

Russian Domestic Policy: A Chronology

July – September 2007

1 July 2007 The Kamchatka Territory is established. It comprises the Koryak Autonomous Area and Kamchatka Region. The inhabitants of the two regions voted for the merger in a referendum on 23 October 2005. A transitional period has been established until the end of 2008, during which time new organs of power should be created.

2 July 2007 Spravedlivaya Rossiya's Sergey Mironov says the numerical strength of the party now exceeds 400,000.

2 July 2007 Aleksey Kuzmitskiy officially takes office as governor of Kamchatka Territory, which was created on 1 July as a result of the merger of Kamchatka Region and the Koryak Autonomous Area.

2 July 2007 The Interior Ministry (MVD) command and control centres in the Central Federal District take part in the Region 2007 command-post exercise under the leadership of the head of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, Army Gen Yuriy Baluyevskiy.

3 July 2007 It is reported that representatives of the Russian opposition are unable to come to an agreement to determine a single candidate to take part in the forthcoming presidential election. There are splits between the United Civil Front and the Russian People's Democratic Union, headed by Mikhail Kasyanov. Kasyanov says he will leave Drugaya Rossiya and set up a new party. Its working title is People for Democracy and Justice.

3 July 2007 The federal operational HQ of the National Antiterrorist Committee decides to set up a situation analysis and crisis centre at the Foreign Ministry, and to form crisis HQs at Russian embassies.

4 July 2007 The Duma ratifies an Agreement on Demarcating Instruments of Authority between the federal structures of state authority and the structures of state authority in the Republic of Tatarstan.

5 July 2007 First deputy prime minister Dmitriy Medvedev is interviewed in *Vedomosti*. He says he thinks that Vladimir Putin may announce his support for one of the candidates for president in the 2008 election in the autumn.

5 July 2007 The Duma adopt in a third and final reading a draft law to set up Transbaykal Territory as a result of the merging of Chita Region with Agin Buryat Autonomous Area. According to the draft law which was submitted to the Duma by the president following the results of a referendum carried out in the named constituent parts of the Russian Federation, the territory will be considered to have been set up as of 1 March 2008.

5 July 2007 Drugaya Rossiya says it will take part in the Duma election.

6 July 2007 The Duma approves the draft bill of Russia's first three-year budget, which covers the period until 2010. Its main features are a reduction in the gap between revenue and expenditure. By 2010 there will no longer be a budget surplus. The state treasury's revenue and expenditure will be around R8,000 billion.

6 July 2007 St Petersburg governor Valentina Matviyenko denies having presidential ambitions.

6 July 2007 Eduard Limonov says he intends to set up a new political party to replace the banned National Bolshevik Party.

6 July 2007 The chairman of the board of the Unified Energy System of Russia, Anatoliy Chubays, says Russia needs to complete its World Trade Organisation (WTO) entry before the end of the year.

6 July 2007 The Russian Prosecutor-General's Office says Russia has opened three criminal cases in relation to calls by Boris Berezovskiy for the seizure of power by force and the carrying out of extremist activities.

6 July 2007 The Duma adopts amendments to the law on extremism.

7 July 2007 Lieutenant-General Aleksandr Gorkov, chief of the Russian Air Force's Surface-to-Air Missile Troops is interviewed in *Krasnaya Zvezda*.

7 July 2007 The head of the Federal Security Service's (FSB) directorate of registration and archives Vasiliy Khristoforov says information in the FSB archives about secret staff members of the security organs and the individuals who helped them confidentially can never be declassified, and case materials about people suspected of anti-Soviet activity and propaganda have been destroyed.

7 July 2007 The head of the Constitutional Court, Valeriy Zorkin, says the rules on how Russians appeal to the European Court of Human Rights need to be amended. A norm needs to be introduced to Russian legislation to stipulate that citizens can only turn to Strasbourg once they have exhausted the channels of court protection within Russia.

8 July 2007 United Civil Front leader Garri Kasparov says Drugaya Rossiya will name a single presidential candidate in the autumn.

Vladimir Ryzhkov, leader of the Republican Party, says the party will not take part in Drugaya Rossiya.

8 July 2007 First Deputy Director of the FSB Vladimir Pronichev, who is also head of the Border Guard Service, is interviewed on television.

9 July 2007 There are rumours that the secretary of the Security Council, Igor Ivanov, has resigned.

9 July 2007 First Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov says it is necessary for Russia to develop its own fleet in the Baltic Sea. He calls for the construction of more sea terminals in the Baltic.

9 July 2007 Navy Commander-in-Chief Admiral Vladimir Masorin inspects the Pacific Fleet. A new submarine base will be built in Kamchatka.

10 July 2007 Mikhail Kasyanov says there should be a single opposition candidate for the presidency.

10 July 2007 Deputy Prosecutor-General Ivan Sydoruk strongly criticizes the performance of southern Russia's local authorities in the fight against terrorism.

10 July 2007 Member of the Duma Defence Committee and former chief of staff of the Vityaz unit of MVD Internal Troops Andrey Golovatyuk says no more than 150 irreconcilable fighters are currently engaged in subversive activity in the Chechen Republic.

10 July 2007 On the Main Theme TV programme on Moscow's Channel 3 TV, the commander in chief of the Russian Fleet Admiral Vladimir Masorin says that the Russian Navy will be updated with six aircraft carrier battle groups in the next 20 years. There will be an aircraft carrier, escort groups and auxiliary craft in each group; three of them will be based in the Northern Fleet, three others in the Pacific Fleet, he added. Another measure to strengthen the Russian Navy envisages the construction of a new base in Kamchatka, where next generation missile carriers will be deployed.

11 July 2007 The Federation Council speaker, Sergey Mironov, says that public opinion should prompt the legislators to adopt a decision regarding the presidential term, and in 2008-09 amendments to this effect could be made to the constitution."It would be quite realistic to bring amendments to the constitution, which would extend the presidential term to six or seven years."

11 July 2007 The Federation Council approves the federal budget for the next three years.

11 July 2007 The commander-in-chief of the Navy, Admiral Vladimir Masorin, says the construction of a system of bases for ships of the Black Sea Fleet in Novorossiysk will be completed by 2012.

First Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov says the government aims to double the capacity of ports of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov by 2010.

12 July 2007 The AGORA human rights organisation says that persecution of NGOs has increased in 2007. In the first six months of 2007, human rights defenders registered 106 instances of persecution of NGOs in 38 regions of Russia.

12 July 2007 Soviet dissident Vladimir Bukovskiy, who lives in Great Britain, applies for a new Russian passport. He says he will stand in the 2008 presidential election.

12 July 2007 The Patriots of Russia party says it will take part in the Duma election in December 2007. The party is holding its 7th extraordinary party congress in Moscow.

12 July 2007 The first thousand kilometres of the oil pipeline from Eastern Siberia to the Pacific Ocean are completed. The construction of the pipeline started in April 2006. It is going to pass through seven regions, with a length of almost 5,000 km. The pipeline is being built to deliver oil to countries in the Asia Pacific area. Construction is expected to take six years at most.

12 July 2007 A VTsIOM poll gives an approval rating of nearly 80 per cent for Vladimir Putin. Over the first six months of 2007, 58% of Russian trust Vladimir Putin. Dmitry Medvedev is trusted by 20 per cent and Sergey Ivanov by 17 per cent.

13 July 2007 Vladimir Putin instructs the government, together with the Central Bank, to prepare and submit to the Duma draft amendments to the law "On countering the legalization (laundering) of proceeds received by criminal means and the financing of terrorism".

13 July 2007 Lt-Gen Arkadiy Bakhin is appointed new chief of staff - first deputy commander of the Siberian Military District.

16 July 2007 Major-General Gennadiy Omelchenko has been appointed Moscow Region military commissar.

17 July 2007 A trial begins in Chuvashia of five members of the Hezb-e Tahrir movement. They are charged under the article on "fanning ethnic, racial and religious strife" of the Russian Criminal Code.

17 July 2007 Dmitriy Kozak, the presidential plenipotentiary in the Southern Federal District, denies reports that he is planning to resign from his post.

18 July 2007 Vladimir Putin appoints Valentin Sobolev acting secretary of the Security Council. He replaces Igor Ivanov.

18 July 2007 The head of the government staff and Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Naryshkin is appointed coordinator of the East Siberia - Pacific Ocean Pipeline (ESPO) construction project.

18 July 2007 Vladimir Putin discusses the demographic situation with the Minister of Health and Social Development Mikhail Zurabov.

18 July 2007 The member of the Federation Council from the parliament of Ingushetia, Vasiliy Likhachev, says that the Security Council should meet urgently to discuss the latest developments in the republic. He says terrorist attacks in Ingushetia are being carried out by the Wahhabi underground as well as Wahhabi and terrorist centres in the Middle and Near East.

