

**In Retrospect: Points for Dialogue with
Russia in the OSCE Context**
**Conclusions from Russian Scientific Periodicals
2010 – 2015**

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Intention and Acknowledgements

International security cooperation with Russia has come to a complicated point. This paper tries to look back and summarize earlier points for dialogue with Russian officials and scholars on co-operative security within the framework of the OSCE. It looks on discussions of the period before the Ukrainian conflict until its early phase. It reflects a review of articles in renowned Russian scientific periodicals (and their English-language issues) published between January 2010 and October 2015 – namely “International Affairs”, “Russia in Global Affairs”, “World Economy and International Relations (Мировая экономика и международные отношения)” and “Security Index (Индекс безопасности)”. The paper also includes a number of governmental strategy papers, newspaper articles and think tank publications issued in this period and afterwards. It covers the classic range of OSCE matters except military first dimension issues.

Discussions in these publications show an extraordinary intellectual richness. It must be mentioned that they include – in an old Russian tradition – a continued philosophical and political debate on Russia’s self and its place in the world. The broad spectrum of these thoughts cannot even remotely be reflected here. There is a visible trend of seeing Russia as a recovering global player that has particular importance for Europe and increasingly for the Asia-Pacific region and other parts of the world, such as the Middle East. Current governmental strategy documents see the country “as a leading world power [...] in a polycentric world” (2015)¹ or – less pretentiously – “as a centre of influence in today’s world” (2016).² Recent developments on the international stage confirm that Russia is, indeed, actually trying to set off in this direction on a broad scale, combining military, diplomatic, economic and media means.

However, the focus of this paper is not on global issues, but on security-related matters that can be discussed with Russia in the framework of the OSCE.

In the articles reviewed, as well as in Russia’s current political debates, the OSCE as such plays only a marginal role. It received some increased attention in the wake of the Ukrainian conflict, specifically in the Russian daily media. In addition, many items mentioned in the literature reviewed can be related to the OSCE.

In the present paper, the Russian authors themselves have largely been given the word. The paper has been written with the intention of providing a background for further communication and co-operation with Russian partners within the context of the OSCE. The few proposals that we make in conclusion pick up some of the contributions of the Russian authors that seem realistic for the given moment. They could be helpful in stimulating dialogue under more favorable circumstances than there are today.

Although some positions may have been overtaken by events, the richness and broad variety of views still deserve attention.

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¹ The Russian Federation’s National Security Strategy, 31 December 2015, pt. 30.

² Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 30 November 2016, pt. 3c.

1. Russia's Mixed Attitudes towards the OSCE

Not surprisingly, the OSCE plays a rather insignificant role in the scientific and political debates in Russia. Notably, there is a discrepancy between situation-driven polemics about the OSCE, on the one hand, and strategic positions expressed in governmental foreign-policy papers, on the other hand. Russia's attitudes towards the OSCE are neither consistently critical nor positive. While Western dominance over the OSCE's structures and operations is criticized, its very existence appears to be much appreciated. Irrespective of changing opinions in the Kremlin, the OSCE seems to have friends among senior Russian diplomats, scholars and civil society activists.

Interest in the OSCE in government papers

Perhaps less broadly known, Russia has consistently expressed its long-term positive interest in the OSCE in its programmatic foreign-policy papers. In its third-to-last 2000 Foreign Policy Concept, Russia insisted in broad terms on "the further balanced development of the multi-functional character" of the OSCE and stated that it would "strongly oppose the narrowing down of the OSCE functions, specifically the attempts to redirect its specialized activities to the post-Soviet space and the Balkans."³

In the 2008 Foreign Policy Concept, the OSCE's special feature as a "forum for an equitable dialogue [...] 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" were particularly underlined as was the demand for "a solid regulatory framework ensuring the supremacy of collective intergovernmental bodies' prerogatives."⁴

The 2013 Foreign Policy Concept defined the OSCE "as an important instrument for building an equitable and indivisible system of pan-European security" and saw Russia as "interested in strengthening its role and authority."⁵ The same approach was repeated in the 2016 Foreign Policy Concept.⁶ These are usable reference points for further discussions.

Political polemics: disagreement with the OSCE

As is commonly known, Russia has continually expressed its disapproval of the OSCE for the last two decades. In his landmark 2007 Munich speech, Vladimir Putin dubbed the OSCE "a vulgar instrument designed to promote the foreign policy interests of one or a group of countries."⁷ Scholars such as Sergei Kortunov (2010) objected to a "bipolar world – Russia and all others" and that "[v]ery much contrary to its mandate,

³ Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 28 June 2000, IV. Regional priorities.

⁴ Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 12 July 2008, IV. Regional priorities.

⁵ Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 12 February 2013, pt. 62.

⁶ Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 30 November 2016, pt. 68.

⁷ Vladimir Putin, Speech and the Following Discussion at the Munich Conference on Security Policy, Munich, 10 February 2007, at: <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/transcripts/24034>.

the OSCE is developing into an anti-Russian organization.”⁸ Boris Mezhuyev (2009)⁹ and Nadezhda Arbatova (2010)¹⁰ believe that this is rooted in gross violations of the Helsinki Decalogue during the Yugoslav wars – one of the central events for Russia’s contemporary security perceptions, particularly in the OSCE context.

Andrey Kelin (2013), a former Russian Permanent Representative to the OSCE, summarized Russia’s long-standing points of criticism under the following key words: “the practice of double standards; thematic and geographic distortions: attempts to use the OSCE’s institutions to mechanically implant neoliberal democratic models in post-Soviet and other countries outside NATO and the EU, without taking into account their national characteristics, civilizations and cultures.”¹¹ All of these points had continually been made by Russia during the failed OSCE reform discussions (2005-06) and the Corfu Process (2009-10).

After Georgia and Ukraine: some revived interest

In view of its isolation in Europe, Russia has been making considerable efforts to return to the international scene in- and outside of the continent for about a decade now. In particular, this has entailed a turn from the harsh verbal criticism to a more friendly tone towards the OSCE. After the Georgian war, FM Sergey Lavrov (2009) argued again for a strong OSCE as a pivotal security platform:

“It would have been enough to ensure the systematic institutionalization of the OSCE and its conversion into a fully fledged regional organization within the terms of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. That is, the OSCE would have dealt with the entire range of problems in the Euro-Atlantic area and, above all, it would have ensured, on the basis of legally binding obligations, an open system of collective security in the region.”¹²

In the course of the last four to five years, Russian officials and scholars have been arguing along this rather positive line, emphasising again the value added by the

⁸ Sergei Kortunov, Uniform Rules for the Euro-Atlantic Region, in: *International Affairs*, No. 1, 2010, p. 52.

