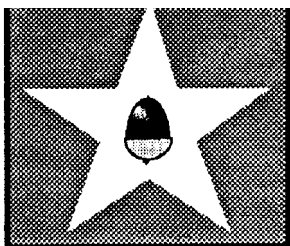


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# Contemporary Russian Perceptions of Euro-Atlanticism

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*In the post Cold War period Russia has been searching both for partners/allies in the international arena and for a post-communist role. She has been doing this whilst maintaining the belief that she is still a great power. Partnership with the USA has not developed as originally hoped, and Russo-Chinese strategic partnership has also not become an effective counterweight to US unipolarity. The failure of these partnerships has confronted Russia with the fear of marginalisation in the international arena. The prospective widening of the EU in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century has pushed Moscow to seek the EU as a strategic partner.*

## **From the Cold War to 2001**

During the Cold War the Soviet leadership desired to exercise greater influence over Europe. As Malcolm Mackintosh put it in 1973, the “Russians feel themselves to be not only the most numerous but also the greatest of all European peoples. They believe on these grounds and on ideological grounds that the Soviet Union has the right to greater influence in European affairs than she has now.”<sup>1</sup> This desire was frustrated by the USA’s security commitment to Western Europe, manifested through NATO. As a result, the Soviet Union had a strong perception that the USA’s presence in Europe was illegitimate, and her overriding policy objective was to decouple the USA from Western Europe. In February 1990 the then Soviet foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze admitted that until “quite recently our aim was to oust the Americans from Europe at any price.”<sup>2</sup> The Soviet Union pursued this goal by promoting the notion of Europe for the Europeans. This was most prominently seen in the calls made in the mid-1960s by the Soviet leadership for a European security conference without US participation, and for the dissolution of the NATO and Warsaw Pact alliance systems.

The removal of the USA from Western Europe was the ideal pursued by the Soviet Union. This objective was tempered by the reality that there was little the USSR could do to bring about this state of affairs, and Moscow often sought to utilise the existence of US-West European links to pursue her interest towards both pillars of the Atlantic Alliance. There appeared at times to be an acceptance that the US presence in Western Europe helped to provide stability in Europe. West Germany’s integration into NATO, for example, prevented Germany from pursuing a revanchist policy towards the Soviet Union.

Furthermore, during certain phases of the Cold War, the USSR may have endeavoured to use its relationship with Western Europe as a conduit to influence

the USA at times of extremely poor US-Soviet relations. It was also prompted by the desire to preserve USSR-West European détente at a time when US-Soviet détente was under severe pressure. The preservation of a Soviet-West European détente could either serve as an alternative to a failed US-Soviet détente, or as a means of persuading the USA of the desirability of resuming a détente relationship with the USSR. This appeared to be the case in the early 1980s, when US-Soviet relations were difficult. Soviet policy at the time may therefore have aimed at exploiting US-West European differences in order to persuade the USA to moderate its anti-Soviet policies, or if they failed to do so, to develop Soviet-West European relations as an alternative.

Hence in November 1981, when US-Soviet relations were extremely poor, Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev argued that that Europe was “our common home” when he visited West Germany, partly in order to emphasise the differences between the USA and Western Europe on détente.<sup>3</sup> This may have aimed at either encouraging West Germany to urge the then Reagan Administration to modify its anti-Soviet line, or at offering West Germany the opportunity to develop a détente relationship without the USA.

The concept of Europe as a common home underwent a significant evolution in the latter half of the 1980s. It was revived by Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985.<sup>4</sup> He initially gave it an anti-US slant in his report to the 27<sup>th</sup> CPSU Congress in 1986, where he sharply criticised the USA, in contrast to Western Europe. However, by the end of the 1980s, his attitude had changed. His visit to West Germany in June 1989 envisaged the Common European Home as one in which the USA had an integral part. By the late Gorbachev period, the USSR appeared to accept fully the close ties between Western Europe and the USA.

The collapse of the USSR and the emergence of a separate Russian foreign policy in 1991 saw the initial continuation of this approach. The term “common European home” was dropped from the Russian political vocabulary, perhaps as it was perceived as a Gorbachevian concept, hence irritating to Yel'tsin.<sup>5</sup> Nonetheless, the broad approaches of Russian policy were similar. This approach changed in the latter half of the 1990s, following the appointment of Yevgenny Primakov as foreign minister in January 1996. Primakov's appointment led to the emergence of the Russian foreign policy concept of multipolarity, and Russian opposition to a unipolar international system dominated by the USA.

Hostility to US unipolarity was accompanied by a more hostile attitude towards NATO widening in Europe, and indeed to NATO's very existence. NATO is often seen as a pliant tool of US strategy, rather than an organisation of sovereign states. It was argued that NATO should either be abolished or transformed. In its place Russia argued that an all-European collective security organisation should manage security affairs in Europe; the OSCE is often advocated as a suitable organisation to play this role. NATO and other organisations such as the EU, WEU are envisaged as playing a security role subject to OSCE authorisation.

The shift in Russian attitudes towards European security has resulted in calls for a reduction in the USA's role in European security affairs. In September 1997, President Boris Yel'tsin commented that the USA exerted “great influence on European security issues through NATO”, and added that “we would not like to see the US being drawn into Europe as it is now being drawn.”<sup>6</sup> These sentiments were effectively a rehash of Soviet sentiments that Europe is for the Europeans, and the USA should therefore not be in Europe. This sentiment is probably still held, and

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explains continued aversion to the US presence in Europe. The reduction or removal of the US presence in Europe would probably result in an increase in Russian influence, even in Russia's current weakened state.

