

# **Russia's Foreign Security Policy in the 21st Century**

Putin, Medvedev and beyond

**Marcel de Haas**



Contemporary Security Studies

# Russia's Foreign Security Policy in the 21st Century

This book examines Russia's external security policy under the presidencies of Vladimir Putin, Dmitry Medvedev and beyond.

The Russian Federation has developed from a neglected regional power into a self-declared resurgent superpower. Russia's background in the former Soviet Union as well as close ties with the upcoming new powers of China and India served as spring-boards towards regaining an influential status in the world. Simultaneously, Moscow developed an assertive policy towards the West and unwilling neighbours, culminating in August 2008 in an armed conflict with Georgia. Reviewing this decade of Russian international security policy, this work analyses security documents, military reforms and policy actions towards friends and foes, such as the USA and NATO, to provide an assessment of the future security stance of the Kremlin.

This book will be of much interest to students of Russian politics and foreign policy, European politics and Security Studies and IR in general.

**Dr Marcel de Haas** is a Senior Research Fellow on security policy of the Netherlands, NATO, EU, Russia and the CIS at the Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael in The Hague.

MID	<i>Ministerstvo Innostrannykh Del Rossiyskoy Federatsii</i> (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation)
Minoborony	<i>Ministerstvo Oborony Rossiyskoy Federatsii</i> (Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation)
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCMD	North Caucasus Military District
NRC	NATO-Russia Council
NSC	National Security Concept of the Russian Federation
NSS	National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation
ODKB	<i>Organizatsiya Dogovora o Kollektivnoy Bezopasnosti</i> (Collective Security Treaty Organization)
OFP	Overview of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PCA	Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (EU)
PfP	Partnership for Peace (NATO)
PGMs	Precision guided munitions
R&D	Research & Development
RF	Russian Federation
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SCRF	Security Council of the Russian Federation ( <i>Sovet Bezopasnosti Rossiyskoy Federatsii</i> )
SFOR	Stabilization Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina (NATO led)
SG	Secretary General
SMF	Strategic Missile Forces (Russia)
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
UN	United Nations
UNOMIG	UN Observer Mission in Georgia
UNSC	UN Security Council
USA	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Soviet Union

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# Preface

In 2004, when my PhD thesis, ‘Russian Security and Air Power (1992–2002)’ was published, interest in Russia – apart from think tanks, especially in the USA and the United Kingdom – was rather limited. In May 2005, after my posting at the Dutch Defence Staff editing the first Netherlands Defence Doctrine, I received the opportunity to apply my knowledge of Eastern and Western security policies as a senior researcher at the Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael, in The Hague. In subsequent years, in his second term in office as president of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin more and more followed an assertive course towards the West and to dissident neighbouring countries, Georgia and Ukraine after their ‘coloured revolutions’ in particular. This forceful stance, combined with a mindset of a self-declared resurgent super-power, was supported by a huge rise in energy prices which generated enormous revenues that could be exploited to accomplish this desired status. These developments – reinforced by Putin’s and Medvedev’s threats to re-aim nuclear missiles or deploy new systems against Western countries, by applying the ‘energy weapon’ of cutting off energy resources, and culminating in the Georgian conflict of August 2008 – have completely changed the picture of the West neglecting an allegedly meaningless Russia. Today nobody doubts anymore that Moscow is back on the international stage.

This return of Russia in the international scene coincided with a number of research projects I carried out at the Clingendael Institute, on Western and on Eastern security developments. Various of these topics laid the foundation for successive books, from my earlier one on Russian security policy of Yeltsin and Putin, to that of Putin, Medvedev and beyond in the present work. In retrospect, a number of these research projects, some by assignment of the Dutch Ministry of Defence (MOD), fit well together, not in the least by developments in the ‘East–West’ relationship. For instance, a research paper of 2006 on geo-strategy of energy and military security in the South Caucasus proved its value during and in the aftermath of the Russian–Georgian conflict of August 2008. Furthermore, in 2005 I was persuaded to write on the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Since then this Eastern grouping has gained in weight, also towards the West, because of its vicinity to Afghanistan. This made it worthwhile to do more and in-depth research on the SCO, of which the Clingendael Institute

realized its value. But also research projects on Dutch and NATO security developments gave way to do more research on Russian foreign and security policy. In particular, the wide-ranging future policy survey of the Dutch MOD also included aspects such as the development of Russia as a great power, the potential status of Russian-led international organizations, as well as scenarios for the future of international security considering Dutch and allied armed forces in an environment with Russian and other possibly 'opposing' forces.

All these research projects raised the idea that a book on the current and future international security policy of Russia might be a worthwhile undertaking, as closure of my 'tour-of-duty' at the institute. I am very happy and grateful that the Clingendael Institute shared my enthusiasm and has allowed me to carry out this intention. Finally, I would like to thank my wife Edith and children Martijn and Esther for yet another time of constructively supporting my endeavours on Russia, the intriguing country which they were recently able to see for themselves.

# Abbreviations

ABM	Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty
BRIC	Grouping of Brazil, Russia, India and China
BTC	Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline
BTE	Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline
CFE	Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy (EU)
CGS	Chief of the Russian General Staff
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CST	Collective Security Treaty
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organization ( <i>Organizatsiya Dogovora o Kollektivnoy Bezopasnosti</i> )
DWP	Defence White Paper
EaP	Eastern Partnership (EU)
EAPC	Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (NATO)
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy (EU)
ESDP	European Security and Defence Policy
EU	European Union
EUMM	EU Monitoring Mission (in Georgia)
EUSR	EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus
FPC	Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation
FSB	<i>Federal'naya Sluzhba Bezopasnosti</i> (RF Federal Security Service)
GPV	<i>Gosudarstvennaya Programma razvitiya Vooruzheniy</i> (Russian State Programme of Armaments)
GS	General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces
GUAM	Organization of Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
IFOR	Implementation Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina (NATO led)
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force (in Afghanistan)
KFOR	Kosovo Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina (NATO led)
MAP	Membership Action Plan (NATO)
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MIC	Military Industrial Complex

# Introduction

Since 2000 Russia's defence budget has risen tenfold. Russia has applied its 'energy weapon' against former Soviet republics that followed a pro-Western course. Under President Vladimir Putin's Russia unfolded an anti-Western stance, condemning NATO expansion, unilateral and dominating policies, the deployment of a missile shield and the 'Cold War vestiges' of the current European security architecture. Subsequently, in December 2007 Moscow suspended the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty, which by both sides had always been considered as the cornerstone of post Cold War European security. This assertive stance has been combined with sabre-rattling. The Kremlin has shown its military power by threatening to aim nuclear missiles at European states, by conducting military drills with China, by resuming strategic nuclear bomber flights, by conducting naval exercises in the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean, by recommencing the traditional military parade on Red Square, as well as by dispatching strategic bombers and warships to Latin America for carrying out joint war games in Washington's backyard. In August 2008 the assertive posture of the resurgent Russia escalated under President Dmitry Medvedev, when Russian armed forces invaded and occupied large parts of Georgia, after its attack on the secessionist region of South Ossetia. This enumeration of events gives the impression that Russia is back as a superpower, capable of projecting power.

This book provides an analysis of Russia's international security policy since Vladimir Putin was sworn in as President of the Russian Federation in 2000. The work is a mixture of theory and practice, policy structure by research of security documents and policy statements, and policy implementation by analysing Russia's performance, e.g. in bi- and multilateral cooperation and Moscow's actions in regions and against specific states. This introduction proceeds with the basics of Russia's security views, by comparing Moscow's current policy with traditional principles of security thinking. Next, to set the scene, details are given of the maturing of Russian security policy and the ensuing structure of key documents under Yeltsin's presidency in the 1990s, as the foundation of the subsequent policy eras of Putin and Medvedev. The introduction continues with an explanation of the research set-up and finishes with an overview of major developments in Russia and in the world, related to Moscow's external security policy (1991–2009).



Map 1.1 Russian Federation (source: United Nations Cartographic Section, New York).

## Current policy and traditional principles of Russian security thinking

In comparing Russia's current external security conduct with traditional principles, the following four characteristics can be noted about the development of Russian security policy since the collapse of the USSR in 1991, after which Boris Yeltsin became the first President of its successor, the Russian Federation. A *first* tradition in Russian security thinking is fear for the alien, a feeling of being surrounded by enemies, considering invasions of Russia by for instance Mongol, French and German armies. This characteristic finds its present side effect in an emphasis on external threats in security documents (Odom 1998: 1–2, 14). Related to the previous characteristic, the *second* characteristic is an insatiable desire for security, which expresses itself in expansion and buffer zones, such as those of the Warsaw Pact. Nowadays, this feature is shaped by the Russian-led military cooperation in the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), as well as with China in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) (Haas 2008). A *third* characteristic of traditional Russian security thinking is a feeling of superiority, which is expressed in references to the unique status of Russia and its leading role in the world. As the so-called 'third Rome' theory – of being the global political–religious vanguard after that of Rome and Constantinople had come to an end – this concept already existed under the tsars and was prolonged under the Marxist–Leninist rule of the USSR. Under Putin and Medvedev this thinking comes to the fore in frequent statements on Russia's great power status and that Russia no longer lets itself being ignored or humiliated by the West (Bezemer 1988: 26, 33–4; 'Russian nationalist' 2006). A *fourth* characteristic – more of an internal nature – is the fact that Russians have no heritage of a democratic tradition, but conversely, one of servitude to the state. The policy consequence of this characteristic was reflected in President Putin's 'vertikal' policy of returning to centralized power from the Kremlin and in an internal security policy that under the pretext of the threat of terrorism has restraint democratic institutions (Riasanovsky 1984: 115–17; Smith 2006). Consequently, the security service representatives have a tight grip on the federation and have proven their effectiveness in the 'solution' of the conflict in Chechnya. Security thinking has always had a considerable influence on the policy views of the Kremlin of the past and present. The aforementioned characteristics have caused, since approximately the year 1200, the Russian empire's expansion over the Eurasian continent, enlarging with regions such as Siberia, the Caucasus and Central Asia (Bezemer 1988). In 1991 an opposite development took place. With the annulment of the Warsaw Pact in July of that year the USSR lost its security buffer zone in the west. And with the demise of the USSR in December 1991 Russia inherited a framework state, having lost parts such as the South Caucasus, Central Asia and Ukraine. In addition to large migration movements within the CIS and other painful socio-economic consequences, the mental factor of the collapse of the (Soviet-) Russian empire, was a driver for subsequent security thinking, influencing the present-day security policy of Medvedev and Putin.

## 4 Introduction

*Table I.1* Presidents of the Russian Federation since 1991

<i>Name</i>	<i>Terms in office as President</i>
Yeltsin, Boris Nikolayevich <sup>1</sup>	June 1991–July 1996 July 1996–December 1999
Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich <sup>2</sup>	December 1999–March 2004 March 2004–May 2008
Medvedev, Dmitry Anatolyevich <sup>3</sup>	May 2008–

Source: Kremlin (2009a).

### Notes

- 1 On 12 June 1991 Yeltsin was elected as the first President of the Russian Federation. He was re-elected President on 3 July 1996.
- 2 On 31 December 1999 Yeltsin appointed Putin as acting President. On 26 March 2000 Putin was elected in office and on 7 May 2000 he was inaugurated as President. On 14 March 2004 Putin was elected for his second term.
- 3 On 2 March 2008 Medvedev was elected in office, on 7 May 2008 he was inaugurated as President.

## Characteristics of security policy under Yeltsin

After the break up of the Soviet Union in December 1991, the Russian Federation became its legal successor state. Initially, the Russian military and political leadership were convinced that the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) would develop towards an organization similar to that of the former Soviet Union, naturally under Russian supervision. However it did not take long before a number of CIS states decided differently. They created their own armed forces and subsequently formed independent security policies. The effect of these developments was that Russia felt itself forced to do the same by forming its own armed forces and a Ministry of Defence, in spring 1992. With the abandonment of the Marxist–Leninist ideology the Russian Federation was now in need of basic documents for its security policy (Haas 2004b).

### *Thought process of the political–military elite*

For more than 70 years the Soviet citizen was raised in the Marxist–Leninist world of thought. In the USSR this ideology was the determining school of thought but also the theoretical fundament for its grand strategy. In 1991 the Marxist–Leninist ideology abruptly ceased to exist. As of 1992 this had consequences for the Russian Federation, as the primary successor state to the USSR. In the field of security Russia was confronted with a twofold vacuum: with regard to a basic school of thought as well as to a theoretical fundament for its strategy. In due course the vacuum of a school of thought was filled by way of a dominant role of pragmatic thinking. The thread consisted of the perception that Russia was a great power with corresponding responsibilities, tasks and aspirations. The other vacuum, a theoretical fundament for policy making, also had to be met. Leading Russian circles rather soon came to the conclusion that a



National Security Concept (NSC) would replace the annulled ideology. From the NSC policy documents for foreign and military policy would be derived a Foreign Policy Concept (FPC) and a Military Doctrine. An important part of the Russian military and political elite was educated in Soviet ideology. Taking this into account it was not remarkable that Russian security thinking in the 1990s still displayed features of the renounced ideology. The Soviet Union allotted itself a vanguard position in the global class struggle. The three leading security documents generated in the 1990s – NSC, FPC and Military Doctrine – showed that Russia was eager to fulfil a similar position, as a crucial actor in the international arena in general and in the CIS especially. Another aspect was that the revolutionary nature of the Soviet state dictated the offensive as the leading form of combat. In the 1990s the Russian doctrinal development process unmistakably demonstrated that although its Military Doctrine from a political point of view was presented as defensive, in reality it increasingly emphasized the offensive as the leading form of combat. A final comparative aspect is threat perception. The USSR considered itself surrounded by a threat of hostile capitalist states. Russian doctrines also specified this ‘encirclement syndrome’. Considering these comparative aspects, although Marxist–Leninist ideology was officially abandoned certain features of it remained vivid in Russian security thinking in the 1990s. However, with reference to the aforementioned traditions of Russian security thinking, large parts of the former Marxist–Leninist ideological principles on security in fact demonstrated a continuation of traditional Russian (tsarist) characteristics. Hence, tsarist, Soviet and the successive Russian Federation security thought tended to be quite akin, in spite of different state-building systems.

### ***Framework of security documents***

According to Russian thinking on national security policy the state has military, diplomatic, legal (both national and international), information, economic and other means at its disposal for achieving its objectives. These means are joined in the NSC, Russia’s political or grand strategy. From the NSC separate concepts and doctrines are derived to guarantee security in – amongst others – international, military, economic, social, environmental and information areas. The two most important of these documents are the FPC and the Military Doctrine. The differences between Russian security, foreign and military policies are the following. The security policy, as laid down in the NSC, is pointed at safeguarding national interests against external and internal threats. The foreign policy, documented in the FPC, deals with maintaining relations with actors in the international arena, such as states and international organizations (Manilov 2000: 165, 231–2). The military policy, recorded in the Military Doctrine, consists of views and measures concerning war, conflicts, crises and their prevention, deterrence and suppression of aggression, force generation and preparation of armed forces, population and economy in securing vital interests of the state (Zabolotin 2000: 161).



## 6 Introduction

Table I.2 Chronology of Yeltsin's major security documents (1991–1999)

Date	Policy document
May 1992	<i>Draft</i> RF Military Doctrine published
April 1993	Foreign Policy Concept ratified by presidential decree
2 November 1993	Military Doctrine ratified by presidential decree
17 December 1997	National Security Concept ratified by presidential decree
29 September 1999	<i>Draft</i> Military Doctrine accepted by the MOD Collegium
5 October 1999	<i>Draft</i> National Security Concept accepted by the SCRF

### *Accomplishing theory and practice of foreign security policy*

It would take until the end of the 1990s before a comprehensive security policy was reached in Russia. Not earlier than December 1997 the last but also the hierarchical highest of the three documents, the NSC, was published, which completed the theoretical fundament of Russia's security policy. For a number of reasons it took six years before the spectrum of security was accomplished. The *first* reason was the hesitant approach of the Executive and especially of President Yeltsin as to whether the security documents should be drafted for the CIS as a whole or exclusively for the Russian Federation, which was the choice in the end. *Second*, the Russian security elite debated heavily on which course to take in foreign and security policies. *Third*, there was a struggle for power amongst the security organs, involving especially the MOD, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the SCRF. For this reason the first FPC as well as two Military Doctrines could be announced before the first NSC from which they were supposed to be drawn. *Fourth*, the period of 1992–1997 was characterized by instability, nationally (the 1993 conflict between the Executive and the Legislative and the first Chechen war of 1994–1996), within the CIS (for instance the civil wars in Tajikistan, Georgia and Moldova) and on the Balkans. These circumstances delayed the further maturing of Russian security policy into an NSC. Only after consensus had been reached within the security elite and among the security organs, as well as once (inter) national circumstances had more or less stabilized, could a generally accepted NSC be drafted.

In the first half of the 1990s the development of Russia's national security policy illustrated a realistic perception in considering the non-military, internal social-economic situation as the biggest threat. To improve these circumstances, Yeltsin's foreign policy was mainly oriented to the West. Consequently, Russian foreign policy was primarily directed at international cooperation, and the non-military means of Moscow's international policy had received priority. In the second half of the 1990s, due to the armed conflicts in former Yugoslavia and the consequent enhanced role of NATO in international politics, Russian security policy changed drastically. Another essential development was the two conflicts in Chechnya (1994–1996 and 1999–). As regards the increasing role of NATO in international security, this was especially demonstrated in the use of force in the former Yugoslavia (Bosnia and Kosovo), its enlargement in the

eastern direction and adopting a Strategic Concept granting itself the right to maintain international security in the Euro-Atlantic region of which the boundaries were not specified. Concerning the Chechen conflict, the consequences of the Russian interventions in Chechnya, such as bomb attacks in Russia, the high number of casualties on both sides, heavy criticism by the West and (supposed) foreign support for the terrorists, led the Kremlin to believe that, once again, Russia was faced with internal as well as external military threats. This changed Russian security policy to the extent that military means for conflict resolution and external threats now received the highest priority. A peaceful international advancement was no longer in prospect. Both developments promoted the introduction of anti-Western entries into the security documents. Apart from this, a longing grew towards regaining the status of superpower, as held by the former Soviet Union, possibly as a way out of Russia's internal and external difficulties. Lacking a sound economic base to support the status of superpower, military means – including nuclear arms – became the best instrument to achieve these political objectives. The aversions to the security policy as conducted by the West, and on top of that the desire to regain a superpower status led to focusing on the CIS politically, economically and militarily. In the 1990s the pragmatic school of thought became dominant in Russia's security policy. This security policy originated from national interests, which in case they were threatened, could be defended by every existing means of the state. Thus, Russia conducted a firm course in international politics, in which international cooperation and power play could succeed each other.

## **Research set-up**

### ***Objective and ordering principles***

The objective of this work is:

Acquiring insight into the development of Russia's international security policy since 2000, by revealing its contents and main characteristics. Based upon this analysis, providing an outlook on the future development of Russia's foreign security policy, and its possible consequences for Western security.

This objective will be realized by addressing the following ordering principles:

- What was the thought process of the Russian security elite as formulated in security documents and as incorporated in status and reforms of the armed forces?
- How was Russia's international security policy put into practice, especially in relation to friends and foes?
- Was Russian foreign security policy characterized by a structural development or by opportunistic decisions?

## 8 Introduction

- What conclusions can be drawn from the August 2008 Russian–Georgian conflict, regarding Russia’s security policy, as well as its wider, international consequences?
- In which ways could Russia’s domestic security situation and corresponding external security policy develop in the next decades?

### *Limitations*

The research for this work on Russia’s external security policy is restricted in four areas: in time, place, actors and topics. In *time*, the work is largely limited to the security policy of this decade, covering the presidencies of Putin and Medvedev. In a preceding book I discussed Yeltin’s security policy and the start of Putin’s venture (Haas 2004b). Hence, the current work can be regarded as its successor. With crucial changes in (security) politics currently going on, such as the aftermath of the Georgian conflict, Moscow’s ambitious rearmament plans and the financial crisis, it is also useful to present an outlook on Russian security policy in the next decades and how this might affect Western security. Hence, although this work first of all focuses on Russia’s external security policy from 2000 to 2009, side steps will be made to earlier and future periods to accomplish a more complete picture. The second restriction of this research concerns *place*. In place or setting, because the work is limited to Russia’s external or international security policy. Thus, in principle, it does not describe domestic security developments. There are two exceptions to this rule. First, the internal armed conflict in and around Chechnya, which has had repercussions for Moscow’s external security policy. Second, to be able to provide an outlook on the forthcoming development of Russia’s foreign security policy, in the concluding SWOT analysis and future scenarios the present domestic socio-economic, political and security environment will also be taken into account. The third limitation is in *actors*. The chapters on Putin’s and Medvedev’s security policy describe, among others, Russia’s relationship with friendly and opposing actors. These actors will primarily be (a selected number of security-related) international organizations, since the subject matter is too broad to include all states with which Russia maintains good or poor relations. As to the fourth and final restriction, concerning *topics*, it is clear that Russian foreign security policy is a very wide theme. The topics discussed in detail in this work are those that in security documents and in practice of policy come to the fore as the major issues on Russia’s security agenda, in the past, present and future.

### *Structure*

The core of this work, described in Chapters 1–4, consists of a study of Russian international security policy of this decade (2000–2009), covering the successive presidencies of Putin (2000–2008) and Medvedev (2008–). In essence, the two chapters per president have the same structure. The first chapters explain the structure (theory) of external security policy, as laid down in security documents

Table 1.3 Major security developments in Russia and in the international arena (1991–2009)

<i>Major developments in/by Russia</i>	<i>Major international developments</i>
<p><i>1991</i></p> <p>December:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annulment of the USSR</li> <li>• Formation of CIS and RF</li> </ul> <p><i>1992</i></p> <p>May:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formation of SCRF and Russian armed forces</li> </ul>	<p>July:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disbandment of the Warsaw Pact Treaty Organization</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CIS Collective Security Treaty (CST)</li> <li>• Tensions between the RF and Ukraine on the Crimea, Black Sea Fleet and nuclear arms</li> </ul>
<p><i>1993</i></p> <p>October:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yeltsin orders military action against the Supreme Soviet</li> </ul>	<p>September:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Withdrawal of RF forces from Poland completed</li> </ul>
<p><i>1994</i></p> <p>December:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yeltsin starts the first Chechen conflict</li> </ul>	<p>February:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yeltsin objects against intentions of enlarging NATO</li> </ul>
<p><i>1995</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confrontation with the West: Russian statements against NATO action in Bosnia, against NATO expansion and against interference regarding Chechnya</li> </ul>	<p>August:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NATO conducts an air and artillery offensive against the Bosnian Serbs</li> </ul> <p>December:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peace Agreement and deployment of IFOR peacekeeping force in Bosnia</li> </ul>
<p><i>1996</i></p> <p>July:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yeltsin re-elected as RF President</li> </ul> <p>August:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End of the first Chechen conflict</li> </ul>	<p>April:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Founding of the 'Shanghai Five', predecessor of the SCO</li> </ul>

*continued*

Table 1.3 continued

<i>Major developments in/by Russia</i>	<i>Major international developments</i>
<p>1997</p> <p>January:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Russia recognizes Maskhadov's government following his victory in the Chechen presidential elections</li> </ul> <p>June:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Russia becomes member of the G-8</li> </ul> <p>1998</p> <p>August:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial crisis in Russia as a result of decline in world commodity prices</li> </ul> <p>1999</p> <p>Spring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RF condemns NATO attack on Kosovo and suspends military cooperation</li> </ul> <p>June:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RF enforces participation in KFOR by deploying troops from Bosnia</li> </ul> <p>August/September:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vladimir Putin Russian Premier</li> <li>• Start of second Chechen conflict</li> </ul> <p>December:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parliamentary elections won by Communist Party (CPRF) with Putin's party second in line</li> <li>• Putin succeeds Yeltsin as (acting) President</li> </ul> <p>2000</p> <p>March:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Putin elected as President with 53 per cent of the votes</li> </ul>	<p>May/July:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Founding Act signed between NATO and Russia</li> <li>• Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic invited to join NATO</li> </ul> <p>October:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GUAM grouping founded</li> </ul> <p>May:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pakistan successfully conducts nuclear tests in answer to India's nuclear deterrent</li> </ul> <p>March:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NATO Kosovo air campaign</li> <li>• Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic new NATO members</li> </ul> <p>April:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Strategic Concept NATO</li> </ul> <p>June:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NATO deploys KFOR peacekeeping force in Kosovo</li> </ul> <p>November:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the Istanbul OSCE Summit Russia agrees with withdrawal of forces from Moldova and Georgia</li> </ul> <p>October:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CIS Summit calls for formation of a collective rapid deployment force against aggression and terrorism</li> </ul>

2001

May:

- Putin appoints Dmitry Medvedev as chairman of Gazprom

Autumn:

- Putin gives support to Bush after 9/11 terror attacks
- Widespread opposition in the security elite against Western military deployment in the CIS after 9/11, and against Putin's endorsement of military action in Russia's backyard

2002

October:

- RF threatens to invade Georgia's Pankisi Valley for alleged presence of Chechen terrorists
- 'Nord-Ost' hostage taking by Chechen fighters in a Moscow theatre

2003

March:

- Putin condemns US/UK invasion of Iraq, but continues cooperation
- December:
- Parliamentary elections: Putin (United Russia) wins with 37 per cent of the votes

2004

March:

- Presidential elections: Putin re-elected with 71 per cent of the votes
- September:
- Hostage taking by Chechen fighters of a school in Beslan, with consequences for Russia's security policy

2005

November:

- Dmitry Medvedev and Sergei Ivanov appointed as Deputy Premier, thus forming Putin's likely 'crown princes'

June:

- 'Shanghai Five' transformed into Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)

September:

- 9/11 terrorist attacks on USA

Autumn:

- US-led coalition invades Afghanistan

December:

- US decides to cancel the ABM Treaty

May:

- Founding of NATO–Russia Council (NRC)

October:

- Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) succeeds CST

March:

- US/UK invasion of Iraq

November:

- Rose Revolution in Georgia bringing pro-Western Saakashvili into power

March:

- Seven states enter NATO as members: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia

November:

- Orange Revolution in Ukraine bringing pro-Western Yushchenko into power

July/August:

- SCO calls for withdrawal of Western forces from Afghanistan
- First large Russian–Chinese (SCO) military exercises in 40 years

*continued*

Table I.3 continued

<i>Major developments in/by Russia</i>	<i>Major international developments</i>
<p><b>2006</b></p> <p>January:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gazprom cuts gas deliveries to Ukraine</li> </ul> <p>September:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tensions with Georgia: Russia imposes sanctions against Georgia, cuts transport links and expels Georgians</li> </ul> <p><b>2007</b></p> <p>January:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Russia cuts oil supply to Belarus</li> </ul> <p>February:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sergei Ivanov appointed First Deputy Premier and as Defence Minister replaced by Anatoly Serdyukov</li> </ul> <p>August:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Putin announces resumption of strategic bomber flights</li> </ul> <p>December:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parliamentary elections won by Putin's United Russia with 64 per cent of votes</li> <li>• Russia suspends CFE Treaty</li> <li>• Putin announces Medvedev as his successor for the presidency</li> </ul> <p><b>2008</b></p> <p>March:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presidential elections won by Dmitry Medvedev with 71 per cent of the votes</li> </ul> <p>April:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Russia says it will step up ties with Abkhazia and South Ossetia</li> </ul> <p>May:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dmitry Medvedev installed as RF President, appoints Putin Premier</li> <li>• First military parade on Moscow's Red Square since 1992</li> </ul> <p>August:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Russia invades Georgia: five days Russian–Georgian armed conflict</li> <li>• RF recognizes the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia</li> </ul>	<p>January:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A temporary total cutoff in energy supplies to Georgia after blasts of Russian pipelines</li> </ul> <p>September:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Russian army officers detained by Georgia on spying charges</li> </ul> <p>February:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the Munich conference Putin strongly worded condemns Western security policy</li> </ul> <p>April:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Estonia removes a Soviet war statue; Russia cuts energy transports to Estonia and disturbs its websites</li> </ul> <p>August:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large-scale, mainly Russian–Chinese SCO military drills in the Urals</li> </ul> <p>October:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MoU signed between SCO and CSTO</li> </ul> <p>February:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kosovo declares its independence</li> </ul> <p>April:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NATO's Bucharest summit defers decision on Georgia's and Ukraine's MAP application until December</li> </ul> <p>August:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Georgia sends troops to South Ossetia to restore its authority</li> <li>• EU and NATO suspend high-level consultations with Russia</li> </ul>

Autumn:		Autumn:
• Russian stock market collapses		• International financial crisis
• Military reforms and rearmament plans announced		November:
December:		• EU restores consultations with Russia
• Constitutional amendments adopted to prolong presidential term to six years and extend Duma term to five years		• Obama elected as President of the USA
2009		
January:		February:
• Russia cuts gas supplies to Ukraine and Europe for two weeks		• In Munich US Vice President Biden calls to reset US–Russian relations
March:		March:
• SCO Afghanistan conference in Moscow: first SCO meeting at which NATO/EU were invited and present		• NATO resumes talks with Russia
April:		April:
• Medvedev and Obama meet for the first time at a G-20 summit		• NATO 60th anniversary Summit in Strasbourg/Kehl, with Croatia and Albania as new members
June:		May:
• CSTO summit in Moscow		• Negotiations started between the USA and Russia on nuclear arms reductions
• SCO summit in Yekaterinburg		June:
July:		• First NATO–Russia Council at MFA level since the 2008 Georgian conflict
• Medvedev receives US President Obama in Moscow <sup>1</sup>		

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Note

1 The manuscript of this work was closed in July 2009.



and status and reform plans of the armed forces. The second chapters elaborate on the implementation (practice) of Russia's international security policy, i.e. Moscow's relationship with friendly and opposing actors – mainly international organizations – as well as Russia's major decisions/actions in security policy, especially in arms control, military power and energy security. The fifth chapter, on the Russian–Georgian armed conflict of August 2008, presents a case study of practical application of the Kremlin's foreign security policy documents. The book ends with a sixth chapter, which assesses Moscow's international external security policy since 2000, describes Russia's current status in a SWOT analysis and provides an outlook on Moscow's security policy in the future and its possible consequences for the relations with the West.

# 1 Structure of Putin's foreign security policy (2000–2008)

President Vladimir Putin released new editions of the three key security documents in the beginning of his first term in office. In later years more security papers and statements were to follow. In addition to security documents, Putin's initiatives on military reforms and their consequences for the status of the Russian armed forces complete the picture of the theoretic configuration of his foreign security policy.

## Security policy documents

In 2000 Putin started his first term in office as President by signing new editions of Russia's major security documents, i.e. the National Security Concept, the Military Doctrine and the Foreign Policy Concept. In 2003 the Russian Ministry of Defence published a defence white paper. Only late in Putin's second presidential term were new security policy documents published. However, just as the defence white paper of 2003, these were not adapted issues of the three aforementioned major security documents, but an overview of foreign policy (2007) and a strategy for the development of Russia towards 2020 (2008) (see: Table 1.1).

*Table 1.1* Chronology of Putin's major security documents and statements (2000–2008)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Policy document</i>
10 January 2000	National Security Concept ratified by presidential decree
21 April 2000	Military Doctrine ratified by presidential decree
28 June 2000	Foreign Policy Concept ratified by presidential decree
2 October 2003	MoD publication 'The priority tasks of the development of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation'
27 March 2007	MFA publication 'Review of foreign policy of the Russian Federation'
8 February 2008	Speech by President Putin on 'Strategy for the development of Russia until 2020'

***The 2000 editions of the National Security Concept, the Military Doctrine and the Foreign Policy Concept***

Shortly after the publication of the National Security Concept (NSC) in January 2000, the subordinate major security documents, i.e. the Military Doctrine and the Foreign Policy Concept (FPC), were also revisited. The order of publication and the generally similar points of view of the different concepts gave proof of a well-coordinated and comprehensive approach to the foreign and security policies. Hence, 2000 could be considered as the year of completion of the process towards an integrated and comprehensive Russian security policy, after the 'roaring' 1990s.

*National Security Concept*

The NSC was produced by the Security Council of the Russian Federation (SCRF) – Russia's highest security policy organ – and provided an overall view of Russian security policy, applying all means available to the state. With respect to threats, the 1997 NSC had expressed a generally positive view on international developments and perceived internal problems as the most important threat for Russia's national security. Within two years this perspective changed radically. In the 1999 draft NSC, a rise in military threats was displayed. The 1999 edition of the NSC clearly illustrated a turning point in threat perception. Externally, Moscow had now changed its objectives from stress on international cooperation at the global level, to emphasis on cooperation and integration within the CIS. This review in policy was the result of disappointment with the cooperation with the West but also of the new impetus for regaining Russia's superpower status, which could best be achieved starting from the CIS. Russia's rebuffing attitude towards NATO's new Strategic Concept of 1999 and to its military intervention in Kosovo of the same year, meant that Western security policy was now considered to be a threat, resulting in statements in the security documents expressing these anti-Western sentiments. By ratifying the final draft of the new NSC on 10 January 2000, President Putin authorized this revised view of Russian security policy (SCRF 2000a).

*Military Doctrine*

The Military Doctrine was drafted by the MOD and deals with the military means of the state. The revised Military Doctrine, signed by President Putin in April 2000, contained positions against the West and consequences of the second Chechen conflict (SCRF 2000b). New entries regarding the President and Belarus were included. Taking into account his policy of centralization of power, it was not surprising that the position of the President in the chain of command was strengthened. As a result of the Union Treaty of December 1999, Russia and Belarus had intensified their cooperation. The military aspects of the deepened relations were now stated in the doctrine. The SCRF, probably by instigation of

the military, was left out of this chain in the (draft) doctrine of 1999/2000. However, in the course of 2000 Putin made it clear that he intended to strengthen the position of the Security Council at the expense of the Ministry of Defence and the General Staff (IISS 2000a: 109).

### *Foreign Policy Concept*

The Foreign Policy Concept (FPC) was drawn up by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Ministerstvo Inostrannykh Del*, MID), and discussed the political and diplomatic means of Russia. More than seven years after the first FPC of 1993, on 28 June 2000 President Putin signed a revised version of the FPC (SCRF 2000c). The introduction of the new document stated that certain tendencies in international politics compelled Moscow to review its foreign and security policies. These negative tendencies were in contrast with the expectation, listed in the 1993 FPC, that multilateral cooperation would further intensify. The 2000 edition of the FPC mentioned as basic principles of Russian foreign policy, that the RF was a great power, that Russia's influence in international politics was to be strengthened and that political, military and economic cooperation and integration within the CIS had a high priority. Furthermore, the FPC contained expressions of aversion to Western security policies.

### *Assessment of the 2000 security documents*

Major points of view in the security documents of 2000 were an assertive attitude towards the West, strengthening Russia's position both within the CIS and on a global level, as well as an emphasis on military means as an instrument of security policy (SCRF 2000a, b, c; Haas 2004b: 74–97). The 2000 security papers displayed a prominence of negative tendencies with reference to Western security policy. In particular NATO's use of force in the former Yugoslavia (Bosnia and Kosovo) was seen as a clear example of its policy of ignoring Russia, which claimed a decisive role in Europe, as well as of disregarding the UN and the standards of international law. Other concerns were NATO's new Strategic Concept of April 1999 and its enlargement with new member states in the East, adjacent to Russia's borders. With regard to external national interests the documents mentioned strengthening Russia's international position as a great power and joint security action through the Collective Security Treaty (CST), particularly in combating international terrorism and extremism (see: Chapter 2, 'Russia's approach towards other international actors: friends'). Moscow felt threatened by attempts to belittle the role of existing mechanisms for international security, by economic and power domination of the United States and other Western states, as well as by ignoring Russian interests and influence in resolving international security problems. The parts in the 2000 security documents on ensuring Russia's security portrayed the principles of foreign and security policies for the purpose of achieving the external objectives of Russia's grand strategy. In ensuring security by foreign policy, priority was given to the

UN(SC) as a mechanism of international security. With this entry Moscow clearly rejected a leading role in international politics of institutions other than the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). This provision of course was related to the objective of strengthening Russia's international position. In the UNSC Russia possessed the right of veto and was thus able to block undesirable resolutions. Therefore, the objective of reinforcing Russia's international status could be promoted within the constellation of the UN. However, if NATO dominated international politics, the situation would be different. In such an arrangement of the international system, Russia, without a veto right, would be more or less 'dependent' on NATO's policies. This explained the prominence of the UN and the UNSC especially in the relevant entries in the documents. Another entry in foreign policy principles of ensuring security dealt with advancing regional stability. In the practice of politics Russia's standpoints on good neighbourhood (partnership) and on regional conflict resolution in the CIS became confused. On some occasions Russia had allegedly actively encouraged regional conflicts, for instance in Abkhazia, followed by an offer of conflict solution, thus making a CIS state, in this case Georgia, dependent on Russia for ensuring its security. Subsequently, this dependency in the field of security was aimed at enhancing Russian influence on this state, thus 'ensuring' good neighbourliness. A further priority in ensuring security was protecting Russians abroad. This had been a recurring theme in Russian foreign security policy. The NSC, as well as the FPC, in describing the location of Russians abroad, used the term *za rubezhëm*. This term pointed at states adjacent to Russia. The expression *za rubezhëm* has an emotional connotation: it refers to something familiar, which binds together.<sup>1</sup> As to ensuring military security the NSC and the Military Doctrine permitted the use of nuclear weapons to counter aggression.

### ***Terrorist attacks affecting major security documents***

In autumn 2002 Chechen terrorists carried out a voluminous hostage taking in Moscow. This attack had – at first sight – deep consequences for the internal but also for the external security thinking in Russia. After the violent ending of the hostage taking Putin gave orders to intensify the war in Chechnya, to reform military power and to make changes in current national security documents and legislation, in order to strengthen Russia's fight against terrorism. In September 2004 Russia was shocked by another large-scale hostage taking, this time in the North Ossetian city of Beslan. In the aftermath of the Beslan hostage taking again changes in security policy (documents) were announced.

#### *'Nord-Ost' hostage taking (2002)*

From 23–26 October 2002 Chechen fighters carried out a hostage taking in a theatre in Moscow, in which the musical 'Nord-Ost' was performed. Special forces (*spetsnaz*) units of the power ministries violently put an end to this act of terror.<sup>2</sup> 'Nord-Ost' had brought the Chechen conflict into Russia's capital. As a

result there was a broad feeling amongst Russian military–political decision makers as well as in Russian society that this terrorist attack meant a turning point in Russian security policy, which was illustrated by the Russian press by describing ‘Nord-Ost’ as Russia’s ‘9/11’ (Solovyev 2002b). Shortly after ‘Nord-Ost’ parliamentarians and academic security specialists already declared in public that this hostage taking had demonstrated that the current legal system lacked a normative basis for an effective fight against acts of terror (Sokolov 2002a, b; Bogdanov 2002; ‘Orders revision’ 2002; Nikolayev 2002). The existing legal system did not live up to the demands of the necessary anti-terrorist operations. For that reason existing legislation, such as the Constitution, the NSC, the Military Doctrine, Laws on Anti-Terrorism, Defence as well as on State of Emergency, was to be revised (Bogdanov 2002). On 29 October 2002, President Putin affirmed this defining moment by ordering his security ministers and chiefs to draft a revision of the NSC. According to Defence Minister Sergei Ivanov the adjustments of current legislation would include the following provisions: intensifying the involvement of the Russian armed forces in fighting terrorism, assessing the increased threats against national security and the readiness of Russia to act against terrorists but also against their sponsors abroad. After revising the NSC, the Military Doctrine was to be altered, followed by other security documents subordinated to the NSC (Solovyev 2002c).

Evaluating the policy decisions after ‘Nord-Ost’, the anticipated revision of security policy turned out to be ambivalent. On the one hand, recognizing the increased importance of internal threats and conflicts seemed to be a realistic approach by Putin. This replaced the focus on large-scale warfare, which conservative circles in the General Staff by emphasizing nuclear instead of conventional forces, still considered to be the primary conflict. If the repeated conflicts in Chechnya and Dagestan did not make this clear, then surely ‘Nord-Ost’ proved that the primary threats to Russia’s national security were of an internal nature. Therefore, it would make sense that the revised Military Doctrine as well as other security documents took account of the increased importance of non-nuclear military means, which would correspond with the actual threat perception. On the other hand, the ambivalence came to the fore with regard to the trend of the proposed revision in security policy, stressing military solutions and not social–economic ones. Another feature of ambivalence was the fact that Russian authorities repeatedly made it clear that Russia granted itself the right to attack terrorists abroad. This option to use force abroad was not to be conducted by an invasion of troops, but by employing precision guided munitions (PGMs) in operations against terrorist training camps or against other targets out of the country, which were related to international terrorism (‘Defence Minister says’ 2002). By doing so, Moscow permitted itself to violate norms of international law, such as the prohibition of using force and the non-intervention principle, as laid down in the UN Charter.

*Beslan hostage taking (2004)*

On 1 September 2004 in Beslan, North Ossetia, Chechen terrorists captured more than 1,000 teachers, parents and children at a school, during the festivities of the opening of the new educational year. On the morning of 3 September armed Ossetian civilians allegedly opened fire at the terrorists which set off fighting between hostage takers and Russian anti-terror units, who were unprepared for storming the building at that moment. As a result of the fighting 300 to 400 hostages and servicemen were killed. Just as in 'Nord-Ost', the anti-terror units *Vympel* and *Alfa* of the Federal Security Service (FSB) took the lead in bringing the hostage taking to an end ('Russian elite' 2004). 'Beslan' was not the only terror attack in this period; the week before suicide bomb attacks at a Moscow metro station and on board two Russian airliners killed some 100 people ('War on terror' 2004).

To a large extent the policy responses after Beslan were similar to those taken in the aftermath of 'Nord-Ost'. In their statements the political and military leadership of the MOD repeated their views of 2002, maintaining that war had been declared against Russia and that, if necessary, (preventive) attacks by Russian forces against terrorists abroad would be carried out. Likewise, politicians such as State Duma Speaker and former Minister of Internal Affairs Boris Gryzlov stated that new legislative initiatives against terror attacks would be presented to the Duma in short order. A new and unusual step taken was that Russia asked for an extraordinary session of the UNSC, a request which was not made for previous terror attacks, such as 'Nord-Ost' ('War on terror' 2004). At the special session of the UNSC Russia asked for and received an unqualified condemnation of the hostage taking. This UNSC resolution provided Russia with the acknowledgement that the Chechen conflict was part of international terrorism, which would legitimize its actions in Chechnya. However, this international recognition did not mean that Russia allowed the international community to interfere in its internal conflict in Chechnya.

***The 2003 Defence White Paper: the priority tasks of the development of the Russian armed forces***

On 2 October 2003 Russia's Minister of Defence, Sergei Ivanov, published 'The priority tasks of the development of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation', by its format – not only a doctrine explaining military operations but also describing military capabilities – and therefore here referred to as the Defence White Paper (DWP 2003) (Minoborony 2003). Warfare analysis of the characteristics of conflicts from the 1970s until 2003 led the Russian MOD to the following conclusions in the 2003 DWP:

- A significant part of all the conflicts had an asymmetrical nature. They demonstrated fierce fighting and in a number of cases resulted in total destruction of a state system.

- The outcome of conflicts is more and more determined in its initial phase. The party that takes the initiative has the advantage.
- Not only military forces but also political and military command and control systems, (economic) infrastructure as well as the population have become primary targets.
- Information and electronic warfare nowadays have a great impact in conflicts.
- The use of airborne, air mobile and Special Forces has increased.
- Unified command and control, joint warfare and a thorough cooperation between ground and air forces in particular has become essential.
- A prominent role in modern warfare, as demonstrated in conflicts such as those in the former Yugoslavia (1999), Afghanistan (2002) and Iraq (2003), was taken by long-range PGMs in combination with airpower, after air superiority has been established.
- Massive use of tanks and infantry has to a large extent been replaced by long-range guided weapon systems and massive air raids, although the role of these conventional forces is still important after the initial stages of a conflict.
- The dominating role of airpower in modern warfare requires a well-equipped and electronic warfare resistant anti-aircraft defence system (Minoborony 2003: 34–8).

With standpoints stressing the importance of information and electronic warfare, unified command and control and joint warfare, emphasizing asymmetric warfare, the 2003 DWP demonstrated a realistic view on modern warfare. Correctly, the DWP focused on asymmetric conflicts as being at the contemporary forefront, instead of large-scale conventional wars. Apparently, study of recent Western-led conflicts and of their own experiences in Chechnya convinced the Russian military–political leadership to concentrate on irregular warfare. Nonetheless, carrying out this realistic approach towards modern warfare was a concern. The observations that modern, specifically irregular, warfare could only be fought with sophisticated weapon systems – such as PGMs and avionics providing all-weather capability – as well as by improving the training level of personnel, required financial means. The Russian armed forces, massive in form, were still aimed at conventional large-scale warfare and demanded a lot of money for upkeep. So far military reform plans did not offer a solution for this dilemma. Unless the military–political leadership decided to radically change the structure of the armed forces towards one capable of conducting asymmetric warfare, the envisaged adaptation of the Russian army was expected to be hampered.

With regard towards the West, the DWP 2003 showed ambivalence. In dealing with the West in general and NATO especially the 2003 DWP posed a vision of two minds. On the one hand entries showed concern on the enlargement of the alliance and the possible deployment of NATO forces on the territory of new NATO members. But it also mentioned that the NATO–Russia



partnership would be further deepened in spite of these major differences. Furthermore, it stated that nuclear and large-scale wars with NATO or other US-led coalitions were no longer probable armed conflicts and that Russia expected cooperation with the USA and other industrialized countries to grow in ensuring stability. On the other hand elsewhere in the 2003 DWP this moderate tone was set aside and replaced by an antagonistic approach, underlining that Russia expected the anti-Russian entries to be removed from NATO's military planning and political declarations. Even stronger, the document stated that if NATO was preserved as a military alliance with an offensive doctrine, cardinal changes would be undertaken in Russia's military planning and development of the Russian armed forces, including its nuclear strategy. At the time of publication of the 2003 DWP these entries caused considerable concern in circles within NATO. The ambivalent character of the document clearly gave evidence that it was written by multiple authors.

### ***The 2007 Overview of Foreign Policy***

On 27 March 2007 President Putin approved the 'Overview of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation' (OFP) prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). Putin had ordered such an analysis at a meeting with Russian ambassadors and permanent representatives on 27 June 2006. According to the MFA announcement of this publication, the OFP and its recommendations would serve as guidance (for instance for embassies) for establishing foreign policy positions on different topics (MID 2007b). This document was possibly also used for drafting Medvedev's Foreign Policy Concept of 2008. The OFP consisted of five chapters, covering in particular (MID 2007a):

- 1 *multilateral diplomacy*: UN, G8, threats, disarmament and crisis management;
- 2 *geographic directions*: CIS, Europe, North America, Asia-Pacific and other regions;
- 3 *economic diplomacy*: liberalization of trade, energy diplomacy;
- 4 *humanitarian diplomacy*: protection of rights, protection of Russian citizens abroad, cultural and scientific cooperation;
- 5 *ensuring foreign policy*: diversification of policy instruments, regional cooperation.

Significant entries in the OFP were the following. The international position of Russia was considerably strengthened. The now powerful Russia had become an important element of positive changes in the world. An important achievement of recent years was that Russia had regained its foreign policy independence. On the formation of an independent state of Kosovo the OFP warned that that would cause a serious deterioration of stability in Europe, and would serve as a precedent. Georgia allegedly intended to destroy the existing peacekeeping and negotiating formats as a result of which the situation around Abkhazia and South

Ossetia became more complicated. Russia would not allow such a course of action. Concerning (the deteriorating situation in) Afghanistan, the OFP realized that a failure and subsequent withdrawal of the USA and NATO from this country would result in the Central Asian states and Russia being confronted with the Afghan threats of narcotics, terrorism, fundamentalism and destabilization. The OFP distinguished a role for the CSTO and for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in countering these threats (see: Chapter 2 'Russia's approach towards other international actors: friends'). The OFP stated that Russia had already more than once put forward the CSTO as a counterpart for NATO in Afghanistan. Specifically, joint NATO–CSTO guarding of the Tajik–Afghan border, possibly also involving Iran, was suggested. As to the millions of ethnic Russians living abroad, elsewhere in the CIS, the OFP mentioned an active policy of protecting them, but also of encouraging them to resettle in Russia.

### ***The 2008 Strategy for the Development of Russia towards 2020***

On 8 February 2008 President Putin addressed an expanded meeting of the State Council with a speech on 'Russia's Development Strategy towards 2020' (henceforward: 'Strategy 2020').<sup>3</sup> Coming to the end of his second term in office as President of the Russian Federation, Putin wanted to speak about what was accomplished during his presidential years. Furthermore, he also set out his long-term vision of the future. The first part of the speech was devoted to the deplorable circumstances in Russia that existed when he came into power, followed by the improvements established during his reign. Considering this emphasis and his audience, the State Council, in most of his Strategy 2020 Putin discussed domestic developments. Only around one out of ten pages of the statement dealt with military, security and other international aspects (Kremlin 2008a). Salient external security features of this part of his speech were security concerns, such as on NATO (e.g. enlargement; the CFE Treaty), energy security, US deployment of troops in Eastern Europe and the missile shield, as well as Russia's intended reply with arms procurement and military reforms.

### ***Assessment of the 2003, 2007 and 2008 security papers***

In spite of many announcements on forthcoming new editions of the major security documents, after the year 2000 no new NSC, FPC or Military Doctrine was published. Instead of the primary security documents, other policy papers were launched during the remainder of Putin's presidency, i.e. the 2003 DWP, the 2007 OFP and the 2008 Strategy 2020. Analysis of these three documents, by comparing their entries, must be undertaken with some reserve, due to the different 'producers' of the papers. Whereas the 2000 security documents – as basic and coherent papers – were attuned to each other, this was not necessarily the case with the documents of later years, which were in the first place products of individual security organs. The DWP was a product of the MOD, the OFP of the MFA and

the Strategy 2020 – mainly a domestic-oriented document – probably of the Presidential Administration. To a certain extent this explains the differences between them. However, the similarities between the papers are stronger than the differences. The main corresponding records are (see: Table 1.2):

- Russia has regained a competitive international position as global power, and is capable of formulating the international agenda.
- The significance of military power and use of force in international politics is rising. As a consequence Russia's armed forces have to be strengthened to serve as an effective instrument of political-strategic objectives, such as protection of economic interests.
- Energy has become a vital security aspect for two reasons. First, as instrument of power, because the energy resources increase Russia's international weight and, second, as threat, since other actors without these resources might forcefully try to obtain them from Russia and others;
- The interests of ethnic Russians abroad (*za rubezhëm*), will be protected by Russia.
- The West is considered a threat to RF national security. In particular NATO, for its unwillingness to sign the adapted CFE Treaty and its continued enlargement (possibly also with Georgia and Ukraine), and the USA for the deployment of troops in Romania and Bulgaria and of the intended missile defence shield in Poland and the Czech Republic.
- Cooperation with CSTO and SCO is an important element of Russia's security policy.

