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War and Peace Building

Two landmark international developments in the early twenty-first century and the interaction of their two emergent trends have ushered in a new era in which the very nature of security and global threats are being redefined. These defining trends, however, appear to point today's global actors in different directions.

The U.S.-led war on terrorism launched in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks catalyzed the first defining trend. Although the war on terrorism implied increased levels of international cooperation on antiterrorism issues, it has also reinforced unilateralist tendencies in U.S. foreign policy (exemplified by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's famous statement about "the mission" determining "the coalition" and not the other way around). By conflating antiterrorism with a need to win the "war" on terrorism, it has also relied excessively on the use of military force as the primary instrument.

The second trend has been manifested by the situation in postwar Iraq. In contrast to the first trend with its emphasis on the capacity to "win the war" decisively, the second trend has emphasized the growing importance of winning the peace after the war and a greater demand for actors capable of effectively managing the transition from war to sustainable and lasting peace. If, throughout the first post–Cold War decade, a state's security capability was still largely measured by its ability to win war through the overwhelming use of military force, today it may increasingly be judged by a state's ability to win the peace through nonmilitary means. The crisis in Iraq has clearly exposed the limits of U.S. unilateralism and demonstrated the failure of unprecedented military might unconstrained by international legal

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norms and backed by technological and economic superiority to achieve a just and durable peace after the war—a challenge no less complex or ambitious than effectively waging war.

Although these two main, current trends in international security—the global emphasis on winning the war, implying heavy militarization of security policy and reaffirming the U.S. unipolar moment, on one hand; the growing demand for international actors, institutions, and mechanisms capable of winning the peace, on the other—are conflicting, they develop in parallel and do not have to be mutually exclusive. Understanding how Russia is positioning itself toward and being affected by these trends requires a basic overview of the key post–September 11 international changes and developments.

The Rise of Superterrorism

Even prior to September 11, the traditional definition of international terrorism (in contrast to domestic terrorism) as terrorist activities conducted on the territory of more than one country or by or against citizens of more than one state was no longer sufficient. In the post–Cold War world, the distinction between international and domestic terrorist groups became increasingly blurred, as even those groups whose political goals and agenda remained limited and confined to a certain area or to a particular armed conflict began to internationalize some or most of their fundraising, logistics, propaganda, and even planning activities, often extending them far beyond the terrorists' specific area of operations.

Against this background, the September 11 events as well as the sequence of post–September 11 high-profile terrorist attacks, such as those in Bali, Istanbul, and Madrid, demonstrated a qualitative upgrade of traditional international terrorism to a new type of terrorism. This new phenomenon, often referred to as superterrorism, should be defined functionally rather than technically; and unlike traditional international terrorism that merely extends terrorist activities to several countries, it is by definition global in its reach. The main targets of superterrorism tend to be either located in or directly associated with the developed world, but superterrorist networks such as Al Qaeda operate and train globally, reaching out both to developed and underdeveloped states. While Sudan and then Afghanistan were used as safe havens, London served as one of the recruitment centers; operational cells have been discovered in western Europe; and, after all, it was in Florida, not in a suburb of Mogadishu, that the Al Qaeda pilots learned how to fly a Boeing.

Finally, unlike more traditional, localized terrorist activities, which are conducted for limited political purposes and usually with the use of limited

technical means, superterrorist groups and networks tend to have nonnegotiable and potentially unlimited goals, such as challenging the world order and the West as in the case of Al Qaeda or achieving global dominance as in the case of Aum Shinrikyo. Unlimited goals imply, or even require, the potential use of more advanced weapons and technologies, including unlimited means: weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

Complicating matters further, superterrorism does not supplant or replace other, more traditional forms of terrorism, including terrorism employed as a standard mode of operation by many militant groups engaged in asymmetrical armed conflicts around the world. At the same time, superterrorist attacks, networks, and methods have a strong demonstrative and inspiring impact on groups pursuing a more limited political agenda and involved in more localized terrorist activities (particularly for many radical Islamic groups and movements, such as the Jemaah Islamiyah network operating in Southeast Asia). Al Qaeda's superterrorist network is also reported to have possibly funded several local groups engaged in terrorist activities aimed at achieving more concrete and localized political goals (such as Harakat ul-Mujahidin, which fights against India in Kashmir and had operated a training camp in eastern Afghanistan in the 1990s).

Turning rogue states into failed states leads to more terrorism, not less.

All the parallels and links between the qualitatively new phenomenon of superterrorism and the continuing, more traditional terrorist activities do not make one fully conditional upon the other, nor do they make the task of fighting superterrorism much easier. As with other forms of terrorism, superterrorism retains a significant degree of autonomy and has its own logic and dynamics. Therefore, rather than confronting a fully integrated, universal terrorist network that is spreading from local to global levels, the international community faces a far more difficult challenge: coping with functionally different types and variations of terrorism and with the complex, elusive, and increasingly disturbing interrelationship between them.

