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1. Current Model of Strategic Cooperation Between Russia and the United States

The positive changes achieved during the reset in Russian-American relations, for all the emerging problems, made it possible to consider a transition to a new model for strategic interaction between Moscow and Washington in the 21st century. This approach to Russian-American relations should provide for the transition from “mutual assured destruction” to a positive system of security based on “mutual assured stability”. This requires current concepts to be reassessed and new approaches to safeguarding mutual security to be developed.

The arrival of nuclear missile weapons as a factor in the bipolar system of international relations fundamentally changed the concept of strategic military balance, reducing it to parity in intercontinental nuclear weapons (range of action over 5,500 km) between the two superpowers, the United States. and the USSR. These new weapons could provide decisive results in a short time by annihilating half the population and two-thirds of the industrial potential in the enemy country (mutual assured destruction).

This narrow definition was limited to warheads carried by intercontinental and submarine-launched ballistic missiles and heavy bombers. No attention was paid to medium- and short-range nuclear weapons, or to the giant stocks of conventional weapons that the United States and the USSR possessed. Furthermore, other countries’ nuclear and non-nuclear weapons were also excluded from this scheme.

At the same time, this understanding also included limitations on anti-missile defense. This led to the narrow interpretation of the concept of “strategic stability” that became the basis for Soviet-American accords on nuclear weapons control. The SALT agreements and BMD Treaty of 1972 imposed quantitative limitations on START and strategic missile defense.

1.1. Mutually Assured Destruction

The model of “mutual nuclear deterrence”, or “mutually assured destruction” (MAD) took shape in the Soviet-American relations by the early 1970s. It was codified in a system of arms control treaties including the SALT (START) and BMD agreements.

The MAD model includes a series of important characteristics, which distinguishes it from nuclear deterrence as such.

1. Moscow and Washington maintain quantitative and qualitative parity in strategic forces. Other nuclear powers do not aim for parity.
2. Russia and the United States have agreed to classify their nuclear forces as strategic (i.e. with a range of action of over 5,500 km) and tactical. Other nuclear powers do not apply this strategic-nonstrategic classification to their nuclear weapons.
3. The United States and Russia are the only countries with “counterforce nuclear potential”, that is, an ability to deliver a prompt strike at military targets and military command and political administration centers. Other nuclear states have countervalue potential, i.e. the ability to attack large cities and industrial areas.
4. Only the Russian and United States’ strategic forces are able to strike and destroy military and political command and control systems. Other countries’ nuclear forces lack the capacity to carry out plans like this.
5. As a result, only Russia and the United States are potentially capable of delivering a surprise preemptive strike at any time.
6. Given this situation, Moscow and Washington created and maintain early warning systems (both land and satellite based) to detect a nuclear missile attack. Other nuclear states do not have comparable systems at their disposal.
7. Russia and the United States therefore keep their strategic nuclear forces on high alert (combat-ready) so as to be able to launch their missiles (chiefly Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles, ICBMs) in a matter of minutes following a warning of a missile launch by the opposite side. Other nuclear powers have no capabilities to launch on warning.
8. In order to mitigate the consequences of a preemptive strike, the USSR and United States agreed to limit their strategic antimissile defense by parameters that leave no chance of avoiding retaliation in the event of a preemptive strike.
9. The MAD model does not take into account the conventional armed forces and non-nuclear weapons that the parties have at their disposal.

Arms control was expanded at the end of the Cold War. The INF Treaty was signed in 1987 and under it the two superpowers destroyed their land-based missiles that have a range of action from 500 to 5,500 km. In addition, Washington and Moscow in 1991 announced their unilateral, but parallel measures towards tactical nuclear weapons reduction. The multilateral Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty) was signed in 1990 to impose limitations on five types of conventional weapons (tanks, armored combat vehicles, artillery, combat aircraft and strike helicopters). Along with the United States and the USSR, the list of signatories included all NATO and Warsaw Treaty member countries on a parity basis. But no limitations were set on navy armaments, except for submarine-launched ballistic missiles.

1.2. Broad Definition of Strategic Stability

The MAD model survived the end of the Cold War and remains the basis of military-strategic relations between Russia and the United States. The new START Treaty, signed in 2010, does not revoke MAD, and in fact makes this model more lasting and stable.

