

**Conflict Studies Research Centre**



**A Russian Chronology  
October - December 2005**

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# Russian Domestic Policy: A Chronology

## October-December 2005

**2 October 2005** Oil and gas production starts under the Sakhalin-1 project.

**3 October 2005** Vladimir Putin submits a new bill to the Duma. The bill allows parties that win in regional elections to put forward their nominees for governor. The bill is said to increase parties' role in forming government bodies in Russia's constituent parts.

**3 October 2005** It is reported that federal forces' aircraft have bombed Vedenksiy District in Chechnya. This occurred on 28 September.

**3 October 2005** An article in *Novaya Gazeta* details growth of the St Petersburg faction in government since 1996. 65 management posts in 30 key federal government structures are held by officials from St Petersburg.

**4 October 2005** Vladimir Putin relieves Mikhail Novikov of the post of deputy director of the Federal Service for Military and Technical Cooperation. Putin appoints Maj-Gen Mikhail Petukhov to this post. Previously, Petukhov was head of the financial department of the Federal Service for Military and Technical Cooperation.

**4 October 2005** Vladimir Putin abolishes the Federal Agency for Agriculture, the functions of which are being passed to the Ministry of Agriculture.

**5 October 2005** The deputy head of the Security Council Nikolay Spasskiy is interviewed in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*. He discusses Islamic terrorism and the Russian demographic crisis.

**6 October 2005** Special Interior Ministry subunits carry out an exercise in Chelyabinsk Region based on eliminating terrorists.

**6 October 2005** The offices of lawyers Albert Mkrtychev and Denis Dyatlev, who defended Yukos's ex-chief Mikhail Khodorkovskiy, are searched.

**7 October 2005** Russian freedom of speech advocate Aleksey Simonov says the resignation of the managers of the Russian privately-owned Ren TV channel is the "final unification" of the country's broadcasting media by the Kremlin.

**8 October 2005** An attack on the lawyer Mikhail Zhidkov, who was the lawyer of Aleksey Pichugin, the former head of the Yukos security department (sentenced to 20 years in March 2005 for murder and attempted murder) takes place in Moscow.

**8 October 2005** Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov approves additional measures to accelerate economic growth.

**8 October 2005** The economic development and trade minister, German Gref, pledges a radical increase in funding for the development of the Russian Far East.

The new focus on the Far East of Russia is a task set before the government by Vladimir Putin. Gref states:

Let me name these three figures: In 2004, the federal budget allocated a total of R2.7bn to develop all Far Eastern territories; this year, the figure is R9.5bn, while next year the plan is to spend R17.5bn. Thus, over three years, financing for the Far East's infrastructure is to rise by a factor of six. ...In 2001, we adopted the following regional priorities, of which there are five: they are Kaliningrad, the Southern Federal District, including the North Caucasus, the Far East and Trans-Baykal, and separately the Kuril Islands. That is what was specifically singled out as our priorities. A priority, however, requires an appropriate level of financing.

**8 October 2005** Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov announces a revision of conscription deferrals. The review aims to toughen health requirements for call-up, end deferrals for most professions entitled to them until now, but retain deferrals intended to enable students to complete their higher education.

**9 October 2005** A poll by the Public Opinion Foundation puts Vladimir Putin's popularity rating at 48 per cent.

**10 October 2005** The leaders of Irkutsk Region and Ust-Orda Buryat Autonomous Area apply to the president requesting that the two regions be merged into a new constituent part of the Russian Federation. In the event of the approval, the plan is to establish the new part on 1 January 2008. An 18-month transition period is to follow, during which state government bodies of the new region will be formed, the press service said.

**11 October 2005** Col-Gen Arkadiy Yedev, commander of the Combined Force in North Caucasus, says he believes that more than 70 illegal armed groups comprising about 800 rebels are currently active in Chechnya.

**12 October 2005** Vladimir Putin signs a law allowing the regions to transfer to the new system of self-government when they are ready up until 2009.

**12 October 2005** Presidential adviser Andrey Illarionov says he believes that the prospects for the development of the Russian economy are very gloomy. He says that the nationalization of the oil industry, refusal to invest in it and general parasitizing on the current successes of the oilmen can result in the near future in falling oil prices and loss of potential profits.

**12 October 2005** The executive secretary of the interreligious council of Russia, Roman Silant'yev says there are from 10 to 14.5 million Muslims living in Russia.

**13 October 2005** A large scale attack is launched on the town of Nalchik, the capital of Kabarda-Balkar Republic. Vladimir Putin orders the city to be sealed off. Special-purpose Ministry of Defence units and Ministry of Internal Affairs Troops are being moved into Nalchik from other regions in the North Caucasus. Deputy Prosecutor-Vladimir Kolesnikov says that 80-100 people in different groups simultaneously attacked eight targets in Nalchik, including three police stations, a guard patrol by the local OMON and the FSB building. Kolesnikov states that the attack was planned on the orders of Anzor Astemirov, a fervent Wahhabi.

Chechen warlord Shamil Basayev claims that he was "in overall command of the attack" on Nalchik.

The Kavkaz Tsentr news agency receives a "brief" message from mojahedin which names the unit engaged in clashes with federal troops in Nalchik. In a statement sent to the Kavkaz Tsentr website, the rebels say that it is the Caucasus front which is fighting in Nalchik; this is a division within the armed forces of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria. The Jamaat Yarmuk from Kabarda-Balkaria is the Caucasus front's vanguard group.

The chairman of the Federation Council international affairs committee, Mikhail Margelov, says:

What happened in Nalchik today is part of the international terrorist aggression against Russia, which, I am convinced, started back in 1990s. And Russia is not alone in this - the list of countries subjected to this aggression includes the USA, Spain, Britain, as well as African, Asian and Arab states.

**13 October 2005** In an interview with *Kommersant*, the new proprietor of *Moscow News*, Arkadiy Gaydamak, says that if the authorities are democratically elected it is no business of the press to set public opinion against them.

**14 October 2005** A person suspected of organizing the terrorist party Hezb-e Tahrir, Sardobek Siddikov, is detained in Moscow.

**14 October 2005** Five militants are killed and one arrested in the town of Chegem 15 km from Nalchik.

**14 October 2005** The MOD states in 2005 in Chechnya (as at 1 October) 80 servicemen have been killed and five went missing, in 2004 - 162 and none respectively; in 2003 - 299 and 1; in 2002 - 485 and none; in 2001 - 502 and two, in 2000 - 1,397 and 13; in 1999 - 547 and 12.

**15 October 2005** A statement by Chechen rebel deputy prime minister, Akhmed Zakayev, on the Chechenpress website says that the events in Nalchik on 13 October were a "legitimate military operation" covered by the Geneva Convention.

**17 October 2005** Gazprom decides to acquire 75.679 per cent of shares in Sibneft.

**17 October 2005** Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov stresses the need to encourage foreign investment in the Russian economy. In the first six months of 2005 growth in GDP had been 5.6 per cent, growth in industrial production was up 4 per cent and fixed capital investments had risen by 9.4 per cent. Meanwhile, the population's income had risen by 8.4 per cent. Fradkov says that the amount invested in Russia by foreigners in the first half of this year was 37.4 per cent greater than in the same period in 2004. The actual figure exceeded 90bn dollars.

The Economic Development and Trade Ministry submits a medium-term programme for the development of Russia until 2008 to the government.

Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Zhukov says privatization in Russia will proceed at a faster pace. In 2006, it is planned to privatize about 1,500 enterprises.

**17 October 2005** Chechen Interior Minister Col Ruslan Alkhanov says a special police operation is under way in Groznyy.

**17 October 2005** An article in *Izvestiya* discusses public opinion poll results on the support for Vladimir Putin.

**17 October 2005** An article in *Kommersant* discusses non-combat deaths in the Russian armed forces.

**18 October 2005** Vladimir Putin has sent condolences to the widow of Aleksandr Yakovlev, one of the architects of perestroika.

**18 October 2005** An article in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* by Leonid Radzikhovskiy says that terrorism in the Caucasus is being beaten.

**18 October 2005** Aleksandr Ryazanov is appointed the new president of Sibneft. Gazprom intends that Sibneft should become the backbone of Gazprom's oil business.

**18 October 2005** A new large-scale special operation to track down fighters is under way in Nalchik. The law-enforcement agencies are trying to find the organizers of the attack on the city on 13 October.

**18 October 2005** A closed door meeting at the Duma on Russian military bases abroad stated that Russia has 16 military bases and facilities abroad, with about 40,000 servicemen and 25,000 civilian employees serving there.

**19 October 2005** Agriculture Minister Aleksey Gordeyev says the spread of bird flu in Russia has been contained.

**20 October 2005** Vladimir Putin signs a decree to introduce next generation foreign travel passports with electronic data in Russia as of 1 January 2006. The government is to prepare a relevant draft law during the next three months and approve a sample of the new passport by 1 November so its production could be started as of 10 November.

**20 October 2005** The former head of the Yukos oil company Mikhail Khodorkovskiy, sentenced to eight years' imprisonment, will serve his term in a correctional-labour colony in Chita Region.

**20 October 2005** Maj-Gen Valeriy Panchenko, head of the Federal Border Guard Service's technical development directorate says Russia has over 12,000 km of ill-equipped borders and about 60 per cent of border checkpoints are ill-equipped.

**21 October 2005** Vladimir Putin decrees the formation of a council to the head of state for the implementation of priority national projects.

**21 October 2005** Vladimir Putin has signed a decree "On measures for socio-economic development of Kamchatka Region and the Koryak Autonomous Area".

**21 October 2005** Col-Gen Nikolay Rogozhkin, the force's commander-in-chief, says a programme for developing arms and special materiel for the MVD's Internal Troops up to 2015 has been developed.

**21 October 2005** Energy Minister Viktor Khristenko says it is incorrect to say the state is taking over the Russian oil and gas sector.

**22 October 2005** Vladimir Putin amends a presidential decree of 2004, and permits the Emergencies Ministry to have four deputy ministers, including one state secretary. The ministry is now allowed to have up to 11 directorates instead of eight. Up until now the ministry had three deputy ministers, including one first deputy.

**22 October 2005** A conference of the Rodina electoral bloc takes place in Moscow. Delegates representing the People's Will Party and the Unified Socialist Party of Russia took the decision to regard the Motherland Party headed by Dmitriy Rogozin as having left the election bloc.

**23 October 2005** Kamchatka and the Koryak Autonomous Area vote in a referendum to merge into one region.

**24 October 2005** The deputy prosecutor-general for the Volga Federal District, Sergey Gerasimov expresses concern about the increase in the number of radical preachers at mosques in the Volga district.

**24 October 2005** A campaign team for a referendum on amalgamation with Irkutsk Region to create a new member of the Russian Federation is set up in the Ust-Orda Buryat Autonomous Area. A similar team has already been established in Irkutsk Region. Both legislatures asked the federal president of Russia on 11 October 2005 if they could merge the region and the autonomous area. The referendum is expected to be held on 16 April 2006, with the new member of the federation set to be created on 1 January 2008.

**24 October 2005** Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev says the military commandants' offices of the MOD in Chechnya will be handed over to the highland spetsnaz of the MVD's Internal Troops.

**24 October 2005** Rosoboroneksport federal state unitary enterprise director-general Sergey Chemezov is interviewed in Vedomosti. He says Rosoboroneksport has collected a portfolio of orders estimated to be worth about 12bn dollars for the period until 2007-2008.

**24 October 2005** Vice-Adm Aleksandr Kletskov has been appointed chief of staff of the Baltic Fleet. The new chief of staff has taken over from Vice-Adm Vladimir Vysotskiy, who had become commander of the Black Sea Fleet.

**25 October 2005** Vladimir Putin issues a statement on education reform.

**25 October 2005** The head of the economic security department of the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs, Sergey Meshcheryakov, says the number of detected crimes related to legalizing earnings obtained in a criminal way more than quadrupled in Russia this year. In 2004 the Ministry of Internal Affairs detected 1,977 such crimes, and in the first nine months of 2005, their number is already 6,820.

**25 October 2005** The government approves by special resolution No 635 of 22 October 2005 a federal space programme for 2006-15.

**26 October 2005** Minister of Internal Affairs Rashid Nurgaliyev says the situation in district police departments in the regions is catastrophic. Nurgaliyev says data on solving crimes is also being falsified everywhere. In the first nine months of 2005,

more than 20,000 policemen have had criminal or disciplinary proceedings instituted against them.

**29 October 2005** The CPRF holds an extraordinary congress. The CPRF leader admits that the CPRF has lost positions.

**29 October 2005** Agriculture Minister Aleksey Gordeyev wants Russia to close its market to subsidized agricultural produce from the EU. He says: "I would now be tough with the EU nations and tell them they no longer have access to the Russian market with those food products subsidized by the EU as exports."

**30 October 2005** Vladimir Putin visits Kabarda-Balkaria to attend the funeral of the first president of Kabarda-Balkaria, Valeriy Kokov. He died aged 64 after a long illness.

**31 October 2005** Vladimir Putin states regarding the presidential election in 2008:

I am well aware that year 2008 will be a serious and not a straightforward test for Russia. At the same time, in accordance with the constitution of the Russian federation, the president, the head of state, is elected for the term of four years through a direct secret poll and cannot hold this post for more than two consecutive terms. Of course I am not indifferent about in whose hands will be the destiny of the country to which I have dedicated all my life.

But if every new head of state is going to amend the constitution to suit himself, then there would soon be nothing left of a state of this kind. I will not allow any destabilization in Russia for the sake of the interests of Russian and other peoples of the Russian Federation.

**31 October 2005** Head of the Audit Chamber Sergey Stepashin says it is essential to create an effective system of financial control over the implementation of national projects in the regions.

**31 October 2005** Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov briefs Vladimir Putin about the meeting on 26 October of the interdepartmental commission on export control and nonproliferation of WMD and its components.

### ***November***

**1 November 2005** The State Commission on Chemical Disarmament states that the new programme of chemical arms destruction endorsed by the Russian government on 24 October may be revised in the future.

**1 November 2005** A united coalition of democratic organizations issues a statement. The coalition is made up of Yabloko, the Union of Right Forces, Green Russia and the Unified People's Party of Soldiers' Mothers. The statement says:

"We believe it is our civil and political duty to gain power in Russia by constitutional means and to ensure unconditional and complete compliance with the constitution and the law, human rights and liberties, social justice, the integrity of private property, honest competition and our country's transformation into a modern civic European state. . . backed by the mass support of citizens, of using all possible legal means to resist the advance of an authoritarian, bureaucratic regime, of forming a united democratic

opposition and of seeking the constitutional removal from power of the ruling group and the prevention of any future successor operations.

An authoritarian regime has been established in Russia. The deliberate destruction of the basic institutions of democracy is under way. The independence of parliament has been abolished, there's political censorship of the media, the executive has made the judiciary, elections and business subordinate to it. One of the main gains of Russia's recent history, federalism, is being destroyed before our very eyes.”

**1 November 2005** Former Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov says he is willing to stand as presidential candidate for the united coalition of democratic organizations of Russia in the 2008 elections.