There is great concern that NATO plays too major a role in the management of European security, and that NATO is essentially a tool of the USA. Harsher interpretations see NATO as a tool of US diktat in Europe. These perceptions were reinforced by NATO's decision to take military action against Yugoslavia in March 1999 following the failure of the Rambouillet talks on the future of Kosovo earlier that month. This decision was seen very much as an instance of US diktat over Europe, and a threat to Russian security. In December 1999, the then defence minister Igor Sergeyev stated:

*The fullest and most graphic significance of these threats to Russia's national security was manifested in the course of NATO's expansion to the East and their aggression against Yugoslavia ... From a military-political point of view, this war signified in essence, the beginning of a new era not just in military history, but also world history. This is an era of the open, military force diktat of the USA in relation to other countries, including its allies.<sup>7</sup>*

Russian perceptions of the 1999 NATO strategic concept, which arguably justified the use of military force without necessarily gaining the consent of the UN Security Council strengthened Russian views that NATO's role in Europe was undermining rather than enhancing European security. NATO's failure to consult adequately with Russia over its decision to take military action against Yugoslavia was seen by many in Russia as a breach of the 1997 Russia-NATO agreement, and so Operation Allied Force became a watershed in Russia-NATO relations. Yevgenny Primakov regarded the NATO decision to use force against Yugoslavia in March 1999 as a major turning point in Russo-Western relations that confirmed to Russia that NATO widening was a real, rather than ephemeral threat. He argued that the intervention constituted the laying down of bricks that resulted in the construction of a "virtual wall" dividing Russia and the West.<sup>8</sup>

As a result of Kosovo, NATO-Russia relations were frozen in 1999, and a gradual thaw began in 2000. However this thawing process is unlikely to convince many in the Russian foreign policy elite of the desirability of NATO remaining a key element in a post Cold War security system in Europe. Russian frustration over its inability to reduce NATO's role in Europe and the role of the USA in NATO remains.

The beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century has brought to the fore three major developments, which are likely to have a significant impact on the future of EuroAtlanticism, and on Russia's relations with both the USA and Europe. These are:

- The change of leadership in Russia. Putin's foreign policy so far differs little from Yel'tsin's, but it is likely to develop its own distinctive style as time goes by, and may also alter in substance.
- The change of leadership in the USA. The election of George W Bush as President in November 2000 is likely to result in changes to US foreign and security policy. The Bush Administration may place less emphasis than its post-1945 predecessors on the importance of its security ties with Europe, feeling that the Cold War is over, the Soviet/Russian threat is gone, and that the

anti-terrorist struggle requires that the main focus of US security policy be placed outside Europe.

- The development of the EU integration process. Following the end of the Cold War, the EU, like NATO, also intends to widen to include the former communist states of Central and Eastern Europe. At the same time, the deepening of the integration process means that the EU may well become more than just a close grouping of independent nation-states and may possibly become either a confederation or federation. The development of a Common Foreign and Security Policy for the EU and the decision taken by the European Council in Helsinki in December 1999 for the EU to develop its own military capability enhances the importance of the EU in international relations.

In the early 1990s, the Yel'tsin leadership hoped that a special bilateral partnership would develop between Russia and the USA. In some ways this seemed to be like a desire to re-create the special superpower relationship that existed between the USA and the USSR in the early 1970s, with the difference being that Russia and the USA would be partners in a cooperative relationship, rather than rivals in a competitive relationship. The Russian ideal since the end of the Soviet Union has been to see Russia and the USA as equal partners in the international system, with the US-Russian relationship as the single most important relationship within it. As foreign minister Igor Ivanov put it in his recent book on post-Soviet Russian foreign policy:

*It is a generally recognised fact that Russo-American relations continue to remain a weighty element influencing the political climate in the world. Russia and the USA, being permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, and the largest nuclear powers, carry a special responsibility for upholding international peace and security. Both states have global interests, conduct a multi-directional foreign policy, actively participate in the process of limiting and reducing armaments and overcoming crisis situations on the planet. Today there can scarcely be any large international problem that can be resolved without the participation of Moscow and Washington.<sup>9</sup>*

The disparity in power between the two states in the 1990s, however, meant that this sort of partnership never really emerged. Russia never occupied the central place in US priorities that it hoped it would have. Nonetheless, the Clinton Administration did probably see US-Russian relations as being in some way "special". The existence of the US-Russian Commission on economic and technological cooperation headed jointly by the US Vice-President and Russian prime minister was an indication of the special nature of the US-Russian relationship under Clinton. Prior to 11 September 2001, the Bush Administration's initial approach towards the Russian Federation was to downgrade it as a foreign policy priority. The commission was abolished by the Bush Administration. Under the Bush Administration, the National Security Council has subsumed the Russia/Eurasia directorate within the European directorate. A similar development may take place in the State Department.

