

THE FOREIGN POLICY CONCEPT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Approved by Dmitry A. Medvedev, President of the Russian Federation,

on 12 July 2008

I. General provisions

The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (hereinafter referred to as "the Concept") is a system of views on the content, principles and main areas of the foreign policy activities of Russia.

This Concept shall supplement and develop the provisions of the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, approved by the President of the Russian Federation on 28 June 2000.

This Concept shall be based on the Constitution of the Russian Federation, Federal Laws, generally recognized principles and norms of international law, international treaties of the Russian Federation, instruments of the Russian Federation governing the activities of the state authorities of the Russian Federation in the area of foreign policy, as well as the Concept of National Security of the Russian Federation, Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation and other relevant documents.

International developments in the field of international relations in the beginning of the 21st century and strengthening of Russia have required reassessment of the overall situation around Russia, rethinking of the priorities of the Russian foreign policy with due account for the increased role of the country in international affairs, its greater responsibility for global developments and related possibilities to participate in the implementation of the international agenda, as well as in its development. As regards the international situation, along with a positive trend, i.e. the strengthening of the positions of the Russian Federation in international affairs, negative trends emerged that are to be considered in conducting foreign policy of Russia in specific areas.

In accordance with the uppermost priority of the national security policy, i.e. protection of interests of the individual, society and the state, main foreign policy efforts should focus on achieving the following chief objectives:

to ensure national security, to preserve and strengthen its sovereignty and territorial integrity, to achieve strong positions of authority in the world community that best meet the interests of the Russian Federation as one of influential centers in the modern world, and which are necessary for the growth of its political, economic, intellectual and spiritual potential;

to create favorable external conditions for the modernization of Russia, transformation of its economy along innovation lines, enhancement of the living standards, consolidation of society, strengthening of the foundations of the constitutional system,

rule of law and democratic institutions, realization of human rights and freedoms and, as a consequence, ensuring competitiveness of the country in a globalizing world;

to influence global processes to ensure formation of a just and democratic world order, based on collectiveness in finding solutions to international problems and supremacy of international law, first of all provisions of the UN Charter, as well as relations of equal partnership among States with a central and coordinating role of the UN as the key organization governing international relations and possessing a unique legitimacy;

to promote good neighborly relations with bordering States, to assist in eliminating the existing hotbeds of tension and conflicts in the regions adjacent to the Russian Federation and other areas of the world and to prevent emergence of the new ones;

to search for agreement and coinciding interests with other States and international associations in the process of finding solutions to the tasks according to Russia's national priorities, to establish, on that basis, a system of bilateral and multilateral partnerships aimed to ensure stability of the international position of the country in the face of international foreign policy volatility;

to provide comprehensive protection of rights and legitimate interests of Russian citizens and compatriots abroad;

to promote an objective image of the Russian Federation globally as a democratic state committed to a socially oriented market economy and an independent foreign policy;

to promote and propagate, in foreign States, the Russian language and Russian peoples' culture constituting a unique contribution to cultural and civilizational diversity of the contemporary world and to the development of an intercivilizational partnership.

II. The modern world and the foreign policy of the Russian Federation

The modern world is going through fundamental and dynamic changes that profoundly affect the interests of the Russian Federation and its citizens. A new Russia, basing on a solid foundation of its national interests, has now acquired a full-fledged role in global affairs.

Differences between domestic and external means of ensuring national interests and security are gradually disappearing.

In this context, our foreign policy becomes one of major instruments of the steady national development and of ensuring its competitiveness in a globalizing world.

Russia, being a permanent member of the UN Security Council, participant in the G8 and other authoritative international and regional organizations, intergovernmental

dialogue and cooperation mechanisms, and as a country possessing a major potential and significant resources in all spheres of human activities, vigorously developing relations with leading States and associations throughout the world and integrating consistently into the world economy and politics, exerts a substantial influence upon the development of a new architecture of international relations.

Drastic transformation of international relations, the end of ideological confrontation and steady overcoming of the Cold War legacy and its prejudices and stereotypes, the strengthening of Russia and its international position have all contributed to significant enhancement of global cooperation. The threat of a full-scale war, including a nuclear one, has been diminished.

Today, traditional cumbersome military and political alliances can no longer provide for counteracting the whole range of modern challenges and threats which are transnational in their nature. Bloc approaches to international problems are being replaced by a network diplomacy based on flexible forms of participation in international structures for the search of joint solutions to common tasks.

Together with the military power of States, economic, scientific and technological, environmental, demographic and informational factors are coming to the fore as major factors of influence of a state on international affairs. Of increasing influence are: the level of protection of interests of the individual, as well as those of society and the state; spiritual and intellectual development of citizens; improved well-being of people; balance of educational, scientific and production resources; general level of investments in human capital; efficient use of mechanisms governing global markets of goods and services, diversified economic relations; comparative advantages of States in integration processes. Economic interdependence of States is becoming one of key factors of international stability. Prerequisites are being created for building a more stable and crisis-resistant world order.