Regarding international circumstances, the 2003 DWP emphasized social-economic conflicts. In 2007–2008 security papers showed that the dominating nature of conflicts had changed into one of military clashes. The background for this assumption was probably related to the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and the fight against international terrorism, which were mentioned in other entries in the papers. In the 2003 document, Russia's regained status of superpower and the enhancing interest of energy as a security factor were still missing; they were first listed in the papers of 2007 and 2008. Russia regarded guarding ethnic Russians abroad also as a vital interest of its security policy. This was a recurring characteristic in all three documents. The 2003, 2007 and 2008 security papers displayed a common threat perception of NATO, resulting from the enlargements of 1999 and 2004. Especially the entrance into the alliance of the former Baltic Soviet republics was already under Yeltsin considered as a threat to Russia's national security. The possible joining of more former Soviet republics – Georgia and Ukraine with recently elected pro-Western governments with which Russia maintained a confrontational relationship – as well as NATO's refusal to sign the adapted CFE Treaty, further stirred up feelings against the Western alliance. Similar negative feelings towards the USA were the result of the deployment of US troops in new NATO member states and of the intended missile defence shield. Although the latter were stated in the 2007–2008 documents, the

Table 1.2 Main entries of the security documents of 2003, 2007 and 2008<sup>1</sup>

<i>Themes</i>	<i>Defence White Paper October 2003</i>	<i>Overview of Foreign Policy March 2007</i>	<i>Strategy towards 2020 February 2008</i>
<b><i>Russia in the world community</i></b>			
<b><i>Destabilizing factors for the military-political situation</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current stage of global development is noted for acute socio-economic conflicts and political contradictions</li> <li>• Security is shifting from questions of war and peace to complicated political, financial-economic, ethnic-national, demographic and other problems</li> <li>• The significance of military power in the post-bipolar world has not diminished, since a number of international security institutions are in grave crisis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Russia has regained a balance of power and competitive international position lost after the Cold War</li> <li>• Force as a factor to solve international problems has increased</li> <li>• Focus on disarmament has dropped</li> <li>• Attempts to form a unipolar world</li> <li>• 'Victory in the Cold War' results in unilateral responses</li> <li>• Continuous enlargement with new members is aimed at broadening Western influence</li> <li>• Iraq has demonstrated the myth of a unipolar world</li> <li>• The US withdrawal of the ABM Treaty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under the pretext of liberty and open society the sovereignty of states and complete regions is destroyed</li> <li>• A fierce battle is taking place on energy resources. Many armed conflicts carry the smell of oil and gas</li> <li>• There is a growing interest by the outside world in Russia and Central Asia because of their energy</li> </ul>

*continued*

Table 1.2 continued

Themes	Defence White Paper October 2003	Overview of Foreign Policy March 2007	Strategy towards 2020 February 2008
<b>Russia's national interests</b>			
<i>International</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening of the Russian armed forces may prevent the final dissolution of the system of international relations, based upon international law</li> <li>• The Russian armed forces can ensure global stability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An important achievement of recent years is that Russia has reinstalled its foreign policy independence</li> <li>• Russia as an active global power not only participates in realizing the international agenda but also formulates this agenda</li> <li>• Energy diplomacy is gaining weight due to Russia's leading role in it</li> <li>• The energy factor is increasing in Russia's foreign policy</li> <li>• Relations with the CIS countries are a key priority in RF foreign policy</li> <li>• Russia has an interest in having friendly, flourishing, democratic and stable states at its borders</li> <li>• Russia does not intend to give up its natural competitive advantages nor to damage its national interests</li> <li>• Russia conducts an active policy towards the millions of ethnic Russians living in the near abroad (<i>za rubezhem</i>). Protection of their interests and encouragement to resettle in Russia are priorities of RF foreign policy</li> <li>• Russia should expand its current economic cooperation in the BRIC format (Brazil, Russia, India and China) with energy and counterterrorism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The expenditures for new weapon systems must be in line with the possibilities and not contrary to the priorities of the social-economic development</li> <li>• Strengthening of national security demands a new strategy towards 2020 for the build-up of the armed forces</li> <li>• Russia has an active interest in global and regional integration processes</li> <li>• For the accomplishment of its national tasks Russia strives towards peaceful and positive stance of international relations</li> </ul>

## Threats to Russia's security

### External threats

- International terrorism
- Drug trafficking
- Organized and cross-border crime
- Deployment of foreign troops in the territory of new NATO members and states aspiring to join the bloc
- Unilateral use of military power without UNSC mandate
- Armed force used by ad hoc coalitions
- Cold war stereotypes
- Proliferation of mass destruction weapons
- Armed force is increasingly used for protecting economic interests, which enlarges foreign policy requirements for using violence
- Reducing the role of the UNSC is a dangerous tendency
- Renationalization of security policy of states in Central Asia, the Far East or elsewhere in the CIS will compel Russia to consider the regions as potential sources of conflict
- Interference in internal RF affairs
- Demonstration of military power close to the borders of Russia
- Expansion of military blocs
- Strengthening of Islamic extremism close to Russian borders
- Infringement on the rights and interests of Russian citizens in foreign states (*za rubezhëm*)
- International terrorism
- Extremism
- Narcotics
- Regional conflicts
- Independence of Kosovo would cause a serious deterioration of stability in Europe and would serve as a precedent
- Georgia intends destroying the existing peacekeeping and negotiating formats complicating the situation around Abkhazia and South Ossetia
- On Afghanistan, a failure and subsequent withdrawal of the USA and NATO would confront the Central Asian states and Russia with the Afghan threats of narcotics, terrorism, fundamentalism and destabilization
- The USA and other Western states try to use the OSCE as an unilateral instrument for ensuring their foreign and security policy objectives
- NATO's refusal to sign the adapted CFE Treaty, further enlargement, possibly including Ukraine and Georgia, as well as the deployment of US troops in Romania and Bulgaria deteriorate the relations with Russia
- The planned US missile defence shield in Eastern Europe
- A new arms race is unfolding, caused especially by developed states, leaning on their technological superiority
- NATO refuses to sign the adapted CFE Treaty, but demands from Russia a one-sided compliance
- NATO further enlarges, taking its military infrastructure towards Russia's borders
- The USA is establishing new military bases in Romania and Bulgaria and a missile defence shield in Poland and the Czech Republic
- Because of the abundance in energy resources Russia is faced with a revisionist policy of deterrence resulting in unfair competition, as well as with actors that try to get access to Russia's energy reserves

*continued*

Table 1.2 continued

Themes	Defence White Paper October 2003	Overview of Foreign Policy March 2007	Strategy towards 2020 February 2008
<b>Ensuring Russia's security</b>			
<i>Fundamentals and objectives</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nuclear and large-scale wars with NATO or other US-led coalitions are no longer probable</li> <li>Russia expects cooperation with the USA and other industrialized countries to grow in ensuring stability and dismantling the Cold War vestiges</li> <li>NATO–Russia partnership is maintained despite major differences on issues of enlargement of the alliance and its foreign military operations</li> <li>The main international obligations of Russia are related to the UN, the CSTO, the SCO and Belarus</li> <li>Russia expects that the anti-Russian entries will be removed from military planning and political declarations of NATO members</li> <li>Economic relations with EU countries will further develop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multilateral diplomacy is the fundamental method of regulating international relations</li> <li>Russia as an active global power not only participates in realizing the international agenda but also formulates this agenda</li> <li>The EU is Russia's principal partner in Europe</li> <li>Russia expects two-way politics from European actors, such as the EU, the Council of Europe, the OSCE and NATO</li> <li>The relationship with China and the cooperation in the triangle Russia–India–China are vital policy points</li> <li>Russia conducts an active policy towards ethnic Russians living in the near abroad (<i>za rubezhem</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Russia is back in the international arena as a powerful state, which has to be taken into account and which can stand up for itself</li> </ul>
<i>Foreign policy objectives</i>			<i>Not mentioned</i>

### *Ensuring military security*

- If NATO is preserved as a military alliance with an offensive doctrine, cardinal changes will be undertaken in Russia's military planning and development of the Russian armed forces, including its nuclear strategy
- Russian armed forces will contain military and political threats
- Russian armed forces will ensure Russia's economic and political interests and its territorial integrity
- Ensuring the security of Russian citizens in armed conflicts and situations of instability
- Fight against international terrorism, political extremism and separatism
- Preservation of a strategic deterrence force potential aimed at preventing power politics or aggression against Russia and allies
- Russia promotes international peace through the UN and regional organizations such as OSCE, CSTO, CIS and SCO
- CSTO and SCO can play a positive role in the fight against narcotics and terror and in promoting stabilization around Afghanistan and in Central Asia on the whole
- Russia repeatedly offers NATO cooperation with the CSTO around Afghanistan. NATO and CSTO could jointly guard the Tajik-Afghan border with Russia and Tajikistan, possibly also involving Iran
- The Russia-NATO Council has become an important factor for stability and prediction of the relations with the Alliance
- In the coming years Russia will produce new weapon systems which will qualitatively be at least equal or even better than those of other countries
- Due to the demands of modern technology the strategy for the build-up of the armed forces must be reviewed to acquire an army which can cope with the most sophisticated demands
- Such a modern army requires solving the current problems in prestige, salaries, social security and housing

### *Note*

- 1 The citations are mostly not literally derived from the different security documents, but are adapted by the author. Since the National Security Concept (NSC) was the principal Russian security document until publication of the National Security Strategy in May 2009, for reasons of unity and clarity the main entries of the documents are offered in the format of the NSC. The grouping of related entries as used here is for the purpose of clarity and does not necessarily correspond with the original documents.



2003 DWP had already presented similar antagonistic viewpoints, with NATO's conflict in Kosovo of 1999 still in mind (see: Chapter 2, 'Russia's approach towards other international actors: foes'). To convince the domestic and the foreign audience, the part on ensuring Russia's security of the 2007–2008 security papers reiterated the statement that Russia was back as an influential global power. In response to the discontent with Western security policies the 2003 DWP and 2007 OFP presented CSTO and SCO as the (security) organizations with which Moscow would cooperate to accomplish its political-strategic goals. Only in recent years before the 2003 DWP the Russian-Chinese-led SCO (2001) and the Russian-dominated CSTO (2002) had been transformed from ad hoc groupings into international organizations (see: Chapter 2, 'Russia's approach towards other international actors: friends').

### ***New editions of major security documents remained pending***

In the aftermath of the 'Nord-Ost' terror attack in Moscow of October 2002, Putin ordered a revision of the National Security Concept (NSC), and subsequently of the Military Doctrine and other security documents subordinated to the NSC. Likewise, after the hostage taking in Beslan, September 2004, in its statements the Kremlin reiterated the necessity of new editions of the major security documents, dating from the year 2000.

### ***National Security Concept***

On 29 October 2002, after 'Nord-Ost', President Putin had instructed his security ministers and chiefs to draft a revision of the NSC. After 'Beslan' a revision of the NSC again came to the fore as one of the policy measures. On 29 September 2004 Igor Ivanov, Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation (SCRF), announced that Russia would review its NSC in the light of the war against international terrorism. Ivanov noted that the present concept was adopted in 2000, before the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States and therefore it did not reflect the new reality ('Russia to review' 2004). Surprisingly, no mention was made that already in October 2002 Putin had ordered such a revision of the NSC. Apparently, until 'Beslan', 2004, the anticipated revision had not left the stage of rhetoric. Later on, more details of the contents of a new NSC were released. On 1 February 2005, at a scientific conference on the NSC, Igor Ivanov explained the current phase of development of the highest security document. He made clear that, as key issues in the new NSC, social-economic problems, the fight against terrorism, disparities in development among Russia's regions, insufficient funding for science and technology, environmental and demographic problems, as well as public confidence in government bodies and state institutions would be included ('National security' 2005). Most of these entries were also listed in previous editions of the NSC, such as the last one of 2000. However, Russia's conservative security elite had always been able to bypass a social-economic

approach and solution by prioritizing a military approach to external as well as internal security.

### *Military Doctrine*

After the terror attacks of 'Nord-Ost' and 'Beslan', President Vladimir Putin ordered a revision of the country's security documents. However, as regards to military doctrine, in the next years no new developments could be discerned. Not earlier than in 2005, Putin ordered a review of Russia's military doctrine (Solovyev 2007). In August 2006, reports appeared in the Russian press on the draft of a new doctrine, to be completed in 2007 (Kirshin 2006). These reports, however, were immediately denied by the Minister of Defence, Sergei Ivanov ('And denies' 2006). In the course of 2007, with the announcement of the draft-in-process of a new doctrine, it seemed that the news reports were correct after all (Myasnikov 2006b). On 20 January 2007, a conference of the Russian Academy of Military Sciences took place in Moscow. At the conference, the academy's President, Army General Makhmut Gareyev, and the Chief of the General Staff (CGS) of the Russian armed forces, Army General Yuri Baluyevsky, presented elements of a new military doctrine. The revised doctrine – to be published at the end of summer 2007 – was to replace the one that was ratified by President Vladimir Putin in 2000. At the Moscow conference, it was stated that the doctrine then in force, of 2000 – i.e. before the 9/11 terror attacks – needed revision because of the deterioration of the international security situation since then. A striking point of the draft doctrine was the apparent effort of the military to strengthen its position on security issues within Russia's decision-making circles. Moreover, not surprisingly, the provisional entries of the new doctrine resembled the more and more complicated relationship between the West and Russia (Solovyev 2007).

*Threat perception.* Russia's military observed that security cooperation with the West had not brought a diminished number of military threats. According to Baluyevsky, the existing threats came from Washington: the course of the USA was towards global leadership and a desire to get a foothold in regions where Russia traditionally was present (Solovyev 2007). The next threat was the enlargement of the NATO 'bloc' to the east and the fact that this alliance was involved in local conflicts near Russia's borders. Another threat was the increasing spread of hostile information on Russia's policies. Terrorism and separatism were only mentioned further down on his and Gareyev's list of threats. Gareyev was less outspoken on the threats emanating from the West, and chose to mention them in general terms (Gareyev 2007). His priority threats were those of specific international forces and leading states aiming to affect the sovereignty of Russia, to damage Russia's economic and other interests, as well as to execute political and information pressure and undermining activities. The threat of energy security was also considered a vital threat, since leading circles within NATO now considered price changes of energy resources as a form of aggression. The second threat on Gareyev's list was that of nuclear weapons – among

others resulting from the construction of anti-missile defence systems – and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction ('Russia to revise' 2007). According to Gareyev, in the end, nearly all holders of nuclear arms had them aimed at Russia. Third, he mentioned the start of armed conflicts and even large-scale wars as an existing threat. This threat derived from the motivations of great powers to reach military superiority, and the presence of large military contingents near the borders of Russia, resulting in a change of the military balance. Finally, the fact that NATO had broadened its sphere of activities and was striving to act on a global level was also regarded as a threat by Russia. Furthermore, Gareyev called for a comparison with military doctrines of other key players in international security – such as China, the United States and NATO – in order to include entries of their common threats, for instance on terrorism, into Russia's revised military doctrine. Moreover, to counter threats, Gareyev pleaded for a 'division of labour' between East and West, by determining areas of responsibility between NATO and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Russian-led CIS military alliance (Gareyev 2007). The entries on threats – mainly referring to the West in general and the United States and NATO in particular – corresponded with the deteriorating relationship between Russia and the West. Yet, the anti-Western entries were not new and, therefore, not alarming. Similar phrases were used in the military doctrine of 2000. In addition to this, some interesting points of view could be recognized and considered in a positive way. The demand for a comparison of threat perceptions with doctrines of other important actors – China, the USA and NATO – demonstrated Russia's willingness to learn from others and not to consider itself in an isolated position. Related to this was the proposal to construct a division in areas of responsibility between NATO and the CSTO. Although this was to be unacceptable to the Alliance, which, according to its Strategic Concept, regarded itself responsible for the unspecified Euro-Atlantic region, the fact that Russia encouraged cooperation between both military partnerships could possibly be valuable in the near future but more importantly also showed that Russia wished to continue security teamwork with the West in spite of the differences.

*Doctrine versus political strategy.* In the editions of the military doctrine of 1993 and 2000, military threats and measures were separated from other dimensions, such as political, economic, diplomatic and other non-violent means to prevent wars and conflicts. These other spheres of security traditionally belonged to the competence of the NSC, Russia's political strategy. The development of the international security situation demonstrated that this division in threats and corresponding measures was disappearing. This led to the conclusion that either all related dimensions – i.e. all military and non-military security threats – were to be included in the military doctrine, or that the doctrine and the national security concept should be combined into one document, perhaps a so-called defence or security doctrine (Gareyev 2007; Solovyev 2007). The recognition that a distinction could no longer be made between internal and external security and military and non-military threats and corresponding responses was a noteworthy feature. As Western doctrinal experts had done previously, their Russian coun-

terparts now also acknowledged that security is comprehensive and comprises all dimensions. In line with this was the call to strengthen the status of the SCRF, which is the organ to provide an all-inclusive and interdepartmental response to internal and external security challenges. These entries revealed that Russia's military had an open eye for international security developments and for recognizing the value of related analyses of others. After the terror attacks of 2002 and 2004 Putin had already ordered a revision of the NSC. However, after a report by Secretary SCRF Igor Ivanov in February 2005, on the draft contents of the revised NSC, nothing more was heard of that draft document. At the conference of the Russian Academy of Military Sciences of 20 January 2007, Gareyev explained that the review of the NSC had been delayed and that the adjustment of the military doctrine would be accomplished first. The development of the new military doctrine, its sequence with the NSC and the provisional contents of the doctrine clearly displayed an attempt by the military to increase its influence among Russia's security elite and thus on decision making in this field. Theoretically spoken, a country should first draft a political strategy before a military doctrine, which should be in line with and derived from this grand strategy. Traditionally, Russia's military has had a fundamental influence on the state's security policy. To remain in the forefront of security policy, the military in 1999 managed to avoid the SCRF and to bring out a draft of the revised Military Doctrine before the draft of the modified NSC was made public. After taking over from President Boris Yeltsin, President Putin in 2000 returned order in the security documents by first ratifying the final edition of the NSC and then that of the Military Doctrine. In 2007 the development of security documents seemed like a repetition of 1999. For unknown reasons, the revised political strategy was delayed but instead of waiting for this, the military were well underway in releasing a new doctrine, which – according to the statements of Baluyevsky and Gareyev – was likely to include non-military threats and measures as well, which actually belonged to the NSC. Obviously, just as in 1999, the military leadership was eager to strengthen its position, this time apparently with Putin's approval.

*Reinforcing military power.* To counter the threats, according to the draft doctrine, Russia's military organization was to be strengthened, both financially and politically. To do so, the provisional entries of the doctrine emphasized the reinforcement of Russia's nuclear capabilities (Yasmann 2007b). According to Baluyevsky and Gareyev, in addition to advancing the strength of the armed forces by increasing the defence budget from 2.5 per cent to 3.5 per cent of the GNP and by enlarging the mobilization capacity, the position of the Minister of Defence should also be reinforced (Gareyev 2007; Solovyev 2007). The draft doctrine suggested enhancing the status of the Minister of Defence by promoting him to Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces. Considering that Russia's President is the Commander-in-Chief, this proposal included granting the Minister of Defence *de facto* the position of Vice President. Furthermore, the draft stated that the SCRF should be the all-compassing security organ of the Russian state, which had not been the case in practice in preceding years. To raise its standard to this level, the SCRF was to be under administrative

command of the Vice President (Gareyev 2007; Solovyev 2007). The call to make the Minister of Defence Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, as well as (de facto) Vice President looked like another effort to increase the leverage of the military in security-related decision making. With supervision not only over the military, but also over the troops of the other so-called power ministries – such as the FSB and the Ministry of Internal Affairs – the extension of the position of the Minister of Defence with that of the newly to be established Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces and consequently that of Vice President, would mean a heavy concentration of power in the hands of one person, possibly giving preference to military power at the expense of other security organs.

### *Foreign Policy Concept*

Much later than the NSC and the Military Doctrine, only in March 2008 was it announced that a new edition of the FPC was being drafted ('Russian foreign ministry' 2008). According to Russian media, the MFA had noted that the international environment had changed considerably since publication of the 2000 issue of the FPC – for instance by the US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty in 2001, and less focus from Moscow on terrorism and CIS integration – which necessitated a new FPC. Furthermore, the State Duma Foreign Affairs Committee chairman stated that the new FPC should take into account Russia's new role in the world, as a richer and more assertive power than it was in the 1990s.

During the remainder of Putin's second term as President large terrorist attacks did not occur any more. Perhaps for that reason or division among the different actors in security policy decision making – such as the SCRF and the Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs – or perhaps a lack of genuine interest from Putin, revised issues of the NSC, Military Doctrine and FPC, as repeatedly announced after the major terrorist attacks of 2002 and 2004, were not after all released before the end of Putin's presidency in May 2008.

### *Conclusions on the development of security thinking under Putin*

The security documents published during Putin's presidency provide a rendering of the development of Russia's security thought and policy between 2000 and 2008. A comparison of Putin's first term security documents (the 2000 NSC, FPC and Military Doctrine and the 2003 DWP) with his second term documents (the 2007 OFP and the 2008 Strategy 2020) offer *consistent*, *developing* and *new entries*. First, the documents provided a number of *consistent entries*. NATO and the USA were continuously considered as a threat to Russia's national security. Opportunistic remarks on the perceived Western threat also found a place in the different security documents. In those of 2000 the impact of NATO's Kosovo war of 1999 was vividly present, whereas in the 2007/2008 papers NATO's possible enlargement with Ukraine and Georgia was highlighted, as well as the planned US missile shield and intended US deployment of troops in Eastern

Europe. Another consistent entry was the reference to dominant and/or unilateral actions by the West and by the USA in particular. Conversely, the Russian-led military alliance CIS Collective Security Treaty (as of 2002: CSTO) was also mentioned consistently. In the documents as of 2003 the other Eastern alliance, SCO, was added. A further recurring theme in all security documents between 2000 and 2008 was the protection of Russian compatriots/citizens living in the 'near abroad' of the CIS. A *development in entries* was evident in those pointing at Russia's position towards other international actors, especially Western. Whereas Putin's first term documents complained about efforts to weaken Russia, and the desire to strengthen Moscow's position as a great power, in the second term the circumstances changed to the benefit of the Kremlin. The 2007 OFP and the 2008 Strategy 2020 repetitively stated that Russia had returned to a powerful status in the international arena which had to be taken into account by other actors. In addition to the consistent and developing entries in the security papers of 2000–2008, a *new entry*, not found in the documents of 2000 or the DWP of 2003, but only in the 2007 OFP and the 2008 Strategy 2020, was released on the topic of energy. Energy politics, diplomacy, reserves, conflicts and the threat of force to obtain energy resources found an important place in the security documents of 2007 and 2008.

### **Military thought and status of the Russian armed forces**

Although President Vladimir Putin, Minister of Defence Sergei Ivanov, parliamentarians and academics regularly stated that radical modernization of the armed forces was necessary to cope with modern day warfare and contemporary threats, corresponding measures could hardly be traced. The status of material and personnel, as well as plans for the future did not coincide with the perceived interest in acquiring capabilities for modern warfare.

#### ***More attention for asymmetric warfare and a different threat conception?***

In October 2003, Sergei Ivanov published 'The priority tasks of the development of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation', Russia's Defence White Paper (DWP) (Minoborony 2003). Among other things this DWP dealt with characteristics of current wars and armed conflicts. Rightly, the DWP focused on asymmetric conflicts as being at the forefront, instead of large-scale conventional wars. But the threat conception was not in line with this. It stated that nuclear and large-scale wars with NATO or other US-led coalitions were no longer probable armed conflicts and that Russia expected cooperation with the USA and other industrialized countries to grow in ensuring stability. Elsewhere in the 2003 DWP this appeasing tone was put aside and replaced by an antagonistic approach, underlining that Russia demanded the anti-Russian entries to be removed from NATO's military planning and political declarations. On 25 January 2006, CGS General Yuri Baluyevsky in the MOD's *Red Star* newspaper



mentioned as modern day threats organized crime, drugs and arms trafficking, illegal immigration, extremism, separatism and terrorism (Baluyevsky 2006). However, at the same time he repeated the traditional 'Cold War vestiges' of threat perception, such as the expansion of military blocs, military presence in traditional regions of Russian interest, ignoring Russia in international security politics and attempts against the strengthening of Russia as one of the influential centres in the world. Hence, although recognized as the primary warfare to prepare for, asymmetric threats were not emphasized as the most essential ones. This ambiguity in Russia's threat perception – emphasis on large-scale conventional and/or nuclear warfare and, conversely, irregular conflicts – remained.

### ***Decentralization of military structures: organizational innovations?***

Since the end of 2005 more and more details were made public on a change of thinking towards the organization of the armed forces. Traditionally, Russia's military had been administratively organized in military districts, for instance those of Moscow, North Caucasus and the Far East. New Russian military thinking, as stated in the DWP, that a large-scale conflict was highly unlikely, meant that centralized command and control should be changed. Aiming at decentralization, as of 2006 until 2010, the organizational structure was to be changed from military districts into interdepartmental and inter-service or joint regional operational groupings and strategic directions (Babakin 2006). In the 1990s, another attempt – though in vain – was already made to restructure the military districts system into operational-strategic commands. Because of the Chechen conflict, in the North Caucasus for some years already a joint and interdepartmental command existed, comprising the different services of the armed forces, as well as the so-called other troops, military formations of the other power ministries. Allegedly, Russia had planned to construct a second command of defence forces and internal and security troops in its Far East region. The reform of the administrative military organization would be aimed at changing all military districts into operational-strategic commands. Joint control and command of defence and other security forces was a justified initiative, considering that Russia had to cope with internal unrest and conflicts especially.

### ***Personnel: not high on the priority list***

In October 2004, a downsizing of the personnel strength of the armed forces by 100,000 men before January 2005 was announced (Solovyev 2004; Babakin and Myasnikov 2004). Optimistically, this reduction of 10 per cent of the overall strength would have provided financial means for upgrading the military for modern warfare. However, the benefits of this reduction might also have been used for different (non-military) purposes. Nevertheless, the social circumstances of the military personnel continued to be deplorable. Even Sergei Ivanov admitted that salaries and pensions made living conditions hard and caused suicides among the military to increase. In addition to this, Russia's military suffered

from severe conscript desertion, mainly due to hazing – a traditional problem but which became public at a large scale – a shortage of qualified officers, a low level of motivation, corruption and a lack of training, resulting in insufficient combat readiness. A shift towards modern warfare and thus to conventional, high-tech, expeditionary forces would also demand a change from the traditional large-sized conscript army to a small-sized professional army. The period of conscription service was gradually reduced, from the traditional two years to one year of service as of 1 January 2008. Although that was a sound reform – certainly with respect to achieving a lower degree in hazing – it also demanded many more eligible young men from a rapidly decreasing population. In March 2006, Ivanov mentioned that in 2008 the Russian military would consist of 70 per cent professional soldiers ('And discusses' 2006). That benchmark was very doubtful. First, in other statements Ivanov made it clear that the total size of the armed forces, around one million soldiers, would not be changed, i.e. no radical cuts ('Defense minister' 2006). Although military salaries were relatively low, paying so many professional soldiers would demand much of the defence budget, whereas a Russian conscript received only 100 rubles (US\$3) per month in 2006. Second, due to the bad reputation of the army (hazing, Caucasian conflicts, low salaries) and a declining population, chances were not high that Ivanov would be able to find the required amount of contract soldiers.

### ***Armament: nuclear procurement preferred to conventional***

A large part of Russia's weaponry was becoming obsolete. However, the level of investments made for buying new hardware was too low. The number of arms and equipment getting outdated grew faster than the number of arms and equipment meant to replace them. Around 2006 the share of modern military hardware was only some 20 per cent of the total, whereas the weaponry of the armed forces of NATO countries was more than 70 per cent modern ('Russian forces' 2006; Rostopshin 2007). From 2000–2004 the army received only 15 new tanks on a total number of tanks of 23,000 (Myasnikov 2006a). Similar figures applied to other conventional weapon systems of ground, air and naval forces. A number of reasons were likely to cause this lack of investment in conventional arms. A first reason was the upkeep of the Military Industrial Complex (MIC). The inefficient MIC formed a burden for the budget of the military. However, for reasons of employment, the MIC was to be sustained, although some efficiency measures, such as merger of enterprises, were taken. Furthermore, export of arms was the guarantee for the survival of the MIC. Weapon deliveries to Russia's own armed forces could – because of insufficient production facilities – jeopardize this. Second, the size of the armed forces – more than one million – demanded a lot of money, not only for (low level) salaries, but also for other facilities to keep the forces going. Third, a large share of the actual investments was not going to conventional but to nuclear forces. Especially the latter was a vital reason for lack of investments in conventional forces.

The political and military elite recognized the necessity of introducing modern arms to replace the majority of obsolete ones. However, the aforementioned



ambiguity between nuclear and conventional arms was also visible in the State Programme of Armaments, *Gosudarstvennaya Programma razvitiya Vooruzheniy* (GPV). The GPV is a classified document, covering domestic arms procurement, military related research and development (R&D) and the repair and modernization of arms and other military equipment, describing a ten year period of which the first five years in detail (IISS 2009: 214–15). Due to the difficult economic situation in the 1990s the GPVs of those years were never fulfilled. Under President Putin more attention was given to the GPV. In 2002 he approved the GPV-2010, which realistically emphasized that rather than buying large quantities of new equipment the majority of the funds should be directed to extensive R&D with investment in procurement at a later stage. Implementing this approach, funds would start to shift from R&D into procurement from 2008 onwards, with full-scale procurement resuming from 2010. In 2006 Putin approved the GPV-2015, covering the period of 2007 to 2015. The GPV stated that by 2025 the armed forces would be fully equipped with modern weapon systems, i.e. a ratio of 70 per cent modern versus 30 per cent old weapons, demanding 5.5 per cent replacement per year between 2015 and 2025. However, the actual pace of rearmament turned out to be only 2 per cent per year (Rastopshin 2007). Some two-thirds of the financial means of the GPV were to be allocated to the procurement of new arms. A central point in the GPV-2015 was emphasis on the nuclear deterrent (FTsP 2008). Russia's strategic deterrent had shrunk from 1,398 intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) in 1991 to 430 missiles in 2008 (IISS 2009: 214). According to the GPV-2015, Russia by 2020 was to be equipped with a modern nuclear force, by acquiring *Topol-M* land-based and *Bulava* submarine-launched ICBMs, as well as a number of new strategic bombers and (nuclear) submarines equipped with the *Bulava*. Conventional procurement would entail weapons such as tanks, armoured personnel carriers, fighter aircraft, helicopters and air defence missile systems. Apparently, the political leadership could or would not decide in which way military reforms were to go, either towards smaller, conventional, professional, high-tech, expeditionary forces – the direction in which Western armed forces moved – or to continue with large but old-fashioned conventional forces together with modernized nuclear strategic-deterrent forces, to emphasize Russia's vital status in the international arena. An example of this ambiguity in deciding the way ahead was demonstrated by Putin and Ivanov. In March 2006 Putin underlined the nuclear deterrent and corresponding investments, whereas Ivanov two months earlier had argued that greater priority should be given to high-tech conventional arms, instead of the nuclear deterrent which – according to him – received more than 50 per cent of the defence spending ('Russia sets' 2006).

### ***Conclusions on security thinking versus the capabilities of the military***

In the Defence White Paper of 2003 Russia rightly focused on modern high-tech warfare and on asymmetric conflicts, instead of large-scale conventional wars.

However, the traditional large-scale structure of the armed forces was not changed, which obstructed the adaptation of the armed forces to modern warfare. As was shown by the explanation of the future structure and personnel strength of the armed forces there were no indications that Russia was moving towards a model of Western-style modern forces. According to the future plans a large military force was to be maintained which, for a considerable part, would remain consisting of conscripts. Russian military reforms were limited to reduction of manpower and an organizational change from five (strategic missile and air defence forces) into a three services structure (air, ground and naval forces). Military exercises – such as the (mainly) Russian-Sino military manoeuvres of 2005 and 2007 – demonstrated that Russia was capable of handling conventional warfare (Haas 2005b; 2007a). However, this applied to a large extent to deploying forces in a traditional way. Moreover, there were no indications that the armed forces were trained and equipped for wide-ranging, complex military operations abroad, as had become the core business of Western armed forces in that decade. Apart from its 15 Mechanized Brigade – which was dedicated for peace support operations for instance together with NATO – the Russian armed forces were not reformed into an army capable of executing expeditionary tasking. During Putin's presidency Russia refrained from radically changing the structure of the armed forces towards one that was capable of addressing the challenges of modern warfare and current threats. Russia's global ambitions, resulting from its endeavours to restore its superpower status, demanded the capability of power projection by highly skilled, modern equipped, expeditionary military forces that could be deployed at short notice anywhere in the world. However, instead of conventional modernization, the nuclear deterrent received priority. At the same time protracted conflicts in the North Caucasus – Russia's Achilles heel – demanded armed forces capable of conducting asymmetric warfare against an irregular opponent. Under President Vladimir Putin the situation of Russia's armed forces neither at the time, nor under future plans, lived up to these two demands towards the military.

## 2 Implementation of Putin's foreign security policy

This chapter deals with major developments in the practice of Putin's security policy. Russia's relationship with 'friends' and with 'foes' is discussed, encompassing – except for China, as Moscow's primary strategic partner – international organizations, whilst states are discussed in general. In addition to friends and foes, crucial international security topics, especially in arms control, military power and energy security, are reviewed.

### **Russia's approach towards other international actors: friends**

#### *Collective Security Treaty Organization*

The Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) is a Russian-led military alliance with Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan as the other member states. In the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), a CIS Collective Security Treaty (CST) was signed in May 1992 in Tashkent. The treaty reaffirmed the desire of all participating states to abstain from the use or threat of force. Furthermore, in its Article 1, the treaty forbids parties to join other military alliances. Just as NATO, the CSTO has a military assistance provision (Article 4), which states that aggression against one party will be considered as an attack on all parties (CSTO 1992). The CST was set to last for a five year period unless extended. In 1999 the presidents of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan, signed a protocol renewing the treaty for another five year period. Azerbaijan, Georgia and Uzbekistan refused to sign and withdrew from the treaty. On 7 October 2002 the six members of the CST signed a charter expanding it and renaming it the 'Collective Security Treaty Organization' (CSTO). According to Putin, the main responsibilities of the CSTO were cooperation in defence, the manufacturing of weapons, training of military personnel and peacekeeping activities. Other areas of cooperation were a common integrated air defence system and the fight against terrorism and narcotics, which particularly concerned Central Asia (Kaczmarek 2005; 'Moscow reinforces' 2005; 'Korotko: Mirotvortsy' 2006).

*Military structures and tasking*

The CSTO has formed a joint headquarters in Moscow and a collective rapid reaction force. This collective reaction force consisted of 4,000–4,500 soldiers, and was composed of three battalions from Russia and Tajikistan, two battalions from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, units of Russia's military base in Tajikistan, as well as the military aviation group of Russia's airbase in Kant, Kyrgyzstan (Eurasian Home 2009; Weitz 2006: 41–2; Marat 2007). The CSTO consisted of three military regions: the European, the Caucasian and the Central Asian regions. CSTO documents and statements by officials put the emphasis of the CSTO on Central Asia and to a lesser extent on Europe or on the Caucasus (Saat 2005: 8, 10; Plugatarev 2005c). The return of Uzbekistan into the CSTO in 2006 was one of the developments of the increased focus of the CSTO for Central Asia. Evidence to this fact was also the desire of the CSTO to deploy a considerable military contingent in that region, consisting of units of the Central Asian member states. The alliance formed a Collective Rapid Reaction Force deployed in Central Asia, and continued to build up its military forces, according to CSTO Secretary General Nikolai Bordyuzha. Furthermore, the CSTO proposed that the SCO join its efforts on post-conflict rehabilitation of Afghanistan. According to Bordyuzha, the CSTO, together with China and the SCO, should prevent the Taliban from coming back to power ('CSTO proposes' 2007). The enlargement of the CSTO military contingent could be viewed as a step to counterbalance NATO's further eastward expansion and to keep CIS countries under Russia's military protection. Bordyuzha warned about a large-scale work aimed at creating a well-developed Western/American military infrastructure around Russia, Belarus and other CSTO countries ('CSTO plans' 2007).

*Moscow's leverage*

Russia was of course by far the most dominant member of the CSTO, which made it a useful instrument for the pursuit of its policy. An important Russian success – in countering Western influence in its neighbourhood – was Uzbekistan. In 2005, Uzbekistan, until then Western ally, demanded that US forces leave the air base on its territory, as a result of US and European criticism of the beating down of unrest in Andijan by Uzbek authorities earlier that year. Subsequently, Uzbekistan looked for closer ties with Russia. On 23 June 2006, Vladimir Putin announced that Uzbekistan would (re)join the CSTO as a member (Socor 2006). Uzbek President Karimov's main argument for joining the CSTO was probably his need for Russian protection against a regime change like the ones that had taken place in Georgia (2003), Ukraine (2004) and Kyrgyzstan (2005) (Plugatarev 2005b). Thus, the CSTO met Moscow's policy goal of increasing its international status, but also of countering pro-Western regime changes in the CIS. On 6 October 2007, at a CSTO summit in the Tajik capital Dushanbe, the organization announced decisions to increase military cooperation. At the request of Russia, the member states agreed to buy military arms and

equipment from Russia at domestic Russian prices. Furthermore, the CSTO decided that its collective rapid reaction force in Central Asia would be supplied with modern materiel before the end of 2010. A further Russian initiative was the foundation of a joint military force for peacekeeping operations. The concept of a joint peacekeeping force encompassed the formation of brigades capable of conducting peacekeeping missions, if necessary also outside the territory of the CSTO (Lebedev 2007). But, according to the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergei Lavrov, contingents would not be deployed in the so-called 'frozen conflicts' in the South Caucasus, i.e. the separatist regions in Georgia, the Transdnestria region of Moldova and the Nagorno Karabakh area ('Gendarme' 2007).<sup>1</sup>

### ***Shanghai Cooperation Organization***

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is a regional international organization comprising states in Europe, the Near East, Central Asia and South East Asia (Haas 2007b). The SCO includes China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan as member states and Mongolia, Iran, Pakistan and India as observer states.<sup>2</sup> SCO member states have a population of nearly 1.5 billion people, which is about a quarter of the total world population. Including the four observers, the SCO encompasses nearly half the world's population. In addition to the member states Russia and China, the observers India and Pakistan bring together in the SCO four states with nuclear weapons. Furthermore, the Chinese and Russian armed forces are amongst the largest armed forces in the world (SCO 2009a; Population Reference Bureau 2008).<sup>3</sup> The SCO provides cooperation in political, military, economic, energy and cultural fields. Important ingredients of economic cooperation are (conventional) arms trade and energy.

### ***Security organization***

Although the SCO started as a security organization – extending from confidence building measures at the borders to anti-terrorist activities – the SCO members have frequently stated that this organization was primarily meant for political and economic cooperation and that military coordination – focusing on domestic security – played a minor role. For instance, the Russian Deputy Defence Minister, Sergei Razov, denied allegations that military cooperation among SCO members was a top priority and stated that economic cooperation and security were the main interests. Likewise, President Putin denied that the SCO would develop into a full-grown security organization such as NATO (Stakelbeck 2005; 'ShOS ne nado' 2007). Neither individual members nor the organization itself made any statements towards the intention to create what some Western commentators call a 'NATO of the East'. Furthermore, its members disagreed upon vital issues of security – as was the case with the anti-Western positions in the declaration of the 2005 Astana summit – concerning the call to stop Western military deployment in Central Asia, and also on other issues of security cooper-

ation. For instance, as to the international legal connotation of security, there was common understanding within the SCO that 'non-interference' in internal affairs is a leading principle. Accordingly, its members refused Western criticism on their human rights practices. However, when it came to collective action against domestic, non-violent uprisings, the March 2005 revolution in Kyrgyzstan demonstrated disagreement within the SCO whether to act or not, with China allegedly in favour and Russia against military intervention (Weitz 2006: 41–2). Another important aspect of the composition and status of the SCO was that Russia and China did not always see eye-to-eye on a closer relationship between the CSTO and the SCO. The CSTO had a military assistance mechanism as well as rapid reaction forces; thus, a closer relationship between CSTO and SCO could give the impression to the outside world that the SCO endeavoured to become a 'NATO of the East'. China regarded such a development as counterproductive to its economic and political interests.

In spite of the frequent denials of the military nature of the SCO and the differences between members on military and security cooperation, a number of developments could be discerned pointing in the direction of the SCO gradually moving towards a full-grown security organization. First of all, the features of military and political activities were combined. For the first time a political summit (Bishkek 2007) was amalgamated with war games ('Peace Mission 2007'). Moreover, until then defence ministers were the highest ranking officials to watch SCO military exercises. The Heads of States' presence at the war games of 2007, for the first time in the history of the SCO, was probably to demonstrate the growing significance of the military component within the SCO but also signalled their determination to be in 'command' of the security situation in this region. Next, there was the phenomenon of 'military assistance' as a concept. Perhaps the most significant development with regards to the security policy aspects of 'Peace Mission 2007' was its scenario in which military assistance played a central role. One of the vital ingredients of a mature security organization, which also applied to the CSTO, was military assistance as one of its instruments. Although a development towards inclusion of such an article into the policy documents of the SCO could not (yet) be discerned, the scenario of 'Peace Mission 2007' unmistakably revealed a *de facto* application of military assistance. Moreover, the intensifying relationship between the SCO and the Russian-led military alliance CSTO was a crucial aspect. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the SCO and the CSTO was signed in October 2007, which opened the door for military cooperation between the two organizations (SCO 2007a; 'CSTO proposes' 2007). Since the CSTO was a purely military alliance, this cooperation would undoubtedly reinforce the military component of the SCO. Another indication of the SCO moving into the direction of a mature security organization was the military exercises of the SCO. Since 2002 these drills became increasingly ambitious, developing from a bilateral or multilateral level to a joint all-SCO level, and including not only counterterrorism but also external security policy connotations. In addition to this, the SCO ministers of defence in Bishkek on 27 June 2007 reached agreement on a

structural arrangement for joint exercises. According to the Kyrgyz Defence Minister, Ismail Isakov, this agreement was to lay the long-term organizational and legal foundations for such activities in the future ('SCO member' 2007; Karniol 2007). Finally, the 2006 Shanghai summit affirmed that in case of threats to regional peace, stability and security, SCO members would have immediate consultations on effectively responding to the emergency. Also, the intention was expressed of formulating a mechanism for measures in response to threats to regional peace, as well as a study on establishing a regional conflict prevention mechanism within the SCO framework. The projected drafting of such security mechanisms, which were also found in NATO, was repeated at the 2007 Bishkek summit (SCO 2006b, 2007b).

#### *Military exercises as instrument of Moscow's security agenda*

In 2005 and 2007 the SCO conducted large military exercises, called 'Peace Mission', with an emphasis not only on counterterrorism, but also as a demonstration of force, to show others (the West) who is in control of the region. Although under the aegis of the SCO, these drills were dominated by Russia and China, who are the leading actors of the organization. In a number of ways Russia has used 'Peace Mission 2007' as an instrument to advance its national security policy. For instance, at the military-political consultations in Urumqi, China, Chief of the Russian General Staff Army General Yuri Baluyevsky made public that Russia had sent a proposal on SCO military cooperation to the member states in April 2007 but had not yet received a reply. Baluyevsky furthermore argued that the member states' economic development required stronger regional security, involving the members' respective military structures (Kononov 2007; 'Russian military' 2007). President Vladimir Putin did likewise, when he proposed conducting counterterrorism exercises on a regular basis at the Bishkek SCO summit of 16 August 2007. Moreover, on 17 August at the Chebarkul range Putin used the audience of 'Peace Mission 2007', of some 500 journalists and military observers, to announce that Russia would resume long-distance patrol flights of strategic bombers, which were – according to the Russian President – suspended in 1992 after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Putin asserted that other states' long-distance strategic patrol flights had created certain problems for Russia's national security ('Putin proposes' 2007; 'Russia restores' 2007). Another example of the SCO as Moscow's security and foreign policy tool was that the USA was not allowed to send observers to the exercises, allegedly because the drills were internal SCO oriented and because the military testing ground was not large enough to accommodate many guests ('Club of dictators' 2007). With hundreds of military and media observers, also from the West, both grounds seemed invalid. The real reason was likely to be found in Russia's anti-American policy, for instance related to the US' 'missile shield' initiative in Europe. Thus, the 2007 SCO war games were an excellent chance for Putin to have global media coverage for his continued anti-Western stance. As mentioned above, another long-standing Russian interest was to establish



closer ties and cooperation between SCO and CSTO. Although China prevented 'Peace Mission 2007' from becoming a joint SCO–CSTO exercise, Russia was allowed to invite representatives of the CSTO, Belarus and Armenia, to observe the war games, which advanced this spearhead of Russian security policy (Haas 2007a: 9).

*Arms trade for Russia's economic benefit*

Armament deals – with Russia as supplier – are another activity within the SCO. In this field a secondary objective of the Russian–Chinese exercises of 2005 and 2007 – not suggested by official sources but by Russian and Western independent reports – might have been arms export (Bogdanov 2005; 'Sino-Russian' 2005). As China, being one of the largest customers of Russian arms clearly did not have to be convinced of the effectiveness of Russian military equipment, perhaps the demonstration of weapon systems was meant to impress some of the SCO observers. India, for instance, amounted to some 40 per cent of Russia's arms export and Iran was considered to be an interesting growth market for Russian arms (Strugovets 2005; Blua 2005; 'Defense minister says' 2005; 'Putin steps in' 2005). Although arms trade was primarily a Russian-led bilateral issue, the SCO served as a convenient marketplace to conclude such contracts. Considering that energy deals initially were arranged in a similar way but developed into the 'SCO Energy Club', it was not unlikely that in due course arms export would also acquire a more 'joint' SCO nature.

*Energy policy*

SCO oil reserves, including SCO observer Iran, are some 20 per cent of the world's total. As these countries are not members of the OPEC, Western oil companies view the oil reserves in the region, especially in Central Asia, as very attractive, which leads to a lot of investment and cooperation. The situation with gas is even more important. Aggregate gas reserves of Russia, Central Asia – including Turkmenistan, which is not (yet) aligned to the SCO – and Iran exceed 50 per cent of the world's known reserves, according to a Russian formal source ('Energy outcome' 2006). The fact that the SCO contains major energy exporters – Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Iran – as well as significant energy importers – China and India – consequently makes energy also one of the topics of cooperation of this organization. Energy deals are usually made on a bilateral or multilateral but not on a common, joint base. The SCO serves as a convenient platform for concluding energy deals, also on a bilateral level. For example, China concluded a deal with Uzbekistan on oil and gas exploration on the eve of the 2006 annual summit (Bezlova 2006; 'China makes' 2006). The entries on energy in the declarations of the 2006 and 2007 SCO summits as well as the founding of a so-called 'Energy Club' within in the SCO gave evidence to the fact that SCO members and observers were increasingly engaged in energy cooperation and joint energy security policies.<sup>4</sup> However, energy cooperation



coincided with disputes, when contrasting national (energy) interests were at stake. This was especially the case with the relationship between Russia and other energy producing or consuming states in the SCO (see paragraph 'SCO as vehicle and obstacle of Moscow's energy cooperation', below).

### *Cornerstone of Russian security policy*

For Putin's foreign and security policy, the SCO was an interesting rising organization. In this regard, it is worthwhile to note that in none of the Russian security policy documents of 2000 – i.e. the National Security Concept, the Military Doctrine and the Foreign Policy Concept – was the SCO, at the time called 'Shanghai Five', dealt with. It was only mentioned in the Foreign Policy Concept as one of the cooperating organizations in Asia. In 'The priority tasks of the development of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation', Russia's Defence White Paper of October 2003, the SCO for the first time was brought up in detail. In this document the SCO was described as an important organization for regional stability in Central Asia and the Far East, especially in countering military threats. And the March 2007 Overview on Foreign Policy stated that the SCO, together with the CSTO, could play a positive role in the fight against narcotics and terror and in promoting stabilization around Afghanistan and in Central Asia as a whole. For Russia, the SCO represented a means to bring together different policy objectives. Not only China, but India and Iran as well maintained a special (economic) relationship with Russia. All three states were important actors in Russia's arms export. In addition to this, China and India were gaining a closer relationship with Russia in the field of joint, bilateral military exercises. Another example of the SCO as an instrument of the Kremlin was that President Putin instigated the foundation of an energy club within the SCO (Haas 2007b: 26–7). This fitted in with Russia's policy of using energy as a power tool. It was likely that Moscow would further try to extend the SCO as an instrument of Russian foreign and security policy.

### *Cooperation between CSTO and SCO*

CSTO and SCO nowadays formally cooperate, but the development of closer ties between these organizations was not an easy process. First, Uzbekistan prevented a strengthened connection and later on China took that role. Already in 2003 Russia had the intention of bringing the two organizations closer together, for the purpose of increasing the fight against terrorism and against drug trading, but probably also to form an 'Eastern bloc' against Western military involvement in the Central Asian region, in and around Afghanistan. In the process of enhancing the link between the CSTO and the SCO, Uzbekistan threatened to leave the SCO as a result of its aversion of the CSTO, which it had left at an earlier stage. A second reason for the resistance of Uzbekistan against closer ties was its power struggle with Kazakhstan on hegemony over Central Asia. Third,

Uzbekistan spoke out against SCO military exercises on its territory, which it rather conducted in cooperation with NATO. Resulting from this stance, in 2003 Uzbekistan did not participate in joint SCO drills in Kazakhstan and China, because of a possible involvement of the CSTO in these manoeuvres (Luzhanin 2003; Mukhin 2003).

In 2006 – the year that Uzbekistan returned as a member state of the CSTO – chances for an intensification of the relations between the SCO and the CSTO seemed to improve. In May of that year, SCO Secretary General Zhang Deguang stated that the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the SCO had instructed the SCO Secretariat to arrange cooperation with the CSTO in the field of security. However, a year later, in April 2007, expectations had proved to be too optimistic. The negotiations on a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between both organizations – of which the text was completed and only awaited signature – had come to a deadlock, as a result of Chinese reluctance. According to China, the CSTO, with its collective military force and a military assistance article, was primarily a political–military organization, but the SCO was to remain a political–economical organization. In addition to delaying the MoU, China also prevented the CSTO from contributing to the ‘Peace Mission 2007’ military exercises of the SCO. In November 2006, China had rejected the proposal of the Russian CGS, Yuri Baluyevsky, to make the 2007 drills a SCO–CSTO event (SCO 2006c; Litovkin 2007d). Apart from China’s fear for a transformation of the SCO into a military alliance, another reason for its objections to further CSTO–SCO cooperation was probably that this might strengthen Russia’s position in the SCO by bringing in two of its ‘allies’, Armenia and Belarus.

In spite of the Chinese reluctance, the CSTO continued its efforts to strengthen the cooperation between the two organizations. For instance, in July 2007 the CSTO called for joint action with the SCO with regard to Afghanistan. Notwithstanding the Chinese posture, probably at the request of Russia, the Bishkek 2007 summit of the SCO in its final declaration optimistically mentioned the growing cooperation between the SCO and the CSTO. The declaration by the Heads of State specifically stated support for a further deepening of relations between the two organizations, with the aim of coordinating efforts on strengthening regional and international security and counteracting new challenges and threats (‘CSTO proposes’ 2007; SCO 2007b, c; Safranchuk 2007). On 5 October 2007, during a CIS summit in Dushanbe, the signing of the MoU between SCO and CSTO at last took place. Presumably, to receive consent from China, the agreement comprised an MoU between the Secretariats of both organizations and not between the organizations themselves, although in practice that would not make any difference. The fields of cooperation, as mentioned in the MoU, were (SCO 2007a):

- ensuring regional and international security and stability;
- counteraction against terrorism;
- the fight against drug trafficking;

- the fight against arms trafficking;
- counteraction against transnational organized crime;
- other areas of mutual concern.

At the signing of the MoU, CSTO Secretary General Bordyza explicitly stated that this cooperation between the two Eastern organizations was not directed against NATO. On 4 December 2007, in Moscow, SCO and CSTO held their first meeting on the areas of cooperation, as declared in the MoU (SCO 2007d; 'Security alliances' 2007; Litovkin 2007e; Blagov 2007).

A sequence of events in 2007 had demonstrated considerable progress in a closer relationship between the CSTO and the SCO, namely: the CSTO's proposal for joint action towards Afghanistan; the presence of CSTO observers – although not as participating organizations – at the SCO 'Peace Mission 2007' exercises; wording in the Declaration of the 2007 SCO Bishkek summit; and finally the signing of the MoU between the SCO and the CSTO as the climax. Since the CSTO was a purely military alliance, the cooperation would undoubtedly reinforce the military component of the SCO. If the SCO would endeavour to proceed on a way towards a full-grown security organization, then closer ties with the CSTO were helpful. Essential elements of a professional security organization, such as rapid reaction forces and a military assistance article, were part of the framework of the CSTO. With the majority of the states sharing membership of both organizations, it would be easy for the SCO to adopt such instruments as well, if so desired.

## *China*

In recent years there has been a comprehensive improvement of bilateral relations between China and Russia. For instance, the long-standing border disputes between both states were settled in agreements in 2005. Furthermore, Russia, in addition to its arms export, supplied China with oil and gas. But even more important, both countries found each other in a strategic partnership aimed at countering the (Western/US) 'monopoly in world affairs', as was made clear in a joint statement by the Chinese and Russian Presidents in July 2005 (Blua 2005; 'Putin stresses' 2005; 'Russian, Chinese President' 2005). Apart from joint political statements, Russo-Chinese cooperation was most abundant in the areas of war games, arms sales and energy deliveries.

## *Military exercises*

From 18 to 25 August 2005, for the first time in 40 years, Russian and Chinese armed forces, formally under SCO aegis, carried out joint 'Peace Mission 2005' exercises, comprising 10,000 military personnel, navy vessels and aircraft (Haas 2005b). According to Russia's Minister of Defence, Sergei Ivanov, the decision to conduct bilateral exercises was made in Beijing, in December 2004. China took the lead in proposing the size, participating type of forces and content of

the manoeuvres. In the process of drafting the exercise plan the number of Russian troops decreased whereas the number of Chinese troops increased. Allegedly, China also took care of most of the costs of the manoeuvres (Plugatarev 2005a; 'Russia, China' 2005). The Chinese Chief of the General Staff as well as his Russian counterpart more than once stated that the manoeuvres were in line with UN principles and were not aimed against third countries (Perminova 2005). The formal objectives of the exercises were to fight against international terrorism, separatism and extremism; as well as to enhance the mutual combat readiness against newly developing threats (Ventslovskiy and Litkovets 2005). Another aim of these exercises seemed to be to promote arms export from Russia to China. From a military-operational point of view Russians as well as Chinese gained from the experience of these bilateral exercises. Before the formal start of the exercises Russian and Chinese airborne troops had already trained together. Whereas exercises with NATO forces are often characterized by complications because of differences in weapon systems, in this case, due to the fact that China uses a lot of Russian-made arms, this problem was absent. The biggest problem to be encountered was the language barrier (Ventslovskiy 2005a, c; 'Russians encounter' 2005; Ventslovskiy and Litkovets 2005). The Chinese armed forces were – as a consequence of China's increasing political and economical power – in a stage of growth, in size as well as in ambition. Therefore, for instance, practising command and control procedures but also purely operational aspects, such as carrying out an airborne assault, strengthened the capabilities of the Chinese forces. And if Russia considered that China could turn into a threat in the long run, then these exercises were worthwhile for the Russian General Staff, by providing it insight in how the Chinese armed forces operated and what their current capabilities were. The formal exercise objectives had little to do with warfare against terrorism, as declared, but were actually nothing other than practising conventional warfare, employing all services except for nuclear forces. The most likely real main objective of the manoeuvres was that in this way China and Russia made clear to the (Western) world that they considered themselves to be in control of the Asian-Pacific region and that others were denied interfering in their sphere of influence. At the military exercises Defence Minister Ivanov stated that Russia and China – although no plans had yet been drafted – could conduct joint military exercises on a regular basis ('Russia, China' 2005).

In August 2007 the SCO, but predominantly Russian and Chinese troops, again conducted large military exercises in China and Russia, under the title 'Peace Mission 2007' (Haas 2007a). Now, the war games were to be conducted not only in Russia – in the vicinity of the town of Chebarkul, in the Chelyabinsk region of the Ural Mountains – but to start (the first two days) in China, in the northwest city of Urumqi. Russia and China had different opinions on some aspects of the 2007 exercises. Regarding the size of the force contributions, China more than once pressured Russia during the consultation rounds to accept a bigger Chinese contingent. Although Russia agreed with this, they did not

agree with the Chinese request to participate with tanks and other heavy equipment, in order to keep the operation along the lines of the intended anti-terrorist scenario (Petrov 2007a, b; Litovkin 2007a, b; Plater-Zyberk 2007: 4). Another conflicting aspect between Russia and China was the possible involvement of the CSTO. The Russian CGS, Army General Yuri Baluyevsky, intended to make these exercises a joint SCO–CSTO effort, but the Chinese counterparts turned this down. As a result of the Chinese rejection, the CSTO input in the manoeuvres remained limited to representatives of its secretariat, staff and member states as observers (Litovkin 2007a). It appeared that China – in contrast to Russia – was interested in strengthening the military component, but without involvement of the CSTO. This was probably also the reason for the delay in reaching an MoU between the SCO and the CSTO, propagated by Russia, but carefully and hesitantly considered by China. An additional diverting view was the difference in attitude between China and the other participating SCO forces in the drills, to the apparent solo military action by the former. For instance, all contributors to the war games – except for China – made use of ammunition, arms and equipment provided by Russia. China, however, had brought its own stocks of ammunition and materiel. Why the Chinese were unwilling to make use of Russian supplies remained unclear. The SCO ‘Peace Mission’ of 2005 and 2007 drills proved that the organization had two lead nations, which publicly cooperated intensively, but behind the curtains often were involved in a struggle for power (Litovkin 2007c; Tikhonov and Denisov 2007; SCO 2007b; Haas 2006a).