Furthermore, the tone adopted by some senior figures in the Bush Administration towards Russia in early 2001 revealed a critical tone that was almost never heard during the Clinton era. In February 2001 defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld described Russia as an active proliferator of missile technology. Similar statements were also made by under secretary for defence, Paul Wolfowitz.<sup>10</sup> The early months of the Bush Administration were therefore marked by a the manifestation of a new

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attitude towards Russia, that focused less on Russia as a partner, and more on the security challenge she posed as a potential proliferator. In March 2001 the first deputy foreign minister Aleksandr Avdeyev accused the Bush Administration of having stereotypical views of Russia.<sup>11</sup>

The initial Russian response to the new US administration was almost a mirror image of US attempts to reduce the importance of the US-Russian relationship. The first major event in Russo-US relations in 2001 was the visit of then Security Council secretary Sergey Ivanov to the USA in March 2001.<sup>12</sup> He stated that relations with the USA were no longer a top priority for the Russian Federation, although they were still a priority. This was an apparent reflection of the Bush Administration's decision to accord Russia a lower ranking in US foreign policy priorities. It would be deeply humiliating for the Russian Federation to accord the USA a higher priority than Washington accords Moscow, and illogical, as Russian expectations would inevitably be disappointed. The US decision was probably already humiliating for the Putin leadership, and probably explains why Putin omitted mentioning the USA in his state of the nation address in April 2001.<sup>13</sup> However in a meeting of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) collegium in mid-April 2001 devoted to the prospects for US-Russian relations, the MFA made clear that relations with the USA were one of the priorities of Russian foreign policy and that the American direction in Russian foreign policy was an important one. The statement issued by the MFA on the collegium made clear the importance of the development of Russo-US relations, "arguing that cooperation and coordination of actions between Russia and the USA have important significance for the settling of key international and regional problems, the strengthening of security and stability in the world."<sup>14</sup> It welcomed what it saw as the possibility to develop and improve relations with the USA.

The collegium statement gave an impression of a Russian leadership that desired cooperation with the USA. This impression was strengthened by the tone adopted at the first Putin-Bush summit in Slovenia in mid-June 2001 and the meeting of the two presidents at the G8 summit in Genoa in July 2001. The Putin leadership indicated that it hoped for the development of Russo-US cooperation, and that differences over national missile defence (NMD) would not prove to be an unsurmountable obstacle in the development of cooperation between the two states. There appear to be signs of some flexibility from Moscow over NMD and the future of the 1972 ABM treaty. Russia appears to have dropped (for the time being at least) its earlier emphasis on developing a Russo-European tactical missile defence system, that seemed to aim at exploiting differences between the USA and some European members of NATO over NMD. This approach may indicate that the Russian Federation realises that it cannot afford to turn its back on the USA, and that it will have to make some concessions to a Bush leadership that seems to be determined to develop an NMD system. It also appears to accept that it has little hope in exploiting any US-European differences over this issue. Russian weakness has thus driven it towards accommodation with the USA. At the same time, there also seemed to be an awareness from the USA that it would be unwise to brush aside Russian concerns on arms control issues. The June summit did appear to indicate a greater willingness by the Bush Administration to move away from its earlier emphasis on "deprioritising" Russia.

In reality the Russian leadership accepts (albeit with great reluctance) the current status quo. The Russian leadership has stated that it desires to be fully integrated into the global community, which means it cannot ignore either the USA or its alliance with Europe. For the time being, the Putin leadership is forced to accept

NATO's role in European security, the US role in NATO, and the US linkage with Europe.

NATO is the most important Atlanticist institution, linking the USA with Europe in a military alliance. Whilst Russia remains opposed to NATO enlargement, it appears resigned to the process of further widening, and accepts that it will have to deal with NATO as it is, namely a collective defence organisation that links the USA with Europe. However accepting the NATO status quo is probably seen in Moscow as the necessary first step towards transforming that status quo, rather than accepting it as an immutable fact (see the discussion below). In an ideal world the Russian leadership would like to see either the disbanding or transformation of NATO. The fundamental hostility of a significant part of the Russian foreign policy elite to Atlanticism should not be underestimated. Vladimir Sokolenko, head of a department of the General Secretariat of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs wrote in 1999 that "the monopoly on global dominance enjoyed by the Atlantic civilisation with the United States at its pinnacle spawns a mentality of infallibility and permissiveness, and creates an illusion of absolute power, which in itself is a prelude to degradation and ultimate collapse."<sup>15</sup>

The Russian objective of being integrated into the global community means above all economic integration, which means developing harmonious relations with major international economic institutions, such as the IMF, World Bank and World Trade Organisation (WTO). The major role played by the USA in these institutions makes them Atlanticist, and therefore makes it impossible for Russia to ignore Atlanticism if she seeks to become a full part of the global economy. Russia's desire to become a member of the WTO places limits on any wishes she may have to downgrade the USA as a foreign policy priority.

In an ideal world Russia would endeavour to promote either the transformation or disbanding of NATO, and separate the military-security aspect of Atlanticism (NATO) from the economic aspect (IMF, WB, WTO). It is of course true that Russia accepts the NATO status quo because she has no choice other than to cooperate with this organisation or risk being marginalised in the management of European security. It does not mean that she accepts the legitimacy of that status quo, or that she will not pursue the transformation of that status quo should opportunity arise. In the 1970s, the Federal Republic of Germany accepted the post-war status quo in Eastern Europe as a necessary part of a long-term process of encouraging the change of that status quo should the possibility of doing so arise. A Russian acceptance of the current status quo in European security affairs may well be seen in Moscow as the first step of a long-term process of trying to encourage the change of that status quo away from NATO-centrism. From the Russian standpoint such a policy will be fraught with both contradictions and frustrations, because of the desire for economic integration with the West and because of Russia's limited ability to encourage changes in the Atlanticist status quo that would diminish NATO-centrism in Europe.