This narrow definition of “strategic stability” persisted until recently, and this was registered in the new START Treaty that covered only traditional components of the strategic triad.

In the early 21st century, however, the military-strategic balance is not confined to strategic nuclear forces. Today, achieving decisive objectives in war (hitting a wide range of military targets and economic areas, destroying political administration and military command systems) is possible using non-nuclear weapons. New non-nuclear weapons boast destructive capacities that are increasingly close to that of nuclear weapons. In the coming decades, strategic non-nuclear weapons will, it seems, mature to a point at which they are able to exert a considerable impact on the military-strategic balance. In fact, the United States takes the lead in creating strategic non-nuclear weapons.

In the polycentric world, the overall balance of forces involves numerous factors. An ever-greater role is played by counter-missile technologies, the potential for Prompt Global Strike (PGS) using conventional warheads, and the possibility to orbit space-to-surface weapons. Cyber weapons are being developed rapidly. Great imbalances have appeared in conventional weapons. The links between these different factors are becoming increasingly evident. There is a clear need to develop an integrated approach to dealing with problems arising as a result of breakthroughs in military technologies.

It is significant that the first decade of this century saw the remit of the United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) expand considerably as part of its fundamental, root and branch, reorganization. USSTRATCOM initially brought together the strategic nuclear forces of the U.S. Air Force and Navy. Its structure comprises the Joint Functional Component Command for Global Strike (JFCC-GS) that includes nuclear and non-nuclear weapons, the Joint Functional Component Command for Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaisance (JFCC-ISR), the United States Space Command (USSPACECOM), the Joint Functional Command Component for Integrated Missile Defense (JFCC IMD), the United States Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM) let by the director of the National Security Agency, among others.

In late 2011 and early 2012, official representatives of Russia and the United States held consultations on strategic stability. Certain differences came to the fore in their respective approaches.

2. Official Views in Russia and the United States

2.1. Russia's Official Views

The Russian side defines "strategic stability" as a stable balance of overall military potential, including both offensive and defensive weapons. This is an extremely broad definition. Russia calls for refraining from any steps in building up military potentials, weapons development and deployment, troop deployment, the adoption and implementation of doctrines and concepts, formation and reconfiguration of military-political alliances, establishing military bases in foreign territories, and other actions that the other side could perceive as a threat to its national security.

They add that Russia will seek to involve other states, above all those with nuclear weapons, and those that have a stake in joint action to support security, in the process to build up strategic stability. The Russian side declares that any further steps in the area of nuclear weapons reduction and limitation should be multilateral.

Russia defines "strategic deterrence" as a set of measures intended to forestall or reduce any threat of destructive action from an aggressor state (or coalition of states). They add that nuclear deterrence is fundamental to maintaining strategic stability. Moreover, for the foreseeable future, nuclear weapons will remain an important factor in preventing emergence of nuclear conflicts and military conflicts involving conventional weapons that could be modified into nuclear ones. Under its military doctrine, Russia asserts its right to use nuclear weapons to retaliate application of nuclear or other mass destruction weapons against it and/or its allies, and also in the event of conventional weapons used in an aggression against the Russian Federation that endangers the very survival of the state[1].

The Russian side, therefore, states that further nuclear arms reduction should be considered taking due account of the broader combination of factors that are key to strategic stability. These include, but are not limited to, BMD, PGS, ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty, the threat of space-orbited weapons, and quantitative and qualitative imbalances in conventional weapons.

[1] Military Doctrine of Russian Federation. 2010. February 5.

2.2. The United States' Official Views

The American side tends towards the narrow understanding of strategic stability that was accepted in the Cold War and chiefly involved the balance of strategic offensive nuclear forces. This approach is sometimes identified in the U.S. as "arms race stability", requiring approximate parity in the size and composition of strategic nuclear forces. This is the approach that served as the foundation for the SALT, START and SORT treaties.

The Obama Administration concedes that, despite considerable reductions in nuclear forces by both the U.S. and Russia, these forces remain targeted against each other as if the two states were still enemies.

The American side proceeds from the premise that, in normalcy and crisis, both sides retain a considerable contingent of strategic nuclear forces and systems of command and control over nuclear forces in a position that makes it possible to survive the first disarming strike from the opposite side, and to retaliate with destructive force against a wide range of vital targets.

