Conflict Studies Research Centre

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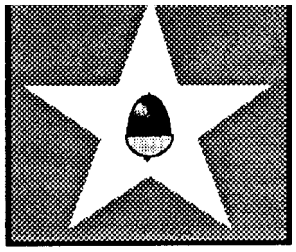
Issues & Obstacles

July 2002



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The Reform of the Russian Army
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Has the heir to the powerful Red Army become incapable of maintaining stability in the former Soviet Union? According to some analysts, Russia, having failed to accomplish the reform of the army, has been forced to agree to the American presence in Central Asia and the southern Caucasus, especially since the attacks on 11 September 2001. The highly unsatisfactory performance of the Russian armed forces in the second Chechen conflict, although less catastrophic from the purely military point of view than in the first, points to the scale of the task still ahead. Initially Vladimir Putin, who received massive electoral support from the army, shelved the problem at a time when, due to the constraints of the war in Chechnya, he needed to maintain good relations with the senior military officers, who are still to a large extent hostile to reform.

Even before he was elected president, Putin highlighted the role of the army in the consolidation of the Russian state. At the end of October 1999, when still only prime minister, he announced his intention of rebuilding military power in Russia because of the growing instability within the Federation and the (re)militarisation of international relations. "If we let our defence potential decline," he said at the time, "our independence as a sovereign state will be threatened. Events in the northern Caucasus, Tajikistan, Kirghizstan and Uzbekistan show that new threats have emerged on our southern borders. Developments in Europe, in Yugoslavia, are also giving cause for concern."[1] Once he was in the Kremlin, he was convinced of the need to speed up the reform of the armed forces and made it one of his priorities. It must be said that he showed much greater determination than his predecessor in that respect and that he enjoyed greater room for manoeuvre. Putin's relations with the military authorities were based on relative trust, fostered by the new president's intention of strengthening the state and Russia's international role and by the improvement in the army's financial situation thanks to the stabilisation of the economy since 1999. However the decisions taken in 2000-2001 on military reform policies met with strong opposition from the armed forces and once again this issue seems to be causing severe problems for the Russian government.

Reform Under Way

The army President Putin inherited when he came to power still needed a great deal of reform. There had been a succession of programmes in the 1990s, but these had mainly led to efforts to rationalise structures.[2] All too often, reflecting the chaotic nature of the decision-making processes and the personalisation of power in the Yeltsin years,[3] they were based on a balance of power between bodies and individuals (ground forces versus airborne forces,[4] strategic forces versus conventional forces, strategic missile forces versus space troops and so on), at a time when budgets were being cut.

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ISBN 1-903584-95-7
July 2002

Main force structures

Ministry of Defence (MO)
Sergey Ivanov - 977,100 men (regular army)*

Army (SV)
Commander-in-chief: General Nikolay Kormiltsev - 321,000 men

Air Force (VVS)
Commander-in-chief: General Vladimir Mikhaylov - 184,600 men

Navy (VMF)
Commander-in-chief: Admiral Vladimir Kuroyedov - 171,500 men

Strategic missile forces (RVSN)
Commander: General Nikolay Solovtsov - 100,000 men**

Space and space defence troops (VKS)
Commander: General Anatoly Perminov

Airborne troops (VDV)
Commander: General Georgy Shpak - 30,000 men

Ministry of the Interior (MVD)
Boris V Gryzlov - 151,100 men (Interior troops)

Federal Border Guard Service (SPS)
General Konstantin Totskiy - 140,000 men

Federal Security Service (FSB)
Nikolay P Patrushev - 4,000 men

Federal Communications and Information Agency (FAPSI)
General Vladimir Matyukhin - 54,000 men

Service for the Protection of the State
General Yevgeny Murov - 10,000 to 30,000 men

Notes:
* 1,274,000, according to the Defence Minister, *AFP*, 31 January 2002. The other figures in this box are from *Military Balance 2001-2002*, IISS, Oxford University Press, 2001.
** The strategic nuclear forces have a total strength of 149,000.