## **11 September 2001: Russia's Opportunity**

The terrorist attack on the USA in September 2001, and the subsequent military and diplomatic response by Washington have helped to transform the nature of the US-Russian relationship from partnership to quasi-alliance.

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Since the terrorist bombings in the USA, the Russian Federation has been extremely supportive of the USA and its attempts to form an anti-terrorist coalition. It has also been supportive of the USA's use of military force against the Taleban regime in Afghanistan and Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda terrorist network. Although Russia made it clear that she would not participate militarily in Operation Enduring Freedom, Moscow has become part of this anti-terrorist coalition, and will cooperate in the exchange of intelligence, in cutting off the sources of financial support for terrorist groups and allowing its airspace to be used by the USA for humanitarian missions. Russia is also sending humanitarian aid to Afghanistan.

Russia is supporting the US response as she sees the events of 11 September 2001 as a vindication of her long held view that international terrorism motivated by Islamic extremism is the major threat to international security. The Russian leadership has, in particular, long identified Osama bin Laden and the former Taleban regime in Afghanistan as major sources of "international terrorism". The foreign minister Igor Ivanov has called for cooperation with the USA and other states in creating a new global system to fight terrorism, although it is not clear what the Russian leadership has in mind when it talks of "a new global system".

These developments have created the possibility that there could be major shifts in the nature of Russo-Western relations. This is certainly the view taken by the US Administration.

In *Argumenty i Fakty* on 3 October 2001, the new US Ambassador to the Russian Federation Alexander Vershbow commented that Moscow and Washington may once again become allies.<sup>16</sup> On 4 October, National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice expressed gratitude to Vladimir Putin for calling George Bush immediately after the terrorist strikes and informing him that Russia would not put its armed forces on alert in response to the US alert and would cancel several exercises it was holding, to avoid any confusion. Rice commented that:

*Indeed, that feeling, that spirit of the possibilities of a new US-Russian relationship had already been foreshadowed at Ljubljana and at Genoa, when the two presidents talked about looking beyond the Cold War to see if there was not a more common agenda that they could pursue. And they have been pursuing that agenda since those meetings. But since September 11<sup>th</sup>, its been given new impetus.<sup>17</sup>*

Earlier, on 28 September, US Trade Secretary Robert Zoellick said that there was an opportunity to reassess Russo-US relations, and that the USA would speed up its analysis of Russia's appeal to be accorded market economy status. Although he denied that rules would be eased for Russia's application to join the WTO, he anticipated that there would be rapid progress in WTO talks.<sup>18</sup>

On 5 October, Russian foreign minister Igor Ivanov noted that the latest events in the USA were forcing many to reconsider foreign policy approaches and stereotypes.<sup>19</sup> This is presumably a coded way of stating that the USA was reconsidering its approach towards Russia, and according her a much higher status as a partner than she had been accorded previously. On 9 October deputy foreign minister Georgy Mamedov stated that Russia was prepared for a stage-by-stage development of a new framework of strategic partnership with the USA.<sup>20</sup>

The Bush Administration has now moved almost 180 degrees from its initial approach towards Russia, and could create the closest partnership that has existed



since the Second World War. The Texas summit of November 2001 may well be the harbinger of a far-reaching détente relationship.

The new rapprochement is also likely to affect the Russia-NATO relationship. It is too soon to say with certainty how this will evolve. Tony Blair has proposed a closer relationship that would move beyond the “19+1” formula of the 1997 Russia-NATO Founding Act, where the cooperation/consultation process would be more in the form of “20” rather than “19+1”.<sup>21</sup> If such a state of affairs emerges, then Russia’s role in the management of European security may well be enhanced, and she may be more able to encourage the evolution of NATO away from its traditional collective defence role towards becoming a political consultative body – a long standing goal of post-Soviet Russian policy in Europe.

## EU Integration

The Russian Federation has looked with increasing interest at the development of the EU integration process, particularly since the EU’s moves to develop a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) following the Helsinki summit in December 1999, and the likelihood of EU eastward widening over the next decade or so. This has increased the importance of the EU as a partner for Russia, as the Putin leadership has realised. The EU is currently Russia’s biggest trade partner, accounting for about 35 per cent of Russia’s trade turnover. EU widening could increase this figure to 51 per cent. In 2000 Russia-EU trade increased by 42.5 per cent compared with 1999.<sup>22</sup> The economic importance of the EU for Russia is one reason why Russia emphasises her identity as a European power, and sees the EU as potentially her main partner in the international arena.

The Putin leadership consequently welcomes EU widening, which it sees as a natural process of integration, provided it does not damage Russian economic interests. In March 2001, Putin attended the EU summit in Stockholm, the first time that a Russian leader has ever attended an EU leaders’ summit, indicating the increasing importance of the EU to Russia. In May 2001, at the Russia-EU summit in Moscow Putin described the Russia-EU relationship in the following way:

*Our meeting with the EU troika was very constructive, meaningful and, in our view, exceptionally useful. In essence, we discussed all aspects of our cooperation. And I think it can be said that it was a question of strengthening long-term strategic partnership. So far as we are concerned, the European Union is a key partner. I would note that the Russian Federation’s foreign policy blueprint regards ties with the EU as one of the most important priorities. During the meeting we considered the prospects for political dialogue, including security problems. We reaffirmed our mutual interest in developing relations in spheres such as the power industry, science, high technology and space. We intend to step up our joint work in the spheres of justice, internal affairs, environmental protection and nuclear safety. We are also prepared to work on creating a single socio-economic space in Europe.<sup>23</sup>*

It was at this summit that European Commission Chairman Romano Prodi put forward the initiative of creating a high-level commission to develop through the joint efforts of the EU and Russian Federation the principles of a single economic space in Europe, which would include Russia. The Russian leadership sees its

partnership with the EU as one in which the two partners become organically linked as two constituent elements in a united Greater Europe. In July 2001, prime minister Mikhail Kasyanov spoke at the World Economic Forum in Salzburg of a linking between Russia and the EU rather than Russia seeking EU membership.<sup>24</sup> The development of a single economic space would be an important step forward in this process, and the Russian leadership has put emphasis on developing its legislation to conform to EU norms as part of this process. It is also possible that Russia may switch to conducting its trade with EU states in the euro, instead of the dollar. This again would push Russia closer to the EU.

