

Russian Foreign Policy: A Chronology

July-September 2004

July

1 July 2004 Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma arrive in Minsk to take part in festivities marking the 60th anniversary of Belarus's liberation from the Nazis.

The Foreign Ministry (MFA) states it "is surprised at the distortion by the Ukrainian side of Russia's position on the Azov and Kerch waters".

1 July 2004 Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev visits Bashkortostan and Tatarstan.

1 July 2004 The MFA warns that using force in the Georgian-Osetian conflict will "directly lead to the resumption of an armed confrontation between the two sides". The MFA notes that a considerable part of South Osetia's population are citizens of the Russian Federation. It also notes that the aspiration of the inhabitants of South Osetia, the majority of whom are Russian citizens, to join the Russian Federation is understandable but says that the territorial integrity of states must be respected.

The talks on a settlement of the Georgian-Osetian conflict fail to take place. The Georgian side refuses to participate in the meeting because the South Osetian authorities have not yet released three employees of the Georgian security services detained in South Osetia.

1 July 2004 Vladimir Putin sends a message of greetings to Iraqi President Ghazi Mish'al Ajil al-Yawar to mark the latter's assumption of office.

1 July 2004 The first deputy chief of the General Staff of the armed forces, Col-Gen Yuriy Baluyevskiy, takes part in the seventh round of Russian-Chinese talks on strategic stability. Deputy foreign minister Sergey Kislyak also attends these talks.

1 July 2004 Duma chairman Boris Gryzlov visits the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro. Gryzlov says that Russia is proposing a Balkan conference, with international participation, to enshrine the principles of inviolability of borders and the multiethnic character of states in the region.

1 July 2004 Deputy Foreign Minister Yuriy Fedotov attends a session of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in New York. He says Russia is ready to give support to the interim government of Iraq both within the framework of international efforts and through bilateral channels.

Fedotov discusses Russia's readiness to write off the least developed countries' debts. Fedotov says Russia has started to act as a donor within the World Food Programme.

1 July 2004 Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev visits Armenia to participate in a meeting of the Armenian-Russian law-enforcement bodies.

1 July 2004 Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says Russia will continue its efforts to return to Russia the Russian nationals who were recently sentenced to life imprisonment in Qatar for the assassination of Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev.

1 July 2004 Sergey Lavrov says he is "cautiously positive" about the recent six-party talks on North Korea. He points out that progress towards a final agreement "is becoming more and more clear". "A general understanding of the main parameters of this progress is taking shape: first, the final agreement should be a package one. It should ensure nuclear-free status for the Korean Peninsula, ensure security guarantees for North Korea and include economic and humanitarian assistance to Pyongyang." The second understanding, which - according to Lavrov - has almost taken shape, is "the need to move towards this package agreement stage by stage".

The first stage and its content will be governed by the "freezing in exchange for compensation" principle. "This is an important achievement of the latest round of the six-party talks. Of course, an agreement on the content of the first stage can be reached only when it is clearly stated that it is not the only stage, and movement will continue towards a full package agreement."

1 July 2004 The MFA denies Russian media reports that Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov allegedly held an unofficial meeting in Istanbul with the prime minister of the unrecognized Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Mehmet Ali Talat.

2 July 2004 A statement is circulated in the Duma calling for the Anti-NATO interaction committee, which was set up by the second Duma, to be revived. The committee will be responsible for formulating the Duma's position on NATO's eastward enlargement.

2 July 2004 Sergey Lavrov attends the ASEAN security forum in Jakarta. A joint statement on fighting international terrorism is issued.

2 July 2004 Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov opens the 10th session of the Russian-Ukrainian mixed cooperation commission in Moscow. A package of

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problems will be discussed, including cooperation in the fuel and energy sector, military-technical cooperation and space.

2 July 2004 The MFA says there is a need to resume talks soon on the regulation of the Georgian-Osetian situation within the framework of the mixed monitoring commission (MMC). The meeting of the MMC scheduled for 30 June-1 July did not take place.

Ground Troops Commander-in-Chief and Deputy Defence Minister Nikolay Kormiltsev denies Georgian Interior Ministry statements on the alleged relocation of arms, ammunition and combat hardware from Russia to South Osetia.

3 July 2004 An informal meeting of CIS heads of state takes place in Moscow.

3 July 2004 Sergey Lavrov visits South Korea.

4 July 2004 Sergey Lavrov visits North Korea.

4 July 2004 US, Russian and UK naval forces hold anti-terrorist exercises off Vladivostok.

5 July 2004 Sergey Lavrov says his talks in Seoul and Pyongyang were useful for the advancement of the six-way talks on the Korea nuclear issue. Lavrov says Russia "supports North Korea's proposal to freeze its nuclear programme in exchange for compensation".

5 July 2004 Secretary of the Security Council Igor Ivanov visits Iran. He says he does not believe that Iran's nuclear programme gives grounds for handing over the "Iranian dossier" to the UN Security Council. Ivanov also speaks out against interference by third countries in the affairs of the Central Asian region and the Caucasus. "In spite of the fact that Washington has declared Central Asia and the Caucasus a zone of its own interests, which will make the situation in the region still more difficult, Russia opposes the interference of third countries and especially their military presence ... we are convinced that security in the region should be ensured by the regional states themselves."

6 July 2004 Vice-Chairman of the Chinese Central Military Commission Guo Boxiong visits Moscow for talks with defence minister Sergey Ivanov on military and technical cooperation.

6 July 2004 Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says Japan's demand that the Russian troops stationed in the South Kuril islands be withdrawn is "a relic of the Cold War". This is following a statement by the Japanese Defence Agency that "all the Russian troops in the Northern Territories must be withdrawn as soon as possible".

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7 July 2004 British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw visits Moscow.

7 July 2004 Bulgarian President Georgi Purvanov visits Moscow for talks with Vladimir Putin.

7 July 2004 The Duma adopts a statement "On the need to oppose the heroization of Nazism" in connection with pro-fascist actions in a number of Baltic states.

The MFA condemns a rally of SS veterans in Estonia.

7 July 2004 The Federation Council ratifies the Agreement on Adaptation of the CFE Treaty.

8 July 2004 German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder arrives in Moscow for talks with Vladimir Putin. They discuss economic cooperation, Russia's World Trade Organisation (WTO) negotiations and the visa regime.

8 July 2004 Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov has talks with Vice-Chairman of the Central Military Commission of the People's Republic of China Guo Boxiong in Moscow on military-technical cooperation.

8 July 2004 The MFA calls for the reform of the OCSE. It says it shows double standards.

8 July 2004 Igor Ovsienko, first deputy director-general of the federal munitions and conventional armaments agency, says Russia has fulfilled a contract for the delivery of 310 T-90C tanks to India.

8 July 2004 Gazprom and German company E.ON AG sign a Memorandum of Understanding.

9 July 2004 Sergey Lavrov is interviewed in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*.

9 July 2004 The MFA says it respects the opinion of the World Court in the Hague on the legality of Israel's construction of a "separation wall" on the West Bank of the River Jordan.

9 July 2004 The MFA condemns Georgian policy over South Osetia. It says Tbilisi's actions are leading to the collapse of the Mixed Control Commission for resolving the conflict between South Osetia and Georgia.

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10 July 2004 Sergey Lavrov and US Secretary of State Colin Powell discuss the Georgia-South Osetia conflict by telephone.

The Duma issues a statement condemning the actions of Georgia in South Osetia.

The MFA issues a statement on the South Osetian situation, calling for renewed talks between Georgia and South Osetia.

Georgian Defence Minister Giorgi Baramidze says some elements in the Russian armed forces are supporting South Osetian separatism.

Russian peacekeepers strengthen their checkpoints in South Osetia.

10 July 2004 Vladimir Putin visits Austria to attend the funeral of Austrian ex-President Thomas Klestil.

11 July 2004 The Chechen government says it does not see any sense for the OSCE mission to come back after leaving for security reasons.

11 July 2004 Sergey Lavrov says the OSCE should ensure that Georgia honours its commitments to resolve the conflict with South Osetia. He says Russia has offered to organize an OSCE visit to places where Georgian illegal armed formations are based. Lavrov says Moscow is alarmed by Tbilisi's refusal to return Russian helicopter equipment.

Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov visits London. He says the situation in South Osetia is very dangerous and extremely tense.

MFA special envoy Lev Mironov visits South Osetia for talks with South Osetian leader Eduard Kokoit. Mironov says the OSCE has a biased stance on this issue.

Lavrov says Moscow shares the Council of Europe's concerns about the status of Ajaria. Lavrov says its PACE monitoring group had visited the region recently. A PACE statement said the Georgian leadership was still not carrying out recommendations by the PACE.

12 July 2004 A conference on the current tasks of Russian foreign policy takes place at the MFA. Vladimir Putin addresses it.

12 July 2004 The Federal Security Service (FSB) says Russian border guards are putting in place additional subdivisions and detachments to heighten security along the Russian-Georgian border.

Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov asks Georgia to immediately return unguided missiles taken from South Osetia.

12 July 2004 The head of the Federation Council International Affairs Committee, Mikhail Margelov, says that the OSCE is a relic of the past. He says that the OSCE has been a means of putting Western pressure on Russia.

