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**The National Security Concept of the Russian Federation  
Approved by the Decree of President Boris Yeltsin  
of December 17, 1997**

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### **I. Russia in the international community**

At present, the international situation is mainly characterised by the strengthening of the trend towards a multipolar world. This is reflected in the strengthening of the economic and political positions of a significant number of countries and their integration groups, and in the improvement of mechanisms for multilateral management of international political, economic, financial, and informational processes. While military and power factors remain important in international relations, economic, political, scientific and technical, environmental, and informational factors play an increasing role. At the same time, international competition in gaining control over natural, technological, and information resources and distribution markets is increasing.

The emergence of a multipolar world will be long term. At the current stage of the process, recurrences of attempts to develop a structure for international relations based on unilateral, including military-force, solutions to key global policy issues are still strongly present

The growing gap between developed and developing countries will also influence the pace and directions of shaping the new structure of international relations.

The current period in the development of international relations opens up new opportunities for the Russian Federation to ensure its security, but is linked to a number of threats related to Russia's change of status in the world and to difficulties in carrying out internal reforms.

The preconditions for the demilitarisation of international relations, the strengthening of the role of law in resolving disputed inter-state problems, and the danger of direct aggression against the Russian Federation have decreased. All this opens up new possibilities for mobilisation of resources to address the country's internal problems.

<sup>117</sup> The formal introduction has been omitted.

There are prospects for wider integration of the Russian Federation into the world economy, including international credit and financial institutions—the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. There is a trend towards increased cooperation between Russia and CIS member states.

Russia's community of interests with many countries in such international security issues as preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, resolving and preventing regional conflicts, preventing international terrorism and drug trafficking, and addressing serious global environmental issues, including nuclear and radiological security, has expanded. This significantly increases the ability to guarantee Russia's national security by non-military means—through legal, political, economic and other treaties.

At the same time, Russia's influence on resolving fundamental issues of international life affecting the interests of our country has significantly decreased. Under these conditions, the aspiration of a number of countries to weaken Russia's position in the political, economic, and military spheres increased.

The process of creating a common and comprehensive security model for Europe, based on the principles largely initiated by Russia, has faced significant difficulties. The prospect of NATO's enlargement to the East is unacceptable for Russia, because it is a threat to its national security. Multilateral peace and security mechanisms at global (UN) and regional (OSCE, CIS) levels are still insufficiently effective, which limits our ability to use such mechanisms to ensure national security interests through political and legal means. Russia is, to some extent, isolated from integration processes in the Asia-Pacific region. All this is unacceptable to Russia as an influential European-Asian power with national interests in Europe, the Middle East, Central and South Asia, and the Asia-Pacific region.

[...] <sup>118</sup>

## II. The threats to the national security of the Russian Federation

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Threats to the national security of the Russian Federation in the international sphere are manifested in the attempts of other countries to counteract the strengthening of Russia as one of the influential centres

<sup>118</sup> Sections concerning the analysis of the situation in Russia and its national interests have been omitted.

<sup>119</sup> Sections on internal threats have been omitted.

of the emerging multipolar world. This is reflected in actions aimed at violating the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation, including the use of inter-ethnic, religious, and other internal contradictions, as well as in territorial claims, referring, in individual cases, to the lack of a specific legal and treaty regulation of state borders. With their policy, such states strive to reduce the significance of the Russian Federation in solving key problems of the international community and in the activities of international organisations. In general, this may lead to a reduction in Russia's influence, a violation of its most important national interests and a weakening of its position in Europe, the Middle East, Transcaucasia, and Central Asia.

The threat of political, ethnic, and economic crises in the CIS countries, which may delay or destroy the integration process, is particularly important for our country. It is extremely important for the Russian Federation to strengthen these countries as friendly, independent, stable, and democratic.

