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American-Russian Strategic Relations: From Confrontation to Cooperation?

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than just a Cold War construct and may set natural limits to Nordic caucusing even in the event of common EC membership.

However ingenious its conception, the new-born Barents region is in for a delicate childhood. It has yet to receive (or seek) any form of recognition from the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), NATO or the EC Twelve, let alone any pledges of concrete help from 'observer' states. While the Russian authorities had sound reasons of self-interest for going along with the idea, there are obvious cross-currents of intent on their side as between the civilian and military, central and provincial authorities. How far the BEAC framework can be used to coax cooperation out of them, and to unblock directly and indirectly linked issues – not least that of Barents Sea delimitation – over and above what was on offer in the bilateral context, remains very much to be seen. A good omen was Moscow's decision a few days after the Kirkenes meeting to grant some \$60m for safety measures at the Polyarny Zori nuclear-power plant on Kola. A bad omen was their decision at the same time to give their own military-industrial complex rather than a Norwegian-led consortium the licence for exploitation of the huge Shtockmanovskoye offshore gas field. In purely practical terms, it is not clear that what brings profit to Kirkenes will necessarily help Murmansk: the Arctic communities could just as well end up competing for scarce investment and for facilities that only need

to be built in one place.

As a classic case of region-building by politicians rather than by bottom-up processes, the Barents scheme cannot count on automatic support from the locals. Municipal leaders and elite elements seem well on board, but discordant notes were struck at Kirkenes both by environmental activists who find the governments' approach to pollution too feeble and complacent, and by the Saami who feel their one place on the Regional Council will not be enough. Others are uneasy about the way the scheme appears to supersede and 'capture' the tradition of spontaneous cross-border contacts typified by the 'Nordkalotten' conferences of recent years: a tradition which flourished on sentiments of regional particularity and distance from government, very different from the Europe-regarding subtleties of Stoltenberg's diplomacy now.

None of this can detract from one undisputed achievement of the Kirkenes meeting: the demonstration that Norway with its 4m people is capable of taking initiatives and adding contours of its own to the new architecture of Europe. For a small country on the brink of entering for the first time (as an independent state) a truly supranational jurisdiction, the psychological assurance implied in that is something not to be scorned.

A NORDIC CORRESPONDENT

American-Russian strategic relations: from confrontation to cooperation ?

Christoph Bluth

The strategic nuclear 'arms race' was arguably the most dramatic feature of the Cold War. It was the existence of two large and growing arsenals of strategic nuclear weapons and the capability to inflict total devastation on any part of the world that gave the East-West confrontation its global character and imbued it with an apocalyptic quality. Until the mid-1980s, strategic nuclear arms control, while only marginally affecting the technical-military aspects of the conflict, was a powerful symbol of the superpowers' endeavour to restrain their competition and arrive at some sort of political *modus vivendi*. Failure to make progress in strategic arms control, on the other hand, was symptomatic of the deterioration in East-West relations in the late 1970s.

When Mikhail Gorbachev set out to end the military confrontation with the West, there was no conceptual framework for a cooperative denuclearisation. In January 1986, Gorbachev announced a programme to rid the world of nuclear weapons by the year 2000.¹ This was generally interpreted as a utopian vision not to be taken seriously. The political complexities of the issue came to the fore when, at the Reykjavik summit in 1986, Presidents Reagan and Gorbachev came very close to an agreement on a drastic reduction in strategic nuclear forces, going as far as the elimination of strategic nuclear delivery vehicles (SNDV) within 10 years. At the same time, Gorbachev indicated his preparedness to accept the 'zero option' for Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF).

For the Europeans, the Reykjavik meeting was a shock even though the summit ended without agreement because of President Reagan's unwillingness to compromise on the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI). It conjured up the spectre of an American-Soviet condominium. For the Europeans, the most threatening aspect of the military confrontation was the conventional threat in Central Europe. For decades one of the principal objectives of the Europeans in relations with the United States had been to secure the protection of American strategic nuclear forces as the ultimate guarantee against Warsaw Pact aggression. The reaction of the European allies to the Reykjavik summit indicated, therefore, that nuclear arms control was linked with broader military and political detente in Europe and elsewhere and could not be pursued in isolation.²

The changes in East-West relations since 1989 have created a political environment in which the role of arms control is fundamentally different. Instead of leading political change, political developments have had a seemingly irresistible momentum of their own and have quickly superseded the results of long and complex arms control negotiations. As a consequence, arms control was no longer primarily an instrument of improving political relations, but a means to deal with the military-technical aspects of security.

