

Russian Domestic Policy: A Chronology

April-June 2004

April

1 April 2004 The government launches the next phase of administrative reform. The number of departments within ministries will be significantly reduced. A minister will have no more than two deputies. The overwhelming majority of governmental and interdepartmental commissions are to be "reduced to departmental level". Only two or three commissions will survive of the 221 commissions that come under the Russian government. The shaping of the government structure has to be finished by 20 April, as stipulated by presidential decree. Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov says the number of officials in the Russian government will be drastically reduced.

The head of the government staff, Dmitriy Kozak, says the "power" ministries and also the Foreign Ministry will undergo a structural reform in the near future.

1 April 2004 In a formula of accusations levelled at Platon Lebedev that was published on the official web site of the Prosecutor-General's Office, the former head of Yukos, Mikhail Khodorkovskiy, is suspected of setting up an organized crime group that engaged in swindling during the privatization of Russian enterprises.

1 April 2004 Minister of Natural Resources Yuriy Trutnev criticizes the practice of concluding production sharing agreements (PSAs), calling them a "speculative and corrupt" mechanism. He says he hopes that "the exploitation of Russia's continental shelf oil deposits will be possible without these agreements". Trutnev emphasizes that the process of allowing foreign companies to develop major oil deposits must continue in the same way as it does the world over.

1 April 2004 An antiterrorist centre is set up in the North Caucasus. The centre has been set up on the basis of the Interior Ministry's (MVD) former main operational directorate for the North Caucasus. It will be subordinate to the MVD's main directorate in the Southern Federal District. Police Col Vladimir Rasstegayev, former chief of the criminal investigation service of the MVD's main directorate for Stavropol Territory, has been appointed chief of the centre. He was also appointed deputy head of the MVD's main directorate for the Southern Federal District.

1 April 2004 The secretary of the Committee of Soldiers' Mothers of Russia, Valentina Melnikova, expresses dissatisfaction with the law on alternative service.

1 April 2004 Vladimir Yakovlev, the presidential representative in the Southern Federal District, meets Chechen President Akhmad Kadyrov. Yakovlev expresses concern that goals set under a federal programme to rebuild Chechnya were not achieved in 2003. Out of the R22bn (733m dollars) allocated for rebuilding Chechnya in 2003, over 2bn (66m dollars) was spent unlawfully. Another R4m (133,000 dollars) was misused or used inefficiently, according to the Federal Audit Chamber.

2 April 2004 It is announced that an extra subject, "The Fundamentals of Islam" is to be introduced in general education schools in Chechnya in the new school year.

2 April 2004 Deputy prime minister Aleksandr Zhukov says that as a result of the administrative reform, "the overall number of civil servants who will be working in ministries, federal services and directorates will be reduced by 4,000 people, or by 20%, as compared with the number of officials who used to be employed in federal ministries. The number of civil servants, including those working in various organizations that formed part of ministerial networks, as well as those who performed state functions and were employed in regional structures, will be reduced by 25,000.

2 April 2004 Vladimir Putin instructs that presidential aide Aleksandr Abramov should act in the capacity of secretary of the State Council.

2 April 2004 Ground Troops have successfully carried out a combat launch of a missile from the missile complex Tochka-U in the Trans-Baykal region. The combat launch of the missile was carried out in the course of the command and staff exercise of the Siberian Military District's headquarters and troops.

3 April 2004 Commander-in-Chief of the Space Troops Vladimir Popovkin says Russia is planning to carry out space launches exclusively from its own territory in the long term. "In the long term we are planning to carry out launches only from the territory of Russia - we have in mind the space launch sites Plesetsk and Svobodnyy." Russia currently also uses Baykonur in Kazakhstan. Baykonur is used to launch heavy-class rockets and manned spacecraft. It is mainly light- and medium-class rockets carrying satellites, primarily of a military nature, that are launched from Plesetsk.

4 April 2004 Defence minister Sergey Ivanov visits Norway. He says, "The Russian Defence Ministry, MVD and Foreign Ministry are structures subordinate to the president himself. There are no plans to restructure them radically." He says the Defence Ministry's structures had already been streamlined. "The Defence Ministry does not have a central administration, there are central bodies of military command, whose staff number about 1,000 officers for 1,100,000 servicemen ... the Defence Ministry structure settled a long time ago, I see no point in changing anything. The unity of command principle remains the main principle of a military organization."

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He comments that the General Staff continues to be relieved of extraneous duties, such as financial, managerial, supply and so on. "The General Staff must deal with what it was created for - to command the armed forces and draw up plans for its use."

4 April 2004 Liberal politician Irina Khakamada has said she does not agree with former Yukos head Mikhail Khodorkovskiy's assessment of the state of liberalism in Russia. She is commenting on the article he wrote entitled "Crisis of Liberalism in Russia" which was published in *Vedomosti*.

4 April 2004 Prime minister Mikhail Fradkov is interviewed on TV.

5 April 2004 Vladimir Putin appoints Aleksandr Kotenkov the president's plenipotentiary representative to the Federation Council. Kotenkov is also appointed the head of state's plenipotentiary representative at the State Duma.

Putin also appoints Andrey Popov head of the President's Main Directorate for Domestic Policy and Marina Yentaltseva head of the president's protocol service and organizational directorate.

5 April 2004 Former Russian presidential candidate Irina Khakamada says she intends to join the "2008: Free Choice" committee. She sees the committee as an ideal platform allowing all democratic movements to forge a coalition and stand for the future elections in a decent way. She says the coalition should be formed by 2006.

5 April 2004 A jury at the Moscow City Court has found Russian scientist Igor Sutyagin guilty of state treason by spying.

5 April 2004 A jury reaches a unanimous guilty verdict in the case of Zarema Muzhakhoyeva, who was accused of attempting to carry out a terrorist attack on Tverskaya street in Moscow in the summer of 2003.

6 April 2004 Vladimir Putin signs a decree appointing former media minister Mikhail Lesin to the post of presidential adviser on mass media.

6 April 2004 Yukos head Mikhail Khodorkovsky denies that he wrote the article "Crisis of Liberalism in Russia" that was published in the *Vedomosti* newspaper on 29 March. He says however that he agrees with its contents. His lawyer Anton Drel later says Khodorkovskiy is the author.

6 April 2004 An unsuccessful attempt is made by a suicide bomber to assassinate Ingush president Murat Zyazikov.

6 April 2004 Chechnya's pro-Moscow president, Akhmat Kadyrov, says he is ready to guarantee the safety of Aslan Maskhadov, the leader of Chechen separatists, if he hands himself in voluntarily. Kadyrov says he will ask Vladimir Putin to pardon Maskhadov if he surrenders. Kadyrov says he is against UN forces being deployed in Chechnya.