13 July 2004 The police in Maritime Territory and the Chinese province of Heilongjiang agree to expand their cooperation in the fight against international crime. A protocol on their mutual intentions and exchanging information is signed in Vladivostok by Nikolay Vachayev, the head of the Maritime Territory Interior Directorate, and Wan Dun Hua, the head of the Heilongjiang police.

13 July 2004 Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov criticises NATO moves to deploy additional men and equipment in its new member states. He calls for broader cooperation with NATO against terrorism.

13 July 2004 The MFA says it fails to understand Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili's statement in which he calls on the graduates of the national academy of Georgia's Ministry of Defence to "be ready for a wide-scale foreign aggression on the territory of Georgia".

The MFA protests to Georgia over the detention of a Russian emergencies ministry convoy with humanitarian aid in South Osetia.

Sergey Ivanov says there are around 3,000 Georgian military personnel in the Georgian-Osetian conflict zone. The control mechanism allows for 500 peacekeepers from each side, Russia, Georgia and South Osetia, to be located in the conflict zone.

Georgian National Security Council Secretary Gela Bezhuashvili and his Russian counterpart, Igor Ivanov, meet in Moscow. Ivanov says the peace-keeping force will continue its mission.

13 July 2004 Vladimir Putin appoints Viktor Khristenko, minister of industry and energy, his special envoy in charge of the development of integration cooperation with CIS countries.

13 July 2004 Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev and Ukrainian Interior Minister Mykola Bilokon have talks on cooperation in fighting terrorism. They sign a cooperation protocol between the Russian and Ukrainian interior ministries for 2005-2006.

13 July 2004 Armenian Prime Minister Andranik Markaryan visits Moscow for talks with his Russian counterpart Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov. They discuss economic and military-technical cooperation.

14 July 2004 Vladimir Putin appoints Andrey Denisov Russia's permanent representative at the UN in New York and representative at the UN Security Council.

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15 July 2004 Sergey Lavrov visits Italy. He criticises the Georgian leadership's statement on the South Osetia situation.

The quadripartite talks on the settlement of the Georgian-Osetian conflict end in Moscow. The parties sign a protocol.

15 July 2004 Russia's ex-prime minister and current ambassador to Ukraine, Viktor Chernomyrdin, visits Azerbaijan for talks with President Ilham Aliyev. They may discuss the possibility of an Iranian gas pipeline going through Azerbaijan. Moscow opposes this.

16 July 2004 *Novosti Uzbekistana* reports that Itera is winding up its operations in Uzbekistan.

16 July 2004 Sergey Lavrov visits France. He says Russia is insisting on fulfilment of all accords on South Osetia reached at the sitting of the Joint Control Commission in Moscow.

16 July 2004 A meeting of the chairmen of the state commissions of Russia and Georgia for preparing a draft framework Russian-Georgian treaty on cooperation and friendship takes place.

16 July 2004 The MFA backs a resolution on ethnic minorities, adopted at the final plenary session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE in Edinburgh on 9 July, and says it believes that Latvia and Estonia "will regard the OSCE concerns about the position of the Russian-speaking population in these countries with due consideration".

16 July 2004 Col-Gen Mikael Arutyunyan, chief of the general staff of the Armenian armed forces, and Igor Gromyko, adviser to the Russian ambassador to Armenia, sign a document on the activities of the Russian military base in Armenia.

17 July 2004 The MFA calls on Georgia to withdraw illegal armed groups from South Osetia.

19 July 2004 Vladimir Putin chairs a session of the Security Council. It discusses CIS integration. A coordinating body will be set up under the Security Council, which together with ministries and departments will be responsible for developing concrete projects for cooperation with the countries of the CIS.

Sergey Lavrov says Russian scientific and cultural centres will be set up in countries of the CIS.

19 July 2004 Vladimir Putin signs the federal law "On the ratification of the Agreement on Adaptation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe".

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The law was passed by the Duma on 25 June and endorsed by the Federation Council on 7 July 2004.

19 July 2004 The MFA criticises Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili's trip to the Georgian-Osetian conflict zone.

19 July 2004 An agreement is signed between the Russian and Indian space agencies. Some of the Russian GLONASS navigation system satellites will be launched in India using Indian rockets.

19 July 2004 The MFA says it regrets attempts by "Estonian Foreign Minister Kristiina Ojuland to distort the essence of the discussion between Russia and the EU on issues dealing with the rights of the Russian-speaking minorities in Latvia and Estonia".

20 July 2004 CIS CSTO forces hold an anti-terrorist exercise in Kazakhstan. The first stage of the exercises will take place on the territory of Kazakhstan from 20 to 23 July, and the second stage from 3 to 6 August in Kyrgyzstan.

20 July 2004 Aleksandr Denisov, first deputy head of the Federal Military Technical Cooperation Service, says Russia will scale up military technical cooperation with several European nations.

20 July 2004 LUKoil head Vagit Alekperov says he hopes that it will be able to start operating in Iraq by the end of the year.

The MFA denies reports in the American media suggesting that Moscow and Washington are engaged in talks to send Russian troops to Iraq in return for economic concessions.

20 July 2004 The MFA says it regrets statements made by the Georgian side containing remarks on the possibility of withdrawal from agreements on a settlement of the Georgian-South Osetian conflict.

20 July 2004 The MFA resumes humanitarian supplies to the Palestinian leadership.

21 July 2004 Deputy Foreign minister Yuriy Fedotov says Russia regards the UN General Assembly's resolution on the wall being built by Israel as a means of putting pressure on both Israel and the Palestinians.

Sergey Lavrov says Russia regards as illegal Israel's determination to continue the construction of the West Bank barrier.

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21 July 2004 The MOD says that the armoured vehicles sent to South Osetia are intended for the peacekeeping battalion there.

The MFA says the OSCE should take a clear position on the Georgia-South Osetia conflict.

22 July 2004 Vladimir Putin meets Jim Mulva, the president of the US oil company ConocoPhillips in Krasnodar Territory.

23 July 2004 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Saltanov says Russia is willing to take part in rebuilding Iraq as soon as security for specialists working there can be guaranteed. Russian companies had resumed their work in Iraq immediately after hostilities stopped in the summer of 2003. In April this year, the Russian leadership, acting in the interests of security of Russian specialists, evacuated them temporarily.

23 July 2004 Security Council Secretary Igor Ivanov pays a working visit to Qatar.

23 July 2004 Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Kislyak says Moscow regrets the USA's decision to impose sanctions on Russia's Altay scientific production centre.

24 July 2004 Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari visits Russia. He says Baghdad considers the presence of Russian peacekeepers in Iraq necessary.

Sergey Lavrov says Russia and Iraq have confirmed their interest in holding an international conference on Iraq. Lavrov has had talks with his Iraqi counterpart Hoshiyar Zebari. Zebari also has talks with Security Council secretary.

The MFA and MOD say that no Russian peacekeeping troops will be sent to Iraq.

24 July 2004 The MFA expresses concern that the VGTRK bureau in Minsk, Belarus, may not be able to continue its work.

24 July 2004 Sergey Ivanov says ships of the Black Sea Fleet will soon start combat patrols with NATO as part of a programme to prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

Ivanov says construction of a modern military base will begin in Novorossiysk in 2005. He says that the navy will also remain in Sevastopol.

24 July 2004 Georgia returns to Russia the missiles that it had seized from peacekeepers in the Georgian-South Osetian conflict zone.

26 July 2004 The head of the Russian Finance Ministry's debt department Sergey Kolotukhin says Russia will only determine the terms for writing off more of the

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Iraqi debt after the IMF has completed its analysis of the country's debt-repayment stability. Iraq's debt to Russia stands at about 3.5bn dollars, now that 65% had been written off as part of the Paris Club. Before that, Iraq's debt to Russia, inclusive of interest and late payment fines, stood at 9.2bn dollars.

26 July 2004 Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev meets his Italian counterpart Giuseppe Pisanu in Moscow.

26 July 2004 Spanish foreign minister Miguel Moratinos visits Moscow. Russia and Spain will create a joint group to fight terrorism.

26 July 2004 Vladimir Putin has talks in Yalta with Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma. Putin also meets Uzbek President Islom Karimov in Yalta.

26 July 2004 A Tatarstan government delegation headed by Prime Minister Rustam Minnikhanov visits Iran.

27 July 2004 The MOD condemns the seizure of Russian military compounds in Tbilisi and Vaziani by Georgian forces. This is denied by the Georgian MOD.

27 July 2004 Romanian Prime Minister Adrian Nastase visits Moscow.

27 July 2004 Deputy Foreign Ministers Sergey Kislyak and Aleksandr Saltanov have talks with the French Foreign Ministry's deputy secretary-general for political and security affairs, Stanislas Lefevre de Laboulaye. They discuss Iraq and non-proliferation of the weapons of mass destruction.

27 July 2004 Lukoil begins training Iraqi oil specialists.

27 July 2004 The Joint Peacekeeping Forces HQ says Russia has completed the second and final stage of the withdrawal from Tskhinvali of faulty military hardware of the Osetian peacekeeping battalion of the Joint Peacekeeping Forces.