The Russian leadership views the Russo-EU relationship as one of its most important bilateral relationships, if not the most important. The prospect of EU widening, which would mean that the enclave of Kaliningrad Oblast would be surrounded by EU member states once Poland and Lithuania become EU members, has pushed Russia towards seeking closer cooperation with the EU. The position of Kaliningrad Oblast has made the development of cooperation all the more necessary, which is why the Russian Federation has demonstrated in 2001 greater interest in the development of partnership with the EU. The attempt to create a single economic space embracing both the Russian Federation and the EU underlines the priority that the EU occupies in Russian thinking. This was arguably taken one step further by Putin in July 2001, when he called for a Europe united from the Atlantic to the Urals.<sup>25</sup> The Russian concept appears to envisage a Europe seamlessly united as a single entity, with a close partnership relationship between the Russian Federation and the EU as a key feature of this united Europe.

### **The Security Dimension of the Russia-EU Relationship**

The moves by the EU to develop ESDP have not gone unnoticed in Russia. In October 2000 at the Russia-EU summit in Paris, it was agreed that the EU would associate Russia with future EU crisis management operations and that Russia and the EU would develop a strategic dialogue on security issues and hold specific consultations on security matters, enlarge the scope of regular consultations on disarmament, weapons control and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.<sup>26</sup> In November 2000, Igor Ivanov said the possibilities of Russian contributions to future EU crisis management operations would be studied.<sup>27</sup>

In 2001 Russian interest has developed further. In January 2001 it was reported that the Kremlin was interested in coordinating Russian defence doctrine with that of the EU, and the visit of an EU delegation including Chris Patten, the EU Commissioner for external relations and Javier Solana, Secretary General Council of the EU and High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU to Russia in February 2001 enabled the then secretary of the Security Council Sergey Ivanov to discuss security issues with them.<sup>28</sup> Likewise when Solana visited Moscow in April 2001 to discuss the EU-Russia summit planned for May 2001, he discussed the development of Russia-EU defence cooperation with Sergey Ivanov.<sup>29</sup>

Discussion of traditional security issues has become a feature of Russia-EU relations since late 2000. In February 2001 Putin said that Russia wished to cooperate more widely with both NATO and the EU in controlling the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.<sup>30</sup> Prior to 2000, discussion of such topics would probably have taken place in other forums, and Russia-EU dialogue would have more likely been confined to the discussion of economic and trade issues. Russian attitudes were well summed up by MFA spokesman Aleksandr Yakovenko in June 2001 when he said that the Russia would continue its dialogue with the European

Union in creating the future architecture of European security and on settling crisis situations.<sup>31</sup> At the seventh Russia-EU summit in Moscow in May 2001, it was agreed that:

*We reaffirm our attachment to promoting closer dialogue and co-operation on political and security matters in Europe. We recall the general Joint Declaration and the specific Joint Declaration on Strengthening Dialogue and Co-operation on Political and Security Matters in Europe, both adopted at the EU-Russia Summit on 30 October 2000, and have agreed to deepen our partnership. We have made foreign and security policy matters a regular feature of the agendas of the EU-Russia political dialogue meetings at all levels, including at the highest political level.*

*The EU will inform Russia on developments in ESDP matters and Russia will inform the EU on the development of its security and defence policy and its implementation within the fora for political dialogue. We shall make full use of existing formats for dialogue and focus on substantive issues of common concern in the field of security policy. Meetings at the level of the senior officials will be used as a focal point to intensify the security policy dialogue, including on the work of the EU on military and civilian crisis management. We have concluded that the co-operation should continue to evolve gradually and in a structured way.*

*Crisis management in Europe as well as UN and OSCE matters have been identified as important areas of co-operation. As the European Union is improving its capacity for conflict prevention the dialogue with Russia in this field is being strengthened. The successful implementation of the decisions of the Nice European Council on the arrangements for strengthened dialogue and co-operation with Russia should lay the necessary ground for possible participation by Russia in EU-led crisis management operations under agreed conditions.*

*We have emphasised mutual interest in further developing our dialogue and interaction on non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control, and pointed out the significance of realising our commitments and obligations in this field. The European Union and Russia have strengthened their cooperation in support of destruction of chemical weapons and disposition of weapons grade plutonium, implemented in the Russian Federation.<sup>32</sup>*

Russia has given a cautious welcome to the EU's moves to acquire a certain military capability. It is not regarded with suspicion and does not cause Russia to view negatively the prospect of EU widening which could eventually include former Soviet states (most probably the Baltic states). Russia's 1999 Medium Term Strategy Towards the EU expresses the hope that the development of an EU defence identity could counterbalance NATO-centrism in Europe. The hope that the development of an EU military capability could at least counterbalance, if not diminish NATO's current role in Europe probably forms a part of Russian thinking on this issue. This is certainly the view taken in Russian military circles.

