

Russian Domestic Policy: A Chronology

October – December 2007

1 October 2007 Vladimir Putin attends the Yedinaya Rossiya congress. He says that he will head the party list for Yedinaya Rossiya in the December Duma elections (although he will not become a member of Yedinaya Rossiya). He says it is “entirely realistic” that he might become prime minister. He says he opposes changing the constitution.

1 October 2007 Deputy chief of the General Staff Colonel-General Vasiliy Smirnov says at present there are 202,000 contract servicemen serving in the Armed Forces. 51,000 are female. He says that in 2007 the federal targeted programme for the transfer of units to a contract basis for the period of 2007-2007 will be completed in full. Under this programme it was planned to transfer to contract staffing 81 combined units with the total personnel of 125,400. He noted that by the end of 2007 it is planned to move to contract service 19 combined units with total personnel of 42,000.

1 October 2007 The Moscow City Court rules legal the arrest of Boris Zemtsov, deputy editor-in-chief of *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, who is charged with extortion.

1 October 2007 Chechen separatist president Dokka Umarov appoints Amir Abdul Madzhid commander of the Dagestani front.

1 October 2007 The autumn draft starts. This intake will be the last to serve 18 months. From January 2008 military service will be cut to 12 months. Over 130,000 young men will be conscripted this autumn.

2 October 2007 The Yedinaya Rossiya congress votes to nominate its 600 candidates for Duma seats. The list was supported in a secret ballot by 476 congress delegates, with three votes against and two abstentions. The party's list is divided into 83 regional groups. The party decided not to form a federal list of three candidates and instead included just one candidate, Vladimir Putin, in the federation-wide part of the list.

2 October 2007 Deputy head of Rosatom Andrey Malyshev says that in the foreseeable future Russia has no intention of importing foreign-made spent nuclear fuel for storage and future reprocessing.

2 October 2007 Vladimir Putin relieves Kamil Iskhakov of his post of presidential representative in the Far Eastern Federal District because he will become deputy minister of regional development.

2 October 2007 Speaker of the People's Assembly of the Chechen parliament Abdurakhmanov says the counterterrorist operation in Chechnya has been completed and only a few dozen militants now remain in the republic.

2 October 2007 Rosatom head Sergey Kiriyenko says over the past two years the

state has substantially increased the funding of Russia's nuclear weapons complex. A federal targeted programme for the development of the nuclear weapons complex, worth a total of R38 billion, was adopted in 2006. Over the last two years an additional R60 billion has been granted to the complex.

2 October 2007 Army General Aleksandr Belousov is appointed chief of the Military Academy of the General Staff. He was first deputy defence minister of Russia from July 2004 to September 2007.

3 October 2007 Lt-General Aleksandr Bulbov, a head of department in the Federal Service for Control Over the Trafficking of Narcotics (Gosnarkokontrol), is arrested along with three colleagues in Moscow's Domodedovo airport. Gosnarkontrol says there are no grounds for his arrest. Moscow's Basmannyy Court also sanctions the arrest of the deputy head of the security department of Gosnarkontrol, Yuriy Geval.

3 October 2007 Sergey Mironov says Vladimir Putin's decision to be a candidate in the Duma election in December 2007 means that Putin has effectively started the formation of a bipartisan system in Russia.

Pro-Putin youth groups hold a rally in Moscow. They are from Molodaya Gvardia, Nashi, and Molodoya Rossiya.

3 October 2007 The Audit Chamber sets up a directorate to deal with internal security matters.

3 October 2007 Arkadiy Dvorkovich, head of the president's expert department, says he opposes the creation of state sector corporations.

3 October 2007 The head of Gazpromenergo, Denis Fedorov says in 2007 Gazprom has reduced natural gas production by 6-6.5 billion cubic metres.

3 October 2007 The former presidential representative to the Far Eastern Federal District, Kamil Iskhakov, is appointed deputy minister of regional development.

3 October 2007 Defence Minister Anatoliy Serdyukov informs the Duma of the reform of the armed forces. He says the MOD is ready for the introduction of 12-month conscription in January 2008.

3 October 2007 Former secretary of the Security Council Andrey Kokoshin says Russia can and must have a much larger space programme both for near-Earth space as well as the planets of the solar system and beyond. He states:

The development and implementation of the suggested programme, which is based on maximum utilization of the potential of unmanned and manned sectors of Russian space exploration would bring Russia not only scientific-technical and economic benefits but would also strengthen defence capability of the state thanks to the organizational and technical strengthening of our industry and the creation of dual-use technologies.

He is addressing the conference Space and International Relations in the Institute of Space Research of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

4 October 2007 Viktor Zubkov joins the Security Council. The former secretary of the Security Council, Igor Ivanov, and the former presidential envoy to the Southern Federal District, Regional Development Minister Dmitriy Kozak, have been removed from the Security Council.

Dmitriy Kozak says the institution of presidential representatives in the federal districts will remain.

4 October 2007 Former Yukos boss Mikhail Khodorkovskiy makes an open statement to liberals.

4 October 2007 Vladimir Putin submits to the Duma bills on creating the state nuclear energy corporation and "On introducing amendments to a number of Russian legislative acts in connection with the adoption of the federal law on the state nuclear energy corporation".

4 October 2007 Duma chairman Boris Gрызлов says Russia needs a long-term space exploration programme for a minimum of 30-40 years.

Space Forces Commander-in-Chief Colonel-General Vladimir Popovkin is interviewed in newspaper *Moskovskiy Komsomolets*.

4 October 2007 It is reported that there is a build up of Interior Ministry (MVD) and MOD troops in Magas in Ingushetia.

4 October 2007 Aleksandr Burutin is appointed first deputy chief of the General Staff

5 October 2007 Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov distributes duties among his deputies. There are five deputy prime ministers, of whom two are first deputy prime ministers, in the new government.

- First Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov will specifically deal with defence, space and missile industry issues, as well as innovative development.
- First Deputy Prime Minister Dmitriy Medvedev will be in charge of the implementation of the national projects.
- Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Zhukov will be responsible for the development of the regions and sport, including the preparation for the 2014 Winter Olympic games.
- Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin will deal with Russia's socioeconomic development and financial policy.
- Deputy Prime Minister and head of the government staff Sergey Naryshkin has been given foreign policy, and he will also supervise the implementation of administrative reform.

5 October 2007 The Duma refuses to register a new faction, People's Union (Motherland) (Narodny Soyuz – Rodina), which is supposed to be headed by deputy speaker Sergey Baburin.

5 October 2007 Vitaliy Lopota, the president of the Energiya rocket and space company, says that the full-scale operation of the GLONASS satellite navigation system is impossible without the introduction of an updated map-making system. GLONASS is to start operation in Russia by the end of 2007, for which 18 satellites

will have to be deployed in orbit, while by the end of 2009 the system will be able to cover the whole globe with its 24 satellites.

6 October 2007 Deputy Defence Minister General Nikolay Makarov says the Russian Space Troops' electro-optical centre at Nurek (Tajikistan) will be re-equipped and improved.

6 October 2007 Vladimir Putin announces that he intends to appoint Grigoriy Rapota, the former executive secretary of the Eurasian Economic Community, as his plenipotentiary representative in the Southern Federal District.

6 October 2007 A 49-year-old Ukrainian criminal godfather is arrested in connection with the murder of Anna Politkovskaya.

6 October 2007 Vladimir Putin announces that ex-Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov will become chief of the Foreign Intelligence Service.

7 October 2007 Vladimir Putin meets military commanders in the Kremlin on the occasion of his 55th birthday. He states:

You and I know and remember well the state of the armed forces a few years ago. We know what tragedy befell our country, above all in the Caucasus. We know that we personally have done something for this, but the main factor that has enabled us to turn the situation round is the courage of our officers and the heroism of rank-and-file soldiers.

7 October 2007 Anatoliy Perminov, head of the Russian Space Agency, is interviewed on cooperation with NASA, the 2009-2010 Luna Glob expedition and the Mars programme.

8 October 2007 Central Electoral Commission Chairman Vladimir Churov says that Vladimir Putin can run as a candidate in the Duma election in December 2007.

8 October 2007 Major-General Aleksandr Kerilin, chief of the Military Memorial Centre of the Russian Armed Forces says that 6,688 Russian servicemen have been killed in the Chechen Republic from November 1994 to date. This also includes personnel from all security services.

8 October 2007 The Nashi youth movement will launch a project on the Orthodox religion.

9 October 2007 Prosecutor-General Yuriy Chayka says the investigation into the murder of journalist Anna Politkovskaya is concluded.

9 October 2007 Deputy Chief of the General Staff Colonel-General Vasiliy Smirnov says that more than 12,000 people dodged the spring draft in 2007.

9 October 2007 Rosoboronexport deputy director-general Aleksey Aleshin says over the next three to five years Russia will manufacture weapons and military hardware worth 22 billion dollars for exports.

10 October 2007 Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov appoints:

- former leader of the Nashi youth movement Vasiliy Yakemenko head of the State Committee for Youth Affairs.

- Andrey Dutov is appointed head of the Federal Industry Agency, succeeding Boris Aleshin, who now heads the Avtovaz motor company.
- Aleksandr Sukhorukov is appointed aide to the chairman of the government of the Russian Federation for the duration of Viktor Zubkov's tenure of the post, while Anton Vayno is appointed deputy head of the Russian government staff.
- Aleksandr Zharov is appointed head of the government's Press Service, Information and Protocol Department.

10 October 2007 Army General Nikolay Patrushev, FSB director, is interviewed in *Argumenty i Fakty*.

10 October 2007 Army General Nikolay Rogozhkin, the C-in-C of the MVD's Internal Troops, believes that there will be no new war in the North Caucasus, no matter how the situation develops in Ingushetia. He says the number of troops in Ingushetia will not be increased.

10 October 2007 Economic Development and Trade Minister Elvira Nabiullina says inflation in 2007 will exceed the 2006 rate of 9 per cent.

10 October 2007 Sergey Mironov says that Spravedlivaya Rossiya will remain in opposition to Yedinaya Rossiya.

10 October 2007 The Moscow Region Muslim association (Muhtasibat) sends an open letter to the regional governor, Boris Gromov. The letter says that the Moscow Region authorities are impeding the construction of mosques and Muslim houses of prayer, thus infringing the rights of Muslims. The Moscow Region Muhtasibat is chaired by Arslan Sadriyev, deputy head of the Council of Muftis and of the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of European Russia.

11 October 2007 Federation Council speaker Sergey Mironov says he hopes that Vladimir Putin will return to the presidential post in 2012.

11 October 2007 Yuriy Nyrkov is appointed deputy chairman of the Investigations Committee under the Prosecutor-General's Office.

11 October 2007 Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov appoints Nikolay Bulayev as the new head of the Federal Education Agency.

11 October 2007 Director of the Moscow Human Rights Bureau Aleksandr Brod says there have been more than 170 xenophobia-related attacks and conflicts in Russia in 2007. This has resulted in the deaths of 51 people with at least 230 receiving various injuries.

11 October 2007 Vladimir Putin approves the concept of Russia's demographic policy to 2025. The government has been tasked with approving the plan of action for the concept's implementation in 2008-2010 within three months. The concept gives an assessment of the current demographic situation in Russia and the trends for its development, defines the principles of Russia's demographic policy and the demographic policy's main tasks.

11 October 2007 Vladimir Putin says that the Ministry of Regional Development should play an important role in attracting investment to Russia's regions.

11 October 2007 Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov says that the former leadership of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade underfunded agriculture. Zubkov says the development of agriculture should be regarded as a top priority area for the government.

12 October 2007 A VTsIOM poll shows that 60 per cent of the electorate are prepared to cast their votes for parties of patriotic orientation in the forthcoming election to the Duma; 40 per cent intend to support those parties that stand for democratic values, according to VTsIOM data, and 38 per cent, left-wing socialist parties.

A Levada poll shows that only Yedinaya Rossiya and the CPRF are likely to be represented in the Duma. 68 per cent will vote for Yedinaya Rossiya (55 per cent in September). 15 per cent will vote for the CPRF (18 per cent in September). All other parties have support levels below 7 per cent.

