

IN SEARCH OF LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL FOR U.S.-RUSSIAN RELATIONS

ALEXEY ARBATOV | JUNE 2018

Never before has it been so difficult to evaluate relations between Moscow and Washington. There have been very bad but predictable times, such as the forty years of the Cold War. There was a good and constructive period from the second half of the 1980s to the second half of the 2000s. There was even a positive but uncertain time from 2009 to 2011. Today, relations are simultaneously bad and unpredictable. More than a year has passed since the victory of Donald Trump in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. It is too early to assess the results of his presidency and whether it heralds a new phase in U.S.-Russian relations. Some preliminary observations, however, can already be made.

First, most of the radical changes in foreign policy Trump promised during his campaign are being erased under the influence of international realities and the unprecedented pressure of bipartisan domestic opposition. Trump's foreign policy is drifting from the new look he intended toward the more traditional, hardline, and conservative approach of the Republican Party.

Second, the biggest watering down of Trump's political intentions (or at least of his campaign promises) is taking place with regard to Russia. Not only have there been no positive breakthroughs—relations are deteriorating even further. Trump's posture toward Russia has become the main target of opposition to the president's aspirations, with some conservatives as well as almost all moderates and liberals united against him. When it comes to relations with Russia, the most anti-liberal president in recent U.S. history has turned out to

be more vulnerable to domestic pushback than liberal predecessors like John F. Kennedy, Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton, and Barack Obama.

Third, timid attempts to normalize cooperation on issues such as Syria and Ukraine have had weak results; this is because such efforts have been met with resistance from influential domestic stakeholders in the United States and Russia, and it is also because these efforts concern multifaceted problems with many external participants. At the same time, due to their respective political inclinations and priorities, both administrations are ignoring the policy area in which bilateral success could be achieved quickly with great benefit to international security: nuclear arms control. Cooperation between the two powers in this area should supersede any current political differences and the personal preferences of their leaders.

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ARE MOSCOW AND WASHINGTON ENTERING A NEW COLD WAR?

The state of U.S.-Russian relations is now often described as a new Cold War. To determine how justified this claim is, the attributes of the original Cold War should be recalled. Between the late 1940s and the late 1980s, the international relations landscape changed, but it retained distinctive characteristics, namely the bipolarity of the international system and a global zero-sum competition between two major international coalitions led by the United States and the Soviet Union, respectively.¹ These two coalitions represented different economic and political systems, and they waged a relentless ideological battle. In practically every international conflict, they supported opposing sides, while avoiding direct armed conflict with each other. At the same time, the United States and the Soviet Union competed in a nuclear and conventional arms race unprecedented in its scale and pace.

Many events and developments in recent years are reminiscent of that period. Russia abandoned what is perceived as a path of European-style development, in the sense of creating liberal democratic norms and institutions and integrating with Western states. Moscow set out instead on a path characterized by active diplomacy and a military buildup. The goal has been to restore Russia's status as an independent, global center of power and as the leading impetus behind coalitions that oppose the global dominance of the United States, such as the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa); the Collective Security Treaty Organization; the Eurasian Economic Union; and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

As expected, the United States and its allies—with some delay and considerable differences—set out to counteract Russia. Starting in 2013, amid the early stages of the Ukraine crisis, rivalry increased sharply between Russia and the West for domination of the former Soviet space and for influence in the Middle East, South Asia, and North Africa, as well as selectively in Latin America and the Far East. Following Russia's unification with Crimea and the conflict in Ukraine's Donbas region, the West started a campaign of economic sanctions against Moscow. Military confrontation between Russia and the United States and the rest of the North

Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is reemerging in the form of a military buildup, major military exercises, and the risk of ships and planes colliding over the Baltic Sea and Black Sea, in the Arctic, and in the Asia Pacific.

A new cycle in the U.S.-Russian arms race is beginning, encompassing nuclear and conventional weapons, as well as offensive and defensive systems, including means of cyberwarfare and (eventually) space arms. The superstructure of treaties and arms control regimes Moscow and Washington built up over several decades has entered a period of crisis and disintegration. The danger of a major war between Russia and the United States, including the use of nuclear weapons (a threat that had seemed firmly consigned to the past), once again hangs over Europe and the world.

Even if the situation in Ukraine is resolved peacefully, and if an armed clash between Russia and the United States is avoided in Syria, it will not be possible to overcome this wide-reaching crisis with a single package of agreements. The roots of this crisis are not only international but also internally political and ideological in nature, despite earlier hopes that such differences had ended with the collapse of communism in Europe.

The popular belief that there is no longer an ideological struggle between Russia and the West is incorrect. While there is no longer a rivalry between communism and capitalism, there is a schism between the liberal, democratic and the authoritarian, state-monopolized models of capitalism. Of course, these models are not themselves homogeneous, and there are differences in how they are understood and implemented by different countries in the East (Russia, China, and their partners in the SCO and the BRICS) as well as by countries aligned with the West (individual NATO and EU members, as well as U.S. allies in Asia). With the Trump administration now in office, these differences may deepen. These two dominant ideologies have become very apparent, alongside a third in the form of militant Islamic fundamentalism.

Among Russia's ruling class, liberal democracy has become almost a dirty word in recent years, similar to how bourgeois

ideology was perceived in the Soviet past. It is difficult to believe that just over five years ago, President Vladimir Putin said: “For Russia there is not nor can there be any political choice other than democracy. I would like to say and even emphasize that we share the universal democratic principles adopted worldwide.” Similarly, a few years earlier, then president Dmitry Medvedev wrote: “The modernization of Russian democracy and formation of a new economy will, in my opinion, only be possible if we use the intellectual resources of post-industrial societies.” Today, one might not be imprisoned for uttering such words, as one would have been in the Soviet Union, but any official or parliamentarian from the ruling party would instantly lose his or her job.

A sign of the times is the proclaiming of the absolute sovereignty of Russia (self-sufficiency and import substitution) and its Eurasian path based on traditional values, which Putin has called “the staples.” These values include great-power status, the all-powerful bureaucratic vertical with a prominent role for the security services, Orthodox Christian spirituality, patriotism, and national unity, as well as military power for protecting the country from its hostile surroundings.