**1 November 2005** Yukos shareholder Leonid Nevzlin expresses concern that Mikhail Khodorkovsky may be killed.

**1 November 2005** The presidential envoy to the Far Eastern Federal District, Konstantin Pulikovskiy, sets up an interdepartmental commission to supervise realization of the top priority national projects in the territory of the Russian Far East.

**1 November 2005** Mikhail Kasyanov calls for the return of elected governors and attacks restrictions on press freedom in Russia.

**2 November 2005** Justice Minister Yuriy Chayka states that a total of 38 political parties and 150,000 public organizations have been registered in Russia.

**2 November 2005** Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says that over 12,000 officers have retired early from the armed forces this year.

Col-Gen Nikolay Reznik, head of the armed forces' main personnel and military education directorate, says the Russian armed forces may soon establish the post of human rights ombudsman.

**3 November 2005** Tatarstan president's political adviser, Rafael Khakimov, writes in *Vostochnyy Express* about the danger of Wahhabism in Russia.

**3 November 2005** The presidium of the Russian president's council for implementing priority national projects is formed.

**3 November 2005** The president's plenipotentiary representative in the Southern Federal District, Dmitriy Kozak, says urgent measures are needed to enforce security in southern Russia. He says that the Caucasus peoples do not want to secede from Russia:

All hypotheses about the secession of southern Russia, the North Caucasus, from Russia are fantasy. No matter how much somebody might even want this to happen, the people simply wouldn't allow it. I am absolutely sure from my own experience of meeting ordinary folk that the 23m people who live here cannot conceive of being anything other than a part of the Russian Federation. They know this from their own experience. Indeed, in the mid-90s, the Chechen Republic virtually seceded from Russia. It was outside Russia. And you all know - especially the people who lived there during that period - what went on there, what this led to. There was wholesale banditry

and absolutely no guarantees of any kind - for security, property, or anything - for anybody.

Chechen separatist president Abdul-Khalim Sadulayev issues a statement on Eid. He urges the people of the North Caucasus to rise up against the Kremlin and vowed to continue the war until "the Caucasus is fully cleared of the jackbooted Russian occupiers".

**3 November 2005** The state defence order for 2006 will be R237bn, which is R54bn more than the 2005 order.

**3 November 2005** Viktor Kholstov, deputy head of the Federal Industry and Energy Agency says weapons stored at special facilities in Russia can not fall into the hands of terrorists.

**4 November 2005** Russia marks a new holiday - National Unity Day - for the first time. It has been instituted to commemorate the liberation of Moscow from foreign occupiers in 1612. These events put an end to the Time of Troubles. Vladimir Putin lays flowers at the monument to Kuzma Minin and Dmitriy Pozharskiy, who set up an irregular army in Nizhniy Novgorod that played a decisive role in the liberation of Moscow.

**6 November 2005** Vladimir Putin signs a federal law "On amendments to the federal law 'On the federal budget for 2005'" which was earlier adopted by the Duma and approved by the Federation Council

**7 November 2005** It is reported that the Armed Forces main combat training directorate has worked out a new combat training blueprint under the supervision of First Deputy Defence Minister Col-Gen Aleksandr Belousov.

**8 November 2005** Nikolay Zakharov, deputy chief of the FSB public relations centre, attends a conference on "International terrorism - view from Russia" in Vienna. He says "sixty international extremist Islamic organizations, about 100 foreign commercial firms and 10 banking groups" are involved in funding terrorism in Russia.

**8 November 2005** A bust of Feliks Dzerzhinskiy is installed in the courtyard of the Main Directorate of Internal Affairs building in Moscow.

Col-Gen Nikolay Rogozhkin, commander-in-chief of the MVD's Internal Troops says more units of the MVD's Internal Troops have now been moved to the most difficult areas of the Southern Federal District. However the number of servicemen in the group of troops deployed in Chechnya has not changed, and is currently 24,600. A regiment and a battalion of Internal Troops are now deployed in Kabarda-Balkaria and provisions are being made in Karachay-Cherkessia for the battalion which arrived there. Every day 60 per cent of the 200,000-strong personnel of the Internal Troops are involved in ensuring public order throughout Russia.

First Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Internal Troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs Col-Gen Yevgeniy Baryayev says a total of 1,183 servicemen of the Internal Troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs have been killed since the start of the antiterrorist operation in the Chechen Republic.

Commander-in-chief of the Internal Troops Col-Gen Nikolay Rogozhkin says that as of the beginning of 2006 no servicemen of the MVD's Internal Troops will be

undergoing conscript service on the territory of Chechnya. Only contract servicemen will be serving there. Rogozhkin says that at present there are 24,600 servicemen in the Internal Troops group in the North Caucasus.

**9 November 2005** Vladimir Putin holds an annual conference with senior military commanders. Taking part in the conference of the command personnel of the armed forces of the Russian Federation are Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov, Federation Council and Russian State Duma speakers Sergey Mironov and Boris Gryzlov, head of Presidential Administration Dmitriy Medvedev, Russian Security Council Secretary Igor Ivanov, Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Zhukov, Minister of Defence Sergey Ivanov, Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Internal Affairs Rashid Nurgaliyev, Federal Security Service head Nikolay Patrushev and Chief of the General Staff Yuriy Baluyevskiy. Sergey Ivanov and Yuriy Baluyevskiy will deliver reports. Ivanov will sum up the results of the fulfilment by the armed forces of the tasks they were set in 2005 and separate assessments will be given for each type and branch of the armed forces, military district and fleet. The minister will also pay a great deal of attention to issues of equipping the army and the fleet with new arms and equipment and also of transferring some permanent readiness units to contract service. Baluyevskiy will outline the tasks of the Armed Forces for 2006.

Sergey Ivanov says Russia's armed forces will be reduced to 1.1m by 2011. The army should comprise 1.1m servicemen on 1 January 2011. It means that nearly 35,000 servicemen, among them 300 top military commanders, will be dismissed from the armed forces over the next five years. The number of generals and admirals in the armed forces will not exceed 1,100, which provides the most optimal proportion - one commander for every 1,000 servicemen. More than 1,134,800 people currently serve in the army and navy.

**9 November 2005** The Supreme Court upholds the verdict passed against three residents of Chechnya who won a lawsuit against the Russian authorities in the European Court of Human Rights.

**9 November 2005** Andrey Kokoshin, chairman of the Duma committee for CIS affairs and links with compatriots is interviewed in *Trud*. He says the combat potential of the Pacific Fleet should be increased to defend Russia's interests in the Asia-Pacific region.

**11 November 2005** Mikhail Khodorkovskiy publishes an article in *Kommersant* entitled "Turn to the Left – 2."

**11 November 2005** The MOD website states 3,482 Defence Ministry servicemen have been killed and 32 have gone missing since the beginning of the antiterrorist operation in Chechnya.

**11 November 2005** The bill whereby political parties can nominate candidates for regional governorships passes its first reading in the Duma.

**11 November 2005** the director of the Economic Development Ministry's department for defence industry, Yuriy Koptev, addresses the Federation Council on military industry. He says defence-sector industries cannot survive on state procurement orders alone. In the Soviet period the defence sector employed 9.5m people in Soviet days but just 1.7m now. Eighty percent of the sector remained in Russia when the USSR collapsed. Defence-sector businesses are currently working at less than 30 per cent capacity, and only a third of that is for state orders.

**11 November 2005** A conference on the Russian space industry takes place entitled "The space industry within the Russian Federation national security system: current status and legislative problems".

**12 November 2005** The executive secretary of the union of committees of Soldiers' Mothers, Valentina Melnikova says several thousand signatures in support of a referendum on the issue of moving to a voluntary contract-based military service were collected at rallies which took place in 40 Russian regions.

**13 November 2005** Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov is interviewed on TV. He says that only 20 per cent of the weapons the army has are modern.

**14 November 2005** Vladimir Putin makes several important personnel appointments.

- Head of the presidential administration Dmitriy Anatolyevich Medvedev is appointed first deputy prime minister. He will be head of the council to implement priority national projects.
- Defence minister Sergey Ivanov is also appointed a first deputy prime minister. He retains his post as defence minister.
- Sergey Sobyenin is appointed head of the presidential administration. He was governor of Tyumen region.
- In the Volga Federal District presidential envoy Sergey Kiriienko has been replaced by a former Bashkir prosecutor Aleksandr Konovalov, while the presidential envoy to the Far Eastern Federal District Konstantin Pulikovskiy has been replaced by Kamil Iskhakov, the former head of the Kazan administration.

**14 November 2005** The chairman of the Central Bank, Sergey Ignat'yev says the Central Bank is forecasting GDP growth of six per cent for 2005.

**14 November 2005** The FSB investigations department charges Igor Reshetin, the general director of the TSNIIMASH-EKSPORT Company, with illegally passing dual-purpose technology to China.

**15 November 2005** The former presidential plenipotentiary representative in the Volga Federal District, Sergey Kiriienko, has been appointed head of Rosatom. He replaces Aleksandr Konovalov.

**16 November 2005** Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov says he does not rule out further changes in the government and even a fourth deputy prime minister being appointed.

**16 November 2005** Sergey Ivanov is to coordinate the work of the entire defence-industry complex. As he now holds both the post of deputy prime minister and defence minister, there is to be a new department combining the functions of the two posts,

**16 November 2005** Yedinaya Rossiya's youth movement renames itself from Molodezhnoye Yedinstvo to Molodaya Gvardiya.

**16 November 2005** Viktor Kravchuk is appointed commander of the Caspian flotilla.

Navy Commander-in-Chief Vladimir Masorin says the new sea-based Bulava ballistic missile will enter the Russian navy's inventory in 2007.

**18 November 2005** The Duma endorses in principle the draft budget for 2006 in its third reading. A total of 334 deputies voted in favour, 52 against and one deputy abstained, while 226 votes are required for bills to be approved. The draft federal budget's revenue stands at R5,046.1bn, expenditure at R4,270.1bn and budget surplus is R776bn.

**18 November 2005** The head of the Chechen Republic's pro-Moscow government, Sergey Abramov, is involved in a road accident. He is seriously injured.

**19 November 2005** Maritime governor Sergey Darkin says that the first phase of pipeline from Siberia to the Russian Pacific coast is to be built by 2008.

**19 November 2005** Minister of Natural Resources Yuriy Trutnev says that there will be enough reserves of Russian gas for at least 70 years.

**19 November 2005** Sergey Ivanov is interviewed on NTV Mir.

**21 November 2005** First Deputy Prime Minister Dmitriy Medvedev is appointed deputy chairman of the government commission for liaison between the federal centre and regions. It meets for the first time.

**21 November 2005** A number of Russian senators propose setting up a board of special prosecutors whose task it would be to investigate the conduct of the country's top officials.

**21 November 2005** The Federal State Statistics Service states that Russia's permanent population was 142.9m as of 1 October, having shrunk by 0.39 per cent or 555,100 since the start of the year.

**21 November 2005** The official representative of the Foreign Ministry, Mikhail Kamynin, states that losses among Russian servicemen in Chechnya are steadily decreasing. "Unfortunately, there continue to be losses as a result of bandits' sorties. But these sad statistics also have dynamics. In 2000, the losses amounted to 1,397 people; in 2002, they were 485; in 2004, they were 161. We hope that this year the losses will become even smaller." The Chechen Interior Ministry consists of 17,000 employees. The 42nd rifle brigade consisting of 15,000 people is stationed in Khankala. "There will be no reduction in the grouping until the parliamentary election but after the election, some reduction is possible among those who have been seconded. I can say that over the past three to four years the overall number of troops in Chechnya has fallen by 50 per cent.

**22 November 2005** Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says he may head a military-industrial commission under the government which is one of the two main mechanisms for managing the industry.

**22 November 2005** Fuel and Energy Minister Viktor Khristenko is interviewed in *Argumenty i Fakty*. He denies that the state is seeking to control the oil and gas sector in Russia.

**23 November 2005** A bill on NGOs goes through its first reading in the Duma.

**23 November 2005** Chechen field commander Khizir Khachukayev surrenders to the federal authorities.

**24 November 2005** Federal Security Service chief Nikolay Patrushev is interviewed in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*.

**24 November 2005** Sergey Ivanov says the MOD is considering the possibility of changing a number of enterprises of Perm Territory to be fully state-owned ones.

**25 November 2005** Former Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov attacks the idea of party government put forward by Yedinaya Rossiya.

**25 November 2005** Lt-Gen Aleksandr Manilov, deputy head of the FSB's border guard service, has been appointed as chairman of the coordinating service of the council of the commanders of the border troops of CIS countries.

**25 November 2005** The Duma is debating a bill that would make it impossible for the Duma to question the president.

**25 November 2005** Deputy commander of Strategic Missile Troops, Lt-Gen Vitaliy Linnik, says it is planned to retain the RS-20 Voyevoda heavy intercontinental ballistic missiles (also known as R-36M-2, or, according to Western classification, SS-18 Satan) in the Strategic Missile Troops grouping for another 10-15 years.

**26 November 2005** Yedinaya Rossiya holds its 6<sup>th</sup> congress in Krasnoyarsk. The congress re-elects Duma Chairman Boris Gryzlov as chairman. Moscow city mayor Yuriy Luzhkov, Tatar President Mintimer Shaymiyev and Emergencies Minister Sergey Shoygu remain the co-chairmen of the party's supreme council, which includes 36 people. The congress decides to include in the supreme council's bureau Agriculture Minister Aleksey Gordeyev and Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Zhukov.

**26 November 2005** The Moscow City Court bans Rodina from elections to the Moscow City Duma, as it produced a racist poster in its election campaign.

**26 November 2005** The deputy prosecutor-general of the Russian Federation (responsible for the Southern Federal District), Nikolay Shepel, is interviewed in *Krasnaya Zvezda*. He says law-enforcement agencies have evidence of the existence in southern Russia of an international terrorist organization whose objective is to seize the North Caucasus from Russia and set up an Islamic state, the so-called caliphate there.

**27 November 2005** The Chechen parliamentary election takes place. Yedinaya Rossiya gains the most number of votes.

**28 November 2005** Vladimir Putin telephones Chechen President Alu Alkhanov to congratulate the leadership and inhabitants of the republic on the successful parliamentary elections. Putin says:

“A legitimate, representative authority has been elected in Chechnya, the parliament. This completes the formal legal procedure of restoring constitutional order in the Chechen Republic. At the same time, we all know perfectly well that there is still a very great deal of work to be done, so that

all the circumstances favourable to destabilization are eradicated. In order to do that, we need to implement the plans of the Russian government and the leadership of the Chechen Republic to revive social and economic life there effectively.”

**29 November 2005** Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov says there are no plans to set up a federal defence industry agency in the near future.

**30 November 2005** Former prime minister Mikhail Kasyanov and Duma deputy Aleksandr Khinshteyn meet. Khinshteyn is behind the Kasyanov dacha affair.

Kasyanov says he does not rule out standing down as candidate for the 2008 presidential election in favour of a single candidate for the democrats.

**30 November 2005** Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov says that says that the regions should have greater powers in collecting taxes.

Fradkov says in 2006 the state defence order budget is to increase by 31.3 per cent compared with 2005. Spending on arms and military equipment will grow by 36.6 per cent and funding for the construction of special-purpose and military facilities will increase by 52.5 per cent.