12 October 2007 Army General Aleksey Maslov, the commander-in-chief of the Russian Ground Troops, says the formation of two alpine brigades in the North Caucasus is almost completed. Brigades are headquartered in Botlikh, Dagestan and Zelenchukskaya, Karachay-Cherkessia. The brigades will start implementing their tasks on 1 December. The brigades were formed pursuant to the presidential resolution of 11 September 2004. Each consists of alpine battalions and supporting units. The total strength of the brigades is about 4,500.

Major-General Valeriy Kulikov, the head of the Defence Ministry's Central Military Medical Commission says that the number of conscripts will go down by almost 400,000 in 2006-10 due to the demographic situation and bad health care. 1.03 million conscripts were registered in 2006. This will go down to 870,000 in 2008 and in 2010 to about 600-660,000 conscripts. This means that the number of conscripts will decrease by almost 40 per cent.

15 October 2007 St Petersburg governor Valentina Matviyenko says Vladimir Putin may become prime minister after stepping down as president. She says he is the guarantor of Russia's further dynamic development.

15 October 2007 Nikolay Tokarev, formerly the head of Zarubezhneft, is elected president of Transneft.

15 October 2007 Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov says that Russia has become a more favourable place for foreign investment. Investment totalled over 60 billion dollars in the first six months of 2007.

15 October 2007 First Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov says more than R140 billion will be allocated for the development of the nuclear power industry over the next two years. A state corporation bringing together all assets of the industry is to be established by the end of 2007.

16 October 2007 Anatoliy Safonov, the president's special representative for international cooperation in combating terrorism and transnational organized crime says a single data bank on the issues of combating terrorism has been created in Russia and has started functioning.

17 October 2007 The leader of Yedinaya Rossiya Boris Gryzlov writes in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*. He says that Vladimir Putin will remain the Russia's leader after the election and that the Duma election in December will be a nationwide

referendum on support for Putin. He says some people “see Putin's departure as Russia getting weaker. They are not going to see it. Putin will remain Russia's leader.”

The Central Electoral Commission Chairman Vladimir Churov says Russia will keep its promise to invite international observers to monitor elections.

17 October 2007 Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov criticises officials from the state commission on borders for failure to carry out presidential instructions.

17 October 2007 The Investigations Committee under the Prosecutor-General's Office charges FSB officer Lt-Colonel Pavel Ryaguzov in the context of the murder case of journalist Anna Politkovskaya.

18 October 2007 Vladimir Putin says he is opposed to the president ceding his powers to the government. He says giving the government extra powers would create diarchy. He says the presence of opposition parties in the Duma is useful.

Putin says that the Security Council will not be abolished. He has not yet decided who the next secretary will be.

19 October 2007 The MOD states that a total of 47 servicemen died in September 2007 as a result of various crimes and incidents in the Russian armed forces. A total of 352 servicemen have died in the armed forces since the beginning of 2007 as a result of crimes and incidents.

Colonel-General Yevgeniy Karpov, head of communication at the Armed Forces says by 2015 they will have completed the creation of an integrated computerized digital communication system, OATsSS.

20 October 2007 Vladimir Putin signs a decree to set up the State Antinarcotics Committee to make the fight against illegal trafficking of drugs more efficient.

20 October 2007 The former USSR president, Mikhail Gorbachev, is elected the leader of the newly founded all-Russia public movement Union of Social Democrats.

20 October 2007 The MVD denies that it is collecting data on children from ethnic minorities.

20 October 2007 Vladimir Putin signs a decree amending the list of strategic enterprises and joint-stock companies to include Atomenergoprom.

21 October 2007 According to the Federal Migration Service, 2 million people were registered as illegal immigrants in Russia in 2007 against 10 million people in 2005.

22 October 2007 The Prosecutor-General's Office demands a 9-year sentence for Boris Berezovskiy, charged with and being tried in absentia for embezzlement of R215 million of Aeroflot money.

23 October 2007 Vladimir Putin addresses a meeting of the all-Russian association of municipal entities to discuss problems of local government. Putin proposes the establishment of a presidential council dealing with reform of municipal authorities.

23 October 2007 The Ministry of Industry and Energy drafts and submits for the government's consideration a decision to build the second section of the East Siberia - Pacific Ocean pipeline.

23 October 2007 President of the Chechen Republic Ramzan Kadyrov describes Wahhabis as his personal enemies and says that he intends to follow them wherever they are in the North Caucasus.

23 October 2007 The Human Rights in Russia website (www.hro.org), is attacked by hackers.

24 October 2007 Prime minister Viktor Zubkov appoints Andrey Zasyepkin head of the Federal Agency for State Border Development and Maintenance.

24 October 2007 Aleksey Timofeyev, St Petersburg Legislation Assembly deputy from the Spravedlivaya Rossiya party, suggests that his party dissolve itself as he considers the rivalry between the two pro-presidential parties to be inappropriate. This is rejected by Spravedlivaya Rossiya leader Sergey Mironov. Timofeyev is later expelled.

24 October 2007 Ekho Moskvyy radio station reports that pro-Putin rallies are being held in several regions.

24 October 2007 Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev says that two suspects in the bombing of the Nevskiy Ekspress train have been detained in Ingushetia.

24 October 2007 The first railway congress opens Moscow. One of the main questions on the agenda is strategy and development of the railway until 2030.

24 October 2007 Rosatom states that Russian prospected uranium deposits exceed 1 million tonnes. Russia has the third biggest uranium deposits in the world after Australia and Kazakhstan.

24 October 2007 The Ministry of Agriculture states that representatives of associations and unions uniting major producers of foodstuffs and chain stores have signed at their own initiative an agreement at the Agriculture Ministry on taking measures to stabilize prices of individual types of socially important foodstuffs. The price freeze will run to 31 January 2008.

25 October 2007 Ekho Moskvyy radio station reports that rallies are taking place in various places throughout Russia calling for a third presidential term for Vladimir Putin.

25 October 2007 The deputy head of the MVD department providing public law and order, Vladimir Golubovskiy, says there are 302 informal extremist youth groups generally consisting of over 10,000 people.

25 October 2007 Minister of Regional Development Dmitriy Kozak speaks for a radical change in the system of relations between the federal centre and the regions. 'We need to develop and create a system of relations between the federal centre and the regions that will stimulate their development to the maximum, first of all of the recipient regions.'

25 October 2007 The Chechenpress website reports that exiled representatives of Chechen separatists have held a teleconference to warn their president Dokka Umarov against proclaiming himself the emir of a North Caucasus emirate.

25 October 2007 The commander of the Strategic Missile troops, Colonel-General Nikolay Solovtsov, says that the RS-24 strategic missile, fitted with multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles, will be added to the Russian nuclear arsenal probably within three years. Solovtsov says that the RS-24, coupled with Topol-M missile systems, stationary and mobile, will constitute the backbone of the Strategic Missile Troops' attack force.

26 October 2007 The Yedinaya Rossiya list of candidates for the Duma election is officially registered.

26 October 2007 Aleksey Borodavkin, Russia's permanent representative at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), says that Russia will invite observers from the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) to the Duma elections on 2 December, but it will determine the conditions of the election monitoring itself.

Federation Council speaker Sergey Mironov states that he continues to support the idea of a third presidential term for Vladimir Putin.

26 October 2007 Vladimir Putin signs the federal law on amending the federal law "On state benefits for citizens who have children". The new law envisages that two new state benefits will be paid as of 1 January 2008: a one-off allowance of R14,000 for a conscript serviceman's pregnant wife, and a R6,000 monthly benefit for a conscript serviceman's child.

26 October 2007 The Ossetian mujahedin community Kataib al-Khoul says that a sabotage group of mujahedin carried out a successful act of sabotage to kill infidels in the capital of North Ossetia on 21 October.

26 October 2007 the plenipotentiary representative of the Russian president in the Southern Federal District, Grigoriy Rapota 84 per cent of the terror-related crimes committed in Russia are in the country's south.

26 October 2007 Strategic Missile Troops Commander Colonel-General Nikolay Solovtsov says four silo-based launchers and three mobile launch pads for the Topol-M missile system will be placed on combat duty before the end of 2007. There will be five more test launches in 2007. Solovtsov says that Russia, should the need arise and should a political decision be taken, is capable of resuming the production of short- and medium-range missiles within a short period.

26 October 2007 The Federation Council calls on the government to do more to stabilize food prices. Some food prices have risen by between 10 and 60 per cent in September-October.

26 October 2007 Ren TV reports that people have been forced to take part in pro-Putin rallies in Voronezh.

26 October 2007 It is stated that the pro-Moscow Chechen government is drafting a programme to attract Russian speakers back to Chechnya.

27 October 2007 The deputy head of the presidential administration, Vladislav Surkov, outlines the Putin Plan on the NTV show Real Politics.

27 October 2007 Pro-Putin rallies take place in Novosibirsk and in Uryupinsk (Volgograd Region).

28 October 2007 Vostok-2007 command-post exercises on troop management begin. Planning measures to counter terrorism and to deal with humanitarian, environmental and technological disasters on the territory of the Siberian and Far Eastern federal districts is the main objective.

29 October 2007 Dmitriy Akhanov is appointed head of the Federal Energy Agency. The post became vacant on 3 October following the resignation of Sergey Oganessian.

29 October 2007 Lavochkin Research and Production Association director-general Georgiy Polishchuk says that Russia has all the technical capabilities to start implementing its moon programme in 2009-2010. The programme is scheduled to commence in 2012.

30 October 2007 Ren TV reports that the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) wants fewer foreign elections observers. It has decided to reduce the list of invited observers by almost two-thirds. About 400 people have been invited. Opposition figures disagree with this decision.

30 October 2007 Vladimir Putin attends a ceremony at the Butovo range near Moscow, to commemorate the victims of Soviet repression.

30 October 2007 Vladimir Putin appoints Oleg Safonov as presidential plenipotentiary representative in the Far Eastern Federal District. He was a deputy interior minister.

30 October 2007 First Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov says special economic zones, should become centres of growth of Russia's new economy. There are currently 13 such zones in Russia and 54 agents have been registered and started working there. He also states:

Sooner or later the time will come when their reserves will dwindle and the economy based on raw materials will simply collapse; and in order for us not to find ourselves under its rubble, we already now have to take specific steps to diversify the economy, build a modern economy based on innovations, which will be powered not by the pace of development of natural resources, but by ideas, inventions and the ability to implement them in a specific competitive product.

31 October 2007 A bus blows up in Tolyatti. Seven people are killed and 20 injured. Terrorism is suspected.

31 October 2007 Members of the Public Committee for a Fair Election claim that there have been violations of the rules of campaigning in the pre-election period by some political parties.

A pro-Putin rally takes place in Rostov-na-Donu.

A Levada centre poll reveals that 55 per cent would not object to increasing the Russian president's term of office from four to seven years, while one-third (34 per cent) are against this and the rest are undecided.

The opinion poll showed that most of those questioned (53 per cent) were in favour of giving Vladimir Putin the opportunity to be elected president for three or four consecutive terms and not two as currently stipulated by the constitution (35 per cent are opposed to this idea). At the same time two-thirds of respondents (65 per cent) would not like him to become president of Russia for life. However, 17 per cent do support this idea.

31 October 2007 Vladimir Putin speaks at a session of the Commission for Military-Technical Cooperation. He says Russian companies should strive to increase cooperation with foreign partners to jointly develop military equipment.

31 October 2007 The deputy head of the science and technology centre at the Russian federal directorate on the safe storage and destruction of chemical weapons, Andrey Shevchenko says Russia has destroyed some 24 per cent of its stockpiles of chemical weapons, which means 9,633 tonnes out of the total of 40,000 tonnes. Russia plans to destroy 45 per cent of its chemical warfare agents by 31 December 2009, and to get rid of all its stockpiles by 2012.

31 October 2007 Chechen separatist foreign minister Akhmed Zakayev expresses disagreement with the statement by the leader of the Chechen armed resistance, Dokka Umarov, about plans to establish a new Islamic state - the Caucasus Emirate.