In December 1999, the Russian Defence Ministry stated that it hoped that the European armed force which the European Union plans to set up would be independent of NATO, whilst in November 1999 Chief of the General Staff Anatoly Kvashnin hoped to try and play on possible US-EU tensions by accusing the USA of

seeking to weaken the EU, in order to prevent it from becoming an economic and political rival.<sup>33</sup>

Since 11 September, the way does seem open for much closer cooperation between Russia and the West in the security sphere; the Russia-EU summit of October 2001 made clear that the security dialogue between Russia and the EU will intensify. In addition to existing consultations, there will now be one-off meetings whenever necessary between the EU Political and Security Committee and Russia. There will also be monthly meetings between the EU Political and Security Committee troika and Russia to take stock of consultations on crisis prevention and management. Arrangements for possible Russian participation in civilian and military crisis management operations will be developed as progress is made in the development of ESDP.<sup>34</sup>

In an ideal scenario, the Russian military and political leadership would probably like to see an EU military force replace NATO and remove the USA from involvement in the management of European security. Articles on this subject in the military newspaper *Krasnaya Zvezda* express the hope that an EU military capability will be to the detriment of NATO, and of Europe's security ties with the USA.<sup>35</sup>

The improved US-Russian relationship since 11 September 2001 does not mean that Russian attempts to detach Europe from the USA are a thing of the past. Putin's speech to the Bundestag in late September contained the following paragraph:

*Nobody doubts the great value of Europe's relations with the United States. However, I simply think that, certainly and in the long-term, Europe will better consolidate its reputation as a powerful and really independent centre of international politics, if it combines its own possibilities with Russia's human, territorial, and natural resources, with Russia's economic, cultural, and defence potential.*<sup>36</sup>

Putin subtly contrasts Russo-European relations with US-European relations, arguing that whilst the latter are of value, ties with Russia could be even better for Europe. The attempt to create a Russo-European (ie EU) axis independent of the USA is likely to be a feature of Russian policy under Putin.

## Energy

Russia envisages a partnership with the European Union in which the two partners become organically linked. An important part of this process is the development of a close energy relationship between the EU and the Russian Federation.<sup>37</sup> The EU imports 53 per cent of Russia's oil exports and 62 per cent of Russia's gas exports. Russian exports account for 16 per cent of the EU's oil consumption and 20 per cent of the EU's gas consumption. Energy accounts for about 20 per cent of Russia's GDP, with Gazprom alone accounting for 8 per cent of GDP and RAO UES 6 per cent. At the sixth EU-Russia summit in Paris in October 2000, it was agreed to institute an energy dialogue on a regular basis between the EU and Russia in order to make arrangements for an EU-Russia energy partnership. The Joint Declaration of the sixth summit stated that the energy partnership "will provide an opportunity to raise all the questions of common interest relating to the sector, including the introduction of cooperation on energy saving, rationalisation of production and transport infrastructures, European investment possibilities, and relations between the producer and consumer countries. The planned ratification

of the Energy Charter treaty by Russia [Russia signed this treaty in 1994] and the improvement of the investment climate will be important aspects in this context.”<sup>38</sup> Russian deputy prime minister Viktor Khristenko and Director-General of the EU Commission directorate of Energy and Transport, Francois Lamoureux, were appointed interlocutors.

Europe’s need for a secure energy supply, and Russia’s need to earn export revenues and for investment in its energy sector make the EU and Russia natural partners. It has been estimated that the Russian energy sector will require between \$460 and \$600 billion in new capital investment up to 2020. The energy partnership aims at improvement investment opportunities in the Russian energy sector by upgrading infrastructure, promoting efficient and environmentally friendly technologies and enhancing energy conservation within Russia. The EU desires that Russia undertake concrete commitments in terms of fiscal stability, improvement of production and protection of investment. It also aims to improve the legal framework in which European firms operate. Access to Russian transport infrastructure will be part of the EU’s concerns. The European Commission’s role is to facilitate discussions between the parties involved. Four thematic groups have been set up to deal with the following issues:

- Energy strategies and balances
- Investment
- Technology transfer and energy infrastructure
- Energy efficiency and environment.

The development of cooperation in the energy sector between Russia and the European Union will prove to be one of the most important aspects of the Russia-EU relationship, and the need of the EU for a reliable source of energy, and of Russia for investment in modernising her energy sector provide the basis for a natural partnership that could bind the two partners closely together. The possibility of energy supplies from the Middle East becoming more uncertain over the next few years increases Russia’s importance as an energy supplier to Europe, and therefore her importance as a European power.

### **Problems in the Relationship**

For all Russian hostility towards NATO, it is ironic that the EU as an organisation has been more critical of Russian policy in Chechnya than has the North Atlantic Alliance. This has caused irritation, but Moscow has not allowed this to obstruct the process of developing a strategic partnership with the EU. Since early 2000, Russia has become more mindful of the concerns of western states and has stated its readiness to co-operate with the EU over humanitarian assistance to Chechnya. While the conflict in Chechnya continues, it is likely to prevent the development of a seamless integration between Russia and the EU. However the anti-terrorist struggle may diminish the importance of Chechnya as a bone of contention between Russia and the EU.

