

**The Russian Far East's
Security Perspective:
Interplay of Internal and External
Challenges and Opportunities**

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The Evolution of Regional Threat Perceptions

The main regional security threats to the Russian Far East in the 1990s mostly had been of a traditional character and were perceived to be:

- potential armed conflict on the Korean Peninsula;
- military growth of China and its hypothetical conflict with Taiwan;
- tension with Japan over unresolved territorial disputes;
- Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) proliferation and illegal arms trade.

However, in the post cold war era the spectrum of most critical security threats in the world as well as in the Asia Pacific (in my analysis I mostly include East Asian countries and the Russian Far East's territories as a geographical part of this subregion) became much more diversified. Nowadays, various religious and separatist movements manifest themselves through acts of terrorism, while the proliferation of WMD, local conflicts, drug trafficking, organized crime, piracy, and ecological and epidemic disasters are also very serious threats.

In the globalized world the priority of the above-mentioned threats is becoming very fluid and constantly changing. For example, in 2003 and 2004 the most urgent security threats for East Asia could be considered as terrorism, the crises in Iraq and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), and the SARS outbreak.

After the events of 9/11 almost all experts agree that the most serious threat arises from international terrorism. Unfortunately, East Asia is not immune from the threats of international terrorism, and recent outbreaks of terrorism in Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand illustrate this point. Terrorist groups usually have close ties with criminal elements all over the world. It is very difficult to trace them, and the only possible way to counter that challenge is through a multinational format.

Terrorism took a new dimension after the attacks of 9/11, when it became clear that al Qaeda provided resources, training, and brought new tactics of universal jihad to different parts of the world. As a result, there is more cooperation among the governments in East Asia, while counter-terrorism training centers are being established in the region. However, this cooperation has a long way to go, and terrorism will remain a long-term regional challenge.

The crises in Iraq and the DPRK are both producing serious anxieties for security in East Asia. Though there were no critical threats to social stability in Muslim countries in the region, the Iraqi war clearly reinforced negative feelings around the region of the United States as a unilateralist power. The SARS outbreak in the spring of 2003 created widespread panic in East Asia, proving that virtually every year brings with it a new medical threat, while some other diseases, like HIV-AIDS, remain long term challenges.

As far as the Russian Far East territories are concerned, during the last several years both the spectrum and priority of security threats for them have also changed, the most urgent being either internal (declining socioeconomic situation, negative demography, etc.) or para-military in character (terrorism, illegal migration and fisheries, etc.). However, the classical military menace of nuclear arms proliferation (the DPRK issue) as well as the globalization era connected geopolitical threat for the Russian Far East to be excluded from East Asian and Northeast Asian political and economic integration processes are also considered critical.

In spite of the fact that in 2003 the Russian economy grew at a decent rate of 7 percent, the long awaited economic structural reforms aimed at overcoming Russia's over-dependence on extracting and exporting raw materials have yet to be implemented. In order to double

Russia's gross domestic product by 2010 (the objective announced by Vladimir Putin in May 2003) the Russian economy needs to grow at least 8 percent annually. However even such an annual rate is not enough for Russia to compete adequately in the global economic environment and to radically improve Russian standards of living (more than 31 million people in the Russian Federation live below the official poverty level of \$70 per month). In other words, for the near-to-medium term the most critical threat for Russia is its inadequate pace of economic development.

In fact, in his May 2004 annual address to the Federal Assembly Putin defined Russia's most urgent priorities as follows: ¹

- to double Russia's gross domestic product by 2010;
- to decrease poverty and increase the population's well-being;
- to modernize the Armed Forces.

However, outbreaks of terrorism unprecedented in scale and cruelty in the Caucasus and Moscow in August-September 2004 became the most negative feature of the Russian domestic scene. Several grave versions of transport terrorism in August were followed by the unprecedented act of terror in Beslan (Northern Osetia) on September 1 when a group of international terrorists seized a public school and took more than one thousand hostages. As a result of the terrorists setting off a series of explosions and shootings, about 350 innocent people, mostly school children, were killed.

As Americans did on September 11, 2001, Russians found themselves in another country in September 2004 after realizing the cumulative effects of unprecedented acts of terrorism that challenged the whole Russian state and nation. Finding a systemic answer to the highly increased challenge of international terrorism became the most urgent national priority in Russia.