31 October 2007 Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov says Russians expect Vladimir Putin to decide on changing the constitution to extend the presidential term to seven years.

November

1 November 2007 A pro-Putin rally takes place in Krasnoyarsk.

1 November 2007 Vladimir Putin gives the government three months to finish work on a concept for the socioeconomic development of the country up to 2020. He states:

We are indeed expecting a lot from this document. That is why it should not just lay down our priorities in building an innovation-based economy and diversifying its structure, not just outline the continuity of objectives concerning the improvement of social institutions and how they serve the country's citizens, but, most important, this concept should give a clear answer to how we achieve these goals, using which methods and instruments, and how we move towards our stated objectives.

Without elaborating these aspects, the document will remain merely a declaration. I would like you to pay attention to how this issue is being raised because the concept should become a genuine action guide for both the executive and legislature covering the period up to 2020.

I think that at the beginning of next year, say in February, this concept should be adopted.

1 November 2007 Colonel Igor Konashenkov, aide to the commander-in-chief of the Ground Troops says "The number of contract soldiers and sergeants in the Ground Troops' permanent readiness units has almost reached 100,000".

1 November 2007 Major-General Valentin Nikolayev, acting head of the Russian Defence Ministry directorate for housing programmes, says that by the end of 2007 the MOD will get over 42,000 flats for servicemen.

2 November 2007 Sergey Mironov, leader of Spravedlivaya Rossiya, warns about the domination of one political party in the country.

2 November 2007 Ren TV reports that the local parliament in Kaliningrad Region is preparing to consider the draft law banning rallies and pickets outside local government buildings.

2 November 2007 FSB chief Nikolay Patrushev, who also heads the agency's National Antiterrorist Committee, chairs a conference of heads of antiterrorist commissions of the Central Federal District in Tula. Patrushev says that in two years the number of terrorist acts was reduced by half. There were 257 in 2005 and 112 in 2006. In the first 10 months of 2007, there were 38 - compared with 99 in the same period of 2006.

2 November 2007 First Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov says that the atomic energy sector must be developed in Russia to avoid an energy shortage.

2 November 2007 A series of military exercises codenamed "Kavkazskiy khrebet-2007" begins.

Zvezda TV reports on the Vostok 2007 military exercises. These began on 28 October and ended on 2 November.

2 November 2007 The secretary of the presidium of the Central Council of Spravedlivaya Rossiya, Aleksandr Babakov, says he believes that there is more freedom of speech in Russia now than eight years ago.

3 November 2007 General Valentin Korabelnikov, the head of the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, says that monitoring US ABM efforts is a GRU priority.

4 November 2007 Vladimir Putin states on national unity day:

Some people are constantly going on about the need to divide our country and are still trying to disseminate those theories. Some believe that we have too many natural resources and that they should be shared. They themselves, of course, have no wish to share their own natural resources with anyone, and we should take that into account, too. We should base our position on the fact that views like these exist in the world.

He also states:

The world around us is not uniform and hostile. Moreover, I deeply believe that the majority of people living on the planet have a positive attitude to our country and some of them even treat it with hope as they see Russia as a protector of their own interests. As for the fact that someone does not like it, yes, of course, someone may not like it because there are not only our supporters but also those who would like to set up a unipolar world, who would like to have control over the entire humanity. Nothing like this has ever happened in the history of the planet and never will, I believe.

5 November 2007 Vladimir Putin signs a decree "On changes to the composition of the council for the implementation of priority national projects and demographic policy under the Russian president approved by Russian Federation presidential decree No 1226 of 21 October 2005". Under the decree, Health and Social Development Minister Tatyana Golikova, Economic Development and Trade Minister Elvira Nabiullina, and presidential plenipotentiary representative in the Southern Federal District Grigoriy Rapota have been included on the council for the implementation of priority national projects and demographic policy under the president.

Vladimir Putin has also reshuffled the presidium of the council for the implementation of priority national projects and demographic policy under the Russian president approved by the Russian presidential decree of 13 July 2006. He included Health and Social Development Minister Tatyana Golikova and Regional Development Minister Dmitriy Kozak in the presidium of the council.

5 November 2007 A group of Chechen separatist officials issue an appeal to the rebel Chechen parliament speaker, Zhaloudi Saralyapov, posted on Chechenpress website, condemning the recent statement by rebel Chechen President Dokka Umarov proclaimed himself the "Emir of the Caucasian Emirates" and leader of the jihad. Saralyapov asks Chechen rebel leader Dokka Umarov to clearly explain the situation concerning his video statement.

7 November 2007 Yedinaya Rossiya leader Boris Gryzlov says the party will do all it can to preserve Vladimir Putin's status as a national leader and ensure the continuation of his policy.

7 November 2007 Oleg Safonov commences work as the new presidential envoy to the Far East Federal District.

7 November 2007 The first deputy defence minister, Colonel-General Aleksandr Kolmakov, says that over the past 10 years the Russian state aviation, which incorporates the Russian Air Force, the government's air fleet and the ROSTO air fleet, has lost 280 airplanes and helicopters and 707 people have died as a result of failures and crashes.

7 November 2007 The deputy commander of the Ground Troops, Vladimir Moltenskiy says that the military education system in Russia is set to change.

8 November 2007 Vladimir Putin meets members of the Russian Islamic clergy. He urges Moslems to vote in the Duma elections.

Boris Nemtsov claims that MVD spetsnaz police have seized all the printed matter for the election campaign of the URF.

8 November 2007 The head of the Moscow Federal Registration Service directorate, Ivan Kondrat, says the directorate refuses to register 1,380 NGOs because of violations of the existing legislation. Since April 2006 13,014 applications have been submitted to the directorate. 1,380 have been refused.

8 November 2007 It is reported that Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov on 1 November approved the statute of the Federal Agency for State Border Development and Maintenance.

9 November 2007 General Mikhail Pankov, chief of the MVD's Main Directorate for the Southern Federal District, says that 32 terror attacks and more than 56,000 corruption-related crimes have been registered in the District between January and September 2007.

9 November 2007 The director of the Federal Agency for Special Construction (Spetsstroy), Army General Nikolay Abroskin, states that the new radar station in Armavir (Krasnodar Territory) will be fully ready to become operational in July 2008.

The head of the Federal Space Agency (Roskosmos) Anatoliy Perminov says a final decision about the location of the new cosmodrome in the Far East will be made by the country leadership in early 2008. However Russia will not leave Baykonur until 2020.

10 November 2007 The commander of the Strategic Missile Troops, Colonel-General Nikolay Solovtsov, says the latest ballistic missile RS-24 with multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles will be taken into service in three years.

10 November 2007 A member of the Yedinaya Rossiya general council's presidium and head of the Duma directorate for public relations, Yuriy Shuvalov, says Yedinaya Rossiya's leaders have admitted that there are ideological disagreements within the party, but categorically denied the possibility of a split. Shuvalov says there are three main ideological platforms in the party: the social, the liberal and the conservative-patriotic. The social club is headed by the chairman of the Duma committee for labour and social policy, Andrey Isayev; the liberal club, The 4th of November, is headed by the head of the Duma committee for constitutional legislation and state construction, Vladimir Pligin and Ekspert magazine's editor Valeriy Fadeyev; the conservative-patriotic club is headed by Yuriy Shuvalov as part of the social-conservative policy.

10 November 2007 Director of the Moscow Human Rights Bureau Aleksandr Brod says between January and October 2007, around 200 attacks and conflicts on xenophobic grounds took place in Russia, as a result of which 60 people died and at least 280 were injured. In 2004 more than 80 were injured and 25 died as a result of assaults on xenophobic grounds. In 2005 more than 200 attacks motivated by ethnic hatred were registered, with 25 people dead and around 200 injured. In 2006, some 340 were injured and 56 people were killed in xenophobic attacks.

10 November 2007 The commander of the North Caucasus Military District, Army General Aleksandr Baranov, says that the two new mountain brigades based in the North Caucasus Military District are now fully staffed.

Baranov says that not a single Russian soldier will remain in Georgia by 1 December.

12 November 2007 First Deputy Prime Minister Dmitriy Medvedev states that Russia must continue to have a strong presidency.

It would not be right "to develop along the path of European states which during turning points in their history changed their constitutions like gloves and changed their political systems, moving from a presidential form of government to a parliamentary one and vice versa. We must rely on our political tradition and remember that Russia is the largest country in the

world...only if there is a strong presidency can a country like Russia survive on the world map.

12 November 2007 The Supreme Court refuses to remove the CPRF from the election to the Duma, which is scheduled for 2 December. Spravedlivaya Rossiya filed a suit demanding that the CPRF be disqualified from the polls over violating the copyright law.

The secretariat of the Central Committee of the CPRF lodges a complaint with the Central Electoral Commission and the courts over the information policy of federal TV channels.

12 November 2007 Aleksandra Levitskaya is appointed deputy economic development and trade minister. Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov appoints two new deputy heads of the Federal Service on Financial Monitoring. Sergey Osipov is appointed state secretary - deputy head of the service and Aleksandr Klimenkov deputy head of the service.

12 November 2007 The deputy director of the Federal Migration Service (FMS), Mikhail Tyurkin, says the FMS is completing the compilation of a single database on all foreign nationals. The database currently contains more than 55 million entries. These are information about crossing the border, registering with migration bodies, receiving work permits, the offences and crimes committed.

Tyurkin says the FMS is beginning to issue new biometric passports all over its territory. By 9 November 100,000 Russian citizens had received new passports. They are residents of the so-called pilot zones - Moscow, Kaliningrad and St Petersburg, where the first specimens of modern IDs appeared. Each such document contains an electronic chip. A unified system will be created by the end of 2009. It will make it possible to provide a new-generation passport for every Russian resident.

13 November 2007 Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov says that Yedinaya Rossiya should show a good result in the Duma election, which would enable it to form an effective parliament and ensure continuity of the country's course for many years to come.

Yedinaya Rossiya leader Boris Gryzlov says the party has personnel problems which it needs to tackle. He accepts criticisms of the party made by Vladimir Putin, who warns that opportunists could penetrate the party.

13 November 2007 The Duma passes a law banning foreign citizens from contract-based military service in the special services. The package of amendments to the law on military duty and military service bans foreigners from joining the Foreign Intelligence Service, departments of the FSB, the federal agency for special communications and information, federal state security agencies and the federal agency providing mobilization training for government bodies.

General Yuriy Baluyevskiy, chief of General Staff, is interviewed on TV. He discusses the development of the armed forces, the CFE treaty, US missile defence plans and Georgia.

14 November 2007 The Duma adopts in the second and third readings amendments to the law "On state secrets", envisaging the possibility of handing over information amounting to a state secret to international organizations.

14 November 2007 Federation Council speaker Sergey Mironov says he believes that after March 2008 Vladimir Putin could become head of the upper house of parliament.

14 November 2007 The Chechen separatist parliament denounces the declaration establishing a Caucasian emirate.

14 November 2007 A new border complex has been inaugurated in Magerramkentskiy District in Dagestan. FSB Director Nikolay Patrushev attends the opening ceremony.

15 November 2007 Lawyer Pavel Astakhov says participants in the For Putin movement have gathered 30 million signatures in support of Putin.

15 November 2007 Vladimir Putin signs a decree "On the Approval of the Basic Military Regulations of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation". The decree has approved the Barracks Regulations, the Disciplinary Regulations, and the Garrison and Guard Duty Regulations of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. The decree will take effect on 1 January 2008.

16 November 2007 Deputy Finance Minister Sergey Storchak is arrested. His arrest is apparently linked to the Russian Federation's debt to the Sodeksim company dating back to the Soviet period.

16 November 2007 The Federation Council approves amendments to the law on military-technical cooperation with foreign states. The law provides for the establishment of specialized organizations which will be state intermediaries in foreign trade in military products.

Chief of the General Staff Army General Yuriy Baluyevskiy addresses the Federation Council. He states that the programme of development of the Armed Forces until 2016 and until 2020 has been defined.