Notably, the hidden ideological inclinations of a leader often shine through more during momentary slips and improvisations than they do during lengthy official speeches. Not long ago, Putin called into question the conventional wisdom about the bloody, savage reign of Ivan the Terrible—a sixteenth-century Russian czar—saying:

“The Pope’s nuncio made it up when he visited Russia for talks with Ivan IV and tried to convert Orthodox Rus’ to Catholicism. When Ivan IV refused him and sent him away, all kinds of legends emerged. He was made into Ivan the Terrible, an extremely cruel individual . . . this method of fighting our country is still ongoing. As soon as any rival emerges, all the other players immediately start thinking how to slow that rival down.”

In contesting the assessments of great Russian historians such as Nikolay Karamzin, Vasily Klyuchevsky, and Sergey Solovyov, Putin outlined his vision of historical continuity in the country’s domestic and foreign policies.

Putin is a great master of ambiguity. On another occasion, when he was presenting awards to talented children, he asked one of them: “Where does Russia’s border end?” The child prodigy replied, “the Bering Strait.” The president corrected him, saying that Russia’s border “doesn’t end anywhere.” He did not, however, specify whether he had in mind Russia’s great culture and boundless metaphysical mentality about itself, or something else—much to the discomfort of neighboring countries.

Unlike that of the Soviet era, the emerging ideology of modern Russia is highly eclectic. It is not imposed on other nations, and it is defensive rather than expansionary. The ruling elites reject liberal democracy for Russia, and they openly or tacitly stand in solidarity with foreign regimes that oppose the West. The Soviet Union also supported such countries in the hope that they would embrace socialism, but Russia does this so that Western democratic norms and institutions are not imposed on them or on itself. All of these regimes are authoritarian or totalitarian—including Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bolivia, post-Soviet Central Asian countries, China, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Syria, Venezuela, and even Turkey (a NATO member), as well as, in the past, Iraq and Libya (although it must be remembered that far from every Western-aligned state is a democracy).

The power of Russian Orthodox patriotic ideology and appeals to national roots should not be underestimated. These principles are consciously or instinctively dear to the majority of Russians following the traumatic collapse of the empire, the impoverishment and chaos of the 1990s, the disintegration of the army, and foreign policy humiliations, especially NATO’s war against Serbia in 1999. Here lies the difference between Putinism and the communist dogma, which the Soviet people did not understand and in which, by the time the empire had declined, no one believed any longer.

Russia and the United States have completely different perceptions of the causes of their confrontation just as they did during the Cold War. The official version of recent Russian history, according to the country’s new ruling class, is that the United States destroyed the Soviet Union, encouraged

political chaos in its place, and induced the economic and military weakening of Russia. The country was saved from final collapse and dismemberment only by its nuclear potential.² In the 1990s, the West tried to subdue Russia in military, political, and economic relations by surrounding it with NATO countries and military bases and by plundering its natural resources.³ Because of this, after the end of the Cold War, Russia's security decreased. Starting in the second half of the 2000s, and even more determinedly after 2012, when Russia under Putin began to fight for its sovereignty and status as a global power, to restore its defenses, to revive its traditional values, and to rally the Russian world, the United States and its allies revived the politics of the Cold War. They embarked on a course of isolation and containment of Russia, attempted to dismantle its economy with sanctions, and tried to devalue its nuclear capability through the deployment of missile defense systems and high-precision, non-nuclear strategic weapons.

The Western version of these events is that Russia's internal development and relations with the United States and its allies were on the right path in the 1990s. Then, at the beginning of the 2000s, the postcommunist Russian *nomenklatura* decided to consolidate its newly accumulated wealth and power in perpetuity by curtailing democracy and providing the population with the growing benefits of high prices on oil and gas exports. In this way, the commodity-exporting nature of the economy and the authoritarian political system were cemented. When, after 2012, an economic crisis set in and oil prices fell, the ruling class embarked on a path of further authoritarian consolidation, antagonism toward the democratic West, an arms race, and territorial expansion.⁴

Trump, who apparently did not know this history, came into office intending to build new relations with Russia by starting with a clean slate. In contrast, Putin, like all Russian and U.S. political elites, was a witness to and direct participant in the events of the last twenty years. Marked differences in the two countries' interpretations of the recent past will keep having a serious impact on relations between Russia and the United States.

PUTIN'S GRIEVANCES

On ascending to the Kremlin for the first time in 2000, Putin sought to restore Russia as a strong state in the form he understood this notion, by fully consolidating state structures and expanding their control over society. In terms of foreign policy, he tried to foster cooperation with the West on more equal terms, and to this end he took important steps that had not been possible under former president Boris Yeltsin.

In 2000, Putin secured the ratification of the second Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START II), which had been blocked in the State Duma for the previous seven years, and the ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. These accomplishments were followed by the Adapted Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty in 2004. Despite the U.S. withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM) in 2002, Russia proceeded with the signing of a new Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty that year.⁵ The two countries also signed the Declaration of a New Strategic Relationship that same year, which pertained to cooperation in the development of missile defense systems.

After the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001, Putin, contrary to the moods of most Russian political elites, gave full and unconditional support to U.S. military operations in Afghanistan, and he later granted NATO transit rights to Afghanistan through Russia. On the issue of NATO's eastward expansion, he said in 2001: "Of course, we would reconsider our position with regard to the process of expansion if we were to be involved in this process." At the Russia-EU summit in Saint Petersburg in 2003, Putin unconditionally proclaimed the imperative of Russia's European choice.

In response to these steps, between 2002 and 2004, Russia was greeted with the U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty and the beginning of construction on missile defense bases in the Czech Republic and Poland, the war in Iraq (with the liquidation of major Russian oil concessions there), a new step of NATO expansion to the east to add seven states—including the three former Soviet Baltic states—to the alliance, the encouragement of color revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine,

and the active involvement of these countries in the transatlantic alliance.

Putin's landmark speech at the 2007 Munich Security Conference was a signal to the West that Russia no longer intended to play by the old rules and would not follow the course set by the United States. However, it took Russia's armed conflict in Georgia in 2008 for the West to understand that Moscow actually intended to stop NATO's eastward expansion. Medvedev's presidency between 2008 and 2012 was a short respite (or a reset) in the escalating confrontation between Russia and the United States, which included the signing of the New START Treaty in 2010, the cancellation of a planned delivery of S-300 anti-aircraft missile defense systems to Iran, and the joint fight against terrorism and piracy.