The War on Terrorism and Iraq

For the United States, this challenge has become all the more pressing following its intervention in and occupation of Iraq. The 2003 U.S.-led war in Iraq and the subsequent failure of the coalition to secure law and order in that country cannot be viewed in isolation from other post–September 11 developments, particularly the preceding U.S.-led intervention in Afghani-

stan, whose immediate although not necessarily long-term success had helped pave the way for war in Iraq. In the midst of the post–September 11 global shock and almost universal support for the U.S. reprisal against the terrorists, the quick and virtually unhindered intervention in Afghanistan served as a precondition that provoked the Bush administration to go to the extremes in its approach to international security and in its modern interpretation of the "limited sovereignty" doctrine of the Cold War era. This approach ultimately led the United States into Iraq and stimulated an unprecedented backlash worldwide.

Russia arguably proved more crucial to the U.S. in Afghanistan than many NATO allies.

Perhaps the most intriguing connection to be explored in this context is that between the war on terrorism and the crisis in Iraq. Although this connection had remained mainly a virtual product of the U.S. administration's public relations campaign to gain public support for the war prior to the intervention, it has actually materialized in post-Saddam Iraq. The U.S.-led military intervention in and occupation of Iraq, as well as the ensuing armed resistance, has successfully intertwined Iraq with the war on terrorism. Although terrorist acts in postwar Iraq (politically motivated attacks intentionally directed against civilians and civilian objects, both local and foreign) have been coupled with and at times even overshadowed by acts of guerrilla warfare (attacks by insurgents against coalition forces and pro-coalition Iraqi security targets, such as the "new" Iraqi military and police), terrorism generated by conflict in Iraq remains a long-term security problem. The continuing presence of coalition forces in Iraq also has further motivated forces ready to employ terrorist means in the fight against the United States and its allies worldwide.

In sum, the situation in postwar Iraq proves that a strategy of turning the so-called rogue states into failed states leads to more terrorism, not less. Applying antiterrorist measures to failed states is particularly problematic, as these states contain intersections of homegrown and international terrorism (and the line between them can be quite blurred) and at the same time lack effective state capacity to fight terrorism. The task of successfully countering terrorist threats posed by failed states, however, cannot be achieved simply by applying rigid and militarized measures to combat terrorism from the outside unless a workable and legitimate local state capacity is rebuilt. Here is where the international capacity to "win the peace" centered on building functional state institutions that enjoy broad, local public legitimacy assumes critical importance.

The Impact on Russian Foreign and Security Policy

The U.S.-led campaign against terrorism certainly has influenced Russia's own antiterrorist strategy: the fight against terrorism has become an even higher priority in Russia's foreign and security policy. More specifically, Russia has intensified efforts to block terrorist financing and reviewed its antiterrorism legislation. Yet, the global war on terrorism has had even more fundamental implications for Russia's broader foreign policy interests and concerns. The attacks not only opened a strategic window through which Vladimir Putin could use antiterrorism cooperation to redefine Russia's relations with the West, but they also elevated transnational, or global, threats on the Russian security agenda.

Antiterrorism Cooperation

In the wake of the September 11 attacks, Moscow's closer cooperation on antiterrorism with the West and especially with the United States has proved particularly valuable to Russia. Such cooperation did not emerge as a remnant of the Cold War relationship as joint efforts on nuclear disarmament had, but rather stemmed from the need to counter a new threat to global security posed by the rise of international terrorism in increasingly lethal forms. Since the September 11 attacks, the growing importance, if not yet preeminence, of new security threats such as international terrorism in the U.S.-Russia bilateral security agenda has become self-evident.

Russia's interest in rooting out terrorism in Afghanistan and preventing that country from serving as a primary source of instability for the wider region along the southern flank of the former Soviet Union led Moscow both to play a key role in providing supplies for Afghanistan's Northern Alliance forces at the most critical stage of the U.S. antiterrorist campaign in Afghanistan and to restrain its reaction to the growth of the U.S. military presence in Central Asia. Arguably, during the earlier stages of antiterrorist operations in Afghanistan, Russia proved more crucial to the United States than many of Washington's NATO allies.

In the immediate aftermath of the September 11 attacks, much of the bilateral cooperation on antiterrorism was conducted within the framework of the U.S.-Russia Working Group on Afghanistan, created as early as August 2000. This group proved to be such a timely and suitable mechanism for bilateral cooperation on antiterrorism that George W. Bush and Putin renamed it at the May 2002 Moscow summit to be the U.S.-Russia Working Group on Combating Terrorism and its mandate was further expanded. The working group became increasingly focused on issues such as preventing the

use of nuclear, biological, chemical, or radiological weapons and materials in terrorist acts.