19 July 2007 The MOD starts to transfer military servicemen from the 1st Mountain Motor-Rifle Battalion to the North Caucasus. The 1st Mountain Motor-Rifle Battalion had been designated to form the 34th Mountain Brigade in Zelenchukskaya (Karachay-Cherkessia).

19 July 2007 Vladimir Putin says he does not think it necessary to extend the rights and powers of the Security Council.

19 July 2007 Federation Council speaker Sergey Mironov says the presidential term of office in Russia that currently totals four years may be increased by the end of 2008.

19 July 2007 The Public Chamber says it is setting up a working group to develop an index of freedom of speech and press in Russia.

19 July 2007 The government discusses the construction of the ESPO pipeline, the longest one in Russia. The total length of the pipeline is over 4,000 km. It will cross the entire Far East. The first section - about 1,000 km long - has already been built

and, according to Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov, the transfer of 30m tonnes of oil should begin by the end of 2008.

20 July 2007 First Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov addresses a session of the government commission for the development of industry, transport and technology. He criticises the state of the machine-building sector.

20 July 2007 Black Sea Fleet Commander Admiral Alexander Tatarinov is appointed deputy Navy commander-in-chief. Vice Admiral Aleksandr Kletskov will be appointed commander of the Black Sea Fleet. Until now, he was chief of staff of the Baltic Fleet. Vice Admiral Viktor Chirkov, commander of the Maritime Territory mixed forces flotilla, will become chief of staff of the Baltic Fleet.

21 July 2007 Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Naryshkin says Russia will use oilfields in eastern Siberia to feed the ESPO pipeline.

21 July 2007 Unidentified people fire on a convoy of Ingush President Murat Zyazikov in Magas using assault rifles and grenade throwers. Vehicles are damaged and presidential adviser Vakha Vedzizhev is killed in the attack.

23 July 2007 Vladimir Putin signs the federal law "On amendments to Article 1 of the federal law on the order of forming the Federation Council of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly", which was adopted by the Duma on 4 July 2007 and approved by the Federation Council on 11 July. The law establishes an additional requirement to the effect that all members of the Federation Council must be citizens of the Russian Federation who have lived for at least 10 years in total in the constituent part of the Russian Federation whose body of state power is appointing them as members of the Federation Council.

23 July 2007 The leader of the Spravedlivaya Rossiya party, Federation Council Speaker Sergey Mironov, says his party has difficulty gaining access to federal TV channels.

Sergey Mironov says the membership of the party will reach 500,000 members by 1 August. He says that CPRF membership is now 180,000.

Sergey Mironov predicts that Russia's political system will change drastically after 2008. He says a new form of socialism will establish itself in Russia.

23 July 2007 President Vladimir Putin signs a decree "on the state secretary and deputy minister of civil defence, emergencies and disaster relief". Vladimir Puchkov is appointed Russian state secretary and deputy minister of civil defence, emergencies and disaster relief.

23 July 2007 Vladimir Putin signs a law stating that from 1 March 2008 Russia is going to have a new constituent part. The new Transbaykal Territory will join together Chita Region and the Agin Buryat Autonomous Area.

24 July 2007 The Great Russia party, led by Duma deputy Andrey Savelyev, is refused official registration.

24 July 2007 A Levada opinion poll shows that 46 per cent of Russians believe that the West is trying to solve its problems at Russia's expense and "damages Russia's interests whenever a convenient opportunity arises". 74 per cent believe

that Russia is a Eurasian state which should follow the path of "its own historical development".

25 July 2007 Fleet Admiral Vladimir Masorin, navy Commander in-Chief, is interviewed in *Krasnaya Zvezda*.

25 July 2007 Vladimir Putin meets senior officials from the power structures. He says that the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) must increase its potential.

25 July 2007 Vladimir Putin attends a meeting of the Security Council. He says that by 2015 Russia should become a leader in global IT.

25 July 2007 The deputy chairman of the military industrial complex commission of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, Anatoliy Sitnev, says the technical base of existing enterprises of the Russian military industrial complex is designed for the manufacture of second- and third-generation armaments. "The existing technical level of the enterprises is designed for the manufacture of second and third-generation armaments at a time when generations 4+ and 5 need to be produced." He says the rate of modernization of the complex is annually 1.5 to 2 per cent, when it should be 8 per cent.

26 July 2007 Vladimir Putin signs the law on extremism. He also signs into law the three year federal budget.

26 July 2007 Governor of Krasnoyarsk Territory Aleksandr Khloponin says commercial extraction of oil at the Vankor oil field is to start at the end of 2008.

26 July 2007 Vladimir Putin has signed the federal law "On approving the agreement on division of responsibility and authority between bodies of state power of the Russian Federation and bodies of state power of the Republic of Tatarstan". The law was approved by the Duma on 4 July 2007 and by the Federation Council on 11 July.

26 July 2007 The Main Military Prosecutor's Office notes that the situation with crime in the Russian army is stabilizing and crime is falling,

26 July 2007 The United Aircraft Manufacturing Corporation states that it plans to build over 430 civilian aircraft between 2008 and 2012. The task is part of the Corporation management's strategic course aimed at increasing Russia's share in the world civilian aircraft production market from 1 to 5 per cent by 2015 and to 10 per cent by 2025.

27 July 2007 A private electricity company cuts off electricity supplies to a communications centre belonging to Moscow's air defence system control.

27 July 2007 First Deputy Prime Minister Dmitriy Medvedev says other companies could join Gazprom's project to develop the Shtokman gas deposit.

28 July 2007 Former Soviet dissident Vladimir Bukovskiy says that the state is using psychiatry to suppress dissenters.

30 July 2007 Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says the Russian economy is likely to grow by 7.1 per cent in 2007.

30 July 2007 The Prosecutor-General's Office asks Moscow's Basmannyy court to arrest in absentia businessman Boris Berezovskiy within the framework of a new

criminal case related to the embezzlement of SBS-Agro bank funds. The Office of the Prosecutor-General of Russia also files a request for Berezovskiy's assets in France to be impounded.

30 July 2007 The leadership of the Great Russia party decides to withdraw the documents it has submitted to Rosregistratsiya.

30 July 2007 Mikhail Gutseriyev announces that he is selling the Russneft company.

31 July 2007 The Central Electoral Commission says that slightly over 107 million voters have been registered in the country.

31 July 2007 Federal commissar of the Nashi movement Vasiliy Yakemenko says the real election for a new leader to lead the movement in 2008 has not yet taken place.

31 July 2007 The government sets the rate of export duty for crude oil at a level of 223.9 dollars per tonne as of 1 August 2007.

31 July 2007 Command-post exercises involving live firing will be held in North Ossetia, Ingushetia, Dagestan, Chechnya and Stavropol Territory commence. They will run to 9 August 2007.

The MOD says aircraft from the Russian air force's long-distance aviation are to fly over the North Pole area and release cruise missiles during tactical flight exercises in August.

31 July 2007 Vitaly Lopota is nominated as new head of Energiya.

August

1 August 2007 Spravedlivaya Rossiya leader Sergey Mironov says that it will merge with the Social Democratic Party. It is negotiating with this party and five other leftist parties.

1 August 2007 Sergey Ivanov briefs Vladimir Putin on the development of the aviation and shipbuilding industries.

2 August 2007 The government discusses the development of the Far East and Transbaykal Territory for the period to 2013. Under a federal programme, over R400 billion (15.5 billion dollars) will be channelled into the region in the next six years from the state budget.

2 August 2007 Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Navy Admiral Vladimir Masorin visits the Russian naval base in Sevastopol. He discusses the future of the Black Sea Fleet.

Admiral Masorin says the Black Sea Fleet should have at least 15 submarines in the future.

2 August 2007 Vladimir Putin signs a decree on "issues concerning the Investigation Committee under the Office of the Prosecutor-General of the Russian Federation". Aleksandr Bastrykin, deputy prosecutor-general, was appointed as

chairman of the Investigation Committee on 22 June. He will formally take up his new post on 7 September.

3 August 2007 Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov says there will be no militants left in Chechnya by the end of 2007. "I officially declare that the problem of the remaining illegal armed formations will be fully resolved by the end of the year. There will be no militants, whom we call shaytans, remaining in Chechnya."

3 August 2007 Members of St Petersburg human rights organizations and citizens known for their human rights activity jointly set up a human rights council.

3 August 2007 Russian Navy Commander-in-Chief Adm Vladimir Masorin says the Black Sea Fleet will stay in Sevastopol until 2017. He says that as the construction of the Novorossiysk base progresses, it is planned that the fleet will be beefed up with new vessels.