⁹ “[C]ontrary to the letter and spirit of the Helsinki Accords, the borders of European countries continued to change, and not always as a result of an agreement by the two sides on a civilized separation, but rather due to support for the demands of separatists. The national sovereignty of states and their territorial integrity were, thus, no longer secured. The graphic example is Yugoslavia, where the region of Kosovo was practically sawn off by force and transformed into an independent state.” (Boris Mezhuyev, *Towards Legal Universalism*, in: *Russia in Global Affairs*, 5 September 2009, at: http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/number/n_13590.)

¹⁰ Nadezhda Arbatova, *Towards a New European Security Architecture (K novoy arkhitekture evropeyskoy bezopasnosti)* in: Galina Oznobishcheva (ed.), *Towards a New European Security Architecture (K novoy arkhitekture evropeyskoy bezopasnosti)*, in: *World Economy and International Relations (Mirovaia e’konomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia)*, No. 11, November 2010, p. 6.

¹¹ Andrey Kelin, *Russia and the OSCE*, in: *International Affairs*, No. 1/2013, p. 89f.

¹² Sergey Lavrov, *The challenges of “hard security” in the Euro-Atlantic region. The role of the OSCE in establishing a stable and effective security system* (statement at the opening session of the OSCE Annual Security Review Conference; PC.DEL/408/09), Vienna, 23 June 2009.

OSCE. Appraisals range from approvals of the OSCE in general terms to statements on selected subjects. Andrey Kelin (2013) sees the OSCE as a

“... unique field of triangular cooperation between Russia, the EU and the U.S. on European affairs. Work in the ‘triangle’, primarily due to its being a flexible and not over-formalized format, provides opportunities for finding solutions to the most complex issues.”¹³

Alexei Kuznetsov (2015) considers that the fact that “Russia’s lost confidence in the EU and NATO [...] added significance to the OSCE. [...] We can no longer ignore the crisis of deeper integration in the EU which lost much of its former attractions”.¹⁴ Kuznetsov sees Russia on a double track. Russia should, on the one hand, emphasise bilateral relations with Western states especially in view of “disagreements among individual EU members over their relations with Russia.” On the other hand, Russia should also invest efforts in “real all-European institutes, the OSCE in the first place.”¹⁵ Andrey Kelin (2013) notes:

“Even if the OSCE does break apart, the core issues will still not go away. It will have to be replaced with another structure, which is likely to be very similar to it and no less contradictory. The Organization is important primarily because it helps to keep the states together by encouraging dialogue between them. Indeed, today, because of the differences, the OSCE is not effective enough as an organisation. However, as a format that makes it possible to initiate, maintain and promote the political process, it is, on the contrary, quite strong.”¹⁶

Taken together, this could mean that we will continue to deal with a Russia that, for the time being, remains interested in making use of the OSCE.

2. Typically Russian: Calls for a Fundamental Debate

Frequently, Russia suggests fundamental debates over European security affairs and the role of Russia, other states and international organisations. Most notably, this was the case with Dmitry Medvedev’s 2008 European Security Treaty proposal that triggered the OSCE Corfu Process (2009-10). In the past, these suggestions were typically focussed on Europe, but right now (2018), this seems not to be on top of Russia’s priority list. Rather, Russia has begun to reshuffle its political, economic and military attention towards the Asia-Pacific region. Russia’s broadening ambitions have more and more Asia-Pacific elements, particularly with a view to Russia’s engagements in the APEC, but also the UN and the G20, the promotion of Russia’s own frameworks within the BRICS, SCO and CSTO as well as the EAEU and the CIS. The most ambitious vision in this respect is Vladimir Putin’s (2016) “idea of building

¹³ Kelin 2013, quoted above (note 11), p. 91.

¹⁴ Alexei Kuznetsov, Reconsidering the Greater Europe Concept in the Context of the Ukrainian Crisis, in: *International Affairs*, No. 1/2015, p. 3.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* p. 8f.

¹⁶ Kelin 2013, quoted above (note 11), p. 90.

a multi-level integration model for Eurasia in the form of a Greater Eurasian Partnership".¹⁷ Russia looks to reinforce its positions in the Middle East.

This does not, however, weaken Russia's self-perception as a European state and its interests here.

Simultaneity of co-operation and geopolitical rivalry

More than half a decade ago, Alexander Dynkin (2011) observed, in the relations between the major powers, an ambivalent concurrence of "co-operation in the solution of global security problems, and rivalry for selection of the ways to solve them in the mode of benefits for themselves but in coordination with other leaders."¹⁸ With the Ukrainian war looming, Dmitry Trenin (2014) detected that "the united Europe under Berlin's leadership and Washington's military and political patronage has become Russia's ideological opponent and geopolitical rival in addition to being its economic partner."¹⁹

Resuming discussions, heading for a common space, reaffirming Helsinki

With Crimea annexed and the Ukrainian conflict in full swing, Vladimir Putin (2015) expressed Russia's revived interest in

"resum[ing] substantial discussions of the topic and subject of creating a Euro-Atlantic system of equal and indivisible security. One needs to carry out a full inventory of existing problems and disagreements. On the basis of this analysis, it will be possible to enter into a discussion on the principles of sustainable political development in the OSCE and other international organizations; bring into accord the legally binding guarantees of the indivisibility of security for all countries; achieve compliance with important basic principles of international law"²⁰.

In a widely noticed article, Russian Deputy FM Alexey Meshkov (2015) specified these explanations with three proposals, at least two of which can be referred to the OSCE. One is directly related to the Organization. Emphasis is placed here on the commonness of overarching European security interests and (remarkably) the reaffirmation of the Helsinki principles:

„First, we consider it essential to develop what is known as the integration of integrations – Eurasian and European – in the interest of creating a common

¹⁷ Vladimir Putin, Presidential Address to the Federal Assembly, 1 December 2016, at: <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/53379>.

¹⁸ Alexander Dynkin (ed.), *Strategic Global Outlook 2030*, IMEMO RAN, Moscow 2011, p. 11.

¹⁹ "All this does not mean that another—European—front in Russia's confrontation with the West has now been opened. We are dealing with both cooperation and confrontation in conjunction with an important geopolitical component." (Dmitry Trenin, *The End of Consensus: What Does Europe Want from Russia?* in: *Russia in Global Affairs*, 23 December 2014, at: <http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/book/The-End-of-Consensus-What-Does-Europe-Want-from-Russia-17228>.)

²⁰ Vladimir Putin, Speech at the meeting of the CSTO Collective Security Council, Dushanbe, 15 September 2015 (*Vystupleniye na zasedanii Soveta kollektivnoy bezopasnosti ODKB*, Dushanbe, 15 sentyabrya 2015g.), at: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/50291>.