When he returned to the Kremlin for a third term in 2012, Putin began to chart a new course in the spirit of his Munich speech. A bitter historical irony is that, after 2008, then president Obama tried to change the U.S. policy of previous years. As if responding to Putin's accusations in Munich, Obama affirmed the rule of law in international politics, the leading role of legitimate international institutions such as the UN and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the primacy of diplomacy and of multilateral approaches to conflict resolution; Obama also took steps toward U.S. withdrawal from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the cessation of NATO expansion to the east, and radical nuclear disarmament.

In terms of relations with Russia, Obama was probably the best U.S. leader after former president Franklin D. Roosevelt—but it was already too late. Upon Putin's return to the presidency, he and his associates were determined to drastically change the model of relations with the West that had been in place from the 1990s through his first two terms. Obama's peace overtures were perceived as a manifestation of weakness at best, or at worst as yet another hoax. Russia's relations with the West thus entered the most difficult period of the past quarter century and now bear a considerable resemblance to the Cold War.

It is necessary, however, to emphasize that history does not repeat itself according to a blueprint; the world has fundamentally changed over the past thirty years, whatever nostalgic feelings and ideas borrowed from the past have possessed politicians. In place of the bipolar world order of the Cold War, a polycentric, non-uniform, dynamic international system is emerging after failed U.S. attempts to establish a unipolar world under its leadership. Unlike the Cold War, the current confrontation between Russia and the West does not cover all aspects of their relationship and does not involve the rest of the world, which is preoccupied with its own affairs and conflicts. The world economy has become more integrated and global, and reciprocal economic sanctions cause mutual, though unequal, damage. Globalization, the information revolution, and continuous innovation in high-tech sectors are eroding the sovereignty of states; these developments are having a powerful impact on socioeconomic conditions, international politics, the military balance, and security considerations.

Ethnic and religious conflicts, the disintegration of states and the redrawing of borders, mass migration, Islamic extremism and international terrorism, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction pose formidable dangers to civilization. The fight against these trends requires unity among the world's leading powers and alliances, the strengthening of institutions and norms of global and regional governance, and the consolidation of arms control and nonproliferation regimes. This is even truer of fundamental, politically fraught global problems such as climate change, ecological degradation, epidemics, demographic challenges, and the scarcity of food and other natural resources.

For now, however, the drastic aggravation of military and political tensions between the major centers of power—above all between Russia and the United States and its NATO allies (and in the future, perhaps between China and the United States and its allies in Asia)—prevails over the need for cooperation. These tensions threaten to destroy (however imperfect) institutions, regimes, and norms of global governance, and they risk leading to a multilateral, multifaceted arms race that could cause regional or even

global wars, drawing the world into the chaos of economic collapse, lawlessness, and violence.

The current furor in the United States over Russia's alleged covert interference in the 2016 presidential election deserves separate comment. Given that there has been no talk about cyber interference in vote counting, efforts to blame Russia for Trump's victory discredit the United States' great democracy and political culture. No one from the outside could impact the results of its elections if there were no preconditions and demand among U.S. society for politicians like Trump. As Russian analyst Dmitri Trenin has noted, "The very idea that hacking attacks, which happen all the time, could undermine the most sacred thing in the U.S.—democracy—is revolutionary. This merely testifies to the low confidence of those who advance this theory, and to their distrust of the American voter." Laying the responsibility for the outcome of the 2016 election on Russia in some sense is similar to the consistent campaign by major Russian television channels to blame the United States' hostile machinations for the collapse of the Soviet Union. Besides, Trump got 3 million fewer votes than Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton, and the results of the election were determined most of all by the peculiarities of the U.S. voting system.

WHAT MOSCOW EXPECTED

It is no secret that Trump was the Kremlin's preferred candidate. Without a doubt, his flattering statements concerning Putin played a not-insignificant role, as the Russian leader takes all internal and external political *démarches* quite personally. But this was not the only factor at play.⁶ The main reason Russian elites liked Trump was that his platform rejected the foreign policy of Obama and his presumptive Democratic heir. Since 2014, in response to events in Ukraine and related developments, this policy's goal was to isolate Russia internationally, destroy its economy, and undermine Putin's authority. At the same time, on a personal level, Obama was the antithesis of Putin in every way, while Trump has a lot in common with the Russian leader, despite their different backgrounds and life experiences.

On a more fundamental level, the benevolent attitude of the Russian establishment toward Trump was due, above all, to his indifference to human rights, to the right of nations (including former Soviet republics) to self-determination, and to U.S. support for the democratic opposition in Russia, which the Kremlin unambiguously perceives as an effort to instigate a color revolution. In Russia's December 2015 National Security Strategy, color revolutions were categorized as priority threats. During his election campaign, Trump did not paint a clear position on Ukraine, but on Crimea he was quite in tune with Moscow. For the Russian leadership, this was crucial.

Furthermore, neither Trump nor Putin is satisfied with the established world order, albeit for different reasons. Trump is opposed to globalization, efforts to strengthen the role of institutions, and the extension of interdependence and openness in international relations. Russian political elites' attitudes toward globalization are also highly negative, as they see globalization as having proceeded under the auspices of the West while Russia had a quite modest role and was in a dependent position. Russian leaders prefer bilateral relations and believe that it is easier to negotiate with the United States on the basis of pragmatic interests rather than under the latter's all-encompassing vision of global leadership and sense of responsibility.

Trump has an ingrained notion that the United States' allies use its altruism and require it to make military and economic sacrifices for their security while they only care about their own economic prosperity. Trump called NATO an "obsolete" organization and threatened that, if U.S. allies do not start to pay up, they would have to leave the alliance, saying: "And if it breaks up NATO, it breaks up NATO." Russia, meanwhile, has bigger bones to pick with NATO over the alliance's eastern expansion to its borders. Trump also has made many unflattering statements concerning the EU, and he has openly supported Brexit and Euroskeptic populist figures, such as Hungarian President Viktor Orbán. Meanwhile, Russia is tacitly seeking to weaken the unity of the EU, which for many years has been competing with Moscow for influence across

the former Soviet space. Moscow therefore welcomed Brexit by default, supported the presidential candidacy of Marine Le Pen in France, and sympathizes with nationalist and separatist movements in European countries.

