agreement as soon as possible.

Economic Development Minister Elvira Nabiullina says that Russia's commitment to joining the WTO is unchangeable.

7 July 2009 Presidential aide Arkady Dvorkovich says that it is not planned to extend the world's monetary system with the help of new currencies in the near future.

We do not have any intentions aimed at replacing the dollar as the world's reserve currency. We do not have any thoughts or wishes like this. Moreover, it would be naive to think about it taking into account the current structure of the global economy. But we think that financial stability in the world depends on the actions and on the coordination of actions of many countries and on the fact whether new strong financial centres will appear.

Our Chinese counterparts have a similar position. They do not strive to destroy the existing currency system but stand for its gradual development.

8 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev attends the G8 summit in L'Aquila (Italy).

8 July 2009 Sergey Lavrov says the Russian-American summit was unprecedentedly open.

On strategic offensive weapons three major principles were set which must be reflected in the new treaty: the non-deployment of strategic arms beyond national territory, the interrelation of offensive and defensive strategic systems and the influence of delivery vehicles of a non-nuclear nature on strategic stability...

The USA sees for itself terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as the main threats...Washington understands that this is also a threat for Russia. And it is these two things which really unite us. There are no reasons to keep each other in the dark. America cannot resolve these issues single-handedly. Russia is a key partner.

8 July 2009 Duma Chairman Boris Gryzlov says that US President Barack Obama's visit to Russia has defined positive prospects for the development of Russian-US relations.

Relations between Russia and the USA, the two biggest nuclear powers, are of fundamental importance for the entire system of international security. Unfortunately, in recent years these relations left a lot to be desired. Barack Obama, however, said that the USA realized the need to bring relations with Russia back to normal, and was willing to 'reset' them. The 'reset' was billed as a US foreign policy priority, and that alone inspired certain optimism.

We saw that for the first time in a long while, the tone with which our US partners were setting out their position was different. That exchange of views already showed the willingness of the US side to discuss constructively the entire range of issues, including the acute ones, such as the deployment of a missile defence system in Europe."

One gets the impression that people who really do want to get rid of the outdated stereotypes of the Cold War era have come to power in the USA.

8 July 2009 Chairman of the Duma international affairs committee, Konstantin Kosachev says the position of US President Barack Obama on some key issues differs favourably from that of his predecessor. On missile defence he states:

The more we reduce our nuclear potential from thousands down to, say, hundreds and perhaps even dozens of warheads, the more significant the issue of missile defence will become. It is not effective. But it is not effective against the current nuclear potential. When the number of missiles and warheads is reduced five- or tenfold, it will become far more effective and already now we must understand whether this missile defence will exist, where it will exist, in what parameters it will exist. Otherwise, we shall not be able to make progress in reducing strategic nuclear weapons.

What is it important to understand? It is important to understand that we are not against creating missile defence systems in principle. They are needed, they are needed by Russia too. It is another matter when they are created on a unilateral basis and when the creation of a missile defence system, for example the US third positional area in Poland and the Czech Republic, violates strategic balance, when we are forced not just to give up reducing but perhaps even to start building up our nuclear potential in order to be sure that we shall be able to overcome this missile defence. Nobody needs this.

This is what we are proposing to the Americans: to agree in advance that we give up unilateral steps, that we are transparent for each other, that we cooperate in missile defence and theoretically create some joint projects. I think that President Obama now understands this logic. I see that at the level of the president himself and at the level of his inner circle, signals are becoming more intensive that the Americans have at least stopped and at most are revising this programme of theirs. I hope that this result of the Moscow summit will in future be recorded even more clearly in exhaustive legal agreements.

The Americans suggest linking missile defence to Iran. Frankly speaking, I would not consider such a package. But still there should be some achievements, some results in the very area of strategic offensive arms. Therefore, it is an issue for quite a lengthy discussion, but we are already in this process. We have left behind the previous position of the Bush administration, when there was no dialogue, when all decisions had already been taken without us and for us, just as for the Poles and the Czechs and we were just invited to agree to that. All this is gone. This is a principally new position of President Obama and we welcome and support this position.

He also discusses START and NATO widening. On Iran he states:

Saying that for us this issue does not exist would be wrong. For us too Iran is not a 100-per-cent transparent and predictable partner. Unfortunately, on a number of issues our advice to our Iranian colleagues remains not in demand. It is another matter that we and the Americans clearly disagree on the issue of what the tactics of our reaction to what is happening in Iran and to Iran should be.

The Americans favour a certain pressure, a categorical approach, the use of if not military then at least economic force, that is sanctions. Whereas our position consists in that a dialogue is always better, that we should not be driving our Iranian partners into a corner. We should convince them that it would be far more effective to resolve Iran's domestic problems with cooperation with the surrounding world rather than relying on one's nuclear or any other military programme.

8 July 2009 The MFA says that Russia considers the situation in China's Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region to be China's internal matter.

8 July 2009 Presidential envoy to the Far Eastern Federal District Viktor Ishayev says the Japanese parliament's declaration that the Southern Kurils are Japan's "native territories" has no international legal force. He says the settlement of the territorial problem is a matter of a distant future and "is currently not on the political agenda".

8 July 2009 Konstantin Kosachev discusses Barack Obama's visit to Moscow in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*.

9 July 2009 *Vedomosti* reports (Anastasiya Kornya : "Please, Not Surkov. Human Rights Defenders Ask for Vladislav Surkov To Be Recalled From the US-Russian Medvedev-Obama Commission") that Russian human rights defenders have appealed to Dmitry Medvedev in an open letter asking for Vladimir Surkov, first deputy leader of the Presidential Staff, to be recalled from the bilateral US-Russian commission. Its membership list has been published on the Kremlin website. Surkov has been appointed coordinator of civil society questions.

9 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev and British Prime Minister Gordon Brown have bilateral talks at the G8 summit.

9 July 2009 The aide to the president of the Russian Federation, Arkady Dvorkovich says Russia hopes that the issue concerning the reserve currencies will be discussed at the G20 summit in Pittsburgh.

9 July 2009 MFA spokesman Andrey Nesterenko says Russia believes that US President Barack Obama's visit to Moscow on 6-8 July was "clearly a success" and a "powerful stimulus" for future bilateral cooperation. He says it set a clear action plan for future bilateral relations.

9 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev criticizes Japan's revised law declaring that four Russian-controlled disputed islands are an integral part of Japan.

9 July 2009 MFA spokesman Andrey Nesterenko calls allegations that the large-scale Kavkaz-2009 military exercise held in southern Russia was a preparation for an invasion of Georgia as "fantasies".

Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Air Force Colonel-General Aleksandr Zelin denies Tbilisi's information that the Russian side is using unmanned aerial vehicles to reconnoitre Georgian territory.

9 July 2009 The MFA denies claims that Russia is seeking permission to open a new military base in Kyrgyzstan.

9 July 2009 Maksim Medvedkov, head of the Russian delegation for accession talks to the WTO and head of the Department of Trade Talks of the Ministry of Economic Development says that Russia is continuing the negotiations to join the WTO as part of the Customs Union with Belarus and Kazakhstan but, at the same time, it will strive as much as possible to join the club on its own terms.

9 July 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin attends a meeting of the state border commission. He warns about the possibility of "hostile takeover" of Russian border areas by neighbouring states. He states:

In business, there is a notion of hostile takeover. So, we cannot and we should not allow hostile takeovers in any areas of contact...I believe that problems of security provision in border areas deserve very close attention...the great resource base of these territories is attractive to neighbouring states.

As for transborder cooperation, economic cooperation and humanitarian and cultural ties, Russia is open to close, keen partnership with neighbours.

9 July 2009 *Ukraine Defence Express* reports that Russia and Ukraine have reached an agreement of principle to resume the joint development and production of the military An-70 plane. A protocol was agreed on amending the intergovernmental agreement of 1993 on the programme of the construction of the military An-70 plane. Experts estimate that under the present conditions the whole procedure of the joint completion of state tests may take 2.5-3 years. This means that the first planes can be received by the Ukrainian and Russian armed forces by 2012.

9 July 2009 Presidential aide Arkady Dvorkovich says that the scenario of the accession of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan to the WTO has not yet been defined. He also notes that Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan could join the WTO as sovereign states, because their accession within the Customs Union will take several years.

We have not totally lost this hope (to join the WTO as the Customs Union). Our colleagues tell us this will take us several years and we need to weigh all pros and cons. Our initiatives are not changing, we are not losing benefits from the Customs Union.

There are different scenarios of WTO accession. Experts believe that accession to the WTO as the Customs Union will be a problem. So another scenario is for the Customs Union's three countries to join the WTO simultaneously.

9 July 2009 The head of the Presidential Administration, Sergey Naryshkin, condemns the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly resolution passed on 3 July which condemns Nazism and Stalinism in equal measure.

9 July 2009 Russian Navy Commander Admiral Vladimir Vysotsky and the commander of the Turkish Naval Forces, Admiral Muzaffer Metin Atac, have talks in Moscow. They discuss Black Sea Cooperation.

10 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev gives a press conference at the G8 summit at L'Aquila. He calls on the USA to abandon plans to station missile defence systems in Eastern Europe. He says that the option of deploying Iskander missiles in Kaliningrad has not been withdrawn. He says no progress has been made on the Russo-Japanese territorial dispute. He also discusses the situation in the Caucasus. He says that that international missions in the Caucasus are "useful" and that Russia does not have any objection to them. He says that Russia vetoed a UN resolution on its mission in the region because the UN did not take into account the fact that South Ossetia and Abkhazia had declared their independence. He says he is moderately optimistic about prospects to resolve the Armenian-Azeri conflict over the Nagornyy Karabakh region quite soon.

10 July 2009 The Abkhaz parliament ratifies an agreement signed with Russia on 30 April on joint measures to protect the state border of the republic of Abkhazia.

10 July 2009 Viktor Ivanov, head of the Federal Service for Control over the Trafficking of Narcotics says that Russia has suggested that the drug production in Afghanistan should be acknowledged as a threat to international security and equated with terrorism and piracy. He criticizes Washington for ineffective steps to counter the Afghan drug threat. He hopes for cooperation with the USA in the fight against drugs.

During eight years the USA and other NATO member states have been organizing the destruction of poppies in the way that was knowingly ineffective, using solely mechanical method to destroy the crops. It is no wonder that the achieved results were poor: according to the UN official information, 5,480 of 157,000 ha of opium

fields were destroyed in 2008, which is a modest 3.4 per cent.

10 July 2009 Rosselkhoznadzor lifts the ban on pork deliveries by two companies in the USA and one in Brazil.

11 July 2009 *Vesti TV* reports that over 700 people held a protest rally in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. They are protesting about Japan's latest claims on the Kuril Islands.

13 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev addresses naval personnel in Sochi. He says that it is not Russia's task to tackle Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili and his government. He says Saakashvili would eventually be brought to account by the Georgian people.

13 July 2009 President Dmitry Medvedev visits South Ossetia for talks with South Ossetian President Eduard Kokoyty. They visit the 4th military base of the Russian Defence Ministry stationed in Tskhinvali. They discuss military cooperation.

13 July 2009 Maksim Medvedkov, head of the department of trade talks of the Ministry of Economic Development says that the accession of the countries of the Customs Union to the WTO separately, not as a single organization as was decided earlier, will be quicker.

13 July 2009 President Dmitry Medvedev says it is necessary to create a separate international court for sea pirates.

13 July 2009 Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow meets the chairman of the council of the Russian union of oil and gas producers and head of the Soyuzneftegaz interstate oil company, Yury Shafranik. The deputy chairman of the council of the Russian union of oil and gas producers, Gissa Guchetl, also attends the meeting. The sides also discuss prospects for and possibilities of boosting cooperation in keeping with the strategy of developing the fuel and energy complex which is being implemented in Turkmenistan.

14 July 2009 Interfax reports an MFA source stating that Moscow has calmly reacted to the signing of an intergovernmental agreement on building the Nabucco gas pipeline, but calls not to politicize the implementation of the project. An intergovernmental agreement on the Nabucco project was signed on 13 July in Ankara, that involves by Turkey Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Austria.

14 July 2009 Abkhaz deputy foreign minister Maksim Ghvinjia says that Georgia and Abkhazia will hold meetings every other week for the prevention of incidents in the area of the Georgian-Abkhaz border, the first meeting takes place on 14 July.

14 July 2009 Abkhaz President Sergey Bagapsh meets Russia's permanent envoy to NATO Dmitry Rogozin in Sukhumi.

14 July 2009 The chief of the Armed Forces General Staff, Nikolay Makarov, says Russia envisages building facilities for the Black Sea Fleet in Novorossiysk, but he states:

We do not aim to leave Sevastopol...We want, in the first place, to develop all large units and units of the Novorossiysk naval base...The agreement (on using Sevastopol as a base of the Black Sea Fleet) is in force until 2017...Certainly, there can be different turns of events...We envisage building facilities of the Black Sea Fleet in the Novorossiysk area as well.

The head of the Federal Agency for Special Construction Nikolay Abroskin says that the main base of the Black Sea Fleet's ships and vessels in the territory of the Russian Federation in Novorossiysk will be fully operational in 2020.

15 July 2009 The Russian Communist Party leadership says it welcomes US President Barack Obama's decision to suspend for half a year as of 1 August the operation of the law of 1996, which introduced a number of tough sanctions regarding Cuba.

15 July 2009 First Deputy Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov says he does not regard the Nabucco gas pipeline as a competitor to Russian projects but warns that Nabucco could become "an empty memorial to certain ambitions".

15 July 2009 Deputy Finance Minister Dmitry Pankin says the government may decide on a \$500 million loan for Iceland by the end of July.

15 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev has sent a greeting message to the participants and guests of the 15th summit of the Non-Aligned Movement.

15 July 2009 The MFA issues a statement rejecting Ukrainian claims that it is refusing to hold talks on the delimitation of the Kerch Straits. It states:

As is known, issues of the position of the Russian-Ukrainian state border are regulated by two treaties.

The Treaty on the Russian-Ukrainian State Border of 2003 envisages the state border of the Russian Federation and Ukraine as a line between the junction point of the borders of the Russian Federation, Ukraine and the Republic of Belarus and a point on the shore of the Bay of Taganrog. This treaty does not establish any other state border line, either on land or at sea. The treaty says that issues relating to contiguous sea areas shall be settled by agreement between the sides in line with international law.

The treaty between the Russian Federation and Ukraine of 2003 on cooperation in the use of the Sea of Azov and the Strait of Kerch includes a provision saying that the state border in the Sea of Azov shall be delimited by agreement between the sides. Furthermore, issues relating to the waters of the Strait of Kerch shall also be settled by agreement between the sides.

Therefore, the existing treaties between the Russian Federation and Ukraine say that all issues should be decided on the basis of bilateral agreement in line with international law. Moreover, such agreement is possible only on a mutually beneficial basis.

That is precisely what the Russian side proceeds from in the negotiating process on all aspects of this problem.

16 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev attends the St Petersburg Dialogue Russian-German public forum in Munich. He has talks there with German Chancellor Angela Merkel. Medvedev emphasises the need to tackle nuclear proliferation and says that Europe needs a new security architecture. He states that a new European security treaty should involve all European structures, including NATO, the EU and the CIS. He says the economic crisis is not over and stresses the need for new rules to regulate the world economy and the financial system. He questions the feasibility of the Nabucco gas project but says that if it turns out to be good for Europe it will be good for Russia as well. He states:

However, so that you understand, we are not jealous at all as regards Nabucco. Let it develop. If gas flows into Nabucco it will mean that someone needs this. But so far no-one has managed to explain to me where gas will come from for it, despite the signing of the well-known document a few days ago.

Therefore, we are in favour of energy supplies being secure and diversified. However, these supplies should be based on existing contracts. That said, whatever is done for the good of Europe is good. We too are Europeans.

Medvedev calls on Sweden to drop its reservations about the Nord Stream pipeline, which is to carry gas from Russia to Germany along the Baltic seabed. Medvedev and Merkel discuss the nuclear problems of Iran and North Korea and also bilateral cooperation in the economic sphere.

16 July 2009 State Secretary, Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin says that Moscow hopes that the introductory meeting for the prevention of incidents in the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zone held in Gali on 14 July will be followed by concrete results.

16 July 2009 Rospotrebnadzor head Gennady Onishchenko says Minsk is politicizing the problem of Belarusian dairy product deliveries to Russia and is ruining the accords reached on this issue in June.

16 July 2009 The head of the Duma committee for international affairs, Konstantin Kosachev, meets the foreign minister of Transdnestr, Vladimir Yastrebchak, in Tiraspol. Kosachev expresses his support for the 5+2 format for Moldovan-Transdnestr settlement talks. This was confirmed by the joint declaration by Transdnestr president Igor Smirnov, Dmitry Medvedev and Moldovan President Vladimir Voronin in March 2009.

16 July 2009 UNIAN reports that representatives of the Black Sea Fleet's naval aviation have refused to allow members of the Ukrainian Defence Ministry's commission to inspect aircraft in order to check whether they may use nuclear weapons. This is a report on the inspection of the Black Sea Fleet naval aviation's Su-24 aircraft stationed at the Hvardiysky aerodrome in Crimea.

16 July 2009 Aleksandr Saltanov, the Russian envoy to the Middle East, has talks in Lebanon with the Lebanese leadership on the Middle East Peace Plan.

17 July 2009 Head of the Duma international affairs committee Konstantin Kosachev says the Transdnestr region will never be a bargaining chip for Russia. "Russia will support a decision reached by the sides (Moldova and the Dniester region) during a dialogue based on an equal footing. Russia will make sure the process does not stop."

17 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev appoints Sergey Kopeyko as Russia's permanent representative at Charter bodies and other bodies of the CIS in Minsk. Yevgeny Belov has been relieved of the post in connection with his retirement.

18 July 2009 The presidential special representative Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Saltanov, meets Khalid Mish'al, the head of the Political Bureau of the Palestinian movement Hamas, in Damascus.

A delegation from Dagestan led by President Mukhu Aliyev begins a friendly visit to the Palestinian territories. In April 2009 Dagestan was visited by a delegation from the Palestinian Authority led by Mahmud Abbas, who invited the head of Dagestan to make a return visit.

18 July 2009 The information and public liaison service of the Ground Troops rejects a statement by deputy speaker of the Georgian parliament Paata Davitaia, who said Russia had increased its military presence in Abkhazia.

18 July 2009 A trilateral meeting of Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan, Dmitry Medvedev and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev take place in Moscow.

18 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev and Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev have talks in Moscow. They discuss issues of bilateral cooperation, in particular the Customs Union.

19 July 2009 Presidential Representative for Mideast Affairs and Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Saltanov says that Russia demands that Israel must stop building settlements on Palestinian territories. Saltanov has detailed negotiations with Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Mu'allim.

20 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev says Russia will continue dialogue with the USA on strategic offensive weapons and the future of missile defence systems in Eastern Europe. He also says that cooperation with the USA would continue on the Afghan track too.

20 July 2009 ITAR-TASS cites a source stating that Russia "has heard a whole number of positive points" in Hillary Clinton's keynote speech on 15 July 2009. The source states:

These include the refusal to return to 'the deterrence policy' of Cold War times, the admission of inability to resolve world problems alone without taking the opinion of other members of the world community into account, the necessity to strive for achieving global consensus, the readiness to conduct a more flexible and pragmatic policy on the basis of common interests, values and mutual respect.

For a long time Russia proceeded exactly from this understanding of foreign policy and called on the USA to do the same. Hillary Clinton openly spoke about foreign policy mistakes the USA had made in recent years and about the intention to correct them.

20 July 2009 Interfax cites an MFA source as stating that Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili's interview to *The Wall Street Journal* may indicate that he has realized the new reality, and in particular the fact of South Ossetia's and Abkhazia's independence.

20 July 2009 The head of the Federal Service for Consumer Rights Protection, Gennady Onishchenko, says that Russia has resolved all disagreements with its neighbouring countries regarding the import of milk and dairy products.

20 July 2009 South Korean Defence Minister Lee Sang-hee arrives in Moscow for an official visit.

20 July 2009 Interfax-AVN cites an MOD source as saying that the Russian Navy is modernizing the material and technical support base in the Syrian city of Tartus. This is to enhance the navy's capability to fight pirates. Tartus is the only Russian naval base not on Russian territory. The agreement was signed between the Syrian government and the former Soviet Union in 1971 to support Russian warships traversing the Mediterranean Sea, primarily to repair and to deliver supplies to the fifth Mediterranean squadron. The squadron ceased to exist in 1991, and Mediterranean voyages of Russian warships became irregular.

21 July 2009 MFA spokesman Andrey Nesterenko says that Russia intends to follow the progress of US Vice-President Joe Biden's visit to Ukraine and Georgia "attentively", but does not aim to usurp the rights of neighbouring countries regarding their choice of international partners.

Nesterenko comments on US-Russian START talks:

There is an interest in the issue of holding the next round of Russian - US talks on the strategic nuclear arms reduction treaty to be held on 22-24 July in Geneva. We are expecting further clarification of positions on the parameters of the future treaty, we are hoping for bringing closer our approaches to the quantity figures as regards strategic carriers and warheads as well as to other aspects of the treaty. What do I

mean? I mean the correlation between strategic offensive and defensive arms, non-deployment of strategic arms outside the national territory and the issue of non-nuclear strategic arms. The dates and the venue for holding further talks will be discussed in the course of the July round in Geneva. We expect that we will meet again in Geneva in late August or early September.