Note: Translations from Russian quotations into English are unofficial translations of the author of this article.

economic and humanitarian space from the Atlantic to the Pacific. [...] we believe that this space could be based on cooperation between the Eurasian Economic Union and the European Union and between the Eurasian Economic Commission and the European Commission.

Second, our proposal regarding the codification in international law of the principle of undivided security in the Euro-Atlantic region is still on the table. We see good prospects for discussing it in restarting dialogue on fundamental security issues in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian region. [...] The idea is to breathe new life into the Helsinki process. This will require the reaffirmation of all the Helsinki principles and ensuring their uniform understanding and practical implementation by all member states today. This will require efforts to address the most challenging problems that have not been addressed, but have been piling up over the past two decades, including the need to reach a consensus on the balance between the territorial integrity of states and the right of nations to self-determination and to reaffirm the unacceptability of an unconstitutional change of government and support for extremist forces.”²¹

“The *third* principle is the joint resolution of international and regional issues. Everyone recognizes the importance of cooperation with Russia on the Middle East settlement, the resolution of crises in Syria, Iraq, Libya, and Yemen and the fight against international terrorism.”²²

- We suggest conducting a Track 1.5 workshop with Russian scholars and officials on the meaning, interpretation and mutual relationship of the basic OSCE principles, norms and commitments.

Russia's changeable belief in codifying foreign relations

Traditionally, Russia has had an inclination towards a codification of foreign relations. Nonetheless, Russia itself acts against international law, now and again. Boris Mezhyuev (2009) explains this contradictory pattern of current Russian action with two opposing basic positions standing behind this. He writes that after

“Russia’s realization of her position as the ‘loser’ in the Cold War, two ‘parties’ [...] emerged in Russia’s social and political space among intellectuals. [...] The first ‘party’ insisted that Russia adapt to the existing world order in view of its pre-eminence, or considering [...] Russia’s own weakness. At first, discussions would centre on Russia’s acceptance of the legal standards of the existing world order, but subsequently, after Yugoslavia and Iraq, it became clear that those who considered themselves to be the victors in the Cold War did not intend to respect these standards themselves. [...] At the side of the second ‘party’, staunch] supporters of strong national statehood [...] demanded that Russia completely disregard international norms in planning its policies and exclusively pursue its own national interest, or, more precisely, national egoism. Consequently, since it is in Russia’s interests to recognize South Ossetia and Abkhazia, it should

²¹ Alexey Meshkov, *Russia and Europe: What next?* in: *International Affairs*, No. 6/2015, p. 45f.

²² *Ibid.* p. 46.

recognize them without regard for legal considerations, all the more so that its Western partners are not acting any better themselves. [...] If the position of the first 'party' politically disorientated Russia, the second 'party' was pushing the country into an inevitable political deadlock."²³

Even after Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Sergei Lavrov (2012) stated that "[t]he consistent assertion of the rule of law in international affairs is a key priority of our diplomacy."²⁴ Deputy FM Andrei Denisov (2012) warned that a "dangerous amplification of the elements of chaos in world politics will be unavoidable otherwise."²⁵ The 2016 Foreign Policy Concept formulates Russia's intention as

"to counter attempts by some States or groups of States to revise the generally accepted principles of international law enshrined in the UN Charter, the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations of October 24, 1970, as well as in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe of August 1, 1975".²⁶

This statement is all the more remarkable as it was issued after the events in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine.

The Russian belief in codifying foreign relations in an all-embracing manner was also a key driver behind the 2008 European Security Treaty proposal."²⁷ For Fyodor Lukyanov (2009), it was "Moscow's first attempt in 20 years to formulate a coherent foreign-policy vision."²⁸ In Dmitriy Danilov's view (2012), Moscow bound itself with it "to build its policy on a cooperative paradigm [but...] the potentials of the European Security Treaty as an alternative to a NATO-centric security model were simply nonexistent."²⁹ For Nadezhda Arbatova (2010), the essence of the EST proposal was the "introduction of rules of conduct between Russia and NATO."³⁰

²³ Mezhujev 2009, quoted above (note 9).

²⁴ Sergei Lavrov, Russian Diplomacy and the Challenges of the 21st Century, in: *International Affairs*, No. 5/2012, p. 8.

²⁵ Andrei Denisov, Russia in a Changing World: Continued Priorities and New Opportunities, in: *International Affairs*, No. 4/2012, p. 11.

²⁶ Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 30 November 2016, pt. 26b.

²⁷ Sergey Lavrov (2010) explained that EST "focuses only on one subject, namely the principle of indivisibility of security, which has systemic importance. [...] The "codification" of the principle of indivisibility of security would help create a single legal military-political space in Europe without zones of different degrees of security, and would help us pool our efforts at a basically new level of confidence for joint and more effective counteraction to common threats." Sergey Lavrov, *The Euro-Atlantic Region: Equal Security for All*, in: *Russia in Global Affairs*, 7 July 2010, at: http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/number/The_Euro-Atlantic_Region:_Equal_Security_for_All-14888.

²⁸ Fyodor Lukyanov, *Rethinking Security in "Greater Europe"*, in: *Russia in Global Affairs*, 5 September 2009, at: http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/number/n_13589.

²⁹ Dmitriy Danilov, *From Vancouver to Vladivostok: Crossroads in the Common Security Space (Ot Vankuvera do Vladivostoka: perekrestki obshchego prostranstva bezopasnosti)*, in: *World Economy and International Relations (Mirovaia e'konomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia)*, No. 12, December 2012, p. 41.

³⁰ Arbatova 2010, quoted above (note 10), p. 7.

Russia's belief in codifying conflict-management rules

The belief in codifying foreign relations keeps playing a role in Russia's approaches to conflict management as well. FM Sergei Lavrov (2012) discussed this in detail with respect to the invasion of Iraq (2003), the recognition of Kosovo's independence (2008) and the military intervention in Libya (2011) – in his view all precedents of Western violations of international law.³¹ Codifying foreign relations is also the pattern standing behind Russia's insistence on adapting an OSCE founding document or charter.³²

Russia's interest in the Near Abroad

An important part in Russian programmatic discussions is its prominent interest in the so-called Near Abroad. In this context, Russian authors discuss the eastward expansion of the Euro-Atlantic integration structures over the last 25 years. Igor Istomin (2010) comes to the conclusion that "Russia feels excluded from the European security system and is therefore dangerous for its neighbours and hazardous for regional security."³³ Sergei Kortunov (2010) objects that, three years before the Ukrainian crisis, Western states "spared no effort to channel the processes underway in the CIS countries to adjust the 'European periphery' to their own pattern and put pressure on the countries outside NATO and the European Union to change their political orientation up to and including regime change".³⁴ Yevgeny Bazhanov (2014) emphasises Russia's special rights in relation to the Near Abroad and a somewhat natural gravitational force of Russia: "None of the former Soviet republics, probably with the exception of the Baltic states, can fit into different contexts: economic interdependence, mixed populations, cultural traditions and security considerations push them to Russia."³⁵

3. Russian Interests in Selected Subjects

Strengthening organisational structures, preserving the consensus rule

Since the so-called OSCE reform discussions in 2005-06, Russia has now and then suggested strengthening the Organization's capacities, particularly with a view to decision-making and regulatory control mechanisms. "In our view, the key to success in the OSCE's upgrade will be to strengthen its organisational structure while strictly observing its consensus basis of decision-making", writes Deputy FM Alexey

³¹ Lavrov 2012, quoted above (note 24), p. 7.