Resistance

Some of the reform policies deemed necessary by certain circles both in the Government and among political forces and supported by public opinion, in particular the professionalisation of the armed forces and a law on alternative service,[5] have failed to progress (though both are theoretically now in place, editor's note). These projects are at odds with Russian armed forces tradition and have met with resistance from senior officers. Vladimir Putin is anxious to resolve this situation and assert the control of the civilian authorities over military leaders, the limits of which have been brought home to him on several occasions (cf the public conflict between the defence minister and the head of the General Staff on military development policies, difficulties in controlling the forces in Chechnya,[6] the lack of transparency from the naval authorities over the Kursk incident...)

Finding himself in an ambiguous situation in relation to the armed forces, President Putin has had to wait before deciding to take action. However, noting that the

"Chechnya generals" were trying to increase their influence over the decision-making process[7] and taking the view that the public disputes between the two most senior military figures, defence minister Igor Sergeyev and head of the General Staff Anatoly Kvashnin, were undermining his efforts to restore the credibility of the Russian State, Mr Putin has started taking steps to regain control of the army.

Regaining Control

The appointment on 28 March 2001 of a new defence minister, Sergey Ivanov, a member of the FSB and close associate of Vladimir Putin, is the clearest signal. This move, which was remarkable given the traditional resistance of the former Soviet army to outside "interference", was accompanied by other measures demonstrating that the civilian government is taking a firmer hand with the military authorities. The aim in appointing Lyubov Kudelina (previously with the Ministry of Finance) to the post of deputy defence minister in charge of the budget was to engage senior military officers, who criticise the inadequacy of the funds allocated to them, in an effort to rationalise the use they make of budget monies. The government is intending to impose budgetary discipline on the armed forces, particularly as their financial situation has shown a relative improvement since 1999 due to the stabilisation of the economy. In the last three years the budget has in any case been easier to forecast and almost fully implemented while over the 1990s the army used to receive only part of the defence budget planned in the federal budget laws.[8] However the problems between the civilian and military authorities on the issue of finance persist, the military authorities pointing to the inadequacy of their budget as further justification for the delay in introducing reforms.

In 2002, the federal budget heading for military reform (excluding the defence budget, set at 284.2 billion roubles), although four times as high as in 2001, is only 16.5 billion roubles. More generally, the defence budget is well below 3.5% of GDP, the figure indicated by the Russian authorities since the mid 90s as the minimum needed to maintain the defence capability. In the federal budget law for 2002, defence expenditure was set at 2.6% of GDP.[9] The government emphasised that neither Washington's decision to withdraw from the ABM treaty (December 2001) nor the increase in the American defence budget would lead to a rise in military expenditure.[10] This strict budgetary policy contradicts the forecasts by some experts on the remilitarisation of the economy under President Putin. He has always stressed that the armed forces development and reform programmes should be driven by the level of spending the State can afford to devote to military needs.[11] However, as many Russian experts and members of parliament point out, the lack of transparency in the military budget and in the use of defence appropriations has hampered the efforts by successive governments to bring about a change in relations between the civil and military authorities.[12]

Disappointments

Recent military reform policies are a synthesis of several proposals, some of them put forward by Yabloko (social-democrat party) and the Union of Right Forces (SPS), which makes the military authorities suspicious of the government's intentions.[13] Vladimir Putin is trying to minimise, if not bypass, the influence of senior army officers, thus attempting to break with the practice in the Yeltsin years. Indeed, Yeltsin to some extent allowed the military to monopolise the internal defence and security debate. This was because of his team's relative lack of interest in those areas, coupled with a desire to offset any political risks caused by discontent amongst the military authorities about what was happening to the army with a range of concessions. Consequently, participation by officials and civilian experts

in the military debate, to which the generals have always been hostile, became increasingly rare in the 1990s, and the debate was no longer as dynamic as it had been under Gorbachev.