Nesterenko refuses to confirm or deny reports that Russia has been holding talks with Kyrgyzstan about the establishment of a new Russian military base in the country.

Nesterenko says Russia does not support Denmark's initiative to establish an Arctic military command.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is following the internal political discussion which emerged in Denmark regarding the recently published inter-party agreement on issues of military construction in 2010-2014, including in the Arctic. Russia opposes unleashing an arms race in the Arctic region and proposes as an alternative extending international cooperation in the North on issues of increasing the safety of navigation, search and rescue, and preventing ecological catastrophes. It is in our national interests to further preserve the Arctic as an area of peace and cooperation. This remains a fundamental position of our state.

21 July 2009 Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev confirms Russia's intention to provide comprehensive assistance to South Ossetia in establishing law and order. He is visiting South Ossetia, as is Emergencies Minister Sergey Shoygu.

The prosecutor-general of South Ossetia, Taymuraz Khugayev, and Russian Prosecutor-General Yury Chayka sign in Tskhinvali a memorandum on cooperation between the general prosecutors' offices of the two countries.

21 July 2009 Rosatom and the Brazilian National Nuclear Energy Commission (CNEN) sign a cooperation memorandum in the area of the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The document is signed by the director-general of Rosatom, Sergey Kiriyyenko, and the chairman of CNEN, Odair Dias Goncalves. The agreement to move cooperation to the practical level was reached during Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's visit to Brazil last November. The memorandum envisages such potential areas of cooperation as the development of technologies for exploration of uranium, technologies for new-generation reactors, designing and building of research reactors, production of radioisotopes for their subsequent use in medicine, industry and agriculture; education and training of specialists for the nuclear branch.

21 July 2009 Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov says that Russia believes that the Korean peninsula should be a nuclear-free region, and that this should be achieved via a return to the six-party negotiations. Serdyukov is speaking following talks in Moscow with his South Korean counterpart Lee Sang-hee.

21 July 2009 Rosselkhoznadzor temporarily restricts the import of meat products to Russia from two Belarusian companies.

21 July 2009 Russian state TV Rossiya's international service, RTR-Planeta, starts unencrypted satellite broadcasts in Latin America.

21 July 2009 A delegation from the FSB of the Regional Border Directorate for the Far East Federal District led by Colonel-General Valery Putov and a delegation from the Heilongjiang Provincial Military District of the People's Liberation Army of China led by Major-General Kou Tie hold a working session in Khabarovsk. The meeting is convened to coordinate combined operations on the Russian-Chinese state border and to ensure border security.

22 July 2009 Sergey Lavrov and US State Secretary Hillary Clinton meet in Phuket (Thailand) and agree to continue talks on a new strategic offensive arms reduction treaty in accordance with mutual understanding reached at the Russian-US summit in Moscow.

22 July 2009 Sergey Lavrov says Russia is awaiting a response from Iran to the "five-plus-one" proposals that were made earlier.

Sergey Kiriyenko, the head of Rosatom, says that Russia is not changing its plans to launch the nuclear power plant in Bushehr (Iran) by the end of 2009.

22 July 2009 Sergey Lavrov meets his Chinese counterpart Yang Jiechi. They discuss the Korean nuclear issue. Lavrov says that no country in the world is raising the issue of tightening sanctions against North Korea.

22 July 2009 A VTsIOM poll shows that Russians regard the outcome of the US President Barack Obama's visit to Moscow as positive and hope for an improvement in Russian-US relations in future. 34 per cent of Russians believe that the recent summit was useful for both sides and brought good results, another 37 per cent think that although the meeting passed well, a majority of problems in relations between Russia and the USA remain unresolved. 8 per cent of those polled are confident that Obama's visit was useless and brought no result. The poll was carried out in 140 localities in 42 Russian regions on 18-19 July.

Army General Nikolay Makarov, chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, says that the presence of US ships in the Black Sea during the Russian-Georgian conflict in the Caucasus in August 2008 was a US unfriendly act with regard to Russia.

22 July 2009 The MFA rules out UN investigation of the killing of Chechen human rights activist Natalya Estemirova on 15 July.

22 July 2009 Security Council deputy secretary Vladimir Nazarov visits NATO to discuss the new Russian national security strategy.

Russian permanent representative to NATO Dmitry Rogozin says Russia is ready to cooperate with NATO in fighting sea pirates, but thinks that priority should be given not to military efforts but to the development of a legal framework. Rogozin also suggests coordinating activities between the captains of Russian and NATO ships engaged in anti-pirate efforts off Somalia as part of the resumed military partnership between Russia and the alliance. He rejects any idea of placing Russian ships under international command or the command of another country.

22 July 2009 Vladimir Putin signs an order stating that Russia may grant an up to a \$150 million export loan to the Cuban government to finance supplies of Russian construction and agricultural machinery. The loan is expected to be granted for two years starting from the moment the agreement comes into force and to be used for the payment of contracts on the export of Russian machinery. The volume, prices and terms of supplies will be determined by Russian and Cuban business partners.

23 July 2009 ITAR-TASS reports that following a demand by the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry, an adviser to the Russian embassy in Ukraine, Vladimir Lysenko, who works in Sevastopol, has been instructed to leave the territory of Ukraine before 29 July. This was announced after a convoy of Black Sea Fleet (BSF) armoured vehicles was taken into custody in Sevastopol after it tried to drive into the city to take part in the rehearsal of a parade for the Russian Navy Day. Police claim that the transit of Russian military vehicles had not been agreed with anyone.

23 July 2009 State Secretary and Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin says that Russia is deeply concerned about Georgian "remilitarization", and intends to counter it. He also

details plans for the development of South Ossetia and Abkhazia using Russian budget funds. He says Russia plans to sign agreements with Abkhazia and South Ossetia in the near future on providing assistance for social-economic development.

There are currently 33 draft bilateral documents at the development stage between Russia and South Ossetia, and 38 drafts with Abkhazia... You understand, of course, that this is a huge volume of work, in which dozens of agencies are participating. After all, our legal-treaty base with the republics is starting from scratch. This also concerns our military-technical cooperation - the relevant intergovernmental agreements are being prepared for signing.

He says Russia "consistently supports" retaining an international presence in Georgia, Abkhazia and South Ossetia. He says "partners from Western countries as well as the Georgian side were not prepared to look truth in the eyes, and blocked our compromise proposals on retaining the UN and OSCE missions in the region". He says Russia is "not begging anyone" to recognize the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Karasin is currently in Brussels for meetings with head of the Political Department of the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union Helga Schmid; EU special representative for Central Asia and the Caucasus, Pierre Morel; EU special envoy to the South Caucasus Peter Semneby; and NATO Assistant Secretary General Martin Erdmann.

23 July 2009 Grigory Karasin calls "strange" the recommendation of the Belarusian Foreign Ministry to the citizens of this country to travel to South Ossetia and Abkhazia only through Georgian territory.

The first deputy head of the Russian State Duma committee for CIS affairs and liaison with compatriots Konstantin Zatulin says that the recommendations of the Belarusian Foreign Ministry regarding visits to Abkhazia and South Ossetia are "an opportunistic position".

This decision is caused by the flirting which Belarus is trying on with the West, with a view to reducing its distance from the European Union states, a wish to be heard in the West, to demonstrate its own stance on the issue, which differs from the Russian one.

After the events of last year, when there was the impression that the West was in a state of a new confrontation with Russia, Belarus decided that was a suitable reason to demonstrate loyalty to the Western position, to drag out and now, as we see, to shelve the idea of recognizing Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

23 July 2009 Sergey Lavrov attends the Russia-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in Phuket, Thailand.

23 July 2009 The chairman of the Russian State Duma committee on CIS affairs, Aleksey Ostrovsky says that Tajik President Emomali Rahmon's draft bill cancelling the status of the Russian language as a language of interethnic communication in Tajikistan is "a mistake for Tajikistan and for the Tajik people".

24 July 2009 Sergey Lavrov gives a lecture at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok. He states:

Russia calls for a transparent security architecture of equal rights and cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region, which is based on collective foundations and generally accepted norms and principles of international law, and which uses dialogue, consultations and negotiations as an instrument to solve difficult problems. In other words what is defined as the 'ASEAN method'.

"Military supremacy, growth of defensive might, weakening the security of other

states, creation of military bases and defensive alliances in the Asia-Pacific region and the creation of regional missile defence system able to destabilize the strategic balance are not needed for this.

Progress towards the creation of such an architecture should be made by establishing multilateral diplomacy, developing links between regional organizations and forums, and the most important thing - via mutual respect of each other's interests.

Lavrov says that Russia is in favour of stepping up cooperation with Thailand in the oil and gas industry.

We consider one of the most important tasks is to step up energy cooperation between Russia and Thailand. We are interested in advancing such promising projects as joint exploration for and development of energy resources, the construction and servicing of facilities in the oil and gas industry, supplies of Russian hydrocarbons to Thailand, the construction in the kingdom of a regional base for storage, and processing of and trade in oil and gas from Russia.

Our experts are ready to provide assistance in implementing Thailand's plans to set up national nuclear power engineering.

To that end it is necessary to make the most of the potential of the two countries, which are an integral part of the Asia Pacific region, the Russian regions of Siberia and the Far East. The eastern part of Russia is not only a unique storehouse of natural resources, which holds for present and future generations huge resources of oil, gas, coal, timber and marine resources, and mineral deposits. This enormous region has the necessary infrastructure, its own scientific base, highly qualified labour resources and in general a strong potential for industrial development, which makes it possible to set up profitable companies in various branches of industry, from petrochemical and gas processing facilities to high-technology factories.

24 July 2009 Sergey Lavrov says that the USA will have to recognize the independence of Georgia's breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. He is responding to comments by US Vice President Joe Biden that Washington will never recognize the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. He criticises states which continue to supply arms to Georgia. He says that the promise made to Georgia in April 2008 that it could become a member of NATO encouraged Saakashvili's adventurism. "I hope that the necessary conclusions will be drawn in this regard too. As far as I can judge, many NATO member-states have already drawn such conclusions, as the alliance's current secretary also has."

He says that he hopes that the international commission investigating the events of August 2008 in the Caucasus will make public unbiased and decent assessments.

Lavrov says that the expulsion of Russian diplomats from Ukraine and Georgia is a provocation and Russia will not leave such unfriendly steps unanswered. He says that "Georgian and Ukrainian counterparts decided to time the announcements that they were asking someone to leave their countries to coincide with the visits of US Vice President Joe Biden".

24 July 2009 Sergey Lavrov visits Vietnam.

Lavrov says that the Russia-Belarus Union State remains an incomplete project and it must be taken forward.

24 July 2009 Russian Ambassador to NATO Dmitry Rogozin says that cooperation between the USA and other NATO members on strategic missile defence would jeopardize the

prospects for joint Russia-NATO drills. He is interviewed on *Ekho Moskvyy*. He discusses the possibility of joint military exercises, missile defence and US President Barack Obama's visit to Moscow. Rogozin says that Russian is not interested in NATO's defeat in Afghanistan, but he doubted that NATO could win the war there.

We really are not interested in NATO's rout in Afghanistan because then, that euphoria of a victory over the Americans, it will sooner or later turn into a euphoria of a march northwards or, let's say, the spread of these fundamentalist, extremely dangerous, radical, extremist ideas. And Russia is a country with a powerful Islamic component. We have millions of Muslims and if these Muslims suddenly get radical false prophets who will be throwing them against people of another religion, other ethnic groups, then this is a real threat to Russia. Therefore, we are not interested in NATO's defeat in Afghanistan.

He says that Moscow's position "consisted of the need to strengthen, the need to help form one central government of Afghanistan. It is necessary to help the Afghans themselves to ensure that they themselves are responsible for the fate of their own state, because NATO will leave anyway."

He says US companies may face Russian sanctions if they arm Georgia.

24 July 2009 Rosselkhoznadzor lifts the ban on supplies of all kinds of meat from the US states of Arizona and California that was introduced in connection with the registration of A/H1N1 flu there. The ban on import of meat from California was imposed on 26 April 2009 and from Arizona on 14 May 2009.

24 July 2009 Russian ambassador to Belarus Aleksandr Surikov is optimistic about Russia granting a \$500 million loan to Belarus. He also says that that Belarus should pay the average annual price for Russian gas. "Gazprom and Beltranshaz signed a contract stipulating that the gas price should be revised every three months in accordance with the global oil price, though slower than the latter is. However, the two presidents agreed that the average annual price would be paid regardless of the contract."

24 July 2009 Chairman of the Audit Chamber Sergey Stepashin says that "the state border between Abkhazia and Georgia will be fully sealed off and equipped by 2011, taking into account all modern technical means". He is visiting the FSB Border Directorate in Abkhazia.

24 July 2009 The MFA website publishes an interview with Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs/State Secretary Grigory Karasin on Georgia. The interview took place on 23 July.

Chairman of the Federation Council's international affairs committee Mikhail Margelov says that by asking for arms supplies from the USA, Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili is trying to "trip up" the Obama administration.

24 July 2009 The MFA welcomes the International Court of Arbitration Ruling on Disputed Sudan Region of Abyei.

25 July 2009 Presidential aide Sergey Prihodko says that the Russian leadership is puzzled regarding sharp criticism of Russia made by US Vice-President Joseph Biden at a time when the two countries are actively implementing the "reset" of their relations. He is commenting on an interview given by Biden to the *Wall Street Journal*. Prihodko says that Biden's criticisms of Russia make one wonder who controls US foreign policy.

25 July 2009 The MFA states that Russia and the USA will hold the next round of the negotiations to work out a new fully-fledged agreement to replace the START treaty in late August-early September. The fourth round of the Russian-US negotiations took place in Geneva on 22-24 July.

26 July 2009 Navy Commander-in-Chief Admiral Vladimir Vysotsky says that there have been violations of the conditions of the BSF's deployment in Crimea. He is referring to the recent incidents when convoys of Russian armoured vehicles were moving through Sevastopol without local authorities' consent.

Vysotsky says that the Main Command of the Russian Navy believes it is desirable to base the main forces of the Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol after 2017.

26 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev gives an interview to NTV. He discusses US-Russian relations and US and Russian relations with the other states of the former Soviet Union. He states:

I do not think that it would be right for relations with Russia to be reset - if we are to use this rather notional American term - at the expense of some other countries.

We need normal relations, working relations, friendly relations, most importantly mutually beneficial relations with the United States of America. A great deal depends on them. However, this does not mean that our relations should lead to worsening of our relations with other countries, or worsening of American relations with some countries, be it Ukraine or Georgia.

27 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev signs into law the bill "On the ratification of the Agreement on Setting Up the Eurasian Economic Community Anti-Crisis Fund and the Agreement on Managing the EAEC Anti-Crisis Fund".

The bill was adopted by the Duma on 15 July 2009 and approved by the Federation Council on 18 July 2009. The EAEC states and Armenia signed the anti-crisis fund agreement on 9 June 2009.

27 July 2009 Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Kirill arrives on a 10-day pastoral visit to Ukraine. He says that "Kiev is our common Jerusalem". He also says that: "Living in different states, we shall hold and preserve sacred the spiritual unity that He has commanded us. Our strength is in this unity." He says the local Orthodox church already exists in Ukraine and all Orthodox believers regardless of their political preferences should be its members.

27 July 2009 State Secretary and Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin says that the presence of EU observers is restraining any strong-arm whims by Georgia against Abkhazia and South Ossetia. He is commenting on the decision by the EU Council to extend the mandate of its monitoring mission in Georgia by a year.

27 July 2009 Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin visits Venezuela. He meets Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez. Key political, military-technical and trade-economic issues of bilateral relations are discussed, including cooperation in the energy and oil and gas sectors.

28 July 2009 Russian Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin visits Cuba. He says Cuba and Russia have signed an agreement under which Russia is to grant Cuba a loan of \$150 million to purchase Russian building and agricultural equipment. The two sides initial documents about the activities of the Zarubezhneft in Cuba's exclusive economic zone in the Gulf of Mexico.

28 July 2009 Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin visits Nicaragua. An agreement on visa-free travel and a memorandum of intentions of Nicaraguan company Petronic and the Russian National Oil Consortium to cooperate in the oil sector are signed.

28 July 2009 Russian ambassador to the UK Yury Fedotov says that Russia permits the activity of the British Council in Moscow even despite the fact that there are no legal grounds

for it. He also says that the British mass media does not reflect an objective picture of events happening in Russia.

28 July 2009 Sergey Lavrov sharply criticizes a recent interview given to the *Wall Street Journal* by US Vice-President Joe Biden, in which the latter linked Russia's domestic problems to possible foreign policy concessions.

28 July 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin meets the leadership of the French gas company Gaz de France. He states: "Gaz de France is a long-term, reliable, stable partner of ours, and we know about the level of your competence in the sphere of liquefying gas. We are interested in the development of our cooperation in this sphere, as well as in other areas. This is referring to transport, electricity, and work in the sphere of renewable energy sources."

28 July 2009 State Secretary and Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin says that:

We believe that, on the whole, the extension of the mandate of the EU monitoring mission in Georgia is a positive factor. For a region that was subjected to aggression from Georgia a year ago the most important thing is stability. The EU mission that was deployed in October 2008 on the basis of agreements between presidents Dmitry Medvedev and Nicolas Sarkozy objectively contributes to this. The important thing is that it is maintaining constant working contacts with Russian servicemen and border guards ensuring security in Transcaucasia.

Interfax cites a MFA source as saying that it opposes the idea of US observers joining the EU mission in Georgia.

Abkhaz prime minister Aleksandr Ankvab and Krasnodar Territory governor Aleksandr Tkachev sign an agreement in Sukhumi on cooperation.

28 July 2009 Mikhail Margelov, chairman of the International Affairs Committee of the Federation Council, says that the obligation of states to protect their populations from genocide, ethnic cleansing and many other problems does not mean in any way that other countries have the right to judge on their own how well a particular state is coping with this task. He addresses the 63rd session of the UN General Assembly. He says that without the Security Council, General Assembly and other UN institutions, "arbitrariness in international politics is inevitable...Therefore Russia is in favour of the UN maintaining its key role, of no new artificial mechanisms and new formations being devised, and of no other international organization usurping the UN's functions." He criticises attempts by certain states to spread democracy by bombing.

28 July 2009 The Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology expresses concern over the ongoing construction in China of a canal which may result in the River Argun, one of the sources of the River Amur, growing shallow in Russian territory. The People's Republic of China is continuing to implement a project to build a canal to direct the water of the River Hailar (Argun) to Lake Dalai.

28 July 2009 The Omsk-based A S Popov Radio Plant production association announces that it has received an instruction to prepare proposals for further implementation of the Russian-Italian project for the creation of NATO-Russia integrated communications systems.

29 July 2009 Ukrainian ambassador in Moscow Kostyantyn Hryshchenko is summoned to the MFA, where he talks to State Secretary and Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin. This is connection of the expulsion of Russian diplomats from Ukraine. Moscow proposes to Kiev to curtail the mission of Ukraine's consul-general in St Petersburg and that of a counsellor of the Ukrainian embassy in Moscow.

29 July 2009 Patriarch of Moscow and All-Russia Kirill says he considers an autocephalous status of the Ukrainian Orthodox church as untimely. He says the issue of autocephaly divides people in Ukraine because many understand the significance of the single Russian church both here and in the world.

29 July 2009 The head of the Duma Committee on International Affairs, Konstantin Kosachev says that the first round of the strategic and economic dialogue between the USA and China should not be viewed as an attempt to re-divide the world. He is commenting on the results of the US-Chinese consultations which concluded on 28 July. He states:

If this is in anyone's minds, either in Washington or Beijing, it would be a fatal error. Because for all the power of the American and Chinese economies, they are not sufficiently global to lay claim to re-dividing the world...The Indian economy is comparable in its ever increasing power, Japan has not fallen behind by much at the moment, and there is quite a large number of other powers which can lay claim to notable positions in the world, and I would not in any way exclude Russia from this list.

He says Russia does not have to be fearful of a new US-Chinese dialogue. He says that China will be interested in receiving raw materials, energy resources and other types of products from Russia, and the USA is interested in cooperation with Russia in high technology sectors, such as space.

Therefore there is great potential for US-Chinese, US-Russian and Russian-Chinese cooperation to each develop in their own way, not inhibiting but rather supplementing each other...We are cooperating very fruitfully with both China and the USA within the G20. And it appears to me that we need to follow the process of Washington and Beijing now coming together very closely, but I would call it an obvious exaggeration to be unreservedly jealous of this, or regard it as being directed against Russia.

29 July 2009 Presidential aide Sergey Prikhodko says that all issues related to the deployment of a military base of the Collective Rapid Reaction Force (CRRF) of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) on Kyrgyz territory have practically been agreed.

Prikhodko recalls that Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka did not take part in the CSTO official summit that was held in Moscow on 15 June. It was at that summit that the agreement on the CRRF creation was signed. It was not signed by Uzbek President Islam Karimov and the absent Lukashenka. Back then chairmanship in the CSTO was due to pass to Belarus but since its president was absent, Russia remained the technical chair of the organization. Prikhodko expresses the hope that the Belarusian president will sign the CRRF agreement at the Cholpon-Ata summit on 31 July. He says that Russia would be ready to hand over chairmanship of the CSTO to Belarus.