At the same time, certain shifts have occurred under the Obama Administration. This was reflected in the preamble to the new START Treaty, recognizing the interrelation between strategic offensive and strategic defensive weapons. The American side notes that both sides' strategic offensive forces should have the ability to overcome the air and ballistic missile defense of the opposite side to destroy designated targets. They also assert that neither Russia nor the United States have deployed air or ballistic missile defense forces that are powerful enough to blunt a retaliatory strike by the other side in any serious way.

Moreover, they raise the question of reducing the number of targets subject to this attack risk.

The American side, therefore, suggests further bilateral reductions to U.S. and Russian nuclear weapons, with no participation by other nuclear countries in the effort. This involves both strategic and non-strategic, and both deployed and non-deployed nuclear weapons.

The United States also proposes discussions on nuclear doctrines and terminology, since Russia raises the possible use of nuclear weapons in the event of war with an adversary relying on superiority in conventional weapons.

On one hand, the American side recognizes Russia's concerns about the development of U.S. BMD and Prompt Global Strike (PGS). On the other hand, they express their own concern about the modernization of strategic nuclear forces in Russia.

Particular emphasis is laid on transparency. The American side points out that information on BMD plans and programs and development of cooperation, for example, in monitoring BMD system tests, joint training, joint analyses and planning, could prove instrumental in delivering better understanding, greater predictability and enhanced confidence.

The American side is also prepared to discuss emerging threats to critically important satellite capabilities and cyber networks, threats that may undermine strategic stability, and also joint approaches to countering these threats.

2.3. Problems

It is therefore clear that there are considerable differences in the U.S. and Russian approaches to strategic stability. This is due to asymmetry in their military potentials and their national security interests.

The United States is prepared to opt for accords on nuclear weapons where the two countries have approximate parity. But Washington does not agree to rigid limitations in those areas where the United States has clear superiority. Moscow, meanwhile, is wary of threats to its nuclear potential from U.S. non-nuclear weapons and considers limitations in this area a priority.

The United States adheres to a narrow interpretation of strategic stability, suggesting it should be supported by legally binding bilateral agreements on further nuclear arms reductions, and also by political, but not legal, measures to achieve a certain degree of transparency in such areas as BMD, PGS, aerospace devices, and cyber space. When it comes to multilateral accords, the U.S. position is limited solely to non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Russia tends towards an extremely broad interpretation of strategic stability. Moscow is in no hurry to agree to new nuclear arms reductions, especially regarding tactical nuclear weapons (TNW). At the same time, the Russian side wants to achieve legally binding limitations on strategic non-nuclear military systems, an area in which it is lagging considerably behind the United States. Russia also advocates a military balance of forces established multilaterally under international law.

There are influential political groups in both countries that, as a matter of principle, reject any need to support strategic stability through arms control accords. For example, the Republican Party's stance leaves very little room for the ratification of a new disarma-

ment treaty by the U.S. Senate. This further complicates diplomatic efforts to achieve a compromise acceptable to both Russia and the United States.

At the same time, Moscow and Washington both have to deal with financial and economic problems that cannot but impact defense spending. Modern weapons systems require massive outlays. Therefore, U.S. budget cuts will have an impact on spending on the nuclear complex, BMD and other weapons programs. The Russian Federation, too, has its own budget problems. It is indicative that Russia currently has under the number of deployed launchers and warheads allowed by the new START Treaty.

2.4. Roadmap

In order to analyze how the Russian-American dialogue on strategic stability can develop, we first need to understand whether the United States is prepared to conclude further legally binding agreements on strategic nuclear and non-nuclear arms control. If it is, then there are quite realistic prospects for strengthening strategic stability in both the narrow and broader senses. But, it is not, then strategic stability will start to erode. If no compromise is reached, arms control as a restraining mechanism could be consigned to "the dustbin of history".

It seems that the narrow interpretation of strategic stability that corresponded to the bi-polar world in the late 20th century, when there were two opposing superpowers, is now obsolete. The 21st century requires a broader understanding of strategic stability that corresponds to today's technological and geopolitical realities. Viewed conceptually, however, this issue requires serious analysis. Neither Russia nor the United States is currently prepared to seek political solutions covering all aspects of this broader interpretation of strategic stability.

The shift from the outdated, narrow concept of strategic stability that dominated in the late 20th century to a broader understanding that is relevant to today's realities could involve several stages.