At the same time, new challenges and threats (first of all, international terrorism, narcotraffic, organized crime, spread of weapons of mass destruction and means of their delivery, regional conflicts, demographic problems, global poverty, including energy poverty, as well as illegal migration and climate change) are global problems that require adequate response of the entire international community and solidarity efforts to overcome them. The ecological factor is playing an increasingly important role, the problem of prevention of and counteracting infectious diseases is becoming evermore urgent. The complex nature of challenges facing the international community requires development of a balanced strategy of their solution, based on the interrelationship of issues of security, social and economic development and human rights protection.

The contradictory trends determining the current state of international relations are a result of the transitional period in their development. Those trends are reflecting differences in understanding of a genuine meaning and consequences of the end of the Cold War. It is for the first time in the contemporary history that global competition is acquiring a civilizational dimension which suggests competition between different

value systems and development models within the framework of universal democratic and market economy principles.

As the constraints of the bipolar confrontation are being overcome, the cultural and civilizational diversity of the modern world is increasingly in evidence. A religious factor in shaping the system of contemporary international relations is growing, inter alia, as regards its moral foundation. This problem cannot be resolved without a common denominator that has always existed in major world religions.

The reaction to the prospect of loss by the historic West of its monopoly in global processes finds its expression, in particular, in the continued political and psychological policy of "containing" Russia, including the use of a selective approach to history, for those purposes, first of all as regards the World War Two and the post-war period.

The need for the international community to develop a common vision of our era is becoming evermore urgent, which could only be achieved through open and honest substantive discussions of the problems confronting the mankind. What is needed is to provide favorable conditions for scientists to carry out their professional work with a view to establishing the historical truth and preventing historical issues from becoming an instrument of practical policy.

The unilateral action strategy leads to destabilization of international situation, provokes tensions and arms race, exacerbates interstate differences, stirs up ethnic and religious strife, endangers security of other States and fuels tensions in intercivilizational relations. Coercive measures with the use of military force in circumvention of the UN Charter and Security Council cannot overcome deep social, economic, ethnic and other differences underlying conflicts, undermines the basic principles of international law and leads to enlargement of conflict space, including in the geopolitical area around Russia.

The UN is to play a fundamental role in developing full-fledged intercivilizational dialogue aimed at reaching agreement between representatives of various religions, confessions and cultures.

Russia will continue to seek the strengthening of principles of multilateralism in international affairs, development of an architecture of international relations that would be based on the recognition by the international community of the principles of security indivisibility in the modern world and would reflect its diversity.

The interests of Russia are directly connected to other global tendencies, inter alia:

globalization of the world economy. This trend along with complementary opportunities for social and economic progress and development of human contacts, is fraught with new dangers, especially for weak economies. The threat of large-scale financial and economic crises is growing, as well as development imbalances in various regions of the world which are a result of unequal starting positions and

domestic potentials to respond to the modernization challenges. The globalization process confronts the increasing desire of individual States to protect their economic sovereignty, and such kind of protectionism often acquires the forms of economic nationalism when pragmatic interests are substituted with political considerations. The cultural identity of the overwhelming majority of countries and peoples suffers the increasing onslaught of globalization;

growing role, due to objective factors, of multilateral diplomacy, international institutions and mechanisms in global policy and economy, as a result of growing interdependence of States and the need to make global development more manageable;

enhanced economic potential of the emerging global growth centers, inter alia, as a result of a more equal distribution of development resources due to liberalization of global markets. The economic growth in those countries and regions converts into their political influence, the trend to a polycentric world order growing further;

development of regional and subregional integration in the area of the Community of Independent States (CIS), in the Euro-Atlantic and Asia-Pacific regions, in Africa and Latin America. Integration associations are acquiring an ever-growing importance in the global economy and emerge as a major factor of regional and subregional security, including peacemaking activities;

military and political rivalry of regional powers; growing separatism, ethno national and religious extremism. Integration processes, including in the Euro-Atlantic region, are often of selective and restrictive nature. Attempts to lower the role of a sovereign state as a fundamental element of international relations and to divide States into categories with different rights and responsibilities, are fraught with undermining the international rule of law and arbitrary interference in internal affairs of sovereign States;

ignoring by individual States and their groups of major principles of international law. Russia advocates full universality of the generally recognized norms of international law both in their understanding and application.

Strengthening of international position of Russia and solution of the tasks related to the establishment of equal mutually beneficial partnerships with all countries, successful promotion of our foreign economic interests and provision of political, economic, information and cultural influence abroad require the use of all available financial and economic tools of the state and provision of adequate resources for the Russian Federation's foreign policy.

The Russian Federation possesses real capacity to play a well-deserved role globally. In this respect, of fundamental importance are the following factors: strengthened Russian statehood, stable economic growth, further political and economic reforms, resolution of social problems, overcoming of the resource-based economy and its transition to innovations, as well as improved demographic situation. Other important

factors include the strengthened civil society institutes and governmental support to national non-governmental organizations interested in promoting Russia's foreign policy interests.

Russia pursues an open, predictable and pragmatic foreign policy determined by its national interests. Russia develops international cooperation on the basis of equality, mutual respect for interests and mutual benefit.

Balanced and multivector character of Russia's foreign policy is its distinguishing feature. This is due to a geopolitical position of Russia as the largest Euro-Asian power, its status as one of the leading States of the world and a permanent member of the UN Security Council. Our national interests today make it imperative to actively promote positive agenda covering the whole spectrum of international problems.