The Reykjavik summit injected considerable momentum into

the START (Strategic Arms Reduction Talks) and the INF negotiations. The latter resulted in the INF Treaty which banned a whole class of weapons (INF with a range greater than 500 km) entirely. With respect to strategic forces, the Reykjavik proposals envisaged the elimination of SNDV in two phases. During the first phase they were to be reduced by 50 per cent. The START negotiations can be interpreted as an effort to implement the first phase, albeit with somewhat more modest targets (i.e., reductions by about 35 per cent in the number of warheads).³ These negotiations were plagued by political and technical complexities and thus dragged out beyond the lifetime of the Reagan Administration. By the time the first START accord was ready for signature in July 1991, it was already lagging behind political developments. The Cold War had been declared over and the military confrontation in Central Europe was at an end.

The end of the Cold War did not just affect Europe but also the whole range of American-Soviet relations, from the resolution of regional conflicts in many different parts of the world to the strategic nuclear confrontation. The existing nuclear force postures were now incompatible with the nature of the political relationship that was emerging between the United States and the Soviet Union. To maintain the kind of tactical nuclear weapons in Central Europe that were deployed in 1990 was patently absurd. By the end of 1991 it had become apparent that the START process itself was an inadequate instrument to restructure strategic forces in line with the new international environment. Indeed, it was not clear what sort of strategic forces the two superpowers should deploy in the future, and hence what the objectives of strategic arms control should be.

The unilateral arms reductions measures announced by Presidents Bush and Gorbachev on 27 September and 5 October 1991 respectively were a clear indication that much more radical cuts in nuclear forces were possible. The most dramatic decision related to theatre nuclear forces (TNF). In effect, it amounted to the withdrawal of all short-range nuclear forces (with the exception of about 50 per cent of the free-fall nuclear bombs deployed by NATO forces in Europe). At the strategic level there were a number of confidence-building measures.

For example, all strategic bombers were taken off alert, and all those intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) to be eliminated under START. All sea-based nuclear weapons (except long-range ballistic missiles (SLBMs)) were to be withdrawn. The most important of these from a strategic perspective were sea-launched cruise missiles (SLCMs). During the negotiations for the first START accord, SLCMs were the joker in the pack. They were not formally included in the treaty, but both sides agreed not to deploy more than 880 (without verification). Now only conventionally armed cruise missiles will be retained. President Gorbachev announced the cancellation of two programmes to develop successor versions of the SS-24 and SS-25 ICBMs, while President Bush cancelled the development of the rail-mobile version of the MX *Peacekeeper* and the mobile elements of the single-warhead *Midgetman* ICBM. The future of strategic arms control was mapped out by Bush's proposal to eliminate all ICBMs with multiple warheads, while Gorbachev proposed a further 50 per-cent cut in strategic weapons after the implementation of START.⁴ Thus the two main nuclear powers had declared their intention to move substantially further down the road towards a minimum deterrent posture when the Soviet Union disintegrated.

The changed international situation raises fundamental issues

for the Russian Republic as it – like the other former republics of the Soviet Union – seeks to come to terms with being an independent state and define its national interests and foreign and security policy objectives. On 13 February 1992 President Boris Yeltsin described the two principal tasks of Russian foreign policy as securing Russia's entry into the civilised world community and enlisting maximum support for efforts towards Russia's transformation.⁵ Under the direction of the Foreign Minister, Andrei Kozyrev, a Russian 'three circle' strategy – similar to Winston Churchill's 'Three Circles' of British diplomacy after the Second World War – has been enunciated.

The first circle consists of the sovereign states on the territory of the former Soviet Union. The second includes the Northern hemisphere, the United States, Japan, Korea, China, Eastern Europe and Western Europe. The rest of the world comprises the third circle.⁶ It is evident that good relations with the West (and the United States and Germany in particular) remain a central priority of foreign policy.⁷ However, that item – like many other aspects of Yeltsin's policy as well as Kozyrev's position – are under threat from the Civic Union and other more right-wing opponents. They advocate greater Russian dominance over the rest of the former Soviet Union and less dependence on the West. They also take a hardline stance on the protection of Russian minorities in other states of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). There is no sign, however, of any intention to re-establish a Soviet Union or reverse the strategic withdrawal from Eastern Europe.