Important, bilateral antiterrorist measures in this area already have included a Joint Statement on Combating Bioterrorism, issued in November 2001 following an outbreak of anthrax in the United States. In addition to bilateral mechanisms, broader international forums such as the Group of Eight (G-8) have become a useful framework for U.S.-Russian cooperation on counterproliferation issues in the context of the fight against international terrorism. Of particular importance has been the so-called 10+10+10 initiative, launched at the June 2002 Kananaskis summit as part of the G-8 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction and designed to support "specific cooperation projects, initially in Russia, to address nonproliferation, disarmament, counterterrorism and nuclear safety issues."[1]

These efforts have been supplemented by marked progress on mutual legal assistance and in countering terrorist financing and money laundering (such as the signing of the U.S.-Russia Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty, which provided a "legal basis for cooperation in identifying and seizing or freezing criminal or terrorist assets" and was brought into force in late January 2002), as well as "unprecedented forms of intelligence sharing that have helped prevent attacks and shut down terrorist groups."[2]

Relations with the West

Throughout the 1990s, the West's consolidation of security gains from the end of the Cold War, such as the regional expansion of NATO, dramatically shaped Russia's security agenda. By decade's end, continuing U.S.-Russian disagreements over Iraq as well as NATO's increasing military dominance in the Euroatlantic region and the 1999 war against Yugoslavia had almost led to a stalemate in Russia's security relations with the West. These developments threatened to block Russia's progress in achieving its main strategic goals of economic growth, modernization, and competitiveness as well as deeper integration into the global community as a major regional power with its own strong national and cultural identity.

In contrast, in the post–September 11 context, working directly with the United States to meet new common threats has allowed Russia to achieve a new rapprochement with the West and to secure a niche for itself in world politics as a reliable partner in the fight against terrorism. The October 2001 Joint U.S.-Russia Statement, the November 2001 Joint Statement on a New Relationship Between the United States and Russia, and follow-on joint declarations codified these mutual goals. Overall, bilateral antiterrorism cooperation created a more favorable climate in Russian-U.S. relations,

temporarily elevated their importance for both sides, and might even have helped moderate the negative political consequences of the U.S. withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and of the new round of NATO expansion.

It soon became clear, though, that joint antiterrorist efforts have yielded few long-term, significant economic or political breakthroughs for Russia. The new momentum of U.S.-Russian cooperation in Afghanistan and on WMD-related antiterrorism cooperation was seriously tested by sharp disagreements over the U.S.-led intervention in Iraq between the United States with the United Kingdom and such leading European powers as France and Germany, joined by Russia. Moscow viewed the war in Iraq and subsequent occupation of that country as a violation of international law as well as an extreme manifestation of Washington's unconstrained unilateralism. Moreover, the war and occupation proved counterproductive to antiterrorist priorities by provoking more terrorism rather than lessening it and by damaging the integrity of the coalition against terrorism. Moscow highly valued that coalition as the most direct way to associate itself politically with the West, particularly the United States, and as a more favorable international context for its own antiterrorist operations in the North Caucasus.

Joint antiterrorist efforts have yielded few long-term, significant benefits for Russia.

Changing Moscow's Threat Perceptions

The September 11 attacks and Russia's participation in the international coalition against terrorism did more than just improve Moscow's relations with the Western world. The attacks changed Russian security perceptions themselves. The shift of international attention toward new threats to global security has stimulated Russia to pay greater attention to global security threats. Throughout the 1990s, Russia's focus on such threats had gradually waned, due to its significantly reduced global role in the post–Cold War world and the urgent need to concentrate on domestic political stabilization and economic priorities.

Because of a complex mix of conflict-generated terrorism and international connections in the North Caucasus, the threat posed by terrorist attacks against the civilian population was high on Russia's security agenda well before September 11, 2001. What has changed for Russia's post–September 11 threat assessment is rather the balance of threats. This resulted from the change in the international environment generated by the Septem-

ber 11 attacks, the subsequent shift in international attention toward new security threats, and Russia's new rapprochement with the West on antiterrorism grounds. Among other things, NATO was downgraded as a potential source of national security threats for Russia, in contrast to the rise of Islamic extremism.

Even prior to the war in Iraq, Russia had problems with the Bush administration's "axis of evil" rhetoric in general and with attempts to link Iraq directly to Al Qaeda in particular. Recognizing the recorded gradual decline of state support for terrorist activities in the post–Cold War world,[3] top Russian officials, in contrast to the Bush administration, have not publicized any black list of states supporting terrorism and have used the more flexible term of "arcs of instability," implying failed states or areas in which the existing power vacuum had or could be filled by terrorist groups and forces. As specified by Russian defense minister Sergey Ivanov, the regions of particular concern included "the Middle East, the Balkans, [and] Somalia as well as the territory of a number of states in Asia and the Caucasus"[4] such as Eduard Shevardnadze's Georgia, where the very weakness of the state prevented it from doing enough on antiterrorism in places such as the Pankisi Gorge.