The first deputy director of the State Service for Military and Technical Cooperation, Aleksandr Denisov, says the volume of Russian defence industry exports in 2005 will be 5.1 billion dollars. The ratio of Russia armaments and military technology export has changed over the past year, with 50 per cent of the overall military export coming from the navy. The export of aviation technology has gone down from 70 to 30 per cent. The remaining part comes from air defence.

## ***December***

**1 December 2005** The leaders of Yabloko and the URF states at a conference of the Moscow civil congress that democratic forces intend to create a single democratic party in Russia.

**1 December 2005** Vladimir Putin sends a bill to the Duma which will make it easier for former Soviet citizens to acquire Russian citizenship.

**1 December 2005** Chief of the General Staff Army Gen Yuriy Baluyevskiy says that documents which show how to create dirty radioactive, chemical and biological weapons have been found in Chechnya. He says that some 200 foreign mercenaries, some of them from NATO countries, are operating in Chechnya.

Baluyevskiy says the Russian leadership will never agree to a total demilitarization of Kaliningrad Region. He says the Baltic countries' accession to NATO has had an adverse effect on the situation in the Baltic region. He also says that NATO is seeking CIS states as members in order to weaken the CIS.

**1 December 2005** Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces Army Gen Yuriy Baluyevskiy says that “as the chief of the General Staff, I do not see a potential enemy as a specific country. We have long since stopped preparing for large-scale nuclear or conventional wars.”

**2 December 2005** Vladimir Putin issues a decree amending the structure of the FSB. It amends the decree of 11 August 2003 on the FSB. The document allows

the FSB to have two first deputy directors, including the head of the Border Guard Service, and three deputy directors, including one state secretary. Under the decree that has been amended, the Federal Security Service director was permitted three first deputy directors, including the head of the Border Guard Service, and nine deputies, including a state secretary and the head of the Federal Security Service Inspection Directorate.

**2 December 2005** The transfer of four commandant's offices in the mountainous part of Chechnya from the MOD to the Interior Ministry Internal Troops is completed.

**2 December 2005** Yuriy Solomonov, the director of the Moscow Institute of Thermal Technology says that by the end of 2005, the Russian navy is to carry out flight tests of the Bulava-M, a new sea-launched ballistic missile. Solomonov says the development of strategic arms has been funded better for the past few years. However: "For 2006, the funding volume for the programme approved by the Russian president and government, for what has been identified as the main priorities in strategic arms development (which include the Topol-M and the Bulava), does not yet match the tasks that have been set."

Strategic Missile Troops Commander Col-Gen Nikolay Solovtsov says that by 2012-2015, Topol-M mobile and silo-based combat missile systems will be the only ones in use by the Strategic Missile Troops.

**4 December 2005** Acting Chechen Prime Minister Ramzan Kadyrov says that Prime Minister Sergey Abramov will return to work after he recovers from his road accident in Moscow.

**5 December 2005** Vladimir Putin asks that the government prepare amendments to the NGOs bill as soon as possible, taking into account concerns expressed by the European Commission and the Public Chamber.

**6 December 2005** Former Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov states he intends to set up a broad democratic coalition. He states:

"The time has come to act. I have decided to devote all my time to the creation of a broad democratic coalition. The political structure suitable for setting this process off is the Democratic Party of Russia.

The founding principles for such a coalition will be: first of all, free and fair elections; a real division of powers; an independent judicial system; free media; real respect for civil rights.

Achieving a result is important for us so that this broad coalition could win elections in 2007 and 2008."

URF leader Nikita Belykh says Kasyanov's statement is "not interesting". Our Choice leader Irina Khakamada expresses interest and Yabloko deputy leader Sergey Ivanenko says that a Kasyanov-led coalition is possible.

**6 December 2005** Deputy chairman of the Federation Council, Aleksandr Torshin, and head of the Duma parliamentary commission on Beslan says the report on the Beslan terrorist incident of September 2004 is unlikely to be published in 2005.

**7 December 2005** The Our Choice party, led by Irina Khakamada, says it intends to support former Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov at the 2008 presidential election and plans to merge with his Democratic Party.

**7 December 2005** The Duma passes the federal budget for 2006 in the fourth, final reading. Three hundred and forty-two deputies voted for the budget (226 votes were necessary) and 89 against, with one abstention. The budget's revenues are expected to be R5,046.1bn, expenditure R4,270.1bn, with the surplus of R776bn. Next year's GDP is forecast at R24,380bn and the inflation rate at 7-8.5 per cent.

**7 December 2005** Sergey Lebedev, director of the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) says he does not rule out the probability that humanitarian missions and NGOs may be used by foreign special services for their own purposes.

**8 December 2005** Sergey Lebedev, director of the SVR, is interviewed in *Rossiskaya Gazeta*.

**8 December 2005** The trial of National Bolshevik Party activists who seized the public reception office of the presidential administration in 2004 ends in Moscow. The majority of them have been given suspended sentences. Nine will serve custodial sentences ranging from one-and-a-half to three-and-a-half years.

**10 December 2005** Human rights ombudsman Vladimir Lukin says civil society in Russia must not be harmed by concern over with national security.

**11 December 2005** Chechen Security Council Secretary Rudnik Dudayev dies in a fire in a house on the government compound in Groznyy. The cause of the fire is unknown.

**14 December 2005** Vladimir Putin states that Russia's gold and hard currency reserves had increased by 44bn dollars since January 2005. On 1 December 2005 they amounted to 168bn dollars.

**14 December 2005** The Federation Council approves the 2006 budget. Revenue is set at R5,046bn and expenditure at R4,270bn. The budget surplus is therefore R776bn.

**14 December 2005** An initiative group-headquarters, which includes the Peace and Freedom Association, the Association of Chechens in France, the Society for the Protection of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, and the Sintem public organization, declares that it supports the appeal of the International Association for Peace and Human Rights to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe to take measures in line with international obligations to stop the war in Chechnya.

**14 December 2005** The Duma passes a bill in its first reading which makes it easier for residents of the former Soviet Union to acquire Russian citizenship.

**14 December 2005** Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Sergey Ivanov says there are no plans to change the structure of the armed forces radically: "There are no plans to eliminate [military] districts, fleets, or main commands of the branches of the armed forces now or in the foreseeable future." He also says that the "idea of setting up regional commands is correct".

Ivanov says that 70 per cent of next year's state defence order will be spent on procurement of new armaments and military hardware. The state defence order will

amount to R237bn (8.27bn dollars) in 2006, which is nearly R54bn (1.88bn dollars) more than 2005.

**15 December 2005** The government has, in line with the law "On special economic zones in the Russian Federation", endorsed the provision for free economic zone supervisory councils.

**16 December 2005** The commander of the Strategic Missile Troops, Col-Gen Nikolay Solovtsov, says that the service lives of some missile complexes on combat duty expired long ago. It means that their service lives were extended by one and a half time and lives of such complexes as UR-100 NUTTKh [NATO's Stiletto, silo-based] and Topol have been extended by 2-3 times. In the future the Strategic Missile Troops will be armed with only Topol-M type stationary and mobile missile system.

**16 December 2005** Vladimir Putin says he is not planning any further changes within the presidential administration.

**16 December 2005** The Director of the FSB, Nikolay Patrushev, confirms that Al-Qa'idah's main representative in the North Caucasus, Abu Omar, has been destroyed in Dagestan.

**17 December 2005** Two rival Democratic Party Congresses are held in Moscow. One is pro-Mikhail Kasyanov, the other anti-Kasyanov.

**19 December 2005** The Duma passes a new version of the law "On political parties" in the third and final reading. On the initiative of the president, the party that wins a regional election may now submit a nominee for governor to be put forward by the president. This candidate will enjoy majority backing in the local parliament. 336 deputies voted for the bill, with 51 against.

**19 December 2005** The Chechen parliament calls on all participants in illegal armed groups to lay down their weapons.

Chechen President Alu Alkhanov says the leaders of the operational group for counterterrorist operations in the North Caucasus are working on proposals for reducing troop numbers. Alkhanov says that there had been 39 acts of terror in Chechnya in 2005 by comparison with 113 in 2004.

**19 December 2005** The Adygea Nat Press website reports that the Union of Slavs of Adygeya has held a congress which adopted a resolution urging the Russian president to examine a merger between Adygeya and Krasnodar Territory.

**19 December 2005** Former Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov is interviewed on *Ekho Moskvy* radio. He accuses the Kremlin of trying to establish total control over political life in Russia, saying he sensed "elements of totalitarianism".

**20 December 2005** Deputy chairman of the Duma Vladimir Pekhtin says Russia will allocate significant sums of money on ensuring its security in 2006. He says that in 2006 federal budget spending on national security and law-enforcement activities will be increased by almost 20 per cent compared with 2005. According to the 2006 budget, there are plans to allocate R666.26bn on "national defence" and R541.6345bn on "national security and law-enforcement activities".

**20 December 2005** Col-Gen Viktor Zavarzin, chairman of the Duma defence committee, says that by the end of 2005, 40 permanent-readiness units of the Russian armed forces will have switched over to all-volunteer manning. Contract servicemen account for 30 per cent of Russian army personnel at the moment. Another 20 permanent-readiness units will switch over to all-volunteer manning in 2006.

**21 December 2005** The chief of the main staff of the navy, Admiral Mikhail Abramov, says the first submarine equipped with the Bulava missile system will enter service in 2008.

**21 December 2005** Vladislav Surkov, the deputy head of the presidential administration, says that the two main threats Russia faces are a rise in nationalism leading to isolation, and the restoration of an oligarchic regime.

**21 December 2005** The Duma passes the draft law on nongovernmental nonprofit organizations in its second reading.

**21 December 2005** The Constitutional Court upholds the constitutionality of the new procedure for appointing governors.

**21 December 2005** Vladimir Putin meets the Chechen leadership to discuss the region's socioeconomic development. He calls for money allocated for reconstruction to be spent on that.

**22 December 2005** Vladimir Putin addresses the founding congress of the Association of Lawyers of Russia. He discusses civic rights.

**22 December 2005** The Security Council discusses Russian energy security. Vladimir Putin states:

Russia makes a weighty contribution to ensuring global and regional energy security. Moreover, our country has both natural competitive advantages and natural and technological possibilities to occupy more significant positions on the economic and energy market. We must use these positions in the interests of the entire international community but not to the detriment of our national interests.

Russia's prosperity both now and in the future directly depends to a significant extent on what place we occupy in the global energy context. The aspiration to leadership in the world energy industry is an ambitious task and to achieve it is not enough simply to increase volumes of production and exports of energy resources. Russia must become an initiator and a trendsetter in terms of energy innovations, new technologies and also in the search for modern forms of resources and conservation.

Putin says that at the G8 summit in St Petersburg, Russia will put forward concrete energy security initiatives, including those of an antiterrorist nature and on developing nuclear energy.

**22 December 2005** Vladimir Putin says Russia must build not just an oil pipeline, but also a gas pipeline to the Pacific Ocean.

**22 December 2005** The Internal Troops commander-in-chief, Col-Gen Nikolay Rogozhkin, says the number of Internal Troops in Chechnya will not be reduced at

least until the end of the winter. The group may be reduced when goals are defined for the spring and summer of 2006.

**23 December 2005** The setting up of the Public Chamber of Russia is completed.

**24 December 2005** First Deputy Defence Minister Col-Gen Aleksandr Belousov says there will be no change in the structure of Russia's armed forces up to 2010. He says:

“The five-year plan of building the armed forces is nearing completion. In the next five years - up to 2010 - there will be three types and three arms of the forces. There will be no other changes until 2010...Beyond 2010 is the long term, we shall sort things out by then. Everything will depend on the military, political and strategic situation which emerges in the world.”

**26 December 2005** Chechen Interior Minister Ruslan Alkhanov says Chechen police detained 306 rebels in 2005, including 13 ringleaders. Forty-eight rebels gave themselves up to interior bodies. One-hundred-and-forty rebels were killed while offering armed resistance, 17 bases of illegal armed groups and 148 arms caches have been eliminated. Interior Ministry employees have taken 412 automatic weapons, 149 pistols, 44 machineguns, 345 grenade launchers and over two tonnes of explosives out of illegal circulation.

**26 December 2005** Russian deputy prosecutor-general, Nikolay Shepel, say that adequate forces were deployed in Beslan to eliminate the terrorists and free the hostages. A 92-page report on Beslan by experts who staged a reconstruction of the situation was signed off on 25 December.

**26 December 2005** Commander of the Russian Strategic Missile Troops, Col-Gen Nikolay Solovtsov, expresses the hope that Russia and Ukraine will continue to cooperate over the extension of service life of the RS-20 Voyevoda ICBMs (SS-18 Satan by NATO classification).

**26 December 2005** Vladimir Putin asks that the government launch the Glonass navigation system for commercial use as soon as possible.

**27 December 2005** Presidential adviser on economic affairs Andrey Illarionov submits his resignation. He says Russia is no longer politically free and is becoming economically corporatist.

**27 December 2005** The head of Roskosmos, Col-Gen Anatoliy Perminov says that by the end of 2007 the Defence Ministry will complete the handover of the Baykonur cosmodrome to Roskosmos.

**27 December 2005** An article on Strana.Ru website gives an optimistic assessment of the state of the Russian armed forces.

**28 December 2005** The head of the Beslan parliamentary commission Aleksandr Torshin presents the commission's report on Beslan to parliament. He says the security forces acted correctly in ending the siege. However he states:

“The existing system of antiterrorist measures operated by the organizations responsible for this is insufficiently effective. Moreover, in the view of the commission, officials of law enforcement bodies, and primarily of the Republic of Ingushetia and the Republic of North Ossetia-

Alania, behaved in a negligent and careless manner amid a real and present terrorist threat.”

Vladimir Putin signs the law "On parliamentary inquiry", which sets out rules for the establishment and operation of commissions similar to one that is now working on the events in Beslan.

**28 December 2005** Vladimir Putin chairs a meeting of the commission on military-technical cooperation summing up Russian arms sales for 2005. He says that Russia earned 5.3bn dollars through military contracts.

**28 December 2005** Presidential envoy to the Southern Federal District Dmitriy Kozak says that a special coordination group, which includes representatives of federal departments, will monitor the spending of money allocated for the restoration of the economy and the social sphere of the Chechen Republic.

**28 December 2005** The parliament of Irkutsk Region approves the proposed date of 16 April 2006 for a referendum on a merger with the neighbouring Ust-Orda Buryat Autonomous Area.

**29 December 2005** Moscow mayor Yury Luzhkov is interviewed in *Izvestiya*. He says that ideally, Vladimir Putin should carry on running the country beyond 2008 when his second and constitutionally final term expires.

“Of course it would be good to persuade Putin to carry on with his work, but he has said his word. This means that successor options must be looked at, someone who can continue what has been started and avoid doing damage. The situation is extremely serious. Once an election campaign is declared, contenders will appear out of every nook and cranny while we have no right to make the wrong choice. Too much is at stake. When we look at neighbouring countries, we can see a whole range of instances of absolutely ineffective governance. Instead, they are painted all over in all sorts of colours - orange, rosy.”

**29 December 2005** The minister of economic development and trade, German Gref, says he regretted Andrey Illarionov's resignation from the post of adviser to the Russian president on economic issues.