Vladimir Yakovlev, the presidential representative in the Southern Federal District, which includes Chechnya, unveils data on embezzlement of state funds in Chechnya, at a meeting with the Chechen government. 66m dollars were embezzled in 2003.

7 April 2004 The Moscow city court sentences Russian scientist Igor Sutyagin to 15 years in prison for treason in the form of spying for the USA.

7 April 2004 A poll conducted by Yuriy Levada's Analytical Centre late in March states that 33% of Russians want Vladimir Putin to serve a third presidential term, 39% want him to leave in 2008 and the rest are undecided.

8 April 2004 Prime Minister Aleksandr Zhukov says the Russian government has cut the number of government commissions at the federal level from 220 to 14.

8 April 2004 The head of the Federal Service for Financial Monitoring, Viktor Zubkov, says the flow of "dirty" money from Russia is falling.

8 April 2004 The presidential envoy to the Far Eastern Federal District, Konstantin Pulikovskiy, says Russian companies intend to expand their participation in the development of Sakhalin Region's oil and gas sector. He says their current participation is insufficient.

8 April 2004 An official spokesman of the regional centre in charge of the anti-terror operation in the North Caucasus, Colonel Ilya Shabalkin, states that extremist international organizations have given around 10 million dollars to the leaders of Chechen bandit formations.

9 April 2004 An inter-factional group of deputies called Sever Rossii is set up in the Duma. The new association will be headed by Valentina Pivnenko, head of the Duma Committee on the North and Far East.

9 April 2004 The Rodina Duma faction declares that it will be the opposition force in the Duma.

9 April 2004 The head of the Justice Ministry's territorial directorate for Chechnya, Bek Baskhanov, says Aslan Maskhadov must answer to the law for the crimes he has committed and the blood the people have shed. "Only after a court has passed sentence on Maskhadov can the issue of a pardon be considered."

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9 April 2004 Vladimir Putin signs a decree to appoint Andrey Belyaninov the director of the federal defence order service and to relieve him of the post of the director of the Rosoboroneksport federal state enterprise.

9 April 2004 The CPRF demands that the General Procuracy investigates claims of vote rigging in the presidential elections.

11 April 2004 Vladimir Putin attends the Easter Sunday service in the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour. Patriarch Aleksiy II says that Putin is ruling Russia by God's will. The patriarch wishes the president success in his work for the benefit of Russia.

12 April 2004 Deputy Prosecutor-General Vladimir Kolesnikov suggests making Wahhabism a criminal offence.

13 April 2004 The Duma holds hearings on "current issues of legislative support for the fight against terrorism". Representative of the Information Security Centre of the Federal Security Service (FSB) Dmitriy Frolov gives evidence on cyber-security. He says that at present it is the information systems of the state and military command that are least protected against cyber-terrorism. He says that the FSB has drafted and sent proposals to the State Duma on improving legislation in the sphere of cyber-terrorism.

Chairman of the Duma security committee Vladimir Vasilyev says at the hearings that up to 80% of terrorist activities in Russia in 2003 were registered in the Southern Federal District, in Chechnya in particular.

13 April 2004 Andrey Illarionov, the presidential adviser on economic issues, says if Russia signs the Kyoto Protocol, this will cause it to suffer an economic recession.

13 April 2004 *Severnyy Kavkaz* reports that the police of Makhachkala's Sovetskiy district (Dagestan) have found and seized 360 extremist Wahhabi books in a shop selling religious literature and products.

13 April 2004 Agriculture Minister Aleksey Gordeyev says imports account for 20% of Russia's demand in food.

14 April 2004 Former Yukos boss Mikhail Khodorkovskiy sends another letter from prison to the Open Russia forum. He defends his letter which was published in *Kommersant* on 29 March.

14 April 2004 The Federation Council adopts amendments to the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation which increase the period for bringing charges from 10 to 30 days in the case of an investigation of a terrorist nature. The executive director of the Human Rights Movement, Lev Ponomarev, condemns these changes.

14 April 2004 Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov outlines the government's economic strategy to the Federation Council. He lists five main tasks for the government:

- Combat poverty.
- Create a new management system, ie to complete administrative reform.
- Create a tough environment that would help to identify Russian competitive companies, to provide for growth in the investment business as well as growth in innovation companies, the innovation business.
- Develop new mechanisms of interaction between business and the state.
- Ensure Russia's rational integration in the world economy.

14 April 2004 LUKoil president Vagit Alekperov states that a new oil and gas province discovered in the north of the Caspian is comparable in terms of reserves to the Azerbaijani section of the Caspian Sea. There are plans to begin commercial oil extraction in 2008. The Korchaginskoye field will have been brought on stream by then. It has overall reserves of 21m tonnes of oil and 3bn cubic metres of gas. The company is to invest around 1bn dollars in building surface facilities and even more significant amounts of raw hydrocarbons will be extracted in the north Caspian in future. The company predicts that by 2012 oil extraction will exceed 4m tonnes and gas extraction will reach 10bn cubic metres.

14 April 2004 The Economic Development and Trade Ministry says industrial production in Russia rose by 7.6% in the first quarter of 2004.

Goskomstat figures show that Russia became a net wheat importer in February for the first time in the last three years. Russian wheat imports amounted to around 30,400 tonnes in February, while exports stood at 17,500 tonnes. Imports were estimated to exceed 60,000 tonnes in March, while exports almost stopped. The bulk of the wheat comes from Kazakhstan.

14 April 2004 Chechen President Akhmat Kadyrov says it is necessary to extend the amnesty for rebels who voluntarily lay down their arms.

14 April 2004 The Federation Council passes amendments to legislation aimed at creating a legal basis to put the armed forces on a professional footing. The chairman of the upper house's defence and security committee, Viktor Ozerov, says that the amendments in questions are designed to "provide a stronger legal framework for tests for those entering into professional service and to effect changes to the mechanisms for material provision and to afford incentives for service personnel on professional service in combined units and units to be in a state of permanent readiness".

15 April 2004 Centre-left forces decide to form a single party. Vladimir Kishenin, chairman of the Party of Social Justice, and Konstantin Titov, Russian Social-

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Democratic Party leader and Samara Region governor, sign a cooperation agreement.