### *Arms sales*

One of the aims of the Sino-Russian SCO ‘Peace Mission’ exercises of August 2005 might have been arms export. Demonstrating to China the capabilities of Russian military equipment, possibly encouraged China to buy it. This assumption was strengthened by the fact that right after the closure of the exercises, China announced that it was interested in acquiring 30 Il-76 transport aircraft (Bogdanov 2005; ‘Sino-Russian’ 2005). In 2006, some 45 per cent of Russia’s arms export belonged to China. Since 2000, Russia delivered weapon systems to China – including fighter aircraft, submarines and destroyers – amounting to an average of \$2 billion annually. India took care of some 40 per cent of Russia’s arms export and Iran was considered an interesting growth market for Russian arms (Strugovets 2005; Blua 2005; ‘Defense minister’ 2005a; ‘Russia to increase’ 2005; ‘Putin steps’ 2005). Hence, China was the best buyer of Russian military equipment for a number of years. Russia’s arms export to China was an important factor in the cooperation between the two countries. However, Russia seemed to be well aware that China would like to obtain its most sophisticated military technology, which, in case of deteriorating relations, might turn against Russia. For that reason Russia was reluctant to provide China with its state-of-the-art products. Moreover, there were indications that China was steadily acquiring enough knowledge to have a solid military industry of its own. Subse-

quently, in the coming years China would buy fewer and fewer arms from Russia, which diminished the value of this cornerstone of bilateral relations ('Alliance with China' 2005).

### *Energy policy*

China is the world's second largest oil importer. In August 2005 during a visit to Beijing, President Putin stressed bilateral economic ties, especially the work of Russian energy companies in China, bilateral projects that would distribute those supplies to third countries, as well as the delivery of Russian oil and gas to China ('Putin stresses' 2005). Furthermore, in November 2005 Russia and China agreed to double oil exports to China and to consider constructing an oil pipeline from Russia to China and a gas-transmission project from eastern Siberia to China's Far East ('Russia agrees' 2005). However, China focused on Iran and Kazakhstan as well in its need for energy. It received 13 per cent of its oil imports from SCO-observer Iran, which it intended to increase. Furthermore, in due course the Sino-Kazakh pipeline was to be enlarged and would eventually provide China with some 15 per cent of its crude oil needs ('Kazakh-China' 2005; see also: paragraph 'Caucasus and Central Asia: crucial areas in the class on energy', below). China wanted to avoid energy dependency on Russia. Another argument was that by redirecting Kazakh oil pipelines through China instead of through Russia, China's influence over Kazakhstan and Central Asia would increase at the expense of Russia's position. However, although cooperating with China in energy, Kazakhstan had a considerable Russian minority and therefore would be hesitant to follow an anti-Russian political course. In addition to decreasing energy dependency from Russia, China's alignment with Kazakhstan was allegedly also caused by disappointment in Russia's actions. Beijing had failed to achieve a position on Russia's energy market through an attempt with Yukos to build an oil pipeline from Angarsk to Daging. After Yukos' Khodorkosky had been arrested this project was stopped to the annoyance of China ('Alliance with China' 2005).

### *Demographic policy as conflicting matter*

As described above, there were already indications visible that military and energy cooperation were in decline. China was seeking alternatives for its dependence on Russia's energy and arms sales, and military cooperation in the context of the SCO did not always go smoothly either. Furthermore, demographic developments were also causing alarm. In its far east, Russia was facing increasing illegal immigration from China. In December 2005, Russia's Interior Minister, Nurgaliev, stated that illegal immigration – among other aspects – was creating a threat to national security in Russia's far east ('Russian interior' 2005). Although Nurgaliev did not mention the word 'Chinese', and in spite of frequent formal statements contradicting such a development, a continuous influx of illegal Chinese immigrants was taking place in this region. Russia has a



long border with China, some 4,300 kilometres, and is sparsely populated in its far east. The numbers of Chinese immigrants may vary but several sources mentioned a flood of Chinese entering Russia, although this has been continuously officially denied ('Major players' 2000).<sup>5</sup> Another possible indication that Moscow feared a Chinese takeover of its far east appeared in December 2006, when Putin warned for social and economic isolation of its far east from the rest of Russia, which would pose a serious threat to Russia's position in the Asia-Pacific region and to its national security ('President warns' 2006). It was not inconceivable that the flood of Chinese immigrants was more than a coincidence, but possibly a planned policy directed from Beijing, in order to gradually increase its influence over this Russian region. The reasons for such a population policy were perhaps to create an overflow area for Chinese citizens from too densely populated regions in China, but also to gain a political and/or economic foothold in Russia's far east, which is rich in energy sources.

## **Russia's approach towards other international actors: foes**

### *North Atlantic Treaty Organization*

The relationship between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and Russia was one of ups and downs. Structural cooperation started in 1997 with the Founding Act providing frequent consultations on a number of security issues. As a result of NATO's air attack on Kosovo in 1999, however, Russia postponed all cooperation with NATO. In the beginning of the next decade, Russia returned to negotiations with NATO, which led to the foundation of the NATO–Russia Council (NRC) in 2002. After 2002, mutual consultations were intensive and a considerable number of political and military forms of cooperation were enacted. This did not mean, however, that differences of opinion did not occur.

### *NATO's actions rejected*

In the 1990s, NATO developed from a collective defence organization into a collective security alliance and broadened its 'area of responsibility' from NATO territory proper via Europe into the Euro-Atlantic region, as was stated in its Strategic Concept of 1999. Along with conceptual and organizational changes in the 1990s, NATO conducted operations outside its territory and enlarged its membership. A number of these developments have specifically annoyed Russia (Haas 2004b: 52):

- *NATO's involvement in the former Yugoslavia.* The air attacks on Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1995 and the air campaign on Kosovo in 1999, in particular. Russia was neither consulted nor informed about these operations prior to their start.
- *NATO's 1999 Strategic Concept.* With this concept, the alliance ensured stability in the Euro-Atlantic region. The document, however, did not state

what this region's boundaries were. Furthermore, as demonstrated by the Kosovo conflict, NATO could act even without consent of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). These entries in the Strategic Concept – from Russia's point of view – provided the alliance with a *carte blanche* of using military force wherever considered necessary.

- *NATO's 1999 and 2004 enlargement rounds.* Russia usually referred to these enlargements as 'expansion'. Already during the early debates on NATO enlargement, President Yeltsin protested against this intention. This point was introduced as a threat in the 1993 Military Doctrine (Haas 2004b: 52). Apparently, Russia did not accept the Founding Act of 1997 as a trade-off for the introduction of former Warsaw Pact members into the alliance. Russia was especially disturbed by granting the former Baltic Soviet Republics NATO membership, which formally was considered a threat to Russia's national security ('And calls' 2006).
- *NATO's air protection above the Baltic states.* Since Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania became members of the alliance in 2004, NATO has provided aircraft to protect their airspace from violations, corresponding to military assistance provisions of the NATO treaty ('Defense minister' 2005b).
- *The possibility of NATO membership for Ukraine and Georgia.* This would again add former Soviet republics to NATO. Ukraine has a large Russian (oriented) population. More importantly, both states provide vital geo-strategic and geo-economic interests, for instance with regard to the Crimea and oil pipelines in the Southern Caucasus (Plugatarev 2006c; 'Russian general' 2006; 'Russia warns' 2006).
- *The deployment of US forces in Bulgaria and Romania.* This, as part of the Pentagon plan to shift US military bases eastwards, as was announced at the end of 2005 ('Foreign minister says' 2005; 'Ex-foreign minister' 2005).
- *The deployment of an anti-missile shield by the USA in Poland and Czech Republic.* Although this is a bilateral arrangement between the aforementioned states, the Kremlin often portrayed this as a NATO (instigated) plan ('Putin says missile' 2007).

Russia was not informed prior to most of these decisions and felt ignored as a great power in Europe and even more as a (resurgent) superpower. Furthermore, considering its traditional security perceptions – pointing at encirclement by its enemies and an insatiable desire for security, demanding buffer zones such as the former Warsaw Pact satellites – Russia had difficulty in understanding and accepting NATO's move eastwards and conducting operations close to Russia's borders. The result of this was twofold: disappointment and aversion.

#### *Russia's expectations of more influence on NATO after '9/11'*

A milestone in NATO–Russia relations was the terrorist attack on the USA of 11 September 2001, the so-called '9/11'. After 9/11, Russia closely cooperated with the USA to make an end to the Taliban regime as well as to the terror network of



Osama bin Laden. This teamwork strengthened Russia's desired status of a great power. Putin felt that Russia finally was taken seriously by the West. This had to result in an increase of influence of Russia on international politics and NATO in particular. The outcome of the reconsideration of NATO–Russia cooperation was to be the evidence of this strengthened position of Moscow: Russia's input in NATO's decision-making process in the field of international security would be enlarged (Rooij 2001). However, concerning closer cooperation between Russia and NATO, long negotiations would only lead to meagre results. Russian CGS General Kvashnin was convinced that NATO still considered Russia its opponent ('Russia–NATO' 2002). At NATO's summit in Rome on 28 May 2002, concerning the revised cooperation between NATO and Russia, it became clear that Russia still did not have a direct say in NATO's operational decision making, i.e. Russia did not get influence on NATO's use of force. Russia was not invited to join the North Atlantic Council – NATO's primary organ – and therefore did not obtain a 'veto right' to prevent undesired military action. On the other hand, in the new NRC issues were discussed by NATO's 19 member states and Russia together, in contrast to its predecessor, the Permanent Joint Council of 1997, in which NATO members only after reaching consensus discussed matters with Russia. However, although the meeting procedure had been improved, the rise in substantial involvement of Moscow in NATO's decision-making process did not live up to Russia's expectations. In the NRC Russia was only allowed to have an equal say on a limited number of matters, especially in so-called 'soft security' issues, such as the fight against terrorism, disarmament, but also on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction ('NAVO-Rusland' 2002). In addition to this, Russia and NATO maintained different views on the fight against terrorism, for instance pertaining to Russia's actions in Chechnya and the contrasting way both sides considered the Palestinian organization Hamas. Thus, 'structural deepening' of relations between Russia and NATO, as anticipated by Moscow, clearly did not become reality in the way the Kremlin would have seen it. Cooperation between NATO and Russia had only improved to a limited extent. This being the final outcome of the negotiations brought Minister of Foreign Affairs Igor Ivanov to the conclusion that Russia should continue to reject further enlargement of the alliance ('With no' 2002). Russia's security elite remained sceptical regarding the intentions of the alliance. Although Putin tried to present things differently, the reactions of Kvashnin and Ivanov in 2002 gave evidence to the fact that prominent representatives of Russia's security establishment persisted in their aversion against NATO as well as against the West in general.

*Ambivalence: NATO policy listed as threat whilst conducting military-operational cooperation*

Russian feelings of aversion towards NATO were expressed in stances in Russia's primary security documents. The following entries, which clarify what Russia considered to be threats to its national security, are derived from the ver-

sions of the National Security Concept, Foreign Policy Concept and Military Doctrine, which were approved by President Vladimir Putin in 2000, from the Defence White Paper of October 2003 as well as from CGS Yuri Baluyevsky's policy article of January 2006 (Baluyevsky 2006; Haas 2005a). Threats listed were:

- NATO's Strategic Concept enabling the use of force out-of-area;
- political and military guidelines of the alliance which were in contrast with Russian security interests;
- NATO's offensive military doctrine;
- the eastward expansion of the alliance;
- the deployment of foreign troops in new NATO member states;
- NATO's planning and political declarations comprising anti-Russian entries;
- the strengthening of military blocs;
- the use of force against befriended states without sanction of the UNSC;
- the concept of 'humanitarian intervention' on the grounds for using military force, which violates the UN Charter.

Nonetheless, the aforementioned political-strategic obstacles did not prevent constructive activities in military-operational cooperation at the same time. In 2003, the contrasting views between the USA and parts of the West and Russia on the US–British invasion of Iraq did not obstruct military-operational cooperation. Military delegations on both sides continued their work in Moscow and Brussels, other than in 1999, when Russia withdrew its delegations as a protest against NATO military action in and around Kosovo. Also, Russia sent navy ships to participate in NATO's maritime operation *Active Endeavor* ('Russia, NATO' 2005). This was particularly interesting since the operation was a so-called Article 5 (of the NATO treaty) action, making Russia part of a collective defence operation of the alliance, which during the Cold War would have been unimaginable. What is more, leaders from both sides called for military cooperation in other areas as well. In December 2005, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergei Lavrov proposed cooperation between NATO and the CSTO, for instance in Afghanistan to fight narcotics together with NATO's ISAF contingent ('Foreign minister pushes' 2005). Also, in summer 2005, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer and then-US Ambassador to Russia, Alexander Vershbow, suggested operational cooperation between NATO forces and Russia's dedicated peacekeeping unit, the 15th Motorized Rifle Brigade (NATO 2005). Another example of this was the NRC's third Theatre Missile Defence Command Post Exercise, hosted by Russia in autumn 2006. These examples gave evidence to the fact that NATO–Russia military cooperation was not likely to fade away, and was to remain the specific forum of teamwork, especially in improving relations on the whole.

**European Union**

The legal basis for European Union (EU) relations with Russia was the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), signed in June 1994, which came into force on 1 December 1997 for an initial duration of ten years. It set the principal common objectives, established the institutional framework for bilateral contacts and called for activities and dialogue in a number of areas (European Commission 2009b). The EU has a tendency of putting every policy aspect down in writing, which has also determined its external security cooperation with Russia. An important fundament of the EU's external security ties with Russia was laid down in the four 'Common Spaces' of the framework of the PCA, as agreed by both parties at the St Petersburg summit of May 2003: a Common Economic Space, a Common Space of Freedom, Security and Justice, a Common Space of External Security, as well as a Common Space of Research and Education, including Cultural Aspects. At the Moscow summit of May 2005 parties agreed to create a single package of 'road maps' for the realization of the four common spaces. The London summit of October 2005 focused on the practical implementation of the 'Road Maps' for the four Common Spaces. The road maps set out shared objectives as well as the actions necessary to make these objectives a reality, and determined the agenda for cooperation between the EU and Russia for the medium term. The third common space was the Common Space of External Security. The road map for the Common Space of External Security underlined the shared responsibility of the EU and Russia for an international order based on effective multilateralism, their determination to cooperate to strengthen the central role of the UN and to promote the role and effectiveness of relevant international and regional organizations, in particular the OSCE and the Council of Europe. Building further on their already ongoing cooperation, the EU and Russia would strengthen their cooperation and dialogue on security and crisis management in order to address the global and regional challenges and key threats of today, notably terrorism, the proliferation of WMD, existing and potential regional and local conflicts. They would give particular attention to securing international stability, including the regions adjacent to Russian and EU borders, where they were to cooperate to promote resolution of the frozen conflicts in Europe (e.g. in Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Nagorno-Karabakh), in line with UN and OSCE commitments. The EU would continue to provide support through humanitarian assistance, economic rehabilitation, confidence building and efforts to tackle poverty and human rights abuses. Furthermore, the road map for the Common Space of External Security mentioned five priority areas for increasing EU–Russia cooperation: *dialogue and cooperation* in the international arena, *crisis management*, *fight against terrorism*, *non-proliferation* of WMD and disarmament, and *civil protection* (European Commission 2003b, 2005, 2007).

Concerning the first policy objective, *dialogue and cooperation on international security*, in its political strategy of 2003, *A Secure Europe in a Better World*, the EU recognized that it should continue to work for closer relations

with Russia, because this state is a major factor in the EU's security and prosperity. But immediately after this statement of realism, the EU, as it often did, added its moral objective, by mentioning that respect for common values would reinforce progress towards a strategic partnership. More specifically, towards current topics of international security, the *European Security Strategy* stated that in the Balkans, the EU and Russia – together with the US, NATO and other international partners – accomplished that the stability of the region was no longer threatened by the outbreak of major conflict. The EU's political strategy also referred to the Arab–Israeli conflict in the Middle East, as an object of diplomatic cooperation with Russia (European Council 2003: 8, 14). In addition to the Balkans and the Middle East, the EU conducted diplomatic cooperation with Russia also closer at home, in regions adjacent to the EU and Russia, for instance on Belarus and on the regional conflicts in Moldova and the South Caucasus. Within Russia's borders – in the North Caucasus region – the EU had been active too. Since the beginning of the second conflict in Chechnya, in autumn 1999, the European Commission had provided funds for humanitarian aid in this crisis, of which the EU was the largest donor in the region. Originally, the aid was aimed at supporting internally displaced persons and vulnerable groups in Chechnya, Ingushetia and Dagestan, but also at Chechen refugees in Georgia and Azerbaijan. Considering that the humanitarian situation had improved, the EU shifted the emphasis of its support to programmes in health care, education and economic development, in order to boost social–economic recovery (European Commission 2007: 3, 16, 24–5).

Regarding cooperation in *crisis management*, the October 2001 EU–Russia summit in Brussels provided a Joint Declaration on stepping up dialogue and cooperation on political and security matters. The Joint Declaration stated that meetings would be organized in response to events between the EU Political and Security Committee and Russia. In addition, it announced monthly meetings between the EU Political and Security Committee Troika and Russia in order to take stock of consultations on crisis prevention and management.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, the options for Russian participation in civilian and military crisis-management operations increased as progress was made in European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP). The EU at its Seville European Council of 2002 defined the arrangements for crisis management operations. Areas in which the EU and Russia could cooperate were especially (European Commission 2001; European Council 2002: 4, 31–4):

- strengthening arrangements for sharing intelligence and developing the production of situation assessments and early warning reports, drawing on the widest range of sources;
- developing a common evaluation of the terrorist threat against the member states or the forces deployed under the ESDP outside the Union in crisis management operations, including the threat posed by terrorist use of weapons of mass destruction;
- determining military capabilities required to protect forces deployed in European Union-led crisis management operations against terrorist attacks;

- exploring further how military or civilian capabilities could be used to help protect civilian populations against the effects of terrorist attacks.

The EU and Russia developed a policy dialogue in the field of crisis management and ESDP, by meetings of the Russian side with the EU's Political and Security Committee and with the EU Military Committee. However, the outcome of Russian–EU military and security cooperation – such as intended activities in strategic airlift, joint peacekeeping operations, naval cooperation and tactical missile defence – remained rather limited. The same applied to more specific operational crisis management cooperation, of which as genuine successes only Russia's contribution to the EU mission in Macedonia and Russia's participation in an EU–NATO crisis management exercise could be listed. Reasons for the limited achievements were on the EU side a lack of military capabilities and unwillingness to share command (with Russia) in a mission. On the Russian side enhanced cooperation in crisis management was curbed by reluctance of the military leadership to cooperate with the EU, insufficient readiness level of its armed forces and the Russian attitude towards peace support operations, which goes against Western norms of limited use of force (Monaghan 2005: 2–5).

As to the *fight against international terrorism*, EU–Russia cooperation took place in international fora – of the UN, OSCE and the Council of Europe in particular – which deal with the topic of counterterrorism. In November 2002, Russia and the EU adopted a joint declaration on countering terrorism, which among others, included exchange of information on terrorist networks and enhancing common efforts to stop the financing of terrorism, including freezing of funds (European Commission 2002). Nevertheless, practical cooperation was not visible, partly due to the abstract nature of the joint declaration, but also because of Russian doubts on the capabilities of the EU to deal with the threat of international terrorism.

In the area of the EU policy target of *non-proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery, strengthening export control regimes and disarmament*, the *European Security Strategy* of 2003 identified the proliferation of WMD as a key threat for EU security. As part of the implementation of the *European Security Strategy*, the Council also adopted an *EU Strategy against the Proliferation of WMD* in order to address that threat (European Commission 2003a). The EU and Russia both sought a greater effectiveness of relevant international instruments, for example the Missile Technology Control Regime and the Australia Group on Biological and Chemical Weapons Control. Furthermore, a major part of EU funding supported the International Science and Technology Centre in Moscow for the redeployment of weapons experts to work on peaceful projects. The EU also has contributed to the G8 Global Partnership against the Proliferation of WMD, in which the EU specifically committed itself to cooperation in the field of non-proliferation, disarmament, counterterrorism and nuclear safety. In spite of the large number of initiatives, EU–Russia cooperation in this field was also hampered by a Russian lack of faith in EU capabilities, in which the

USA seemed to be a better partner. Moreover, the EU and Russia had different priorities. Russia first of all sought support for the destruction of nuclear submarines and stocks of plutonium, whereas the EU prioritized the safe storage of highly enriched uranium and implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, both of which were related to countering terrorism.

The fifth and last priority area for strengthening EU–Russia cooperation in external security was *civil defence and emergencies*. In this case both parties were committed to increasing ties in responding to disasters and emergencies. In 2002 Russia suggested to establish a Pan-European Centre for Disaster Management. Russia wanted to integrate this centre into the ESDP and strengthen this through contributions of disaster management technology of both sides. The principal threats were considered to be forest fires, river flooding, volcanic activity, and explosions and fires at hazardous industrial transport, energy and military sites. Furthermore, Moscow proposed to form a special aviation pool of helicopters and transport aircraft and also offered mobile detection laboratories (Monaghan 2005: 12). In a Russia–EU Joint Declaration on strengthening dialogue and cooperation on political and security matters in Rome, of 6 November 2003, both parties agreed to establish cooperation in the field of civil protection. In May 2004, the European Commission and Russia signed an administrative arrangement on cooperation in the field of civil protection. This arrangement, between the Commission's service responsible for civil protection, the Directorate-General for Environment and its Russian counterpart, the Ministry for Affairs of Civil Defence, Emergencies and Disaster Relief (EMERCOM), provided for cooperation between the EU Monitoring and Information Centre and the Operations Centre of EMERCOM. It included that members of the operational staff would spend one week a year in the operational centre of the other service in order to gain practical experience. EMERCOM officials also attended Monitoring and Information Centre training courses on an ad hoc basis. Practical cooperation took place through arrangements for permanent communications lines and exchanges of information and staff between the operational centres (MID 2003; European Commission 2009a, 2007: 16–17).

## **GUAM**

GUAM is a regional organization comprising four CIS states, i.e. Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova, from which the institutional acronym was derived. The four GUAM member states share (a heritage of) a difficult relationship with Russia. Azerbaijan is for Moscow a competitor in the energy resources business, which likes to follow an independent course by trading with the West and transit cooperation with Georgia. Ukraine has a large Russian ethnic population, for instance on the Crimea, unhappily shares the Black Sea Fleet with Moscow and is eager in joining Western institutions, NATO and the EU in particular; an interest shared with Georgia. The two remaining GUAM members, Georgia and Moldova have (had) a strained relationship with Russia, due to Russian oriented breakaway regions – Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia



and Transdniestria in Moldova – which were receiving indirect Russian support and in which Russian peacekeeping forces were deployed. The strained relations were further exacerbated between Russia and Moldova and Georgia, because of Russian boycotts of export products to these countries. Azerbaijan also has such a ‘frozen conflict’, Nagorno Karabakh, a separatist region supported by Armenia. In this case no Russian troops were involved but Armenia participated in the Russian-led military alliance CSTO and Moscow maintained a military base in this country.

The group was created in October 1997 as a way of countering the influence of Russia in the former Soviet area. Subsequently, the grouping received backing and encouragement from the USA. In 1999, the organization was renamed GUUAM due to the membership of Uzbekistan. After heavy criticism by the West on crushing an uprising in Andijan, Uzbekistan withdrew from GUUAM in May 2005 to rejoin the CSTO in Russia's camp the following year. Though at one point GUAM was generally considered to have stagnated, later developments have caused speculation about a possible revival of the organization. After the arrival to power of pro-Western leaders in Georgia (2003) and Ukraine (2004) GUAM has undergone a recovery. In May 2006, Ukraine and Azerbaijan announced plans to further increase the contents of GUAM. They did so by renaming the institution into ‘GUAM Organization for Democracy and Economic Development’, adapting a new charter, establishing a headquarters in the Ukrainian capital Kiev, as well as by changing the nature of GUAM from a grouping into an international organization (Fuller 2006a; ‘Russia suspicious’ 2007). Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev was elected the first Secretary General of the organization. GUAM has maintained cooperation with the West, not directly with its major institutions, NATO and EU, but through individual member states of these organizations. GUAM established partnerships with European states – Lithuania, Czech Republic, Poland and Romania – but also with the USA and Japan (GUAM 2009a; Fuller 2006b; ‘GUAM's Batumi’ 2008). Together with its change of name in 2006, GUAM also chose a new economical and political course. The focus moved to economic cooperation, especially concerning the construction of export pipelines for Caspian oil and gas to bypass Russian territory. By GUAM's Yalta summit in June 2001 it was already agreed that energy security was one of its priorities (GUAM 2009b). All members of GUAM, except for Azerbaijan, were dependent on Russian gas and oil. Thus, with the creation of an energy alternative to Russia, GUAM would seriously enhance its political and economical independence. Although faced with the consequences of Russian energy cuts to Ukraine, the EU refrained from supporting the endeavours of GUAM in this area (Makarkin 2006). Another developing activity was the concept of joint peacekeeping operations. On 30 May 2006 the Ukrainian Defence Ministry – to underline Kiev's regional leadership – announced discussions on establishing GUAM peacekeeping forces. This military contingent, comprising a battalion of 500 soldiers, could contribute to peacekeeping missions outside the GUAM area. This concept was discussed at the GUAM summits of 2006 and 2007 but allegedly Moldova vetoed this pro-

posals, to improve its own relationship with Moscow ('Ukraine suggests' 2006; 'Russia suspicious' 2007; 'GUAM shows' 2008).

In recent years Moldova took a more appeasing course towards Russia. Moldova's President Voronin has not only been absent in successive GUAM summits but has also criticized the organization. Simultaneously, Russia has tried to reach an agreement with Moldova on Transdniestria, which for both parties is a reason to weaken Moldova's links with GUAM. Evidence to this fact is also that only Moldova so far has refrained from ratifying the charter of GUAM, which is detrimental for the organization in gaining international recognition. In this situation Moldova's withdrawal from GUAM was a serious expectation ('GUAM shows' 2008). This would leave only three out of five member states left in GUAM, which puts the effectiveness of this 'Russia avoiding' former Soviet region organization in doubt. Another indication for such a development is that Russia since 2008 also made efforts to solve the Nagorno-Karabakh 'frozen conflict' between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Although, other than Moldova, Azerbaijan will demonstrate to be a harder negotiation partner, steadfast to continue with GUAM and in intensifying cooperation with the West. Nevertheless, these Russian initiatives towards Moldova and Azerbaijan are likely to affect the cohesion of GUAM.

### **Emphasizing the nuclear deterrent**

In the 1990s Russia's doctrinal thinking on nuclear issues developed from a nuclear 'no-first-use' declaration to the possible use of nuclear weapons against conventional threats. The Soviet Military Doctrine of 1990 included a nuclear 'no-first-use'. Next, the first Russian Federation doctrine of 1993 mentioned a nuclear 'no-first-use' under conditions. Subsequently, the 1999 Russian doctrine stated the right to use nuclear arms in case of wide-scale conventional aggression (Haas 2004b: 55, 61, 66–7, 74, 80, 83, 177, 189, 204). Thus, the development of doctrinal thinking showed a gradual lowering of the nuclear threshold. Since the foundation of the Russian Federation, military thought continuously gave prioritization to nuclear weapons. This was for instance visible in a power struggle in 1998–1999 within the MOD and General Staff on the primacy of nuclear versus conventional arms, between Minister of Defence Marshal Sergeyev, former commander of the Strategic Missile Forces (SMF) and CGS Kvashnin, proponent of conventional forces (IISS 1999: 106). The SMF remained relatively undamaged during a decade of fierce reductions in the 1990s, due to the fact that Sergeyev was Minister of Defence (1997–2001). Furthermore, there was a strengthened position of nuclear weapons in doctrinal thinking as a result of conventional weakness and the desire to regain a superpower status. In 2001 the SMF was downgraded in the armed forces hierarchy from a separate service to an arm (branch) directly subordinated to the General Staff (IISS 2001: 106). However, this was only a 'political' defeat, with no serious consequences for size and budget of the SMF (Haas 2004b: 26). Another proof of the continued attention for nuclear weapons was that the strategic bomber force was the



only part of the Russian Air Forces that did not suffer from reductions. Although President Putin in August 2007 announced the resumption of strategic bomber patrol flights, already as of the late 1990s an increase in number and distance of such flights, with sorties to the borders Japan and the USA, was visible (Haas 2004b: 105).

### *Nuclear arms in security documents and high-level statements*

The emphasis in military thinking on nuclear weapons was continued under Putin's rule and was laid down in the major security documents in the following way. The National Security Concept (NSC) of 2000 stated that all forces and facilities available, including nuclear weapons, would be used if necessary to repel armed aggression, if all other means were exhausted. Also, that a deterrence capability should be maintained in the interest of preventing aggression on whatever scale, including when nuclear arms were used against Russia and its allies. Finally, the NSC mentioned that Russia must have nuclear forces for use against any aggressor state or coalition of states. The Military Doctrine of 2000 mentioned that Russia retained a nuclear power status for deterring aggression against Russia and (or) its allies and also that Moscow grants itself the right to use nuclear weapons in response to weapons of mass destruction and in response to wide-scale aggression using conventional weapons in situations critical for the Russian Federation. The Foreign Policy Concept (FPC) of 2000 declared that Russia is prepared to consent to a further reduction of its nuclear potential on the basis of bilateral agreements with the USA. Moreover, the FPC called for averting the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Finally, the Defence White Paper (DWP) of 2003 stated that nuclear and large-scale wars with NATO or other US-led coalitions were no longer probable armed conflicts (Haas 2005a: 6–7, 15–24). Additionally, the DWP asserted the necessity of preserving a strategic deterrence force potential aimed at preventing power politics or aggression against Russia and its allies.

In addition to wording in security documents the weight of nuclear arms was also regularly expressed in statements. For instance, on 30 October 2003 Minister of Defence Sergei Ivanov stated that nuclear weapons were the chief component of Russia's security ('And ambiguous' 2003). On 17 November 2004 President Vladimir Putin announced that Russia was developing new nuclear missile systems, and that although terrorism was a main threat, nuclear weapon development would remain to be a top priority ('Putin predicts' 2004). Moreover, on 28 September 2005 Ivanov made known that in 2007 the sea-launched Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) *Bulava* would be introduced, which allegedly was invulnerable to any strategic missile defence systems. Putin and Ivanov together stated in November 2006 that the SMF was the main priority of the defence agenda, introducing 17 new ICBMs in 2007 ('Russia prioritizes' 2006). Subsequently, in May 2007, Ivanov announced that the *Topol* ICBM could penetrate any missile defence system. The next month Putin insisted that if the USA built a missile defence shield then Russia would again aim its missiles

on Europe and Ivanov added on 9 July 2007 that the US missile defence shield could be replied by Russian deployment of cruise missiles in the enclave Kaliningrad. The possible deployment of missiles in Kaliningrad in reply to the US missile shield, was repeated regularly, in the form of *Iskander* tactical ballistic missiles in January 2008 by General Shamanov of the General Staff and in November 2008 by President Medvedev, during his annual speech to the combined houses of parliament (Pomeroy 2007; 'Russian minister' 2007; 'General makes' 2008; Socor 2008h). On 17 August 2007, Russia resumed strategic bomber patrols because, according to Putin, other states' long distance patrol flights were threatening Russia's national security (Zolotarëv 2007). The Russian newspaper *Vedomosti* stated on 11 October 2007 that the aim of the USA with missile defence was to weaken Moscow's nuclear arsenals and to gain a strategic advantage. The following day at a meeting with the US Secretaries Rice and Gates, Putin warned the US not to force through the missile defence system in Eastern Europe ('Putin warns' 2007). In December 2007 First Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Ivanov insisted that Russia needed nuclear parity with the USA to guarantee its independent and strong position and consequently with a voice that was heard ('Russia wants' 2007).

### ***Ambiguity and lack of vision***

In spite of a large number of security document entries and statements on the significance of nuclear weapons, contrasting visions on nuclear arms also existed. The security elite demonstrated ambivalence to military reforms. On the one hand towards smaller, conventional, professional, high-tech armed forces, or, on the other hand, to continue with large but mainly old-fashioned conventional forces together with modernized nuclear strategic-deterrent forces. This ambiguity was also regularly demonstrated by Putin and Ivanov. In March 2006 Putin stated that the nuclear deterrent was the main security guarantee for Russia. However, around the same time Defence Minister Ivanov preferred priority to high-tech conventional arms; claiming that the nuclear deterrent received more than 50 per cent of the defence spending ('Russia sets' 2006). In an interview in May 2006 Ivanov provided a double-sided view, maintaining that because of its size and position in the world Russia needed a large (conventional) army, but also, that Russia would not only preserve its nuclear forces but was also going to improve them ('Russian Defense Minister' 2006). Under Putin, Russia took a tough stance against the US missile defence system, to a large extent because it would reduce the weight of Russia's prioritized nuclear forces. The often contrasting views on forces' structure demonstrated that Moscow's security elite lacked a clear vision on this topic, especially regarding how to connect conventional and nuclear assets. Nuclear deterrence was likely to remain an important aspect of Russian security thinking, as long as the conventional forces would be weak, but also in support of Moscow's superpower ambitions.

### **Suspending the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty**

In December 2007, Russia suspended the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty, which both parties – Russia and NATO – had always considered to be the cornerstone of post Cold War security. This unilateral action could be considered as part of Moscow's increasing assertive and deliberate independent stance towards the West and their corresponding deteriorating relationship. The CFE Treaty was the result of over 16 years of negotiations. It was meant to replace military confrontation with a new pattern of security relations to overcome the divisions of Europe of the Cold War period. It was signed in Paris in November 1990 between the Soviet Union, its Warsaw Pact allies and NATO, and entered into force in July 1992. It established a secure and stable balance of conventional forces in Europe at dramatically lower levels in five categories of Treaty-Limited Equipment (TLE) (tanks, armoured combat vehicles, artillery, attack helicopters and combat aircraft). It also eliminated the capability to launch offensive action, by establishing a system of limitations, transparency (annual exchanges of information and notifications), verification (on-site inspection) and an emphasis on host-nation consent to the stationing of foreign forces (NATO 2009a).

In 1996, the CFE parties agreed to initiate the process of adapting the CFE Treaty to the changed security realities. This was accomplished by transforming the bloc-to-bloc (NATO–Warsaw Pact) system of limitations to a system of national and territorial ceilings, reflecting that the Soviet Union had collapsed and that former Warsaw Pact members had joined NATO. At the OSCE's 1999 Istanbul summit, Russia agreed to withdraw its forces from the Republic of Moldova, reduce the equipment levels in and agree with Georgia on the Russian forces stationed on Georgian territory, and reduce their forces in the flanks (North Caucasus) to the agreed levels of the Adapted CFE Treaty. These agreements, known as the Istanbul Commitments, provided an essential condition for NATO and other CFE member states to sign the Adapted CFE Treaty. Concerning Georgia, agreement was reached in March 2006 on the withdrawal of Russian forces by 2008, and this withdrawal was carried out with the exception of a Russian military base in Gudauta in Abkhazia. With regard to Moldova, the Russians did withdraw 58 train loads of equipment and ammunition from Transdnestria but no further withdrawals occurred after 2004.

Since Russia – which in July 2004, together with Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine, ratified the Adapted CFE Treaty – did not comply with the agreed full withdrawals from Georgia and Moldova, NATO and other CFE member states refrained from signing the Adapted CFE Treaty. Because of this Western refusal to sign, in January 2006 Russian Defence Minister Sergei Ivanov threatened to withdraw from the treaty ('Russia threatens' 2006). At a CFE Review Conference, in June 2006, Russia expressed its concerns regarding ratification of the Adapted CFE Treaty. Next, in April 2007 at his annual address to both houses of parliament, Putin called for a Russian 'moratorium' on implementing the CFE Treaty, blaming Western rejection of ratifying it and demanding that new NATO

members, such as the Baltic states, should join it. He also connected Russia's compliance with the treaty to the planned US missile shield in Eastern Europe and to NATO's enlargement (Chivers 2007). After an Extraordinary CFE Conference in June 2007, called by Moscow, President Putin signed legislation on 14 July 2007 to unilaterally 'suspend' its participation in the CFE Treaty as of 12 December 2007. In response to these events, NATO offered a 'parallel action package' in which Russia would begin resolving the remaining commitments in Georgia and Moldova while NATO members began ratifying the Adapted CFE (Benjamin 2007; Dempsey 2007a). However, Russia implemented its suspension on 12 December 2007 (Blitz 2007).

### **Opposing the missile defence shield**

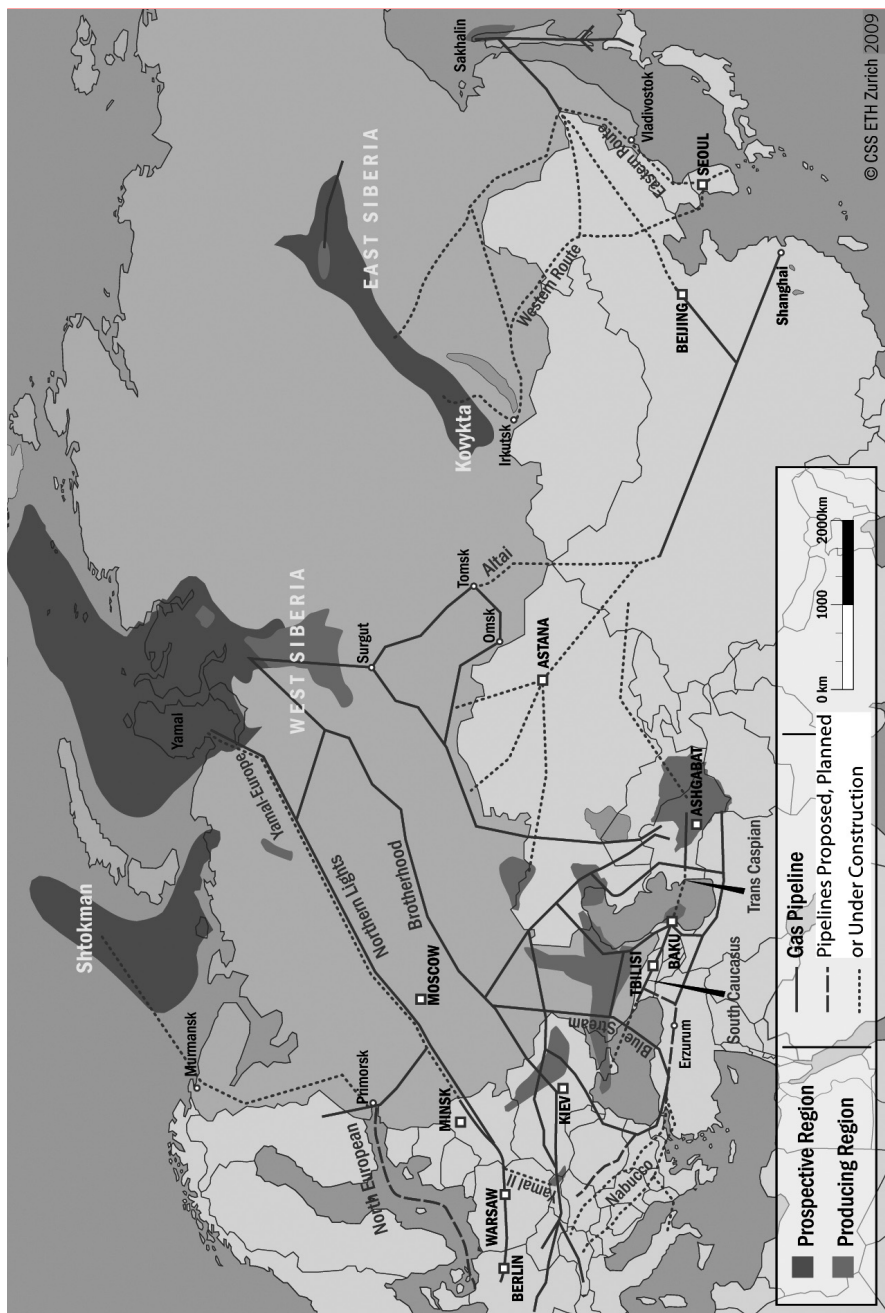
Since 2002, the US had been in talks with Poland and other European countries over the possibility of setting up a European base to intercept long-range missiles. A site similar to the US base in Alaska would help protect the US and Europe from missiles fired from the Middle East or North Africa ('US considers' 2005). The US missile defence shield, also called the European Interceptor Site, was planned to consist of ten silo-based interceptors, to be placed in Poland, together with a radar system in the Czech Republic. The USA has frequently claimed that the system was intended to protect against future missiles from Iran. Russia strongly opposed the system, stressing that the system would be directed against Russia's nuclear deterrent. Furthermore, the radar installation allegedly would be able to collect information about all movements in Russian airspace up to the Ural Mountains. In January 2007, Washington made a formal request to Poland and the Czech Republic to deploy the missile shield on their territories.

An early example of Russia's fierce resistance against the missile defence shield was on 22 January 2007, when the Commander of the Space Forces stated that this system would be a real threat to Russia because it would make strategic nuclear forces visible. He added that it was very doubtful that the shield would be aimed against Iranian missiles ('Russian general calls' 2007). In February the US started formal negotiations with Poland (Dempsey 2007b). Also in February Putin warned that Moscow would send an asymmetrical reaction, claiming that the latest *Topol-M* ICBM could penetrate missile defences. And later that month the Commander of the Russian Strategic Missiles Forces, General Solovtsov, added that Russia might target missiles at Poland and the Czech Republic if they accepted the US missile defence system, and also speculated about withdrawal from the 1987 Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, as did CGS General Baluyevsky. The harsh language from Moscow actually convinced Poland and the Czech Republic to go ahead with accepting the US proposal ('Putin slams' 2007; 'Russia threatens to target' 2007). In April, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergei Lavrov called for a meeting of the EU and CIS – excluding the USA and NATO – in an apparent attempt to split the West on the issue of missile defence. As seen around the US–British invasion of Iraq in 2003, this was a familiar Russian method, however in vain ('Is Russia' 2007; Stephens 2007). In

the meantime the USA offered Russia incentives to drop its harsh opposition, for instance on sharing intelligence on missile threats and combining American and Russian anti-missile systems (Shanker 2007). In June 2007, President Putin reiterated the threat made by his generals in April, of pointing missiles at European targets (Pomeroy 2007). To retake the initiative, also in June, Putin at the G8 summit in Germany proposed sharing the *Qabala* radar, leased from Azerbaijan. But for the USA this was not an acceptable substitute, noting that this installation was obsolete and on the wrong spot to detect Iranian missiles, and, consequently, that it would continue with the Czech radar site ('U.S. tells' 2007). On 4 July 2007, First Deputy Premier Sergei Ivanov announced that Russia might deploy cruise missiles in the exclave of Kaliningrad in reply to the US missile shield, creating a direct threat to Poland and Germany (Halpin 2007a; 'Krayeygol'nyy podryv' 2007). Russian officials continued their protests against the US anti-missile system in the remaining months of 2007. In February 2008 MFA Lavrov in the prolonged resistance took on another traditional method of Russian external policy, by stating that the missile shield was used by the USA to encircle Russia ('Lavrov suggests' 2008). In March 2008, after Dmitry Medvedev was elected President, a temporary 'lull' appeared in the battle against the anti-missile system when Sergei Lavrov made known that the USA had offered Russia to monitor the shield with equipment and inspectors to check that that the shield was not directed against Russia ('Foreign minister says U.S.' 2008). In April 2008, NATO endorsed the US missile shield. So far, under Putin's rule, the Kremlin had been unsuccessful in countering the US missile defence shield.

### **Applying energy as an instrument of power**

In the beginning of the 1990s Russia tried to coerce other former Soviet states, such as Ukraine and the Baltic states, to adhering to its demands by cutting energy supplies (Smith 2006a, b). After the end of the 1990s Russia gradually rediscovered energy as a policy instrument. During Putin's second term as President, from 2004–2008, due to the rise of global prices for oil and natural gas and an increasing demand – especially from China and India – energy resources became an essential policy instrument of the Kremlin. The most obvious example was provided in December 2005 when Russia stopped energy deliveries to Ukraine to force it to pay a higher gas price, an action that was repeated at the turn of 2008/2009 (Parfitt 2006). However, the renewed interest in the energy instrument came now as part of a coordinated policy endeavour together with the military instrument. Russia's leadership did not hide this conviction, which was demonstrated in 2003, when Putin called Russia's gas firm *Gazprom* a powerful political and economic lever of influence over the rest of the world (Kempe 2006; Ostrovsky 2006). In 2006 Minister of Defence Sergei Ivanov stated that Russia now needed to think not only about diplomatic, but also about forceful means to safeguard its economic interests (Gallis 2006). Russia's political ambitions in the field of energy (security) were not limited to national politics but



Map 2.1 Russia's natural gas pipeline network (source: Caucasus Analytical Digest, no. 3, 19 February 2009, p. 18. Online, available at: [www.res.ethz.ch/analysis/cad](http://www.res.ethz.ch/analysis/cad). Reprinted with permission from the editors).



also to be applied in the international arena as part of its agenda in international organizations. The development of increased attention to energy security was not limited to Russia. National armed forces and security organizations in East and West, such as CSTO and NATO, gradually became involved in energy security, realizing that nowadays security not only entails military but also energy issues.

Pavel Baev has published an excellent analysis of the relationship between energy, military power and Russia's superpower ambitions (Baev 2008). This paragraph will examine other topics – military, security and geo-strategic policy aspects of energy – that are directly linked to Russia's foreign security policy. This part of the chapter sets off with the role of Russia and its allies (CSTO and SCO) in relation to energy (security). Next, the vital energy regions of the Caucasus and Central Asia, where Russian and Western interests collide, are discussed. After that the involvement in energy of (pro-) Western organizations (NATO, EU and GUAM) is given detail. The paragraph concludes with an assessment of Russia's policy of countering the efforts of Western and other actors of rerouting of energy supplies.

### ***Military tasking in energy security of Russia and the CSTO***

The (renewed) Russian interest in and alertness on the importance of energy sources was not limited to its value as an instrument of power. Russia's political and military leadership also realized that protection of its energy resources was of vital interest to national security. The perceived need for protection of economic resources included offshore. At a closed meeting of the Maritime Board in October 2005, Minister of Defence Sergei Ivanov reported that protection of offshore oil and gas resources, including extraction facilities, was already in place. Ivanov further stated that the Defence Ministry should be in charge of ensuring military security for offshore operations and supplying special services during the development and operation of offshore shelf deposits (Giles 2006: 3). Next, Army General Yuri Baluyevsky, CGS and First Deputy Minister of Defence, added defence of Russia's mineral resources to the list of tasks for the military at an April 2006 press conference (Gallis 2006: 4; Giles 2006: 3). Energy security as a military task did not remain limited to the national realm. The security of oil and gas pipelines against terrorist attacks had also become a task of the CSTO. Since 2004 the CSTO had been responsible for the protection of railway lines, which – just as energy – was also related to strategic economic interests. As to the guarding of energy installations, in August 2005 the CIS Anti-Terrorist Centre held an exercise around the Kazakh city of Aktau, while on the Caspian coast armed forces were to counteract terrorists that had seized an oil tanker. In September 2006 the Anti-Terrorist Centre of the CIS conducted an anti-terrorist exercise at a nuclear energy station in Armenia, in which units of the CSTO participated. Furthermore, during the CSTO's joint military exercises in June 2006 in Belarus, one of its objectives was the protection of gas and oil pipelines, which further confirmed the CSTO's conceptual development towards energy security tasking (Plugatarev 2006a, b; Blank 2006).

***SCO as a vehicle and obstacle of Moscow's energy cooperation***

Russia was very active in concluding energy contracts with partners in the SCO. At the Shanghai summit of 15 June 2006 of the SCO Iran stated that it wanted to set gas prices jointly with Russia, as the world's two largest gas producers. Such a statement was likely for propaganda purposes, because gas prices are agreed upon by companies and gas contracts are long-term contracts. In spite of the 'PR value' of the Iranian announcement and the fact that Russia had not (yet) agreed with this proposal, this statement caused concern in the West as a possible threat to its energy security, since it would create a near monopoly on gas prices. At the same occasion, Putin announced that Russia's *Gazprom* was prepared to help build a gas pipeline linking three SCO observers: from Iran via Pakistan to India. Moreover, Russia was taking effective steps to develop power generation in Central Asia. It signed an agreement to complete the construction of the Sangtundinskaya hydropower plant, was preparing a similar one on the Rogunskaya hydropower plant, both in Tajikistan, and another one on the construction of the Kambaratinskaya hydropower plant in Kyrgyzstan. Another important issue was the creation of a power grid to transfer excessive electricity produced by Tajik and Kyrgyz power plants to Central and South Asia (SCO 2006b; 'Iranian President' 2006; Bezlova 2006; 'Putin says' 2006; 'Energy outcome' 2006).

*Opposing views*

However, energy politics of SCO members and observers were not always in harmony with Moscow's ideas. For instance, China and other SCO countries did not want to be fully dependent on energy ties with Russia and subsequently also focused on other partners in their need for energy. In addition to Russia as supplier, China has also focused on Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan for its need for energy. With Uzbekistan, China concluded an energy deal on oil and gas exploration on the eve of the 2006 Shanghai summit. Regarding China's energy cooperation with Kazakhstan, in December 2005 the Atasu–Alashankou oil pipeline between the two countries was opened. In May 2006, oil pumped from Kazakhstan reached China, thus marking the first direct pipeline import of oil to China. This Sino-Kazakh pipeline was to be extended from 1,000 to 3,000 kilometres and would eventually provide China with about 15 per cent of its crude oil needs ('Kazakh–China' 2005; 'Kazakh oil' 2006; 'Circumventing' 2005). Kazakhstan was also considering a Chinese proposal for a gas pipeline to China running parallel to the Atasu–Alashankou oil pipeline ('Kazakh minister' 2006). After the 2007 SCO summit in Bishkek, Chinese President Hu Jintao made a state visit to Kazakhstan at which an agreement was signed for the second phase of the Kazakh–Chinese oil pipeline, extending it westwards, thus linking China with the Caspian Sea. Moreover, both countries announced the construction of a gas pipeline, transporting Turkmen gas to China via Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan, however, kept all doors open by its energy cooperation not only with Russia and China, but also with the West ('SCO energy' 2007). The Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan



(BTC) oil pipeline became an interesting option after many Kazakh producers decided to join this project in an attempt to avoid Russian dependency (see: subparagraph 'Alternative pipelines to circumvent Russia', below). The Kazakh government, which formally joined the BTC project on 16 June 2006, stated that in ten years it would like to supply the BTC with three-quarters of its total capacity ('Circumventing' 2005; 'BP Azerbaijan' 2006; 'Fact box' 2005; 'Eurasia: Kazakhstan' 2006; 'GUAM' 2006).

### *Energy club*

At the June 2006 SCO Shanghai summit, for the first time energy was publicly put on the agenda as a major issue. At this summit Russia's President Putin announced the intention of the founding within the SCO of an 'Energy Club', in order to develop a joint SCO course of action in the field of energy. At a meeting of the Heads of Government Council of the SCO in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, on 15 September 2006, a common energy policy was further discussed. First of all, priority areas of cooperation concerning energy, transportation and telecommunications, were set out. Furthermore, decisions were made on implementing the initiative voiced by Vladimir Putin at the Shanghai summit, where he proposed to set up an 'SCO Energy Club'. The heads of government tasked a special working group on fuel and energy with studying in the shortest time the possibility of forming an 'SCO Energy Club'. The Kazakh and Russian parties presented their proposals to the SCO Secretariat for all parties to be discussed in 2007 at a meeting of the heads of fuel and energy departments of the SCO member states. On 3 July 2007 this 'Energy Club' was established in Moscow. The regulations of the 'Energy Club' – in which the SCO observers also take part in this capacity – explain that it unites energy producers, consumers and transit countries in coordination of energy strategies with the aim of increasing energy security. At the Bishkek summit of 16 August 2007, Russian Foreign Affairs Minister Lavrov confirmed an active role for the SCO observers in the 'Energy Club', for instance with participation open to their companies (SCO 2006b; 'Moratorium' 2007; Haas 2007b: 26–7). Although so far energy deals were made bilaterally, the foundation of the 'SCO Energy Club' was a step towards a common energy policy, even though it remained unclear what the intentions were.

### *Assessment*

In addition to military–political issues, energy security, which was increasingly identified as a vital element of security policy, was gaining weight in the SCO. With its 'Energy Club' established, the SCO aimed for a common energy approach, above all in strengthening energy security. Western assessments sometimes viewed the SCO as increasingly becoming a mechanism to oust the USA and its Western allies from Central Asia, and thus to threaten Western security interests. The SCO Energy Club was possibly likewise perceived as a threat to Western (energy) security. Iran's proposal to set gas prices and determine its

major flows together with Russia only has reinforced this fear, even though this proposal has a very high level of propaganda. On the other hand, SCO member countries that export oil and gas were not only partners, but also rivals on the promising markets in East and South Asia. China, for instance, was making efforts to get a foothold in the energy sectors of Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. The latter started to threaten Russia's position in Central Asia based on a monopoly on export gas pipelines to Europe. Thus, there was much diversity among SCO members and observers on energy cooperation – as well as on cooperation with the West – instead of a simple unification on or against such issues. Whether a common SCO energy policy would change this diversity remained to be seen. Regarding energy security as collective military tasking, so far the SCO did not have or plan either rapid reaction forces, or joint military endeavours in energy security. Nonetheless, considering the steps the SCO was taking towards a mature security organization, the developing cooperation of the SCO with the CSTO, as well as through its 'Energy Club', this situation could change in the future. Since the SCO states also had to cope with terror attacks, possibly also against their energy infrastructure, it was not unlikely that the SCO in the near future would create standing reaction forces with security of energy infrastructure and of transport routes as tasking.