**28 December 2005** The Federal Guard Service opens an Internet site. - [www.fso.gov.ru](http://www.fso.gov.ru).

**28 December 2005** Kommersant reports that Tatars in Bashkortostan want official status for their language.

**29 December 2005** Economic Development and Trade Minister German Gref says GDP will not be doubled by 2010.

The government adopts a medium-term programme for the country's socioeconomic development in 2006-2008. The programme envisages a 6-per-cent average annual growth of GDP and a 4.8-per-cent growth in industrial output.

**30 December 2005** The Levada Centre poll asks who would you vote for in a presidential election on 1 January. The results are:

Against all 32%

Don't know 27%  
Sergey Ivanov 11%  
Boris Gryzlov 9%  
Mikhal Fradkov 5%  
Dmitry Medvedev 4%  
Dmitry Kozak 3%

**30 December 2005** Maj-Gen Vladimir Konstantinov, acting head of the recruitment department of the Russian General Staff's central mobilization directorate, says the autumn draft has been successfully completed. In the draft of October-December 2005, a total of 140,000 men aged 18 to 27 were sent to military units.

## Russian Foreign Policy: A Chronology

### October-December 2005

**1 October 2005** Minister of Industry and Energy Viktor Khristenko and president of Rosneft oil company Sergey Bogdanchikov discuss with Indian Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Mani Shankar Aiyar cooperation between Rosneft and the state-owned International Petroleum Company of India ONGC Videsh.

**1 October 2005** The Foreign Ministry (MFA) says that at an OSCE conference to review the implementation of obligations in the human dimension sphere, one of Russia's priorities is to defend the rights of Russophone populations in the post-Soviet space. Representatives of more than 50 OSCE states and 315 NGOs took part in the forum of the organization, held in Warsaw from 19 to 30 September.

**1 October 2005** The MFA says Russia has spoken out several times on the need for Switzerland to extradite former Russian minister Yevgeniy Adamov to Russia regardless of the American request to surrender him.

**3 October 2005** Vladimir Putin visits Belgium. He says that Russia is interested in increasing the number of participants in the North European gas pipeline project. A Russo-Belgian joint action plan for 2005-07 is signed.

**3 October 2005** The MFA expresses its objections to Switzerland's decision to extradite former head of the Russian Atomic Energy Ministry Yevgeniy Adamov to the USA.

**3 October 2005** The MFA accuses Georgia of increasing tension in South Osetia.

**3 October 2005** Vasiliy Likhachev, deputy chairman of the Federation Council's international affairs committee says the situation regarding the Russophone community in the Baltic countries is due to the EU's unwillingness to talk tough to its new members on this issue.

**3 October 2005** Deputy Natural Resources Minister Valentin Stepankov says that Russia is interested in joint development of oil fields in South Africa. An agreement on cooperation between the two countries' chambers of commerce and industry is signed in Moscow.

**3 October 2005** Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says Russia and Sweden will conduct a joint exercise in Sweden in winter 2006. He is having talks with his Swedish counterpart Leni Bjoerklund.

**4 October 2005** Vladimir Putin attends the Russia-EU summit in London. He discusses economic cooperation, energy, Iran and visa arrangements.

**4 October 2005** The director of the MFA's security and disarmament department, Anatoliy Antonov, says Russia is perplexed by the USA's appeal to all states to freeze all existing projects with Iran in the nuclear field.

**4 October 2005** Justice Minister Yuriy Chayka says former atomic energy minister Yevgeniy Adamov should be extradited to Russia.

**4 October 2005** Vladimir Putin and Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan have a telephone conversation. They discuss current issues of bilateral cooperation linked to agreements reached between Russia and Turkey within the framework of Putin's meeting with Erdogan in Sochi in July.

**4 October 2005** South Osetia's de facto leader, Eduard Kokoiti, visits Moscow. He says he wants to have a natural gas pipeline built between South Osetia and Russia.

**4 October 2005** Kazakh Deputy Foreign Minister Vadim Zverkov describes media reports on the possible merger of Kazakhstan and Russia to form a single state as absurd.

**5 October 2005** Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Yakovenko is interviewed in *Izvestiya*. He discusses relations with China.

**5 October 2005** Vladimir Putin and British Prime Minister Tony Blair have bilateral talks in London on Russo-UK relations.

**5 October 2005** The MFA says Russia has put forward a proposal that a multiparty investigation group with the participation of OSCE observers should be set up to look into the circumstances of firing from grenade launchers at the capital of the breakaway republic of South Osetia, Tskhinvali. First Deputy Foreign Minister Valeriy Loshchinin and the South Osetian president, Eduard Kokoiti, held a meeting at the MFA on 4 October to discuss the worsening of the situation in the zone of the Georgian-Osetian conflict caused by the shelling of Tskhinvali.

**5 October 2005** The MFA expresses disapproval of Switzerland's decision to extradite former atomic energy minister Yevgeniy Adamov to the USA. Justice Minister Yuriy Chayka says the Justice Ministry will demand the extradition of Adamov to Russia.

**5 October 2005** Aleksandr Rumyantsev, the head of Rosatom, says Russia "does not regard taking the Iran nuclear issue to the UN Security Council as being constructive.

**5 October 2005** Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says the Lithuanian authorities have officially completed their investigation into the incident involving the crash of a Russian Su-27 fighter jet. The Russian side intends to carry out an independent investigation to find out all the circumstances involving the incident. Ivanov says he hopes pilot Valeriy Troyanov will return to Russia within the next few days.

**5 October 2005** Slovak defence minister Juraj Liska visits Moscow for talks with Russian counterpart Sergey Ivanov.

**6 October 2005** United Energy Systems chief Anatoliy Chubays says talks are underway with China on implementing a project to supply electricity to China.

**6 October 2005** Lithuania's general procuracy has decided to halt its pre-trial investigation of Russian pilot Valeriy Troyanov and allow him to return home.

**6 October 2005** The 18th meeting of the special working group to draw up a convention on the Caspian legal status opens in Baku. Russia urges creation of joint crime-fighting naval force in the Caspian

**6 October 2005** Sergey Lavrov says the USA had no questions for Moscow regarding Russia's participation in the construction of the Bushehr nuclear power station in Iran.

Sergey Lavrov meets the co-chairmen of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, Ted Turner and Sam Nunn. Lavrov says Russia "supports IAEA policy and thinks the agency's director general, Muhammad al-Baradi'i, is on the right track in tackling problems in the nuclear sphere."

**6 October 2005** The MFA denies reports about the possibility of uniting Russia and Kazakhstan into one state.

**6 October 2005** A presidential summit of the Central Asian Cooperation Organization opens in St Petersburg.

**6 October 2005** Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has talks in Moscow with Austrian Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik.

**7 October 2005** Uzbek President Islom Karimov proposes to Vladimir Putin that Russia and Uzbekistan establish alliance type relations.

**8 October 2005** The presidential envoy to the Far Eastern Federal District, Konstantin Pulikovskiy, visits North Korea.

**8 October 2005** German Gref, the economic development and trade minister, says the EU is afraid that, with Russia in the World Trade Organisation (WTO), Russian producers could expand into European markets. Gref is having talks in London with the EU commissioner for external trade.

**9 October 2005** Defence minister Sergey Ivanov visits Portugal.

**9 October 2005** Col-Gen Anatoliy Mazurkevich, the chief of the Main Directorate for International Military Cooperation in the MOD, says before 2006 Russia will supply Afghanistan, in the form of aid, with military assets worth 30 million dollars.

**10 October 2005** The head of the upper chamber international affairs committee, Mikhail Margelov, says Russian-German relations will not change substantially with the appointment of Angela Merkel to the post of chancellor of Germany. The head of the Duma international affairs committee, Konstantin Kosachev, says that, with Angela Merkel's appointment, Russian-German dialogue on key areas of European and world politics will retain its intensive character.

**10 October 2005** Sergey Lavrov visits Spain.

**10 October 2005** The Emergencies Ministry sends multiberth tents, bedding, camp beds and other articles to earthquake-affected residents of Pakistan.

**10 October 2005** Secretary-general Grigoriy Rapota says there are plans to set up a Single Economic Space as part of the Eurasian Economic Community, and after this, a single currency will be introduced.

**11 October 2005** Sergey Lavrov says Russia does not plan to join NATO or the European Union, but is ready to fully cooperate with these organizations.

**11 October 2005** Sergey Lavrov visits France. He attends a meeting of the Russian-French council for cooperation and security issues. He says: "Within the Russia-NATO cooperation there is a joint mechanism for adopting and implementing decisions relating to external security. But Russia and the EU do not have such a mechanism...We are in favour of introducing this system for our activity across the Russian Federation and the EU." He also says that Moscow is not worried about a cooling of relations with Germany in connection with the change of leadership there. He expresses support for Turkey's accession to the EU.

Sergey Lavrov calls on the international community to take account of the lessons of Iraq when tackling international problems in future, including the introduction of sanctions. He says:

"Sanctions were introduced all too easily and without any forethought...No-one feels any satisfaction at the fate of the UN's humanitarian programme (oil for food). However, let us ponder whether it was needed at all, if it were not for the fact that those behind the sanctions resolution proceeded from what was known in advance to be an unrealistic expectation that Saddam Husayn's regime would crumble within six months of the introduction of the sanctions."

Lavrov voices concerns about disruption of work for the settlement of Iran's nuclear problem in the present format in the framework of the IAEA.

**11 October 2005** Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says that MOD representatives and also of the Ministry of Internal Affairs are helping Palestinian security and police forces on Palestinian territory. He praises Syria's role in the Middle East. He says:

"The region is situated close to Russia's borders and its problems cannot be resolved in isolation from one another. The process which has got under way in Palestinian-Israeli relations ought to be continued, but it will not resolve the whole Middle East problem. Lebanese-Israeli and Syrian-Israeli relations must also be settled. The main thing is to help Palestinians fulfil their pledges in the fight against terrorism. They need to be helped in establishing their security forces."

"Syria is trying to help Palestinian leader Mahmud Abbas to put relations with Palestinian groups to rights. We observe a constructive position on the part of Damascus, whether it concerns steps to withdraw from Lebanon, or non-interference in Lebanese parliamentary elections. Both Syria and Lebanon are interested in normal, friendly relations."

**11 October 2005** The secretary-general of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), Nikolay Bordyuzha, says a big military grouping will be set up in Central Asia to protect the countries of the region against external military threats. "It has now been decided to establish a big military grouping in the Central Asian region, along the lines of the regional military groupings already existing within the framework of the treaty, ones like the Russian-Belarusian and Russian-Armenian groupings and the collective rapid-reaction forces."

**11 October 2005** The UK Minister of State for the Armed Forces Adam Ingram visits Russia. In Yekaterinburg Ingram will visit a centre for retraining retired officers funded by Britain's MOD.

**12 October 2005** Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says that Russian troops will be withdrawn from the Dniester region as part of the political peace process between Chisinau and Tiraspol.

**12 October 2005** The MFA says Russia views as a provocation the resolution adopted by the Georgian parliament on the situation in the zones of conflict between Georgia and Abkhazia and Georgia and Osetia setting conditions for the presence of Russian peacekeepers in the self-proclaimed republics of Abkhazia and South Osetia.

Sergey Lavrov warns against "sudden movements" regarding the Russian peacekeepers in South Osetia and Abkhazia.

**12 October 2005** Deputy Interior Minister and chief of the Regional Operations Headquarters General Arkadiy Yedelev says Georgian territory has once again become a transit point for rebels returning to Chechnya.

**12 October 2005** Transport Minister Igor Levitin says Armenia, Russia, Georgia and Abkhazia will probably set up a consortium for the restoration of the Abkhazian section of the railway (joining Russia with Armenia via Georgia).

**12 October 2005** Armenian President Robert Kocharyan receives Aleksandr Tkachev, the governor of Russia's Krasnodar Territory, in Yerevan.

**12 October 2005** Sergey Lavrov has a telephone call with Iranian counterpart Manuchehr Mottaki. He call for "speedy resumption of the negotiation process between Iran and the European troika (Britain, Germany, France) on Iran's nuclear programme aimed at reaching political-diplomatic settlement of the problem".

**14 October 2005** US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice arrives in Moscow for talks.

**14 October 2005** Brazilian foreign minister Celso Amorim visits Moscow for talks.

**14 October 2005** The MFA says Russia and NATO are working on the creation of a joint system for monitoring air space.

**15 October 2005** Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra visits Moscow for talks with Vladimir Putin.

**16 October 2005** The joint Russian-Indian antiterrorist exercise, Indra 2005, takes place in India. Sergey Ivanov is India to attend the exercises. He says the idea of a Russia-India-China military bloc is outdated, and that there are no plans to set up bases for Russian naval ships in foreign countries in the Indian Ocean.

**16 October 2005** The MFA says Moscow welcomes the referendum on the draft of Iraq's permanent constitution that took place on 15 October.

**16 October 2005** Sergey Lavrov is interviewed on TV. He discusses US and Russian policy in Central Asia and Iran.

**17 October 2005** Sergey Ivanov says in 2006 Russia will host a joint antiterrorist exercise with NATO and India.

**18 October 2005** Vladimir Putin sends a message to the head of the Palestinian National Authority, Mahmud Abbas, about developing the peace process after the withdrawal of Israeli settlements and military infrastructure from Gaza and parts of the West Bank. He also sends a message to Israeli President Moshe Katsav.

**18 October 2005** Duma deputy Konstantin Zatulin challenges the legality of the Russian withdrawal from military bases in Georgia.

The president of South Osetia, Eduard Kokoiti, warns that the withdrawal of Russian peacekeepers will lead to a sharp exacerbation of the situation in the conflict zone.

**18 October 2005** The MFA denies reports in the western media on Russian assistance in the Iranian ballistic missile programme.

**18 October 2005** Vladimir Putin and Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva sign a joint statement after talks in Moscow. Russia expresses support for Brazil "as a strong candidate for the post of permanent member of a reformed UN Security Council provided a well-grounded decision is taken on expanding the Security Council".

**18 October 2005** Sergey Lavrov says negotiations with the EU on visa issues have been completed following talks with his Portuguese counterpart Diogo Freitas do Amaral.

**18 October 2005** A closed door meeting at the Duma on Russian military bases abroad stated that Russia has 16 military bases and facilities abroad, with about 40,000 servicemen and 25,000 civilian employees serving there.

**19 October 2005** Egyptian foreign minister Ahmad Abu-al-Ghayt visits Moscow.

**19 October 2005** Turkish interior minister Abdulkadir Aksu visits Moscow for talks with the Interior Ministry.

**19 October 2005** The defence ministers of Russia and Belarus, Sergey Ivanov and Leanid Maltsaw, approve a blueprint for the fundamentals of a union state of Belarus and Russia defence legislation. The policy document will be used as the basis for further work on building a military organization of the union state.

**19 October 2005** The MFA says Russia has never objected to the inclusion of the EU and the USA as observers at talks to settle the dispute over the Dniester region.

**19 October 2005** Vladimir Putin amends a decree issued on 11 July 2004 on the MFA. There will now be eight deputy foreign ministers at the Foreign Ministry, including one first deputy foreign minister, one state secretary - deputy minister and one director-general of the Foreign Ministry, and 36 departments dealing with the main areas covered by the ministry.