The initial stage could involve the examination of prospects for further bilateral nuclear arms reductions by the United States and Russia. One reason is that other nuclear powers have refused to undertake any official commitments to limit their arsenals. It is not clear how states that have nuclear weapons but that are not recognized under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) can be involved in the disarmament process.

The second stage could involve the three other “officially recognized” nuclear powers – France, the UK and China – in the treaty regime. They would have to agree to some sort of quantitative ceilings on nuclear weapons and to measures of verification and control. Even the most optimistic assessments do not suggest that this could happen any sooner than the end of the decade.

The third stage should involve efforts to include the “unofficial” nuclear powers – India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea – in this nuclear arms control regime. But when and how this can be achieved is, for now, conjecture. This may require amendments to be made in the Non-Proliferation Treaty itself, and this is fraught with extremely dangerous consequences.

3. New Agreements on the Reduction of Strategic Nuclear Weapons

3.1. New Russian-American Agreement for START Reduction?

The U.S. approach to new nuclear arms reductions was outlined in a report by the State Department's International Security Advisory Board of November 27, 2012[2]. The report examines several scenarios: adopting an amendment to the new START Treaty; concluding a treaty on non-strategic and non-deployed weapons; concluding a treaty covering all nuclear warheads; and parallel mutual political commitments. The report noted that unilateral and coordinated actions could be carried out faster and at lower political cost (meaning ratification difficulties). It also considered the prescheduled fulfillment of the START Treaty, which would make it possible to avoid deployment by Russia of a new type of heavy ICBM. The report also proposed discussing additional measures for transparency (for instance, information exchanges on TNW reductions already implemented), and possible verification of nuclear warheads reductions.

In our assessment, new American-Russian accords could be concluded as additional agreements on more far-reaching reductions of strategic nuclear weapons than envisaged under the START Treaty. The sides could agree, for instance, within the framework of the current treaty, to set a ceiling of 1,400 warheads deployed on strategic carriers in 2014, and 1,000 deployed warheads in 2017. But this reduction would only make sense if a ceiling of 500 units is established for ICBM and SLBM. It might also be possible to limit the number of heavy bomber aircraft to 40 units (with an actual load of approximately 300 nuclear warheads).

Consequently, the ratio between nuclear warheads that could be used in a preemptive strike and the number of targets potentially subject to strikes would be less than 2 to 1. This ratio makes preventing a retaliatory strike extremely difficult, and, consequently, would help strengthen crisis stability.

At the same time, the possibility of switching a considerable proportion of "active" nuclear weapons to lower combat readiness is emerging. This will be instrumental in overcoming apprehensions concerning a sudden mass preemptive attack to disarm and incapacitate. However, the ability to carry out a counterattack cannot be eliminated by technical measures. Therefore, START reductions, coupled with a partial diminishment of combat readiness, will not radically alter the MAD setup, although they will make this model

[2] Options for Implementing Additional Nuclear Force Reductions: report / International Security Advisory Board. 2012. November 27.

more reliable and stable. The Russian and American strategic nuclear forces will retain their function of mutual deterrence.

3.2. Destabilizing Factors

This, however, leaves out a host of destabilizing factors such as BMD, non-strategic nuclear weapons, PGS, and other high-precision conventional weapons.

Russia is unlikely to agree to any further reductions in nuclear weapons, so long as the United States is intent on building up its strategic anti-ballistic missile defense. However, expecting Washington to sign and ratify a new BMD treaty is not realistic.

At the same time, the United States will seek to limit non-strategic nuclear forces, an area in which Russia boasts quantitative superiority. But Moscow will not agree to talks on this issue unless they include high-precision conventional weapons, such as PGS forces, and disparities between Russia and NATO in conventional armed forces. In addition, the CFE Treaty's termination renders it impossible to verify the fulfillment of the TNW agreement. Solving these problems will require a number of additional accords to support new START agreements. These are as follows.

1. Limiting strategic BMD (interceptors with a speed of 4.5 km/sec. and over) to a ceiling of not more than 100 weapons.

2. Limiting PGS forces to 20 weapons. These forces will have to be included in Russian-American accords on reduction of strategic ICBM launchers and SLBM.