Moreover, at first, Russia was quite happy with Trump's hostile attitude toward China and the likely growth of economic and political conflict between the world's two leading powers. The huge scope of economic interdependence between China and the United States has always concerned Moscow in view of the modest economic relations it has with these two industrial and financial giants. This was regarded as the cause of China's extremely low-key support for Russia on the expansion of NATO and the EU and over the conflicts in Georgia, Syria, and Ukraine.

Finally, the Trump administration, like the Russian leadership, has a positive attitude toward nuclear deterrence and is skeptical of nuclear disarmament. For Russia, a massive nuclear arsenal is a pillar of its great-power status, despite the weakness of the economy and its ineradicable dependence on the exportation of natural resources. Preventing nuclear war, reducing nuclear arms, and advancing the cause of nonproliferation are not even mentioned among the general objectives of Russia's 2016 Foreign Policy Concept. While the Obama administration regularly harassed Russia with its initiatives on strategic arms reduction and movement toward a nuclear-free world, any interest Trump and his entourage have in the subject is practically invisible.

The stated premises of Trump's foreign policy gave Russia hope of a halt to sanctions and attempts to politically isolate Moscow, as well as equal, pragmatic cooperation on issues of mutual interest, such as investment and the exchange of technologies, the development of the Arctic shelf, and the fight against Islamic extremism.

WHAT RUSSIA GOT

In November 2016, the State Duma—where not a single liberal remains—stood and applauded the news of Trump's victory, and Russian journalists and pundits were gripped by

euphoria about prospective relations with the United States. One year later, this attitude has changed to one of deep skepticism. The customary perception (unverified by history) of eternal U.S. hostility toward Russia has returned to the forefront. Trump is considered to be a victim of anti-Russian feelings within the United States, and this perception has led to a more restrained Russian reaction.

At least some Russian political elites' hopes are justified. For example, Trump's eccentricity, his ignorance of international affairs, and his inarticulate nature contrast advantageously with Putin's restraint, experience, and rhetorical skill (despite the latter's frequent folksy Russian flourishes). But these advantages are superficial. Since Trump's election, the two great powers have not managed to cooperate on a single serious issue, except for the June 2017 agreement to establish four restricted de-escalation zones in Syria. On the contrary, the state of bilateral relations has deteriorated markedly, in light of economic sanctions, reciprocal infringement on diplomatic missions, and mutual accusations of violations of the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.

More than anything, this is explained by the nature of the U.S. government, namely its system of checks and balances and its constraints on the president, even in the sphere of foreign policy. Trump's critical statements about NATO allies were subject to correction during the course of overseas visits by Vice President Mike Pence, Secretary of Defense James Mattis, and then secretary of state Rex Tillerson. The administration has emphasized military tools to achieve its goals in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria and is gradually reviving a tough position on Ukraine. Given the pressure stemming from a massive campaign against Russia over its alleged interference in the 2016 election, the prospect of establishing better U.S.-Russian relations has at the very least been postponed to some distant future.

These internal and external constraints are highly unlikely to allow Trump to realize the revolutionary ideas he conceived in his eponymous tower. In all likelihood, these ideas will eventually be buried beneath a strictly conservative version of the Republican elites' traditional Russia policy, owing to the

efforts of professionals in the administration whose views are reminiscent of those on then president Ronald Reagan's team in the early 1980s (in particular, newly hired National Security Adviser John Bolton and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo).

Even the weakening cohesion between Western states is not necessarily strengthening Russia's position. The stance of the Trump administration on the Iran nuclear deal, also known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and on North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile programs, has scared U.S. allies in Europe and the Far East, but it has not provided Russia with any gains. On the contrary, the crisis of 2017, the real possibility of war on the Korean Peninsula, and the probable collapse of the Iran deal—which would likely prompt another war in the Middle East—could greatly damage the interests and security of Russia and the rest of the world.

In light of Trump's personal qualities and political decisions, the United States' alienation of the leading members of NATO, the EU, and allies in the Far East has been evident. The Obama administration worked hard starting in 2013 to create free trade and investment zones with the EU and Asia Pacific nations, which the new president immediately backed out of, even as he announced his intention to leave the Paris Agreement.

However, Russia has not been able to benefit from these developments, and its relations with unhappy U.S. allies and partners have not improved. EU economic sanctions are being extended, NATO's military presence and activity along the borders with Russia are increasing, and missile defense systems are being deployed on land and at sea in Japan, Poland, Romania, and South Korea, despite Moscow's protests. U.S. economic and security relations with China have deteriorated in early 2018, which might be considered a gain for Russia. Indeed, Russia is trying to get additional benefits from this and make up for its split with the West by increasing trade and military cooperation with China. In doing so, Moscow is gradually becoming more dependent on its neighbor in economic, technological, and even potentially military terms. This development should worry Russia much more than the United States.

There are reasons why Russia's hopes often go unfulfilled. In a multipolar world, there are more complex rules at play than in the old bipolar world order, and a loss for one side is not always equivalent to a win for the other. For example, Brexit in no way improved Russia's relations with the EU, even though it created problems for the latter. The same can be said about tensions between the EU and Poland, as well as about separatism in Belgium, Italy, Spain, and the UK, or tensions between the United States and Mexico and between the United States and some Islamic states after Trump's election.

Another reason is that, despite the growing relevance of military force as a factor in international relations, economics retains its leading position as a foundation for political relations between states and, over the long term, for the military balance of power. In this sense, with less than 2 percent of global GDP and an economy dependent on exporting natural resources, Russia is in a losing position from the outset. The restoration of its global status starting in the early 2000s should have begun with a thorough economic transformation and a transition from exporting raw materials to a high-tech innovative model. This is exactly the path that China has taken over the past thirty years to turn from an agrarian country into an industrial giant recognized as the second global power; this is allowing Beijing to compete and cooperate on equal footing with Washington. Fifteen years ago, Russia had far more opportunities and resources to do the same, although the Chinese model did not, of course, suit Russia. But Moscow did not seize the chance, with the exception (perhaps) of a large program to modernize its armed forces.