- Valeriy Loshchinin is the first deputy foreign minister of Russia. He is in charge of bilateral relations with the CIS countries, ties with the parliaments and constituent parts of the federation, socio-political organizations, personnel and consular issues and also state protocol issues.
- Aleksandr Alekseyev deals with relations with Asian countries and issues of multilateral cooperation within the Asian-Pacific region.

- Aleksandr Grushko deals with relations with European countries and issues of pan-European and Euro-Atlantic organizations.
- Sergey Kislyak deals with relations with the countries of North and Latin America, international security issues, disarmament and Russia's participation in G8.
- Aleksandr Saltanov deals with relations with Middle East and Africa and issues of Middle Eastern and Iraqi settlement.
- Aleksandr Yakovenko deals with issues of Russia's participation in international organizations, international law issues, international economic and humanitarian cooperation and international cooperation in human rights.

Putin also appoints Grigoriy Karasin state secretary - deputy foreign minister of Russia. As a deputy foreign minister he was in charge of issues of multilateral cooperation within the CIS and a number of functional issues.

Putin also appoints Vladimir Titov deputy foreign minister. Prior to this appointment he headed the personnel department of the Foreign Ministry.

Doku Zavgayev is the Foreign Ministry's director-general. He deals with administrative, financial issues and also special issues ensuring the smooth running of the ministry and its institutions abroad.

The Foreign Ministry has 36 departments for the main areas of its activity. The maximum number of staff at the Foreign Ministry's central office is set at 3,278 excluding security and service staff, and the payroll fund is R181,956,600 per quarter.

**19 October 2005** The head of the Duma International Affairs Committee, Konstantin Kosachev, says the trial of Saddam Husayn is "doomed to be political".

**19 October 2005** The Russian open joint-stock company, TVEL, signs a contract with the Libyan research centre, Tajura, for the delivery of low-enriched nuclear fuel for an IRT-1 research reactor.

**19 October 2005** The Russian and Norwegian foreign ministers, Sergey Lavrov and Jonas Gahr Stoere, "have noted the close cooperation between the authorities in both countries in settling the affair of the Russian trawler Elektron in the Barents Sea".

**20 October 2005** The head of the World Bank, Paul Wolfowitz, visits Moscow. He has talks with Vladimir Putin.

**20 October 2005** Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that the EU is protecting Latvia and Estonia from criticism in connection with the human rights situation, voiced against these countries in the OSCE and the Council of Europe.

**20 October 2005** Vladimir Putin and his Ukrainian counterpart Viktor Yushchenko discuss over the phone Russian-Ukrainian energy cooperation.

**20 October 2005** The Russian-Belarusian commission for drafting the Constitutional Act of the Union State of Russia and Belarus approve a draft of this document. The Constitutional Act will become the main document for the merger of Russia and Belarus. It must first be approved at the Supreme Council of the Union State and then it must be approved by the residents of the two countries in a referendum.

**20 October 2005** Andrey Kokoshin, chairman of the State Duma CIS affairs committee, says he believes that the recent resolution of the Georgian parliament on Russian peacekeepers is a political provocation.

**20 October 2005** Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev receives Sergey Lebedev, director of the Foreign Intelligence Service of the Russian Federation.

**20 October 2005** Sergey Lavrov visits Turkmenistan. He discusses Russo-Turkmen gas relations and Caspian Sea zones.

**20 October 2005** Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing meets visiting Security Council Secretary Igor Ivanov in Beijing. They are conducting Sino-Russian Strategic Security Talks. Trade between Russia and China is expected to top 27bn US dollars in 2005.

**20 October 2005** Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Alekseyev urges the parties to talks on the North Korean nuclear problem to "consider the real concerns" of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

**20 October 2005** Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Alekseyev says Vladimir Putin is to visit Japan in 2005. He says that in 2004 the trade between the two countries was worth over 8bn dollars. He says Russia and Japan are still deadlocked over a peace treaty.

**20 October 2005** Separatist Chechen Minister of Foreign Affairs Usman Ferzauli visits Poland.

**20 October 2005** Sergey Lavrov says that armed forces of third countries should not be involved in military activities in the Caspian.

**21 October 2005** Sergey Lavrov visits Uzbekistan.

**21 October 2005** Pavel Borodin, state secretary of the Russo-Belarusian union, says that the referendum on the Constitutional Act of the Russia-Belarus union state could be held in October or November 2006.

**21 October 2005** Gazprom deputy chairman Aleksandr Medvedev says North Korea has yet to approve a project to link it and South Korea to gas supplies from Russia because of political circumstances.

**22 October 2005** The MFA says that discussion of the report on the investigation into the murder of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri at the UN Security Council scheduled for 25 October must not be politicized.

**24 October 2005** Iranian foreign minister Manuchehr Mottaki visits Moscow for talks with Sergey Lavrov.

**24 October 2005** The chargé d'affaires of the MFA in Norway is summoned by the Norwegian Foreign Ministry in connection with the detention of two Russian fishing ships, the Kapitan Gorbachev and the Dmitriy Pokramovich, near Bear Island.

**21 October 2005** Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov briefs Vladimir Putin on the outcome of his trip to Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.

**24 October 2005** Giorgi Khaindrava, Georgian minister of state for settlement of conflicts, claims that Russian peacekeepers are not observing their mandate in the South Osetian conflict zone and "artificially stirring it up".

**24 October 2005** Roving ambassador Dmitriy Nesterushkin says Russia has handed to Moldova a working document that sums up all the ideas for resolving the Dniester conflict.

**24 October 2005** Russian Energy and Industry Minister Viktor Khristenko visits the USA to discuss energy cooperation. He says Moscow attaches "strategic significance" to the development of "Russian-American gas cooperation". Two American companies, Conoco-Philips and ChevronTexaco, have recently been included by Gazprom in the list of candidates to take part in the development of the Shtokman gas condensate field, the largest in the world.

**24 October 2005** Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Alekseyev says the three-way dialogue between Russia, India and China "is not directed against anybody in Asia and the world". He is commenting on prospects for Moscow's relations with New Delhi and Beijing and collaboration between the three states.

**25 October 2005** Vladimir Putin has a telephone conversation with Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinezhad. Putin spoke in favour of Iran developing cooperation with the IAEA further, including with the aim of renewing the negotiation process.

Vladimir Putin says that Russia is ready to continue collaboration with Iran in nuclear power engineering taking into account Moscow's obligations on nonproliferation.

**25 October 2005** Syrian President Bashar al-Asad telephones Vladimir Putin.

**25 October 2005** The chairman of the Federation Council international affairs committee, Mikhail Margelov, praises the outcome of the Iraqi constitutional referendum. He says "statehood is starting to take shape and a base for legitimizing the democratic processes and reorganizations that have taken place over the last two years is emerging".

**25 October 2005** Nepalese foreign minister Ramesh Nath Pandey visits Moscow.

**26 October 2005** The MFA says Russia will oppose attempts to introduce UN Security Council sanctions against Syria in connection with the investigation into the killing of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri.

**26 October 2005** Sergey Lavrov visits Israel. He says Russia "is firmly against any new countries becoming nuclear powers and actively supports all efforts aimed at preventing violations of the nonproliferation treaty".

Sergey Lavrov urges Syria to "actively cooperate with the Mehlis commission in the investigation of the murder of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri".

Sergey Lavrov says in Israel that Russia "does not need to be convinced that Iran should not have a nuclear bomb".

Sergey Lavrov leaves for Ramallah, where he will meet the head of the Palestinian National Authority Mahmud Abbas. Lavrov says Russia's offer to organize an international meeting of experts on the Middle East in Moscow still stands. Lavrov says he supports direct talks between Israel and the Palestinians.

**26 October 2005** The MFA says the actions of the Norwegian authorities with regard to the detained Russian boats have been excessive.

**26 October 2005** The head of the Vatican foreign policy department Archbishop Giovanni Lajolo visits Moscow, for the first time in the history of relations between Russia and the Vatican.

**26 October 2005** Mongolian Prime Minister Tsakhiagiyn Elbegdorj visits Moscow.

**26 October 2005** The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation has a heads of government summit in Moscow. Observer countries - India, Pakistan, Mongolia and Iran attend for the first time.

**26 October 2005** Pakistani Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz visits Moscow. He discusses economic and military cooperation. An energy cooperation agreement is signed to build a gas pipeline from Iran to Pakistan.

**27 October 2005** Sergey Lavrov expresses disagreement with Israel's view that Iran be excluded from the UN and that IAEA nuclear dossier be examined by the UN Security Council. Lavrov says there should be a new IAEA report on Iran.

Sergey Lavrov expresses disapproval of Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinezhad's remark that Israel to be wiped off the face of the Earth.

Sergey Lavrov arrives in Jordan.

Sergey Lavrov says Russia will support both politically and financially the actions of the Palestinian authorities to fight terrorism.

**27 October 2005** Iranian ambassador to Moscow Gholamreza Ansari is summoned on to the MFA in connection with the remarks made by Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinezhad about wiping Israel off the map.

**27 October 2005** Indian Minister of External Affairs Natwar Singh visits Moscow.

**27 October 2005** Andrey Kokoshin, Duma deputy and former secretary of the Security Council visits China at the invitation of the Chinese National Defence Ministry to attend a Russian-Chinese conference on regional security and bilateral relations.

**27 October 2005** Sergey Ivanov says Russian peacekeepers will not leave the Dniester region until a political decision on the Moldova-Dniester conflict is taken.

**27 October 2005** The secretary of the Russian Security Council, Igor Ivanov, says the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) is striving for partner-like relations with NATO and is ready to take in new members.

Igor Ivanov says the campaigns against Belarus that are being waged in the West are counterproductive.

**28 October 2005** Fishing quotas in the Barents Sea for 2006 have been established at the 34th session of the Russian-Norwegian Fisheries Commission.

**28 October 2005** Sergey Lavrov states that documents used by Paul Volcker's independent commission on Iraq on the oil for food issue may have been forged.

The head of the Federation Council committee for international affairs, Mikhail Margelov, regards the independent commission's report on abuses during implementation of the UN "oil-for-food" programme as a farce.

**28 October 2005** Defence minister Sergey Ivanov criticises Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinezhad for his anti-Israel remarks.

**28 October 2005** The head of the Duma international affairs committee Konstantin Kosachev criticises Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinezhad for his anti-Israel remarks. On the nuclear issues he says it cannot be said with absolute confidence that all of Iran's actions in the nuclear sphere are completely legitimate, but he said that no-one could as yet substantiate any of the grievances against Iran.

**28 October 2005** Chairman of the Duma International Affairs Committee Konstantin Kosachev says Syria must be persuaded to cooperate with the international community in investigating the killing of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri.

"Right now it is important not so much to understand what to do with Syria or whether to impose sanctions of some kind but to persuade the country to cooperate with the international community in investigating the killing of Lebanon's ex-prime minister and to give Syria chance to present its counter-arguments...Everything now depends on an appropriate response from Syria, however. If it is not forthcoming, it will be very hard for Syria's friends, of which Russia is one, to protect Syria."

**28 October 2005** Sergey Lavrov has talks in Moscow with Vatican Secretary for Relations with States Archbishop Giovanni Lajolo.

**29 October 2005** Sergey Ivanov is interviewed on Russian security policy. He discusses the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Iran, Caspian Sea security.

**29 October 2005** CPRF leader Gennadiy Zyuganov denies his involvement in the Iraqi oil-food scandal.

**29 October 2005** Sergey Lavrov says Russia is "ready to demand an explanation from the Volcker commission if fakes are found again as the result of further work on its report". He is commenting on the situation with investigations into irregularities in the implementation of the UN's "Oil-for-Food" programme.

**29 October 2005** Agriculture minister Aleksey Gordeyev says Norway exceeded its authority when it acted to detain Russian fishing vessels.

**29 October 2005** The MFA warns against hasty conclusions from the interim report of the UN commission investigating the circumstances of the killing of Lebanese ex-premier Rafiq Hariri, and also calls on Syria to cooperate as much as possible with the commission.

**31 October 2005** The UN Security Council passes a resolution on Syria calling on it to cooperate in the investigation into the circumstances surrounding the killing of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri.

**31 October 2005** Vladimir Putin calls upon the world community to harshly fight the manifestations of terrorism, including any forms of support for it. "We must understand that this kind of thing will lead to problems in these countries themselves...one cannot buy off terrorists even with presents, even with providing refuge to them.

**31 October 2005** Vladimir Putin says he does not rule out the raising of the issue of Russia's possible accession to NATO. He says:

"We actively develop relations with both organizations: with NATO and even more so with the European Union...we do not perceive NATO as a hostile organization. We are developing cooperation with it...Of course, we want to build and will build relations of partnership with all countries, with all associations, including with NATO. I think that in recent years we have developed dialogue with the North Atlantic bloc very well."

### ***November***

**1 November 2005** Sergey Lavrov says that the UN Security Council resolution on Syria is softer thanks to Russia.

The head of the Federation Council international affairs committee, Mikhail Margelov, considers it essential to monitor the work of the commission investigating the death of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri so as to ensure that suspicions of involvement in the murder are based on facts.

**1 November 2005** The MFA states that Russia and the USA will "reduce the number of their strategic nuclear warheads by 31 December 2012 so that each side will have no more than 1700-2200 warheads." This is following the 4th session of the bilateral commission for the implementation of the Russian-US Treaty on the Reduction of Strategic Offensive Arms held in Geneva.

**1 November 2005** Vladimir Putin visits the Netherlands.

**1 November 2005** The MFA criticises the Swiss authorities' decision to extradite former Atomic Energy Minister Yevgeniy Adamov to the USA.

**1 November 2005** The final protocol of the ninth meeting of the Russian-Chinese commission for regular meetings of heads of government states that as of 2006, the annual amount of oil delivered from Russia to China by railway is to rise to at least 15m tonnes. The Russian and Chinese deputy prime ministers, Aleksandr Zhukov and Wu Yi, signed the protocol.

Former secretary of Russia's Security Council, Andrey Kokoshin, says he believes that cooperation between Russia, China and India will have a preventive effect on

potential terrorists and extremists. He is attending the Sino-Russian strategic cooperation forum in Beijing.

**1 November 2005** The State Commission on Chemical Disarmament states that the new programme of chemical arms destruction endorsed by the Russian government on 24 October may be revised in the future.

**1 November 2005** An agreement on the safety of navigation for Russian and US submarines is signed in Kaliningrad.

**1 November 2005** Nino Burjanadze, the chairwoman of the Georgian parliament, says that Russia may be excluded from the process of settling the Abkhaz and South Osetian conflicts and that states which are "friendly towards Tbilisi" may be brought into it.

"The exclusion of Russia from this process is in no way Tbilisi's objective. But we will never put up with the Russians looking for thousands of reasons to preserve the status quo in conflict regions. Therefore, if the Russians continue this policy, we will try, with the assistance of our friends, to isolate it from the process and settle our conflicts without it."

**2 November 2005** A delegation of European diplomats arrives in Grozny to study the situation in Chechnya and observe preparations for the republic's parliamentary election on 27 November.