When the Soviet Union was finally dissolved and the CIS was established at the end of 1991, a separate agreement on strategic forces was signed on 31 December 1991 in Minsk which specified that all nuclear weapons would remain under a joint command based in Moscow. The decision to use strategic nuclear weapons (wherever based) would be made by the Russian President in agreement with the leaders of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine and after consultation with the leaders of the other independent states.

It must be emphasised that both the United States and Russia see the Russian Federation as the successor state to the Soviet Union as far as strategic nuclear forces are concerned.⁸ It is on the basis of this assumption that the strategic dialogue with the United States has been continued by President Yeltsin. Given his policy of developing a close cooperative relationship with the United States, the political function of large strategic nuclear arsenals needs clarification. It seems odd for two countries who are partners or even allies to target nuclear weapons at each other. Yeltsin addressed this issue on ABC Television on 25 January 1992, when he revealed that CIS ICBMs are no longer targeted at the United States.

That was clearly designed to underscore his statement that the United States and Russia were no longer enemies. According to a television interview on 22 February 1992 with the Commander of the CIS strategic forces, Marshal Shaposhnikov, that means that they have been assigned a 'zero mission', i.e., no target information has been programmed.⁹ There have been conflicting reports about whether the entire CIS arsenal has indeed been taken off alert without specific target information, but Western analysts are generally sceptical. It must be added that no such commitments have been made from the Western side, and American and British nuclear forces are presumably still targeted at the former Soviet Union. A verifiable way of adopting a non-threatening posture for both sides would be to stand all land-based

nuclear forces off alert, remove the warheads from the missiles and store them separately. This measure, which would have the additional benefit of preventing unauthorised launches, has been proposed by American analysts concerned with the safety of nuclear weapons.¹⁰

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the strategic dialogue continued with greater urgency. According to the American-Russian Charter of June 1992, the United States and Russia 'do not regard each other as adversaries and are developing relations of partnership'. The underlying conception is that the United States and Russia would, as strategic nuclear powers, cooperate to preserve global peace and prevent the emergence of new hostile nuclear powers. The so-called Bush-Yeltsin agreement of June 1992 envisaged further deep reductions in strategic nuclear forces. It was formalised in the START 2 Treaty signed by Presidents Bush and Yeltsin in January 1993.

At present, the United States and the former Soviet Union have deployed a total of 10,875 and 10,271 strategic nuclear warheads respectively. After the first START Treaty has been implemented these will have been reduced to at most 6,000 on both sides. START 2 envisages a further reduction in two phases. During the first seven years after ratification of the treaty both sides will cut their strategic arsenals to between 3,800 and 4,250 warheads each. By 1 January 2003 both sides must reduce their strategic nuclear warheads on both sides to a total of 3,500.

Arguably the most important feature of the treaty is the elimination of land-based missiles with multiple warheads (so-called MIRVs – multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles). MIRVs were originally invented in the late 1960s in order to overcome ballistic missile defences. They are considered to be particularly destabilising weapons, because they form the basis of any first-strike potential. From the American point of view, the elimination of the SS-18 is particularly welcome. The liquid-fuelled SS-18 is the only ICBM classed as 'heavy' and can carry up to ten warheads. Code-named 'Satan' by NATO, the SS-18 was regarded as the symbol of Soviet aggression. Half of the SS-18 force is due for removal under START 1, the remainder under START 2.

This means that in future Russia will have just two types of ICBM. A total of 105 of the older SS-19s will be retained in service. They currently have six warheads and will have to be 'downloaded' to carry just one. The rest of the Russian ICBM force will consist of single-warhead SS-25s or a new missile of a similar type. The United States ICBM force will consist entirely of 'downloaded' single warhead Minuteman III missiles. The MX 'Peacekeeper' missile will be scrapped.

The total number of warheads carried by submarine-based nuclear missiles (SLBMs) is limited to 1,750 by the treaty. They could still be MIRVed. The United States has deactivated the last remaining submarines carrying *Poseidon* C-3 missiles and is expected to retain some of its *Trident* I (C-4) and *Trident* II (D-5) missiles. These may be downloaded to some extent. Russia is expected to scrap some of the older missiles and retain the SS-N-18, SS-N-20 and SS-N-23 in service on the *Typhoon* and *Delta* submarines.