Because of these problems, the new Defence Minister is facing obstruction from a number of military leaders, who realise that, contrary to what some of them had expected, the close political and personal relationship between Ivanov and Putin has not been reflected in any special "indulgence" towards the army, even though the president appears to pay more attention to it than his predecessor. Officers have stated publicly that the president has not kept his promises, particularly on pay.[14] Others claim that Sergey Ivanov is incompetent and challenge his right to decide on the fate of an institution he only knows from the outside. These attitudes betray the anxiety of senior defence leaders about the government's intention to extend its right to scrutinise the army, which has traditionally lacked transparency and has been accustomed to being in control of any decision that concerns it. Because of this climate of unease, the military hierarchy hardened its objections to two major policies in the reform projects: the professionalisation of the forces and the adoption of a law on alternative service. If these proposals were to be fully implemented, they would change the traditional face of the Russian army for ever.[15]

Professionalisation

In November 2001, the Russian president announced his intention of gradually abolishing conscription, in order to equip Russia with a smaller and more mobile professional army. He asked the Ministry of Defence to draw up a programme.[16] The plan is for the process to be started first of all in "pilot units", which will be made up entirely of contract personnel. This would give those in charge an opportunity to assess the impact of this change in the structure of the forces on efficiency (the 76th Pskov airborne division is one of the first to be assessed).[17] The Russian military had opposed the professionalisation plan throughout the 90s, following the position adopted in the first talks on military reform in the USSR in the late 80s. Nowadays they claim to be more objective, although they still advocate caution. When asked about the prospects for this change, Anatoly Kvashnin continues to emphasise that in future conscripts should not in any event serve in "trouble spots" and the units in permanent battle readiness should operate exclusively on a contractual recruitment basis.

Cost

The main argument put forward against professionalisation is its cost. According to Ministry of Defence sources, it costs an average of over 40,000 roubles a year to support a private or sergeant serving under contract, compared with 16,000 to 17,000 roubles for a conscript.[18] They also point out that action will need to be taken on infrastructures, since professional soldiers will not accept the conditions that conscripts live in at present.[19] General Vasily Smirnov, deputy head of the general staff's organisation and mobilisation directorate, who is responsible for conscription, stresses that so far only a few rich countries (the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Japan) – and now France – have managed to establish armies composed entirely of professionals, and then only at the end of a gradual process of change (over 10 years in the case of the United States).[20]

The political leaders' response to these arguments is that the conscription system wastes the resources of the army, which is currently devoting too much money to basic instruction and training for young people who lack the skills required in an

army capable of using sophisticated equipment. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that the deterioration in living conditions in the army and the declining prestige of a military career have caused officers to leave in massive numbers.[21]

Supporters of professionalisation, particularly the Yabloko and SPS parties, also draw attention to the impact of the demographic crisis in Russia. According to a Ministry of Defence source, the number of 18 to 27 year olds in 2005-2007 will enable the army to recruit only 40 to 50% of the men it needs.[22] For the military leaders, the solution lies in restricting deferment opportunities for students.[23]

The government anticipates that, when conscription is abolished and further manpower reductions are made,[24] it will be possible to adjust the balance of the defence budget towards investment (new equipment procurement, more funding for military R&D)[25] and training,[26] whilst offering servicemen more attractive pay[27]. Indeed, as Sergey Ivanov points out, about 70% of the defence budget has been spent on maintenance of the forces since the early 1990s, compared with 30% on investment. He stresses that in 2001 the balance has been redressed, with 56% allocated to maintenance and 44% to investment.[28]

Towards Compact & Mobile Armed Forces

After the reforms, the Russian army should be more compact, more mobile and better organised. To achieve these objectives, it will be restructured on the model of Western forces, on the "three environments" principle: ground-sea-aerospace.