Considering the Russian Far East territories, the declining socioeconomic situation (in comparison to other parts of Russia it is much worse) is of special importance. Mostly it has to do with the fact that tariffs on energy, fuel, transportation, etc. are over two times higher here than in other parts of Russia thus making local production uncompetitive. Such a situation triggered a prolonged negative

1 Vladimir Putin, "My dolzhni rasti bistree," *Parlamentskaia gazeta*, May 27, 2004.

demography (over the last 15 years the Russian Far East has lost more than one million people, and its population now is only 6.7 million) that, according to the presidential representative in the Far Eastern District, General Pulikovskii, finally materialized as the most critical threat to the sustainability of that part of Russia.²

In fact, 6.7 million is the size of a medium Chinese city, whilst in neighboring Chinese provinces the population is more than 140 million. With such a critical geopolitical disparity, one must think seriously how to arrange effective immigration mechanisms to control the flow of incoming foreign citizens.

Another recent estimate (in this case by the high level representative of the Russian Federal Assembly and Chairman of the Federation Soviet on Defense and Security, Viktor Ozerov) concerning regional security threats faced by the Siberian Federal District practically coincided 100 percent with the assessment proposed by Pulikovskii for the Russian Far East. In an interview Ozerov admitted that Siberia (especially its eastern part) is seriously under-populated, and mentioned the negative demography (due to dominating flows of the Russian population's migration to the European part of the country), high transportation tariffs (leading to the autonomy of Siberian economic processes) and uncontrolled Chinese immigration as the most critical threats to national security in that part of Russia.³

The above-mentioned changes in threat perceptions are leading to new roles that should be performed by the Armed Forces. Some of the new tasks of the Russian Navy and new Armed Forces' operational concepts have been demonstrated during recent strategic military exercises held in the Russian Far East in August 2003 and in June 2004. Both exercises have also become a good showcase of Moscow having a much more positive attitude toward implementing confidence-building measures in security (CBMS) in Northeast Asia.

2 Konstantin Pulikovskii, "Partnerstvo bez ogliadki," *Parlamentskaia gazeta*, April 27, 2004.

3 Viktor Ozerov, "Sibir'iu dolzhna ukrepiat'sia derzhava," *Parlamentskaia gazeta*, April 29, 2004.

Russian Input to Security in East and Central Asia

Russia's position in world affairs today is mostly determined by domestic policy aimed at transformation into an economically effective state. This is why Moscow is primarily focused on increasing Russia's influence in its more immediate region of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) with the key strategic goal to form a real joint economic zone with Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan.

Another major goal is to further deepen military and political integration between Russia and the five other CIS countries in the framework of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). At an April 2003 Summit Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan formally created the CSTO, which will attempt to provide a more efficient response to strategic problems confronting member states, specifically terrorism and drug trafficking. Its Joint Staff became operational in January 2004 with the principal task of forming the organization's military structure and controlling its rapid deployment force to be stationed at a Russian military base at Kant in Kyrgyzstan.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Central Asian Cooperation Organization (CACO) are also becoming important political instruments for Russia to sustain her influence in Central Asia. At a June 2004 Summit in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, six SCO member states (Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan) signed intergovernmental organizational documents, and officially started its first project – the SCO Regional Antiterrorist Structure (with its main thrust to coordinate joint efforts to stop the growing traffic of drugs from Afghanistan to Uzbekistan and other countries).

In October 2004 Russia joined CACO (it was formed in 2002 by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan to support security and economic cooperation in Central Asia), and signed an interstate agreement with Tajikistan that envisages forming a Russian military base in Tajikistan on the basis of her 201st infantry division. So now Russia has two military bases in Central Asia (the other one is an air force base at Kant in Kyrgyzstan) that are becoming critical components of the regional collective security structure and joint rapid

deployment force. Such an increased Russian military input demonstrates that Moscow is ready to pay a high price to counter terrorism, drug trafficking and other critical security threats at a long distance from its own border.

Taking into account her priorities, Moscow's ability to influence conflicts, such as in Iraq or the DPRK, are to some extent limited. Nevertheless keeping with its commitment to control WMD, Russia will continue trying to avert nuclear crises with Iran or the DPRK, but will oppose the use of force against them.