Russia fully recognizes its responsibility for maintenance of security both globally and regionally and is prepared to take joint actions with all other States concerned aimed at finding solutions to common problems. Should our partners be unprepared for joint efforts, Russia, in order to protect its national interests, will have to act unilaterally but always on the basis of international law.

Russia is not going to get involved in a costly confrontation, including renewed arms race, destructive for its economy and disastrous for its internal development.

III. Priorities of the Russian Federation for addressing global problems

Diversity and complexity of international problems and crisis situations call for a timely assessment of each of them when implementing the Russian Federation's foreign policy. The use of political and diplomatic, legal, military, economic, financial and other instruments in handling foreign policy tasks should be commensurate with their real value in terms of safeguarding Russia's foreign policy interests; moreover, these instruments should be applied on the basis of adequate coordination among all branches of power as well as appropriate agencies.

1. The emergence of a new world order

Russia looks forward to emergence of a stable system of international relations based on the principles of equality, mutual respect and mutually beneficial cooperation as well as the norms of international law. Such a system aims at ensuring reliable and equal security for every member of the international community in the political, military, economic, information, humanitarian and other areas and employs multilateral diplomacy as its main tool.

The United Nations, an organization for which there is no real alternative and which has a unique legitimacy, should continue to serve as a clearing-house for the coordination of international relations and world politics in the 21st century. Russia supports the efforts aimed at strengthening its central and coordinating role

This implies:

strict observance of the ends and principles enshrined in the UN Charter;

rational reform of the UN so that it could gradually adapt itself to changing global political and economic realities;

further improving the effectiveness of the work of the UN Security Council, which has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and making this body more representative in the course of the reform while keeping its work as expeditious as possible. Any decisions on the enlargement of the Security Council should enjoy the widest agreement of the States Members of the United Nations. The five permanent members of the Security Council shall retain their status.

Russia attaches great importance to improving the manageability of the world development and establishing a self-regulating international system, an effort that requires collective leadership by the leading States, which should be representative in geographical and civilizational terms and fully respect the central and coordinating role of the UN. For these ends, Russia will make itself more fully engaged in such formats as the Group of Eight and its dialogue with its traditional partners, the Troika (Russia, India and China) and the BRIC Four (Brazil, Russia, India and China), as well as by more actively using other informal structures and venues for dialogue.

2. The primacy of law in international relations

Russia consistently supports the strengthening of the legal basis of international relations and complies with its international legal obligations in good faith. The maintenance and strengthening of international rule of law is among its priorities in the international arena. The rule of law is intended to ensure a peaceful and fruitful cooperation among States while maintaining the balance of their often conflicting interests as well as safeguarding the interests of the world community as a whole. Adherence to international law is important for safeguarding the interests of our country, its nationals and legal entities.

Russia intends to:

ensure compliance by the international stakeholders with their international obligations both to Russia and to the world community as a whole; combat violations of international law by States, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and individuals. The globalization of challenges and threats to security and sustainable development increases the importance of the UN Security Council as a universal instrument for safeguarding international rule of law;

counter the attempts by individual countries or groups of countries to revise the universally accepted norms of international law enshrined in universal documents such as the UN Charter, the 1970 Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the

UN Charter, as well as in the CSCE Final Act of 1975. Arbitrary and politically motivated interpretation by certain countries of fundamental international legal norms and principles such as non-use of force or threat of force, peaceful settlement of international disputes, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, right of peoples to self-determination, as well as the attempts to portray violations of international law as its "creative" application, are especially detrimental to international peace, law and order. Such actions erode the basis of international law and inflict a lasting damage to its authority;

promote the codification and progressive development of international law, especially under the UN aegis, universal acceptance of the UN treaties and their uniform interpretation and application and, in general, a careful treatment of these unique legal instruments and the regimes established by them;

strive to strengthen the international legal basis of cooperation within the CIS and in other regional and subregional forums, put our strategic relations with the European Union on a solid and modern legal basis and establish a legal space under the auspices of the Council of Europe that would span across the entire Europe;

make efforts to complete the process of legal regulation of the State border of the Russian Federation as well as of boundaries of maritime areas over which it exercises its sovereign rights and jurisdiction.

3. Strengthening international security

Russia consistently calls for diminished role of the force factor in international relations with simultaneous enhancement of strategic and regional stability. Towards these ends, the Russian Federation:

unswervingly fulfils its international obligations under international treaties in the sphere of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, arms control and disarmament, as well as takes confidence-building measures in military sphere; participates in negotiations to work out and conclude new accords in these fields consistent with its national interests and on the basis of the principles of equality and indivisibility of security;

reaffirms its unfailing policy of developing multilateral foundations of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction and means of their delivery; stands for compliance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, as well as the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction; is actively engaged in international endeavors to control traffic of dual-use materials and technologies; promotes the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; supports a global missile non-proliferation regime on the basis of a legally binding agreement;

is prepared to negotiate with all nuclear powers a reduction of strategic offensive weapons (intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles as well as heavy bombers and warheads they carry) up to a minimum level sufficient to maintain strategic stability;