Admiral Masorin says it is necessary for the Russian navy to have a constant presence in the Mediterranean Sea. He says the operational area of the fleet covers the Black Sea and the Mediterranean Sea zones up to the Atlantic Ocean. "For the Black Sea Fleet, the Mediterranean Sea, first of all, is this kind of operationally important region. I expect that with the assistance of the forces of the Northern Fleet and the Baltic Fleet the permanent presence of the Russian navy must be established here."

Masorin says a new aircraft carrier may be based at the Black Sea, while introducing new the Black Sea Fleet commander, Vice-Adm Aleksandr Kletskov to personnel aboard the Moskva missile cruiser. Masorin, who is in Sevastopol, says that the growing geo-political significance of the Black Sea requires constructive cooperation between the Russian Black Sea Fleet and naval forces of other Black Sea states, primarily Ukraine and Turkey.

Spokesman for the navy Igor Dygalo discusses Admiral Vladimir Masorin's statement that the Russian Navy should have a presence in the Mediterranean.

3 August 2007 Deputy director of Russia's Shirshov Oceanology Institute Leopold Lobkovskiy comments on the Arctic-2007 project in an interview with Russia's Vesti TV, where he says that the expedition could not prove to which country or continental shelf the Arctic belonged

4 August 2007 Leader of Spravedlivaya Rossiya and Federation Council speaker Sergey Mironov believes the process of Communist Party members moving over to his party is irreversible.

4 August 2007 *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* reports on the wealth of Russian ministers. It has published information about the incomes and assets of members of the government for 2006.

4 August 2007 A group of human rights activists are prevented from seeing United Civil Front activist Larisa Arap, who has been forcibly admitted to a psychiatric hospital in Murmansk Region.

4 August 2007 Separatist Chechen foreign minister Akhmed Zakayev, who is in exile in Britain, has said that the Chechen resistance remains strong and will continue so long as the Russians occupy its territory.

5 August 2007 The commander-in-chief of the navy, Admiral Vladimir Masorin on a visit to the naval base in Sevastopol, says a decision on serial production of components for Bulava-M missiles has been made based on the results of missile tests. He says two Bulava launches will be performed in 2007, the rest in 2008.

5 August 2007 A joint command and staff exercise of the 58th army internal troops, border guards and the Caspian military flotilla is being held in four regions of the North Caucasus. The exercise's objective is to check the interaction of military units and subdivisions in combat action. Over 8,000 servicemen and 350 pieces of military equipment are taking part in the exercise.

5 August 2007 Energiya President Vitaliy Lopota outlines plans for the development of Russia's space programme.

6 August 2007 Vladimir Putin discusses problems of the exploitation of mineral resources with the heads of the country's leading oil and gas companies and members of the government. Putin states:

We are consistently aiming at introducing transparent conditions for foreign investors. I must note that one of the most liberal regimes of access for foreign investments into the oil and gas sector is in force in Russia. We need not just an open procedure, but a procedure which is as understandable and transparent as possible and which rules out ambiguity. We have talked about the need to improve legislation in this area and I'm also proposing to discuss this today.

6 August 2007 The Moscow City Court finds former Yukos employee Aleksey Pichugin guilty of organizing murders and attempted murders. He receives a life sentence.

6 August 2007 Former governor of Novgorod Region Mikhail Prusak is offered a post in the administration of the Russian president.

6 August 2007 Larisa Arap, an activist of the United Civil Front branch in Murmansk who has been forcibly put in a psychiatric hospital, is allowed to meet her husband.

6 August 2007 A new air defence system, S-400 Triumf, goes on combat duty for the first time in Elektrostal near Moscow.

6 August 2007 Moscow prosecutor Yuriy Semin says charges have been brought against eight people in the case of the explosion which took place in August 2006 at the Cherkizovskiy market in Moscow.

7 August 2007 Vladimir Putin receives members of the Russian Arctic expedition. Head of the Arctic-2007 expedition Artur Chilingarov states:

We are happy. We have been asked about the results of our expedition. Well, you are welcoming us and we are happy. We are happy that deep in the ocean where not a single man has ever been - I do not know, millions, billions of years, I do not know - we have reached the North Pole and set up a Russian flag. I do not care about what all those foreign public figures are saying about this matter. The Arctic region has always been Russian, since it has been the north, and it will be Russian today. This is Russia, this is the Arctic region, we are together. Hurrah!

7 August 2007 The Supreme Court upholds the decision recognizing the National Bolshevik Party public organization as extremist and banning its activity in the territory of the Russian Federation.

7 August 2007 Vladimir Putin introduces amendments into the list of equipment, materials and technologies which can be used to build missiles and are subject to export control regulations.

7 August 2007 Vladimir Putin nominates Aleksandr Khoroshavin for Sakhalin governor.

A new governor is appointed in Novgorod Region. The regional parliament approves the candidacy of Sergey Mitin.

7 August 2007 Chief of the General Staff Yuriy Baluyevskiy says that within eight years Russia's armed forces will deploy more than 20 modern battalions equipped with the missile complex S-400. He meets Vladimir Putin.

8 August 2007 Services of remembrances are held in all Russia's churches for the victims of Stalin's purges. On 8 August 1937, the first mass shooting of so-called enemies of the people began at the NKVD firing range in Butovo on the outskirts of Moscow. Father Kirill (Kaleda), prior of the church of the Russian holy latter-day martyrs and confessors in Butovo says:

We all should remember, on the one hand, the sad and terrible events, and, on the other hand, the events, as a result of which our people and our church were granted a great host of Russian latter-day martyrs and confessors. The remembrance and the glory of the deeds of the latter-day martyrs should become the basis for the spiritual rebirth of our people.

8 August 2007 The MVD seizes all shares of Russneft. It is reported that the Interior Ministry's investigations committee had secured a court decision on the seizure of 100 per cent of Russneft's shares. The decision was taken by Moscow's Lefortovo court, apparently on 31 July.

8 August 2007 Rosneft buys the transport and media assets of Yukos for R18.576 billion (about 730m dollars).

8 August 2007 A second Arctic expedition will start on 11 August. The nuclear ice-breaker Rossiya is planning to start the next stage of research at the Lomonosov ridge on 11 August.

8 August 2007 C-in-C of the Russian air force Col-Gen Aleksandr Zelin gives a press conference on the state of the Russian air force.

Air force spokesman Col Aleksandr Drobyshevskiy says aircraft from the Long-Range Aviation of Russia's air force today launched eight cruise missiles at targets in northern firing ranges as part of a tactical flight training exercise.

9 August 2007 The founding congress of the party of Mikhail Kasyanov, former prime minister and leader of the Russian People's Democratic Union, will take place on 22 September. The new party's name is People for Democracy and Justice.

9 August 2007 First Deputy Prime Minister Dmitriy Medvedev is interviewed in the German magazine *Stern*.

9 August 2007 The Federal Migration Service says the quota for labour migrants in Moscow in 2007 has been raised to 810,000.

9 August 2007 The first deputy defence minister of the Russian Federation, Army General Aleksandr Belousov, says Russia will fully comply within the set timeframe with all the obligation it took upon itself regarding the destruction of the stockpiles of chemical weapons. All weapons are to be destroyed by 2012. The head of the federal directorate for safe storage and destruction of chemical weapons, Lt-Gen Valeriy Kapashin, says Russia has received from its Western partners just over 25 per cent (R11 billion) of the promised financial assistance for the destruction of the stockpiles.

9 August 2007 The long-range aviation commander, Maj-Gen Pavel Androsov, says in the course of an exercise, aircraft of long-range aviation have successfully launched missiles and flown over the North Pole and areas of the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. Two crews flew close to US bases in Guam.

9 August 2007 Yuriy Baluyevskiy, chief of the General Staff, says successful economic activities in the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) "will be impossible unless security in the region is strengthened, including by involving military departments from the SCO member states". "We are not talking about setting up a military-political bloc or a union as this would run counter to the SCO principles." He says "as a priority step some conceptual foundations should be drawn up for military cooperation in the framework of the organization". Russian experts had drawn up such a document and passed it to the defence ministries of all the SCO countries in April, however so far there "has been no response".

10 August 2007 Vladimir Putin meets the head of the new Investigations Committee under the Russian Prosecutor-General's Office, Aleksandr Bastrykin.

10 August 2007 A court rules that Larisa Arap, an activist of the Murmansk branch of the United Civil Front must remain in a psychiatric hospital for forcible treatment.

10 August 2007 About 1,000 servicemen of the Internal Troops entered Malgobek in Ingushetia at request of Ingush President Murat Zyazikov. This measure is taken because of the deteriorating criminal situation in the republic.