15 April 2004 The Duma Council decides to set up a deputies' commission on the fight against corruption.

15 April 2004 The vice-president of the Russian Medical Association, Yuriy Komarov, says Russia will need 100 years to reach the current life expectancy in the developed countries. "Today the difference in the average life expectancy of Russians and the inhabitants of developed countries abroad is 15-18 years. Something like 100 years will be needed to close the gap."

Komarov says that the birth rate is another serious problem. "If this trend continues and goes on growing, then, according to the forecasts we have, in 2015 Russia will lose approximately 11 million people, and by 2040 there will only be 90 million people in Russia."

16 April 2004 Maj-Gen Valeriy Menshikov, director of the Space Systems Research and Development Institute, publishes an article in *Vestnik Vozdushnogo Flota* on the use of space in C2 systems.

17 April 2004 The head of the Audit Chamber, Sergey Stepashin, says there will be no large-scale revision of privatization in Russia.

19 April 2004 Vladimir Putin says that the reform of the security ministries has begun. This is the final stage of administrative reforms.

19 April 2004 Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Zhukov says that private property will not be renationalized in Russia.

19 April 2004 The Federal Service for Nuclear Supervision says it is concerned about the safety of nuclear facilities located in Moscow. Valeriy Rozhnov, a spokesman for the service, says that there are "eleven research reactors with a combined capacity of 20 MW in Moscow". "Some of them are based at Moscow's higher education establishments, where efficient monitoring of radioactive material production is difficult to mount."

19 April 2004 The deputy chairman of the Gazprom management board, Aleksandr Ananenko, outlines Gazprom's strategy during a session of the gas industry's commission for developing deposits and exploiting natural resources. Gazprom sees its participation in the creation of a unified system for the extraction of natural gas, its transport and supply in Eastern Siberia and the Far East as a strategic field of development.

20 April 2004 The Duma commission for countering corruption is set up.

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20 April 2004 Sergey Ivanov says that proposals for the reform of the Defence Ministry will be put before President Vladimir Putin in the course of the next two weeks. He says the number of deputy defence ministers will be cut.

20 April 2004 An article in *Gazeta* gives detailed analysis of plans to reform the power structures.

20 April 2004 A meeting held at the office of Russian president's plenipotentiary in the Southern Federal District, Vladimir Yakovlev, decides to strengthen border controls in the Northern Caucasus. Land border services will be created in Karachay-Cherkessia, Kabarda-Balkaria, North Osetia, Ingushetia and Chechnya with a control centre in Stavropol. In addition, a coastal watch system will be established to guard the Black Sea, Azov Sea and Caspian Sea sections of Russia's border.

21 April 2004 The MVD gives figures for abductions in the North Caucasus in 2003. 707 people were abducted in Chechnya, Ingushetia and Dagestan. A total of 605 people were abducted in Chechnya, 66 in Dagestan and 36 in Ingushetia. In the same period 105 hostages were freed, including 42 in Chechnya, 48 in Dagestan and 15 in Ingushetia. 1,766 people still remain in captivity in the three republics, including 1,699 in Chechnya.

21 April 2004 Andrey Nikolayev is appointed adviser on military policy issues to Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov.

21 April 2004 Vladimir Putin says that adjustments to the government structure are to be continued.

The head of the Russian presidential administration, Dmitriy Medvedev, signs an instruction "On the division of responsibilities between officials of the administration of the president of the Russian Federation".

21 April 2004 An article in *Gazeta* reports that Vladimir Putin has issued a decree permitting the FSB to carry out combat operations in those CIS countries that are party to the CIS Collective Security Treaty. The Alfa and Vypel detachments of the FSB are expected to engage in antiterrorist operations, mainly on the section of the border with Afghanistan.

22 April 2004 The MVD's Main Tax Directorate begins searches and a seizure of documents at the Yukos oil company central office in Moscow.

22 April 2004 The leader of the Rodina party, Dmitriy Rogozin, says that he plans to form a mass left-wing party.

22 April 2004 Interfax reports Magomed Khambiyev, a Chechen separatist leader and former "interior minister of Ichkeria", who surrendered in early March, as saying that all his subordinates have surrendered their arms and have turned themselves in to the law-enforcement agencies.

23 April 2004 Sergey Antipov, deputy head of the Federal Atomic Energy Agency, says Russia plans to complete dismantling all of the country's decommissioned nuclear submarines by 2010.

Russia has decommissioned 133 nuclear submarines as of April, of which 96 have already been and 35 are currently being dismantled. 62 submarines are waiting to be dismantled and 55 are still afloat loaded with nuclear fuel.

Head of the security and disarmament department of the MFA Mikhail Lysenko says Russia plans to scrap another 100 nuclear submarines.

A senior Defence Ministry official, Major-General Mikhail Starodubtsev, says Russia guarantees that its nuclear arsenal is safe and protected. He is speaking at an international conference titled "G8 Global Partnership Against the Proliferation of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction".

The commander-in-chief of the Ground Troops, Deputy Defence Minister Army Gen Nikolay Kormiltsev, is interviewed in *Krasnaya Zvezda*.

24 April 2004 Vladimir Putin signs a decree endorsing the members of the Security Council of the Russian Federation. The members are:

Vladimir Putin, president of the Russian Federation, chairman of the Security Council of the Russian Federation.

The following are permanent members:

Boris Gрызлов, chairman of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly
 Igor Ivanov, secretary of the Security Council
 Sergey Ivanov, defence minister
 Sergey Lavrov, foreign minister
 Sergey Lebedev, director of the Foreign Intelligence Service
 Dmitriy Medvedev, director of the Russian Presidential Administration
 Sergey Mironov, chairman of the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly
 Rashid Nurgaliyev, minister of internal affairs
 Nikolay Patrushev, director of the Federal Security Service
 Mikhail Fradkov, prime minister.

The following are members of the Security Council:

Leonid Drachevskiy, plenipotentiary of the president in the Siberian Federal District
 Anatoliy Kvashnin, chief of General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces, first deputy defence minister
 Sergey Kiriyyenko, plenipotentiary of the president in the Volga Federal District
 Ilya Klebanov, plenipotentiary of the president in the Northwest Federal District

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Aleksey Kudrin, finance minister
Petr Latyshev, plenipotentiary of the president in the Urals Federal District
Yuriy Osipov, president of the Russian Academy of Sciences
Georgiy Poltavchenko, plenipotentiary of the president in the Central Federal District
Konstantin Pulikovskiy, plenipotentiary of the president in the Far Eastern District
Vladimir Ustinov, prosecutor-general
Yuriy Chayka, justice minister
Sergey Shoygu, minister of civil defence, emergencies and disaster relief
Vladimir Yakovlev, plenipotentiary of the president in the Southern Federal District.