promotes the prevention of deployment of weapons in outer space and the establishment of a system of collective response to potential missile threats on an equal basis, and opposes unilateral actions in the field of strategic anti-missile defense that are destabilizing international situation;

considers that the present fundamental development trends, including the emerging multipolarity, and diversification of risks and threats lead to the conclusion that the strategic stability issue cannot anymore be addressed exclusively within the framework of Russia - US relations. Objectively, the time is coming to involve major States in these endeavors, first of all nuclear ones, interested in joint actions to ensure common security. This is the essence of the strategic openness underlying Russian initiatives, in particular those related to collective counteraction to potential missile threats for Europe and to lending of globalized character to the regime of the Treaty Between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles of 1987;

consistently speaks for the prevention of the arms race, opposes attempts to develop and deploy destabilizing, including new types, weapons, such as low-yield nuclear warheads, non-nuclear intercontinental ballistic missiles, and strategic anti-missile systems;

attaches special attention to such an important aspect of consolidating strategic stability as ensuring international information security;

supports international efforts against illegal traffic of light and small arms;

intends to further promote enhanced regional stability in Europe through participation in the processes of conventional armed forces limitation and reduction as well as through confidence-building measures in military sphere on the basis of the principle of equal security for all parties;

regards international peacemaking as an effective instrument for settling armed conflicts and resolving post-crisis nation building tasks and intends to increase its participation in international peacemaking activities under the auspices of the United Nations and within the framework of collaboration with regional and international organizations; and will actively contribute to improving the United Nations preventive anti-crisis potential;

firmly proceeds from the premise that only the UN Security Council has the authority to sanction the use of force for the purpose of coercion to peace;

regards Article 51 of the UN Charter as an adequate and not subject to revision legal basis for the use of force in self-defense, including in the face of existing threats to peace and security such as international terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction;

views fighting international terrorism as its most important domestic and foreign policy task taking into account the necessity of systemic and comprehensive use of politico-legal, advocacy, socio-economic and special measures focusing on the preventive aspect of such counteraction; calls for elaboration of further measures aimed at consolidation of the global anti-terrorism coalition under the UN aegis with the participation of regional organizations without resorting to double standards and on the basis of universal anti-terrorism conventions and decisions of the UN Security Council; will promote the right of every individual regardless of his/her nationality, race, sex or religion for the protection against terrorism and terrorist acts. Russia, in accordance with international law and its legislation, will take all necessary measures to repel and prevent terrorist attacks against itself and its citizens, to protect them against terrorist acts, prohibit activities within its territory aimed at organizing such acts against citizens or interests of other countries, and not give refuge or floor to terrorists and instigators of terrorism;

will seek political and diplomatic settlement of regional conflicts on the basis of collective actions of the international community proceeding from the premise that modern conflicts cannot be solved by the use of force, their settlement should be sought through engagement in dialogue and negotiations of all parties rather than through isolation of one of them;

targeted efforts to counter drug trafficking and organized crime in cooperation with other States both multilaterally, especially within the framework of specialized international bodies, and bilaterally;

supports establishment of effective institutions under the auspices of the United Nations and other international and regional organizations to ensure cooperation in the response to calamities and large-scale man-made disasters, as well as to other emergencies, including mitigation capacity building and enhancement of early warning and forecast systems;

participates in international cooperation aimed at regulating migration processes and ensuring rights of migrant workers;

as a multinational and multiconfessional state facilitates dialogue and partnership between cultures, religions and civilizations, consistently pursues this policy in the United Nations, UNESCO, OSCE and the Council of Europe, as well as other international and regional organizations, including in the context of cooperation with the Organization of the Islamic Conference; supports relevant initiatives of the civil society and actively interacts with the Russian Orthodox Church and other main confessions of the country.

4. International economic and environmental cooperation

Russia has been making a considerable contribution to the stability of the global economy and finance by its steadily high economic growth, which to a great extent is based on the increasing domestic demand, and by its natural and accumulated financial resources. Consequently, Russia proposes to contribute, including through joining the World Trade Organization and the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, to shaping a just and democratic architecture of global trade, economic, monetary and financial relations with a view to becoming a full-fledged and efficient member of it.

The main priority of the Russian Federation's policy in the area of international economic relations is to contribute to the development of its national economy in the environment of globalization by ensuring equal positions of the country and Russian business in the system of world economic links. To achieve this goal, the Russian Federation:

seeks maximum benefit and minimizes risks in the process of further integration of Russia in the world economy taking into account the need to ensure economic, energy and food security of the country;

creates favorable political conditions for diversifying Russia's presence in the world markets through expanding the export range and geography of foreign economic and investment links of Russia;

takes trade policy measures to protect interests of the Russian Federation in accordance with international rules and counteracts trade and political measures of foreign States encroaching upon the rights of the Russian Federation and Russian enterprises;

provides state support to Russian enterprises and companies in getting access to new markets and in developing traditional markets, counteracts discrimination of national investors and exporters, especially in the markets of high-tech products and goods of high level of procession;

assists in drawing foreign investments in science-intensive and other priority areas of the Russian economy;