3. Including non-strategic nuclear warheads in the overall ceiling of non-deployed nuclear warheads.

4. Agreeing on transparency and, possibly, verification measures for BMD, PGS and TNW.

5. Implementing additional confidence-building measures (exchanges of notifications, etc.) on naval forces.

6. Setting restrictions (self-restrictions) on increases in certain types of high-precision conventional weapons.

The need to achieve these accords greatly complicates the task as compared to the provisions already available in the START treaty. Prospects for concluding the relevant legally binding treaties look doubtful, and above all because of the stance taken by the United States. Political commitments may prompt doubts in Moscow, where there is every reason for concern over a possible shift in American policies following a change of administration in Washington.

As for the problems of cyber weapons and orbiting strike systems in space, these cannot be resolved on a bilateral basis. Meanwhile,

involving China and other powers in possible agreements will at best take a long time.

In his State of the Union message, president Obama called for negotiations with Russia about further cuts to nuclear arsenals. Washington understands that no progress in these talks is possible without a compromise solution to the BMD problem[3]. On March 15, the new U.S. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel announced a "restructuring" of the American BMD program[4]. Undersecretary of Defense Jim Miller, responding to a question at the Pentagon news conference, clarified that the SM-3 Block 2B program has been cancelled[5].

The Obama administration demonstrated that has no intention of seeing relations with Russia deteriorate, and is (to an extent) ready to compromise. It the next decade, U.S. BMD is unlikely to exceed the ceiling of 100 interceptors established by the ABM Treaty a long time ago. Russia meanwhile has almost 500 ICBM and SLBM launchers and heavy bombers with 1,500 nuclear warheads.

Despite this, it is too soon to suggest that the problem has been resolved. First, Washington intends to implement the 2nd and the 3rd phases of its Adaptive Approach, including deploying SM-3 Block 2A in Romania and Poland in the 3rd stage. Second, under pressure from Republicans in Congress, the Pentagon promised to conduct a "study" of the Third Site on the Eastern shore of the United States. But Hagel emphasized that it is just a "study", not a commitment to deploy. Nevertheless it is impossible to rule out the possibility that, when the Republicans come to power, we will see renewed efforts to create a "thick" ballistic missile defense to protect U.S. territory.

We now have a "window of opportunity". It is time for serious negotiations between Moscow and Washington. Hopefully we can reach compromise agreements that will respond to each country's security interests and strengthen strategic stability.

If a Russian-American compromise on BMD is achieved in 2013-2014, we can hope to maintain strategic stability, in the narrow meaning, until at least the end of this decade, or the beginning of the next decade. Alongside new reductions in nuclear weapons by Russia and the U.S., this will help strengthen the non-proliferation regime.

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[3] State of the Union Address. 2013. February 12. URL: http://www.whitehouse.gov/photos-and-video/video/2013/02/12/2013-state-union-address

[4] Hagel C. U.S. Bolstering Missile Defense / U.S. Department of Defense. 2013. March 15. URL: http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=119543

[5] U.S. Announces EPAA Phase IV cancellation, increase in number of GMD national missile defense interceptors from 30 to 44 (March 15, 2013). Mostly Missile Defense. URL: http://mostlymissiledefense.com

4. New Strategic Stability Model in the XXI Century

4.1. New Approaches Needed

Further down the line, maintaining the military-strategic balance will necessitate some fundamentally new approaches to strategic offensive and defensive weapons. It would seem that in the 21st century, the arms control mechanism created during the Cold War based on legally binding accords (setting quantitative ceilings, and verification and control measures) is far from applicable when it comes to the possible regulation of the numerous components that comprise today's military-strategic balance at both a bilateral and multilateral level.

The traditional arms control mechanism can still be effective on nuclear weapons when it comes to Russia and the United States, as has been confirmed in the new START Treaty. That said, this mechanism does elide the two countries' non-strategic nuclear weapons. Theoretically, it could be possible to achieve new legally binding accords between Russia and the United States on nuclear weapons. It is, however, highly unlikely that it will be possible to achieve a new legally binding agreement on limits to anti-ballistic missile defense (ABM-2 Treaty). It is even less possible, or indeed necessary, to revive the CFE Treaty, although efforts should continue to reach accords on a new framework of international legal control over conventional armaments that involves all European countries.

Therefore, there is a clear need to develop new instruments to regulate the military-strategic balance and supplement preexisting legally binding accords. Supporting and strengthening the military-strategic stability is a process that should ensure the situation remains predictable, while also preventing any sudden shifts in the balance, ruling out unnecessary arms race expenditures, and forestalling the emergence and escalation of military-political crises.