The efforts of the United States and its allies to revive the strategy of containing and isolating Russia are not having the desired results either. The Kremlin enjoys the support of a majority of the Russian people, who are prepared to make sacrifices for the country's sovereignty and resurgent national greatness. Many states and movements around the world oppose Western domination and aspire to political cooperation with Moscow, and Russian natural resources, weapons, and nuclear technology are in demand abroad.

Nevertheless, Russia's position cannot be called favorable, despite a sense of official optimism. In the current polycentric world, Moscow finds itself confronting the most powerful economic and military coalitions (NATO and the EU) to the west, facing a tumultuous neighborhood to the south, and grappling with an unequal partnership with China to the east. In addition, Russia's status and military capabilities rest on a relatively modest GDP that is dependent on world energy prices. Its position is becoming more vulnerable amid economic sanctions, cross-border conflicts in adjacent territories, the expansion of religious radicalism and terrorism, the collapse of regimes for the limitation and nonproliferation of nuclear and conventional weapons, and the development of new military technologies.

Ultimately, for Russia, the disappointing results of Trump's first year in office are connected to the fact that Putin and his associates—having been confident in the correctness of their policies since 2012—expected a change in course and concessions only by the United States. But these did not come, and they will not come for the foreseeable future. Given the political chaos in the United States and the paralysis of the Trump administration, any positive changes in bilateral relations are now more dependent on the Russian leadership and its willingness and ability to compromise and put forward new initiatives.

In the current political contexts in the United States and Russia, the hoped-for fundamental improvement in bilateral relations at the end of the Cold War will have to be postponed until the distant future. In the short term, the countries' focus should be on stopping any further escalation of confrontation, preventing direct armed conflict between the two countries in Ukraine and Syria, and limiting the dangerous new cycle of arms races that are beginning.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE

One potential Russian initiative could be a UN peacekeeping operation in Ukraine, as Putin suggested at the BRICS summit in China in September 2017. The Minsk II process has been stalled for three years on all counts, except for the

ceasefire, and even that key condition is regularly violated, with both sides unfailingly blaming each other. Putin said that deploying UN troops along the demarcation line in the Donbas could be the start of winding down the discord. This measure, however, would require a full-scale mission under the mandate of the UN Security Council, preferably with the involvement of military contingents from OSCE nations equipped with armored vehicles, artillery, helicopters, and drones. Only through such an operation can lasting peace be established in the Donbas and all provisions of the Minsk agreements fulfilled. In the more distant future, this would open the possibility of solving the broader range of problems between Russia and Ukraine, as well as tackling Russia's relations with Europe and the rest of the West.

The situation in Syria precisely reflects the challenges of contemporary world politics. On the one hand, Russia and the United States appear to be allies in Syria because they have common enemies in the self-proclaimed Islamic State and the Nusra Front. On the other hand, they are opponents in the conflict: Russia provides military support to President Bashar al-Assad's regime, together with Iran and Hezbollah, whereas the United States and its coalition are helping the opposition in the form of the Syrian Democratic Forces. Turkey—a key NATO member, despite its frequent political zigzags—is an opponent of the Assad regime and Iran, but it also has thorny differences with the EU and United States.

Ankara actively flirts with Moscow. Russia is running a gas line to Turkey, selling Ankara new S-400 air defense systems, and building nuclear reactors there. The situation gets even more confusing when one takes into account Saudi Arabia and its partners (which are hostile to Iran), Iraq (which is friendly to the United States and Iran but hostile to the Kurds), Israel (for which the biggest threats are Hezbollah and Iran), and the Kurds (which are supported by the United States, but considered to be the main enemy of Turkey). With the gradual retreat and withdrawal of common terrorist enemies of the United States and Russia, the threat of a direct military clash between the two countries is growing due to their differences in choosing allies that are now directly confronting each other. The fight near Deir Ezzor (in February

2018) and the scare over the U.S.-led missile strike on Syrian chemical sites (in April 2018) should be taken as the most serious warning of the danger to be avoided at all costs.

After a devastating civil war with extensive external intervention, national unity and peace is at best a distant prospect in Syria. The only realistic solution in the near future is the unofficial partitioning of the country into zones controlled respectively by the Assad regime (under the patronage of Russia and Iran), the Syrian Democratic Forces (under the umbrella of the United States, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey), and the Kurds (under the protection of the United States). This de-facto partitioning, which Russia and other countries are officially against, can be implemented under the guise of the tried-and-tested model of de-escalation zones. All three groups must work together to destroy the Islamic State and the Nusra Front, and then they must closely monitor the Assad regime, Iran, and Turkey to prevent them from expanding their zones in Syria.

The proposed solutions to the Ukrainian and Syrian problems would take a long time to negotiate and implement. But there is another big issue on which the United States and Russia have in effect come to an unspoken agreement, and on which they are fundamentally wrong. This agreement has to do with nuclear arms control, which both powers are currently ignoring, except for mutual accusations of violating the INF Treaty. The arms control situation amounts to an escalating crisis that demands urgent measures to salvage cooperation. In contrast to the problems of Ukraine and Syria, such measures could be agreed upon quickly and serve as a trigger for cooperation on other issues.

THE COLLAPSE OF NUCLEAR ARMS CONTROL

Trump's incoherent maxims about nuclear weapons over the course of 2017 do not paint a complete picture of his views on the subject. In one interview, he said, "let's see if we can make some good deals with Russia. . . . For one thing, I think nuclear weapons should be way down and reduced very substantially." On another occasion, he said, "Let it be an arms race. . . . We will outmatch them at every pass and

outlast them all." There is no doubt, however, that Trump is a supporter of the buildup of U.S. nuclear forces, which he promised to voters, the Pentagon, and the defense industry. The Nuclear Posture Review of February 2018 envisions a broad modernization of the U.S. nuclear triad and a number of additional nuclear-weapons programs (such as low-yield nuclear warheads for some Trident-2 missiles and a new nuclear sea-launched cruise missile).