**2 November 2005** Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Zhukov visits China.

**2 November 2005** Federation Council Speaker Sergey Mironov urges the international community to take strict control over developments in Kosovo-Metohija. He meets Serbia-Montenegro parliament Speaker Zoran Sami.

"It is necessary to do everything there under the auspices of the UN. But because even representatives of this organization sometimes handle issues in a one-sided way, international attention is necessary here and it is mandatory to take into consideration the opinions of Serbia and Montenegro...The problem of Kosovo should be resolved through direct dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina. However, once again we note that Kosovo should not be allowed to become a sovereign state."

**2 November 2005** The secretariat of the Collective Security Treaty Organization [CSTO] says it is surprised by a statement made by the NATO secretary-general's envoy to the South Caucasus and Central Asia, Robert Simmons, who said the alliance finds it inadvisable to develop cooperation with the organization in the format and way proposed by Russia.

**3 November 2005** A Russian delegation headed by Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov visits China. He says Russia is prepared to build all the atomic and thermal power stations China needs. 5.8m tonnes of oil was delivered by rail to China in 2004, while the total in 2005 would be about 8m tonnes.

**3 November 2005** The Kavkaz-Tsentr news agency website condemns Britain and other EU member states for sending diplomats to monitor the elections in Chechnya on 27 November.

**3 November 2005** The head of the operations department of the Main Staff of the Russian navy, Vice-Adm Vladimir Avdoshin says that in 2006, ships of the Black Sea Fleet will for the first time take part in the Active Endeavour antiterrorist operation of the joint US navy in the Mediterranean Sea. He is talking about the results of the Russian-American talks in Kaliningrad.

**4 November 2005** The head of the Federal Atomic Energy Agency, Aleksandr Rumyantsev says that the IAEA has no complaint against Russia or Iran in relation to the construction of the Bushehr nuclear power station. He also says Russia does not rule out the possibility of its participation in building light-water reactors in North Korea, if North Korea rejoins the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

**4 November 2005** The president's special representative on international cooperation in the war on terror and transnational organized crime, Anatoliy Safonov says in Brussels that Russia and the EU have moved on to discussing issues of practical cooperation on a broad range of problems relating to the fight against terrorism. He is heading the Russian interdepartmental delegation at talks with EU representatives on the fight against terrorism.

**5 November 2005** The MFA favours a proposal by the Arab League to summon an Iraqi national reconciliation conference. The secretary-general of the Arab League, Amr Musa, visits Moscow.

**7 November 2005** Sergey Lavrov says he does not see any grounds for doubting the legitimacy of the election results in Azerbaijan. The MFA says partial and biased assessments of elections are damaging to the reputation of the OSCE. Chairman of the international affairs committee of the Federation Council Mikhail Margelov says Il'kham Aliyev's party's victory at the Azerbaijani parliamentary election is "an undoubted good for the region".

**7 November 2005** Sergey Lavrov says it is "impermissible for the province of Kosovo to be split up and for the borders of neighbouring states to be changed". He is visiting Serbia-Montenegro.

**7 November 2005** Sergey Lavrov says that the basis for resumption of talks between Tehran and the European "troika" (Britain, France and Germany) on the Iranian nuclear programme should be that account is taken of Iran's right to develop peaceful nuclear power and that the nature of nuclear research in that country should be such as not to arouse doubts on the part of the international community.

**8 November 2005** Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Alekseyev arrives in China after visiting North Korea.

**8 November 2005** Sergey Lavrov says that Russia supports direct talks between Prishtina and Belgrade, adding that nobody can impose any solution for Kosovo's status.

**8 November 2005** Sergey Lavrov says Moscow is proposing a road map to settle the Dniester region conflict in accordance with Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko's plan. He is visiting Romania.

**8 November 2005** The Russian and Iranian trade and commerce chambers agree to set up a joint business council.

**8 November 2005** Deputy Foreign Minister and Foreign Ministry state secretary Grigoriy Karasin says the territory of Afghanistan remains a major source of threat. He says that a high-level sitting of the CSTO recently drew up documents about creating a CSTO working group on Afghanistan.

Karasin says Russia will continue its efforts to establish dialogue between NATO and the CSTO. He says NATO leaders are evading official contacts on this matter.

**8 November 2005** Russia's UN envoy Andrey Denisov says at the UN Security Council that Moscow is convinced that another international meeting on Iraq is needed.

**9 November 2005** Plenipotentiary presidential representative to the Southern Federal District Dmitriy Kozak visits Israel.

**9 November 2005** The chairman of the Duma Committee for the CIS and Ties with Compatriots, Andrey Kokoshin, says the accession of Ukraine to NATO would erect a "Berlin wall" between it and Russia together with Belarus.

Andrey Kokoshin is interviewed in *Trud*. He says the combat potential of the Pacific Fleet should be increased to defend Russia's interests in the Asia-Pacific region.

**9 November 2005** The MFA says that successfully establishing national security structures in Iraq "will in future create the conditions for complete withdrawal of the multinational contingent from Iraqi territory". This is stated in connection with the adoption of UN Security Council adoption of Resolution 1637 on Iraq.

**9 November 2005** Sergey Lavrov says that there are no differences of opinion between Russia and the EU over Iran's nuclear programme. He meets the EU ministerial troika in Moscow.

**9 November 2005** Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has talks in Moscow with the EU troika. He says Russia and the EU note progress in implementing the accords reached at the London summit. The Moscow talks also discussed approaches to the basis for collaboration in treaties and the law in the light of the current agreement's expiry in 2007.

**9 November 2005** Russia has paid damages to Lithuania following the crash of the Su-27 fighter in September. Moscow has remitted the requisite amount - around 19,500 euros - to the relevant bank account.

**9 November 2005** An article in *Severnyy Kavkaz* by Sergey Shakaryants says that some forces in NATO are interested in getting Russia out of the North Caucasus and compel Georgia to be tougher against Russia.

**10 November 2005** Russia will end free technical aid to the Afghan armed forces in 2006.

**10 November 2005** Sergey Lavrov is interviewed in Romanian newspaper *Ziua*. He says attempts to impose from the outside the standards of a social system on countries in the post-Soviet space are unacceptable.

**10 November 2005** Sergey Lavrov visits Norway.

**10 November 2005** The MFA refuses to issue a visa to Estonian Foreign Minister Urmas Paet in order to attend a roundtable in St Petersburg. The MFA states that the visa request had been made only two days before the roundtable and had not been made in the correct way. The aide to the president of the Russian Federation and a special representative of the president of the Russian Federation on issues of developing relations with the EU, Sergey Yastrzhembskiy, thinks it is inappropriate for any foreign minister to take part in the round-table meeting on issues of cross-border cooperation which is being held in St Petersburg. Estonian Regional Development Minister Jaan Ounapuu decides not to attend the meeting in protest.

**10 November 2005** Vladimir Putin telephones French President Jacques Chirac.

**10 November 2005** Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Alekseyev says disagreements still remain between the delegations taking part in the six-party talks on the North Korean nuclear problem in Beijing.

**10 November 2005** Sergey Lavrov is interviewed by the BBC.

**10 November 2005** The Azerbaijani ambassador to Russia Ramiz Rizayev says Baku opposes plans to deploy Russian weapons being withdrawn from Georgia in Armenia. Baku supports Moscow's initiative to create Casfor, a multinational force in the Caspian region targeting the terrorist threat and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

**11 November 2005** Gazprom and KazMunayGaz (Kazakhstan Oil and Gas) companies sign an agreement on the transit of Russian and Central Asian gas through Russia.

**11 November 2005** The secretary of the Security Council, Igor Ivanov, arrives in Iran, where he is to discuss issues to do with Iran's nuclear programme.

**11 November 2005** Vladimir Putin has a telephone conversation with Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon.

**11 November 2005** The MFA evaluates positively the results of the first session of the fifth round of the six-party talks aimed at resolving the North Korean nuclear problem.

**11 November 2005** Nikolay Bordyuzha, general secretary of the CSTO, says foreign military bases being deployed near Russian borders pose a potential threat to Russia.

**13 November 2005** Igor Ivanov visits Iraq.

Igor Ivanov says that more than 80 per cent of the work to build a nuclear power station in Bushehr has been completed.

**13 November 2005** Serbia-Montenegro President Boris Tadic visits Moscow.

**14 November 2005** Uzbek President Islam Karimov visits Moscow. He and Vladimir Putin sign a treaty where Russia and Uzbekistan have agreed on the possibility of each using the other's military facilities.

**15 November 2005** The foreign ministers of Russia and China, Sergey Lavrov and Li Zhaoxing, meet in Pusan (South Korea).

**15 November 2005** Indian Defence Minister Pranab Mukherjee visits Moscow for the meeting of the bilateral intergovernmental commission of military-technical cooperation.

**15 November 2005** Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Kislyak confirms that Moscow still objects to the UN Security Council discussing the Iranian "nuclear dossier."

**15 November 2005** General Staff chief Yuriy Baluyevskiy visits NATO HQ. He says that Russia and NATO are working on operational compatibility of their armed forces but this only applies to units and detachments preparing for joint tasks such as peacekeeping and the fight against terrorism. Russia has assigned the 15th Motor-Rifle Brigade for joint antiterror actions and international peacekeeping operations.

**15 November 2005** Vladimir Putin receives the president of Serbia, Boris Tadic, in the Kremlin.

**15 November 2005** Igor Ivanov, the secretary of the Security Council, has talks with the Palestinian leadership in Ramallah. He also has talks with the Israeli leadership in Jerusalem.

**15 November 2005** The Georgian MFA accuses an officer of the Russian peacekeeping force of firing on a vehicle in South Osetia.

The Azeri MOD complains about the transfer of Russian arms from Georgia to Armenia.

**16 November 2005** The Russian delegation of the Joint Control Commission for the settlement of the Georgian-Osetian conflict believes a meeting between the leaders of Russia, Georgia and South Osetia is essential. This is stated by Russian Foreign Ministry special envoy Valeriy Kenyaykin.

**16 November 2005** The Duma ratifies the treaty on the state border with Kazakhstan.

**16 November 2005** Vladimir Putin says that Russia and India will have more military exercises. He has talks in Moscow with Indian defence minister Pranab Mukherjee.

**16 November 2005** Sergey Lavrov attends the APEC summit in South Korea.

**16 November 2005** Russia and New Zealand sign a joint declaration on cooperation in the Antarctic.

**16 November 2005** Security Council Secretary Igor Ivanov visits Syria. He says Russia is happy with Syrian cooperation in implementing the UN Security Council's resolution on investigating the killing of former prime minister of Lebanon Rafiq Hariri.

**17 November 2005** Vladimir Putin visits Turkey. He visits Samsun on a working visit. Putin, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, are officially opening the Blue Stream gas pipeline.

**17 November 2005** The CIS Interparliamentary Assembly meets in St Petersburg. The Georgian delegation are denied visas due to an error at the Russian embassy in Tbilisi.

**18 November 2005** ambassador at large Valeriy Kenyaykin, who represents the Russian side in the Joint Control Commission for the settlement of the South Osetian conflict, says Russia considers a summit meeting of the parties to the Georgian-South Osetian conflict to be expedient. The Commission includes representatives of Russia, Georgia, South Osetia, North Osetia and observers from the OSCE and the EU.

**18 November 2005** Vladimir Putin attends the APEC summit in Pusan, South Korea.

**19 November 2005** Vladimir Putin visits South Korea after the APEC summit. He says

Russia has always worked for, and is today also unequivocally voicing its support for, dialogue and rapprochement between the two Koreas and the process of ensuring the Korean Peninsula's nuclear-free status. We are in favour of continuing with the six-sided format of negotiations. We believe that it is precisely the process of negotiations that is the most rational means of finding a peaceful solution to the problems and easing the tensions in the region.

I think that trilateral energy and transport cooperation between Russia, the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea could, indeed, form a real integral part of the expansion of collaboration. I am convinced that such cooperation not only would be economically beneficial but would also promote the building of trust on the Korean Peninsula.

Russia and South Korea approve a joint action plan in the sphere of trade and economic cooperation.

**19 November 2005** Maritime Territory governor Sergey Darkin says he supports the idea of the joint Russian-Japanese business operations in the South Kuril islands, put forward by Japan.

**19 November 2005** The MFA says the Commitment to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) must be ratified by all.

**20 November 2005** Vladimir Putin visits Japan.

**21 November 2005** Iraqi foreign minister Hoshyar Zibari visits Moscow.

**21 November 2005** Sergey Lavrov, in Brussels, says Russia sees no reason to send the Iranian nuclear dossier to the UN Security Council.

Sergey Lavrov attends a meeting on the EU "Northern Dimension" programme.

**22 November 2005** The Federal Penal Service rejects complaints by US senators about the conditions in which ex-heads of Yukos Mikhail Khodorkovskiy and Platon Lebedev are serving their prison sentences.

**22 November 2005** Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Grushko says the Council of Europe must do its best to persuade Latvia and Estonia to stop discriminatory practices against its Russian-speaking population.

**22 November 2005** The deputy head of the nuclear power engineering directorate of Rosatom Aleksandr Shmygin says the generating set No 1 of Bushehr nuclear power station is not ready in technical terms for the loading of nuclear fuel, so it is too early to start shipments to Iran.

**22 November 2005** Sergey Lavrov visits Morocco.

**22 November 2005** The chairman of the Duma foreign affairs committee, Konstantin Kosachev, says hopes pinned on the coloured revolutions in Ukraine and Georgia proved illusory.

**23 November 2005** The deputy chairman of the Duma committee for CIS affairs, Sergey Antufyev, says if Georgia leaves the CIS, the Duma might consider denouncing agreements with Georgia.

Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov declares that the Russian army's first and only peacekeeping brigade is to start performing its duties in Abkhazia in December 2005.

**23 November 2005** Sergey Lavrov visits Algeria. He says Russia "will support the IAEA report on the need for IAEA inspectors to continue their work in Iran".

Sergey Lavrov is interviewed in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*.

**23 November 2005** The Duma passes a resolution expressing concern over human rights abuses in post-war Iraq.

**24 November 2005** Sergey Lavrov publishes an article on the MFA website entitled "Three pillars of the Asia-Pacific region".

**24 November 2005** Prosecutors-general of member states of the CIS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization meet in Moscow to discuss prospects for cooperation in the fight against crime at inter-state level.

**24 November 2005** Georgian Prime Minister Zurab Noghaideli travels to Moscow to discuss South Osetia and gas issues. He denies that Georgia has any intention of leaving the CIS. He has a three-phase peace plan for South Osetia.

**25 November 2005** A state of emergency is to be introduced in Khabarovsk Territory due to possible contamination of the Amur with chemicals which were discharged into a tributary of the Amur, the Sungari River in the Chinese province of Jilin.

**25 November 2005** Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov says that it is necessary to move to market world prices in payments for supplies of Russian gas to Ukraine and its transit through European countries. He is talking about the results of the CIS Heads of Government summit.

**25 November 2005** The Council of CIS Heads of Government takes place in Moscow.

**25 November 2005** The heads of the Russian and German foreign ministries, Sergey Lavrov and Frank Walter Steinmeier, have a telephone conversation.

**25 November 2005** Industry and Energy Minister Viktor Khristenko visits India. He says that Russia is ready to take part in implementation of a large-scale project to build a gas pipeline along the route Iran-Pakistan-India.