These instruments could include confidence-building measures and enhanced transparency regarding particularly sensitive components of the military-strategic balance. The sides are surely aware of the need for restraint, and the importance of refraining from attempts to achieve superiority. As history indicates, this superiority is only ever fleeting in nature and risks igniting a new, and very dangerous, arms race.

We can anticipate that these measures could include unilateral, parallel steps at a bilateral level (for example, between Russia and the United States, or China and India). These measures could relate to both quantitative parameters of certain types of weapons and the

supply of information regarding their operational application. These measures could be adopted via political accords, rather than legal commitments under a treaty.

Of course, the Russian-American accords on nuclear arms reductions described above cannot be regarded as sufficient to uphold the military-strategic balance if we accept the broad definition of strategic stability, which has to deal with both non-nuclear strategic systems and the multi-polar nature of the world today. It is particularly important to be aware the stability of the military-strategic balance will be increasingly influenced by the need to avoid or disincentivize the militarization of space and the development of cyber weapons. Obviously, supporting strategic stability in the multi-polar world in the 21st century will require new efforts to neutralize serious threats arising in these areas of military rivalry.

Strategic stability in the world and the situation in particular relating to European security, for the coming decade, will depend directly on whether Russia and the U.S. together with other NATO member countries are able to ensure predictability on the BMD issue. This system has to be based on an operational cooperation mechanism.

4.2. Mutual Assured Stability and Security

The U.S. approach to Mutual Assured Stability (MAS) was presented in a special report by the U.S. State Department's International Security Advisory Board on August 14, 2012[6].

In this report, MAS is defined as relations characterized by the following features:

- Nuclear weapons no longer play the central role in ensuring security;
- Deterrence on the basis of nuclear destruction is no longer necessary;
- Probability of nuclear war is extremely low;
- The chief, key challenges to security (ideological or territorial conflicts, rivalry in the access to natural resources) do not exist;
- Benefits from peaceful integration in the economic, political and diplomatic spheres outweigh any advantages from a nuclear conflict.

Forming an MAS model is, the report's authors feel, critically important in Russian-American relations, because the two countries' nuclear arsenals are greater than the nuclear weapons stocks of all other countries in the world.

[6] Report on Mutual Assured Stability: Essential Components and Near Term Actions / International Security Advisory Board. 2012. August 14.

The authors support the idea of conducting talks on strategic stability between the United States and Russia in order to discuss the composition and adoption of a plan for this transition to MAS. They particularly emphasize the need for a joint analysis of the requirements in national and multilateral BMD. In addition, they recognize it necessary to make changes (on a reciprocal basis) to the U.S. nuclear doctrine, in order to move from a nuclear policy that deems Russia the chief menace, to a doctrine of general deterrence with no concrete enemies specified. It is also proposed that the sides should jointly work out issues relating to nuclear weapons classification, the security of nuclear materials, and other countries' adoption of appropriate standards. They note the need to exchange data on missile warning systems (MWS), and for 5-year plans for nuclear systems modernization. The report also proposes developing economic interaction, stepping up the anti-drug struggle, and enhancing cooperation in science and technology. This transition to MAS, the authors feel, will take years and even decades.

It should be noted that members of the Obama Administration concede that MAS indeed has an impact on the evolution of relations between Russia and the United States in both political and military areas, and emphasize the inter-connectedness of these two aspects of MAS. They say the aim is to make the transition to mutual security and normal relations. MAS is considered a mechanism of joint response to common challenges to security, a mechanism devoid of ulterior motivations that could prompt crises, spark conflict, or ignite an arms race.

An important form of support for MAS could be cooperative action to provide for joint security and joint defense. This would make it possible to move from "negative" to "positive" rules of interaction.

It could be mentioned in this connection that the creation of the North Atlantic Alliance led to a situation in which any military confrontation between NATO member states has been virtually ruled out, although historically they have fought among themselves on numerous occasions. One apposite example here would be relations between Great Britain and France: the two countries have been able to overcome their thousand-year-old confrontation, and although they possess nuclear weapons, they interact positively in their approach to key problems. These former adversaries have become allies, with whatever differences there were between them no longer leading to armed conflicts.