³² Kelin 2013, quoted above (note 11), p. 93. See: Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Russia, Tajikistan, Draft Decision on the Charter of the OSCE), PC.DEL/897/07, 18 September 2007.

³³ Igor Istomin, American Analysts on European Security, in: International Affairs, No. 3, 2010, p. 96.

³⁴ Kortunov 2010, quoted above (note 8), p. 62.

³⁵ Yevgeny Bazhanov, Russia and the West, in: International Affairs, No. 1/2014, p. 50.

Meshkov (2013).³⁶ The 2016 Foreign Policy Concept calls for “drafting the OSCE Charter and reforming its executive bodies with a view to ensuring appropriate prerogatives of the collective intergovernmental bodies [that] are the prerequisites for making the OSCE even more relevant.”³⁷ While reforming the OSCE executive bodies is not a current matter, discussions on a constituent document continue in the open-ended Informal Working Group on Strengthening the Legal Framework of the OSCE.

3.1. Subject Matters in the Politico-Military Dimension

Emphasis on the first dimension: Addressing transnational threats

Russian officials rank OSCE efforts in the first dimension ahead of other matters. “Without this”, states Andrey Kelin (2013), “it is impossible to implement the task of expanding economic and humanitarian cooperation.”³⁸ The 2016 Foreign Policy Concept re-emphasises Russia’s priorities in the first dimension of the OSCE as “primarily regarding countering transnational challenges and threats”.³⁹

Russian scholars pay attention to new threats and challenges and mention the OSCE in this context. According to Ida Kuklina (2013), the problems of addressing them have been taken “beyond the scope of bilateral relations, the status of which was previously a major and, traditionally, a priority indicator for evaluating the stability of global development.”⁴⁰ She underscores that the multitude of ideas, beliefs or phenomena that express specific group interests, “such as nationalism, ethnic separatism, tribalism, the politicization of the religious factor and inter-confessional conflicts, authoritarianism, the preservation of archaic forms of government, are conflictual by their very nature [... and that state elites on these grounds] are unable to adequately answer to the challenges of the emerging new world order.”⁴¹ Alexei Gromyko (2011) and others emphasise that there are dominant common interests between Russia and the West in tackling new threats and challenges.⁴² Marianna Evtodieva (2011) underlines the OSCE’s well-known role in this field.⁴³

Addressing cyber and information security

Russia engages in matters of international information security (IIS), particularly with the OSCE and the UN Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on IIS that was set up in

³⁶ Alexey Meshkov, The Rumors of an Imminent EU Collapse Are Premature, in: *International Affairs*, No. 5/2013, p. 7.

³⁷ Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 30 November 2016, pt. 68.

³⁸ Kelin 2013, quoted above (note 11), p. 94.

³⁹ Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 30 November 2016, pt. 68.

⁴⁰ Ida Kuklina, Global Provision of Security: Collapse of Power and Law? (Global'noye obespecheniye bezopasnosti: kollaps sily i prava?), in: *World Economy and International Relations (Mirovaia e'konomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia)*, No. 3, March 2013, p. 19.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* p. 22.

⁴² Alexei Gromyko, Security Through Cooperation, in: *International Affairs*, No. 5/2011, p. 20.

⁴³ Marianna Evtodieva, OSCE: The Military-Political Dimension, Status, Trends, in: *International Affairs*, No. 1/2011, p. 66.

2014.⁴⁴ Specific interest is drawn to issues, such as the unlawful use of information and communications technologies (ICTs), its interpretation under current international legal norms and its possible classification as aggression, the application of terms such as “weapon” or “use of armed forces” to ICTs and connotations of the definition of “theatres of war in the information space”, the right to self-defence, the responsibility of states, the balance between IIS and freedom, and the right of access to information and, finally, the role of international organisations in ensuring IIS. Andrey Krutskikh and Anatoly Streltsov (2014) summarize that “[a]t this point, the apparent key problem is the lack of a full-fledged international legal framework governing ICT-related activities by States, including their military aspects.”⁴⁵

Oleg Demidov and Elena Chernenko (2015) underline Russia’s proactive role here. According to this, Russia and the SCO countries, China, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, had presented a draft Code of Conduct for Information Security to the UN General Assembly in September 2011, followed by a Russia-prepared draft UN Convention “On International Information Security”. In their view, “Russia tried not only to protect its resources from cyber threats in the strict sense (software and hardware sabotage, computer espionage, etc.), but also to prevent the use of information and communication technologies for political purposes (to manipulate public opinion in other countries, destabilize regimes, etc).”⁴⁶

However, this is a disputed area in which Russia has become subject to international criticism and has lost a lot of credibility. In the OSCE, Russia has engaged in adapting confidence-building measures to reduce the risks of conflict stemming from the use of information and communication technologies (PC.DEC/1106/13, PC.DEC/1202/16, MC.DEC/5/16).

- We suggest conducting a workshop with scholars from Russia and other participating States on identifying “ways of strengthening and optimizing the work of the OSCE as a practical platform for reducing risks of conflict stemming from the use of information and communication technologies” (MC.DEC/5/17). This workshop could be conducted within the OSCE Network as an OSCE Chairmanship event or within the cross-dimensional Informal Working Group, established pursuant to Permanent Council Decision No. 1039.

Appreciating the “very positive role” in conflict management

Russia sees a special quality in OSCE conflict management. The 2016 Foreign Policy Concept underlines that “Russia strongly advocates a political and diplomatic settlement of conflicts in the post-Soviet space” and makes explicit reference to using

⁴⁴ The GGE Information Security includes 20 experts, *inter alia*, from BLR, EST, FRA, GER, RUS, ESP, UK and USA. The UN Secretary-General submits annual reports to the UN General Assembly reflecting the views of UN Member States on IIS. Germany is among those which annually submit full national IIS reports to the GGE. See: <http://www.un.org/disarmament/topics/informationsecurity/>.

⁴⁵ Andrey Krutskikh, Anatoly Streltsov, International Law and the Problem of International Information Security, in: International Affairs, No. 6/2014, p. 64.