**25 November 2005** Federal Drug Control Service director Viktor Cherkesov says Russian special services will step up measures to counter the flow of heroin from Afghanistan. He says the flow has intensified after Russia handed over control of the Afghan border to Tajikistan earlier this year.

**26 November 2005** Naftohaz Ukrayiny says it is ready to pay for Russian gas with weapons. Gazprom rejects this.

**28 November 2005** Gazprom states that Ukraine "is to all intents and purposes sabotaging the signing of documents on which a reliable supply of Russian gas to European consumers in 2006 depends". Ukraine is delaying the signing of a protocol on deliveries of Russian gas.

**28 November 2005** Sergey Lavrov states that the positions of Russia and the USA on the Russian Federation's accession to the WTO are drawing closer but the negotiations are proceeding with difficulty.

**28 November 2005** Sergey Lavrov says that Moscow objects to the situation in which decisions by the EU are put higher than decisions made by other European organizations. He says there have already been precedents, when the Council of Europe adopted a convention but the European Union placed itself outside its jurisdiction through a number of mechanisms.

**29 November 2005** Deputy Foreign Minister Grigoriy Karasin says Moscow welcomes NATO's desire to contribute to the fight against terrorism and drug trafficking in Central Asia but stresses that this is impossible without close cooperation with the CSTO.

**29 November 2005** Igor Ivanov, the Security Council secretary, speaks at a meeting of secretaries of security councils of the CSTO in Moscow. He says:

There is no stability in Afghanistan and Iraq. The situation in the southern Caucasus is complicated. Pressure from NATO and US political and military structures in the direction of Central Asia is raising the degree of tension in regions of responsibility of the CSTO...What we see are practical attempts to interfere in the political life of new independent states under the guise of advancing democratic values and freedoms, putting pressure on authorities via protest processes.

**29 November 2005** Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says that Moscow will not be buying Ukrainian armaments in exchange for Russian gas. He warns that military-technical cooperation between Moscow and Kiev could be terminated should Ukraine join NATO.

Gazprom says it intends to raise gas prices for the CIS countries, for Ukraine in particular, to the level of the European market.

Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov and Ukrainian Defence Minister Anatoliy Hrytsenko sign an intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in flight safety of civilian aircraft and a plan of cooperation between the two countries' defence ministries for 2006. Ivanov says the Russian-Ukrainian committee on the Black Sea Fleet will start work in the near future.

**29 November 2005** Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov says there are no plans to set up a federal defence industry agency in the near future.

**29 November 2005** Security Council Secretary Igor Ivanov says Russia is not planning to deploy additional military bases on the territory of Central Asia.

**30 November 2005** Alexander Medvedev says that if Ukraine fails to accept Gazprom's offer on the gas price, it will go up even more. A figure of 160 dollars for one thousand cubic metres is being offered.

**30 November 2005** The CSTO defence and foreign ministers meet in Moscow. Vladimir Putin addresses the meeting.

### ***December***

**1 December 2005** Chief of the General Staff Col-Gen Yuriy Baluyevskiy discusses cooperation with the USA and CIS.

**1 December 2005** The Secretary-General of the CSTO Nikolay Bordyuzha is interviewed on TV. He discusses CSTO-NATO relations.

**2 December 2005** Gazprom plans to purchase 25.8bn cu. m. of natural gas in 2006 from Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. This exceeds by one-third what Gazprom has purchased in 2005 (some 19bn cu.m.).

**2 December 2005** It is reported that Russia has signed an arms deal with Iran worth over 1bn dollars under which it will supply up to 30 Tor-M1 surface-to-air missiles, patrol craft and other military equipment.

**2 December 2005** Austrian Chancellor Wolfgang Schuessel visits Moscow for talks with Vladimir Putin.

**2 December 2005** The MFA says statements made in Georgia that "Russia has supported Tbilisi's new plan for a settlement of the Georgian-Osetian conflict are untrue".

**2 December 2005** The Russian-US working group on combating terrorism meets in Moscow. It is headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Kislyak and US Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns.

**2 December 2005** Chief of the General Staff of the armed forces Army Gen Yuriy Baluyevskiy says the refusal of the NATO countries to ratify the agreement on adapting the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe treaty is directly connected with planned changes in the US military presence on the European continent.

**3 December 2005** Sergey Lavrov says Iran is ready to resume talks with the EU3. Lavrov has talks with German Foreign Minister Frank Walter Steinmeier.

Steinmeier has talks with Vladimir Putin.

**3 December 2005** Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Kislyak and US Under Secretary of State Nicholas Burns sum up the results of a meeting in Moscow of the Russian-US working group for countering this threat.

**3 December 2005** Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov is interviewed on Russian TV. He denies having presidential ambitions, warns Ukraine of negative economic consequences of NATO entry and says Russia is not planning to set up a military base in Uzbekistan.

**4 December 2005** Sergey Lavrov says Russia is not mediating in the talks on the Iranian nuclear problem between Iran and the EU.

**4 December 2005** Sergey Lavrov attends the OSCE foreign ministers' meeting in Ljubljana. He criticises the OSCE for not sending monitor to all the elections and referendums that have been held in the Chechen Republic in the past two years.

**5 December 2005** Sergey Ivanov, Russian deputy prime minister and defence minister, confirms that Russia has signed an agreement to deliver Tor-M1 anti-aircraft missile complexes to Iran.

Atomstroyeksport says it is ready to take part in the construction of a second nuclear power plant in Iran.

**5 December 2005** Vladimir Putin expresses deep condolences to Israeli President Moshe Qatzav in connection with the terrorist act in Netanya.

**5 December 2005** Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visits Moscow for talks. India and Russia may jointly use the Tajik military airfield Ayni.

**5 December 2005** Sergey Lavrov advocates OSCE reform at the OSCE foreign ministers' meeting in Ljubljana. He says the potential of the OSCE "in the fight against terrorism and drugs is far from being utilized to the full". He calls for greater security collaboration and for progress in ratifying the CFE treaty.

**5 December 2005** Stroytransgaz signs a contract to build a gas processing complex in Syria.

**5 December 2005** North Korean border guards detain a Russian ship (the Terney).

**5 December 2005** Sergey Lavrov publishes an article entitled "The foreign policy results of 2005: reflections and results" on the MFA website.

**6 December 2005** Council of Europe High Commissioner for Human Rights Alvaro Gil-Robles criticises the draft law on NGOs being considered by the Duma.

**6 December 2005** The Iranian embassy in Moscow rejects media reports according to which guerrillas are being prepared in Iran for activities in Chechnya.

**6 December 2005** Gazprom criticises Ukraine's Naftohaz approach on their talks over the delivery of Russian gas to Europe via Ukraine. Gazprom states: "Ukraine's unconstructive approach to signing the protocol on payments for the transit of Russian gas across its territory in 2006 endangers the energy security of European consumers of Russian gas as well as Ukraine's own security."

**6 December 2005** Sergey Lavrov says that Moscow insists that the Dniester problem should be tackled by Chisinau and Tiraspol and not within the framework of the OSCE.

**6 December 2005** Indian prime minister Manmohan Singh visits Moscow for talks with Vladimir Putin. Several major agreements are signed. Putin says that Russia, India and China are interested in continuing their collaboration in a three-way format which is becoming more focused and specific.

**6 December 2005** Vladimir Putin calls on the IAEA to do more over Iran.

“We hope that our Iranian partners will comply with all the obligations they have taken upon themselves, including those taken unilaterally, and we think that the capabilities of the IAEA in tackling all the problems on the Iranian nuclear dossier are far from having been exhausted. Russia, for its part, will do everything to facilitate the negotiations process between the Iranian partners and all the countries involved in tackling these problems.”

Sergey Lavrov says supplying Iran with Russian Tor-M1 air defence systems will in no way upset the balance of forces in the region, since these systems are purely defensive.

**6 December 2005** The MFA says it believes that the legal framework of Russia-EU relations needs upgrading. It states: “Although the current Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation [APC] can be extended on an annual basis even after the year 2007, the need to upgrade the legal framework of Russia-EU relations is obvious.” Russia and the EU are now working together on the so-called “2007 factor” related to the expiry of the APC and the need to upgrade the legal basis of bilateral relations.”

**6 December 2005** The MFA says Russia and NATO plan to jointly prepare personnel for Afghanistan's antidrugs agencies using a training centre in Domodedovo.

**6 December 2005** The MFA rejects ideas of linking the issue of ratifying the adapted version of the CFE to the issue of implementing the Istanbul agreements. The MFA argues that the Russian-Georgian and Russian-Moldovan agreements on the withdrawal of military bases and armaments of the Russian Federation from those countries “are of a bilateral nature and do not create any obligations on the part of Russia in relation to third countries”.

**6 December 2005** The 10th round of Azerbaijani-Russian talks behind closed doors on the demarcation of borders opens in Baku.

**7 December 2005** The Federation Council ratifies an agreement on cooperation in protecting the external borders of Eurasian Economic Community members. The document was signed in February 2003 by Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

**7 December 2005** Vladimir Putin speaks with Ukraine's President Viktor Yushchenko in a telephone call. They discuss energy.

Ukrainian Supreme Council Chairman Volodymyr Lytvyn visits Moscow for talks.

**7 December 2005** Vladimir Putin has a telephone conversation with Turkmenistan's President Saparmyrat Nyyazow. They discuss energy cooperation.

**7 December 2005** Sergey Lavrov says a statement on Georgia adopted at an OSCE ministerial meeting in Ljubljana "includes issues linked to the withdrawal of Russian bases from Georgia and to the South-Osetian and Abkhaz conflicts".

Sergey Lavrov says Russia "is ready to work to ensure that progress is achieved in the Dniester region settlement". "Russia intends to collaborate with Ukraine and the OSCE, as well as the USA and the European Union, which are observers."

**7 December 2005** Kamil Iskhakov, presidential envoy in the Far Eastern Federal District, heads the Russian delegation at the third extraordinary OIC summit in Mecca. Russia has observer status in the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC). This is the first time that a representative of Russia is taking part in the OIC summit.

**7 December 2005** Sergey Lavrov says Russia "is very closely following the changing US presence in Europe". He comments on the signing of an agreement between the USA and Romania on the deployment of US military bases in Romania. He says that Russia would like to know how this affects the adapted CFE Treaty.

Sergey Ivanov warns that US bases in Romania may threaten the CFE and says Moscow may raise the issue of the future of the adapted version of the CFE Treaty if NATO member-countries continue to refrain from ratifying it.

"The advancement of the US and NATO infrastructure towards Russian borders raises the question of the future of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. Everyone has signed it, but only four states, including Russia, have ratified it. If the treaty is not ratified by all the other signatories, the question arises of whether such a mechanism, which envisages the transparency of military activities within greater Europe, is needed at all. Russia has to date been fully observing all the restrictions imposed on it by the treaty, but if we see that other countries are ignoring the treaty, we will of course draw the relevant conclusions."

**8 December 2005** Vladimir Putin says Russia can no longer allow Ukraine to get cheap gas. He says Russia is going to lose about 4.6bn dollars this year because of Ukraine's reluctance to go over to market prices in payment for Russian gas. Ukraine is paying about 180 dollars less for 1,000 cubic metres of gas than customers in Western Europe.

Sergey Lavrov says any decision by Ukraine to join NATO "is bound to affect Russian-Ukrainian relations". He attends a meeting of the Russia-NATO Council in Brussels.

Ukrainian First Deputy Foreign Minister Anton Buteyko says Russia and Ukraine have agreed draft documents on the delimitation of the waters of the Azov and Black seas. Buteyko says Russia and Ukraine have not been able to iron out their differences on the delimitation of the Kerch Strait.

**8 December 2005** A Russian delegation led by Federation Council Speaker Sergey Mironov visits Armenia.

**8 December 2005** The deputy commander-in-chief of the Ground Troops, Lt-Gen Valeriy Yevnevich, arrives in Transdniester region. Yevnevich says that the Russian peacekeeping servicemen will stay in the region as long as they are needed to ensure peace, security and a political settlement of the conflict between Chisinau and Tiraspol.

**8 December 2005** Sergey Lavrov and NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer take part in the opening of an exhibition in Brussels called "Russia-NATO: Strategic Partners", and the presentation of a collection of material on the subject of "Psychological responses to the new terrorism: A NATO-Russia dialogue".

**8 December 2005** Deputy Foreign Minister of Russia Grigoriy Karasin addresses a round table meeting in the Duma. He says violations of rights of Russian compatriots are "grounds for revising Russian policy towards countries where discrimination is observed".

**8 December 2005** Vladimir Putin discusses economic cooperation with the new German economics and technologies minister, Michael Glos.

**8 December 2005** Sergey Lavrov says collaboration between NATO and the CSTO could lead to a "better quality of the positive result".

**8 December 2005** Sergey Lavrov warns the participants in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council "against adopting functions that do not belong to it," such as human rights.

**8 December 2005** Sergey Lavrov says Russia is willing to discuss the border treaty with Latvia only after the "clarificatory declaration" to the treaty is repudiated. The Latvian government issued a clarificatory declaration' on 26 April 2005. Theoretically it gives the Latvian side the possibility of making territorial claims against Russia under an invalid 1920 treaty despite the contents and goals of the border treaty.

**8 December 2005** Andrey Kokoshin, chairman of the State Duma Committee for CIS Affairs, is interviewed in *Moskovskiy Komsomolets*.

**9 December 2005** A ceremony to mark the beginning of the construction of the North European gas pipeline takes place in Cherepovets. The pipeline will be completed in 2012.

**9 December 2005** Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov dismisses Ukraine's remarks about raising the rent for the Black Sea Fleet as a kneejerk reaction to the situation regarding supplies of Russian gas to Ukraine.

**9 December 2005** The MFA Moscow describes as unacceptable Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinezhad's remark about moving the state of Israel to the territory of Germany. The foreign minister's special representative for the Middle East, Aleksandr Kalugin, says Ahmadinezhad's remarks run counter to international law.

**9 December 2005** MFA spokesman Mikhail Kamynin says the statement of the OSCE Council of Foreign Ministers which says that the Tbilisi plan can be used as a basis for the settlement of the Georgian-South Osetian conflict should not be viewed as a diplomatic victory for Tbilisi and a defeat for South Osetia.

**9 December 2005** Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Saltanov visits Namibia.

**9 December 2005** Col-Gen Volter Kraskovskiy, former commander of Missile Space Defence Troops says that access to Ukrainian missile attack warning radars, stationed at Sevastopol and Mukacheve, granted to US experts, may result in Russia's losing control over the southwestern sector of missile defence.

**9 December 2005** CSTO Secretary General Nikolay Bordyuzha says that one of the main areas of military cooperation in 2006 will be creation of a regional military grouping in the Central Asian region. There are already two groupings - the Eastern European (Russia - Belarus) and the Caucasian (Russia - Armenia).

**10 December 2005** The Georgian minister of state for conflict settlement, Giorgi Khaindrava, meets with the Russian ambassador-at-large and co-chairman of the Russian part of the control commission, Valeriy Kenyaykin, to discuss South Osetia in Tbilisi.

