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Review Paper:

New Russian Defense Doctrine

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Abstract: On December 26, 2014, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a new military doctrine for the Russian armed forces. The document identifies the expansion of NATO and efforts to destabilize Russia and neighboring countries as the biggest security threats. This doctrine somehow is Continuation Russia's military doctrine previous in the years 1993 - 2000-2010.

In the Tsarist, Soviet, and Russian military tradition, doctrine plays a particularly important role. The state's defense or military doctrine possesses a normative and even, often a juridical quality that should be binding on relevant state agencies, or at least so its adherents would like to claim. Doctrine is supposed to represent an official view or views about the character of contemporary war, the threats to Russia, and what policies the government and armed forces will initiate and implement to meet those challenges. Thus beyond being a normative or at least guiding policy document, defense doctrine should also represent an elite consensus about threats, the character of contemporary war and the policies needed to confront those threats and challenges.

Keywords: Vladimir Putin, Nuclear and Conventional Parity, NATO.

1 Introduction

Iran's relations with Russia are becoming increasingly important as the Islamic Republic seeks to strengthen its defense sector and develop a new national security strategy. Given Russia's strong position in the global power hierarchy, Iran-Russia defense cooperation can provide important achievements for Iran and regional stability.

Defense diplomacy is part of the national power of a country that, along with foreign policy, enhances the capacity of action of a country in foreign relations. Indeed, the link between defense and military activities and diplomatic actions can be a powerful interconnected tool of national power. Defense diplomacy can be effective both in times of war and peace as well as in preventing conflicts. [1]

Accordingly, defense diplomacy allows Iran to withstand efforts to harm the country's reconstruction and prosperity. The achievement of large capabilities in defense diplomacy requires a deep understanding of Iran's position in both regional and global affairs.

Iran is considered to be a regional power whose indigenous defensive capabilities have grown in the aftermath of the 1979 revolution and the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war. Because of cross-border security conflicts in Iran's regional environment, bilateral defense treaties can be desirable for Iran. Russia is of interest to Iran in this regard.

The gradual increase of Russia's political and military power in global and especially regional affairs has encouraged Iran to seek a new and broader level of relations with Moscow. Although there are still different perspectives in Iran on Russia's

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position in the global system, the commonalities of these perspectives indicate that Russia's place in the hierarchy of global power is steady. Hence, defense cooperation between Iran and Russia can be a major achievement for Iran to achieve regional stability and strengthen deterrence.

There are two perspectives in Iran regarding the relationship with Russia. One sees Russia's approach to Iran as opportunistic and believes that the Russians are primarily thinking of their own economic and political interests and are only playing the "Iran card." Other Iranians believe that Russia supports Iran but with limitations. Evidence of both views is apparent in Russia's approach to UN Security Council's resolutions on Iran's nuclear program. [2], [3].

Russia's ties to other great powers in the framework of "peaceful development" opens the door to serious restrictions to Iran-Russia relations. At the same time, the United States is trying to scale back its military involvement in the Middle East and gravitate toward Asia and the Pacific. Such a shift in US strategic priorities and policies toward Asia-Pacific can be a comparative advantage for Iran in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf.

Question:

Does Russia have a formal Defense pact in the World?

Problem definition:

Russia and Iran are both continuing their support of the Assad regime in Syria.As of now, there are two major obstacles to deeper Iranian-Russian military cooperation. First, Moscow has to persuade Tehran to withdraw its lawsuit from the OSCE Court of Conciliation and Arbitration Geneva. In 2007, Russia agreed to sell five S-300PMU-1/SA-20 Gargoyle SAM systems (40 launchers) to Iran for $800 million. However, as a consequence of a UN Security Council resolution of June 2010 imposing sanctions — which included a ban on the sale of modern weapons — on Iran over its controversial nuclear program, Russia cancelled the delivery of the missiles and stopped all military-technical cooperation. In return, Iran demanded $4 billion in compensation.