10 August 2007 *Gazeta* reports that an unofficial list of governors who may lose their jobs may appear next week. The article is about several governors who have allegedly made a critical number of mistakes or did not secure enough votes for Yedinaya Rossiya at the last election. Some of them are: heads of Karelia [Sergey Katanandov], Karachay-Cherkessia [Mustafa Batdyyev], Volgograd Region [Nikolay Maksyuta], Perm Region [Oleg Chirkunov], and Chita and Arkhangelsk regions [Ravil Geniatulin and Nikolay Kiselev respectively].

10 August 2007 The aide to the Air Force Commander-in-Chief Col Aleksandr Drobyshevskiy expresses satisfaction with the exercises by the Long Range Air Force over the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. He says the Russian long-range aviation is returning to the practice of long-range missions after a long break.

10 August 2007 The active phase of the 'special combined preventative operation' SCPO begins in Ingushetia.

11 August 2007 Vladimir Putin visits an air defence radar at of Lekhtusi near St Petersburg. It replaces the old radar station at Skrunda in Latvia.

Putin says that he expects Defence Minister Anatoliy Serdyukov to carry on the work of his predecessor Sergey Ivanov on the modernization of the armed forces. He states:

When Sergey Borisovich Ivanov was defence minister he devoted a lot of time and attention to addressing issues related to the modernization of the armed forces. I hope that the new leadership of the defence department will also do everything to ensure, to certainly ensure the implementation of all plans on the modernization of the army and navy.

11 August 2007 Nashi youth group celebrates the victory of the people's militia of Minin and Pozharskiy over the forces of the Polish-Lithuanian invaders in 1612.

11 August 2007 Vladimir Putin discusses the development of the aircraft engine sector. He signs a decree on the formation of an integrated structure for the development of new-generation aircraft engines on the basis of the Salyut federal state unitary enterprise.

13 August 2007 Chechen Interior Minister Ruslan Alkhanov says there are about 100 militants remaining in Chechnya.

13 August 2007 Russian Railways says it does not rule out that a deliberate explosion was the cause of the derailment of the Moscow-St Petersburg high-speed passenger train. There were no fatalities, but some injuries.

13 August 2007 A video showing the murder of two foreign nationals allegedly by Russian ultra-nationalists appears on the internet.

13 August 2007 The president of the Independent Psychiatric Association, Yuriy Savenko, says that United Civil Front activist Larisa Arap was put in a psychiatric clinic illegally.

14 August 2007 Russian Railways says the derailment of a Moscow - St Petersburg train on 13 August was caused by an improvised bomb explosion.

14 August 2007 Natural Resources Minister Yuriy Trutnev says Russia is looking into a possibility of imposing even stricter regulations than the current ones on the use of its mineral resources by foreign companies. The government has adopted amendments to the current legislation on foreign companies' involvement in mining mineral resources. According to the draft, they should not be allowed to acquire a controlling stake in the development of all offshore deposits or any onshore deposits containing in excess of 70m tonnes of oil, 50 billion cubic metres of gas, 50 tonnes of vein gold or 500,000 tonnes of copper. Trutnev says 56 per cent of the budget revenue for of the Russian Federation comes from mineral resources.

15 August 2007 Federal Migration Service Director Konstantin Romodanovskiy says about 10 million immigrants are working in Russia illegally at the moment.

15 August 2007 The prosecutor's office in Maykop (Adygeya) instigates criminal proceedings in relation to a student who admitted his involvement in the dissemination through the Internet of a video showing an execution of two men - supposedly natives of Dagestan and Tajikistan.

15 August 2007 Movement Against Illegal Immigration (DPNI) leader Aleksandr Belov says the head of the regional branch of DPNI in Velikiy Novgorod is questioned in connection with the derailment of the Nevskiy Express train on 13 August. He also says that a DPNI member from Novosibirsk, Lev Kurshin, had also been questioned in connection with the publication on the Internet of a video showing the execution of people of presumed Tajik and Dagestani origin.

15 August 2007 First Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov says the Russian armed forces are to be equipped with new control systems before 2015. The state armaments programme for 2007-2015 includes provisions for large-scale research and development projects in the sphere of automatic and communication systems.

15 August 2007 Head of the Central Electoral Commission Vladimir Churov says a total of 107,062,000 voters were registered in Russia by 1 July 2007.

16 August 2007 Rosstat states that in the first half of 2007 Russia received 15.8 billion dollars of foreign direct investment. That is more than in the whole of 2006. Favourite sectors remain the same as a year ago: fuel and energy, finance, and the food industry. In the first half of 2007 Russia received 60.3 billion dollars of foreign investment, which is 2.6 times more than in the first half of 2006. Loans represented the largest share of accumulated foreign capital (52.8 per cent), foreign direct investment represented 45.2 per cent (compared to 48.1 per cent in 2006), and portfolio investments represented 2 per cent (up from 1.8 per cent in 2006). The volume of Russian investment accumulated abroad stood at 25.9 billion dollars at the end of June 2007.

17 August 2007 Vladimir Putin announces that Russia will resume long distance patrols by strategic aviation.

In 1992, the Russian Federation unilaterally stopped combat duty flights of its strategic aviation in far-flung areas. Unfortunately, not everybody followed our example and other countries' strategic aviation continued their flights. This creates certain problems in ensuring the Russian Federation's security. In view of this, I have decided to resume the flights of Russia's strategic aviation on a regular basis.

Long-Range Aviation exercises take place over the North Pole.

17 August 2007 Sergey Mironov says that Spravedlivaya Rossiya may put forward its own presidential candidate in 2008 and then Vladimir Putin in 2012.

The URF calls for a single democratic presidential candidate in 2008.

17 August 2007 Chechnya's first airline, Groznyyavia, is set up on the order of the republic's president, Ramzan Kadyrov.

17 August 2007 The Dissenters' March planned for September 2007 in Yekaterinburg has been cancelled. Yevgeniy Borovik, the leader of the regional branch of the United Civil Front was detained in Moscow.

17 August 2007 co-chairman of the Council of Muftis of Russia Nafigulla Ashirov warns of the danger of the clericalization of Russia.

18 August 2007 The FSB directorate for Novosibirsk Region launches a criminal case against two doctors of physical and mathematical sciences, the brothers Oleg

and Igor Minin, under Article 283 Part 1 of the Russian Criminal Code (disclosing state secrets).

20 August 2007 Two anarchists are detained in connection with the bombing of the Nevskiy Ekspres train on 13 August.

20 August 2007 The MOD website states that 262 people died because of crimes and incidents on duty in Russia's Armed Forces in 2007.

20 August 2007 Dimitrovgrad City Court in Ulyanovsk Region rejects the request to release on parole former colonel Yuriy Budanov, who was convicted of killing a Chechen woman Elza Kungayeva in 2000.

21 August 2007 The Novgorod Region prosecutor's office denies information on the arrest of terrorists suspected of blowing up a Nevskiy Express train.

21 August 2007 Economic Development and Trade Minister German Gref says GDP rose by 7.9 per cent in the first seven months of 2007.

21 August 2007 The presidential aide for military technical and defence and industrial policy, Aleksandr Burutin, says the resumption of regular flights by Tupolev Tu-160 and Tu-95 strategic bombers could also lead to the resumption of their production.

Speaker of the Federation Council Sergey Mironov says that funding for the defence industry must be increased.

22 August 2007 Sergey Mironov says Russia may return in the future to the practice of direct election of governors and Duma elections based on the mixed system.

22 August 2007 The Prosecutor General's Office sets up a directorate for the supervision of the implementation of the legislation for fighting corruption.

22 August 2007 Regional Development Minister Vladimir Yakovlev issues instructions for the creation of an interdepartmental working group to deal with the stable development of the Arctic zone. The working group, to be headed by Deputy Regional Development Minister Vladimir Dedyukhin, will examine projects to develop the indigenous peoples of the north, transport infrastructure (air, sea and land transport), and information technology in the Arctic. The working group will also be involved in projects concerned with the healthcare of the people in the area, adaptation to climate changes, and the use of natural resources. The conception of the stable development of the Arctic zone was devised by the Regional Development Ministry in 2006.

Viktor Poselov, deputy director of the All-Russian Ocean Geology Research Institute (the head marine geology research institute of the Rosnedra federal agency), says the underwater Lomonosov ridge in the Arctic Ocean is "structurally an extension of the continental platform and not in any way isolated from the Russian plateau". He is basing these comments on the results of the Arctic-2007 survey made at the beginning of August.

22 August 2007 Vladimir Putin approves a list of micro-organisms, toxins, equipment and technologies that are subject to export control. This has been done in order to protect national interests, and also due to the need to fulfil Russia's international obligations as part of the Convention on the Prohibition of the

Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction.

