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Russia Revises Military Doctrine and Upgrades Strategic Nuclear Forces

Yuriy RUBTSOV

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This is the first substantial upgrade of Russia's military doctrine published in February 2010. The document had to be revised by the end of 2014 in response to the growing pressure exerted on Russia by the West after Moscow refused to recognize the legitimacy of the coup in Ukraine. A military doctrine offers no spectrum of responses to isolated threats but rather provides

guidance on countering the long-term trends undermining the country's security. The revised version of the doctrine describes the following factors that pose threats to Russia:

- the growing military potential of NATO and its expansion bringing the alliance's military infrastructure close to the borders of the Russian Federation;
- the deployment of foreign military contingents on the territories of the states adjacent to Russia;
- the construction and deployment of strategic missile defense by the Pentagon undermining global stability, the implementation of Prompt Strike Concept and the plans to place weapons systems in space;



The doctrine provides guidance on how to respond to emerged threats and challenges. The new provisions are introduced as a reaction to the events in Ukraine and around it, as well as in Africa, Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan which threaten the Russian Federation. The specific features of contemporary military conflict include «the complex use of military force in combination with political and economic measures, information warfare and other actions of non-military nature implemented with intensive use of people's protest potential» along with the use of political forces and public movements controlled and financed from outside. The authors of the document say it openly that Russia is ready to counter the organizers of «color revolutions».

The revised military doctrine remains to be of defensive nature. Russia would resort to the use of force only when all non-violent ways to solve a conflict are exhausted.

The document is added by a new provision on non-nuclear deterrence which envisions the implementation of foreign policy and military measures to prevent an aggression against the Russian Federation when the use of nuclear weapons is premature or unjustified.



As one can see the nuclear weapons are not viewed as the only means of deterrence. At that the West exerts unprecedented pressure on Russia and the talks about the return of Cold War posture are renewed. It makes the strategic nuclear forces the most important factor to guarantee security. The revised document does not envision changes in the order the nuclear forces could be used. A nuclear strike could be delivered in response to the use of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction against Russia and its allies or in case Russia becomes a victim of conventional attack when the very existence of the state is threatened. Belarus and other partners - members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization are the Russia's allies to be defended.

The Russian military leadership pays special attention to upgrading the nuclear shield. On the very same day the Russian President signed the document a RS-24 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) blasted off from Plesetsk successfully hitting a designated target at the Kura test range on the Kamchatka peninsula in the Far East. The solid-fuel Topol-M and Yars ICBMs designed for mobile platforms and silos make up the backbone of Russia's contemporary strategic potential. Over 20 mobile and ground-based Yars ICBMs will be added to the inventory of the Russia' Strategic Rocket Forces next year.

The day before the Commander of the Strategic Rocket Forces of Russia Colonel-General (three stars) Karakayev officially announced the development of a heavy solid-fuel ballistic missile known as RS-26. Starting from 2016 the RS-26 is to reinforce the group of solid-fuel rockets, such as Topol-M and Yars of the Strategic Missile Forces. The characteristics are classified but it is known that the missile already dubbed by media the «killer of missile defense» will be able to break through any type of missile defense.

The silo-based systems are upgraded too. The RS-20B Voyevoda (NATO classification – Satan) is the most powerful nuclear weapon in service today. It can penetrate the multi-echelon missile defense deployed by the US. It is in service since the 1980s. Its service life was extended but the

time is drawing near for its replacement.

In a few years the heavy 100-ton Sarmat will take its place. It will be produced only by Russian enterprises to exclude the risks like in case of Satan, for instance, when some components were produced by Ukrainian Yuzhnoe design bureau and manufacturer. The Sarmat heavy ballistic missile will be deployed in Uzhur (Krasnoyarsk region) and the village of Dombarovsky (Orenburg region). There is one more inspiring news to confirm the strong political will of Russian leadership. Russia was unwise enough to take out of service the RT-23 railway ICBM launching system (NATO reporting name SS-24 Scalpel). As a platform a train could cover a thousand kilometers a day and it was impossible to track it from satellites as it was undetectable among many thousands of other trains moving on the ground. Strategic Rocket Forces Commander Col.Gen. Sergei Karakayev stated a new military railroad missile system dubbed Barguzin is being developed for Russia's Strategic Rocket Forces. An R&D project was rolled out to develop a new rail-mobile intercontinental ballistic missile with the first prototype to be completed in 2020. The weapon's mobility makes it difficult to track, thus complicating a preemptive strike. On his part, Russian Deputy Defense Minister Anatoly Antonov said the new system does not violate the START Treaty which stipulates that each side has a right to independently decide the structure and composition of its strategic nuclear potential.



One regiment (that is one train) of the new Barguzin rail-mobile system will include six (MIRV-multiple independently targeted vehicle) Yars missiles. The Scalpel system included three RT-23 Molodets ICBMs. The strategic forces will have a division including five railway missile platforms (regiments) constantly changing the location as they will move across the country's vast plains. The Scalpel railway ICBM platform used to be a never ending headache for Americans to make them strongly insist that the system be taken out of service. One can only imagine what kind of nightmare the Barguzin will become for the USA. The system's life service

is to last till 2040.

NATO spokeswoman Oana Lungescu responded by saying in a statement that the alliance «poses no threat to Russia or to any nation.» «Any steps taken by NATO to ensure the security of its members are clearly defensive in nature, proportionate and in compliance with international law», she said. No matter it evidently contradicted the facts the spokeswoman said «In fact, it is Russia's actions, including currently in Ukraine, which are breaking international law and undermining European security.» Such statements evoke no surprise, especially after it was stated in Washington that Russia moved to the borders of NATO - not the other way around.

The official representative of the alliance added that NATO seeks constructive relationship with Russia. It is logical to guess that the revised military doctrine and the measures taken by the Russian government to upgrade the country's defense will give a new impetus to this process.