Second, full-fledged military cooperation between Iran and Russia can only happen once UN sanctions have been lifted. This largely depends on Tehran's willingness to reach a mutually acceptable agreement in the P5+1 negotiations over Iran's nuclear program. Only then can full-fledged arms sales resume. In October 2011, Russia made its last and so far only public arms sale to Iran in the form of a radar-jamming station. Back in the year 2000, Iran was the fourth largest importer of Russian military equipment placing right after China, India, and the United Arab Emirates, buying 6.1 percent of Russia's total arms exports. Sputnik News quotes the Center for the Analysis of World Arms Trade in Moscow, which estimated that the Russian defense industry has lost around $13 billion in arms sales due to UN sanctions against Iran. [4]

For now, the military cooperation agreement focuses on deeper cooperation in the field of counter-terrorism, exchanges of military personnel for training purposes, and an increase in the number of reciprocal port visits by the Iranian and Russian navies. Russia's stance vis-à-vis Iran is intrinsically connected to its relations with the Western world. Should NATO-Russia relations deteriorate further, Moscow will make an even stronger effort to improve ties with Tehran.

On December 26, 2014, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a new military doctrine for the Russian armed forces. The document identifies the expansion of NATO and efforts to destabilize Russia and neighboring countries as the biggest security threats. This doctrine somehow is Continuation Russia's military doctrine previous in the years 1993 - 2000- 2010.

In the Tsarist, Soviet, and Russian military tradition, doctrine plays a particularly important role. The state's defense or military doctrine possesses a normative and even, often a juridical quality that should be binding on relevant state agencies, or at least so its adherents would like to claim. Doctrine is supposed to represent an official view or views about the character of contemporary war, the threats to Russia, and what policies the government and armed forces will initiate and implement to meet those challenges. Thus beyond being a normative or at least guiding policy document, defense doctrine should also represent an elite consensus about threats, the character of contemporary war and the policies needed to confront those threats and challenges.

Since 2002 President Vladimir Putin has regularly called for and stated that a new doctrine, to meet the challenges of the post September 11 strategic environment will soon appear. However, no such doctrine has yet appeared or is in sight. In 2003 the Defense Ministry published a kind of white paper that foreign observers then called an Ivanov doctrine after Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov. But no Russian authority has followed suit. This document argued that the Russian forces must be ready for every sort of contingency from counterterrorism to large-scale conventional theater war and even nuclear war. Ivanov and the General Staff also argue that the forces can and must be able to handle two simultaneous regional or local wars. This guidance also evidently follows Putin's direction that the armed forces must be able to wage any kind of contingency across this spectrum of conflict even though he apparently had ordered a shift in priorities from war against

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NATO to counter-terrorist and localized actions in 2002-03. [5], [6]

Within this spectrum of conflict, most published official and unofficial writing about the nature of threats to Russia repeatedly states that terrorism is the most immediate and urgent threat to Russia, that Russia has no plans to wage a war with NATO, i.e. a large-scale conventional or even nuclear war, and that Russia sees no visible threat from NATO or of this kind of war on the horizon. Indeed, Russian officials like Putin and Chief of Staff, Colonel-General Yuri N. Baluyevsky have recently renounced the quest for nuclear and conventional parity with NATO and America, a quest whose abandonment was signified in the Moscow Treaty on Nuclear Weapons in 2002. Yet the absence of doctrine suggests an ongoing lack of consensus on these issues. And this discord is particularly dangerous at a time when Russian leaders perceive that "there has been a steady trend toward broadening the use of armed forces" and that "conflicts are spreading to larger areas, including the sphere of Russia's vital interests," because they may be tempted to follow suit or react forcefully to real or imaginary challenges."

Indeed, if one looks carefully at Russian procurement policies and exercises, both of which have increased in quantity and intensified in quality under Putin due to economic recovery, we still find that large-scale operations, including first-strike nuclear operations using either ICBM's or tactical (or so called non-strategic) nuclear weapons (TNW) predominate, even when counterinsurgency and counter-terrorist exercises are included. In other words, the military-political establishment, rhetoric to the contrary notwithstanding, still believes that large-scale war, even with NATO or China is a real possibility. Ivanov's speech to the Academy of Military Sciences on January 24, 2004 excoriated the General Staff for insufficient study of contemporary wars and for fixating on Chechnya. Blaming it for this fixation, he said that, "We must admit that as of the present time military science has not defined a clear generalized type of modern war and armed conflict. Therefore the RF Armed Forces and supreme command and control entities must be prepared to participate in any kind of military conflict. Based on this, we have to answer the question of how to make the military command and control system most flexible and most capable of reacting to any threats to Russia's military security that may arise in the modern world." [7], [8], [9]

Ivanov had earlier observed that Military preparedness, operational planning, and maintenance need to be as flexible as possible because in recent years no single type of armed conflict has dominated. The Russian armed forces will be prepared for regular and anti-guerrilla warfare, the struggle against different types of terrorism, and peacekeeping operations.