continues to build up and modernize the capacity of the fuel and energy industry to support its reputation of a responsible partner in the energy markets, while ensuring sustainable development of its economy and contributing to the maintenance of balanced world energy markets;

strengthens strategic partnership with the leading producers of energy resources, develops active dialogue with consuming countries and transit countries on the basis of the principles of energy security enshrined in the final documents of the Saint Petersburg G8 Summit in 2006, assuming that measures being taken to guarantee

reliability of energy supplies should be consistently supported by forthcoming activities aimed at ensuring stability of demand and secure transit;

actively employs possibilities of regional economic and financial organizations to protect interests of the Russian Federation in the corresponding regions, paying special attention to the activities of organizations and institutions that contribute to strengthening of integration processes in the CIS space;

in accordance with the norms of international law, uses all available economic leverage, resources and competitive advantages to protect its national interests.

The Russian Federation stands for expanding international cooperation in order to ensure environmental security and to counter climate changes on the planet, including through the use of brand-new energy-saving and resource-saving technologies, in the interest of the entire world community. Among priorities in this sphere are further development of science-based approaches to the preservation of the healthy natural environment and increased interaction with all the States of the world in the area of environmental protection with a view to ensuring sustainable development of the present and future generations. The Russian Federation:

regards sustainable socio-economic development of all countries as an indispensable component of the modern collective security system and believes that international development assistance should be aimed at searching for effective ways to support efforts to eliminate the imbalances in the development of various regions. For these ends, Russia, using its donor capacity, pursues an active and targeted policy in the area of international development assistance both multilaterally and bilaterally;

supports international cooperation in healthcare with the leading role of the World Health Organization as one of the priorities in the global agenda and as an integral component of ensuring sustainable development.

Given the growing importance of sea areas, both from the economic point of view and in terms of strengthening security, their effective use has become a pressing task. For these purposes, the Russian Federation will try to ensure safe navigation regimes that would meet its national interests, as well as responsible fishing and research activities in the World Ocean combined with the measures to protect sea environment, fight terrorism and counter spread weapons of mass destruction. In accordance with the international law, Russia intends to establish the boundaries of its continental shelf, thus expanding opportunities for exploration and exploitation of its mineral resources.

5. International humanitarian cooperation and human rights

Russia, being committed to universal democratic values, including protection of human rights and freedoms, sees its goals in the following:

to seek respect for human rights and freedoms in the entire world through a constructive international dialogue on the basis of the Universal Declaration of

Human Rights, taking advantage of other opportunities, including at the regional level, in the area of human rights, and preventing double standards, respecting national and historic peculiarities of each State in the process of democratic transformations without imposing borrowed value systems on anyone;

to protect rights and legitimate interests of the Russian citizens and compatriots living abroad on the basis of international law and effective bilateral agreements, regarding the multimillion Russian diaspora - the Russian world - as a partner, including for expanding and strengthening the space of the Russian language and culture;

to contribute to the consolidation of the organizations of compatriots so as to ensure a more efficient protection by them of their rights in their countries of residence and to preserve the ethnic and cultural identity of the Russian diaspora and its links with its historic motherland, to consistently create conditions to assist in the voluntary resettlement to the Russian Federation of those compatriots who would make such choice;

to contribute to learning and spread of the Russian language as an integral part of the world culture and an instrument of inter-ethnic communication;

to firmly counter manifestations of neofascism, any forms of racial discrimination, aggressive nationalism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia, attempts to rewrite the history, use it for instigating confrontation and revanchism in the world politics, and revise the outcome of the World War Two;

to develop, including through the use of the resources, potential and initiatives of the institutions of civil society in public diplomacy, international cultural and humanitarian cooperation as a means of building intercivilizational dialogue, achieving concord and ensuring mutual understanding between peoples, paying special attention to the interreligious dialogue;

to build up interaction with international and non-governmental human rights organizations to strengthen universal norms in the area of human rights without double standards, to link them with the responsibility of persons for their actions, first of all in terms of preventing contempt for the feelings of believers and promoting tolerance, and to strengthen moral foundations in the human rights dialogue;

on the basis of the above-mentioned to expand participation in international human rights conventions and agreements, and to amend the legislation of the Russian Federation accordingly.

6. Information support for foreign policy activities

An important part of the foreign policy activities of the Russian Federation is communicating to the broad world public full and accurate information about its stand on the main international problems, foreign policy initiatives and actions by the

Russian Federation, its domestic social and economic development processes and plans, as well as on the accomplishments of Russian culture and science.

In public diplomacy, Russia will seek its objective perception in the world, develop its own effective means of information influence on public opinion abroad, strengthen the role of the Russian mass media in the international information environment providing them with essential state support, as well as actively participate in international information cooperation, and take necessary measures to repel information threats to its sovereignty and security.

IV. Regional priorities

Development of bilateral and multilateral cooperation with the CIS Member States constitutes a priority area of Russia's foreign policy.

Russia forges friendly relations with all the CIS Member States on the basis of equality, mutual benefit, respect and regard for the interests of each other. Strategic partnerships and alliances are developed with States that demonstrate their readiness to engage in them.