16 November 2007 Director of the FSB Nikolay Patrushev says construction of all border facilities in the North Caucasus is to be complete by the end of 2007.

17 November 2007 The Investigations Committee under the Russian Prosecutor-General's Office officially confirms the detention of Deputy Finance Minister Sergey Storchak and two businessmen. They are suspected of embezzlement.

18 November 2007 The Council of Muftis of Russia supports the idea to set up a public movement "Muslims in support of President Putin". The head of the Islamic Cultural Centre, Abdul Vakhed Niyazov, has been instructed to organize the movement, which will later join the nationwide public movement in support of Putin.

20 November 2007 Vladimir Putin addresses senior military commanders on defence policy and the state of the armed forces.

20 November 2007 Deputy director of the Sova analytical centre Galina Kozhevnikova says racially motivated crimes are increasing in Russia at the rate of 20 per cent annually. In 2007, 529 people suffered from racially motivated crimes, and 55 of them died. These figures are similar to those for the whole of 2006, even though 2007 has not ended yet.

20 November 2007 Defence Minister Anatoliy Serdyukov says the MOD pursues a policy of maximum openness to public scrutiny.

We have maintained active cooperation with the Public Chamber, the presidential council for the promotion of civil society institutions and human rights. The Defence Ministry has created a Public Council. Its inquiries have confirmed positive trends in the armed forces and allowed a number of public organizations to reconsider their vision of the armed forces in general. One can say with certainty that a positive role is being played by parents' committees, set up just recently at military units and the military commissariats of Russia's constituent territories. They act as an information link between military commanders and soldiers' parents.

20 November 2007 A high tech special economic zone is opened in Tatarstan.

20 November 2007 The Chechen separatist parliament states that it is assuming state powers. The announcement came after the proclamation of the Caucasus Emirate by separatist president Dokka Umarov.

Chechen separatist foreign minister Akhmed Zakayev tenders a letter of resignation to the chairman of the CRI parliament.

20 November 2007 Defence Minister Anatoliy Serdyukov says the MOD has focused its efforts on the creation of a new command and control system.

In 2007 we focused our main efforts on the creation of a command and control system of forces of the operative-strategic, operative and tactical levels on the basis of uniform ground mobile and air control centres, a mobile automatic control system and an integrated digital ground communications system.

He talks about the planned exercise Stability-2008:

It is being planned that the exercise will practise step by step the issues of eliminating armed conflicts along the Russian state borders and organizing strategic deployment of the Army and Navy if necessary. [It is being planned] to practice tasks on the use of military groups in strategic-scale military actions and to finish them by carrying out strategic command and staff training on control over all armed forces, including strategic nuclear forces.

Vice-Admiral Nikolay Maksimov, formerly acting commander, is appointed commander of the Northern Fleet. Earlier, Northern Fleet commander Vladimir Vysotskiy was appointed commander-in-chief of the Russian Navy.

The chairman of the Federation Council Defence and Security Committee Viktor Ozerov says Russia's financial expenditure on national defence and security for the 2008-2010 period, in accordance with the adopted three-year budget, will amount overall to nearly 7.5 trillion roubles (approx 308.5 billion US dollars).

He states that on 16 November the Federation Council approved Russia's first ever three-year "military budget". In accordance with it, direct and indirect expenditure on the defence and security of the state will amount to 7,448,100,000,000 roubles. In 2008 2,225,000,000,000 roubles would be allocated for this purpose. In 2009 and 2010 spending on defence and security would amount, respectively, to 2,485,700,000,000 roubles and 2,737,400,000,000 roubles. Spending on the state

defence order is to increase by 19.1 per cent in 2008 compared with 2007, in 2009 by 31.6 per cent, and in 2010 by 46.1 per cent.

Compared with 2007 expenditure in the 'national defence' section in 2008 will increase by 137.6 billion roubles to 959.6 billion roubles; in 2009 by 239.5 billion roubles to 1,061,500,000,000 roubles; and in 2010 by 369 billion roubles to 1,191,000,000,000 roubles.

Ozerov says that the largest growth in expenditure by 2010 would be on the upkeep and maintenance of the armed forces (one-and-a-half times), and large amounts would also be spent on preparation and participation in providing collective security and peacekeeping activities and on the development of the nuclear weapons complex.

In the period from 2008 to 2010 a total of over 100,000 apartments will be built for military servicemen.

21 November 2007 Vladimir Putin addresses an all-Russian forum of supporters. He attacks politicians who damaged the country in the 1990s who are now seeking to return to power with the help of western experts.

21 November 2007 Sergey Lavrov says Russia will continue to pursue a policy of market reforms and support democracy.

21 November 2007 Oleg Eskin is appointed a deputy defence minister. He was adviser to Defence Minister Anatoliy Serdyukov. He will be in charge of communications and control issues. Yevgeniy Shkolov is appointed deputy interior minister.

21 November 2007 Chief public health doctor Gennadiy Onishchenko says as of 1 November, there are 403,100 HIV positive people registered in Russia, including 2,636 children.

21 November 2007 Chechen ombudsman Nurdi Nukhazhiyev criticises the appointment of former commander of the Russian forces in Chechnya Lt-General Vladimir Shamanov as head of the Main Administration for Military Training and Service. Various Russian human rights organisations also criticise this decision.

A new commander of Airborne Troops is appointed, Lt-General Valeriy Yevtukhovich, replacing Col-General Aleksandr Kolmakov who has been appointed first deputy defence minister.

22 November 2007 Former Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov and ex-head of the Central Bank Viktor Gerashchenko issue a joint statement. They says that Russia is threatened with a "full-scale socio-economic crisis, which will throw the country a long way back":

Administrative intervention and the use of force in economic processes have long exceeded all reasonable limits. The runaway expansion of more and more 'state corporations' suppresses healthy competition, lowers the general efficiency of economic activity and state governance, and increases corruption. The perversity of the system of governance of state banks and companies also shows. There is no strategy of macroeconomic regulation, officials' statements and actions are contradictory.

22 November 2007 Receiver Eduard Rebgun states that Yukos has ceased to be a taxpayer, and its bankruptcy is complete. The Federal Tax Service has made an entry in the unified state registry of legal entities on the dissolution of the oil company.

22 November 2007 Head of the macroeconomic forecasting department of the Economic Development and Trade Ministry Andrey Klepach states that by 2020 Russian GDP will amount to almost R154,000 billion. 2007's GDP will reach R30,000 billion. Under the long-term development concept, Russia should become the fifth largest economy in the world and become a leader in such industries as aircraft manufacturing, software, shipbuilding, grain and meat production.

22 November 2007 Federation Council member Vasiliy Likhachev says the UN is winding down its humanitarian project in the North Caucasus. Chechnya, Ingushetia and other republics are no longer considered disaster zones. The UN believes that the situation in the North Caucasus has become stable.

Chechen rebel leader Dokka Umarov says that nobody can revoke his authority as emir of the leader of the Caucasus Emirate and the governor of the Nokhchicho Valiyat (Chechnya Province).

22 November 2007 Army General Anatoliy Grebenyuk, the chief of the Ministry of Defence Billeting and Facilities Service, and the chief of the Main Military Medical Directorate of the Russian Armed Forces Colonel-General of the medical service Igor Bykov are relieved of their posts and dismissed from military service. Bykov is replaced by Major-General Vladimir Shappo.

Colonel-General Vladislav Polonskiy had also been relieved of his post as chief of the ministry's Main Tank-Automotive Directorate and retired from military service. His replacement is Lt-General Nikolay Yershov, until recently deputy commander of the Volga-Urals Military District for armaments.

22 November 2007 The MVD says that organizers of the "dissenters' march" in St Petersburg (planned for 25 November) have refused to sign a document giving their consent to the route of the march proposed by the mayor's office and intend to stage a series of unauthorized protests. The MVD claims that the National Bolshevik Party plans to use non-lethal weapons during the protest.

Drugaya Rossiya reports that Special Services have raided a flat in Moscow where National Bolshevik activists are located. www.namarsh.ru

22 November 2007 State Secretary, Deputy Defence Minister Army-General Nikolay Pankov says that 10 million voters have links with the Armed Forces.

22 November 2007 First deputy speaker of the Duma and Yedinaya Rossiya member Lyubov Sliska says she is convinced that there are people who want to restore the rule of oligarchs in Russia.

22 November 2007 *Kommersant* reports that Yevgeniy Shkolov is appointed a new deputy internal affairs minister for criminal police. He was head of the ministry's Economic Security Department. Shkolov replaces Deputy Minister Oleg Safonov, who was appointed recently as president's plenipotentiary representative in the Far East Federal District.

23 November 2007 The URF nominates Boris Nemtsov as its presidential candidate.

The militia seize URF newspapers published in the Perm region.

Boris Berezovskiy states that he is funding a certain opposition underground in Russia.

Ekho Moskvyy reports that the militia are searching the office of Garry Kasparov.

Yabloko stages a rally outside the Federation Council in Moscow.

23 November 2007 The Investigations Committee under the Prosecutor-General's Office charges the deputy finance minister, Sergey Storchak, with attempted embezzlement of more than R43 million from the state budget.

23 November 2007 The Federation Council approves a bill on the creation of Rosatom.

23 November 2007 The MOD states that a total of 395 servicemen have died in the armed forces as a result of crimes and incidents since the beginning of 2007.

The MOD states that Vice-Admiral Konstantin Sidenko will take over as commander of the Pacific Fleet, and Vice-Admiral Viktor Mardusin the Baltic Fleet. Vice-Admiral Aleksandr Kletskov was appointed commander of the Black Sea Fleet in August, when its former commander, Admiral Aleksandr Tatarinov, was transferred to the navy's Main Staff in Moscow as deputy navy C-in-C.

24 November 2007 A protest rally takes place in Nazran against the arbitrariness of special services and corruption in Ingushetia. It is forcibly broken up by the authorities. The police prevent a Dissenters' March in Nizhny Novgorod. Journalists are prevented from covering the rallies.

The appeal commission of the Supreme Court confirms the legitimacy of President Vladimir Putin's participation in the election to the fifth Duma due to take place on 2 December.

Mikhail Kasyanov, leader of the People's Democratic Union movement and the People for Democracy and Justice party set up in October confirms his decision to stand in the presidential election in 2008.

The URF office in Moscow is attacked by hooligans.

Moscow Meshchanskiy Court sentences opposition United Civil Front leader Garry Kasparov to five days of arrest. Kasparov is punished for violations he had committed during the so-called march of the dissenters in Moscow earlier in the day.

At least four activists of the pro-Kremlin Molodaya Rossiya youth movement are detained in Moscow.

URF Duma candidate Mariya Gaydar is arrested during the Dissenters March in Moscow. She is released as she has immunity.

24 November 2007 Kavkaz-Tsentr websites states that rebel Chechen president Dokka Umarov has survived an assassination attempt organized by Russian special services.

25 November 2007 Nikita Belykh, the chairman of the federal council of the URF and a Duma candidate, is detained by the police in St. Petersburg. Boris Nemtsov is also detained in St. Petersburg. He is released the same day.

Thirteen Yabloko party members are arrested at an unauthorised rally in St. Petersburg.

26 November 2007 URF leader Nikita Belykh says that all the opposition politicians who have declared their intention to take part in the presidential election must sit down at the negotiating table after 2 December.

Duma deputy, Vladimir Ryzhkov, says he is ready to take part in the presidential election but only as the single candidate from the democratic parties.

The Federation Council sets the date of the presidential election on 2 March 2008.

The leader of Spravedlivaya Rossiya and the speaker of the Federation Council Sergey Mironov says that Vladimir Putin made a mistake in putting himself at the head of the Yedinaya Rossiya list for the Duma elections.

The head of the CEC, Vladimir Churov, says that even if Vladimir Putin leaves the presidency early, he will not be able to take part in the presidential election as 2 March 2008.

26 November 2007 Vladimir Putin appoints Sergey Chemezov head of Rostekhnologii. He is simultaneously relieved of his post of head of Rosoboronexport. Anatoliy Isaykin is appointed head of Rosoboronexport.