In spite of disagreements over Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO), Russia's opposition to further NATO and EU enlargement, and serious disagreements over Iraq, Moscow is consolidating mostly economics-oriented relationships with the US and the EU. In the future Moscow will continue to do its best to develop equal partnership relations with the US (mostly in counter terrorism, nonproliferation of WMD, and trying simultaneously to sustain Russian economic interests in Iraq, Iran, and the DPRK) and the European Union (by trying to form four joint spaces in such areas as: economics, external security, democratic freedoms and humanitarian ties). Moscow will use the Russia-NATO Council and the Russia-EU Forum to minimize its political and economic risks posed by NATO (for example, US plans to shift its forces stationed around the globe, in some cases bringing them closer to Russia's borders) and the EU (not to change the former Berlin wall to some new Schengen or other wall) expansion to the East.

The Asia Pacific region will remain another main focus of Russian foreign policy, because Moscow is very interested to use its increasing economic potential to contribute to the development of the Russian Far East and Eastern Siberia.

Moscow is doing her best to achieve regional stability on a bilateral and multilateral basis. Just recently Putin mentioned that Russia would continue to develop political and economic dialog with such large partners as the US, China, India, and Japan, making special emphasis on implementing transborder regional cooperation.⁴ Besides, Moscow is actively participating in APEC and the ASEAN Regional

4 Vladimir Putin, "My dolzhni rasti bistree," *Parlamentskaia gazeta*, May 27, 2004.

Forum, and trying to play a positive role in the ongoing Korean Peninsula security negotiations in multilateral track 1 and track 2 formats.

China

For a number of security and economic reasons, Russia's policy in Asia gives priority to its partnership with China. In October 2004 Putin made a historic visit to China that helped to finish 40 years of negotiations that led to final demarcation of the 4,300-kilometer-long Russian-Chinese border, and also to agree with Beijing on Russian WTO membership terms. Though Moscow made small territorial concessions, the improved spirit of the bilateral relationship would guarantee much better political and economic cooperation perspectives that are manifested in a Russia-China Action Plan for 2005-2008 signed in Beijing by the Presidents of both countries.

Moscow and Beijing have already become partners in strengthening stability in adjacent regions, such as Central Asia (the Shanghai Cooperation Organization) as well as on the Korean Peninsula (six-party talks). Beijing is gradually increasing its role in multilateral security and economic cooperation by making such contributions as proposing to invest a billion US dollars to stimulate trade and economic cooperation between SCO member-states, and by arranging a constant negotiation venue (Beijing) for six-party talks. Beijing is not satisfied with the Russian government's decision to construct an oil pipeline route going from Taishet (Eastern Siberia) to Nakhodka (Sea of Japan). However, Russia is eager to invite Chinese investors to discuss a possibility to finance construction of a special off-shoot (to Daqing, Northern China) from the main pipeline going to Nakhodka.

In 2000-2005, the overall value of Russian arms exports to China is projected to be \$5-6 billion. As a result, to some extent China depends on Russian military technology, whilst military sales to China have become important for the survival of the Russian Far East military-industrial enterprises, making some regional countries a little apprehensive. However, it is important to point out that Russia does not sell China any armaments of the strategic offensive character.

Russia has very serious economic interests and increasing trade with China (for example, in 2003 the Russian-Chinese foreign trade turnover reached a record \$17 billion, and in 2004 it is expected to reach as high as \$22 billion, while during his recent visit to China Putin declared that in the future it should reach an unprecedented \$60 billion). For the last several years Russians have complained that Chinese exports have mostly consisted of raw materials, thus making it unprofitable. In the years 2003-2004 the situation showed signs of improving when Chinese businessmen began considering opportunities and making real investments in several joint industrial complexes in the Russian Far East with an emphasis on timber processing and other sectors.⁵

As far as the Chinese illegal migration threat is concerned, several considerations should be taken into account. Most representatives of Moscow and the regional political elite are sure that Russia needs a foreign labor force to help master her vast territorial spaces in the Russian Far East and Siberia. The issue is how to construct adequate laws and then implement an effective immigration policy.⁶ Putin expressed the same view saying that “Chinese migration to the Russian Far East is neither good nor evil, but an objective process. However, the regional labor market should be regulated in such a way that Russians have priority in getting jobs in comparison to representatives of other nations.”⁷

Taking all these factors into account China will continue to be the main focus of Russian policy in the Asia Pacific. Russian-Chinese relations will lack the previous geopolitical romanticism about an alliance relationship and will be characterized by more pragmatic economic considerations in the future. However, that effect should not impede mutually advantageous economic and trade ties at the regional

5 At a recent Russia-China investments Forum in Khabarovsk in June 2004, Chinese businessmen signed several joint agreements with their Russian partners for the sum of \$700 million – see: “‘Skazano – sdelano’ – obeshchait kitaittsy,” *Zolotoi Rog*, June 15, 2004.