New Threats

These guidelines are in line with the hierarchy of threats as seen by a large part of the senior military command and the Russian political authorities. At the top of the hierarchy, regional and local wars and management of some of the effects of the disappearance of the bipolar world (increased low intensity conflicts and peacekeeping operations) have replaced the previous threat from the West. It is true that, particularly since the Kosovo crisis, official documents emphasise the persistence of a potential military threat from the West, a perception that a new "wave of enlargement" of the Alliance might revive. However, the Russian authorities see the instability within the Federation and its immediate periphery (particularly in the Caucasus and Central Asia) as the most immediate threat. The possibility of using the armed forces within the country is now part of the Russian military doctrine. This is due to the war in Chechnya and the problems experienced by the federal Russian state in maintaining its hold over the Federation's subjects, in spite of a definite reinforcement of its control under Putin. The Russian authorities have declared that forces in a permanent state of alert will be put in place by 2006, to be focused strategically on the south and Central Asia. The merger of the Volga and Ural military districts, completed in September 2001, is presented as a first step towards the achievement of that objective (the region will accommodate the staffs for any operations in Central Asia, for which it will be used as a rear base).

The military apparatus is to be restructured to respond to these potential risks and be able to conduct operations in low and medium intensity conflicts. The need for building a more flexible and mobile army that is capable of better interaction with the other forces structures (MVD, FSB, Ministry of Emergency Situations, border guards, etc) in the field is stated as a priority by the Russian authorities. This model is also in line with the needs of peacekeeping operations. These are regarded

as an instrument capable of playing a stabilising role in the immediate periphery, but also as a tool for enhancing Russia's participation on the international scene. According to the reform plans currently implemented, the Russian army should ultimately have around ten combat-ready divisions permanently available. At the beginning of 2000 the ground forces had only three divisions and four brigades of that type. The conflict between Russia's needs in Chechnya[29] and those related to its role in peacekeeping operations in the former Soviet Union and the Balkans have focused attention on its shortcomings in that area.[30]

A New Territorial Structure

As said above, the Russian central government wants to establish a reliable structure for reacting to local conflicts in the immediate periphery of the country and to possible crises in the Federation's provinces. Territorial reorganisation of the defence system is currently under way. In 1997, when the overall command of the ground forces, at the time directly under the general staff, was abolished, it was decided to transfer its functions to the military districts (VO). In the days of the USSR, the army was only used in external theatres of operations. On that basis, the main role of the military districts was to act as pools of forces. Operational command was traditionally exercised through the staffs of the various branches of the armed forces, leaving the military districts with mainly functional responsibilities (logistics, discipline, recruitment, territorial administration, training). The reorganisation under the reform programmes will lead to a significant increase in the powers of the military districts, with the inter-services territorial command and operational command concentrated at regional level. The military districts are therefore to become "operational commands" directly under the Ministry of Defence and the General Staff. The first phase of restructuring – the merger of the Siberia and Transbaykal military districts and subsequently the merger of Volga and the Urals – was completed in September 2001.

In this project, the Russian military authorities are proposing to place all forces belonging to the so-called force structures (MVD, Border Guards, FSB ...) under a single command, at least operationally in a crisis. It is also planned to standardise the territorial command and administrative structures of the various force structures, with the new commands eventually consolidating around them all the military and paramilitary forces attached to other ministries and government bodies. Indeed, the administrative regions of the Interior Ministry forces, border guards, etc, inherited from the Soviet period, do not correspond to the administrative division of the military districts. All these components will have to be brought together in a unified system, making it possible to reduce costs and allowing interoperability. The second war in Chechnya initially testified to the efforts that have been made over the last five years to promote cooperation between the different branches of the armed forces and also between the regular army and the other military and paramilitary structures. But this interoperability is still insufficient, partly because of the persistent rivalry between the army and the other force structures, wishing to keep their autonomy. It is nonetheless one of the strategic focuses of reform. It is already taken into account in forces training and armament programmes. The transition to the establishment of a single armaments and military equipment procurement system for all power structures is now under way. The fact that the manpower reduction process concerns all the armed forces and not just the Ministry of Defence forces seems to point in the same direction. The new military doctrine adopted in April 2000 restates the objective of rationalising all the military and paramilitary forces through the creation of a unified structure.