24 April 2004 The Motherland People's Patriotic Union has been renamed. It will now be known as the national public organization For a Worthy Life (Za Dostoynuyu Zhizn). Sergey Glaz'yev is the leader.

24 April 2004 Aleksandr Rumyantsev, the head of the Federal Atomic Energy Agency, is interviewed on Mayak Radio. Rumyantsev outlines the current reform in the industry.

24 April 2004 The vice-president of Russian Railways, Khasyan Zyabirov, says Russian Railways are investing over R30bn into developing the railway infrastructure in the territory bordering China.

24 April 2004 The Black Sea Fleet completes exercises off the Caucasian coast of the Black Sea.

26 April 2004 Yakut President Vyacheslav Shtyrov is interviewed in *Kommersant-Vlast* on Yakutia's economic development.

26 April 2004 Akhmed Zakayev, the deputy prime minister of the Chechen government and special representative of the president of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria, is interviewed on the Chechenpress website. He believes that any peace initiative from the Chechen side will be rejected on principle and that only the use of force or capitulation remains.

26 April 2004 Minister of Finance Aleksey Kudrin says it is quite feasible that Russia will have doubled its GDP by 2010. He says that in the first quarter of 2004 GDP had increased by 8% and investments by 13%.

26 April 2004 Vladimir Putin sends his conclusions regarding the bill "On public gatherings, protests, demonstrations, rallies and pickets" to the Duma. The bill was passed by the Duma in its first reading on 31 March.

26 April 2004 Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov signs a decree reorganizing the government staff. There will remain 12 departments (currently there are 14 departments and nine directorates).

Vsevolod Vukolov has been appointed head of the department for state management and local self-government

Aleksandr Kozlov head of the department for regional monitoring

Anton Drozdov head of the department for the economy and finances

Valeriy Mikhaylov head of the department for the defence industry and high technologies

Tatyana Volovaya head of the department for international cooperation

Denis Molchanov head of the department for mass communications, culture and education. This department will take over from the department for government information.

Sergey Kalashnikov will head the department for social development and the environment.

Garri Minkh will head the legal department

Olga Pushkareva the department for sectoral development.

Vyacheslav Kokunov has been appointed head of the administrative department.

27 April 2004 The head of the MVD's national scientific and research institute, Sergey Girko, tells an international conference entitled "Crime in Russia: causes and outlook", that there are 240 extremist organizations operating in Russia, with a total membership of 3,000.

27 April 2004 Russian chief rabbi (Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia) Berl Lazar says state anti-Semitism is a thing of the past in Russia.

27 April 2004 Yukos chief financial officer Bruce Misamore says the merger deal between Yukos and Sibneft remains in force.

28 April 2004 Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov appoints 10 deputy prime ministers. They are: Aleksandr Rybas, Sergey Kolesnikov, Sergey Vinokurov, Gennadiy Bukayev, Vladimir Milovidov, Andrey Nikolayev, Aleksandr Pochinok, Vladimir Filippov, Sergey Frank and Boris Frenkel.

28 April 2004 Duma deputy and head of the Volgograd organization of the Agrarian Party of Russia Vladimir Plotnikov is elected chairman of the Agrarian Party of Russia.

28 April 2004 Vladimir Putin signs a decree appointing Sergey Chemezov director-general of Rosoboroneksport.

28 April 2004 Chechen President Akhmat Kadyrov says the "surplus part" of power-wielding structures currently stationed in Chechnya is to leave for their

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permanent bases. He says the Chechen MVD should be the sole force fighting separatists. The C-in-C of the Russian MVD's Internal Troops Col-Gen Vyacheslav Tikhomirov says "it would be premature to hand over the command of the antiterrorist operation in Chechnya to the republic's MVD". "Proceeding from the situation in the republic and the standards of professional readiness of the Chechen police, I think that it is premature to hand over the command of antiterrorist operations to the local police. It is necessary to create sufficient facilities and prepare the personnel, and only then to extend the remit of the Chechen MVD."

28 April 2004 The State Council meets at Salekhard in West Siberia to discuss state policy towards the northern regions. Vladimir Putin attends.

29 April 2004 The Office of the Prosecutor-General denies media reports about the arrest of Vladimir Potanin, the head of the Interros holding company.

29 April 2004 Boris Berezovskiy denies that he will sell the *Kommersant* publishing house, the newspaper *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* and the website Grani.ru.

29 April 2004 The Duma passes amendments to the law "On defence" in its first reading. These amendments strip the General Staff of the right of operational command and control of the army, as well as control over finances.

30 April 2004 The Economic Development and Trade Ministry publishes a review of the country's social and economic development in the first quarter of 2004. GDP grew 8% by comparison with the first quarter of 2003.

30 April 2004 Human rights activists condemn the decision reached by a jury court on the Ulman case. Russian servicemen accused of murdering six Chechen civilians were acquitted by jurors. Leader of the human rights movement Lev Ponomarev says this is another failure of judicial reform.

May

4 May 2004 The head of the Union of Soldiers' Mothers Committee, Valentina Melnikova, claims that about 25,000 soldiers and officers of the Russian armed forces and policemen have been killed and have died from wounds during the two Chechen campaigns over the past almost 10 years. She also claims that at least 50,000 servicemen have received wounds and become disabled.

6 May 2004 The Central Bank of Russia says total foreign investment in Russia rose to 21.4bn dollars in 2003 from about 10.4bn dollars in 2002.

7 May 2004 Vladimir Putin is inaugurated as president.

9 May 2004 An explosion occurs at Grozny's Dinamo stadium, killing Chechen President Akhmat Kadyrov. The commander of the Combined Force in the North Caucasus, Valeriy Baranov, is seriously injured. Under Article 76 of the Constitution of the Chechen Republic, the chairman of the government of the Chechen Republic, Sergey Abramov, will be temporarily fulfilling the duties of head of the republic. New presidential elections are to be held by 9 September.

Commander-in-Chief of the MVD Internal Troops Army Gen Vyacheslav Tikhomirov is appointed chairman of the commission for the investigation of the terrorist bombing in Grozny.

10 May 2004 Presidential plenipotentiary to the Southern Federal District Vladimir Yakovlev says the restoration of the economy and the social sphere in Chechnya will be accelerated.

Army Gen Vyacheslav Tikhomirov says military reinforcements could be sent to Chechnya.