6 Viktor Ozerov, “Sibir’iu dolzhna ukrepliat’sia derzhava,” *Parlamentskaia gazeta*, April 29, 2004.

7 “Voprosi v lob,” *Vladivostok*, August 29, 2002.

and transborder levels, and numerous joint projects of that kind should flourish.

Japan

A positive trend in Russia's bilateral relationship with Japan was manifested in a Japan-Russia Action Plan signed by Putin and Koizumi Junichiro in 2003. Koizumi successfully lobbied for a change in the main route of the oil pipeline from Angarsk to Primorskii krai (with a branch to Daqing, China), where Tokyo can get more reliable access to Russian energy resources.

The Russian-Japanese foreign trade turnover in 2003 reached the decent level of \$5 billion, and in 2004 bilateral relations continued to develop in a favorable way. However, the recent improvement of economic ties and the numerous bilateral negotiations did not bring progress in resolving their territorial dispute.

At the moment both sides are not ready to soften their position on the issue. In this context Putin's position is clear. Just recently he appointed Moscow mayor Iurii Luzhkov (well known for his tough stance in the Russian territorial dispute with Ukraine over the Crimea Peninsula) as a head of the Russian part of the "Wisemen Council" proposed by Koizumi during the latest APEC Summit in Thailand (October 20-21, 2003) to facilitate negotiations on the territorial issue. Koizumi's recent trip (September 2, 2004) on a patrol boat to oversee several islands belonging to the so-called "Northern territories" did not serve to improve bilateral ties. Nevertheless, what counts is that even in such an environment both countries now agree to continue the dialog on the territorial dispute while making serious efforts to expand mutual ties in security, economics, education, culture and other spheres.

For example, in the defense area, the Russian Navy made their own impressive input into improving bilateral relations. In 1998, the first joint Russo-Japanese search-and-rescue (SAR) naval exercises were held in the Vladivostok area. Another breakthrough happened in September 2000 when Maritime Self-Defense Force ships (the first ever foreign Navy ships in the post Soviet era) visited the Kamchatka Peninsula. Finally, in August 2003 the Japanese Navy took part in a strategic exercise held in Russian Far East waters.

This positive trend in bilateral relations is expected to continue, as Russia launches several major projects to develop its regional infrastructure in which Japanese capital and technology could play an important role, while Japan seeks political support from Russia on issues such as North Korea's nuclear programs as well as the diversification of its energy resources.⁸

The US

Taking into account that the US is a critical player in this field, it is worth noting that US politics in Asia did not seem to contradict any critical Russian interests in the region. On a number of diplomatic issues, they have effectively coincided. For example, Moscow appreciated US financial assistance in dealing with Russia's nuclear submarine waste. The only visible problem in bilateral relations in Asia is the US-Japanese effort to install Theater Missile Defense.

During most of the last decade Russian-American military contacts in the Asia-Pacific have been positive, including conducting a series of search-and-rescue exercises, amphibious disaster relief exercises, and others. However, it is worth mentioning that during the same period Russian-American military cooperation in the Asia Pacific had played a secondary role in comparison to bilateral relations in the Atlantic. Thus at several times worsening of the latter relationship had made Pacific ties a hostage of that negative impact (for example, the Kosovo crisis, NATO enlargement and other events that have effectively blocked bilateral military cooperation in the Asia Pacific region).

The recent war in Iraq has clearly demonstrated that America's bellicose declarations concerning the so-called "Axis of Evil" countries were not mere rhetoric, but a real part of a new Bush Doctrine. Taking into account that the DPRK (with which Russia has a common border, and where Moscow has legitimate interests) is also on that list of such countries, it is of critical importance for Russia to prevent the US from using the Iraqi model to solve the Korean Peninsula issue.

8 Sergei Sevast'ianov, Chapter on Russia, in Charles Morrison ed., *Asia Pacific Security Outlook*, (Tokyo: Japan Center for International Exchange, 2004), p. 164.