28 July 2004 Sergey Karaganov writes an article in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* on the last six months of Russian foreign policy.

28 July 2004 The MFA says Russia has no plans to supply heavy hydrogen to Iran.

28 July 2004 The chairman of the Federation Council's International Affairs Committee, Mikhail Margelov, says the US Democratic Party's new political platform shows that it is ready to cooperate with Russia.

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28 July 2004 The Russian and Italian justice ministries sign a memorandum in Moscow, which specifies priorities in bilateral cooperation in 2005-2010. Anti-terrorist cooperation is a major priority.

28 July 2004 Deputy Foreign Minister Fedotov says Russia is currently against imposing international sanctions on Sudan.

29 July 2004 The Court of Appeal of Qatar has ruled to uphold the life imprisonment sentence handed down to the two Russians convicted of the murder of the former Chechen separatist leader Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev.

29 July 2004 Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Chizhov and US Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs Elizabeth Jones have talks in Moscow. They discuss preparations for an OSCE foreign ministers' meeting to be held in Sofia on 6-7 December, Russia-NATO relations and Georgia.

29 July 2004 Stroytransgaz wins a tender to build a section of the Melut Basin Oil Development Project in Sudan. Stroytransgaz is in a consortium with STG-International GmbH.

29 July 2004 Vyacheslav Trubnikov is appointed the Russian Federation's extraordinary and plenipotentiary ambassador to India.

30 July 2004 Vladimir Putin signs a decree relieving Vyacheslav Trubnikov of his post as deputy foreign minister.

30 July 2004 Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Kislyak and US Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs Elizabeth Jones have talks on strategic stability and nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Jones praises Russia's role in the war on terrorism. She also praises Russian cooperation in the multilateral negotiating process on settling the situation on the Korean Peninsula, and cooperation with Russia on the Middle East, Iraq and Afghanistan.

30 July 2004 The MFA calls for urgent talks to settle the situation concerning South Osetia. First Deputy Foreign Minister Valeriy Loshchinin meets the head of South Osetia, Eduard Kokoiti. The MFA welcomes the UN Security Council's adoption of a resolution extending until 31 January the mandate of the UN observer mission in Georgia.

31 July 2004 The MFA calls for restraint by both Chisinau and Tiraspol following a row over Transdniester's closure of Moldovan-language schools.

August

2 August 2004 The MFA says that Georgia should not take any actions which would aggravate the situation in the Georgia-Abkhazia conflict zone. This is in connection with an incident on 30-31 July when a Georgian coastguard launch fired on a Turkish cargo vessel.

First Deputy Foreign Minister Valeriy Loshchinin says Russia cannot remain indifferent on the issue of the security of its citizens in South Osetia. He says that Russia will give humanitarian aid to the South Osetian population. He says Georgia should not opt out of the June 1992 agreement on South Osetia.

3 August 2004 The MOD will begin exercises on the Kola Peninsula to practise actions in the event of accidents involving nuclear weapons. The tactical and specialized war games, codenamed Avariya-2004, will involve about 1,000 servicemen and specialists of power-wielding structures. These will be the first joint exercises of this kind held under the auspices of the Russia-NATO Council.

3 August 2004 The Economic Development and Trade Ministry says Russia's trade surplus in January-June rose to 35.5bn US dollars from 28.9bn dollars in the same period in 2003. The trade surplus with non-CIS countries amounted to 32bn dollars and was 3.5bn dollars with CIS countries.

Russia's exports increased to 77.7bn dollars in January-June compared with 62.8bn dollars in the same period last year. Exports to non-CIS countries were 65.2bn dollars, up 22.3% on the year, while exports to CIS countries were 12.5bn dollars, up 30.2% on the year.

Russia's imports amounted to 42.2bn dollars in January-June compared with 33.9bn dollars in the same period last year. Imports from non-CIS countries were 33.2bn dollars, up 21.2% on the year, and from CIS countries 9bn dollars, up 36.4% on the year.

Russia's foreign trade turnover rose 23.9% on the year to 119.9bn dollars in January-June.

3 August 2004 First Deputy Foreign Minister and State Secretary Valeriy Loshchinin proposes that representatives of Moldova and Transdnier region should meet in Moscow with the co-mediators of the Dniester settlement.

3 August 2004 Lim Chae-jung, chairman of the Committee for Unification, Foreign Affairs and Trade of South Korea's National Assembly visits Moscow.

4 August 2004 Economic development and trade minister German Gref says at a meeting of the Russian and Chinese economic cooperation commission that trade turnover between Russia and China is expected to increase to 20bn US dollars this year from 15.76bn dollars in 2003. Gref says Russia and China see almost eye-to-eye on almost all issues relating to Russia's aim to join the WTO. Gref says the

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government will revisit the issue of building an eastward oil pipeline (to China) and choose its precise route in autumn 2004.

4 August 2004 The MFA warns Georgia against firing on ships that contain Russian tourists. This follows a warning by Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili that Russian tourists should not take holidays in Abkhazia.

It is reported that a Duma delegation to South Osetia, led by the head of the Duma CIS affairs committee Andrey Kokoshin, has come under fire. The MFA issues a protest and urges the Georgian authorities to investigate the incident.

4 August 2004 First Deputy Foreign Minister Valeriy Loshchinin and Kuwaiti Minister of Religious Endowments (Awqaf) and Islamic Affairs Abdallah Ma'tuq al-Ma'tuq in Moscow discuss Russian-Kuwaiti relations.

4 August 2004 The defence ministers of Russia (Sergey Ivanov), Kyrgyzstan (Esen Topoyev) and Tajikistan (Sherali Khayrulloev) meet in Bishkek. They discuss cooperation within the CIS Collective Security Treaty Organization. They will also watch joint antiterrorist exercises (Rubezh-2004). The exercises will be held at the Edelveys training ground in high mountains near the Kyrgyz town of Balykchi.

5 August 2004 The Duma passes a resolution condemning Georgian policy over South Osetia.

Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov visits Abkhazia.

The MFA says it will protect Russian citizens holidaying in Abkhazia.

First Deputy Foreign Minister Valeriy Loshchinin expresses concern about the growth of US influence in Georgia. He also says the MFA is against imposing economic and military sanctions on Georgia in the wake of the exacerbation of the Georgian-Osetian and the Georgia-Abkhaz conflicts.

5 August 2004 The official spokesman of the Federal Agency for Atomic Energy (FAAE), Nikolay Shingarev, condemns the possibility of an Israeli pre-emptive strike against the Iranian nuclear plant at Bushehr.

5 August 2004 Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says that "the North Korean nuclear problem really exists but Russia is not involved in creating it ... we know who really is involved in the creation of the North Korean nuclear problem. The problem is indeed very serious, but assertions about Russia's involvement in its creation are a myth". He denies claims that Russia was involved in the proliferation of missile and nuclear technologies.

5 August 2004 MOD sources state that the contract for the delivery of four S-300PMU1 air defence system battalions to China has been fulfilled successfully.

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5 August 2004 Blackseafor 2004 naval exercises begin. They will end on 14 September. Russia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Turkey and Ukraine are the participating states.

5 August 2004 The Strana.Ru web site publishes a profile of Russia's new permanent representative to the UN, Andrey Denisov.

6 August 2004 The Constitutional Court of Russia responds to an inquiry by Andrey Kokoshin, the chairman of the Duma Committee on CIS Affairs, about possible unification of South Osetia with Russia. The court clarified that an agreement is signed not with a part of a state but directly with the state itself. The court also reiterated that South Osetia is part of Georgia and therefore, questions concerning its acceptance into the Russian Federation are to be discussed with Georgia and on the latter's initiative.

Duma Deputy from Motherland faction Sergey Baburin says the possibility of South Osetia becoming a constituent member of Russia "has not been removed from the State Duma agenda".

The Georgian MFA says a Russian military aircraft has violated Georgia's airspace. This is denied by the Russian air force.

The MFA says Russia will ensure the security of its citizens holidaying in Abkhazia.

6 August 2004 The MFA expresses disappointment with the decision of an immigration court in Boston, which is now final, to grant political asylum in the United States to Ilyas Akhmadov, who describes himself as "Chechnya's foreign minister". The Chechen plenipotentiary representative in Moscow, Ziyad Sabsabi, says this shows that the USA has double standards over terrorism. The US decision is also criticised by the head of the Federation Council's committee on international affairs, Mikhail Margelov.

6 August 2004 The MFA states that the military attaché at the Lithuanian embassy in the Russian Federation, Col Sigitas Butkus, has been declared persona non grata. The Russian side also decides not to agree to the accreditation of Col R Zibas as the new military attaché.

9 August 2004 The MFA criticises the US-Danish agreement to permit the USA to modernize the US radar station in Thule (Greenland), which is to be used as part of the US antimissile defence system.

9 August 2004 Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says NATO representatives will not be given access to Russian nuclear installations or Russian nuclear armaments. He says Russia is prepared to permit the familiarization of "our partners in the alliance with the protection system and methods for the elimination of the aftermath of possible accidents involving nuclear armaments". He is commenting on the results of the Avariya-2004 exercises on the protection of nuclear installations.