Baluevsky has also since argued that any war, even a localized armed conflict, could lead the world to the brink of global nuclear war, therefore Russian forces must train and be ready for everything. These remarks reflect the continuing preference for major theater and even intercontinental nuclear wars against America and NATO over anti-terrorist missions. [10], [11]

Neither are they alone. In 2003, former Deputy Chief of Staff, General (RET.) V.L. Manilov, then First Deputy Chairman of the Federation Council Defense and Security Committee, told an interviewer that, let's take, for example, the possible development of the geopolitical and military-strategic situation around Russia. We don't even have precisely specified definitions of national interests and national security, and there isn't even the methodology itself of coming up with decisions concerning Russia's fate. But without this it's impossible to ensure the country's progressive development. ... It also should be noted that a systems analysis and the monitoring of the geostrategic situation around Russia requires the consolidation of all national resources and the involvement of state and public structures and organizations. At the same time, one has a clear sense of the shortage of intellectual potential in the centers where this problem should be handled in a qualified manner. [12], [13]

Since Russian planners cannot develop a truly credible hierarchy of threats or adequately define them or Russia's national interests they inevitably see threats everywhere while lacking the conceptual means for categorizing them coherently. Lacking a priority form of war or threat for which they must train, the troops must perform traditional tasks and priority missions like defending Russia's territorial boundaries, i.e. Soviet territorial boundaries, preventing and deterring attacks on Russia, and maintaining strategic stability. They also must participate directly in achieving Russia's economic and political interests and conduct peacetime operations, including UN or CIS sanctioned peace operations. Consequently coherent planning and policy-making are still bedeviled by multiple threats that haunt senior military leaders. In 2003, Baluevsky said that,

In order to conduct joint maneuvers (with NATO-author), you have to determine who your enemy actually is. **We still do not know** (Bold-author) After the Warsaw pact disappeared; there was confusion in the general staffs of the world's armies. But who was the enemy? Well, no enemy emerged. Therefore the first question is: Against whom will we fight? [14], [15], [16]

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But the campaign against terrorism does not require massive armies. And NATO's massive armies have not disappeared at all. No one says "We do not need divisions, we do not need ships, and we do not need hundreds of thousands of aircraft and tanks ..." The Russian military are accused of still thinking in World War II categories. Although we, incidentally realized long before the Americans that the mad race to produce thousands and thousands of nuclear warheads should be stopped!

Thus the General Staff and for that matter the Ministry have abdicated their critical task of forecasting the nature or character of today's wars.

Today, if anything, we see a continuing inclination to turn back the strategic clock towards quasi-Cold war postures and strategies. Much evidence suggests that various political forces in Russia, particularly in the military community, are urging withdrawal from arms control treaties, not least because of NATO enlargement towards the CIS and U.S. foreign and military policy in those areas. In March, 2005 Ivanov raised the question of withdrawal from the INF Treaty with the Pentagon. Since then Russian general Vladimir Vasilenko has raised it again more recently though it is difficult to see what Russia gains from withdrawal from that treaty. Indeed, withdrawal from the INF treaty makes no sense unless one believes that Russia is threatened by NATO and especially the U.S.' superior conventional military power and cannot meet that threat except by returning to the classical Cold War strategy of holding Europe hostage to nuclear attack to deter Washington and NATO. Apparently at least some of the interest in withdrawing from the INF treaty also stems from the fact that Vasilenko also stated that western missile defenses would determine the nature and number of future Russian missile defense systems even though admittedly it could only defend against a few missiles at a time. Thus he argued that,

Russia should give priority to high-survivable mobile ground and naval missile systems when planning the development of the force in the near and far future. ... The quality of the Strategic nuclear forces of Russia will have to be significantly improved in terms of adding to their capability of penetrating [missile defense] barriers and increasing the survivability of combat elements and enhancing the properties of surveillance and control systems. [17]