27 November 2007 Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov states that law enforcement agencies have acted appropriately during the so-called Dissenters' March on 24 November.

27 November 2007 Navy Commander in Chief Admiral Vladimir Vysotskiy says in 2008 areas of operation of Russian Northern Fleet will be expanded substantially: 'Next year Northern Fleet ships will be addressing tasks in the interests of Russia's security in a number of areas of the world ocean where they have not sailed in a long time'.

27 November 2007 Vladimir Putin signs the Federal Law "On introducing amendments in Articles 9 and 12 of the Federal Law 'On military-technical cooperation of the Russian Federation with foreign states'".

28 November 2007 Vladimir Churov, the chairman of the CEC says he supports a more active role for the Russian Orthodox Church in state affairs and politics.

28 November 2007 Finance Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Aleksey Kudrin asks for a personal meeting with his deputy Sergey Storchak, who is now in custody.

28 November 2007 Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev says that the number of terrorist attacks in Russia has decreased by 15 times in the past four years. He

states that 38 terrorist attacks were reported in the first nine months of 2007, against 561 in 2003.

28 November 2007 Federation Council senator Admiral Vyacheslav Popov addresses a hearing on the Russian Navy. He laments its state.

28 November 2007 The commander-in-chief of the MVD's Internal Troops, Army General Nikolay Rogozhkin, says that the strength of the Internal Troops has not been cut in the process of reorganization of Interior Troops districts into regional commands. Rogozhkin says that at the present time their overall strength stands at about 190,000. On 27 November prospects for the development of the Internal Troops of the Russian Interior Ministry in 2011-20 were considered at a scientific and practical conference held at the main command of the Internal Troops.

28 November 2007 The Chechen separatist information minister, Movladi Udugov, expresses his support for rebel president Dokka Umarov's recent proclamation of a Caucasus Emirate and condemns criticism by separatist rebel prime minister Akhmed Zakayev of this move.

28 November 2007 Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov signs a decree putting 31 oil and gas fields on the list of strategic assets critical for domestic gas supply.

29 November 2007 Spravedlivaya Rossiya leader and Federation Council chairman Sergey Mironov says the actions taken by police against the Dissenters' March are inappropriate and create excess publicity for it.

Vladimir Putin gives a TV address urging people to vote for Yedinaya Rossiya.

Central Electoral Commission Secretary Nikolay Konkin says that in the course of the Duma election campaign, 123 people have been removed from parties' federal lists of candidates. The Democratic Party of Russia lost 30 candidates on its list. 26 candidates were removed from the list of Spravedlivaya Rossiya, 21 from the Patriots of Russia and 18 from the URF. Yedinaya Rossiya and the Social Justice Party lost one candidate each.

The Federal Registration Service publishes a list of 15 parties that have the right to take part in the upcoming Russian presidential election. They are: The Democratic Party of Russia, the One Russia party, the Russian Political Party of Peace and Unity, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, the Union of Right Forces, the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, the Yabloko party, the Patriots of Russia, the Green Ecological Party of Russia, the Agrarian Party of Russia, the People's Union, the Civil Force, the Party of Social Justice, the Party of Russia's Revival, and A Just Russia: Motherland/Pensioners/Life.

The deputy chairman of the Yedinaya Rossiya faction in the State Duma, Valeriy Ryazanskiy, says the Yedinaya Rossiya party will name its candidate for president in the second third of December.

29 November 2007 Moscow's Savelovskiy court sentences businessman Boris Berezovskiy to six years in prison in absentia for embezzling almost R215 million from Aeroflot.

29 November 2007 Vladimir Putin signs a decree to transform the exclusive exporter of Russian weapons Rosoboronexport from a federal unitary enterprise (FGUP) into an open joint-stock company (OAO). Under the decree, 100 per cent of Rosoboronexport shares are transferred to the Rostekhnologii state corporation.

29 November 2007 Deputy Head of the Border Guard Service of the FSB Lt-General Nikolay Rybalkin says the Service is setting up special-purpose subunits at the most dangerous sections of the state border to fight crime more efficiently. He says the Border Guards will become fully professional in 2008.

30 November 2007 Former FSB officer Colonel Mikhail Trepashkin is released from prison.

30 November 2007 Vladimir Putin addresses a meeting of the Council for Science, Technology and Education. He says he thinks it expedient to draw up a concept of "macro regions of the Russian Federation" and does not rule out that it may lead to the redrawing of borders of federal districts.

30 November 2007 Newly appointed Chechen separatist prime minister Akhmed Zakayev outlines his government's priorities in an address on the Chechenpress website.

December

1 December 2007 Rossiya TV reports that the formation of mountain brigades has been completed in the North Caucasus.

2 December 2007 Duma elections take place. Yedinaya Rossiya receives an overwhelming majority.

- Yedinaya Rossiya is in first place - 64.30 per cent, 44,714,241 votes. 315 Duma seats.
- The CPRF is in second place - 11.57 per cent, more than 8,046,886 votes. 57 Duma seats.
- LDPR is in third place - 8.14 per cent of the vote or 5,643,600 supporters. 40 Duma seats.
- Spravedlivaya Rossiya is in fourth place, 7.74 per cent with 5,383,639 votes and 38 Duma seats.

Duma speaker and Yedinaya Rossiya leader Boris Gryzlov makes the following comment on the Duma elections.

I wish to say that the referendum has taken place. The turnout was splendid, about 60 per cent. I understand that this is an average European turnout. That is approximately how many people vote in Europe, in developed democracies. One Russia, according to the results that have already been announced, has received good support, and I would like, first of all, to thank our citizens who voted for One Russia. We have lived up and continue to live up to your expectations. It is very important that not only the turnout was high but also One Russia's result is good. It is well in excess of 50 per cent. Considering that the State Duma election was effectively a referendum on support for the course of our president, support for the course of Vladimir Putin, we can say that Vladimir Putin has won in the first round. I think that that is how this should be judged.

Leader of the URF Nikita Belykh says that the election to the Duma was "the most dishonest election in Russian history".

CEC Deputy Chairman Stanislav Vavilov says the CEC has no information on serious irregularities during the election. However Yevgeniy Kolyushin, a CEC spokesman says violations have been registered. The CPRF states that there have been violations in many parts of Russia.

Aleksandr Brod, director of the Moscow Human Rights Bureau and co-chairman of the Civil Control association, says that on the whole the election is valid and its results are legitimate.

Yabloko leader Grigoriy Yavlinskiy says that there were many violations during the Duma election.

Yuriy Luzhkov, mayor of Moscow and co-chairman of the Yedinaya Rossiya supreme council, believes that the results of the elections reflect the trust voters feel towards Vladimir Putin rather than towards One Russia. 'Now our main concern is how to invite Vladimir Vladimirovich so that he remains involved in the process of developing the main principles and main avenues of our country's development.'

Former independent Duma deputy Vladimir Ryzhkov and former presidential economic adviser Andrey Illarionov state that the Duma election is illegitimate.

3 December 2007 Vladimir Putin says that the recently elected Duma has more legitimacy than the previous one, as the previous Duma had the support of 70 per cent of the electorate, the fifth Duma will have the support of 90 per cent because the parties that failed to make it to the Duma received considerably fewer votes than in the previous election.

3 December 2007 The supreme mufti of the Central Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Russia, Talgat Tadzhuddin, says that Yedinaya Rossiya's landslide victory indicates that most Russians want Vladimir Putin to be in power after the presidential election in 2008.

Former independent Duma deputy Vladimir Ryzhkov says the fifth Duma is going to be as limp and weak-willed as the fourth.

Among the parties to have made it, three will never speak against the president, his administration and certain powerful officials and ministers. Yedinaya Rossiya has been keeping silent and approving everything for the past seven years and will continue to do so; the LDPR, which surprisingly is acting as an opposition but has in fact always supported and supports the executive power; and Spravedlivaya Rossiya, which has several outstanding people, but under the new law where a person can lose their mandate over wrong voting, no-one will dare to speak against the will of the Kremlin and their party leadership. Thus 90 per cent of the Duma is absolutely loyal and only the Communists could sometimes raise their voices, but there are too few of them to influence anything.

The leader of the United Civil Front, Garri Kasparov, calls the Duma election a "political farce."

The chairman of the political council of the Civil Force party, Mikhail Barshchevskiy, is ready to leave his post to help the democratic forces amalgamate. He talks about the possibility of the amalgamation of Civil Force, URF, Yabloko and part of the Yedinaya Rossiya electorate.

CPRF leader Gennady Zyuganov makes the following comments on assessments of the Duma elections made by the OSCE and other observers: 'Their critical conclusions and observations made today are quite natural. This election was so dirty, and numerous violations committed during it were so scandalous that only the blind and deaf were unable to have seen and heard all this.'

Nashi holds a large-scale pro-Putin rally in Moscow.

Nashi activists picket the CEC HQ to protect it from opposition representatives who go to the HQ to protest the Duma election results.

URF leader Boris Nemtsov says that right-wing forces have to join their efforts on the eve of the presidential election to put forward their candidate. He says he is having talks with Garry Kasparov and Vladimir Ryzhkov on this issue.

Political analyst Stanislav Belkovskiy suggests that Vladimir Putin will step down in 2008, but his successor will be unable to cope and will step down in 2009.

3 December 2007 Vladimir Putin signs the federal law "On amendments to Articles 4 and 18 of the Russian Federation law 'On state secrets'" adopted by the State Duma on 14 November 2007 and approved by the Federation Council on 23 November 2007. The law envisages the possibility of transferring information constituting a state secret to international organizations in line with the procedures established for the transfer of such data to foreign states.

Putin also signs the federal law "On state corporation on atomic energy Rosatom" that was adopted by the State Duma on 13 November 2007 and approved by the Federation Council on 23 November 2007.

3 December 2007 The Prosecutor-General's Office brings new charges against Deputy Finance Minister Sergey Storchak, who is accused of embezzling more than 43 million dollars. The new criminal case against Storchak is connected with abuse of his official position during talks on the settlement of the debt of the former USSR to Kuwait.

3 December 2007 The Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov endorses the new composition of the government administrative reform commission. Former Economic Development and Trade Minister German Gref with his deputies Andrey Sharonov and Andrey Belousov, as well as former Health and Social Development Minister Mikhail Zurabov, have been removed from the commission. They are being replaced with new Minister of Health and Social Development Tatyana Golikova, Minister of Regional Development Dmitriy Kozak, deputy director general of the Russian Nanotechnologies Corporation Andrey Malyshev and First Deputy Emergencies Minister Ruslan Tsalikov. The commission will be headed by First Deputy Prime minister, Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin.

First Deputy Defence Minister Aleksandr Kolmakov, Deputy Economic Development and Trade Minister Stanislav Kuznetsov, Deputy Finance Minister Tatyana Nesterenko and deputy head of the government administration Vladimir Shamakhov will also join the commission.

Zubkov signs an order approving the concept of the development of TV and radio broadcasting for 2008-15.

3 December 2007 Chechen Prime Minister Odes Baysultanov says that Chechnya should gain a greater share of the revenue earned from the sale of oil produced in Chechnya. He attends a meeting at which the issue of transferring a licence of Rosneft joint-stock company to its daughter company Grozneftegaz joint-stock company was discussed. According to the Chechen Finance Ministry, if the licence is transferred to Grozneftegaz, income from oil produced may total over R3 billion that may be used for the restoration work in the republic.

4 December 2007 The CEC says it has received 43 complaints about the results of the election to the Duma, 10 from citizens and 33 from political parties.

CIS Interparliamentary Assembly election observers state they consider the Duma election to be fair.

Yedinaya Rossiya Duma deputy Andrey Kokoshin says that international observers drew up their reports on violations at the Duma election before they were held.

The director of the Yedinaya Rossiya Central Executive Committee, Andrey Vorobyev, says that Yedinaya Rossiya has no intention of using its huge majority in the Duma to change the constitution. He says Yedinaya Rossiya has 1.7 million members.

It is reported that all candidates running in the March 2008 presidential election will be known by 27 January 2008. All registration documents must be submitted to the CEC by 16 January and the commission has 10 days to consider them.