9 August 2004 The ambassador-at-large for the Russian Foreign Ministry, Lev Mironov says Georgia underestimates the importance of the Joint Control Commission for a Georgian-Osetian settlement as an effective negotiating mechanism. He says Georgia entirely disregards the Joint Control Commission and continues to violate accords achieved earlier.

Georgian Defence Minister Giorgi Baramidze visits Moscow for talks.

10 August 2004 Gazeksport resumes gas supplies to Azerbaijan. Gas is currently being delivered in small volumes but it will reach the previous volume of 15m-16m cu.m. a day. Gas supplies to Azerbaijan were suspended on the night of 6 July because of a sabotage act on the Mozdok-Qazimammad trunk pipeline in the North Caucasus.

10 August 2004 Nikolay Bordyuzha, CIS Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) secretary-general, says that the CSTO intends to carry out peacekeeping operations. He also supports the idea of creating a rapid deployment brigade. He is speaking after the Rubezh-2004 exercises were modelled on the bloody events of 1999-2000 in Kyrgyzstan.

11 August 2004 The Chechen National Salvation Committee criticizes Council of Europe Secretary-General Terry Davis's stance on Chechnya. The committee accuses European officials and the international community of condoning Russian atrocities in Chechnya.

11 August 2004 LDPR leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and 40 State Duma deputies arrive in Sukhumi, Abkhazia by boat from Sochi.

11 August 2004 The head of the Federal Atomic Energy Agency Aleksandr Rumyantsev says pre-commissioning works, carried out with Russia's technical assistance, have reached their finishing stage at the first power unit of the Tianwan Atomic Energy Plant near the Chinese city of Lianyungang. Russia may participate in other Chinese civil nuclear projects.

12 August 2004 MFA Ambassador at large Igor Savolskiy says representatives from Russia have been sent to the Georgian-Osetian conflict zone to work out measures to safeguard Russian citizens.

First Deputy Foreign Minister Valeriy Loshchinin says Moscow "proposes that an emergency meeting of the co-chairmen of the Joint Control Commission be held in Tskhinvali". Loshchinin says "the situation is becoming inflamed with every passing hour and could go out of control at any moment".

12 August 2004 Igor Savolskiy, the MFA ambassador-at-large says Moscow "will not put pressure unilaterally on Moldova or the Dniester region, because it would run counter to existing agreements". Savolskiy stressed that the Russian

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delegation had insisted on the return of the sides to the negotiating table within the five-sided format (Ukraine, Russia, the EU, Moldova and the Dniester region).

12 August 2004 Kyrgyz Foreign Minister Askar Aytmatov says Kyrgyzstan may become Russia's main military and political foothold in the Central Asian region.

12 August 2004 Deputy Foreign Minister Yuriy Fedotov says Russia is ready for further broadening of collaboration with North Korea in the interest of jointly seeking a settlement of the so-called "North Korean nuclear problem". He says: "We are convinced that ensuring the Korean Peninsula's non-nuclear status should be accompanied by providing guarantees of security and creating conditions for successful social and economic development of all the countries in the region."

12 August 2004 Vladimir Putin issues an instruction on the implementation by the Russian Federation of its international obligations in the field of military and technical cooperation with foreign states.

12 August 2004 The Russian-Chinese subcommission for nuclear issues meets in Beijing. They discuss the possibility of developing a first-ever floating nuclear power plant. Federal Atomic Energy Agency head Aleksandr Rumyantsev and the chairman of China's Commission of Science, Technology and Industry for National Defence, Zhang Yunchuan, headed the delegations of the two countries at the talks. They also discuss the Tianwan nuclear power station, which is being built in eastern China with Russian assistance. They also discuss the construction of a proton cyclotron accelerator for fundamental research, joint work on the building of a floating nuclear power station, cooperation in controlled thermonuclear fusion and plasma physics, and space nuclear power engineering. A protocol was signed.

12-13 August 2004 The Russian-Georgian-South Osetian Joint Control Commission for conflict resolution in South Osetia meets through the night in Tskhinvali. Georgian officials say the talks end without result. Counsellor at the Russian embassy in Georgia Vasilij Korchmar says the talks were constructive.

13 August 2004 Vladimir Putin signs a decree appointing Valeriy Loshchinin first deputy foreign minister. Putin signs other decrees appointing Aleksandr Alekseyev, Sergey Kislyak, Sergey Razov, Aleksandr Saltanov and Vladimir Chizhov deputy foreign ministers. (Kislyak, Razov, Saltanov and Chizhov already hold this post, while Alekseyev was previously Director of Third European Department at the MFA.) Doku Zavgayev, previously deputy foreign minister, is appointed director-general at the Foreign Ministry. Putin also signs a decree releasing Eleonora Mitrofanova from the post of first deputy foreign minister in connection with her transfer to another post. In another decree Putin releases Anatolij Safonov from the post of deputy foreign minister in connection with his transfer to another post.

These decrees are issued in accordance with the decree on the new structure of the Foreign Ministry, signed by him on 12 July. Under the new structure, the ministry is to have seven deputy ministers, including one first deputy minister and one director-general. The ministry will now comprise 35 departments.

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Aleksandr Alekseyev, a new deputy foreign minister, will be responsible for relations with Asian countries at the MFA. Alekseyev represents Russia at the six-party talks on the North Korean nuclear problem that are held at the level of deputy minister. In June this year he led the Russian delegation.

13 August 2004 Deputy Foreign Minister Yuriy Fedotov says the deteriorating situation in Iraq clearly demonstrates that the world community should probably have relied on other approaches to dealing with that country. He says: "Before the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1546, Russia was calling for a stable model of a transitional period in Iraq relying on a broad national dialogue." A dialogue "would trigger a national reconciliation process and involve all influential political groups, in particular opposition groups, in resolving the situation in the country".

He calls for an international conference on Iraq.

13 August 2004 The MFA says "in 2003 Russia ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, thereby committing itself to the obligation of not carrying out any kind of nuclear tests. We are rigorously adhering to this obligation and intend to continue so to do".

13 August 2004 Federal Atomic Energy Agency head Aleksandr Rumyantsev says Iran's Bushehr nuclear power plant is a totally peaceful facility and cannot be used for developing military technologies. About 1,500 specialists from Russia and CIS countries are working at Bushehr.

13 August 2004 The MFA criticizes calls being heard in Tbilisi for the internationalization of the peacekeeping operation in South Osetia.

14 August 2004 US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld visits St.Petersburg for talks with defence minister Sergey Ivanov. They discuss international terrorism, NATO and Georgia air and missile defence.

15 August 2004 Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov is interviewed on TV on relations with US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld who is visiting Russia. He also discusses Iraq, South Osetia, draft into the Russian army, development of the Russian armed forces.

16 August 2004 Duma International Affairs Committee Chairman Konstantin Kosachev says the announcement of US troop redeployment plans in Europe is a cause of concern not panic. He says the subject of the redeployment of American troops in Europe had been one of the main issues on the agenda of all recent Russian-American talks on both presidential and ministerial levels. US troop numbers will be cut by one-third from current levels of 120,000. Some US forces will move eastwards towards the Russian border, probably to Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, and Romania. Kosachev states:

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"Americans tell us all the time that these actions carry no anti-Russian content, that this is done to fight international terrorism globally, and that Americans simply need more convenient bases for making a leap, mobile bases where, if needed, a large contingent could be deployed, but for the moment this contingent will not be deployed. All this is directed towards the south and the east, which is roughly saying the countries that are today perceived by the United States as the main source of threat to their security, in particular, as sources of Islamic fundamentalism. And there is certainly logic to these ruminations, but not 100%. If you look at the map, then you see that Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania - that is indeed moving southeast, but Poland - that's clearly moving towards the Russian border."

16 August 2004 Maj-Gen Svyatoslav Nabzdorov, commander of the peacekeeping contingent in South Osetia, says the concentration of Georgian personnel and hardware in South Osetia has reached an unacceptable level.

16 August 2004 The MFA announces a new distribution of responsibilities between the deputy foreign ministers.

Valeriy Loshchinin, first deputy head of the Foreign Ministry, is responsible for bilateral relations with CIS countries, ties with parliament, the constituent parts of the federation and public and political organizations. Issues connected with personnel, consulate matters and state protocol are also his responsibility.

Deputy Minister Aleksandr Alekseyev is entrusted with relations with countries in Asia and multilateral cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region.

Sergey Kislyak is responsible for ties with countries in North and Latin America, problems of international security and disarmament and Russia's involvement in the G8.

Sergey Razov's responsibilities are multilateral cooperation with the CIS and a number of functional problems.

Aleksandr Saltanov has been given relations with countries in the Middle East and Africa and problems connected with a Middle East and an Iraqi settlement.

Yuriy Fedotov is in charge of ties with international organizations, economic and humanitarian cooperation, mutual interaction in the sphere of human rights and international-legal issues.

Vladimir Chizhov is in charge of relations with European countries and issues connected with all-European and Euro-Atlantic organizations.

Doku Zavgayev, the general director of the Foreign Ministry, will be engaged in administrative, financial and special matters connected with ensuring work at the ministry and its establishments abroad.