29 July 2009 The Investigations Committee under the prosecutor's office says it has collected documents that demonstrate plans by the Georgian authorities to destroy the Ossetian population in South Ossetia during the Russian-Georgian war over South Ossetia in August 2008.

29 July 2009 Iran and Russia's first joint regional naval drill, with the motto of "Clean and safe Caspian - regional cooperation", starts in Anzali Port in the presence of observers from Caspian littoral states. The drill aims to fight pollution and carry out surveillance and sea rescue.

29 July 2009 The MFA condemns the staging of a regular meeting of the veterans of the 20th Estonian Waffen-SS division in Estonia and accuses the Estonian authorities of criminal connivance in an official commentary.

29 July 2009 The MFA states that a telephone conversation has taken place between Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin and EU special representative for Central Asia and for the crisis in Georgia Pierre Morel. Karasin says Moscow insists that the presence of a mission of international observers in Abkhazia and South Ossetia requires the consent of Sukhumi and Tskhinvali.

Russo-Abkhaz talks take place in Sukhumi on simplifying the Russo-Abkhaz border crossing. The meeting takes place on the joint Russian-Abkhaz border checkpoint Psou and was attended by Abkhaz President Sergey Bagapsh, Prime Minister Aleksandr Ankvab, First Deputy Prime Minister Leonid Lakerbaia, Interior Minister Otar Khetsia, chairman of State Customs Committee Grigory Yenik, and chairman of the State Tourism and Resorts Committee Tengiz Lakerbay. The Russian delegation is headed by First Deputy Director of the Federal Security Service (FSB) and Director of the Russian Border Guard Service Vladimir Pronichev and comprised representatives from the Federal Customs Service, the Federal Border Guard Service, the Federal Migration Service, the Federal Service for Consumer Rights Protection, the Federal Tourism Agency, the company Russian Railways and other agencies.

30 July 2009 Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Kirill is interviewed on *Vesti TV* (the interview was recorded on 29 July). He warns of the dangers of politicizing the Orthodox Church. He says that disagreements that exist in the Orthodox Church in Ukraine regarding the possibility of independence from the Moscow Patriarchate should be overcome within the church body, as "no church-political projects can be effective or viable if they are aimed at dividing people".

The church is called to work at a level higher than borders, including political borders - at a level higher than historical sympathies and antipathies, and everything that divides people. Because the church is a unique community, it unites people who have faith in their hearts...I think that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate - the true canonical historical local church of that people - has this potential for unification in full measure.

He discusses the problem of church property in Ukraine.

30 July 2009 A meeting between the leaders of Russia, Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Pakistan, takes place in Dushanbe. Dmitry Medvedev says he welcomes the new format of dialogue. Medvedev also proposes discussing bilateral cooperation with Tajik President Emomali Rahmon.

The four presidents also sign a statement, in which they call on the international community to resolutely fight against the drug threat coming from Afghanistan and speak in favour of close cooperation between the four states in the economic sphere. The presidents also "express interest in economic cooperation under the aegis of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and call on the World Bank and other international financial institutions to step up assistance in the implementation of regional economic projects". They call on the international financial organizations "to look into the possibility of providing this assistance to the CASA-1000 project (to create single electricity market central Asia - Middle Asia).

30 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev and Tajik president Emomali Rakhmonov hold bilateral talks in Dushanbe. They instruct ministries of the two countries to work on the proposal on concrete areas of military cooperation, including the functioning of the 201st Russian military base. Medvedev and Rahmon express satisfaction with the completion of construction of the Sangtuda-1 hydroelectric power station as well as with other achievements, including the opening of a branch of the Moscow State University named after Lomonosov in the city of Dushanbe.

The deputy Russian minister of economic development, Andrey Klepach, says that Russia is interested in taking part in a project to construct the Roghun hydroelectric power station in Tajikistan.

30 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev has bilateral talks with Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari in Dushanbe. He praises the development of Russo-Pakistani trade.

30 July 2009 Russia's permanent representative at NATO Dmitry Rogozin says that it is not worth regarding the statement by representatives of the US administration about Russia's possible NATO membership seriously. Rogozin is referring to US Assistant Secretary of State Philip Gordon's statement about the possibility of Russia entering NATO. He notes that Gordon said Russia could become a member if there is a consensus in NATO. Rogozin comments that there will never be a consensus.

Rogozin says that the deployment of Russian troops in Abkhazia and South Ossetia had all but ruled out the possibility of fresh hostilities in Georgia's breakaway regions.

Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Grushko says that Moscow hopes for constructive cooperation with the newly-appointed NATO secretary general, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, who assumes office on 1 August.

30 July 2009 Sergey Lavrov calls Kiev's decision about the early termination of two Russian diplomats' work in Ukraine an unprecedented provocation.

30 July 2009 The head of Russian news agency Regnum, Modest Kolerov, is refused entry to Lithuania. Until the end of October 2007, Kolerov was head of the Russian President's Directorate for Interregional and Cultural ties with Foreign Countries.

30 July 2009 ITAR-TASS cites a source in the Navy Main Staff as saying that the Russian Navy has nothing to do with the exercises conducted by the rescue services of Russia and Iran in the Caspian Sea. The source thus denied reports in certain media saying that the two countries had conducted naval manoeuvres together for the first time in the Caspian Sea. The Russian ships that took part in the exercise are from the Russian Emergencies Ministry.

30 July 2009 A detachment of Pacific Fleet ships comprising the large ASW ship Admiral Tributs, the tanker Boris Butoma and the rescue tugboat MB-99 arrives in the Gulf of Aden, where it is embarking on an operation to protect shipping from pirate attacks.

30 July 2009 Russia's chief public health officer, Gennady Onishchenko, says that the dairy dispute with Belarus has been resolved. He says that "there will be no shortages, no stalling" of the supply of Belarusian dairy products in Russia after the 1 August deadline.

31 July 2009 Dmitry Medvedev says that Russia and Tajikistan are drafting several new documents on cooperation in the energy sector and geological prospecting.

31 July 2009 Energy Minister Sergey Shmatko says that "the sharpness of discussions" between Russia and Turkmenistan in relation to gas supplies has considerably subsided now. Problems arose following the accident at the gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to Russia on 8 April, which halted Turkmen gas exports to Russia.

31 July 2009 First Deputy Director of the FSB and Director of the Border Guard Service General Vladimir Pronichev visits South Ossetia for talks with South Ossetian president Eduard Kokoyty.

31 July 2009 Russian ambassador to NATO Dmitry Rogozin says that he hopes that the new secretary-general of NATO, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, will abandon the policy of dragging former Soviet republics into NATO.

31 July 2009 An informal CSTO summit takes place in Cholpon-Ata (the Kyrgyz presidential residence).

August 2009

1 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev has bilateral talks with Kyrgyz President Kurmanbek Bakiyev in Bishkek. They sign a memorandum on further developing and improving the legislative basis regulating the presence of Russian military units on the territory of Kyrgyzstan and on deploying an additional Russian military contingent there. An additional Russian contingent up to a battalion in strength and a training centre to train Russian and Kyrgyz servicemen are to be set up in Kyrgyzstan. Other CSTO states will be able to use the training centre.

Sergey Lavrov says that Russian and Kyrgyzstan are ready "to make it part of the Collective Rapid Reaction Force being set up now".

1 August 2009 The CSTO decides to set up an information technology centre in Russia to exchange information on information security and a centre in Kyrgyzstan for the patriotic education of young people.

Sergey Lavrov says Russia "will continue its technical chairmanship of the CSTO in anticipation of when Belarus will be ready to take on the fully fledged functions of the chairmanship".

1 August 2009 The MOD issues a statement saying that Russia is concerned about the aggravation of the situation regarding South Ossetia and is ready to use force to guarantee the security of the residents of the republic and Russian servicemen stationed in the region: "If there are further acts of provocation that present a threat to the population of the republic and the Russian military contingent based in the territory of South Ossetia, the Russian Defence Ministry reserves the right to use all available force and equipment to defend the citizens of the republic of South Ossetia and Russian servicemen."

2 August 2009 the head of the external church relations department of the Moscow patriarchate, Archbishop Ilarion of Volokolamsk, says that a plane carrying Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All-Russia, who was visiting Sevastopol, will fly to Kiev instead of the western Ukrainian city of Rivne at the request of Ukrainian authorities. He says that the Ukrainian authorities explained it was for safety reasons. The Ukrainian president's office denies that it had anything to do with changing Patriarch Kirill's schedule. He later arrives in the town of Korets in Rivne Region.

2 August 2009 Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov visits Baku. He has talks with Azerbaijani Defence Minister Safar Abiyev.

2 August 2009 Deputy Foreign Minister and State Secretary Grigory Karasin and US Undersecretary of State William Burns discuss by telephone reports about skirmishes and rising tension in the area of the Georgian-South Ossetian border ahead of the first anniversary of the August conflict.

4 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev and US President discuss START by telephone. They will issue additional directives to experts to step up work aimed at reaching decisions on a new START by December 2009. They also discuss the lessons of the 2008 Georgian crisis, the situation in the Middle East and Iran.

4 August 2009 The MOD says that the Russian Armed Forces stationed in the Caucasus

region will "nip in the bud" any possible aggression by Georgia against South Ossetia, without additional reinforcements. The MOD says the service regime at the 4th military base in South Ossetia has been intensified. The MOD says that it is not planning to hold any exercises on South Ossetian territory in the near future.

State Secretary and Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin says he regrets US supplies of arms to Georgia. He also criticises Ukraine for arming Georgia. Karasin says that Russia's decision to recognize Abkhazia's and South Ossetia's independence should not be regarded as a precedent and, at the same time, it was not exclusive. "The most important thing for us was to ensure lasting security for all the people living in the Trans-Caucasus. In this connection I would not say that the adopted decision has set a precedent or was exclusive." Karasin is interviewed in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*.

Russia's permanent representative to NATO Dmitry Rogozin says that a change of regime in Georgia would not improve Russo-Georgian relations as Georgian society is so bogged down in jingoism". Rogozin says he thinks that the difficult state of Russian-Georgian relations does not have a large impact on relations between Moscow and NATO. He says NATO sidesteps discussing the issue and that they realise that Saakashvili is a liability.

The first deputy chairman of the Duma international affairs committee, Leonid Slutsky, says he believes that Russia could consider the possibility of South Ossetia joining Russia. He says that it is necessary to listen to the views of the South Ossetian population.

Just as the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia seemed to us quite improbable before the tragic events of August last year, so [South Ossetian leader Eduard] Kokoyty's statement [about South Ossetia joining Russia] appears to be improbable. But I think that we should simply weigh up all the pros and cons and, above all, take into account the position of South Ossetia's population itself. My personal position, off the top of my head, is that we would be handing our opponents on the international arena an opportunity to say that we only recognized the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in order for these countries, which we recognized, to join Russia. I think that both the Russian and South Ossetian sides should be extremely careful in adopting any decisions here. I think that we will be discussing this as part of parliamentary diplomacy in the autumn. In the meantime, this is merely food for thought, not more than that.

Gennady Gudkov, a SR Duma deputy, says he believes that South Ossetia will eventually join Russia because it will be unable to exist independently.

A VTsIOM poll finds that 86 per cent of Russian citizens approve of Russia's military intervention in South Ossetia in August 2008. The poll found that 27 per cent of people asked believed Russia's actions to be correct, but with minor reservations. 52 per cent of Russian citizens believe Russia should treat South Ossetia like an independent state and facilitate its recognition by other countries. One in four respondents favour integrating the republic into the Russian Federation. Nine per cent believe South Ossetia should join the Union of Russia and Belarus, and only 3 per cent believe the republic should be reincorporated into Georgia, Interfax reported. Only 20 per cent of poll respondents thought Russia's decision to recognize South Ossetia's independence could be revised in a certain situation, it added.

A Levada poll shows that 35 per cent put the main responsibility for the deterioration of the situation in the region in August 2008 on Georgia and 34 per cent on the USA. However, the number of those who blame Washington decreased by 15 per cent, Levada Centre sociologists told Interfax. They have polled 1,600 Russian citizens in 26 regions on 17-20 July. 9 per cent blame the August 2008 conflict on the desire of the South Ossetian and Abkhaz leaderships "to maintain their grip on power by constantly provoking a tense situation in the region". 5 per cent blame Russia's desire to keep its influence in the Caucasus by pursuing the divide and rule policy. 67 per cent believe that Russia's military intervention in

the conflict was "the only way out" of the situation in August 2008, while 13 per cent of those polled disagree and say that the Russian diplomacy has shown its "inability to solve problems between countries through negotiations". 62 per cent say that Western countries supported Georgia in this conflict because they desire to weaken Russia and squeeze it out of the Transcaucasus. 54 per cent of those polled do not doubt that Russia should not withdraw its troops from South Ossetia (24 per cent do not agree with that and 22 per cent do not know what is the best option in this situation). The number of Russians, who insist on immediate integration of South Ossetia and Abkhazia into Russia, dropped from 20 to 17 per cent and the number of those who oppose this increased from 12 to 17 per cent. The number of those who find it difficult to answer the question also increased to 28 per cent against 25 per cent in 2008. A total of 40 and 41 per cent of those polled, respectively, say that South Ossetia and Abkhazia should be independent states. 6 per cent of Russians see South Ossetia and Abkhazia as part of Georgia; other respondents (18 per cent) find it difficult to voice their point of view on this issue.

Dmitry Medoyev, South Ossetia's ambassador in Moscow, says that South Ossetia is not planning to join Russia for the time being.

5 August 2009 The MFA publishes a commentary on the deployment of Russian military units in Kyrgyzstan. It states: "The Russian military presence on the territory of our CSTO allies - Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan - is dictated by our common concern for the maintenance of stability and security in the region in the face of challenges and threats from international terrorism. It is of a defensive nature and is not directed against any other countries."

In a report posted on its website on 3 August, the Uzbek Foreign Ministry said that it was opposed to the deployment of additional Russian troops in Kyrgyzstan.

5 August 2009 The Kyrgyz ambassador to Russia, Raimkul Attokurov, says that Moscow and Bishkek are launching a \$1.7 billion hydroelectric power station project in Kyrgyzstan.

He adds that the question of Gazprom's participation in privatizing Kyrgyzgaz and obtaining a controlling stake in the company in exchange for a Kyrgyz state debt had been resolved.

5 August 2009 Russian coastguard and patrol boats from South Korea's maritime police hold joint naval exercises off Sakhalin.

5 August 2009 Sergey Lavrov is interviewed on *Vesti TV*. He discusses the August 2008 Russo-Georgian conflict.

Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin says that the Russian military in Abkhazia and South Ossetia has been placed on high alert to prevent any reckless steps by Georgia. He says Georgia opposes stability in the region. He also says that attempts to impose international formats for the subordination of Tskhinvali and Sukhumi to Tbilisi will not succeed. Karasin says that Russia has no plans to annex Abkhazia and South Ossetia. He says that the number of Russian servicemen deployed in South Ossetia and Abkhazia is to amount to 3,000 people by the end of 2009. There will be around 1,500 troops in South Ossetia and 1,500 in Abkhazia.

Karasin and the OSCE Chairmanship's Special Representative for Protracted Conflicts Charalampos Christopoulos express their concern about the aggravating situation in the Transcaucasus at their meeting in Moscow.

Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces Anatoly Nogovitsyn says that Russia is not planning any actions in the South Caucasus other than "supporting calm and stability". He says Russia has no plans to "burst in and disarm anyone" in Georgia. He claims that Georgia is preparing for war with Russia. He says Russia does not intend to create major new forces on the border with Georgia in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Nogovitsyn

says Russia is to sign with each of Abkhazia and South Ossetia over 30 documents on various forms of cooperation including the military sphere before the end of 2009. He says Russia has reliable evidence that Georgia was preparing aggression against South Ossetia long before August 2008.

Gennady Gudkov, deputy head of the SR faction in the Duma welcomes the appointment of Vadim Brovtsev as the prime minister of South Ossetia. He says the appointment will help to improve control over spending of financial funds allocated to the republic by Moscow. Gudkov says the appointment of a new prime minister in South Ossetia means that "Moscow no longer wants to trust local personnel with spending its considerable financial infusions...To some extent this also means certain mistrust in the ability of the president of South Ossetia, Eduard Kokoyty, to control spending of financial flows coming to the republic from Russia."

The head of the Duma committee for international affairs, Konstantin Kosachev, says that in order to guarantee security in the Caucasus, Russia will be forced not just to maintain, but even increase its military presence in the region.

5 August 2009 Grigory Karasin says he hopes that Ukraine will stop supplying arms to Georgia. He says the USA is continuing to supply arms to Georgia.

Deputy Chief of Staff of the Russian Armed forces Anatoly Nogovitsyn says weapons and military hardware are still being supplied to Georgia using hidden schemes.

Russia's permanent representative at NATO, Dmitry Rogozin, says that Moscow will engage in dialogue with Washington to tackle the issue of arms deliveries to Georgia. He says Russia may curb military cooperation with the USA if it does not halt arms supplies to Georgia.

5 August 2009 A Cabinet of Ministers order states that Prime Minister Vladimir Putin has approved a draft intergovernmental protocol with Turkey on nuclear energy cooperation, and has charged Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin with coming to an agreement on it with their Turkish partners and signing it on behalf of Russia. (This information is released on 13 August).

6 August 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin visits Turkey. He signs several energy cooperation projects. Putin says that together with the Turkish prime minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan he had discussed "such large-scale projects as South Stream, Blue Stream 2 and the construction of a nuclear power station in Turkey". Putin says

It is obvious today that the South Stream gas pipeline is needed. It is very important for whole Europe's energy security and the development of a whole range of ties between Russia and Turkey. Our talks showed that together with Turkish leaders we can find solutions which pave a path to new large-scale energy projects.

It is known that South Stream and Nabucco are rivals. Competition between South Stream and Nabucco is much more than competition between the Samsun-Ceyhan oil pipeline and Burgas-Alexandroupolis, much more. But even the construction of South Stream does not in principle close the door on Nabucco. Depending on demand of the main consumer countries, this can be implemented in future as well. It's just that South Stream is of course a priority for us. As for two oil pipelines, there is even less competition...The more infrastructure projects there are, the better, because this makes energy supplies to Europe reliable and stable.

Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin says that the construction of South Stream should begin shortly after 1 November 2010 when Turkey gives permission to start building it.

6 August 2009 A Russian government resolution says Russia has refused to join the international Energy Charter. The MFA will send the relevant notification to the Portuguese government. A resolution to this effect has been signed by Prime Minister Vladimir Putin.

6 August 2009 The MFA issues a statement on the first anniversary of the Russo-Georgian conflict. It accuses Georgia of planning to use force to regain South Ossetia and Abkhazia. It advocates that all sides adhere to the Medvedev-Sarkozy plan.

State Secretary and Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin says the work of the EU observers on the border between Georgia and South Ossetia is very important.

MFA spokesman Andrey Nesterenko says that Georgia should sign legally binding agreements not to use force against South Ossetia and Abkhazia. He defends Russia's decision to recognize Abkhazia's and South Ossetia's independence. He says that Georgia's "aggression" against South Ossetia reveals that the European security system is inadequate.

Russian permanent representative to NATO Dmitry Rogozin says that the process of NATO's eastward expansion "broke down" after the Russian-Georgian war over South Ossetia.

Vladimir Putin states:

Russia is interested in settling conflicts and, on the contrary, is not interested in any conflicts in the Caucasus. Because any conflict situation hampers our relations with this or that country. However, Russia has always maintained that it cannot replace conflicting sides. We can only be guarantors of this process and these agreements. We will do everything to make sure that compromises are found and could lead to full and final settlement.

Putin praises Dmitry Medvedev for working hard to resolve the Nagorny Karabakh problem.

State Secretary and Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin and EU Special Representative for the crisis in Georgia Pierre Morel speak by telephone. They discuss the current situation in the area of the border between Georgia and South Ossetia, the functioning of the joint mechanism for the prevention of incidents, as well as issues to do with the anniversary of the August tragedy in South Ossetia. The sides agreed about the need to take additional measures in order to maintain stability in the region ahead of the memorable date.

6 August 2009 Head of Rostekhnologii Sergey Chemezov says that no trend for a decrease in arms exports has been observed in 2009, and he hopes that they will remain at the same level in 2010. He says the main customers for Russian arms remain India, China and Venezuela.

6 August 2009 *Ekho Moskvy* radio reports that the Court of Arbitration has deemed most of the tax claims against the British Council unlawful. Therefore, the court has partly upheld the complaints by this educational organization. At the same time the court did not clarify the amount by which the claims have been reduced. In January 2008, the tax inspectors presented the British Council with claims amounting to R200 million [about \$6.4 million]. The organization did not agree with this and has said previously on several occasions that it pays all its taxes meticulously.

7 August 2009 The Security Council meets in Sochi. It discusses the consequences of the Russo-Georgian war that began on 8 August 2008.

The Investigations Committee under the prosecutor's office announces that the investigation into Georgian troops' crimes in South Ossetia has been extended till February 2010. Vladimir Markin, official spokesman for the Committee, states:

In the course of our investigations, evidence of the scale of the armed aggression, and the politico-military and propaganda preparations which were made by the Georgian side well in advance and thoroughly, give us every reason to maintain that the incursion into South Ossetia with the aim of exterminating the Ossetian population of the republic was planned and organized directly by Georgia's top political and military leadership.