Political parties must nominate their candidates by (or on) 23 December, whereas the deadline for self-nominated candidates is 18 December. The campaign itself will last from 2 till 29 February.

Molodaya Gvardiya holds a rally in Moscow to celebrate the Yedinaya Rossiya victory in the Duma election. Andrey Tatarinov, a member of the Molodaya Gvardiya political council addresses the rally:

Wearing velvet orange gloves, they want to strangle Russia. Western spin doctors have taught their jackal cubs how to take to the streets, how to organize acts of provocation against legitimate Russian authorities. We have gathered here in this square and will never allow them to foil our plan!

A VTSIOM poll states that 60 per cent of Russians on the whole support the idea of a "national leader", while 19 per cent oppose this idea. 55 per cent of those polled support the idea of Vladimir Putin maintaining his influence as a national leader after his term of office expires, and 22 per cent disapprove it.

4 December 2007 Co-owner and president of the Finansgrupp finance group Oleg Shvartsman says that an interview of him which appeared in Kommersant on 30 November was inaccurate. In this interview he stated that a process of velvet reprivatization was under way in Russia, authorized by top figures in the state and carried out in the interest of the so-called siloviki.

5 December 2007 A poll by the Yuriy Levada Analytical Centre shows that 68 per cent of Russians believe that order is more important for Russia at present, even if

some violations of democratic standards have to take place for the sake of achieving order and some personal freedoms have to be restricted.

The first secretary of the CPRF Moscow city committee, Vladimir Ulas says the CPRF does not agree with the results of the parliamentary elections and demands that fresh elections be called.

Deputy chairman of the CPRF Central Committee Vladimir Kashin says the elections were rigged.

Lyubov Sliska, State Duma deputy chairman, says OSCE observers were not impartial. She says OSCE observers cannot be impartial and objective because they act in compliance with the rules dictated by Brussels and the US State Department.

The pro-Kremlin youth movement Mestnyye holdis a rally on Bolotnaya Ploshchad in Moscow, called "My vote, my country, my choice!" The movement's leader Sergey Fateyev says: 'We are prepared to defend the choice made by our country against both internal and external opponents of the legitimacy of the recent parliamentary election.'

Nashi holds a protest rally outside the British Embassy.

5 December 2007 Oleg Panfilov, head of the centre for extreme journalism says that there have been three attacks on BBC correspondents in Moscow in the past few days.

5 December 2007 Ekho Moskvyy reports that a Moslem medical clinic has opened in Moscow.

5 December 2007 The Prosecutor-General's Office cancels a resolution to launch a criminal case against Deputy Finance Minister Sergey Storchak. The official was charged with exceeding his authority in connection with talks on settling the former Soviet Union's debt to Kuwait. However, Storchak will remain in custody because the first criminal case, in which he is charged with an attempt to embezzle over 43 million dollars from the budget, has not been closed.

5 December 2007 State secretary and deputy defence minister Army General Nikolay Pankov says all cadet corps and Suvorov military colleges will come under the direct subordination of the Defence Ministry before 1 January 2008. There are currently 17 Suvorov military colleges and these will be increased to 20.

5 December 2007 Defence Minister Anatoliy Serdyukov says the Russian navy has resumed a permanent presence in the world's oceans.

An expedition has been planned, from today until 3 February 2008, of vessels from a naval combat group of the Northern Fleet to the northern area of the eastern Atlantic and to the Mediterranean. The aim of the expedition is to ensure our naval presence in areas of the world's oceans that are operationally important; and second, to create conditions of safe passage for Russian ships.

6 December 2007 Nashi holds a rally on Vasilyevskiy Spusk near Red Square in Moscow to celebrate the election victory of the Yedinaya Rossiya party. About 30,000 are present.

6 December 2007 The Moscow Human Rights Bureau states there has been an increase in the number of attacks on the grounds of ethnic intolerance in Russia in 2007. Between January-November 2007, there were about 216 cases of attacks and conflicts on the grounds of xenophobia which resulted in 65 deaths and at least 300 injured.

6 December 2007 Vladimir Putin says Sergey Kiriyyenko is to head Rosatom. This is the new state corporation for nuclear energy. Kiriyyenko is currently the head of the Federal Agency for Atomic Energy (also known as Rosatom).

6 December 2007 Rosstat states that the November inflation rate was 1.2 per cent while the accumulated inflation for the period from January to November amounted to 10.6 per cent. The annual inflation rate could exceed 11.5 per cent.

6 December 2007 The director of the Federal Special Construction Service (Spetsstroy), Army General Nikolay Abroskin, says that in 2008 Spetsstroy subunits will be taking part in the construction of strategically important roads in the south and far east of the country. During 2008, the Spetsstroy subunits should build between 250 and 300 km of roads of military and strategic importance in the Southern and Far Eastern federal districts. In 2007, special construction subunits have built over 200 km of roads and over five transport bridges.

6 December 2007 The MOD has amendments to the current law dealing with the retirement age of servicemen, the state secretary and deputy defence minister General Nikolay Pankov says. The retirement age for lieutenant-colonels is expected to increase from current 45 to 50 years, for colonels to 55 years and for generals to 60 years.

6 December 2007 The president of the Chechen Republic, Ramzan Kadyrov, signs a decree "On additional measures to ensure human and civil rights and freedoms in the Chechen Republic". Ramzan Kadyrov meets the Chechen ombudsman, Nurdi Nukhazhiyev. Nukhazhiyev notes that the human rights situation in the republic has improved in comparison with previous years but, he says, it can be even better if the republic's leadership backs a project developed by activists and aiming for observance of human rights in the republic.

6 December 2007 The Atomredmetzoloto Company, a member of the Atomenergoprom holding, sets up three new subsidiaries in Chita Region and the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) to develop domestic uranium deposits. These are

1. the Gornoye Uranium Mining Company, which is to develop the Gornoye and Berezovoye deposits in Krasnochikoyskiy and Uletovskiyy districts of Chita Region. The combined uranium reserves of Gornoye and Berezovoye deposits are estimated at 8,700 tonnes
2. Olovskaya GKKh Company, developing the Olovskoye deposit in Chernyshevskiy District of Chita Region. The reserves of Olovskoye are 12,800 tonnes.
3. The Elkonkiy GMK enterprise (Yakutia). It will mine uranium in the Elkonka uranium deposit. By 2020, this deposit is expected to yield up to 5,000 tonnes of uranium a year.

The ARMZ is Rosatom's leading company for developing uranium deposits in Russia and abroad. The ARMZ consolidates all the uranium mining facilities in Russia. It also has uranium mining joint enterprises in Kazakhstan.

7 December 2007 First Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov speaks on the development of military industry and on Russia's military needs. He says the production of armaments and military equipment in Russia has grown 23.1 per cent year-on-year. Production in the defence-industrial complex had grown by 15.6 per cent year-on-year. In the aviation industry production had risen 39 per cent, while production of conventional weapons had climbed 73 per cent. He says that the state defence order in 2008 would total R1,000 billion (40.8 billion dollars at the current exchange rate).

7 December 2007 Spravedlivaya Rossiya leader Sergey Mironov says that Spravedlivaya Rossiya is not going put forward its own candidate in the 2 March presidential election; the chances of this are 99.9 per cent.

Mironov says that the party will purge traitors.

8 December 2007 Vadim Solovyev, member of the Central Electoral Commission from the CPRF, says that the CPRF will not recognize the results of the election to the Duma.

Yabloko officially protests against the Duma election results.

An electoral initiative group proposes Mikhail Kasyanov, former prime minister and leader of the Russian People's Democratic Union (RPDU), as candidate in the presidential election on 2 March 2008.

9 December 2007 Vice-Admiral Konstantin Sidenko is appointed Pacific Fleet commander. Previously he headed the Baltic Fleet.

10 December 2007 Yedinaya Rossiya, Spravedlivaya Rossiya, the Agrarian Party and Grazhdanskaya Sila state that they nominate Dmitriy Medvedev as their candidate in the next presidential election.

BORIS GRYZLOV: The results of the election to the State Duma were announced on Saturday. Now the presidential election campaign has begun. In accordance with the law, the parties that have been elected to the Duma need to think about their candidate.

We thought that it would be good to base ourselves on a broad range of political forces in deciding on a candidate for future president, accordingly, the leaders of four political parties, United Russia, A Just Russia, the Agrarian Party, and Citizens' Strength, got together to discuss a candidate for the presidential election.

The consultations were quite friendly. We would like to present to you the name of the candidate we have all agreed to support – First Deputy Prime Minister Dmitriy Anatolyevich Medvedev. We think that he is the candidate most attuned to society's needs. He has already proven himself in managing the national projects and the demographic programme. He has achieved real results, and it is this that is most important.

We think that we could make raising living standards the slogan for our work over the next four years, after all, only the first steps have been taken. We all think that Dmitriy Medvedev could head this work, and we wanted to discuss this matter in detail with you today.

VLADIMIR PUTIN (Addressing Dmitriy Medvedev): Dmitriy Anatolyevich, have you been consulted on this?

DMITRY MEDVEDEV: Yes, there were preliminary consultations and they were positive. We will continue these discussions today and tomorrow.

VLADIMIR PUTIN: We have a lot of political events crammed into a rather short period of time. With New Year upon us this is not the most agreeable work to take on, but life has to continue and the law requires that we begin the presidential campaign.

This proposal has come from four political parties, two of which are not only represented in the parliament but hold a stable majority, and all four parties together represent a broad spectrum of Russian society and speak for the interests of a diverse range of groups. This indicates that we have the opportunity to establish stable government after the 2008 election, and not just stable government but government that will continue the policies that have produced positive results over these last eight years. As for the candidacy of Dmitriy Anatolyevich Medvedev, I can say that I have known him for more than 17 years now and have worked closely with him throughout these years, and I fully and wholeheartedly support this choice.

11 December 2007 Dmitriy Medvedev says that Vladimir Putin should become prime minister after he steps down from the presidency.

It is so necessary to continue with the policy that developed in the late 1990s. To continue on this path, it is not enough to elect a new president who shares this ideology. It is equally important to preserve the capability of the team that was formed by the incumbent president.

That is why I consider it of principal importance for our country to retain Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin in the most important executive post, that of chairman of the Russian government.

It was he who headed the list of the major party One Russia, which achieved an impressive victory in the State Duma election. It is only in this composition that the new legislative and executive authorities will be able work effectively.

Having expressed my readiness to stand for the post of Russian president, I am asking him to agree in principle to head the Russian government after the new president of our country is elected.

First Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov welcomes Dmitriy Medvedev's prospective nomination as a presidential candidate. Ivanov says he believes the present government will continue working until the inauguration of the new president in May.

Vladimir Putin addresses the Chamber of Trade and Industry. He says:

We are not going to create state capitalism. That is not our choice or our path. But we can see that without the support of the state for some vitally important spheres of an economic nature, we will simply be unable to restore them. Business will not be going there yet. That is true.

But I would also like to tell you that we are not going to keep these state corporation forever in the form in which they are being created. Once they get up on their feet and become competitive on world markets, we are not merely not ruling out this possibility, but I think it would be right if we create, on terms understandable to ordinary citizens, conditions for them to operate in exclusively market conditions and involve [private] business participation in them in various proportions, perhaps even in key, controlling proportions in the future. It is not only that I am not ruling this out, but I think that that is what we will be doing.

11 December 2007 FSB director Nikolay Patrushev says that the level of terrorist threat continues to be high in Russia. He chairs a meeting of the National Antiterrorist Committee. He states that 'about 22 million foreign nationals and stateless persons visit Russia every year, and many of them stay in our country illegally'.

Emergencies Minister Sergey Shoygu and Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev say that the Emergencies Ministry and the Ministry of Internal Affairs are joining efforts to create an integrated security system in Russia.

Army General Nikolay Rogozhkin, commander-in-chief of the MVD's Internal Troops, says the number of militants in Chechnya is now between 500 and 700. He says 226 militants have been killed in the last two years.

Sergey Ivanov criticizes government ministers responsible for the creation of defence industry holding companies at a session of the Military-Industrial Commission. He says the state is exercising its ownership rights in defence-industry enterprises inefficiently.