### ***Caucasus and Central Asia: crucial areas in the clash on energy***

Energy resources are present in Azerbaijan, the Caspian Sea and in the Central Asian states of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. These resources have become more significant in a time of growing demand. The importance of these regions has also grown as a result of energy policies by consumer states in the West that want to decrease their dependence on resources from Russia and the Middle East. Stability in the Caucasus is a vital requirement for the uninterrupted transport of Caspian oil and gas. The Caspian Sea region (South Caucasus and Central Asia) contains about 3–4 per cent of the world's oil reserves (Middle East: 65 per cent) and 4–6 per cent of the world's gas reserves (Middle East: 34 per cent) (Baran 2002: 221; 'Fact box' 2005; 'Caspian Oil' 1998: 32). In itself the Caucasian share of global oil and gas reserves is not considerable. However, in view of the uncertainty over the reliability of Persian Gulf supplies, as well as the possibility that Russia may use energy delivery as a power tool, the transport of Caspian and Central Asian (Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan especially) energy supplies to the West via the Caucasus gained vital importance.

A number of actors, such as Georgia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, China, USA, EU and NATO, were making efforts to end Russia's near monopoly on the transport of energy supplies in the Eurasian region. They attempted to create alternative routes to transport these supplies. After the energy dispute between Russia and Ukraine in the beginning of 2006, Europe and the USA took a closer look at the energy map around the Caspian Sea, i.e. the South Caucasus and Central Asia (Gallis 2006; 'EU: Brussels mulls' 2006; 'EU: Brussels targeting' 2006). Evidence of the reinforced US conviction of the geo-strategic and energy-related

importance of this region were for instance the visits of Azeri President Ilham Aliyev to Washington and the visit of US Vice-President Dick Cheney to Kazakhstan, both in late spring 2006, and the visit of the Kazakh President to the USA in autumn 2006. A major objective of this endeavour was the creation of pipelines from Central Asia via Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey to the West. However, there were other actors, most notably India and China with their rapidly growing economies, which were in competition with the West and Russia in gaining new energy resources (see also: paragraph 'Russia's approach towards other international actors: friends/China').

### *Alternative pipelines to circumvent Russia*

In September 1994 a consortium of 12, mostly Western oil companies with BP as operator, signed a contract with the Azerbaijani government to transport oil from three fields (Azeri, Gyuneshli, Chirag) to world markets (Fuller 2006c). In light of its difficult relations with Tehran, the USA ruled out from the very beginning the shortest and easiest route, running southward via Iran to the Persian Gulf. An alternative route to Turkey via Armenia was unacceptable to Baku due to the unresolved conflict with Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh. And the third main possibility, northward from Baku to Novorossiysk on Russia's Black Sea coast was not chosen because the US wanted to bypass Russia rather than give Moscow the chance to control Azerbaijan's oil exports. Other reasons for avoiding the northern route included the security threats posed by the war in Chechnya and because Turkey since early 1994 had repeatedly expressed its opposition to increasing the volume of oil-tanker traffic through the Bosphorus. Turkey and Georgia proposed in December 1994 routing the main export via Georgia rather than via Armenia, which found favour with Washington insofar as it would serve to anchor Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey to the West and thereby undercut Russia's influence in the South Caucasus. This Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan (BTC) oil pipeline, although taking a longer and more expensive route than possible other ones, thus became an interesting option as an alternative to energy dependency on Russia. Similar to the BTC was the Baku–Tbilisi–Erzurum (BTE) gas pipeline, linking Baku to the Turkish city of Erzurum, through Tbilisi. The BTE was earlier referred to as the Shah Deniz pipeline or the South Caucasus pipeline ('BP Azerbaijan' 2006; 'Fact box' 2005; 'Eurasia: Kazakhstan' 2006; 'GUAM' 2006; 'Azerbaijan's Shah' 2006). The US tried to involve Kazakhstan into the project as well, by lobbying for a gas and oil pipeline connecting Kazakhstan, along the Caspian seabed, to the BTC and BTE. Kazakhstan joined the BTC project in June 2006 (Main 2005: 16–17; 'Cheney runs' 2006). In Vienna, on 26 June 2006, the EU, together with representatives from Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Austria, signed a joint declaration supporting the Nabucco gas pipeline (see: Map 2.1). This pipeline was set to deliver Azeri – and later to be followed by Kazakh and possibly Turkmen – gas from the Caspian region through Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary to the Baumgarten terminal in Austria, from where it

would be distributed around Europe. The construction was expected to start in 2010 and to be completed in 2013 ('EU signs' 2006; 'Caspian: EU' 2006; Torello 2008). Hence, with BTC, BTE and Nabucco, mainly Western actors sought to thwart Russia's energy dominance.

### ***Western involvement in energy in the former Soviet area***

In the 1980s and 1990s due to relatively low prices – with the exception of the Gulf Wars – energy did not receive much attention from the international community. Around the millennium this low priority status began to change when oil and gas prices started to rise in 1999. Between 2003 and 2006 global oil prices doubled and subsequently continued to increase until the international financial crisis of autumn 2008 (Gennip 2006; Yergin 2006). In addition, China and India's growing economies demanded more energy resources, which drove up oil and gas prices even further, and potentially proved to be a source of tension with the West. Around the turn of the year 2005 it became even clearer that energy security was an essential part of Russia's external policy when it used energy as a power instrument to force Ukraine to pay a higher gas price. As a result of these developments, energy security became high on the international agenda. The USA, EU, NATO and the pro-Western GUAM grouping in the CIS area expressed their concerns about threats to energy security and started to draft their concepts on securing energy supplies.

### ***NATO***

The South Caucasus region as well as the topic of energy security developed into an important interest for NATO. Energy security was not an entirely new phenomenon within NATO. In the 1980s, during the Iran–Iraq War, a coalition of European NATO member states and the US conducted a maritime operation to secure the supply routes of oil, and during the Gulf War of 1991 European NATO members again joined the US in a coalition in the war against Iraq, which – due to the protection of oil production in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia – was also related to energy security. The first step taken by NATO on energy security in the area of the former Soviet Union was a regional cooperation seminar on energy security in the Caucasus, which took place in Azerbaijan in 2000 (Appathurai 2001). Next, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR)/Commander of the US European Command, General Jones, more than once stressed the importance of the Caucasus and of energy security. In October 2005 at a seminar at The Hague, Jones asked: 'What is NATO's role with regard to securing access and the flow of energy, upon which we all depend so much? Whether it is Europe's dependence upon Russian oil and gas pipelines coming from the Caucasus, Caspian and Russia' (Haas and Versteegen 2005: 10). Moreover, in May 2006 speaking in Washington, General Jones stated that at the next NATO summit at Riga in November 2006, energy security and the security of critical infrastructures would be in the topics to be discussed.

Furthermore, he asserted that NATO would talk more about the maritime domain in terms of energy protection and that in this respect the alliance should be concerned about the Black Sea as well ('National press' 2006). The Parliamentary Assembly of NATO also took an interest in energy security and published a report on it, whilst NATO itself formed a working group to look at energy security matters. Energy security also concerns military matters, which call for NATO to be involved in the American and European dialogue on this subject. In regards to this matter – according to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly report – the EU should also be engaged, even though its related so-called 'Green paper' did not deal with military matters (Gennip 2006; European Commission 2006). The US followed a proactive course in energy security and US officials regularly advocated a (stronger) role for NATO in this respect, not only by its member states but also by energy producers within the Partnership for Peace (PfP), such as Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan. The Bush administration, with the support of Britain and Germany, introduced a discussion on energy security in NATO, in February 2006. During this meeting of NATO governments a range of potential actions in the event of future disruption of oil supplies caused by military action came to the fore. For example, options such as the protection of tanker traffic and oil platforms in conflicts and the use of satellites to monitor threatened areas of energy sources were raised. In addition to statements by high officials of NATO and the USA on energy security, there were indications that the US and NATO had been actively involved in the security of energy infrastructure in the South Caucasus. According to a Russian newspaper, NATO and American armed forces conducted operations to protect energy transport facilities in the South Caucasus (Plugatarev 2006a). Allegedly, in 2005 an agreement was reached that arranged for the USA and NATO to secure the BTC oil pipeline. In the future they supposedly would also safeguard the BTE gas pipeline. Apparently, NATO shared an interest in these two pipelines with the EU. In addition to assistance, military units of NATO and the USA would also support and/or train Azeri troops tasked with the protection of oil pipelines (Mamedov 2006a). However, Georgian, NATO and American officials all denied any NATO or US involvement in pipeline security in Georgia and Azerbaijan and claimed that these two states had their own dedicated units for pipeline protection.<sup>7</sup>

Energy security also reached NATO's summits as a topic to be discussed; the first one with this theme on the agenda was in 2006, after the gas dispute between Russia and Ukraine. At NATO's Riga summit of 28–29 November 2006 in his keynote speech Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, discussing the international pressure on NATO to go global, called energy security one of the new emerging challenges that should be dealt with. The Riga summit declaration mentioned that Alliance security interests could also be affected by the disruption of the flow of vital resources. The Declaration called for a coordinated, international effort to assess risks to energy infrastructures and to promote energy infrastructure security. The North Atlantic Council was directed to consult on the most immediate risks in the field of energy security, in order to define those areas where NATO could add value to safeguard the security inter-

ests of the Allies and, upon request, assist national and international efforts (NATO 2006a, b). Some of the policy initiatives on energy security agreed upon in Riga were immediately put into practice. In the week following the summit, NATO Secretary General De Hoop Scheffer received Kazakh President Nazarbayev. At this meeting De Hoop Scheffer announced NATO's desire to discuss with Kazakhstan and neighbouring states a possible role for the Alliance in the protection of energy flows ('Brussel lonkt' 2006). In response to discussions about energy security at the Riga summit, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov demanded that Russia would be included in any realistic planning in this sphere. He argued that Russia could not dictate to NATO what to do in Riga, but that energy security was a matter that concerned all and should be discussed by taking into account the interests and approaches of all the key players, including Russia ('Foreign minister says' 2006). At the NATO summit in Bucharest of 2–4 April 2008, in response to the tasking of the Riga summit, the report 'NATO's Role in Energy Security' was discussed. With regard to energy security, NATO decided to engage in the following fields: information and intelligence fusion and sharing; projecting stability; advancing international and regional cooperation; supporting consequence management; and supporting the protection of critical energy infrastructure. NATO members would continue to consult on the most immediate risks in the field of energy security (NATO 2008b). Although direct involvement of NATO in energy security in the former Soviet area could not be proven, it was clear that energy security was to remain high on the agenda of the alliance, due to the increasing global demand for energy and the danger of an international crisis resulting from a decrease in supply levels.

## *EU*

EU countries as a whole import some 50 per cent of their energy needs and will import 70 per cent by 2030. Furthermore, EU countries import 25 per cent of their energy needs from Russia, which may rise to 40 per cent in 2030 (and 45 per cent from the Middle East) (Gallis 2006). Concerning energy security, in addition to the dominating energy dependency on Russia, the EU was also confronted with growing prices and with the fact that most energy sources were located in unstable areas such as the Middle East. For all these reasons the EU became aware of the necessity to diversify its sources for the procurement of energy. To a large extent energy policy remained within the competence of EU member states' foreign policies and a matter of national sovereignty. The EU's Green Paper of 29 November 2000 'Towards a European strategy for the security of energy supply' already showed a change in policy. This document mentioned EU objectives in the field of securing energy supplies and the diversification of energy resources in order to minimize external risk factors and dependence on one source (Karayianni 2006; European Commission 2000). Consequently, the awareness of energy dominance by Russia, the disclosure of new energy markets such as those found in the Caspian Sea area and the EU's exclusive competence on commercial relations with non-EU countries put



security of energy supply on the agenda of the EU. Another factor was the refusal of Russia to ratify the EU's Energy Charter Treaty, which would have given the EU access to oil and gas from Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan via the Russian pipeline network. The rise of energy security on the agenda of the EU was further expressed in a June 2006 EU report, in which the Union's main energy objectives were identified. The key factor mentioned was to ensure that the EU would have reliable alternative sources to substitute for Russian energy supplies. This change in policy and awareness of energy security resulted in the EU seeking long-term supply contracts with Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, as well as promoting a string of pipelines to take Central Asian and Caspian gas and oil via Azerbaijan and Turkey to Europe, thus circumventing Russia. The Nabucco pipeline project, which aimed to deliver gas and oil from the Caspian to Europe, was an example of this proactive energy policy of the EU ('Russia and Middle' 2006; 'EU: Brussels mulls' 2006; 'EU: Brussels targeting 2006).

### *GUAM*

All members of the pro-Western organization GUAM, except for Azerbaijan, were dependent on Russian gas and oil. To diminish their dependency on Russian energy resources, GUAM members were interested in creating energy alternatives, which would seriously enhance their political and economical independence (see also: paragraph 'Caucasus and Central Asia: crucial areas in the class on energy'). Although the BTC pipeline definitely served to strengthen GUAM it was not the sole guarantee for the organization's energy security. Only Azeri gas through the BTE could replace Russian gas for Georgia (Fuller 2006b). As part of Georgia's desire to diversify its energy supplies it made agreements with Azerbaijan on the delivery of this gas (Mamedov 2006b). The only way Ukraine could profit from the BTC and BTE was if Kazakhstan, with its enormous energy resources, was connected to the BTC and BTE pipelines. Kazakhstan agreed to participate in the BTC by shipping oil across the Caspian ('Kazakhstan to' 2006). However, it remained to be seen if a future gas pipeline from Kazakhstan would be constructed on the Caspian seabed, as Russia, as one of the littoral states of the disputed Caspian Sea, was eager to prevent this on 'environmental' grounds.

### *Assessment: Russia's reply to rerouting of energy supplies*

The trend to minimize Russian influence on energy flows, as exemplified in the BTC and the Chinese-Kazakh pipelines, seemed to be successful. Of course, Moscow could not be expected to remain passive to such attempts intended to bypass Russia. The BTC runs close to the two self-declared independent Georgian enclaves of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, whose leadership was aligned to Russia and on which territory Russian troops were deployed. In January 2006 explosions damaged pipelines to Georgia on Russian soil. Some sources blamed Russia's security service, the FSB, for this disruption. They believed it to be a

show of force to warn Georgia against its efforts for Western integration and for reducing its dependence on Russian gas by securing alternative supplies from Azerbaijan, Turkey and Iran ('Sabotage' 2006; Kramer 2006b). Attacks or sabotage on the BTC from the secessionist enclaves was possibly an option for Russia to act against this undesirable development. Furthermore, Russia had leverage on Kazakhstan, because of Kazakh gas export transit through Russia, but also because of the considerable Russian minority in Kazakhstan, which made Kazakhstan hesitant to follow an anti-Russian political course. However, affecting the BTC and the Chinese–Kazakh pipelines would also have negative consequences for Russia's relations with China and the West and encouraged Georgia to enhance its efforts to gain alternative energy supplies. In November 2005, another option to counter the attempts to decrease Russian influence on energy flows was announced by President Putin. He announced plans to expand a pipeline that Gazprom was building across the Black Sea to Turkey so as to provide extra supplies to Southern Europe ('Blue Stream'; see Map 2.1). In addition to the previous options of (re)controlling Central Asian energy, Russia claimed that Caspian sub-sea pipelines were environmentally unacceptable (Gorst 2006). The different policy options used by Russia were aimed to convince Western and other actors that they should seriously consider the potential of Russian resistance to their endeavours to reroute energy from Central Asia. Considering these developments, a continuation of rivalry between Russia and especially Western actors on the control over Central Asian was to be expected.

## **Conclusions on Putin's international security policy in practice**

### ***Putin's first years***

The following can be said about Putin's security and foreign policy as of the start of his presidency, on 31 December 1999, until the terrorist attacks against the USA of 11 September 2001 (9/11). Russia's fixation on its influence within the CIS was prolonged. In order to stress Russia's great power status and the independent course of Russian foreign policy, Putin followed an active line to intensify relations with a number of countries. He displayed interest in relations with so-called 'pariah' states such as North Korea and Cuba and deepened political, economic and military ties with China, India and Iran (Smith 2000: 27). In this way, he showed that his foreign policy was not dictated by the West. However, Putin realized quite well that these rapprochements with dubious states could cause resistance in the West and weaken Russia's international position. Furthermore, Putin regularly admitted that influence in international politics was determined by economic rather than by military power. Taking into account the fact that internal and external policies are so closely connected, as was also stated in the 2000 FPC, Putin gave a high priority to economic cooperation and integration in the global economy. In view of Russia's geographic position, this led to the conclusion that closer ties with Europe were in the interest of the



Russian Federation. Not surprisingly Minister of Foreign Affairs Igor Ivanov stated that Russia's primary external interests lay in Europe. Therefore, Moscow aimed at structural and balanced relations with the EU. Trade relations between Russia and the EU were intensive: 40 per cent of Russia's trade in the year 2000 was conducted with the EU (IISS 2000a: 122). Former deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and foreign policy expert, Anatoly Adamishin, confirmed the importance of economic cooperation with Europe and the EU in particular. In his idea within ten to 20 years the entry of Russia to the EU could be realized (Adamishin 2000: 3). Hence, international economic cooperation, especially with the EU, was considered a central point of Russian foreign policy prior to 9/11. Closer cooperation with the EU served more than one objective of Russian policy. First, economic cooperation with Europe would most likely bring about growth in the Russian economy, which in turn would enhance Russia's international position. Second, closer ties with the EU might also weaken the relationship between Europe and the USA, even more so if Russia was supporting, or participating in the further development of an independent European security policy with its own military power, which possibly could be in contrast with American interests. From a weakening or even split in the transatlantic camp, Russia naturally could benefit in the international arena by promoting its foreign policy principle of multipolarity in international politics and Russia's status as a great or superpower.

### ***September 2001 terror attacks: affecting Russia's international status***

After the terrorist attacks on the USA of 11 September 2001 President Putin took a pro-Western course. In the long run Putin desired to strengthen Russia's international position, not excluding military means to achieve this. However, Putin realized quite well, in contrast to many Soviet leaders, that influence on a global level was more than ever based on economic leverage. Taking this into account, his rapprochement towards the West, and especially towards Europe, did not seem strange. Nonetheless, after 9/11, Russia's international position was weakened, physically as well as psychologically: physically in the sense that the West, by deploying support bases for its armed forces in Central Asia following its invasion of Afghanistan, had 'lodged' itself in the traditionally Russian 'backyard' of the CIS. Already before 9/11 the West had gradually strengthened its position in this region. NATO achieved this through its cooperation programme 'Partnership for Peace' (PfP) and the USA by conducting military exercises with some of the CIS states in Central Asia. After 9/11 a remarkable turning point in positions had occurred. Many CIS states had previously been tied to the Russian Federation because of economic and/or military dependency. However, the growing Western presence in this area could possibly end this reliance. In the first years after 9/11 the involvement of the West in the CIS was slowly appearing to be of a long-lasting kind. The USA invested hundreds of millions of dollars in airbases in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (Khodarenok 2002). It was not likely that these costly investments were made for stationing troops in

that area for a limited period of time. Another aspect of these investments was that they led to an economic impulse for the CIS states in question. It is said that the USA had to pay \$7,000–7,500 for every air movement from and to Manas airbase in Kyrgyzstan. This Western, or better American, policy towards the CIS improved the economic as well as the security situation of a number of CIS states and subsequently diminished their dependency on Moscow. This then meant that Russia 'physically' lost ground in the CIS. In a psychological sense Putin also suffered defeat, from a national as well as from a CIS point of view. Nationally, after 9/11 Putin dropped his resistance to Western initiatives such as the annulment of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty by the USA, the development of the US National Missile Defence and further enlargement of NATO. The Russian security and foreign affairs elite, including the two Ivanovs (Minister of Defence, Sergei; and of Foreign Affairs, Igor) voiced a great deal of criticism on Putin for giving in to the West. Putin's aspired status as a 'strong leader' was somewhat at stake, although his position did not seem to be threatened. Putin was 'psychologically' damaged in the eyes of other CIS states, who noticed that he was forced by the West to give way on a number of occasions. This affected Russia's status within the CIS.

### ***March 2003 invasion of Iraq: Putin's turning point***

In January 2003 the Academy of Military Sciences of the Russian General Staff held its annual conference (Solovyev 2003). The tone of this conference, at which speeches were not only delivered by military scientists but also by the Chief of the General Staff (CGS) and the Minister of Defence, revealed that Russia's security establishment had not freed itself from conservative views. The lectures of Army General Makhmut Gareyev, President of the Academy of Military Sciences, and other representatives of this institute, evidently expressed a continuation of anti-Western tendencies. For example, NATO allegedly was using the fight against terrorism to weaken Russia's military power. Furthermore, MOD Minister Sergey Ivanov stated that maintenance of a nuclear potential of deterrence was the highest priority of military policy. And CGS Kvashnin pointed at the threat of a large-scale conflict and emphasized the importance of Russia's position as a key player in the international arena. Only rarely at this conference attention was paid to Putin's order to set fighting terrorism as the primary task of forces and troops. Consequently, there was a difference in opinion between the MOD and the other ministries with armed formations and the President on the primacy of internal over external threats. In the US–UK invasion of Iraq, in March 2003, Putin saw his chance to comply with his conservative security elite, by implementing the policy option of splitting the transatlantic Western camp. In their plea in the UNSC for military intervention against Iraq, the USA and the UK were diametrically opposed to Germany and France. Putin supported the latter in their rejection of the use of force, just like France, by threatening to use the right of veto, and, after Operation 'Iraqi Freedom' was launched by a strongly worded condemnation of the use of force

('Putin says' 2003). The Kremlin's reaction demonstrated the dualistic nature of its policy. On the one hand Putin used the division in the Western camp to strengthen Russia's status in the international community. At the same time he apparently had instructed Foreign Affairs Minister Igor Ivanov to use more measured words towards the USA, thus serving the opposite part of Russia's dualistic policy: cooperation with the West in order to improve Russia's economy ('Foreign minister' 2003; 'Putin stresses' 2003). Putin's policy regarding the war against Iraq was definitely also intended for domestic consumption. His firm stand against the USA raised goodwill among the conservative representatives of the Russian security elite, who had rebuked Putin for his pro-American attitude since '9/11'. Hence, in the case of the Iraqi War of 2003, by adhering to the customary dualistic approach, Putin managed to accomplish national as well as international objectives of Russia's foreign and security policy.

### ***Putin's second term (2004–2008): assertive stance towards the West***

With the Russian economy now booming and the coloured revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine in mind as threat for Russia, Putin – although perhaps not pre-planned – in his second term as President apparently decided it was time to follow a stronger course towards the West. This unfolded in the form of fierce resistance against undesired developments, such as the US missile shield, moreover by demonstrating military power, upgrading the nuclear deterrent, by opposing Western-initiated security mechanisms, applying the energy weapon and also by strengthening ties within the CIS and with partners elsewhere, often by the West regarded as pariahs. During the second term of Putin's presidency the South Caucasus, because of its vital geo-strategic position between Asia and Europe and its vicinity to Russia's unstable area of the North Caucasus, became a more important element as the Kremlin strived to strengthen its international position, using the CIS, Russia's sphere of influence, as its major vehicle. For the same purpose Russia reinforced its ties with its eastern neighbours, Central Asian states and China in particular, bilaterally and by way of its leading role in the regional organizations CSTO and SCO. In the (former Soviet or 'near abroad') regions of the South Caucasus and Central Asia energy resources and security played a vital role.

### ***Relations with friends and foes***

During Putin's presidency CSTO and SCO were the dominating befriended international organizations, which Russia used as instruments of its security policy. Within the SCO, but also bilaterally, China was by far the most significant partner of Russia – at least formally as witnessed in statements and documents. In addition to China, again within the SCO but also bilaterally, Putin also considered India and Iran as important partners. Russia has maintained an intensive military cooperation with India, demonstrated by joint exercises and Russian

arm sales. For example, in May 2003, India and Russia held their first joint naval exercises in ten years (IISS 2004: 87). In October 2005 Russia and India conducted joint 'anti-terrorist' manoeuvres in India, called 'IndRo-2005'. In these exercises, intended to become an annual event, army, navy and air forces – including Russian strategic bombers and airborne troops – participated ('Russia and India' 2005). According to official statements, in the Russian-Indian exercises – as in the Sino-Russian exercises of August 2005 – Russian strategic aircraft, bombers and fighters practised mid-air refuelling and demonstrated that the Russian air force was capable of conducting combat missions in difficult climate and visibility conditions and at long range ('Russian Air' 2005). Taking into consideration that India was responsible for one-third of Russia's arms exports in combination with the growing bilateral ties in conducting military exercises, it was not a surprise that Russia brought forward India to obtain the status of observer in the SCO. Iran also received an observer status with the SCO, to which it was introduced by Russia, together with India, in 2005. Just as China and India, Iran had a special (economic) relationship with Russia. In the case of Iran, relevant aspects were that after Russia, Teheran ranked second in the world with its natural gas reserves, and the fact that Moscow provided technology for nuclear energy to Iran (nationmaster.com 2009e). All three states – China, India and Iran – were important actors in Russia's arms export. The fact that India and Iran joined China in its cooperation with Russia within the SCO, was an example of the SCO serving as a platform for Russia's security policy.

In order to understand Russia's relationship with the West, Russia's perception of security and security-related developments in the past must be taken into account. For instance a number of new EU/NATO states were – against their will – part of the Soviet Union or the Warsaw Pact. Because of this past they often regarded the USSR's successor, the Russian Federation, as a threat to their existence. Consequently, this influenced their policy towards Russia, bilaterally, but also in their attitude in the EU/NATO towards Moscow. Likewise, the Kremlin regarded their membership of Western institutions as something that went against Russia's interests. The result of this difficult relationship was for instance confrontations between Russia and the Baltic states – for example with Estonia on the removal of the war statue, in April 2007 – and with Poland, regarding the export of Polish meat to Russia. The same countries delayed the negotiations between Russia and the EU for drafting a new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. As a consequence of these confrontations with antagonizing new members of EU and NATO, but also to strengthen its international position by an alignment with neighbouring CIS states – Belarus, Armenia and Central Asian states in particular – Russia took a leading role in the military alliance CSTO, and together with China, also in the SCO (Haas 2007b). Russia's involvement in both organizations had the counter-effect that Russia declined closer ties between the member states of CSTO with Western institutions, such as NATO and the EU.<sup>8</sup> An even more important fact of Russia's increasing involvement with CSTO and SCO was that Moscow seemed to be replacing European/Western (security) arrangements for those in the East. An example

was Russia's suspension of the CFE Treaty in December 2007. Furthermore, Russia considered the former Soviet Union area as its legitimate sphere of influence. It was reluctant to see any Western interference with developments in this area and took its own course, for instance by maintaining (peacekeeping) forces in the frozen conflicts in Georgia and Moldova. Another legacy of the past was that Russia felt frustrated by the way the West neglected it in the 1990s, especially in military action in the former Yugoslavia, and would not accept such a treatment anymore. This explained Russia's firm attitude in rejecting the US missile defence shield, to be installed in the EU (and NATO) member states Poland and the Czech Republic. Another unsolved problem was Russia's resistance against the independence of Kosovo.<sup>9</sup> The independence of Kosovo was to become one of the arguments of Russia under Medvedev for recognizing the independence of the Georgian separatist regions Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

### 3     **Structure of Medvedev’s foreign security policy (2008–2009)**

President Dmitry Medvedev has demonstrated an active interest in the theoretic foundations of Russia’s security policy, by releasing security documents and launching military reforms. This chapter explains the details of Medvedev’s security documents and statements. In addition to initiating a number of security documents, in the aftermath of the Georgian conflict Medvedev also proved to be very active in introducing plans for military reforms and modernization of the Russian armed forces. Both components – security documents and military reforms – constitute the theoretic structure of Medvedev’s foreign security policy. This chapter concludes with an analysis of Medvedev’s security thinking in comparison with corresponding key documents of his predecessor Putin.

#### **Security policy documents**

In July 2008, a couple of months after his inauguration as President, Medvedev launched his first major security document, the Foreign Policy Concept (FPC). Already, soon after a fundamental occurrence in international security (the Russian–Georgian conflict of August 2008), Medvedev introduced a second security policy initiative, this time in the form of a statement on major policy principles. The next month, in September 2008, Putin’s successor approved a specific strategy for the Arctic region. Because of the fact that this document was not a key but a subordinate security paper and due to its relevance for energy security policy in particular, the Arctic strategy will not be discussed here, but in Chapter 4

*Table 3.1* Chronology of Medvedev’s major security documents and statements (2008–2009)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Policy document</i>
12 July 2008	Foreign Policy Concept approved by RF President
31 August 2008	Statement by Medvedev on principles of foreign/security policy
18 September 2008	Principles of policy on the Arctic approved by RF President
12 May 2009	National Security Strategy until 2020 ratified by presidential decree

in the paragraph on applying energy as instrument of power. After the FPC and principles on foreign and security policy as third security policy project, President Medvedev ratified Russia's first National Security Strategy in May 2009. The remaining pillar of the 'troika' of Russia's security policy hierarchy, after the strategy and the foreign policy paper – the Military Doctrine – was allegedly also awaiting a new edition in the course of 2009 (Ivanov 2009).

### ***Foreign Policy Concept (July 2008)***

On 12 July 2008, Medvedev signed a new edition of the Foreign Policy Concept (FPC), his first security document (MID 2008a). The most salient entries in the document dealt with Russia's international status, Euro-Atlantic security structures and (security) cooperation with Eastern actors.

#### *Contents*

As to its position in the international arena, the FPC described Russia as possessing a powerful posture with a fully fledged role in global affairs and being one of the influential centres in the modern world. Because of this status of a resurgent great or superpower Russia now exerted a substantial influence on international developments. Related to its strong international position the FPC made it clear that Russia would provide protection of rights and legitimate interests of Russian citizens and compatriots abroad (*za rubezhēm*). With regard to Euro-Atlantic security, the FPC mentioned the desire of Moscow to create a different regional collective security and cooperation system, ensuring the unity of the Euro-Atlantic region. Furthermore, the FPC rejected further expansion of NATO, especially concerning Ukraine and Georgia. The document also reiterated Moscow's opposition against the planned US missile defence shield in Europe. Moreover, this foreign policy guideline put a lot of emphasis on the East, by asserting deepened engagement in the format of the Troika (Russia, India and China), with China and India bilaterally, in the Russian–Chinese strategic partnership, as well as in the format of the BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, China). In addition to this, the FPC explicitly mentioned the CSTO as a key instrument of maintaining stability and ensuring security in the CIS, and the SCO, for its role in creating a network of partners in the Asia-Pacific Region.

#### *Assessment*

The FPC clearly reflected Moscow's policy priorities of the time. The document expressed the conviction of a reinstated international position of power, acting upon its own national interests instead of being influenced by the desires of other actors. This line of policy was already witnessed in Putin's security documents of 2007 (Overview of Foreign Policy) and 2008 (Strategy 2020). The August 2008 Russo-Georgian conflict might also be considered as a corresponding policy action. Most of the stated rejected Western security actions – such as the



existing Euro-Atlantic security architecture, NATO expansion and the US missile shield – were incorporated in Russia's security policy of the latter part of Putin's second term, whereas the proposal for a new Euro-Atlantic security architecture had been launched by Medvedev in June 2008. The emphasis on partners – states and organizations – in the East was concurrent with Moscow's closer ties with China and the uplifting of CSTO and SCO from respectively a treaty and a grouping into fully fledged organizations in recent years. The FPC expressed considerable attention to energy (security and resources). This was also in line with Putin's 2007 OFP and 2008 Strategy 2020. Energy, due to the sky-scraping revenues of resources and its (regained) status of a power instrument, as for instance reflected in the gas conflicts with Ukraine, had now become a consistent part of Moscow's security thinking. Another structural aspect of the security mindset of the Kremlin included in the FPC was that of the importance of being a nuclear arms power. The document recurrently mentioned the importance of the strategic nuclear deterrent but also noted the option of negotiations on reductions of nuclear weapons. The emphasis in this document on strengthening ties with India and China and with CSTO and SCO, in combination with its opposition towards the current (Western-oriented) European security structure, gave the impression that Russia's interest in seeking security arrangements was moving from West to East.

### ***Principles on foreign and security policy (August 2008)***

Soon after the Russo-Georgian conflict, President Medvedev further elaborated his views on foreign and security policy by announcing five principles, as mentioned in a television interview on 31 August 2008 (Kremlin 2008b):

- 1 primacy of international law;
- 2 the world should be multipolar; not single-pole; no domination, such as by the USA;
- 3 Russia has no intention of isolating itself, seeks friendly relations, also with the West;
- 4 protecting Russians wherever they may be is priority – Russia responds to any aggressive act against them or Russia;
- 5 Russia has privileged interests in certain regions.

Because of Russia's recent invasion not only of the separatist regions Abkhazia and South Ossetia, but also of Georgia proper, the emphasis in these principles on international law was disputed at the time. The principle against (American) unipolar and dominant policies, just as the one on protecting Russians abroad was a traditional entry in Russian security thinking. In the light of Russia's conflict with Georgia, this reference to the protection of Russian minorities received a different connotation. One of the grounds to use military force in Georgia's separatist regions had been the protection of the Russian minority in South Ossetia. Considering the presence of large Russian minorities on their territory,



consequently Estonia and Latvia felt threatened by Russia. The last principle on privileged interests, just as entries in the 2008 FPC on rebuffing further NATO enlargement especially with Georgia and Ukraine, underlined that Russia considered the former Soviet area as its sphere of influence from which the West should stay out.

### ***National Security Strategy until 2020 (May 2009)***

On 12 May 2009 Russian President Medvedev signed a decree approving the 'National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020' (SCRF 2009b). The Kremlin published this strategy on 13 May 2009. The National Security Strategy 2009 (NSS) replaced the National Security Concepts of 1997 (Yeltsin) and 2000 (Putin). The document comprised chapters on developments in international security, national interests, priorities and threats, ensuring national security in the field of military security and defence, social security, welfare of citizens, economy, science-technology-education, health care, culture and environment.

### ***Contents***

Concerning national interests and priorities the document stated defence and state and civil security as the first priorities for Russia's national security, followed by social-economic aspects such as increasing the quality of life and economic growth. According to the NSS the conditions of national security depended in the first place on the country's economic potential. In the military field the paper mentioned that parity with the USA on strategic nuclear weapons should be gained or maintained. Furthermore, that Russia should develop into a global power, since it was already one of the leading powers influencing world processes. The NSS also identified the interdependence between civil stability and national security, by stating that social-economic development was equally as important as military security. Another interest was the protection of Russian citizens in the so-called 'near abroad' (*za rubezhēm*). A highly ambitious economic objective was to become the world's fifth largest economy in terms of GDP. Traditionally, a crucial element of Russian strategic policy papers has been threat perception. As to threats Medvedev's strategy pointed out the policy of a number of leading countries, aimed at military supremacy by building up especially nuclear but also conventional strategic arms, unilateral development of anti-ballistic missile defence and militarization of space, which may trigger a new arms race. Another threat was NATO's expansion near Russia's borders and attempts to grant the military alliance a global role. Reference as a threat was also made to non-compliance of international arms control, limitation and reduction agreements. Energy security was now also brought in as a threat, claiming that competition for energy resources might create tension, which could escalate into the use of military force near the borders of Russia and its allies. In addition to external threats, the document also listed domestic ones, such as demographic

problems, poverty, insufficient health care, terrorism, separatism, radicalism, extremism, organized crime, corruption and pandemics.

### *Assessment*

As was the case with its predecessor, Putin's National Security Concept of 2000, reflecting the Kosovo conflict of 1999, and furthermore also discernible in Medvedev's first security document, the 2008 FPC, the NSS too exhibited present-day policy priorities. A first example of this was that Russia should develop into a global power. This was a clear continuation of the thinking in the latter years of Putin claiming that the point of ignoring Russia was passed since Russia in the meantime had returned as a resurgent great or superpower. Other current and continuing Russian policy positions in the strategy were for instance rejecting further enlargement of NATO and the US missile defence shield in Europe, promoting a new European security architecture and underlining the modernization of its armed forces. Another vital and recurring policy point was the protection of Russian citizens in the 'near abroad', since this argument was used by Moscow to legitimize its invasion of Georgia in August 2008. The reference in the NSS to Russian military contingents in conflict areas promoting international stability was probably also related to Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Energy had been gaining weight in Russian security thinking since Putin's second term in office. Indicative of the crucial importance of energy (resources and security) also for Medvedev's security policy was that the NSS mentioned this item more than five times, respectively in the chapters 'Russia in the world community', 'National defence', 'Raising the quality of life' and 'Economic growth'. The strategy described energy as a power instrument, to strengthen Moscow's influence in the international arena, and to use energy resources as strategic deterrence. The latter was possibly a hint to the applied policy of cutting-off energy supplies for economic but also for political purposes, e.g. respectively to Belarus and Ukraine. Energy was also considered as a strategic security asset, asserting that increasingly scarce energy resources can create a threat from states attempting to control those of energy rich states, such as Russia, which could cause armed conflicts. In addition to expected areas, such as Central Asia and the Caspian Sea, the Arctic region was also mentioned as a prime area for energy resources, which corresponded with the Kremlin's Arctic strategy, endorsed by Medvedev in September 2008 (see: Chapter 4, 'Energy as instrument of power').

According to the NSS the main military threats came from the West, i.e. the USA and NATO. The reference to non-compliance of international arms control agreements was probably related to the unilateral annulment of the ABM Treaty by the USA, effective in 2002, as well as to the refusal of NATO member states to ratify the Adapted CFE Treaty of 1999, which caused Russia to suspend this treaty in December 2007. The statements on nuclear arms in the NSS were ambiguous. On the one hand Russia stressed (modernization of) its strategic nuclear deterrence, probably to counterbalance its weak conventional forces and

to underline its position as a great or superpower. The strategy focused at maintaining nuclear parity with the USA in reply to its European missile shield and an assumed US nuclear strike doctrine. However, on the other hand the NSS also proposed nuclear disarmament. Since a large part of Russia's nuclear deterrent was obsolete therefore the talks with the USA on nuclear reductions, started in spring 2009, were most likely aimed at destructing obsolete weapons and maintaining Moscow's modern nuclear arms.

Overall the NSS demonstrated a balanced approach of the full scope of security dimensions. The foreign and military security dimension comprised seven out of the 16 pages of the NSS. The remaining pages dealt with other, especially domestic security dimensions. Thus, the NSS was more than simply a military-oriented document. However, when it came to external security threats an overload of (military) threats from the West demonstrated the traditional approach of Russian security thinking, in terms of encirclement by enemies, fear for the alien and a necessity to seek allies and create buffer zones against such perils. The NSS mentioned a great number of objectives to be reached in all security dimensions but it was yet to be seen whether these could be achieved. However, for the first time in a strategic security document, the NSS concluded with a number of indicators, such as economic growth, the unemployment rate and the level of military modernization. If these indicators were monitored and policy would be adjusted accordingly, then the chances of successful accomplishment of the targets were rather fair.

### ***Conclusions on Medvedev's security documents***

In the course of his first year in office President Dmitry Medvedev presented three major security ventures, i.e. the Foreign Policy Concept (July 2008), a statement on major policy principles (August 2008) and the National Security Strategy (May 2009) (see: Table 3.3, below). Comparison of the three major documents/statement leads to the following conclusions. First of all, they all emphasized a multipolar world, without unilateral domination, such as by the USA. Second, the three projects mentioned Russia's desire to cooperate and maintain friendly relations, also with the West. Third, every security scheme underlined protection of Russians abroad as a policy priority. And fourth, all plans – whether openly or concealed in other entries – distinguished that Russia had privileged interests in certain regions, i.e. the former Soviet Union region. Whereas Medvedev's statement of August 2008 was limited to enumerating policy principles, the FPC and the NSS explained policy entries in detail. Additional policy priorities, shared by the FPC and the NSS were: Russia's strong posture, capable of influencing international developments; interests as the starting point for foreign and security policy; rejection of Western security programmes, such as the existing Euro-Atlantic security architecture, NATO expansion and the US missile shield; emphasis on partners in the East (China, India, CSTO and SCO); energy as a power tool and strategic asset; and nuclear arms as status of power. Consequently, Medvedev's three major security policy initiatives demonstrated a coherent approach of foreign security policy.

## **Military thought and status of the Russian armed forces**

The performance of the Russian military should be considered in the light of the actual conditions of the army and also as part of the existing military thinking. The Georgian conflict of August 2008 was part of a consistent assertive stance in Moscow's foreign and security policy, of which military power is one of the major instruments. Around the military campaign in Georgia President Medvedev launched the aforementioned new policy concepts, emphasizing Russia's return to a position of strength. However, this assertive stance in external security policy was not matched with a military apparatus capable of executing these political ambitions. A large part of Russia's weaponry was obsolete. In the Georgian conflict this was demonstrated by soldiers sitting on top of infantry carriers with insufficient armour. Although a victory for the Kremlin, the Georgian conflict clearly demonstrated shortcomings in the capabilities of the Russian armed forces. After the conflict the Kremlin concluded that the military should be brought in line with the (regained) status of important power in the international arena. Thus, ambitious procurement and military reform plans were announced.

### ***The State Programme of Armaments 'GPV-2015' enhanced***

The foundation of Russia's rearmament plans was the State Programme of Armaments, *Gosudarstvennaya Programma razvitiya Vooruzheniy* (GPV). Under Putin's presidency the GPV-2015 was developed, covering the period 2007–2015 (see: Chapter 1, 'Armament: nuclear procurement preferred to conventional'). Just before the start of the Russo-Georgian conflict, in July 2008 Premier Putin announced that the modernization plan was to be speeded up and that around 70 per cent of the defence budget was to be spent on weapons procurement, repair of existing arms and R&D; two years ahead of the original schedule. Nevertheless, this ambition seemed to be doubtful, considering that this part of the defence budget amounted to only 30 per cent of the 2006 budget (IISS 2009: 214). After the Georgia conflict President Medvedev ordered an acceleration of the modernization plans for the armed forces. Although already well known, the conflict once again confirmed that a large part of the weaponry of the Russian armed forces was obsolete, which hampered successful conduct of operations. According to the GPV-2015 as of 2011–2012 the military would receive new weapon systems at a large scale. The Georgia conflict revealed that the level of the existing arms was even worse than assumed until then. This convinced the political and military elite that the pace of the modernization should be enhanced, i.e. new weapon systems were to be introduced sooner. The GPV-2015 was maintained, only the schedule of modernization was advanced. As underlined in the statements on the GPV under Putin, after the Georgia conflict – in spite of its nature of purely conventional warfare – remarkably emphasis was again laid on the nuclear forces, as the guarantee for Russia's national security. Prioritization of the nuclear deterrence was clarified by the assumption that no

state would dare to attack a nuclear power. In October 2008 the Kremlin intended to allocate extra financial means for the enhanced modernization of the military (Denisov 2008). This line of policy was still formally valid in March 2009, stressing that the GPV-2015 would not be affected by the financial crisis. Again priority for procurement of nuclear weapons – amounting to 25 per cent of the expenditures on armament – was stressed. However, it was already uncertain whether the Military Industrial Complex (MIC) was able to supply the military with new arms according to the original schedule of the GPV-2015 and even more with its acceleration. In addition to inefficiency and mismanagement of the MIC, as well as its priority for arms export, expectations were also dimmed for uncertainty of inflation and corresponding costs of materials. Another reason for doubt of speedier arms deliveries was that the financial crisis had already forced considerable financial support from the Kremlin to keep the MIC intact (Litovkin 2009a).

### ***Armed forces: ambitious military reforms***

Soon after the Georgian conflict, in September 2008, President Medvedev made a first statement on the necessity of modernizing the armed forces, with regard to weapon systems as well as organizational structures and personnel. After this first announcement, a number of detailed military reform plans were to follow at a rapid pace, not only by President Medvedev, but also by First Vice-Premier Sergei Ivanov, Defence Minister Serdykov and CGS Makarov (see: Table 3.2). The Defence White Paper of 2003 had been the first Russian security document to express the need for restructuring the armed forces into Western-type expeditionary forces, comprising well-equipped and well-trained troops with strategic air and sea lift capacities, which could be deployed in irregular operations rapidly and far away from the motherland. However, under Putin no structural modernization plans were undertaken, except for preparing the introduction of a large amount of modern weapons. The military reform plans of Medvedev provided a realistic attitude of the present problems of the armed forces, sound measures to solve them and ambitious plans to accomplish a modern military apparatus. Evaluating the military reform plans, as announced between September 2008 and March 2009, the following features dominate in the intended restructuring and modernization of the military (see: Table 3.2):

- improving the combat readiness of the armed forces; all military units must become permanently combat ready;
- forming in each of the six military districts an airborne brigade as a quick-reaction operational-level unit;
- reducing the number of senior officers but increasing that of junior officers and non-commissioned officers:
  - reduction of the officer corps from 310,000 officers (some 30 per cent of the manpower) to 150,000 officers (15 per cent);

- reduction of ministerial and headquarters staff positions by 60 per cent from 22,000 to some 8,500;
- providing the armed forces with advanced weapons and equipment;
- preferring nuclear weapons above conventional arms; in improving combat readiness as well as in priority of procurement.

If the measures and plans were carried out, the following deficiencies of the Russian army would be solved. As to the armed forces' structure, after the end of the Cold War Western armed forces had mostly deleted obsolete unit levels, such as divisions and army corps. Furthermore, they changed their organizational structure from a considerable amount of mobilization formations to permanent ready units exclusively. In deployments overseas Western armies used brigades and battalions as standard units. The Russian restructuring plans intended to follow similar lines of reorganization. With regard to the structure of the military, in 2008 only 20 per cent of the military units were in permanent readiness status. According to the reform plans, most largely unfilled framework units would be dissolved in favour of establishing permanent ready units. The restructuring measures dictated that in 2011 all (remaining) units should be permanently ready. Related to this was that the number of military units would be reduced from 1,890 in 2008 to 172 units in 2012. The total of 172 units would consist of 80 brigades, all permanently ready. These self-contained modular brigades would be capable of conducting operations independent of other units. The restructuring to a brigade structure was executed at a fast pace; in June 2009, 50 brigades were already formed and in December 2009 the full amount of some 80 brigades was to be accomplished ('Brigadnomu' 2009). Additionally, if Moscow was to apply power projection more successfully than in the Georgian conflict, rapid reactions forces would be required, capable of conducting operations at short notice. For this purpose airborne brigades would be formed in each military district. Concerning personnel, the plans aimed to end the discrepancy of the overload of officers compared to soldiers (until now officers filled between one-third and half of the armed forces) and to organize a professional non-commissioned officers' corps. This would enhance the number of available combat troops and increase the combat readiness of the military. With regard to the status of weaponry, the usual ratio between new and obsolete weapons in armed forces is 80 to 20 per cent; however in the Russian armed forces in 2008 this figure was 20 modern versus 80 per cent outdated. To solve this shortcoming a large-scale rearmament of the armed forces was to start in 2011.

### ***Assessment of military thinking and modernization plans***

Reduced staff levels and burden of command and control (by deleting divisions and regiments), more troops available for combat action (by creating a more balanced ratio of officers versus soldiers and lowering the average age), as well as concentrating on modern-equipped permanent ready and rapid reaction units, would improve decision taking and usability of the military, and provide the

Table 3.2 Chronology of military reform plans (2008–2009)<sup>1</sup>

<i>Date and source</i>	<i>Defence/armed forces structure</i>	<i>Personnel</i>	<i>Arms</i>
11 September 2008 <i>President Medvedev</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing modern armed forces</li> <li>The August 2008 Russian–Georgian conflict as catalyst for reforms.</li> </ul>		New weapons needed
26 September 2008 <i>President Medvedev</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Five points for development of armed forces until 2020:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All military units must change to become permanently combat ready</li> <li>Improving of command and control over the armed forces                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2009 defence budget: \$40 billion, 20 per cent more than in 2007</li> </ul> </li> </ol> </li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving the system of personnel training, military education and science</li> <li>Raising social circumstances of the military: wages, housing conditions and everyday living</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equipped with sophisticated weapons               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By 2020 new weapon systems introduced:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guaranteed nuclear deterrent system</li> <li>Superiority in the air achieved, capable of conducting high-precision strikes on land and sea targets, as well as of the rapid transfer of troops</li> </ul> </li> <li>New warships: nuclear submarine cruisers with cruise missiles and multipurpose submarines</li> <li>Establish airspace defence system.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>



*14 October 2008*  
*MoD Serdyukov*

- Command and control structures reformed: from military districts, armies, divisions and regiments into military districts, operational command units and brigades
- In each of the six military districts an airborne brigade as a quick-reaction operational-level unit, to accomplish operations with high precision and in a matter of several hours
- In 2012 reduction of army units from 1,890 to 172 units
- By 2012 reduction from 1.2 million personnel to 1 million
- From 310,000 officers (30 per cent of the manpower) to 150,000 officers (15 per cent)
- Reduction of ministry and headquarters and high-level command structures by 60 per cent from 22,000 to 8,500 by 2012
- Number of senior officers reduced and of junior officers and NCOs increased

*19 November*  
*2008*

- Concluding from the Chechen campaigns and the August 08 Caucasus conflict, regiments and divisions will be converted into brigades

*11 December*  
*2008*

- Now only 20% of military units in permanent readiness; in 2011 all units permanently ready

*5 January 2009*  
*CGS Makarov*

- Each military district with strategic command functions, controlling all local army, navy and air force units, fight small conflict in its zone
- Brigades are better balanced, organized and efficient battlefield formations: form 80 brigades including 40 general-purpose brigades, all permanently ready
- The self-contained modular brigades can fight independently of other units in preset sectors
- Airborne and strategic missile divisions remain
- Usual ratio between new and obsolete arms is 80 to 20%, in the Russian armed forces it is 20 versus 80%.
- In the next three to five years plan to equip 30% of the armed forces with advanced weapons and equipment
- By 2018–2020 to raise this figure to 80–100% of the armed forces
- Brigades will use a variety of weapons and military equipment, e.g. radio-electronic warfare systems, nuclear, chemical and biological (NBC) protection units, combat-engineer and logistics-support units and air support of attack and transport helicopters

*continued*



Table 3.2 continued

Date and source	Defence/armed forces structure	Personnel	Arms
2 March 2009 <i>Deputy Prime Minister Ivanov</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First Deputy Premier Sergei Ivanov:</li> <li>No reduction in defence procurement plans, despite problems in the MIC</li> <li>As to military reforms some economizing is possible, by pushing back the time frame</li> <li>The new national arms programme will be adopted for the period from 2011 to 2020</li> <li>Strategic nuclear forces will be re-equipped by 2020</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First Deputy Premier Sergei Ivanov:</li> <li>Order of priorities in procurement is: strategic nuclear forces, air force and navy, and precision weapons for the ground forces</li> <li>Despite the financial crisis, modernizing over the next three years to procure more than 70 strategic missiles, 30 for the <i>Iskander</i> operational-tactical system; 48 combat aircraft; more than 60 helicopters; six unmanned aerial vehicles; 14 ships; 300 tanks; and more than 2,000 vehicles</li> </ul>
4 March 2009 <i>Finance Kudelina</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deputy MoD for Finance and Economic Affairs Kudelina: some cuts in the overall defence budget but not damaging the reform and modernization of the armed forces</li> </ul>		
17 March 2009 <i>President Medvedev</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A modern, well-trained army equipped with modern weapons is the key to our defence</li> <li>The conflict in South Ossetia has led to certain conclusions revealing our weaknesses, problems with weapons and communications</li> </ul> <p>Despite the current financial difficulties, focus will be on five priorities/challenges:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving the combat readiness of our troops, most importantly in our strategic nuclear forces; transfer of all combat units and formations to permanent readiness</li> <li>Optimizing the structure and the headcount of the army</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further improvement in military education, science and technology</li> <li>Resolving the social problems of servicemen, especially housing</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equip our troops with advanced weapons. Despite the current financial problems the amounts spent are almost identical to those included in the earlier plans; in 2011 we will begin the large-scale rearmament of the army and navy</li> <li>Due to the financial crisis, in which part of our military production is shut down, repairing equipment is unacceptable, we need to buy new equipment</li> </ol>

17 March 2009 • First priority to modernizing nuclear  
*MoD Serdyukov* deterrent than conventional forces

- Now only 10 per cent of the weapons modern
- By 2015 up to 30 per cent modern arms, and by 2020 up to 70 per cent modern weapons

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Sources: Felgenhauer (2008c, d, f, 2009d, e); 'Russia to downsize' (2008); Naumov (2008); 'Russia's general staff vows' (2008); 'Russian military to be fully rearmed' (2008); Litovkin (2008b, 2009b); 'Medvedev orders' (2008); Lowe (2008b); Kramchik (2008); Petrov (2009); Solovyev (2009); McDermott (2009); Kremlin (2008l, m, 2009c); 'Russia announces' (2009).

#### Note

- 1 The citations are mostly not literally derived from the sources, but are adapted by the author. The grouping of related entries as used here is for the purpose of clarity and does not necessarily correspond with the original documents.

Kremlin with power projection capabilities in support of its foreign security policy. This must have been the objective of President Medvedev when he got actively involved in modernizing Russia's military power. However, for a number of reasons it is uncertain whether these plans will be fully carried out and will be successful in enhancing the capabilities of the military. First, for many years the armed forces have been faced with military reforms which were not implemented, because of obstruction of the military leadership and a lack of will with the security elite. Second, although Russia's defence budget had risen rapidly under Putin, there was no considerable improvement visible of the combat readiness of the forces. The defence expenditures increased tenfold, from some US\$5 billion in 2000 to some US\$50 billion in 2009 (IISS 2000b: 116, 2009: 216; Pukhov 2007; 'The Russian military expenditure budget' 2008; Felgenhauer 2008d). However, in spite of the sharp boost of the defence budget the average annual inflation in this period was more than 10 per cent, thus lowering the effectiveness of more financial means. Although defence expenditures were augmented, as a percentage of the GDP they actually went down, for instance from 4.29 per cent in 2000 to 3.9 per cent in 2007 (IISS 2009: 213). Furthermore, down at the operational level, money often disappeared into the pockets of corrupt officers or was used inefficiently. Defence Minister Serdyukov, a former tax official, was appointed to this post by former President Putin especially to counter corruption and obstruction by the military leadership. He faced a lot of opposition from the military leadership against his reform plans, due to the intended deep cuts in the officer corps and in the central staff. Third, Russia was suffering heavily from the international financial crises, to an extent that the financial reserves built up by oil and natural gas revenues were rapidly fading away. Money was possibly more needed to avoid social unrest than to invest into military power. An indication of the financial problems was in March 2009 with the announcement that the defence budget for 2009, 2010 and 2011 would be cut by 8 per cent (Haas 2004a: 75–84; Lowe 2008b; Charap and Kuchins 2008; Zarkhovich 2008; 'Russia/defence' 2009). Fourth, although aiming to reform its military into Western-style expeditionary forces, Russia's security elite continued to consider combat readiness and modernization of nuclear arms as its first priority, which was not consistent with the overall reform plans and could prove to be counter-productive to conventional arms' reforms. Fifth, due to the inefficiency of the MIC and its contracts for arms export – meaning crucial revenues for the upkeep of the MIC – the output capability of the military industries was likely to be insufficient to deliver the requested amount of modern weapons for the RF armed forces. Around December 2008 the reform plans still insisted that by 2020 the figure of modern weapons and equipment would be raised to 80–100 per cent of the total. However, in March 2009, the modernization aim was lowered to 70 per cent advanced weapons in 2020. A variety of political, financial, industrial and conceptual obstacles affected the upgrading of the military, making it doubtful that Russia was capable and willing to carry out the military reforms from top to bottom. Hence, it was uncertain that Moscow was going to acquire fully modernized armed forces, skilled for power projection, to accom-



plish the political-strategic objectives of the foreign security policy of the Kremlin.