Since some 100 forensic medical and other tests have not yet been completed and since the procedure whereby the criminal case is examined in the European Court of Human Rights and in the International Criminal Court will take a long time, the term of the investigation into this criminal case has been extended to 8 February 2010.

Deputy Chief of the General Staff Colonel-General Anatoly Nogovitsyn dismisses "new evidence" presented by Georgia about which side started the August 2008 conflict in South Ossetia. He also denounces the "grey schemes" which are being used to supply Georgia with arms. He says that Russia had no plans to capture Tbilisi in August 2008. He says that the difference between the official data of the General Staff of the Armed Forces and the Investigations Committee under the Prosecutor-General (SKP) about the Russian servicemen killed in South Ossetia in August 2008 results from the fact that the military department takes into account only those killed during combat operations from 8 to 12 August and the SKP for the whole of the conflict. According to the data of the General Staff, 64 servicemen were killed during combat operations in South Ossetia from 8 to 12 August. The SKP gave the number killed as 67.

State Secretary and Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin says that Moscow is not ruling out the use of economic sanctions against companies which supply arms to Georgia.

A joint statement signed by the leaders of YR, SR, the CPRF and the LDPR: Boris Gryzlov, Sergey Mironov, Gennady Zyuganov, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy states: "Having defended South Ossetia from Georgian aggression, Russia prevented a new large-scale war in the South Caucasus".

The CPRF holds a rally outside the US embassy in Moscow.

Russia's envoy to the European Union Vladimir Chizhov says that Russia is urging the EU to establish contacts with South Ossetia and Abkhazia in order to settle the situation in the Caucasus.

Chairman of the Duma Foreign Affairs Committee Konstantin Kosachev is interviewed on *Vesti TV*. He blames the Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili for the Russo-Georgian conflict of August 2008, and US backing for Saakashvili.

Deputy Minister of Regional Development Roman Panov says that the total amount of work done to rebuild South Ossetia is estimated to have cost nearly R4 billion [around \$126 million. Panov says R1.3 billion has already been paid; papers have been submitted for payment of R500 million; and papers are being prepared for payment of another R700 million within the next two weeks.

7 August 2009 Deputy Foreign Minister and State Secretary Grigory Karasin welcomes the tone set by Patriarch Kirill in relations between Moscow and Kiev during his recent visit to Ukraine.

7 August 2009 Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin meets with the South Korean minister of knowledge economy, Lee Youn-ho. They discuss economic cooperation.

7 August 2009 The MFA website publishes an "Answer from Andrey Nesterenko, official representative of the Russian Foreign Ministry, to a question from the media regarding

Russia's decision not to become a member of the Energy Charter Treaty".

On 30 July the government of the Russian Federation took the decision that Russia does not intend to become a member of the Energy Charter Treaty and the Protocol to the Energy Charter on issues of energy efficiency and related environmental aspects, signed in Lisbon on 17 December 1994.

Russia's position is based on adherence to the objectives of strengthening global energy security, finding a balance of interests and taking into account the positions of all players in the international energy market as much as possible. As is known, we adopted this course in 2006 in the period when Russia was chairing the G8, when our country was an initiator of the passing of the declaration on issues of ensuring global energy security, among other things.

The present decision of the Russian government is a continuation of this line. It does not, however, mean a rejection of the positive developments made within the framework of the Energy Charter Treaty on the track of developing international cooperation in the area of energy. Such undoubtedly exist, and there is need for them.

At the same time, significant changes have recently taken place in the world energy arena. New threats and challenges to the stability of energy markets and energy security have appeared, a fitting answer to which cannot be given using the existing international legal instruments, including the Energy Charter Treaty. It needs to be fundamentally revised, and a new legal architecture is needed for cooperation in the area of energy.

In this regard, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev proposed a conceptual approach to a new legal base for international cooperation in the area of energy in Helsinki in April 2009. Russia believes a future system of legal acts in this area should be universal and non-discriminatory in character, based on equal rights, with a genuine mechanism for implementing them; it should envisage a procedure for dealing with emergency situations.

As is known, the Russian initiatives were considered with interest by key players in the international energy market. Russia is maintaining active contacts with them about the choice of a forum and the definition of a format for launching a dialogue on this matter.

8 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev comments on Vesti TV on the Russo-Georgian conflict of August 2008. He says that "virtually everyone" agreed with Russia's response in the conflict with Georgia of 2008. Medvedev is attending a reception in Vladikavkaz, in North Ossetia, for the Russian military who fought in South Ossetia. He states: "So it is this awareness inside ourselves, that we were right, that allows us to develop our country the way we want, to build it as a strong, powerful state which has a key role to play here in the Caucasus and in other parts of the world." He says Russia will continue to provide military aid for South Ossetia. He says Russia will not backtrack on its decision to recognise the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

Medvedev sends a message to French President Nicolas Sarkozy on the anniversary of the August 2008 events in South Ossetia.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says the Georgian leadership is responsible for the loss of Abkhazia and South Ossetia as it failed to treat the Abkhaz and the South Ossetians with respect.

Russia's permanent representative at the United Nations Vitaly Churkin says that Russia did

not seek an excuse for the peace enforcement operation in South Ossetia in August 2008. He says it had no other choice but respond to the massive use of force by Georgia. He is responding to US Vice President Joe Biden's recent statement in Tbilisi that Russia had used an excuse to invade Georgia.

Churkin says that Russia does not rule out a UN role in the Caucasus if the new political reality that has emerged there is not upset. He says Russian diplomats are discussing this issue with the UN Secretariat and other interested parties. He says that the UN Mission will continue its work after 1 October, but says that it must accept the reality that South Ossetia and Abkhazia are independent states. He says other powers are refusing to accept the new reality in the Caucasus since August 2008.

The commander of Russia's 58th Army, Lt-General Anatoly Khrulev, rejects the assertion of Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili that the Russian military planned to seize Tbilisi during the Georgian-South Ossetian conflict in August 2008.

10 August 2009 The acting Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Air Force Lt-General Vadim Volkovitsky says that Russia does not share the Estonian Air Force commander's concern over the flights of Russian aircraft over neutral waters. He is commenting on Estonian Air Force commander Valeri Saar's concerns about Russian military aircraft often breaching flight rules in Estonia's zone of responsibility, and posing a threat to civil aviation. He says that the Russian Air Force conducts the flights without trespassing into neighbouring countries' airspace and in accordance with international rules for flights over the open sea.

11 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev issues a statement to the President of Ukraine Viktor Yushchenko criticising his leadership for having a negative attitude towards Russia. Medvedev decides to postpone new Russian ambassador's (Mikhail Zurabov) arrival in Ukraine.

Russian presidential aide Sergey Prikhodko says that Moscow does not intend to break or freeze diplomatic relations with Kiev.

Vadim Gustov, chairman of the CIS Affairs Committee in the Federation Council, welcomes Medvedev's decision to suspend sending the Russian ambassador to Ukraine.

The leader of the opposition People's Democratic Union, Mikhail Kasyanov, criticises Medvedev's message to Viktor Yushchenko.

11 August 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin has talks in Moscow with Venezuelan Energy and Petroleum Minister Rafael Ramirez. Putin says that Russia is willing to examine applications from Venezuela relating to military-technical cooperation.

Head of the Rostekhnologii state corporation Sergey Chemezov said some time ago that over the past three years Russia had signed nearly \$4.4 billion worth of contracts with Venezuela, and most had already been completed. 100,000 Kalashnikov assault rifles of the new AK-103 modification have already been supplied to Venezuela. Two plants are being built to produce Russian assault rifles under licence and manufacture ammunition for them; and a contract has been signed to set up technical centres to repair warplanes and military helicopters. The contract for supplying Venezuela with 24 Su-30MK2 multipurpose fighters and about 50 helicopters - 34 Mi-17V-5, 10 Mi-35M and three Mi-26T - is being successfully implemented.

11 August 2009 Russian envoy to NATO Dmitry Rogozin has his first meeting with new NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen. They discuss Afghanistan, the Russian proposal for a European security treaty and the Georgian crisis of August 2008. Rogozin says he passed on to Rasmussen an invitation from Sergey Lavrov to meet at the UN General Assembly in New York in September.

11 August 2009 First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov says that the Customs Union consisting of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan intends to establish a joint negotiating group for joining the WTO.

The Russian president and prime minister have given us instructions that we should organize a single negotiating process in the name of the three states, in the name of the Customs Union, for the three of us to join the World Trade Organization. If we are legally required to register our membership on a bilateral basis, and not as a joint customs territory, a joint Customs Union, then those legal opportunities will obviously be taken by us. We are proceeding from the basis that the negotiations are being carried out in the name of the three states at the same time, from the platform of a joint negotiating group. We will be striving for equal terms and acceptance of the customs territory at the same time. If this does not work out, then the three states separately, but at the same time. Any change to the format will require these positions to be agreed upon with Kazakhstan and Belarus, and we will act within the framework of a single negotiating group.

11 August 2009 A Levada poll asks Russians for their attitude towards the USA and EU. 61 per cent have a positive attitude towards the EU, while 47 per cent of citizens have a positive attitude toward the USA. 22 per cent view the EU negatively. 40 per cent view the USA negatively. In April 2005, 63 per cent of respondents regarded America positively, 29 per cent negatively and 8 per cent abstained. In March 2007, 47 per cent regarded the USA negatively; 43 per cent held the opposite point of view, with 9 per cent abstaining. The peak of disapproval of the USA by Russian citizens, according to the published data, came in May 2009. 50 per cent then declared their negative attitude towards the USA; 36 per cent regarded it well at the time, and 14 per cent did not respond to the question. The USA enjoyed the most popularity with respondents in November 1991, when 80 per cent regarded it positively, 6 per cent negatively and 14 per cent did not respond to sociologists.

47 per cent regard Ukraine rather badly or very badly; 44 per cent take a positive view, and 10 per cent had difficulty in responding. In March 2008, 55 per cent of citizens were positively inclined, 33 per cent negatively inclined, with 13 per cent abstaining.

25 per cent regard Georgia positively, while 63 per cent view it negatively.

11 August 2009 The latest pentilateral meeting on the prevention and investigation of incidents on the border between Abkhazia and Georgia has been held in the town of Gali.

11 August 2009 The MFA website publishes an answer by MFA spokesman Andrey Nesterenko to a question on the 6th Fatah congress.

11 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev and Finnish President Tarja Halonen have talks in Sochi. They discuss Russia-EU relations and European security.

11 August 2009 Federation Council Chairman Sergey Mironov plants the Russian national flag on the shore of Kunashir Island facing Japan.

11 August 2009 Zvezda TV reports that the Bronze Soldier monuments has been vandalized in Estonia. At a cemetery near Tallinn, vandals drew Nazi symbols on the famous monument.

11 August 2009 Mikhail Margelov, chairman of the Federation Council Committee on International Affairs, says the bill on the procedure for the use of Russian armed forces abroad submitted to the Duma by Dmitry Medvedev, complies with the Russian constitution, the principles of international law and Russia's treaty obligations. Margelov says that: "A procedure for the use of Russian armed forces abroad has been prescribed in a bill

submitted to the Federal Assembly because, sadly, there are threats that call for this...the experience of the five-day war in August last year has shown this particularly clearly."

12 August 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin visits Abkhazia. The Russian delegation includes Russian Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov, Regional Development Minister Viktor Bazargin, Transport Minister Igor Levitin, Rosneft President Sergey Bogdanchikov, Russian Railways Vice President Vladimir Vorobyev. Putin gives an interview to the Abkhaz media. He states:

We all talk about standards - the West, Russia. You know, the West is also not homogeneous - not homogeneous at all. And in the West - as it is notionally called, the West - there are real supporters of ours, and quite a few. They are all under certain pressure from the leading country of NATO, the United States. And if we are talking frankly, many of them do not express their positions publicly, although they differ significantly from that of the United States.

You talked about double standards. That is not even double, not even triple standards. It is a complete lack of any standards.

After the end of the Cold War, some in the United States got the illusion that one can act without any rules at all - as one feels like, as one likes - and the criterion may be only one idea - one's own interest. And often, by the way, our own interest is incorrectly understood.

But in my view, today people are coming to realize that everyone is interested in there being generally accepted standards and rules reinforced by international law. Because no one country in the world in today's conditions is in a position - there are not enough resources, even if there is a wish to do that - to play the role of a world policeman, a world empire which dictates to everyone the rules of conduct.

He says that the West now understands "the truth" regarding the events in Georgia in August 2008, and criticism of Russia is due to "pressure from one country".

Putin says that Russia is to spend around R15 billion, or some \$457 million, on equipping its military bases in Abkhazia and reinforcing the territory's border in 2009. He also says Russia will continue to pay pensions in the republic and allocate money for its infrastructure. The Russian government has been paying Abkhaz pensions since 2003. He also says that the MFA may soon open an additional office in the capital of Abkhazia to help issue replacement Russian passports to Abkhazia's residents. In 2009 and at the end of 2009 - start of 2010, approximately 70,000 passports need to be replaced. In 2009 around 10,000 to 12,000 have already been replaced.

Putin says that Russia and Abkhazia have elaborated a plan for Abkhazia's socioeconomic development for 2010-2011, which envisages allocation of R10.9 billion [about \$336,340,000]. The Abkhaz leadership wishes to borrow R1.5 billion [\$50 million]. The money will be spent on the construction of railway facilities and the development of the banking system. Putin says that "the main thing is to create grounds in Abkhazia proper for the development of the Abkhaz economy". Putin says that if necessary, Russia will render military support to Abkhazia.

Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov says that Russia is not planning to move the ships of the Black Sea Fleet to Abkhazia.

Rosneft president Sergey Bogdanchikov says that Rosneft is hoping to obtain a licence from the Abkhaz government to develop oil deposits in the shelf of the republic.

12 August 2009 All Russia Public Opinion Research Centre says that over the last five

years, the share of Russians confident that the development of friendly relations between Russia and Georgia is impossible under current Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili has more than doubled. The results of an opinion poll show that whereas in 2004 this point of view was supported by 32 per cent of those polled, in 2009 the number has increased to 78 per cent. Five years ago 40 per cent of Russians hoped for friendship between the two countries under Saakashvili, and only 14 per cent today. 79 per cent believe that Georgia needs a president worthier than Saakashvili. Another 11 per cent noted that there are things they don't like in the Georgian president but they respect the choice of the Georgian people. 2 per cent of Russians say they liked and respected the Georgian president. Others could not say.

12 August 2009 The Russian charge d'affaires in Kiev Vsevolod Loskutov says that Dmitry Medvedev's letter and video address to his Ukrainian counterpart, Viktor Yushchenko, on mounting disagreements between Ukraine and Russia has no relation to Ukraine's forthcoming presidential election, scheduled for January 2010.

Leonid Slutsky, deputy head of the Duma international affairs committee says that Dmitry Medvedev's strong-worded address to his Ukrainian counterpart, Viktor Yushchenko, and his decision to postpone sending a new ambassador to Ukraine are an "honest" acknowledgement that relations between the two countries are very bad and need to be reset.

12 August 2009 First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov says that the Customs Union of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia has set up a single negotiating team for joining the WTO, which will be lead by the director of the trade talks department of the Economic Development and Trade Ministry, Maksim Medvedkov. Shuvalov says:

The accession of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan on equal terms and at the same time is a priority... Legally, each state can join the WTO separately. On certain issues we can join as part of the Customs Union. The main thing is that we are fulfilling decisions made last June - that we are not holding separate talks on WTO accession, we fully trust each other in this issue and set up a single group for this. How it will be presented - on a bilateral basis, or with the Customs Union, or with the Customs Union and on a bilateral basis - is a technical matter.

Shuvalov says that the group would be fully formed by 24 August and "will immediately start formal talks with the WTO Secretariat.

Shuvalov says that the customs union will start operation on 1 January 2010, one year ahead of plan.

13 August 2009 Andrey Kokoshin, the director of the Academy of Sciences' International Security Problems Institute and deputy head of the YR faction in the Duma says a new strategic arms reduction treaty (START) must ensure Russia's capability to inflict guaranteed unacceptable damage on an aggressor in a counter-strike. Kokoshin thinks that if the new START treaty is not ready by December 2009, "nothing terrible will happen". He says that should tensions arise in relations between the two countries, Russia could revisit the options of asymmetrical response in the sphere of strategic nuclear arms that the Soviet Union had. "I mean small mobile ground-based single-warhead missile systems, which can be hidden in any building, air-launched ballistic missiles and other means capable of penetrating missile defences - both the strategic one and the missile defence systems in a theatre of military operations, which the USA are strenuously developing now. In this area, Russia has no match." He also says that Russia should retain a tactical nuclear arsenal. He says China does not pose a threat to Russia and most of its nuclear forces are targeted at the USA.

13 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev signs a decree on the appointment of Mikhail Zurabov as Russia's ambassador to Ukraine.

13 August 2009 *Kommersant* reports that the Federal Service for Veterinary and Plant Control (Rossekhznadzor) has sent a warning to Vilnius to the effect that as of 17 August Russia is limiting imports of dairy products from certain Lithuanian companies after antibiotics have been found in them.

13 August 2009 The deputy director of the Federal Migration Service Yekaterina Yegorova says the FMS is creating special conditions for foreign top managers to enter Russia, and it hopes for reciprocal concessions.

14 August 2009 German chancellor Angela Merkel and Dmitry Medvedev have an informal summit in Sochi. Medvedev speaks in favour of Russian investments in Germany. He says:

Investment is needed where there is no normal economic activity yet. So, for example, proposals such as investing in such companies as Infinion or Qimonda or the acquisition of Opel are precisely those high-tech sectors which we are lacking and which no doubt can help improve the structure of our economy, which means our better protection when there is a crisis in the future.

So, this kind of strategic investment, first, helps create a better structure to work with in the future, to create a better economic structure, and, second, they are a safety net against future economic cataclysms. So, there has to be investment right now. This is the right thing to do.

14 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev blames the current Ukrainian leadership for the deterioration in relations between Russia and Ukraine and says that, until the leadership there changes, there is no chance for normal relations to be restored between the two countries. Medvedev states:

You know, everything that I wanted to say to the president of Ukraine I have already said. If I will now explain why I did it, and cite some additional arguments, I am afraid that it will turn out only more harshly and I would rather not enter controversy on these issues. Everything that I wanted to convey, I conveyed. Let them read it once more. This is the first thing. Secondly, it is perfectly clear for any observer that in recent years, in the years while the current leadership has been working, relations between Russia and Ukraine have radically deteriorated, and I spoke about this openly - I believe that this is not the fault of the Russian side - no matter what their subsequent response might be. This is second.

And finally, thirdly. I do not see at present the prospects for restoring normal relations under the current leaders. Perhaps something will happen and the situation will change. I would only be glad but so far I do not see such prospects. And the latest decisions, including the attempt to expel senior diplomats from the Russian embassy, are absolutely visual proof of that. Therefore, I took the decision not to send the ambassador recently appointed by me there. We'll wait and see. I hope that the new leadership of Ukraine in that event will have a significant number of opportunities to improve our relations substantially. Russia is really striving for this. For us it is a major foreign-policy priority.

14 August 2009 The head of the Economic Development Ministry's department for trade negotiations, Maksim Medvedkov, says it is planned to use the Russian Federation's agreements reached at the WTO talks as a basis for forming the Customs Union's (Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus) unified position on talks with the WTO.

14 August 2009 Chief of the General Staff Army General Nikolay Makarov meets his Belarusian counterpart Lt General Syarhey Hurulyow in Moscow. They discuss issues related to the operational and strategic exercise Zapad 2009 which will be held in

September-October 2009. The exercise will be held in Belarus. It will involve about 13,000 servicemen, including 7,000 Russian servicemen. Makarov says that "this will be a significant exercise. We have not held exercises similar to this one in composition or scale for a long time". Large groups of combined arms formations, considerable air and Russian naval forces will be involved. Makarov says: "We are planning to practise not only the use of the general command system but also the system of command for formations and military units which are being set up as part of the reforms in the Russian armed forces...This is necessary to understand what we have set up, how we did this and how efficient they are."

15 August 2009 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Grushko says that Moscow is not satisfied with a course of the dialogue with NATO on the conventional forces in Europe (CFE) treaty. He states:

The dialogue does not proceed easily, at times partners make one step forward and two steps back and take long pauses. We are not satisfied with the speed of moving towards the agreement.

The main drawback in the current approach of NATO member states is that Russia is expected to make concrete steps to meet partners halfway in exchange for rather vague promises to consider Russia's concerns only after the adapted CFE Treaty comes into force. Of course, such promises are not sufficient as far as national security issues are concerned. Hence, we insist that the future agreement should envisage clear obligations not only for Russia but for other participants in the agreement.

15 August 2009 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Grushko says that Russia is ready to discuss the transit of military cargo through its territory to Afghanistan with members of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), and calls for more action against drug trafficking. He states:

As regards the transit of military types of goods, Russia remains open to discussion of this issue with the interested partners who participate in ISAF's operations.

Afghanistan is a strategically important area of our interaction with NATO. Peace and stability in that long-suffering country is in Russia's long-term security interests, as it seeks to prevent the emergence of a potential for conflict on its southern borders and in Central Asia.