Russia approaches trade and economic relations with the CIS Member States taking into consideration the level of cooperation achieved and consistently follow market principles which is an important condition for promoting truly equal relationship and strengthening objective prerequisites for advancing modern forms of integration.

Russia actively develops interaction between the CIS Member States in the humanitarian sphere by preserving and increasing common cultural and civilizational heritage that provides an important resource for the whole of the CIS and for each of its Member States in the era of globalization. Particular attention is paid to supporting compatriots who live in the CIS Member States, as well as to negotiating mutual agreements intended to protect their educational, linguistic, social, labor, humanitarian and other rights and freedoms.

Russia will increase cooperation with the CIS Member States in ensuring mutual security, including joint efforts to combat common challenges and threats, primarily international terrorism, extremism, drug trafficking, transnational crime, and illegal migration. The priorities here include elimination of terrorist and drug trafficking threats emanating from the territory of Afghanistan and prevention of risks of destabilization of the situations in Central Asia and Transcaucasia.

To achieve these goals Russia will:

take steps to ensure further realization of the potential of the CIS as a regional organization, a forum for multilateral political dialogue and mechanism of multidimensional cooperation with priorities set in the areas of economy, humanitarian interaction and combating existing and emerging challenges and threats;

continue agreed efforts to create favorable conditions for effective establishment of the Union State by gradually transforming relations between Russia and Belarus on the basis of market principles within the framework of developing a common economic space;

actively interact with Belarus and Kazakhstan within the Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC) in order to establish a customs union and common economic space and encourage other EurAsEC Member States to participate in this work;

further strengthen EurAsEC as a core element of economic integration, a mechanism to support implementation of major water-energy, infrastructure, industry and other joint projects;

promote in every possible way the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) as a key instrument to maintain stability and ensure security in the CIS area focusing on adapting the CSTO as a multifunctional integration body to the changing environment, as well as on ensuring capability of the CSTO Member States to take prompt and effective joint actions, and on transforming the CSTO into a central institution ensuring security in its area of responsibility.

Russia will continue to actively support peaceful resolution of conflicts in the CIS area based on international law, respect for earlier agreements and search for agreement between the parties involved, by fulfilling responsibly its mission of a mediator in the negotiations and peacekeeping.

Russia's attitude towards subregional entities and other bodies to which Russia is not party in the CIS area is determined by their assessed real contribution into ensuring good neighborly relations and stability, their eagerness to take into account Russia's legitimate interests in practice and to duly respect existing cooperation mechanisms, such as the CIS, CSTO, EurAsEC, and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

In the same way Russia will define its approaches to developing comprehensive practical interaction in the Black Sea and Caspian Sea regions by preserving the identity of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation and strengthening the mechanism of cooperation between the Caspian States.

The main objective of the Russian foreign policy on the European track 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 that took shape during the Cold War period. 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.

Russia calls for building a truly unified Europe without divisive lines through equal interaction between Russia, the European Union and the United States. This would strengthen the positions of the Euro-Atlantic States in global competition. Being the

biggest European State with multinational and multiconfessional society and centuries-old history, Russia stands ready to play a constructive role in ensuring a civilizational compatibility of Europe, and harmonious integration of religious minorities, including in view of various existing migration trends.

Russia advocates a strengthened role of the Council of Europe as an independent and universal European organization that determines the level of legal standards in all its Member States without applying discriminatory practices against or extending privileges to anyone, as an important instrument of eliminating dividing lines on the continent.

It is in Russia's interests that the OSCE fulfill in good faith its function of being a forum for an equitable dialogue between the OSCE participating States and for collective consensus decision-making on the basis of a comprehensive approach to military and political, economic and humanitarian aspects of security based on the balance of interests. In order to fully implement this function the whole process of OSCE functioning should be underpinned by a solid regulatory framework ensuring the supremacy of collective intergovernmental bodies' prerogatives.

In the military and political sphere Russia will seek to fix the imbalances present in the sphere of conventional arms and armed forces reduction and to adopt new confidence-building measures.

The Russian Federation will develop its relations with the European Union, which is a major trade, economic and foreign-policy partner, will promote strengthening in every possible way the interaction mechanisms, including through establishment of common spaces in economy, external and internal security, education, science and culture. From the long-term perspective, it is in the interests of Russia to agree with the European Union on a strategic partnership treaty setting special, most advanced forms of equitable and mutually beneficial cooperation with the European Union in all spheres with a view to establishing a visa-free regime.

The Russian Federation is interested in the strengthening of the European Union, development of its capacity to present agreed positions in trade, economic, humanitarian, foreign policy and security areas.

The development of mutually advantageous bilateral relationships with Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Finland, Greece, the Netherlands, Norway and some other West-European States is an important resource for promoting Russia's national interests in the European and world affairs, as well as contributing to putting the Russian economy on an innovative track of development. Russia would like the potential for interaction with Great Britain to be used along the same lines.

Russia has been developing onward practical interaction with Nordic countries including the implementation within the framework of multi-lateral mechanisms of joint cooperation projects in the Barents/Euro-Arctic region and the Arctic as a whole with account of the interests of indigenous peoples.

Russia is open for further expansion of pragmatic and mutually respecting cooperation with the States of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe taking into account genuine readiness to do so on the part of each of them.