Northeast Asian Regional Cooperation in Economics and Security and the Korean Peninsula Issue

The most striking recent development in Russia's regional cooperation is in the area of energy policy. In October 2003 Russia became for the first time the world's largest oil producer (8.5 million barrels of oil per day), replacing Saudi Arabia. Addressing participants at the APEC Summit in Bangkok the same month, Putin announced that Russia was prepared to contribute to a new energy and transportation configuration in the Asia Pacific. He urged foreign businesses to invest in the gas and oil industry in Siberia, and announced that one of the largest natural gas liquefying plants in the world would open in 2007 on Sakhalin Island. Russia's growing potential in the Asia Pacific is also demonstrated by the ongoing international debates on routes for the Eastern Siberia oil pipeline and alternative ways of connecting Trans-Siberian and Trans-Korean railroads. However, the North Korean nuclear crisis has inhibited several countries from moving actively into major infrastructure projects in the Russian Far East and Eastern Siberia.

This consideration is a major reason why Russia seeks to improve the security situation on the Korean Peninsula. After a decade of being largely excluded from the negotiation process,⁹ recent Russian-DPRK summits have been helpful in reestablishing Moscow as one of the principal players on the Korean issue. Becoming an official participant of the six-party talks, Russia proposed a package approach in multilateral negotiations to achieve such final purposes as: denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, observance of WMD non-proliferation, and providing the DPRK with security guarantees and economic assistance. As a first step to achieve that, Russia proposed to freeze the DPRK nuclear programs and to place them under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) control whilst ensuring a steady supply of energy and economic assistance to the DPRK. By 2005 inexpensive energy produced at Bureia hydropower

9 Russia had never been a part of KEDO (the Korean Energy Development Organization with the US, Japan, ROK, EU and DPRK as members), or the four-party talks (US, China, ROK and DPRK).

station (Amurskaia oblast) will be brought through a high voltage electric circuit to Russian Far East Primorskii krai bordering DPRK territory thus making Russian participation in supplying affordable energy to that country a very practical option.

In fact, China has recently developed a much more positive attitude toward multilateralism in dealing with the Korean Peninsula and other regional security problems. Such a trend could lead to crucial changes in the format and the role of multilateral organizations dealing with the security of Northeast Asia in the future.

Recent (August 2003) strategic exercises in the Russian Far East – including a scenario in which Pacific Fleet ships stopped a hypothetical North Korean vessel carrying a nuclear weapon, and an episode devoted to stemming the possibility of 100,000 DPRK refugees at the Russian border – have signaled to Pyongyang that continuing its nuclear weapons programs may undermine its relationship with Moscow.

As predicted by security experts, the basic parameters of an agreement concerning the DPRK nuclear proliferation issue, meeting the articulated needs of the US and DPRK, can be identified. A breakthrough may occur as a result of negotiations, but the most critical issue is whether Washington would be ready to wait long enough to make that happen.

The absence of positive movement may eventually rekindle a crisis, and the White House may be tempted to adhere to the “Bush Doctrine” that has been recently applied in Iraq. According to that doctrine the US has the right to preemptively attack states that presumably support terrorists and pursue WMD.

If normalized, such an American position would move the principal authority regarding the use of force away from centralized international institutions like the UN. This may well create a situation in which the deployment of lethal force in self-defense becomes indeterminate. For example, both Iran, having much stronger ties with terrorists than Iraq, and the DPRK that allegedly possesses WMD and has a track record of selling missiles, fit quite readily as legitimate targets within the framework of the new Bush Doctrine.

One more critical worry about the Bush Doctrine is that other states may follow the American lead and preemptively attack their foes

(for example, any of the Korean states may attack each other, China could attack Taiwan, etc.) undermining the whole international security system.

During the debates over the new Doctrine Washington declared that it preferred a diplomatic mode in settling the Korean Peninsula crisis. Yet, on the second day of the latest war against Iraq, an anonymous American official was quoted by the New York Times as saying that “This is just the beginning. I would not rule out the same sequence of events for Iran and North Korea as for Iraq.” In this new world order environment, in February 2003 Japan warned that it would launch a preemptive military action against North Korea as a self-defense measure if the DPRK were to “resort to arms against Japan.”

From the Russian standpoint, due to such an American approach to handling international security issues, the situation on the Korean Peninsula has become most worrisome and is posing a real threat to the security of Russian Far East territories. To downplay this dangerous trend provoked by the new Bush Doctrine, countries should establish reliable global and regional systems of counteraction.