Grushko says that the MFA does not believe that the Russia-NATO Council needs major reforms but supports the resumption of its normal activity. He states: "A full 'reset' the Russia-NATO Council will only take place when we can jointly move on to a qualitatively new level of cooperation, including on the military track, in reacting to real and not imagined threats to security in the Euro-Atlantic region". He makes the following comment on the development of NATO's new strategic concept:

If the process of developing the strategy takes place behind closed doors, maintaining the absolute autonomy of NATO's actions, this can only provoke misgivings among other Euro-Atlantic states, primarily Russia. It will again become a test for the indivisibility of security on the European continent

One cannot consent to plans which are drawn up by someone in secret, in the interests of only a narrow group, later being imposed on everyone else as 'ultimate truths'. Russia will not sit indifferently in the hallway, waiting for NATO to come up with a 'universal prescription' to solve global problems which directly concern our interests. Global problems demand genuinely collective answers."

Many things concern and interest us - how NATO's activity will be incorporated into

the international community's efforts to strengthen global and regional security, what the algorithm will be for cooperation with the UN and other international organizations, which tasks will be set before NATO's military potential, the extent to which they will be in accordance with the norms of international law, and whether NATO's new basic documents will exclude ambiguity on the most important issue - use of force.

He also states:

I am not going to anticipate events, but it seems that certain prospects have begun to emerge for Russia and NATO in the area of comparing strategic concepts," Grushko said. A presentation of Russia's national security strategy has taken place within the framework of the Russia-NATO Council, and Russian permanent representative to NATO Dmitry Rogozin has participated in one of the first NATO discussion seminars on the launch of work on NATO's strategic concept.

Grushko says the fact that the topic of Georgia's and Ukraine's membership of NATO is no longer at the forefront of the political stage is a victory of common sense.

15 August 2009 The Russo-Venezuelan intergovernmental commission meets in St Petersburg. It is chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin and Venezuelan Vice-President Ramon Carrizales. Sechin says that \$30 billion investment is needed to develop the Junin-6 oil project in Venezuela's Orinoco belt. Sechin states that a joint enterprise between a Russian consortium of six major oil companies and Petroleos de Venezuela for developing the Junin-6 oilfield will be created in the near future. Sechin says it is possible that Russia will supply a large shipment of tanks to Venezuela. Russia and Venezuela also agree to expand cooperation in the sphere of fishing, environmental protection and agriculture. Several cooperation documents are signed.

15 August 2009 Kim Jong-il, chairman of North Korea National Defence Commission, receives a message of greetings from Dmitry Medvedev, on the occasion of the day of Korea's liberation.

17 August 2009 The deputy military attache of the Russian embassy in Prague is expelled from the Czech Republic and another Russian diplomat has been recommended not to return from holiday. Sergey Lavrov labels the Czech decision "another provocation".

17 August 2009 Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov reports to Dmitry Medvedev that the *Arctic Sea* bulk carrier has been found, the Russian crew are safe and sound, and are now being questioned. The *Arctic Sea* was found 300 miles from Cape Verde islands at about 0100 Moscow time today [2100 gmt on 16 August].

17 August 2009 Rosoboronexport states the overall cost of the Russian warplanes exported to India, Venezuela, Algeria and Malaysia in 2008 exceeded \$2 billion.

17 August 2009 A specialized Russo-Mongolian exercise, Darhan 2, starts in Mongolia. Servicemen of the Russian Siberian Military District and the Mongolian armed forces will practise the provision of technical support to forces. It involves about 200 servicemen of the Siberian Military District and 90 pieces of military hardware and will last until 15 September.

18 August 2009 Yury Morozov, deputy director-general of the firm Stroyprogress says the construction of the main Tskhinvali-Dzuarikau gas pipeline has been completed in North and South Ossetia. The gas pipeline will become operational on 26 August on the first anniversary of Russia recognizing South Ossetia's independence.

18 August 2009 Israeli President Shimon Peres arrives in Sochi for talks with Dmitry Medvedev.

18 August 2009 Konstantin Biryulin, deputy director of the Federal Service on Military-Technical Cooperation, says that it is conducting negotiations with Ukraine seeking a ban on the supply of Ukrainian weapons and military equipment to Georgia.

19 August 2009 MFA deputy spokesman Igor Lyakin-Frolov says that Russia has not received any requests from the USA about the contents and the size of US military cargo transit to Afghanistan through Russian territory. He says that the transit agreement is expected to come into force and to be implemented within scheduled dates. The Russian-US agreement on the military transit to Afghanistan that was signed on 6 July at the Moscow Russian-US summit will come into force only after the state internal legal procedures are completed. In Russia it must be ratified by the parliament. 60 days after the agreement is signed, that is on 6 September, its temporal application begins.

19 August 2009 The Russian and Ukrainian prime ministers, Vladimir Putin and Yuliya Tymoshenko, discuss by phone economic cooperation between the two countries, including energy and finance, and the implementation of the joint project to create the An-70 transport aircraft.

The Natural Resources and Ecology Ministry believes that Ukraine's accusations that the Russian Black Sea Fleet has polluted Sevastopol Bay are unfounded.

The Russian and Ukrainian defence ministries agree to renew joint works within the framework of the An-70 military transport aircraft development programme. Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov and Acting Ukrainian Defence Minister Valery Ivashchenko sign a protocol to this effect at the MAKS 2009 aviation salon.

19 August 2009 Head of the Irkut corporation Oleg Demchenko says Russia has fully fulfilled a contract to supply 18 fighters Su-30MKM to Malaysia.

Demchenko also says that out of 28 Su-30 aircraft that Russia was to supply to Algeria, 22 had been supplied, the remaining six would be supplied in September 2009.

Aleksandr Mikheyev, deputy general director of Rosoboronexport, says it has finished supplying a large batch of helicopters to Venezuela and has started to create infrastructure for their repair and maintenance. In all, over 50 Mi-17, Mi-26 and Mi-35M helicopters had been supplied to Venezuela.

20 August 2009 Russia's permanent representative at NATO Dmitry Rogozin says it was possible to carry out the successful operation to free the *Arctic Sea* cargo vessel crew largely thanks to the information feed from NATO.

20 August 2009 Sergey Lavrov and US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton discuss Iran by telephone. A meeting has been scheduled for 2 September between the political directors of the foreign ministries of Russia, the USA, China, Great Britain, Germany and France over the Iranian nuclear problem. The schedule of upcoming contact between the Russian and US foreign ministers is also agreed upon, with the aim of monitoring the implementation of the agreements reached during the talks between President Dmitry Medvedev and President Barack Obama in Moscow on 6-7 July.

They also discuss economic cooperation and Transcaucasia.

20 August 2009 Inter RAO YeES and the Venezuelan national energy company Petroleos de Venezuela sign a memorandum of understanding aimed at the two countries implementing joint projects in the use of petroleum coke.

21 August 2009 Rosatom and the Ministry of Electricity and Renewable Energy of Ecuador

sign a memorandum of intention on cooperation in the area of the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

21 August 2009 Eduard Kokoyty, the president of South Ossetia, says that South Ossetia will seek to be part of the Union State of Russia and Belarus.

21 August 2009 CIS Executive Secretary Sergey Lebedev thinks that Georgia's secession from the CIS "will not particularly affect the situation in the CIS".

21 August 2009 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksey Borodavkin says that the MFA believes that dialogue with the Taleban's moderate wing is possible but only on certain conditions.

We are confident that national accord in Afghanistan is only possible if dialogue is established with the Taleban's moderate wing but only if they accept the national constitution, disarm and sever ties with Al-Qaeda.

Russia is building cooperation with Afghanistan in various areas, in the economy first of all... Our country is providing considerable help to Afghanistan.

He says Russia is ready to consider military-technical cooperation with Kabul, if the Afghan authorities request it.

21 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev has talks with Moldovan President Vladimir Voronin in Sochi.

21 August 2009 The advisor to the Armenian parliament speaker on economic issues, Tatul Manaseryan, says that upon issuing Armenia a loan of \$500 million, Russia demanded that the Armenian authorities write off a debt to the tune of at least \$5 billion. He says Russia "demanded that the accounts of Armenian residents, both individuals and legal entities, in Vneshekonombank be frozen for an overall amount, which is at least 10 times more than the amount of the Russian loan". Russia transferred to Armenia a \$500 million loan in mid-July 2009, which was provided at LIBOR + 3 per cent interest rate. The loan maturity is 15 years, with grace period of four years.

21 August 2009 The MFA issues a statement on its website, criticising steps by the Estonian government to toughen its language policy towards its non-ethnic-Estonian population.

21 August 2009 The Pacific Fleet's spokesman Roman Martov says that its third squad will continue its peacekeeping mission off the Horn of Africa until the beginning of this autumn. The third squad headed to the Gulf of Aden from Vladivostok on 29 June.

21 August 2009 CSTO Secretary-General Nikolay Bordyuzha says that the CSTO will begin the joint exercise of its Collective Rapid Reaction Forces on 26 August as planned, and all reports about the postponement and disruption of the exercise are acts of targeted disinformation. He denies claims that Belarus is disrupting the exercises. The first stage of the exercise will start at the CSTO united headquarters in Moscow on 26 August. The second will be held in Belarus in the second half of September and the third in Kazakhstan in October.

23 August 2009 The Russo-Mongolian military exercise Darhan-2 takes place in Mongolia.

24 August 2009 Rosneft sets up a subsidiary to work the continental shelf off Abkhazia.

24 August 2009 The Investigations Committee under the prosecutor's office reports that during the investigation of the criminal proceedings on the genocide and mass murder of Russian citizens in South Ossetia, the participation of Ukrainian servicemen and members of the Ukrainian nationalist organization UNA-UNSO has been established.

24 August 2009 Russia's permanent representative at NATO, Dmitry Rogozin says Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko and his entourage are forcing Ukraine into NATO at an accelerated rate. He is commenting on the signing of a declaration on amendments to the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between Ukraine and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization from 9 July 1997 at the NATO headquarters in Brussels. He expresses concern that in the additional declaration signed by Ukraine and NATO, "a clause has appeared for the first time whereby Ukraine has an absolute right to convene a Ukraine-NATO Commission if its territorial integrity is threatened".

24 August 2009 Ukraine and Russia have signed a protocol to make changes to a 1997 agreement between the two countries on developing, manufacturing, supplying and servicing aircraft. Ukrainian Industrial Policy Minister Volodymyr Novytsky and Russian Deputy Industry and Trade Minister Denis Manturov signed the protocol at the MAKS 2009 international aerospace show in Zhukovsky.

24 August 2009 CSTO Joint Staff states that units of Russia's Defence Ministry, Interior Ministry and Emergencies Ministry will participate in the joint comprehensive exercises that will start on 26 August and take place in several member-countries of the CSTO. A battalion of the 98th Airborne Division will represent the Russian Defence Ministry at the second stage of the exercises in Belarus. The exercises' third stage will take place in Kazakhstan and involve units of Russia's 31st Air Assault Brigade.

25 August 2009 The MFA issues a statement on the dry cargo vessel *Arctic Sea* which was hijacked and then captured by the Russian Navy on 17 August. It says that "many "grey areas" still remain which, "first of all, the investigation, which is only just beginning, must clear up".

25 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev visits Mongolia. He has talks with Mongolian President Tsahiagiyn Elbegdorj. Their agenda includes trade, economic and investment cooperation, in particular large-scale projects in mining, transport and agriculture. Russia and Mongolia sign an agreement to set up a joint venture to extract uranium.

25 August 2009 The MFA issues a statement calling for wider recognition of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

25 August 2009 The director of the History and Records Department of the Russian Foreign Ministry, Konstantin Provalov, says he doubts that the discontent expressed by Poland in connection with the film about the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, which was shown on *Vesti TV* on 22-23 August is appropriate. The authors of the Russian TV documentary believe that Poland was a political ally of Hitler's Germany and this forced Moscow to sign the agreement with Berlin.

25 August 2009 Rosselkhoznadzor lifts temporary restrictions on imports of live poultry, hatching eggs, feather and floccus, poultry meat and all types of poultry products, poultry feed and feed additives from the department of Vendee in France. These restrictions were introduced on 9 February. Various restrictions on US poultry imports are also lifted.

26 August 2009 The Russian and Mongolian Presidents sign a declaration on developing strategic partnership. Russia and Mongolia will consider the issue of building a trunk gas pipeline to Mongolia. Moscow confirms its decision in principle to allocate a soft loan of \$300 million from the Rosselkhozbank bank for the development of the Mongolian agricultural sector and bilateral cooperation in agriculture.

26 August 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin meets the leader of South Ossetia, Eduard Kokoyty in Moscow. Russia and South Ossetia sign a government agreement on rendering assistance to South Ossetia in socioeconomic development.

Putin says that Russia is not interested in humiliating Georgia.

Russia is supporting Georgia too. You probably know that Georgia is getting large amounts via the IMF. We are an active member of the IMF. And we regularly allocate large resources to this international financial organization, which are then given out to countries in need. They go to Georgia, among others. This is once again evidence that we have no interest in humiliating Georgia. We have no interest in there being winners and losers here. Our interest lies in the creation of a stable situation, which would guarantee peace and stability for all peoples who live in that region of the Caucasus for the long term.

Russia still intends to provide comprehensive political and economic support to both Abkhazia and South Ossetia. I would also like to say clearly and unambiguously once more: Russia will not tolerate any attempts at revenge, or a repeat of further military adventurism in the region. We will observe what is happening carefully, and will respond appropriately to any of these events.

From the moral and ethical point of view, comparing Kosovo, the Kosovo precedent, with Abkhazia and South Ossetia is well-grounded. There is no difference in essence. Both there and here ethnic conflicts exist, both there and here the law was violated.

...Not many participants of the international dialogue are using their sovereignty in full sense of the word, and being under the pressure of one superpower - the USA - are fulfilling its political will.

The international community should reach agreement regarding which rules we are going to live by. Either we make the principle of territorial integrity the priority and we all follow that rule - but then Kosovo needs to be left as part of Serbia. Or we make the right of a nation to self-determination the priority. In which case this right needs to be secured for small peoples which strive for independence, such as the South Ossetian people and the people of Abkhazia.

And everyone, under pressure from one superpower - the USA, carries out the political will of that superpower. Essentially without delving into, and without wanting to delve into the essence of the events taking place.

Putin says that South Ossetia could be a transit route for Russian gas.

The Chairman of Gazprom's management committee Aleksey Miller gives the command to start the flow of direct gas supplies from Russia to South Ossetia.

26 August 2009 Chief of the General Staff Army General Nikolay Makarov says Russia has reduced the number of its servicemen in bases in South Ossetia and Abkhazia to 1,700 men.

Makarov says the issue of setting up a joint Russian-US post for monitoring missile launches is still being developed: "Work is under way on the issue of setting up a joint monitoring post that would ensure control over missile launches, notification, and in the case of any unsanctioned launches we could notify each other about what sort of a launch that was in order to defend our countries against possible emergencies that may arise." Makarov says that at the moment the issue of a location for that post that would satisfy both sides is being discussed.

Makarov says that Russia is planning to buy a multi-purpose Mistral assault helicopter carrier from France and then to jointly produce vessels of this kind in Russia. Makarov says that the MOD is planning to buy one Mistral ship and to produce three or four vessels when production is arranged.

26 August 2009 CSTO Deputy Secretary-General Valery Semerikov says that the CRRF of the CSTO will not be used to deliver pre-emptive strikes outside the member-states of the organization.

Nikolay Makarov says that there are no specific agreements yet about the parameters for deploying a training centre of the CRRF in southern Kyrgyzstan.

The task force of the Uzbek Armed Forces did not turn up for the first stage of the joint integrated exercise of the CSTO. This is in view of Uzbekistan's dissenting opinion on the participation in the structures of the CSTO CRRF.

27 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev meets Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka in Sochi.

27 August 2009 Channel 1 TV reports that a group of Ukrainian bailiffs has penetrated the territory of a Russian military unit in Sevastopol. They demand that navigation facilities near the Kherson lighthouse be transferred into the ownership of Ukraine.

27 August 2009 Energy Minister Sergey Shmatko says Russia is proposing to hold a joint seminar with OPEC in Moscow in autumn 2009.

28 August 2009 CSTO Secretary-General Nikolay Bordyuzha states that a mode of operation by the member states in the event that the situation escalates in any collective security region was practised during the first stage of a joint combined exercise on the use of the CSTO's CRRF. The Russian defence, interior and emergencies ministries' forces were involved in the exercise at its first stage, which began in Moscow on 26 August. The exercise will take place in three stages in Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan. A battalion from the 98th Airborne Troops Division and subunits from the 31st Separate Airborne Assault Brigade will be involved in the exercise at its second and third stages, respectively, as will a group of more than 20 aircraft such as the Tu-22M3, Su-24, Su-27, Su-25, Il-76 and Mi-8MTV. At the third stage, in addition, the Russian Interior Ministry's Rys [Lynx] and Zubr [Bison] special-forces subunits and the Emergencies Ministry's 294th Special-Risk Operations Centre will be involved.

The exercise aims to rehearse the preparation and use of the CRRF and groups of forces from the CSTO member states' armed forces. The second stage will take place from 19 to 28 September in Belarus; the third stage in Kazakhstan from 2 to 15 October.

29 August 2009 In a report as part of Aleksandr Sladkov's "Military Programme" on the Russian official television channel Rossiya on 29 August, about "who our enemy is" and "how we train to fight" them, potential military threats against Russia were considered. NATO as a whole, Georgia, Turkey, Japan and China were looked at.

30 August 2009 Dmitry Medvedev is interviewed on Rossiya's 'News of the Week' Programme. He discusses the Russian education system and criticises other countries' interpretations of WW2 and the Soviet role in it. He strongly criticises the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly's assertion that Germany and Soviet Union were equally to blame as a "flat-out lie".

31 August 2009 An article by Vladimir Putin is published in the Polish newspaper *Gazeta Wyborca*. It discusses the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact which Putin condemns.

Deputy head of the Russian government staff Yury Ushakov says Moscow and Warsaw are unlikely to find a compromise on the so-called Katyn issue on the basis of insisting on the need for the Russian side to declassify the remaining documents on this case. He says "history should not hold back progress in developing relations".

31 August 2009 The MFA issues a statement welcoming the election of the Democratic Party of Japan in the parliamentary election on 30 August.

The head of the Duma's International Affairs Committee, Konstantin Kosachev, says that he rules out a quick settlement of the Kuril Islands issue when the Democratic Party of Japan assumes power. "The future Japanese premier Hatoyama seems to be a more flexible person and better informed about the general context of Russian-Japanese relations, but at the initial stage his attempts will obviously be constrained by conservative Japanese society. Everything will depend on his perseverance in the declared course to revise our relations."

31 August 2009 Moscow mayor Yury Luzhkov arrives in Tskhinvali, South Ossetia.

31 August 2009 Secretary-General of the CSTO Nikolay Bordyuzha says collaboration with NATO needs to be improved for the joint struggle against international terrorism, drug trafficking and other threats and challenges.

September 2009

1 September 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin arrives in Gdansk, where he will hold bilateral talks with his Polish counterpart, Donald Tusk, and will also take part in the events marking the start of World War Two. Putin makes a speech on WW2 and condemns attempts to falsify history. Putin says that access to archives should be given on a reciprocal basis.

Sergey Lavrov speaks at the Moscow International Affairs Institute MGIMO. He criticises attempts by western nations to politicise the history of WW2 and the Soviet role in WW2.

TV presenter Konstantin Semin questions the existence of secret protocols to the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, and also says that the West had been pleased with massive Soviet deaths in WW2.

A VTsIOM poll shows that 63 per cent of Russians say that the Soviet Union could have won World War Two even without the help of allies, although the number of such respondents has fallen since 2001 (from 71 per cent). Respondents view the role of Great Britain and France as insignificant (36 and 34 per cent respectively), or quite significant (26 and 22 per cent respectively). Russians tend to express both the former and latter viewpoints in equal measure regarding the USA (30 per cent each). According to the VTsIOM figures, over the last seven years the opinion of Russians about the role of specific countries in the victory in World War Two has changed. The proportion of Russians pointing to the USSR making the main contribution has fallen from 92 per cent to 87 per cent. There are now also fewer people who regard as insignificant the role of Great Britain (from 42 to 36 per cent), China (from 27 to 18 per cent), USA (from 39 to 30 per cent), France (from 39 to 34 per cent). At the same time, the number of people who consider the USA's contribution as very or quite significant has risen (from 10 to 14 per cent).

Ekho Moskvy broadcasts a report stating that the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) alleges that the Polish leadership which was at the helm on the eve of WW2 planned the destruction of the Soviet Union through its fragmentation. The SVR says this is testified by archive documents that have been declassified now.

Vladimir Putin says Russian-Polish disagreements about gas supplies are mainly "technical" in nature, and denies the existence of any "anti-Polish subtext" in the Nord Stream pipeline project.

1 September 2009 Vitaly Strugovets, spokesman for the CSTO secretariat, says Moscow

and Yerevan are holding no talks on deploying Armenian military bases in Russian territory as part of the agreement on the creation of the CRRF.

1 September 2009 Vladimir Putin tells his Bulgarian counterpart Boyko Borisov in Sopot that Russia may decide not to implement some energy projects in Bulgaria. He says that if Bulgaria changes its mind about the implementation of joint energy projects, Russia can find other ways for supplying raw materials.