Strategic bombers constitute the third 'leg' of the so-called nuclear 'triad'. The United States will cut its bomber force substantially. Originally the B1 bomber was supposed to be converted to conventional use, but in return for allowing Russia to retain some SS-19 missiles the United States is allowed to use B1 bombers as a nuclear weapons platform as some of the older

B 52s are taken out of service. The new Russian 'Blackjack' will be deployed in only token numbers. The same applies to the American B2 'Stealth' bomber.¹¹

Some Western commentators have played down the significance of START 2, given that a very substantial strategic arsenal will remain on both sides even after implementation (roughly at a level before the strategic arms control process began at the end of the 1960s).¹² But it could be argued that the elimination of multiple warheads does constitute a qualitative restructuring of the arsenals that substantially enhances stability at a much reduced level and to a large extent takes the competitive element out of the maintenance of a nuclear deterrent force.

Whereas START 1 was readily ratified by the Russian Parliament, START 2 will prove more controversial. This is a reflection of the greater influence of the military industries and hardliners in Parliament. There has been some criticism, for example, of the decision to scrap the SS-18 and to rely almost exclusively on the SS-25 in future.¹³ President Yeltsin's critics may make their support for START 2 dependent on a commitment to modernise the remaining strategic forces and American financial assistance for the dismantling of ICBMs.

Although President Yeltsin has continued strategic arms control on his own initiative, the disintegration of the Soviet Union has important consequences for the START process. Strategic nuclear weapons are based in Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. They comprise 1,042 land-based ICBMs. Of these, 176 are stationed in Ukraine, consisting of 46 of the modern SS-24 with 10 warheads apiece and 130 older SS-19s with 6 warheads. Kazakhstan's ICBM fields at Derzhavinsk and Zhangiz Tobe contain 104 SS-18 missiles. In Belarus, 54 single-warhead SS-25s are mounted on large trucks.¹⁴

The United States and Russia are concerned that central control over all nuclear weapons of the former Soviet Union is maintained and that there is only one nuclear successor state. The removal of all tactical nuclear weapons from the former Soviet republics to Russian territory was completed by 6 May 1992. This process allayed Western fears very considerably. In a protocol to the START Treaty originally concluded between the United States and the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine agreed to assume the obligations of the USSR under the treaty. Furthermore Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine agreed to adhere to the non-nuclear proliferation treaty (NPT) as non-nuclear weapons states. Only Russia, Kazakhstan, and Belarus have so far ratified START.

The Ukrainian reticence appears to be driven by a desire to extract the maximum concessions from both Russia and the United States. Thus Ukrainian politicians are talking about the need for security guarantees against Russia after the dismantlement of nuclear weapons based in Ukraine (even though these are not under Ukrainian control). Ukraine also sees the weapons as assets which have a certain economic value (e.g., the fissile materials in the warheads). The United States has promised Ukraine \$175m worth of aid if it ratifies START, plus a share of the proceeds of any sale of uranium from the warheads. Ukrainian leaders have said that they will need \$1.5bn to provide for the cost of dismantling the missiles. Instead of allowing the warheads to be transported back to Russia for dismantlement, they want facilities for this purpose based in Ukraine. Since such nuclear installations could also be used to make nuclear warheads, this demand will be strongly resisted by Russia and the United States.

The implementation of START 1 and 2 would inhibit horizon-

tal proliferation of nuclear weapons (by preventing the creation of new nuclear weapons states) and constitute important progress in fulfilling the commitment to nuclear disarmament by the nuclear powers in the 1968 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). In these respects, the START process can be seen as an instrument of nuclear non-proliferation and cooperative denuclearisation. The United States is increasingly becoming involved in providing concrete assistance to transport, secure, store and dismantle nuclear weapons in the former Soviet Union in the context of nuclear SSD (safe and secure disarmament) assistance, as well as purchasing highly enriched uranium for conversion into fuel. This may develop into technical cooperation with the Russian nuclear weapons industry to an extent that may itself contribute substantially to the development of a strategic partnership.

If START 2 is implemented, Russia and the United States will have cut their strategic nuclear arsenals to about a third of their levels in 1991. With the elimination of land-based multiple warheads and various confidence building-measures, this can be characterised as a substantial residual nuclear deterrent. Russia is also interested in cooperation with the United States in the development of strategic defences. An integrated GPALS (Glo-

bal Protection against Limited Strikes) system could serve to defend against the emerging ballistic missile threats from the third world.¹⁵

This new interest in ballistic-missile defence represents a dramatic shift from the position during the Gorbachev period, which consisted in a complete rejection of the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) and any deviation from the Anti-Ballistic Missiles (ABM) Treaty. The establishment of a joint American-Russian early-warning centre agreed by Presidents Bush and Yeltsin is a first step in the direction of such cooperation. However, the enormous technical difficulties and substantial costs involved cast considerable doubt on such projects. The ABM system, which is deployed around Moscow, will nevertheless remain for some time.