Pacific Fleet Status and Recent Military Exercise Threat Assessments

The Pacific Fleet has always been a valuable asset for Russia in implementing her regional security obligations. As then-Pacific Fleet Commander (now Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Navy) Admiral Vladimir Kuroedov declared in November 1996 that the Pacific Fleet's main operational tasks were:¹⁰

- to maintain nuclear deterrence;
- to defend Russian territory;
- to secure the Russian Federation's economic zone;
- to protect the sea lines of communication; and
- to conduct “show-the-flag” missions in the ocean areas of

10 Vladimir Kuroedov, “Russian Security Politics and Its Role in Building Trust among Asia-Pacific Nations” (paper presented at the Fifth Western Pacific Naval Symposium, November 25-27, 1996, Tokyo).

strategic importance (including port visits, joint exercises, and peacekeeping missions).

To accomplish these tasks, the Pacific Fleet had different types of submarines, surface combatants, auxiliary vessels, sea aviation, a marine core, shore missiles, and artillery units.

Furthermore, since the end of the cold war the Pacific Fleet has been a valuable asset to Russian diplomacy in the Asia Pacific, and a great number of foreign naval vessels have visited Vladivostok. Pacific Fleet ships have also visited many countries, and the first visits paid to some of them, especially to the United States (1990), China (1993), the Republic of Korea (ROK) (1993), and Japan (1997), were real breakthroughs in reestablishing bilateral relationships after many years of confrontation and distrust. Those visits were supplemented by bilateral communications, joint maneuvers, and SAR exercises thus contributing to increased trust and interoperability between the Russian and foreign navies. This means that if a multinational search-and-rescue or a UN-led naval operation against pirates or to confront some other threats were necessary in the Asia Pacific, the Pacific Fleet (if the operation coincided with Russia's national interests) could allocate ships.

Several changes in regional security threat assessments have been openly demonstrated during strategic exercises that have been arranged in the Russian Far East in August 2003 and June 2004.

First of all, we can consider positive changes in the Russian approach to CBMS, in which exercises became an excellent example. The information about exercise plans and goals had been distributed well in advance. Naval ships from Japan and the ROK had been invited and were able to take part in some of the exercise's episodes.

Secondly, detailed information concerning three phases of the August 2003 exercise (aims, tasks, dates, number of participating ships, auxiliary vessels, aircraft, helicopters, military and civilian personnel, etc.) had also been published.

The most "revolutionary" feature of the 2003 exercise was the fact that only 25 percent of the tactical episodes were devoted to classical military issues such as bombing surface combatants, landing marines, etc. Most parts of the episodes were devoted to countering so-called paramilitary threats, such as fighting terrorists, piracy, poaching in

economic zones, countering ecological threats as a consequence of accidents at sea, etc.

One of the tactical episodes was devoted to stemming some 100,000 refugees from a neighboring state (taking into account that it was arranged in the Khasan area, the scenario envisioned the immigrants would come from the DPRK). Several episodes have been proposed to train military personnel to fight terrorists. According to one possible scenario, a strategic bridge is seized by terrorists, and in another a train with radioactive fuel is seized.¹¹

The most recent strategic exercise, Mobility 2004, arranged in June was devoted to improving interoperability of the Armed Forces (in other words, to urgently deploy by air the most combat ready troops from the European parts of Russia to its Far Eastern part to react to any negative changes in the security situation).

Overall, the above-mentioned exercises have demonstrated several new trends in military training, including the urgent need for more cooperation and interoperability between armed forces and non-military structures to counter new regional threats, as well as the need for increasing the Armed Forces transportation capability to urgently deploy troops from one part of Russia to another.

CBMS in the Nuclear Safety Sphere

A great number of the Pacific Fleet's decommissioned submarines are still waiting for dismantlement and deactivation of their nuclear reactors. Substantial nuclear waste stocks at Bol'shoi Kamen (Primorskii krai) also need to be processed. Due to the Fleet's financial problems and lack of adequate technical facilities, the above-mentioned problems can not be completely solved in the immediate future. That was why the United States and Japan, concerned with nuclear safety issues, have proposed to offer help and allocated money to solve the problem. In 1999 the "Zvezda" ship repair yard management signed two documents with official representatives of the above-mentioned countries, and in 2003 the whole complex (US Department of Defense funded technical shore base at "Zvezda and the Japanese-funded

11 "Khronika chrezvychnogo polozheniia", *Vladivostok*, August 29, 2003.

floating filtration plant “Landysh”) finally became operational.¹² In 2004 Russia has continued to cooperate with the US and Japan in efforts to dismantle its Pacific Fleet nuclear submarines and to process nuclear waste, whilst Australia joined the “Global Partnership” program allocating Russia \$10 million for nuclear submarines’ utilization.