Putin and Ukrainian Prime Minister Yuliya Tymoshenko have talks in Poland. They discuss energy relations and cooperation in the aviation sector.

Putin and Dutch Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende have talks in Poland. They discuss economic cooperation. Trade turnover in 2008 was almost \$62 billion and \$46 billion of reinvestment, of which \$30 billion-odd were direct investments from Holland in the Russian economy. Russia and the Netherlands agree on the development of plans for joint actions.

Putin has talks with the head of the Croatian government, Jadranka Kosor, in Poland. They discuss economic cooperation.

He also has talks with Finnish Prime Minister Matti Vanhanen. They agree to meet at the Timber Summit in St Petersburg in October. Putin says to Vanhanen that Russia will inform Finland of the results of an environmental examination of the Russian segment of the Nord Stream project. Nord Stream, with a length of 1,220 kilometres, will be laid from Russia's Vyborg to Germany's Greifswald across the Baltic Sea bed. The first line with an annual rated capacity of 27.5 billion cubic metres may be commissioned in 2011. The pipeline will go through economic zones of Russia, Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Germany. The transboundary report was approved on 13 February 2009, and consultations with the public of nine countries that may be influenced by the pipeline started in March. At present, public hearings are being held in Germany, Russia, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. The Nord Stream consortium hopes to get the remaining permissions by the end of 2009, and to start building the pipeline in the first quarter of 2010.

1 September 2009 Sergey Lavrov says at MGIMO that any future agreement to replace the START treaty should be based on an "inseparable link" between strategic offensive and defensive. He says that Russian society does not suffer from "systemic anti-Americanism. He praises US President Barack Obama's administration for reformulating US foreign policy in a "positive, realistic manner". He says: "We see no sensible alternative to three-way cooperation between Russia, the EU and the USA, which, as President Medvedev has repeatedly said, should become the fundamental construction of political unity in the Euro-Atlantic space." He says Russia will continue to render transit assistance for NATO countries with forces in Afghanistan and calls for cooperation between the CSTO and NATO to fight terrorism and drug trafficking in that country. He then says the West was mistaken in expanding NATO at the expense of the OSCE.

Lavrov says that the only way to deal with Iran's nuclear ambitions and to ensure stability in the world is to let Iran cooperate with European energy players.

1 September 2009 Vladimir Putin says in Poland that Russia is not going to support processes which may lead to an unconstitutional change of power in Belarus. He says the international community must establish priority principles for resolving territorial conflicts. "We have a perfectly clear and understandable strategy: either the international community adheres to one of the fundamental principles, the maintenance of territorial integrity, or the principle of a nation's self-determination will be made the cornerstone."

2 September 2009 An article by Sergey Lavrov, "The tragedy of the Second World War: Who is to blame?" is published on the MFA website.

2 September 2009 First Deputy Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov says complications in dairy produce imports from Belarus to the Russian Federation were artificially created by Belarusian manufacturers because of the late implementation of technical regulations for milk, approved in Russia at the end of 2008.

2 September 2009 Only 16 senior officers of the Russian Armed Forces were admitted to the General Staff Academy in 2009. In July 2009, 142 generals and officers, including 33 foreigners, graduated from the Academy. Generals and officers from 16 foreign countries - Belarus, Algeria, Angola, Ethiopia, South Korea, Sweden, Finland, Syria, Serbia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Greece, Mongolia, China and Libya - are currently studying at the academy.

3 September 2009 Vladimir Putin says that Russia will not exercise its right to take a privileged loan from the IMF but it will not be an IMF donor either.

Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says that under the programme on the emission of special drawing rights, Russia could count upon taking a privileged loan of \$8.8 billion from the IMF.

3 September 2009 Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi is interviewed on *Vesti TV*. He says that NATO is trying to seize Russia's riches.

3 September 2009 Sergey Lavrov says that Russian and US negotiators have made progress in preparing a new document on strategic offensive arms and hope to reflect this in the report that will be presented to the Russian and US presidents for their meeting in Pittsburgh on 25 September. Lavrov says that in drawing up a new agreement it is necessary "to take new realities into account", including maintaining the clear interlinkage between strategic offensive and defensive weapons, and to finalize issues related to strategic delivery vehicles with non-nuclear payloads.

MFA spokesman Andrey Nesterenko says that Russia is satisfied with how its strategic dialogue with the new US administration is developing, adding that a new agreement replacing the old START treaty is likely to be reached within the time frame agreed by the two countries' presidents.

3 September 2009 The MFA releases the six powers' statement on Iran's nuclear programme made following the meeting of political directors of the foreign ministries of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and Germany (the political director from the EU also took part), at which the situation with Iran's nuclear programme was discussed, in Frankfurt on 2 September. From the Russian side, the meeting was attended by Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov.

3 September 2009 MFA spokesman Andrey Nesterenko defends Soviet diplomacy in 1939 on *Vesti TV*.

Nesterenko says that Russia is in talks with Saudi Arabia on the sale of its military hardware.

3 September 2009 President Dmitry Medvedev confirms Russia's unchangeable stance in its recognition of the national sovereignty of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in 2008.

3 September 2009 CSTO Secretary-General Nikolay Bordyuzha says the CSTO hopes to establish constructive cooperation with NATO on a range of specific issues. He mentions countering drug trafficking in Afghanistan.

3 September 2009 Indian President Pratibha Patil visits Moscow for talks with Dmitry Medvedev.

3 September 2009 NTV reports that a London court has issued an arrest warrant for the

former co-owner of the Yevroset company, Yevgenny Chichvarkin. It was done at a request of the Russian Prosecutor-General's Office to extradite him.

4 September 2009 *Ekho Moskv*y reports that British courts deny claims by the Russian prosecutor's office that an arrest warrant for Yevgenny Chichvarkin has been issued.

4 September 2009 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksey Borodavkin says that Russia continues to insist on the continuation of the six-party talks to resolve the issue of denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula.

4 September 2009 Russia's official representative to NATO Dmitry Rogozin says that there is no real coordination within the NATO contingent in Afghanistan.

I believe that we should have a serious question for the alliance. We are helping a lot with transit, helping the Afghan leadership itself on a bilateral level, but by helping we should know what is happening there. We want to know everything - about the military strategy, military plans, political plans of a settlement of the situation in Afghanistan. Therefore, the question that is currently being addressed is about Russia gaining access to internal discussions which are carried out in NATO and then perhaps we will be able to give some advice, taking into account our experience.

4 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev addresses the tenth annual conference of heads of the security agencies and intelligence services of CIS states. He states:

First of all, internal problems get worse during a crisis period, without any doubt. Second, you get a lot of people looking to use the crisis to resolve a wide variety of problems, including political, bordering on political, or, one might say, quasi-political ones; to basically stuff their pockets in an elementary way by fastening on to some form of assistance being provided - you know such decisions have been taken, as well as using existing channels of various types of information.

He also discusses the problem of cybercrime.

SVR chief Mikhail Fradkov states that the special services of the CIS countries have outlined a joint plan of action in priority areas, ranging from the fight against terrorism to economic crimes.

4 September 2009 Konstantin Kosachev, the chairman of the Duma international affairs committee and head of the Russian delegation in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) says Russia may take a break in its relations with PACE if it does the bidding of the Georgian delegation and strips Moscow of its right to vote in this organization.

The Russian Air Force denies Georgian media reports that a Russian military helicopter has overflowed a district in Georgia near Abkhazia.

4 September 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin meets Indian President Pratibha Patil. They discuss economic cooperation. The two sides expressed satisfaction at the ongoing efforts to achieve the bilateral trade target of \$10 billion by 2010. The bilateral trade in 2007-08 was \$3.41 billion. Both sides noted that there were ample opportunities for further expansion of relations, especially in the fields of space, energy, including hydrocarbons, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy and military-technical cooperation, Patil said. Energy sector is an important area in Indo-Russian bilateral relations. ONGC-Videsh Limited has acquired 20 per cent stake in the Sakhalin-I oil and gas project in the Russian Federation and has invested about \$2.8 billion in the project, one of the largest investments by India abroad. India and Russia hope to wrap up the deal on the construction of four more reactors at Kudankulam power plant.

5 September 2009 Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin attends a meeting of G20 finance ministers in London. He says that in 2012 Russian gross domestic product (GDP) will be recovered to its pre-crisis level. According to the revised forecast for socioeconomic development in 2010-2012, the forecast for GDP growth has been raised from previously forecast 1 per cent to 1.6 per cent in 2010, in 2011 from 2.6 per cent to 3 per cent and in 2012 to from 3.8 per cent to 4.3 per cent.

5 September 2009 The MFA issues a statement condemning Georgia for an illegal seizure of a Turkish vessel in neutral waters. On 16 August a Georgian military boat seized the Turkish tanker *Buket* in neutral waters in the Black Sea. The tanker was heading to the port of Sukhumi carrying a cargo for Abkhazia.

The Georgian MFA rejects the Russian statement.

5 September 2009 The head of the Federal Special Construction Agency (Spetsstroy), Army General Nikolay Abroskin, says that his agency has started redeveloping the Roki tunnel linking North Ossetia with South Ossetia.

Abroskin also says that the construction of all the coastal infrastructure in the Black Sea port of Novorossiysk would be completed by 2018 and that the construction of the Vostochny spaceport in Amur Region would start as of 2011.

7 September 2009 Igor Lyakin-Frolov, deputy director of the Information and Press Department of the MFA, says that Russia is ready to allow the transit of US military goods to Afghanistan through its territory at any moment, but is still waiting for a request from the USA in order for this to begin. "We reaffirm all the commitments we have made, and are ready for this work. But we have not yet received any requests from the American side. The air transit of military cargo has not yet started. We are waiting for requests to this end from the American side." He also discusses arms control. He says that in preparing a new treaty Moscow will have to face opposition from some US forces which do not see Russia as an equal partner.

7 September 2009 Energy Minister Sergey Shmatko heads a Russian delegation to Iraq to discuss energy cooperation.

Lukoil president Vagit Alekperov says that Lukoil representatives would also visit Iraq. He says that the delegation would discuss preparations for forming an intergovernmental commission and would hold additional consultations.

7 September 2009 Grigory Logvinov, deputy head of Moscow's delegation to the six party talk on the North Korean nuclear issue, has talks in South Korea with South Korean and US officials on ways to resume the six-party talks. Logvinov plans to meet his South Korean counterpart Hwang Joon-kook, Seoul's chief nuclear negotiator Wi So'ng-rak, and Hur Chul, director general of the foreign ministry's Korean Peninsula peace regime bureau. He is also scheduled to meet Sung Kim, who is in charge of Washington's day-to-day dealings with Pyongyang as an assistant to Stephen Bosworth, the US special representative for North Korea policy.

7 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev says to Gazprom head Aleksey Miller that he intends to propose to the leaders of Caspian countries to build relations in the gas sector on the basis of middle-term and long-term intergovernmental agreements. He intends to discuss the issue with the leaders of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan at an informal summit at the end of this week.

7 September 2009 Konstantin Kosachev, chairman of the Duma International Affairs Committee casts doubt on the objectivity of the PACE rapporteurs on Russia's implementation of its obligations since the events in the Caucasus in August 2008. The

PACE bureau in Paris had included on the agenda of the PACE autumn session opening on 28 September in Strasbourg a report and draft resolution headed "A year since the war between Georgia and Russia". Kosachev says both documents are "unacceptable and bewildering".

7 September 2009 Thomas Hammarberg, the human rights commissioner of the Council of Europe, and Russian ombudsman Vladimir Lukin meet the chairman of the Chechen Supreme Court, Ziyaudi Zaurbekov and Prosecutor Mikhail Savchin.

7 September 2009 The Russian ambassador to NATO, Dmitry Rogozin, warns NATO that it faces defeat in Afghanistan if it continues with what he called "indiscriminate strikes" against civilians.

We can see that each country is trying to blame another for the dead. It means that here in the West, in the capitals of the countries that have sent their soldiers and officers to Afghanistan, the non-acceptance of the Afghan campaign has increased sharply. The position of politicians raising the issue of withdrawing their countries' soldiers from Afghanistan is getting stronger. In the end, this may lead to Americans staying in Afghanistan alone, while the famous NATO solidarity will be shown up to be worth nothing.

He says that US troops could also withdraw from Afghanistan, paving the way for the Taliban spreading its influence to countries in which Russia has "vital interests".

Russia should seriously consider the possibility of the situation developing dramatically and NATO collecting its belongings and walking away from Afghanistan. We will then get a real problem: an increasingly brazen Taliban that has increased numerically and qualitatively. I think the extremist ideology that is currently being spread by the Taliban has a good chance of establishing itself in neighbouring countries where we have our own vital interests. That is why Russia should give serious consideration to events currently taking place in Afghanistan and the new tactics, new scandals, new processes and intrigues that are developing between NATO allies. All this may end with them abandoning the ruins and fleeing Afghanistan, leaving us one to one with an enraged enemy on Russia's southern approaches who will be building on its success in the north, closer to our borders.

If it wants to achieve at least 50 per cent of the tasks it is facing, at least the task of stabilizing the situation in Afghanistan, which we support, NATO should stop keeping what they have done in Afghanistan secret. They should give us all the information about their plans there and start regional cooperation with all countries interested in success in Afghanistan.

8 September 2009 Sergey Lavrov writes an article in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* on Russian foreign policy, entitled 'Relations in the New Coordinate System'. Lavrov writes that Russia will continue to provide transit help to NATO countries whose troops are in Afghanistan. "We are prepared for honest cooperation wherever our interests coincide. We will continue to provide transit help to those countries which have forces in Afghanistan, for as long as the international military presence is acceptable to the Afghan government and meets the task of achieving a settlement in the country."

Sergey Lavrov says that the rumours that S-300 systems were on the board of the *Arctic Sea* dry-cargo ship are groundless.

Lavrov says that the Russian-US talks on the new treaty to replace START-1 are in progress and a relevant report will be presented to Russian and US presidents during their meeting in New York on 23 September.

Lavrov says both Russia and Ukraine are taking measures to prevent a repeat of last winter's gas crisis.

Lavrov says that Iran's nuclear programme must be addressed by means of political and diplomatic negotiations. Lavrov says that he is surprised to find out that many members of the IAEA had accused the organization's director-general, Mohamed El-Baradi'i, of keeping secret certain information about the Iranian nuclear programme.

Lavrov says that the only way to reach agreement with North Korea is its participation in the six-party talks. "I am convinced that only by means of talks, only by involving our North Korean partners in negotiations it is possible to reach a settlement acceptable for all sides. Isolation, especially threats, won't solve anything."

Lavrov has talks in Moscow with Slovak Foreign Minister Miroslav Lajcak.

8 September 2009 The Russian ambassador to Afghanistan, Zamir Kabulov, says that the Afghan army is not currently capable of combating its enemies on its own.

8 September 2009 Shamsail Saraliyev, Chechnya's minister of external relations, national policy, information and the press says that representative offices of Chechnya are to be opened in the six European countries where the largest numbers of Chechen emigrants live, in Germany, Austria, Belgium, France, Denmark and Poland.

8 September 2009 Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says that "the possibility of granting Ukraine a loan is not ruled out, but we are not considering at the moment, it requires additional talks and conditions. We are not prepared to give Ukraine a loan yet."

8 September 2009 Head of the FSB Border Guard Service Vladimir Pronichev says Russia will allocate additional forces and funds to guard Abkhazia's sea borders. He is meeting Abkhaz President Sergey Bagapsh.

8 September 2009 The joint Russian-Belarusian strategic exercise Zapad 2009 commences. It comprises about 12,500 servicemen, 40 planes and up to 200 combat vehicles.

9 September 2009 Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov meets Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Thomas Hammarberg. Kadyrov says that the leadership of Chechnya is doing all it can to solve the problem of establishing the whereabouts of those who went missing or were kidnapped during the counterterrorism operation.

Hammarberg discusses the situation with ensuring human rights in the North Caucasus with representatives of the Investigations Committee under the Russian prosecutor's office.

9 September 2009 Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez visits Moscow. He attacks the USA as "the world's chief terrorist". Energy cooperation is discussed.

Igor Sechin, deputy prime minister, addressing a roundtable meeting says:

We expect strategic projects to become catalysts for the development of our trade and economic ties. A consortium has been set up to implement oil projects in Venezuela; it comprises the five largest oil and gas companies in Russia, which are among world leaders in the oil and gas sector.

A joint venture will be set up shortly between the state company Petroleos de Venezuela and the Russian national oil consortium, which comprises Rosneft, Lukoil, Surgutneftegaz, Gazprom Neft and TNK-BP. The new joint venture will be largest in oil-rich Venezuela.

Aide to the Russian president Sergey Prikhodko says Russia does not rule out the possibility of extending a credit facility for the exports of Russian military hardware to Venezuela.

9 September 2009 Dmitry Peskov, the Russian prime minister's spokesman says Poland does not want to support the implementation of the Nord Stream gas project.

10 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev says that the agreements between Russia and Venezuela reached following the top-level bilateral meeting take relations between the two countries to the strategic level.

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez says that his country recognizes the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

10 September 2009 MFA spokesman Andrey Nesterenko says that the UN General Assembly resolution reaffirming the right of refugees from Georgia's breakaway regions to return home is "politically motivated and based on opportunistic calculations of the Georgian side". This resolution was voted on on 9 September.

10 September 2009 The MFA issues a statement calling for continued adherence to UN Security Council Resolution 1244 on Kosovo.

10 September 2009 The MFA says it is closely studying Iran's proposal to the Sextet (comprising the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany) regarding its nuclear issue and hopes that the talks between the Sextet and Iran would continue in the near future.

10 September 2009 The official spokesman for the Investigations Committee under the prosecutor's office Vladimir Markin says the dry-cargo vessel *Arctic Sea* will be handed over to Malta after the investigation into its hijacking finishes.

10 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev states on Afghanistan:

This state has turned into the largest supplier of heavy narcotics to Europe, the largest supplier. And everyone is suffering because of it; the Russian Federation too is suffering. And we think that precisely now it is necessary to establish order there.

We are ready to help our Afghan partners, help our partners from Central Asia do this. But I am stressing once again that cooperation in this sphere should not turn into an element of political pressure. It should be depoliticized cooperation, aimed at protecting national interests.

MFA spokesman Andrey Nesterenko states that Russia has nothing against holding a new international conference on Afghanistan, but the initiative and form of such a meeting should come from the new Afghan government.

10 September 2009 Andrey Nesterenko says Moscow welcomes as positive the creation of the Russian-language channel on China Central Television.

10 September 2009 A CSTO spokesman says that a plan for the operational deployment of the contingents comprising the CRRF of the CSTO and for providing them with modern weapons will be drawn up at the CSTO in the very near future. The decision to set up the CRRF of the CSTO was taken at the CSTO summit in Moscow on 4 February 2009.

10 September 2009 Energy Minister Sergey Shmatko is interviewed on *Vesti TV* on energy cooperation with Iraq. He discusses energy cooperation, in particular electrical power. He says cooperation in the oil sector lags.

10 September 2009 Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov meets US Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Philip Gordon at the MFA. They discuss European security problems, including the functioning of a mechanism for regular discussions on European security problems in the format of the 'Corfu Process', conventional arms controls in Europe, as well as the situation surrounding the Iranian nuclear programme. They also discuss strategic arms control.

11 September 2009 Navy C-in-C Admiral Vladimir Vysotskiy says Russia's intention is to buy a French Mistral-class helicopter carrier on a competition basis. He says the navy intends not only the helicopter carrier but also the technology to build it.

11 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev and Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev meet in Orenburg. Medvedev says that they should intensify cooperation in the field of high technology. He speaks of the need to integrate the energy systems of Siberia and Kazakhstan, and for further Russian-Kazakh cooperation on energy efficiency and nuclear energy. Russia and Kazakhstan sign three intergovernmental agreements, including on cooperation in the field of energy and military-technical cooperation.

11 September 2009 The Presidents of Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan meet in Aktau in Kazakhstan. They announce that they have no intention to discuss the Caspian issue without participation of Iran and express the hope that the next summit of Caspian states will be held in Baku as soon as possible.

11 September 2009 Defence Minister Anatoly Serduykov arrives in Tajikistan on a working visit. They discuss the future of the Russian military base in Tajikistan.

11 September 2009 The MFA issues a commentary on the Adoption on 9 September by UN General Assembly of a Resolution on the Status of Internally Displaced Persons and Refugees from Abkhazia and South Ossetia".

12 September 2009 The Israeli Minister of Intelligence and Atomic Energy Dan Meridor states that Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu recently made a secret visit to Moscow.

12 September 2009 Energy Minister Sergey Shmatko says Russia intends to continue developing multifaceted relations with OPEC. He rejects claims that Russia does not always play by OPEC rules.

13 September 2009 Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez says on Venezuelan TV that he has reached agreements with Russia to strengthen Venezuela's defence capabilities. He says Venezuela will purchase 92 125mm T-72 tanks and Smerch missiles for air defence.

13 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev visits Turkmenistan. He has talks with Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow. They discuss energy cooperation. In 2007 the Russo-Turkmen trade turnover was \$7 billion. In the first seven months of 2009 it amounted to \$5 billion. An agreement is signed between Itera and Turkmenistan's State Agency for the Management and Use of Hydrocarbon Resources on the joint exploration of part of the Caspian shelf.