⁴⁶ Oleg Demidov, Elena Chernenko, The Game of Rules. Can Cybersecurity Be a Uniting Force? in: Russia in Global Affairs, 22 September 2015, at: <http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/number/The-Game-of-Rules-17709>.

the OSCE in the Karabakh context.⁴⁷ Russia's engagement in the various mediation formats for the conflicts in the post-Soviet space verify this. In his widely noticed Valdai speech, Vladimir Putin (2014) called the OSCE an organisation "which, over the course of 40 years, has proven to be a necessary mechanism for ensuring security and cooperation in the Euro-Atlantic region. I must say that even now, in trying to resolve the crisis in southeast Ukraine, the OSCE is playing a very positive role".⁴⁸

Marianna Evtodieva (2011) criticizes the reduction of the OSCE's conflict-management role to merely post-war rehabilitation and democratisation assistance, while leaving more prominent responsibility to the EU and the UN.⁴⁹ With the conflict in Eastern Ukraine, Igor Shcherbak (2015) appreciates the OSCE as "a very useful and constructive moderator. This role is ensured by the recognition of the equal status of all participants in the Helsinki Process and their equally legitimate concerns with all aspects of their security. To a great extent, this is possible thanks to the mechanisms set up by the OSCE for the purposes of regular discussions of the decisions passed by its structures and regular meetings called to readjust earlier decisions to facilitate compromises."⁵⁰

3.2. Subject Matters in the Economic and Environmental Dimension

Dealing with the OSCE's second dimension has been limited because specialized organisations are generally better positioned than the OSCE. This is also true for the discourse with Russia. However, new geopolitical and economic rivalry between Russia and the West has given the OSCE's second dimension a new relevance. Current discussions on the subject of connectivity between the different European integration structures have opened up some opportunity for dialogue. Alexei Kuznetsov (2015) underscores Russia's interest in the OSCE as a collective platform that "can efficiently address the problems of economic, energy and ecological security which are steadily coming to the fore in Europe in the interests of all countries, not only the EU core."⁵¹

Dialogue between the two European Integration Structures: Contradictory Positions in Russia

Russian authors are concerned about the changing character of conflicts in the course of globalisation. Not surprisingly, a case in point is economic disagreement and competition between the two integration structures on the Europe-Asia continent. Igor Shcherbak (2015) notes:

"The military and political contradictions are replaced with trade and economic disagreements, especially vehement in the context of an aggressive widening of

⁴⁷ Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 30 November 2016, pt. 58.

⁴⁸ Vladimir Putin, Meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club, Sochi, 24 October 2014, at: <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/46860>.

⁴⁹ Evtodieva 2011, quoted above (note 43), p. 65.

⁵⁰ Igor Shcherbak, The OSCE and Its Anti-Crisis Mechanisms in West-East Integration Processes, in: *International Affairs*, No. 1/2015, p. 94.

⁵¹ Kuznetsov 2015, quoted above (note 14), p. 3.

geographical zones of trade and economic associations and the desire of certain regional blocs to monopolize their positions at the expense of others.”⁵²

Tensions may turn into full-scale crisis especially if they are aggravated by trade and economic sanctions or trade and economic war. Igor Shcherbak (2015) notes further:

“This means that the OSCE should widen its traditional anti-crisis agenda to cope with the new challenges created by the policy and actions of trade-economic associations. Its considerable potential of ‘preventive diplomacy’ may help it address and resolve the problems and in this way harmonize the integration processes underway in Europe and also in the Europe-Asia context.”⁵³

It is important to note that behind the official Russian suggestion of an “integration of integrations” debate, one can find completely contradictory positions in the Russian literature. Authors, such as Victor Sheynis, suggested as early as 2010 thinking about what prevents the integration of Russia into European alliances – both from the Russian side and from the West – and starting to remove these obstacles.⁵⁴

Andrey Suzdaltsev (2010) saw one of the obstacles in Russia’s fear of losing its “status of the main force steering integration processes in the post-Soviet space” and seeing this space finally getting pushed “into the sphere of integration processes designed by external forces – the EU, China, etc.”⁵⁵ On the other hand, Sergey Lavrov (2013) formulated “the creation of a common economic and humanitarian space from the Atlantic to the Pacific as a strategic goal”.⁵⁶ Still, with the Ukrainian crisis heating up, he underlined that Russia would

“not counter-pose the Eurasian project to other integration projects, in particular the ongoing integration work in the EU. We are ready and keen to harmonize these processes [...] to create, in the future, a unified economic and humanitarian space from Atlantic to Pacific where all EU countries, the future members of the Eurasian integration process and other nations located in this area could coexist and cooperate to mutual advantage.”⁵⁷

In a completely different perspective, Evgenij Treshchenkov (2014) perceives the European and the Eurasian integration models as mutually exclusive and distanced from each other by a lack of mutual understanding. With respect to the “countries in-between” he stated:

⁵² Ibid. p. 91.

⁵³ Ibid. p. 92.

⁵⁴ Victor Sheynis, *The World Order after the War in the Caucasus (Findings and Fantasies about International Topics)* (Miroporiadok posle kavkazskoi' voi'ny (Konstatatsii i fantazii na mezhdunarodnye temy), in: *World Economy and International Relations (Mirovaia e'konomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia)*, No. 5, May 2010, p. 17.

⁵⁵ Andrey Suzdaltsev, *Politics Ahead of the Economy*, in: *Russia in Global Affairs*, 9 April 2010, at: http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/number/n_14783.

⁵⁶ Sergey Lavrov, *Russia's Foreign Policy Philosophy*, in: *International Affairs*, No. 3/2013, p. 6.

⁵⁷ Sergey Lavrov, *It Is Time for Our Western Partners to Concede that They Have no Monopoly on Truth*, in: *International Affairs*, No. 4/2014, p. 2.

“From countries with an interest in both integration associations, both Russia and the EU require a clear choice in favor of only one of the two models. In addition, the voices of supporters of the contradistinction of Russia and Europe as different civilization communities are strong. In this context, Russia’s integration projects are often characterized as an alternative to the convergence of the European CIS countries with the European Union. On the other hand, one often talks about the functionalities of the Eurasian integration making use of the unique experience in creating the European structures of the Customs Union and the single market. [...] The example of the EU is used to justify the need of the Eurasian integration, giving it attractiveness and a modern sound.”⁵⁸

Still, before the Ukrainian crisis, Andrey Kelin (2013) stressed the role of the OSCE as an arena for dialogue between the two European integration areas of the EU and the EAEU:

“Special note should be taken here of our close cooperation with our CSTO allies and other CIS partners in the OSCE. For all of us, the Organization is primarily a forum for equal dialogue with colleagues from all Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian countries on every security issue. It serves to exchange best practices without moralizing and preaching, and also to look for unifying themes that can help to ‘glue’ together the different integration processes in Eurasia.”⁵⁹

Again, it is important to be aware of the fact that the official Russian position of a European integration debate in the OSCE is not shared by all participants in the published Russian discourse. However, it is difficult, if not impossible, to assess the relative influence of the proponents of the incompatibility of ‘different models of civilizations’.