In contrast to Trump, Putin, as a rule, puts forward more coherent, consistent thoughts on this topic. At the Valdai Discussion Club in October 2016, he said, "Nuclear weapons are a deterrent and a factor in ensuring peace and security worldwide. It is impossible to consider them as a factor in any potential aggression." This was the first time such a positive and even somewhat romantic assessment of the role of nuclear weapons had been expressed at the highest state level, either in the Soviet Union or post-Soviet Russia. This sentiment is fully consistent with the position listed on Putin's 2012 policy platform: "We will under no circumstances surrender our strategic deterrent capability, and in fact we will strengthen it." After Putin's third term, this course is gaining a new momentum. As he declared in his March 1, 2018, statement in response to the U.S. ballistic missile defense deployment, Russia is developing a whole package of offensive systems to negate it (and possibly to cope with any expanded version of antimissile system yet to be introduced by the Trump administration). Besides the Avangard/Sarmat heavy SS-28 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), other such weapons include a nuclear-powered, intercontinental nuclear cruise missile (the Burevestnik); a long-range, nuclear-powered super-torpedo with a high-yield nuclear warhead (the Poseidon); and an air-launched, medium-range hypersonic missile (the Kinzhal).⁷ It is not clear how all these innovations will affect the prospects of arms control, but they certainly will not make things easier.

The state of nuclear deterrence gives cause for serious concern. Seven out of nine nuclear-armed states presently maintain open or tacit military postures that imply openness to the first use of these weapons. China and India are the only two states to have stated a commitment of no-first-use for nuclear weapons, but now they seem to be in the process of reconsidering

that principle.⁸ France, Pakistan, and the UK openly, and Israel by default, allow for nuclear first use.⁹ North Korea has aggressive propaganda instead of a doctrine but, in light of the limited number and vulnerability of its nuclear weapons, the only way for North Korea to use nuclear weapons in a conflict with the United States would be to strike first (and afterward, to perish).

Russia's official nuclear doctrine provides not only for a retaliatory strike in case of the use of nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) against it or its allies, but also allows for a first strike "in the event of aggression against the Russian Federation involving the use of conventional weapons when the very existence of the state is under threat." U.S. military doctrine has also always allowed for the possibility of using nuclear weapons first, as stated in the 2010 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), for a "narrow range of contingencies." In view of security commitments to allies in Europe and Asia, Washington was "not prepared at the present time to adopt a universal policy that deterring nuclear attack is the sole purpose of nuclear weapons." Trump's 2018 Nuclear Posture Review largely expanded the concepts of tailored options and damage limitation, which essentially imply nuclear first use or first strike, stating that

"if deterrence fails, the United States will strive to end any conflict at the lowest level of damage possible and on the best achievable terms for the United States, allies, and partners. U.S. nuclear policy for decades has consistently included this objective of limiting damage if deterrence fails. . . . To address these types of challenges and preserve deterrence stability, the United States will enhance the flexibility and range of its tailored deterrence options."

Russia, the United States, and other nuclear states have therefore said they are ready to use nuclear weapons first only if deterrence fails, in response to aggression by way of other types of WMDs or conventional arms. Historically, however, in many wars—especially after 1945—states have believed that they were defending themselves from real aggression or the threat of imminent aggression even while conducting offensive operations. This reality brought with it—or could have brought with it—the escalation of conflict. The Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 presented a clear demonstration of

the possibility of nuclear war caused by a loss of control over events, rather than as the result of planned aggression. More recently, such dangers of crisis escalation have been growing in Syria, the Black Sea and Baltic regions, and in the Arctic, due to the buildup of Russian and NATO forces and their increasing activities in immediate proximity to each other. The current confrontation between Russia and NATO in Europe and the multiparty nature of the crises in the Middle East, combined with the development of new nuclear and conventional high-precision weapons and sophisticated command-and-control systems, constitute a danger of inadvertent escalation of conventional (even local) conflicts between great powers to nuclear war.

After the end of the Cold War, the number of U.S. and Russian tactical nuclear weapons in Europe were reduced sharply, and apocalyptic scenarios were forgotten for a quarter century. But the Ukraine crisis and the buildup of armed forces on both sides of the new borders between Russia and NATO have revived old fears in European political circles. The two sides' large-scale military exercises have begun regularly simulating the use of tactical nuclear weapons. Several hundred weapons of this class are still co-located with conventional forces at Russian forward bases and in U.S. depots on NATO territory.

In addition, there are dangerous innovations, such as concepts for the selective use of strategic nuclear weapons.¹⁰ Amid current heightened tensions, ideas that seemingly reflect the strategic thinking of state institutions in Russia and the United States periodically surface in professional publications. For example, military experts from institutions affiliated with Russia's Defense Ministry emphasize "the limited nature of a first nuclear strike, which is designed not to harden an aggressor, but to sober him, to force him to cease an attack and go to the negotiating table."¹¹ The United States, in turn, is resurrecting the concept of limited nuclear war in the form of "tailored nuclear options." In an extensive report designed to influence the official review of the U.S. nuclear doctrine, more than thirty U.S. specialists with close ties to the nuclear complex, as if responding to their Russian colleagues, wrote: "Escalation control, or intra-war deterrence, to support the

goal of damage limitation may be most possible with U.S. nuclear options, including limited options, that can provide a proportionate response to any level of attack.” As mentioned above, the NPR adopted by the Trump administration in 2018 further expands and refines this posture.

These examples show that closed institutions, with the connivance or ignorance of political leaders, tend to adopt a narrow, technical, and operational way of thinking that is completely divorced from reality and fraught with terrible potential consequences in the event of its practical implementation. In the current political environment, there is a risk that political leaders of some nuclear-armed powers—who are unfamiliar with the issue, do not have access to alternative assessments, and do not know the history of the Cold War’s most dangerous crises—believe in the feasibility of such concepts. In trying not to show weakness in a tense international situation, they could make a fateful decision and launch a process of uncontrolled escalation that could result in a universal catastrophe.