The Russian Federation is willing to interact with Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia in the spirit of good-neighborliness and on the basis of reciprocal consideration of interests. Of fundamental importance for Russia are the matters relating to the rights of the Russian-language population in accordance with the principles and norms of European and international law, as well as questions of ensuring sustenance of the Kaliningrad Region.

Proceeding from a realistic assessment of the role of NATO, Russia deems it important to ensure progressive development of interaction within the format of the Russia-NATO Council in the interests of ensuring predictability and stability in the Euro-Atlantic Region, the utmost utilization of the existing potential for a political dialogue and practical cooperation in resolving issues relating to responses to common threats, such as terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional crises, drug trafficking, natural and man-made disasters.

Russia will build its relationship with NATO taking into consideration the degree of the alliance's readiness for equal partnership, unswerving compliance with the principles and standards of international law, the implementation by all its members of the obligations, assumed within the framework of the Russia-NATO Council, not to ensure one's security at the expense of security of the Russian Federation, as well as the obligation to display military restraint. 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, which violates the principle of equal security, leads to new dividing lines in Europe and runs counter to the tasks of increasing the effectiveness of joint work in search for responses to real challenges of our time.

Russia builds its relations with the USA taking into account not only the vast potential of that country for mutually advantageous bilateral trade, economic, scientific, technological and other cooperation, but also its key influence on the state of global strategic stability and international situation as a whole. Russia is interested in making effective use of the existing broad infrastructure for interaction, including a continued dialogue on foreign policy, security and strategical stability issues, which permits to find mutually acceptable solutions on the basis of coinciding interests.

To this end, it is necessary to transform the Russian-US relations into strategic partnership, overcome the barriers of strategic principles of the past and focus on real threats, while working for the resolution of differences between Russia and the USA in the spirit of mutual respects in the areas where they persist.

Russia has been consistently favoring new agreements with the United States on disarmament and arms control in the interests of preserving continuity of this process,

strengthening confidence building and transparency measures in space activity and anti-missile defense, as well as on issues of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, secure development of peaceful nuclear energy, broadening cooperation in countering terrorism and other challenges and threats as well as settlement of regional conflicts.

Russia is interested in US actions in the world stage be based on the principles and norms of international law, first of all the UN Charter.

The long-term priorities of the American track in the Russian policy consist in putting the relationship with the USA on a solid economic foundation, ensuring joint development of a culture for resolving differences on the basis of pragmatism and respect for the balance of interests, which will permit to ensure greater stability and predictability in the Russian-US relations.

The relations with Canada, which are traditionally stable and almost immune to the effects of political environment, are an important element of the North American dimension of Russia's balanced policy. Russia is interested in boosting further the dynamics of bilateral trade, economic links and investment cooperation as well as interaction in the Arctic.

In the context of the Russian Federation's multi-vector foreign policy, the Asia–Pacific Region has important and ever-increasing significance, which is due to Russia's belonging to this dynamically developing region of the world, its interest in tapping its potential for the realization of programs aimed at economic development of Siberia and the Far East, the need for strengthening regional cooperation in the field of countering terrorism, ensuring security and maintaining a dialogue between civilizations. Russia will continue to actively participate in major integration mechanisms of the Asia–Pacific Region, notably the Asia–Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum, the mechanisms of partnership with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), including the ASEAN Regional Forum.

Further strengthening of the SCO, promoting its initiative for setting up a network of partner ties among all the integration associations in the Asia–Pacific Region occupy a special place.

The development of friendly relations with China and India forms an important track of Russia's foreign policy in Asia. Russia will build up the Russian–Chinese strategic partnership in all fields on the basis of common fundamental approaches to key issues of world politics as a basic constituent part of regional and global stability. Bringing the scope and quality of economic interaction in line with the high-level of political relations constitutes a major task in the field of bilateral ties.

While deepening strategic partnership with India, Russia keeps by its line of principle aimed at strengthening interaction on topical international issues and comprehensive strengthening of the mutually advantageous bilateral ties on all fronts, particularly in ensuring a substantial growth in the trade and economic sphere.

Russia shares the interest displayed by China and India in building effective foreign policy and economic interaction in a trilateral format – Russia-India-China.

The Russian Federation is in favor of good-neighborly relations and creative partnership with Japan in the interest of the peoples of both countries. The problems inherited from the past should not pose an obstacle in this way. The work for finding a mutually acceptable solution to those issues will be continued.

Russia intends to further develop its relations with Turkey, Egypt, Algeria, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Libya, Pakistan and other leading regional States in bilateral and multilateral formats.

Russian's foreign policy is aimed at increasing positive momentum in its relations with South-East Asian States, primarily to develop strategic partnership with Vietnam as well as to promote multifaceted cooperation with Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, Singapore and other countries of the region.

It is of fundamental importance to Russia to bring about a peaceful and sustainable climate for Asia where there are still sources of tension and conflicts and a growing risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Our efforts will be focused on ensuring Russia's active participation in the search for a political solution to the nuclear problem of the Korean Peninsula, maintaining constructive relations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the Republic of Korea, promoting dialogue between Seoul and Pyongyang and strengthening security in the North-East Asia.