Akhmat Kadyrov's son Ramzan is appointed first deputy chairman of the Chechen government. The Memorial human rights centre opposes this appointment. It says there are serious grounds to suspect Ramzan Kadyrov of committing crimes against civilians, especially crimes that involved violence, taking of human lives and their freedom.

11 May 2004 Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov says the terrorist act which was committed in Chechnya on 9 May will not lead to an increase in the number of MOD troops in Chechnya.

11 May 2004 The government approves new members of the Defence Industry Commission set up in 1999. Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov becomes the commission's new chairman, while head of the Federal Industry Agency Boris Aleshin, Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov, and Industry and Energy Minister Viktor Khristenko become his deputies.

12 May 2004 Vladimir Putin signs a decree appointing Mikhail Fradkov chairman of the Russian Federation government. The Duma endorses Fradkov, who had been nominated by the president for the post of prime minister, with 356 votes in favour, 72 against and eight abstentions.

12 May 2004 Five people are detained on suspicion of involvement in perpetrating the terrorist act in Grozny which killed Akhmat Kadyrov.

The MVD force commander-in-chief, Vyacheslav Tikhomirov, visits Chechnya after the 9 May terrorist attack, and inspects the 46th Detached Brigade of the force which is stationed in the republic on a permanent basis. Army general Vladimir

Boldyrev, commander of the North Caucasian Military District, accompanied by a group of staff officers of the district, also visited Chechnya between 9 and 11 May.

12 May 2004 Acting Agriculture Minister Aleksey Gordeyev tells Vladimir Putin that Russia's 2004 grain harvest is expected at 73-76m tonnes. In 2003, Russia's grain output declined to 67.2m tonnes in clean weight, down from 86.6m in 2002. Russia emerged as a big grain exporter in the 2002-03 marketing year (July-June), shipping abroad around 17m tonnes of grain. In July-January 2003-04, exports amounted to around 6.5m tonnes, while the overall 2003-04 exports are expected at over 7m tonnes.

12 May 2004 Acting Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says economic growth stood at around 8% of GDP for the first four months of 2004. He speaks during "government hour" in the Federation Council.

13 May 2004 Col Oleg Zhidkov is appointed deputy to presidential envoy in the Southern Federal District, Vladimir Yakovlev. Zhidkov is interviewed in *Moskovskiy Komsomolets*.

13 May 2004 It is reported that Chechen leaders are seeking to change the Chechen constitution so that Akhmat Kadyrov's younger son Ramzan can run for president.

14 May 2004 The head of the Central Electoral Commission, Aleksandr Veshnyakov, says the current situation in Chechnya is such that the constitution cannot be changed.

14 May 2004 Maj-Gen Sergey Topchiy, Deputy Commander of the MVD troops, says the administrative reform currently underway will result in the MVD troops transforming into the National Guard next year. A bill 'On Law and Order Protection Bodies in the Russian Federation' has been drafted within the framework of the administrative reform currently under way.

15 May 2004 The acting head of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, German Gref, visits Chechnya. He says the government is to draw up a three-year programme for the social and economic development of Chechnya in the very near future. He is in Groznyy with a government working delegation to assess the economic situation in the republic.

17 May 2004 The Saratov Region prosecutor's office charges governor Dmitriy Ayatskov with exceeding his powers and abuse of office.

17 May 2004 Shamil Basayev claims responsibility for killing Akhmad Kadyrov.

17 May 2004 Vladimir Putin meets acting Economic Development and Trade Minister German Gref. They discuss the restoration of Chechnya.

17 May 2004 Acting Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov states that the armed forces are to hold large-scale exercises in June. In addition, exercises are to be held in the Central Asian sector, in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, from August to September within the framework of the Collective Security Treaty Organization. Large-scale naval patrols are planned, both independently and as part of international cooperation, in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean in August and September.

18 May 2004 Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov expresses concern that there are too few conscripts in the country, during a visit to the Moscow Region conscription centre.

18 May 2004 The leadership of the 2008 Committee holds a press conference. It sees as its main task the setting up of a coalition of democratic forces under the patronage of the committee itself. The coalition will be deemed to be a real one when all the politicians invited to join have put their signatures to some sort of general democratic platform, which is expected to happen in autumn 2004.

18 May 2004 The Presidium of the Central Committee of the CPRF expels the chairman of the Executive Committee of the People's Patriotic Union of Russia, Gennadiy Semigin, from the party.

18 May 2004 The head of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, Metropolitan Lavr of New York, meets Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia Aleksiy II. A commission is set up to deal with the eventual unification of the church.

19 May 2004 The head of the People's Patriotic Union of Russia, Gennadiy Semigin, leaves the CPRF Duma faction.

19 May 2004 Vladimir Putin signs a decree "On measures to ensure information security of the Russian Federation in the sphere of international information exchange". The decree is aimed mainly at ensuring a reliable protection of the Russian segment of the Internet, firstly all network resources of the state bodies, from external threats of unauthorized interference.

20 May 2004 The Meshchanskiy court in Moscow starts an open hearing in the criminal case against the head of the Menatep financial group, Platon Lebedev. The trial of Lebedev is postponed until 28 May.

20 May 2004 Vladimir Putin signs a decree creating a Ministry of Information Technology and Communications and appoints Leonid Reyman to head it.

20 May 2004 The chairman of the Council of Muftis of Russia, Ravil Gaynutdin, the head of the Central Spiritual Board of Russia's Muslims, Talgat Tadzhuddin, and the head of the Coordinating Centre of Muslims of the North Caucasus, Ismail Berdiyev, issue a joint statement condemning terrorism.

20 May 2004 The new cabinet is appointed.

20 May 2004 The decision to launch criminal proceedings against Saratov Region governor Dmitriy Ayatskov is cancelled.

20 May 2004 Col-Gen Anatoliy Kvashnin, chief of the General Staff, attends a conference on teaching and training methods attended by the commanding officers in charge of military command structures and of the higher military educational establishments in Ryazan. He says that a new plan for the use of the Russian armed forces taking into account the changes in the world's military and military-political situation and in the post-Soviet area is going to be introduced in 2005. This regulatory document will radically differ from plans for the use of the troops which existed in the former USSR and which, in one way or another, have been and are still in use in Russian military theory and practice.

21 May 2004 Maj-Gen Nikolay Bezborodov, a member of the Duma defence committee, is interviewed in *Nezavisimoye Voyennoye Obozreniye*. He discusses the military educational and training system.

22 May 2004 Mikhail Gorbachev steps down as Leader of the Social Democratic Party of Russia (SDPR). He has lost trust in party Chairman Konstantin Titov (governor of Samara Region).