Against this background, from Russia's antiterrorist perspective, the U.S. intervention in Iraq turned a rigid authoritarian regime that had managed to harshly suppress Islamic extremism and terrorism into a failed or semifailed state in which the use of terrorist means by Iraqi resistance groups may become increasingly intertwined with terrorist activities by professional jihadists with suspicious international connections. The prospect that Iraq—located not far from Russia's own southern border—could become a major hotbed of Islamic terrorism and thus reactivate the so-called southern arc of instability spreading from Chechnya to Kashmir is of major concern to Russia. This possibility has played a key role in shaping Russia's position on the postwar settlement in Iraq. Not surprisingly, therefore, Russia sees the formation of functional state institutions that enjoy broad legitimacy among the Iraqi people and full international, that is, United Nations, recognition as the key to preventing Iraq from becoming a focal point of international terrorism and extremism.

Russia's Balancing Act: International Peace Building and the War on Terrorism

The post–September 11 war on terrorism, Moscow's participation in it, and the war and ensuing crisis in Iraq have influenced Russia beyond the realm of its relations with the United States and the West. These events have

served as objective indicators of Russia's new role in the emerging post–post–Cold War world. How does post–Soviet Russia—literally a creation of the post–Cold War era—see itself emerging in the post–September 11 international environment and in the context of the continuing crisis in Iraq?

No country underwent changes as deep and profound in the post–Cold War world as Russia did. Although this adaptation had been a rather painful process, by the late 1990s Russia had by and large adjusted to its reduced role and influence in international affairs and had reconciled itself with the loss of a global empire. At the same time, Russia increasingly assumed what appears its natural role as a regional Eurasian power, playing the key role in the Commonwealth of Independent States, prioritizing economic development and modernization, and behaving as a predictable and law-abiding international partner.

The attacks changed Russian security perceptions themselves.

Russia's reaction to the landmark international developments since September 11, 2001, including the war on terrorism and the war in and destabilization of Iraq, have clearly demonstrated that Russia's security policy has elements of both main, current trends in global security: the one prioritizing the need to win the war and the other focused on the need to win the peace. Will either of these trends become a leitmotif for Russia's own strategic thinking in the post–September 11 international era?

On one hand, the destabilization in postwar Iraq and the need to find an international solution to the challenges of transition from war to peace in that country have elevated international peace-building concerns on Russia's list of security priorities. Russia's permanent seat on the UN Security Council coupled with its strong opposition to using force to settle international disputes (Russia remained one of the main opponents of the U.S. "bombing is better than nothing" policy toward Iraq throughout the 1990s and of the NATO military intervention against Yugoslavia) are also valuable assets that could add to Moscow's capability to contribute to international efforts to win the peace in Iraq. Russia is unlikely, however, to assume a leading role among the actors most prominent in international peace building on a global scale, as it lacks both the significant financial resources needed for such purposes and, realistically, has limited political leverage and interest in managing conflicts that do not directly affect its own national security (such as those in Africa or, for instance, Southeast Asia).

These inherent limitations on Russia's ability to play a leading role in international peace building may provide additional motivation for Moscow to

seek a higher profile in the international arena through even closer political, military, and intelligence cooperation in the U.S.-led war on terrorism. In May 2004, Russia provided initial evidence to support this prospective trend by joining the U.S. Proliferation Security Initiative, which authorizes the potential land, sea, or air interdiction of missiles and WMD components.

Russia's role in the international coalition against terrorism already should have earned it acceptance as one of the key partners of the West in the fight against terrorism. What remains to be seen is the extent to which Moscow's relations with its G-8 partners, primarily driven by the need to confront common security threats such as international terrorism, help promote Russia's broader national interests, such as modernization and deeper political and economic integration into the global community.

Notes

1. "Statement by G8 Leaders: The G8 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction," Kananaskis, June 27, 2002, http://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2002kananaskis/arms.html (accessed July 1, 2004).
2. Alexander Vershbow, "Russia, NATO, and International Organizations," remarks at the Institute of Scientific Information on Social Sciences, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, May 26, 2003, http://www.usembassy.it/file2003_05/alia/A3052903.htm (accessed July 2, 2004).
3. See *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2001* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, 2002), p. 63, http://www .state.gov/documents/organization/10319.pdf (accessed July 2, 2004).
4. *Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye* [Independent Military Review], February 8–14, 2002, p. 1.