Russia will fully contribute to finding political and diplomatic ways of solving the situation regarding the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran based on the recognition of the right of all States Parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to the peaceful use of nuclear energy as well as upon strict compliance with the requirements of nuclear non-proliferation regime.

The deepening crisis in Afghanistan poses a threat to the security of the southern CIS boundaries. Russia, in collaboration with other countries concerned, the United Nations, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and other multilateral institutions, will make consistent efforts to prevent the export of terrorism and drugs from Afghanistan, find a just and lasting political solution to the problems of this country while respecting the rights and interests of all country's ethnic groups and achieve post-conflict rehabilitation of Afghanistan as a sovereign and peace-loving State.

Russia will be making a substantial contribution to the stabilization of the situation in the Middle East by using its status as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council and a member of the Quartet of international mediators. The main goal is to channel collective efforts into achieving, on an internationally acceptable basis, a comprehensive and long-term settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict in all its aspects, including the establishment of an independent Palestinian State living in

security and peace side by side with Israel. Such a settlement should be reached with the participation of all States and nations that are key actors in bringing stability to the region and taking into consideration their legitimate interests. The Russian Federation is in favor of increasing collective efforts, on the basis of mutual respect, to contribute to ending violence and to reach political settlement in Iraq through national reconciliation and full restoration of country's statehood and economy.

To enhance its interaction with the States of the Islamic world, Russia will take advantage of its participation as an observer in the work of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the League of Arab States, and play an active role in implementing the G8 Partnership with the Broader Middle East and North Africa Region. Priority attention will be paid to developing mutually beneficial economic cooperation, in particular in the energy sector, with countries of this region, which is of strategic importance to Russia's national interests.

Russia will enhance its multi-pronged interaction with African States at the multilateral and bilateral levels, including through the dialogue and cooperation within the G8, and contribute to a prompt resolution of regional conflicts and crisis situations in Africa. We will develop political dialogue with the African Union and subregional organizations taking advantage of their capabilities to involve Russia in economic projects implemented on the continent.

Russia will seek to establish a strategic partnership with Brazil, broaden its political and economic cooperation with Argentina, Mexico, Cuba, Venezuela and other Latin American and Caribbean countries and their associations relying on the progress achieved in relations with the States of this region in recent years, enhance its interaction with these States within the international organizations, promote export of Russia's high-technology products to Latin American countries and implement joint energy, infrastructure and high-tech projects, inter alia, in accordance with the plans elaborated by the regional integration associations.

V. Shaping and implementing the foreign policy of the Russian Federation

The President of the Russian Federation, in conformity with his constitutional powers, directs its national foreign policy and, in his capacity of the Head of State, acts on behalf of the Russian Federation on the international stage.

The Federation Council and the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, within the framework of their constitutional powers, provide legislative support for the country's foreign policy, take measures to fulfill its international obligations as well as enhance the efficiency of parliamentary diplomacy.

The Government of the Russian Federation acts to implement the country's foreign policy.

The Security Council of the Russian Federation assesses the challenges and threats to the national interests and security of Russia in the international sphere, submits proposals to the President of the Russian Federation for his decision as the Head of State on issues of foreign policy of the Russian Federation in the field of national security, as well as on coordination of activities of federal executive bodies and executive bodies of the Subjects of the Russian Federation in the process of the implementation of the decisions taken in the area of ensuring national security, and evaluates the efficiency of those decisions.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation develops a general foreign policy strategy for the Russian Federation, submits relevant proposals to the President of the Russian Federation and implements the foreign policy of the Russian Federation in accordance with this Concept, as well as coordinates foreign policy activities of the federal executive bodies.

The Subjects of the Russian Federation develop their international relations in accordance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the Federal Law No. 4-FZ of January 4, 1999 "On Coordination of International and Foreign Economic Relations of the Subjects of the Russian Federation" and other legislative acts. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and other federal executive bodies provide assistance to the Subjects of the Russian Federation in implementing international and foreign economic cooperation in strict compliance with sovereignty and territorial integrity of Russia and making use of the capacities of the Council of the Heads of the Russian Federation's Subjects and the Advisory Council for international and foreign economic relations of the Subjects of the Russian Federation, which operate under the Foreign Ministry of the Russian Federation. The development of cooperation in regions and border areas is an important reserve for bilateral relations with relevant countries and regions in the trade, economic, humanitarian and other fields.

In working out foreign policy decisions, the federal executive bodies cooperate, on a permanent basis, with the Chambers of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, political parties, non-governmental organizations, the academic community and business associations of Russia encouraging their participation in international cooperation. A broader involvement of civil society in the foreign policy process is consistent with the trends of Russia's domestic development, meets the goal of maintaining agreement in the country on foreign policy issues and contributes to its efficient execution.

In financing foreign policy activities, the resources of the Federal Budget should be used more extensively, with non-budget funds being attracted through the mechanism of the State-private partnership on a voluntary basis.

The consistent execution of Russia's foreign policy is called upon to create favorable conditions for the realization of the historic choice of the peoples of the Russian Federation in favor of rule of law, a democratic society and socially-oriented market economy.