23 May 2004 Vladimir Putin says that the government has decided to raise oil export tariffs.

24 May 2004 Vladimir Putin signs a decree on the reform of the President's Administrative Office.

24 May 2004 Finance Minister Aleksey Kudrin says Russia will keep increasing oil production and oil exports as oil prices on the international market remain high. Russia's output in the second quarter is expected to total 109.5m tonnes, 7% up on the year. In 2003, Russia's oil output rose to 412.377m tonnes from 380m tonnes in 2002.

25 May 2004 Deputy prime minister Aleksandr Zhukov says the government will try to increase domestic oil output.

26 May 2004 Vladimir Putin gives his state of the nation address to both houses of parliament.

26 May 2004 Deputy Interior Minister Aleksandr Chekalin says over 26,000 displaced persons have returned from Ingushetia to Chechnya in 2003 and 2004.

26 May 2004 Gazeta.ru reports that Vladimir Putin has dismissed General Vladimir Matyukhin, former director of the Federal Government Communications and Information Agency, from the post of first deputy defence minister.

27 May 2004 The National Bolshevik Party led by writer Eduard Limonov is denied re-registration under the new name National Bolshevik Order by the Justice Ministry.

27 May 2004 Vladimir Putin says the Russian authorities are ready to facilitate the reunification of the once-divided Russian Orthodox Church. He says this at a meeting with Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Aleksiy II and the head of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, Metropolitan Lavr, who is coming to the end of his first official visit to Russia.

27 May 2004 The Duma adopts amendments to the Russian Criminal Code at the second reading that increase penalties for the crime of terrorist activities. Four hundred and two deputies voted unanimously in favour of a draft law to amend Articles 57 and 205 of the Criminal Code. The main changes will be to Article 205 on terrorism. It is suggested that life imprisonment be introduced as the ultimate penalty under this article.

27 May 2004 Prime minister Mikhail Fradkov says that the Economic Development and Trade Ministry will for the first time play the key role in forming government policy.

Minister of Economic Development and Trade German Gref says the Russian government considers that Russia's GDP could double by 2010. Gref also says the state is planning to increase its share in Gazprom. The head of Gazprom, Aleksey Miller, believes that the state's share in the company should be increased from the current 38%. Gazprom's market shares will be liberalised this year.

28 May 2004 Vladimir Putin signs decrees appointing Valentin Sobolev, Yuriy Zubakov and Nikolay Spasskiy deputy secretaries of the Security Council.

28 May 2004 The Duma passes in the second reading the bill "On meetings, rallies, demonstrations, marches and picketing", the blueprint for which was approved by the deputies on 31 March.

28 May 2004 Lt-Gen Aleksandr Manilov, deputy commander of the FSB's border guards directorate, is interviewed in *Krasnaya Zvezda*. He discusses border security on the North Caucasian border. The total length of the Russian border exceeds 61,000 km, 38,000 of which are sea borders. Manilov says 13,500 km of the Russian border are not equipped or even defined legally.

29 May 2004 The head of the Russian Railways public relations department, Konstantin Pashkov, says Chechnya is re-establishing passenger transport links with other Russian regions. The first train for Moscow will depart from Groznyy on 30 May.

29 May 2004 Vladimir Putin signs a decree appointing as the new commander of the Northern Fleet Mikhail Abramov, who previously held the post of first deputy commander and chief of staff of the Baltic Fleet. The former commander of the Northern Fleet, Gennadiy Suchkov, who commanded the fleet from 3 February 2003, was suspended by presidential decree in September 2003 after fatalities occurred as the K-159 submarine was being transported for scrapping.

31 May 2004 NTV drops an interview with the widow of Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev.

31 May 2004 About 40 members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation call on leader Gennadiy Zyuganov to step down at the 10th party congress, due on 3 July.

31 May 2004 Vladimir Putin at the State Council says more power should be delegated to the regions.

June

1 June 2004 Mobilnost' (Mobility) 2004 exercises begin.

1 June 2004 *Argumenty i Fakty* publishes an article on Russia's demographic situation. The Russian population is shrinking by about 600,000 to 800,000 a year. By 2016 it will number 134.3m, which is 9.7m down on the most recent census.

1 June 2004 The Moscow Arbitration Court upholds a ruling of 19 May suspending implementation of a decision by the Ministry of Taxes and Levies to make the Yukos oil company pay taxes and penalties. The court thereby rejected the ministry's appeal for the ruling to be overturned.

1 June 2004 Vladimir Putin issues a decree releasing Valentin Stepankov from his duties as deputy secretary of the Security Council.

1 June 2004 President Murat Zyazikov of Ingushetia says he is against the idea of uniting with Chechnya. He says there should be a committee for the North Caucasus in the Federation Council or Duma. Zyazikov says he also supports the idea of introducing the post of deputy prime minister in the federal government who would supervise southern Russia and the North Caucasus.

2 June 2004 The acting president of Chechnya, Sergey Abramov, says he will not take part in the election to choose a head of the republic, scheduled for 29 August.

Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) Representatives Rudolf Bindig and Andreas Gross leave for Chechnya and Ingushetia to study the humanitarian situation there.

2 June 2004 The Russian presidential adviser on economic issues, Andrey Illarionov says the Kyoto protocol is incompatible with Russia's interests.

Illarionov says the Economic Development and Trade Ministry underestimates the growth rate of Russia's GDP. In order to meet the target of doubling GDP by 2012, set by Vladimir Putin in 2003, GDP should grow by 7.2% per year, while if GDP is to double by 2010 as suggested by Putin last month, it should grow by 9.2% annually. Illarionov says the ministry's forecast that GDP would grow by 6.6% in 2004 is pessimistic and illogical. In January-April 2004 GDP rose by 8%.

3 June 2004 Vladimir Putin appoints Andrey Chernenko director of the Federal Migration Service.

3 June 2004 Foreign Ministry spokesman Aleksandr Yakovenko says Chechen terrorists are still operating from the territories of neighbouring states, however the situation is gradually improving.

Chechen Prosecutor Vladimir Kravchenko says there are no large rebel groups left on Chechen territory. He says 19 gangs were eliminated in 2003.

4 June 2004 The Duma adopts in the third and final reading the bill "On meetings, rallies, demonstrations, marches and picketing". With a minimum of 226 votes required, 336 deputies voted in favour of the bill, 97 voted against it and two abstained.