But then, Russia's government and military are thereby postulating an inherent East-West enmity buttressed by mutual deterrence that makes no sense in today's strategic climate, especially when virtually every Russian military leader proclaims that no plan for war with NATO is under consideration and that the main threat to Russia is terrorism, not NATO and not America. Nonetheless Russian generals do not raise the issue of withdrawal from the INF treaty unless directed to do so. As of 2003 the General Staff made clear its opposition to joint Russian-NATO exercises allegedly on the grounds of NATO enlargement and the improvement of missiles. In fact, the military's enmity to NATO is due to the fact of its existence. As the so called Ivanov doctrine of October, 2003, stated,

Russia ... expects NATO member states to put a complete end to direct and indirect elements of its anti-Russian policy, both form of the military planning and the political declarations of NATO member states. ... Should NATO remain a military alliance with its current offensive military doctrine, a fundamental reassessment of Russia's military planning and arms procurement is needed, including a change in Russia's nuclear strategy.

Alexander Golts, one of Russia's most prominent defense commentators, observes that the military must continue to have NATO as a 'primordial enemy'. Otherwise their ability to mobilize millions of men and huge amounts of Russian material resources would be exposed as unjustified. Similarly Western observers have noted the resistance of the military to a genuine military reform, even though the forces are being reorganized. The problem here is well known to the Russian military. Genuine reform is a precondition for effective partnership with NATO. Therefore resistance to reform, in particular, democratization of defense policy, inhibits cooperation with NATO and is therefore deliberately created from within the military and political system. Evidently Russian leaders no longer perceive democratization as a mere ritual for the White House, as in the past, but as a threat to the foundations of Russian statehood, including a threat to the structure of the armed forces and its top command organizations. [18]

This hostility to NATO as such also appears in the growing opposition to continuing to observe the CFE treaty. Since the bilateral partnership with NATO began, Russian officials openly stated that if the Baltic States remained outside the treaty then its future would be at issue along with Europe's overall security of which it is a key part. Ivanov frequently says that Russia has fundamental differences with NATO over the CFE Treaty and that NATO's insistence upon Russia withdrawing from Moldovan and Georgian bases as promised in 1999 at the OSCE's Istanbul summit is a "farfetched" pretext for not ratifying the treaty or forcing the Baltic States to sign it. Thus the Baltic States form "a gray zone" with regard to arms control agreements that could in the future serve as a basis for first-strikes, mainly by air, upon nearby Russian targets. This sums up many of Moscow's military arguments against the CFE treaty.

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Ivanov and other officials, like former Deputy Foreign Minister, linked the CFE to the realignment of U.S. forces and bases in Europe. Likewise, speaking of the connection between the CFE treaty and enlargement, Lt. General Alexander Voronin wrote in the General Staff's journal VoyennayaMysl©(Military Thought) that,

“Russia's opposition to CIS members' joining NATO is immutable and that NATO's failure to take Russia's interests into account here is very troubling. Russia should fully take into account the alliance's strategy of spreading its influence to countries neighboring Russia in the west, south, and southeast, uphold its interests, show strong will, make no concessions, and pursue a pragmatic and effective foreign policy. This raises a number of questions: First, why do we have to cooperate with NATO at all? Second, what could be the practical payoff from this interaction? And finally in what areas is it expedient to develop military cooperation with the alliance?"

Voronin's answer to these rhetorical questions is that it all depends on how soon NATO overcomes Cold War inertia to meet new challenges and threats. In this respect his approach merely confirms earlier military arguments against the CFE treaty.

In 2004 Baluevsky raised the issue that the Baltic States' membership in NATO would doom the CFE treaty. In 2005 Colonel-General Anatoly Mazurkevich, Chief of the Main Directorate of International Military Cooperation in the Russian Ministry of Defense complained that the CFE treaty has been ignored since it was revised in 1999 and that it is slowly 'expiring'. Allegedly the CFE treaty can no longer uphold the interests of the parties or stability in Europe and now in a strategic region adjacent to Russia and under NATO's full responsibility — the Baltic — the region is absolutely free of all treaty restrictions.

Yet since they are critical elements of any democratic reform, the failure to reach a coherent defense doctrine is a critical sign of the failure of Russia's democratic project. This failure to devise a coherent doctrine that realistically assesses Russia’s capabilities and prospects, is not just a failure to achieve democracy, it also represents an enduring threat to Russia itself, its neighbors and interlocutors. [19], [20]

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