22 August 2007 A forum called "Islam - the religion of peace and creation" takes place in Chechnya. Among the delegations to come to Chechnya were Islamic religious leaders from Russia, Saudi Arabia, the USA, Austria, Poland, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan and other countries. The guests were met by First Deputy Prime Minister of the Chechen Republic Adam Delikhmanov, the head of the department for external relations at the Chechen government, Ramzan Lechkhadzhiyev, Chechen Mufti Sultan Mirzayev as well as muftis of North Caucasus spiritual directorates.

22 August 2007 Maj-Gen Oleg Ostapenko is appointed as new head of the Plesetsk cosmodrome (Arkhangelsk Region).

22 August 2007 The press service of the Strategic Missile Troops announces that the second missile battalion of the latest mobile land-based Topol-M complex will be put on combat duty at the Teykovo missile formation by the end of the year. The first Topol-M regiment, comprising one missile formation and the regiment command post, was put on combat duty on 10 December 2006.

22 August 2007 The vice-president of the panel of military experts, Aleksandr Vladimirov, says radars will be built in Armavir, the Far East and the Urals as part of the early warning system in Russia. He says "five to six or perhaps even more radar stations" should "come into service".

23 August 2007 The Russian Council of Muftis issues a statement criticising the teaching of basics of Orthodox culture in secondary schools.

23 August 2007 Archaeologists in Yekaterinburg state that they may have found the remains of Tsarevich Aleksey and Grand Duchess Mariya, the children of the last Russian Tsar, Nicholas II.

23 August 2007 Chechen Interior Minister Gen Ruslan Alkhanov says head of a sabotage and terrorist group Rustam Basayev is killed in Grozny's Leninskiy district as a result of a special operation to seal off and to eliminate the group.

23 August 2007 An Islamic institute opens in the district centre of Kurchaloy in Chechnya. It will be the largest in the North Caucasus.

23 August 2007 First Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov says the resumption of regular flights by Russian long-range aviation does not signify a return to the cold war.

This is definitely not related to any bloc mentality or any standoff or - even more so - to a return to the cold war. This cannot be the case. And no-one was setting such tasks.

These flights are carried out to defend national interests and to train pilots. They are being carried out at the moment - at the time when we are standing here together. There is nothing aggressive about this.

23 August 2007 The deputy director of the Federal Migration Service, Vyacheslav Postavnin, says that about 400,000 migrants will get Russian citizenship in 2007.

24 August 2007 Duma speaker Boris Gryzlov says Russia will meet all international commitments it has taken upon itself in the area of chemical weapons destruction.

The head of the Federal Directorate for Safe Storage and Destruction of Chemical Weapons, Lt-Gen Valeriy Kapashin, says that in accordance with its international commitments Russia will destroy 45 per cent of its chemical weapons reserves, or 18,500 tonnes, by the end of 2009. And by 1 May 2012, Deputy Defence Minister and General of the Army Aleksandr Belousov says Russia will destroy all chemical weapons reserves on its territory. In spring 2007 the share of destroyed chemical weapons amounted to 20 per cent (8,000 tonnes).

24 August 2007 Chechen separatist leader Dokka Umarov urges Muslims to join the holy war against Russia.

24 August 2007 Head of Rosoboronexport arms trader Sergey Chemezov says Russia will export arms worth 6.5 billion dollars in 2007.

27 August 2007 Prosecutor-General Yuriy Chayka gives a press conference on the Anna Politkovskaya case and other major cases. Ten people have been arrested for this murder.

27 August 2007 Vladimir Putin accepts the resignation of Samara Region governor Konstantin Titov.

27 August 2007 Maj-Gen Pavel Androsov, commander of the 37th Air Army of the Supreme High Command, says aircraft of the Russian air force's long-range aviation carry no weapons, including nuclear weapons, on board when conducting air patrols.

28 August 2007 The Prosecutor-General's Office of the Russian Federation officially charges four natives of Chechnya who have been arrested in the murder case of Novaya Gazeta newspaper observer Anna Politkovskaya.

28 August 2007 The Moscow Tverskoy Court issues an arrest warrant *in absentia* for the head of Russneft Mikhail Gutseriyev, who is being accused of illegal business activity and corporate tax evasion.

28 August 2007 The head of Transneft, Semen Vaynshtok, briefs Vladimir Putin about the progress in the work to build the longest Russian oil pipeline, Eastern Siberia-Pacific Ocean.

28 August 2007 NPO Mashinostroyenia first deputy director for corporate formation and organization Anatoliy Khromushkin says the formation of the defence industry corporation NPO Mashinostroyenia will be completed by the end of 2007 or early 2008. 11 enterprises will be incorporated.

29 August 2007 The Moscow City Court confirms the names of all the individuals arrested in connection with the murder of Anna Politkovskaya. The names are: Aleksey Berkin, Dmitriy Lebedev, Tamerlan Makhmudov, Dzhabrail Makhmudov, Ibragim Makhmudov, Oleg Alimov, Magomed Dimelkhanov, Akhmed Isayev, Sergey Khadzhikurbanov and Dmitriy Grachev.

29 August 2007 Spravedlivaya Rossiya leader Sergey Mironov says party membership is 500,000.

29 August 2007 Deputy Interior Ministry Col-Gen Arkadiy Yedelev says the Interior Ministry's leadership in southern Russia is concerned at attempts being made from abroad to destabilize the situation in the region.

29 August 2007 by First Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov says the economy must diversify and not be based on raw materials.

30 August 2007 Leader of the Russian People's Democratic Union and former Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov urges the Yabloko and URF parties not to take part in the forthcoming Duma election in December.

30 August 2007 Federation Council Speaker and Spravedlivaya Rossiya leader Sergey Mironov announces the intention to unite all of Russia's left-wing forces under his party's banner.

30 August 2007 Beslan commission member Yuriy Savelyev says the official report by the parliamentary commission for investigating the causes and circumstances of the terrorist act in Beslan "will not be published because the information contained in it does not correspond to reality". He says "the conclusions in the report contradict the facts and this provoked deep anger among the victims".

September

1 September 2007 Col-Gen Nikolay Solovtsov, commander of Strategic Missile Troops, says a second missile division of mobile missile systems Topol-M will be put on combat alert duty in December 2007.

1 September 2007 Presidential envoy to the Southern Federal District Dmitriy Kozak says that over the last three years, the number of terrorist attacks in southern Russia has dropped by 40 per cent. He meets members of the Beslan Mothers.

2 September 2007 Vladimir Putin signs the decree on holding the election to the Duma of the Federal Assembly. The election will be held on 2 December 2007.

3 September 2007 Deputy director of the Sova think-tank Galina Kozhevnikova says there have been more than 350 attacks motivated by ethnic hatred in Russia in 2007. "Thirty-eight people have been killed this year as a result of attacks motivated by racial hatred, and another 318 have been injured."

3 September 2007 Vladimir Putin says the situation on the world financial markets cannot affect the Russian economy in a serious way.

3 September 2007 The rebel Chechen Daymohk website says the foundation of an Islamic state has been built in Caucasus.

4 September 2007 The head of Russian Railways Vladimir Yakunin tells Vladimir Putin that \$13,000 billion roubles are needed for the reconstruction of the Russian railways.

4 September 2007 Vladimir Putin signs a decree entitled "The issues of the state commission for chemical disarmament". The Russian presidential representative in

Volga Federal District, Aleksandr Konovalov, is appointed chairman of the commission.

5 September 2007 The Duma election campaign officially begins.

5 September 2007 Vladimir Putin visits Kamchatka. He visits the naval base at Vilyuchinsk. He also discusses the fishing industry in Kamchatka.

5 September 2007 Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov calls on the Federal Service on Financial Markets to be more active in attracting emitters to the Russian stock exchange. He noted that foreign investors' interest in the Russian market is growing and the trade at the stock exchange is increasing. However, trading floors have a long way to go to a perfect infrastructure.

5 September 2007 The director of the SVR Sergey Lebedev is interviewed in *Moskovskiy Novosti*. He says intelligence services of some Western countries are increasingly using methods of the Cold War era and interfering in the affairs of sovereign states.

5 September 2007 The head of the Central Electoral Commission of the Russian Federation Vladimir Churov says political parties have to make their election manifestos public by 11 November.

5 September 2007 Gazprom and Tatarstan sign an agreement for the gasification of the republic.

6 September 2007 FSB director Nikolay Patrushev says that countering nuclear terrorism and joint fight against the use of the Internet by terrorists are very important issues and only multilateral cooperation can help here because any state's unilateral efforts will not be effective. Patrushev is at an international conference of heads of security services and law-enforcement agencies from 53 countries in Khabarovsk.