Another problem with nuclear deterrence is that it may serve to advance strategic stability and global security only within the context of arms control. Before the advent of practical arms control (beginning with the 1963 Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty), the world repeatedly approached the brink of nuclear war. The most dangerous episode—the Cuban Missile Crisis—was mainly caused not by the confrontation between the Soviet Union and the United States over Cuba, but by the dynamics of nuclear deterrence, namely then Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev’s attempt to offset the United States’ rapidly growing ICBM superiority by moving medium-range missiles to Cuba. After the 1963 treaty, an extensive system of measures predicated on the limitation and nonproliferation of nuclear weapons was created. Agreements on limiting and reducing their numbers stabilized the military balance at lower levels and played a decisive role in preventing a global war. Similarly, there is a clear discernible relationship between the successes and failures of dialogue between the great powers on nuclear disarmament and progress or regression on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons.¹²

Moreover, even if one assumes that deterrence, along with the agreements between the great powers, was one of the factors that has saved the world from nuclear war in the past, it is not at all obvious that it will continue to do so in the future. The relationship of stable strategic parity was developed solely between the Soviet Union (and later Russia) and the United States. But there is no reason to expect the same of relations between other nuclear powers, such as India and Pakistan. This is especially true of North Korea, but it will also be the case for future nuclear-armed powers if the technology continues to spread, an outcome that may be inevitable in the event of a failure to negotiate further reductions and limitations of nuclear arsenals. Through new nuclear states, these weapons or weapons materials and expertise could very well fall into the hands of terrorists sooner or later, a risk that could conceivably bring a catastrophic end to the role of nuclear weapons as a guarantor of peace and security. Nuclear deterrence, according to the eternal laws of the Hegelian dialectic, risks eliminating itself if new arms control measures are not passed. This danger is all the more likely because of the unprecedented crisis currently unfolding in the nuclear arms control system.

Traditional nuclear arms control hinged on the predominant bipolarity of the world order, the approximate equilibrium of forces, and agreements on the classes and types of weapons, as hashed out through negotiations. Now the world order has become multipolar, the balance of forces is asymmetrical, and new weapons systems are blurring old distinctions. Arms control and efforts to prevent a nuclear war must adapt in a timely manner to these changing conditions. But a solid, tested foundation is essential before adding to a building—this is an elementary rule of any reconstruction. It would be easy to destroy the existing system of arms control without even doing anything; without constant efforts to strengthen it, it will collapse under the pressures of political conflicts, military advances, and other technological developments.

The weakest link is the INF Treaty between the Soviet Union (and later Russia) and the United States. The two sides have been accusing each other of violating the agreement for several years now, and following the change of administration

in the United States the agreement could be renounced in the near future. In Russia, skepticism about the treaty manifests itself regularly in the form of statements from government leaders. It is alarming that it is not even mentioned in the 2016 Foreign Policy Concept as one of the treaties Russia adheres to.

Despite criticism of the INF Treaty, it is much more important to Russia's security today than it was thirty years ago, given the country's current geopolitical situation. In the event of the treaty's collapse and in response to the deployment of currently banned Russian weapons systems, the United States might resume the deployment of medium-range missiles, not in Western Europe as before but right on the front lines in the Baltic states, Poland, and Romania, from where they could strike Russian territory beyond the Ural Mountains. This would force Moscow to pour a huge amount of resources into increasing the survivability of its nuclear forces and of its command-and-control systems.

The crisis in nuclear arms control is also evident from the fact that there have been no talks between the United States and Russia on the next START treaty for eight years now—the longest pause in such negotiations in forty-nine years. The current START treaty will expire in 2021, and then there will be a vacuum in strategic arms control unless a new one is agreed upon. There is less and less time to conclude a new treaty in light of the depth of disagreements between the two parties on missile defense and high-precision conventional weapons.

By the mid-2020s, the United States will begin a broad program to modernize its strategic nuclear arsenal, and it will also likely expand its missile defense program, forcing Russia to respond. Unlike during the Cold War, this nuclear and missile race will be complemented by a rivalry in offensive and defensive strategic non-nuclear weapons, as well as by the development of space weapons and means of cyberwarfare. The newest weapons systems are especially dangerous because they blur the former technical and operational distinctions between nuclear and conventional, offensive and defensive, and regional and global classes of arms.

In addition, the arms race will become multilateral, involving China, India, Iran, Japan, NATO countries, North Korea, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, and other states. The conference on reviewing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 2015 ended in failure. The U.S. withdrawal from the 2015 multilateral agreement limiting the Iranian nuclear program in May 2018 could lead to another failure of the NPT review conference in 2020 and put the final nail in the coffin of this basic nonproliferation treaty.

WHERE TO START

Given current conditions, it seems that Russia should take the initiative in terms of ensuring the preservation and improvement of nuclear arms control mechanisms, that is—of course—if Russia wants to do so, and so far there is no assurance that it does. In addition to Russia's responsibility as a great power and one of the two nuclear superpowers, the operant motive should be other, more pragmatic considerations. A sober analysis of the situation, free from political grievances and nuclear romanticism, shows that Russia should be interested in strengthening nuclear arms control. First, it is in Moscow's interest to lower strategic ceilings, bring the U.S. nuclear triad modernization and future hypersonic boost-glide systems below them, and return to the issue of agreeing on parameters and confidence-building measures with regard to anti-ballistic missile systems—especially since Russia is building such a system as part of its large air-space defense program and the severe restrictions of a new anti-ballistic missile treaty would not suit it.

Another motive, as noted above, is that Russia is in a more vulnerable geostrategic position than the United States or other NATO countries, and Moscow does not have any nuclear-armed allies. Well-thought-out and energetic arms control measures are capable of eliminating many of the dangers that cannot be removed if the arms race continues to exist. Finally, a new military rivalry would require colossal resources, and the Russian economy is clearly not on the rise (in 2017, the military budget began to decline). Restrictions on strategic forces and other measures would make it possible to save considerable funds that could be redirected to the country's other needs.

The fact that the United States cannot be counted on to embrace Russian proposals with enthusiasm is an additional argument in favor of intensifying Russian policy on this issue. If it receives serious proposals from Russia, the United States will not be able simply to dismiss them. Furthermore, given the difficulties in relations between the two countries in other areas (on Iran, North Korea, Syria, and Ukraine), this area could act as a stimulus to resume cooperation elsewhere. In addition, Trump could take credit for achieving breakthroughs where his predecessor failed (there are historical precedents for this: Richard Nixon after Lyndon B. Johnson, and Ronald Reagan after Jimmy Carter).