The president's aide Sergey Prikhodko says that Gazprom and Turkmenistan will in the next few weeks resume consultations on deliveries of Turkmen gas. He says that Turkmenistan has offered Russia additional electricity if necessary.

14 September 2009 A draft resolution is submitted by 72 PACE delegates to reconsider the credentials of the Russian delegation.

14 September 2009 Russian President Dmitry Medvedev has talks with French Prime Minister Francois Fillon during "The Modern State and Global Security" conference in Yaroslavl.

Medvedev says at the conference that Russia will promote its initiative for a treaty on European security.

I hope for a further discussion of our initiative which I phrased last year, of a European security treaty. We are ready for a constructive dialogue with our European partners. We will continue to put forward this proposal, explain our position. This document should not be aimed against anybody. On the contrary, this is a document which should help to coordinate the wills of all the countries living on European soil.

14 September 2009 Sberbank chief German Gref outlines the plans of the Magna-Sberbank consortium after they have bought the controlling stake in Opel.

14 September 2009 The MFA states that a notification has been sent to the International Court of Justice of the United Nations about Russia's intention to take part in the hearings on the declaration of independence by Kosovo.

14 September 2009 A press statement entitled "Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov Converses with Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights Janez Lenarcic" is published by the MFA on its website. Lavrov met Lenarcic on 10 September in Moscow. Lavrov calls for ODHIR to avoid double standards.

14 September 2009 Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Zhukov visits Prague. He discusses energy security with Czech Prime Minister Jan Fischer.

Zhukov is in Prague for an annual meeting of the Russian-Czech inter-governmental Commission for Economic, Industrial and Scientific and Technical Cooperation. Czech Industry and Trade Minister Vladimir Tosovsky is Czech co-chairman of the commission. Czech-Russian trade exceeded \$13 billion in 2008.

14 September 2009 Konstantin Vyshkovsky, the director of the department of international financial relations, state debt and state financial assets of the Ministry of Finance sees no urgent need to grant Iceland a loan. It was reported earlier that Iceland had asked Russia for a \$500 million loan.

15 September 2009 An MFA source says to *Kommersant* that proposals handed over by Iran to the six international mediators (five permanent members of the UN Security Council and Germany) last week are unconstructive. The MFA sees as positive and encouraging all the steps taken by Tehran recently towards meeting the proposals of the 5+1 group and IAEA's calls for expanding control activities at Iranian nuclear facilities.

Dmitry Medvedev calls for the proposals handed by Iran to the 5+1 group of negotiators to be studied closely. On 9 September Russia received a "package" of cooperation proposals submitted by Tehran.

15 September 2009 The MFA ambassador-at-large Grigory Logvinov says that the countries taking part in the six-party talks on the North Korea nuclear problem do not have a single opinion so far on prospects to continue consultations. "We are united about the need to continue talks, but we do not have a clear common vision so far. Now a search for ways is in progress."

15 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev says that he and US President Barack Obama are trying to listen to each other, while communication with George Bush's administration was "different".

In the recent period, the busiest talks I have had, as far as both their duration and density of the subject matter are concerned, however obvious this may sound, were with President Obama. I communicated with him for eight hours. This shows that we are at least trying to listen to each other, which, in my opinion, is not too bad because the style of communication with the previous US administration was different.

Medvedev says Russia is ready to discuss any issues with the USA, even those where the two countries' positions do not coincide. He says Russia is ready to solve various tasks together with the USA, which includes discussing some regional issues. "I think that the discussion of various issues during President Obama's visit to Russia was fairly productive; we talked about the Iranian nuclear problem, Afghanistan, Pakistan, North Korea."

Medvedev says that there are no disagreements between him and Vladimir Putin on the issue of Russia's joining the WTO, and accuses the USA of blocking Russia's accession to the organization.

15 September 2009 Presidential aide Arkady Dvorkovich says that the plan proposed by the current US administration to overcome the economic crisis meets the main challenges of the present-day economic situation.

15 September 2009 Ukrainian Economics Minister Bohdan Danylyshyn says that Ukraine would like to review the formula set in the 10-year gas contract with Russia, the volume of gas Ukraine undertook to buy each year and the terms of Russian gas transit through Ukraine. Dmitry Medvedev earlier said that the long-term gas agreement between Russia and Ukraine should not be changed. Danylyshyn also calls on Russia to invest in the modernization of the Ukrainian gas pipelines.

15 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev says he cannot see any prospects for improving relations with the current Georgian leadership.

Zavtra TV reports that Russia has signed military cooperation agreements with South Ossetia and Abkhazia. In accordance with the agreement, Russia has received an opportunity to build, use and improve military infrastructure and bases on the territory of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The effective period of the agreement is 49 years. The agreements were signed by the defence ministers of the three states.

15 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev says that Japan's new prime minister should move away from "extreme positions" in settling issues related to the Kuril Islands.

15 September 2009 Vladimir Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov says that France may participate in the South Stream project. This was briefly discussed at the meeting between Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and his French counterpart Francois Fillon on 14 September.

15 September 2009 Pacific Fleet Commander Vice-Admiral Konstantin Sidenko orders setting up a new, fourth, detachment of ships to take part in the international mission to fight piracy in the Gulf of Aden.

15 September 2009 Admiral Sidenko visits South Korea to discuss joint ways to better ensure the safety of passageways for merchant ships in the region.

16 September 2009 Gazprom head Aleksey Miller meets South Ossetian prime minister Vadim Brovtsev. Brovtsev says that South Ossetia will sign contracts with Gazprom for gas supplies. Miller also meets the president of South Ossetia, Eduard Kokoyty, to discuss Russian gas deliveries via the Dzuarikau-Tskhinvali gas pipeline.

16 September 2009 The Investigations Committee completes investigative actions onboard the bulk carrier *Arctic Sea* in the Atlantic Ocean. The Committee refuses to forward the *Arctic Sea* hijacking case to Malta or Sweden for trial. The Maltese government as that of the flag state under whose flag the *Arctic Sea* is registered and the ship's owner, Arctic Sea LTD Malta, had been informed that the *Arctic Sea* would be handed over at the port of Las Palmas of the Gran Canaria island between 17 and 18 September.

16 September 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin has a telephone conversation with Danish Prime Minister Lars Loekke Rasmussen. They discuss the Nord Stream gas pipeline. Putin notes the high investment activity of Danish companies on the Russian market. The total amount of their investment exceeds \$8 billion.

16 September 2009 Director of the MFA's department for European cooperation Vladimir Voronkov says that Russia believes it would be expedient to start working on a programme of immediate actions in the field of confidence-building measures and control over weapons, similar to how this was done in 1993-94. He says there is currently a need to modernize the Vienna Document on confidence- and security-building measures in the military field, which has not been revised since 1999. He says that Russia firmly supported restoring the viability of the CFE regime on the basis of an improved "package solution".

16 September 2009 Participants in a session of the Coordinating Committee of the CIS Defence Ministers' Council in Astrakhan say that several CIS member-countries are engaged in setting up three joint regional air defence structures as part of the CIS air defence system - East European, Caucasus and Central Asian.

17 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev praises US President Barack Obama for his decision to shelve plans to deploy missile defence systems in Poland and the Czech Republic.

We saw the statements by President Obama about correcting the USA's approaches to the issue of missile defence. I discussed this topic with the US president during our meetings in London and Moscow. We agreed and recorded this in our agreements, in our joint statements that Russia and the USA will strive towards joint work for assessing the risks of missile proliferation in the world.

The statement made in Washington today shows that quite good conditions are evolving for such work. Of course, substantial expert consultations still have to be conducted and of course our country is ready for this. In any case, during my meeting with President Obama planned for 23 September in New York we will have a good opportunity to exchange opinions on all issues of strategic stability, including missile defence.

I expect that we will instruct the relevant departments, Russian and American departments, to step up cooperation, including with the involvement of European and other interested states. We will develop together efficient measures concerning the risks of missile proliferation; measures which allow for the interests and concerns of all sides to be taken into account and to ensure equal security for all states in the European space. We appreciate the responsible approach of the US president to implementing our agreements. I am ready for the continuation of dialogue.

Sergey Lavrov states:

As for missile defence, this subject was discussed by the presidents, Medvedev and Obama, on more than one occasion, starting from their first meeting at the beginning of April in London, during the Moscow summit in June this year. It was reflected in the documents which were approved by the presidents. And the presidents, inter alia, spoke in these documents in favour of carefully looking at the ways of cooperating on an equal basis when it comes to risks of missile proliferation. The American leader

stated that on his instruction, a process of looking at all the aspects of the plans for the deployment of the third positioning area of US missile defence in the Czech Republic and Poland was under way in the United States. He said that this overview would be completed sometime in September. And judging by the reports which we received today, this is really the case and as far as I understand, President Obama's news conference has been scheduled literally now. We shall be listening and analysing carefully what he will say. I hope that his statements will reflect taking into account the concerns that we have been expressing regarding the third positioning area, and taking into account our proposals to work jointly with the aim of neutralizing and averting the risks of missile proliferation, but jointly, meaning from the very beginning - joint analysis of the risks and threats, joint working out of measures which could be used to prevent such risks and joint implementation of such measures.

The head of the Duma International Affairs Committee, Konstantin Kosachev, says that the US decision to scrap its plans for missile defence systems in Europe is long-awaited and shows that the Obama administration is beginning to understand Russia.

Today's events are, naturally, long-awaited. We never doubted the rightfulness of what Russia has been standing up for, that is, on the one hand, a more honest, more objective assessment of the situation in Iran and, on the other hand, a more serious and responsible attitude to the strategic dialogue between Russia and the USA as a most important factor in preserving global stability.

In both these positions the Bush administration categorically did not understand us. As far as I can judge by today's decision, the Obama administration is beginning to understand us.

No security scheme can be set up exclusively on a national basis any more. They should envisage cooperation with partners or, at the very least, not undermine trust between partners.

President Obama's decision constitutes a return to the positions of strategic partnership. It means a resumption of dialogue on the assessment of the nature of our common threats. It means that in the future Russia and the USA will not only be discussing these problems but will be closely cooperating over these matters, including the area of missile defence. I would definitely not rule this out.

Russian Ambassador to NATO Dmitry Rogozin states:

We are on the threshold of very important changes in the character of relations between Russia and the West. I hope that these will lead to stronger security for the whole of the European continent.

If this decision is officially announced by Washington, this will signal that our relations with the new American administration are acquiring a more stable character, and those irritants that have marred our relations are removed as garbage.

Russia's prestige has considerably risen in the past few years. I am speaking here absolutely definitely on this topic, since I know at first hand how they have begun to treat us. We have displayed our resolve and adherence to principles by the events in August of last year. Everyone has seen that if Russia makes a decision related to guaranteeing its security, it will not hesitate and will go all the way.

This decision has been reconsidered. However, the ships on which the new strategic missile defence elements will be stationed can sail to one area today and a different area tomorrow. In the end, in the event of some tensions between Russia and NATO or Russia and the USA, they could sail to our shores. It means that the Americans

have simply chosen a much more flexible scheme for deploying their strategic missile defence elements than the one before.

Second, voices are being heard in the West, including here in Brussels at NATO, claiming that this is a huge concession to Russia. But I do not want us to fall into childlike euphoria. In reality, this is being referred to as a concession to Russia primarily by those who want to squeeze out extra dividends from us. They will say: look, you did not want a radar in the Czech Republic and antimissiles in Poland, and we have done what you wanted, so now it is your turn. I must say that horse trading is inappropriate here. In reality, the Americans have merely corrected their own mistake, and we are not obliged to pay for someone correcting their own mistakes.

Rogozin states that the Obama administration is "much more advanced intellectually than their predecessors".

However, I also think there will also be a certain compensation. Patriot long-range air defence and interception systems are likely to be deployed in Poland and perhaps the Czech Republic. But the question is against whom. Does Iran have a single plane that can reach Poland or the Czech Republic even without needing to fly back? Of course not. The only country that is not a member of NATO and is near this region to have such combat aviation is the Russian Federation.

So it is quite obvious that, in order to placate Poland and the Czech Republic, it is most likely that Washington will deploy its American anti-aircraft systems next to our borders. It will mean that there will be no winding down of serious talks with the Americans and NATO on the issue of Europe's militarization.

He says the USA should cooperate with Russia over missile defence:

We will continue to insist that the cart cannot be placed ahead of the horse. If the Americans really wanted to agree with us, they would not have started carrying military junk from one country to another, from land to the sea and so on, but they would have acted differently. They would have said: Russians, we are ready to agree with you, above all, on conducting a joint analysis of missile threats, and we ready to explore with you what the real threats to our world are, and afterwards we would be ready to draw up with you political and economic measures containing this threat. If these measures do not help, only then could one consider a military response. We have heard nothing like this so far. That is why I do not particularly support the elation I have heard from our experts, military experts, over today's news from Washington. We should be much more firm and consistent in our intentions. We will be insisting that we start with the joint analysis of missile threats.

He warns that the Obama Administration is still aiming at world hegemony:

The plans to deploy strategic missile defences cover not just the United States, which has such systems, and countries of Western Europe, but almost the entire world, as we can see today. If these ships sail to the Middle East, the Mediterranean or somewhere else, for example the shores of North Korea, it means that the US plans to develop missile defences amount to plans for a permanent US military presence throughout the world. It means that no-one in Washington, even under Barack Obama's new Democratic administration, intends to abandon plans for US hegemony in the entire world. We should take that into account.

Chairman of the Duma International Affairs Committee Konstantin Kosachev makes the following comments on Vesti TV on the US decision:

I am confident that there will be impact and it will be positive. We are in the beginning

of a new chapter of Russian-US relations. Dialogue is being restored. What the Bush administration is doing, however you look at it, meant that a trustful dialogue was impossible. We did not believe the Americans' assurances that they were acting bearing in mind Iran exclusively. It was obvious that the Russian component in this antimissile defence project is no less central, at least. This, naturally, undermined mutual trust. Now trust is coming back. Since it's coming back, agreements will follow soon, including on a new treaty on strategic offensive arms.

[Presenter] *How will Iran take the news? Will they revise their plans for the nuclear programme?*

[Kosachev] *We would very much like to believe this, because Iran's nuclear programme still raises questions. In the latest report by the IAEA, there is no proof that the programme is military or could be military. But there are still questions. And we all expect Iran to be more open, more ready for talks, more flexibility, if you want. Until now, any country would have reacted similarly. Iran reacted to pressure from the outside, by the USA, with extreme toughness, responded to pressure by pressure, if you wish, moral, or even military sometimes. If the factor of American pressure is gone, either Iran must immediately respond to this and behave differently, or, sadly, Iran might miss a real opportunity to restore trust to itself and resolve the problems of its national security through multilateral mechanisms rather than through its defence.*

17 September 2009 Sergey Lavrov gives a speech at the MFA. He warns against using force against Iran.

This fully applies to the Iran situation. The issue of its nuclear programme can only have an integrated, negotiated solution, in a regional context, but in no way one based on the use of force. Attempts to use force would have catastrophic consequences for the entire region of the Middle and Near East, which is overloaded with conflicts as it is, above all by the Arab-Israeli conflict. This is why those who call for stepping up pressure on Tehran should think out the entire strategy, to the end.

Now there is a real chance to start talks the result of which should be accords allowing the restoration of trust in an exclusively peaceful character of Iran's nuclear programme and ensuring Iran's participation on equal footing in international economic life and collective efforts aimed at the settlement of crisis situations in the region.

MFA spokesman Andrey Nesterenko says that Russia is not trying to exclude Iran from decisions about the Caspian Sea. He mentions this while referring to the informal four-party meeting of the presidents of Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan in the town of Aktau (Kazakhstan), which took place on 11-12 September at the initiative of Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev.

17 September 2009 The MFA says that due to Georgia's secession from the CIS, Georgian citizens without visas can no longer enter Russia via its land border with Azerbaijan.

17 September 2009 The seventh round of the Geneva discussions on security in the Transcaucasus takes place. The head of the Russian delegation, Deputy Russian Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin, says participants have agreed to continue work on determining the main principles of an agreement which would guarantee that Georgia will not attack Abkhazia and South Ossetia again. "The Russian, Abkhaz and South Ossetian sides intend to speak about the need to conclude a binding agreement on the non-use of force between Georgia and South Ossetia, and also Georgia and Abkhazia." He says Georgia is ready to discuss the possibility of concluding such an agreement. "But the point is that this agreement should be signed between Georgia and Abkhazia and Georgia and South Ossetia - this is categorically not being accepted by the Georgian side. Herein is the main difficulty."

17 September 2009 Sergey Lavrov says that Russia's military involvement in Afghanistan is "absolutely ruled out".

The MFA welcomes the publication of preliminary results of presidential and provincial elections in Afghanistan. The elections took place on 20 August.

17 September 2009 Energy Minister Sergey Shmatko says that in the last two days he has held negotiations by phone with the secretary-general of OPEC and Qatar's deputy prime minister to discuss the present situation, and they agree that Russia and OPEC are still interested in developing relations of partnership.

17 September 2009 MFA spokesman Andrey Nesterenko says Moscow supports the intention of the new Japanese prime minister, Yukio Hatoyama, to sign a peace treaty with Russia.

18 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev welcomes the US decision to scrap plans to deploy missile defence systems in Poland and the Czech Republic.

The fact that this signal has been sent is very good. It shows that, to say the least, our American counterparts are prepared to pay heed to the arguments and position of the Russian side, ready to maintain dialogue and take decisions aimed at the situation calming down. I don't think that anyone would have gained any dividends from the third positioning area in Europe, apart from the group of politicians directly involved in the decision and the group of companies which would have been supplying relevant ABM and making a radar.

Vladimir Putin says:

The recent decision of Barack Obama, which cancelled plans to build a third deployment area for missile defence in Europe, makes us think good thoughts. And I very much hope that this correct and bold decision will be followed by others, including the complete abolition of all restrictions on cooperation with Russia, and on transferring high technology to Russia, and stepping up the expansion of the members - the number of members - of the World Trade Organization by [admitting] Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan.

18 September 2009 Russia's envoy to NATO, Dmitry Rogozin, says that the NATO secretary-general Anders Fogh Rasmussen has completed the "defrosting" of relations with Russia." He is referring to Rasmussen's speech at the Carnegie Europe think tank in Brussels.

18 September 2009 A Russian military delegation headed by Chief of General Staff Nikolay Makarov has talks with the Cuban Head of State Raul Castro, Chief of General Staff of Revolutionary Armed Forces Div-General Alvaro Lopez Miera and other representatives of the Cuban military leadership in Cuba.

19 September 2009 Federation Council speaker Sergey Mironov rejects any suggestion that Russia should not supply S-300 air defence systems to Iran in exchange for the USA's decision to suspend its plans to deploy missile defence facilities in Eastern Europe.

First deputy head of the Duma international affairs committee Leonid Slutsky says Russia's proposals to the United States on joint use of the radar stations in Armavir and Qabala [in Azerbaijan] in the sphere of developing missile defence cooperation have new significance following the US decision. He says the next logical step to counteract common challenges and threats could be the ratification of the adapted CFE Treaty by US and NATO allies.

19 September 2009 MFA spokesman Andrey Nesterenko says that statements made in Tehran by Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinezhad on 18 September doubting the reality of the Holocaust are unacceptable.

19 September 2009 Energy Minister Sergey Shmatko has talks in Sofia with Bulgarian Economy, Energy and Tourism Minister Traycho Traykov with Prime Minister Boyko Borisov. They discuss South Stream, the Belene nuclear power plant and the Burgas-Alexandroupolis oil pipeline.

20 September 2009 A source in the Federal Security Service's Border Guard Service informs Interfax that Russia is planning to send up to 10 coast patrol boats to protect Abkhazia's sea borders.

21 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev, visits Switzerland. He says he hopes for an active discussion with the Swiss side of the Russian initiative on concluding a legally-binding treaty on European security. Medvedev is received by the president of the Swiss Confederation, Hans-Rudolf Merz. Medvedev says the level of European security has diminished in recent years. "We believe that all countries are interested in establishing a new security architecture in Europe. Perhaps, especially interested in this are those countries which have not been involved in alliances or blocs, those which are not participating in the resolution of a whole range of issues within such influential organizations as NATO or the European Union." Medvedev says G20 countries should act fast to reach universally binding agreements on a new configuration of global financial relations. He calls for a new international energy security agreement. Medvedev says that Russia shares Switzerland's desire to create a free trade zone between the Russian Federation and the European Free Trade Association.

21 September 2009 The MFA publishes on its website a "response by the official spokesman of the Russian Foreign Ministry, A A Nesterenko, to a question from the media relating to the statements by NATO Secretary-General A Fogh Rasmussen regarding the establishment of strategic partnership with Russia". Rasmussen spoke in favour of establishing strategic partnership with Russia in his speech at the Brussels division of Carnegie Endowment on 18 September.

21 September 2009 Chief of General Staff Nikolay Makarov says Russia's attitude to US plans to deploy its new missile defence systems in the Caucasus is negative. He says that in Russia's opinion, a global missile defence system should be created jointly. Makarov says that Russia has not yet taken the decision to cancel its plan to deploy Iskander missile systems in Kaliningrad Region following the US decision to shelve its plan to deploy missile defence systems in Europe.