17 August 2004 The MFA says that it believes that Washington's plans to redeploy troops in Europe should be in line with the obligations taken by the USA with regard to limitations of armed forces and armaments. "Our further attitude towards these plans will depend on their further specific details and on the extent to which they will pose a threat to Russia's interests ... the US side has advised us in advance about its plans to introduce changes to US military deployment abroad because of the changing nature of threats after the end of the Cold War, and, first of all, because of the growing threat of international terrorism."

Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says that US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, gave him advance warning of US plans to redeploy its forces, when he was in St Petersburg on 14 August. "We know of the US plans to reconfigure their foreign military presence, in general. This is dictated by a number of objective circumstances. We understand them. At the moment I see nothing alarming in these plans, especially as, of course, they affect not only - and not so much - the countries of the Warsaw Treaty."

18 August 2004 Valeriy Loshchinin, first deputy foreign minister, says accords on a cease-fire reached at an emergency meeting on 13-14 August of the Joint Control Commission (JCC) on a settlement of the Georgian-South Osetian conflict are not being fulfilled through the fault of the Georgian side.

18 August 2004 Azeri foreign minister Elmar Mammadyarov visits Moscow for talks with his counterpart Sergey Lavrov.

18 August 2004 Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma meet in Sochi.

The prime ministers of Russia and Ukraine, Mikhail Fradkov and Viktor Yanukovych, sign an in Sochi intergovernmental agreement "On oil transit across the territory of Ukraine". They also sign an intergovernmental agreement "On measures to ensure strategic partnership in the gas sector".

18 August 2004 Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says he sees no threat to Russia's security from the opening of the first missile silos for the USA's new air defence system. "As far as US plans for construction of an air defence system are concerned, we also have our own plans to develop strategic nuclear and space forces. I assure you that those plans which we have will be unswervingly implemented and adhered to."

18 August 2004 The main stage of a naval exercise involving the countries of the Black Sea basin, Blackseafor, begins at Novorossiysk.

19 August 2004 Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov say Russia and Azerbaijan are taking active part in the creation of the North-South international transport corridor to Iran.

19 August 2004 The MFA says that Georgia should "adopt harsh measures against those who deliberately embarked on a path of violating the existing agreements and accords". Commander of the Joint Peacekeeping Forces Gen Svyatoslav Nabzdorov says it is Georgian Interior Minister Irakli Okruashvili and the armed formations subordinate to him that are the "third force" that is constantly provoking exchanges of fire in the Tskhinvali area.

Nabzdorov then praises Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili's announcement that all Georgian armed formations not having a peacekeeping mandate will be withdrawn from the Georgian-Osetian conflict zone.

19 August 2004 The MFA repeats its calls for an international conference on Iraq.

20 August 2004 The MFA says it is satisfied with the decision of the Georgian president, Mikheil Saakashvili, to withdraw Georgian military units that are not part of the force of peacekeepers from the area of the Georgia-Osetia conflict.

Vladimir Putin expresses concern over Georgian policy towards South Osetia. He says that Georgia was mistaken to strip Abkhazia and South Osetia of their status as autonomies.

20 August 2004 Armenian President Robert Kocharyan visits Moscow for talks with Vladimir Putin.

20 August 2004 Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka visits Moscow.

20 August 2004 The MFA rejects Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus's statements that Lithuania has the same right to compensation from Russia for the Soviet occupation as European countries which suffered from Nazi Germany.

23 August 2004 Vladimir Putin meets Belarusian leader Alyaksandr Lukashenka in Sochi. They agree that the rouble will be introduced as a single currency of the two states provisionally on 1 January 2006. Putin says there are no remaining problems between Russia and Belarus.

Putin says Russia is to start exporting gas to Belarus at Russia's domestic price if a joint venture between Russian natural gas monopoly Gazprom and Belarus gas pipeline monopoly Beltransgaz is established.

23 August 2004 Peacekeeping forces in Abkhazia start command post exercises.

23 August 2004 The MFA criticises the unveiling of a monument to legionaries from the 20th Estonian SS Division in Lihula, Estonia.

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24 August 2004 Sergey Lavrov telephones his Sudanese counterpart Mustafa Uthman Isma'il to discuss the Darfur conflict. Lavrov also discusses the Sudanese crisis with Chinese foreign minister Li Zhaoxing by telephone.

24 August 2004 The MFA says that it is still committed to the six party talks on the North Korean nuclear problem despite the North Korean statement on 23 August that it is impossible for North Korea to take part in the next round of six-party talks "because of the extremely hostile policy of the USA".

24 August 2004 Sergey Lavrov says Russia is drafting an appeal to all OSCE member states to start reforming it. Lavrov says that reform of the OSCE is on the agenda of Vladimir Putin's talks with French President Jacques Chirac and German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, to be held in Sochi in late August.

24 August 2004 Joint Armenian-Russian military exercises take place in Armenia.

25 August 2004 Russia's Industry and Energy Minister Victor Khristenko is in China to take part in a bilateral energy committee meeting on oil, gas, power, and energy and power engineering. He says Russia is able to increase oil exports to China by rail to 10 million tonnes per year. He says: "Recently we were discussing 3m tonnes of oil exports per year, while currently we export over 6m tonnes of oil to China per year."

25 August 2004 The MFA criticises recent utterances of the Georgian leadership about Russia. "Militaristic rhetoric has increasingly been more present in official Tbilisi's recent statements. Hints and accusations against the 'northern neighbour' which is allegedly the source of all ills and conflicts on Georgia's territory, have already been voiced, repeatedly so. However, the latest utterances show a complete absence of any sense of restraint, bordering on the irresponsible in whatever dimension, whether personal or state."

25 August 2004 The MFA warns Israel not to create new settlements on the West Bank of the river Jordan.

26 August 2004 The Iranian ambassador to Russia, Gholamreza Shafei, says that Iran agrees to return spent nuclear fuel to Russia and will sign an agreement on this soon. He also calls for increased cooperation between Russia and Iran in fighting terrorism.

Rosatom says construction of the first generating set of the Bushehr nuclear power station in Iran will be completed in 2005.

26 August 2004 A Japanese delegation headed by Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs Kazunori Tanaka begins a working visit to Kamchatka. The delegation will learn about the work of the northeast centre for repairing and decommissioning nuclear submarines, which is in the town of Vilyuchinsk.

26 August 2004 Industry and Energy Minister Viktor Khristenko says Russia and China plan to sign agreements on cooperation in the gas sector and crude oil exports. He is commenting on the results of the sixth meeting of the Russian-Chinese subcommission for energy cooperation. Khristenko says the Russian government will be able to officially start examining plans for an oil pipeline from Tayshet to Nakhodka in six months' time, after a thorough expert assessment. The pipeline will be 4,000 km long and will cost 15bn dollars.

26 August 2004 The Russian Federation's permanent representative at the Disarmament Conference in Geneva, Leonid Skotnikov, says "the Russian Federation does not have plans for the development or deployment in space of any space weapon systems" now or in the near future.

27 August 2004 Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov says that supplies of Russian oil to China will remain stable.

27 August 2004 The MOD says Russia's first peacekeeping brigade will be formed by 1 January 2005.

28 August 2004 A meeting has taken place between the Chechen acting president, Sergey Abramov, and members of the delegation of the Council of Europe and PACE, which arrived in the republic on a three-day visit to collect information on the political and humanitarian situation in the North Caucasus region.

28 August 2004 The MFA says it sees no alternative to direct talks on the Dniester problem between the Moldovan and Transdnestrian leaderships.

29 August 2004 Vladimir Putin meets the Abkhaz prime minister Raul Khadzhimba at a veterans conference in Sochi.

30 August 2004 The MFA criticises Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's intention to view the South Kuril islands from on board a ship. It says this may complicate the peace treaty negotiations between Moscow and Tokyo.

30 August 2004 MFA spokesman Aleksandr Yakovenko says "a significant share in the responsibility for the fate of the continent of Europe between the three states" is a stimulus toward unity for Russia, France and Germany. He says the "troika" format was determined by "close and coinciding approaches to the problems of countering new challenges, primarily in the war on terror, the narcotics threat and transnational organized crime". The importance of trilateral cooperation between Russia, France and Germany "is objectively determined by the very composition of the troika: two permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, the leading countries in the EU".

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Yakovenko also noted the "general intent to create a new system of international relations based on multilateral principles with a central role for the UN and reliance on international law".

30 August 2004 German Chancellor Gerhard Schroder arrives in Moscow for talks with Vladimir Putin and French President Jacques Chirac, who will arrive on 31 August.

30 August 2004 Vladimir Putin partially lifts the arms embargo on Iraq and multinational forces.

30 August 2004 At the meeting of the Central Asian Cooperation Organization (CACO) held on 28 August in Astana (Kazakhstan) the draft protocol on Russia acceding to the founding treaty of the CACO (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) was approved. A Russian delegation headed by Deputy Minister in charge of relations with the CIS Sergey Razov, took part for the first time in a CACO meeting.

31 August 2004 Vladimir Putin meets the French and German leaders in Sochi.

Putin again says it is necessary to join efforts in order to effectively fight against international terrorism. He says Russia will increase its oil exports. He also says that Russia opposes Iran obtaining nuclear weapons.