4 June 2004 Deputy commander-in-chief of Internal Troops Lt-Gen Vyacheslav Dadonov is appointed acting commander of the Combined Force in the North Caucasus. He replaces in this post Col-Gen Valeriy Baranov, who was seriously injured in the 9 May terrorist act in Groznyy.

5 June 2004 *Kommersant* publishes a list of former USSR KGB officials who now work in the government:

Dr Mark A Smith

Sergey Ivanov - minister of defence. Served in the Second Main (counterespionage) and the First Main (foreign intelligence) Directorates of the KGB. From 1998 he was assistant director of the FSB, head of the Department of Analysis, Forecasting and Strategic Planning.

Rashid Nurgaliyev - minister of internal affairs. Worked in the KGB of the Karelian ASSR (Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic) and the central apparatus of the KGB. From 2000 he was a deputy director and head of the Inspection Directorate of the FSB.

Viktor Cherkesov - director of the Russian Federal Service for Control over the Trafficking of Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances. Worked in the KGB Directorate for Leningrad and Leningrad Region. In 1998 he was appointed First Deputy Director of the FSB.

Aleksandr Tsarenko - head of the President's Main Directorate for Special Programmes. Served in the KGB Directorate for Chelyabinsk Region, then later in the KGB central apparatus. From 1997 he was head of the KGB Directorate for Moscow and Moscow Region, FSB deputy director.

Gennadiy Korniyenko - director of the State Courier Communications Service. He served in the KGB from 1981.

Andrey Chernenko - chief of the Federal Migration Service. From 1992 he headed the public relations centre of the Russian Ministry of Security, becoming deputy minister.

Leonid Nadirov - deputy minister of culture and mass communications. After graduating from the Leningrad Engineering Construction Institute he worked in the USSR KGB.

Mikhail Dmitriyev - head of the Federal Service for Military and Technical Cooperation. From 1970 he worked in the PGU (First Main Directorate) of the USSR KGB. At the beginning of the 1990s he headed the Information-Analysis Directorate of the SVR (Foreign Intelligence Service).

Andrey Belyaninov - head of the Federal Service for the Defence Order. From 1978-1991 he worked in the PGU of the KGB.

Vyacheslav Volokh - chief of the Federal Supervisory Service for Ecology and the Use of Natural Resources. He worked in the KGB from 1972. In the 1990s he was chief of the Operations Directorate of the FSB Antiterrorist Centre.

Aleksandr Grigor'yev - head of the Federal Agency for the State Reserves. From 1975 he worked in the USSR KGB's Directorate for Leningrad and Leningrad Region. From 1998 he was chief of the FSB Directorate for St Petersburg and Leningrad Region, becoming FSB deputy director.

5 June 2004 Russian Centre TV channel criticises human rights organizations for criticizing President Putin for his attacks on rights groups in his state-of-the-nation address.

7 June 2004 Chechnya's Deputy Prime Minister Ramzan Kadyrov gives rebel forces three days to lay down their arms voluntarily, otherwise they will be destroyed. Kadyrov says an amnesty for the rebels has been in effect for a sufficiently long time.

7 June 2004 Aleksandr Veshnyakov, the head of the Central Electoral Commission, sends a letter to Vitalina Glazunova, the chairman of the Nenets Autonomous Area's assembly of deputies. He says the unification of the Nenets Autonomous Area with Arkhangelsk, which is being put to a referendum in the area, "is not in keeping with current legislation". The letter observes that "in accordance with current legislation, constituent parts of the Russian Federation cannot unilaterally change their constitutional and legal status".

8 June 2004 Oleg Morozov, Duma deputy speaker and one of Yedinaya Rossiya's leaders says the number of people wishing to join the party is growing steadily. The party currently has 800,000 members.

8 June 2004 The MOD says Russia is about to begin a large-scale exercise on troop transportation from the northwest to the east of the country. The chief goal of the exercise, which will be directed by Anatoliy Kvashnin, Chief of the General Staff, is to transport mobile reserves and rapid deployment units, in particular paratroopers and marines, to distant locations. Nearly 800 servicemen, weaponry and military hardware will be airlifted from northwestern Russia to the Far East.

A command post exercise supervised by Airborne Troops commander Aleksandr Kolmakov begins at the Airborne Troops HQ.

Maj-Gen Aleksandr Kvasnikov is appointed chief of staff/deputy commander of the space forces.

9 June 2004 The Supreme Court revokes the not-guilty verdict against physicist Valentin Danilov. In December 2003 a jury at the Krasnoyarsk Territory court acquitted the scientist, who was charged with espionage for the benefit of China. He will be retried.

10 June 2004 Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov is interviewed on his first 100 days in office in *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*. He discusses administrative reform and relations with Belarus.

10 June 2004 The Moscow District Military Court again acquits all six defendants in the trial over the murder of *Moskovskiy Komsomolets* newspaper correspondent Dmitriy Kholodov. The criminal case over the murder of Kholodov will be sent to the Prosecutor-General's Office for further investigation in order to identify the people involved in the murder.

10 June 2004 Deputy Prime Minister Aleksandr Zhukov says in the coming three to four years Russia's economic growth should continue and annual growth of GDP

should amount to 7-7.5%. He says in the past four years the real incomes of the population grew 10-15%, the number of residents of Russia living below the poverty line has been reduced by one-third in the last few years. At present about 30 million citizens receive income below the subsistence level. In the coming three years it is planned to reduce this figure by half. Zhukov states that the birth rate in Russia increased by 18% in the last three years while infant mortality fell by 25%.

11 June 2004 The Duma adopts the new wording of the law "On referendums in the Russian Federation", passing both the second and third readings at one go. The new law makes it impossible to dismiss the president by referendum.

11 June 2004 The Duma turns down a bill banning Wahhabi and other extremist activities and stepping up control over the activities of religious groups in the Russian Federation. The bill introduces amendments to the law "on freedom of conscience and on religious associations".

16 June 2004 The trial of Menatep chief Platon Lebedev and ex-head of Yukos Mikhail Khodorkovskiy begins. The case is then adjourned because of the illness of one of the defence team lawyers, Genrikh Padva.

16 June 2004 The Lukoil terminal at the Baltic Sea port of Vysotsk in Leningrad Region is opened. Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov says Russia will increase the production and export of oil in a planned manner in keeping with the energy strategy approved earlier.

16 June 2004 The Federal Service of State Statistics says GDP in current prices amounted to R3,598.9bn (124.01bn dollars) in January-March. GDP increased by 7.4% in the first quarter of 2004 as compared with the same period of in 2003.