21 September 2009 First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov says that membership of the WTO remains the invariable ultimate goal of the Russian government. He is visiting the USA. He says "in this matter 99 per cent depends on the US Administration... "Unless the Americans want this, there will always be an excuse to prevent Russia from joining the WTO."

21 September 2009 A joint anti-piracy exercise by the Russian and Chinese navies ends in the Gulf of Aden off the Horn of Africa coast.

21 September 2009 The border guard patrol ship *Novorossyisk* has come on combat duty off the coast of Abkhazia. It is the first ship from a force that Moscow is dispatching to protect the republic's territorial waters. The division, which will consist of 10 newest patrol boats, will be based in the Abkhaz town of Oчамchire.

22 September 2009 First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov says that Russia and the USA have only four unresolved matters relating to Russia's accession to the WTO.

22 September 2009 A BSF source says that starting from 1 October, the Sevastopol authorities are tripling utility rates for city enterprises. This means that Russia will be paying three times more for the maintenance of the BSF in Sevastopol.

22 September 2009 The chairman of the Duma Committee on Affairs of the CIS and Relations with Compatriots, Aleksey Ostrovsky, says that if Moldova joins Romania, it will lose the Transdnestr region for good.

I am not the president of the Russian Federation who defines foreign policy in line with the constitution. Therefore I cannot and shall not talk about whether Russia recognizes the Dniester region or not. I am expressing my personal opinion. I believe that the Russian leadership won't allow the Russian-speaking population in the Dniester region - and the whole population there is Russian-speaking - to be deprived of the opportunity to use their own language, to speak their own language, to teach their own language and to be fully involved with its main homeland, the Russian Federation.

22 September 2009 Agriculture Minister Yelena Skrynnik says that in 2010 Russia and Belarus will keep the volume of mutual food deliveries at the 2009 level.

22 September 2009 The chairman of the Federation Council's Committee on Security and Defence Issues, Viktor Ozerov, says that the decision to set up a naval base for the Black Sea Fleet in the Abkhaz port of Ochamchire has not been taken yet.

Spetsstroy director Army General Nikolay Abroskin says he has not received any orders to start constructing coastal infrastructure facilities in Ochamchire either.

22 September 2009 The deputy head of the MOD press service, Irina Kovalchuk says that the defence ministers of Azerbaijan and Russia have signed a plan of military cooperation for 2010.

22 September 2009 Russia's official representative to the Organization of the Islamic Conference, Kamil Iskhakov, says Russia does not yet intend to change its status of an observer to that of a member.

22 September 2009 An article by Vladimir Nadein entitled "Around Russia: Serdyukov from the Pentagon" in *Yezhenedelnyy Zhurnal Online* discusses the US decision to scrap its planned missile defence system in Poland and the Czech Republic. It discusses the roles of Dmitry Medvedev and Vladimir Putin in the formulation of Russian foreign and defence policy.

23 September 2009 The Russian ambassador to NATO, Dmitry Rogozin, says that the United States still has a long way to go to meet Russia halfway in building better relations between the two countries. He calls on the United States to lift Cold War-era restrictions on technology transfer to Russia and to support the country's bid to join the WTO together with Kazakhstan and Belarus.

23 September 2009 Presidential aide Sergey Prikhodko says the Kremlin has expressed satisfaction over the course of forging relations with the current US administration. "We are satisfied that we are establishing a very intensive and open discussion on the entire breadth of the agenda of Russian-US relations concerning not only purely bilateral relations, but also maintaining strategic stability."

We are ready to work in this manner, and will work in this way, sensing a willingness in return from the American side.

He says that relations between Moscow and Washington "are not devoid of inconsistencies on regional and other issues, and are not devoid of contradictions on other issues, but we

acknowledge the willingness to find a broader understanding of the USA's and Russia's responsibility for many issues concerning nuclear disarmament and the international agenda".

23 September 2009 A source in the Russian UN delegation in New York says Russia does not rule out taking part in drawing up new UN Security Council sanctions against Iran, but only if there are objective reasons and IAEA recommendations.

23 September 2009 Konstantin Kosachev, chairman of the Duma Committee on International Affairs, expresses regret over Poland's Sejm adopting a resolution on the outbreak of World War Two.

23 September 2009 State Secretary and Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin says Russia is interested in settling the issues of the status of the Caspian as soon as possible. He is attending a meeting of the Russian ambassadors to the Caspian littoral states in Astrakhan. He says:

Talks on the status of the Caspian, which have been busy and not easy, have been going on for 12 years already. This is due to the fact that new states have emerged in this region, which are looking for their place and want to understand where they are situated in the legal frame of reference.

As far as Russia is concerned, we are doing all we can for the legal status to take into account the interests of all the Caspian littoral states and we will insist on this. The main principle is that in settling the issue of the status of the sea all five Caspian states should be involved, that, first of all, the regional interests and the interests of those states which are situated around the Caspian should be taken into account.

I think that we are not far from settling the status issues, but we should not wait for their settlement. Rather it is necessary to develop practical forms of cooperation in economy, investment, culture, relations between people.

We want to set up such a security system on the Caspian that would promote stability in that region. To this end a conference of representatives of all five Caspian states is to take place in Baku in late October. We are preparing for this conference. We hope that practical forms of cooperation will be found there.

24 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev has a bilateral meeting with US President Barack Obama. He says that "favourable changes" had indeed occurred in Russian-US relations and that the two sides had "begun to listen to each other" once again; that a new agreement to replace the START treaty should be ready on time; that the USA's decision to suspend its plans to deploy missile defence facilities in Eastern Europe was "very sensible"; and that sanctions are rarely productive "but in certain situations the use of sanctions is unavoidable", when talking about Iran's nuclear programme. He says Russia has offered the United States to cut the number of nuclear weapons delivery vehicles by more than two-thirds and this is being discussed with the USA.

24 September 2009 The MFA expresses regret over a resolution adopted by Poland's lower house of parliament, the Sejm, on 23 September condemning the Soviet invasion of Poland on 17 September 1939.

24 September 2009 The Russian MOD denies claims by Georgian officials about Russian Navy submarines having been deployed in the Abkhaz port of Ochamchire.

24 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev attends the UN General Assembly in New York. He discusses Iran in bilateral discussions with US President Barack Obama. He also has a bilateral meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama, and Chinese President Hu

Jintao.

Medvedev gives a speech at the UN General Assembly.

24 September 2009 Major-General Vladimir Dvorkin, head of the Centre for Strategic Nuclear Force Problems, is interviewed on the US decision to abandon the deployment of the missile defence system in the Czech Republic and Poland and the Iranian nuclear programme.

25 September 2009 An article in *Novaya Gazeta* by Mikhail Delyagin: "New National Idea: 'Russia as a BRIC Country'" discusses BRIC and Russia's role in it.

25 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev issues a statement on Iran which is published on the presidential website. It refers to the information that for several years now Iran has been building the enrichment plant near the city of Qom without the IAEA's knowledge.

25 September 2009 Sergey Lavrov says that Russia's joining the WTO remains its "strategic goal". He says the first meeting with the Customs Union partners, Kazakhstan and Belarus, will be held in a new format in Geneva soon.

First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov says that work to agree and unify customs tariffs within the Customs Union of Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan has been completed. Directives for a unified negotiating group for their accession to the WTO have been approved.

25 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev says that Russia will not be deploying Iskander short-range ballistic missiles in the Kaliningrad Region following Washington's decision to shelve its missile defence plans for East Europe. He praises the USA for realising that the unipolar world is collapsing. He says he may stand for president again in 2012.

25 September 2009 First Deputy Chairman of the Duma International Affairs Committee Leonid Slutsky thinks that Russia will not use its right of veto if the UN Security Council decides to impose sanctions against Iran.

Sergey Lavrov and his Israeli counterpart, Avigdor Lieberman, discuss the Middle East situation at the UN General Assembly in New York.

25 September 2009 Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says that Russia is satisfied with the decisions drafted by the G20 in relation to the reform of the IMF.

25 September 2009 , says the countries with military forces in Afghanistan should share responsibility for the production of drugs there. He meets his US counterparts in Washington.

25 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev gives a press conference after the G20 summit in Pittsburgh.

25 September 2009 The head of the Presidential Administration, Sergey Naryshkin, visits Moldova.

26 September 2009 Sergey Lavrov addresses the the US-Russia Business Council in New York. He says that the "reset" in Russian-US relations could happen "more energetically" if economic cooperation were stepped up between the two countries. He says: "Trade between the two countries, which increased by more than one-third to reach a record \$36 billion last year, lost this one-third in the first six months of 2009." He says investment has dropped by more than \$1 billion, "although the USA still ranks number eight in the list of the largest investors in Russia".

26 September 2009 Sergey Lavrov says that Russia regards the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty as a key element in nuclear weapons limitation and nuclear non-proliferation.

26 September 2009 Sergey Lavrov says Moscow has noted the rapprochement of positions with NATO and is ready to work together, but not based on a selective principle.

Undoubtedly, there is rapprochement of positions on behalf of the alliance. After NATO had unilaterally severed relations with Russia in August 2008, a process of rethinking the situation took place in the alliance. I believe that everyone understands the new reality and what all of us have spoken about: no problem can be solved single-handedly.

For example, NATO in Afghanistan badly needs support of the states that are not its members, first of all, Afghanistan's neighbours, and, of course, Russia's support. We are giving it in various forms.

26 September 2009 The deputy head of the CSTO's department for political cooperation, Anatoly Chuntulov, says the CSTO is ready to establish contacts with NATO.

He is participating in the round-table discussion on cooperation between the CSTO and NATO in Southwest and Central Asia. The discussion was organized by the New York-based East-West Institute. Chuntulov notes the CSTO on the top level took the decision in 2004 on a dialogue with NATO. "All the CSTO member states supported the decision. So, the organization is long ready for it."

27 September 2009 Channel 1 TV reports that Russian ships have now started patrolling Abkhaz waters. Georgian MPs are preparing to take legal action in the international maritime court (International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea) in Hamburg.

28 September 2009 Gazprom head Aleksey Miller says that Turkey, Romania and a number of other countries are showing an interest in the South Stream pipeline project, which is being implemented by Gazprom and Italian Eni on an equal footing.

Miller says that Gazprom will continue to develop the Kovykta gas field in Eastern Siberia. He denies reports that Gazprom may cede control over to the Rosneftegaz state holding company.

28 September 2009 Sergey Lavrov says that Moscow has urged Tehran to show maximum cooperation in relations with the IAEA and believes that Iran has got the message. He states this following talks with his Iranian opposite number, Manuchehr Mottaki.

28 September 2009 Kristian Bzhania, the head of the directorate for Abkhaz governmental information and mass communication under the republic's president, says Russia and Abkhazia have signed a memorandum giving the Abkhaz side landline and mobile communications codes which the republic may introduce as early as next week.

28 September 2009 The MFA website publishes a text "On the meeting between State Secretary and Deputy Russian Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin and the head of the EU's Monitoring Mission in Georgia, Hansjoerg Haber". "They met on 28 September. They discussed in detail the situation on the Georgian-South Ossetian and Georgian-Abkhaz borders, the activities of joint mechanisms for preventing incidents in the border regions, and issues of cooperation between representatives of Russian military and border contingents and EU observers in the Transcaucasus."

28 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev telephones German Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel to congratulate her on her victory in the German parliamentary elections.

28 September 2009 Russia's permanent representative to NATO, Dmitry Rogozin, says that the US decision to base a missile defence system at sea complicates Russian planning.

When in the past we would have known definitely that there will be 10 anti-missiles in Poland and a radar in the Czech Republic while we have our Iskander in Kaliningrad Region - we would be keeping an eye on each other, monitoring and scaring each other - then now the missile defence system will be based on board US cruisers and who knows where else they will turn up tomorrow.

29 September 2009 Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov says the recent missile tests conducted by Iran should not serve as a pretext to bring to a head the issue of imposing sanctions against Teheran. He says that Iran's proposals submitted to the group of six [5 + 1] international mediators for the settlement of the Iranian nuclear issue in early September open up a broad field for dialogue.

29 September 2009 Russia's permanent representative at NATO, Dmitry Rogozin, says Iran's missile programmes cannot fail to cause Russia's concern.

29 September 2009 The state secretary - deputy minister of foreign affairs Grigory Karasin has talks in Moscow with the deputy minister of foreign affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran for European affairs, Mehdi Safari.

29 September 2009 Head of the Duma international affairs committee and head of PACE Konstantin Kosachev says that Moscow will not agree to the demands that it should leave Abkhazia and South Ossetia:

We are being invited to withdraw completely from the so-called conflict zone, both militarily and politically, and give the Georgian authorities the chance to restore its territorial integrity, which suddenly turned out here to be the only value defended by the assembly, which incidentally is very odd.

However, we will of course not do so, at least not while the people who intend to restore Georgia's territorial integrity by military means, and who have not admitted that their actions in August last year were a mistake, remain in power in Georgia; and also while this proposition about Georgia's territorial integrity continues to be supported quite indiscriminately by certain international organizations.

Kosachev says that the Russian delegation at PACE is not going to take part in a debate on the request to strip Russia of its powers at a sitting of the autumn session of PACE which is scheduled for 1 October.

Kosachev says the Russian delegation disagrees in principle with the conclusions and assessments of the report and the draft resolution, "The war between Georgia and Russia: one year after".

29 September 2009 Russia's permanent representative at NATO, Dmitry Rogozin, says Russia wants to have guarantees that the USA's new planned sea-based missile defence system will not be aimed against Russia's nuclear missile potential. Rogozin says that Moscow is against the European missile defence system becoming part of the US missile defence system and depending on this it will decide the issue of expediency of cooperation with NATO in the sphere of missile defence.

Rogozin rules out the possibility of Georgia and Ukraine joining the organization.

Rogozin says that without Russian support in Afghanistan, NATO will not succeed there.

We want to know everything that is going on in NATO members' heads in relation to Afghanistan. This is a territory of our responsibility and that of our allies in the CSTO. So we are currently holding talks on setting up a special system of dialogue, political dialogue, on the future of Afghanistan between Russia and NATO. Without Russia's support in Afghanistan, NATO will not be able to do anything.

29 September 2009 Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov speaks at a Russian-American Pacific Partnership forum in Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. He says there is a new quality of relations between Moscow and Washington.

An absolutely new matter of cooperation in all fields, and first of all in military and political and trade and economic fields, is taking shape. Enhanced additional opportunities, including chances for further implementation of interregional links, are opening.

The results of the recent talks at the G20 summit in Pittsburgh and bilateral meetings within the framework of the UN General Assembly, numerous and busy contacts at interdepartmental level - all these are "clear evidence of a 'reset' in Russian-US relations launched by the Russian and US presidents in June [should be July].

29 September 2009 Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov says that the timetable for starting the implementation of the Russian-American accords on the transit of military cargoes to Afghanistan depends on the USA. He says Russia is ready to start implementing the accords.

29 September 2009 Dmitry Medvedev visits Belarus for the Zapad-2009 military exercise. He says Russia and Belarus have agreed to stage such drills once every two years.

29 September 2009 Sergey Lavrov says that Russia calls for expanding trade and economic ties with Iraq and the need to implement joint projects in the oil and gas sector. He had talks on 28 September with Iraqi counterpart, Hoshyar Zebari at the UN.

Lavrov says Russia is planning in the foreseeable future to submit a draft new European security treaty to European agencies for consideration. He says he is convinced that Germany will not change its course towards Russia after the Bundestag election that has taken place.

30 September 2009 Gazprom's board of directors discuss the company's participation in gas and energy markets of the North America and adopts a decision to strengthen the company's positions in the region. North America is a target market within the framework of Gazprom's strategy in the field of liquefied natural gas (LNG) production and supply approved by the board of directors in March 2008. The document envisages Gazprom's work in the sectors of gas liquefaction, sea transporting, regasification and sale the fuel to end consumers. Gazprom plans to deliver LNG to the North American market from two Russian projects, Sakhalin-2 and Shtokman gas field.

30 September 2009 Presidential press secretary Natalya Timakova says that "Russia's proposals to the USA on cooperation in missile defence, including on the use of the Qabala radar station in Azerbaijan, are current as before". Timakova also says that the issue of Russia deploying Iskander missile systems in Kaliningrad Region has been definitively closed.

Timakova says Russia would like to establish fully-fledged cooperation with NATO. "We have never renounced all of the obligations which we undertook and, of course, we would like to restore cooperation in a fully-fledged capacity in accordance with the spirit of Pratica di Mare." [Pratica di Mare near Rome is where the principles for Russian-NATO relations were determined in 2002].

30 September 2009 Natalya Timakova says that the Russian leadership welcomes the conclusions reached by the EU commission investigating the conflict with Georgia in August 2008. "If the commission has admitted that Georgia was the first to start the fighting, which the Russian side has said repeatedly since the moment the conflict began, we can only welcome this conclusion."

The MFA issues a statement on the publication of the report on the Russo-Georgian conflict of August 2008. It states:

In our opinion, the efforts of the EU Commission were not in vain - any thinking person will draw the pivotal conclusion from the report published on 30 September this year that it was the current Georgian leadership which launched the aggression against South Ossetia during the night of 7-8 August. This is ultimately the main conclusion of the work of the Tagliavini Commission.

Meanwhile, the report also contains several ambiguities. In particular, the passage in the report on the allegedly disproportionate use of force by the Russian side gives rise to serious questions.

State Secretary and Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin says that the report lays the blame for unleashing aggression against South Ossetia in August 2008 on Georgia.

Russia's permanent representative at the EU, Vladimir Chizhov, says: "On the main issue of who started the war and who is responsible for it, the report says unequivocally enough that it was precisely the assault by the Georgian army on sleeping Tskhinvali on the night of 7-8 August last year that marked the beginning of large-scale hostilities and the transformation of the conflict ... into an acute armed phase."

First deputy chairman of the Duma Committee for CIS Affairs and Ties with Compatriots Konstantin Zatulin says that the report cuts the ground from under those who want to represent those events as a plot and provocation by Russia.

The head of the Russian delegation at PACE, chairman of the Duma Committee on International Affairs, Konstantin Kosachev says he is satisfied with the main conclusions contained in the EU's report.

30 September 2009 The deputy head of the MFA's information and press department, Igor Lyakin-Frolov, says that the PACE resolution demanding that Russia immediately ensure international observers' unlimited access into South Ossetia and Abkhazia "does not reflect modern-day realities".

30 September 2009 Federation Council speaker Sergey Mironov says those who have initiated debates on stripping Russia of its voting rights in PACE are showing their inability to see the real state of affairs.

We do not want to talk to those who have anti-Russian phobias, but we are open for a dialogue with those who sincerely want to understand the sense of the events that took place in the Caucasus in August last year. Those who have initiated debates on stripping Russia of its voting rights in PACE present in an unfavourable light not Russia, but themselves and their inability to see reality as it is due to an imagination affected by anti-Russian phobias.

Deputy head of the Russian delegation at PACE and first deputy chairman of the Duma International Affairs Committee Leonid Slutsky says that Russia will facilitate the access of observers to South Ossetia and Abkhazia if this does not contradict the interests of the republics.

30 September 2009 Prime Minister Vladimir Putin sends a message to Vlad Filat to congratulate him on his appointment as Moldova's prime minister.

The presidential press secretary Natalya Timakova says that Russia is hoping for constructive and good-neighbourly relations with the new Moldovan leadership, but does not intend to alter its position on NATO expansion.

30 September 2009 Presidential Press secretary Natalya Timakova says that the future position of Russia regarding the Iranian problem will depend on Iran's readiness to cooperate with the IAEA and on the results of the meeting of the 5+1 group on 1 October.

30 September 2009 Aleksandr Bedritsky, the head of the Federal Service for Hydrometeorology and Monitoring of the Environment says Russia is ready to take part in the programme to globally cut greenhouse gas emissions as part of a new agreement on climate change that will replace the Kyoto Protocol. Earlier, Dmitry Medvedev announced that by 2020 gas emissions reduction would reach 10-15 per cent of the 1990 level.

30 September 2009 A meeting of the NATO-Russia Council at ambassador level takes place in Brussels. The permanent representative at NATO, Dmitry Rogozin, says Russia and NATO will need to draw up a road map for bilateral cooperation with the aim of creating guarantees to prevent any military conflicts for any reason. He says that in November a regular meeting of the Russia-NATO Council at the level of ambassadors will take place, and within its framework, work will start to assess common threats in the Euro-Atlantic region. Rogozin also says that during the ambassadors' meeting of the Russia-NATO Council the sides agreed to step up a dialogue on Afghanistan within the framework of the November meeting, to which it is planned to invite representatives of diplomatic missions of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

30 September 2009 Head of the Duma Defence Committee Viktor Zavarzin says one should not be euphoric about the USA's decision not to deploy antimissile defence elements in the Czech Republic and Poland. He meets with US Deputy Defence Secretary Alexander Vershbow in Moscow.

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this paper are entirely and solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect official thinking and policy either of Her Majesty's Government or of the Ministry of Defence.

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Defence Academy of the
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Research & Assessment Branch

Defence Academy of the UK
Block D, JSCSC
Shrivenham
SN6 8TS
England

Telephone: (44) 1793 788743

Fax: (44) 1793 788287

Email: R&ABTeam.hq@da.mod.uk

<http://www.da.mod.uk/r-and-a-b>

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