There is some concern in Russia over its trading relationship with the EU. In January 2001 Igor Ivanov said that Russia was not opposed to EU widening, provided it did not have an adverse affect on Russian trade with the EU.<sup>39</sup> In April

2001, prime minister Mikhail Kasyanov expressed concern over EU discrimination against exports of steel, other metallurgical products and furs from Russia.<sup>40</sup>

## Conclusions

Neither the USA nor the Russian Federation are able to ignore each other, although it is an unpalatable fact for Moscow that the USA has since 1991 been the stronger partner in the relationship. The USA's predominant position in international financial institutions means that Russia cannot ignore the US attitude towards Russia in these institutions if she desires to become integrated into the global economy, as she currently does. Furthermore, the continued importance of strategic arms control also means that Russia cannot afford to turn her back on Washington. The future of the ABM treaty is of great concern to the Russian Federation (it is clearly of less concern to the USA), and the Russian desire to ensure that any US NMD system does not undermine the viability of the Russian nuclear deterrent means that Russia has to continue to deal with the USA.

Russia not only has to deal with the USA, she has to do so as part of a Euro-Atlantic security system. NATO remains part of the European security system, indeed it is very much the key European security organisation, much to the chagrin of Moscow, who feels that NATO should have gone the way of the Warsaw Pact in 1991 (ignoring the fact that the Warsaw Pact was an unwilling alliance imposed by the USSR on the communist states of Central and Eastern Europe). Russia's freezing of relations with NATO in 1999 following the Kosovo military operation was followed by a significant thaw in 2000 as Moscow came to the conclusion that NATO was a reality that simply could not be ignored. This acceptance of NATO amounts to an acceptance of the US role in European security affairs. This is however a reluctant acceptance. Moscow tried during the Cold War to exploit "intra-imperialist contradictions" between the USA and Western Europe and attempted to do so to a certain extent during the Kosovo conflict. The proposal of a Russo-European non-strategic ABM system is another manifestation of the same approach, although it may partly be aimed at persuading the USA to adopt a more accommodating stance on NMD. Russian attacks on the unipolar structure of the international system are partially aimed at loosening US ties with her major allies. The changes in the US-Russian relationship since 11 September 2001 give Russia the opportunity to develop closer ties with the USA and possibly nudge Washington away from the unipolarity it has enjoyed in the 1990s.

The Russian belief that Europe is ideally for the Europeans (hence by definition excluding the USA) was, as noted above, a feature of Soviet thinking during the Cold War, and probably remains so. Since 1945, Russia/the USSR has always been attracted by developments within Europe that have the potential to enhance European autonomy vis-à-vis the USA and diminish or possibly remove the USA's security link with Europe.

In the post Cold War period Russia has been searching both for partners/allies in the international arena and for a post-communist role. She has been doing this whilst maintaining the belief that she is still a great power. Partnership with the USA has not developed as originally hoped, and Russo-Chinese strategic partnership has also not become an effective strategic counterweight to US unipolarity. The failure of these partnerships has confronted Russia with the fear of marginalisation in the international arena. The prospective widening of the EU in

the early 21<sup>st</sup> century has pushed Moscow to seek the EU as a strategic partner. This is again partly defensive in motivation. The development of European integration may have given rise to concern in Moscow that Russia may be left on the sidelines, both politically and economically, in Europe, and be forced to see the emergence of an eventual European superpower that may have little interest in the Russian Federation.

On the plus side, the development of a wider and deeper EU gives Russia potential benefits and opportunities, hence her interest in developing a close strategic partnership. There is considerable potential for economic cooperation, especially in the energy sector. If the EU develops into an entity akin to a federation or confederation, it could conceivably become a superpower. Its combined GDP almost matches that of the USA, and the euro may eventually rival the dollar in importance.<sup>41</sup> If the political will exists, it could develop military forces to rival those of the USA.

It makes sense for the Russian Federation to develop a partnership with this potential superpower, particularly as the EU is interested in close partnership with it. Strategic partnership with the EU may become the defining post-communist foreign policy role for the Russian Federation. The development of EU military structures and Russian cooperation with these structures is part of this process. Given her views on Atlanticism and Europe, it is inevitable that Russia will hope that the development of the EU into possible federation or confederation and the development of EU military structures will undermine Atlanticism, and result in a Europe less closely tied to the USA. Such hopes may be excessively optimistic in the short term, but a possible decline in US interest in Europe and the development of the EU may result in long-term changes in Trans-Atlantic relations which could reduce the US role in European security affairs. Russian partnership with the EU and the development of a dialogue on security and defence is partly motivated by this end, and by the belief and hope that this will enhance Russian influence in Europe. Changes in the Russia-NATO relationship could also enhance Russia's role in the management of European security.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Malcolm Mackintosh, 'Moscow's view of the balance of power', The World Today, 29, 1973, p111.

<sup>2</sup> Eduard Shevardnadze, 'All is changing in the world at a dizzy pace', Izvestia, 19 February 1990.

<sup>3</sup> 'Visit to the Federal Republic of Germany, speech of L I Brezhnev', Pravda, 24 November 1981.

<sup>4</sup> See 'The Atlantic Alliance in Soviet and Russian Perspectives', by Hannes Adomeit in Neil Malcolm ed Russia and Europe: An end to confrontation?, London, Pinter Publishers, 1993, p38.