New Balances Emerging

In those circumstances the conventional forces, particularly the ground forces, should see their resources increased at the expense of the strategic nuclear forces, which have enjoyed preferential treatment since 1997, particularly in armaments procurement (80-90% of the resources earmarked for armaments expenditure were allocated to the strategic forces). On the strategic nuclear weapons side, the deterrent will be based on reduced capabilities. However, there is still no consensus on the future nature of the strategic arsenal. Many experts do not believe that Russia can afford to maintain a triple structure (strategic missile forces, naval component, air component) and believe it should follow the examples of France and the United Kingdom, which have opted for a "monostructure". The decision to downgrade the status of the strategic missile forces (RVSN), traditionally the central component of Russia's strategic forces, and to endorse the current slow pace of the new missile production programme (Topol-M) has been much criticised in the domestic debate. Some are calling for the RVSN to be reinstated at the centre of Russia's strategic capabilities in order to be able to "respond" to the future deployment of anti-missile defences by the United States and strengthen Russia's position in the current talks on future offensive nuclear weapons reductions (a new agreement on further nuclear reductions was finally signed in Moscow in May 2002, editor's note). The Russian naval authorities have recently announced that priority would be given to the naval component. Although some experts believe that as a native of St Petersburg President Putin has a "natural" interest in the naval forces, which might cause him to favour that option, others draw attention to its cost. These debates reflect the persistent problems Russia's leaders are having in establishing priorities in a situation confused by budgetary constraints that exacerbate bureaucratic rivalries and also by strategic and geopolitical uncertainty.

The Technology Gap

The growing military technology gap between Russia and the western countries, especially the United States, has been causing concern since the mid-70s. For the Russian generals, the Gulf War (1991), NATO's military intervention in Yugoslavia (1999), and America's military operations in Afghanistan (2001) have shown how far ahead of the Russian forces the US army is technologically in terms of armaments and control, intelligence and liaison systems. The contrast with the equipment used by the Russian forces in Chechnya (mostly about 20 years old) is glaring. Russian strategists are concerned about the conventional American precision systems, which they tend to regard as strategic systems in that they are capable of seriously affecting the enemy's political, military and economic centres. America's anti-missile defence programmes are also seen as likely to consolidate the United States' lead in military technology. Generally speaking, only 25 to 30% of the armed forces' stocks of armaments, equipment and military materiel are up to date, a direct result of the drastic fall in armaments orders and the freeze on mass production.

As regards investment, since 1997 the Russian authorities have said that they want to give priority to funding R&D rather than armaments procurement, with the aim of improving national skills in a number of fields of military technology and ensuring that the gap between the Russian and Western armies does not widen still further. One of the main priorities is the development of advanced technologies, particularly in information warfare, intelligence systems and precision weapons. Mass production, which is to continue on the basis of the resulting prototypes, and procurement are deferred until the financial situation improves. But this "prototype policy" is also hard hit by the budgetary constraints which have so far prevented a solution being found to Russia's military R&D crisis.

The Future

The public image of the Russian army, which has deteriorated steadily since the late 1980s, showed a relative improvement in the first few months of Putin's presidency, with the stepping up of its operations in Chechnya after the trauma caused by the attacks in the autumn of 1999. However the hostility of the Russian military to two highly popular projects, the professionalisation of the armed forces and the introduction of community service as an alternative, has weakened the military's public credibility. So alienated is the public, which supports the abolition of conscription, that some experts are starting to believe it could reject even the most "liberal" of the military reform projects.[31] If President Putin, halfway through his term of office and very sensitive to changes in his popularity rating, decided to speed up the professionalisation programme (even if only partial) and a more liberal law on alternative service, the problems with the army could worsen. In any event, regardless of the attitude of senior military officers, further economic stabilisation will be a major requirement for the government's capacity to fund the reform programme. Although stabilisation has made it possible to clear a large proportion of the pay arrears and Ministry of Defence debts to the defence industry, inflation and the war in Chechnya have prevented the release of the substantial funds needed for military reform.