It is conceivable, therefore, that the strategic nuclear arms race could be replaced by a new strategic cooperation between the United States and Russia. But it must be pointed out that, despite some promising first steps, the United States and Russia are still quite a long way from the sort of close partnership envisaged in public declarations and that the future of Russian foreign policy, in particular, remains uncertain.

NOTES

1. *Pravda*, 16 January 1986.
2. For an analysis of the Reykjavik summit from the Soviet perspective, see Michael McGwire, *Perestroika and Soviet National Security* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institutions, 1991), pp. 198-203; the European response is discussed in Ivo H. Daalder, *The Nature and Practice of Flexible Response* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991).
3. For more detail, see Christoph Bluth, *New Thinking in Soviet Military Policy* (London: Pinter, 1990), pp. 47f.
4. For more detail on the various proposals, see *The Military Balance 1992-93* (London: Jane's for the IISS, 1992), pp.222f.
5. Russian Television, 13 February 1992; see also Suzanne Crow, 'Russian Federation Faces Foreign Policy Dilemmas', *RFE/RL Research Report*, 6 March 1992, pp.15-19.
6. *Izvestiya*, 2 October 1991.
7. For a comprehensive analysis of Russian foreign policy, see Vladimir Mateyev, 'The New Russian Diplomacy: The First Months', *International Relations*, Vol. XI, No 2, August 1992, pp.77-94.
8. Russia has adopted the official position that all nuclear weapons in the former Soviet Union belong to the Russian Federation. This is also the official view of the United States, which does not recognise the CIS as a sovereign entity in this regard. Belarus and Kazakhstan also agree; the position of Ukraine is unclear. See the statement by the American Secretary of State, James A., Baker at the signing of the Start Protocol in Lisbon on 23 May 1992.
9. This contrasts, however, with a statement by Foreign Minister Kozyrev to the effect that although such a decision had been taken, it had not yet been implemented., *Izvestiya*, 13 February 1992. Kozyrev also proposed storing warheads separately from missiles. In October the Russian Defence Minister, Pavel Grachev, claimed that the missiles stationed outside Russia had been 'taken off alert' and that even those missiles still on alert had no targeting information programmed. *Izvestiya*, 15 October 1992.
10. Owen Cote and Steven E. Miller, 'Safety and Security Enhancements for Residual Nuclear Forces', unpublished paper from the CSIA Conference, *Cooperative Denuclearization: An International Agenda*, 3-4 December 1992, Cambridge, MA.
11. Much of this analysis is based on *The Military Balance*, *op.cit.*, pp. 222-29, which was published before the signing of START 2 but after the Bush-Yeltsin agreement. Considerably less reliable are figures cited in newspaper reports of the START 2 accord; see *Financial Times*, 30 December 1992; *The Independent*, 30 December 1992 and 4 January 1993; *The Times*, 4 January 1993.
12. See, for example, Lawrence Freedman, 'A treaty from the past', *The Independent*, 31 December 1992.
13. Petr Belov in *Rossiskaya gazeta*, 3 November 1992, p. 4.
14. See Christoph Bluth, 'What do you do with a nuclear arsenal?', *New Scientist*, 18 July 1992, pp. 26-30.
15. John Lepingwell, 'US-Russian Cooperation in Missile Defense', *RFE/RL Research Report*, Vol. 1, No 33, 21 August 1992, pp. 49-56.

Russia and Japan: the unmaking of a territorial settlement

Leszek Buszynski

Russia's pro-Western leadership has attempted to settle the outstanding territorial dispute with Japan quickly. The dispute dates back to August 1945, when Soviet troops occupied the islands of Etorofu, Kunashiri, Shikotan and Habomai at the conclusion of the Second World War. The Soviet Union invoked the San Francisco Conference of 1951 to legitimise its possession of the islands, claiming that as part of the Kurile Island chain the islands were returned to Soviet control.

The Japanese, in turn, argued that the disputed islands were not part of the Kurile Island chain and were historically part of Japan, as recognised by the Treaty of Shimoda of 1855. Moreover, the Japanese claimed that, since they were not signatories to the San Francisco declaration, it was not binding on them.¹ None the less, the Soviet Foreign Minister, Andrei Gromyko, consistently rejected Japanese claims and declared that no territorial dispute existed. With the collapse of the Soviet Union,