Evidently, this experience is instructive for future interaction between Russia and the United States - countries that have never been adversaries in the multi-polar system of international relations.

Moreover, Washington and Moscow were allies in World War II despite their ideological differences.

4.3. Political Transformation

The 22 years that have elapsed since the end of the Cold War are evidence that the stated strategic partnership has failed to deliver any qualitative changes in Russian-American relations. The formation of a new model for partnership between Russia and the United States took place in conditions of rapidly growing asymmetry in the two countries' potentials and interests.

First, the declarations were not followed by practical measures to create lasting institutions. More precisely, half-measures were taken that had little hope of ever proving efficient. Random efforts were not molded into an overall strategic concept, they were sporadic, and with rare exceptions had no significant consequences. "The partnership" also became little more than rhetoric.

Second, no solid international legal framework has been created for strategic partnership. Russia and the United States singed new nuclear arms reduction agreements on three occasions: START-II in 1993, SORT in 2002, and the new START Treaty in 2010. But just as during the Cold War, these agreements only established "negative rules", that is, what should not be done. No positive clauses were outlined such as a potential treaty on mutual security or counter-terror agreement.

Some of the "negative rules" previously contained in the military-strategic rivalry were even eroded. The unilateral withdrawal by the United States from the ABM Treaty was a heavy blow to the entire arms control regime. The moratorium on the CFE Treaty also played its role.

Third, the Moscow-Washington strategic partnership has no economic basis. Russia accounts for less than 1 percent of the volume of American foreign trade and capital exports.

Fourth, strategic partnership between Russia and the United States is not supported in domestic policies. This is largely due to the weakness of economic ties, as it is the business community that usually comes out to lobby for political cooperation. But there are well-organized groups that have links to the defense sector and related industries (military-industrial complex) that direct their efforts against arms reduction or the development of cooperation in military and political areas.

As the Advisory Board report dated August 14, 2012 points out; transition to MAS will be difficult, if it is achievable at all. Although

the Cold War has ended, mutual mistrust remains, as do some fundamental differences in values and conflicts in interests. But then, MAS does not require absolute trust, or comprehensive cooperation, or even fully coinciding national interests. The authors point out that neither side threatens the key security interests of the other side, especially concerning border disputes, ideological conflicts or rivalry over natural resources.

The report admits that there are risks associated with the transition to MAS, in particular if other nuclear powers are not involved in the process of strengthening strategic stability. The authors add that a shift in Russian-American relations in this direction risks creating problems for the United States in its relations with other countries.

We have to admit that although there are no ideological or geopolitical conflicts between Moscow and Washington today comparable to the confrontation in the Cold War period, and although the reset has made it possible to achieve accords on START, WTO and several other issues, Russian-American relations remain fragile and unstable. MAD represents one of the "built-in" elements destabilizing these relations.

An analysis of approaches taken by Russia and the United States to the problem of strategic stability indicates that no radical improvements should be expected here in the short-term. While not denying the necessity and possibility of new accords on military-strategic issues, we have to conclude that new agreements on arms reductions and limitations cannot in themselves lead Moscow and Washington to MAS instead of MAD.

A radical solution to this problem lies, chiefly, in the political and economic spheres.

Russia and the United States share common interests in their approaches to a host of key issues in international security. This primarily concerns non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. There are opportunities for interaction over Iran and North Korea. Cooperation is developing on Afghanistan, too. The repeal of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment and Russia's accession to the WTO laid the groundwork for trade and investment relations to be imbued with new momentum.

In our opinion, qualitative changes in the political and economic spheres will also render inevitable the transformation of military-strategic interaction between Russia and the United States. Furthermore, both political and legal international approaches to coordinating the two sides' positions are possible, up to concluding a mutual security treaty.

Therefore, strategic stability in the 21st century could rest on the following pillars:

1. Treaty obligations on limitations and reductions in armaments.
2. Confidence-building and transparency measures on the basis of political obligations.
3. Unilateral parallel measures to demonstrate the absence of threat.
4. Cooperation in the area of security and defense on the basis of reciprocal political and legal commitments, including those related to BMD.
5. Development of political and economic cooperation between Russia and the United States.

Ideally, transition from mutually assured destruction to mutually assured stability should lead to mutually assured security for Russia and the United States. This requires considerable political will from both sides.

FOR ENTRIES

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