First Deputy Chief of the Main Staff of the Russian Navy Vice-Adm Oleg Burtsev says the design planning of all types of new-generation combat ships and combatant craft will be completed in Russia by 2011-2012, after which their series production will begin.

12 December 2007 First Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov says Vladimir Putin's response to the proposal that he should become prime minister after the March 2008 presidential election should not be expected soon.

Federation Council speaker and leader of Spravedlivaya Rossiya Sergey Mironov rules out the possibility that actual power in Russia would belong to Vladimir Putin if Dmitriy Medvedev becomes president.

URF leader Boris Nemtsov says there should be a single opposition candidate. He has been nominated as URF candidate. He is speaking at the 4th Russian Civic Congress. He says an arbitration council should nominate a candidate.

A Levada poll gives Dmitriy Medvedev 35 per cent support in a presidential election. In a "hypothetical election next Sunday" first deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov would have won 21 per cent, Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov 17 per cent, Gennadiy Zyuganov (Communist Party) and Vladimir Zhirinovskiy (Liberal Democratic Party of Russia) 11 per cent each, Grigoriy Yavlinskiy (Yabloko) 3 per cent, Mikhail Kasyanov (former prime minister) and Boris Nemtsov (SPS) 1 per cent each. With Ivanov and Zubkov out of the equation, Medvedev had the support of 63 per cent of the electorate, Zyuganov 15 per cent, Zhirinovskiy 14 per cent, Yavlinskiy 4 per cent, Kasyanov 2 per cent, Nemtsov 1 per cent.

Vladimir Putin's approval rating has reached 87 per cent. The approval ratings of Sergey Ivanov, Dmitriy Medvedev and Viktor Zubkov stand at 66 per cent, 65 per cent and 62 per cent respectively.

The poll of 1,600 people was conducted in 128 towns and villages across 46 regions on 7-10 December.

12 December 2007 FSB director Nikolay Patrushev says the war on terror "has been practically won" in Russia.

12 December 2007 Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov signs approval for federal targeted programme "The development of electronic component base and radio-electronics" for the years 2008-2015.

12 December 2007 Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov says the Chechen Republic will always abide by the Russian constitution which was adopted in the national referendum on 12 December 1993.

12 December 2007 Dmitriy Medvedev, the first deputy prime minister says that a three-year action plan under the long-term demographic policy concept has to be drawn up within the next three months. The concept of demographic policy to 2025 which was approved by a presidential decree in October 2007 'is a purely conceptual document'. Medvedev says that the demographic situation is changing for the better, noting that "154,000 babies were born in October, an increase of 18 per cent on the same period in 2006, an absolute record for recent times", while figures for the first ten months of 2007 showed an increase of 8 per cent on last year.

13 December 2007 United Civil Front leader Garry Kasparov says he will not stand in the presidential election in March 2008.

Patriarch of Moscow and All-Russia Aleksiy II supports the idea of Vladimir Putin becoming prime minister should First Deputy Prime Minister Dmitriy Medvedev be elected president.

The Liberal Democratic Party of Russia nominates its leader, Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, as its candidate for president. Zhirinovskiy says Russia should eventually become a parliamentary republic.

13 December 2007 Vladimir Putin surrenders his Duma deputy mandate to Sergey Kapkov from Magadan.

13 December 2007 The Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO) will start training defence cooperation and defence industry managers in August 2008. An agreement on strategic partnership between Rostekhnologii and MGIMO is signed.

14 December 2007 Former Soviet dissident Vladimir Bukovskiy arrives in Russia to stand for president. He is not allowed to hold a meeting of his supporters in Moscow. Yabloko decides to support his presidential bid.

Yabloko says it does not recognize the results of the State Duma election on 2 December.

14 December 2007 Finance Minister and First Deputy Prime Minister Aleksey Kudrin meets his deputy Sergey Storchak, who was detained on suspicion of fraud on 15 November.

14 December 2007 Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov calls on Chechens to return to Chechnya.

14 December 2007 The commander of Russia's Space Troops, Colonel-General Vladimir Popovkin, outlines priorities for 2008 on the Interfax-AVN website.

15 December 2007 Army General Yuriy Baluyevskiy, chief of the General Staff, says that by 2012 the Russian Navy will have received several new ships armed with Bulava intercontinental ballistic missiles.

15 December 2007 The CPRF nominates party leader Gennadiy Zyuganov to run for president in March 2008.

15 December 2007 Ekho Moskvy reports that the URF is on the verge of bankruptcy.

16 December 2007 Vladimir Bukovskiy holds a meeting of the campaign group in support of his nomination as a candidate for the post of president of the Russian Federation.

17 December 2007 Yedinaya Rossiya endorses Dmitriy Medvedev as its candidate for the presidential election at its congress. Dmitriy Medvedev and Vladimir Putin both address the Yedinaya Rossiya congress. Putin states:

I believe it necessary to say that if our people, citizens of Russia express their confidence in Dmitriy Anatolyevich Medvedev and elect him the new president of the Russian Federation, then I also will be ready to continue our joint work, in that case in the capacity of the chairman of the government of the Russian Federation. Without changing powers between the institution of president and the government.

Medvedev states:

We also have to be making further strides in developing our education system, science, public health and Russia's culture - all those spheres which directly impact on human resources. I also believe that together we shall be able to achieve some real success in strengthening Russia's special leadership role in the world and our positions in the global marketplace. Russia's society as a whole is striving to tackle these tasks. Its people are being united by the genuine aim of building an advanced, prosperous and socially-oriented state. Such is the choice made by the Russian citizens and such is my own choice as well.

17 December 2007 Nikolay Levichev, secretary of the political bureau of the presidium of Spravedlivaya Rossiya central council, is elected as head of the party's faction in the Duma.

Nikita Belykh is re-elected URF leader.

The leaders of five southern republics of Russia are elected to the supreme council of Yedinaya Rossiya party at the party congress in Moscow. They are Ingush President Murat Zyazikov, Kabarda-Balkar President Arsen Kanokov, Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov, North Ossetian President Taymuraz Mamsurov and Adygeyan President Aslancheriy Tkhakushinov.

17 December 2007 Colonel-General Nikolay Solovtsov says the number of Topol-M systems supplied to the Strategic Missile Troops will double starting from 2009-2010. They are annually adopting three mobile Topol-M systems and three or four silo-based Topol-Ms. The number will double starting from 2009-2010. The second missile battalion equipped with mobile Topol-Ms was deployed in the Ivanovo region

on 16 December 2007. The first squad of the kind was deployed in the same place on 10 December 2006.

18 December 2007 First Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov says that Dmitriy Medvedev will be a successful president. He is interviewed on Vesti TV channel. He states:

The personnel decisions that have been taken, and the nomination of Dmitriy Anatolyevich Medvedev for the post of president, have, I think, put an end to speculation and even expectations, because now everything is predictable and clear. And I would like to say once again that I have known Dmitriy Anatolyevich Medvedev for a long time. I have known him very well since 2000 because we have been working practically side by side since then.

I am absolutely sure that if he is elected he will be a successful president of the country. As regards my plans, I will be working in a calm manner as part of the current cabinet of ministers until May 2008, implementing the tasks set before me by the current president. I think that I too am in charge of quite a serious bloc of issues, not just the industry but also transport, communication, space and the defence industry commission. I have enough work to do.

As regards what happens in May, let us wait and see. The new president will form a new cabinet. I think everyone knows well who the head of the government will be. The current cabinet will automatically resign in its entirety, as per the constitution. As regards what happens after May, let us wait and see.

Sergey Ivanov makes the following statement on Vesti TV about the economy:

By the end of 2007 inflation will reach a mark around 12 per cent. This is too high, and this, by the way, has a very negative effect on other parameters. I would like to stress however that at the same time the growth of GDP in 2007 stands at between 7.6 and 7.8 per cent. By European standards, we are in leading positions in Europe.

I think that the quality of the economy has changed. All of this growth - 7.6-7.8 per cent - has been achieved owing to a growth in processing industries, machine-building and construction, not in oil and gas exploration. Apart from solving the well-known problems such as technological development and job creation these sectors of the industry at the end of the day are aimed at improving the quality of life of the ordinary Russian.

He warns against confusing state corporations with holding companies in which the state has a share.

18 December 2007 First Deputy Prime Minister and chairman of the Gazprom board says the gasification of the regions is a top priority.

18 December 2007 Boris Gryzlov is to head the majority Duma faction, Yedinaya Rossiya. Gryzlov is again nominated to the post of the Duma chairman which he held in the fourth Duma convocation. Four intrafaction groups are to be set up in the Duma's Yedinaya Rossiya faction. They will be led by Vladimir Pekhtin, Valeriy Ryazanskiy, Artur Chilingarov, and Tatyana Yakovleva. The heads of the intrafaction groups are elected first deputy heads of the Yedinaya Rossiya faction in the new Duma.

18 December 2007 Mikhail Khodorkovskiy's lawyer Yuriy Shmidt says "new documents have been planted" into the criminal case of Yukos's former heads Mikhail Khodorkovskiy and Platon Lebedev following a decision by investigator Valeriy Alyshev.

18 December 2007 Ingush President Murat Zyazikov accuses foreign organisations of trying to destabilise the situation in Ingushetia. He states:

We are following our own path, which our wise forefathers bequeathed to us. They bequeathed to us that we should resolve all our problems within Russia, together with Russia.

Deciding the people's fate behind the scenes, bypassing the people - we've already been through that. So when the Jamestown Foundation and White House lackeys recommend holding a rally in Nazran, we will deal with it. We have our own regional party committee. We have our own vision, our own worldview, our own ideology... We do not need advice from Scandinavian countries, mother Europe or from over the ocean.

18 December 2007 The Kavkazskiy Uzel website reports Chechen rebel prime minister Akhmed Zakayev as saying Russia's policy towards Chechnya will change substantially if Dmitriy Medvedev is elected president. He made these comments to a Polish radio station on 12 December.

18 December 2007 Sergey Kiriyenko, head of Rosatom talks about the need to expand Atomenergoprom with key players of the world nuclear sector.

Tekhsnabexport Director-General Aleksey Grigoryev says Tekhsnabexport has increased the commercial export of enriched-uranium products by more than 30 per cent in 2007.

18 December 2007 First Deputy Prime Minister Sergey Ivanov says he hopes that the Topol-M intercontinental ballistic missile will soon be fitted with multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles.

Lt-General Alevtin Yunak, chief of environmental safety at the Russian Defence Ministry, says the start of the implementation of the programme for the Pacific Fleet to scrap nuclear submarines is planned for 2008. He invites Japanese participation.

Yunak says that Russia has completed the establishment of an interagency system of environmental security for the force structures as part of a single system of logistical support for the armed forces, other troops and troop formations.

Aleksandr Konovalov, chairman of the State Commission on Chemical Disarmament and presidential envoy in the Volga Federal District, says that Russia has duly fulfilled its obligations to destroy chemical weapons. Viktor Kholstov, deputy head of Russia's Federal Agency for Industry and deputy chairman of the commission, says that before 2012 Russia will receive from its foreign partners R12 billion (490 million dollars) in aid to fulfil its obligations, which is only 54 per cent of what it needs.

19 December 2007 Vladimir Putin is named Time magazine man of the year.

Putin addresses the State Council on the implementation of his state of the nation address to the Federal Assembly.

19 December 2007 The Constitutional Court refuses to consider the complaint submitted by Vladimir Kara-Murza (coordinator of the campaign group for Vladimir Bukovskiy's nomination as presidential candidate) about the rejection by the CEC of his attempts to register for the presidential election.

19 December 2007 FSB Director Nikolay Patrushev discusses the work of the FSB in 2007 on Chekist Day with media editors. He states: 'In 2007, 35 people were convicted on charges of terrorism in Russia, while 54 were convicted of consciously providing false information about terrorist attacks.'

FMS director Konstantin Romodanovskiy says that a central records bank of foreign citizens is to come into operation from 1 January 2008, where information about all foreigners who have visited Russia will be kept.