### **Comparison of Medvedev's security thinking with that of Putin**

In order to draw conclusions on Medvedev's security thinking, this paragraph compares his security documents of 2008–2009 with corresponding documents and statements of his predecessor of 2000–2008. As such, Medvedev's 2008 Foreign Policy Concept (FPC) and 2009 National Security Strategy (NSS) will be weighed against the 2000 National Security Concept (NSC) and 2000 FPC of Putin's first term as president and against the 2007 Overview of Foreign Policy (OFP) and 2008 Strategy 2020 of his second term in office (see: Table 3.3). The evaluation will be carried out by comparing statements on specific developments. Subsequently, Russia's position on international organizations, individual states and on particular security issues will be described (see: Chapters 2 and 4 for further details of the described developments in international security). Furthermore, conclusions will be drawn on the value of security documents versus policy in practice.

#### *Multilateral relations: international organizations*

The RF security documents between 2000 and 2009 stated a number of international organizations. Some were considered neutral (UN, EU), some friendly (CIS, CSTO, SCO and BRIC) and some as antagonistic and/or biased (NATO, OSCE). The *UN* was mentioned for two aspects, first for its Charter and UNSC organ as the supreme mechanisms of international security, and second in the context of Western actors violating the UN Charter and using military force without sanction of the UNSC (e.g. NATO in Kosovo and the US/UK invasion of Iraq). These two approaches of the UN are found in the security papers of Putin as well as of Medvedev. The *EU* received attention, especially in the 2000 and 2008 FPCs as well as in the 2007 OFP, as one of the key organizations of cooperation. Furthermore, Russia's position as a major European power, which consequently should play an important role on this continent, was also stressed. The fact that the FPCs and the OFP emphasized the EU is not surprising. The MFA, responsible for Russia's foreign policy including the relationship with the EU, drafted all three documents. Other than NATO, the approach towards the EU was described in a neutral or positive way.

The *CIS* has constantly received a priority status in Russian foreign and security policy. Initially integration processes, under Moscow's rule, were a goal. When most CIS states developed a policy more independent from Moscow, the Kremlin concentrated on its military arm, the *CSTO*, as a priority tool to achieve its political-strategic objectives. The first security document that mentioned the *SCO* was the 2003 Defence White Paper (see: Table 1.2). In the non-defence affiliated documents the *SCO* was mentioned as of 2007. The importance of the

Table 3.3 Medvedev's key security documents compared with those of Putin (2000–2009)<sup>1</sup>

<i>National Security Concept January 2000</i>	<i>Foreign Policy Concept June 2000</i>	<i>Overview of Foreign Policy March 2007</i>	<i>Strategy towards 2020 February 2008</i>	<i>Foreign Policy Concept July 2008</i>	<i>National Security Strategy May 2009</i>
<b>Russia in the world community</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dominance in the international community of developed Western states led by the United States. This is especially aimed at applying unilateral solutions, including the use of military force, to key problems in world politics, flouting the fundamental principles of international law</li> <li>• Efforts to weaken Russia's position politically, economically and militarily, as well as in other fields</li> <li>• Attempts to ignore the interests of Russia in solving major problems in international relations</li> <li>• Terrorism poses a threat to world stability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unilateral actions can destabilize the international situation, provoke tensions and the arms race, aggravate interstate contradictions, national and religious strife</li> <li>• The use of force in violation of the UN Charter is unlawful and poses a threat to the stability of the entire system of international relations</li> <li>• Attempts to introduce into international parlance such concepts as 'humanitarian intervention' and 'limited sovereignty' in order to justify unilateral power actions bypassing the UNSC are not acceptable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Russia has regained a balance of power and competitive international position lost after the Cold War</li> <li>• Force as a factor to solve international problems has increased</li> <li>• Focus on disarmament has dropped</li> <li>• Attempts to form a unipolar world</li> <li>• 'Victory in the Cold War' results in unilateral responses</li> <li>• Continuous enlargement with new members is aimed at broadening Western influence</li> <li>• Iraq has demonstrated the myth of a unipolar world</li> <li>• The US withdrawal of the ABM Treaty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under the pretext of liberty and open society the sovereignty of states and complete regions is destroyed</li> <li>• A fierce battle is taking place on energy resources. Many armed conflicts carry the smell of oil and gas</li> <li>• There is a growing interest of the outside world in Russia and Central Asia because of their energy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Russia exerts a substantial influence upon the development of a new architecture of international relations</li> <li>• The reaction to the prospect of loss by the historic Western global monopoly is expressed in the policy of containing Russia</li> <li>• Unilateral action strategy destabilizes the international situation, provokes tensions and arms race, and exacerbates interstate differences</li> <li>• Strategic stability issue cannot anymore be addressed exclusively within the framework of Russia–US relations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RF energy potential provides opportunities to strengthen Moscow's influence in the international arena</li> <li>• Russia is on the way to becoming one of the leading powers in terms of technological progress, standards of living of the population and influence upon world processes</li> <li>• A new European security architecture should be formed, based upon an open system of collective security and a clear legal foundation</li> <li>• International politics will be aimed at acquiring energy resources from the Arctic and Caspian regions and from Central Asia</li> </ul>

## Russia's national interests and priorities

- Realizing Russia's national interests is possible only on the basis of stable economic development. That is why the national interests of Russia in this field are the crucial ones
  - Eliminating the causes and conditions contributing to political and religious extremism, ethno-separatism and their consequences, i.e. social, inter-ethnic and religious conflicts and terrorism
  - Strengthening Russia's position as a great power, as one of the centres of influence in a multipolar world
  - Developing mutually advantageous relations, especially with the member states of the CIS and Russia's traditional partners
  - Preventing military aggression against Russia and its allies
  - Developing relations with the members of the CIS, and developing integration processes within the CIS are in Russia's interest
  - Keep up a deterrence capability in the interest of preventing aggression on whatever scale, including when nuclear arms are used against Russia and its allies
- To achieve firm and prestigious positions in the world community, most fully consistent with the interests of the RF as a great power, as one of the most influential centres of the modern world
  - A priority area in Russia's foreign policy is multilateral and bilateral cooperation with the member states of the CIS
  - A priority task is to strengthen the Union of Belarus and Russia as the highest, at this stage, form of integration of two sovereign states
  - Through the CIS Collective Security Treaty the development of cooperation in the military-political area and in the sphere of security
  - Relations with European states is Russia's traditional foreign policy priority
  - Of key importance are relations with the European Union (EU)
  - The intensity of cooperation with NATO will depend on its compliance with key clauses of the NATO-Russian Founding Act of 1997
  - Respect by Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia of Russian interests, including in the key question of respect for the rights of the Russian-speaking population (*ex rubezhem*)
- An important achievement of recent years is that Russia has reinstated its foreign policy independence
  - Russia as an active global power not only participates in realizing the international agenda but also formulates this agenda
  - Energy diplomacy is gaining weight due to Russia's leading role in it
  - The energy factor is increasing in Russia's foreign policy
  - Relations with the CIS countries are a key priority in RF foreign policy
  - Russia has an interest in having friendly, flourishing, democratic and stable states at its borders
  - Russia does not intend to give up its natural competitive advantages nor to damage its national interests
  - Russia conducts an active policy towards the millions of ethnic Russians living in the near abroad (*ex rubezhem*)
  - Protection of their interests and encouragement to resettle in Russia are priorities of RF foreign policy
  - Russia should expand its current economic cooperation in the BRIC format (Brazil, Russia, India and China) with energy and counterterrorism
- The expenditures for new weapon systems must be in line with the possibilities and not contrary to the priorities of the social-economic development
  - Strengthening of national security demands a new strategy towards 2020 for the build-up of the armed forces
  - Russia has an active interest in global and regional integration processes
  - For the accomplishment of its national tasks Russia strives towards peaceful and positive stance of international relations
- A new Russia, based on a solid foundation of its national interests, has now acquired a fully fledged role in global affairs
  - Strengthening of the international position of Russia
  - RF possesses a real capacity to play a well-deserved role globally
  - Being the biggest European state, Russia stands ready to play a constructive role in Europe
  - Russia will make itself more fully engaged in its dialogue with its traditional partners, the Troika (Russia, India and China) and BRIC
  - The development of friendly relations with China and India forms an important track of Russia's foreign policy in Asia
  - Promote in every possible way the CSTO as a key instrument to maintain stability and ensure security in the CIS
  - Further strengthening of the SCO
  - The OSCE should be a framework of supremacy of collective intergovernmental bodies' prerogatives
  - Create favourable conditions for establishing a Union State of Russia and Belarus
- Russia is to become a global power, maintaining strategic stability and mutually advantageous partnerships in a multipolar world
  - The first priorities for Russia's national security are national defence as well as state and civil security
  - Subsequent priorities are a stable development of the quality of life, economic growth, science, technology, education, health care, culture, environment and strategic stability/equal partnership
  - Maintain parity with the USA on strategic nuclear weapons
  - There is interdependence of a stable development of the nation and its security
  - Social-economic development is a priority on par with traditional areas of defence capability and national security
  - Russia will enhance mutual cooperation in multilateral formats such as G8, G20, CSTO, SCO, Russia-India-China and BRIC

*continued*

Table 3.3 continued

<i>National Security Concept</i> <i>January 2000</i>	<i>Foreign Policy Concept</i> <i>June 2000</i>	<i>Overview of Foreign Policy</i> <i>March 2007</i>	<i>Strategy towards 2020</i> <i>February 2008</i>	<i>Foreign Policy Concept</i> <i>July 2008</i>	<i>National Security Strategy</i> <i>May 2009</i>
<b>Threats to Russia's security</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attempts by separate states and intergovernmental organizations to belittle the role of existing mechanisms for the maintenance of international security, primarily the UN and the OSCE</li> <li>• The danger that the political, economic and military influence of Russia in the world will be reduced</li> <li>• The strengthening of military-political blocs and alliances, above all the expansion of NATO eastwards</li> <li>• The possible presence of foreign military bases and large military contingents in the immediate vicinity of Russian borders</li> <li>• The weakening of the processes of integration in the CIS</li> <li>• The development and escalation of conflicts close to the state border of the Russian Federation and the external borders of the member states of the CIS</li> <li>• International terrorism has unleashed an open campaign to destabilize the situation in Russia</li> <li>• NATO's practice of using military force outside the bloc's zone of responsibility without UNSC sanction, now elevated to the rank of a strategic doctrine, threatens to destabilize the entire global strategic situation</li> <li>• The under-funding of national defence leads to a critically low level of operational and combat training in the armed forces and other troops</li> <li>• Religious extremism and ethno-separatism</li> <li>• Linking of government organs with criminal organizations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing trend towards a unipolar structure of the world with the economic and power domination of the United States</li> <li>• States are being placed on Western institutions and forums of limited composition, and on weakening the role of the UNSC</li> <li>• Attempts to belittle the role of a sovereign state as the fundamental element of international relations generate a threat of arbitrary interference in internal affairs</li> <li>• NATO's present-day political and military guidelines do not coincide with Russian security interests and occasionally directly contradict them</li> <li>• This primarily concerns the provisions of NATO's new strategic concept, which do not exclude the use of force outside NATO's Treaty zone without the sanction of the UNSC</li> <li>• Russia retains its negative attitude towards the expansion of NATO</li> <li>• The protracted conflict in Afghanistan creates a real threat to security of the southern CIS borders and directly affects Russian interests</li> <li>• The growth of separatism, ethnic-national and religious extremism</li> <li>• The growth of international terrorism, transnational organized crime, as well as illegal trafficking in drugs and weapons</li> <li>• The implementation of the plans of USA to create a national missile defence system will inevitably compel the RF to adopt adequate measures for maintaining its national security at a proper level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International terrorism</li> <li>• Extremism</li> <li>• Money laundering</li> <li>• Narcotics</li> <li>• Corruption</li> <li>• Regional conflicts</li> <li>• Independence of Kosovo would cause a serious deterioration of stability in Europe and would serve as a precedent</li> <li>• Georgia intends destroying the existing peacekeeping and negotiating formats complicating the situation around Abkhazia and South Ossetia</li> <li>• On Afghanistan, a failure and subsequent withdrawal of the USA and NATO would confront the Central Asian states and Russia with the Afghan threats of narcotics, terrorism, fundamentalism and destabilization</li> <li>• The USA and other Western states try to use the OSCE as an unilateral instrument for ensuring their foreign and security policy objectives</li> <li>• NATO's refusal to sign the adapted CFE Treaty further enlargement, possibly including Ukraine and Georgia, as well as the deployment of troops in Romania and Bulgaria deteriorate the relations with Russia</li> <li>• The planned US missile defence shield in Eastern Europe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new arms race is unfolding, caused especially by developed states, leaning on their technological superiority</li> <li>• NATO refuses to sign the adapted CFE Treaty, but demands from Russia a one-sided compliance</li> <li>• NATO further enlarges, taking its military infrastructure towards Russia's borders</li> <li>• The USA is establishing new military bases in Romania and Bulgaria and a missile defence shield in Poland and the Czech Republic</li> <li>• Because of the abundance in energy resources Russia is faced with a redivivist policy of deterrence resulting in unfair competition, as well as with actors that try to get hold of Russia's energy reserves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coercive measures with the use of military force in circumvention of the UN Charter and UNSC undermines international law and enlarges conflict space, including the area around Russia</li> <li>• RF opposes unilateral actions in the field of strategic anti-missile defence that are destabilizing international situation</li> <li>• Integration processes, including in the Euro-Atlantic region, are often of a selective and restrictive nature</li> <li>• Russia maintains its negative attitude towards the expansion of NATO, notably to the plans of admitting Ukraine and Georgia to the membership in the alliance, as well as to bringing the NATO military infrastructure closer to the Russian borders on the whole</li> <li>• Attempts to lower the role of a sovereign state as a fundamental element of international relations</li> <li>• Military and political rivalry of regional powers</li> <li>• Terrorist and drug trafficking threats emanating from Afghanistan and prevention of risks of destabilization of the situations in Central Asia and Trans Caucasus</li> <li>• Spread of weapons of mass destruction and means of their delivery</li> <li>• Terrorism, separatism, ethno-national and religious extremism</li> <li>• Drug trafficking</li> <li>• Organized crime</li> <li>• Illegal migration</li> <li>• Infectious diseases</li> <li>• Regional conflicts</li> <li>• Demographic problems</li> <li>• Global poverty, including energy poverty</li> <li>• Climate change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The policy of a number of leading countries, aimed at military supremacy by building up especially nuclear but also conventional strategic arms, unilateral development of anti-ballistic missile defence and militarization of space, which may trigger a new arms race</li> <li>• NATO's expansion near Russia's borders and attempts to grant the military alliance a global role</li> <li>• The present Euro-Atlantic security architecture, which is only oriented at NATO</li> <li>• Non-compliance of international arms control, limitation and reduction agreements</li> <li>• Actions aimed at unbalancing the systems of state and military control, missile warning, outer space monitoring, the functioning of strategic nuclear forces, the nuclear armaments storage facilities, nuclear power plants and atomic and chemical industries and other potentially dangerous facilities</li> <li>• Competition for energy resources in key energy-rich regions creates tension which may escalate into the use of military force near the borders of Russia and its allies</li> <li>• Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction</li> <li>• Terrorism, separatism, radicalism and extremism</li> <li>• Cyber crime, transnational organized crime (narcotics, illegal immigration), corruption</li> <li>• The international financial crisis</li> <li>• Epidemics and pandemics</li> <li>• Lack of fresh water</li> </ul>



## Ensuring Russia's security

- Overcoming the RF's scientific, technical and technological dependence on external sources
- Raising the military potential of the state and maintaining it at a sufficiently high level
- Defending the legal rights and interests of Russian citizens resident abroad (*za rubezhem*)
- All forces and facilities available, including nuclear weapons, will be used if necessary to repel armed aggression, if all other means have been exhausted
- One of the most important strategic objectives of military security is the interaction and cooperation with the member states of the CIS
- The interests of Russia's national security may require a Russian military presence in certain strategically vital regions of the world
- The stationing of limited military contingents (military bases, navy units) in these regions should ensure that Russia is ready to help establish a stable military-strategic balance of forces in the regions, and should enable the state to meet its foreign policy goals
- To protect the rights and interests of Russian citizens and compatriots abroad (*za rubezhem*)
- To promote elimination of the existing and prevent the emergence of potential hotbeds of tension and conflicts in regions adjacent to the RF
- Russia shall collaborate with other states in combating drug trafficking and organized crime
- Partnership with all CIS member states to take into account in a due manner the interests of the RF, including guaranteeing rights of Russian compatriots (*za rubezhem*)
- Russia is prepared to consent with the USA to a further reduction of its nuclear potential and observance of the 1972 Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (ABM) – the cornerstone of strategic stability
- Russia intends to further promote the strengthening of regional stability by participating in the processes of reducing and limiting conventional armed forces
- Multilateral diplomacy is the fundamental method of regulating international relations
- The EU is Russia's principal partner in Europe
- Russia expects two-way politics from European actors, such as the EU, the Council of Europe, the OSCE and NATO
- The relationship with China and the cooperation in the triangle Russia-India-China are vital policy points
- Russia promotes international peace through the UN and regional organizations such as OSCE, CSTO, CIS and SCO
- CSTO and SCO can play a positive role in the fight against narcotics and terror and in promoting stabilization around Afghanistan and in Central Asia as a whole
- Russia repeatedly offers NATO to cooperate with the CSTO around Afghanistan
- NATO and CSTO could jointly guard the Tajik-Afghan border with Russia and Tajikistan, possibly also involving Iran
- The Russia-NATO Council has become an important factor for stability and prediction of the relations with the Alliance
- Russia is back in the international arena as a powerful state, which has to be taken into account and which can stand up for itself
- In the coming years Russia will produce new weapon systems which will qualitatively be at least equal or even better than those of other countries
- Due to the demands of modern technology the strategy for the build-up of the armed forces must be reviewed to acquire an army which can cope with the most sophisticated demands
- Such a modern army requires solving the current problems in prestige, salaries, social security and housing
- RF strengthens strategic partnership with leading producers of energy resources and dialogue with consuming countries and transit countries; assuming that reliability of energy supplies is supported by activities on ensuring stability of demand and secure transit
- To protect rights and legitimate interests of the Russian citizens and compatriots living abroad (*za rubezhem*)
- To consistently create conditions to assist in the voluntary resettlement to the RF of compatriots
- Russia together with CSTO, SCO and others makes consistent efforts to prevent export of terrorism and drugs from Afghanistan
- Regional collective security and cooperation ensuring the unity of the Euro-Atlantic region, in such a way as not to allow its new fragmentation and reproduction of bloc-based approaches which still persist in the European architecture dating from the Cold War
- RF is prepared to negotiate a reduction of strategic offensive weapons to a level sufficient to maintain strategic stability
- The conditions of national security depend in the first place on the country's economic potential
- Energy resources can be applied to support strategic deterrence
- A prominent task in strengthening national defence is modernization and restructuring of the armed forces and of the military industrial complex
- Protection of Russian citizens in the 'near abroad' (*za rubezhem*)
- To become the world's fifth largest economy in terms of GDP
- Maintaining nuclear parity with the USA in reply to its European missile shield and the US nuclear strike doctrine
- A gradual development towards a world without nuclear weapons
- Deployment of military contingents in conflict areas promoting strategic stability and equal strategic partnership

Sources: National Security Concept 2000 (SCRF 2000a); Foreign Policy Concept 2000 (SCRF 2000b); Overview of Foreign Policy 2007 (MID 2007a); Strategy 2020 (Kremlin 2008a); Foreign Policy Concept 2008 (MID 2008); National Security Strategy 2009 (SCRF 2009b)

## Note

- 1 The citations are mostly not literally derived from the different security documents, but are adapted by the author. Since the National Security Concept (NSC) was the principal Russian security document until publication of the National Security Strategy in May 2009, for reasons of unity and clarity the main entries of the documents are offered in the format of the NSC. The grouping of related entries as used here is for the purpose of clarity and does not necessarily correspond with the original documents. This comparison excludes defence papers, since Medvedev had not released such documents until mid-2009

SCO, together with the CSTO, was seen in promoting regional security and stability in Central Asia and especially in fighting terrorism and drugs, in particular in relation to Afghanistan. Cooperation in the *BRIC* format was first mentioned in the 2007 OFP, of Putin's second term, and was continued in Medvedev's papers. The desire was expressed to expand BRIC cooperation in the economic field with common interests in energy and counterterrorism.

*NATO* was consistently regarded as a grouping hostile towards Russia, although the motivations sometimes differed with the existing developments, e.g. from its war in Kosovo without UNSC sanction and its 1999 Strategic Concept (2000 documents) until its refusal of the adapted CFE Treaty and future membership of Georgia and Ukraine (as of the 2007 documents). *NATO* enlargement was constantly seen as a negative policy line (2000–2009). Hence, Russian security thinking under Putin and Medvedev followed a consistent (assertive) course towards *NATO*. The *OSCE* was mentioned in different documents throughout 2000–2008. The 2000 NSC already warned that the objective mechanisms of this organization might be affected. The 2007 OFP was quite outspoken in stating that the USA and other Western states tried to use the *OSCE* as a unilateral instrument for ensuring their foreign and security policy objectives. This disappointment in the functioning of the *OSCE* was probably related to the criticism of this organization on election proceedings and human rights circumstances in Russia. Perhaps as a result of this, the 2009 NSS did not mention the *OSCE* at all.

Three international organizations, the UN, *NATO* and EU, were mentioned frequently and consistently in the security documents of both presidents: the UN because of Moscow's constantly declared priority of international law and its veto power in the UNSC; *NATO* as the continuous adversary; and the EU as the most important cooperation partner on the shared continent. Russia's attitude towards CIS and *OSCE* demonstrated a certain development: within the CIS towards a focus on fewer CIS partners and gradually more specifically on the security realm, as performed in the CSTO. During Putin's first term security papers of 2000, the CIS itself was still the focus of Moscow, whereas his security documents as of 2007 and the subsequent ones of Medvedev concentrated instead on the CSTO. By the time of Putin's second term in office Russia had lost interest in the *OSCE*, after becoming an 'instrument' of Western policy. As with the CIS, Medvedev continued Putin's changed stance on the *OSCE*. SCO and BRIC first appeared in Putin's second term security papers and received even more attention under Medvedev. The aforementioned development in listing of Western and Eastern (security) organizations gives evidence to a change of course of security interest from West (CFE, *OSCE*) to East (CSTO, SCO, BRIC), which, judging from the contents of security papers, took place in Putin's second term as President (see: Chapter 2, 'Russia's approach towards other international actors'). Comparing the listed records of the two successive presidents on international organizations, leads to the conclusion that the security documents of Putin and Medvedev were in line with each other, either by a steady course or by a continued development in positioning.

*Bilateral relations: other states*

Concerning adversary countries the *USA* was listed in all of the security documents. A consistent entry on relations with the *USA* was regarding nuclear weapons, with entries on mutual reductions and on maintaining strategic nuclear parity with the *USA*. Because of conventional weakness, nuclear arms were the only competitive capacity of Russia, but even the status of that capability was doubtful. Other standpoints concerning the *USA* were in Putin's first term on the unilateral and dominating policy of the *US*, in Putin's second term on rejection of deployment of *US* troops in Bulgaria and Romania and, as of Putin's second term and continued by Medvedev, on rejection of the deployment of a missile defence shield in Poland and Czech Republic. *Georgia* and *Ukraine* were mentioned in the MFA documents of Putin's second term (2007 OFP) and of Medvedev (2008 FPC) with regard to their future entrance into NATO. *Georgia* was also listed in the 2007 OFP concerning its tense relationship with the separatist regions Abkhazia and South Ossetia. *Kosovo*, as another adversary region/country, was only brought up in the 2007 OFP, stating that *Kosovo's* independence would cause a serious deterioration of stability in Europe and would serve as a precedent.

In addition to opposing states the security documents also mentioned friendly/supportive countries. In Putin's first term expectations were still high to form a Union State with *Belarus*, as stated in his 2000 FPC. Possibly due to a developing lack of interest of both parties as well as regular disputes between Putin and his Belarusian counterpart Lukashenko, subsequent security papers and those of Medvedev left this desire for a Union State out, with the exception of Medvedev's 2008 FPC. *China* and *India* were not present in Putin's first term security papers, but became listed as of the 2007 OFP and in the subsequent documents of Medvedev. These two states, also mentioned in the format of the Russia–India–China Troika and BRIC cooperation, were considered as traditional partners, whose friendly relations formed an important track of Russia's foreign policy in Asia.

*Afghanistan* already received attention in the 2000 FPC, by stating that its internal conflict created a threat to the security of the southern CIS borders and subsequently directly affecting Russian interests. As of Putin's second term, the deteriorating situation in *Afghanistan* and its consequences for Russian security resulted in more concern from Moscow and consequently in more entries in the security documents on *Afghanistan*. Since 2007 Putin's and Medvedev's security papers have added on *Afghanistan* that Russia together with CSTO and SCO, as well as in cooperation with NATO, makes consistent efforts to prevent export of terrorism and drugs from *Afghanistan*. Hence, Russia recognized that if NATO would fail in *Afghanistan* that subsequently Russia and Central Asia would be confronted with the consequences.

In the global arena the *USA* was the key opposing player to Russia, which explained Moscow's consistent and assertive attention to Washington in all analysed documents. In retrospect the statements on *Georgia* and *Kosovo* carried a

predictive nature. After the independence of Kosovo, in February 2008, Russia took a harder line against Georgia, in particular after NATO's Bucharest summit promising NATO membership to Georgia and Ukraine. Furthermore, as declared in the OFP, Russia regarded 'Kosovo' as precedent and strengthened its ties with Abkhazia and South Ossetia. In August 2008 the tensions around Georgia culminated into the Russian–Georgian armed conflict. Especially the 2007 OFP contained a number of entries from which the West could have expected troubles after Kosovo's independence in combination with the Georgian separatist regions and the prospect of Georgian membership of NATO (see: Chapter 5, 'Russia's political and military build-up prior to the conflict'). Just as in the comparison of international organizations, the enumeration of bilateral relations also bears witness that Moscow's security focus has changed course towards the East. In this case demonstrated by the fact that the importance of Belarus has gradually decreased and that of India but even stronger, China, have emerged as of 2007. Around 2005 Russia and China concluded a strategic partnership on political, military and economic cooperation, which explains the considerable number of references to China in the security documents as of 2007 (see: Chapters 2 and 4 'China'). In spite of the strengthened prominence of Russia's security cooperation with the East (CSTO, SCO, China), Moscow clearly recognized that a role of the West (NATO) in Afghanistan was inevitable, not least for its own security. The records in the security papers offering cooperation between CSTO/SCO and NATO provided a mutual beneficial approach (see: Chapter 6, 'Afghanistan'). Again, as with multilateral relations, the overview of documents of Putin and Medvedev on bilateral relations demonstrates consistency in policy development.

### *Security issues*

In addition to Russia's position on international organizations and individual states the security documents also addressed specific security issues. A number of issues showed continuity. Pertaining to *threats to security*, factors such as weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, extremism, nationalism, separatism, radicalism, transnational organized crime and drugs/narcotics (also in relation to the war in Afghanistan) received recurring records in most of the documents of Putin and Medvedev. Medvedev's documents further enlarged this list of threats with entries on illegal migration, diseases (pandemics, epidemics), the financial crisis, poverty, climate change, lack of fresh water and cyber crime. The enumeration of threats in general as a security factor displayed continuity. Aspects added by Medvedev – illegal migration, diseases, the financial crisis, poverty, climate change, lack of fresh water and cyber crime – were a logical prolongation of the former, resulting from current international thinking on security developments. Another continuing security topic was *Russia's position in the world*. Putin's first term documents complained about (Western) efforts to weaken or ignore Russia and expressed the desire to strengthen Moscow's position as a great power. However, his second term papers mentioned that Russia

had regained a powerful status (great, leading, global, influential power) in the worldwide arena, which was able to influence the international agenda. Medvedev's security documents continued this line of Russia's position as a resurgent (super)power. *Protection (of rights and interests) of Russian minorities/compatriots* in the near abroad (*za rubezhëm*) has also been one of the constant security themes in Russian security thinking since Putin's first term. As of his second term the security papers also included remarks on encouraging Russians abroad to resettle in Russia, as a priority of RF foreign policy. The protection of Russian minorities abroad was a continuous factor in Russian security thinking but gained weight as a result of certain developments. This issue was strengthened because of the decline in population inside Russia, making the authorities eager to encourage Russians abroad to return home. The entrance to NATO (in 2004) of the Baltic states – comprising Russian minorities – also increased the importance of this topic. Furthermore, one of the grounds for Russia to invade Georgia in August 2008 was to protect Russian citizens, in fact South Ossetians to whom Russian passports were issued. This caused alarm with the Baltic states, who regarded themselves threatened by an attack on similar grounds and demanded collective defence back on NATO's agenda (see: Chapter 4 'NATO'). Consequently, the security issue of protecting Russian minorities had consequences for international politics.

Besides consistent security issues in the course of time a number of new topics were addressed. As of Putin's second term, and continued by Medvedev, *energy* (resources, politics, diplomacy, conflicts, regions) was mentioned as a topic in the security documents. Energy became a vital security aspect in Russian security thinking for two reasons. First, energy was regarded as an instrument of power, increasing Russia's international weight. Second, energy could also be a threat aspect, since other actors without energy resources might forcefully try to obtain them from Russia and other energy-rich states. In this respect initially the Caspian and Central Asian regions were mentioned as areas where energy disputes might take place. Medvedev's 2009 NSS added the Arctic to this list of vital energy regions. Putin introduced in his 2008 Strategy 2020 another new security issue, of *restructuring and modernizing the RF armed forces*. The 2000 NSC had already mentioned that the under-funding of national defence led to a critically low level of operational and combat training of the military. Realistically, Putin's 2008 Strategy 2020 as well as Medvedev's successive documents on strengthening the military apparatus stated the proviso that this should not be achieved at the expense of the social-economic development. The allocation of means for military reforms was only introduced in Putin's second term because earlier the economic situation did not allow it. Under Medvedev the many shortcomings in Russia's military campaign against Georgia in August 2008 resulted in more and stronger entries on military reforms in the security documents (see: Chapters 1 and 3, 'Structure of foreign security policy'/'Military thought and status of the Russian armed forces'). Medvedev too introduced a new security issue. In his documents he included the proposal for a *new Euro-Atlantic (security) architecture*. This new architecture was to replace the current one –

primarily existing of NATO, EU, CFE and OSCE – which, according to Medvedev, still contained vestiges of the Cold War. Medvedev's proposed new European security architecture was not as innovative as it looked. In fact it supplemented Putin's policy. Putin's security papers reflected disappointment and rejection of Western security policy, as performed by the USA, NATO and the OSCE. In addition to increasing security cooperation with the East, restructuring the existing 'unkind' European security architecture into a format of non-bloc related cooperation was a next natural step to take. Furthermore, it would serve the traditional Russian policy objective of creating a split between Europe and the USA (see: Chapter 4, 'A new European security architecture'). As such, Medvedev's concept of a new European security architecture can be considered as a continuation of Putin's security thinking.

Most of the specific security issues in the 2000–2009 security documents of Putin and Medvedev were intertwined. For instance, Russia's international status, its energy wealth and modernization of its armed forces were related. It was around 2003 with the boost in international prices of oil and gas when energy resources became the major foundation of Moscow's economic strength as well as an instrument of leverage, which was demonstrated in cutting off gas from Ukraine, Georgia and other states in later years. Thanks to the risen value of its energy resources, Russia could claim the status of a resurgent superpower. The vital importance of its energy resources convinced Russia that its army should be strengthened, not only as a capacity for possible power projection but also for protection of its energy assets. However, Russia's energy power play became disputed by the West, which was eager to create alternative energy routes and sources to diminish its dependence on Russia. Russia's resistance to this policy was stated in the 2007–2008 documents in entries on 'the battle on energy resources' (see: Chapter 2, 'Applying energy as an instrument of power'). The importance of energy in Russian security thinking was also demonstrated by adopting a dedicated strategy for the Arctic region in September 2008. The Arctic Strategy, formally called 'Foundations of the Russian Federation national policy in the Arctic until 2020 and beyond', gave clearly evidence to this combination of Moscow's international power status, energy as foundation of its economic strength and a proposed military build-up in the Arctic to fulfil Moscow's strategic objectives in this region (see: Chapter 4, 'Arctic Strategy').

Overall, the analysis of particular security issues in the major documents also provides a picture of continuity of security policy during the presidencies of Putin and Medvedev. The topics which were introduced later – energy, military reforms and a new European security architecture – were also discernible as part of a prolonged line of course.

### *Conclusions: security theory versus practice*

Before elaborating on the relationship between security documents (thinking) and policy practice (implementation) some attention must be given to the validity of research of formal security documents. Such a method of research, of texts



that might be biased, for instance because of propagandist objectives, has certain risks. The value attached by Russian society to these official documents as well as the influence of these documents upon security policy can be questioned. Some of the entries of the documents can only be qualified as 'wishful thinking'. For example, the statements on the alleged regained status of a great power, which are in doubt when the actual internal and external security status of Russia is taken into account (see: Chapter 6, 'Current security status of Russia: a SWOT analysis'). Furthermore, in general, Russian citizens and the military – other than the military leadership – have a lack of interest in security documents, because they are too far away from their daily lives. However, Russian independent media do discuss security documents and are aware of their possible propagandist nature, which they include in their assessments. Nevertheless, between the sometimes pompous entries the formal documents do unfold the development of views of the military–political leadership, e.g. on Russia's increased focus to the East (CSTO, SCO, China, India) for security cooperation and the rise of new security issues, such as on energy and on a new European security architecture. Moreover, the policy intentions that are expressed should not be ignored. An example of this was the outspoken statement on the possible consequences of independence of Kosovo, as described in the 2007 OFP. Was the West aware of this warning in spring/summer 2008, when developments after Kosovo's independence ended in the Georgian conflict?

Concerning the influence of security documents on implementation of security policy, the following can be said. Although the contents might be subjective, these documents remain the fundament for and thread of RF security policy. A tradition that the RF inherited from the USSR is its legalistic approach. The state has a strong desire to record or base its policies in law. This also applies to security policy. The major security documents provide a detailed description of issues, such as destabilizing factors, national interests, threats and measures for guaranteeing national security. The analytical method of comparing texts of security papers can contribute in establishing an accurate review of present and future directions of Russian security policy. For example, a major feature in the textual comparison is an intensification of anti-Western sentiments as a result of disappointment and/or rejection of Western security policy. The West was continuously deemed as a threat, often as a consequence of security policy initiatives undesirable to the Kremlin, but probably also related to the traditional Russian fear of the alien. Specific Western action – such as NATO enlargement and the US missile shield – caused an increase of anti-Western entries in the security papers. Another featuring tendency in the documents was that due to the risen economic strength as of 2007 the security documents revealed a Russia that no longer felt neglected but had resumed its leading position in the world. This conviction was supported by tough deeds. Both tendencies in the security documents – an enhanced anti-Western stance and security policy based upon a (perceived) position of a resurgent great power status – resulted in a more assertive Russian stance in the international system. This became visible in the implementation of policy. For instance in the form of anti-Western rhetoric, of which



President Putin's famous speech at the Munich Security Conference of February 2007 was a strong exponent (Kremlin 2007). Russian policy actions in this respect were: a change of course on security cooperation towards the East; application of the so-called 'energy weapon', i.e. cutting off energy transports to (pro-)Western countries; suspension of the CFE Treaty; and in reply to the USA missile defence shield, threats to aim nuclear missiles at Poland, the Czech Republic and Ukraine, and to deploy missile systems in the Russian exclave Kaliningrad; as well as the tenfold multiplication of the Russian defence budget since Vladimir Putin became President in 2000 augmented by Medvedev with ambitious rearmament programmes ('Record' 2008; Felgenhauer 2008d). In addition to policy concepts and rhetoric, the Kremlin – under Putin as well as under Medvedev – has also increased its manifestations of military power as part of its developed assertive line of course and evidence of its status as great power. One method of show-of-force was conducting large-scale domestic military drills; for example in September 2006 the exercise 'Yuzhnyy shchit-2006', of 20,000 troops and in September/October 2008 'Stabilnost-2008' involving 40,000 troops. The latter was allegedly Russia's largest combined arms live fire drill in 20 years, in which the use of nuclear arms was also tested (Plugatarev 2006d; Dyomkin 2008; Felgenhauer 2008e). In addition to domestic exercises Russia also conducted military drills with its allies, for instance with India in October 2005 and the 'Peace Mission' manoeuvres with China in 2005 and 2007, under the auspices of the SCO ('Russia and India plan' 2005; Russia, India' 2005). Other drills with allies were conducted within the format of the CSTO, for instance from September to November 2008, with joint military exercises respectively in Russia, 'Center-2008', and in Kazakhstan the drills 'Aldaspan-2008' and 'Shield-2008' (Zhussip 2008). Another way of demonstrating military power was Putin's order of August 2007 to resume flights of strategic (nuclear) bombers, not only as a test of the borders of NATO and other Western countries, but also to visit befriended states, such as Venezuela ('Russia restores' 2007; Litovkin 2007f). Moreover, in 2007 and 2008 for the first time since the demise of the USSR the Russian navy returned with maritime groupings to the Atlantic Ocean, the Mediterranean Sea, the Middle East (Syria), North Africa (Somalia), as well as to the Caribbean region (Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela), the backyard of the USA. This was allegedly Moscow's retort to the support of the US navy to Georgia after the August 2008 conflict, in Russia's self-declared sphere of influence (Halpin 2008a; Felgenhauer 2008e; 'Russian navy' 2008). And on 9 May 2008, two days after Medvedev's inauguration as President, a military parade of 8,000 troops, vehicles and aircraft was held on Moscow's Red Square for Victory Day, in which the emphasis was laid on nuclear weapons. Such a parade, a display of military hardware, was last performed in 1990 ('Moscow's Red' 2008). However, for the time being, the height of demonstrating military power came in August 2008 with the use of military force against Georgia.

Comparative research of Russian security thinking on multilateral and bilateral relations as well as on specific security issues evidently demonstrates a link

between theory and implementation of policy. Hence, given the policy tendencies in the security documents and the corresponding action in the practice of policy, it seems valid and valuable to study texts of security documents to acquire insight in policy development. Of course opinions might differ in considering whether the adjustments in policy were caused by changed circumstances or by the revised documents.

## **4 Implementation of Medvedev's foreign security policy**

After his inauguration in May 2008 as Russia's new President, Dmitry Medvedev was supposed to take the lead in conducting foreign and security policy, the prerogative of the Head of State. However, Vladimir Putin, now as Premier, continued to play an important role in these areas of policy. Soon after his installation Medvedev was faced with an armed conflict with Georgia. The Georgia conflict would have a great impact in Moscow's position towards external security issues and its relationship with friends and foes. Other leading security topics – such as the CFE Treaty, nuclear deterrence and the US missile defence shield – were continued by Medvedev, usually in line with the course of action followed by his predecessor. In addition to continuing security issues started by Putin, the successive President developed his own other topics, in particular a plea for a new European security architecture and an Arctic strategy as elements of his energy security policy.

### **Russia's approach towards other international actors: friends**

In his Foreign Policy Concept (FPC) of 12 July 2008, President Dmitry Medvedev as one of the most striking policy directions seemed to indicate that the Kremlin was replacing security cooperation with the West into one with the East (Kremlin 2008d). Explicitly, this document stated cooperation of Russia with Eastern organizations, such as the Eurasian Economic Community, the CSTO, the SCO and BRIC – the four rising powers Brazil, Russia, India and China – which intended to apply their growing economic power into the political realm. With the exception of BRIC these organizations usually involved a key role for Russia and included CIS member states, depending on Moscow for their security, as minor actors. In these cooperation frameworks, favoured by Russia, priority towards China and India was a vital feature. China just like Russia is a leading member state of the SCO, and India has an observer status with this organization. In BRIC the 'troika' Russia–China–India emerges once again, with Brazil as the fourth cooperation partner. Furthermore, the FPC elaborated on the trilateral cooperation between Russia, China and India. This dialogue has reached further than only political consultation. For example, Russia is an

important supplier of energy and arms to these two states. India and China have taken two-thirds of the arms sales of Russia's defence industry at their expense. Moreover, the three countries have recognized as a common threat extremism, separatism and terrorism: for Russia this referred to the Caucasus, for China to the Xinjiang province and for India to the Kashmir mountains. The oriental troika of Russia, China and India has in theory an impressive potential of nuclear weapons, the largest armies in the world, Russia's energy resources, the powerful economies of India and China and one-third of the world's population. Considering these facts, does Russia's intensifying outlook into that direction have to cause fear for the East? Not necessarily, because besides being partners in cooperation Russia, China and India have regularly also acted as each other's opponents. For instance, Russia has accused China of stealing its weapon technology and was disgruntled by China's energy cooperation with Kazakhstan and by that of India with the United States. Additionally, India and China as rising economic giants are each other's competitors in consuming markets and energy sources. Russia, China and India cooperate, but first of all adhere to their national interests. For this reason it is improbable that the oriental troika will be a threat to the West. Moreover, analysing Russia's prioritizing of the East, it is clear that this has concerned member states of the CIS in particular. Often former Soviet republics were still to a large extent economically and for their security dependent on the legal successor of the USSR, Russia. Also, in recent years Moscow has become a powerful player in the international arena and demanded not only to be part of discussions on international security but also to influence the global agenda in this field. The Kremlin could best achieve this endeavour by starting from its 'backyard', the former Soviet area. However, Russia's allies in the East have not always behaved as its desired 'satellites'.

### ***SCO and CSTO***

In 2008 Medvedev's first annual summit of the SCO, held on 28 August in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, was dominated by the Russian–Georgian conflict, which had taken place earlier that month. The final declaration of the summit meeting only expressed careful support for Russia's role in this conflict:

The member states of the SCO welcome the approval on 12 August 2008 in Moscow of the six principles of settling the conflict in South Ossetia, and support the active role of Russia in promoting peace and cooperation in the region.

(SCO 2008)

But Russia's recognition of the independence of the regions Abkhazia and South Ossetia did not receive any support from the other SCO member states. Moreover, the backing of the SCO for Russia was considerably less than Medvedev had counted on at the start of the summit, when he stated:

We are grateful for your understanding and your objective assessment of Russia's peacemaking efforts. We are confident that the position of the member states of the SCO will receive appropriate international support. And I hope that this will send an important signal to those who are trying to argue that black is white and that the most blatant aggression is justified. (Kremlin 2008f)

The formal summit statement, in which the other SCO member states expressed only minor support towards Russia, without following Moscow's example of recognizing the Georgian separatist regions, was to be expected. Central Asian member states were dependent for their security on Russia and therefore gave support to Moscow. In addition to this, the countries of the SCO have themselves to cope with secessionist movements and for this reason did not recognize the independence of the two regions, out of fear for growing separatism within their own borders. This applied certainly also to China, because of Tibet and the Xinjiang province. With respect to NATO, President Dmitry Medvedev stated at the summit that the SCO was not a military bloc and that it therefore was not an opponent of the transatlantic alliance ('Medvedev tells' 2008). The final declaration of this SCO summit made no report of NATO. However, this official statement did mention that a confrontational mentality, bloc politics and unipolar policy should disappear. Although not explicitly stated, such wording at Russian-led meetings usually referred to Western security policy. Additionally, objections against the development of a global anti-missile shield were included in the declaration, but without referring to the USA. All in all the tone of the final declaration of the 2008 Dushanbe SCO summit was slightly critical in the direction of Western security policy, probably as a result of the Russian–Georgian conflict. The annual summit of the CSTO, held on 5 September 2008 in Moscow, provided a similar approach by – what are supposed to be – Russia's best allies. Again, the other member states refused to follow Moscow's example of recognizing the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia ('Joint declaration' 2008; Kremlin 2008g; Marat 2008). Interestingly, the phrasing used to support Russia's role in its armed conflict with Georgia matched that of the SCO summit (CSTO 2008). Since Putin's arrival as RF President, SCO and CSTO have been used by the Kremlin as a vehicle for its ambitions to return to the international arena as a superpower. Nevertheless, in the SCO Russia's leading role was regularly contested by China, demanding the same status. Opposition against recognition of separatist regions – considered by Beijing as a primary threat to its national security – was a logical development. More interesting was the development that the same four Central Asian member states – Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan – in the CSTO replacing China for Belarus and Armenia, once more disagreed with Moscow on the recognition of the Georgian separatist regions.

In 2009 the CSTO Moscow summit of 14 June repeated the unwillingness of some of the CSTO partners to adhere to Russia's wishes. The Belarusian President Lukashenko at the last moment cancelled his participation in the meeting,

responding to Moscow's restrictive commercial measures against Belarus and abusive practices in the energy sector. And Uzbek President Karimov signed the summit's documents with reservations attached, limiting Uzbekistan's participation in future CSTO activities. In this way both Belarus and Uzbekistan effectively blocked Moscow-inspired plans for reorganizing and reinforcing the CSTO collective forces, which were intended to grow from the current 7,000 military (ten battalions) to include up to 20,000 troops (Socor 2009a, b). The lack of support for Moscow's recognition of the separatist regions at the 2008 CSTO summit as well as the resistance of Belarus and Uzbekistan at the 2009 summit demonstrated that CSTO member states, although some of them to a large extent depending on Russia for their security, and recognizing Moscow's status of *primus inter pares*, did not automatically adhere to the wishes of the Kremlin and thus affected its unilateral plans for the CSTO as one of the key instruments of Russia's external security policy. After the CSTO summit in Moscow most of the participants travelled on to Yekaterinburg where the annual SCO summit was held from 15–16 June (SCO 2009b). Remarkable developments at this summit were, first of all, the approval of 'SCO Regulations on Political Diplomatic Measures and Mechanisms of Response to Events Jeopardising Regional Peace, Security and Stability'. These mechanisms, pending since the 2006 SCO summit, meant a step further towards an integrated military–political infrastructure. Furthermore, Sri Lanka and Belarus were granted the status of dialogue partners. Apparently to avoid disputes on member and observerships – at the summit, observer Pakistan as in 2001 in vain expressed its desire to become a member – this third category of participants was created ('Russia/Afghanistan' 2009). Sri Lanka made sense as a neighbour of observer India. Belarus' access to the SCO possibly indicated a deepening of the cooperation with the CSTO – as agreed in an MoU of October 2007 – to which Russia and the Central Asian states also belonged (see: Chapter 2, 'Shanghai Cooperation Organization'). However, this did not coincide with Belarus' defiant absence at the preceding CSTO summit. In spite of the presence of NATO and the EU at the SCO Afghanistan conference of 27 March 2009 in Moscow, the reference to this conference in the SCO summit declaration did not mention these Western organizations as actors involved in Afghanistan. Consequently, the SCO was not yet ready to engage NATO and EU as cooperation partners. A final interesting aspect was that this SCO summit was combined with a meeting of BRIC. This corresponded with the increased attention that Medvedev had given to BRIC in his 2008 FPC and 2009 NSS security documents (see also: Table 3.3). Whereas the SCO summit refrained from rapprochement between SCO and NATO, a month later NATO created an opening. NATO's Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council Security Forum in Astana, Kazakhstan, from 24–25 July, was also attended by Bolat Nurgaliev, Secretary-General of the SCO. Although this seemed to be a small step forward in closer ties between the two organizations, NATO's Secretary-General, De Hoop Scheffer, denied that the alliance wanted to establish formal relations with the SCO ('NATO/Asia' 2009).



Map 4.1 Shanghai Cooperation Organization (source: Bailes *et al.* 2007).



## ***China***

### *Political and economic cooperation*

Dmitry Medvedev has given a high priority to maintaining the close ties with China as established by Vladimir Putin (see: Chapter 2, 'China'). Already at the end of May 2008, soon after his presidential inauguration, Medvedev made his first visit to Beijing. A joint statement of the Russian President with his Chinese counterpart Hu Jintao included a number of like-minded views of international politics, e.g. rejection of the US missile defence system. In addition to this, the parties signed deals on nuclear energy, aerospace and nanotechnology (Blagov 2008a). In July the Russian and Chinese foreign ministers signed a border agreement, which settled the demarcation of the 4,300-kilometre border. However, Chinese media made clear that the agreement was seen as a territorial handover by Moscow (Blagov 2008b). Conversely, in August 2008 the usual Sino-Russian friendly relationship and conformity on international security was disturbed when China did not approve of Russia's recognition of the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia after the Georgian conflict, considering its own separatist problems in Tibet and Xinjiang. China even expressed its concern about the development in the Georgian separatist regions, thus indirectly criticizing Moscow (Wagstyl 2008b). For Moscow, a continuing development of unease was the decline of the Russian but rise of the Chinese population in Russia's far east. In the Birobidzhan region, bordering China, regional Russian authorities allegedly used federal budget transfers to finance Chinese businesses. Furthermore, Chinese farmers in Birobidzhan, subsidized by the regional authorities, were selling their produce to China. Birobidzhan was an example of the 80 per cent of the foreign trade of the Far East region being oriented not to Russia but to China, Japan and South Korea (Zarakhovich 2009). Hence, because of continued demographic (influx of Chinese immigrants) and economic developments Moscow was gradually losing its grip on its far east.

### *Energy*

Although opinions on foreign policy were often concurrent, division was visible in the field of energy. In 2008 Russian oil exports to China were going down because China was reluctant to accept Moscow's prices. The differences on export volumes and prices of oil also prevented the intended construction of an oil pipeline from Eastern Siberia to China, as well as of the Altai gas pipeline (Blagov 2008a) (see Map 2.1). In October 2008, after long negotiations, Russia and China finally agreed upon the oil pipeline to China, to be operational in 2011, whereas the gas pipeline project was still suspended due to disagreements over gas prices (Blagov 2008b, 2009). In April 2009 both parties finalized a deal under which Russia would supply China with oil for 20 years (Blagov 2009).

*Military cooperation: arms sales*

Since 2007 reports have been circulating that China was copying Russian arms technology for its own exports. In spring 2008 information was released that in 2007 Russian arms export to China had dropped by two-thirds because the size of Beijing's military industry was approaching that of Moscow's ('Is China' 2008). Until then Beijing had taken care of some 45 per cent of Moscow's arms export (see: Chapter 2, 'China'). Another reason for the reduction in arms sales was that China sought more sophisticated technology than Russia was willing to offer. As to copying, once China had mastered the technology of Russia's Su-27SK Flanker fighter, it produced its own version, the J-11B, to sell them to third countries, and subsequently ended the licence contract with Moscow. Beijing even exported the J-11B to Pakistan without a permit from the Russian aircraft manufacturer Sukhoi (Petrov 2008). China was eager to do the same with the Su-33 Flanker-D carrier-based fighter, but the Russians were now aware of this copying attempt ('Kitay sozdaët' 2009). Furthermore, although hardly ever outspoken, Russian officials were concerned that with China's growing economic, political and military power, one day Beijing might use Russian weapons against Moscow.

*Assessment*

In the coming years of Medvedev's presidency on first sight, listening to Russian and Chinese statements, the ties between the two states are likely to be further strengthened. Not only in the field of security but also in areas such as military cooperation, energy, (arms) trade and foreign policy, these two states are allegedly seeking a closer relationship. Russia has more than once stated that closer relations with China is a geopolitical objective in order to strengthen Russia's global position ('Presidential envoy' 2005). Nonetheless, this close and strategic relationship with China could very well turn out to be for the shorter term, as a result of increasing conflicting interests. For instance, China is 'using' Russia for its military technology and energy resources. When China has reached its current striving for independence in military technology and has created alternative ways of gaining energy – for instance through Kazakhstan – China may well 'dump' Russia. Moreover, China will continue to use its neighbours, such as Russia, the Central Asian states and other partners within the SCO, to strengthen its global position. If so required, China will not hesitate to use its power against one of its (former) partners, as is demonstrated by China's efforts to divert energy routes away from Russia. Russia seems to be aware that China's growing economic and military importance could develop into a threat. An indication of Russia's concern regarding China's build-up is that in its far east – after the first one was set up in Russia's primary area of insecurity, the North Caucasus – Russia allegedly is planning a second joint military grouping of defence forces and internal and security troops (Mukhin 2005). Since – in contrast with the area of Chechnya and Dagestan – in Russia's far east there is no threat of Islamic

extremism, the formation of a joint military command could only be related to a potential threat from China. Another indication that Russo-Chinese relations might deteriorate is the fact that China refrained from supporting Russia in its August 2008 war against Georgia. Similarly, China has prevented the SCO from convincingly supporting Russia in this matter (Wagstyl 2008a; 'Asia sides' 2008).