6 September 2007 The government approves a railway transport development strategy for the next two decades. The document provides for a series of measures to reform the industry, including upgrading the stock and expanding the rail network. More than 20,000 km of new railway lines are to be built in Russia over that time. The overall investment is estimated at between R11,000 billion and R13,000 billion. For comparison: this is nearly three times the total spending on all the armaments programmes for the army.

6 September 2007 An anti-terrorist HQ is set up in Ingushetia.

7 September 2007 The president of the Alemar investment and financial company, Leonid Melamed, is appointed director-general of the Russian corporation of nanotechnologies.

7 September 2007 Defence Minister Anatoliy Serdyukov says the coastal infrastructure of the Pacific Fleet is to be substantially upgraded.

7 September 2007 The Investigative Committee starts work. Aleksandr Bastrykin is the head of this committee. It takes away some of the powers of the General Procuracy.

7 September 2007 Col-Gen Vladislav Polonskiy, chief of the Main Motor and Armoured Vehicle Administration, says that by the end of 2007 the Ground Forces

will have taken delivery of more than 300 new tanks and armoured vehicles. This is three times as many as in 2006.

10 September 2007 C-in-C of the Russian Ground Troops Army Gen Aleksey Maslov says that the combat effectiveness of military units fully manned by those serving on contract is not much higher than that of the units in which conscripts serve.

C-in-C of the Ground Troops of the Russian Federation Army Gen Aleksey Maslov says the reduction of the term of military service for conscripts to one year may lead to a reduction in the number of those willing to serve on contract.

10 September 2007 Major-General Aleksandr Poryadnin, the first deputy chief of the Main Staff of the MVD Internal Troops says the districts of the Internal Troops will be replaced by regional commands in January 2008. All six districts will be transformed into regional commands. The MVD Internal Troops number 200,000, and there are no plans to reduce this number.

10 September 2007 First Deputy Prime Minister Dmitriy Medvedev open the World Social Welfare Forum. He says that over the recent years Russia has managed to overcome the demographic crisis. From 2015 the population of the country will start to grow. He also says the economy is growing.

At present the economic statistics figures show that Russia is entering a new, higher level of the economic development and we are certainly happy about it. The national economy has overcome a depression, the lengthy production recession and is among the ten world economies. The annual GDP growth over the recent years has totalled six to seven per cent in our country. The economic growth enables the state to channel more resources into the social sphere. As a result, we have been observing positive dynamics in key social indices. The real income of the population grows by 10 to 12 per cent annually. The level of poverty has reduced almost twice. Employment grew by 3m people over the last three years. At the same time, the country retains the lowest birth-rate and a high level of mortality.

10 September 2007 Kavkaz-Tsentr receives a statement on behalf of the Riyad us-Saliheen martyrs' brigade which says that saboteurs of this brigade blew up the Nevskiy Ekspress fast train which was derailed on 13 August.

10 September 2007 The director of the FSB Nikolay Patrushev informs a meeting of the National Anti-terrorist Committee about the number of terrorist acts in Russia. In 2005 the number of terrorist acts committed amounted to 257, a year later the number was 112 and in the first half of the current year the number was 21.

11 September 2007 The Industry and Energy Ministry approves a development strategy for the national electronic industry for the period to 2025.

11 September 2007 First Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov gives details of the new state defence order. The order will increase by 30 per cent in 2007 against 2006 and will exceed R700 billion; R300 billion will be spent on acquisitions for the Defence Ministry.

Denis Manturov, the director-general of the Oboronprom amalgamated industrial corporation, Rosoboronexport's subsidiary, is appointed Russian Deputy Industry and Energy Minister.

Russian TV reports on a newly created vacuum bomb. Aleksandr Rukshin, deputy chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces, says:

“The results of the trial of the newly created aviation bomb have shown that its effectiveness and potential are comparable to a nuclear bomb. At the same time, I must stress, the action of this bomb is ecologically absolutely clean and does not pollute the environment, compared with a nuclear bomb.”

11 September 2007 Chechen separatist leader Movladi Udugov says that a new generation of mojahedin is emerging and the Chechen armed forces have developed a new strategy and tactics.

12 September 2007 Major-General Vyacheslav Shanshin is appointed new head of the Dagestani directorate of the FSB instead of Nikolay Gryaznov, who has resigned.

12 September 2007 The director of the human rights centre of the universal Russian popular assembly, Roman Silantyev, says a large amount of Wahhabi literature is circulating among Muslims in Sakhalin and the Maritime Territory. Silantyev reckons the Wahhabi community in the Russian Far East to be about 1,000 people.

12 September 2007 Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov tenders his resignation to President Vladimir Putin, who accepts the resignation. First Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov praises the newly appointed prime minister Viktor Zubkov, who was head of the Federal Financial Monitoring Service.

12 September 2007 First deputy speaker of the Duma and member of Yedinaya Rossiya's higher council Oleg Morozov says YR considers the CPRF and not Spravedlivaya Rossiya to be its main opponent in the upcoming Duma election.

12 September 2007 The Duma passes in three readings at once a government bill to increase the basic part of all forms of pension (old age, disability and in the case of a deceased breadwinner) from R900 to R1,260 a month from 1 October 2007.

12 September 2007 The first deputy chairman of the Military-Industrial Commission (MIC) under the government, Vladislav Putilin, says Russia is to invest over R1,000 billion (\$39 billion) in the production of arms and military equipment by 2010. The MIC discusses the programme of the development of the country's defence-industrial complex to 2010.

12 September 2007 The former commander-in-chief of the Russian Air Force, Army General Anatoliy Kornukov, says a vacuum aviation bomb, comparable by its power to nuclear warheads is a further development of the research that was conducted in Russia into the creation of fuel-air explosive devices.

Duma defence committee chairman, Viktor Zavarzin says that Russia will strengthen the potential of its triad of strategic nuclear forces - the Strategic Missile Troops, the naval strategic nuclear forces and strategic aviation. He says the economic growth of the recent years had made it possible to steadily increase defence expenditure. A significant part of this expenditure is spent on providing new weapons and hardware to the troops.

13 September 2007 The MOD states it has on its books 133,600 servicemen who require flats or need improvement in their housing conditions.

13 September 2007 Vladimir Zubkov says that if he achieves something in the post of prime minister, then he does not rule out running for president. He says there will be structural changes in the government, and there may also be personnel changes.

Vladimir Putin makes the following comment on personnel changes in the Russian government:

It is rather difficult to concentrate when there is some uncertainty about what will happen to each specific person and how the system of government and administration will be aligned in the country after these events in December this year and next March.

That is why I deemed it expedient to remove these questions, just as it happened, if you remember, in 2004 ahead of that presidential election. In my opinion, it is better to make some personnel decisions already now and take the necessary steps to modernize the system of administration itself in order, of course, to avoid the shortcomings that accompany major reshuffles and systemic changes, but also to show the direction in which the administrative and executive branches of government will develop and be aligned in the period between December 2007 and March 2008.

I hope that all these steps will result in people concentrating more and better on the execution of their official tasks and the whole system of government and administration in Russia functioning smoothly both during the elections and immediately after the elections, I repeat, in 2007 and 2008.

13 September 2007 The secretary-general of the Union of Journalists, Igor Yakovenko, says that pressure on the mass media is increasing in the run up to the Duma elections.

13 September 2007 The leaders of political parties and movements sign an agreement for the creation of the Motherland - Patriots of Russia election coalition. The coalition, created on the basis of the Patriots of Russia party, includes Gennadiy Seleznev's Party for the Rebirth of Russia, Dmitriy Rogozin and Andrey Savelyev's unregistered Great Russia party as well as a number of other organizations.

13 September 2007 Navy Commander-in-Chief Admiral Vladimir Masorin has retired from his post as he has reached the age of 60. He is replaced by commander of the Northern Fleet, Admiral Vladimir Vysotsky.

14 September 2007 Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov addresses the Duma on government priorities. He indicates that personnel changes may take place in ministries concerned with social policy. He proposes setting up a special anti-corruption committee.

14 September 2007 Vladimir Putin gives the following statement about his decision to appoint a new prime minister:

In general, a scenario was possible under which there would not have been a change of government before the presidential election and before the planned government resignation after the president is elected and sworn in in May 2008. And I would have liked events to follow this scenario.

However, unfortunately, members of the government are first of all people. They, as I saw, have slowed down in their work, began to think more about what would happen to them personally after the elections. This is the first thing.

Meanwhile, I would like the government in Moscow, the regional authorities and the federal bodies of power in Russia's territories to work - like a Swiss watch - without a single interruption up to the elections and right after the election, in the period from March to May 2008. I need it to be an efficient, well-coordinated and well-functioning mechanism, without any faults or delays, without any breaks for rest.