<sup>5</sup> However the term "common European house" was used by Russian prime minister Mikhail Kasyanov when he visited Austria for the European Economic Forum on 3 July 2001. Kasyanov was discussing the development of a common European economic space between Russia and the EU. <http://news.monitor.bbc.co.uk> FS1MCU 030701/19 bj/eg

<sup>6</sup> See Yekaterina Grigor'yeva, Tatyana Koshkareva, Rustam Narzikulov, 'That which was under Peter I, will also be under Boris I', Nezavisimaya Gazeta, 19 September 1997, BBC Summary of World Broadcasts (henceforth referred to as SWB) SU/3028, 19 September 1997.

<sup>7</sup> Igor Sergeev, 'The main factors which determine Russia's military-technical policy on the eve of the 21<sup>st</sup> century', Krasnaya Zvezda, 9 December 1999.

- <sup>8</sup> See the interview with Yevgenny Primakov, in 'Moscou, ton univers impitoyable', *Politique Internationale*, hiver No 86, 1999/2000, p139-140.
- <sup>9</sup> Igor Ivanov, *Novaya Rossiyskaya Diplomatiya: desyat' let vneshney politiki strany*, Moskva, OLMA PRESS, p141.
- <sup>10</sup> See Toby Harnden & Marcus Warren, 'Russia selling atomic know-how says US', *Daily Telegraph*, 16 February 2001 and SWB SU/4100, 21 March 2001.
- <sup>11</sup> SWB SU/4103, 24 March 2001.
- <sup>12</sup> SWB SU/4096, 16 March 2001.
- <sup>13</sup> SWB SU/4113, 4 April 2001.
- <sup>14</sup> <http://www.mid.ru> The report of the collegium meeting appears in the section of the website entitled *novosti rossiyskoy politiki. Dokumenty I materialy*. The collegium was held on 13 April 2001, entitled *Perspektivy rossiysko-amerikanskikh otnoshenii*. It appeared on the website on 14 April 2001.
- <sup>15</sup> V Sokolenko, 'Civilised expansion of Atlanticism', *Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn'*, 5, 1999, p29.
- <sup>16</sup> 'We should help each other', *Argumenty i Fakty*, 3 October 2001.
- <sup>17</sup> See <http://www.usrbc.org> for the text of Condoleezza Rice's speech to the US-Russian Business Council 4 October 2001.
- <sup>18</sup> SWB SU/4292, 30 September 2001.
- <sup>19</sup> SWB SU/4298, 6 October 2001.
- <sup>20</sup> SWB SU/4302, 10 October 2001.
- <sup>21</sup> Richard Norton-Taylor, 'Blair sees security role for Russia', *The Guardian*, 17 November 2001.
- <sup>22</sup> SWB SU/4151, 12 May 2001.
- <sup>23</sup> SWB SU/4158, 19 May 2001.
- <sup>24</sup> See Russian government website official chronicle reporting on Kasyanov's press conference of 3 July 2001 in Salzburg, <http://www.gov.ru/main/ministry/isp-vlast47.html>
- <sup>25</sup> SWB SU/4202, 2 July 2001.
- <sup>26</sup> Peter Norman, 'EU, Russia move to strengthen energy and security ties', *Financial Times*, 31 October 2000.
- <sup>27</sup> See the speech by Igor Ivanov at the European Forum in Berlin 25 November 2000 on the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs website, <http://www.mid.ru>. See also Haig Simonian, 'Russia seeks stronger ties with EU', *Financial Times*, 27 November 2000.
- <sup>28</sup> SWB SU/4072, 16 February 2001.
- <sup>29</sup> SWB SU/4115, 6 April 2001.
- <sup>30</sup> SWB SU/4079, 24 February 2001.
- <sup>31</sup> SWB SU/4200, 30 June 2001.
- <sup>32</sup> [http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/russia/summit17\\_05\\_01/statement.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/russia/summit17_05_01/statement.htm)
- <sup>33</sup> For the MOD's comments see SWB SU/3712, 8 December 1999. Note also that on 22 December 1999 the head of the Defence Ministry's Main Directorate for International Military Cooperation, Col-Gen Leonid Ivashov, said that Russia would consider different forms of cooperation with the European corps if this military-political structure seeks to reduce NATO's role and does not add to its potential. See SWB SU/3726, 24 December 1999. For Kvashnin's comments, see SWB SU/3694, 17 November 1999.
- <sup>34</sup> See the Russia-EU statement following the October 2001 summit: [http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/russia/summit\\_10\\_01/dc\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/russia/summit_10_01/dc_en.htm)
- <sup>35</sup> See for example M Demyanov 'Multispeed Europe', *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 8 September 2000 and Yu Pankov, 'EU - attention! NATO - at ease!', *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 6 December 2000.
- <sup>36</sup> SWB SU/4289, 27 September 2001. For the text in German see <http://www.russische-botschaft.de> For the text in Russian, see <http://www.president.kremlin.ru/events/313.html>
- <sup>37</sup> For details of the Russia-EU energy relationship see [http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/energy\\_transport/en/lpi\\_en\\_3.html](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/energy_transport/en/lpi_en_3.html)
- <sup>38</sup> [http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/russia/summit\\_30\\_10\\_00/statement\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/russia/summit_30_10_00/statement_en.htm)
- <sup>39</sup> See the interview with Igor Ivanov in *Corriere della Serra*, 14 January 2001, SWB SU/4045, 16 January 2001.
- <sup>40</sup> SWB SU/4135, 26 April 2001.



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<sup>41</sup> The GDP of the USA in 2000 was 9,896.4 billion dollars and of the EU was 7,836.7 billion dollars. For GDP data see <http://www.oecd.org/std/gdp.htm> The figures on this website, accessed on 8 February 2002, were last updated in July 2001.

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