19 December 2007 The head of the Interpol central national bureau with the Russian Interior Ministry Timur Lakhonin condemns Sweden's refusal to extradite Chechen Magomed Uspayev, who has been charged by Russian law enforcers with involvement in the death of ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Yatsina.

19 December 2007 URF leader Boris Nemtsov accuses the Russian authorities of spy mania for claiming that the radical opposition in Russia is an instrument of influence of certain foreign states.

19 December 2007 Vladimir Putin addresses the State Council and says budgets of all levels will have to be revised to accommodate the recently proposed earlier-than-planned rises in public-sector wages and servicemen's allowances in February 2008.

19 December 2007 Atomredmetzoloto's director-general Vadim Zhivov says that after the incorporation of OAO Atomredmetzoloto, its uranium reserves will amount to 550,000 tonnes. He says 'by the level of uranium reserves, we will be one of the three largest uranium-producing companies in the world'.

19 December 2007 A Northern Fleet battle group heads for exercises in the Mediterranean.

19 December 2007 First Deputy Prime Minister Dmitriy Medvedev says the government will continue implementing "national projects" under the new president.

20 December 2007 Dmitriy Medvedev submits documents to the CEC to be registered as a presidential candidate from Yedinaya Rossiya.

Medvedev says he will not take leave for his election campaign, but would quit his post of Gazprom chairman if elected president. Medvedev says that his election headquarters will be headed by Sergey Sobyenin.

According to a VTsIOM opinion poll 45 per cent of Russians would support his candidacy if the presidential election took place this Sunday. Support for other candidates is: Vladimir Zhirinovskiy (Liberal Democratic Party of Russia) 5 per cent; Gennadiy Zyuganov (Communist Party of Russian Federation) 5 per cent; Boris Nemtsov (URF) 1 per cent. Other politicians, such as Irina Khakamada, Sergey Glazyev, Grigoriy Yavlilnkiy, Mikhail Kasyanov, Vladimir Bukovskiy and Mikhail

Khodorkovskiy, would not win even one per cent of votes. The poll was conducted on 15-16 December. A total of 1,600 people were polled in 153 towns of 46 regions, territories and republics of Russia. The margin of error does not exceed 3.4 per cent.

Vladimir Bukovskiy and Boris Nemtsov state that the opposition is able to reach a consensus and nominate a single candidate for the Russian presidency.

20 December 2007 Vladimir Putin addresses FSB personnel on their professional day.

20 December 2007 The St. Petersburg Human Rights Council demands that the police solve recent crimes motivated by ethnic and racial hatred.

20 December 2007 It is reported that Manana Aslamazyan, head of the Educated Media not-for-profit foundation (the successor of Internews Russia), has been put on the international wanted list on charges of smuggling funds.

20 December 2007 Vladimir Putin adds the Avionika concern (Ramenskoye, Moscow Region) to the list of strategic enterprises.

20 December 2007 Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov calls at a government meeting for Russia to improve its energy efficiency. He says that increases in energy tariffs in 2008 must not hurt the population.

20 December 2007 The North Ossetian Supreme Court decides to close down the NGO public committee Voice of Beslan in its current makeup.

20 December 2007 Long-range aviation commander Major-General Pavel Androsov says strategic missile-carrying aircraft of the Air Force will continue air patrols in remote areas of the world.

21 December 2007 The MVD denies reports that the head of the Educated Media NGO, Manana Aslamazyan, accused of smuggling cash, was put on the international wanted list.

21 December 2007 Deputy chairman of Gazprom's management board Aleksandr Ananenko says Gazprom is ready to fulfil its obligations at the Sakhalin-2 project by the contractual deadlines. He says that Gazprom is striving to ensure supplies of liquefied natural gas in 2008. Sakhalin Region governor Aleksandr Khoroshavin says these shipments are likely to start in spring 2009.

21 December 2007 Rosstat states that the results of the first six months of 2007 show that over 22 million Russians have incomes below the average subsistence level across Russia, which is 7 per cent less than in the first six months of 2005.

21 December 2007 Aleksandr Kanshin, Chairman of the Defence Ministry Public Council's Commission for Safe Military Service, Law, Order and Military Discipline says a total of 417 servicemen died non-combat deaths in January-November 2007; half of the deaths resulted from suicide. He says the army deaths are in decline. There were 1,063 deaths in 2005 and 514 in 2006.

21 December 2007 A United Civil Front rally in Moscow is disbanded by police.

22 December 2007 Spravedlivaya Rossiya says it is officially backing Dmitriy Medvedev for president.

22 December 2007 The CEC refuses to allow former Soviet dissident and writer Vladimir Bukovskiy, who intended to stand for president of Russia, to take part in the presidential campaign.

22 December 2007 The coordinator of opposition Oborona youth movement, Oleg Kozlovskiy, is kidnapped from the military medical unit he was being kept in while on hunger strike.

22 December 2007 Russian human rights ombudsman Vladimir Lukin says Russia has still a lot to do to develop the concept of civil society and ensure respect for human rights.

The situation with human rights remains a very contradictory issue today. Russia is not yet reached a situation whereby human rights are fully respected. Unfortunately we have to acknowledge that the concept of civil society and ways of its development in our country have not developed yet.

23 December 2007 Vladimir Putin signs a decree on the relocation of the Constitutional Court to St. Petersburg by 21 May 2008.

23 December 2007 Gazprom denies reports that by 2010 it will be unable to satisfy domestic demand for gas and could turn into a gas importing company.

24 December 2007 Chechen separatist premier Akhmed Zakayev issues a statement challenging the proclamation of a Caucasian Emirate by former separatist president Dokka Umarov.

24 December 2007 Defence Minister Anatoliy Serdyukov issues a statement on the work of the MOD in 2007.

25 December 2007 The third congress of the Nashi youth movement takes place in Moscow. The deputy head of the presidential administration, Vladislav Surkov, attends. The head of the State Committee for Youth Affairs, Vasiliy Yakemenko, has stepped down as the leader of the Nashi movement. Nikita Borovikov is elected head of Nashi.

25 December 2007 Oleg Morozov, first deputy chairman of the Duma and deputy secretary of the presidium of the Yedinaya Rossiya general council, says that the issue about Vladimir Putin and Dmitriy Medvedev joining the party is no longer topical.

25 December 2007 First Deputy Prime Minister Dmitriy Medvedev chairs the last meeting of the presidium of the council for national projects for 2007. He says the state will spend R300 billion (over 12 billion dollars) on the projects in 2008.

25 December 2007 The Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia says the incidence of xenophobia and anti-Semitism in the country fell in 2007.

Prosecutor-General Yuriy Chayka says over 327 crimes of extremist nature were recorded in Russia January to November 2007, which is an increase of 42 per cent. Chayka rejects reports of confrontation between his department and the Investigations Committee under the Prosecutor-General's Office. Chayka says that the Prosecutor-General's Office does not see any grounds for accusing Andrey

Lugovoy of the murder of Aleksandr Litvinenko. He says Lugovoy could face trial in Moscow.

25 December 2007 A representative of the International Committee on Problems in North Caucasus, Ruslan Kutayev, says studies carried out in the Republic of Chechnya showed that in the last six months between 8,000 and 10,000 people left the republic, but in the last month this figure amounted to 4,000-5,000.

25 December 2007 It is stated that Army General Yuriy Baluyevskiy, chief of the General Staff and first deputy defence minister will remain as CGS until 2010.

25 December 2007 Tatarstan President Mintimer Shaymiyev says he is unhappy about the law on the single educational state standard. This law abolishes the division between the federal, regional and institutional components in educational standards and introduces a federal state educational standard. Shaymiyev believes that this standard restricts the teaching of native languages and folklore disciplines in schools. The head of the Republic of Mordovia, Nikolay Merkushev, and a number of other regional leaders in the Volga Federal District also take this view.

25 December 2007 Chechnya begins to issue biometric foreign passports.

26 December 2007 A poll by the Public Opinion Foundation shows that 46 per cent will vote for First Deputy Prime Minister Dmitriy Medvedev in the forthcoming presidential election. Other figures are: Vladimir Zhirinovskiy 7 per cent; Gennady Zyuganov 6 per cent.

Boris Nemtsov withdraws from the presidential race.

26 December 2007 Agriculture Minister Aleksey Gordeyev says that Russia had a good grain harvest in 2007 of 81.5 million tonnes. This means that Russia can export 12-13 million tonnes.

26 December 2007 Aleksandr Ananenkov, deputy chairman of Gazprom's Management Committee, says that Gazprom is against the involvement of foreign companies in Russia's subsoil development.

26 December 2007 Army commander-in-chief General Aleksey Maslov says that Army conducted about 1,700 command-post and tactical exercises in 2007. In 2008 major efforts will be focused on combat training of permanent combat readiness units.

27 December 2007 An explosion takes place in the underground Okhotnyy Ryad shopping centre in Manezhnaya Square in the heart of Moscow. Police blame hooligans.

27 December 2007 Valeriy Fedorov, director-general of the All-Russia Public Opinion Research Centre, says that almost 50 per cent of Russians consider the year 2007 to be successful and are waiting for the new year in a good mood.

27 December 2007 The Moscow Human Rights Bureau says the number of attacks and conflicts motivated by xenophobia in Russia in 2007 grew by 30 per cent against 2006, the number of fatalities grew by 20 per cent and casualties almost doubled. There were about 230 instances of attacks and conflicts motivated by xenophobia in 2007.

27 December 2007 Roskosmos head Anatoliy Perminov, outlines Roskosmos' work in 2007 at a press conference. He says spending for the space programme amounted to R32 billion in 2007. He says current spending levels are insufficient.

27 December 2007 Director of the FMS Konstantin Romodanovskiy says that new migration legislation is increasing the number of migrants coming to Russia. This helps to compensate for the country's declining population.

28 December 2007 Garry Kasparov calls for a boycott of the country's presidential election on 2 March.

The Supreme Court upholds the decision of the CEC to exclude Vladimir Bukovskiy from the presidential election race.

28 December 2007 Gazprom Neft and LUKoil set up a joint venture. Gazprom Neft will have a 51 per cent share in the company, which is called Razvitiye Regionov Oil and Gas Company, while LUKoil will have a 49 per cent share.

29 December 2007 Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says that the government has failed to curb inflation in 2007. He says that inflation will total 11.9-12 per cent in 2007 against the expected 8 per cent. He says that "we are confident that next year we will attain 8.5 per cent inflation".

29 December 2007 Rosatom head Sergey Kiriyyenko outlines Rosatom's plans for 2008.

29 December 2007 FSB Director Nikolay Patrushev informs Vladimir Putin about the special seven-year programme for reinforcing the country's borders. The programme was launched in 2003. During this period 88 border facilities have been commissioned. They discuss the development of the border system in the Northern Caucasus which has been completed.

29 December 2007 Chechen prime minister Odes Baysultanov says the government of the Chechen Republic is creating a special commission to resolve problems linked to the use and lease of agricultural lands by sub-units of the MOD, FSB and MVD troops stationed in Chechnya on a permanent basis.

29 December 2007 A jury at the Republic of Tatarstan Supreme Court brings a guilty verdict on 17 suspected members of the terrorist crime group Islamic Jamaat.

29 December 2007 Defence Minister Anatoliy Serdyukov issues a new year message to the personnel of the Armed Forces.

The Federal Service for Financial and Budgetary Supervision uncovers violations of financial and budgetary legislation in the use of funds allocated for the reform of the defence sector in 2005-2006 totalling R1,418 million (about 58 million dollars), or 30 per cent of the audited funds while auditing the Ministry of Industry and Energy and organizations subordinate to it.

30 December 2007 The deputy chairman of the executive board of Gazprom, Aleksandr Medvedev outlines Gazprom's production plans. He says the Yuzhno-Russkoye gas field will hit its production peak in 2009. The Bovanenkovskoye field will come on line in 2011.

31 December 2007 Vladimir Putin signs a decree "On approving the staff of the council under the president of the Russian Federation on the development of the

local governance and the staff of the council board". Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov is appointed chairman of the council board.