31 August 2004 The MFA says it is surprised by a statement by US Department of State official representative Richard Boucher that the 29 August Chechen presidential elections allegedly "did not meet international democratic standards".

31 August 2004 Maj-Gen Svyatoslav Nabzdorov, commander of the Joint Peacekeeping Forces says the annulling of the Dagomys agreement on a Georgian-Osetian settlement may result in the outbreak of a new armed conflict in the region.

31 August 2004 Deputy Foreign Minister Yuriy Fedotov says resumption of military and technical cooperation between Russia and Iraq depends on how the process of political settlement in Iraq will go.

31 August 2004 The MFA condemns the bus bombing in Beersheba, Israel.

31 August 2004 The special representative of the president of the Russian Federation for international energy cooperation, ambassador at large Igor Yusufov, and Iranian ambassador in Moscow Gholamreza Shafe'i discuss prospects for bilateral cooperation in the area of fuel and energy.

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31 August 2004 Deputy Foreign Minister Yuriy Fedotov and Greek Foreign Ministry Director-General Anastasios Skopelitis have talks. They discuss the fight against international terrorism, and the situation in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Middle East and Cyprus.

31 August 2004 MFA spokesman Aleksandr Yakovenko says Moscow believes Russian-Turkish partnership in the arms trade sphere has great potential.

31 August 2004 A Russian Pacific Fleet vessel detachment under the flag of Rear-Adm Sergey Avramenko, the commander of the Maritime Territory flotilla of the Pacific Fleet, has arrived in Japan. The ships will participate in an unprecedented joint search and rescue exercises.

The Vorovskiy, a border guard patrol ship, left Kamchatka for US Kodiak Island in the Gulf of Alaska for joint exercises with the US Coast Guard.

A detachment of Black Sea Fleet warships leaves for an official visit to Italy, which will include joint exercises with the Italian Navy.

September

1 September 2004 Sergey Lavrov addresses students at MGIMO. He outlines Russian foreign policy priorities.

1 September 2004 Russian armed forces Chief of the General Staff Yuriy Baluyevskiy says it would be counterproductive to opt for use of force to resolve the Georgian-Osetian conflict.

1 September 2004 Russia asks for an urgent session of the UN Security Council so that it can express its attitude to the series of recent terrorist attacks in Russia.

Akhmed Zakayev, special representative of President Aslan Maskhadov, has issued an appeal from the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria to the United Nations Security Council.

1 September 2004 The MFA announces that Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov will visit the Middle East on 3-7 September. He will visit Egypt, Lebanon, Israel and Syria.

1 September 2004 Vladimir Putin says that if the Soviet Union had not changed politically and had not disintegrated, the USA would not have resorted to a military operation in Iraq.

1 September 2004 The Russian president's plenipotentiary representative in the Siberian Federal District, Leonid Drachevskiy, leads a trade delegation to Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in China.

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2 September 2004 Vladimir Putin meets King Abdallah II of Jordan in the Kremlin.

King Abdallah II also meets chairman of the Dagestani State Council Magomed Magomedov.

2 September 2004 Vladimir Putin postpones his visit Turkey due to the hostage crisis in North Osetia.

2 September 2004 The border between Russia and Georgia is reopened.

3 September 2004 The Duma issues a statement calling on the world community to reject a policy of double standards when it comes to terrorists.

4 September 2004 Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov describes as sacrilegious Dutch Foreign Minister Bernhard Bot's statement on behalf of the EU in which he demanded an explanation from Russia in connection with the hostage-taking in Beslan. Lavrov is visiting Egypt. He discusses the Israeli-Palestinian peace process and Iraq. He affirms belief in the road map, and repeats Russia's demand for an international conference on Iraq.

The MFA issues a statement on terrorism condemning double standards.

5 September 2004 Vladimir Putin has talks by telephone with Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Abdallah Bin-Abd-al-Aziz Al Saud on the Beslan school siege. Putin later has telephone talks with Indian prime minister Manmohan Singh, and Canadian prime minister Paul Martin.

5 September 2004 Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov visits Lebanon. He calls for an international conference on Iraq. He says Moscow is in favour of a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East, including the Lebanese and Syrian aspects.

6 September 2004 The Federal Customs Service reports that Russia's foreign trade surplus rose to 50.1bn dollars in January-July 2004 from 42.9bn in the same period last year. Foreign trade turnover increased 24.8% to 129.8bn. Russia's foreign trade turnover with non-CIS countries rose 22.1% on the year to 105.1bn dollars in January-July, while trade turnover with CIS countries increased 38.3% to 24.7bn dollars.

Russia's trade turnover with EU countries totalled 47.1bn dollars in January-July. EU countries accounted for 36.3% of Russia's trade turnover in January-April and 47.7% in May-July, after the EU enlargement last May.

CIS countries accounted for 19% of Russia's trade turnover in January-July, up from 17.2% in the same period of 2003. European-Asian Economic Cooperation countries accounted for 10.6% of the total turnover, up from 9.6% on the year, while Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation countries made up 17.4% of the total turnover, up from 16.1% on the year.

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Russia's exports went up 22.5% on the year to 90bn dollars in January-July. Exports to non-CIS countries increased 19.8% on the year to 74.9bn dollars in the period, while exports to CIS countries rose 37.8% to 15.1bn dollars.

Natural gas exports to CIS countries rose 28% in January-July, while crude oil exports did not change on the year.

Russia's imports from non-CIS countries rose 28% on the year in January-July to 30.2bn dollars. Imports from CIS countries went up 38.9% on the year to 9.6bn dollars in the period.

6 September 2004 Sergey Lavrov visits Israel. He discusses Russian nuclear cooperation with Iran. The Russian and Israeli foreign ministries sign a cooperation agreement in trade, economic, cultural and other areas.

6 September 2004 The MFA announces that the Russian embassy in Riga has officially demanded an explanation from the Latvian Foreign Ministry with regard to the deportation of Aleksandr Kazakov, an activist of the HQ for the protection of Russian schools. The MFA raises with the EU the issue of Latvia's continuous non-observance of the rights of its Russian-speaking population even after joining the EU.

7 September 2004 Vladimir Putin's visit to Germany, scheduled for 10-11 September, is postponed because of Beslan.

The Russia-NATO Council issues a statement on terrorism. The council confirms the commitment of all NATO member states and Russia to fight the terrorist threat together and to develop, as a matter of priority, a plan of specific joint actions within the framework of the Russia-NATO Council.

The MFA says Russia will seek the extradition of Akhmed Zakayev and Ilyas Akhmadov.

7 September 2004 Sergey Lavrov visits Syria.

7 September 2004 South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun receives members of a Russian delegation. The delegation is taking part in a meeting between co-chairmen of the Russian-Korean joint commission on economic, scientific and technical cooperation. The delegation is led by Transport Minister Igor Levitin.

8 September 2004 The MFA says it regards US statements about possible contacts with Chechen separatists as an attempt to legitimize Aslan Maskhadov's emissaries.

8 September 2004 Chief of General Staff General Yuriy Baluyevskiy meets General James Jones, the NATO supreme allied commander.

9 September 2004 Foreign minister Sergey Lavrov is interviewed in *Vremya Novostey*. He says: "Unfortunately, we have to prepare ourselves for a long-term struggle against terrorism. This presupposes a still higher level of trust between special services, including even cooperation which used to seem unthinkable. This means revealing sources of information." He criticises countries which provide asylum to those involved in terrorism.

Lavrov accuses the USA and Great Britain of double standards over terrorism as they refuse to hand over Chechen separatists while giving assurances that they are ready to cooperate with Russia. He is referring to the USA giving asylum to Ilyas Akhmadov and Great Britain doing the same for Akhmed Zakayev.

Lavrov urges Georgia not to see Russia as an external enemy.

Vladimir Putin and German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder adopt a joint statement on the struggle against international terrorism.

9 September 2004 Presidential envoy to the Volga Federal District Sergey Kiriyenko visits Japan, and meets Japanese Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi.

9 September 2004 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Saltanov says North Korea should receive security guarantees.

9 September 2004 Sergey Lavrov welcomes the IAEA report on Iran.

9 September 2004 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Saltanov says there should be further talks on North Korean nuclear weapons.

9 September 2004 The Second Taiwan-Russia Cooperation Forum meets in Moscow.

10 September 2004 In an interview with Al-Jazeera TV, Sergey Lavrov repeats that Russia will if necessary launch pre-emptive strikes against terrorist bases.

10 September 2004 The rail link between Moscow and Sukhumi (Abkhazia) is restored after 11 years.

10 September 2004 The MFA criticizes the OSCE and Council of Europe for not devoting due attention to Latvia's violation of ethnic minority rights.

10 September 2004 Dmitry Rogozin criticises the decision of the Lithuanian parliament to vote against the creation of a corridor for Kaliningrad transit. He warns that Russia also has opportunities for sharply influencing a situation like this. One of the conditions of the agreement with the Republic of Lithuania on visa-free transit to Kaliningrad was that Russia would agree to ratify a treaty on the

border with the Republic of Lithuania. If Lithuania opts for hostile actions of any kind, the treaty will be terminated. This will put Lithuania in a very difficult international situation.