That is what prompted what was done, the government change. What is more, I had made no move to push the prime minister towards it. The prime minister took this decision himself. The fact is that he, too, is a responsible man. In his capacity as head of this government team, he was very well aware of the mood that formed in the team which he led.

Viktor Zubkov is confirmed as prime minister by the Duma. 381 voted for him, 47 against, 8 abstained. Zubkov says he does not exclude the possibility of running for the presidency in 2008. Vladimir Putin makes the following comment about Zubkov:

Now about whether Viktor Alekseyevich Zubkov can stand in the 2008 presidential election. He can, like any other citizen of the Russian Federation. Naturally, he is not a rank-and-file citizen of the Russian Federation. From today he is not just the head of Rosfinmonitoring. He is also the prime minister of the Russian Federation.

Yesterday or the day before yesterday he replied to this question to journalists. He honestly said, and I believe he said the right thing: before moving to a higher post I have always throughout my life proved to myself and people I have worked with that I achieved positive results first of all in the job I was doing at the time. And if the results of my work in the post of prime minister of the Russian Federation would satisfy me and the citizens of the country, I do not rule out, he said, that I might stand for Russian president in March 2008.

He did not say he would stand. He said he did not rule out this possibility. I think it was a balanced and calm reply. Indeed, at present it is difficult to say: he should do some work first and in a rather difficult period, the period of elections to the State Duma. And then we shall see.

You may have noticed that a year or 18 months ago they were saying that we had an empty field and there was no-one to elect, and that it was not known who would become [president]. Now they are naming at least five people who have real chances of being elected Russian president in March 2008.

If there appears a new realistic candidate, the people of Russia will have an opportunity to choose from several people.

14 September 2007 The head of the Defence Ministry's Economy and Finance Service, since September 2004, Lyubov Kudelina, is appointed Deputy Defence

Minister. She will continue overseeing the ministry's financial and economic activity.

14 September 2007 Vladimir Putin dodges a question at the Valday Club about whether he will run for president in 2012. He says that he will find something interesting to do before 2012.

14 September 2007 FSB head Nikolay Patrushev addresses the National Antiterrorist Committee. He says 66 acts of terrorism were committed in the first half of 2006, against 21 for the same period in 2007.

15 September 2007 Yabloko holds a party congress.

15 September 2007 Chairman of Federation Council Sergey Mironov says that Vladimir Putin should return to power on the strength of the 2012 presidential election.

16 September 2007 Chechen Interior Minister Ruslan Alkhanov says the Chechen Republic has wiped out nearly all rebel chieftains.

18 September 2007 Acting Defence Minister Anatoliy Serdyukov submits a letter of resignation because of his close family ties with the prime minister, Viktor Zubkov. President Putin rejected his resignation on 24th September.

18 September 2007 Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov appoints Yuriy Chikhanchin as head of his secretariat. Chikhanchin was Zubkov's deputy head at the Federal Financial Monitoring Service.

18 September 2007 Investigator Salavat Karimov, who led cases against former Yukos head Mikhail Khodorkovskiy and Khodorkovskiy's associate Platon Lebedev, is appointed adviser to the prosecutor-general.

19 September 2007 The head of army air defence of the Russian Armed Forces, Col-Gen Nikolay Frolov, says "with 50 per cent of the Ground Troops' air defence systems being old military hardware," active work is under way in Russia to develop new systems for the army.

19 September 2007 Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov reappoints Gennadiy Bukayev and Sergey Vinokurov, who have been working as aides to former Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov. They will continue working as aides to the chairman of the Russian government for the duration of Zubkov's time in office. He removes two other aides - Andrey Nikolayev and Gennadiy Fadeyev - from their posts. Mikhail Senelin, who was in charge of Fradkov's secretariat, has been relieved from his post.

19 September 2007 A Levada Centre opinion poll gives Vladimir Putin an approval rating of 80 per cent. A Levada opinion poll asks who would you vote if a Duma election took place next Sunday. The results are:

Yedinaya Rossiya	55 per cent (59 per cent in August 2007)
CPRF	19 per cent (19 per cent in August 2007)
LDPR	11 per cent (7 per cent in August 2007)
Spravedlivaya Rossiya	7 per cent (9 per cent in August 2007)

20 September 2007 Rossvyazokhrankultura Middle Volga directorate appeals to a local court for the licence of Saratovskiy Reporter newspaper to be withdrawn for extremism. It depicted Vladimir Putin as Stirlitz, a Soviet-era fictional secret agent who operated undercover in the German SS.

20 September 2007 Lt-Gen Viktor Buslovskiy, deputy chief of the Main Directorate of Educational Work of the Russian armed forces, says the number of suicides among servicemen in the armed forces is growing. Deputy Prosecutor-General of the Russian Federation and Chief Military Prosecutor Sergey Fridinskiy says the number of bullying cases in the armed forces in 2007 has dropped by more than a third.

21 September 2007 Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov appoints Tatyana Kultina as his aide.

21 September 2007 Former head of the Achkhoy-Martanovskiy District of Chechnya Shamil Burayev, is charged with aiding and abetting the murder of Novaya Gazeta reporter Anna Politkovskaya.

21 September 2007 Former Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov's press secretary Tatyana Razbash confirms that the former prime minister has returned the dacha Sosnovka-1 to the Federal Property Agency.

21 September 2007 Acting Defence Minister Anatoliy Serdyukov presents the new navy commander Vladimir Vysotskiy to navy officers. Previously he was in charge of the Northern Fleet.

21 September 2007 The MOD forecasts a reduction in the waiting list for housing by 11,600 by 1 January 2008.

23 September 2007 Former prime minister Mikhail Kasyanov has become the head of the People for Democracy and Justice party which was reorganized from the People's Democratic Union.

23 September 2007 A regional conference of Drugaya Rossiya elects Garri Kasparov, leader of the United Civil Front, as single opposition candidate to stand in the 2008 presidential election.

24 September 2007 Vladimir Putin announces the new line-up of the Russian government. There are three new ministers:

- Dmitriy Nikolayevich Kozak has been appointed minister of regional development;
- Elvira Sakhizadovna Nabiulina has been appointed minister of economic development and trade. She replaces German Gref;
- Tatyana Alekseyevna Golikova has been appointed minister of health and social development. She replaces Mikhail Zurabov.

There are two new committees, the State Committee for Youth Affairs and the State Fisheries Committee.

The status of the minister of finance of the Russian Federation has been upgraded. He will also assume the duties of deputy chairman of government of the Russian Federation. His name is Aleksey Leonidovich Kudrin.

24 September 2007 Vladimir Putin appoints Vladislav Putilin first deputy chairman of the Military Industrial Commission under the Government of the Russian Federation - minister of the Russian Federation.

24 September 2007 The Great Russia party, whose unofficial leader is Dmitriy Rogozin, is denied registration.

24 September 2007 Two men are detained in the Volga region. They shot several people in Bashkortostan on 16 September. Yelabuga residents Danil Gabdulkhakov, 25, and his cousin Vener Khazetdinov, 25, were members of the Islamic Jamaat organization, which operated in Tatarstan and the neighbouring regions in 2001-4.

24 September 2007 The Federal Tax Service is to set up the inter-regional tax inspectorate No 11 in the near future to deal with major individual taxpayers.

24 September 2007 Yevgeniy Kozlovskiy, dean of the optimization faculty at the Russian State University of Geology and Prospecting and former Soviet Minister of Geology, says Russia's current oil reserves will last for 50 years, and its gas reserves for 75 years. Kozlovskiy says Russia is currently losing about 150m tonnes of oil a year because of insufficient oil extraction.