**10 December 2005** The commander of the Russian peacekeeping contingent of the joint peacekeeping forces in the Dniester region, Col Anatoliy Zverev, states that the situation in the security zone in the Dniester region calls for an immediate meeting of the Joint Control Commission.

**10 December 2005** Sergey Lavrov arrives in Malaysia for the Russia-ASEAN summit. An economic agreement is signed.

**12 December 2005** The speaker of Iran's parliament, Gholamali Haddad-Adel, visits Russia. He says that Iran welcomes the holding of talks with the Russian side about issues of Iran's nuclear programme. He also visits Tatarstan.

**13 December 2005** Vladimir Putin visits Malaysia for the Russia-ASEAN summit.

**13 December 2005** Gazprom head Aleksey Miller says that if Kiev fails to sign the necessary documents by 1 January, supplies of gas to Ukraine will be stopped.

**14 December 2005** Vladimir Putin states that Russia's gold and hard currency reserves had increased by 44bn dollars since January 2005. On 1 December 2005 they amounted to 168bn dollars.

**14 December 2005** Valeriy Grebennikov, deputy head of the Russian delegation to Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), says the report entitled "Violations of Human Rights in the Chechen Republic" presented to the winter session of the PACE fails to take account of the latest changes and, in particular, the holding of parliamentary elections there.

"We are not refusing to cooperate with PACE, but our readiness is constantly coming up against a desire to make more and more accusations against Russia. There are certain forces in Europe which find it convenient to see Russia as a permanently guilty party, to make it into a kind of whipping boy and in the final analysis to place it in a position of dependence. In this situation it will be easier to gain not only economic, but also political concessions from Russia. If PACE continues to persist in its constant, unproven and groundless accusations of Russia being unconstructive, violating human rights, then the Russian Federation will reject the very idea of cooperating with European parliamentarians and Council of Europe institutions, not only where Chechnya, but also other issues are concerned."

**14 December 2005** Viktor Khristenko, the head of the Industry and Energy Ministry, says Russia intends to review the conditions for deliveries of natural gas to the Baltic states, Georgia and Moldova.

Gazprom issues an official statement on the sale of gas to Ukraine. Deputy chairman Aleksandr Medvedev says:

“I would like to draw your attention to the fact that talks have been held with Ukraine for over nine months. Unfortunately, no progress has been achieved during these talks. In this connection, I would like not just to draw your attention but to point out that Ukraine has missed the right moment because of the way it was holding the negotiating process, and there can no longer be any talk of some 160 dollars.

The situation on the market has changed - it is changing all the time. Therefore, we can now talk only about forming a price on the Russian-Ukrainian border that will match European prices, taking transport costs on the territory of Ukraine into account, of course. This will not be a fixed price but a price calculated using a formula. It will be formed on the basis of international rules, that is, taking into account prices for competing kinds of fuels - fuel oil and diesel fuel. An average formula which we use in deals with our European customers and calculated at the border of Ukraine will produce a figure of 220-230 US dollars from 1 January.”

**14 December 2005** Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov rejects any attempts by Ukraine to link gas prices to the rent for the Black Sea Fleet's Sevastopol base. He says Ukraine has not made any such link.

**14 December 2005** Gazprom states that as of 2006, it will use European prices in contracts for supplies of gas from Russia to Azerbaijan.

**14 December 2005** Part of Russia's first special peacekeeping brigade (1<sup>st</sup> Battalion of the Special Russian Peacekeeping Brigade) stationed near Samara leaves for the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zone.

**14 December 2005** Mikhail Margelov, the chairman of the Russian Federation Council International Affairs Committee, says the remarks made by Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinezhad may drive Iran into international isolation.

**15 December 2005** Ukraine's Fuel and Energy Minister Ivan Plachkov says Ukraine has proposed to Russia a plan for the gradual transition to market relations in forming the fee for transit of Russian gas across Ukrainian territory and the corresponding price for the gas that Ukraine receives in payment for transit. He says that a full transition to the new format for relations between Russia and Ukraine "on gas issues" is proposed starting from 2010.

**15 December 2005** The Ukrainian and Russian presidents, Viktor Yushchenko and Vladimir Putin, release a joint statement welcoming the new round of talks on the settlement of the conflict between Moldova and its breakaway Dniester region.

**15 December 2005** Vladimir Putin meets in Sochi with his Belarusian counterpart, Alyaksandr Lukashenka.

**15 December 2005** An ITAR-TASS correspondent is informed by the MOD that there are no plans to sign an agreement on military-technology cooperation between Russia and Israel.

**15 December 2005** The MFA condemns the latest statements by Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinezhad denying the Holocaust. It says: "Russia regards Israel as a sovereign state, which has the right to live in peace and security alongside its neighbours, also including an independent Palestinian state."

**16 December 2005** The benzene slick from China enters the Amur river.

**16 December 2005** Vladimir Putin announces that the presidents of Russia and Ukraine have decided not to make a political issue out of the question of gas supplies.

**16 December 2005** Vladimir Putin meets Armenian President Robert Kocharyan in Sochi.

**16 December 2005** The sixth meeting of the Russian-Georgian intergovernmental economic commission ends in Tbilisi with the signing of a joint document by Georgian Prime Minister Zurab Noghaideli and Russian Transport Minister Igor Levitin. It has been agreed to set up an international consortium for the restoration of the Abkhazia section of the Russia-Georgia railway that will carry out a detailed study of the project.

**17 December 2005** Economic development and trade minister German Gref says Russia will complete all bilateral negotiations - part of its admission to the WTO - in the first few months of 2006.

**19 December 2005** SVR director Sergey Lebedev says: "The new military bases and troop contingents appearing around our country cannot but cause concern to Russians. In these conditions, uncovering military threats to Russia remains a priority for the SVR...New and no less serious threats and challenges to our state have taken the place of the old ones. The most dangerous threats today are international terrorism and religious and nationalist extremism. Flashpoints of tension continue to smoulder around the perimeter of Russia's borders."

**19 December 2005** The Council of Ministers of the Union State of Russia and Belarus meets in Moscow. Russo-Belarusian trade declined slightly in 2005. Russia and Belarus agree on a gas supply price for 2006.

**19 December 2005** Sergey Yastrzhembskiy, presidential aide and special representative for development of relations with the EU, criticizes the EU for failure to take action to tackle the problems of the Russian-speaking population in the Baltic countries.

**19 December 2005** The North Korean authorities allow the Russian ship Terney to leave North Korean territorial waters.

**20 December 2005** Sergey Lavrov says that Russia will honour its commitments to supply gas to Europe.

**20 December 2005** Czech Foreign Minister Cyril Svoboda visits Moscow.

- 20 December 2005** Gazprom says that Georgia should charge less for the transit cost of Russian gas being piped to Armenia via Georgia.
- 20 December 2005** Sergey Lavrov says it will not be possible to solve the problem of a Dniester settlement as long as Moldova insists on its terms being met.
- 20 December 2005** The head of the Duma Defence Committee, Viktor Zavarzin, says that a switch should be made from theory to practice in Russia-NATO relations. He says there should be a transition from purely theoretical activities, such as seminars, conferences and talks, to practical ones, for example, joint exercises and personnel training. “Everyone will benefit from this, Russia as well as NATO. The enemy is not sleeping and our common enemy is terrorism...We are interested in taking our relations to such a level of trust and finding such an algorithm of actions which would not be inferior to the level of trust and cooperation among the members of the alliance themselves.”
- 21 December 2005** Georgia frees three Russian servicemen who were arrested on 20 December on suspicion of staying in the country with expired visas.
- 21 December 2005** Georgian Deputy Agriculture and Food Minister Mirian Dekanoidze leaves for Moscow to discuss Russia’s banning the import of Georgian fruit.
- 21 December 2005** Deputy Foreign Minister Grigoriy Karasin visits Ukraine to discuss the Sevastopol naval base.
- 21 December 2005** Konstantin Kosachev, chairman of the Duma Committee on International Affairs, says Iran is really using Russia in the dispute over its nuclear intentions.
- 21 December 2005** Sergey Lavrov says Russia is hoping that progress in the process of ratifying the CFE Treaty will be achieved by May 2006. He hopes that NATO states will ratify it.
- 21 December 2005** Macedonian foreign minister Ilinka Mitreva visits Russia. Sergey Lavrov says that Russia is watching carefully the issues concerning the plans of stationing NATO infrastructure and military contingents of this organization in the new member states of the alliance.
- 21 December 2005** The MOD states that Russia is actively taking part in twelve international UN peacekeeping operations. “Today about 100 Russian military observers are taking part in peacekeeping operations under the aegis of the UN in 12 regions, including in Western Sahara, Congo, Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire, Burundi, East Timor and Middle East.” Over 3,000 Russian servicemen are taking part in peacekeeping operations on the territory of the CIS states. “The largest peacekeeping contingent, about 1,800 servicemen, is carrying out duties in the zone of Georgian-Abkhaz conflict. In addition, 700 Russian peacekeepers are on duty in the Dniester region and 580 in South Osetia.”
- 21 December 2005** SOCAR-Gazprom talks on deliveries of Russian gas in 2006 to Azerbaijan take place in Baku. The sides agreed that the amount of gas supplied in 2006 will remain at the current level - 4.5bn cu.m. The price of Russian gas will go up from 60 dollars per 1,000 cu.m. to 110 dollars. A contract will be signed in this regard by the end of 2005.

**22 December 2005** Ukrainian chargé d'affaires ad interim in Russia Leonid Osavolyuk says Kiev is hoping that, by the end of the year, it will be able to reach agreement with Moscow on conditions for the transit of Russian gas to Europe across the territory of Ukraine. He says Ukraine would demand that Moscow return "a number of facilities illegally occupied by the Black Sea Fleet in Crimea."

**22 December 2005** Iranian Ambassador to Russia Gholamreza Ansari says that Iran is interested in developing military-technical cooperation with Russia.

**25 December 2005** Sergey Lavrov is interviewed on Russian foreign policy in 2005 on Russia TV.

**26 December 2005** Valeriy Loshchinin is appointed Russia's permanent representative at the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva, a post which he will combine with the job of permanent representative to the Disarmament Conference in Geneva.

**26 December 2005** Kuwaiti Energy Minister Ahmad Fahd al-Ahmad al-Sabah, who is chairman of OPEC, visits Moscow.

**26 December 2005** The MFA confirms that it has put a proposal on uranium enrichment to Iran.

**26 December 2005** The Main Military Prosecutor's Office drops criminal charges against former Ukrainian Prime Minister Yuliya Tymoshenko because the statute of limitation has expired.

**26 December 2005** The navy commander, Admiral Vladimir Masorin, says that statements by some Ukrainian politicians on the need to draw up an early inventory of Black Sea Fleet facilities in Sevastopol and Crime are unacceptable as this work has already been done.

**27 December 2005** The Federation Council approves sending a force of up to 200 servicemen of the Russian armed forces with arms and military hardware to take part in the UN peacekeeping operation in Sudan.

**27 December 2005** Industry and Energy Minister Viktor Khristenko denies Kiev's announcement that Moscow is prepared for a gradual switch to market prices for gas.

Gazprom condemns Ukrainian threats to siphon off Russian gas travelling through Ukrainian pipelines to Europe.

**27 December 2005** Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says he believes that the level of rent paid for the radar stations in Sevastopol and Mukacheve can be the subject of negotiation between Russia and Ukraine.

**27 December 2005** Sergey Lavrov meets in Moscow with the prominent politician and former Lebanese foreign minister, Jean Ubayd. Lavrov says Russia supports the establishment of an intra-Lebanese dialogue and the preservation of civic peace and accord in Lebanon. He condemns the series of terrorist acts in Lebanon.

**28 December 2005** Ukrainian Fuel and Energy Minister Ivan Plachkov has talks in Moscow with Russian Federation Industry and Energy Minister Viktor Khristenko on Russian gas prices for Ukraine.

**28 December 2005** The co-chairman of the South Osetia Joint Control Commission for the Russian side, Russian ambassador at large Valeriy Kenyaykin says the main approach to settling the conflict between Georgia and South Osetia - setting up a joint working group within the Joint Control Commission - "has been rejected by Georgia".

**28 December 2005** CSTO Secretary-General Nikolay Bordyuzha says the CSTO is not planning to establish new military bases in Central Asia. He says the Afghan terror threat is decreasing. He expresses interest in developing cooperation with NATO especially in the area of fighting drugs trafficking and terrorism.

**29 December 2005** Vladimir Putin invites Ukraine to take out a commercial loan from Russia to finance the period of transition to the market formula for relations in the gas sphere. This is rejected by Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko. Yushchenko says that Ukraine would manage to pay for gas on its own and that the price of Russian gas in Ukraine should be 75-80 dollars per 1,000 cu.m. Gazprom wants Ukraine to pay 230 dollars for the same amount.

Vladimir Putin blames Russian and Ukrainian gas chiefs for creating a crisis in the talks over gas prices.

The chairman of the board of Naftohaz Ukrayiny Oleksiy Ivchenko, has promised Vladimir Putin that his company will stick to its pledge as regards the transit of Russian gas to Europe.

**29 December 2005** Transdniester region leader Igor Smirnov welcomes the joint statement by the Russian and Ukrainian presidents on the Moldovan-Dniester conflict settlement. The Russian co-chairman of the Joint Control Commission, Viktor Shanin says at the present time there is no alternative to the joint peacekeeping operation in the Dniester region.

Moldovan Prime Minister Vasile Tarlev says he still hopes that Gazprom will continue to supply gas to Moldova in 2006 at the current price of 80 dollars per 1,000 cubic meters.

The government endorses the proposal of the Defence Ministry, agreed with the Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, on the handover of real estate being vacated by Russian forces deployed on the territory of Dniester region (Moldova) to representatives of the local bodies of power.

**29 December 2005** The MFA states that it has received no response from Tehran to Moscow's proposal to set up a Russian-Iranian uranium enrichment facility in Russia.

**29 December 2005** The MFA says it hopes that "Georgia will adjust its position on starting joint work on a unified programme for settling the Georgian-South Osetian conflict." The MFA hopes for a meeting of the Joint Control Commission before the end of January 2006.

**29 December 2005** The president of Turkmenistan Saparmyrat Nyyazow states that Turkmenistan "attaches great significance to the successful implementation of a 25-year gas contract with Russia", following the signing of an additional agreement on Turkmen gas supplies to Russia in 2006. Gazprom agrees with

Turkmenistan to buy 30bn cu.m. of gas at a price of 65 dollars per 1,000 cu.m next year.

**29 December 2005** The head of the General Staff, Army Gen Yuriy Baluyevskiy, visits Cuba.

**30 December 2005** Sergey Lavrov is interviewed on Russian foreign policy on Channel One TV. He discusses Russia's chairmanship of the G8 in 2006.

**30 December 2005** The Security Council denies reports that a telephone call allegedly took place on 29 December between the secretary of the Security Council, Igor Ivanov, and his Iranian opposite number, Ali Larijani, on the Iranian nuclear problem.

**31 December 2005** Vladimir Putin states that he has ordered his government and Gazprom to continue gas supplies to Ukraine at current prices, but only on condition that Kiev agrees to pay market prices from the second quarter of 2006.

**31 December 2005** Former atomic energy minister Yevgeniy Adamov is extradited to Russia from Switzerland.

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