On the other hand, there are Russian scholars, such as Igor Shcherbak (2015), who have forwarded a whole series of partially detailed proposals for an EU / EAEU dialogue in the OSCE arena that could be summarized in the following way:

- The OSCE can “broker trade and economic ties [between the EU and Russia/EAEU and] acquire a new role: it can harmonize the conditions of future mutually advantageous cooperation”.⁶⁰
- The OSCE should adopt a “declaration on new challenges for Europe’s economic stability” that should also clarify “the OSCE role as an intermediary responsible for the conflict-free development of trade and economic integration in its responsibility space.”(Ibid.)
- The participating States should mandate the OSCE CEEA to assume “functions related to consultations between the EU and the EAEU on conflict settlement in the spheres of trade and economy” (ibid.).

⁵⁸ Evgenij Treshchenkov, *The European and the Eurasian Integration Models: The Limits of Commensurability (Evropei'skaia i evrazii'skaia modeli integratsii: predely soizmerimosti)*, in: *World Economy and International Relations (Mirovaia e'konomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia)*, No. 5, May 2014, p. 31.

⁵⁹ Kelin 2013, quoted above (note 11), p. 93.

⁶⁰ Igor Shcherbak, *The OSCE and Its Anti-Crisis Mechanisms in West-East Integration Processes*, in: *International Affairs*, No. 1/2015, p. 97.

Academic Dialogue on EU / EEU relations in the OSCE

Although the OSCE has not yet adopted decisions on facilitating a dialogue between the different economic integration structures, this debate has been started – at least semi-officially – at the level of the “OSCE Security Days”. In the report on the “OSCE Security Days” in Berlin, 23-24 June 2016 titled “From Confrontation to Co-operation: Restoring Co-operative Security in Europe” we can find suggestions that we would slightly adapt in the following way:

- We suggest conducting an expert workshop on “Increasing the Role of the OSCE in Facilitating Economic Connectivity across Areas Divided by Conflict Lines”, taking into account, among other examples, “the OSCE’s experience in the Trilateral Contact Group’s working group on the economy within the framework of the Minsk negotiations on the crisis in and around Ukraine”⁶¹ and experiences in the negotiation process for the Transdniestrian Settlement in the “5+2” format (cf. MC.DOC/1/17).
- We suggest starting a small-format 1.5 dialogue with scholars and representatives from the OSCE, the UNECE, the EU, the EAEU and other organizations interested in “practical areas of interaction between integration initiatives within the OSCE space”.⁶² This could be arranged within the OSCE Network of Think Tanks Academic Institutions.

Responding to ungovernability, taking “responsible leadership”

In a more general perspective, Russian authors observe an increasing ungovernability in global affairs and draw conclusions for Russia. Andrei Denisov (2012) notes “a deepening crisis of the system of global governance”.⁶³ Alexander Dynkin (2011) observes a “globalization of security and development issues” and “changes in strategic thinking of political elites of leading nations.”⁶⁴ From this, he draws the conclusion that the “task to strengthen itself as a ‘center of power’ will be transformed into another one – to exercise a capacity for “responsible leadership” to respond to the common security and development challenges.”⁶⁵ At the political level, Vladimir Putin (2015) proposed “a new global consensus of responsible forces” in light of “the increase in uncontrollability and various threats”.⁶⁶

Responsible leadership and common interests in Central Asia

Responsible leadership covers a large spectrum – regionally and thematically. *Inter alia*, Russia is striving to remain a regional power and keep its economic positions in

⁶¹ OSCE Security Days, From Confrontation to Co-operation: Restoring Co-operative Security in Europe, Berlin, 23-24 June 2016, Conference Report, SEC.DAYS/17/16, 27 July 2016.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Andrei Denisov, Foreign Policy Aspects of Russia’s Accession to the WTO, in: International Affairs, No. 5/2012, p. 20.

⁶⁴ Alexander Dynkin 2011, quoted above (note 18), p. 11.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Vladimir Putin 2014, quoted above (note 48).

Central Asia. Sergey Dorofeev (2011) sees Russia's interests here as ranging from security matters and the preservation of social and political stability in the region; through energy issues and the control of transport infrastructures; the integration within the frameworks of the CSTO and the Eurasian Economic Community to humanitarian soft-power interests that, *inter alia*, touch Russian citizens and Russian-speaking Central Asians.⁶⁷

A number of authors emphasize Russia's interest in preventing radical Islamism and other forms of radicalism. Sergey Dorofeev (2011) underlines common Russian and Western interests within a broader regional picture that includes the prevention of destabilization in three regions within the context of common interests – the Caspian region, the Middle East and Afghanistan –, to curb third parties' political influence there and to implement energy-related interests.⁶⁸ Fedor Basov (2011) makes a similar point about common Russian and Western interests on the subject of Russia's influence and security efforts in Central Asia as opposed to the option of a growing Chinese influence there.⁶⁹

Supporting OSCE disaster risk reduction and management

Former Russian Permanent Representative to the OSCE, Andrey Kelin (2013), stressed that a "new theme for the OSCE is staving off natural and man-made disasters. The Organisation could well be useful here, say for mobilising the political will of countries for more effective multilateral co-operation, as a venue for exchange of experience."⁷⁰

Disaster risk reduction and management have received specific attention within the OSCE only in recent years, particularly under the Swiss 2014 Chairmanship. Increasingly, this issue is seen as having the potential to promote security and trust-building, especially in cross-border areas. Awareness-raising and capacity-building efforts to prevent and manage natural and man-made hazardous events include, *inter alia*, the fields of water management, mitigating floods in transboundary river basins, and wildfire management. These OSCE activities are appreciated by governments and the broad public. Russia engages in disaster management in different parts of the world, including the OSCE area. Thus, Decision 6/14 "Enhancing Disaster Risk Reduction" adopted by the Basel Ministerial Council, appeals to the participating States to:

- Discuss "disaster risk reduction measures with climate change adaptation and mitigation plans at all appropriate levels".

⁶⁷ See: Sergey Dorofeev, Russian and US Interests in Central Asia: Prospects for Possible Co-operation (Interesy Rossii i SShA v Tsentral'noi' Azii: Perspektivy vozmozhnogo sotrudnichestva), in: World Economy and International Relations (Mirovaia e'konomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia), No. 2, February 2011, p. 95.