Despite positive changes in the world, threats to the national security of the Russian Federation in the defence sphere remain. Given the profound changes in its relations with other major powers, it can be concluded that the threat of large-scale aggression against Russia in the foreseeable future practically does not exist. At the same time, attempts at violent rivalry with Russia cannot be ruled out. The most real threat to Russia in the defence sphere are existing outbreaks of local wars and armed conflicts near its national border.

The proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and their production technologies and means of delivery pose a serious threat, mainly in Russia's neighbouring countries or regions.

At the same time, the spectrum of threats related to international terrorism, including the possible use of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, is expanding.

The maintenance or establishment, by major powers, (and their coalitions) of strong groupings of armed forces in regions adjacent to Russian territory continues to pose a threat to its national security in the defence sphere. Even in the absence of aggressive intentions towards Russia, these groupings represent a potential military threat.

The enlargement to the East and the transformation of NATO into the dominant military and political power in Europe pose a threat of a new division of the continent, extremely dangerous in the situation of maintaining mobile strike groupings and nuclear weapons in Europe,

as well as in the face of the insufficient effectiveness of multilateral peacekeeping mechanisms.

The technological superiority of the world's leading powers and the increase in their potential to develop next-generation weapons and military equipment can lead to a qualitative new stage in the development of the arms race.

[...] <sup>120</sup>

There has been a tendency to increase the threat of human intelligence, operational and technical penetration of foreign intelligence in Russia. The state authorities, political parties and other social associations, banks and other credit organisations, industrial companies, scientific and research organisations and the mass media are the targets of their operation. The result of this operation may be intensified counteraction of the policy direction chosen by Russia, violation of its economy through involvement in unfavourable commercial-economic transactions, unreasonable military-technical cooperation, development of scientific and experimental research in areas with no prospects, drawing Russia into regional conflicts and destabilising the political situation in the country.

The analysis of the threats to the national security of the Russian Federation shows that the most important of them, now and in the foreseeable future, are not militarily directed and are mainly internal in nature, they focus on the domestic, economic, social, environmental, information and spiritual spheres.

The development of qualitatively new relations with the world's most important countries and the absence of the threat of large-scale aggression against Russia, while maintaining its nuclear deterrent potential, make it possible to relocate state and society's resources to solve serious internal problems in the first place.

### III. Ensuring national security of the Russian Federation

[...] <sup>121</sup>

Russia is also interested in equal participation in global, European, and Asian economic and political structures. Therefore, in seeking mutually beneficial cooperation, the Russian Federation will further develop a constructive partnership with the United States, the European Union, China, Japan, India, and other countries. This is in line with the political and economic interests of the Russian Federation and

<sup>120</sup> Section on problems in the armed forces has been omitted.

<sup>121</sup> Sections on activities in the internal sphere, economic activities, and actions towards the CIS countries have been omitted.

will ensure that it can be fully integrated into all organisations and institutions of collective management of global political processes.

An invariable condition for the implementation of Russia's foreign policy efforts should be the creation of a model for ensuring global, regional, and sub-regional security for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, based on the principles of equality and indivisibility of security for all. This implies the establishment of a fundamentally new Euro-Atlantic security system in which the OSCE will play a coordinating role; intensified efforts to establish multilateral structures to ensure cooperation in the sphere of international security in the Asia-Pacific and South Asia regions; active participation of Russia as a permanent member of the UN Security Council in regional crisis and conflict resolution and prevention; further improvement of international arms control and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery; resolute defence of the legitimate rights and interests of Russian citizens living abroad, in strict compliance with the standards of international law.

An important direction of the Russian Federation in ensuring national security in the sphere of foreign policy is to help resolve regional and local conflicts through peacekeeping activities. In this process, it is necessary to make maximum use of the collective efforts of the Commonwealth of Independent States and the United Nations in this direction, and in the future also of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

[...] <sup>122</sup>

Translated by Mirosław Łukawski. Verified with the Russian original by Marek Menkiszak.

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<sup>122</sup> Sections on defence policy, the system of state governance, and the conclusion have been omitted.

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