25 September 2007 A new structure of the federal executive bodies is announced.

1. Federal executive bodies whose operation is governed by the Russian president; federal services and federal agencies subordinated to these federal executive bodies:

Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation

- Federal Migration Service

Ministry of Civil Defence, Emergencies and Disaster Relief of the Russian Federation

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation

- Federal Service for Military and Technical Cooperation

- Federal Service for Defence Order

- Federal Service for Technical and Export Control

- Federal Special Construction Service

Justice Ministry of the Russian Federation

- Federal Penal Service

- Federal Registration Service

- Federal Bailiff Service

- Federal Land Registry Service

Russian Federation State Courier Communications Service (federal service)

Russian Federation Foreign Intelligence Service (federal service)

Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation (federal service)

Russian Federation Federal Service for Control Over the Trafficking of Narcotics (federal service)

Federal Bodyguard Service of the Russian Federation (federal service)

Main Directorate of the Russian Federation President's Special Programmes (federal agency)

Russian Federation President's Administrative Department (federal agency)

2. Federal executive bodies whose operation is governed by the government of the Russian Federation; federal services and agencies subordinated to these federal executive bodies:

Ministry of Health and Social Development of the Russian Federation

- Federal Service for Consumer Rights Protection
- Federal Supervisory Service for Health and Social Development
- Federal Labour and Employment Service
- Federal Agency for Health and Social Development
- Federal Biomedical Agency
- Federal Agency for High-Technology Medical Care

Ministry of Information Technologies and Communication of the Russian Federation

- Federal Agency for Information Technologies
- Federal Agency for Communication [Rossvyaz]

Ministry of Culture and Mass Communications of the Russian Federation

- Federal Archive Agency
- Federal Agency for Culture and Cinematography
- Federal Agency for Press and Mass Communications

Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation

- Federal Service for Intellectual Property, Patents and Trademarks
- Federal Service for Education and Science Supervision
- Federal Agency for Science and Innovation

Ministry of Natural Resources of the Russian Federation

- Federal Agency for Water Resources
- Federal Agency for Management of Mineral Resources
- Federal Service for Regulation of the Use of Natural Resources

Ministry of Industry and Energy of the Russian Federation

- Federal Industry Agency
- Federal Agency for Technical Regulation and Metrology
- Federal Energy Agency

Ministry of Regional Development of the Russian Federation

- Federal Agency for Construction, Housing and Utilities

Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation

- Federal Service for Veterinary and Plant Control

Ministry of Transport of the Russian Federation

- Federal Service for Transport Supervision
- Federal Air Transport Agency
- Federal Agency for Geodesy and Cartography
- Federal Road Agency
- Federal Railways Transport Agency
- Federal Agency for Maritime and River Transport

Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation

- Federal Tax Service
- Federal Service for Insurance Supervision
- Federal Service for Financial and Budgetary Supervision
- Federal Treasury (federal service)

Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of the Russian Federation

- Federal Agency for State Reserves
- Federal Agency for Management of Federal Property
- Federal Agency for Management of Special Economic Zones.

3. Federal executive bodies whose operation is governed by the government of the Russian Federation:

State Committee of the Russian Federation for Youth Affairs

State Committee of the Russian Federation for Fisheries
 Federal Antimonopoly Service
 Federal Air Traffic Control Service
 Russian Federal Service for Hydrometeorology and Monitoring of the Environment
 Federal Statistics Service
 Federal Service for Supervision of Compliance with the Law in the sphere of Mass Communications and Preservation of Cultural Heritage
 Federal Customs Service
 Federal Service for Tariffs
 Federal Financial Monitoring Service
 Federal Service for Financial Markets
 Federal Service for Ecological, Technological and Nuclear Monitoring
 Federal Agency for Atomic Energy
 Federal Space Agency
 Federal Agency for the Supply of Armaments, Military and Special Equipment and Material Resources
 Federal Tourism Agency
 Federal Agency for Physical Education and Sport.

Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov says that from now on the ministers will be responsible for the implementation of the federal government's decisions at local level. Zubkov says a specific official will now be responsible for the implementation of every resolution of the government.

Regional Development Minister Dmitriy Kozak says that the powers of his ministry have been expanded. He states: "First of all, inter-budget relations and control over investment from the federal budget, as well as the investment fund in the regions have been transferred to the Regional Development Ministry."

It is announced that Deputy Prime Minister Aleksey Kudrin will be in charge of the Finance Ministry and the Economic Development and Trade Ministry, while First Deputy Prime Minister Dmitriy Medvedev will supervise the Health and Social Development Ministry.

25 September 2007 Vladimir Putin appoints Airborne Troops commander Aleksandr Kolmakov first deputy defence minister, relieving him of the post of commander of the Airborne Troops.

26 September 2007 Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov says that the government reform is over for now, no new ministries or departments will be set up, and the main load of changes has fallen on the Ministry of Regional Development, the Ministry of Health and Social Development and the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade.

Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin will not only oversee the work of the Finance Ministry but also that of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade.

Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Naryshkin says deputy prime ministerial responsibilities will be redistributed. He says Rosfinmonitoring has been removed from the Ministry of Finance and is now directly subordinated to the cabinet. There will also be a redistribution of functions between the Ministry of Economic Development and the Ministry of Regional Development. The latter will acquire wider responsibilities.

Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov signs a government decree to appoint Oleg Markov as head of the Federal Financial Monitoring Service.

Yabloko leader Grigoriy Yavlinskiy criticises Vladimir Putin's recent political appointments.

26 September 2007 Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Naryshkin says that in time, the party that wins the parliamentary election will form the government.

26 September 2007 Activists of the Democratic Party hold protests near the Defence Ministry building with the slogan "Pay and avoid military service".

26 September 2007 President Vladimir appoints Police Col Andrey Khorev deputy head of the Department of Economic Security at the Interior Ministry. He also appoints Maj-Gen of Police Vladimir Yeremchenko as interior minister for the Republic of Komi.

The MVD sets up a new IT network.

26 September 2007 The leader of the opposition Civil Front, Garri Kasparov, demands that the Prosecutor-General's Office investigate "threats from Chechen republic officials". It is claimed that he insulted Ramzan Kadyrov.

26 September 2007 The Prosecutor-General's Office states that the members of the Romanov royal family cannot be rehabilitated and sends the case to the Supreme Court for consideration.

26 September 2007 The Ministry of Economic Development and Trade lowers its forecast for the extraction and export of gas in 2007 by 5 billion cu.m. This means that the forecast for extraction was lowered to 660 billion cu.m., while that for export to 192 billion cu.m. The forecast for oil extraction in 2007 is 490 million tonnes, while for 2008-2010 it is from 500 million to 514 million tonnes.

26 September 2007 Vladimir Putin meets the leader of the People's Union party, Sergey Baburin. He says he agrees with the aims of the party. Baburin aims at strengthening the unity of peoples both within the Russian Federation and in the CIS.

27 September 2007 Senior officials from the Audit Chamber are arrested for taking bribes. They are the head of an inspectorate of the Russian Federation Audit Chamber, Sergey Klimantov, and the first deputy head of the Vladivostok administration and Vladivostok's chief representative in Moscow, S. Dubovitskiy.

27 September 2007 The commander of the Space Troops, Col-Gen Vladimir Popovkin, says the radar in Armavir, when it is deployed and goes operational, will make the radars in Mukacheve and Sevastopol redundant. Popovkin warns against the militarization of space, and says there is an uninterrupted missile attack warning system along the perimeter of Russia.

28 September 2007 Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov says Russia will very soon have a federal law in the fight against corruption.

28 September 2007 Vladimir Putin signs a decree to appoint 42 new members of the Public Chamber, which make up one-third of the chamber. He appoints two

human rights activists, resident of the Holocaust fund Alla Gerber and head of the Moscow Human Rights Bureau Aleksandr Brod.

28 September 2007 Tatyana Nesterenko is appointed as a deputy finance minister. Vladimir Khrebtov is appointed as an assistant to Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov.

28 September 2007 Chita's Ingodinskiy district court grants the petition by the prosecutor's office to extend the term of custody of ex-Yukos head Mikhail Khodorkovskiy in the Chita remand centre. In compliance with the court decision Khodorkovskiy will stay in the remand centre until 2 January 2008.

28 September 2007 It is announced that the remains of the children of the last Russian tsar, Grand Duchess Mariya Nikolayevna and Tsarevich Aleksey have been found near Yekaterinburg. However, a genetic forensic examination has not been carried out.

28 September 2007 First Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov says that the state defence order will be the responsibility of the Military-Industrial Commission, and no longer the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade.

The head of Rosoboronexport, Sergey Chemezov, outlines the functions of Rosoboronexport.

28 September 2007 Deputy Foreign Minister Anatoliy Safonov, speaks in the Duma at an international seminar on countering nuclear and radiological terrorism. He says Russian nuclear facilities are securely protected.

29 September 2007 The chairman of the Audit Chamber, Sergey Stepashin, announces that deputy director of the chamber's department for control over federal property Vasiliy Koryagin has been detained on suspicion of corruption.

29 September 2007 A VTsIOM poll asks who would you vote for if a Duma election were held next Sunday. The results are:

Yedinaya Rossiya	47 per cent
The CPRF	7 per cent
Spravedlivaya Rossiya	6 per cent
Liberal Democratic Party of Russia	5 per cent

According to VTsIOM, 1,600 people from 153 population centres in 46 Russian regions, territories and republics took part in the poll, which is conducted weekly. Statistical error does not exceed 3.4 per cent.

30 September 2007 Drugaya Rossiya chooses Garri Kasparov as its presidential candidate for the 2008 election.

30 September 2007 The chairman of the Duma and leader of the Yedinaya Rossiya party, Boris Gryzlov, says he thinks that the rigid vertical chain of authority is the most appropriate one for Russia.

30 September 2007 First Deputy Prime Minister Dmitriy Medvedev says that he has no plans to run for the Duma.