That joint project’s implementation will lead to several positive outcomes. First, it will improve safety and help ease the ecological situation of the Sea of Japan. Secondly, the project has a profound socioeconomic dimension creating new jobs in the city of Bol’shoi Kamen, where “Zvezda” is the largest industrial enterprise.

Conclusion

Negative demography and underdevelopment of vast territories are considered the most critical internal security threats for both the Russian Far East and Siberia.

Instability of the Korean Peninsula is the most serious external security threat for the Russian Far East territories. It could be assessed as having two layers:

- the threat of a direct military conflict bringing a whole array of negative consequences such as possible nuclear radiation of territories, a mass flow of DPRK refugees, etc.;
- the geopolitical threat of prolonged blocking of plans for constructing Northeast Asian international transportation corridors, gas and oil pipelines (that should go through the Korean Peninsula) thus increasing the possibility of the Russian Far East territories’ exclusion from the Northeast Asian integration processes.

In this situation the main strategic long-term task for Russia is to preserve the territorial integrity of its Far East and Siberia. Both China (as a prime source of labor force) and Japan (as a main source of financial capital) are equally important partners for Moscow to solve this historic mission. To achieve its goals Russia would try to attract

12 “Radiatsiia pod kontrolem”, *Vladivostok*, April 10, 2003.

foreign workers, but will do its best to arrange an efficient policy to control Chinese immigration.

Considering Japan, Russia may propose to give Tokyo political support on issues such as preventing DPRK nuclear programs, and will attract Japan with the possibility of diversifying its energy resources whilst trying to solve the territorial issue on the basis of mutual concession.¹³

To strengthen its political weight on the Korean Peninsula, Russia will take a more proactive stand in solving this security issue in a multilateral format (from Gorbachev's time Vladivostok has been waiting for a chance to become a place where Northeast Asian security is discussed at track 1 level). Moscow could provide some efficient input to satisfy DPRK energy needs, as well as to propose cooperation in developing DPRK infrastructure thus giving way to Northeast Asian strategic projects to build pipelines and expand transportation networks through DPRK territory.

Joint efforts by the US and Japan to help Russia in dismantling nuclear submarines and processing nuclear waste became a real input to the future safety of the Russian Far East and Northeast Asia. This positive experience in executing CBMS in the sphere of nuclear safety is a sound manifestation that it is worth trying to use the multilateral model to develop and realize CBMS to solve the Korean Peninsula issue.

Most episodes of the recent strategic military exercises in the Russian Far East have been devoted to countering so-called paramilitary threats, such as fighting terrorists, stemming refugees from neighboring countries, countering poaching in economic zones, as well as ecological threats as a consequence of accidents at sea, etc. The above-mentioned diversification of security threats is critically increasing the need for cooperation among regional governments thus demonstrating an urgent necessity to form an intergovernmental organization to counter regional security challenges. The six-party

13 In November 2004 Putin proposed to settle the dispute in a compromised fashion on the basis of the Joint Declaration signed by Japan and the USSR in 1956. He confirmed Russian readiness to fulfill that obligations, and to transfer Shikotan and Habomai islands to Japan upon signing of the bilateral Peace Treaty.

talks may become a prototype of such a track 1 security cooperation organization for Northeast Asia.

As the dependence of Asian economies on external energy increases, cooperation in supporting energy security is becoming an issue of growing weight in key bilateral relationships in the Asia-Pacific (Russia-China, Russia-Japan, China-Japan, US-Russia, etc.). In this context a proposal of forming a Northeast Asia Energy Forum is considered as a very fruitful one due to the capacity of such a track 1 organization to make a substantial input to regional security.

From the Russian standpoint, to downplay current dangerous trends provoked by the new Bush Doctrine, a global system of counteraction against modern threats should be established. Actually it already exists – it is the United Nations, with its unique characteristics of legitimacy, universality and experience.

The formation of this new global system has already successfully begun. Its prototype may become the international antiterrorist coalition, and the network of global and regional mechanisms built by its participants. The experience gained in the establishment and functioning of this coalition can be used to work out the main guidelines to secure mankind against a much wider range of challenges and risks. It is obvious that the new system must be global, embracing all security problems, capable of making comprehensive decisions, and universal as regards to its membership. Finally, it should become a standard of international legitimacy relying on international law, above all, the UN Charter.