Reform Inevitable

Will President Putin be able to change attitudes in the Russian military, including the attitude to evaluation of the threats, in order to redefine the real equipment and structural reorganisation needs of the armed forces? After all, the military training system hardly changed at all in the 1990s and its content has remained very much focused on the threat from the West. Experiences in Afghanistan and Chechnya have had little real impact on training programmes. The rapprochement with the West, supported by President Putin, has met with opposition in the army, which takes the view that this policy has not been "rewarded" by Washington. In the circumstances, will the fall of the Taliban regime - which has reduced the instability on Russia's southern borders, for several years regarded by the Russian General Staff as a major threat – not bring tensions with the West back to the fore in the same way as after the Kosovan war? Such a development could complicate the military reform policy debate even further. And the United States' decision to withdraw from the ABM treaty could reactivate the debate on defence policy. However the military is not a monolithic body. Many of its leaders now believe that the position of the armed forces has deteriorated so far that reform is inevitable. The growing gap between the resources and efficiency of the Russian forces and those of the Western forces, the success of the American forces in Afghanistan and Washington's decision to jettison the ABM treaty could change attitudes within the Russian high command. Although some senior officers have growing reservations about the rapprochement with the West, and the United States in particular, others might be increasingly persuaded of the need to modernise the army in order to make up, at least to some extent, the gap in standards between it and the Western, especially American, forces. Foreign policy issues will in any event play a crucial role in the current redefinition of relations between the civil and military authorities in Putin's Russia.

ENDNOTES

[1] *Reuters*, 28 October 1999.

[2] See Isabelle Facon, "Armée russe: réformes, contraintes, ambitions", *Revue internationale et stratégique*, No 38, Summer 2000, pp140-150.

[3] One consequence was the inability of the political authorities to devise a real defence strategy and military reform based on that strategy. Financial constraints and the executive's policy of playing on the rivalry between the armed forces and the "other force structures" when allocating funds, personnel and equipment also had a detrimental effect on the state of the armed forces (see Isabelle Facon, "Evolution des doctrines et des discours militaires de Moscou depuis 1989: continuité, discontinuité", *Recherches et documents*, FRS, No 23, November 2001, pp31-44).

[4] In the early 90s, the reform plans supported by the Russian government emphasised the role of the airborne forces, of which Pavel Grachev, defence minister from May 1992 to June 1996, had been a member. For that reason it was violently opposed by the ground forces, which had traditionally been politically dominant in the army.

[5] See the article on insubordination by Françoise Daucé in *Le courrier des pays de l'Est*, No 1022, February 2002.

[6] Reports of violence by the Russian forces against the civilian population in Chechnya have been on the increase. The Russian authorities have apparently started taking steps to try and stop these abuses, but the international community is critical of the lack of transparency in the procedures and does not regard them as sufficiently convincing (*Reuters*, 12 March 2002). Russian military chiefs based in the north Caucasian region apparently reacted with hostility to the opening of contacts between the Kremlin and the Chechen authorities in the autumn of 2001 (Pavel Baev, "President Putin and His Generals: Bureaucratic Control and War-Fighting Culture", *PONARS Policy Memo* No 205, November 2001).

[7] That is probably partly why President Putin decided to transfer responsibility for the "management" of the Chechnya conflict to the FSB at the beginning of 2001. Similarly, in the efforts to resolve the dispute between chief of the general staff Anatoly Kvashnin, one of the "Chechnya generals", and Igor Sergeyev, the executive eventually did not decide in favour of either. Certainly the departure of Sergeyev, who was replaced in March 2001, was consistent with Kvashnin's plan to reduce the funds allocated to the strategic forces, involving withdrawal of the independent status of the strategic missile forces by 2006 and a cutback in the production rate for new missiles (Topol-M). But the president's attitude to Kvashnin is still cautious. The possibility that he might be dismissed is often raised in the Russian press and from time to time various figures in military and security circles close to the presidential team criticise the chief of the general staff's "preferences" in regard to military reform. It is also noted that none of the "Chechnya generals" was promoted in the reshuffle in the senior ranks following the appointment of the new defence minister.