11 September 2004 Duma Chairman Boris Gryzlov calls on other countries to adopt UN conventions on the fight against terrorism as soon as possible. Russia has ratified 11 of 12 UN conventions and the Duma is preparing to ratify the 12th convention. He is attending a conference of G8 parliamentary chairmen in Chicago.

11 September 2004 Pakistani Foreign Minister Mian Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri visits Moscow. He says Islamabad will be more active in sharing its intelligence with Moscow to aid Russia in the struggle against international terrorism.

11 September 2004 Vladimir Lukin, human rights ombudsman, meets Belarusian opposition leaders in Moscow. He expresses concern over the human rights situation in Belarus.

12 September 2004 Georgia's Minister of State for Settlement of Conflicts visits Moscow to discuss Abkhazia. He says Georgia considers the launch of a railway link between Sukhumi and Moscow as a direct violation of Georgian sovereignty and all international agreements and relations between states. He believes it to be a violation of the 2003 Sochi agreement.

12 September 2004 Iranian President Mohammad Khatami says Russia and Iran will continue to cooperate in the sphere of atomic energy, despite pressure from "a third party".

13 September 2004 The Ioniex 2004 joint naval exercise commence. Italian and Russian warships are to practise an operation against terrorists in the open sea.

13 September 2004 The Federation Council's chairman, Sergey Mironov visits North Korea.

13 September 2004 Deputy Foreign Minister Yury Fedotov says Russia opposes the discussion of the Iranian nuclear programme by the UN Security Council.

13 September 2004 The MFA demands that Lithuania prevent the Chechen separatist web site Kavkaz-Tsentr from operating from Lithuania.

13 September 2004 The Transport Ministry says Russia may close its air space to Georgian planes from 1 October if Georgia does not pay off its debt to Russia for air navigation services, which exceed 3.6m dollars.

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14 September 2004 The MFA states that in connection with the recent terrorist acts in the North Caucasus, Russia is introducing certain temporary restrictions on the crossing of the Russia-Azerbaijan border as of 15 September.

14 September 2004 The head of the Federal Atomic Energy Agency (Rosatom), Aleksandr Rumyantsev, says Russia will remove nuclear fuel from all Soviet-era research reactors abroad.

14 September 2004 The MFA says it has no reason to doubt the explanation given by North Korea relating to the explosion on 9 September in North Korea's Yanggang Province.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Alekseyev says it will not be possible to hold the fourth round of six-sided talks on the Korean Peninsula's nuclear problem in September. "Russia strongly believes it would be right to hold this round at the end of September, as was decided in Beijing in June. But, for a whole set of reasons, we will not manage this."

Alekseyev and his South Korean counterpart Lee Soo-hyuck hold consultations in Moscow.

14 September 2004 The Russian air force denies reports that Russian helicopters violated Georgian airspace.

Georgia asks the new commander of the joint peacekeeping force in Tskhinvali Marat Kulakhmetov not to comment on political issues like his predecessor Svyatoslav Nabzdorov.

14 September 2004 The Vilnius-based Chechen rebel web site Kavkaz-Tsentr accuses Moscow of trying to force the Lithuanian authorities to close it down.

14 September 2004 Franco-Russian naval exercises begin in the Atlantic. These exercises follow on from the joint Russian-French manoeuvres in the Norwegian Sea and the Barents Sea in the summer of 2003.

15 September 2004 Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says Russia is expected to pay 17.7bn dollars of its foreign debt in 2005. In 2004, Russia is expected to pay 16.1bn dollars, including 9.0bn dollars on principal repayments and 7.1bn dollars on servicing the debt.

15 September 2004 Industry and Energy Minister Viktor Khristenko says there will be certain limitations on foreigners' holdings in Gazprom.

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15 September 2004 Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov rejects criticisms made by US Secretary of State Colin Powell, who stated that the antiterrorist measures being taken by Russia would weaken Russian democracy.

15 September 2004 The MFA criticizes a resolution passed by the Lithuanian parliament on cooperation with Kaliningrad Region. The MFA says the Lithuanian parliament wants to "ignore the agreements reached between Russia and the European Union in 2002 about visa-free passage for high-speed trains and additional recommendations put forward by experts on the matter, as well as the subsequent agreements between Russia and the EU".

15 September 2004 Vladimir Putin arrives in Astana for the CIS heads of state summit.

16 September 2004 An official delegation from the Republic of Belarus led by Prime Minister Syarhey Sidorski travels to Tatarstan on 16 September.

16 September 2004 The British chargé d'affaires ad interim to Russia, Stephen Wordsworth, is invited to the MFA. The ministry makes representations to him "over anti-Russian activities of so-called 'new political immigrants' such as Akhmed Zakayev, Boris Berezovskiy and others which have increased in London following the events in Beslan".

16 September 2004 The first deputy director of the FSB, Sergey Smirnov, currently on a visit to Indonesia, has signed an intergovernmental agreement on mutual protection of security information with the acting Defence Minister Suprihadi. They also sign an agreement to share intelligence.

16 September 2004 The CIS summit being held in Astana appoints Russian Maj-Gen Viktor Voloshin the new commander of the Combined Peacekeeping Force in Abkhazia.

16 September 2004 The MFA says it hopes that North Korea would not reject continuation of talks on the nuclear issue.

17 September 2004 Deputy Foreign Minister Yuriy Fedotov says Moscow does not think it sensible to invite the world community to take part in political settlement in Chechnya.

MFA spokesman Aleksandr Yakovenko says emissaries of the Chechen rebels are turning the USA and Great Britain into a bridgehead for propaganda work.

17 September 2004 Vladimir Putin holds a meeting in the Kremlin of the government commission on military and technical cooperation with foreign

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countries. In 2003 the total volume of Russian arms and military equipment exported totalled 5,568m dollars.

17 September 2004 First Deputy Foreign Minister Valeriy Loshchinin says bases for training terrorists "continue to operate on the territory of Georgia".

17 September 2004 The MFA says it hopes to settle the problem of delimiting the border with Kazakhstan by the end of 2004. 7,350 km of the border have already been resolved, leaving only a small section of 150 km still to do.

17 September 2004 Deputy Foreign Minister Yuriy Fedotov says Russia "does not feel it is expedient to hand over the question of Iran's nuclear dossier to the UN Security Council for review".

17 September 2004 MFA spokesman Aleksandr Yakovenko denies claims that relations between Moscow and Washington have become cooler because of measures announced by the Russian leadership to combat terrorism, protect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Russian Federation.

17 September 2004 MFA spokesman Aleksandr Yakovenko says Russia and South Korea are preparing to sign an agreement on the exploration and utilization of space for peaceful purposes.

18 September 2004 The MFA expresses bewilderment over US criticisms of Vladimir Putin's decision to strengthen the power vertical in the Russian political system.

"Moscow has noticed that in the heat of the US election contest various allegations have been made regarding the steps taken by the Russian leadership to strengthen the state in the face of the terrorist threat and certain kinds of 'concern' have been expressed about the restriction of democratic freedoms in our country ... moreover, this situation almost casts doubt on the efficacy of the Russian-American partnership in the war on international terrorism ... the way the issue has been raised, along with the lectures being given on the need for Russia to respect the supremacy of the law and human rights, cannot help but cause bewilderment ... any attempt to connect these issues with the cooperation between Russia and the USA in the war on international terrorism is counterproductive. The guarantee of success in this task is the unshakable solidarity of the entire global community in the face of a common threat."

18 September 2004 Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Saltanov says Russia "sees no need to revise the 'road map' for Middle Eastern settlement".

18 September 2004 Aleksandr Saltanov says "establishing a dialogue within Iraq, aimed at achieving national reconciliation and accord, is important" to reach a

tangible turning point in the Iraqi situation. He says Russian companies will expand their presence in Iraq.

18 September 2004 MFA official spokesman Aleksandr Yakovenko says that the Russian-Chinese volume of trade is to reach a record 20bn dollars by the end of 2004. Bilateral trade reached 9.45bn dollars in January-June 2004, he added. Chinese investment in Russia exceeds 1bn dollars, while Russia has invested in China 800m dollars. The Russian-Chinese investment forum, held in Khabarovsk in June, planned the launch of 12 major bilateral projects worth 700m dollars. Priority is given to the oil and gas sector. It is planned to deliver 6.4m tonnes of oil to China. Russia and China also develop cooperation in the scientific and technical domains. In total, 172 bilateral projects are in progress, relating to fundamental and applied research, such as biotechnology, microbiology, atomic physics and high-energy physics, petroleum chemistry, alternative technology, mechanical engineering, telecommunications, electronics, seismology and agricultural technology.

18 September 2004 It is reported that both Russian and Georgian border forces have intensified their patrolling of their borders. The Georgian Border Guard Department says that the airborne control will be carried out jointly by the Russian and Georgian sides. The details of the joint patrolling will be worked out by early October.

18 September 2004 The Lithuanian government closes down a Chechen rebel web site in Vilnius.

18 September 2004 The head of the Federal Atomic Energy Agency (Rosatom), Aleksandr Rumyantsev, attends an IAEA conference in Vienna on the international Global Threat Reduction Initiative conference.