### ***Outlook on Eastern cooperation***

Over the next years, the West will probably have to cope with increasing ties between Russia and China and subsequent policies contrary to Western activities in the Far East and the Pacific. To a certain extent the West itself is to blame for this rapprochement between Russia to China. All current Russian major security documents clearly demonstrate disappointment in the West for leaving Russia out of Western security policy. A peak of this mistrust was NATO's war on Kosovo in 1999. Although Russian-Western relations since then have improved, the feelings of mistrust and disregard have remained present in parts of Russia's security elite and consequently have led to closer ties with China. However, a security threat to the West of a consolidated Sino-Russian security coalition does not seem probable, due to the aforementioned differences between the two parties. When China does not need Russia any more for energy and military hardware, and perhaps also fed by Moscow's fear for a powerful China, the so far mostly hidden fear of China could cause the Kremlin to draw back from China and to seek an intensification of political and economic ties with the West: even if this abandonment from China would mean that Russia has to accept Western influence in the backyard of the former Soviet Union. As to the SCO, this grouping contains too many diverging interests, which will prevent it from becoming a dominating economic and/or military alliance. It is not unlikely that the SCO will fall apart as a result of internal differences or a lack of a common course/threat. Therefore, in the longer run the SCO, like Russia, is not expected to form a bloc with China threatening Western interests. Concerning the CSTO, in recent years the frequent independent line of member states, demonstrated by rejecting Russian security initiatives, has proven that the military CIS alignment of the CSTO can no longer be considered as an automatic instrument of Moscow.

### **Russia's approach towards other international actors: foes**

No significant developments have taken place in the GUAM grouping after the inauguration of Dmitry Medvedev as President. Therefore, this part of the chapter will only describe the major events of the relations of Russia with NATO and the EU under Medvedev's leadership.

**NATO**

The 'love and hatred' relationship between Russia and the North-Atlantic alliance – of cooperation versus disputes – as depicted under Putin's rule, was continued under Medvedev. For instance, when in July 2008 Henry Kissinger made a plea to the US administration to give Russia some space in order to foster the opportunity for strategic cooperation with Russia on issues such as nuclear disarmament, Iran and the former Soviet area, the response from Moscow was contrary to appeasing. In his reply, Russia's ambassador to NATO, Dmitry Rogozin, stressed contradictions between the two parties above cooperation. In particular he complained about NATO's criticism of Russian elections, the promise of NATO membership to Ukraine and Georgia, the hostile attitude of eastern NATO members Poland and the Baltic states to Russia, and the intended US missile defence system in Europe (Kissinger and Rogozin 2008). The Georgian conflict of August 2008 caused a grave deterioration of NATO–Russia relations during Medvedev's presidency, but this was not the only disturbance; more distressing events were to follow.

*Consequences of the Russo-Georgian conflict*

The relationship between Russia and NATO severely worsened as a result of Russia's invasion of Georgia in August 2008. NATO decided to suspend consultations in the NATO–Russia Council (NRC) until Russia complied with the EU–Russian ceasefire agreement, including the withdrawal of Russian armed forces to their positions prior to the conflict (NATO 2008a). In response to this, Russian MFA Lavrov decided to stop military cooperation with the alliance, whilst Medvedev even threatened to cut ties with NATO completely. In detail, Moscow suspended all peacekeeping operations and exercises with NATO and its participation in NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme. However, cooperation with NATO on Afghanistan continued ('NATO–Russia links "should remain"' 2008; 'Medvedev says' 2008; 'Russia freezes' 2008). Russia's invasion of Georgia alarmed alliance members of the former Soviet sphere of influence. Poland, the Czech Republic and the Baltic states considered Moscow's military action as a threat. They demanded that the alliance should again look seriously into its resources for collective defence, as derived from Article 5 of the NATO Treaty, comprising military assistance upon an attack. These countries were now in doubt whether the alliance would live up to its commitments of collective defence in case of an attack on individual members ('NATO/ London' 2008; Busse 2008).

*Ups and downs prolonged*

Already in September 2008, NATO members with close ties with Russia, such as France and Germany, instigated a gradual return to normal relations with Moscow. Moreover, in the format of the Euro-Atlantic Partner Council, talks

with Russia had not been suspended. At an informal meeting in September, NATO MOD ministers expressed their willingness to continue cooperation with Russia on subjects such as counterterrorism, Afghanistan, CFE Treaty and nuclear weapons ('NATO/Georgia' 2008; 'NATO/London' 2008). However, this careful recovery of relations with Moscow was soon again disturbed, when NATO expressed grave concern after Medvedev in his parliamentary speech of 5 November 2008 threatened to deploy missiles in Kaliningrad to counter the US missile defence shield (Lobjakas 2008; see also: paragraph 'Nuclear deterrence'). In December 2008, NATO's foreign ministers agreed to start informal sessions in the NRC format, whilst maintaining that the alliance did not accept Russia's takeover of Abkhazia and South Ossetia nor Medvedev's threat to install missiles in Kaliningrad (Blitz 2008). On 5 March 2009, NATO's foreign ministers decided to resume the formal dialogue with Russia in the NRC, even though Moscow had not complied with the 12 August 2008 armistice plan including pulling out its forces. The reason of the decision seemed to be the feeling in the alliance that NATO needed Russia to carry on with cooperation in common interests, such as Afghanistan, counterterrorism, drugs trafficking, non-proliferation, arms control and the new threat of piracy ('NATO/Russia' 2009a). On 4 April 2009, at the Strasbourg/Kehl summit, NATO's declaration reiterated its dual position towards Moscow, of on the one hand demanding that Russia meet its commitment of forces withdrawal from the Georgian separatist regions, and of condemning Moscow's recognition of the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. On the other hand, by emphasizing continued cooperation in the abovementioned areas, as well as by the proposal of linking US, NATO and Russia missile defence systems, and by once more offering parallel actions aimed at resuming the CFE mechanism (NATO 2009b). The same month the next dispute developed. This time on a NATO PfP exercise, conducted in Georgia from 6 May until 1 June, planned long before the August 2008 Russo-Georgian conflict, with NATO's offer to send Russian observers to Tbilisi. Medvedev condemned the drills and cancelled Moscow's participation at a NRC meeting at Chiefs of Defence level of 7 May as well as the first NRC session resumed at MFA level with Sergei Lavrov of 18–19 May, which was postponed until 27 June ('Russia/NATO' 2009; 'NATO/Russia' 2009b). Subsequently, on 30 April Russia signed agreements with Abkhazia and South Ossetia on the joint protection of borders with Georgia, which led NATO to accuse Russia of violating the Russian–Georgian ceasefire. Around the same time NATO expelled two diplomats from the RF mission with NATO accused of spying. On 27 June 2009, nearly a year after the breakdown of the NRC resulting from the Georgian conflict, Sergei Lavrov attended a NRC meeting at MFA level at Corfu at which parties decided that military cooperation between NATO and Russia would be restarted. Cooperation was also agreed on the war in Afghanistan, drug trafficking, Somali piracy, terrorism and nuclear proliferation. However, both parties acknowledged that they continued to disagree on the situation of Georgia and the separatist regions ('EU/NATO/Russia' 2009; Coalson 2009; Brunnstrom and Melander 2009).

*Assessment*

The August 2008 Russo-Georgian conflict brought about a serious deterioration of the NATO–Russia relationship. Although (voices within) NATO already in September 2008 started thinking about normalization of the relations, it took until June 2009 before this point was reached. In the meantime disputes continued to take place, which ranged from missile threats and spy scandals to exercises. Just as under Putin, the relationship between Russia and NATO under Medvedev was also characterized by ups and downs, by cooperation and rows. However, in spite of severe differences cooperation was not completely cut. Furthermore, both parties came to realize that it was better to concentrate on projects of mutual interest – such as the war in Afghanistan – instead of aiming for broad programmes of structural cooperation.

*EU*

On 26 May 2008, the EU decided to start talks with Russia on a new partnership agreement. The decision to do so had been delayed for some 18 months, with objections from Lithuania, resulting from grievances over Russian energy supplies, and from Poland, due to Russia's embargo on Polish meat ('EU to seek' 2008). The existing EU–Russia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) was signed in 1997. This PCA expired in 2007 but could be renewed at 12-month intervals. As a result of Russia's military action in Georgia, on 1 September the EU decided to postpone negotiations with Moscow on a new PCA, until Russia withdrew its forces from the separatist regions, as agreed in the six-point armistice plan. Still, the regular biannual EU–Russia summit of 14 November remained on the agenda (Castle 2008b). By mid-October the EU had clearly left the united stance of 1 September, condemning Russia for its attack on Georgia. Now, on the resumption of talks with Russia, the EU was divided into two camps, on the one hand that of France, Germany, Italy and Spain, eager to normalize relations with Moscow, and on the other hand that of the Baltic states, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Poland, Sweden and the UK, who considered this step too early, since Russia did not comply with the agreed troop withdrawal from the Georgian separatist regions. Due to the lack of unity the decision on resumption of EU–Russia talks was postponed until the EU–Russia summit in Nice of 14 November 2008 (Barber 2008). In spite of this postponement, on 28 October the French EU Presidency and EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, after discussions with RF MFA Lavrov decided that around the Nice summit EU–Russia talks would be resumed. This decision violated the EU-rule of consensus-based policy. On 10 November 2008, after a meeting of the EU ministers of foreign affairs, the European Commission announced the resumption of negotiations with Russia. Only Lithuania formally dissented from this decision, which again raised doubts about the formally consensus-based EU foreign policy (Socor 2008g; Castle 2008c). In spite of the willingness to talk to each other again, the relationship



between Russia and the EU remained tense. On 30 April 2009 the Czech EU Presidency expressed its concern on agreements between Russia and Abkhazia and South Ossetia on joint border protection, being contrary to the six-point agreement of 12 August 2008 ('EU/NATO/Russia' 2009). Similarly, the biannual EU–Russia summit on 22 May 2009 in Khabarovsk also demonstrated the depth of disagreement between both parties, ranging from security, to energy and trade. The tensions were highest when it came to the two sides' influence in the former Soviet Union, with Moscow condemning the EU's Eastern partnership, agreed earlier that month (Lobjakas 2009a). Due to the fundamental differences between the EU and Russia, as well as among EU member states on what course to take towards Moscow, a new PCA was still to last considerable time and would probably be of a meagre content.

### *Eastern Partnership*

Prior to the Eastern Partnership the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) fulfilled the task of providing a cooperation platform with – among others – Eastern European partners of the EU. The ENP was developed in 2004, with the objective of avoiding the emergence of new dividing lines between the enlarged EU and its neighbours and instead of strengthening the prosperity, stability and security of all concerned (European Commission 2009d).<sup>1</sup> Successive EU enlargements brought East European countries closer to the EU and their security, stability and prosperity increasingly impact on the EU's. Furthermore, the Russo-Ukrainian gas disputes of 2006 and 2009 as well as the Russo-Georgian conflict of August 2008 proved how the EU's security begins outside its borders. Therefore, the European Commission put forward concrete ideas for enhancing its relationship with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Belarus (the latter depending on the development of its relations with the EU), by creating a new 'Eastern Partnership' (EaP), reinforcing the ENP (European Commission 2009c). The EaP was proposed by the European Commission in December 2008 and endorsed by the European Council in March 2009. The first EaP summit was held in Prague on 7 May 2009 at which the EU and the six partners launched this new framework of reinforced bilateral and multilateral cooperation. Russia was not pleased with this alleged intrusion in its area of interest. In April 2009 Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov had characterized the EaP as a ploy of the EU to acquire a sphere of influence (Lobjakas 2009b).

### *Assessment*

EU–Russia cooperation in external security is complicated. In spite of the often rather abstract extensive plans and concepts in this field, in practice cooperation has been limited and problematic. A first reason for this is the differences of both parties in approach to security problems. As with other areas of cooperation this is the consequence of the desire of the EU to bring Russia closer to Europe and



to adopt European values, such as promoting democratization, observing human rights and strengthening rule of law. Conversely, Russia's objective of cooperation with the EU is that this should be carried out without imposing ideas, such as values, on the counterpart. Another cause of a lack of success in external security cooperation is that often – for instance in the case of joint military operations – the EU demands to have 'full command', treating Russia, or any other party, as the junior partner. A third reason for the problematic relationship in external security is the fact that the EU has become active in the former Soviet Union area, for instance with its EaP. Moscow, although recognizing this role for the EU in the Common Spaces agreement, in reality often opposes this involvement in its 'own' region ('Kremlin warns' 2007). A fourth and final reason for a lack of achievements in external security cooperation, and related to the former, is Russia's striving to regain a great or superpower status, by reinforcing its international position. Russia's 'near abroad', often containing large Russian minorities, is the priority area to advance this goal. By using coercion, in cutting off energy or other supplies, the Kremlin has demonstrated that it wishes to influence developments, especially in Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine.<sup>2</sup> Moscow's energy disruption actions were heavily criticized by Western institutions such as the EU, as was the use of military force against Georgia (Kempe 2006: 4, 6; 'EU slams' 2006).

The difficulties in external security cooperation do not mean that Russia–EU cooperation in this field is virtually impossible. First, regarding the internal focus of the EU, EU–Russia external security cooperation is hindered by division within the EU. This division is partly caused by the past, in which EU member states, which formerly belonged to the Warsaw Pact or the Soviet Union, carry this heritage with them in their current attitude towards Russia. The August 2008 Russo-Georgian conflict has strengthened their negative feelings towards Moscow. Other EU members, such as Germany and France, follow a more moderate course towards Russia. For a viable EU–Russia external security cooperation it is necessary that the EU members first reach consensus on issues that are discussed with Moscow, for instance on their interests in the South Caucasus and on energy security. Second, concerning the focus of the EU on Russia, instead of all-embracing concepts an approach of small-scale projects is probably more successful. Cooperation has to be in the interest of both parties, on an equal setting, and, consequently, mutually beneficial. Moreover, in drafting plans for external security cooperation, the sensitivities of the other party have to be taken into mind. In that respect non-proliferation of WMD, disarmament (e.g. the destruction of obsolete Russian nuclear arms) and civil protection come to the fore as the most fruitful areas of cooperation. Practical projects will restore confidence and strengthen relations, which will offer a way ahead for cooperation in more complicated issues of external security.

## **Nuclear deterrence**

Also in the field of nuclear deterrence President Medvedev continued the line of his predecessor when in September 2008 – as part of a huge plan of moderniza-

tion of the military – he announced an upgrade of the nuclear deterrent by 2020, not only in relation to the US missile shield plan but also to the armed conflict with Georgia of summer 2008 (Dyomkin 2008). And on 5 November 2008, the day after Obama was elected President of the USA, in his first state of the nation speech to the combined Houses of Parliament, President Medvedev repeated the statement of Sergei Ivanov of July 2007, that Russia might deploy missiles – short-range Iskander missiles whereas Ivanov mentioned cruise missiles – to Russia's Baltic exclave of Kaliningrad, between Poland and Lithuania, to neutralize, if necessary, a missile defence system (Socor 2008h; Solovyev 2008). This was part of Moscow's reply to the missile shield and other undesired aspects of US security policy. Only when the international financial crisis started to hit Russia as well, Moscow took a softer tone towards the West, also in relation to the build-up of strategic nuclear weapons. In December 2008 the Commander of the Strategic Missile Forces stated that Russia would stop developing certain strategic weapons if the USA would drop plans for a missile shield in Europe. At the same time Russia's military were testing whether the life span of older nuclear missiles could be extended. The latter was an indication that financial troubles might force open the door for arms control negotiations, since more of the appeasing initiatives – towards mutual reduction of nuclear arms with the USA – were subsequently made by Medvedev and Sergei Ivanov (Halpin 2009a; Whitmore 2009). However, simultaneously Medvedev continued to utter strong talk on strengthening the nuclear deterrent, but that was done for domestic, usually military audiences. For example his speech to the highest MOD organ, the Defence College, on 17 March 2009, at which, by tough anti-Western talk, he sought support from the generals in executing the intended military reforms (Halpin 2009b; Litovkin 2009b). On 1 April, ahead of the G20 summit in London, Medvedev and US President Obama, who met for the first time, agreed to start talks on nuclear disarmament (Whitmore 2009). Both parties apparently were seeking improved relations by focusing on issues of less disagreement, before dealing with hard topics such as missile defence and NATO enlargement. Having lost its conventional military superiority after the demise of the USSR, Moscow was interested in discussing nuclear arms, since that more or less equal deterrence with the USA was the only 'evidence' of its superpower status. However, contrary to the USA, Russia did connect (US) missile defence to strategic nuclear reductions (Felgenhauer 2009b, c). From 19–20 May the USA and Russia held their first talks on ways to cut the stockpiles of nuclear weapons. Finding a replacement for the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START 1) before it expired on 5 December 2009 was the primary aim. As expected, RF Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov demanded that the USA should relieve Russian concerns over the missile defence system to achieve a breakthrough in the nuclear weapons talks. However, in April Obama stated that the USA would go ahead with the anti-missile system if Washington thought there was a continued threat from Iran (Faulconbridge and Ferris-Rotman 2009). On 6 July 2009, during a visit of Obama to Russia, both parties reached agreements of principle on resuming discussions on a successive START treaty ('Russia/United States' 2009).

## **CFE Treaty**

After the Georgia conflict of August 2008, NATO foreign ministers stated in December 2008 that Russia's military action in Georgia (invasion, subsequent formation of buffer zones and deployment of additional troops in Abkhazia and South Ossetia) violated fundamental OSCE principles on which stability and security in Europe was based, as underpinned by the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty, suspended by Putin as of 12 December 2007. Furthermore, they called upon Moscow to resume implementation of the CFE Treaty without further delay, and to reach agreement on the basis of the parallel actions package of 2007 (NATO 2009a). According to Russian sources, consultations between the West and Russia, at different levels, had a negative content. Furthermore, the negotiations were between the MFAs of the USA and Russia, allegedly effectively excluding involvement of other Western partners. The Russian side complained about the planned deployment of US troops in Bulgaria and Romania (Mikhaylov 2008). In consequence, the Georgia conflict had further complicated a speedy resumption of the CFE Treaty by Russia. In this way a proven confidence building measure, especially by the exchange of military inspectors, remained out of order, whereas this could have been an excellent instrument to restore the distorted relations between Russia and NATO. The CFE dispute could also be considered in the light of Medvedev's initiative for a different European security architecture, claiming that institutions such as NATO, OSCE and CFE were obsolete. The objective of this initiative was probably found in renegotiated structures, more favourable to Russia (Lachowski 2009: 7).

## **US missile defence shield**

As in other fields of (security) policy – such as the CFE Treaty and nuclear deterrence – with regard to the missile defence shield Medvedev also extended the course of his predecessor Putin by continuing the harsh line. At the end of May 2008, during his first foreign visit to China, he and his Chinese counterpart Hu Jintao issued a joint communiqué against the US missile shield. Furthermore, regarding the earlier US offer of monitoring the system sites, Russia now demanded additional conditions in the form of permanent deployment of Russian inspectors, which the Poles and Czechs rejected as unacceptable ('Medvedev continuous' 2008; see also: Chapter 2, 'Opposing the missile defence shield'). On 7 July 2008, the USA signed a formal agreement with the Czech Republic to host the radar site of the defence system. Russia replied by threatening to retaliate by military means (Charter 2008). However, the first 'retaliation' by Moscow was not by its military but by its energy weapon when a couple of days after the signature Russia cut the agreed oil deliveries to the Czechs by nearly a half ('Russia cuts' 2008). This incident demonstrated that the Kremlin, possessing strategic energy resources, could easily switch from the political and military to the energy instrument of leverage. Clearly, this method had not changed by

Medvedev's takeover of the rule of Russia. On 14 August 2008, around Russia's armed conflict with Georgia, an agreement between Poland and the USA on implementation of the missile defence system on Polish territory was signed in Warsaw. In the midst of the crisis between Russia and the West on Georgia this agreement further deteriorated their relationship. Warsaw, facing the Georgia conflict and the corresponding threat by Russia, probably considered this the right moment to increase its security ties with the USA, displayed by deployment of a US Patriot unit in Poland as part of the deal and extra guarantee of US security support (Baczynska 2008). As mentioned before, on 5 November 2008 Medvedev warned that Russia might deploy Iskandr missiles in Kaliningrad to counter the US missile defence system. The position of the newly elected US President Obama was that he supported deploying a missile defence system if the technology was proved to be workable and if the system was necessary against Iran: a view that he reiterated during his visit to Moscow in July 2009 ('Obama denies' 2008). Hence, the missile shield remained an obstacle in the relations between Russia and the USA.

### **Energy as an instrument of power**

Medvedev has also continued the energy (security) policy of Putin. He included energy issues in his security documents, the FPC, the Arctic Strategy and the NSS. In policy action he maintained Putin's line of building alternative gas pipelines to Europe. The August 2008 Russian–Georgian conflict was probably also related to that. Furthermore, Medvedev, just like Putin, also fought a gas dispute with Ukraine. With his Arctic Strategy, Medvedev introduced a new policy priority.

#### ***Alternative pipelines***

Moscow wants to get rid of its dependence on transit of its gas through the Ukrainian pipeline network, which carries the larger part of Russian gas exports to Europe, and tries to get Western and Southern European states interested in constructing alternative pipelines through these regions (Godzimirski 2009) (see Map 2.1). By circumventing Ukraine, in the future Russia can put leverage (energy and political) on Ukraine, without affecting energy transit to – and thus also relations with – European partners (Götz 2009: 4). Another Russian objective is to counter Western pipeline initiatives to diminish energy dependence from Moscow, such as BTC, BTE and Nabucco (see: Chapter 2, 'Applying energy as an instrument of power'). Russia's alternative natural gas pipelines are the so-called Blue Stream, South Stream and Nord Stream. Blue Stream is a gas pipeline from Russia under the Black Sea to Turkey. It is a joint venture of the Italian energy company ENI and Russia's Gazprom, whereas the Turkish land section is owned and operated by the Turkish energy company BOTAŞ. Preparations of the pipeline project started in 1997. The official inauguration ceremony took place on 17 November 2005 (Blue Stream 2009). South Stream is a gas

pipeline from Russia under the Black Sea to Bulgaria. The project was announced on 23 June 2007, by the Italian energy company ENI and Russia's Gazprom. In addition to Russia and Italy, Bulgaria, Serbia, Hungary and Greece have also joined the project, and Austria has also shown interest. On 15 May 2009 the gas companies of Russia, Italy, Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece signed an agreement on construction of the South Stream pipeline (Bryanski 2009). South Stream, running largely parallel to Western alternative Nabucco, was to be commissioned around 2013 (Socor 2008e; Götz 2009: 3–4). Nord Stream is a gas pipeline from Russia to Germany via the Baltic Sea. The project formally started in December 2005 with a joint venture of Russian, German and Dutch firms. Initially established as North European Gas Pipeline Company, the name was changed into Nord Stream in October 2006. The first gas delivery was scheduled for late 2011 and in 2013 the project was to be realized (Nord Stream 2009; Socor 2008e). The project was regarded as controversial both for environmental and national security reasons by Sweden, Poland and the Baltic states, which favoured overland alternatives.

### *Assessment*

Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary and Austria – that is seven out of 27 EU member states – have been engaged in Russia's alternative pipeline plans. This involvement, usually arranged in bilateral contracts between Russia/Gazprom and (companies of) an individual state, could be counterproductive for a united EU energy policy and corresponding plans of constructing pipelines to reduce dependence from Russia, such as Nabucco. However, due to diminishing production as a result of obsolete infrastructure, underinvestment in exploration and production, as well as an expected rise in future domestic and foreign demand, it is doubtful if Gazprom will be able to supply the requested amount of natural gas to Blue Stream, South Stream and North Stream (Socor 2008e).

### *Arctic Strategy (September 2008)*

On 27 March 2009, the Security Council of the Russian Federation (SCRF) announced in a press release the 'Foundations of the Russian Federation national policy in the Arctic until 2020 and beyond' (SCRF 2009a; henceforth, 'Arctic Strategy'). On 18 September 2008, the Arctic Strategy had already been approved by President Medvedev, but for unclear reasons publication was postponed until March 2009. The Arctic Strategy comprised the main goals, basic objectives, strategic priorities and mechanisms for implementing RF policy in the Arctic region. The most essential viewpoints of the Arctic Strategy were (SCRF 2008):

- *National interests.* The use of the RF Arctic Zone as a strategic resource base helping to resolve social-economic development problems of the

country; using the Northern Sea route as the exclusive RF transport route in the Arctic.

- *Primary objectives and strategic priorities.* In the area of social–economic development, the widening of the resource base of the Arctic Zone of hydrocarbon resources and other types of strategic raw materials; in the area of military security and defence of RF national borders through the Arctic Zone, guaranteeing a favourable operations regime, including sustainability of the necessary military potential of general-purpose troops (forces), other troops, military formations and agencies in this region; delineating maritime space taking into account RF interests; the use of Arctic sea routes for international maritime traffic in the framework of RF jurisdiction.
- *General tasks and measures for the implementation of policy.* Verifying the external borders of the RF Arctic Zone and preparing a RF regulatory act to specify the geographical boundaries of the RF Arctic Zone; starting work to explore oil and gas deposits; in the area of military security, defence and protection of the RF border that runs along RF Arctic Zone, by creating a RF armed forces special designation group of troops (forces), other troops, military units and agencies (foremost, of the border agencies); and by forming a system of coastal protection by the Federal Security Service (FSB).
- *Implementation of national policy.* In the first stage (2008–2010) verification of the external borders of the RF Arctic Zone; in the second stage (2011–2015) documentation of RF Arctic Zone external borders under international law; solving tasks for the structural rebuilding of the economy of the RF Arctic Zone based on the exploration of the mineral and raw material resource base; during the third stage (2016–2020) transformation of the RF Arctic Zone into a leading strategic resource base for Russia, which will allow Russia to preserve its role as the leading Arctic power.

Estimates are that the Arctic region may contain up to 30 per cent of the world's gas reserves and 13 per cent of the oil reserves. Medvedev's Arctic Strategy did not come fully unexpected. The interest of Moscow in the Arctic as the new strategic base of energy resources was already made clear under Putin. Already in 2001 Russia forwarded its territorial claims for the Arctic to the UN. Next, SCRF Secretary Nikolai Patrushev, at the time Director of the FSB, created in 2004 a special Arctic Directorate at the FSB. Furthermore, in 2005 and 2007 Moscow sent expeditions to the Arctic. The expedition of August 2007 planted a Russian flag on the seabed of the North Pole (Halpin 2009d). At an SCRF meeting of September 2008 Medvedev mentioned that some 20 per cent of Russia's GDP and 22 per cent of its export were produced in the Arctic (Sieff 2009). The other Arctic littoral states – the USA, Canada, Denmark and Norway – challenge Russia's claims of sovereignty over parts of the region. Disagreements between Russia and the West have already occurred. For example in March 2009, when RF MFA Lavrov complained that Norwegian military exercises were aimed at getting access to resources. And the RF ambassador at NATO,



Dmitry Rogozin, in reply to NATO's Secretary General De Hoop Scheffer, stating to increase the role of the alliance in the Arctic, ruled out any cooperation between Russia and NATO, because NATO had nothing to do with the Arctic. Conversely, Norway's MFA noticed in the Arctic an expansion of RF military operations, involving warships, aircraft and submarines. Moreover, Canada's Premier Harper, warned that Russia could act outside international law to secure its claims in the Arctic. In June 2009 Russia further emphasized the military aspects of the Arctic region, when the General Staff of the RF MOD demanded that the treaty for the new European security architecture included the Arctic region (Halpin 2009c; 'Arktiku' 2009).

### *Assessment*

Taking into account the growing global energy scarcity as well as the climate change opening up the accessibility of oil and gas in the Arctic region, the Arctic Strategy expresses that the Kremlin is well aware of the value of this region. In their view the Arctic is a new ground of energy resources that can promote economic but also political leverage of Russia, which will reinforce Moscow's position in the international arena. The Arctic Strategy proves that Russia is conscious of the competition from the West in the Arctic region and therefore has taken a proactive stance to be ahead of any Western initiatives. Hence, Moscow intends to determine the boundaries of its aspired area, considers the Northern Sea route under its national control – thus with the possibility to deny access to other actors – and intends to create a military force in the Arctic region which can enforce Russia's objectives if so required. It is unlikely that Western actors will accept this unilateral stance of Moscow and consequently that they will take measures to consolidate their interests in the Arctic. Given Russia's firm stance and the increasing global energy scarcity, the Arctic region is an area where disputes between Russia and the West can be expected, politically, but perhaps also militarily, with a show of military force and/or militarization on both sides.

### ***Russian–Ukrainian gas conflict (January 2009)***

Europe receives about one-quarter of its gas supplies from Russia, of which some 80 per cent is transported via the Ukrainian pipeline system (Cendrowicz 2009). The gas crisis of 2009 began in October 2008 with a failure between Russia and Ukraine to reach an agreement on gas prices and supplies for 2009. Although in December 2008 more than half of its debt was paid by Ukraine, Gazprom remained committed to cutting gas supplies to Ukraine, which were completely discontinued on 1 January 2009. Transit deliveries to the EU were initially continued. However, on 2 January, Hungary, Romania and Poland reported that pressure in their pipelines had dropped. Bulgaria also reported that supply was falling and that transit to Turkey, Greece and Macedonia was affected. On 5 January, Premier Putin instructed Gazprom to reduce supplies via



Ukraine to Europe by the amount of gas Ukraine had allegedly taken since deliveries ended on 1 January. On 7 January, all Russian gas flow through Ukraine was halted. Several countries reported a major fall in supplies of Russian gas; the worst affected were Bulgaria, Moldova and Slovakia. Although the EU, Ukraine and Russia agreed on 8 January on the deployment of an international monitoring group on the gas metering stations between Russia and Ukraine, the supplies to Europe were not yet restored. On 18 January, Russia and Ukraine agreed that Ukraine would start paying European prices for its natural gas, less a 20 per cent discount for 2009, and would pay the full European market starting from 2010. In return for the discounts Ukraine agreed to keep its transit fee for Russian gas unchanged in 2009 (Pirani 2009). Gas supplies restarted on 20 January and were fully restored on 21 January. Out of 18 European nations, 12 EU members – Germany, France, Austria, Italy, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, Romania, Poland, Bulgaria and Greece – had suffered from the gas cut off ('18 countries' 2009). According to the EU Commission and Presidency, the gas crisis caused irreparable and irreversible damage to customers' confidence in Russia and Ukraine; Russia and Ukraine could no longer be regarded as reliable partners.

### *Assessment*

Russia's tough stance against Ukraine was based upon economic grounds: the payment by Ukraine of its debts. However, political reasons, such as the personal animosity between RF Premier Putin and Ukrainian President Yushchenko, as well as Ukraine's support for Georgia in August 2008 and its aspirations of joining NATO and EU, were also motives of the Kremlin for the gas dispute. After the first 'wake-up call' of the Russo-Ukrainian gas dispute of 2005/2006, in January 2009 the EU was confronted with another one. Concluding that Russia and Ukraine, by affecting energy deliveries to 12 EU members, were unreliable energy partners was one thing, taking steps to reduce the EU's dependence on Russian energy resources and Ukrainian transit routes was another. Russia, aiming at the unreliability of Ukraine, hoped that this would encourage the EU (members) to get (more) involved in its alternative pipelines, South and Nord Stream (Lowe 2009). It remains the question whether the Kremlin had foreseen that by cutting off EU countries the reliability of Russia itself would also be at stake. The positive side of the gas dispute was that this time the EU spoke with one voice, hindering Russia's strategy of bilateral energy deals with EU states. In this way, this gas conflict might also promote the Western alternative pipelines of BTC, BTE and Nabucco. Nevertheless, in spite of this 'defeat' Moscow continued to promote Nord and South Stream to the EU as alternatives for the Ukrainian pipeline, as was demonstrated once again at the EU–Russia summit in Khabarovsk of 22 May 2009 (Kupchinsky 2009).

### **A new European security architecture**

Within a month after becoming President, Dmitry Medvedev took the initiative of pleading for a new European security architecture, replacing the existing one which, allegedly, had proved to be unable to deal with the security challenges after the end of the Cold War. Subsequently, his initial statement became a consistent topic of Medvedev's external security policy (see: Table 4.1).

In June 2008 Medvedev used his visit to Germany for proposing an all-European security pact with Russia's participation. With a *speech in Berlin on 5 June 2008*, addressing an audience of nearly 1,000 German businessmen and politicians, Medvedev assessed that Europe's security architecture still bore the stamp of an ideology inherited from the past. Consequently, he called on European countries to start working out an all-European security pact (Kremlin 2008h; Socor 2008e). As to the OSCE, the Russian President hinted that this organization could embody European civilization's newfound unity, but that it was prevented from becoming a fully fledged general regional organization. Not just because of the organization's own incomplete institutional development but also by obstruction by other groups that intended to continue the old line of bloc politics. He furthermore explained that existing organizations in the Euro-Atlantic space could also become signatory parties to the pact, though not to the would-be pan-European organization. Not only the OSCE, but according to Medvedev, NATO had also disqualified itself as the true European security actor, trying to find the purpose of its existence by globalizing its missions, to the detriment of the UN's prerogatives, and by bringing in new members. Furthermore, he rejected the transatlantic basis of the alliance. Although he mentioned North America as one of the three branches – together with Russia and the EU – of European civilization, he continued that Atlanticism was a single basis for security, which had exhausted itself and that the concept of a single Euro-Atlantic space from Vancouver to Vladivostok instead should be the centre of European security policy. He also repeated the usual Russian rejection of NATO's enlargement, as undermining and damaging relations with Moscow, and suggested NATO and the West to take a time out on issues such as Kosovo, NATO expansion and missile defence. On the other hand Medvedev recognized that Afghanistan proved how NATO and Russia share the same fundamental security interests, by Moscow's agreement on land transit for non-military cargoes via Russian territory, the use of Russian military-transport aircraft and by Russian training opportunities for Afghan anti-drugs and anti-terrorism personnel. Nevertheless, he questioned whether it would make sense to jeopardize this cooperation for the sake of a bloc politics approach that continued by inertia. In his speech Medvedev referred to the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 as the legal foundation for the European security system, which had withstood the test of time despite all the difficulties encountered. In his opinion this document should be the basis for the next step, namely, by drafting and signing a legally binding treaty on European security in which the organizations currently working in the Euro-Atlantic area could become parties. Thus, according to Medvedev, a

regional pact should be formed, based on the principles of the UN Charter. This pact could achieve a comprehensive resolution of the security indivisibility and arms control issues in Europe. To establish such a treaty and pact Medvedev proposed to hold a general European summit to start the process of drafting this agreement. All European countries were to take part in this summit, but as individual countries, leaving aside any allegiances to blocs or other groups. He continued that national interests stripped bare of any distorting ideological motivations should be the starting point for all taking part.

In the Foreign Policy Concept (FPC) of 12 July, Medvedev repeated his proposal of June 2008. *At the introduction of the FPC, on 15 July*, at a forum in Moscow of Russia's ambassadors and permanent representatives to international organizations, Medvedev again reiterated his call for a new collective security system in Europe, specifically referring to the Helsinki Accords and (arms control) treaties between the Soviet Union and NATO, as the legacy to start from (Kremlin 2008d). *On 28 July 2008, Russia's ambassador to NATO, Dmitry Rogozin*, clarified Moscow's ideas on a new European security architecture in a meeting of the NATO–Russia Council (NRC) in Brussels. Rogozin rejected European and American reactions to Medvedev's proposal that this was aimed at weakening NATO, OSCE and other Western security institutions. The NATO ambassadors also expressed their concerns and asked for further explanation, which Rogozin promised to do at the next NRC meeting of 24 September (Brunnstrom 2008). However, this clarification was not to come about because of the Russian–Georgian armed conflict of August, which resulted in a NATO decision to suspend consultations in the NRC. After the Georgian conflict the first occasion at which the proposal for a new European security architecture was again conferred was at a *meeting of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) in Moscow on 4 September*. At that event Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov stated that the CSTO had agreed to 'organize joint work' on creating a European security treaty (MID 2008b). Next, at an *international forum in Evian from 6–8 October*, Medvedev declared that the USA had forfeited its place at the heart of the world order and called on Europe to work with Russia on a new security pact. At this conference the Russian President further unfolded his concept, by introducing principles and rebuffs ('Medvedev takes' 2008; Kremlin 2008i; see: Table 4.1). Subsequently, at the regular *EU–Russia summit, in Nice on 14 November*, he again promoted his proposal. This time, however, the Russian President received support from his French counterpart, President Sarkozy, who concurred in holding talks on a new security architecture for Europe (Castle 2008a). Next, Sergey Lavrov discussed the proposal at a meeting of the *OSCE Ministerial Council in Helsinki, on 5 December 2008* (MID (2008c; Makarychev 2009). However, at the OSCE meeting there was not a majority of the member states willing to accept the proposal of French President Sarkozy to convene a special summit on this topic in mid-2009 (Klein 2009). *On 20 April 2009 at the Helsinki University* Medvedev once more addressed the issue (Kremlin 2009b). To a large extent he repeated his earlier statements on a new European security architecture, in particular by disapproving Western security

Table 4.1 Statements on a new European security architecture (2008–2009)

<i>Occasion</i>	<i>Statements</i>
Visit to Germany Medvedev Berlin 5 June 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current European security architecture is obsolete</li> <li>• Bloc politics counter the OSCE as regional European security body</li> <li>• Atlanticism as a sole historical principle has already had its day</li> <li>• Against further enlargement of NATO and its outdated bloc politics</li> <li>• A comprehensive security approach between the whole Euro-Atlantic area from Vancouver to Vladivostok is necessary</li> <li>• Against marginalizing and isolating states and creating zones with differentiated levels of security; instead forming general regional collective security system</li> <li>• Drafting a treaty on European security in which the organizations currently working in the Euro-Atlantic area could become parties</li> <li>• This treaty/pact should define the role of force as a factor in relations within the Euro-Atlantic community</li> <li>• Hold a general European summit to create such a treaty, with all European countries, on an individual basis, not as member states of blocs or other groups and dealing upon their national interests</li> </ul>
FPC Medvedev Moscow 12 July 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The main objective of Russia's European foreign policy is to create a truly open, democratic system of regional collective security and cooperation ensuring the unity of the Euro-Atlantic region, from Vancouver to Vladivostok, in such a way as not to allow its new fragmentation and reproduction of bloc-based approaches which still persist in the European architecture</li> <li>• This is precisely the essence of the initiative aimed at concluding a European security treaty, the elaboration of which could be launched at a pan-European summit</li> <li>• Russia calls for building a truly unified Europe without divisive lines through equal interaction between Russia, the EU and the USA. This would strengthen the positions of the Euro-Atlantic states in global competition</li> <li>• Being the biggest European state with multinational and multi-confessional society and centuries-old history, Russia stands ready to play a constructive role in ensuring a civilizational compatibility of Europe</li> </ul>
World Policy Conference Medvedev Evian, France 8 October 2008	<p>Five specific provisions of the intended new European security treaty:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Affirm basic principles for security and intergovernmental relations in the Euro-Atlantic area, e.g. fulfil obligations under international law; respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of states, and all other principles of the United Nations Charter</li> <li>2 Inadmissibility of the use of force or the threat of its use in international relations. A unified approach to the prevention and peaceful settlement of conflicts in the Euro-Atlantic space</li> <li>3 It should guarantee equal security, based upon three 'no's':             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a no ensuring one's own security at the expense of others</li> <li>b not allowing acts (by military alliances or coalitions) that undermine the unity of the common security space</li> <li>c no development of military alliances that would threaten the security of other parties to the Treaty</li> </ol> </li> <li>4 No state or international organization can have exclusive rights to maintaining peace and stability in Europe</li> <li>5 Establish basic arms control parameters and reasonable limits on military build-up, e.g. mechanisms in WMD proliferation, terrorism and drug trafficking</li> </ol>

<i>Occasion</i>	<i>Statements</i>
Helsinki University Medvedev 20 April 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As in the past certain political forces are still obsessed by the need to expand what they see as obligatory military-political alliances, which by the way often act to the detriment of European security, e.g. the military operation in the Balkans, the recognition of Kosovo, the attack on South Ossetia and the crisis in talks on the CFE Treaty</li> <li>• Multi-faceted cooperation between the RF, EU and USA</li> <li>• Neither NATO nor the EU seem fully appropriate, because there are countries that do not belong to either. The same applies to organizations such as the CIS or CSTO</li> <li>• A future treaty of European security could be considered as a kind of 'Helsinki Plus' treaty; that is as a continuation and effective implementation of the principles and instruments born out of the Helsinki process, but adapted to the end of ideological confrontation</li> </ul>

Sources: Kremlin (2008d, h, i, 2009b), Socor (2008h), MID (2008a).

policy. A new item was calling this proposal 'Helsinki Plus'. By referring to cornerstones of European security, such as the original Helsinki Agreements of 1975, as well as (again) the principle 'from Vancouver to Vladivostok', Medvedev tried to find historical credits for his ideas. The other new entry was that for the first time he mentioned the EU, as part of organizations such as NATO, OSCE and CSTO, who allegedly were too limited to encompass the European security architecture. In June 2009, the General Staff of the RF MOD developed a new aspect, by demanding that the treaty for the new European security architecture should include the Arctic region ('Arktiku' 2009; see also 'Energy as instrument of power/Arctic Strategy September 2008', on page 126).

### ***Assessment: a vague and negative proposal***

Medvedev's proposal of 5 June 2008 on a new European security architecture and a subsequent summit to start with, was very much in line with traditional approaches of Russian security thinking. A number of earlier policy objectives, included in similar proposals or lines of action of Putin and Soviet leaders, seemed to form the background of this renewed proposition and way of thinking. A first aim was most likely to put aside the existing European/Western security institutions that (may) act counter to Russian policy, such as NATO and OSCE, by underlining that European states should participate in their individual capacities, not as members of 'blocs' or other organizations. NATO has usually been the only institution referred to as 'bloc'. Medvedev also used 'bloc' for those which obstructed the OSCE from becoming the European security body. Moreover, in Medvedev's eyes, the existing organizations were only allowed to join the pact as signatories but not to be part of the subsequent decision-making organization. Thus, they would be ruled out of the policy. Related to this, a further target was probably to 'divide-and-rule', i.e. by endeavouring bilateral agreements with individual European countries to split the overall Western camp of NATO and EU, and in this way to gain superiority over the European nations as a whole. In the process of advancing the proposal at different fora, European

division was already revealed with support for the Russian idea of a new European security pact from Italy, Spain, Cyprus, Germany and from the French President Sarkozy in particular, which seemed to confirm this cohesion-breaking approach by the Kremlin (Monaghan 2008; Klein 2009). Another likely goal was to oust the USA from the European security architecture, as implicitly mentioned in the 'outdated' concept of Atlanticism. Remarkable was also Medvedev's reference to the Euro-Atlantic space 'from Vancouver to Vladivostok'. This expression has traditionally been used for the pan-European security thinking on the lines of the Helsinki process and later on in the OSCE. By using this phrase, Moscow probably endeavoured to gain legitimacy for its proposal, implicitly stating that the current European security structures had lost their prestige. In subsequent statements on a new European security architecture was also mentioned the importance of Russia in Europe, owing to its size and history. This was another example of traditional Russian security thinking, expressing feelings of superiority and subsequent claiming an essential role in the international arena. Overall, although rightly assessing shortcomings in the current European security architecture, Medvedev's proposal especially contained a negative attitude, i.e. what should not be done instead of what could be done to improve the existing security mechanisms. Also, the proposal was limited to the extent that it only discussed hard or military security and hence excluded other dimensions of security as for instance dealt with in the OSCE. More importantly, although Medvedev as of June 2008 frequently made statements on his proposal for a new European security, an actual document containing the details of the plan was never published; thus, the plan remained vague. Consequently, there was reason to believe that an actual format for a new collective security system did not exist but that the proposal might have been meant to assess the views of different European actors and, subsidiary, to create division in the Western camp. In this way Dmitry Medvedev demonstrated to be a true follower of Vladimir Putin and of traditional approaches in Russian foreign security policy.

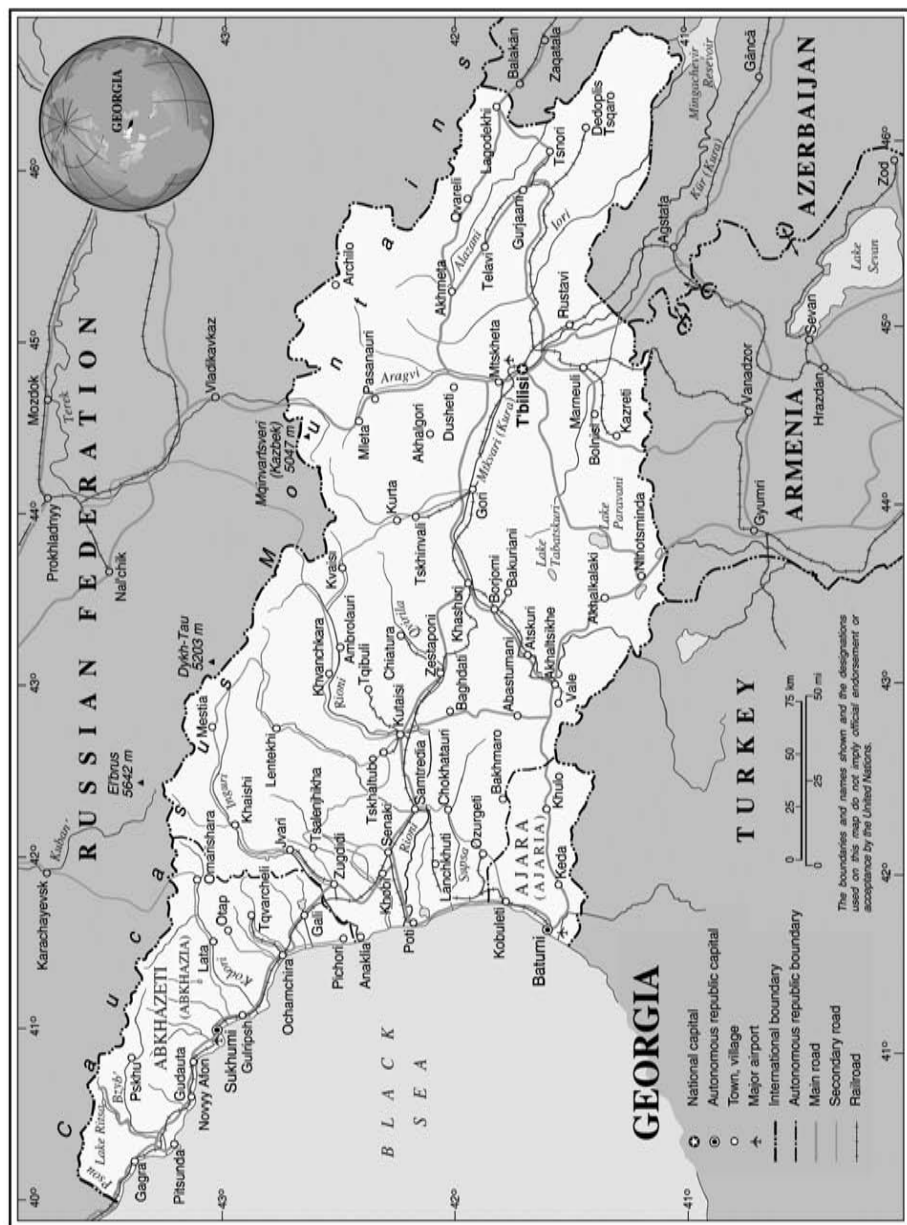
## **5 The Russian–Georgian armed conflict of August 2008**

In August 2008, Russia fought and won a five-day war against Georgia. This short conflict can be considered as a case study of Moscow's foreign security policy of this decade. Russia's warfare against Georgia – considering that the foundations for this armed struggle had been visible for a longer time – was part and parcel of Moscow's security politics, as laid down in the security documents (see: Chapters 1 and 3, 'Structure of foreign security policy'/'Security policy documents'). Before going into detail on the actual Russian–Georgian armed conflict, this chapter first elaborates on Georgia's separatist regions and the involvement in the South Caucasus of Russia and the West. Explaining the August 2008 conflict, this chapter subsequently describes the developments that led to the use of force, the military action itself and its consequences for relations and policy, of Georgia, Russia and the West. The corresponding policy lines/objectives of Putin's and Medvedev's security documents and statements of 2007–2008 will be the leading thread of the analysis of the conflict.

### **Historical development of Georgia and the separatist regions**

After the fall of the Soviet Union in the 1990s the newly independent Georgia faced an internal power struggle as well as separatist uprisings in Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Ajaria.<sup>1</sup> Since the West was not eager to get involved, Georgia had to agree to Russian conditions. Besides becoming a member of the CIS in 1993, Georgia had to accept the presence of Russian military bases on Georgian soil. In exchange for these concessions Moscow halted the further disintegration of Georgia (Coppieters 2000: 25). Following the November 2003 Rose Revolution, as a result of which Mikhail Saakashvili had replaced Eduard Shevardnadze as President of Georgia, the new leader declared the restoration of Georgia's territorial integrity to be one of his key priorities. This objective was only achieved in the case of the region of Ajaria. The other separatist areas, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, remained de facto independent. To diminish Russia's support of secessionist areas, and to hasten Georgian integration within the West, the Georgian parliament repeatedly called for the withdrawal of Russian peacekeeping forces from these regions (Antonenko 2005: 29; 'Abkhaz President' 2006). Consequently, a permanent settlement of the disputed areas could not be reached without Russian consent.





Map 5.1 Georgia (source: United Nations Cartographic Section, New York).

### ***Abkhazia***

During the Soviet era, Abkhazia was an autonomous region situated in the north-west of Georgia, with Sukhumi as its capital, comprising approximately 550,000 inhabitants prior to the outbreak of the conflict ('Regions and territories' 2005). Following the Georgian declaration of independence in 1991 and the replacement of the 1978 constitution with the constitution of 1921, in which Abkhazia had no clear status, the Abkhaz Supreme Soviet reinstated the Abkhaz constitution of 1925 which gave Abkhazia an equal status to Georgia (Cohen 1999: 83; Coppieters 2000: 24). In the summer of 1992 this resulted in a violent conflict. The outcome of the subsequent armed struggle was that Abkhazian troops with Russian assistance compelled the Georgian forces to withdraw from Abkhazia in 1993. As a result, between 200,000 and 300,000 people were displaced (MacFarlane 2004: 137). Following the armed struggle, peacekeeping forces from Russia and of the UN (UNOMIG – UN Observer Mission in Georgia) were stationed in Abkhazia. Although a ceasefire was reached in May 1994, a structural solution was not achieved. Furthermore, there were repeated instances of renewed violence that blended organized crime with partisan activity directed at Abkhaz officials and Russian peacekeepers, as well as UN personnel. In the decade that followed, ongoing negotiations ensued between Abkhazia and Georgia under the supervision of Russia and the UN. In 2003, tensions in both Abkhazia and Georgia ran high again. The separatist region remained *de facto* independent but, prior to the 2008 armed conflict, was not recognized by a single country. Russia in the meantime was distributing Russian passports to Abkhazians on a massive scale, so as to increase the gap between Tbilisi and Sukhumi, while tying Abkhazia closer to Russia. From the Abkhaz perspective, maintaining close ties with Moscow was the only option they had (Erofeyev 2006).

### ***South Ossetia***

In December 1990, Georgia abolished South Ossetia's autonomous status in response to its long-time efforts to gain independence. When the South Ossetian regional legislature took its first steps towards secession and union with the North Ossetian Autonomous Republic of Russia, Georgian forces invaded. The conflict lasted until June 1992 when Russian mediation accomplished a ceasefire. The conflict had resulted in the displacement of some 25,000 ethnic Georgians and between 40,000–60,000 South Ossetians (MacFarlane 2004: 136). After the ceasefire a tripartite peacekeeping force of Georgian, South Ossetian and Russian troops was installed to ensure that the ceasefire would be observed. However, since then clashes regularly occurred and a more permanent settlement between parties was not reached. The South Ossetian endeavour to become independent or to reunite with North Ossetia continued and so did the disputes with Georgia, with Russia participating more than just on the sideline. For example, Russia provided financial aid to South Ossetia and granted Russian citizenship to an estimated 90 per cent of its population. According to Tbilisi in this way

Russia was making attempts to annex this region through the back door. In the August 2008 conflict this policy would allow Russia to argue that its peacekeepers were protecting its own citizens ('South Ossetia accord' 2006). Many ethnic Russians held key positions in the South Ossetian government. Moreover, on 18 September 2005 the Russian constituent region of North Ossetia, together with the separatist South Ossetia, released a joint declaration stating that they were striving to preserve the unity of Ossetia (Antonenko 2005: 28, 30). Clearly, such a message could not have been published without the permission of President Vladimir Putin's centralized authority, which for Saakashvili was yet more proof that Russia would continue to support secessionist regions in Georgia as a deliberate strategy to prevent Georgia from further integrating with the West. On the Georgian side President Saakashvili, after receiving control over Ajaria, placed South Ossetia as the next item on his agenda. In spring 2004 he hoped that the popularity of his revolutionary movement, together with economic pressure, would undermine the separatist leadership and create a spontaneous reunification. However, Georgia's economic pressure escalated into violence between Georgian and South Ossetian troops. Only after strong pressure by Russia, the USA and the EU were Georgian forces withdrawn from the conflict zone in August 2004. In January 2005 Saakashvili made another attempt by presenting a comprehensive peace plan to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. With this plan he aimed at receiving support from the international community. South Ossetia, however, was not prior informed about this initiative and rejected the proposal. After that the Georgian President made a third venture of regaining South Ossetia, this time by demanding Russian troops be replaced by Western troops, specifically from the USA, NATO or the EU. The South Ossetians opposed the idea of a retreat of Russian peacekeepers, expecting a new outbreak of violence if this were to come to pass (de Vries 2006).

## **Involvement of external actors in the South Caucasus**

### ***Russia***

As discussed in the parts on Russian security documents, the primary objective of the Russian Federation has been to regain and strengthen its position in the so-called 'near abroad', the CIS, Russia's back garden, of which the South Caucasus is a part. Russia intends to deny Western leverage over the Caucasus for geo-strategic reasons, due to the importance of the energy resources and pipeline infrastructure present in the area, of which the latter provides Russia with a power tool. This policy is carried out by diplomatic, military and energy security means. Since the 1990s Russia had supported the separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia and maintained peacekeeping troops in these areas, formally under the aegis of the CIS. Russia developed a strained relationship with Georgia, not only for its support of the separatist republics, but also to counter Georgia's wish to join NATO and for its membership of the 'anti-Russian' GUAM coalition. These conflicting matters have resulted in a Russian

policy of political and economic pressure on Georgia, and, conversely, of occasional confrontational acts by Georgia (Baran 2002: 223–5). Elsewhere in the South Caucasus, Russia maintained good ties with Armenia, which is the only South Caucasian state that is a military ally of Russia. Moscow has a military base in Armenia, and Yerevan is a member of the CSTO. The reason for Armenia's (military) relationship with Russia is pragmatic: in Russia, Armenia found an ally against its opponents Turkey and Azerbaijan. Since the latter two are strategically more important to the USA, Armenia turned to Russia as a guarantor of its security, although at the same time it has also maintained military ties with the West, as a member of NATO's Partnership for Peace programme. The oil-rich Azerbaijan upheld good relations with the USA and Turkey, but though it favours the West, refrained from alienating itself from Russia.