⁶⁸ Ibid. p. 98f.

⁶⁹ Fedor Basov, Energy and Environmental Co-operation between Russia and Germany (E'nergeticheskoe i e'kologicheskoe sotrudnichestvo Rossii i Germanii), in: World Economy and International Relations (Mirovaia e'konomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia), No. 8, August 2011, p. 104.

⁷⁰ Kelin 2013, quoted above (note 11), p. 95.

- Share experiences in the field of “technological development, innovation, and the transfer of technology and know-how [...] in support of disaster risk reduction”.⁷¹

3.3. Subject Matters in the Human Dimension

Although it is well-known that many items in the human dimension are almost not discussible, there are some areas that can be fruitfully addressed. These subject matters are dealt with here.

Russia engaging in migration discussions

Migration is an important security issue for Russia and a field where it desires co-operation in different international formats. The classic subject in the OSCE is labour migration. Russia’s 2016 Foreign Policy Concept stipulates that Russia

“... participate[s] in international co-operation aimed at regulating migration processes, ensuring the rights of migrant workers, including by promoting integration formats and mechanisms in the receiving country that suit migrants best, and setting conditions for obtaining citizenship or asylum from persecution; rejects the use of migration processes to achieve political ends.”⁷²

In the view of Victor Komarovsky (2013)

“[t]he main problems associated with migration are the continuation of the financial and economic crisis, the difficult situation on the labor market and the continuing rise of unemployment, overpressure of immigration flows (refugees and illegal immigrants), the growth of ethno-social tensions in the receiving countries, a high proportion of foreigners with an irregular status.”⁷³

Lyubov Bisson (2014) suggests returning to co-operation on migration with emphasis on the common goal of combating illegal migration. Such co-operation was once launched in the form of the EU-Russia high-level Dialogue on Migration in May 2011. Along an action plan of its own, discussions at that time covered such issues as legal migration, asylum and other forms of international protection, combating illegal migration and trafficking in human beings.⁷⁴ Official Russian papers see some

⁷¹ OSCE, Ministerial Council, Basel 2014, Decision No. 6/14, Enhancing Disaster Risk Reduction, MC.DEC/6/14, 5 December 2014.

⁷² Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 30 November 2016, pt. 37. See also: Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation, 12 February 2013, pt. 32f.

⁷³ Victor Komarovsky quoted in: Nikita Zagladin, Ethno-Socio-Cultural Conflict: New Realities of the Present Time (Etnosotsiokul'turnyy konflikt: novaya real'nost' sovremennosti), in: World Economy and International Relations (Mirovaia e'konomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia), No. 11, November 2013, p. 85.

⁷⁴ Lyubov Bisson, Cooperation between Russia and the EU in the Field of Migration (Sotrudnichestvo Rossii i ES v sfere migratsii), in: World Economy and International Relations (Mirovaia e'konomika i mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia), No. 4, April 2014, p. 72ff.

potential for Russia and the EU to step up combined efforts in this field.⁷⁵ Using the OSCE is not prominently mentioned in this context.

Russia's protection of compatriots abroad

A quite traditional subject on Russia's OSCE agenda is the protection of compatriots abroad. More recently, it was brought into play with Eastern Ukraine, during the annexation of Crimea, with respect to the Russian minorities in Estonia and Latvia, and in the context of the protracted conflicts. Sergei Kortunov (2010) emphasizes that the OSCE "should be used to defend our interests when it comes to crisis settlement (when and where this proves possible), prevention of regional conflicts and defence of human rights of Russian speakers in the Baltic countries."⁷⁶ Sergey Dorofeev (2011) sees that Russian interests also touch the matters of Russian citizens living in Central Asia and Russian-speaking Central Asia dwellers.⁷⁷ In this discussion, Alexander Fomenko (2012) draws parallels between Russia and Germany:

"The European experience in this field [soft power, national language and culture] is fairly vast: for several decades now, Germany has been building up its foreign policy on the 'German world' concept. All Germans, no matter where they live, are viewed as compatriots who can claim German citizenship on the strength of their origin. On the other hand, [Germany ...] cultivated the 'culture of tolerance' inside the country. It was only recently that Moscow has finally recognized the Russian World as an obvious cultural and political reality."⁷⁸

The 2015 National Security Strategy stresses that Russia has "demonstrated the ability [...] to protect the rights of compatriots abroad".⁷⁹ The 2016 Foreign Policy Concept now declares the "comprehensive, effective protection of the rights and legitimate interests of Russian citizens and compatriots residing abroad, including within various international frameworks", a main objective of Russia's foreign policy activities.⁸⁰

- We suggest conducting an expert meeting on "Citizenship Concepts for Compatriots Living Abroad: Meeting OSCE Stipulations for Responsible Interstate Relations". Points of departure for these communications could be ways of implementing the Bolzano/Bozen Recommendations on National Minorities in Interstate Relations (2008).

⁷⁵ The spectrum of proposed Russia/EU co-operation includes in this context "counter terrorism, uncontrolled and illegal migration, as well as organized crime, including human trafficking, illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors, arms and explosives, and cybercrime." (Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 30 November 2016, pt. 64).

⁷⁶ Sergei Kortunov 2010, quoted above (note 8), p. 63.

⁷⁷ Sergey Dorofeev 2011, quoted above (note 67), p. 95.

⁷⁸ Alexander Fomenko, *Our Prospects: Outlines of a Eurasian Foreign Policy*, International Affairs, No. 5/2012, p. 234.

⁷⁹ The Russian Federation's National Security Strategy, 31 December 2015, at: <https://rg.ru/2015/12/31/nac-bezopasnost-site-dok.html>.

⁸⁰ Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation, 30 November 2016, pt. 58. Also: Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation, 12 February 2013, pt. 4.