[8] Interview with Sergey Ivanov, strana.ru, 23 February 2002: "The fact that the money allocated for national defence is paid regularly is greatly to the credit of our leaders".

[9] Strana.ru, 8 January 2002.

[10] *Interfax*, 12 February 2002.

[11] The military reform programme adopted in November 2001 is apparently based on government forecasts for the country's socio-economic development and on action coordinated between the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry of Finance and the Security Council *(Kommersant*, 22 November 2001).

[12] Referring to the budgetary demands by the military structures, Sergey Yushchenkov, vice-president of the Defence Committee in the Duma, queried "how far their statements are true ... the real problem is that no one can give a clear answer when asked what exactly they spent the money on" (*BBC Monitoring*, 15 October 2001).

[13] Especially since those two parties are advised by figures recognised as being amongst the best qualified to pronounce on military matters: Yabloko by Alexey Arbatov, vice-president of the Duma Defence Committee, SPS by General Mahmut Gareyev and General Vorob'yev (for more details of the programmes submitted to the Security Council by the political parties and the military, see Pavel Baev, "Putin's Military Reform – Two Trajectories for the First Presidency", *Security Policy Library*, No 6-2001, pp8-9). Mahmut Gareyev is one of the defence minister's advisers.

[14] These are to be brought into line with civil servants' pay from July 2002. The process should be completed in 2003. According to the defence minister, some categories of military personnel in command posts were given a pay rise on 1 January 2002. At the same time, the government has abolished some of the benefits granted to military personnel, as a result of which their financial situation will probably not significantly improve (strana.ru, 23 February 2002; see also "Russia saves money on defence", *Russian Military Analysis*, No 128, 2 November 2001).

[15] Amongst the other main policies, the reinforcement of conventional forces as compared with strategic forces is the most important. In that respect, the ground forces appear to be regaining their importance: note the reinstatement in March 2001 of the ground forces central command, abolished at the end of 1997 for reasons connected particularly with the wish of the political authorities to reduce the army's influence.

[16] The General Staff is to present a draft concept for phased professionalisation to the government (strana.ru, 27 February 2002), which is to be submitted to the President in July. A federal programme should be drawn up on that basis by December 2003.

[17] The number of units of that type is to be increased every year, with a parallel reduction in the number of conscripts (*UPI*, 21 November 2001).

[18] The same Ministry of Defence source estimates that in order for the army to go over completely to a contract system the defence budget would need to be at least doubled (strana.ru, 27 February 2002).

[19] General Smirnov points out that housing remains a problem, with over 100,000 soldiers' families living in makeshift housing, and that "if a large number of soldiers under contract are added to these, the situation will quite simply discredit the idea of voluntary recruitment to the army" (*Russian Military Analysis*, No 113, 28 September 2001). An increase in the resources allocated to the training of reservists has also been suggested, since it should be made possible to reinforce the smaller professional army of the future by calling on reserve soldiers if necessary.

[20] *Ibid*.

[21] 70% were under 30 in 2001 (*Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 11 February 2002).

[22] For further details, see M J Orr, *Manpower Problems of the Russian Armed Forces*, Conflict Studies Research Centre, February 2002, pp3-4.

[23] *RFE/RL Newsline*, 17 January 2002; *Russian Journal*, 1-7 February 2002; strana.ru, 16 January 2002.

[24] These reductions will cut manpower from 1.2 million (current official strength of the Russian armed forces) to 850,000 in 2005 (180,000 reduction for the ground forces, 40,000 for the airborne forces, 50,000 for the navy). Several experts take the view that they are not in themselves a reform measure in that, spread over five years, they are more or less equivalent to the natural wastage in the forces due to the running down of the conscription system. The other force structures are also concerned about this manpower reduction process, which is in line with the plan for a reform encompassing all the government ministries and agencies that have military forces. The steps to integrate the reform of all the armed forces, related in particular to the lack of coordination between them that has been noted in the field in Chechnya, are not unanimously approved of by the experts, some of whom believe that they will simply make the processes more complex (see Pavel Baev, "Putin's Military Reform – Two Trajectories for the First Presidency", *op cit*, p10).