19 September 2004 The head of the Federal Monitoring Authority for Nuclear and Radiation Safety (Gosatomnadzor), Andrey Malyshev, says Russia supports the development of the peaceful nuclear energy industry in Iran. "Iran has produced evidence that it is not engaged in illegal work in the nuclear energy industry, which would go contrary to the main positions of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and additional protocols to the NPT signed by Tehran".

19 September 2004 The MFA criticises US presidential candidate John Kerry for attacking George Bush for ignoring America's interest in the advancement of democracy in Russia.

20 September 2004 The MFA urges Iran to comply fully with the demands of the resolution passed by the Board of Directors of the IAEA in Vienna on 18 September.

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20 September 2004 The MFA says the threat of introducing sanctions against Sudan that is contained in UN Security Council Resolution 1564 is "far from the best method of encouraging Khartoum to meet its UN obligations".

20 September 2004 The president of the South Korea, Roh Moo-hyun, arrives in Moscow on an official four-day visit.

20 September 2004 The Russian air force denies an allegation by the Georgian defence minister that two Russian aircraft have illegally entered Georgian air space in the vicinity of the Chechen border.

20 September 2004 The MFA says it welcomes the decision made by Rolf Ekeus, the OSCE high commissioner on national minorities, to pay an inspection visit to Latvia.

21 September 2004 Minister of Economic Development and Trade German Gref says Russia sees the USA as a promising oil export market. He is speaking at a Russian-American seminar on the transport of oil and oil markets.

21 September 2004 The inter-state council of the EurAsian Economic Community, the EAEC, meets in Moscow. The heads of government of the five countries - Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan - are discussing the development of trade and economic ties. Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov says it is possible that the Russian rouble will become the single currency of the five countries. He also says the amount of foreign investment in the economy of the Russian Federation increased considerably in 2003, almost to 30bn dollars, some 7bn of that in direct investment. As of July 2004, accrued foreign investment in the Russian economy exceeded 66bn dollars.

21 September 2004 Russia and South Korea sign agreements worth over 400bn dollars. These are the first results of talks between the leaders of the two countries, Vladimir Putin and Roh Moo-hyun. The two presidents sign a joint declaration.

21 September 2004 The head of the Ukrainian presidential administration, Viktor Medvedchuk, and Vladimir Putin discuss prospects for Ukrainian-Russian cooperation within the Single Economic Space (Ukraine, Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan) in Moscow. They state full mutual understanding concerning the economic decisions adopted at the latest CIS summit in Astana.

Medvedchuk also meets Russian presidential chief of staff Dmitriy Medvedev to discuss cooperation between Ukraine and Russia.

21 September 2004 Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov attends the the 59th session of the UN General Assembly in New York.

Dr Mark A Smith

21 September 2004 The Duma international affairs committee chairman, Konstantin Kosachev, says the Duma thinks that the USA and Britain must reconsider their decision to grant political asylum to Chechen rebel leader Aslan Maskhadov's envoys Ilyas Akhmadov and Akhmed Zakayev.

22 September 2004 The Duma issues a statement on international cooperation in fighting terrorism. It calls on the governments of USA and Britain to stop the activities of Chechen separatist emissaries Ilyas Akhmadov and Akhmed Zakayev.

22 September 2004 The MFA says it favours putting the issue of preventing an arms race in space on the agenda of the international Disarmament Conference.

23 September 2004 Federation Council Foreign Affairs Committee chairman Mikhail Margelov says it is time for the countries belonging to the antiterrorist coalition to set up an international terrorism tribunal alongside the Hague Tribunal. He says at the 59th session of the UN General Assembly that a concept of "outside the law" should be introduced into international law. "People who organize, carry out and finance terrorist attacks like those in New York and Washington on 11 September 2001, those at the station in Madrid a year ago and the recent attack in Beslan need to be declared outside the law ... anyone who is declared outside the law by the antiterrorist tribunal should be destroyed by the secret services of the countries belonging to the antiterrorist coalition, regardless of where they may be ... the countries in the antiterrorist coalition need to plan and implement pre-emptive measures together."

23 September 2004 Vladimir Putin says the West is not doing enough to counter the drug threat from Afghanistan.

23 September 2004 Justice Minister Yuriy Chayka asks Finnish Justice Minister Johannes Koskinen to raise the issue of the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism at the next meeting of EU justice ministers. Chayka is visiting Finland. The justice ministers of Russia and Finland sign a memorandum on priority areas of cooperation in 2005-2010.

23 September 2004 Sergey Lavrov speaks at the Foreign Policy Association in New York, on Russo-US relations.

Sergey Lavrov attends a meeting of the Middle East Quartet in New York.

23 September 2004 Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao arrives in Moscow for an official visit.

The intergovernmental agreement between Russia and China on the joint exploitation of certain islands and the waters surrounding them in rivers on their joint border is extended by five years.

24 September 2004 Vladimir Putin addresses the opening of World Congress of News Agencies in Moscow. He discusses international terrorism and the need to mobilize society to counter it. He defends his proposed changes of the Russian political system.

24 September 2004 Vladimir Putin says Iran does not need nuclear weapons and should fulfil all the IAEA requirements. "Russia is categorically against the expansion of the club of nuclear states and considers that Iran should move towards fulfilling the IAEA requirements on all the positions set out by that organization ... Iran is fulfilling the IAEA requirements on all positions. I have met the president of that country many times, and I am certain of this ... I have no doubt that Iran does not possess such (nuclear) weapons, but proof is necessary."

24 September 2004 The Russian and Chinese prime ministers Mikhail Fradkov and Wen Jiabao sign a joint communiqué on trade and investment. Russia and China expect trade between them to reach or exceed 60bn dollars by 2010. In the first eight months of 2004 trade grew by 35.4% to 12.87bn dollars. On the basis of results to date this year, one can expect trade to approach 20bn dollars.

25 September 2004 Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says he "does not see any problems in principle" which could complicate the adoption of the antiterrorist resolution draft proposed by Russia at the UN. Lavrov says that Russia proposes that a single list of people and organizations involved in terrorist activities should be compiled.

27 September 2004 Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev and the chairman of the National Security Council and national security adviser to the Israeli prime minister, Giora Eiland, meet in Moscow. They sign an agreement on the exchange of information on terrorist and extremist organizations as well as on the channels by which they are financed.

27 September 2004 Industry and Energy Minister Viktor Khristenko says trade between Kazakhstan and Russia will increase by 42% in 2004 as compared to 2003. Trade between the two countries stood at 6.2bn dollars over 2003.

27 September 2004 Sergey Lavrov visits Cuba.

27 September 2004 Col-Gen Sergey Smirnov, the FSB's first deputy director, visits Armenia.

28 September 2004 Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov tells the Council of Europe's human rights commissioner Alvaro Gil-Robles that Russian military personnel are still committing crimes in Chechnya.

28 September 2004 Polish President Aleksander Kwasniewski visits Moscow for talks with Vladimir Putin.

28 September 2004 Sergey Lavrov says in Cuba the aim of an international conference on Iraq is to help the people of that country reach a national consensus. "The aim of the conference, which it is important to organize, is, first and foremost, to help the Iraqis themselves form a national consensus, so that the political forces which currently make up the interim government can start cooperating with the political opposition."

28 September 2004 Deputy foreign minister Aleksandr Saltanov meets Saudi Ambassador Muhammad Abd-al-Wali and says Russia welcomes the initiative by Saudi Arabia to hold an international meeting on strengthening multilateral antiterrorist cooperation.

28 September 2004 Security Council Secretary Igor Ivanov holds talks with Chairman of the National Security Council and national security adviser to the Israeli prime minister Giora Eiland about bilateral cooperation in security matters and the fight against international terrorism.

28 September 2004 Presidential aide Sergey Yastrzhembskiy says Russia is concerned over the violation of the rights of Russian speaking population in Estonia and Latvia. He is speaking at parliamentary hearings on the ratification of the protocol on cooperation between Russia and the EU.

Yastrzhembskiy says since Lithuania joined the EU conditions of cargo transit in Kaliningrad Region have worsened.

29 September 2004 Vladimir Putin signs a decree entitled "On the formation of an interdepartmental commission for ensuring Russia's participation in the work of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization". Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Alekseyev has been appointed chairman of the commission.

29 September 2004 Security Council Secretary Igor Ivanov says that the project to build a nuclear power station in Bushehr in Iran will be carried out. He says Russia is against submitting the Iran "nuclear dossier" for scrutiny by the UN Security Council.

29 September 2004 Deputy Foreign Minister Yuriy Fedotov says Russia suggests that Chechen separatists, former Chechen foreign minister Ilyas Akhmadov and rebel leader Aslan Maskhadov's envoy Akhmed Zakayev should be put on the UN Security Council's black list of people and organizations involved in terrorist activities.

29 September 2004 Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov has talks in Moscow with Polish National Defence Minister Jerzy Szmajdzinski.

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30 September 2004 Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov visits the Netherlands to prepare for an EU-Russia summit that is scheduled to be held in The Hague on 11 November.

30 September 2004 Deputy Prosecutor-General Vladimir Kolesnikov and some Duma deputies go to Abkhazia to attend independence day celebrations.

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