### *Confrontational relationship with Georgia*

The Georgian endeavour to join Western structures and, conversely, the support of Russia for the separatist leadership in Abkhazia and South Ossetia caused regular tensions between Russia and Georgia. Several interrelated incidents and actions taken by the Russian and Georgian governments widened the gap between the two neighbouring countries. The case of the Pankisi Valley was an apt example of the strained relationship between these actors. In autumn 1999, around the start of the second Chechen conflict, a dispute started between Russia and Georgia regarding the Pankisi Valley, on the territory of the latter. The cause of the clash was Georgia's refusal of Russia's request to use their bases in Georgia to attack into Chechnya. Russia replied by waging a propaganda campaign, alleging that the Pankisi Valley had become a major rear base for Chechen rebels (Yalowitz and Cornell 2004: 112). In the beginning of 2002, the disagreement deepened when President Putin as well as the ministers of defence and foreign affairs repeatedly voiced their disturbance regarding the presence of Chechen fighters in Georgia's Pankisi Valley (Haas 2004b: 196–8). They accompanied their expressions of concern by warning that if Georgia did not refrain from neutralizing these rebels, then Russia reserved the right of pre-emptive military action into the Pankisi Valley to prevent attacks on Russian territory. In September 2002 Putin allegedly instructed the General Staff to draft an operation plan to invade the Pankisi Valley. This threat aimed at Georgia was repeated in the following months. Moreover, 'Pankisi' was part of the second Chechen conflict, which in 2002 had already entered its fourth year. According to the highest levels of the Russian armed forces, an important cause for continuation of this conflict was found in the fact that Georgia was a free haven for Chechen resistance fighters (Solovyev 2002a). In late summer 2002, Tbilisi finally sent security forces into the Pankisi Valley to restore order. Since then 'Pankisi' receded as an irritant in Georgian–Russian relations but remained a possible hotspot for a renewed dispute (Yalowitz and Cornell 2004: 112).

On some occasions Russian President Vladimir Putin threatened to use force against Georgia. However, Putin also pursued an opposite track in foreign

policy, seeking international cooperation. He did not disapprove of US military presence in Georgia and in October 2002 reached an agreement with Georgia's President Shevardnadze, in which measures were announced to lower tensions between both countries ('Putin, Shevardnadze' 2002). Another instance of a (de-) conflicting problem between Russia and Georgia was apparent in May 2005, when both states reached an agreement on the withdrawal of two Russian military bases from Georgia, which was to be accomplished before 2008 ('Georgia since' 2005: 31). However, in the course of 2006, relations between Russia and Georgia severely deteriorated. Explosions in Russia's North Caucasus region, which cut off Georgian energy supplies in January 2006, clearly demonstrated the country's dependence on Russian energy supplies. In addition to energy dependence, Russia was Georgia's largest trading partner in 2005 (Fuller 2006d). At the same time, Georgia strived to replace the Russian peacekeepers deployed in Abkhazia and South Ossetia by international contingents. Furthermore, Georgia was seriously considering quitting the CIS, as a reply to Russian bans on the import of Georgian wine, mineral water and other agricultural products (Fuller 2006d). Tensions rose high in July 2006 when the Georgian parliament voted to expel Russian peacekeepers and demanded that they be replaced by alternative, international peacekeeping contingents. The Russians reacted by saying that the resolution of the Georgian parliament was not legally binding. The response from the Abkhaz and South Ossetian Presidents was even harsher, disregarding the resolution as Georgian warmongering (Fuller 2006e). In August 2006 the situation worsened as Georgian security forces attempted to secure the Kodori Valley, to regain the separatist area of Abkhazia, where Russian peacekeepers were stationed. Moreover, in autumn 2006 the arrest of Russian officers by Georgia on charge of espionage resulted in Russia deciding to withdraw its diplomats and the implementation of transport and mail blockades ('Escalating tension' 2006). Next, in November 2006 Gazprom more than doubled the gas price for Georgia as of 2007 ('Georgian officials' 2006). Considering Russian activities and statements, Georgia has been the primary target of Russia's policy of influence over the South Caucasus. This prioritization was likely based upon Russian expectations of a 'domino-effect' in this region. Georgia has had a leading position among the three South Caucasian states in governmental and public support to join NATO (and the EU).<sup>2</sup> When Georgia would receive NATO membership, Azerbaijan was likely to follow. Therefore, Russia continued to put a lot of effort in preventing Georgia from integrating with Western structures.

## **USA**

In the early 1990s the US did not have a coherent Caucasus policy, partly because of unfamiliarity of policy makers with the region. In these years the US policy was aimed at addressing the Central Europeans first, and then looking for the next series of alliances. By the time of 9/11 the wave of relationships suddenly expanded to Central Asia, but because of long neglect, the attempt largely

failed, with Uzbekistan among others returning to the Russian camp. Subsequently, the USA refocused the emphasis of its foreign and security policy to the Caucasus. Initially, the US policy towards the South Caucasus was to defer to Russia and avoid entering into security arrangements with the three states. However, in the mid-1990s, as American firms' interests in Caspian energy supplies grew, Washington started to follow a more active policy. Next, the USA started to regard the South Caucasus as part of a larger strategy of creating a zone of stability from the Balkans to Central Asia, and useful for under girding NATO's enlargement into Central and Eastern Europe. Over the years, US policy towards the South Caucasus has been vested in three priorities: energy, democracy and political stability (Baran 2002: 222). These priorities can be diversified into energy, political, security and social–economic objectives. With regard to energy security objectives, by 1998 the US had adopted a multiple pipeline strategy to carry Caspian energy to Western markets, intended at bypassing Russia and Iran. The focus was especially on the then planned BTC oil pipeline, but also on other East–West pipelines to transport Caspian oil and gas to Turkey. The US repeatedly maintained that its policy was aimed at breaking the Russian monopoly over energy transportation routes, but that it was not anti-Russian in itself. As to political objectives, a target was the containment of Iran to prevent influencing the Caucasus and Central Asia with radical Islam. Furthermore, the US was actively promoting democracy and market principles. After 9/11, its political objectives were supplemented with security objectives, comprising security cooperation programmes with all three South Caucasus states, of which the arrangement with Georgia was the most encompassing. These programmes were aimed at enhancing anti-terrorism and border guard capabilities and to promote modernization of the military. In addition to this, the USA also pursued endeavours to resolve regional conflicts, especially concerning Nagorno-Karabakh. However, these attempts met with little success. Finally, on social–economic objectives, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) initially provided humanitarian aid but later on – with the changing needs of the region – also promoted the development of the economy and democracy. The aid levels of the US to Armenia and Georgia were among the highest per capita in the world (Yalowitz and Cornell 2004: 113–14).

### *Cooperation with Georgia*

Against the background of '9/11', in February 2002, the USA and Georgia reached agreement to deploy American military advisers in this South Caucasian state. This agreement took the form of the so-called US Georgian Train and Equip Program (GTEP), which was a two-year programme in which US Special Forces would provide support to the Georgian military in anti-terrorism activities. Washington argued that there were likely some Al Qaida elements in Georgia's Pankisi Valley along with Chechen fighters, which connected the GTEP with the '9/11' war on terrorism (Yalowitz and Cornell 2004: 112). In addition to this, the US provided ten combat helicopters (Haas 2004b: 196–7). GTEP laid



the foundation for reshaping Georgia's armed forces into a better equipped and trained army. In 2004, the GTEP was followed by a 16-month Sustainability and Stability Operations Program (SSOP). The SSOP was to train Georgian military battalions, preparing them for multinational peace stabilization operations in Iraq and elsewhere. The US–Georgian military cooperation, however, was not a one-way approach. In return for, or as a result of US assistance, Georgia deployed military units in NATO- and US-led operations in Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan ('Georgia since' 2005: 36). In July 2006, the SSOP was prolonged for a further 12 months ('U.S. allocates' 2006). US support for Georgia did not consist of military cooperation alone, but also encompassed political and energy dimensions. In the political field, the US was in favour of integrating Georgia into Western (security) structures. In July 2006, when the presidents of the USA and Georgia met in Washington, President Bush stressed the importance of admitting Georgia to NATO. Interestingly, during this visit the Turkish Foreign Minister was also present. The US, Georgian and Turkish delegations discussed energy cooperation, specifically the transportation of Caspian oil and gas to world markets via Georgia ('Georgian President' 2006). Thus, military, political and energy interests determined the intensive amount of US support to Georgia. For the USA, Georgia was the hub of bringing the South Caucasus into the Western hemisphere.

## **NATO**

Only relatively recently has NATO taken a deeper interest in the South Caucasus. Officially, in 2000 NATO's policy was still to limit influence in this region, and therefore the alliance was to stay on the sidelines and refrain from direct involvement. NATO was then of the opinion that regional cooperation should be promoted, such as within GUAM and that NATO members individually could be active in the South Caucasus through bilateral measures, and through working with other organizations such as the OSCE and the UN. The only direct activity of this low-key approach that the alliance made was by creating an ad hoc working group on Prospects for Regional Cooperation in the Caucasus within its Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), NATO's forum for security matters with cooperation partners. The next step taken was a regional cooperation seminar on energy security in the Caucasus, which took place in Azerbaijan, in 2000, organized under the auspices of the EAPC (Appathurai 2001: 13–15). Following this, NATO Secretary-General Lord Robertson, made visits to Georgia (September 2000) and to Armenia and Azerbaijan (January 2001). In October 2001, NATO's Parliamentary Assembly organized another seminar, this time on 'The role of NATO in the security of the Black Sea Region', in Bucharest, Romania ('The Role' 2001). Three years later, in November 2004, in Baku, Azerbaijan, the same institution organized a further seminar, this time on 'Security in the South Caucasus' ('Security in' 2004). Moreover, in September 2004 NATO appointed a dedicated Secretary General's Special Representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia, the American Bob Simmons. With regard to actual



military cooperation with the South Caucasian states, NATO applied its Partnership for Peace programme (PfP), in which partner countries carry out defence policy and military reforms and could participate in NATO exercises and operations to adapt their military organization to NATO standards, thereby promoting interoperability with the alliance. Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan joined the PfP in 1994, with the latter two receiving bilateral military assistance from the US and Turkey to complement the PfP. Georgia organized its first multilateral PfP exercise in 2001. PfP was the primary means for the South Caucasian states to move closer to NATO (DeTemple 2001).

### *Cooperation with Georgia*

In 2004 Georgia concluded an Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) with NATO ('Georgia since' 2005: 32, 37). The following step towards NATO entrance was to be the so-called 'Intensified Dialogue' and subsequently the Membership Action Plan (MAP). In this roadmap Georgia envisaged MAP in 2006 and NATO membership in 2008. However, in spite of US efforts to proceed with this time schedule, in summer 2006 consensus within NATO on Georgia's entrance to Intensified Dialogue could only be reached after several consultations. Reluctance to proceed with Intensified Dialogue for Georgia allegedly was related to the (EU) enlargement fatigue of European member states and feelings of irritation towards the USA for pushing its own foreign policy agenda on to NATO.<sup>3</sup> In the end, on 21 September 2006, Georgia did receive the Intensified Dialogue status from NATO (NATO 2006c). However, earlier, in May 2006, NATO's regional Special Representative, Simmons, had already informed Georgia that it should not expect to receive a formal invitation to join NATO at the Riga summit of November 2006 ('NATO official' 2006). Consequently, in 2006, it was already clear that Georgia's aim of NATO membership in 2008 was unlikely to be met. At NATO's Bucharest summit of April 2008, division within the alliance resulted in a statement that Georgia (and Ukraine) would become NATO members, without specifying any date. Moreover, it was decided at the summit that granting these two states the MAP status would be postponed and discussed again at a ministerial (MFA) meeting in December 2008 (NATO 2008b).

### *EU*

Developments in the South Caucasus influence the security of the EU because of its geographic proximity and energy interest. Considering that the EU wishes to avoid instability on its borders, any renewed outbreak of armed conflict in the South Caucasus could spill over and thus undermine the security of the EU. Moreover, the EU has an interest to ensure access to Caspian oil and gas – through the BTC and the BTE pipelines – to develop transport and communications lines between Europe and Asia, and contain threats such as terrorism, smuggling, trafficking, illegal immigration and environmental disasters ('Conflict

resolution' 2006). However, the EU only recently has begun to define specific policies and instruments for this region. For a long time EU member states were not convinced of the strategic importance of this region. Only a few member states have any history of bilateral interests in the South Caucasus. Even though major European oil companies – such as BP, Shell and Elf – invested in the Caspian Sea's resources, politically the EU kept a low profile, mainly because it did not desire to give up its 'Russia first' policy, but also due to the presence of another Western actor, the US, which was already actively involved in the Caucasus (Baran 2002: 227–8). Apart from the special relationship with Russia, in the 1990s, the EU's approach to the status of the South Caucasus was similar to that towards other former Soviet republics. The EU focused on assistance programmes for the South Caucasian states. In 1996 the EU signed Partnership and Cooperation Agreements with Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan and implemented Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) programmes to support these agreements. In addition to TACIS, the EU set up two other programmes. Earlier, in 1993, the Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Central Asia (TRACECA) programme was started, which aimed to develop an East–West transportation corridor from Central Asia, across the Caspian Sea, through the Caucasus, across the Black Sea and finally to Europe. TRACECA funded both technical assistance and infrastructure rehabilitation projects. Furthermore, the Interstate Oil and Gas Transport to Europe (INOGATE) programme was begun, which was designed to rehabilitate and modernize regional oil and gas transportation systems (Baran 2002: 228; 'Conflict resolution' 2006: 12).

By 2001 it had become clear to the EU that the frozen conflicts were an obstacle for further development of the region. Evidence of this change of mind was its declaration in February of that year in which the EU stated that it intended to play a more active political role in the South Caucasus, as well as in the fields of conflict prevention and resolution. Probable reasons for this change of course may be found in the ripening of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), the rapid development of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) since the end of the twentieth century, the release of its own political or grand strategy – 'A secure Europe in a better world: European Security Strategy' – in December 2003 and its enlargement eastwards. Moreover, since 2003 the EU became more active in the South Caucasus, especially in Georgia. In July 2003 the EU appointed a Special Representative for the South Caucasus (EUSR). In 2004, when the EU enlarged with – among others – East European states, the South Caucasus became closer and thus of greater importance. Participation of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan in the EU's European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was offered in June 2004 ('Conflict resolution' 2006: 2). As of that year the EU also started economic development confidence building programmes in Georgia. In April 2006 EUSR Semneby discussed the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with the leaders of that separatist region, which indicated the intention of the EU to play a more decisive role in conflict resolution, not instead of, but in addition to similar efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group. In May 2006 Semneby explained that the more active interest in resolving conflicts was not a reorienta-

tion of the EU policy towards the South Caucasus, but because the EU now had the military means to support settlements.<sup>4</sup>

### *Cooperation with Georgia*

The EU launched an ESDP mission to Georgia – EUJUST Themis – on the rule of law, after Georgian Prime Minister Zhvania, invited the EU to assist the Georgian government in this field, in June 2004.<sup>5</sup> The Joint Action 2004/523/CFSP creating EUJUST Themis was approved by the European Council and, on 16 July 2004, the mission was launched, for a one-year period, terminating on 14 July 2005 (European Council (2005)). The objectives of EUJUST Themis were to assist the government of Georgia in its efforts to reform the criminal justice system and improve legislative procedures. These improvements sought to align Georgia fully with international and European human rights standards. Furthermore, the mission was to provide insight and direction to the criminal justice system reforms, and support the development of relative legislation such as the Criminal Procedure Code. These efforts were also intended to strengthen initiatives undertaken by the Council of Europe and OSCE in relevant areas. EUJUST Themis was the first rule of law mission carried out by an ESDP civilian mission and confirmed the development of new capabilities for the civilian dimension of ESDP. EUJUST Themis also reflected the EU commitment to support the efforts of its neighbours in the South Caucasus for the creation of a stable and secure region. However, opposition parties in Georgia complained that the result of EUJUST Themis was minimal since it did not affect the overall control of the President on executive, legislative and judicial powers.<sup>6</sup>

## **The Russian–Georgian conflict (7–12 August 2008)**

### *Moscow's policy objectives*

As a case study of Russian foreign security policy this conflict is analysed on the basis of the then (2007–2008) relevant and current security documents and statements – i.e. Putin's Overview of Foreign Policy of 2007, his Strategy 2020 of 2008, as well as Medvedev's Foreign Policy Concept of 2008 – before the actual military action will be described (MID 2007a, 2008a; Kremlin 2008a). These policy initiatives comprise a number of viewpoints, which can be linked to the ensuing conflict against Georgia of August 2008:

- a new Russia, basing on a solid foundation of its national interests, has now acquired a fully fledged role in global affairs;
- Russia is back in the international arena as a powerful state, which has to be taken into account and which can stand up for itself;
- strengthening of the international position of Russia;
- a fierce battle is taking place on energy resources – many armed conflicts carry the smell of oil and gas;

- the reaction to the prospect of loss by the historic Western global monopoly is expressed in the policy of containing Russia;
- integration processes, including in the Euro-Atlantic region, are often of a selective and restrictive nature;
- Russia maintains its negative attitude towards the expansion of NATO, notably to the plans of admitting Ukraine and Georgia to the membership in the alliance, as well as to bringing the NATO military infrastructure closer to the Russian borders on the whole;
- continuous enlargement with new members is aimed at broadening Western influence;
- regional collective security and cooperation ensuring the unity of the Euro-Atlantic region, should not allow for new fragmentation and reproduction of bloc-based approaches which still persist in the European architecture dating from the Cold War;
- Georgia intends to destroy the existing peacekeeping and negotiating formats complicating the situation around Abkhazia and South Ossetia;
- Russia conducts an active policy towards the millions of ethnic Russians living in the near abroad (*za rubezhēm*) – protection of their interests and encouragement to resettle in Russia are priorities of RF foreign policy;
- independence of Kosovo would cause a serious deterioration of stability in Europe and will serve as a precedent.

The relationship to the Russian–Georgian conflict of the aforementioned security policy entries can be clarified as follows. At the end of Putin’s second term and start of Medvedev’s period in office, the Kremlin, due to the strong energy-based economy, felt powerful enough to take an assertive course in consolidating its interests, with political but if necessary, also with military instruments. As the successor state of the USSR, protracted influence in the former Soviet area had been one of the consistent characteristics of Russia’s foreign and security policies. In the previous decade Western actors, especially the USA, NATO and the EU, had increasingly paid attention to the South Caucasus and to Georgia in particular. Reasons for this risen interest were not only political – e.g. stability at the borders of the areas of Western organizations – but also energy related, finding alternative energy resources and routes to circumvent Russia’s dominant position. The Kremlin considered the mounting Western involvement in the South Caucasus as an infringement on its sphere of influence and as an attempt to contain Russia, i.e. to prevent its strengthening in the international arena. Moscow’s security documents had consistently rejected NATO enlargement. After the Baltic states, Georgia (and Ukraine), another former Soviet Republic, would be in line to enter NATO again bringing NATO military infrastructure closer to the Russia. NATO itself was still regarded as a military bloc and element of the European architecture which comprised vestiges of the Cold War. Therefore, membership of Georgia was seen as a threat to Russian national security. And with Georgia in NATO, Azerbaijan would possibly to follow. Georgia itself was – according to the Kremlin – following a confrontational

course towards the separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. After Moscow had been distributing Russian passports among their populations for a number of years, the regions now contained Russian minorities which – as stated in the security documents – would be protected, if necessary by force. Russia considered the independence of Kosovo as a precedent. If the West supported independence of separatist regions, then Moscow was entitled to do the same.

Consequently, the discussed standpoints in Russia's security initiatives of 2007–2008 provided a picture of policy objectives and implementation options that Moscow could conduct in order to change developments in and around Georgia for the benefit of its interests.

### ***Russia's political and military build-up prior to the conflict***

Some sources claim that Russia had prepared for war already years in advance, but in spring 2008 evidence for such an assumption became stronger.<sup>7</sup> In preceding years Russia had tightened its grip on the separatist regions by granting Russian citizenship, extending the North Ossetian gas pipeline to South Ossetia and by restoring its rail connections with Abkhazia. After Western recognition of Kosovo in February 2008, Moscow declared this a precedence after which Russia was entitled to do the same concerning Abkhazia and South Ossetia. In April 2008, as a first step, Moscow announced 'official relations' between Russian state agencies and those of the separatist regions ('Baiting the bear' 2008). Also in April Russia deployed more than 1,000 additional troops to its – formally 'CIS' – peacekeeping force in Abkhazia, which until then consisted of some 2,000 soldiers. As of that month Russian military aircraft regularly violated Georgian airspace. The most striking example was a Georgian drone, which provided footage of being attacked by a Russian fighter, just before it was shot down. In May/June Russia deployed its so-called Railway Troops to repair railway tracks in Abkhazia, which during the conflict were to be used to transport reinforcements from Russia to the battlefield in Georgia (Socor 2008a, b, c; 'Schöner Schein' 2008; Myasnikov 2008a). Moreover, on 10 July the commander of Russia's North Caucasus Military District (NCMD) had stated that his troops were exercising for possible intervention in Abkhazia and/or South Ossetia. Until the beginning of August, 8,000 troops of the NCMD, including the 58th Army, conducted exercises near Georgia's border. This formation would subsequently act as the key player in the armed conflict with Georgia. In late July, ships of Russia's Black Sea Fleet, involved in the same Kavkaz-2008 exercises, did not return to their port and later also contributed in the Georgia conflict (Felgenhauer 2008a, b; Socor 2008f; Whitmore 2008). The gradual build-up of Russian armed forces in the months prior to the conflict explains the rapid pace with which Moscow was able not only to counter Georgia's invasion of South Ossetia, but also to conduct land, air and naval operations simultaneously and all over Georgia.

The question remains whether Saakashvili had realized that by invading South Ossetia he would be confronted with Russia's overwhelming military

Table 5.1 Comparison of Russian and Georgian armed forces (August 2008)

<i>Russia's armed forces</i>	<i>Georgia's armed forces</i>
1 million personnel	25,000 personnel
23,000 tanks	183 tanks
25,000 armoured combat vehicles	134 armoured combat vehicles
26,000 artillery pieces	238 artillery pieces
1,736 combat aircraft	9 combat aircraft
635 attack helicopters	9 attack helicopters
<i>Russia's North Caucasus Military District</i>	
90,000 personnel	2,000 armoured combat vehicles
800 tanks	900 artillery pieces

Sources: IISS (2008): 212–20; CFE (2008).

power. A comparison of forces between both combating parties makes it clear that the Georgian armed forces did not have any chance of defeating Russia's army. Of course the discrepancy in numbers has to be regarded with due reserve, since Moscow did not conduct warfare with the whole of its armed forces. Nevertheless, the difference in military capabilities was striking. Even if the comparison of forces is limited to those of the NCMD – the adjacent Russian area from which most reinforcements of troops and arms came from – the superiority of Russia's military power over that of Georgia's was manifest (see: Table 5.1).

### *Course of the conflict*

After days of shooting incidents between the de facto South Ossetian armed groupings and the Georgian armed forces, in the late evening of Thursday 7 August Georgian President Saakashvili ordered his troops to return law and order and Tbilisi's rule in the rebellious province of South Ossetia.<sup>8</sup> Considering the speed with which the armed forces of Georgia and of Russia brought in troops, it was clear that both parties had prepared for an armed clash. Georgia sent in ten light infantry battalions of its 2nd, 3rd and 4th Infantry Brigades, special forces and an artillery brigade, numbering some 12,000 troops in total. In the night of 7 and 8 August Moscow sent reinforcements of its 58th Army – formally on 2 August ending exercise Kavkaz-2008 and with Chechen experience Russia's most combat-ready unit – from North Ossetia into South Ossetia through the connecting Roki tunnel, and responded fire. Their immediate objective was to secure the South Ossetian capital Tskhinvali, which they accomplished on 10 August. From 8 August on, Russia's air force carried out attacks on targets in Georgia proper, i.e. outside Abkhazia and South Ossetia. During the weekend Russia further increased its military force in South Ossetia, with units of an airborne division, of a mechanized division in Chechnya and special forces, totalling some 10,000 troops with 150 pieces of armoured equipment. Furthermore, a second front was opened in Abkhazia, consisting of 9,000 additional troops from units of two airborne divisions and naval infantry of the



Russian Black Sea Fleet. The Black Sea Fleet disembarked 4,000 of these troops in Ochamchire, Abkhazia, and started a maritime blockade of Georgian ports. The naval blockade was also meant to deter any arms shipments from Ukraine. In Abkhazia the Russian forces captured the Georgian-held strategic Upper Kodori Gorge. After the troop build-up was considered at a sufficient level, on Monday 11 August Russian forces invaded from South Ossetia and Abkhazia into Georgia proper. The units from Abkhazia moved south to secure the Senaki airfield and the port of Poti. The units from South Ossetia moved to occupy Gori (see: Map 5.1). Although its 1st Infantry Brigade was rapidly redeployed from Iraq by air, the Georgian armed forces were no match for the Russian superiority in troops and arms, and were forced to withdraw around Tbilisi. Military and civilian casualties on the Georgian side amounted to 295 killed and some 1,500 wounded; on the Russian side 71 killed and 340 wounded (Nicoll 2008; Allison 2008: 1,150–1, 1,157–8; Giragosian 2008; Felgenhauer 2008b; Litovkin 2008a; Myasnikov 2008b; IISS 2009: 210–11).<sup>9</sup> On 12 August Georgia and Russia agreed on a ceasefire, the so-called six-point peace plan, drafted by the French President Sarkozy, fulfilling the EU Presidency, and his Russian counterpart Medvedev.<sup>10</sup>

During and after the armed conflict the leaders in the Kremlin had made it quite clear what their intentions were towards Georgia. Russia's political and military-strategic goals of the military campaign were to prevent Georgian authority over the separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia; to achieve regime change by removing Saakashvili from office; to prevent Georgia and Ukraine from joining NATO; and to destroy Georgia's military power. The targeting of Russian land, sea and air forces coincided with the peacetime locations of the major units of Georgia's armed forces (see: Table 5.2). After neutralizing the Georgian armed forces (destroying bases, arms and equipment, or transporting pieces back to Russia), the Russian troops installed buffer zones south of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, encompassing much of Georgia's central part, vital transport lines, the strategic airfield of Senaki and the harbour of Poti, thus controlling Georgia on the whole (Rusetskiy 2008; Allison 2008: 1157–60). Possibly Russia also anticipated that by partly occupying Georgia this might entail an internal revolt against Saakashvili. Not earlier than at the beginning of

*Table 5.2* Russia's targeting of Georgia's order of battle (8–12 August 2008)

<i>Location</i>	<i>Units</i>
Poti	Main naval base
Senaki	2nd Infantry Brigade; attack helicopter squadron
Kutaisi	3rd Infantry Brigade; air defence battalion
Gori	Artillery brigade; tank battalion; engineer battalion
Tbilisi	Special forces brigade; transport helicopter squadron
Vaziani	1st and 4th Infantry Brigades
Marneuli	Combat aircraft squadron

Source: CFE (2008).



October Russia would withdraw from the buffer zones in Georgia proper, whilst continuing its reinforced deployment of troops in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

### ***Conduct of warfare of the Russian armed forces***

On the positive side, Russian forces were well prepared for the operation, with sufficient logistics and firepower. Furthermore, at the strategic and operational levels the Russian military demonstrated a well-organized command and control, when coordinating forces from different Military Districts and arms of service at short notice (IISS 2009: 211). However, the negative side of Russian military performance tended to be stronger. In their operations the Russian troops used massive artillery and aircraft barrages instead of precision targeting. Also, Russian soldiers were seen sitting on top of their armoured personnel carriers because travelling inside – due to insufficient armour – was more dangerous. Also a lot of the obsolete tanks and personal carriers broke. Close air support for ground forces was hardly witnessed. Moreover, between seven and ten or more Russian aircraft (at least one strategic and one conventional bomber, three fighters and two reconnaissance aircraft) were shot down by a well-organized Georgian air defence. The losses of aircraft were the result of insufficient aerial reconnaissance and other intelligence gathering – causing miscalculation of enemy air-defence capabilities – a lack of flying hours (especially of pilots of fighters and bombers), as well as an absence of training in suppression of air defence. Such training was missing because there was hardly any enemy air defence in the Chechen campaigns. Moreover, as a result of deficient training but also due to a disproportional use of force and old-fashioned ammunitions, much collateral damage was caused. Precision guide munitions (PGMs) were absent or not useable, due to missing satellite guidance. Related to this, air and ground forces also had a lack of night-vision equipment and of modern command and control, communications and reconnaissance systems. At the tactical level the latter brought about poor coordination between units and difficulty in identifying enemy positions. (Litovkin 2008a; Tsyganok 2008; Lowe 2008a; Ivanov 2008; Rastopshin 2008; Nicoll 2008; IISS 2009: 211).

Although after the fiascos of the Chechen conflicts conceptual approaches were launched to increase coordination and to conduct joint warfare – in particular by creating joint-style regional military commands to replace the mainly single service military districts – military action in this conflict was still carried out by way of the long-established structure of command and control. Furthermore, due to the sole experience of the irregular counterterror campaign in Chechnya, Russian troops were not trained for combat against a (modern) conventional force. Consequently, the Russian armed forces conducted in Georgia old-fashioned instead of high-tech and non-contact operations, i.e. the modern (Western style) of warfare, for instance applied in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Russian army won the war by using the traditional Russian/Soviet concept of warfare: an overwhelming use of arms and troops (Tsyganok 2008; Bozhyeva 2008; Myasnikov 2008c; Rastopshin 2008; Nicoll 2008; IISS 2009: 211–12).

Clearly, objectives directed at conducting modern, sophisticated warfare – as stated in the 2003 Defence White Paper – were not yet realized, either in weapon procurement or in operational concepts (see: Chapter 1, ‘The 2003 Defence White Paper’).

### ***End of hostilities and subsequent developments in and around Georgia***

#### *Protracted action by Moscow*

In spite of the agreed ceasefire, the six-point peace plan of 12 August 2008, Russian forces continued military operations to further destroy Georgia’s military power. On 22 August, Russia withdrew its military forces from Georgia proper without those that remained in so-called buffer zones south of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Russia justified the continued occupation of Georgian territory upon point five of the Medvedev–Sarkozy peace plan, stating that ‘prior to the establishment of international mechanisms the Russian peacekeeping forces will take additional security measures’. A few days later, on 26 August, Russia recognized the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia (Kremlin 2008k). A subsequent agreement between Sarkozy and Medvedev of 8 September arranged for Russian forces to withdraw from Georgia proper within ten days of 1 October, and their replacement by at least 200 EU observers (Kremlin 2008j). Although the mandate of this EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) covered the entire territory of Georgia, Russia subsequently denied EU observers access to the separatist regions. Next, Russia decided that it would keep 7,600 troops permanently deployed in South Ossetia and Abkhazia; and intended to establish military bases accordingly (‘Russia to keep’ 2008). International talks on the conflict, corresponding with point six of the peace plan, commenced in Geneva on 15 October 2008, but did not result in a settlement of the disputes. On 30 April 2009 Russia signed joint border protection agreements with Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The EU and NATO expressed their concern on these agreements, being contrary to the six-point agreement of 12 August 2008 (‘EU/NATO/Russia’ 2009). Next, a NATO PfP exercise, conducted in Georgia from 6 May until 1 June, caused another clash between Russia and the West. The drills were planned long before the Russo-Georgian conflict, and NATO offered Moscow to send observers. Nevertheless, Medvedev condemned the drills and cancelled Moscow’s participation at NATO–Russia Council meetings (‘Russia/NATO’ 2009; ‘NATO/Russia’ 2009b). Subsequently, on 15 June Russia exercised its veto power to terminate the UN observer mission UNOMIG, created in 1993 to monitor a ceasefire between Georgia and its breakaway region of Abkhazia. The force was the only international observation body based in Abkhazia since the August 2008 Georgian war. The OSCE, which maintained a mission in Georgia that included monitors for South Ossetia, had faced a similar fate when its mandate expired on 31 December 2008 and was hit by a Russian veto in May 2009. The OSCE mission continued to operate until 30 June 2009. In the case of

both missions Russia demanded recognition of the independence of the separatist territories at the threat of vetoing the operation. As of July 2009, with the closure of the UN and OSCE missions, there was an absence of any independent presence left to monitor military movements or ceasefire violations in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The only international mission left, EUMM, was based in Georgia proper, with access to the separatist regions denied by Russia (Krastev 2009; ‘OSCE observers’ 2009). Russia’s political endeavours since August 2008 have demonstrated that its strategic objectives did not stop with the end of hostilities. Afterwards, in the separatist regions, Moscow stationed thousands of troops, intended to build permanent land and naval military facilities and also manned their border protection. Furthermore, by vetoing the UN and OSCE missions Russia ensured the departure of the international community from the regions. Gradually, Moscow reinforced its grip on Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which more and more became provinces of Russia rather than independent states. Hence, the loss of the regions for Georgia became enduring.

### *Response of the West: EU and NATO*

The invasion by Russian troops of Georgia was condemned by the West. It caused a split in Moscow’s relations with the EU. The deterioration of its ties with NATO was even worse. Throughout and after the conflict the EU had repeatedly condemned Russia. On 1 September 2008 at an Extraordinary European Council held in Brussels, the EU spoke out against the disproportionate reaction of Russia, and condemned Russia’s unilateral decision to recognize the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The EU decided that until Russia’s troops would have withdrawn to the positions held prior to 7 August, meetings on the negotiation of the Partnership Agreement were to be postponed. However, the planned EU–Russia summit, scheduled to take place in Nice on 14 November 2008, was not cancelled or postponed. Furthermore, the European Council decided on the immediate dispatch of a fact-finding mission with the task of helping to gather information and defining the modalities for an increased EU commitment on the ground, under ESDP. The EU made also a decision to step up its relations with Georgia, including visa facilitation measures and the possible establishment of a full and comprehensive free trade area as soon as the conditions were met. The EU took the initiative of convening an international conference to assist reconstruction in Georgia and, related to that, of appointing an EUSR for the crisis in Georgia (European Council 2008). Considering the troubled relationship between the EU and Russia it was remarkable that on the same day that the European Council condemned Russia for recognizing the independence of the two Georgian separatist regions, 1 September 2008, President Medvedev signed a decree for the deployment of a Russian military contingent to the EU mission in Chad and the Central African Republic (Kremlin 2008c). Hence, in spite of the Georgian conflict, the EU and Russia continued to cooperate, as was demonstrated by Medvedev’s decision to join the EU military mission in Chad, and by the decision of the EU to resume talks

on a new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement in November 2008. Nevertheless, the Georgian conflict, in combination with another Russian gas dispute with Ukraine in January 2009, affecting EU members as well, negatively influenced the EU–Russian relationship, especially regarding Moscow’s reliability as partner.

Concerning NATO the Georgian conflict was partly related to the perspective of membership of this alliance for Georgia and Ukraine, as announced at NATO’s Bucharest summit of April 2008. This decision was heavily protested by Russia (NATO 2008b). After the conflict with Georgia, NATO froze most military and political cooperation with Moscow. On 19 August 2008, NATO’s foreign ministers declared that Russia’s military action had been disproportionate and inconsistent with its peacekeeping role, as well as incompatible with the principles of peaceful conflict resolution set out in the Helsinki Final Act, and with the cooperation agreements with the alliance. They called on Russia to take immediate action to withdraw its troops from the areas it was supposed to leave under the six-point agreement signed by President Saakashvili and President Medvedev. Furthermore, the implications of Russia’s military actions for the NATO–Russia relationship were that NATO could not continue with business as usual, and that cooperation in the NATO–Russia Council (NRC) was suspended until Russia withdrew its armed forces from Georgia. Towards Georgia, NATO decided different sorts of immediate relief and support, as well as forming a NATO–Georgia Commission, to strengthen cooperation (NATO 2008a). Convening a meeting of NATO’s highest organ, the North Atlantic Council, in Tbilisi mid-September 2008, was a clear demonstration of moral support (‘NATO/Georgia’ 2008). However, in December 2008, NATO’s foreign ministers refrained from granting the MAP status to Georgia and Ukraine, but instead to bring them closer to that step by encouraging political and military reforms via the NATO–Ukraine and NATO–Georgia Commissions (Blitz 2008). The ups and downs in the relationship between NATO and Russia since August 2008 have demonstrated that the Georgian conflict had distressed the long-term cooperation between these parties (see: Chapter 4, ‘NATO’).

### ***Assessment: outcome of Moscow’s policy objectives***

In the part of the chapter ‘Moscow’s policy objectives’ the entries of Russia security documents were discussed which can be related to Moscow’s subsequent political and military action against Georgia. With the outcome of the August 2008 Russian–Georgian conflict these standpoints will now be reviewed and supplemented by other statements of the Russian security documents (2007–2008) which became relevant to the developments in the aftermath of the conflict (MID 2007a, 2008a; Kremlin 2008a):

- coercive measures with the use of military force in circumvention of the UN Charter and UNSC undermines international law and enlarges conflict space, including the area around Russia;

- unilateral action strategy destabilizes the international situation, provokes tensions and arms race, and exacerbates interstate differences;
- the Russia–NATO Council has become an important factor for stability and prediction of the relations with the Alliance;
- the EU is Russia’s principal partner in Europe;
- separatism and ethno-nationalism are threats to national security;
- promote in every possible way the CSTO as a key instrument to maintain stability and ensure security in the CIS;
- further strengthening of the SCO;
- the development of friendly relations with China forms an important track of Russia’s foreign policy in Asia;
- due to the demands of modern technology the strategy for the build-up of the armed forces must be reviewed to acquire an army that can cope with the most sophisticated demands.

With its military campaign against Georgia, Russia was capable of achieving most of its political-strategic and military objectives, above all the enduring loss of Abkhazia and South Ossetia for Georgia. However, the envisaged regime change in Tbilisi, the removal of Saakashvili, did not take place. Nevertheless, Moscow demonstrated its leverage as – at least – a regional power, capable of changing the geopolitical circumstances in its direct neighbourhood, as claimed in the security documents. But the war against Georgia also had serious counter effects, of which the consequences distressed this triumph. *First of all*, it affected Russia’s adherence to international law, as recurrently claimed in its security documents. The invasion of Georgia, certainly of Georgia proper outside the separatist regions, was in violation of the UN Charter. Furthermore, Russia by its veto right prevented the UNSC from condemning its military action. Whereas Moscow had criticized the West for its unilateral and internationally unlawful military operations on Kosovo against Serbia as well as the one against Iraq, it now acted in a similar way, thus losing its claimed priority to international law. What is more, the legalistic argument against Western security policy had lost its ground. *Second*, Moscow must have foreseen that its invasion of Georgia would damage its relations with the West, but perhaps did not anticipate that NATO and EU would suspend (high-level) relations for considerable time. Moreover, protection of the rights and interests of the Russian citizens in South Ossetia was used as one of the grounds for attacking Georgia. This alarmed especially the Baltic states, with Russian minorities on their territories. The result was that collective defence returned on the agenda of NATO. Hence, the warfare and corresponding instability of summer 2008 did prevent NATO from granting the Membership Action Plan to Georgia (and Ukraine), a clear objective of Moscow, but had longer term consequences for its relationship with NATO and the EU (see: Chapter 4, ‘Russia’s approach towards other international actors: foes’). This went against the stated standpoints on cooperation with these two Western organizations. *Third*, the warfare also had economic connotations. Because of some damage brought to energy infrastructure, the conflict showed the vulnera-

bility of the energy transit lines through Georgia, as an alternative to Russia's energy resources. This made this alternative less attractive, especially for Western energy companies. However, the conflict influenced Russia's economy as well. Moscow did probably not expect the offshoot that its military action would discourage foreign investments, thus affecting its economic strength. *Fourth*, the Kremlin had expected their preferential security partners, as mentioned in the key security papers – China and the other members and observers of the SCO and CSTO – to support its military action as well as to follow Russia in its recognition of independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. However, Russia's allies only modestly expressed support for the military campaign and, with China in particular, abstained from recognition of the independence of the regions, because of their domestic problems with separatist movements threatening stability (see: Chapter 4 'SCO and CSTO; China'). *Fifth*, justifying the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia – administrative subjects of a lower level than the former Soviet republics – was counter to the agreements made at the formation of the CIS. Furthermore, by doing so, Moscow also 'invited' separatist groupings in its own unstable North Caucasus region, e.g. in Chechnya, Ingushetia and Dagestan, to follow a similar course. This was in contrast with the entry of separatism as a security threat, traceable in most Russian security documents, and, consequently, encouraged the disintegration of the Russian Federation. *Sixth*, although a military victory, the operation also revealed a number of shortcomings of Russia's armed forces, putting in doubt Moscow's military capabilities to conduct power projection, in line with its claimed status of a resurgent superpower. This weakness of Russia's conventional forces was already noticed in some of the key security documents.

In a broader perspective Moscow's strategic objectives at the regional (South Caucasian) level corresponded with those of the (inter)national level – as laid down in the security documents – explaining for instance Russia's return as a (super)power, (military) protection of Russians abroad and justifying a sphere of influence (in the former Soviet area). In line with these conceptual aims, the use of military action against Georgia was probably based on a combination of internal and external goals. At home the objective was to maintain support for the leadership of the Kremlin, and abroad to present Russia as a resurgent great power. Given the subsequent encouragement for separatism in the North Caucasus, as well as initial fierce response from EU and NATO and the lack of support from CSTO and SCO, neither objective was accomplished. Russia became isolated by friends and foes. Thus, although on first sight Moscow gained a glorious military victory over Georgia and a political triumph over Tbilisi's Western allies, this alleged success was affected by the negative consequences for Russia's international stature and, internally, for the cohesion of the state.



## **6 Assessment of Russia's foreign security policy (2000–2009) and outlook beyond Medvedev**

In this concluding chapter the following themes will be dealt with. First, an assessment of the foreign security policy during the presidencies of Putin and Medvedev will be presented. The following parts describe the recent and future relationship between Russia and the West. What could the West do to improve the relations with Moscow whilst ensuring its own interests? Next, a SWOT analysis of Russia's domestic and international security status will be offered. Finally, based upon the SWOT analysis, this chapter will introduce scenarios portraying Russia's development in the next decades and the effects they might have on Moscow's external security policy and its relationship with the West.

### **Conclusions on the external security policy of Putin and Medvedev**

#### ***Putin's steadfastness in foreign security policy***

##### *First term (2000–2004): pro-Western course*

After the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, Putin took a pro-Western course. The newly appeasing and indulgent Russian attitude towards the West was possibly related to the great value Putin attached to improving the economy. In the long run Putin desired to strengthen Russia's international position, not excluding military means to achieve this. However, Putin realized quite well, in contrast to many Soviet leaders, that influence on a global level was more than ever based on economic leverage. Taking this into account, his rapprochement towards the West, and especially towards Europe, did not seem strange. Closer cooperation with the EU could serve more than one objective of Russian policy. First, economic cooperation with Europe would most likely bring about growth of the Russian economy. An increase in economic weight subsequently would result in strengthening of Russia's international position. Second, closer ties with the EU could possibly also weaken the relationship between Europe and the USA, even more so if Russia would be supporting, or participating in, the further development of an independent European security policy with its own military power, which almost certainly would be in contrast with American interests. A



weakening or even a split within the Western camp would of course be beneficial for Russian influence in the international arena. The Iraqi war of 2003 provided Putin with such a desired situation, with France and Germany opposing the invasion of the USA and the UK. This development promoted the Russian foreign policy principle of multipolarity as the foundation of international politics, reinforcing Russia's status as a great or superpower. Vladimir Putin had to balance the pressure of his security establishment with reinforcing Russia's economic capacity. Consequently, after 2000 the above all pragmatic President Putin continued manoeuvring between the traditional Russian imperial thinking, in terms of power and influence, as well as recognizing Russia's new post Cold War status, resulting in cooperation with the West.

*Second term (2004–2008): assertive stance to the West*

In his second term in office as President, Putin changed course, from a mainly cooperative stance to an assertive stance to the West. The most likely reasons for this change of course were twofold. First, considering his fierce reaction, Putin considered the regime changes of Georgia (2003) and Ukraine (2004) and their subsequent interest in joining Western organizations as unacceptable. A continuing line in Russian external policy has always been that Russia has a legitimate influence in the former Soviet area, in which other actors, such as the West, would not be tolerated. Furthermore, swapping over of former Soviet republics to the West could result in a domino effect, which was considered to be a threat for Russia's national security. Second, in Putin's second term, due to the high prices for oil and gas, the revenues of energy resources had strengthened Russia's economy to such an extent that Moscow could advance in an international security policy further away and thus less dependent on its (economic) ties with the West. This was for instance demonstrated by strengthening ties with like-minded states, such as the allies in CSTO and SCO and by signing a strategic partnership with China. Conversely, against the West this more independent stance was revealed by fulminating against the US/UK invasion of Iraq in 2003, in opposition to NATO enlargement (especially of the Baltic states in 2004 and the prospect of membership for Georgia and Ukraine), as well as against the US missile shield. This policy was also meant to promote recognition of Russia's (regained) status of great or superpower. A typical example of Russian external security policy was Putin's course of action in topics such as the CFE Treaty, nuclear deterrence and the US missile defence system. These three issues demonstrated recurrence of traditional mindset and policy steps by Moscow, such as statements on encircling of Russia (with military bases and the US missile shield), fear for the alien (the alleged threat of the US missile shield and the West's refusal to sign the Adapted CFE Treaty) and Russia's superiority (nuclear deterrent affected by the US shield, introduction of 'invincible' nuclear missiles as retaliation). Other traditional aspects of Russian security policy visible in these topics were attempts to split the West (by proclaiming the anti-missile system as a threat to Europe) and coercion (by threats of suspending the CFE

Treaty, pointing nuclear weapons against Europe, deploying nuclear missiles in Kaliningrad and by cutting energy transports to the Czech Republic after its acceptance of the US shield).

### *Assessment*

On first hand there seemed to be a watershed between Putin's first and second term, with regard to a pro and subsequent contra standpoint towards the West. Nonetheless, Putin's constructive attitude towards the West in his first term was only based on his statements and economic necessity; the security documents had consistently contained anti-Western entries, e.g. considering NATO and the USA as threats. This was not a radical watershed in security policy but rather a temporary and opportunistic change of course, anticipating return to the steadfast line when possible. Hence, the policy change in Putin's second term from a cooperative to an assertive stance to the West should be considered as a return to the desired and fixed line of policy as constantly described in Moscow's security documents.

### *Medvedev's continuity in external security policy*

Under President Vladimir Putin the Kremlin had unfolded an anti-Western stance, for example by condemning NATO expansion, unilateral and dominating policies and the deployment of a missile shield, and by suspending the CFE Treaty. President Dmitry Medvedev continued this tough stance in security, which was reflected in the theory of his security policy, as well as in its practice. Nevertheless, in the course of this continuity of Putin's forceful attitude in security policy Medvedev did make some personal initiatives. As to the structure of policy, Medvedev for instance proposed a new European security architecture, aiming to remove the 'Cold War vestiges'. This proposal was a logical next step in rejecting Western security organizations. Next, he launched (updated) major security documents and released a dedicated strategy for the Arctic region. Furthermore, in support of the assertive external security policy, Medvedev announced huge plans of military modernization, which had remained absent during Putin's reign. And in implementing his policy, Medvedev proved the continuity of a firm stance by applying military force in an armed conflict with Georgia and by conducting another Russian gas conflict with Ukraine.

### *Like-minded security thinking and policy actions*

Although security documents are highly declamatory and often propagandistic, the following comparative approach demonstrates that they are of value in assessing Moscow's security policy of today and tomorrow. Concerning the structure of foreign security policy, Putin's security documents of 2000–2008 revealed a number of characteristics that would return in the foreign and security policy documents and statements of his successor, Dmitry Medvedev. A *first*

recurring element was that the 2003 Defence White Paper (DWP) already stressed the importance of establishing well-trained and modern equipped mainly professional armed forces with a high level of combat readiness, capable of conducting high-tech warfare, fast and worldwide. These entries were repeated in Putin's 'Strategy 2020' speech (2008) and were to be the foundation of the military reforms announced by Medvedev in the aftermath of the Georgian conflict, which were also laid down in his National Security Strategy (NSS) of May 2009. A *second* continuing aspect was the enumeration of threats coming from the West, of NATO and the USA in particular. A *third* characteristic, only mentioned in Putin's 2007 Overview of Foreign Policy (OFP), which was also dominant in Medvedev's security thinking, was the developments in Kosovo and the separatist regions of Georgia, which in 2008 – because of Kosovo's independence and the Georgia conflict – brought about a serious deterioration in the relationship between Russia and the West. *Fourth*, Putin's second term documents as well Medvedev's 2008 Foreign Policy Concept (FPC) and his 2009 NSS all stressed that Russia was now acting from a position of strength which enabled it not only to play an important role in the international arena, but also to influence its agenda. A *fifth* continuing feature, found in every analysed security document and statement of Putin and Medvedev, was the protection of Russian citizens elsewhere, brought into practice in the Russian–Georgian conflict of August 2008. A *sixth* recurring theme, mentioned in Putin's second term security papers and in Medvedev's documents, was energy (resources and security) as an essential element of Russia's international stance and a ground for conflict caused by actors short of these resources. Gas conflicts with Ukraine and others, under Putin (2005/2006) and Medvedev (2008/2009), would prove the continuity of the importance of this 'energy weapon' as a major policy instrument of Moscow. With regard to implementation of policy, actions of Medvedev were also usually concurring with those of Putin. In addition to the aforementioned examples of policy action, the prolonged vigorous posture of the Kremlin, now under the leadership of Dmitry Medvedev, has been expressed in demonstrations of military force against Moscow's 'foes'. For example by threatening European states involved in the US missile shield programme, by conducting strategic nuclear bomber flights and naval exercises, by reinstalling the traditional military parade on Red Square and by starting or resuming military cooperation with traditional friends – countries 'hostile' to the West – such as Libya, Syria, Cuba and Venezuela. Even when Russia became severely affected by the international financial crisis, as of the end of 2008, the Kremlin only temporarily changed its assertive attitude towards the West into a more moderate one. Hence, Moscow's security documents from 2000–2008 expressed a persistent line in foreign and security thinking and policy practice of Putin and Medvedev.

### *Energy as an essential instrument of power*

Along with the rise in oil and gas prices, President Putin gradually realized the importance of energy (resources and security) as an economic, political and

military tool of leverage. In order to exploit this instrument he took economic, human resources, military, policy-thinking and policy-execution measures. First, the state's role in the energy sector had to be consolidated. This objective was reached by taking back assets from private owners, such as Yukos in 2003, and by limiting the role of foreign owners of Russian energy production. By 2007 the Kremlin controlled some 30 per cent of oil and 87 per cent of the nation's natural gas production (Godzimirski 2009). In addition to gaining control over the ownership of the energy assets, Putin also demanded to have personal control over the energy sector, by appointing state officials in key positions of vital enterprises. On top of this he nominated Gazprom Chairman Dmitry Medvedev as his successor for the presidency, whilst as the other former 'crown prince' Minister of Defence Sergei Ivanov. Hence, Gazprom and the armed forces, i.e. the energy and military power tools, became personally closely aligned. Another evidence of the 'brotherhood' of these two state instruments was that the army had received tasking in energy security. Regarding policy-thinking, energy (resources and security) for the first time became part of security documents, i.e. in the Overview of Foreign Policy (2007) and the Strategy 2020 (2008). Finally, Putin brought energy as a power instrument into practice by cutting energy deliveries for different reasons, to Ukraine (2005/2006: Coloured Revolution/Western aspirations), Georgia (2006: Coloured Revolution/Western aspirations), Estonia (2007: war statue removal) and the Czech Republic (2008: missile shield agreement). Furthermore, he started new pipeline projects – Blue, Nord and South Stream – to divert from the Ukrainian transit route and to discourage Western alternatives: BTC, BTE and Nabucco.

Medvedev has basically continued the energy power tool policy of Putin. On the theoretical side of policy Medvedev – stronger than his predecessor – addressed energy issues in his security documents, i.e. successively in the 2008 FPC, the 2008 Arctic Strategy and the 2009 NSS. The NSS openly declared that Moscow considers energy resources as a tool of leverage on other states (Khranchikhin 2009b). On the side of implementation of policy Medvedev fought a gas dispute with Ukraine (January 2009), just like Putin had done in 2005/2006. Furthermore, he continued Putin's line of building alternative gas pipelines (Nord and South Stream) to Northern and Southern Europe, in order to make the troubled transit route through Ukraine to Europe superfluous and to counter Western attempts to divert from Russian pipelines by creating alternatives, such as BTC, BTE and Nabucco. This was for instance done by (efforts of) contractually binding energy resources from Central Asian states. The August 2008 Russian–Georgian conflict was probably also part of this proactive Russian policy, since the energy transit routes from Azerbaijan via Georgia to Europe proved to be in a conflict area, which would diminish their attractiveness to Western energy companies. Consequently, power policy upon energy resources, as introduced in Putin's second term, was even reinforced under Medvedev as a vital element of Russian foreign security policy.

## **The West and Russia: how to move on?**

Although the current relationship between Russia and the West should not be regarded as a new Cold War, it is evident that the interaction between both parties has suffered from a number of obstacles that need to be lifted. Analysis of the consequences of the Georgia conflict and events in NATO–Russia cooperation offers some options for an improved relationship between the West and Russia. Such options can be found in the field of energy security, on Afghanistan and in cooperation on the political-strategic as well as on the military-operational level.