[25] According to the Deputy Defence Minister responsible for armaments, the latter will be a priority in state orders up to 2006 (it will receive 40% of these between 2001 and 2005, compared with only 10-12% in 1996-1998) linked to the 2001-2010 armaments programme adopted in January 2002 (strana.ru, 7 February 2002).

[26] The situation on this front now seems to have improved somewhat, with extra funding allocated to training since 1999.

[27] In this respect, the relatively efficient performance of forces deployed abroad, mainly contract personnel, might have encouraged the government's plan. On the other hand, military leaders are keen to emphasise the not entirely satisfactory experience with recruiting contract personnel in the early 1990s, pointing to their "inadequacy" (social integration and health problems, 40% of contract personnel are wives of servicemen, etc). The government is hoping that more attractive pay will resolve that problem. For the moment, the Russian army only has slightly over 150,000 servicemen under contract. Because of budgetary constraints, the Ministry of Defence has had to cut by two-thirds the

number of personnel employed under contract. This was partly intended to fill a traditional shortage in the Russian army, the lack of non-commissioned officers and troop officering (M J Orr, *Manpower Problems of the Russian Armed Force, op cit*, p2).

[28] Interview with Sergey Ivanov, strana.ru, 23 February 2002. The minister explains that the aim is to achieve a 50:50 ratio in 2006. However the armed forces reduction and professionalisation projects, one requiring expenditure to support demobilised officers on their retirement and the other a substantial increase in the individual pay of servicemen employed under contract, might slow down the adjustment of the budget towards investment. Also, according to the government's declared intentions, the army should not be making any major new equipment purchases until around 2007-2008.

[29] The Ministry of Defence forces presence in Chechnya has now been cut by several thousand (between 5,000 and 7,000 depending on source) and control of the operations has been handed over to the Federal Security Service.

[30] In 2001 Russia reduced the contingent deployed in Bosnia-Herzegovina from 1,100 to 600.

[31] The same applies to the proposals by the SPS, which is suggesting the possibility of restricting military service to 6-8 months, allowing the establishment of a mobilisation reserve of 5 to 6 million men (to be called up if necessary for specific training courses; the regular army would be made up of volunteers enlisted after their military service).

Internet Sites on the Russian Army

- Ministry of Defence (in Russian). Under development. Contains biographies of senior officers. http://old.rian.ru/mo/

- *Red Star*, Ministry of Defence daily. Basic source for events and commentary, but reflects official point of view (in Russian). http://www.redstar.ru/

- *Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye*, weekly military supplement (Fridays) to the daily *Nezavissimaya Gazeta*, source of official and non-official commentary and analysis (in Russian). http://nvo.ng.ru/

- Union of Soldiers' Mothers. Site with information on soldiers' lives in the army (in Russian). http://www.hro/org/ngo/usm

- *Post-Soviet Armies Newsletter.* Site with reports, works, articles, announcements of conferences on the structure and development of the armed forces throughout the CIS. With various links. An essential source (in English). http://www.psan.org/

- Fondation pour la recherche stratégique. General site with various information on defence and security policy in Russia and the CIS (in French). http://www.frstrategie.org

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Other papers in the dossier include:

"Les forces armées ont dix ans", by Cyrille Gloaguen
"Les femmes. Une intégration à reculons", by Elisabeth Sieca-Kozlowski
"L'insoumission. Un phénomène paradoxal", by Françoise Daucé.

See http://www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/revues/cpe/index.shtml

This text was completed in February 2002.

Translated by MOD LS.

ISBN 1-903584-95-7

Published By:

Defence Academy of the United Kingdom

Conflict Studies Research Centre
Haig Road
Camberley
Surrey
GU15 4PQ
England

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ISBN 1-903584-95-7