17 June 2004 The government of the Russian Federation adopts, in principle, the 2005 budget, in which the revenue side is set at R3,103bn and the expenditure side at R2,916bn.

Chief of the General Staff Anatoliy Kvashnin says the 2005 draft federal budget should include increased defence spending. "The 2005 draft budget does not lead one to believe that there has been a change in the attitude towards national defence and makes it impossible to overcome the crisis the armed forces are now in." He adds that the 2005 draft budget envisages a rise in national defence spending by R83.8bn, however this is caused by structural changes in the budget.

17 June 2004 The MOD rules out the possibility of leaks of nuclear weapons from Russia.

18 June 2004 The Economic Development and Trade Ministry revises its optimistic forecast of GDP growth rate in 2005 to 5.9% from 6.2%, while the pessimistic

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forecast was revised to 5% from 4.8%. The ministry revises down the optimistic forecast of GDP growth rate in 2006 to 6% from 6.1% and in 2007 to 6.1% from 6.2%, while the pessimistic forecast is also revised to 4.8% in 2006 and 2007 from 4.9%. GDP is expected to increase by 27% in 2007 as compared with 2003, according to the optimistic forecast. According to the pessimistic forecast, Russia's GDP would rise 22.9%. In 2004, the ministry expects GDP to increase 6.6% on the year. In 2003, GDP rose 7.3% on the year, and in 2002, it increased 4.7%.

18 June 2004 Oil production in the Russian Federation increase by 8.5% from 1 to 15 June compared with the same period in 2003 to 18,345,000 tonnes. Oil exports to the far abroad increased by 12.9% to 8,268,000 tonnes, while deliveries to the near abroad fell by 1.2% to 1,610,000 tonnes.

18 June 2004 Air Force Commander-in-Chief Vladimir Mikhaylov praises the operations of military transport aircraft during the Mobilnost' (Mobility) 2004 exercises.

18 June 2004 Aslanbek Aslakhonov, an adviser to President Putin says he believes that the situation in Chechnya makes it possible for superfluous units of federal troops to be withdrawn from the republic, as the Chechen police have recently begun to work more effectively.

19 June 2004 Vladimir Putin holds a working meeting with Defence Minister Sergey Ivanov. Ivanov reports on the progress of exercises involving the transfer of personnel and materiel to the Far East as part of the Mobility-2004 command post exercises. More than 5,500 servicemen and equipment from all regions of the country have been lifted to the Far East.

21 June 2004 Boris Nadezhdin, URF member, says there is a possibility of URF merging with Yedinaya Rossiya.

22 June 2004 Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov says the amount of foreign investment in the Russian economy will reach 8bn dollars in 2004.

22 June 2004 Gunmen simultaneously attack eight targets in Ingushetia. Six targets belonging to the MVD are attacked as well as the former directorate of the Security Ministry, a border guard detachment and a motor-rifle unit. Acting Interior Minister of Ingushetia Abukar Kostoyev has been killed in combat with Chechen militants in Nazran. The death toll is over 57 people.

Vladimir Putin makes a brief visit to Ingushetia.

Chechen Interior Minister Alu Alkhanov says the transfer of responsibility for the counterterrorist operation in Chechnya to the Chechen MVD will be continued.

23 June 2004 The Justice Ministry refuses to register the public political organization For a Worthy Life which is headed by Sergey Glaz'yev.

23 June 2004 Chief of the main directorate for economic crime of the MVD's Federal Service for Economic and Tax Crime Aleksandr Orlov says since the beginning of 2004, the MVD has exposed embezzlement of budget funds totalling R22.9bn. In the first five months of 2004, 3,000 instances of officials taking bribes have been exposed.

23 June 2004 *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* publishes amendments to the federal constitutional law "On the Russian Federation Government". The list of executive bodies under the president's direct control is defined by a revised Article 32. It includes ministries and state institutions in charge of defence, security, internal and foreign affairs, justice, and emergencies. The president has charge of these departments personally and via leaders appointed by him.

23 June 2004 Vladimir Putin watches the Mobility-2004 exercise in Primorskiy kray.

24 June 2004 Murat Zyazikov, President of Ingushetia, says international terrorism was behind the rebel attack on Ingushetia's law and order agencies on 21 June.

24 June 2004 Prime Minister Mikhail Fradkov says the government has approved the idea of setting up a single national aircraft-manufacturing corporation in the near future.

24 June 2004 *Kommersant* reports that a former Chechen rebel commander, Artur Akhmadov, has been appointed head of the special-purpose police, the OMON, in Chechnya.

25 June 2004 Mikhail Borovik, a department head with Russia's state arms exporting agency Rosoboroneksport, says that in 2004, Russia's total arms exports "are expected to be not lower than in 2003". In 2003, Russia's weapons and military equipment exports rose 21.4% on the year to 5.1bn dollars, reaching their historical maximum. Russia supplied weapons and military equipment to 52 countries in 2003, with India and China being the major buyers.

25 June 2004 The Duma approves amendments to the Criminal Code in the third and final reading that increase the penalties for terrorism up to life imprisonment. Most changes were introduced to Article 205 of the Criminal Code, which deals with terrorism.

25 June 2004 Head of the Federal Service for Nuclear Supervision Andrey Malyshev rules out any possibility of nuclear materials being taken out of Russia illegally. "I do not agree with statements from some US politicians who say that

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Russia could be a source of a nuclear terrorist threat." There are about 213 nuclear facilities in Russia and 454 locations where nuclear materials, including spent nuclear fuel, are stored. The Federal Service for Nuclear Supervision employs 1,700 inspectors who ensure round-the-clock monitoring of all the facilities.

25 June 2004 The Gazprom board of directors re-elect Dmitriy Medvedev chairman of the board and Aleksey Miller deputy chairman of the board of directors.

26 June 2004 The URF holds its congress.

26 June 2004 Chechen Interior Minister Alu Alkhanov rules out talks with Chechen rebel leaders.

28 June 2004 Vladimir Putin signs the federal constitutional law "On referendums in the Russian Federation". The law was approved by the Duma on 11 June and by the Federation Council on 23 June.

29 June 2004 The government adopts a statute for the Federal Space Agency.

30 June 2004 The government approves the Statute of the Federal Agency for Atomic Energy.

30 June 2004 Aleksandr Kharchenko, who serves as secretary of the State Chemical Disarmament Commission and head of the domestic policy department in the office of the presidential envoy to the Volga Federal District, says that the chemical weapons destruction programme is currently being revised by the State Commission for Disarmament along with interested ministries due to lack of foreign aid.

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