### ***Energy security***

On first sight, the topic of energy security portrays exclusively a hostile attitude of both players towards each other, as a result of Russia's energy dominance and the West's energy dependence from Russia. The West is looking for energy diversity in the aftermath of Russia's recurring use of its energy weapon, i.e. cut offs, against pro-Western states in what it considers its sphere of influence, e.g. Georgia and Ukraine, which also affected energy deliveries to NATO/EU states. The West tries to establish this diversity and decreased dependence from Russia by creating alternative pipelines to obtain Central Asian energy sources via Azerbaijan and Georgia. However, Russia is reluctant to accept the fact that energy producers in the former Soviet area, such as Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, are entitled to follow their own course in trading their energy resources, also with NATO/EU member states. Moreover, Moscow wants to get rid of its dependence on transit of its gas through the Ukrainian pipeline network and tries to get Western and Southern European states interested in constructing alternative pipelines through these regions, the so-called 'Nord Stream' 'South Stream' and 'Blue Stream' (see: Chapter 4, 'Energy as instrument of power'). For NATO, energy security – due to the increasing global demand and the danger of crises from a decrease in supply levels – will gain further weight as a topic on its agenda. Energy security is likely to be a crucial element of future NATO–Russia relations, either positively or negatively, or even both at the same time. The role of the military in energy security – national armed forces and combined forces of alliances such as NATO and CSTO – is increasing at a rapid pace. The main actors, Russia and the USA, have to decide whether their energy security policy will be one of confrontation or one of partnership. In diminishing its energy dependence from Russia, by obtaining oil and gas from elsewhere and by replacing carbonate by alternative durable energy resources, NATO and EU can also decrease the tensions with Russia in this domain, because Russian opposition then becomes less effective. Furthermore, international terrorism and piracy – such as off the coast of Somalia – is a threat to Western but also to Russian energy infrastructure. These international developments offer possibilities for joint action in energy security of both actors, which can also have a positive effect on their relationship.

***Afghanistan***

Around Afghanistan, NATO and Russia, and its allies in the CSTO and SCO, face the same threats: terrorism by Taliban and Al Qaida and drugs trafficking. Russia, as the leading member state of the CSTO and together with China on the forefront in the SCO, could promote a joint effort of these two Eastern (security) organizations to support NATO in Afghanistan. First of all, this could be achieved by a military contribution, by dispatching troop contingents to ISAF, which would strengthen the military force in the war against the Taliban. However, actual military cooperation between NATO and CSTO/SCO seems still to be out-of-the-way because of political sensitivities. Alternatively, other options for political and socio-economic cooperation of CSTO/SCO with NATO, for instance in reconstruction projects in Afghanistan and in the fight against drugs are also imaginable. The SCO states have claimed their primacy in Central Asian regional security, but so far action by the SCO of countering the threats from Afghanistan has not taken place. By cooperating in and around Afghanistan, NATO and Russia, in the latter's prominent role in the CSTO and SCO, could reduce mutual suspicion and distrust and improve stability and security in Afghanistan and elsewhere in the Central Asian region. An example of this East–West cooperation on Afghanistan was that Russia and other CSTO/SCO member states have granted NATO transit rights to transport goods for the ISAF operation in Afghanistan through its territory. Furthermore, Russia did not withdraw this permission during the deterioration of relations with NATO resulting from the Georgia conflict. This is a good example of structural and mutual beneficial cooperation on Afghanistan that could be followed by other initiatives.

***Political-strategic and military-operational cooperation***

Both parties can make efforts to improve relations on the *political-strategic* level. From its side Russia should remove the anti-Western entries from its security documents and refrain from anti-NATO/USA statements. On the other side, unless there is a military necessity to continue this, NATO should withdraw its air protection (Quick Reaction Alert) over the Baltic states, after training and equipping these allies to perform this task themselves. Furthermore, the USA and NATO should abstain from deploying forces near Russia. However such political-strategic changes are difficult to achieve and if so, they will take considerable time. In the mean time *military-operational* cooperation comes forward as an option for improved relations which can be implemented more easily; and is – for instance by the example of arms control inspections – a proven confidence building measure. Therefore, it would be helpful if Russia ended its suspension of the CFE Treaty, in order that mutual inspections can be restored, which will foster confidence and trust on both sides. Increased military cooperation in due course might also encourage progress and strengthening of political-strategic ties. With regard to military-operational opportunities, both parties



share good experiences: Russia's contribution to NATO's peacekeeping operations in Bosnia (SFOR) and Kosovo (KFOR) and in NATO's Article 5 maritime operation 'Active Endeavour' to fight international terrorism, as well as joint theatre missile defence exercises. These examples of military-operational cooperation could be expanded with other joint operations: e.g. cooperation between NATO (ISAF) and the Russian-led CSTO in Afghanistan against the narcotics trade; joint peacekeeping exercises; information exchanges by commanders and military-academic lecturers of operational experiences, for example in irregular warfare and operational doctrine (e.g. Western concepts such as initial entry, three-block warfare, expeditionary use of forces and the intertwining of internal and external security); as well as exchanges of (cadet) officers in training modules and of military academic staff in lecture postings. In political talks as well as exchanges of military academies a topic could be the statements in Russian security documents on threats from the West. To discuss these in public could clear the skies. Such cooperation in political-strategic and military-operational dimensions promotes international stability as well as a decrease in mutual suspicion and distrust.

### ***Improved relationship***

A primary prerequisite for improved relations is that Russia and the West should well consider the sensitivities of the other side and take each other seriously. Furthermore, Russia should realize that US policy is not necessarily the same as NATO or EU policy. Conversely, the West should accept the fact that Russia is 'back in business' in the international arena, whether they like it or not. Also, the USA, EU and NATO should carefully consider their actions in the East to avoid unnecessary conflicts with Russia, as is the case with NATO's air defence of the Baltic states and was the case with Western disapproving responses to the Russian protests against the removal of the war statue in Tallinn in April 2007. But at the same time the West should continue guarding its own values and interests, regardless of whether they are rejected by the Kremlin. Since the problems between Russia and the West at the higher political-strategic level are likely to continue, emphasis should be placed at cooperation at the lower, 'grassroots', level in particular, e.g. by military (cadets) and civilian (students) representatives of the younger generation. In such a way, by fostering confidence and security among youth on both sides, the relationship between the West and Russia could be improved from the bottom-up. Moreover, pertaining to cooperation at all levels between Russia and the West applies that this should concentrate on mutual beneficial, non-political sensitive and practical projects.

### **Current security status of Russia: a SWOT analysis**

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis will be used to depict what the current security status of Russia is.<sup>1</sup> The SWOT analysis is used for two purposes. First, for examining whether the objective of obtaining



the status of superpower – lost after the demise of the USSR – was regained by its legal successor, the Russian Federation. It is important to analyse this assumption because all key security documents of Putin and Medvedev since 2007 (2007 OFP, 2008 Strategy 2020, 2008 FPC and 2009 NSS) have claimed such a status of a resurgent global power (see: Chapters 1 and 3, ‘Structure of foreign security policy’/‘Security policy documents’). Second, the SWOT analysis will be applied for providing a forecast of Moscow’s future external security policy. With regard to *Strengths*, the listed entries are mainly how Moscow perceives itself, which is not necessarily correct if the facts are taken into account. Conversely, the data under *Weaknesses* are mostly those of foreign experts and statistics, since the Kremlin primarily considers itself to be strong in all aspects. The same applies to *Opportunities*, which are mainly those policy options that we in the West deem best for Russia, whereas the Kremlin might think differently. *Threats* are also seen primarily from a Western point of view, since traditional Russian security thinking is not always concurrent with the actual situation. It would be naive to limit this SWOT study to *military* and *international political* security aspects, since security manifests itself also in *social* and *economic* dimensions. These four parameters of security contain, amongst others, the following aspects. In the *social* dimension we encounter leadership, politics, safety, democracy, freedoms, prosperity, health and demography. In the *economic* field development, economic growth and energy sources come to the fore. The *military* area characterizes itself by features such as capabilities, combat readiness and arms export. And in the *diplomatic and political* sphere, alliances (CSTO, SCO, BRIC) and relations (NATO, EU, OSCE, G8, CIS and bilateral) are revealed.

### ***Strengths: domestic***

With regard to the *social* dimension, President Medvedev and premier Putin have consolidated their positions in power. Putin’s ‘vertikal’ policy of centralized power has resulted in the Kremlin now – other than under President Yeltsin in the 1990s – with representatives at all administrative levels in the whole country firmly in control of the federation. These representatives come mostly from Putin’s circles of security services and from the armed forces. There is no effective control by Parliament on the President, nor on his regional representatives. In the meanwhile the private owners of energy and other strategic enterprises are either imprisoned or have fled abroad. In this respect, there are strong indications that the judiciary is also subjected to the executive and consequently has lost its independent status. Energy giant Gazprom does not only own oil and gas resources but also possesses mass-media companies. The number of independent newspapers has become very limited. Banks were subordinated to the ‘vertikal’ as well, and foreign non-governmental organizations were often banned. In his second term Putin assured the future of his strong leadership by appointing at the end of 2005 two ‘crown princes’ as Vice-Premiers, i.e. then Minister of Defence Sergei Ivanov and Gazprom Director Dmitry Medvedev.<sup>2</sup>

Surely not by coincidence these crown princes originated from Rusland's main power instruments: respectively that of the military and security apparatus and that of the energy sector. Eventually Putin chose Medvedev to be his successor as President as of May 2008. In most areas of power the dominant position of Dmitry Medvedev and Vladimir Putin and their political party 'United Russia' is indisputable and can be continued for a long time, certainly after parliament has prolonged the presidential term from four to six years (Levy 2008).

As to the *economic* field, after Putin's inauguration as President in 2000 most of the time the Russian economy developed quite well, with an average increase of approximately 7 per cent. However, this strength was mainly made up by energy revenues, as a result of a strong increase in prices. Russia is the largest gas producer in the world and also has the largest gas reserves. With regard to oil production Moscow finds itself in second position of the global rating and eighth when it comes to oil reserves. The economic growth led to a budget surplus with which Russia has paid its foreign debts (Nationmaster.com 2009e; CIA 2009; IISS 2006: 150). Nonetheless, as of autumn 2008 this successful account has changed with the global financial crisis. Already in November 2008 Russia had lost more than \$150 billion of its energy-founded financial reserves, which in August still amounted to \$600 billion. With the financial crisis going on and considerable drops in oil and gas prices, the negative effects on the development of the Russian economy will rise further. As a result of this the danger of social unrest looms (Lowe 2008b; Charap and Kuchins 2008; Zarakhovich 2008).

### ***Strengths: abroad***

As to the *economic* field, the combination of military and energy leverage is also present in discussing Russia's forceful attitude in international policy. Since the end of 2005 Moscow has used energy as an instrument of power – for economic as well as also political reasons – against Ukraine, Georgia and Belarus in particular. With the EU, Russia conducts consultations from a strong position, as the major energy supplier of most EU countries, demanding access to the European pipeline system but refusing the same right to the EU (Scollon 2006).

In the *military* dimension Medvedev and Putin have responded antagonistically against the American plans for deployment of troops and of an anti-missile site in Eastern Europe. Consequently, a concept for a new Russian military doctrine as well as the May 2009 National Security Strategy (NSS) mentioned the USA and the NATO as main threats (Solovyev 2007; Gareyev 2007; SCRF 2009b). The armed forces constitute – in theory – together with the energy weapon the most important international power instruments of the Kremlin. Russia has some one million MOD troops – after China the largest armed forces in the world – and in addition to these, also some 400,000 other troops of the so-called 'power ministries', such as the security service (FSB) and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (IISS 2006: 154, 161–2; Nationmaster.com 2009c). Putin and

Medvedev have allocated billions in strengthening the armed forces, especially in modernization of the nuclear weapon arsenal, which advances Russia's international status. In formal figures since 2000 the Russian defence budget has been multiplied by ten, from US\$5 billion to approximately US\$50 billion in 2009 ('Record' 2008; Felgenhauer 2008d). However, in these numbers not all budget posts of Russia's security expenditures are taken into account, excluding those for pensions, the troops of the power ministries, turnovers of weapon export, R&D and purchasing power. For this reason, Western security experts estimate the real defence and security expenditures three to four times higher than those officially stated (IISS 2006: 153). According to this calculation, Russia holds third place in the world ranking, after the USA and China. Moreover, Russia has recently developed itself from fourth to first spot in arms sales, thus being the largest weapon supplier in the world, of some US\$6 billion per year (Nationmaster.com 2009b). The purchasers of Russia's arms also provide an interesting picture; first in line are China, India and Iran, which gather with Russia in the SCO.

In the *political* area, in 2005 a number of significant developments in the Central Asian region took place, with consequences for international power relations. The beginning of this decade – especially after the terror attacks of '9/11' – demonstrated an increasing influence of Western (or better: American) influence in Central Asia, at the cost of the influence traditionally exercised by Russia in this region. However, in 2005 a turn took place in this development. That year showed a clear improvement in Chinese–Russian relations. Evidence of this was found in settlement of the border disputes between the two states, the fact that Russia agreed to provide China with oil and gas, China remaining the best customer of Russian arms and equipment, joint statements on rejecting (American) dominance of the international arena, as well as conducting for the first time in 40 years joint military exercises (Blua 2005; 'Putin stresses' 2005; 'Russian, Chinese 2005; Haas 2006a). Furthermore, Russia and China have taken the lead in building the SCO, which might evolve into a security organization of the type of NATO, although such a level of integrated security structure would probably still demand some more decades. The SCO, sometimes indicated as 'NATO of the East', has four nuclear powers – Russia, China, India, Pakistan – with Iran possibly as a future fifth one, and includes almost half of the world population and large energy producers such as Russia, Kazakhstan and Iran.<sup>3</sup> With these political, military and economic capacities the SCO could develop into a forceful opponent of the West in the Central Asia region and the Pacific. Since Russia – together with China – plays a leading role in the SCO, for Moscow this organization forms an effective asset of its foreign and security policy. The assertive line in Moscow's foreign and security policy was also the outcome of domestic developments, i.e. internal problems, which have had consequences for Russia's international position. For instance, after the terror attack on a theatre in Moscow ('Nord-Ost' October 2002), the Kremlin proclaimed its willingness to fight (sponsors of) terrorism with its military instrument if necessary also abroad. In this case not by committing troops, but by conducting attacks with precision

guided weapons on foreign training camps or other targets of international terrorism ('Defence minister says' 2002). In doing so, Russia granted itself the right of offensive military action abroad, which goes against international law. After the subsequent large terror attack, at a school in Beslan (September 2004), Russia for the first time after a domestic terror attack also addressed the international community. Russia requested the UN to convene an extraordinary meeting of the UN Security Council (UNSC). At this meeting of the UNSC Russia asked for and received an unconditional condemnation of the terror attack in Beslan. This condemnation provided Russia with the recognition of Chechen terrorism as an element of international terrorism, for the purpose of justifying Russian military actions in Chechnya.

### ***Weaknesses: domestic***

Concerning the *socio-economic* situation, Russia is the largest country in the world, but the demographic development is very worrisome. At present the population size decreases with some 700,000 per year. If this development continues it means that in the year 2050 the population will have decreased from 140 million in 2009 to 110 million, thus almost a quarter less. The decrease in population is reflected in the average life expectancy of 59 years for men and of 72 years for women. In comparison, in the Netherlands the average life expectancy for men and women is 79 years. Another striking aspect is that in global ratings Russia takes a high spot on the number of suicides: the second country in the world for men and the sixth for women. These socio-economic figures indicate that in spite of the high gas and oil profits of this decade for Russians life has been rather difficult. Russia takes second place in the ranking of industrialized countries of which the population lives under half of the average income; approximately 20 per cent of the Russians live in poverty (Nationmaster.com 2009a; Population Reference Bureau 2008). In addition to unemployment, miserable circumstances exist in housing and medical facilities. The traditional alcohol problem, AIDS and the earlier-mentioned high suicide rate are causes for the serious drop in population. This, for its part, will create problems in productivity and therefore also for the economy. In spite of the energy revenues Russia's economic performance is not impressive. On the global list of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Russia ranks only twelfth, under Spain on nine and above the Netherlands on 17; and with regard to Gross National Income, seventeenth place, just above Belgium on 18, but with the Netherlands on 13 (Nationmaster.com 2009d). That is at least remarkable for a country that measures 500 times the Netherlands. However, even this ranking is at stake. The ageing of the industrial infrastructure will have a negative effect on Russia's economic performance. Furthermore, the economy has been focused primarily on energy resources. The fall in demand and also of energy prices, as a result of the financial crisis, but possibly also a breakthrough in durable alternative energy sources in the future, might have structural negative effects on the Russian economy. Given these conditions and developments, the aim of becoming number five on

the global ranking of GDP, as mentioned in the 2009 NSS, seems to be quite unrealistic (SCRF 2009b).

Also in other areas, such as law and order, domestic weaknesses of Russia come to the fore. The hostage actions of 'Nord-Ost' and 'Beslan', carried out by Chechen warriors, have had a large impact on security thinking, for the authorities as well as for the population. The Russian press described the consequences of 'Nord-Ost' as the Russian '9/11'. These acts of terror were a test case for Putin. Now, he had to show that his firm attitude in the Chechen conflict would also lead to decisive action. The hostage takings ended with the death of most of the hostage takers but also of hundreds of hostages. Putin's structural solution of the 'Chechen problem' was mainly military and not socio-economic. The policy concepts resulting from the hostage actions, such as anti-terror legislation, underlined military and political measures. In general these policy principles ignored the deeper socio-economic grounds of the conflict, i.e. poverty, unemployment, lack of education, housing and medical supplies (Haas 2005a: 9–11). Putin installed in Chechnya a puppet regime of warlord Ramzan Kadyrov, who has a reputation of ruling ruthlessly. But with the spread of violence, from Chechnya over the North Caucasus, the problem has not been solved (Meyers 2007). The one-sided, violent approach towards Chechnya promoted Islamic extremism, instability and radicalism, which spread itself from Chechnya across the North Caucasus, for example in Ingushetia, North Ossetia, Dagestan and Kabardino Balkariya. That is because also elsewhere in the North Caucasus a breeding ground floor exists for extremism. This region is characterized by organized crime, corruption, unemployment, poverty, inter-ethnic rivalry, lawlessness, chaos and anarchy. The problems in this area undermine federal authority (Blandy 2005). The Kremlin is losing its grip on the North Caucasus, which constitutes a strategic area in the vicinity of Iran and Turkey. A weak North Caucasian region forms a fragile belly for Russia on the whole.

The *military* is another course of concern and weakness. The Russian armed forces are not as powerful and strong as they look on first sight by their numbers. Russia's army is faced with many problems. Until recently almost no investments had been made in procurement, which has resulted in for the most part obsolete arms and equipment, which will take many years of investments to solve ('Russian forces' 2006; Myasnikov 2006a). In addition to shortcomings in material, traditionally the armed forces are confronted with many problems in the area of human resources: its personnel. The social circumstances of the Russian military are rather bad, for example inadequate salaries, pensions and living conditions. The number of suicides is considerable. Moreover, the army has to cope with large numbers of deserters – resulting from violent hazing of conscripts and severe living standards – a lack of qualified officers, a growing shortage of potential conscripts (due to health problems, population decline, as well as a higher demand for recruits resulting from the reduced conscript period from two to one years), low morale, corruption and a lack of training. All these shortcomings cause an insufficient level of combat readiness. In autumn 2008 the Kremlin announced huge plans to improve the armed forces, in arms as well

as in personnel. However, the long-term consequences of the financial crisis, corruption, mismanagement, as well as resentment against military reforms by the generals might obstruct a genuine strengthening of Russia's military power.

### ***Weaknesses: abroad***

Russia's *economic* vigour is at stake because the growth of the economy as a whole was already decreasing before the global financial crisis, but also the arms export, which will go down in the coming years. The financial crisis has demonstrated that the fact that Russia's economy is dominated by energy resources makes it very vulnerable for international price changes of gas and oil, which heavily affect its economic performance. Furthermore, the drop in arms sales is related to the fact that China and India – whether or not legally – are obtaining military technology and developing military industry themselves, as a result of which the need for Russian arms and equipment will decrease ('Alliance with China' 2005).

Russia's *military power* also forms a weakness of Moscow's international posture. Russia's global ambitions – proclaiming its return as a resurgent super-power – require armed forces that are capable of power projection. Such an army must comprise highly qualified expeditionary forces, equipped with sophisticated weaponry, which can rapidly bring troops into action everywhere in the world, but which also has the capacity of conducting asymmetrical warfare against irregular opponents. However, a considerable part of the military elite is still focusing on the war that never began – the large-scale conflict between NATO and the Warsaw Pact – whereas the current threats mainly consist of an irregular nature (Solovyev 2003; Haas 2006b). Since the start of the Russian Federation in 1991 no substantial military reforms or modernization have taken place. The reform of the military apparatus has so far only resulted in reduction of the number of troops and a change in the organization from five services (including strategic missile forces and air defence forces) to three (army, air force and navy) (Haas 2004a: 75–84). Until now, Russia has maintained a large army, for a considerable part consisting of conscripts. Plans to train and equip the armed forces for multipurpose and complex military operations, thus possibly also for power projection, were only unfolded in autumn 2008. Thus, as yet the Russian armed forces can hardly be applied as an effective instrument of power. Even more, taking into account the consequences of the financial crisis and obstruction against the reform plans by the military leadership, it is doubtful whether the ambitious reform plans can be accomplished to remove the weaknesses of Russia's military power.

Additionally, in the area of *political cooperation*, the close relations between China and the Russian Federation could well be of a temporary nature and can therefore also be considered as a weak point. In addition to the alleged theft of Russian military technology China also seeks to affect Russia's energy monopoly having constructed a pipeline directly to Kazakhstan, thus avoiding Russia. In due course this so-called Atasu–Alashanku pipeline will meet some 15 per



cent of China's need for crude oil ('Kazakh-China' 2005; 'Circumventing' 2005). Consequently, after 'using' Russia economically and military-technologically, China may well dump this strategic partner in the long run. Furthermore, the SCO seems to be a spear point but sometimes also a breaking point for Russia's international position. The member states and observers of the SCO often seem to have a lack of constructive, common objectives. For instance, for China, obtaining consuming markets and acquiring energy resources are main targets; for Russia, its image of a superpower; and for the Central Asian regimes, the SCO constitutes their 'life insurance' of security. This is a mixture of possible contradictory interests. An example of the division within the SCO was the lack of support for Russia's recognition of the Georgian separatist regions at its 2008 summit. In the long run conflicting objectives can cause cracks in the SCO. In the end the participants have not too much in common. For instance, which position would Russia take if the armed conflict between India and Pakistan returns?

### ***Opportunities***

To reduce the weaknesses outlined above, covering Russia's domestic as well as its international dimension, the Kremlin has a number of options. Bearing in mind that the following opportunities are derived from a Western perspective, which is not necessarily concurrent with Russian objectives. As to domestic *socio-economic* aspects, Moscow could allocate its oil and gas revenues in support of the socio-economic development of, in the first place, Chechnya, and subsequently, to the remainder of the North Caucasus, and finally to Russia on the whole. In this respect Moscow could invest in for example housing, medical care, youth relief, roads and other infrastructure and projects for the promotion of entrepreneurship. For improvement of the situation in Chechnya, Russia could also make a request to international organizations, for example the UN and the EU, as well as to NGOs, in order to support a policy of socio-economic development with activities in the field of relief and reconstruction. Additionally, Russia's rulers must seek a political solution for this administrative republic, together with the Chechen resistance, instead of the current policy of installing a puppet regime in Grozny, which violently and repressively keeps this region under control. Moscow should grant Chechnya a large degree of autonomy and a government more independent from the Kremlin. Such measures would improve the living circumstances of the population, would reduce the influence of terrorist groups, which weaken not only Chechnya, but also the adjacent federal republics such as North Ossetia, Dagestan and Ingushetia. However, so far the larger part of Russia's political and military elite has considered foreign interference and a political solution of the Chechen problem as a sign of weakness. Again, viewed through Western eyes, with regard to *internal politics*, the recent tendency of increasing authoritarian governance should be replaced by a policy in which democratization and human rights are basics. Domestic democratization not only promotes human rights and well being but also prosperity, for



example because less corruption encourages free entrepreneurship and foreign investors. To encourage recovery from the financial crisis and to advance economic growth it is necessary that the one-sided fixation on energy sources as the centrepiece of the economy is diversified. To this end foreign investors can also play a role, if they are guaranteed that their input will not be taken away from them, as was the case with Shell on Sakhalin (Kramer 2006a).

In the *foreign and security* area after nearly two decades of meaningless military reforms it is high time that Moscow takes radical measures to really modernize and structurally change the armed forces, in such a way that it can cope with present threats and is fit for modern warfare, such as irregular conflicts and expeditionary operations. The February 2007 announced procurement programme, of approx. US\$190 billion up to 2015, as well as the autumn 2008 released military reform plans, offer sufficient possibilities to raise combat readiness to the level that the armed forces would be an effective instrument of power projection ('Russia to downsize' 2008; Felgenhauer 2008c; Naumov 2008). Moreover, pertaining to security cooperation with the West, the Kremlin could encourage this by removing anti-Western rhetoric from its security documents. Nonetheless, the latest policy documents, such as Medvedev's Foreign Policy Concept of 2008 and his 2009 National Security Strategy (NSS), unfortunately show the contrary: prolonged antagonism towards the West. In the same domain, deepened interoperability between Russia and NATO, as a confidence building measure, would enhance Moscow's influence on Western security policy. This could have a moderating influence on the disturbed relationship between 'East and West', as a result of disputing matters such as Russia's 'energy weapon' and America's anti-missile system. As yet there are no signs of Moscow intending to follow such a course of action.

### ***Threats***

The Russian state is confronted with internal and external threats that could undermine its socio-economic and political stability. Whereas Moscow in its security documents, such as the NSS of May 2009, considers threats from the West as eminent, a factual threat analysis provides a rather different picture, with domestic, social-economic dangers as the most prominent. On the topic of *internal threats*, the impact of social decline, such as the drop in population size, could lead to a fall of economic growth. The financial crisis, with consequences such as unemployment, inflation, higher prices for daily commodities, is already leading to social unrest. When the economy was booming Russians were pleased with the reign of the duumvirate Putin/Medvedev, although their democratic rights were increasingly limited. However, with the economy in decline the Russian population is not so satisfied anymore with its leadership. OMON riot police have already been used by the rulers to stop disorder in Moscow and Vladivostok and further repressive action can be expected if economic circumstances deteriorate (Felgenhauer 2009a; Baev 2009). In the longer run, a structural reduction of oil and/or gas prices, or a breakthrough in the area of

alternative pipelines and/or of durable energy sources, would have a tremendous negative impact on Russia's economic performance. Furthermore, Putin's one-sided military 'solution' of Chechnya as well as his and Medvedev's inadequate socio-economic policy with respect to the remainder of the North Caucasus promotes Islamic extremism, corruption, chaos and anarchy, and consequently undermines federal authority in that region. All these internal threats are a danger to the stability and cohesion of the Russian Federation.

Russia experiences *external threats* as well. According to the NSS, NATO and the USA are the principal external threats. However, not the West but China might well be or develop into the factual danger from abroad. In Russia's far east region the population density is low, some seven million Russians, whereas at the same time allegedly a massive (illegal) influx of Chinese takes place, in search of a place to live and work. Although the numbers strongly vary, between 100,000 and four million Chinese immigrants are already staying in Russia's far east (Jansen 2005). While formally denied, Moscow must surely be concerned about maintaining its grip on this region, which in addition to space also provides China with oil and gas under its soil. Furthermore, the Russian leadership realizes quite well that China economically, politically, as well as militarily is a rising great power, and could therefore develop into a threat. China could become a risk for Russia proper, but also to Moscow's sphere of influence, the CIS. Here China is getting more and more active in bilateral cooperation with the Central Asian states, especially in the field of energy. An indication of Russia's fear for China could be that there are signals that in its far east – after a similar build-up was executed in Russia's primary area of instability and insecurity, Chechnya/Dagestan – Moscow allegedly is planning to establish a second joint command of defence forces and security troops of the power ministries (Mukhin 2005). Since in its far east Islamic terrorism is not present, this possible military build-up could only be related to countering a threat from China. Another threat from abroad is that Russia's policy of alignment with pariahs – such as the Palestinian movement Hamas and countries as Cuba, Venezuela, Libya, Syria and Iran – might result in restraint by the West of (economic) cooperation, which could affect Russia's economy. Moreover, this alliance with pariahs could even bring about international isolation of Russia, which is detrimental for Moscow's perceived status of superpower. Russia's military invasion against Georgia in August 2008 and the 2008/2009 gas dispute with Ukraine were already causes of such an isolation, although only temporarily, and mainly in relation to the West, NATO and the EU in particular. Nevertheless, this assertive and anti-Western foreign security policy might entail a threat to Russia's international status.

### ***Assessment: a resurgent superpower?***

The SWOT analysis, above, leads to the following conclusions. The Soviet Union could use its political and military power everywhere in the world, from Eastern Europe to Africa. According to the statements of the Kremlin, as laid

down in all key security documents of Putin and Medvedev since 2007, Russia is back as a powerful nation that plays a decisive role in the international agenda. Is that only a demonstration of rhetoric, or does the Russian Federation of today indeed reflect a return of the power and influence of the USSR at the time? For a continuation and certainly for a strengthening of its position in the international arena Russia must meet a number of *social, economic and military* conditions.

With regard to the *social* circumstances in the domestic scene, the stabilization of the North Caucasus' Achilles heel, by way of a robust socio-economic and democratic development, should be a primary concern to the Kremlin. After such a policy is set in place in this region a similar approach should be applied all over Russia as well. Thus, the concentration of power in the Kremlin should be replaced by a return to a democratic development, control of power agencies and promotion of human rights. Such a course of action would promote not only political but also economic cooperation with the West, which in the longer run – given the need for Western investments to diversify the economy and for counterbalancing China's rise as a superpower – will be a prerequisite for maintaining Russia's international status.

In the *economic* area, to advance increase of Russia's economy, its economic capacity must be broader than one that is dominated by energy sources. As a consequence of the global financial crisis Russia's economy feels the disadvantages of the one-sided structure, and has to endure enormous strikes, which bring about a rapid decrease of its financial reserves. For the required investments the revenues of energy sales could be used. Moreover, good (trade) relations with the West – better than with the aforementioned pariahs – could promote diversification and structural increase of the economy. With such an approach Russia could be able to reach an economic output level that would really justify its membership of the G8, which in its turn would also bring closer its intended superpower status.

In the *military* domain a radical modernization of the armed forces – of materiel, personnel and operational concepts – is inevitable if Russia wants to be taken seriously as a military power, other than – as is currently the case – only derived from its nuclear weapon arsenal. Nevertheless, to this end the Russian generals really must put aside their Cold War scenarios and their stubbornness of maintaining a large army. Instead, by reconstructing the defence forces into smaller but more professional troops, with well-trained staff and modern materiel, capable of conducting operations worldwide. The start to such a conceptual reorientation was given after the Georgia conflict, with ambitious plans for procurement and other programmes for improvement of the combat readiness and usability of the armed forces. That apparent change of mindset of the Russian military leadership, from a 'Cold War' type army to expeditionary forces, as known in the West, is in itself a significant step forwards. However, obstacles – such as a lack of political will, obstruction by the generals, corruption by officers and budget deficits – might thwart the plans towards an army capable of global power projection.

If the described social, economic and military requirements are not met, Russia's self-image of a resurgent strong bear might in reality prove to be a lame duck.

## **Scenarios for the future Russia and consequences for the West**

Based upon the aforementioned SWOT analysis, this part of the chapter outlines three scenarios or directions into which Russia's external security policy might develop in the next decades. With regard to the security setting of a country not only *political* and *military* aspects are important but also *economic* and *social* developments. All these dimensions must be considered in order to draw a comprehensive picture of Russia's state of affairs in the future. The scenarios are successively a model based on the current situation, comprising an assertive Kremlin, next a scenario in which a tough Russia will be a threat for its environment and, finally, a weak Russia generating chaos internally and a failing posture internationally.

### ***Scenario 1: an assertive Russia***

In the *domestic political* and *social* areas Russia will maintain a powerful political leadership of the type of 'Putin'. Security will be guaranteed by the security services maintaining law and order and control over the political opposition and terror movements, if necessary supplemented by committing Internal Troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. This also applies to the turbulent area of the North Caucasus, where local militias, such as those of Ramzan Kadyrov in Chechnya, play a role in preventing local entities from separatism. Democratic institutions will continue to be curbed, to ensure prolongation of the political regime. If the economy flourishes, prosperity will increase gradually. However, due to reluctance towards budget spending into that direction, problems in public health, such as a high mortality number caused by the alcohol problem, bad living conditions, poor medical services and a high number of suicides – all this resulting in a shrinking population – will continue. In the *economic* area the economic capacity of the country will continue to grow as long as the demand for gas and oil can be satisfied, as a result of sufficient supply resulting from investments in the energy infrastructure. These conditions can be met provided that the prices of energy resources are at least stable but preferably go up. A development of a middle class and diversification of the economy, broader than the current concentration on energy sources, will only take place gradually, if at all. In the *internationally political* field Russia seeks at least to consolidate its position within CSTO and SCO but rather wants to reinforce it. With NATO an ambivalent relationship will be continued, varying from cooperation to confrontation, according to actions of both parties. The strong trade links with the EU will further be raised, based upon reciprocal interests. But in the security area cooperation with the EU will remain restricted to practical cooperation in areas

that are of interest to Russia, such as counterterrorism, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and civil defence/disaster relief. In the *military* area emphasis will be laid in the execution of the military reforms announced in 2008, aiming to accomplish armed forces that can be used quickly and, if so desired, also abroad. However, in this scenario, based upon prolongation of tendencies of today, due to obstacles such as uncooperativeness of political leaders and generals, corruption, a lack of (defence and security) budget to fulfil the plans, a deficient number of volunteers, as well as shortages in military-industrial capacity to produce the requested number of modern arms, only a part of the envisaged military reform plans is likely to be reached, preventing the formation of fully fledged Western-style expeditionary forces. These armed forces will be comparable with the existing unwieldy, large army, only to a certain extent modernized, largely still consisting of conscripts and with limited capabilities of expeditionary action, certainly not to the level at which Western armed forces are conducting far-off operations.

### ***Scenario 2: a threatening Russia***

In this model in the *socio-political* dimension a harsh leadership exists, which within the Russian borders completely silences any opposition and, consequently, in which democratic institutions and political freedoms are further cut-down. Prosperity, health and demographic circumstances present the same picture as in the scenario of an assertive Russia, which is also valid for the economic capacity of the country, which may likewise continue to grow gradually. Alternatively, *economic* growth can also expand more rapidly because of increased international scarcity of energy resources, which demands a higher production level, and/or as a result of price rises, although still mainly based on energy as the centre of economic weight. The largest changes in this scenario take place in the field of *international security policy*. Russia's stance in the international security arena will be strongly enhanced. That is likely if cooperation in CSTO and SCO is intensified to the level of an integrated military-political infrastructure, comparable with that of NATO. Another possibility for a strengthened international position is the formation of a true – not just paper – security alliance of Russia with one of the two rising political and military powers, India and China. Conversely, strengthening of Russia's status in the international arena can also be the consequence of weakening developments elsewhere, for example rivalry between China and India, a weak America or a divided NATO. In such a dominating position, Russia will take advantage, by – if deemed necessary – thwarting the West and other rivals with political, military and/or economic (energy weapon) power instruments, in order to reinforce its international status even more. In the *military* area Russia – in this situation – then has accomplished armed forces that are restructured according to the military reforms announced in 2008 and 2009, i.e. a standing army, consisting only or mainly of professional, well-trained and equipped soldiers, provided with modern weaponry, and consequently with a high level of combat readiness. With

such high-tech armed forces, together with adequate strategic sea and air lift, Russia is able to deploy its military power elsewhere and at short notice, for peace missions as well as for combat operations.

### ***Scenario 3: a failing Russia***

The *social-political* sphere in this setting shows a Russia which will be characterized by social disorder, by a faulty economy and by political turmoil from the North Caucasus and other regions with separatist entities and also caused by related acts of terror, of the type of 'Nord-Ost' and 'Beslan'. In reply to this mayhem we see a political leadership that domestically manifests itself by repressive action, to keep itself in power. Democratic institutions and political freedoms are virtually non-existent. As a consequence of appalling economic circumstances poverty reigns and the mortality rate is escalating owing to a further deterioration of health care, living conditions and environmental circumstances. Because of these conditions the dwindling of the population also takes a faster pace. The *economy* shows hardly any increase or even shrinks. That is the consequence of a continued one-sided economy solely depending on energy resources and with connected reducing revenues. The diminished revenues are brought about by an obsolete energy production infrastructure, and/or a development in which the European consumer states of Russian oil and gas now receive energy resources mainly from other countries (or have replaced oil and gas partially by alternative durable energy resources), a long-standing drop in oil and gas prices or a combination of these developments. Such a weakened socio-economic situation has also consequences for Russia's position in the dimension of *international security*. Owing to a lack of Russian leadership the military alliance CSTO weakens or even disintegrates. Considering these circumstances and supported by its reinforced position in the SCO, China is able to strengthen its influence in Central Asia at the expense of Russia. The West also identifies the diluted status of Russia by, on the one hand, providing socio-economic and humanitarian aid but on the other side also realizing that Moscow's international position has lost strength. If China's leverage becomes so strong that it can stretch its power into Russia's far east, Moscow might feel obliged to align itself with the West in the field of security cooperation, in order to keep its territorial integrity intact. However, the West – the USA and NATO in particular – will only agree with this if it does not damage relations with China (and India), and by demanding their own conditions from Moscow. In the *military* field we observe Russian armed forces that are still large, one million soldiers, but primarily consisting of obsolete arms and equipment and comprising predominantly of badly trained conscripts and a lot of corrupt officers. In this scenario the military reforms of 2008 have to a large extent not been realized. Many military units are only thinly manned, training and exercises hardly take place and thus the overall combat readiness is of a very low level. This army is only capable of crushing domestic insurrections. Such Russian armed forces are short of a capacity of power projection, towards former Soviet republics and even more with regard to combat operations further away.



### *Consequences of future scenarios for Western security policy*

The first scenario, of an *assertive Russia*, portrays a development resulting from the current situation in international security, including Russia's alleged status of a resurgent great power. Russia's security posture will consist of an army with only limited capacities of power projection. Moscow will continue to follow a vigorous course towards undesired initiatives of CIS neighbours and the West and will – though on a restricted scale – use its military and energy power instruments if deemed necessary for promoting Russian interests. Neither Western military capacities nor its security ambitions will be hampered or will have to be adjusted resulting from this assertive Russia. Security cooperation between the West and the Kremlin will only take place if both parties consider this beneficial.

The second scenario, of a *threatening Russia*, will demand changes in Western security thinking. This will be the case if Moscow persists in the foreseen arms procurement plans and other military reforms, and is able to realize them, together with a continuation of its forceful security policy towards the West. In such a situation it is likely that collective defence – as already brought back on NATO's agenda in the aftermath of the 2008 Georgia conflict – will receive more attention of decision-making bodies within the alliance. These developments may lead Western powers to the conclusion that in their ambitions of international security, collective defence should receive a higher status in strategic and operational planning, at the expense of crisis management missions. Thus, that will also have consequences for the planning of combined military structures, especially those of NATO, since the EU does not provide collective defence arrangements: less emphasis on individual contributions to peace support operations and more on collective allied operations and infrastructure. If the military strength of Russia will strongly rise, to a level at which Moscow's security policy becomes threatening to the West, such a development of Russia might even necessitate NATO armed forces to focus once again on preparations for a large-scale conflict. Furthermore, the conversion in emphasis from crisis management operations to collective defence would also demand changes in military organizational structures, in training and in required types of arms and equipment. However, Russia's military threat will probably not result in a stalemate of the kind of the Cold War: an iron curtain with massive arms and troops on both sides of the border. In this scenario it is more likely that the threat will originate from armed interventions by Russia in or around states of the former Soviet Union, where Moscow considers its interests threatened or wants to reinforce its influence. Such a situation would still demand from the Western allied armed forces to be capable of acting expeditionary, but not for peace support but above all for combat operations.

In the third scenario a *weak and failing Russian state* appears, domestically as well as abroad. In this situation, regions within the Russian Federation want to break away from the central state, which can bring about the use of the armed forces for internal operations, as was the case during the Chechen conflicts in the



1990s. Civil wars in a fragile Russia, as a result of social disorder, failing regional authorities and chaos, can be expected in the North Caucasus in particular. This will entail flows of refugees, also to Western Europe. Under these circumstances it is conceivable that Western armed forces (in a NATO or EU contingent or as part of an ad hoc coalition) could be deployed in and around Russia, to conduct crisis management operations, in the format of for instance conflict prevention, humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping missions.

### ***Expect a failing and assertive Russia***

I would consider a combined scenario of a *failing and assertive Russia* to be the most likely in the next decades. As to a *failing Russia*, this will be the result of deepening of the main existing domestic threats, of a demographic and socio-economic nature, as well as of territorial integrity. Due to the prolonged problems in poverty, unemployment, housing and health care the decline in population is not likely to stop. This could affect the labour force needed to keep the economy running and has already influenced the army, which cannot fill the ranks for a lack of (fit) conscripts. The global financial crisis of 2008 and beyond has proven how vulnerable Russia's one-sided economic dependence is on energy resources. A sudden and deep drop of energy prices might happen again and in the longer run Europe, Gazprom's best customer, might obtain more energy from elsewhere and from durable alternative resources; both of which will weaken Russia's economy. The deteriorated economy has already caused social unrest, which in due course might endanger the power base of the Kremlin. As to territorial integrity, Moscow seems to be losing its grip on the North Caucasus, resulting from crime, corruption, anarchy and Islamic terrorism. Russia's far east is also breaking up from Moscow, by focusing on China and other Eastern countries, possibly actively encouraged by actions from Beijing. Because of internal differences and opposing views to those of Russia neither CSTO nor SCO are likely to obtain an integrated political-military structure, to become an intervention tool of Moscow or to form 'blocs' threatening to the West. Moreover, if their economic strength is further enhanced, China and India will act more independently from Moscow and will undermine its international stature.

With regard to an *assertive Russia*, such perilous circumstances of losing power at home and abroad might induce the Kremlin to use military action, in which, by a fast victory abroad, support domestically will be gained. Other authoritarian regimes have acted similarly when their survival was at stake. Because of the long-lasting economic setback it is doubtful that the Kremlin will succeed in fulfilling the 2008–2009 ambitious military reform plans completely. Nevertheless, Russia's armed forces will probably be partly modernized. Assuming that the current leadership will stay in power in the years ahead, prolongation of its assertive security policy is likely. In that case the West could be confronted with a resurgent Russia with limited capabilities of power projection, in which 'Georgia 2008' type of Russian military action can be expected in the CIS area,

but possibly also farther away. Considering that energy is a primary instrument of its power, Russian military clashes are most likely to occur in regions where energy is to be won or lost. Russia might pursue 'Georgia 2008' confrontations with Ukraine, Azerbaijan and the Arctic region, at an increasing level of probability. The least likely is with Ukraine, in spite of Russian minorities, the Black Sea Fleet, a domestic competition for power, aspirations to join Western organizations, as well as the possibility of another gas dispute, as grounds for a confrontation. Ukraine is too large and complicated for an 'easy' war. Next, Azerbaijan, which is also interested in closer ties with the West. More importantly, Baku has its own oil and gas resources, which are of vital importance for the alternative Western pipelines BTC, BTE and Nabucco, as well as to link them with the resources of Central Asia. However, since the USA is allegedly already militarily involved in Azerbaijan and because of strong Western energy interests, causing fierce resistance in a dispute, Azerbaijan is also less likely as a primary spot of confrontation. The Arctic region is more likely a future area where a clash between Russia and the West might occur (see: Chapter 4, 'Energy as instrument of power'). Grounds for a confrontation are that Russia is already conducting a military build-up in this area, the launching in 2008 of a dedicated RF Arctic strategy, the unsolved territorial disputes with Western stakeholders, as well as frequent statements by Moscow that NATO/the West should keep out of this region. However, the most essential factors are the enormous amount of oil and gas in the Arctic, which is about to open as a result of the climate change and, conversely, further growth of global scarcity of energy. All these aspects could make the Arctic region the primary spot of a future Russian–Western conflict.

#### *Western policy options in response*

How might the West respond to a failing and assertive Russia with a limited capability of power projection? A dual Western policy towards Russia could be the right approach, of the traditional type of 'carrot and stick'. On the one hand the stick, a policy of a tough stance. By pointing out to Russia what is acceptable, and by taking the initiative instead of reacting to Moscow's endeavours. This will demand first of all a united Western stance towards Russia, politically and economically. Considering that seven out of 27 EU member states are involved in constructing new Russian pipeline networks, there is still a lot of work to be done to reach a united EU stance on energy policy against Russia's policy of 'divide and rule' and using energy (security) as a power tool. Next, the West needs to conduct an active policy of assessing forthcoming Russian political, security and military initiatives. The West might also want to prepare its expeditionary military capabilities for a necessary show of force towards Moscow if Western interests are threatened by assertive Russian actions, for instance in the Arctic region. Additionally, under these circumstances the West may well have to change its defence plans into those in which collective defence has an increased focus.

On the other hand, the carrot, a policy of encouraging cooperation with Russia. International isolation of Russia radicalizes its external policy. Therefore, sanctions should be avoided. For that reason it is sensible to continue the cooperation fora of NATO and EU with Russia. Moscow and the West should focus on mutual beneficial and practical projects. And perhaps most important, as lesson learned from the 1990s, the West should treat Russia as an equal partner. The negotiations of the Obama administration with Russia on strategic nuclear arms, as started in May 2009, are a sound step from which talks on other arms control issues, such as the CFE Treaty and the US missile defence shield in Europe may follow. Another option is joint Western–Russian political action in international security, for instance towards (the nuclear ambitions of) Iran and North Korea. Moreover, the good experiences of joint military operations could be reinforced. In addition to cooperating in or on Afghanistan, other foreseeable options in joint operations could be on the topic of the piracy near Somalia, and Russian contingents in EU operations, such as currently in the mission in Chad, which explicitly are of mutual interest. Differences between Russia and the West are likely to stay. Hence, workable conditions have to be established, since both parties will remain important players in the international arena in general and in Europe in particular.

# Notes

## 1 Structure of Putin's foreign security policy (2000–2008)

- 1 As explained to the author by Irina Kirilova, lecturer in Russian studies, University of Cambridge, at a Wilton Park Conference, March 2001.
- 2 The power ministries are the departments, other than the Ministry of Defence (MOD), which also have troops at their disposal, such as the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the security service, FSB. These non-MOD forces consist primarily of Internal Troops, Border Guard Troops, Civil Defence Troops, Railroad Troops and FAPSI (signal intelligence) Troops. See: Zabolotin 2000: 30.
- 3 The State Council is an advisory body to the Head of State, which deals with issues of the highest importance to the state as a whole. The Chairman of the State Council is the President of Russia. The Council is made up of the heads (governors and presidents) of Russia's constituent territories. Other persons may be appointed to the Council at the President's discretion. The State Council considers issues of particular importance to the state, such as the development of governmental institutions, economic and social reforms and other objects affecting the public as a whole. The State Council convenes four times a year. Online, available at: <http://kremlin.ru/eng/articles/council.shtml> (last accessed 15 December 2009).

## 2 Implementation of Putin's foreign security policy

- 1 A 'frozen conflict' is an area where an armed struggle has ceased but in which a lasting political solution is absent. Consequently, armed conflict might start again.
- 2 In practice, the observer states participate in many of the activities of the SCO, such as the annual summits, and as observers at military exercises. Their position is specifically mentioned in the regulations of the SCO Energy Club. Therefore, their status is more than simply that of observer.
- 3 The SCO members and observers account for some 2.7 billion people out of 6.4 billion of the world population; armed forces personnel, online, available at: [www.nationmaster.com/red/graph/mil\\_arm\\_for\\_per-military-armed-forces-personnel&b\\_printable=1](http://www.nationmaster.com/red/graph/mil_arm_for_per-military-armed-forces-personnel&b_printable=1) (accessed 20 January 2009).
- 4 *Energy security* entails an assurance for the producing side that gas and oil are produced, transported, delivered and paid for without hindrance. To the consuming side, energy security entails undisturbed receipt of resources at reasonable prices, which ensure that their states continue to stably function (Haas *et al.* 2006: 11).
- 5 This source claims that in 2004 already four million Chinese were residing in Russia and with an annual inflow of 600,000 will lead to a number of 10–20 million Chinese in Russia by 2015 (see also: 'Military conflict' 2005). However according to another source, citing formal statements, no more than 100,000 Chinese live in Russia's far east ('Russian politicians' 2005).

- 6 The 'Troika' represents the EU in external relations that fall within the scope of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The Troika brings together the Foreign Affairs Minister of the Member State holding the Presidency of the Council of EU, the Secretary-General/High Representative for the CFSP and the European Commissioner in charge of external relations and European Neighbourhood Policy. Online, available at: [http://europa.eu/scadplus/glossary/troika\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/scadplus/glossary/troika_en.htm) (accessed 17 January 2009).
- 7 Statements made to the author by officials of NATO HQ, Brussels, of the US Embassy in Georgia and of the Georgian ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs and the Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies in Tbilisi, Georgia, 26–30 June 2006.
- 8 Article 1 of the CSTO treaty forbids parties to join other military alliances. 'Dogovor o kollektivnoy bezopasnosti', Tashkent, 15 May 1992 (CSTO 1992).
- 9 In September 2008 Kosovo was recognized by 21 EU countries. Online, available at: [www.kosovothanksyou.com](http://www.kosovothanksyou.com) (accessed 12 September 2008). Russia's position was that Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence of 17 February 2008 was against UN Security Council Resolution 1244, *RIA Novosti*, 15 May 2008.

#### 4 Implementation of Medvedev's foreign security policy

- 1 The ENP offers neighbours of the EU a privileged relationship, building upon a mutual commitment to common values (democracy and human rights, rule of law, good governance, market economy principles and sustainable development). The level of ambition of the relationship depends on the extent to which these values are shared. The ENP remains distinct from the process of enlargement. The ENP applies to the EU's immediate neighbours by land or sea – Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine. Although Russia is also a neighbour of the EU, these relations are developed through a Strategic Partnership.
- 2 A Swedish researcher has identified 55 instances of (threatened) energy cut offs between 1991 and 2007. See Larsson 2007: 80–82.

#### 5 The Russian–Georgian armed conflict of August 2008

- 1 This paragraph was to a large extent derived from Haas *et al.* (2006: 17–24). The region of Ajaria will not be discussed because it was not part of the August 2008 conflict.
- 2 According to members of the Georgian Parliament and the Georgian Foundation for Strategic and International Studies, stated to the author, Tbilisi, 29–30 June 2006.
- 3 Statements made by officials of NATO HQ, Brussels, and of the Georgian ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs in Tbilisi, Georgia, 26–30 June 2006. At that moment France, Germany and the Netherlands were against granting Intensive Dialogue to Georgia. See: Wood 2006.
- 4 Semneby probably meant the EU's battlegroups: the European Union battlegroup is a project done in the context of the European Security and Defence Policy, its aim being the creation of several rapidly deployable units for international intervention and tasks reaching up to full-combat situations. A battlegroup is considered to be the smallest self-sufficient military unit that can be deployed and sustained in a theatre of operation. Each battlegroup will be composed of 1,500 combat soldiers plus support. It is desired that each battlegroup should be ready for launch in ten days from command, and be in the theatre of operations in 15 days. It must be sustainable for at least 30 days, which could be extended to 120 days with rotation. Online, available at: <http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/Battlegroups.pdf> (last accessed 15 December 2009).
- 5 The Feira European Council (2000) identified 'strengthening the rule of law' as one of

four priority areas in which the European Union decided to establish specific capabilities for use in EU-led autonomous missions or in operations conducted by lead agencies, such as the UN or the OSCE. The four priority areas are: policing, strengthening the rule of law, strengthening civilian administration and civil protection. Online, available at: [www.consilium.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/Factsheet%20THEMIS%20041026.pdf](http://www.consilium.eu.int/uedocs/cmsUpload/Factsheet%20THEMIS%20041026.pdf) (last accessed 15 December 2009).

- 6 As stated by opposition party leaders to the author, Tbilisi, Georgia, 30 June 2006.
- 7 According to Andrei Illarionov, former adviser of President Putin on economic affairs, Russia had been preparing for a war against Georgia since 2004, after Saakashvili aligned himself with the West and had returned the region of Ajaria under his rule (*Le Monde*, 25 October 2008; *Ekho Moskvy*, 19 August 2008; Nicoll 2008).
- 8 There are also claims that the other side started the conflict. Georgia's invasion was allegedly in reply to South Ossetian attacks on Georgian villages, which triggered the conflict. See: Tsamalashvili and Whitmore (2008). Another source claims that Russian reinforcements were already in South Ossetia on 7 August 2008, see: 'Soldaty govoryat' 2008.
- 9 For details on the course of the conflict, online, available at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/>; [www.rferl.org/section/South+Ossetia+Crisis/454.html](http://www.rferl.org/section/South+Ossetia+Crisis/454.html); <http://en.rian.ru/trend/ossset/index1.html> (accessed 19 January 2009).
- 10 The Medvedev–Sarkozy six points armistice plan comprised: (1) no resort to the use of force; (2) the absolute cessation of all hostilities; (3) free access to humanitarian assistance; (4) the Georgian Army must withdraw to its permanent positions; (5) the Russian armed forces must withdraw to the line where they were stationed prior to the beginning of hostilities. Prior to the establishment of international mechanisms the Russian peacekeeping forces will take additional security measures; (6) an international debate on the future status of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and ways to ensure their lasting security. See: Kremlin 2008e.

## **6 Assessment of Russia's foreign security policy (2000–2009) and outlook beyond Medvedev**

- 1 A SWOT analysis is a strategic planning method used to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. In this case it involved specifying the security objectives of Russia and identifying the internal and external factors that are favourable and unfavourable to achieving those goals.
- 2 On 15 February 2007, Putin appointed Ivanov to First Vice-Premier, at which he was preceded by Medvedev since November 2005 (See: 'Putin shakes' 2005, 2007).
- 3 The population of SCO member states and observers numbers approximately three billion, whereas the global population amounts to 6.7 billion (See: Population Reference Bureau 2008).

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EDD	<i>Europe Diplomacy and Defence</i>
EDM	<i>Eurasia Daily Monitor</i>
FT	<i>Financial Times</i>
IHT	<i>International Herald Tribune</i>
IISS	<i>International Institute of Strategic Studies</i>
JDW	<i>Jane's Defence Weekly</i>
JIR	<i>Jane's Intelligence Review</i>
KZ	<i>Krasnaya Zvezda</i>
NG	<i>Nezavisimaya Gazeta</i>
NVO	<i>Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye</i>
RFE/RL	<i>Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty</i>

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