The primary objective must be to save the INF Treaty.¹³ Instead of a fruitless exchange of accusations, the two sides must work together to develop additional verification measures to eliminate mutual suspicion. Of course, this is only possible if Russia recognizes the critical importance of the treaty to its own security. Meanwhile, to help preserve the NPT, efforts to save the JCPOA nuclear deal with Iran should be undertaken by all of the deal's participants, besides the dissenting United States. Active diplomacy should be applied with the aim of expanding the scope and prolonging the term of the deal and returning Washington to its framework. In addition, Russia, the United States, and other countries should resume cooperation on the safety and security of nuclear facilities and materials. After that is accomplished, a next START agreement should be signed for the period after 2021, with new confidence-building measures with regard to missile defense systems and restrictions on new hypersonic strategic weapons.

CONCLUSION

The change in administration resulting from the 2016 U.S. election has brought an unprecedented element of uncertainty into U.S.-Russian relations and world politics. At the same time, this political shift offers a chance to put the brakes on the escalation of military and political confrontation between Russia and the West, and an opportunity for the two countries to jointly oppose the growing chaos in international relations. Whether or not this chance is capitalized on will

be revealed not only by Trump's future path: its outcome is no less dependent on Russia's ability to adapt to changing conditions and come forward with concrete initiatives to turn the dynamic between the two countries in a constructive direction.

The termination of the last Cold War demanded enormous effort and decades of hard work from many people in different countries. They did not always like each other, and they often had long-standing mutual grievances and complaints, but they correctly understood the priorities of international security and the catastrophic price of failure. The time has now come for current U.S. and Russian leaders and the countries' political establishments to recognize this imperative and to get down to work before the new Cold War and its ensuing arms race gain momentum that may otherwise last for decades to come.

NOTES

- 1 A zero-sum competition refers to a model of relations in which the gain of one side is equal to a loss for the other.
- 2 In an article on military policy in 2012, Putin stressed, “We will under no circumstances surrender our strategic deterrent capability, and indeed, will in fact strengthen it. It was this strength that enabled us to maintain our national sovereignty during the extremely difficult 1990s.” Vladimir Putin, “Byt’ sil’ nymi: garantii natsional’noy bezopasnosti dliya Rossii” [Being strong: National security guarantees for Russia], *Rossiskaya Gazeta*, February 20, 2012, <http://www.rg.ru/2012/02/20/putin-armiya.html>.
- 3 Back during the 2012 presidential campaign, Putin said: “Russia is enormous, huge. We must insure [sic] its absolute defence, so that no one will be tempted to even set foot here. All this talk that global resources should not belong to any single country, it should be scrapped, we should not even discuss that topic.” See “Prime Minister Vladimir Putin Meets With Experts in Sarov to Discuss Global Threats to National Security, Strengthening Russia’s Defences and Enhancing the Combat Readiness of its Armed Forces,” Government of the Russian Federation, February 24, 2012, <http://archive.government.ru/eng/docs/18248/>.
- 4 Gerard Toal, *Near Abroad: Putin, the West, and the Contest Over Ukraine and the Caucasus* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 387.
- 5 The treaty provided for the reduction of strategic weapons on each side to between 1,700 and 2,200 warheads. “The Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty at a Glance,” Arms Control Association, September 2006, <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/sort-glance>.
- 6 Alexey Arbatov and Nadezhda Arbatova, “Faktor Trampa v rossiysko-amerikanskih otnosheniyakh” [The Trump factor in Russia-U.S. relations], *Polis Political Research*, no. 3 (2017): 160–78.
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- 8 Jeffrey G. Lewis, “China’s Belated Embrace of MIRVs,” in *The Lure and Pitfalls of MIRVs: From the First to the Second Nuclear Age*, edited by Michael Krepon, Travis Wheeler, and Shane Mason (Washington, DC: Stimson Center, 2016): 95–118; and Rajesh Basrur and Jaganath Sankaran, “India’s Slow and Unstoppable Move to MIRV,” in *The Lure and Pitfalls of MIRVs: From the First to the Second Nuclear Age*, edited by Michael Krepon, Travis Wheeler, and Shane Mason (Washington DC: Stimson Center, 2016): 119–48.
- 9 Feroz H. Khan and Mansoor Ahmed, “Pakistan, MIRVs, and Counterforce Targeting,” in *The Lure and Pitfalls of MIRVs: From the First to the Second Nuclear Age*, edited by Michael Krepon, Travis Wheeler, and Shane Mason (Washington DC: Stimson Center, 2016): 149–76.
- 10 Alexey Arbatov, “Understanding the U.S.-Russia Nuclear Schism,” *Survival* 59, no. 2 (2017): 33–66.
- 11 Dmitri Akhmerov, Evgeniy Akhmerov, and Marat Valeev, “Aerostat—drug ‘Sarmata’” [Aerostat is a friend of Sarmat], *VPK 654*, no. 39 (October 2017): 6.
- 12 Alexey Arbatov, “Nuclear Arms Control: The End of the Story?,” *Global Economy and International Relations*, no. 5 (2015): 5–18.
- 13 Alexey Arbatov, “Saving Nuclear Arms Control,” *Atomic Scientists Bulletin* 72, no. 3 (2016): 165–70.

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U.S.-RUSSIA POLICY OPTIONS FOR THE LONG HAUL

With the U.S.-Russian relationship badly frayed, what are the biggest risks for escalation, deterioration, and miscalculation? What, if any, opportunities exist for halting a continued downward slide?

With an eye toward informing the conversation about key issues in U.S.-Russian relations, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace has commissioned a series of analytical papers by leading U.S., Russian, and European experts and practitioners to take a cold-eyed look at these challenges.

Building on the work of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace—Chicago Council on Global Affairs Task Force on U.S. Policy Toward Russian, Ukraine, and Eurasia, these papers seek to better inform the conversation about U.S.-Russian relations and to expand the range of

perspectives beyond the relatively narrow confines of the current discussion in Washington and other capitals. The papers highlight the glaring differences between Russian and Western approaches to and perspectives on transatlantic, European, and Eurasian security.

The search for mutual understanding and dialogue is all the more challenging at a time when many of the long-established communication channels between Moscow and the West have been suspended as a result of what is increasingly described as a new cold war. Many of the perspectives in this collection differ, at times fundamentally, from the consensus view held by Western policymakers and analysts. Nevertheless, it is all the more vital for policymakers, analysts, and opinion-makers in the West to be informed about views held by their Russian counterparts, as these views oftentimes reflect and inform official Russian policy. This project is supported, in part, by the Carnegie Corporation of New York.



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