Looking for cultural rapprochement

Similarity or divergence of European and Russian values is an old contentious issue in the self-reflections of Russian elites and the broad public. Remarkably, the government has seemed to see the country amidst a fundamental struggle on the interpretation of universal principles and values. The 2013 Foreign Policy Concept stated:

“For the first time in modern history, global competition takes place on a civilizational level, whereby various values and models of development based on the universal principles of democracy and market economy start to clash and compete against each other.”⁸¹

Along this line, Alexander Fomenko (2012) noticed a fading of “obvious cultural and political differences” and even came to the point that “Moscow, Berlin and Paris (and all others) become the West, at least when seen from the Far or Middle East.”⁸² Armen Oganessian (2012) sees an “affinity of cultures” between Russia and the West.⁸³ Alexander Lukin (2012) assures us that “according to public opinion polls, the majority of Russians consider their country to be part of Europe”.⁸⁴

Interestingly, a year after Russia’s fundamental break with the West over Kosovo and Georgia, the 2009 National Security Strategy named the goal of “developing democracy and civil society” among Russia’s first priorities.⁸⁵ The 2013 Foreign Policy Concept formulated basic goals such as “strengthening the rule of law and democratic institutions, and ensuring human rights and freedoms” as well.⁸⁶ Still, the 2015 National Security Strategy declared “developing democratic institutions, and refining the mechanisms for cooperation between the state and civil society” as long-term national strategic interests.⁸⁷ Then again, scholars, such as Yevgeny Bazhanov (2014), discover a backward-looking change of values in Russia since the mid-1990s:

“Geopolitical disagreements revived ideological contradictions. At the early stages of reforms, people in power did not object to or even greeted the Western efforts to plant democratic values in Russia and teach the nation how to live in a ‘free state.’ Today, this looks like an effort to weaken power in Russia and to ‘force it to its knees.’”⁸⁸

Thus, FM Sergey Lavrov (2013) objects to the “rejection of traditional values that have evolved over centuries, separation from [our] own cultural and spiritual roots and the inflation of individual rights and freedoms [... that were leading to a] loss of all

⁸¹ Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation, 12 February 2013, pt. 9.

⁸² Fomenko 2012, quoted above (note 80), p. 234.

⁸³ Armen Oganessian, *Europe Meets Russia. Venue Is Yet To Be Named*, in: *International Affairs*, No. 4/2012, p. 227.

⁸⁴ Alexander Lukin, *Russian Foreign Policy: On a Course Toward Concentration*, in: *International Affairs*, No. 6/2012, p. 65ff.

⁸⁵ President of the Russian Federation, *The Russian Federation’s National Security Strategy to 2020*, 12 May 2009, pt. 21.

⁸⁶ Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation, 12 February 2013, pt. 4.

⁸⁷ *The Russian Federation’s National Security Strategy*, 31 December 2015, pt. 30.

⁸⁸ Yevgeny Bazhanov, *Russia and the West*, in: *International Affairs*, No. 1/2014, p. 43.

reference points both in national and foreign policy”.⁸⁹ He calls for a “genuinely common moral foundation of international relations [that] should be a product of equal dialog based on the common spiritual and moral denominator”.⁹⁰

From these partially contradictory statements, one can draw the following conclusions: *First*, at least at the declaratory level, universal values including democracy are undisputed. *Second*, however, there are widely different interpretations of what these values mean. The new confrontation between Russia and the West has contributed to a hardening of positions. Therefore, *third*, a dialogue on values makes sense to avoid a further drifting apart.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

Reading Russian foreign and security policy literature leads the Westerner into a different and, to some extent, alien world. It is not only the arguments used that differ, but also the style of arguing. Frequently, the way of arguing is very general, even philosophical – significantly different from Western styles, which are based either on interests or norms or pure pragmatism. However, the more one reads, the better one understands not only the individual argument, but also the general position behind it. Russian strategic literature is by no means uniform and can be used in a number of ways.

First, there are many pieces of predominantly declaratory character, authored not only by politicians and diplomats, but also by scholars and analysts. This does not mean that these writings are not interesting, quite the contrary. One can study which declaratory schemes are used and which ones are not, and how this is changing over time. Finally, one can take these authors at their word and ask what rather general remarks mean in more practical terms.

Second, as mentioned above, this strand of literature is by no means uniform. Rather, we find a wide range of contradictory positions that compete in explicit or more implicit discussions. Knowing about these contradictions is essential for everybody dealing with Russian foreign and security policy.

Third, there are some – not too many – pieces of literature that explain the background and the development of different schools of thought. This is particularly valuable for ‘outsiders’ who do not have discussions with Russian experts on a regular basis.

Fourth and finally, the strand of literature reviewed contains a number of concrete proposals that could be discussed in the OSCE framework or other arenas. In many cases, such proposals are authored by senior diplomats which raises their character to the level of an informal offer for consultations.

Thus, according to different interests of knowledge, the semi-official Russian foreign and security literature can be used in quite different ways: as a source for studying the contours and development of official standard positions, as a way of understanding

⁸⁹ Lavrov 2013, quoted above (note 58), p. 4.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

the deeper layers of Russian thinking in this sphere, and as a possibility for identifying items that deserve more careful consultations.

* * *

In summary of this review, we come to the following recommendations that could be used by the sides when they see that the right moment has come:

- We suggest conducting a Track 1.5 workshop with Russian scholars and officials on the meaning, interpretation and mutual relationship of the basic OSCE principles, norms and commitments.
- We suggest conducting a workshop with scholars from Russia and other participating States on identifying “ways of strengthening and optimizing the work of the OSCE as a practical platform for reducing risks of conflict stemming from the use of information and communication technologies” (MC.DEC/5/17). This workshop could be conducted within the OSCE Network, as an OSCE Chairmanship event or within the cross-dimensional Informal Working Group, established pursuant to Permanent Council Decision No. 1039.
- We suggest conducting an expert workshop on “Increasing the Role of the OSCE in Facilitating Economic Connectivity across Areas Divided by Conflict Lines”, taking into account, among other examples, “the OSCE’s experience in the Trilateral Contact Group’s working group on the economy within the framework of the Minsk negotiations on the crisis in and around Ukraine”⁹¹ and experiences in the negotiation process for the Transdniestrian Settlement in the “5+2” format (cf. MC.DOC/1/17).
- We suggest starting a small-format 1.5 dialogue with scholars and representatives from the OSCE, the UNECE, the EU, the EAEU and other organizations interested in “practical areas of interaction between integration initiatives within the OSCE space”.⁹² This could be arranged within the OSCE Network of Think Tanks Academic Institutions.
- We suggest conducting an expert meeting on “Citizenship Concepts for Compatriots Living Abroad: Meeting OSCE Stipulations for Responsible Interstate Relations”. Points of departure for these communications could be ways of implementing the Bolzano/Bozen Recommendations on National Minorities in Interstate Relations (2008).

⁹¹ OSCE Security Days, From Confrontation to Co-operation: Restoring Co-operative Security in Europe, Berlin, 23-24 June 2016, Conference Report, SEC.DAYS/17/16, 27 July 2016.

⁹² Ibid.

About CORE

The Centre for OSCE Research (CORE), founded in 2000, is the only institute specifically dedicated to research on the OSCE. Located in Hamburg, Germany, within the Institute for Peace Research and Security Policy (IFSH), CORE operates as a politically independent think tank, combining basic research on the evolution of the OSCE with demand-driven capacity-building projects and teaching. Addressing political actors, the academic community and the interested general public in Germany and abroad, CORE strives to contribute to the OSCE's development with analysis and critique that provide insight into the problems faced by and opportunities open to the Organization. For more information about CORE or this paper, please contact:

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